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Recent History

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 - II. Public Interpretation and Presentation
 - III. Architectural History
 - IV. Repair, Restoration or Renovation of Historic Buildings and Structures
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GPT is just as proud of this recent collaboration with the Northern Marianas Humanities Council and Guampedia to bring the public this e-publication of the 1st Marianas History Conference held on June 14-16, 2012 in Saipan.

Marianas History Conference

Recent History

Table of Contents

Recent History

Sunidon Marianas: Chamorro Music and Cultural Unification in the Marianas Islands	1
<i>By Michael R. Clement, Ph.D.</i>	
TTPI Saipan Agriculture Station.....	13
<i>By David Look</i>	
The Shaping of Carolinian Attitudes Toward Food On-the-Scene Insights into Manners and Living in the Moment.....	83
<i>By Ken Kuroiwa</i>	
Apmam Tiempo Ti Uli'e Hit (Long Time No See): Chamorro Diaspora and the Transpacific Home.....	95
<i>By Jesi Lujan Bennett</i>	
A Brief Historical Review of "Selected" Forces and Factors Which Have Impacted the Economy of the Northern Marianas	111
<i>By William H. Stewart</i>	
From Yam to Spam: The Evolution of Pacific Islander Food Culture..	151
<i>By Jon Abraham</i>	
Close of Day: Guam in Contemporary Art.....	165
<i>By Mariquita Davis</i>	

Sunidon Marianas: Chamorro Music and Cultural Unification in the Marianas Islands

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Abstract: *Recorded and live Chamorro music was a major feature of the Chamorro cultural renaissance during the 1970s and 1980s. Early recording pioneers such as Johnny Sablan and the Charfauros Brothers came from Guam, but the industry may never have taken off without the participation of dozens of individuals from the Northern Marianas who played critical roles in the development of Chamorro music. This paper examines the close connections between artists from Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands such as Johnny Sablan, Candy Taman, Alexandro Sablan and J.D. Crutch. These individuals and many others established the diverse musical styles that have become i sunidon Marianas (The sound of the Marianas). The 114 years since partition have set the islands on divergent paths and historical circumstances have presented obstacles for political re-unification. Despite these obstacles Chamorro music has played a major and still unrecognized role in maintaining close cultural ties throughout the islands.*

Introduction

The 114 years since partition have set Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands on divergent political paths. The closest the island's came to re-unification was in the late 1960s, as Northern Marianas islanders considered ways to break away from the T.T.P.I. Re-unification with Guam was the preferred option but in Guam, there was some apprehension. Hard feelings lingered from World War II when Chamorros found themselves on opposite sides of a global conflict. Many on Guam also felt they would be better off economically if they stayed separate from the northern islands. During a hastily organized special election in 1969, Guam voters rejected re-unification.¹ Subsequent developments in these two political entities have made pathways to re-unification much more complicated than they would have been in 1969, but culturally, links have grown stronger as a result of a resurgent pride in Chamorro identity.

In this paper, I will talk about the central role Chamorro music has played in strengthening these ties. Today, it is perhaps taken for granted that, when listening

¹ Don Farrel, *History of the Northern Marianas Islands*, (Saipan: CNMI Public School System, 1991), 542-4.

to the radio, or attending parties throughout the Marianas, one is likely to hear the songs of Chamorro recording artists such as Johnny Sablan, J.D. Crutch, Alexandro Sablan and Candy Taman. The existence of this music did not however come about by chance. It only exists because artists throughout the Marianas made conscious efforts to record Chamorros songs as a way of restoring pride in Chamorro identity. As noted by T.W. Adorno “since the mid-19th century, a country’s music has become a political ideology by stressing national characteristics, appearing as a representative of the nation and everywhere confirming the national principle.”² A shared music is one clear sign of a people who share a national identity, whether or not they share the political boundaries of a modern nation-state.

Chamorro songs are of course difficult to define by a clear set of musical characteristics. They are arranged in virtually any style imaginable, and in many cases, the melodies of songs are borrowed from other places. This raises questions as to how contemporary Chamorro music could be considered central to a “national” identity. Some have even argued that it points to a “colonized culture.” However, most Chamorro food, clothing, games, and even religion can be traced to other places. Far from being a sign of a colonized or degraded culture, Chamorro music provides insight into what Vicente Diaz recognizes as the “remarkable ability of native cultures to survive, even if by adopting or adapting to elements from beyond its shores.”³ Central to this process is that Chamorros maintained considerable agency in determining the cultural norms that regulated their society, and preserved an identity distinct from the colonial power. Despite considerable debate over an exact definition, the most obvious distinctive characteristic of the music that is considered Chamorro today is that it is sung in the Chamorro language.

The roots of the modern Chamorro music recording industry can be traced to Guam in the early 1960s. Chamorros on Guam, influenced by decades of naval policies designed to stamp out the Chamorro language and indigenous identity, embraced modernization and Americanization as pathways to a better future. In this worldview, Chamorro language and culture were seen as obstacles to progress, and antithetical to their new status as American citizens. For young people on Guam during these years, Chamorro things simply were not as cool as things that

² T.W. Adorno, quoted in Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, (Harvard: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 72.

³ Vicente Diaz, *Repositioning the Missionary: Rewriting the Histories of Colonialism, Native Catholicism and Indigeneity in Guam*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 8.

came from America. There were however a few young people who saw things differently. Most notable, were the Charfauros Brothers, a group of singers from Agat, Guam. Their oldest brother, Jesus, served as their primary songwriter and encouraged them to only sing in the Chamorro language. He saw that Chamorro language was central to all other aspects of Chamorro culture and he believed that the future of Chamorros as a people depended on its perpetuation. He articulated this worldview in his mid-1960s song “*Munga Yo’ Mafino Englesi*.” Televised performances by the Charfauros Brothers on the Alan Sekt show, and countless performances in the island’s pala pala circuit created greater awareness of Chamorro music among young people and some began to look more positively at the songs of their parents’ generation.

In Saipan, cultural change proceeded a long a slightly different trajectory. While Chamorros on Saipan were closely related to Chamorros on Guam, with most having emigrated from Agana and Sumay in the last few decades of the nineteenth century, their experience with multiple colonial rulers in the twentieth meant that they had not experienced the type of sustained indoctrination into American culture as had Chamorros on Guam. In Saipan, Chamorros, and Carolinians, who migrated to the island in the early nineteenth century, maintained a clearer understanding that colonial cultures were distinct from their own. Carolinians in particular stood out because of they had a much shorter history of interaction with colonial powers and retained a more definite sense of their pre-contact indigenous identity. At the same time, Carolinians embraced Chamorro culture and would play a large role in the future of Chamorro music. One of the most popular Saipanese singers of the early post-war era was Larry Saralu, a Carolinian who became known for his unique and powerful voice while singing American, Carolinian, and Chamorro songs under a large flame tree at his high school in the mid-1950s.⁴

Nevertheless, by the 1960s many in Saipan saw promise in the adoption of the American way of life. This shaped their view of Chamorro music, just as it had on Guam. Candy Taman was one such individual who embraced American music. Born to a Chamorro-Carolinian mother with roots in Sumay, Guam and a Carolinian father with ancestors from Tamatan, Chuuk, he was born in 1948 in the village of San Roque. He grew up learning both Chamorro and Carolinian songs on the ukulele, but like most youths of the time, there was a particular attraction for music that came from other places. Early on, this meant country western, and Elvis

⁴Tonie Saralu, “Larry Saralu” brief biography provided by Larry Saralu’s daughter Tonie. 19 July 2009.

Presley, who he considered his “idol.”⁵ The thriving teen rock and roll scene on Guam also had an impact on Taman. A turning point in Taman’s life came in 1965 when he saw a young band from Guam called the Kaskells play at the Saipan hotel where he was working. He recalls:

I just went nuts when I listened to these guys...I even got fired because I ran away from the kitchen. I made friends with them and when they were going back to Guam, I cried to my mother and said, ‘I’m going to Guam with these guys.’⁶

While the Kaskells were going to school, Taman hung out in bass player Joe Perez’s garage in Toto and practiced playing different instruments. During the weekends, he helped out as a roadie.⁷ The band was completely oriented towards American music, and Taman would be as well. After six months, he went home to Saipan to organize his first band and began to play hits from the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Animals and the Dave Clark Five. Within in a year his band won the Saipan Peace Corps sponsored “Battle of the Bands.” In Saipan, as in Guam, there was little emphasis on promoting the Chamorro language or indigenous culture. In Saipan, however, the primary reason was that it still seemed strong, and was therefore taken for granted.

Johnny Sablan began to change such perceptions in the late 1960s although a few years earlier it would have been difficult to predict the path he would take. From 1960 to 1963, he had considerable success singing American pop-music as a young teen in California. He had a record deal with a Columbia Artists subsidiary and toured southern California with other promising young American singers. When he came home to Guam for his junior year of high school, he resumed his career as a popular singer. Sablan was by all measures, the epitome of a modern, Americanized Chamorro. Then, in 1966, while attending college in Monterey, California, he was asked to sing songs of his homeland. Despite all of his success, he realized that he could not. The experience shook him deeply, and he made the decision to restore pride in Chamorro culture and language through the revival of Chamorro music. In doing so, he collected songs from family members in California and Guam, but he also collected songs from throughout the Marianas. One person in particular that helped him was Fred De La Cruz from Tinian, who happened to be living on Guam

⁵ Candido Taman. Interview by the author. San Vicente, Saipan, 26 January 2009.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Joseph Perez. Interview by the author, Toto, Guam , 25 February 2009.

at the time. The Northern Marianas and the villages of southern Guam were areas where the Chamorro language remained strong despite the dominance of English in Guam's central and northern population centers. These less Americanized areas were important during Sablan's time and would gain greater importance for the development of Chamorro music in the 1970s and 1980s.

Beginning in 1968, Sablan recorded a string of albums that would redefine local perceptions of Chamorro music. *Dalai Nene* (1968) and *My Marianas* (1969) showcased a wide variety of musical styles from *kustumbren Chamorro* folk songs, to Chamorro pop songs, and songs that described the struggles of Chamorros in the modern world. His album covers leave no doubt that he saw this as an act of cultural nationalism and that he intended for Chamorros in all of the Marianas to hear his call. On the back cover of *My Marianas*, he wrote

“Oh, My Marianas, I love the heritage you have given me.” On the same cover he writes “the heritage of generations, Chamorro music, has slowly been giving way to the music of the Beatles and American soul music. If I can restore this heritage, I will be the happiest Chamorro alive.”⁸

This period in his life, was one of continuous searching for information. As he put it, he was trying to find out “what is Chamorro?”⁹ Central to this search were several trips to Saipan where he gained familiarity with its unique, less Americanized version of Chamorro culture. Carolinians in Saipan also had a profound impact on his search for identity. It was clear to him that they retained closer connections to the pre-colonial culture and when he saw them wearing *mwar mwar* he thought to himself. “What’s this? Chamorros don’t wear that...That’s where we should be.”¹⁰ Their presence alerted Sablan to the reality that Chamorros had become disconnected from an ancient heritage that pre-dated the Spanish and he felt a need to connect to it. His third album, *My Chamorrans* (1970) marked a shift toward a broader formulation of Chamorro identity that included a connection to the deeper, pre-colonial history of the Chamorro people. The album cover featured Sablan not in the stylish western clothing he usually wore but instead shirtless and barefoot with black pants and a “traditional” looking beaded necklace. Significantly, he is pictured standing on top of a *latte* stone amidst a grove of coconut trees; two elements of ancient Chamorro material culture that

⁸ Johnny Sablan, *My Marianas* album cover. Hollywood, Hafa Adai Records, 1969.

⁹ Johnny Sablan, Interview with the author, Asan, Guam, 17 June 2010.

¹⁰ Ibid.

undoubtedly pre-dated western contact. The album include a modern adaptation of *An Gumupu si Paluma*, a song that derived from the ancient extemporaneous debate known in the twentieth century as *chamorrta*.¹¹ It also included Sablan's version of Jesus Charfauros' "*Munga Yo' Mafino Englest*" which had even deeper meaning in light of the passion Sablan displayed on the album cover.

Sablan's first four solo albums and 1972's compilation *Kasamiento*, which included the first recording of Guam talents, The Charfauros Brothers, Flora Baza and Mike Laguana and Saipanese singer Terry Rojas, were immensely popular throughout the Marianas. One early fan was Saipanese artist Alexandro Sablan, who was in middle school when the Sablan albums started coming out. In high school in the mid 1970s, he and band members Ray Neskabei, Ben Muna, and Henry Manalo were still mostly playing rock and roll, but they were fans of the Chamorro music coming from Guam, and they would often play Johnny Sablan songs to an increasingly appreciative audience.

In 1975, Candy Taman formed a new band called Local Breed with fellow Saipan musician Frank "Bokkongo" Pangelinan, and they quickly established themselves as the most popular band on the island through their regular performances at the Oleai Room. It was the beginning of the disco era and the band played music from KC and the Sunshine Band, the Bee Gees, Earth Wind and Fire and the George Baker Selection.¹² But, Local Breed soon found themselves accommodating increasing requests for Chamorro songs. During the second half of the decade, the islands were transitioning from Trust Territory colony to Commonwealth and they were enjoying an upswing in national pride as they shaped their new political identity. This dovetailed with a great awareness of both the elevation of Chamorro identity on Guam, and the recognition that Chamorro language and culture had declined rapidly on Guam.

¹¹ This style of singing was by the 1960s rare on Guam and associated with older generations on Saipan. When asked about *chamorrta* in Saipan during the 1960s, recording artist Alexandro Sablan recalled that as kids, "we didn't like it, but we always hear it. My uncle, you know, drinking tuba, drinking moonshine, that's the only time they'll sing it." Alexandro Sablan, Interview with the author, Dandan, Saipan, 25 January 2009.

¹² The George Baker Selection, a Dutch group obscure in the United States but popular for decades in Europe became very popular in Saipan, in part because Local Breed regularly covered their songs as part of their set list. In particular "Una Paloma Blanca," "Baby Blue" and "As Long as the Sun will Shine" became so popular that they have arguably become Chamorro music "standards." Numerous versions of these songs continue to be performed by Chamorro bands as part of live music sets throughout the Marianas in the 2000s. (Taman interview)

In 1976, Taman switched to an all Chamorro language format and renamed the band Tropicsette. Along with Frank “Bokkongo” Pangelinan, he began writing Chamorro songs for the disco crowd and in the process, began developing a distinctive style characterized by electric guitars and an electric organ, and very often a cha cha beat. Many of these songs were translations and adaptations of well-known country hits that Saipanese had grown up hearing, or current hit songs that Local Breed had performed. Others were Chamorro folk songs, such as “*Mames Kurason*,” “*Mariquita*,” and “*Nene Yangin Para Un Hanao*” and re-arranged Carolinian songs.¹³ Tropicsette’s increasing popularity caught the attention of Franklin Gutierrez, the manager of the popular Guam nightclub Joe and Flo’s. He had seen their performance at the Oleai Room while in Saipan in 1978, and immediately offered to bring them to Guam for a weekend gig at his club. Gutierrez recalled that when they came to Guam,

They became famous you know? Boom, right away, because the [Guam] Chamorros picked up on their sound, it was kind of different, it was more a Carolinian style, and they would perform on stage, they would do these comedy sketches.¹⁴

The performances at Joe and Flo’s created a lot of interest among Guam Chamorro music fans, who started going to visit Saipan to check out the band. The gig at Joe and Flo’s also resulted in their meeting Joe Taimanglo, Jr. Taimanglo a talented musician who led both the Joe and Flo’s house band and the studio band at Charfauros Bros. Productions. This connection led them to come back to Guam in 1979 to record the album *Palasyon Rico* (1980) at Ike Charfauros’ studio in Chalan Pago.¹⁵

Taman, as a Chamorro and a Carolinian, and as someone deeply concerned with the fate of both of his cultures and the future of the northern Marianas, was one of several songwriters who used music to help define the identity of the commonwealth. One song in particular where this was clear was “Commonwealth” from the *Palasyon Rico* album. The first verse (translated) explains that “during World War II, the Americans came and raised their flag, because they beat the

¹³ Taman Interview.

¹⁴ Franklin Gutierrez. Interview by the author, Agana Heights, Guam, 20 March 2008.

¹⁵ In 1981, Tropicsette changed its name to Chamolinian and produced several albums before Taman and Bokonngo launched their solo careers.

Japanese.”¹⁶ The line presented an indigenous perspective on the conflict, emphasizing that both the Americans and the Japanese were foreigners. Nevertheless, the song warns that Americanization is posing a threat to the culture. The song describes how children were taught in school to speak English and eat American food. Farmers abandoned their ranches to work for the government and in the process became dependent on foreign resources. Despite the recognition that with commonwealth, Marianas islanders chose a closer relationship with the United States, Taman reminds listeners that “the Marianas are our islands.”¹⁷ During a 2009 interview, Taman explained his motivation for writing the song:

My general understanding at the time was that we are going to start adapting to the western culture. I was thinking about how kids are starting to eat bread and butter and a lot of them won't eat taro and banana anymore. So I'm just trying to remind them that this is our Commonwealth, and we're brown. Even if we become U.S., we're still going to be brown, and this is the culture and the language that we have. ...I mean, a lot of things are inevitable on this island. We're very small and the outside force is very powerful [but] if anything, at least maintain your identity.¹⁸

Such perspectives from the Northern Marianas came at a critical time in Guam history when Chamorros were on Guam becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the Organic Act, and were exploring options for a new political relationship. It was also a time when many Chamorro teens were growing up with only minimal Chamorro fluency. Chamorros on Guam had been under American rule for eighty years and had a much deeper sense of American identity than did northern Marianas islanders, but Chamorro music promoted a sense of an autonomous, pan-Marianas identity that trumped their political relationships with the United States.

1979 marked the beginning of a proliferation of Chamorro recordings in which C.N.M.I artists led the way, producing all types of music, from easy listening to music for parties and the developing Chamorro nightclub scene. Alexandro Sablan, had already had success with his song *Hagu yan Guahu na Dos*, which was recorded by Guam singer Jesse Muna for the Charfauros Brothers Production *Meskla Unu* album (1978). Sablan then teamed up with his cousin Joe Cabrera to

¹⁶ “Commonwealth,” *Tropicsette, Palasyon Rico*, Tropicsette, 1980.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Taman Interview.

form *Primo Marianas* and recorded *Sounds of the Marianas Islands* (1979). Sablan, as well as bands like Afetnas, Remetau, The Commonwealth, Cindy and Ray, Max and Alex and Kunados Tinian found in Guam a market for Chamorro music that did not exist in the lightly populated Northern Marianas and many made multiple trips to Guam to market their songs. Producers such as Calisto Cing from Rota, and Fred de la Cruz from Tinian surpassed the Charfauros Bros. in the production of Chamorro music and began recording Guam artists as well. One of the most interesting aspects of this peak era in Chamorro music, which lasted through the early 1990s, was that it does not seem likely that it could have happened without both the infusion of talent from the C.N.M.I. and the demand for Chamorro music from Guam Chamorros in Guam and throughout the diaspora in the United States. In this respect, it was truly a pan-Chamorro movement and it demonstrates the way a forging such connections creates the possibility for cultural movements that might not otherwise be possible.

The proliferation of CNMI artists in Guam scene led to many close personal relationship as well as collaborations. Alexandro Sablan came to Guam in 1983 and worked with Guam radio personality Rick “Big Boz” Baza to promote his first solo recording, *Aniyu-hu/Lang* (1983) and worked briefly as a Guam radio personality himself. He also recruited popular Umatac singer Ruby Aquiningoc to record the album *Mampos Umaguaiya* as a duet. Guam artists also enjoyed playing in the C.N.M.I. and took many trips to the islands. J.D. Crutch enjoyed his trip to Rota for the 1977 Rota Fiesta so much that he ended up playing at the fiesta every year for the next seven years. The C.N.M.I. was a place where he both entertained people and picked up songs that he would record. Among songs from Saipan artists that he popularized were Alex Sablan’s “*Kumpara i Pepble*” (Compare the Poor [and the Rich]) and “*Ti Lachi Hao*” (You’re Not the One That Made a Mistake) and the *Afetnas* song “*Tumekkon Hao*.” (You Bent Down in Shame).” Perhaps one of the most significant relationships forged was that between Johnny Sablan and Candy Taman, who had pioneered the Chamorro music scenes on their respective islands. In interviews, both recalled conversations together in the early 1980s where they talked about the importance of keeping the culture alive through music. They both believed, and still believe today that if the islands remain politically divided, at least they can have a shared musical identity.¹⁹ Obviously, the music achieved that aim although most young people on Guam were not aware that much of the music they danced to at parties had come from the Northern Marianas.

¹⁹ Johnny Sablan and Candy Taman interviews.

Today, the generations that drove the Chamorro music scene are aging and few young people on Guam are carrying on the tradition of producing Chamorro popular music. In Guam radio there is a clear segregation between English language popular music stations catering to youth audiences and Chamorro stations catering to the elderly. However, the songs still have a deep meaning for many young people. A quick You Tube search of Chamorro music reveals that a young fan base that upload Chamorro songs and record themselves singing songs from the 1970s and 1980s. Saipanese rapper Pete “Badu” Megofna became a sensation on Guam with “Daggao Hulu i kannai-mu” when he uploaded his video to the site and it appears that if other young Chamorros performed Chamorro songs in contemporary styles they would also find success. Megofna demonstrates the possibility for Chamorro music to be perpetuated in new styles as long as young people continue to learn the language. His success also points to the important role the C.N.M.I. continues to play in shaping Guam Chamorro youth culture through music.

The future of Chamorro popular music remains unclear, but the thousands of songs, recorded on L.P.s, cassettes and compact discs also encompass a storehouse of Chamorro language, cultural knowledge and history that will be a resource for generations to come. The Chamorro music scene has played a major and under-recognized role in the development of pride in Chamorro identity that has manifested itself in new and increasingly diverse forms of cultural expression from cultural dance and chanting to the revival of jewelry, crafts and traditional seafaring. As the Chamorro cultural renaissance continues to grow, it does so on the shoulders of pioneers in Guam and the CNMI, who went against the grain and recorded songs in the Chamorro language.



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TTPI Saipan Agriculture Station

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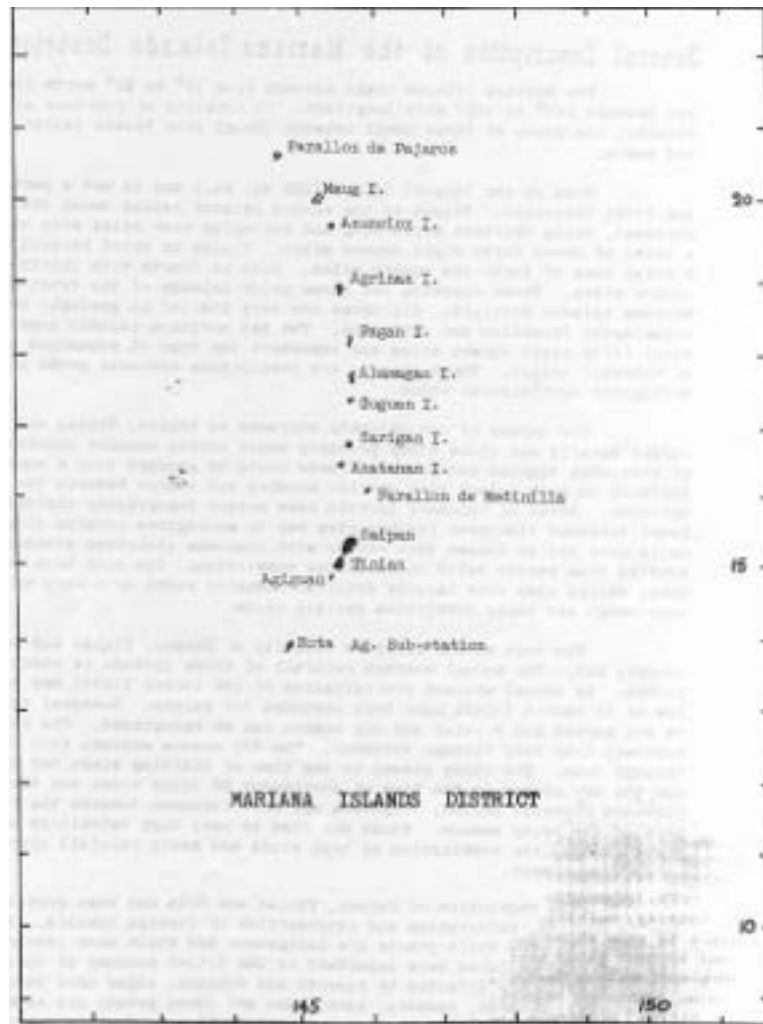
Abstract: *Before World War II, Japan established six agriculture stations in Micronesia. All of these agriculture stations were destroyed during the war except the Ponape Agriculture Station. Between 1926 and 1944 outstanding agricultural research was conducted there. After the war, the United States established six agricultural stations in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Dr. David Lorence, National Tropical Botanical Gardens, believes that there was a second peak of research during the TTPI Period under Manuel Sproat and Leo Migvar. What were their objectives and accomplishments for each district? What role did the Saipan Station play in this development? How did the Saipan Station rank among other stations? Oral history interviews of Sproat and Migvar shed much light on its research, publications, successes and failures. What is the significance and integrity of the Saipan Station? What effect did this have on the history and economy of the Mariana Islands/Micronesia?*

Introduction

The Marianas Islands is a chain of volcanic islands on a north-south axis in far western area of the North Pacific Ocean. On the east side is the Pacific Ocean and on the west side is the Sea of the Philippines. The southern-most island of the Mariana chain is the Island of Guam, a U.S. Territory and not a part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI). The Marianas Island District of the TTPI extends from 13o to 21o north latitude and between 145o to 146o east longitude. The district consisted of 14 single islands, one group of three small islands (Maug) plus lesser islets, banks, and reef.¹

This is a draft and incomplete paper being shared for comments and input. At the end of the conclusion, contact information is provided to encourage and facilitate making this paper more complete and accurate. Most of the photographs came from the Trust Territory Photograph Collection at the University of Hawaii at Manoa (U. of H. Manoa). Only about eight percent of this collection has been identified and made available online. There are many people still alive today who remember the Trust Territory Period and may have special knowledge that will enhance future drafts of this paper. Many important photographs found in TTPI

¹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 70.



Map 1. Mariana Islands District of the TTPI, 1964.² Guam, the largest island in the Marianas chain at 236 square miles, is not shown because it is not part of the district. If it were shown, it would be south of Rota.

publications have not been located but may exist somewhere. Private photographs in personal collection may also shed light on this important period of modern history. Identification of people in the photographs will help make this report not only more useful but more meaningful for future readers and researchers. Correction of any misinformation or misidentification will be greatly appreciated. Special thanks goes to Daniel Peacock who set and managed the microfilming of the Trust Territory records, his daughter Diane Peacock and her staff at the U. of H. Manoa who was extremely helpful, and the many staff at the United States Archives and Record Center in College Park, Maryland, and the United Nations Archives and Library in Geneva, Switzerland. This paper is dedicated to the contributions of Manuel Sproat and Leo Migvar and the other employees, both ex-patriot and Micronesian, who guided, developed, and nurtured the agriculture program in the Mariana Islands and throughout the Trust Territory. Their hard work with minimal

funding, supplies, and equipment is largely responsible for the economic success of the TTPI, which benefits current and future generations. Any photograph identification information received will be forwarded to the appropriate photograph collection.

The Mariana Islands District focused on truck farming and cattle production. This district was the main animal husbandry station for (1) the development and redistribution of cattle herds and (2) the scientific investigation relating to animal diseases.² Breeding stock was sold to islanders at minimal cost.

This paper will present and discuss issues of the Saipan Agriculture Station concerning transportation, copra, truck farming, livestock farming, and forestry and the station's significance. Physical integrity will be addressed after a site visit to the various properties of the Saipan Station.

Transportation

What economic advantage did the TTPI Mariana District have that none of the other districts have? As a real estate agent would say "LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION." Being adjacent to Guam, a large population area and major port in the Western Pacific, made the Mariana agricultural products economically marketable. Transportation was and still is a major problem for Micronesia. Although dried copra could be stored in warehouses for long periods of time, produce, meat, eggs, milk, etc., must be transported to their markets in a timely manner.

The United State Navy administered the TTPI until 1952 when it was transferred to the United States Department of the Interior. Although the Navy did much good, it also made some poor and/or premature decisions especially concerning transportation.

War is a man-made disaster resulting from the breakdown of civilization. The war damage is similar in some respects to the devastation of natural disasters but may have additional political and economic implications. The following excerpt from the first United States Department of Navy report to the United Nations in 1948 give a good overview of the situation at the beginning of the TTPI period.³

² USA Dept. of Navy 1949, p. 35.

³ USA Dept. of Navy, 1948, p. 16.

The Japanese occupation and war years left many islands of the Trust Territory in chaotic condition. Coconut palm plantations were destroyed; small industries and shops in the large centers were devastated. Even in the islands untouched by war economic conditions were poor, inasmuch as the disruption of ordinary trade channels had reduced the efforts of most native groups to a struggle for existence. These adversities were augmented by the repatriation of Japanese and Okinawan traders, in consequence of which the natives were thrust entirely on their own resources. With the coming of the United States forces, an attempt was made to improve these conditions. The United States Commercial Company, an agency of the United States Reconstruction Finance Corporation, began an extensive program of copra buying, established numerous trading posts and undertook a complete survey of economic possibilities. This program has been expanded under the Island Trading Company, successor to the United States Commercial, and is responsible directly to the United States Navy, from which it derives material support and subsidies. During the past year the economic situation in the Trust Territory has been greatly improved by various factors, and two in particular: first, an encouraging growth of interest in economic pursuits on the part of the inhabitants; second, a very advantageous market in the United States and throughout the world for copra and trochus shells. The extremely high copra market has encouraged the cleaning of neglected plantations and otherwise accelerated the production of copra. The trochus season, running from May 15th until July 15th, will produce throughout the area increasing quantities of trochus shells to be shipped to the United States for use in the manufacture of buttons. Fishing in the Northern Marianas is developing, and fishing activities throughout the area as a whole will expand when sea-going fishing fleets can be constructed and economically operated.

Further:

The Island Trading Company, successor to the United States Commercial Company, is assisting the inhabitants to reestablish local economy on a firm basis and to manage their own economy. Private enterprise and individual initiative are being encouraged to implement the turn-over of the economic program to the people. The following steps are being taken:

- a) The Island Trading Company will purchase locally produced goods and thus provide an income for the local inhabitants.
- b) Consumer goods will be provided through sale by the Island Trading Company in order to provide a source of supply to the islanders.

- c) The Island Trading Company will market and distribute products of the islands to the ultimate consumers in the United States and elsewhere.

The amount of private and public capital available to foster and promote economic advancement of the islanders is obviously limited; hence the United States, through the Island Trading Company, has in some cases provided subsidies, loans and goods on consignment to the local enterprises. In every case some form of assistance has been giving to new entrepreneurs. Shipping, storage space and technical personnel have been provided to facilitate the distribution and sale of the products of the island economy. This necessary preliminary aid **has been reduced as native efforts have become more self-sufficient** [bold added]. All proposals by non-indigenous concerns to establish activities in the Trust Territory are closely scrutinized to insure that the indigenous inhabitants are not exploited and that they profit by all such projects as may be established in their area.

In 1950 Navy transportation did not apply to Guam and Saipan:⁴

The Navy has authorized transportation of commercial freight in Naval vessels between Guam and each Civil Administration Unit, except Saipan, and between Civil Administration Centers and outlying islands, at \$0.0075 per short ton per sea-mile. This rate includes stevedoring, except at Guam and Saipan. Since it does not represent the actual shipping cost, it may be considered a partial subsidy. In addition, the differential in the purchase price of copra maintained by the ITC acts as a promotional subsidy to native shipping.

The early years were very difficult until transportation needs were met.

Agriculture Stations

What were the objectives of each district?

Mariana Islands District:⁵

1. To develop a large scale beef cattle project on Tinian
2. To develop a controlled vegetable crop producing program on Rota
3. To develop a dairy project at the Aslito Station on Saipan
4. To develop a bulk feed processing plant on Saipan

⁴ USA Dept. of Navy, 1950, p. 32.

⁵ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 79.

Palau District:⁶

1. To eradicate the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle
2. To develop poultry program
3. To develop carabao breeding
4. To develop crops through varietal tests
5. To develop ramie industry

Yap District:⁷

1. To improve copra quality through new dryers
2. To supervise cacao extension program
3. To test black pepper and coffee under existing environmental conditions
4. To develop mango and citrus production
5. To develop erosion control and forestry program

Truk District:⁸

1. To improve plant development by research, select crops for propagation and distribution, and maintain demonstration plantings
2. To upgrade local stock by maintaining swine and poultry breeding stock for distribution of offspring

Ponape District:⁹

1. To provide direct support of the TTPI Extension Programs
Propagation and distribution of improved varieties of planting stocks of economic crops and vitamin and mineral rich vegetables
Propagation of egg-laying and meat type poultry and swine for distribution
a) Demonstration projects where in groups of farmers, extension agents, and classes from schools receive instruction in proper growing techniques, animal husbandry practices, and pest and disease control methods

⁶ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, pp. 51-54.

⁷ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, pp. 66-67.

⁸ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 89.

⁹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, pp. 102-108.

- b) Administration, supervision and training of agriculture extension agents, and extension programs are formulated and the details of execution are reported, evaluated and modified
2. To provide indirect support of Extension Programs
 - a) Exotic and hybrid varieties of fruits, spices, vegetables and economic crops are tested and local adaptability determined
 - b) Fertilization, cultural and disease control studies are made with a view to eventual adaptation by farmers of the district
 - c) Crop rotation schemes, evaluation of tropical legumes and conservation practices are tested and perfected in an attempt to ascertain practices which can be adopted by local farmers in order that the fertility of their lands can be perpetuated
 - d) Improved processing techniques for copra, cacao, and pepper are worked out and disseminated
 - e) Results of experience and experiments are published and distributed via the medium of extension circulars, instructional materials, and in the near future radio communication
 - f) Cacao processing
 - g) Pepper processing and marketing
 - h) Cacao disease eradication and investigation
 - i) Experimental testing of banana and papaya
 1. To support to programs of other districts
 2. To advise co-operatives

Marshall Islands. District:¹⁰

1. To train agriculture employees
2. To develop coconut program
3. To develop subsistence crops
4. To demonstrate coconut practices
5. To improve livestock

¹⁰ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, pp. 121-122.



Figure 1. Manuel N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i, Photographer: David W. Look, April 24, 1907.

Manuel N. (Manny) Sproat worked for the United States Commercial Company of the Reconstruction Fiancé Corporation from 1945 to 1947. After about a month on Guam, he departed for Truk where he worked for 15 months. He was then transferred to Kosrae and Ponape.¹¹ ¹² He was hired by the U.S. Navy civil administration on Guam in 1948 and U.S. Department of the Interior in 1951. He arrived on Ponape in 1948 and was the Manager of Metalanim Plantation from 1951 to 1957.¹³ From 1958 to 1972 Sproat was Trust Territory Director of Agriculture. In July 1968 High Commissioner W.R. Norwood appointed Sproat, in addition to his duties as Director of Agriculture, as the Acting Ponape Assistant District Administrator.¹⁴ Sproat moved to Ponape and it is not certain how long he remained there. He retired in 1972 and moved back to Hawaii.

Leo Migvar worked in Micronesia for fifty years (1954-2004) and has been a good source of information to fill in the details silent in the official records. For the first 26-27 years he worked for the Department of the Interior. He spent his first two years in Palau. From 1956 to 1962 he was the District Agriculturalist for Ponape and Chief of the Ponape Agriculture Station. From 1963 to 1979 he was the TTPI Assistant Director of Agriculture and chief of the Agriculture Extension Service.¹⁵

¹¹ "Sproat to Retire," *Highlights*, May 1, 1972, p. 5.

¹² Personal communication from Sproat, Apr. 30, 2007.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ "Law and Sproat Designated," *Highlights*, Vol. 16, No. 7, July 8, 1968, pp. 1-2.

¹⁵ "Who's Who, Leo Migvar," *Micronesian Reporter: The Journal of Micronesia*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, Third Quarter 1977, p. 1.

He then worked for Federal Emergency Management Agency until he retired to Hawaii in 2004.

These two men agreed to an oral history interview at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. They furnished much missing information especially on research and publications and provided a number of leads. A connect of any of these publications to the Saipan or Rota Agriculture Stations has not been made.



Figure 2. Seven (Nos. 2,4, 5, 6, 7 9, and 10) of the 11 Agricultural Extension Bulletin Series and Insect Control Guide for Vegetable Crops in the Mariana Islands by L. Darrel Hale, Photo: David Look, Apr. 24, 2007.

Table 1

Agricultural Extension Bulletin Series. The first Agricultural Extension Bulletin has not been located. It is not known if there were more than 11.

No.	Year	Title
1	19??	???
2	1965	<i>Soil is Money</i>
3	1965	<i>Growing Cacao in the Caroline Islands</i>
4	1965	<i>Black Pepper in the Caroline Islands</i>
5	1966	<i>Bananas for Food and Export</i>
6	1975r	<i>Growing Vegetables in Micronesia</i>
7	1968	<i>How to Grow Taros, Yams, Cassava, and Sweet Potatoes</i>
8	1968	<i>Important Legumes and Grasses in Micronesia</i>
9	1968	<i>A Guide to Subsistence Agriculture in Micronesia</i>
10	1971	<i>Pandanus in the Marshall Islands</i>
11	197?	<i>The What's and Why's of Agriculture Quarantine</i>



Figure 3. Eight of the 12 Agricultural Extension Circular Series, Photo: David Look, Apr. 24, 2007.

Table 2

Agricultural Extension Circular Series.

No.	Year	Title
1	1964	<i>The Cacao Canker Disease</i>
2	1964	<i>How to Establish a Pepper Garden</i>
3	1965	<i>The Coconut in Micronesia</i>
4	1965	<i>Coconut Varieties in Micronesia</i>
5	1965	<i>How to Process Black and White Pepper</i>
6	1965	<i>How to Thin Coconut Groves</i>
7	1968	<i>How to Plant Coconuts</i>
8	1968	<i>Tips on Transplanting</i>
9	1968	<i>Growing Healthy Bananas</i>
10	1971	<i>Pandanus in the Marshall Islands</i>
11	1971	???
12	1971	<i>Rats and Coconuts in the Marshall Islands</i>



Figure 4. Twelve of the 35 Agricultural Extension Leaflet Series, Photographer: David Look, Apr. 24, 2007.

Table 3

Agricultural Extension Leaflet Series.

No.	Year	Title
1	1964	<i>Thread Blight of Pepper</i>
2	ca1965	<i>Tips for Poultryman</i>
3	ca1965	<i>Making Compost</i>
4	1965	<i>Pruning Breadfruit Trees</i>
5	1965	<i>Black Fruit Disease of Pepper</i>
6	1965	<i>Coconut Stem Bleeding Disease</i>
7	1965	<i>Citrus Gummosis Disease</i>
8	1965	<i>Bark Canker of Cacao</i>
9	1965	<i>Growing Healthy Watercress</i>
10	1970	<i>A Guide for the Use of Insecticides and Acaricides</i>
11	1971	<i>Powdery Mildew of Cucurbits</i>
12	1971	<i>Anthracnose of Cucurbits</i>
13	1971	<i>Damping-Off</i>
14	1971	<i>Belly Rot of Cucumber</i>
15	1971	<i>Gummy Stem Blight or Leaf Spot</i>
16	1971	<i>Bacterial Spot</i>
17	1971	<i>Bacterial Wilt of Tomato</i>
18	1971	<i>Southern Blight</i>
19	1971	<i>Buckeye Rot of Tomato</i>
20	1971	<i>Anthracnose of Fruit</i>
21	1971	<i>Russetting</i>
22	1971	<i>Bronze Russetting</i>
23	1971	<i>Cottony Rot</i>
24	1971	<i>Mosaic Virus</i>
25	1971	<i>Root Knot</i>
26	1971	<i>Bacterial Soft Rot</i>
27	1971	<i>Rhizoctonia Disease</i>
28	1971	<i>Bacterial Spot of Crucifers</i>
29	1971	<i>Rust</i>
30	1971	<i>Spot Anthracnose</i>
31	1971	<i>Taro Leaf Spot</i>
32	1971	<i>Cercospora Leaf Spot</i>
33	1971	<i>Panama Disease of Banana</i>
34	1971	<i>Bunchy Top</i>
35	1971	<i>Citrus Canker</i>

The Agricultural Extension Bulletin series consists of books on various tropical agricultural topics. Leo Migvar authored Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 7.¹⁶ S. Bert Ogata, Palau District Agriculturist, authored No. 6.¹⁷ Manny Sproat authored Nos. 8 and 9. Sproat and Migvar coauthored No. 5.¹⁸ James T. Hiyane authored No. 10.¹⁹

The Agricultural Extension Circular series is, in general, a “how to” book collection. D[olliver] “Jim” Zaiger provided the text and photographs for Nos. 1, 2, 5, and 9.²⁰ Leo Migvar authored Nos. 3, 6, and 8.²¹ Manny Sproat authored No. 4 with Zaiger providing the photographs.²² Sproat and Migvar co-authored No. 7.²³ J.T. Hiyane authored Nos. 10 and 12.²⁴ Agricultural Extension Circular Nos. 1 and 11 have not been located.

Between 1964 and 1971 the Division published 35 leaflets on a variety of topics on diseases and pests that damaged crops. These were very concise and each dealt with a problem. D[olliver] “Jim” Zaiger, Plant Disease Specialist, authored Nos. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.²⁵ Nos. 2, 3, and 4 were published anonymous.²⁶

L[ester] D[arrel] Hale, Extension Entomologist authored No. 10.²⁷ E[duardo] E. Trujillo, Chief Plant Pathologist, authored Nos. 11-35 and provided a translation in Chamorro.²⁸ These leaflets were published in color so that farmers easily compare their problems with those illustrated in the leaflet. These leaflets ranged from one to 6 pages. Agricultural Extension Agents could hand out the leaflets to farmers or mail them out in response to inquiries.

¹⁶ Migvar, Leo, 1965c, 1965b, 1965e (revised 1967), and 1968a, respectively.

¹⁷ Ogata, S. Bert, 19?? (revised 1975).

¹⁸ Sproat, M.N., and Leo Migvar, 1967.

¹⁹ Hiyane, J.T., 1971a.

²⁰ Zaiger, D., 1964a, 1965, and 1968.

²¹ Migvar, Leo, 1965d, 1965b, and 1968a, respectively.

²² Sproat, M.N., and Leo Migvar, 1965.

²³ Sproat, M.N., and Leo Migvar, 1968.

²⁴ Hiyane, J.T., 1971a and 1971b.

²⁵ Zaiger, D., Dec. 1964b, May 1965a; Aug. 1965a; Aug. 1965b; Aug. 1965c; and Aug. 1965d.

²⁶ Anon. ca. 1965a, ca. 1965a, and 1965c.

²⁷ Hale, L.D., 1970.

²⁸ Trujillo, E.E., 1971, a-y.



Figure 5. Plant Disease Series of the Cooperative Extension Service, College of Tropical Agriculture. Photographer: David W. Look, April 24, 2007.

Table 4

Plant Disease Series of the Cooperative Extension Service, College of Tropical Agriculture.

No.	Year	Title
1	July 1975	<i>Taro Leaf Blight</i>
2	July 1975	<i>Panama Disease of Banana</i>
3	Sept. 1975	<i>Cercospora Leaf Spot (Black Leaf Streak)</i>
4	Sept. 1975	<i>Spot Anthracnose</i>
5	Sept. 1975	<i>Root Knot Nematode</i>
6	Sept. 1975	<i>Southern Blight</i>
7	Sept. 1975	<i>Powdery Mildew of Cucurbits</i>
8	Sept. 1975	<i>Damping-Off</i>
9	Sept. 1975	<i>Bacterial Spot</i>

Saipan Agriculture Station

The first Agriculturist (CAF-10) in the Marianas was hired in fiscal year 1949. He was a white male and assigned to Rota.²⁹ His identity has not been found, but may have been Jack Wheat, who later became the TTPI Director of Agriculture. In fiscal year 1951, a local agricultural station was established on Saipan, exact location is not given.³⁰ The Ponape Station survived World War II and continued to operate after the war. Therefore, the Saipan Agricultural Station was the second TTPI station. It broadened the economic base of the Marianas. The Saipan District converted much acreage to farm produce. The Navy flew in hatching eggs and the

²⁹ USA Dept. of Navy, 1949, p. V.

³⁰ USA Dept. of Navy, 1951, p. 34.

TTPI established poultry pure-bred poultry projects on Saipan, Truk, and Ponape.³¹ By 1951 Saipan had ducks, geese, chickens, and turkeys.

The new Saipan Agriculture Station tested the growing of basic food crops and distributed seeds and planting materials to the local population, such as, “many proven varieties of bananas, papayas, sweet potatoes, yams, and vegetables.”³²

In 1952, the Saipan coffee plantings were supervised by an expert. Coffee trees, being a shading loving tree, is inter-planted among coconut, breadfruit, and other trees.³³

By the end of fiscal year 1952, Saipan District had 43 positions of which five (11.6%) were vacant. Of these 43 positions, three (7.0%) or two and one half (5.8%) pertained to agriculture. These three positions consisted of (1) Teacher of industrial arts and agriculture (G-5, male), (2) Agriculturist (G-10, vacant), and (3) Agriculturist (G-9, male). If the teacher devoted half of his time to industrial arts and the other half to agriculture, his position could have been considered 50% agriculture.³⁴ During FY1952, 399 Micronesians worked for the TTPI in the Saipan District. The exact number who worked for agriculture is not given. Of these 32 (8.0%) worked in the area of economics (commerce, industry, and agriculture). If about a third worked for each, then about 10 (2.7% of the 399 Micronesians) worked in agriculture.³⁵ Note the small percentage of TTPI expatriates and Micronesians working in agriculture.

In the 1953 Annual Report to the UN, 23 TTPI positions were listed for Saipan District. Of these, only one (4.3%) was in agriculture – an Agricultural Advisor (G-11, male).³⁶ Of the 255 Micronesian TTPI employees, three (1.1%) were in the Tinian Agricultural Department – one graded employee and two ungraded employees.³⁷

³¹ USA Dept. of Navy, 1951, p. 37.

³² USA Dept. of Interior, 1952, p. 30.

³³ USA Dept. of Interior, 1952, p. 32.

³⁴ USA Dept. of Interior, 1952, p. 70.

³⁵ USA Dept. of Interior, 1952, p. 70.

³⁶ USA Dept. of Interior, 1953, p. 89.

³⁷ USA Dept. of the Interior, 1953, p. 91.

The 1954 Annual Report stated:³⁸

At the Saipan Agricultural Experimental Station the Agricultural Extension Agent directs the program of testing suitable crops, cultivating of cacao and fruit tree plantings, erosion control, reforestation and irrigation. Positive results have been attained, especially in improvement of root crops, vegetables, bananas and papayas, and in the construction of an irrigation system which carries water from an unused spring to lower land.

In 1954 there were 2 TTPI staff at Rota and 20 at Saipan. Of these, none were identified as being involved in agriculture.³⁹ No positions are shown as vacant. Perhaps the agricultural positions were vacant and therefore not shown.

By 1955 the number of TTPI expatriate employees at Rota increased to 5 and at Saipan to 24. Of these 29 positions, one Rota employee (3.4%) pertained to agriculture – an Agriculturist (GS-9, male).⁴⁰ Of the 281 TTPI Micronesian employees (37 on Rota and 244 on Saipan) only 18 employees (6 on Rota and 12 on Saipan) worked in agriculture.⁴¹ That amounts to only 6.4% of the Micronesian staff.

In the 1956 Annual Report to the UN, 24 TTPI expatriate staff worked at Saipan (none of which were involved in agriculture) and six worked at Rota. The only agriculture position was the agriculturist at Rota – an Agriculturist (GS-9, male).⁴² Of the 32 Micronesians working for the TTPI on Rota, five (15.6%) worked on economic development, probably agriculture. Of the 346 Micronesians working for the TTPI on Rota, 20 (5.8%) worked on economic development, probably agriculture.⁴³

In 1957, of the six TTPI staff at Rota one (16.6%) was in agriculture – Agriculturist (GS-9, male) and of the 30 staff at Saipan one (3.3%) was in agriculture – also an

³⁸ USA Dept. of Interior, 1954, p. 57.

³⁹ USA Dept. of Interior, 1954, p. 121-122.

⁴⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1954, pp. 137-139.

⁴¹ USA Dept. of State, 1955, pp. 140 and 146.

⁴² USA Dept. of State, 1956, pp. 142-143,

⁴³ USA Dept. of State, 1956, pp. 144 and 147.

Agriculturist (GS-9, male).⁴⁴ There were also 50 Micronesians working on Rota of which 6 worked for agriculture and fisheries. Likewise, on Saipan there were 291 Micronesians working for the TTPI of which 14 worked for agriculture and fisheries. There is no way of knowing what percentages of these worked for agriculture.⁴⁵

The 1959 Annual Report to the UN reported that two Saipanese were at the University of Hawaii – one majoring in agricultural economics and one in animal husbandry.⁴⁶

The 1959 Annual Report to the UN gave the following update on combating pests in the Mariana Islands:⁴⁷

A parasite, a species of tiny wasp from Africa, for the Marianas coconut beetle (*Brontispa mariana*) has been successfully introduced in Rota and Palau within the last 3 years. The parasite has effectively controlled the beetle for several years on Saipan, and it is expected that it will do so on Rota.

The Oriental fruit fly (*Dacus dorsalis*) and the melon fly (*Dacus curcurbitae*) at times seriously affect commercial crops of tomatoes, melons, and cucumbers in the Mariana Islands. Parasites have been introduced for their control but are not sufficiently effective to prevent economic damage by the flies. The U.S. Department of Agriculture plans to use Rota this coming year as an experimental island for new methods of fruit fly control which may result in complete eradication of these pests on this island.

In 1967 the melon fly (*Dacus cucurbitae*) was completely eradicated. “From 1964 to 1967, a fruit fly eradication program was in effect in Saipan, Tinian, Agrihan and Rota, using the sterile-fly technique and the male annihilation method.”⁴⁸ However, there was a re-infestation, probably from Guam. “The [melon] fly was eradicated for the fourth time in 1969.”⁴⁹ It was announced that Guam had

⁴⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1957, pp. 159 and 161.

⁴⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1957, pp. 162 and 165.

⁴⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1959, p.64.

⁴⁷ USA Dept. of State, 1959, pp. 65-66.

⁴⁸ USA Dept. of State, 1959, pp. 65-66.

⁴⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1969, p. 59.

established a melon fly eradication program and hoped it would be successful by 1972.⁵⁰ ⁵¹ However, it was not eradicated by 1975.⁵²

As late as fiscal year 1968, the African snail continued to be a major pest in Ponape, Truk, Palau, and the Marianas, “inhibiting commercial and subsistence vegetable crop production and resulting in low economic returns and a decline in farmer initiative.”⁵³



Figure 6. Ben Masga examining fruit fly trap, Rota, 1962.⁵⁴

The Rota District Agriculturist was listed as an IGS-9 in 1960 to 1962.⁵⁵ ⁵⁶ However, in 1962 the Saipan Headquarter had a Director of Agriculture and Fisheries (IGS-13).⁵⁷

In 1964 the Mariana Islands District had two stations, a sub-station, and a forest. The TTPI Mariana Islands District agriculture development program had only begun in 1964 and much remained to be accomplished in establishing bases of

⁵⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1970, p. 69.

⁵¹ USA Dept. of State, 1971, p. 76.

⁵² USA Dept. of State, 1975, p. 50.

⁵³ USA Dept. of State, 1968, p. 59.

⁵⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1959, p.64.

⁵⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1960, p.261.

⁵⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1962, p. 278.

⁵⁷ USA Dept. of State, 1962, p. 273.

operations. However, as early as 1953, livestock had been imported in large number having a great influence on agriculture by the 1960s.⁵⁸

The Aslito Animal Industry Station, the main agricultural station in the Mariana Islands, approximately 69 acres located at the southern end of Saipan, just north of the Kobler Airfield. It is not known at this time if it still exists at this location because of the expansion of the Kobler Airfield as the Saipan International Airport.⁵⁹ The station consisted of six pastures of various sizes, a corral (No. 5), and three structures: a building (No. 4) housing the office, tool room, and equipment storage; a machinery shed (No. 2); and a plant nursery and insecticide fuel storage building (No. 3).⁶⁰ Further research is needed to determine if the proposed central feed plant and poultry unit (No. 1) was constructed as shown (dotted line) at the top of the map. Water and power were available. Dimensions were not given of the facilities at the Aslito Animal Industry Station.

The Kagman Plant Industry Station, 97 acres on the Kagman Peninsula in Chacha, was under development in 1964. The land had been cleared (during FY1964) and is to be used for the propagation of plants, testing of field crops, demonstration gardens (also the demonstration of harvesting, processing, and use of tested crops), and stock supplies for large-scale distribution for the following crops: sugar cane, sisal, citronella, castor bean, banana, sweet potato, tobacco, soybean, corn, sorghums, and other grains.⁶¹ Station would also have a caretaker's building, utility building, and a storage building (16 ft by 64 ft, the only building for which dimensions were given).⁶² Water and power were available. No map was given of this station.

The Agricultural Sub-Station, 40 acres on Beach Road north of Chalan Kanoa, consisted of pasture, bull paddocks, corral, piggery unit, and a public slaughter house with refrigeration.⁶³ All meat for public sale had to be processed and

⁵⁸ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 75.

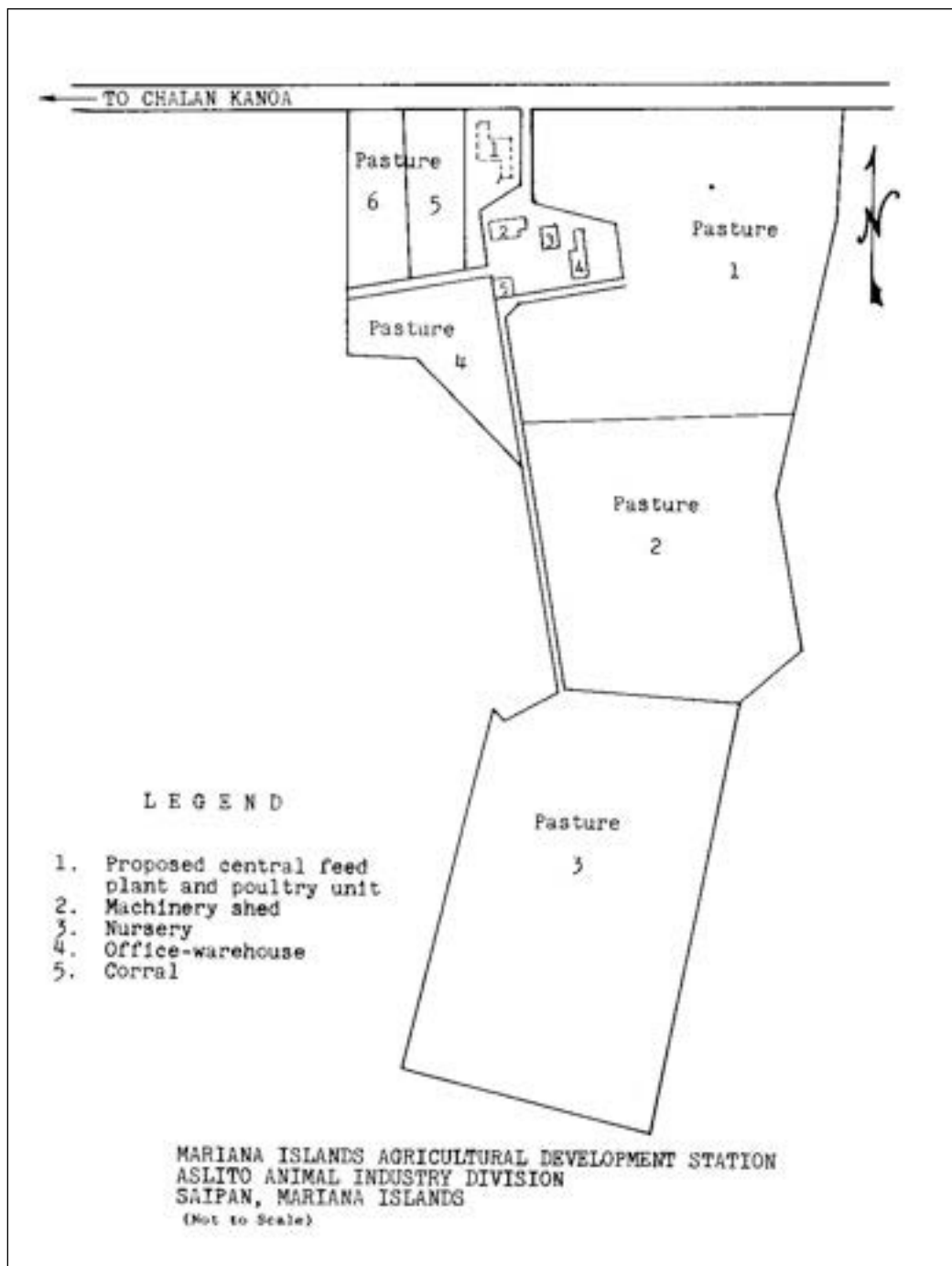
⁵⁹ Numerous inquiries by Mr. Look, Prof. Spennemann, and Paula Creech by letter (26 June 2007), email (2007), telephone (2007-2010), and in person (Washington, DC, 2007 and 2008) have been made to determine the integrity and significance of the TTPI Saipan Agriculture Station. Nothing has been received from the CNMI HPO.

⁶⁰ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 75.

⁶¹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 78.

⁶² M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 75.

⁶³ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.



Map 3. Mariana Islands Agricultural Development Station, Aslito Animal Industry Division, Saipan, Mariana Islands, TTPI, January 1964.⁶⁴

inspected here. It was noted that in the future the poultry and bull facilities at the sub-station would be set up at the Aslito Station.⁶⁵ No map was provided of this station.

⁶⁴ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 76.

⁶⁵ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 78.

As a demonstration in timber development, one acre was planted with mahogany trees at the Forestry Station at Garapan.⁶⁶ Likewise, no map was given of the Forestry Station.

There is no mention of an agriculture station on Tinian. Since Tinian (first large island south of Saipan) is very close to Saipan, the facilities on Saipan could provide assistance to Tinian. However, the importance and potential of Tinian is noted by Sproat and Migvar:

Large-scale cattle production has excellent possibilities on Tinian where there are thousands of acres of good pasture land. One of the best tropical legumes, *Leucaena glauca*, grows throughout the island of Tinian, which with the admixture of good tropical pasture grass species, would result in excellent pastures.⁶⁷

Although Tinian did not have an agriculture station in 1964, the Island of Rota (south of Tinian and north of Guam) did have a small station and a coconut grove. The Rota Agriculture Station was two acres at SongSong Village and the Agriculture Department's coconut grove was 17 acres at the Taipingot area.⁶⁸ The Taipingot grove was used for

producing seed and demonstrating improved coconut cultivation.⁶⁹ To improve production approximately one thousand dwarf coconuts from Ponape and several thousand coconuts from Yap had been distributed to Mariana farmers for planting.⁷⁰ Maps of these two areas on Rota were not provided but the Station consisted of office and classroom building, nursery operation, poultry unit, and two bull paddocks.⁷¹

In 1964 the UN Nations Mission suggested:⁷²

⁶⁶ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 78.

⁶⁷ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 75.

⁶⁸ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁶⁹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 79.

⁷⁰ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 79.

⁷¹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁷² UN Trusteeship Council, 1964, pp. 73-74.

Again, a large vegetable-growing scheme on Rota, supplying the market in Guam, and even supporting a vegetable cannery is possible and economically feasible. Without this form of economic development the people of Rota have little possibility of expanding their income, and many have sunk into a state of economic and political inertia. But the Government participation with technical supervision, help with fertilizers, grading etc., which seem to be essential are not forthcoming because of the lack of \$50,000. The sum of \$20,000 provided in the present budget does not match the need or the possibilities.

From its discussion with specialists throughout the Territory, the Mission understands that in addition to those crops already mentioned numerous other crops could probably be developed. In the Marianas, where typhoons set limits to the crops that are practicable, sugar cane and sisal could be the basis of large industries from the agricultural point of view, though the supply of outside capital and labour could raise considerable problems. Other possible sources of extra cash income are papain (juice of papaya), citrus, bananas, and ground nuts.

No other mention of reviving the sugar cane industry has been found so far. Was the soil depleted? Was it too expensive to repair the small gage railroad track around the island and rebuild the sugar refinery?

The agricultural equipment available and used by the Mariana Station in 1964 were one D-6 Caterpillar bulldozer, one D-4 front-end loader, one 1010 model John Deere tractor with implements, two Ford tractors with implements, one dump truck, one flat bed truck, two Jeeps for extension operations, one pickup truck, and two power-take-all sprayers.⁷³ Their location was not given, but most of the equipment was probably on Saipan and used at the four sites as needed. The heavy earthmoving equipment may have been purchased for clearing of the Kagman Plant Industry Station at Chacha.

In 1964 the Mariana Islands District Agriculture staff consisted of the Island Development Officer [George Davis] in charge, three Assistant Agriculturists, and 39 Micronesians, 32 are station personnel and 7 are extension service division employees.⁷⁴

⁷³ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁷⁴ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, pp. iv and 77.



Figure 7. Worker in Saipan Agriculture Station weeding tomatoes in seedling bed. Photographer, Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN photo.⁷⁵



Figure 8. A worker in the Saipan Agriculture Station weeding tomatoes in a seedling bed. Even with raised beds, weeding is back-breaking work. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969, UN Photo.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ [UN photo 109,958](#). (N-2500.04). Photo 4.

⁷⁶ UN photo 114,987.

At the time the Mariana's Agriculture Extension Program recognized that vegetable production would only improve if there was good supervision and quality control of the whole process from planting, handling, harvesting, grading, packing, shipping, and marketing.⁷⁷ Vegetable Producers Associations (Agricultural Cooperatives) for both Rota and Tinian were planned with government assistance and supervision. Additional program objectives were to: (1) develop a large-scale beef cattle project on Tinian, (2) develop a controlled vegetable crop producing program on Rota for the Guam and other markets, (3) develop a dairy project at the Asilito Station on Saipan, and (4) develop a bulk feed processing plant on Saipan where locally produced and imported whole grains would be processed and mixed for use in all of the districts of the TTPI.

The Aslito Animal Industry Program provided good cattle, hog, and poultry stock for breeding purposes to local farmers to upgrade the local livestock herds and flocks.⁷⁸

The herdman at Aslito Station dewormed, dehorned, castrated, and provided other services for the herds of local cattlemen.⁷⁹ The Brangus and Brahman herds were at Aslito Station. The Braford herd was kept at Kobler and the Brahman was kept at Garapan.⁸⁰ It is not clear if these herds were pastured on government or private land. In 1964 the government herd totaled 168 head. In the future beef cattle development was projected to be based on the Brangus and Santa Gertrudis breeds,⁸¹ however, where the Santa Gertrudis herd was being kept or to be pastured was not given.

The 1964 UN Mission noted: "Useful, though small-scale, work is being done in the Marianas on the development of a cattle industry, on vegetable growing for export and at most agricultural stations some useful work in breeding and distributing improved strains of pigs and poultry."⁸²

⁷⁷ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 75.

⁷⁸ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁷⁹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 79.

⁸⁰ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁸¹ M.N. Sproat and Leo Migvar, 1964, p. 77.

⁸² UN Nations Mission, 1964, p. 71.



Figure 9. Feeding Santa Gertrudis Cattle in Shed, Saipan, February 1964.⁸³

The Headquarters of the TTPI moved from Guam to Saipan in 1962. The TTPI Headquarters were located on a hill east of Garapan (Map 2). The Division of Agriculture had offices in this complex. The Director of Agriculture and the Assistant Director were at the headquarters. Although the Saipan Agriculture Station was not located at the TTPI Headquarters, the headquarters received dignitaries and other visitors from time to time. Some were taken on tours of the Station. The Saipan facilities became a showplace for visitors. Being adjacent to the TTPI Headquarters probably resulted in some increased funding although comprehensive funding information for the Saipan Station and the other district agriculture stations has not been located.

In fiscal year 1976 the Marianas District consisted of 55 employees. Only one (1.8%) was listed in District Agriculture – an Agricultural Management Specialist (IGS-11, male) in District Agriculture.⁸⁴ At the same time there were 1,024 Micronesian employees (746 males, and 278 females) but there is not breakdown of how many worked in agriculture.⁸⁵

⁸³ [Photo 2](#) (N-3420.02).

⁸⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1976, p. 179.

⁸⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1976, p. 190.

Copra

Copra was the principal commercial agricultural product of the TTPI but was not a major commodity of the Marianas District because of the Mariana coconut beetle. Coconuts were grown commercially mostly in the uninhabited islands north of Saipan. The land of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan was more conducive to vegetable, fruit, and livestock farming.

The coconut has always been important to Micronesian culture because it provided food and drink and also materials for construction, etc. However, after western contact the dried meat of the coconut called copra made the coconut a major crop and export commodity because of the products (soap, shampoo, etc.) that could be produced from the oil pressed from the dried copra.



Figure 10. Man drinking from coconut, date unknown.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ [Photo N-3347.12.](#)



Figure 11. Junji Inoue's personal implements. Note fiber zoris, coconut husk hat, knives fashioned from B-29 wreckage, Marianas, date unknown.⁸⁷



Figure 12. Climbing a coconut tree, Pagan Island, Mariana Islands, Jan. 1946.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ [Photo N-1993.07.](#)

⁸⁸ [Photo N-4093.15.](#)

Coconut beetle not only devastated the coconut trees in the Palauan Islands but also in the Marianas. The Marianas beetle (*Brontispa Mariana* Spaeth) appeared to be under control on Saipan by 1950 by the parasite (*Tetrastichodes Brontispa*).⁸⁹ By 1950, the Northern Marianas Development Co. had been established in the Trust Territory for copra production and general trading.⁹⁰

Yap had the best genetically suitable coconut seeds. During 1959, 220,000 selected coconut seed nuts were sent to Rota, Truk, Ponape, and the Marshalls from Yap.⁹¹ After many years of coconut pests, Rota started replanting coconuts during 1959.



Figure 13. Coconut tree fallen on building, curled tin on roof, Mariana Islands, date unknown.⁹²

Coconut trees are subject to the high wind of typhoons because palm trees have a relative small root ball. A palm tree that has been blown down during a storm can be replanted if there is heavy equipment available. If it is done immediately, it has a good chance of surviving. This is sometime done at resort hotels after a typhoon. However, if there are hundreds or thousands of palms trees uprooted by a typhoon in a copra plantation, there is not enough heavy equipment on any island to

⁸⁹ USA Dept. of Navy, 1950, p. 25.

⁹⁰ USA Dept. of Navy, 1950, p. 31.

⁹¹ USA Dept. of State, 1959, p. 63.

⁹² [Photo N-3229.11](#).

accomplish the work necessary in time to save the plantation. The dead and dying trees need to be removed and select seeds planted to restore the plantation. These trees take several years before they begin to produce coconuts.

In 1964 the coconut development in the Marianas District was very small. The District's aim was improving the subsidized field trip quarterly service by the Saipan Shipping Company to the Northern islands (north of Saipan) where most of the coconut and copra were produced.

The following table shows production of copra in Marianas District in comparison to other districts and the TTPI total production.

Table 5
Coconut/Copra Production Figures from Annual Reports to the United Nations.

Year	Marianas	Marshals	Palau	Ponape	Truk	Yap	Total
1964	783,785	11,324,299	1,255,098	6,263,224	4,505,374	1,700,58	25,832,038
1965	786,000	11,324,200	1,209,700	6,727,200	5,567,200	2,200,700	27,815,000
1966	1,125,400	9,417,400	1,054,200	6,727,000	5,606,300	2,007,400	25,937,700
1967	622,000	11,534,000	818,100	4,762,100	6,417,800	2,433,000	26,587,000
1968	614,000	12,360,000	591,600	4,985,900	3,785,000	2,071,000	24,407,500
1969	218,000	12,360,000	814,400	4,990,000	6,937,200	1,699,600	27,019,200
1970	124,000	18,561,000	4,531,500	5,063,000	5,300,000	1,467,100	36,046,600
1971	688,900	10,255,900	362,500	3,375,300	2,706,600	1,064,900	18,454,100
1972	199,300	11,430,180	276,040	3,844,300	4,935,400	793,720	21,478,960
1973	225,800	9,148,400	151,600	2,746,000	3,678,000	978,000	16,927,800
Total	5,387,185	117,715,379	11,064,738	49,484,024	49,438,874	14,715,420	250,505,898
% of Total	2.2%	47.0%	4.4%	19.8%	19.7%	5.9%	100.0%

The table about shows the production of coconuts in pounds rather than value because the market value fluctuates and the dollar value is affected by inflation. When production is up, prices usually go down. Dollar values are extremely important to the economy but are not the best indicator of what is really happening. Without a way to adjust dollar amounts for inflation, the raw figures could be misleading. Agricultural production is affected by weather and climate and even micro-climates. The top three producers of coconuts by far were the Marshalls, Ponape, and Truk. The smallest producer was the Marianas Islands. Although the Marianas 2.2% does not seem very large, it did contribute to the overall economy of the district.

Truck Farming

Truck farming is an American term for growing and marketing vegetables and fruits. It is usually small scale and large intensive. In many respects it was similar to the traditional subsistence farming, but with new introduced plants intended both for local markets and exportation.



Figure 14. Vegetable Garden, Saipan, 1969.⁹³

“Research in agronomy is” according to the 1949 Annual Report to the UN “being carried on at the experimental station on Saipan and at the University of Hawaii.”⁹⁴ In June 1949 several scientists were sent to the Trust Territory under the Scientific Investigation of Micronesia (SIM) program, funded by the Office of Naval Research and directed by the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council. Rats can destroy crops and contaminate food sources. Therefore, on Saipan, they studied rat control.⁹⁵

Produce was exported to Guam but beef was consumed mostly by the local market. As far as marketing, the Northern Mariana Islands had “location, location, location” because of its close proximity to Guam. However, in July 1948 the Navy discontinued shipping schedules between Guam, Saipan, Tinian and Rota in view

⁹³ [Photo 7 \(N-2500.07\)](#).

⁹⁴ USA Dept. of Navy, 1949, p. 21.

⁹⁵ USA Dept. of Navy, 1949, pp. 21-22.

of the development of private commercial shipping, which did not happen in a timely manner.⁹⁶

In 1947, the High Commissioner permitted a company called the Tinian Produce Company, formed by four nationals of the United States, to lease property on the island of Tinian. This company in December 1948 transferred its business interests to Marianas Farms, Inc., which corporation, due largely to unreliable shipping between Tinian and the market in Guam, and to other factors beyond its control, made an assignment for the benefit of creditors on April 5, 1949.

Although most of Micronesia was not suitable for modern agricultural methods and equipment, the Mariana Islands District was the one exception. As early as 1948, agriculture on Tinian was developed through “a lease for large scale farming and through assignment of lands to families for small farms on a tentative homestead basis (Final approval of these measures was received after the close of the year with which this report [1948] is concerned.”



Figure 15. Sakae Bert Ogata from Hawaii, Marianas District Agriculturist, inspects the growth of cantaloupes in the Saipan Agriculture Station. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN photo.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ USA Dept. of Navy, 1949, p. 30.

⁹⁷ [UN photo 109,962](#). Photo 2. (N-2500.02).

The typhoons that hit Micronesia in fiscal year 1958 depressed the vegetable market. Produce income, predominately from Rota and Saipan districts, was approximately \$57,000 for the year.⁹⁸

Farms in the Marianas District are relatively small and average only about ten acres.⁹⁹

The 1968 Annual Report to the UN stated that “A lack of supplemental water supplies for irrigation limits commercial vegetable production in the Mariana Islands during the dry season.”¹⁰⁰ As noted in the 1969 Annual Report to the UN, “Dry land row crop agriculture is practiced to some extent in Palau and the Marianas.”¹⁰¹ Cisterns and water catchments and piped water were not available. Water had to be hauled for cattle during the dry season.¹⁰²



Figure 16. Felix Camacho, a farmer in the village of San Roque on Saipan at work in a vegetable crop of his farm. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN photo.¹⁰³

⁹⁸ USA Dept. of State, 1958, p. 57.

⁹⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1970, p. 62.

¹⁰⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1968, p. 62.

¹⁰¹ USA Dept. of State, 1969, p. 60.

¹⁰² USA Dept. of State, 1969, p. 62.

¹⁰³ [Photo 3](#). UN photo 109,940. (N-2500.03).



Figure 17. Saipan Agriculture Station.¹⁰⁴ Date is unknown. Since this photograph is in color, it is probably in the late 1960s or 1970s. The water situation started to change in fiscal year 1973.¹⁰⁵

Irrigation pumps and pipe lines on Tinian and Rota in the Marianas began operation during the year [fiscal year 1973] but are not fully utilized by farmers. Of the 100 irrigated acres on Tinian, about 40 acres have been cultivated, while on Rota, livestock water was used by cattle growers and not for cropping. Three irrigation pumps on Saipan were ‘confiscated’ by the Public Works Department to supply drinking water to the Saipan residents in Chalan Kanoa because of the continued dry spell during the year. Wells have been drilled in the Fina Siso area of southern Saipan to supply water to crop farmers and livestock.

A farmer’s market was established on Saipan in fiscal year 1973.¹⁰⁶ It included by subsistence crops such as taro and introduced vegetables.

¹⁰⁴ [Photo \(NO-3310b-06\)](#).

¹⁰⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1973, p. 74.

¹⁰⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1973, p. 75.

Figure 18. Saipan Farmer's Market, after 1973.¹⁰⁷



Figure 19. View of customer selecting produce inside the Saipan Farmer's Market, after 1973.¹⁰⁸



Figure 20. Farmer with taro, 1969.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ [Photo 2503-1.](#)

¹⁰⁸ [Photo 2503-2.](#)

¹⁰⁹ [Photo 5. \(N-2500.05\).](#)

Table 6

Vegetable Production Figures from the Annual Reports to the United Nations for the ten year period from 1964 to 1973.

Year	Marianas	Marshals	Palau	Ponape	Truk	Yap	Total
1964	804,200	2,300	42,050	23,000	12,100	6,000	889,650
1965	405,500	2,300	29,800	24,400	12,300	12,300	486,700
1966	1,154,000	2,500	49,000	25,400	14,200	12,300	1,257,400
1967	206,200	1,200	38,400	32,400	40,000	150,000	468,200
1968	107,500	3,500	56,500	34,100	89,300	152,500	443,400
1969	385,500	3,000	67,900	61,000	84,100	15,000	616,500
1970	1,594,000	7,000	67,900	64,100	99,000	15,000	1,847,000
1971	898,000		73,000	47,900	203,000	4,200	1,264,000
1972	901,780	0	129,000	48,900	102,400	62,250	1,247,330
1973	1,649,650	21,879	57,321	72,394	64,750	9,984	1,875,980
Total	8,106,330	43,679	610,871	433,594	721,150	439,534	10,396,160
% of Total	78.0%	0.4%	5.9%	4.2%	6.9%	4.3%	100.0%

During the decade from 1964 to 1973, 78% of the vegetables in the TTPI were grown in the Mariana Islands. By far the Marianas District was number one in the TTPI in vegetable production.

Livestock Farming

Cattle

The 1949 Annual Report to the UN documented that “During the past fiscal year, six bulls and two cows of the pure Brahman stock and 36 Brahman-Hereford cross bred heifers were imported from the United States for establishing of nuclear herds in the high islands of Saipan, Ponape, and Palau districts.” The number sent to each district was not given.

In 1959 Rota received dairy and beef breeding cattle.¹¹⁰ The Saipan District has a slaughterhouse. In one year between 1959 and 1960 the private herds on Saipan increased from 3,500 and 3,800 head of cattle.¹¹¹ The herd is sufficient to supplied beef both local use and for export.

¹¹⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1959, p. 66.

¹¹¹ USA Dept. of State, 1960, p. 70.



Figure 21. Brahman Cattle, Saipan, 1950s-1960s.¹¹²

An intensive egg production project was established on Saipan. By 1960 approximately 600 dozen eggs were produce each month.¹¹³

The TTPI breeding herd of 200 cattle on Saipan supplies breeding stock to other islands, especially the high volcanic islands. The Rota District had about 1,000 head of cattle in 1961 and 1,200 in 1962. At the same time the Saipan herd grew to 4,000 head. Egg production had increased to about 1,000 dozen per month in the Saipan District- mostly from New Hampshire and Leghorn chickens.¹¹⁴

In 1964 the UN Mission stated:¹¹⁵

The Mission was surprised to find eggs and poultry being imported from as far away as the United States. It was said that the cost of importing poultry feed made it uneconomical to establish a poultry industry in the Territory, but that central project for growing poultry was under consideration. In this connection the Mission comments that there may be a tendency in the Trust Territory to think too much in terms of large-

¹¹² [Photo 1 \(N-2499.01\)](#).

¹¹³ USA Dept. of State, 1960, p. 70.

¹¹⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1961, p. 65.

¹¹⁵ UN Trusteeship Council, 1964, p. 73.

scale projects. In other countries it has been found possible to encourage individual growers or co-operative groups (sometimes through enlisting the co-operation of local representative body) to produce crops needed by small local industries; and in the case of a poultry industry additional encouragement might be given by assisting with purchase of small grain crushing machines. The local production of poultry and eggs would seem to the Mission to be something that should be vigorously assisted.

Likewise, the Mission has reason to believe that beef production in the Marianas could become one of the main industries of the Territory earning considerable money from exports to the large market in Guam as well as supplying meat throughout Micronesia, thereby raising the standard of living and reducing the bill for imports. (Canned meat alone costs the Territory \$280,000 annually). Similarly, a dairy industry in the Marianas is feasible and would be invaluable to the Territory. For a large-scale beef and dairy scheme, which seems thoroughly practicable and would take five years to reach its full operation (with 10,000 head of beef cattle), a total investment of \$2 million might be required. But this sum is not needed immediately. The scheme could be launched at once on Tinian; but its start is held up for lack of less than \$100,000, including \$35,000 for a tractor. (Like most equipment in the Territory, the existing tractor is an antique inherited from the Navy and is usually being repaired). This is a serious situation because the Marianas at present lack any basic economy and its people, who were once good farmers, are settling into a habit of existing on wages (mainly paid by the Government); this ruthlessness and economic dependence in turn influence their political attitudes including, in some measure, their desire to secede from the Trust Territory and join Guam.

During 1964 new breeding stock was brought into the TTPI via Saipan, bred, and distributed to the district agriculture departments and made available at low cost to the Micronesian farmers.¹¹⁶ “The following breeding stock was imported into Saipan: 12 Duroc hogs, 10 New Hampshire hogs, 4 Santa Gertrudis bulls, 5 Santa Gertrudis heifers, and 2 Angus bulls. The government cattle herd at Saipan numbers 200 head and the private herds now number 4,100.” The Mariana Islands District was the central breeding station for poultry, swine, and cattle. Note that the cattle in the private herds on Saipan equal 87.6% of the total 4,682 cattle in the entire TTPI. By 1965 45 Santa Gertrudis breeding stock were imported to

¹¹⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1964, p. 75.



Figure 22. Santa Gertrudis Cattle Unloaded, Saipan?, Nov. 1963.¹¹⁷ The cattle were imported from Colorado.



Figure 23. Rancher with Santa Gertrudis Bull, Saipan, Feb. 1964.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ [Photo 1 \(N-3420.01\)](#).

¹¹⁸ [Photo 3 \(N-7, 3420.03\)](#).

Saipan.¹¹⁹ However, the total number of cattle dropped to 4,500 head for the TTPI and 4,080 for the Marianas but the percentage increased to 90.6%.¹²⁰ In 1966 the TTPI government herd on Saipan was only 175 but the private herd was 5,759 for total of 5,934 in the Mariana Islands. This was 93.3% of the total of 6,036 cattle in the TTPI.¹²¹ By fiscal year 1967 there were 8,721 (92.1%) head of cattle in the Marianas out of 9,464 in the TTPI. The government herd of cattle at Saipan consisted of 85 head. Fifty bulls and heifers had been sold to cattle rancher. The Marianas District continued to provide practical training in animal husbandry.¹²²

The Micronesian Development Corporation (MDC), a non-indigenous company, leased 7,000 acres in 1964 on Tinian for raising livestock. By 1966 250 acres had been planted in corn, soybeans, and sorghum for mixed feed and there are 24 breeding stock.¹²³ “With additional introduction from the United States, local purchases, and normal herd production, the Micronesian Development Company’s herd has increased from 700 head in 1967 to about 1800 head this year [fiscal year 1968].”¹²⁴ Of the 5,945 head of cattle in the TTPI, 5,471 (92.0%) were in the Marianas District. By fiscal year 1969, the MDC had 3,000 head of cattle and 2,000 hogs.¹²⁵ Cattle production continued to be concentrated in the Mariana Islands in 1969 with only a slight increase. Of the 5,775 head of cattle in the TTPI, 5,500 (95.2%) were in the Marianas where the conditions are best for raising cattle.¹²⁶ The cattle count for both the TTPI and the Marianas decreased in 1970 5,500 for the TTPI of which 5,000 (90.0%) were in the Marianas.¹²⁷ In 1973 the MDC had about 3,000 cattle and 3,000 hogs.¹²⁸ Cattle are tested for tuberculosis and brucellosis and slaughtered on a regular basis.¹²⁹ “A veterinary laboratory on Saipan provides small animal clinical service and extension veterinary services to ranchers. A [TTPI] staff

¹¹⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1965, p. 80.

¹²⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1965, p. 79.

¹²¹ USA Dept. of State, 1966, p. 77.

¹²² USA Dept. of State, 1967, p. 67.

¹²³ USA Dept. of State, 1966, pp. 76-77.

¹²⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1968, p. 62.

¹²⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1969, p. 62.

¹²⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1969, p. 63.

¹²⁷ USA Dept. of State, 1970, p. 72.

¹²⁸ USA Dept. of State, 1973, p. 76.

¹²⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1973, p. 77.

veterinarian heads the Animal Health Services Branch which also provides training and supervision of animal quarantine and meat inspection.”



Figure 24. Bull tethered in a pasture near the emergency shelter which was erected to house the people of Tanapag village on Saipan following devastation by typhoon “Jean” in 1967. New housing was still being erected two year later. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN photo.¹³⁰

A major accomplishment was the improvement of pastures in the Marianas. Pastures totaling 210 acres were seeded with Guinea, Dallis Naipier, Alabang X, Pangola, and Santa Barbara grasses. Before improvement, an animal needed 2.2 acres for grazing. After establishment of the new grasses, one animal needed only 1.2 acres for grazing.¹³¹ This resulted in increase quality and quantity of beef.

¹³⁰ [UN photo 109,942](#). Photo N-2500.01.

¹³¹ USA Dept. of State, 1964, p. 75.



Figure 25. Man tending cattle on farm on Tinian. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN Photo.¹³²



Figure 26. Aerial view of Kobler (Navy) Field and livestock pasture, Saipan, date unknown.¹³³

¹³² UN photo 109,848.

¹³³ [Photo N-2493.05](#).

As late as fiscal year 1968, improvement of pastures was slowed by the lack of heavy equipment in the Mariana Islands.¹³⁴

Table 7

Livestock Production. Number of pounds of beef produced between 1957 and 1976.

Year	Marianas	Marshals	Palau	Ponape	Truk	Yap	Total
1957	181,800	0	5,000	6,500	500	1,500	175,000
1958	35,000	0	5,000	6,000	2,500	1,000	48,000
1959	40,000	0	5,000	6,000	2,500	1,000	55,000
1960	146,500	0	6,000	6,000	2,500	1,000	162,000
1961	160,654	0	6,000	7,000	3,000	1,000	177,654
1962	182,248	0	3,600	5,000	1,000	1,000	192,848
1963							
1964	200,000	0	3,000	5,000	200	5,000	213,200
1965	180,000	0	5,000	5,000	150	5,000	195,150
1966	224,837	0	6,000	3,000	300	5,300	239,437
1967	160,986	0	7,500	3,000	300	500	172,286
1968	179,558	0	8,000	3,000	150	0	190,000
1969	185,000	0	8,000	300	150	2,400	195,850
1970	180,000	0	8,000	300	150	500	188,950
1971	773,814	0	12,000	300	200	250	786,564
1972	865,750	0	9,000	300	200	350	875,600
1973	120,757	0	1,620	0	0	0	122,377
1974							
1975	180,000	0	1,330	0	0	0	181,330
1976	311,430	0	1,331	0	0	0	312,761
Total	4,308,334	0	101,381	56,700	13,800	25,800	4,484,007
% of Total	96.1%	0.00%	2.2%	1.3%	3.1%	0.6%	100.0%

The table above on beef production clearly shows that the Marianas District produced almost all of the beef in the TTPI between 1957 and 1976. Note that there are no figures for 1963 and 1974 because they have not been located at this time. When found, the figures for these two years will be added but it will not change the conclusion that the Marianas District was by far the largest producer of beef.

¹³⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1968, p. 63.

Swine

Hampshires and Durocs were the preferred hogs for importation and breeding. Two breeds of poultry (not specified) would be maintained: one for egg and one for meat production.



Figure 27. Saipan Piggery. Navy photo.¹³⁵



Figure 28. A large privately-owned pig farm on Tinian. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN Photo.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ [Photo 3 \(N-2501.03\)](#).

¹³⁶ UN photo 113,068.



Figure 29. Worker tending stock on a large pig farm on Tinian. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969. UN Photo.¹³⁷



Figure 30. Pig farm on Tinian, one of the farming enterprises which was established in Mariana Islands District. Photographer: Nagata, February 1969. United Nations photo.¹³⁸

¹³⁷ UN photo 113,069.

¹³⁸ [UN photo 109,846](#). Photo N-2501.01.

By 1974 the number of cattle was back up to 4,500 head but hogs remained at 3,000. The MDC imported in 1974 “700 head of young Holstein dairy stock from New Zealand with the intension of starting a commercial diary operation.”¹³⁹

Table 8

Livestock Production. Number of pounds of pork produced between 1957 and 1976.

Year	Marianas	Marshals	Palau	Ponape	Truk	Yap	Total
1957	9,660	12,700	30,000	19,000	10,000	7,500	88,860
1958	13,400	0	35,000	10,000	10,000	7,500	75,000
1959	13,900	0	36,000	10,000	50,000	6,000	115,900
1960	37,950	0	37,000	10,000	250,000	3,600	338,050
1961	30,998	0	37,000	12,000	50,000	5,000	134,998
1962	24,900	1,000	40,000	15,000	60,000	7,500	148,400
1963							
1964	30,000	0	45,000	15,000	3,500	8,000	101,500
1965	36,400	0	45,000	15,000	4,000	8,000	108,400
1966	32,504	0	46,000	15,000	5,000	8,600	107,104
1967	15,291	0	48,000	16,000	5,000	10,000	94,291
1968	45,865	0	50,000	16,000	24,000	6,600	142,465
1969	52,000	0	50,000	18,000	25,000	12,000	157,000
1970	108,645	0	50,000	18,050	25,000	17,249	318,944
1971	83,249	0	51,000	18,050	26,000	25,000	203,299
1972	86,249	0	75,000	1,900	20,000	30,000	213,149
1973	83,378	3,774	118,145	3,953	0	13,415	223,665
1974							
1975	16,955	0	47,374	0	0	14,283	78,612
1976	33,494	0	43,074	0	0	0	76,568
Total	754,838	17,474	883,593	212,953	567,500	190,247	2,726,205
% of Total	27.7%	0.6%	32.4%	7.8%	20.8%	7.0%	100.0%

Hogs were grown in all of the districts include the Marshall Islands. The lack of figures for the Marshalls is because no pork was exported. Thus all hogs were butchered locally and consumed almost immediately because of a lack of refrigeration on the outer islands where there is no electricity.

Although almost all inhabited islands and all district raised swine, the top producer was the Palau District. The Marianas were second in pork production.

¹³⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1974, p. 48.

Forestry

Replanting of hardwood trees in Saipan was well established by fiscal year 1951.¹⁴⁰ The grove north of American Memorial Park may be one of these early hardwood plantings.

Although there were saw mills in operations in Palau, there is no mention of massive planting of trees other than palm trees for copra production. No information has been found on any saw mills in the Marianas.

Conclusion

The Economic Development Plan for Micronesia, by Robert R. Nathan Associates, Inc., made a keen observation: “Still, today, the many traditional tenure arrangements [throughout the Trust Territory of the Pacific] which continue to persist often create obstacles to agricultural development. The system of undefined ownership by extended families and clans, with use rights by many, discourages investment in land improvement. Land reform is the only ultimate solution, but the careful planning and equitable implementation of a well-conceived land reform will take much expert effort and many years to achieve.”¹⁴¹

The advantages and disadvantages of private land ownership and the statement above can be debated forever. However, since Guam and in the Northern Mariana Islands has had western land owner since the latter part of the 1800s, the issue for most of Micronesia was not an issue for the Mariana Islands.

The following two tables show the last TTPI agricultural statistics of the Northern Mariana Islands:

¹⁴⁰ USA Dept. of Navy, 1951, p. 37.

¹⁴¹ USA Dept. of State, 1969, pp. 54-55.

Table 9

Estimated Agricultural Statistics for the Northern Mariana Islands for FY 1977 (July 1976 to Sept. 1977).¹⁴² These figures include all produce whether sold locally, exported, consumed by producer, given away, fed to livestock, or un-marketed due to market glut.

Agricultural Product	Quantity	Value
Vegetables ¹	2,148,445 lbs.	\$402,527.76
Fruits	177,117 lbs.	48,243.12
Staple Crops	356,133 lbs.	100,348.56
Eggs	53,744 doz.	70,262.10
Beef	306,246 lbs.	195,151.94
Pork	66,889 lbs.	83,611.25
Fresh Milk	1,401,440 lbs.	312,906.70
Copra	680,154 lbs.	70,205.82
Total	5,136,534lbs. 53,744 doz.	\$1,283,257.25

¹ Includes melons.

During FY 1977, truck crops used about 375 acres.¹⁴³ Vegetables grown in the Marianas included cucumbers, watermelons, cantaloupes, honeydew and sweet melons, string and snap beans, Chinese and head cabbages, tomatoes, bell peppers, chili and hot peppers, eggplants, daikon and red radishes, green onions, okra, pumpkins, squash, and bittermelons.¹⁴⁴

The acreage in fruits was estimated at 350 acres. Several typhoons and tropical storms during FY 1977 reduced the fruit crop especially bananas and papayas. Fruits grown in the Marianas included table bananas, papayas, mangoes, avocados, oranges, tangerines, lemons, pineapple, soursop, sugar apples, star fruit, guava, and custard apples.¹⁴⁵

About 380 acres were used to grow staple crops including yams, taros, cassava, plantain (cooking bananas), breadfruit, and coconuts for drinking or cooking. Yams, taros, and breadfruit were adversely affected by the typhoons and tropical storms.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 50.

¹⁴³ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 48.

¹⁴⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

¹⁴⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

¹⁴⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

Table 10

Statistics for the Domestic Sales and Export of Agricultural Products for FY 1977
(July 1976 to Sept. 1977).¹⁴⁷

Domestic Sales¹		
Agricultural Product	Quantity	Value
Vegetables²	491,504 lbs.	\$124,911.44
Fruits	78,766 lbs.	21,782.69
Staple Crops	86,634 lbs.	25,803.21
Eggs	26,872 doz.	35,131.05
Beef	60,803 lbs.	34,534.60
Pork	450 lbs.	410.45
Fresh Milk³	195,152 lbs.	26,865.80
Total Domestic Sales:	718,157 lbs. 26,872 doz.	\$374,741.10
Export⁴		
Vegetables²	1,165,437 lbs.	\$152,704.88
Fruits	19,696 lbs.	4,677.74
Staple Crops	96,231 lbs.	22,938.93
Beef	184,640 lbs.	126,082.74
Pork	4,489 lbs.	5,523.15
Fresh Milk⁵	1,206,288 lbs.	286,040.90
Copra⁶	226,718 lbs.	23,401.94
Total Export:	2,903,499 lbs.	\$996,111.38
Grand Total:	3,621,656 lbs. 26,872 doz.	\$1,370,852.24

¹ Sold locally to farmers market, hotels, and supermarkets.

² Includes melons.

³ 24,394 gals. (converted into pounds @ 8 lbs./gal.)

⁴ Sold to civilian and military markets in Guam.

⁵ 150,786 gals. (also converted into pounds @ 8 lbs./gal.)

⁶ 113.359 short tons (converted into pounds @ 2,000/ton)

Of the 5,000 acres of coconut trees in copra production in the Mariana, about half are in the islands north of Saipan. Approximately half of the coconuts grown are used for livestock and poultry feed because livestock feed costs more than copra is worth in the 1977 market.¹⁴⁸

The 1977 Annual Report to the UN stated that “Beef, pork, and egg productions have declined considerably to an all time low in FY 1977.”¹⁴⁹ This not true for beef because there were 11 years between 1957 and 1976 when there was less beef marketed for export. Slightly over 22,000 acres were used for livestock. The

¹⁴⁷ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 51.

¹⁴⁸ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 50.

¹⁴⁹ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

estimated number of cattle was 7,250 head, including dairy cattle. The MDC on Tinian produced about 80 percent of the marketed beef. In addition, about 86% of the milk produced by the MDC on Tinian's dairy farm was exported to Guam.¹⁵⁰

It was difficult to estimate and/or track the production of hogs because of local consumption by farmers and un-reported sales to neighbors. Large quantities of pork are consumed at celebrations of all kinds from fiestas to baptisms, weddings, and funerals. The MDC discontinued hog raising on Tinian, resulting in the lowest reported production of pork in FY 1977. Although local farmers still grow a few hogs, the decline in production was because of the high cost of hog feed.¹⁵¹

Few TTPI statistical reports covered egg production because there is very little reliable data. In FY 1977 most of the eggs were from local "backyard chicken raising." Eggs were imported from the United States and Australia at a lower cost than fresh local eggs because of the high cost of local chicken feed.¹⁵²

The FY1977 budget for the Agriculture Division was only \$450,000. At the end of the TTPI period, the division had offices at the Saipan Civil Center and "the Plant and Animal Industry Stations at Kagman and As Perdido respectively on Saipan with substations on Tinian and Rota."¹⁵³ The staff of three expatriates and 64 Micronesians on Saipan, 12 Micronesians on Tinian, and 14 Micronesians on Rota assisted farmers with all phases of production through marketing by providing technical advice and training, renting equipment at low cost, enforcing plant and animal quarantine laws and regulations, and providing farm supplies at the farm store located at the farmer's market. This supported 800 farmers—390 on Saipan, 180 on Tinian, and 230 on Rota.¹⁵⁴ In the northern islands there were an additional 80—25 on Agrihan, 25 on Pagan, 20 on Alamagan, and 10 on Anatahan.

The Kagman Plant Industry Substation researched and tried (1) locally-adapted, disease-resistant, and high-yield varieties of vegetables and other crops; (2) fertilizers; and (3) pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides. The extension agents recommended varieties and products during one-on-one advice to farmers and

¹⁵⁰ USA Dept. of State, 1977, pp. 49-50.

¹⁵¹ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

¹⁵² USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 49.

¹⁵³ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 51.

¹⁵⁴ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 48.

through demonstrations. Instructions included the proper use and handling of chemicals.¹⁵⁵

The As Perdido (AsLito) Animal Industry Station maintained breeding stock of Santa Gertrudis cattle, Yorkshire and Hampshire swine, and New Hampshire chicken for distribution and stud services. This upgraded the quality of livestock.

The following statement in the 1977 Annual Report to the UN sounds very negative at first.¹⁵⁶



Figure 31. Felix Camacho of the village of San Rogue, Saipan, sprays insecticide on a vegetable crop on his farm. Photographer: Nagata/jr, February 1969, UN photo.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ USA Dept. of State, 1977, pp. 49-50.

¹⁵⁶ USA Dept. of State, 1977, p. 48.

¹⁵⁷ UN Photo 109,941.

Agricultural activities have greatly declined in the Mariana Islands since the end of World War II because of the Japanese repatriation to their homeland. More recently, due to increased government and private sector employment of Chamorro and Carolinian population of the islands, the decline of farming activities becomes more apparent. Agriculture, however, still plays an important role in the Marianas in providing employment and additional income to a significant number of the working population.

It is hard to imagine what the Marianas would have been without the Agriculture Division. With its minimal staffing and funding it accomplished much. More could have been done if there had been more funding and support from the TTPI administration. Much was expected but little was given in comparison to the huge budget and staffing in health, education, and public works. In comparison, the Marianas fared better than other districts because of its proximity to Guam and the TTPI Headquarter locating on Saipan in 1962. Without the Agriculture Division, the Marianas would have been more dependent on imports. The decline mentioned above in many aspects was the impression created when other segments of the economy, such as tourism and fishing, were growing faster than agriculture in comparison. As education levels increased the hard work of farming appealed less and less to young people.

In the final analysis, the work of the Saipan Agriculture Station and substations met three of its four objectives for the quality and quantity of truck farming and livestock. The livestock feed processing plant was never built even though the high cost of imported livestock feed was cited each year as a problem. Why? No explanation has been found; however, the reason was probably lack of funds.

The Station was very significant to the modern history of the Mariana Islands. It was at least of local if not regional significance. It would be very difficult to state that it was the most significant agriculture station at this time without further research of all of the agriculture stations in the former TTPI. Although most of the other station did not meet all of their objectives, each had significant achievements. The beetle problems in Palau were solved and Palau again became a major producer of copra and built a huge copra processing plant. The Marshall Islands also constructed a copra processing plant. Truk had some success in fiber and weaving of mats. None, however, matched or exceeded the vast accomplishments in research and publishing of the Ponape Station.

What still exists of the Saipan Agriculture Station? An assessment of the integrity of the facilities will be begun as time permits during this conference. If there is sufficient integrity, the CNMI Historic Preservation Office may do additional research and nominate it as a site or a multiple property nomination to the National Register of Historic Places at the local or territory-wide level of significance.

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The Shaping of Carolinian Attitudes Toward Food On-the-Scene Insights into Manners and Living in the Moment

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Abstract: *In our modern Westernized lifestyle, it is easy enough to take food for granted: it is often just a matter of running off to a store or restaurant. In fact, the problem these days might be too much food or the wrong kind of food. Visitors to these islands are also struck by how often one is invited to eat, to the point of being overwhelmed. But historically, an abundance of food has not always been the case in these islands or on most islands of the Pacific. Actually, even now, the supply can be precarious. Citing simple personal experiences, shared by some participants at this conference, we look at how conditions in these islands' past have shaped attitudes, behavior, and even manners with regard to food.*

Acknowledgements

The idea for this presentation was originally a joint effort between myself and my longtime friend, Lino Olopai. While the paper is based mostly on my experiences, it only came about at Lino's urging while we were talking about food and eating and culture. Born and raised on Saipan, Lino has long been deeply involved in local community affairs. In the late 1960s, he served as the Peace Corps language coordinator for Carolinian and Chamorro on Saipan, at which time he and I first met. In 1974, he journeyed to the Central Carolines to get in touch with his ancestral roots and became heavily involved in Satawalese voyaging, which helped him reinforce and deepen understanding and instill pride in traditional culture within the Carolinian community. His ongoing mission includes searching for ways the Carolinian community can thrive within a Westernized society without forgetting the old ways and traditional culture. The recipient of the Governor's Humanities Award for "Preserving Traditional Cultural Practices," Lino acted, in his spare time, in "Song for the Navigator," performing on stage in Seattle, Dallas, and Washington, D.C.



From left, Cecilio Raiukiulipiy, originally from Satawal, Ken Kuroiwa and Lino Olopai. Cecilio was one of the children on Satawal while Ken was there as a Peace Corps volunteer. Lino was the language coordinator on Saipan for the Peace Corps at the time.

Lino and Cecilio are my corroborators, who confirm my understanding and interpretation of what I was experiencing, from the Carolinian insider perspective, rather than just me as an outsider figuring out on my own what was going on and why.

Coming from the United States, where food was plentiful and could even be wasted without much consequence, I never gave much thought to how precious it was. The only inkling I had that this was not always the case was when my father, who had grown up in prewar Japan, told me to think of hungry children in postwar Japan and Korea and not to waste the food on my plate. Having grown up in an industrious but resource-poor country, my father always reminded me how lucky I was to grow up in a land of plenty.

I did not appreciate the wisdom of my father's experience until I lived in the Caroline Islands as a Peace Corps Volunteer (1967-70) but soon learned the value of simple things when I reached my island assignment on Fais Island, the second island out to the east of Yap in Yap District.

Welcome to Fais!

My arrival on Fais was a something of a disaster: unlike Ulithi to the west, and most other islands in the archipelago, Fais has no protective lagoon. Landing and bringing supplies to the beach is at the best of times an adventure, as it was that day. When it was my turn to go ashore with all my supplies, the driver of the small ship-to-shore boat went back and forth just beyond the surf line, waiting for that interval of calm between wave sets. Even for a Fais native, this read is no certain thing, but when he spotted what he thought was a lull, he gunned the engine and headed in.

Unfortunately, there was one more wave, a rogue wave, in the set that he had not anticipated, and after we had committed ourselves, it rose up and hung over us as time seemed to stop. “*Si a mis!!*” the Fais men shouted, “We’re dead!” or more accurately, “We’re done for!! We’re goners!” as the wave lifted our stern and flipped us upside down.

I lost everything except my wallet and passport, which I carried with me. All my other belongings, my books, my American and Japanese comfort food, all the school supplies, tape recorders for the school — even a set of encyclopedias for some reason — all went to the bottom of the sea. For months afterwards, we would find notebooks, pencils and pens, batteries, canned food, paperbacks, and tape recorder parts on the reef when we went spear-fishing. I made it to the beach, wearing only my *gapelepel* — my loincloth. Carlos Haruyei, the school principal as well as my host and mentor, smiled broadly at me and said. “Welcome to Fais!”

Having only my loincloth, my passport, and some dollars that were useless in a mainly pre-cash economy, I would be totally dependent on Haruyei and the people of Fais, which then numbered about 250 among three contiguous villages, plus some teenagers who were away on Ulithi, attending the Outer Islands High School there.

“BUUDOG MWONGOY!” (“Come and eat!”)

My main assignment on Fais was to teach school. The school was a divided one-room, dirt-floor, coconut-thatch hut about the size of a hotel room or smaller on the elevated interior of the island. With my own food supply at the bottom of the sea, I took my meals at Haruyei’s thatched hut not far from my own house, *Togowar*. I would spend hours at Haruyei’s every day, often late into the night, struggling to learn the language and culture. Peace Corps training on Udot Island

in Chuuk Lagoon had been, after all, only seven weeks. What is more, my language training had been in Woleaian, not the Fais dialect, which is close to Ulithian, and it was basically an unwritten language where oral tradition was strongest. Needless to say, I was all eyes and ears.

After breakfast at Haruyei's, I would head for school. I would get no further than the neighboring cluster of homes when the people there would call out, "*Buudog mwongoy!*" ("Come eat!"). Having just eaten, I would politely I thought say "No, thanks," and hurry on to school. Besides, I had grown up in a Japanese American family in California, where it was culturally good manners to show restraint and decline such invitations even if you were hungry.

And at the next group of homes, again I would again be invited to eat, with "*Buudog mwongoy!*" and again, I would decline with "*I towai mwongoy be i sa maeth!*" ("I'm not going to eat because I'm full!") Besides, if I took the time to eat with one or both families, I would be late for school. I would point in the direction of the school and tap my watch, indicating that I was kind of in a hurry.

Learning manners

This went on every day for more than a week, and then, one evening, at dinner, Haruyei said that we needed to talk. At this stage, he would sometimes also use some Japanese with me: Micronesia having been under Japanese control from 1914-1945, many of the older men spoke it to varying degrees. Moreover, it was familiar to me, being largely prewar Japanese, which still bore many traces of the Meiji era (1868-1912) and Taishō era (1912-1926) Japanese that I had grown up with under my grandfather and father.

The conversation went something like this:

"Every day, when you go to school, people invite you to eat, right?"

"Yes," I replied and explained how I generally declined because I was (1) full already, having just eaten, and (2) I didn't want to be late for school.

Haruyei said, quite directly for an islander, "That's not good. Don't do it again. Even if it's just a pinch of food, stop and have a bite with them."

"Even if I'm full after eating with you?"

"Yes, even then."

"But I'll be late for school!"

“School can wait. It’s not going to go anywhere, and the kids will enjoy playing a little more. Besides, I’m the principal, and I say it’s OK.”

“But Haruyei, my job is to...”

“You need to understand how precious food is here in the islands. We don’t have any real stores here, right? Just a few cans of corned beef on a shelf, cigarettes, maybe a sack of rice? The field trip ship comes maybe once a month, but if the waves are high, it passes us by and goes on to Woleai. Sometimes, we go months without field trip ship supplies.

“Actually, we are lucky nowadays. In the old days, there was no such thing as a field trip ship, and if the crops were bad and the canoes couldn’t go out fishing due to rough seas, people would go hungry or even starve to death, even on Fais, which is relatively large, high, and agriculturally blessed among these islands. We are 160 mi. (260 km.) out from Yap, Ulithi Atoll is 56 mi. (90 km.) to the west, and to the east, next is Woleai, 285 mi. (460 km.) away. Back then, no one could help you, at least not easily or quickly. We certainly did not have Coast Guard or Navy relief flights out of Guam. Canoes were the only transportation, and we Fais people often paddled instead.

“I want you to know that, so that you will understand that when people invite you to eat, they are offering you one of the most the most precious things they have, something that money cannot buy.”

Haruyei’s words hit home, and I took on a new attitude toward food from him. And when I later actually experienced hunger on Fais, I was even more deeply affected. I finally understood what my father had been sermonizing about, about the poor, hungry children in Japan and Korea back then.

When I moved on to Hawai’i and later visited Samoa and New Zealand, I understood where people were coming from when they invited me to eat with them even if some of the younger people among them no longer realized where that kind of hospitality in their culture came from. That can be said about the Carolinian community here, too, I imagine. Moreover, in Japan, I tend to have bad manners, because having lived in these islands of Micronesia and Polynesia, I find it almost impossible to refuse an invitation to eat. It is hard to get past the feeling that I would be hurting the feelings my hosts by turning down invitations.

Manini: Experiencing food shortage firsthand

As I said, I actually did experience hunger on Fais, which is a rare thing, since Fais is such a large island – a whole square mile! With high ground and phosphate-rich soil, Fais was a breadbasket among the outer islands of Yap.

But Fais is an island with no atoll or protective reef, so when the field trip supply ship could not stop due to high seas, there could be months before the next ship. Once, we did run out of rice, canned fish, tobacco – almost everything. We were also going through a stretch of bad weather, and the taro and *kamuuti* (sweet potatoes) were not ready or were in short supply. With rough seas, we could not take our canoes out to fish.

Canoes were also necessary to fish for shark, a major source of protein for us on Fais – and which only we in the Outer Islands ate (this also made us the target of jokes from other islanders: “*Go maa mwongoy pago??!!*” (“You eat shark??!!”))

Main meal: papaya, then copra

We ended up eating a lot of papaya. Now, I love papaya, as I am sure most of you do too. But every day, morning, noon, and night, day after day was just too much.

When that ran out, we started eating copra, the hard dried meat of the coconut, which is usually grated to make sauce for cooking taro or sometimes as a skin lotion after bathing – but eaten by itself, it is not that great. It is usually exported for cash, mostly to Japan, I believe, for use in soaps, cosmetics, and food processing.

Flavoring by scent



Convict tang (Ulthian: golach;
Hwn: manini) (NOAA photo)

One day, the kids speared a small *golach* in the shallows – a **convict tang**, or what Hawai‘ians call *manini* – and so that day, we had fish – one small fish smaller than the palm of our hands with our meal of copra. Unfortunately, all of us had to make do with that single *manini*. It was cooked up in a shoyu broth and put in a half coconut shell and covered with the broth.

We adults would take a bite of copra and start chewing on it. Then the coconut shell containing the tasty *manini* and broth was passed around for flavor. We would each bring it up to our noses and inhale the vapors, chew the copra, maybe take another hit of *manini* broth fragrance, and then pass it on to the next person.

And so it was with the adults. No one ate the *manini* or even sipped the broth. We only sniffed the fragrance to add “flavor,” so to speak, to the copra that we were chewing. The *manini* and broth were given to the children, who divided it up among themselves. With this, I not only understood intellectually how precious food was and why it was important not to refuse an offering of food – it was also something I understood in my gut.

Stuffing one’s face

One day, some time later, I saw Hapederes, one of Haruyei’s teenage nephews literally wolfing down food, cramming handfuls of rice, fish, and taro, and breadfruit into his mouth, his cheeks bulging and food spilling out even as he shoved more food in. He ate as if there were no tomorrow.

There was no particular shortage of food on Fais at the time, but this time, I understood more clearly the precariousness of the food supply and how it could be affected by weather and other vagaries of nature that we had no control over, and how isolated we were on Fais, even in the mid-20th century. You might have enough food today, but on an isolated and sometimes hard-to-access island like Fais, that could change in a very short time. In English, we say, “Make hay while the sun shines.” The counterpart in the Carolines might be, “Feed your face while the sun shines” or even “Let us eat, drink – and be merry – for tomorrow, who knows?”

Worry about tomorrow tomorrow

Some of those at this conference will remember Typhoon Pamela in mid-May 1976. The impact on Saipan was not that great, but Guam suffered considerable damage. At the time, I was on Satawal, doing research on Satawalese out of the University of Hawai‘i and the East-West Center. My informant was Edward Remwoi, son of navigator Louis Reppangelug, my next-door neighbor, whose 1970 Satawal-Saipan voyage followed Hipour’s 1969 Puluwat-Saipan voyage¹ but which was the first one by canoe from the Central Carolines since approximately 1905 (Lewis). My evening meals were often in the neighboring cluster of huts, with the family of Mau Piailug, who was then doing the epic voyage from Hawai‘i to Tahiti.

In mid-May 1976, reports began coming in from Guam over the radio (FEN/Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS)) that a major typhoon – then circling

¹ Hipour’s pioneering voyage, which reopened the long-unused Central Carolines-Saipan route, was done aboard the yacht of New Zealander David Lewis (author of *We, the Navigators* (1972; 1994)), *Isborn*, not a canoe. The first modern voyage by canoe was led by Reppangelug and his brother, Reppangelap.

Chuuk was likely to head for Satawal. If this was accurate, it was going to be a problem: Satawal is only about 1.3 km² (0.5 mi²) in size and, aside from the trees, only a couple meters (6-7 feet) above sea level. If it hit Satawal directly and it looked like it was going to we were headed for disaster.

Typhoon shelter

It was decided that we would dig a makeshift typhoon shelter to weather the storm as best we could. This meant digging a large pit in the village there must have been other pits but I do not remember them specifically and so we set about doing so. Looking back, I figure that this would have been on Wednesday, May 19, but having lived in the Carolines for a number of years, I had fallen out of the habit of wearing a watch or keeping track of the calendar except for school and church schedules.

We dug to a depth of about 4-5 feet (1.2 – 1.5 meters), and it was about the size of a room. Whoever went in there would have to wait out the typhoon squatting in the dark. Next, we cut down several coconut trees and laid the trunks across the top of the pit to form a roof, covered it with a tarp and then with sandy soil.

Only women and children would take shelter here, but even then, it was probably not large enough for everyone who needed to go in. Common hospitality usually meant that guests on the island usually be given priority, but in this case, the situation was far beyond that, so I was told that I would be spending the night outside, patrolling the village area with the rest of the men. This put me face-to-face with my own mortality, because if the typhoon did hit us with any force, my future would be cut short along with the rest of the men exposed to the elements.

One of the children who went into that typhoon shelter is someone many of you here in Saipan know, our nephew, Cecilio Raiukiulipiy, who grew up to come to marvel, open-mouthed, at the wonders of the modern technological world and ended up mastering many of them.

What is going on here?

The people of Satawal had faced many typhoons over the years, so everyone pretty much knew what to do. What I saw them doing, however, gave me pause. They started catching all the chickens and killed them. This was fun for the boys because some of them would simply grab a chicken by the head and twirl the body around to snap the neck. Next, they started killing the pigs. Finally, they started rounding up the dogs mine included and dispatched them. I could participate for the

most part but not with my own pet dog. The situation, however, did not allow for any special consideration for my feelings, so I just tried to shut it out from my mind. Meanwhile, the animals were all roasted or cut up and tossed into the cooking pot. Later, I could not eat my own dog, but I did eat dog for the first time in my life. Quite greasy, it was.

“ALL the animals.?”

But I asked one of the men, “Why are we killing ALL the animals? Shouldn’t we be leaving some of them for AFTER the typhoon? What are we going to eat AFTER the typhoon?” Whoever it was that I asked looked at me and said, simply, “We don’t know that there is going to BE an ‘AFTER the typhoon’ for ANY of us. So if we die tonight, at least we die happy, with full stomachs. If we get to the other side of the typhoon, tomorrow, we’ll worry about that when we get there. I began to feel the full seriousness of our predicament and appreciated how precariously balanced life on these islands could be. And I remembered Hapederes on Fais, stuffing his mouth and eating as if there were no tomorrow. Indeed, eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow..., who knows if there will **be** a tomorrow?”

Hoping for the best, preparing for the worst

As food preparations continued on, I noticed another thing: some people were starting to put on their best lavalava skirts and loincloths, clean and with bright colors, not faded or worn with use. Others, I also noticed, were wearing bead necklaces and flower garlands and leis, and smearing their skin with orange *rang* turmeric powder, the stuff that also goes into curry. I could also smell various fragrances in air: aftershave lotion, perfume, and flowery Japanese Yanagiya pomade and Tanchō Chikku (Tanchō Tique) stick pomade. And someone had washed with flowery-scented Camay soap. This was getting quite fancy, as if we were preparing for an island festival, though it hardly seemed time for that. I asked what was going on.

“As I said earlier,” my informant told me, “none of us knows if we’re still going to be around tomorrow, if we’re going to survive the night. If worst comes to worst and we don’t make it, we are ready to be buried, looking our best.” As we faced what might be our last night — ever — I was impressed at how the Satawalese moved purposefully forward, making the best of a bad situation.

Early in its development (May 15-18), Typhoon Pamela had circled Chuuk lagoon in a counterclockwise loop, but on May 17 (Monday), Typhoon Olga in the Philippine Sea moved westward, and a high pressure ridge between Olga and Pamela relaxed,

allowing Pamela to swing north and then northwest. From 16:00 (4:00 p.m.) on May 18 (Tuesday) to 16:00 on May 19 (Wednesday), Pamela headed northwest at 16 kph (10 mph) ("Annual Typhoon Report 1976"). This direction was fortunate, if it continued, because Satawal is almost directly west of Chuuk lagoon, and that course would take Pamela to the north of Satawal.

That night at 22:00 (10:00 p.m.) of May 19 (Wednesday) Pamela reached super-typhoon intensity with winds 240 kph (67 m/s or 150 mph), with gusts up to 290 kph (82 m/s or 184 mph), but by that time if my interpretation of the weather charts is correct, Pamela had passed to the north of Satawal around 18:00 (6:00 p.m.) at a distance of about 392 km (245 mi). The typhoon would maintain this intensity over the next 18 hours, but Satawal was spared and damage was not that significant, as the typhoon continued its northwest track, heading for Guam, where it would bring great destruction with winds of up to 220 kph (61 m/s or 140 mph). It destroyed some 3,300 houses on Guam and significantly damaged 3,200 others ("Red Cross Unit").

In the end, the typhoon came to nothing more than a close call for Satawal, but that was about as close to the abyss as I would ever want to come. Having gone through the experience, though, I had had the privilege of seeing how Satawalese faced their fate with cool equanimity and came to understand food is to be eaten when it is there and available: one does not know what tomorrow will bring or if there will even be a tomorrow.

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Ken Kuroiwa with Mariana Leraegliig, a Satawalese woman on Saipan who was also with him during Typhoon Pamela on Satawal, demonstrating the importance of accepting Carolinian food hospitality, which is exactly what he was doing at the moment, even though he had eaten a full meal just 30 minutes earlier.

Ken Kuroiwa majored in Linguistics and German at UC Berkeley and studied in Germany. After graduation, he joined the Peace Corps and lived on Fais Island in Yap District (1967-70). From 1968-71, he served as Peace Corps language coordinator for Ulithian, Woleaian, and Satawalese, which he learned thanks to being marooned on Satawal for a time. This led to his return there in 1976 for research on Satawalese out of the University of Hawai'i. Since 1981, he has lived in Japan, where he teaches at Saitama Women's Junior College. His other interests include Japanese American immigrant history, Hawai'ian language and culture, and Satawalese canoe voyaging.

Apmam Tiempo Ti Uli'e Hit (Long Time No See): Chamorro Diaspora and the Transpacific Home

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Abstract: *Within Pacific Islands Studies, there is an abundance of research and creative work that discusses the historical movement of Pacific Islanders from their home islands to new host countries. Lacking in this rich epistemology are the experiences of Chamorros. With Guam's political status as a United States territory, Chamorros have been moving off island in large numbers since after World War II through military service. Naval cities, like San Diego, California, have a thriving Chamorro community that has its own communal spaces and social organizations. It is within these spaces that light can be shed on the stories, experiences, and memories of this migrant group. By analyzing the logos and symbols associated with the Chamorro nonprofit organization, CHE'LU Inc, and the social organization, The Sons and Daughters of Guam Club, the history of Chamorro migration can fit into the larger discourse of Oceanic migration.*

Introduction

For some Chamorros, the idea that their diasporic community can have meaningful ties to their homeland may have seemed questionable. As a Chamorro woman who was born and raised within the United States, I can understand the perception that some islanders in the Mariana Islands and even within the United States may have about my positionality as a diasporic Chamorro. Being raised around a diverse population on land that is not my own can leave Chamorros in the Marianas grappling with the strong feelings I have towards my home island and my indigenous identity. Chamorros have been migrating to San Diego, California since the early 1930s. It is here that I have been fortunate enough to have social and cultural resources that have helped bring Chamorros together for various events throughout the county.

One such organization that is the backbone of the Chamorro community in San Diego is, The Sons and Daughters of Guam Club. My earliest memories of understanding that my ethnic roots were different from others in San Diego came through the context of the Guam Club. This Chamorro owned and ran organization, quickly became the central meeting place for Chamorros throughout San Diego County since the early 1960s. As much as I remember the events, gossip,

and memories associated with the Guam Club, my earliest thoughts of it goes back to the drive leading up to the property. The road to the club house would be crowded with cars, most of which would be adorned with car decals that said things like, “Chamorro Pride,” stated family names, or had the Guam flag on it.

These identity markers are not uncommon to see around American cities with larger Pacific Islander populations, however I was always impressed to see so many of these decals from Guam in one space. Seeing these cars would indicate that it was time for me to get ready to catch a glimpse of the main gate to the club grounds. The gate was made of iron and had the outline of large latte stones on both sides of it. Across the top of the gate was an arch that read, “The Sons and Daughters of Guam Club.” The entry way not only framed the clubhouse but it framed the lower canyon of San Diego’s “Diamond District¹.” I did not understand the role of a latte (also latde) stone in being the pillars of our ancient homes nor did I have any real conceptual framework to understand the importance of having a space for my Chamorro community to socialize and organize within. Even with these limitations, I knew that the Guam Club had been a constant space within my family. It was here that I was able to interact with the larger Chamorro community in San Diego. The Guam Club allowed me to be an active participant in events that were culturally significant to us and helped me to start to formulate my own ideas about Chamorro migration and indigeneity.

My introduction to Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity, also known as Che’lu, was during my undergraduate education. As I became more involved within my Ethnic Studies and Critical Gender Studies course work, I began looking for ways to be more active within my own Chamorro community.

Originally, I was searching for a Chamorro organization that I could volunteer for on the weekends. I wanted to become reacquainted with my Chamorro community that I often felt cut off from in my education. Once I was introduced to Che’lu, I learned quickly that this nonprofit was more than just a social space. Che’lu became a vehicle for me to grow as a scholar and activist. It was there that I began to see the complexities of the Chamorro diaspora. Chamorro men who had retired from the Navy would help with language classes and canoe building. For many

¹ San Diego’s Fourth District, also known as the “Diamond District,” is a gem-shaped area that is home to over 88,000 residents. This area is known to be one of the most diverse neighborhoods within San Diego.

years, I associated their faded green military tattoos and their hats that depicted what ship they served in the navy as markers of being a trader.

I learned quickly that even though the military moved many Chamorros from the Mariana Islands to naval cities like San Diego, they are more than the jobs and routes of migration they took years ago. Che'lu helped me learn more about what Chamorros in San Diego are facing and how this diasporic group articulates their identity away from their home islands.

Goals of This research

My paper will use the lens of militarism and indigenous articulations to investigate Chamorro migration and the articulated identities that have been created within this diaspora in San Diego, California. I use visual imagery and design to examine how two Chamorro organizations, The Sons and Daughters of Guam Club and Che'lu (Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity) Inc, construct a home away from home. Through the settlement of Chamorros in San Diego, California, I expose how this Chamorro diasporic group creates spaces and identities that are unique yet strongly rooted in the Mariana Islands.

One purpose for pursuing this research is to understand the effects of out migration of Chamorros from the Mariana Islands. With the overwhelming presence of the United States' military in the Marianas, the process of enlisting Chamorros into military service has become a viable and many times encouraged option for Chamorros looking for work. After the Second World War, Chamorros struggled with participating in a cash economy and living up to the expectation of earning wage employment. Along with this new economic system, more and more islanders were beginning to graduate for high school. This situation made it so that the military remained the most feasible option for Chamorros who were not continuing with their education or could not get hired on island. The first large influx of Chamorros into the armed forces began, "When the U.S. Congress passed the Organic Act in 1950 and the Chamorros became American citizens, inductions of young Chamorro men into the armed services increased dramatically, especially when the Korean War began...." (Underwood, 167)

Through this easily accessible and normalized career choice, the United States military has played a vital role in the out migration of Chamorros from the Mariana Islands, especially from Guam, to militarized cities like San Diego, California. With Chamorros now serving in the military, "This military link to movement abroad was

phenomenal, and three quarters of all Chamorros living outside of Guam have been estimated as being currently or previously associated with the armed services.” (Underwood, 167) Even though movement of Chamorros to San Diego is partially resulted from the U.S. military, I want to show how Chamorros are not reducible to the militarized space in which they live in and the work that they do.

Another purpose that drives this paper is to add to the larger discourse surrounding the United States’ presence in the Mariana Islands. With much of the political, academic, and mundane discussions being centered on a large military buildup approaching Guam’s shores from Okinawa, the U.S. presence and the usage of the island are being reexamined. What is missing from this vital point in Chamorro history is the Chamorro diasporic voice.

There cannot be a full understanding of the effects of militarism of Chamorros and the militarization of the Marianas without incorporating the lived experiences of the diasporic Chamorro communities that have migrated out due to the military. Highlighting this specific group in San Diego allows ideas surrounding the military’s role in Chamorro lives to expand beyond the borders of the Marianas into communities far beyond the islands. This paper will add another crucial element within the already complicated conversation of U.S. presence in Oceania.

I hope that my paper will not only add to the current political discourse in regards to U.S. imperialism in the Mariana Islands, but that it will strengthen Chamorro voices in the diaspora. I want my work to show that the ideas, concerns, and hopes of Chamorros living away from their islands are justified and needed. In Guam, there are sovereignty and anti-military organizations, like We Are Guahan and Famoksaiyan, which were formed by and spearheaded by Chamorros who left Guam for their college education. It was within these diasporic experiences that they began to understand their Chamorro identity as important and something worth fighting for. I think there is something very valuable in looking at the diasporic experiences that Chamorros abroad are having. Today there are more Chamorros living away from their home islands than on them. I hope my project shows that the islanders abroad add to the rich story of Chamorro history. Within in the Mariana Islands, there are 50,000 Chamorros. This may seem like a significant number however, there are a total of 5,000 Chamorros in Hawaii and another 90,000 in mainland United States.² I hope my work can help Chamorros in the Mariana Islands and in the diaspora come to understand one another and see each

² [Chamorro Population of the United States](#), 2000 Census of Population and Housing.

other as a larger community. This can make it easier for Chamorros as a whole to work together to address many issues that we face moving into the future.

The importance of my paper is that it has the potential to be of value to a variety of audiences. For Pacific Islands Studies, my piece would offer further insight to approaching Oceania as an ever-expanding space. Examining Chamorro migration and its diaspora adds to the idea of Pacific Islanders as a mobile people that are flexible in times of pressure and change. For the wider American population, it is important that they be made aware of the continued U.S. colonialism in Oceania and how it affects islanders today. This includes introducing this population to Chamorros fight for sovereignty and land rights. This project can also show a general American audience the resilience and pride that Chamorros have in their Pacific roots despite the struggles that they have faced.

Finally, this paper can be significant for Chamorros living both on and off of their islands. I want to change the current framework of Chamorro critical work to put into conversation the importance of ones ethnic roots, not just the experiences of those who are physically located on the island. I want Chamorros abroad to see my piece as inclusive of their lived experiences and celebrate their complex personhood. Chamorros living within the Mariana Islands can have a means to understanding the different struggles and triumphs Chamorros away from home deal with in a new cultural and geographic context. This documented story will only add to and strengthen our Chamorro history.

History of Chamorros in San Diego, California



For the Sons and Daughters of Guam Club, their logo has become their marker within the Chamorro community in San Diego County. Even though the Guam Club's logo does give some insight about the club, much of its message comes from interpretation. At the center of the design, Guam and California are seen from a bird's eye view on a blue background. It is as if they are two islands on an Oceanic map. Seeing the two landmasses placed next to each other calls to the idea of Pacific Islanders as a mobile people. Long ago, Pacific Islanders saw Oceania as:

“A large world in which peoples and cultures moved and mingled, unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. From one island to another they sailed to trade and to marry, thereby expanding social networks for greater flows of wealth.” (Hau’ofa, 33)

Today, it is more common for Pacific Islanders to navigate Oceania or other geographic spaces via the air. For Chamorros, the airplane is called, “batkon aire,” which literally translates to, “air boat.” (Topping, 220) The usage of airplanes has allowed Chamorros to move beyond the Mariana Islands and expand their Oceania into the United States. The Guam Club’s decision to have Guam and California floating next to each other in their logo speaks to the ever-expanding, borderless space of the Mariana Islands.

Along with Guam and California being depicted as islands, they are also drawn to the same scale. This can be interpreted as the club members seeing the relationship that they have to their island as relevant and important to their new home state. In Robert Underwood’s piece, “On Being Chamorro,” he states that the Chamorros living in San Diego are, “Borrowing liberally from the ethnic movements that abound in the U.S., they too seek to reaffirm their roots.” (Underwood, 9)

It is through such spaces as the Guam Club that these Chamorros abroad are able to speak back to their homeland and have a place to fulfill their cultural needs and obligations. “Because of their comparatively small number in relation to the total population, their familiarity with American life-styles and culture, and the pattern of suburban life in California, Chamorro neighborhoods are neither necessary nor possible.” (Underwood, 174) Since newly settled Chamorros did not live in clusters within San Diego County, they used the Guam Club as a space to socialize and reaffirm their cultural roots. Since many of the Guam Club members are *man’amko* (elderly), there has yet to be formal Guam Club website established on the internet. Without access to the mission statement of the Guam Club, online forums give some indication of the social draw of the club.

On Yelp.com, one user writes about Chamorros in San Diego, “Where do they go for culture besides their grandparents? The Guam Club!” Another user lists different memories that she has of the club. She writes of, “Dinner dances and Sunday brunches, kelaguen and red rice and BBQ, Liberation Queens,

Fundraisers, Pugua and pupululu leaves, muffled laughter as old women sing those Chamoru songs way too loud and off key....”³

It is through these comments that one can see how the lines between Guam and California become blurred at the Guam Club. For Chamorros who utilize the organization’s space, socialization amongst other Chamorros is essential. It becomes easy to understand the reasoning behind having Guam and California draw to the same scale for this migrant group.

Between the two landmasses is the Guam seal, which is the same size as the “islands” around it. The first thing that struck me about the seal is that the image inside of it is painted incorrectly. It is physically impossible to be positioned on the island and get that scene of cliff in the background, also known as Two Lovers’ Point. In Christine Taitano Delisle’s dissertation that discusses the relationship of navy wives to Chamorro women during the United States’ acquisition of Guam, she states that, “Helen Paul designed and sketched the blueprint for the Guam flag” (Delisle, 168).

Helen Paul was a navy wife that constructed the Guam seal in a way that she found visually appealing through her hobby of photography. Seeing it between Guam and California, the seal seems to speak to military link that mobilized many Chamorros to San Diego in the first place. What is also interesting is that there is no seal or flag for California. This could be the case because the club is trying to emphasize its relationship to Guam rather than its relationship to its new home in San Diego.

Moving toward the outer portion of the logo, my eye follows the name of the club around the entire image. Immediately I noticed that everything on the logo is in English. Many of the Chamorro groups in San Diego have recently incorporated a phrase, at the very least a word, in Chamorro into their logos. The language and word choices definitely speak to the time when the Guam Club was first beginning to move to San Diego. The agenda of Chamorros just moving from Guam to San Diego in the 1950s and 1960s was very different from what newly created Chamorro groups in the San Diego area are trying to address today. During this first big influx of Chamorros to San Diego,

“participation in the social group, Chamorros receive a reaffirmed sense of cultural identity and heritage....the social group not only provides

³ [Sons and Daughters of Guam Club.](#)

roots and reaffirms a sense of identity, but it functions as a means in itself to sustain group life. Often, social obligations are more important to an islander than school or job obligations.” (Munoz, 64)

Many during the 1950s were looking to get adjusted to life in the United States in a time where, “their personal contacts there are viewed as people of exotic interest.” (Underwood, 175) Even with that being recognized, using the phrase, “Sons and Daughters of Guam,” speaks to the connections that the club members were trying to keep open and alive with their motherland. It also shows the types of Chamorros that were on the move to military cities like San Diego. There is no mention of the other Chamorros that might have roots in the Common Wealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Prior to the Treaty of Paris, Guam and the Northern Marianas Islands were seen and governed by the Spanish as one unified chain of islands. After the Spanish American war, the United States kept Guam and sold the Northern Mariana Islands to the Japanese. (Camacho, 15) Since then, Guam and the CNMI have been governed as separate entities, even though the people that are native to these islands are linked culturally and ethnically.

With the Sons and Daughters of Guam club seen as a social space, there was a push to have an educational and cultural component added to the organization. In the 2005, Che’lu (Chamorro Hands in Education Links Unity) Inc. was created as the Guam Club’s non-profit organization. Its mission, “is dedicated to the Chamorro community by strengthening our native language, culture and health through education.”⁴ Due to conflict, the two organizations split, however looking at Che’lu’s original logo, one can see its links to the Guam Club.



Like the Guam Club’s logo, Che’lu chose a round design that has the name of the organization encircling the center image. Inside of the logo are white hands reaching out to the Mariana Islands that look to be incased within our ancient home pillars, also known as latte stones. Rather than focusing on Guam or any particular island as the center of the organization, Che’lu works to acknowledge Chamorro roots.

From the perspective of the viewer, it looks as though the hands are reaching out to its homeland that can be either interpreted as the islands or the foundation to our

⁴ [Che’lu](#)

ancestral homes, the latte stone. The latte stone (with the Mariana Islands inside of it) looks to be on a globe. The background is a blue grid. Like the Guam Club's design, Che'lu's logo is constructing imagery that calls to home from a distant place. Che'lu's logo does not have California placed or mentioned anywhere on it, however the outstretched hands indicate a longing of connection from the Chamorro diasporic community.



New Che'lu logo

In 2011, Che'lu redesigned the inner image of its logo to coincide with the planning of the third annual Chamorro Cultural Festival. In some ways the new logo is similar to the original insignia. The organization kept the same round shape and used the name of the organization to border the emblem. The focal point of the logo continues to be a latte stone, however what is depicted around it has changed. Rather than being placed on what seemed to be a globe, the latte stone now has lines coming out from behind. One could interpret the beams as rays of sunshine or perhaps that the latte stone itself is shining.

Reminiscent of a sunset, this setting could be seen as the viewer looking home. The middle of the logo could call to the idea that at the end of the day, Chamorros still look to their ancestral land and regard it as home.

What makes this logo very different from Che'lu's original design and the Guam Club's insignia is that where there used to be islands depicted now is a figure of a man. The man has his hair cut in the style of ancient Chamorros and the muscular figure is reaching his hands out toward the latte stone. Again this could be interpreted as the Chamorro figure reaching back to his islands. What is interesting about this change is the decision to move away from using islands and incorporating a hypermasculine body in the logo. With Che'lu, the emphasis has been a Chamorro ethnic identity rather than any island specifics. Perhaps another symbol, practice, or idea that can link Chamorros together in a meaningful way other than using a latte stone.

Within ancient Chamorro society, "Descent within the clan was reckoned through the female line. This matrilineal principle conferred power and prestige on Chamorro women." (Souder, 44) The maga'haga (oldest women) in clan held the

highest rank within society along with maga'lahi (oldest man). It is interesting that a muscular male figure is a major component of the logo. Currently there are ten women serving as board of directors in Che'lu. This is in stark contrast to the two men who are serving as board of directors. The current president of Che'lu is also a woman who has been in the organization for a few years.⁵ Even though the patriarchal culture of Spain and the United States has had influence on the Marianas Islands, "Chamorro women play a pivotal role, indeed an essential one, in sustaining the family and perpetuating traditions which form the core of Chamorro identity....Chamorro women do hold significant and powerful positions in Chamorro society structure today." (Souder, 46)

With Chamorro woman historically being the central figure in the household and continuing to run organizations like Che'lu, having this male body in the logo can erase the role and importance of the woman who make up the organization and larger Chamorro population in San Diego.



It is thought provoking to juxtapose the Guam Club and Che'lu logos to the Chamorro Cultural Fest's flyer.

The Chamorro Cultural Festival takes place in March to coincide with Chamorro Month in Guam. Thousands of Chamorros gather together to share in food, art, performances, and other activities. When looking at the flyer, the desire to draw a crowd to the event can be seen in the layout and design. Where there was a lot of room for interpretation in the Guam Club and Che'lu logos, the flyer tries to guide its audience's eye more formally. The design comes across as incorporating different aspects of island life. In a

⁵ [Che'lu Board of Directors](#)

way, perhaps this is a means for Che'lu event to call to their pan-Pacific ties. For many diasporic groups in the United States, "solidifying under panethnic umbrellas (i.e. Latino panethnicity, pan-Indianism, pan-Africanism, pan-Asian, pan-Pacific), colonised groups can reclaim their destinies and enhance their empowerment." (Perez, 476)

With Che'lu working along side many other Pacific groups and having connections to non-Pacific organizations, depicting an island scene can be a way to show solidarity and similarities to other Pacific Islanders. As possible as this intention may be, this type of format is also very reminiscent of tourist advertisements.

Perhaps Chamorros within Che'lu have internalized the long history of the Marianas being represented by outsiders in travel brochures, tour guides, etc. The touristy flyer is no longer a bird's eye view of the island; rather the scene is of a romantic beach, absent of any native bodies. The viewer of the flyer is looking out to latte stones and the open ocean. For Chamorros, latte stones are understood to be foundation to our homes. "A latte house offered these advantages: a long lasting structure, protections, ventilation, and prestige." (Cunningham, 50)

Throughout Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, latte stones, differing in size depending on one's societal status, were used as pillars for A-framed shaped homes. They were often built parallel to a river, not next to the open ocean. Knowing what the latte stones were used for, but seeing them in a different area from where they would usually be found could have some Chamorros scratching their heads. Since many people outside of the Mariana Islands do not understand the meaning of the latte stones, the average San Diegan might wonder why large stones are the focal point of the flyer. Currently, in both the Chamorro diaspora and within the Mariana Islands, latte stones have become identity markers for Chamorros. With the Chamorro Cultural Festival celebrating Chamorro culture and the Marianas as home, perhaps Che'lu should find another symbol that better represents Chamorro mobility.⁶ With Che'lu's participation in the revitalization of Chamorro sea navigation with the building of a Sakman, or Chamorro Flying Proa, a Sakman might speak better to the profound movement of Chamorros throughout the United States today.

The Chamorro Cultural Festival is inclusive of all the islands that Chamorros come from. It is apparent in the flags shown and in using Chamorro as the major reason

⁶ "[The promise of latte stones](#)." Craig Santos Perez. *Marianas Variety*: Friday, 13 Jan. 2012.

for the festival. There are a few Chamorro words here and there on the flyer to help with that theme. Having the design say, “Tungo’ Chamorro,” meaning know Chamorro or have knowledge of Chamorro, shows the mission of the festival. The flyer does a good job in putting aside island differences and embracing ethnic roots. Having a young Chamorro boy looking into the distance, towards the Marianas shows how the festival is trying to reach out and celebrate the Marianas as home. The Chamorro Cultural Festival is similar to the Che’lu logo in that it is inclusive of all Chamorros, regardless of which Mariana Island the person calls home. At the same time, the Chamorro Cultural Festival flyer seems to be speaking to a non-Chamorro audience. With information about winning a trip to Guam being bigger than the information about the festival’s activities, the target audience comes into question.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to understand the effects of out migration and the diasporic communities of Chamorros from the Mariana Islands have created. With the overwhelming presence of the United States’ military in the Marianas, the process of enlisting Chamorros into military service has become a possible career for Chamorros looking to make a living. Even though movement of Chamorros to San Diego is partially resulted from the U.S. military, Chamorros are not reducible to the militarized space in which they live in and the work that they do. They flourish, create unique Chamorro identities, and form new networks within their Chamorro community. The Sons and Daughters of Guam Club and Che’lu Inc are just two examples of how Chamorros are negotiating their diasporic identity in the ever-expanding borders of the Marianas Islands.

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A Brief Historical Review of “Selected” Forces and Factors Which Have Impacted the Economy of the Northern Marianas

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***Abstract:** A survey of the economic development successes and difficulties of the Northern Mariana Islands. A review of the forces impacting upon the phenomenal burst of unprecedented economic growth in the mid-eighties followed by the sudden decline in economic activity in the nineties. Included are: Covenant funding, review of the tourism and garment sectors. Includes little known events such as the interpretation of the U.N.'s “favorite nation clause”; the selection of the first airline route award through the islands to Japan. Principle subjects addressed which have had a significant positive or negative impact upon the economy include: Pre-Commonwealth Period, Economic “Boom”, Land Alienation Restrictions - Article XII Influence on the Economy, Land Leased By Foreign Investors and Others, Real Estate Taxes, Non-resident Labor Force, Economic “Bust”, Japanese Investment Abandonment of the NMI, The Public Sector, “Selected” Economic Statistics.*

Introduction

This paper is an expanded version of an April 1999 submission published in the Journal of Pacific Society (Tokyo), entitled: “The Influence of History on the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' Relationship With The United States and the Area's Recent Development.” (Cited in source).

Every effort has been made by the author to present the most current and accurate data available at the time of publication. However, there may still be discrepancies in some subject data when comparing information generated from different sources in which case the information may still be useful when considered as being “indicative.”

In the Northern Marianas economics can rarely be entirely separated from politics and politics from history and geography. It is in consideration of this backdrop that interacting forces have been in play over the time span framed in this review.

NMI's Pre - War Period Under Japan

Several years before the Pacific war (1937) there were 4,145 indigenous islanders and 19,540 Japanese in the Northern Marianas, (Bowers, Neal M.). A thriving fishing industry had developed which could boast an annual catch of 4.4 million pounds of bonito and tuna. Fishing boats of up to one hundred feet in length were constructed in Garapan.

A sugar industry developed and occupied 68 percent of the arable land on Saipan, 80 percent on Tinian and 33 percent on Rota, a result of many years of labor on the part of the Japanese. The Japanese subsidized both agriculture and fishing. The amount of this support in 1931 to the sugar industry alone totaled 531,346 yen (Yanaihara). Sixty miles of primary road and a narrow gauge rail line traversed Saipan. By the time the dark clouds of war had gathered over the western Pacific, some 29,692 Japanese military personnel were garrisoned on Saipan.

Islands Stripped From Japan

After little more than three and one-half years of war and following the defeat of Japan in 1945 and that nation's loss of its Pacific island territories previously entrusted under a League of Nations mandate, the United States decided not to exercise victor's rights and annex the Islands. Of concern was that the Soviet Union might consider such an acquisition as a precedent for annexing the northern islands of Japan which it had invaded just days before the end of the conflict.

By December, 1946 all surviving aliens and Japanese military personnel had been repatriated and the evacuation of Marianas was completed. American authorities did not permit the Japanese to return to any island south of 30 degrees latitude north for many years following the conclusion of hostilities.

The islands were temporarily placed under the administration of the US Navy where they would later be considered a "strategic trust" within the United Nation's Security Council once that body was organized. The islands were to remain under Navy jurisdiction until 1957 afterward to be administered by the US Department of Interior for the U. N as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands until a more permanent political entity evolved as a reflection of the will of the local people.

The islands of the Northern Marianas would be the last of the World War II battlefields to begin the reconstruction of their destroyed Japanese based economy many years after the end of Pacific hostilities. The Japanese would not reappear in the Northern Marianas in any number until around 1976.

United Nations Involvement

The United Nations became involved in the islands since the Northern Marianas had never been recognized as a permanent legal possession of Japan at the time of the Pacific war since being stripped from defeated Germany by the Allied Powers after World War One and assigned to Japan under a mandate from the League of Nations. The islands' status did not change after they were occupied by United States armed forces in 1944. Because the Northern Marianas had no recognized political identity they were never regarded as a permanent possession within the exclusive sovereignty of any nation, except, of course, by Japan when it left the League in 1936 several years before the outbreak of World War II.

At the conclusion of the Second World War the United States turned the islands over to the newly formed United Nations, the successor of the defunct League of Nations, for administration by the US Government for the U.N.'s Security Council.

Being a trust territory under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council where the United States had veto power. The US, as the administering authority under Article 6 of the Trusteeship Agreement accepted the obligation to: "foster the development of such political institutions as are suited to the trust territory and shall promote the development of the inhabitants of the trust territory toward self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the trust territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned

Author and college instructor, Sam McPhetres, the NMI historical authority on political issues notes that, "reports rendered to the United Nations first started in 1947 when the US military administration was responsible for the territory. The Navy continued to prepare the reports until 1951 when the trust territory administration was assigned to the US Interior Department. However, in 1952, Saipan, Tinian and the northern islands were administered as Saipan district and again placed under the Naval administration (and NTTU/CIA). Separate reports were made to the UN until 1962 When President Kennedy canceled the NTTU program and the trust territory was reunified under the Interior Department along lines recommended by the Solomon Report (below). The report of the 1961 Trusteeship Council visiting mission basically 'blew the cover' of the Naval administration in the Northern Marianas."

A radical turnabout accompanied a critical U.N. visiting committee report and the decolonization movement in the early 1960's. National Security Action Memorandum No. 145, signed by President Kennedy, formalized the goal of attempting to permanently incorporate Micronesia into the US state structure. The results of a task force assigned to develop recommendations on how to achieve that goal was termed the Solomon Report, which clearly laid out a strategy for the United States. The US would inject large amounts of money into Micronesia, build a community-service infrastructure, establish a host of development programs and a dependency upon cash, hold a plebiscite at the point at which the Micronesians' hopes had been raised, and then pull back support as the various development programs failed to succeed.

Time and Distance as Development Constraints

Before the widespread use of commercial jet aircraft, travel from Hawaii to the isolated islands of the Northern Marianas required many exhausting hours. In the early fifties a flight from Honolulu to Wake Island required about nine and one half hours. From Wake to Saipan was still eight hours further. Hawaii is 3,226 nautical miles from Saipan. San Francisco 5,300 n. miles.

During the period from (circa) 1951 to 1962, Saipan's isolation provided a convenient location for the US Navy to close off the island to keep secret its Naval Tactical Training Unit (NTTU) operated by the CIA during the Cold War to train insurgents for covert operations in Communist Asia.

President Kennedy ordered the training station closed in 1962. Little is publicly known of this period. (Saipan Tribune Archives, Dec. 24, 2004, "Cold War Covert Activities - Saipan").

By 1965, twenty years after the war, there was only one bank in the Marianas with 4,016 accounts with aggregate savings of \$562,000 within a population of 10,466. The private sector consisted of 55 licensed businesses with total assets estimated at slightly less than \$2 million. Only 957 privately owned vehicles were registered. The single credit union had a membership of 277 with total assets of \$19,700. The 1,056 employed indigenous workers in the islands had wages that totaled \$1.5 million annually. The Trust Territory Government, with its large expatriate payroll, was the major employer.

The total annual US financial contribution for both capital improvements and government operations for the administration of the entire six districts of the Trust Territory, including the NMI for a number of years prior to 1970 was \$10 million. This financial support was increased to \$60 million in 1970.

While the Northern Marianas were under the control of the Japanese from 1914 until 1944 its southern neighbor, Guam, had been an American Territory since being acquired from Spain as a result of the Spanish American War in 1898. Following the 1945 conclusion of World War II hostilities an attempt to unite the two different political entities in 1969 was rejected by Guam voters.

Unlike Guam, the Northern Marianas' economy remained undeveloped for thirty-three years following the war. Partly as a result of isolation and later (until 1973) as a result of American policy exercised on the basis of the "most favored nation" clause within Article 8 (1) of the U.N. Trusteeship Agreement for the Former Japanese Mandated Islands.

Until 1973 the policy to prohibit non American investment was referred to as the "denial principle." The United States Government appeared not to particularly interested in the islands except for Saipan and its training base for the Central Intelligence Agency's covert operations identified and the Naval Technical Training Unit (NTTU) and did not wish to encourage investment from the nationals of other countries. The administering authority interpreted the U.N. Trusteeship Article 8 (1) in such a manner to be an effective tool to prohibit foreign investment. This policy also precluded Japanese businesses from re-establishing in the Marianas and the other islands of Micronesia which were administered under the Trusteeship Agreement. It was largely through the efforts of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and a dynamic business leader, David M. Sablan, at a meeting held at the Royal Taga Hotel in December, 1972 that the United States was convinced of the need to relax its policy and open the islands to foreign investment.

Once the United States changed its policy toward outside investors there was still a strong desire by a somewhat xenophobic Congress of Micronesia to continue to control the introduction of foreign capital into the islands. This body, in which the Marianas District was a member at the time, had enacted a rather stringent and restrictive Foreign Investor's Business Permit Act. This law remained in force in the Northern Marianas until it was repealed 1983. The door was then opened to investment from all nations with few controls to regulate outside capital.

NMI Desire for Close Political Association With The US

For a while during the period when the Marianas District was included within the Government Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands {Micronesia, viz., the Marshalls is., Ponape (Pohnpei), Truk (Chuuk), Yap and Palau (Belau)}, the United States attempted to negotiate with all the islands as a single administrative unit. While this report is not intended to be a treatise on the political history of the islands at that time the future political status desired by the Northern Marianas was expressed as being in close political association with the United States much closer than that desired of the other islands.

For a while the US continued to negotiate with all the island representatives as a unit possibly for administrative convenience. It was to be of no avail.

To impress upon the United States that the Northern Marianas wanted talks for a future political status separate from that of the other island entities it might be said that someone or some people (the identities remain unknown to this day), would make the point to the US negotiators in a fashion so obvious that it could not be misunderstood.

On February 19, 1971 the Marianas District Legislature passed Resolution 30-1971 which threatened secession from Trust Territory by force of arms if necessary. The next day, (February 20) the Congress of Micronesia legislative chambers on Saipan's Capitol Hill were mysteriously destroyed by arson.

Still there was no change in the position of the US negotiators who apparently, either did not get the message or ignored it if they did that the NMI wanted separate talks from those conducted with the rest of the Pacific islands and on November 30, 1971 Trust Territory High Commissioner Edward Johnston's home on Saipan was set ablaze by arsonist while he and his wife were off island.

Against this backdrop during the 4th Round of Micronesian Status Negotiations in Koror; Palau on April 2, 1972 the Northern Mariana Islands again asked for separate negotiations. This time the US representatives got the message. On April 12, 1972 the United States finally agreed to the Northern Mariana Islands request for separate status negotiations after which on May 19 the Marianas District Legislature enacted District Law 3-124, establishing Marianas Political Status Commission.

This episode is interesting to this observer as it should be noted that to make the point it was the symbols of the Trust Territory Government which were destroyed by arson. Left intact and untouched were symbols of America, the Post Offices, Pan Am Offices, US Coast Guard Station and the Coca Cola plant.

The people of the Marianas were the first of all the former Trust Territory entities to decide their future political identity. They decided to enter into a Commonwealth arrangement in political union with the United States. In all of Micronesia they were the only island group to seek and receive so close an arrangement.

As the future would unfold the Northern Marianas' association with the US would result in massive injections of hundreds of millions of dollars. However, as late as the summer of 1970 the islands were almost devoid of the amenities of the twentieth century. There was one black and white television channel available broadcasting only a few hours each evening; only three food stores of any size with a very limited inventory; one cargo vessel a month called at the port; the airport was an open air tin-shack and there were no recreational craft in the lagoon. There were only two small hotels, the Royal Taga where the elegant Diamond Hotel, later renamed the World Resort Hotel now stands in Susupe and the Hafa Adai Hotel in Garapan. The number of island restaurants could be counted on one hand. There were very few automobiles on the island and those consisted mostly of second hand, rusted pick-ups. The Fire Department had a single red jeep and there was only one stop sign on Saipan's roadways. To make an overseas telephone call one had to drive to the RCA office in Susupe. The economy was minuscule.

To even think of a tourism based economy in 1970 was an unimaginable dream since the Japanese could only convert yen to its equivalent of \$743. A round trip ticket to Guam purchased at the Pan American Airline office, or from Continental Air Micronesia, was \$28. The purchasing power of the dollar at the time would be equal to a little less than 10 cents today. Only 2,376 vehicles were registered including those of the Trust Territory and district governments. Gasoline was 38 cents a gallon; rice was 13 cents per pound. A rent-a-car was \$2.50 a day.

There were 55 businesses in the Northern Marianas employing 673 people. The total annual government revenue was only \$433,334 and the islands' exports amounted to a measly \$254,635. There was no private sector economy worth mentioning, no tourism, no garment factories, only government jobs for the most part.

By 1980 the Commonwealth still had no economy of any measurable size, indeed, a very prominent businessman, (Joe Screen of the J. C. Tenorio Enterprise), remarked that he thought the Commonwealth's economy “had a black hand over it.” In those days in appeared the NMI, like the “economic basket cases” elsewhere in Micronesia which were previously part of the Trust Territory would forever remain a stagnate backwater. Aside from the obvious handicaps of no natural mineral resources, poor agricultural soils, a fragmented domestic market (three inhabited islands) and being an area subjected to the uncertainty of devastating typhoons. Some also considered the islands of the Commonwealth had one other disadvantage the handicap of a small indigenous population and thus a limited human resource base. It was thought this single fact, unless it could somehow be overcome, would forever “cap” development and doom the islands to the 1980 level of under development.

Economic “Take-off”

In 1985 two events occurred that had the potential to change the economy. One event was local, the other international. In 1985 as result of the Plaza Accords held in New York hotel between US monetary officials and their counterparts in France, Germany, the UK and Japan the dollar was devalued in relation to the yen there - by doubling the size of the Japanese economy overnight which provided the Japanese with more money than could be absorbed in their own economy. The dollar versus the yen declined by 51 percent. Japanese investment flooded into the islands in amounts estimated to be about \$750 million, primarily in the tourist sector.

This investment was soon accompanied by a number of foreign owned garment industries not necessarily stimulated by the above devaluation for reasons described below. Both types of investment resulted in the importation of large numbers of non resident workers. This was where the above factors came into play resulting in an “economic takeoff.”

The above presented a tremendous opportunity to finally, after decades of a low standard of living and limited business opportunities, to attempt to strive for the achievement of some degree of limited economic self sufficiency. The American Government's action was directly responsible for a flood tide of Japanese investment into the Commonwealth primarily in hotels and tourist related services. A garment industry would follow.

However, the limitations placed on the area by a small local population still had to be overcome. This was solved by the importation of alien workers without which no measurable development could ever occur. Applications for nonresident work permits soared from 2,866 in 1980 to 21,452 by 1990 primarily to provide skilled labor for the garment industry which had established itself in the islands to take advantage of duty free entry to the vast United States market.

Tourism

The first “semi- full” service tourist hotel on Saipan was the 56 room Royal Taga at Susupe built by Ken and Bob Jones of Guam who must be considered leaders in the tourist industry in the Northern Marianas Islands. This was followed by the J.C. Tenorio's Hafa Ada Hotel in Garapan first consisting of ten plywood bungalows and a beach-side Tepanyaki restaurant.

The tourism industry in the Northern Marianas was also greatly aided by the Trust Territory Government's policy in 1973 to award the air routes through Micronesia from Hawaii to Guam and on to Japan to the air carrier that would make substantial hotel investment in each of the then island district centers, a more substantial investment than merely “thatched huts.”

In the hotel “bid competition” for the route award, Continental Air Lines constructed the Continental Hotel – now the Hyatt Regency – and Pan Am constructed the Intercontinental Inn (now the Fiesta Resort & Spa). Investment in the latter was largely a result of Dave Sablan's involvement. He was instrumental in introducing the opportunity to Pan Am and other US hotel firms. The hotel was constructed in 1973 at the time of the world's first fuel oil crises. Continental Air Lines won the air route after both carriers built hotels on land leased from the Government for a fixed annual fee and a percentage of the gross income.

Those were the days when Continental Airline's “Air Mike” operated a 4 engine, 84 seat, DC 6 which flew with its own mechanic on board and operated from unlighted coral air strips with no control towers. Before landing the air craft flew low over the field to frighten any stray cattle which might have wandered onto the field.

As a result of the Plaza Accords the great boom period in Japan fueled Japanese investment in the island's hotel and tourist industry. The economy grew rapidly between 1986 and 1991 with many economic sectors registering average annual

growth rates of 16 percent across the board. The pace of investment was such that a level of development which normally would take 20 to 25 years to occur was squeezed into the short span of five or six years.

Located only some 1,272 miles from Japan, Saipan became that country's "Bermuda" as a travel destination supported by the country's ancestral relationship dating back to the thirties. During the economic "boom" years tourism dominated the private sector of the economy. The visitor industry grew from 976 hotel rooms in 1985 to 2,578 by 1991 for an increase of 164 percent. Visitor entries increased by 198 percent during the same period. Total earnings attributed to this sector in 1991 were estimated at \$434 million.

At the time the tourism industry supported a wide variety of businesses which developed to service the visitor. World-class hotels were constructed. A wide variety of restaurants, souvenir vendors, handicraft producers, automobile rental agencies, service stations, travel agencies, dive shops and ground tour agents were examples of the many businesses which opened on Saipan, very many of which were owned and operated by Asian investors. Many which now have closed their doors as a result of the economic "melt down."

Airlines which once served the Marianas en route to Southeast Asia from Hawaii during the Viet Nam War – all now long gone included: Pan American, Trans World Airlines, Braniff, South Pacific Airways, (SPIA) and Continental which still operates as United Airlines.

Some of the businesses that have been washed away on the Commonwealth's ebbing economic tide include: Hakubotan, the Lighthouse, Rudolph's, House of Taga, Ship Ashore, Micronesian Brew House, La Pergola Restaurant, Boca Boca Beer, Saipan Fruits Court, Sala Crystal, Coral Reef Marianas, Western Auto, Mac Handicraft Products, Pacific Rainbow Dairy, Daiwa Fishing, Captain's Lodge, Islander Inn, Marinas Trench Hotel, Marine Sports Hotel, Traveller's Motel, Pacific Gardenia, Cow Town, Diamond Jewelers, MOE Divers, Bon Marche, Submarine Maria, Chamorro Island Hut, Escolastica's, Tinian's Lone Star Casino and several newspapers including the Voice, Star and Review as well as a couple commuter airlines, numerous "Mom and Pop" stores, many construction firms, several travel agents and assorted ground tour operators – and before those – the small ramshackle bars, the Apollo 11, Josie's, Saipan Inn, Hamilton's and Micro Hut to recall only a few – all serving beer for 35 cents a bottle and free sashimi.

Garment Industry

Aside from the tourist industry, the garment industry developed as the other principal economic engine in the Northern Marianas generating a considerable multiplier effect throughout the economy.

The garment industry made its debut on Saipan in 1983. According to association president, Richard Pierce, FY 1999 witnessed the industry's peak year with sales of \$1.06 billion. The industry required approximately 14,500 nonresident workers at any given time from 1998 to 2005 while resident workers numbered about 2,500 during the same period. Payroll for non-residents in 1999 was approximately \$245 million. The industry led the economy in commodity export earnings and at its height numbered 34 factories benefiting from Headnote 3 (a) of the United States Tariff Schedules which permitted duty free entry into the US market.

During that period the economy was growing so fast in such an uncontrolled manner that in 1991 the Saipan Chamber of Commerce organized an economic conference billed as "Commonwealth 2000 - How Much Is Enough." it was an attempt to look several years ahead to the year 2000 in an attempt to determine the need to monitor and control what some perceived as "runaway growth."

The alarm bells set off were based on erroneous projections of visitor growth. It had been anticipated that more than one million visitors would be recorded at Commonwealth ports of entry by that distant year. At the time the "Asian crisis" was unforeseen and unanticipated by most observers who failed to keep abreast of conditions in Asia.

The third most dynamic sector of the economy was construction. One-third of the temporary alien workers in the islands were engaged within this economic activity.

It was the small local population base within a rapidly growing economy which necessitated the importation of such large numbers of foreign workers. This labor force was recruited precisely because the local labor supply could not meet the demand for workers. During the mid point of economic activity (1990) the 20,082 US citizens in the NMI represented 46.3 percent of the total population of 43,345 of which 23,263 were nonresidents.

The economic "boom period" stimulated a growing private sector which increasingly contributed to the government's internally generated revenues. Even

so, the CNMI Government remained the largest single employer of choice among the local population of working age. Of the many service business which cater to the three consumer markets, namely, the local US citizen population, foreign workers and visitors, many were (and still are) owned and operated by people of non CNMI descent. The majority of these businessmen and women are of Asian extraction some of whom are no doubt US citizens who largely replaced many of the former locally owned “Mom and Pop” small stores.

The economic “boom period” occurred without a plan and without any thought as to the unintended consequences on the society, on relations with the United States Government and on the long range viability of investment supported by imported workers that was encouraged to establish in the Commonwealth.

As recent as April 2001 in an edition of a local paper a prominent indigenous journalist lamented the attitude of some islanders who (and I paraphrase), appear to have been adversely influenced by “protectionist policies” of the local legislature which, according to the writer, fueled the poison of “disdain or hatred” toward those not of the island who have, never-the-less, established themselves in the Marianas. This was certainly a revealing statement from one who communicates in the vernacular offering an unusual and candid degree of insight from one who presumably has the pulse of many local islanders in the community who harbor such an attitude.

Land Alienation Restrictions - Article XII Influence on the Economy

During the administration of the islands, and starting around the early seventies, efforts were undertaken by the Trust Territory Government to prepare the islands for an eventual change in political status from a Trusteeship to a form of government which would ultimately be determined by a plebiscite.

It was during this Education for Self Government (ESG) program which the Congress of Micronesia requested be undertaken that the people of the Northern Marianas were counseled that their land, limited in area as it still is, not be sold in fee simple to non indigenous persons lest the local people be taken advantage by those more experienced in matters of land economics and particularly by foreign speculators and other persons not indigenous to the islands. The Hawaiian example was often cited resulting in the loss of native land. The promulgation of this advice was the official policy of the Trust Territory Government which was often accused by opponents of the policy of promoting the “zoo theory.”

The Political Status Commission's 1975 analysis of the Covenant to Establish the Commonwealth, within Section 805 of the CNMI's Constitution expressly recognized: "the importance of the ownership of land for the culture and traditions of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and the desirability of protecting them against exploitation and also to promote their economic advancement and self-sufficiency."

The Northern Marianas Constitution requires that the Northern Marianas must, until 25 years after the effective date of the Article XII clause, to continue to regulate the alienation of permanent and long-term interests in real property so as to restrict the acquisition to only persons of Northern Mariana Islands descent. The 25 year "count down" started in 1986 the year the U.N. Trusteeship Council concluded that the United States had satisfactorily discharged its obligations to the islands and the year United States citizenship was granted to those in the NMI who met the qualifications.

Thus, 2011 was to be the effective date for such review and consideration by the people, if they so chose, to decide either to change or retain Article XII provisions by referendum. The date came and went without a vote.

Private land could only be leased to non indigenous persons for periods up to 55 years. Government land could be leased for only forty years (25 plus a 15 year extension). Many 55 leases were negotiated in 1986 the year generally considered as the "takeoff" point for the wide spread leasing of land by foreign investors. For many, their lease will expire in the year 2041. At one point as a result of 55 year leases by local land owners there were probably more local millionaires on a per capita basis in the NMI than anywhere within the continental United States. Over a twelve month period, from 1989 to 1990 land prices on Tinian alone soared from \$15. per square meter to \$200.

On December 22, 1990 the Security Council of the United Nations voted to dissolve the Trusteeship over the Northern Marianas. On July 5, 1991 the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth ruled that people of the Northern Mariana Islands descent could not act as trustees or agents for land paid for by persons of non - NMI descent. This ruling, later referred to as a "resulting trust" upheld the issue that land transactions involving a person of non-CNMI descent who enters into an agreement with a person of Northern Marianas descent where the duration of the

lease agreement is of indeterminate duration, that is, not limited to a fixed period of 55 years or less, that such an agreement is automatically void from the beginning.

It was this ruling and the litigation which followed that created confusion among many foreign investors. In the early nineties there was wide spread adverse publicity surrounding Article XII which involved several large foreign investments.

An avalanche of unfavorable publicity surrounding the Commonwealth Court's decision relative to Article XII confirming the ownership restriction which began to appear in the press throughout Asia and North America under headlines such as Indian Givers? Guam Business News (July, '91); Northern Marianas, Land Alienation, Guam Business Almanac ('92); Paradise Postponed, Guam Business News (July, '92); Saipan: Land of Disenchantment, Building Industry (May '93); Gambling, Gangs and the Sleepy Marianas, Far East Economic Review (July 15, '93); CNMI: Paradise for Gangsters, Lawyers, Pacific Daily News (August 16, '93); Asian Developers Bypassing Saipan, Marianas Variety, (August 23, '93) and other negative published articles. The unfavorable publicity generated over Article XII probably still lingers in the minds of many potential foreign investors.

Two Saipanese attorneys petitioned the US Supreme Court on August 7, 1992 to strike down Article XII of the CNMI Constitution which reserved the right to own land in fee simple to only persons of Northern Marianas descent. Citing that the CNMI Constitution's land alienation clause violated the United States Constitution's equal protection guarantees and the right to own property, the attorneys hoped to argue that rights to land ownership provided exclusively to Chamorro and Carolinian residents were racially biased and thus violated the US Constitution. On December 7, 1992 the US Supreme Court refused to hear the case and there-by upheld the Commonwealth's right to limit ownership of land to only those of Northern Marianas descent. The decision not to hear the case silenced the matter that the land ownership issue was a form of unconstitutional racial bias.

In the findings which led to the enactment of Public Law 8-32 in 1993 the Legislature found that several Article XII cases, taken together,"have had a cumulative adverse effect on the CNMI economy in the last two or three years. These actions have led to uncertainty of title, instability of land values and financial inequities. They have caused the Commonwealth to suffer an undesirable

reputation as a risky and uncertain place in which to lease land for investment or development or in which to grant leasehold mortgages.”

The CNMI Legislature provided for a six year statute of limitation for introducing potential Article XII cases for litigation and enacted a severability of contract provision should a court determine that any provision of an agreement would, if enforced, result in acquisition of a permanent, or long-term interest in real property by a person not of Northern Marianas descent.

Land Leased By Foreign Investors

Commonwealth does not know the total amount of land leased to persons of non Northern Marianas descent for periods of up to 55 years, nor does the CNMI know the nationality of those who will control much of the foreign leased land for that period of time other than the fact that most were not of Northern Marianas descent.

While not all land transactions have involved leased land there were more than 64,000 recorded transactions between 1980 and 1998 the period generally considered the period of greatest foreign leasing activity. It is important to note that not all of these transactions involved leased land to non indigenous entities Some of the recorded transactions involved the use of land for collateral to secure loans made to island residents.

Some leased land continues to remain undeveloped by investors who may now either be without the capital or the interest to implement their original projects. Their previously planned projects, now unimplemented would otherwise have made idle land productive and generate revenue for the government and perhaps provide jobs. Many of these investors paid the full 55 year lease price “up-front” since at the time many had the money to do so.

Real Estate and Other Taxes

Should Article XII be eventually abrogated the possibility of levying taxes on real property would most probably become the next heated issue. Currently there is no tax on real property. Section 5 of the Commonwealth Constitution provides that: “no tax may be levied upon any ‘owner occupied’ single family residential, agricultural or unimproved real property unless approved by three-fourths of the votes cast in an election conducted in the Senatorial District in which the tax is to be levied.” Presently there is no indication that taxes might be imposed on “other” (emphasis added) real property assets not covered above. However, it would

appear that the Commonwealth could at some future date impose taxes on other forms of real estate, i.e., commercial buildings, multi-family structures, residential rentals or other improved property not expressly prohibited by the Constitution if it chooses to do so.

Here again we have an interesting question could a US citizen of non-CNMI descent leasing land be eligible to vote on an issue relating to the imposition of a real estate tax?

Still another issue might arise sometime in the future should a property tax be imposed. How would an absentee leaseholder be notified of his tax obligation before the land has a lien placed on it for non payment since the Recorder's Office does not maintain addresses for use in contacting lessees?

In terms of a residential unit one wonders if all property owned by an indigenous person other than that which he or she "occupies", (i.e., their rental property) would be subject to a tax on real estate if and when it is ever imposed?

The fact that there is no tax on real estate in the Commonwealth has been one of the area's few investment incentives. There is no sales tax and up to 90 percent of the personal income tax paid is rebated. In effect residents of the islands pay little or no personal income tax. However, there are a number of fees for a variety of permits.

Non-resident Labor Force

During the peak period of economic growth work permits issued by country of origin were registered as follows: China - 18,134; Philippines - 14,237; Thailand - 931; Korea - 785; Japan - 623; All Others - 667. Total - 35,805. (Note: Work permits issued do not necessarily translate into workers as not all recipients enter the NMI).

The majority of the Chinese, (approximately 14,500) were employed in the garment industry; about 6,400 Filipinos were largely in the service sector while Bangladeshis engaged in farming activities and numbered around 155. Chinese and Filipino were about equal in the construction sector at about 1,800 each while private households accounted for about 1,800 domestic workers. The remaining non resident workers were spread throughout other activities.

The low wages paid non resident workers allowed the NMI to acquire infrastructure at costs far lower that would have otherwise been possible if the US minimum wage had prevailed in the islands.

The importation of non resident farm workers also contributed to an increase in agricultural production. Although a measure of traditional subsistence production from small gardens, lagoon fishing and farm animals is undertaken mostly for personal and family consumption.

Economic “Bust”

Richard Pierce, former garment association executive director, has estimated that over the period the garment industry existed on Saipan, from 1983-2009 almost one billion dollars (\$960 million) was injected into the economy in the form of taxes, fees, wages and a wide range of purchases. The industry was a major economic contributor for the island.

According to Mr. Pierce, the demise of the industry on Saipan was a result of the following factors ranked in descending order of significance:

- a) labor costs;
- b) labor access, i.e., availability and recruitment expenses;
- c) free trade agreements and World Trade Organization (WTO) policies of members.

It was not, as commonly believed, that the implementation of the World Trade Organization's (WTO) policies and regulations adopted by signatory nations that eventually spelled the death knell to the NMI's garment industry. It was the pressure on profit margins as a result of Increased labor costs that contributed to the demise of the industry on Saipan.

The tourism sector experienced its share of bad breaks such as the Asian financial crisis which reduced the number of island visitors from Asia. The Asian “flu” as it became known started in Thailand with the collapse of the baht and the crisis spread to infect much of Asia. Beginning in July 1997 fears were raised of a worldwide economic meltdown due to financial contagion.

The crisis put pressure on the United States and Japan. Their markets did not collapse, but they were severely impacted. The economic slowdown served to

reduce tourist entries to the islands. When the NMI's tourist markets in Asia caught the “flu” the island's economy caught pneumonia.

Still other external events which impacted adversely over the years on the economy included: the threat of the SARS virus in Asia; terrorism threats against the US; Japan Airlines (JAL) pullout of Saipan; the decline of the garment industry; competition from other less expensive competing tourist destinations; rising fuel costs for airlines which made tourist travel more expensive and the Japan tsunami of 2011. All of the above were beyond the control and influence of the islands.

Probably the most serious economic blow aside from the demise of the garment industry was dealt the tourism industry in October, 2005 when Japan Airlines (JAL) closed their office and terminated direct flights from Japan to Saipan.

Many reasons were given for the decision to exit the NMI of which JAL's internal operating deficiencies were cited. Others included, low net pricing since package prices to the NMI were generally priced so low the potential margin for the company to make a profit was also low; higher operating costs, primarily as a result of increased aviation fuel costs and the typical Japanese traveler's sensitivity to crises such as 9 - 11 and SARS, were some reasons for the firm's abandonment of the islands.

The airline's departure was followed by their property sale of the 313 room, five star Nikko Hotel and the adjacent ultra modern San Roque Shopping Mall both essentially investment “walk-a-ways” representing huge losses.

A New York Times article on October 16, 2010 entitled, “Japan, Once Dynamic, Is Disheartened by Decline” addressed the change in Japanese attitudes, “Few nations in recent history have seen such a striking reversal of economic fortune as Japan. The original Asian success story, Japan rode one of the great speculative stock and property bubbles of all time in the 1980s to become the first Asian country to challenge the long dominance of the West.”

But the bubbles popped in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and Japan fell into a slow but relentless decline that neither enormous budget deficits nor a flood of easy money has reversed. For nearly a generation now, the nation has been trapped in low growth and a corrosive downward spiral of prices, known as deflation, in the process shriveling from an economic Godzilla to little more than an afterthought in

the global economy.” This has also negatively influenced the economy of the Marianas.

Japanese banks stopped lending, particularly on the international scene, as they strived for more liquidity. New, additional Japanese investment interest in the Commonwealth all but dried up.

With the loss of the garment industry, and with the exception of the tourism sector (considered an invisible export industry), the Commonwealth produces very little for export and is primarily a consumer oriented economy dependent upon imports of all type.

Some Japanese Investment Abandons the Northern Marianas

Almost overnight the economic situation changed in the CNMI as the clouds from the earlier “economic boom” darkened. There was widespread confusion among investors over Article XII and the adverse publicity the Commonwealth received throughout Asia and North America. This occurred along with the collapse of Japan’s financial bubble; the increasing cost of doing business in the Commonwealth resulting from tighter local business regulations and the shortage of an adequate local labor force to mention only a few of the forces effecting the economy.

The CNMI's convoluted, bureaucratic regulations influencing investment is an assembled bundle of “red tape” which also may have discouraged increased investment.

The Commonwealth had no role in precipitating the “economic boom” and it had none in initiating the collapse which followed.

By early 2012 the NMI economy continued to contract with no indication as to when it might turn around with the only obvious growth potential being the tourist sector and marine resources.

Two events that propelled the economic growth were external forces, namely, the stimuli for Japanese investment in 1985-'86 following the devaluation of the Dollar and the US Congressional application of Headnote (3a) permitting qualified manufactured products duty free access to the United States market such events are not likely to occur again.

Unfortunately, few local people were direct participants in the private sector economy at the time it was expanding preferring to seek employment in government. Their absence in such large numbers has resulted in a shortage of a local risk taking entrepreneurial class as too many local people were left out of the private sector either by choice or they preferred careers in government. This has had the effect of permitting many non US citizens to take over many of the “Mom and Pop” neighborhood stores, gift shops and other small “entry-type” businesses which perhaps should have been reserved for the time when a local person stepped forward to implement the activity but obviously this utopian solution would run contrary to market demand.

The possibility exists that if present trends continue to record economic contraction the NMI can be expected to continue to become increasingly dependent upon Federal financial assistance – a source which may also be reduced.

By the end of 2014 most nonresident workers will have left the Northern Marianas as they are now required to do as of the date of this capsulized economic sketch. It is hoped many of the jobs they previously occupied will be filled by the local US work force made up of “downsized” government employees and younger school graduates entering the labor force for the first time.

The Public Sector

For those old enough to remember, visible proof of how government expenditures on road improvement can, and did, encourage economic growth and enhance property values can be witnessed on the old Aslito Road. This was an unimproved road which was once little more than a dusty, coral road with very few homes and businesses located along its length. The same is true of the previously pot holed, bone shattering, axle breaking, Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle Road) of the seventies and early eighties. A time when a person could count the businesses located along the road on one hand. Once these roads were paved – businesses and home owners lost no time in investing along the perimeter and on the many lateral secondary roads.

The vast majority of the total expenditures made on capital improvement infrastructure projects resulted not so much from locally generated revenues but largely as a result of US financial assistance in the form of program grants and loans and Covenant Funds. The paved roads, the air and sea port improvements,

jail, educational and hospital facilities, etc., if not financed entirely then in major part by the US government.

Most NMI government employees have been insulated against economic hardship at least in the early stages of economic decline. They are not immediately effected by a slowdown in business activity as their paycheck has been assured. One has to look hard to find a local person employed in a tourist oriented enterprise as a waiter or waitress, gift shop clerk, hotel maid, etc.

Generally the local residents have not performed those tasks and therefore the economic contraction has not directly effect them to the same degree as workers in the private sector. As businesses fail the government's ability to raise revenue from taxes declines eventually this will necessitate a reduction in government jobs.

As a reference benchmark, NMI revenues in 1978 for all purposes including infrastructure improvement of deteriorated roads, many of which had not been improved since the days of the US military, was only \$14.9 million (\$5 million in revenues and \$9.9 million in other funds).

Contrast the above with the Northern Marianas internal generated revenues from 1986 to 2004 which totaled \$3 billion - \$74.7 million for an annual average of \$170.8 million. During this period local expenditures ('86 -2004) were \$3 billion - \$317.7 million.

Between 1986 and 2001 63 percent (\$1.2 billion) of the public budget was paid as wages and salaries; as opposed to 3.7 percent (\$74 million) spent on capital expenditures with 33.3 percent, \$656.8 million consumed by "all other" expenditures.

NMI Tax Rates are Minimal

While the mirror image of the US Internal Revenue Code applies to the NMI, up to ninety percent of the personal income taxes collected and paid are refunded. Thus, in effect, there is no personal income tax in the NMI, nor are there real estate taxes or sales taxes. There is a business gross revenue tax, (see Tables 2 and 3).

An Evolving Relationship

At times the CNMI /US relationship has been described as contentious, perhaps because it is still evolving. Indeed, Section 902 of the Covenant permits a reassessment of the relationship every 10 years. It is probably safe to state that

some people of the Northern Marianas did not clearly understand what they voted to support when the plebiscite was held in June, 1975 to accept a negotiated Covenant with the United States.

As a member of the American family of states, territories and semi-autonomous entities, the Commonwealth, situated on the doorstep of Asia is host to thousands of citizens of Asian nations which are allies, trading partners and friends of the United States. For some who visit, either as tourists or nonresident workers, the islands will be the only contact many will ever have with the American form of government and democratic principles. The treatment extended these people while they are in the islands can make a lasting impression on many. To this extent the CNMI exercises no small degree of influence in partially shaping the reputation of America around the Pacific rim and its human rights record.

I do not know for certain the extent to which the American military influenced the decision to offer the Northern Marianas Commonwealth status, however, I suspect that the Pentagon was involved at the time by reason of the area's strategic location in the western Pacific north of the military facilities on Guam.

Many of the complex issues which were to arise could not possibly have been foreseen during the period of negotiations for a change in political status in the seventies and thus a document was produced to attempt permit flexibility in the new political relationship. That document is the Covenant.

It appears to this observer that some indigenous people are adamant in maintaining a “controlled” or “circumscribed” relationship with the US within the confining, verbatim framework of the Covenant when in reality these same people profess to want to be a part of — but separate from — the United States and many of its laws and regulations required of the political union.

Some people in the islands exhibit great sensitivity over issues they perceive could involve interference by the federal government where matters of self government are concerned. Many are quick to react to the possibility of federal infringement within areas considered to be the exclusive prerogative of local government. Much of this concern relates to whether or not the US Government has the authority to monitor and, indeed, audit the use of funds provided under the Covenant. Several agencies of the Commonwealth contend that the people of the Northern Marianas

did not give the United States the authority to interfere in the process of self government and that US authority is limited to that spelled out in the Covenant.

At one point an Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Interior stated: "Freedom to choose a political status carries with it the responsibility, first, to make an informed choice and second, to live with the benefits and responsibilities of that choice". Further the official stated, "for insular leaders to argue that what they freely chose 15 years ago (sic) is not what they thought they were choosing is a criticism of those who chose, not those who offered the choice. It is clear from the plain English of the historical documents involved that the United States has sovereignty in the Commonwealth...sovereignty is not conditional and does not lend itself to subject applicability."

The report of the joint Marianas - United States Drafting Committee for the Covenant, states that the following was agreed upon on February 15, 1975: "It is understood that the authority of the United States under this Section (105) will be exercised through, among other provisions of the United States Constitution, Article IV, Section 3, clause 2."

In May 1989 officials of the Commonwealth appeared before the United Nations' Trusteeship Council and accused the United States of asserting "imperial territorial claims" over the Commonwealth by trying to turn the islands into a colony. The members of this group urged the United Nations to continue to maintain control over Micronesia until the United States granted full self government. Again in May, 1990 a CNMI Trust Termination Task Force presented its position before the United Nations that the Commonwealth disagreed with the United States as to its rights under international law. Thus, many years and many millions of US taxpayer's dollars after achieving Commonwealth status in affiliation with the United States there was still some confusion as to the extent of the relationship and the degree of self government and autonomy the CNMI could exercise.

During Congressional hearings in Washington sometime around 1996 or '97 the subject of possible independence for the Northern Marianas was briefly brought up.

As recent as 2010 a NMI legislator introduced House Bill #15-146 to require an appointed commission "to revisit the provisions of the Covenant and US Government's actions in interpreting and implementing the Covenant, and to

examine alternative political and economic status options for the Northern Marianas.” After completing its study, “ the commission would make recommendations to the CNMI people for adoption in a plebiscite with regard to a desirable political status.”

H.B. 15-146 states that “the people [of the CNMI] desire to reexamine whether continuing in a 'commonwealth' relationship with the United States pursuant to the terms of the Covenant is in their best interest, or whether some other political status will better enable them to fulfill their aspirations of full and meaningful self-government.”

Unlike most people who seek to qualify for United States citizenship, the indigenous people in the Northern Marianas unlike others seeking US citizenship, were not required to possess any knowledge of American history or appreciation of the principles of democracy as most Americans perceive them to be. Most foreigners seeking US citizenship must study a variety of subjects related to American history, pass an examination and swear an oath of allegiance. This was not required of those within the indigenous population of the islands who met the qualifications to become interim US citizens for the period between 1978 and 1986. Public Law 91-241 approving the Covenant was signed in March, 1976 and the following month Secretarial Order 2989 of the Department of Interior separated the NMI from the Trust Territory. On November 4, 1986 President Reagan issued the proclamation placing the Covenant into full effect.

Some in the CNMI interpret internal self government as impunity from federal interference as well as immunity from US Government audits related to the expenditure of federal funds in the Northern Marianas. Such United States Government activity has been viewed as an infringement on the Commonwealth's concept of self government, a term not defined in the Covenant.

On July 24,1992 the United States District Court For The Northern Marianas ruled, “the CNMI is not a sovereign nation, nor is it a sovereign freely associated state. Those choices were available to the CNMI but resoundingly rejected. The CNMI freely and voluntarily, in the exercise of self-determination of its people by a 78.8 percent vote on June 17, 1975 ceded what “presumed” sovereignty they had to the United States of America in Covenant section 101, effective November 3, 1986.” This decision may be reviewed by the United States Ninth Circuit Appellate Court in San Francisco. At the time of this essay no such appeal had been made.

At one point some officials in the CNMI considered placing an initiative on the ballot to present the voters of the Commonwealth with an opportunity to reaffirm, reject or renegotiate the Covenant with the United States.

For those not a party to the negotiations – and observing from the sideline – it often appears that the United States negotiators pretend that the islands are the equivalent of a US territory – while the Commonwealth maintains it is sovereign territory with few limitations, and those being presumably self imposed restrictions, circumscribed only by the Covenant as, for example, regards the right of the islands to conduct certain aspects of foreign affairs.

If some people in the Northern Marianas feel some anxiety over their relationship with the United States and the federal laws which apply in the islands it could, in part, be a result of such statutes originating within a western context. Dogma developed over more than two centuries in an antipodal geographic and historical environment and imported or “imposed” upon the new Commonwealth within the relatively short period of time of several decades cannot be expected to be smoothly incorporated into daily life even though, somehow, the influence of the Spanish has eased the shock of western ways on this Pacific society and, indeed, much more so than that of any other island in the former Trust Territory. It is worth noting that many United States laws incorporated into the Commonwealth’s legal structure were designed for an entire continental land mass and a number of contiguous states. Many of these laws may not always be embraced with ease within a small island separated by many thousands of miles from the mainland metropolis.

While many US laws are certainly beneficial and appropriate others could have perhaps been modified to be more compatible with a distant island environment such as certain provisions concerning landing rights for foreign flag carriers, the CNMI licensing of foreign fishing vessel in Northern Marianas waters, control of wetlands and the Exclusive Economic Zone, (EEZ), to mention a few.

The NMI and Geopolitics In The Western Pacific – Still Relevant?

There can be little doubt that the current political relationship with the United States is, at least partially, a result off the military's interest in the islands for possible use as a forward base in the western Pacific as well as a possible eventual companion facility for the military assets on nearby Guam. This interest in the Northern Marianas was brought into focus during the height of the Cold War at a time of American involvement in Southeast Asia and subsequently fostered by

perceived threats from the Soviet Union and / or the Peoples Republic of China -- neither of which has to date materialized to any substantial degree to challenge the American theory of hegemonic stability in the western Pacific. Link: [The Theory of Hegemonic Stability](#)

The Commonwealth's proximity to Asia places it within a reasonable distances to many hundreds of millions of people within Pacific rim Asian countries. The Central Intelligence Agency estimates China alone had a 2011 gross domestic product equal to \$78.98 trillion dollars and a population of 1.3 billion people with a fast developing economy. Per capita GDP has been estimated at \$11,800 (2011) in purchasing power parity with the US dollar.

Before the war the Japanese developed the economies of the mandated islands to the extent possible. By contrast, the United States did not - electing instead to wait until the Micronesians themselves were the “rulers of their own house.” During this period America adopted a policy of providing funds for public works projects. For a long period of time the islands were not administered by the US Department of State which carries out America's foreign policy since to do so would be tantamount to admitting they were “foreign.” Instead, the newly “associated” Pacific islands were, for a period, administered by the Department of the Interior's Office of Territorial and International Affairs where many United States' domestic policies and programs could be applied regardless of whether they were appropriate for Pacific societies and, indeed, many were not - but others were quite beneficial.

After the United States closed it bases in the Philippines, the Mariana Islands of Guam, Tinian and Saipan also may have, to some extent, experienced a reduced importance to American strategic requirements in the western Pacific. However, It is because of their geographic location in proximity to the Asian Continent as well as the Great Circle Sailing Routes (shortest distance) between the United States and the Philippines, the Strait of Malacca at Singapore and the Lombok Straits in Indonesia that the United States is expected to continue to exhibit interest in the area far into the twenty-first century. The Malacca and Lombok Straits are the passages through which super tankers and their vital cargo of oil from the Middle East must travel en route to the United States west coast and the ports of its Japanese ally and trading partner.

The Mariana Islands are geographically situated so as to be the farthest United States possessions in the Pacific west of Hawaii. As a contingency the United States

military has leased a portion of Tinian (originally 17,799 acres of which 12,000 acres have been leased back to the CNMI). Several US military supply vessels are already based in Commonwealth waters.

However, the islands may have lost much of their strategic appeal as geographic assets. Not only is the land area available for military use limited, but a diminished threat from the former Soviet Union (now the Commonwealth of Independent States) and the modern technology of weapon systems may have reduced the strategic importance of the islands. time will tell.

Future Outlook and Questions

Saipan has changed a great deal since the Japanese “boom” period started in 1986. The decision to open the economy to all comers was made by the islanders alone and that testifies to that the fact that most were not too interested at the time in owning and operating their own businesses since there were many opportunities available at that time to do so.

Very few potential investors, if any, will examine the Covenant for an understanding of the Commonwealth’s unique relationship with the US Few are aware that the United States has provided huge sums over the years amounting to more than one billion dollars in economic and infrastructure assistance. As mentioned elsewhere federal agencies have financed the hospital, road surfacing, schools and many other public facilities. Bond issues aside, the local tax structure has accounted for very little of these improvements.

The first quarter of 2012 saw the NMI government experience continuing shortages of revenue as a result of a shrinking private sector revenue generating tax base.

The ever increasing cost of energy has resulted in non payment of bills requiring electricity cut-offs at several facilities operated by the Commonwealth Health Center along with public school closures. With a government sponsored retirement system near bankruptcy as a result of the government's failure to meet its contractual obligation to make employer's contribution to the Fund the NMI's economy may continue to contract and spiral downward until such time as increased private sector growth and investment occurs, primarily in the tourism sector and the exploitation of marine resources. Increased use of the islands by the military would also provide a measure of economic relief.

It does not take one long to realize that politics occupies the minds of many local people in a manner far out of proportion than that of economic issues – and for that matter – the long range economic well being of the islands. In the Commonwealth many legislators seem unable to come to grips with the urgent economic issues that face the islands. Indeed, political jealousy, family rivalry and in some case unbridled greed consume some to the point that they are unable to bring themselves to cooperate, not only with one another, but between the two legislative bodies - between the Legislature as a whole and the Executive Branch and, regrettably, with the United States Government. One must wonder, given the serious, unresolved problems now facing many existing foreign investors, if these businessmen and women would have invested in the Northern Marianas if they knew in the beginning what they now know.

Still other issues concern the new geopolitical relationships which have evolved around the Pacific rim since 1976 between the United States and other countries. Are they still relevant and exercise the same degree of influence on the political relationship with the Northern Marianas and the US today as in the previous period of the Trust Territory administration?

“Selected” Financial Resources, By “Selected” Fiscal Year Indicated

Federal Loans & Program Grants to NMI (1978 to Present)

Since becoming a Commonwealth in association with the United States the islands have benefited from the full range of hundreds of millions in federal loans and program grants made available from such federal agencies as: Agriculture (including food stamp assistance), Education, Health and Human Services, Medicare, Medicaid, EPA, Transportation (including road improvement), Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Labor as well as Department of Interior grants for construction, special programs, technical assistance, local government operations and maintenance, typhoon relief, etc.

The historical data for United States financial contributions of \$3.8 billion to the Northern Marianas are presented in Tables 12 through 14.

A hypothetical allocation of the above when presented on the bases of an estimated “fixed” indigenous population of 15,000 and presented for illustrative purposes only on a per person basis would equal \$254,728 over 28 years or \$8,803 per year for every year for each person within the local population.

Table 1

US Funding to NMI

- Special Programs ('78 - '86) - \$28.2 million; Operations ('78-'92) - \$225.5 million;
- Capitol Improvement - ('78 - 2012) \$ 446.6 million.- Total Covenant = \$700.3 million., (Includes proposed \$8.7 million for FY 2013). Source: US Department of Interior
- Estimated Federal Agency Program Grants = \$2.9 billion; Direct Loans = \$171.9 million.
Source: Consolidated Federal Funds Report Total Estimated Federal payment (all sources): \$3.8 billion

As a comparison, one dollar in one billion is the equivalent of one cent in ten million dollars or one second in 32 years. The author, as an economist, has been interested in estimating the per capita monetary contribution of all categories of Federal assistance including Covenant payments to the NMI's indigenous population. Federal payments totaling \$3.8 billion distributed to a theoretical “fixed” indigenous population of 15,000 is equal to \$254.7 million per person The amount could be considered to equate to \$8,803 per person per year every year over the funding period.

Table 2

Total Annual NMI Reported Business Revenue Tax (BGRT)

Year	Millions by Year
1985	\$19.2
1990	\$46.5
1995	\$59.1
2000	\$57.2
2005	\$58.29
2010 (2nd Quarter)	\$11.78

Source: CNMI Department of Finance

Table 3**Total Annual NMI Reported Business Gross Revenue**

Year	Millions \$ All Activities
1990	\$1,180.5
1995	\$1,831.0
2000	\$2,255.0
2005	\$2,020
2010	\$453.86 (2nd Quarter)

Source: CNMI Department of Finance

Table 4**Total Annual NMI Internal Generated Revenue**

Year	Millions \$ All Sources
1985	\$58.3
1990	\$116.7
1995	\$203.6
2000	\$228.8
2005	\$210.3
2010	\$39.7 (2nd Qtr.)
2012	Est. \$105

Source: CNMI Department of Finance

Table 5**Total Annual NMI Expenditures**

Year	Millions \$
1985	\$59.3
1990	\$108.6
1995	\$191.4
2000	\$221.6
2005	\$224.1
2010	\$37.8 (2nd Qtr.)

Source: CNMI Department of Finance

Table 6**Visitor Entries**

Year	Air and Sea Arrivals
1976	51,600
1980	110,755
1990	424,458
2000	526,111
2010	103,128 (3 Qtrs)

Source: T.T. & MVA

Table 7

Total Population (All Persons)

Year	Population
1973*	14,333
1980	16,780
1990	43,345
2000	69,221
2010	53,883

Source: T.T * & US Census

Note: As of March, 2012 there were 2,385 retirees and surviving spouses on island and 570 “off island.” Total 2,955

Table 8

Local (Indigenous) Population

Year	Indigenous Population
1973*	11,280
1980	11,802
1990	17,186
1995	20,161
2000	17,401
2010	Not available

* Includes Mixed Ethnicity, i.e., Chamorro and Other and Carolinian and Other

Source: T.T*.& . & US Census

Table 9

Estimated Gross Domestic Product NMI

Year	Millions \$
2002	\$1,222
2003	\$1,181
2004	\$1,148
2005	\$982
2006	\$914
2007	\$863*
2008	\$847
2009	\$716
2010	Not available
2011	Not available

*(\$696.3 (Est. by Dept. Interior Intern)

The US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) estimates the gross domestic product (GDP) for the Northern Mariana Islands. The island's GDP, adjusted to remove price changes, decreased 19.8 percent in 2009 after decreasing 12.1 percent in 2008 reflecting declines in exports primarily in tourism earnings, considered an invisible export, and personal consumption and government expenditures. The decrease in commodity exports resulted from the decline of the garment industry.

Source: [Bureau of Economic Analysis \(BEA\)](#)

Table 10**Historical Dollar – Yen Exchange Rates**

US Dollar vs. average annual Yen exchange rate

Year	US/Yen Exchange Rate
1941	425
1945	15 (occupation)
1948-50; 1949 (for next 22 years)	270
1970	360
1980	226.7
1990	144.8
2000	107.8
2010	87.8
2011	79.8

Source: International Monetary Fund

Table 11**Regional Comparative Gross Domestic Product (GDP)****Per Capita Purchasing Power Parity**

U.S - \$48,100 (2011 Est. by CIA)

U.S - \$45,800 (Est. by Interior)

Japan - \$34,300 (2011 Est.)

Guam - \$15,000* (2005 Est.)

*Includes US military expenditures

CNMI - \$22,449* (2005 Est. by Interior)

*Includes US subsidy - see text)

CNMI - \$12,500* (2005 Est. by CIA)

*Includes US subsidy - see text)

China - \$11,800 (2011 Est.)

Palau - \$8,100 * (2008 (Est.)

*Includes US subsidy of \$700 million.

Phil .- \$4,100 (2011 Est)

Marshall's - \$2,500* (2008 Est.)

*includes US subsidy of \$1 billion (1986 - 2002)

FSM - \$2,200* (2008 Est.)

*US provided \$1.3 billion in aid ('86-2001)

Source: CIA World Fact Book

Note: The CIA estimates the Commonwealth's GDP for the year 2000 at \$900 million which includes subsidies from the US Government

Table 12

Federal Funds to the CNMI, Under the Terms of the Covenant FY 87' - FY13'

Fiscal Year	Special Programs	Operations	Capital Improvements	Total
	(Millions \$)	(Millions \$)	(Millions \$)	(Millions \$)
1978	\$1.6	\$9.9	\$4.6	\$16.1
1979	\$2.5	\$11.9	\$5.8	\$20.2
1980	\$2.8	\$13.0	\$6.3	\$22.1
1981	\$3.1	\$14.0	\$7.0	\$24.1
1982	\$3.2	\$15.2	\$7.4	\$25.8
1983	\$3.4	\$16.1	\$7.8	\$27.3
1984	\$3.5	\$16.3	\$7.9	\$27.7
1985	\$3.6	\$16.9	\$8.2	\$28.7
1986	\$1.5	\$17.8	\$8.5	\$27.8
1987		\$17.1	\$18.3	\$35.4
1988		\$16.4	\$18.0	\$34.4
1989		\$15.0	\$25.1	\$40.1
1990		\$13.0	\$20.9	\$33.9
1991		\$11.0	\$17.9	\$28.9
1992		\$10.3	\$17.4	\$27.7
1993			\$27.7	\$27.7
1994	\$3.0		\$24.7	\$27.7
1995		\$8.6	\$19.1	\$27.7
1996			\$11.0	\$11.0
1997		\$3.0	\$11.0	\$14.0
1998			\$11.0	\$11.0
1999			\$11.0	\$11.0
2000			\$11.0	\$11.0
2001			\$11.0	\$11.0
2002			\$11.0	\$11.0
2003			\$11.0	\$11.0
2004			\$11.0	\$11.0
2005			\$12.4	\$12.4
2006			\$11.2	\$11.2
2007			\$10.6	\$10.6
2008			\$10.3	\$10.3
2009			\$11.3	\$11.3
2010			\$11.0	\$11.0
2011			\$10.0	\$10.0
2012			\$9.5	\$9.5
2013*			\$8.7	\$8.7
Total	\$28.2	\$225.5	\$446.6	\$700.3

* Proposed

Source: Dept. of Interior

Table 13**US Government Expenditures/Obligations Made Available to CNMI****“By Various Federal Agency Programs, Grants & Direct Loans” FY1983 - FY2010**

Fiscal Year (1)	Direct US Expenditures & Obligations	Other Federal Assistance <i>Direct Loans</i>
2010	\$ 249,980,907	\$ 6,700
2009	\$ 225,244,662	\$ 21,000
2008	\$ 166,945,608	\$ 133,736
2007	\$ 130,314,684	\$ 1,369,594
2006	\$ 176,884,136	\$ 1,743,728
2005	\$ 167,096,904	\$ 9,242,589
2004	\$ 213,207,879	\$ 3,368,568
2003	\$ 140,652,569	\$ 11,415,600
2002	\$ 102,062,396	\$ 1,294,022
2001	\$ 96,251,653	\$ 578,754
2000	\$ 69,957,629	\$ 962,330
1999	\$ 85,476,503	\$ 1,192,564
1998	\$ 63,362,841	\$ 12,858,573
1997	\$ 59,362,399	\$ 304,165
1996	\$ 40,968,460	\$ 151,900
1995	\$ 62,408,785	\$ 3,283,400
1994	\$ 53,365,642	\$ 1,501,940
1993	\$ 55,446,827	\$ 1,576,200
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>\$ 2,158,990,484</i>	<i>\$ 51,005,363</i>
1992	\$ 64,522,000	\$ 906,000
1991	\$ 59,127,000	\$ 80,000
1990	\$ 57,103,000	\$ 43,005,000
1989	\$ 69,617,000	\$ 0
1988	\$ 57,844,000	\$ 148,000
1987	\$ 72,412,000	\$ 7,764,000
1986	\$ 89,346,000	\$ 4,091,000
1985	\$ 61,017,000	\$ 0
1984	\$ 119,415,000	\$ 0
1983	\$ 139,314,000	\$ 4,459,000
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>\$ 789,717,000</i>	<i>\$ 60,453,000</i>
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>\$ 2,948,707,484</i>	<i>\$ 171,911,363</i>
Source: US Bureau of Census		
Consolidated Federal Funds Report		
(1) From on line census source '93 to 2010		
From '83 to '92 - Consolidated Federal Funds Report		

Table 14

Total Federal Financial Contributions to the Northern Mariana Islands
By Principle Source of Funds, By Fiscal Year Indicated

Total Federal Contribution	
To NMI (1978 to 2010)	
Fund Source	
US Covenant Contributions	
Special Programs ('78 to '86 plus '94)	\$28,200,000
Operations ('78 to '92 plus '95 & '97)	\$225,500,000
Capital Improvements ('78 to 2010)	\$446,600,000
<i>includes projection for 2011, '12 & '13</i>	
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$700,300,000
US Direct Loans	
1978 to 1982 - Not Available	
<i>Sub Total</i> (1983 to 2010)	\$171,911,363
Direct US	
Expenditures & Obligations	
1978 to 1982 - Not Available	
<i>Sub Total</i> (1983 to 2010)	\$2,948,707,484
Grand Total	\$3,820,918,847

Table 15 displays an analyses of data when presented on an annual basis over the 28 years contribution period for US Federal program expenditures and a 34 year period for the Covenant for a combined total contribution per year of \$136.5 million (adjusted for 28 yrs.).

Table 15

Summary of Federal Contributions to the Northern Mariana Islands

By Category as Based on a Fixed Estimated “Indigenous Population of 15,000”

Pro Rated Per Year and by Per Person. Over Years Funds Provided (28 or 34 Years)

Consolidated Federal Funds (1)	Report - NMI	
	Direct US Expend. & Obligations	Other Fed. Assistance
Fiscal Year		Direct Loans
2010	\$249,980,907	\$6,700
2009	\$225,244,662	\$21,000
2008	\$166,945,608	\$133,736
2007	\$130,314,684	\$1,369,594
2006	\$176,884,136	\$1,743,728
2005	\$167,096,904	\$9,242,589
2004	\$213,207,879	\$3,368,568
2003	\$140,652,569	\$11,415,600
2002	\$102,062,396	\$1,294,022
2001	\$96,251,653	\$578,754
2000	\$69,957,629	\$962,330
1999	\$85,476,503	\$1,192,564
1998	\$63,362,841	\$12,858,573
1997	\$59,362,399	\$304,165
1996	\$40,968,460	\$151,900
1995	\$62,408,785	\$3,283,400
1994	\$53,365,642	\$1,501,940
1993	\$55,446,827	\$1,576,200
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>\$2,158,990,484</i>	<i>\$51,005,363</i>
1992	\$64,522,000	\$906,000
1991	\$59,127,000	\$80,000
1990	\$57,103,000	\$43,005,000
1989	\$69,617,000	\$0
1988	\$57,844,000	\$148,000
1987	\$72,412,000	\$7,764,000
1986	\$89,346,000	\$4,091,000
1985	\$61,017,000	\$0
1984	\$119,415,000	\$0
1983	\$139,314,000	\$4,459,000
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>\$789,717,000</i>	<i>\$60,453,000</i>
1982	N / A	
1981	N / A	
1980	N / A	
1979	N / A	
1978	N / A	
Sub Total		
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>\$2,948,707,484</i>	<i>\$171,911,363</i>
Source: US Bureau of Census		
Consolidated Federal Funds Report		
(1) From on line census source '93 to 2010		
From '83 to '92 - Consolidated Federal Funds Report		

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n.d. For an on-line review of a wide variety of published essays related to the history, geography, economy, population and social issues in the Northern Marianas Google Saipan Tribune and enter William Stewart in the paper's search bar.

The author has been an observer and commentator on the NMI economy of more than 40 years as a former industrial economist & Deputy Director, Dept. of Resources & Development, Trust Territory of Pacific Islands (1970 -'78); Director of 1973 Census of Population for Micronesia; co-director 1990 NMI census; NMI senior economist, (1986 -'90); private consulting economist, cartographer, publisher, columnist, historian.

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William Stewart has been a private consulting economist to many firms and foreign governments in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Middle East and Pacific Ocean areas. He served as economic advisor to the Director General of the Tunisian Development Bank; economic and investment advisor to the Secretary General of the Royal Kingdom of Thailand's Board of Investment; advisor for the Inter-America Development Bank's constituent borrower, the Bahamas Development Bank and the African Development Bank, (Ivory Coast). His association with the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands included

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From Yam to Spam: The Evolution of Pacific Islander Food Culture

By Jon Abraham

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Abstract: *The introduction of Western concepts into Pacific Island cultures greatly affected their way of life, whether through the adoption of Western clothing, religion, and style of government. But perhaps the one lasting effect Western society had on Pacific Islanders was the introduction of Western food and food preparation. This shifting resulted not only in a greater emphasis of importing food from other places but created detrimental effects on the health of Pacific Islanders throughout Oceania. The evolution of Pacific Islander food culture has created a unique identity for Pacific Islanders, one that infuses both Western and traditional foods into the local islander diet, embracing not only the family values found in traditional food styles but also accepting and celebrating Western food culture.*

Introduction

The introduction of Western concepts into Pacific Island cultures greatly affected their way of life, whether through the adoption of Western clothing, religion, and style of government. But perhaps the one lasting effect Western society had on Pacific Islanders and their lifestyle was the introduction of Western food and food preparation. This shifting has resulted not only in an emphasis of importing food from other places but has had detrimental effects on the health of Pacific Islanders throughout Oceania. While traditional food still remains in the Pacific Islander diet, it is not as emphasized as other food cultures that have been introduced in the islands. The evolution of the Pacific Islander food culture resulted from the Westernization (whether American or European) of the Pacific Islander identity, but traditional foods have remained in the Pacific Islander identity because of their cultural uniqueness and familial links.

The Beginning of Pacific Island Food Culture

Throughout the Pacific Islands, various cultures adapted to their surroundings for thousands of years, moving peoples and their cultural staples from Southeast Asia into the archipelagos of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. With each section of the Pacific region came unique characteristics that the migrants put to their use in shaping everything about their culture. An initial foray into Melanesia would not have required navigational skills that extended far beyond the shoreline, but it

would have required a great amount of food and water to establish any sort of foothold in the Melanesian lands. Staples such as taro, coconut, yam, pandanus, and other food plants were brought over by the migrants, and would become established food sources elsewhere as migrations moved from Melanesia into Micronesia and Polynesia.¹

Succeeding movements into other islands and areas brought along these staples. Advanced navigational techniques enabled migrants to travel greater distances from Melanesia to Polynesian islands like Rapa Nui (Easter Island) and played a role in bringing the sweet potato, normally native to South America, to the islander diet.² With each new area settled and explored by early Pacific Islander migrants, food cultivation, preparation, and storage changed accordingly to each new environment encountered by the migrants.³ The cold climate of Aotearoa (New Zealand) made taro cultivation impractical, and shifted the food staple from taro to sweet potato.⁴ Other foods, like the coconut, so frequently associated with Pacific Islander culture, did not thrive in areas where the conditions were not conducive to growth (eastward or far south in the Pacific region).⁵ Whatever condition was encountered, the islander migrants adapted their food culture to it.

No matter where the migrants settled, they shared similar ways of preparing food,⁶ as their food supply was somewhat similar.⁷ Islander migrants not only brought over food plants in their voyages, but animals as well. Dogs, pigs, chickens, and rats were eaten by all islander societies; Hawaiian chiefs relished eating fattened dogs, and pigs were enjoyed by all islander cultures.⁸ The introduction of these foods to the landscape created environmental changes in the new homes of these migrants; along with such changes, outside factors like weather patterns and interaction with other cultures affected food stores for these new settlers.⁹ As these Pacific Islander

¹ Roger Haden, *Food Culture in the Pacific Islands* (Santa Barbara, CA; Denver, CO; Oxford, England: Greenwood Press, 2009), pg. 3

² Roger Haden, *Food Culture in the Pacific Islands* (Santa Barbara, CA; Denver, CO; Oxford, England: Greenwood Press, 2009), pg. 4

³ Haden, *Food Culture*, pg. 4

⁴ Haden, *Food Culture*, pg. 8-9

⁵ Haden, *Food Culture*, pg. 9

⁶ Nancy J. Pollock, *These Roots Remain* (Laie, Hawaii: The Institute for Pacific Studies, 1992), pg. 18-19

⁷ Pollock, *These Roots Remain*, pg. 15

⁸ Haden, *Food Culture*, pg. 12-13

⁹ Haden, *Food Culture*, pg. 13-15

migrants settled into their new surroundings, their cultures evolved and incorporated new food sources into their diets. Soon, they encountered another new source of cultural interaction and change: European explorers.

Pacific Island Food Culture: Western Contact

As migrants became settled in their new homes, they established their cultures to their new environment, and altered their food culture in the process. While their cultural structure remained relatively unchanged, it soon faced a new factor of change: European explorers. From Magellan to Cook, Pacific Island cultures encountered the Europeans and their cultural customs, along with their technology and food. Initial encounters between explorers and islanders involved a great deal of miscommunication; in the Marianas chain on the island of Guam, a skiff taken from one of Magellan's ships resulted in Magellan setting out a landing force to not only violently take back the skiff, but to also set fires to huts and canoes for the perceived slight of thievery.¹⁰ The Chamorros of the Marianas had supplied Magellan and his crew with food and water, and desired an exchange of gifts for their efforts; they were unaware of the life-or-death importance of the skiffs to Magellan's ships.¹¹

Other European encounters with the Pacific Islanders resulted in friendlier relationships between the explorers and islanders. The arrival of British explorer Captain James Cook in 1778 to Hawaii occurred as he was searching for new areas of resupply; Cook discovered that scurvy was rampant if fruits and vegetables were lacking in the sailor's diets.¹² While resupplying his ships with fresh food, Cook left his contribution to the islander diet with goats, English pigs, melon, pumpkin, and onion seeds; in 1793, George Vancouver introduced cattle to Hawaii.¹³ These new food sources expanded the Hawaiian diet, and also played a role in accommodating passing ships.

Missionaries brought their New England ideas and concepts of food and food preparation to Hawaii. Their blend of traditional English food with Native American staples made their food culture distinctly unique, with their use of corn,

¹⁰ Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pg. 83

¹¹ Georg Fritz, *The Chamorro: A History and Ethnography of the Mariana Islands* trans. Elfriede Craddock (NMI Division of History Preservation, October 2001), pg. 1

¹² Arnold Hiura, *Kau Kau: Cuisine & Culture in the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, HI: Watermark Publishing, 2009), pg. 10

¹³ Hiura, *Kau Kau*, pg. 13

stews, salted cod and salted pork, among other items in their menu.¹⁴ Food supplies brought over from New England were greatly desired by the missionaries, but they did not always last the entire trip, due to weather conditions and pests. They adapted their diets to incorporate local foods, though some found it difficult to adjust their eating choices.¹⁵

Food in Economics and Cultural Change

With the introduction of whalers, merchant ships, and other shipping traffic into the Pacific, Pacific Islanders supplied ships and their crews with fresh fruit, water, and vegetables in exchange for trinkets and metal tools. White potato, introduced by Europeans to the Pacific islands, was a high demand item due to its resilience in storage on whaling and sealing ships.¹⁶ In Tahiti, Pape'ete became a chief port of supply and refit for whaling ships, and between the years of 1801 and 1826, it supplied the colony of Port Jackson (known today as Sydney) in New South Wales with over 1,500,000 kilos of salted pork.¹⁷ And while Fiji was not a common stopping ground for whalers, it also took part in food trade, with the islanders exporting bêche-de-mer to Chinese markets.¹⁸

The cultural exchange that occurred between islanders and European explorers remained primarily a design that imposed Western concepts and ideology on the islander way of life. In terms of Pacific food culture, much of it changed, due to the introduction of new staples and higher emphasis on the food of Westerners, at least in terms of economics and supply. Changing tastes moved the focus from a subsistence-based food culture to an import-dependent system. Yet the greatest change remained ahead, as the bombing of Pearl Harbor initiated World War II in the Pacific Islands. This chapter in the history of the Pacific Islands changed not only the way of life for the indigenous residents of the Pacific Islands; it also changed the eating practices and foods of these people.

Food Culture and World War II: Brief Background

As Pacific Islanders adapted to Western ideals, their diets reflected the change and movement from a subsistence-living existence that encouraged an independent

¹⁴ Arnold Hiura, *Kau Kau: Cuisine & Culture in the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, HI: Watermark Publishing, 2009), pg. 17

¹⁵ Hiura, *Kau Kau*, pg 19

¹⁶ Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pg. 97

¹⁷ Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands*, pg. 96

¹⁸ Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands*, pg. 101

lifestyle to a much more dependent structure that saw food imported from other countries into the Pacific Islands. The outbreak of World War II initiated greater changes in the food cultures of Pacific Islanders, both during and after the war. Through wartime policies, whether under Allied or Japanese control, Pacific Islanders experienced much upheaval and chaos in their lives; some islanders “feasted while they still had the chance and the food” to do so.¹⁹ This affected their food culture, and in time, changed the way food was identified and prepared in domestic and social settings.

Japan and America in the Pacific

At the end of World War I, Japan had seized most of Germany's colonial possessions in the Pacific, and operated these lands as their own private economic venture.²⁰ The Japanese utilized the environment, using the islands as a sugar-producing area and utilizing workers from Japan and Okinawa.²¹ For Pacific Islanders located in these areas, the Japanese regarded them as inferior and simplistic, incapable of caring for themselves in any manner.²² The social hierarchy at work in the Micronesian society regarded mainland Japanese at the top, Okinawans and Koreans in the middle, and Micronesians at the bottom.²³ While the Japanese certainly tried to make their wards into respectable Japanese citizens, the segregation practiced by the Japanese insured that Pacific Islanders under their watch would merely absorb certain aspects of Japanese society and culture.

Not all the Pacific Islands were mandated by Japan. The island of Guam, located in the southern Marianas chain, had been an American territory since the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Other areas, such as Nauru and Kiribati, were administered by the British. Hawaii held more economic and strategic value for America, since the overthrow and “annexation” of the Kingdom of Hawaii to the United States.²⁴ Because of the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 that forbade

¹⁹ Hugh Laracy, “World War Two,” *Tides of History* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pg. 154

²⁰ Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), pg. 118

²¹ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, pg. 127

²² Peattie, *Nan'yō*, pg. 112-113

²³ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, pg. 220

²⁴ Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pg. 141

military build-up in the Pacific, America did not fully develop their hold on Guam and expected Japan to do the same with their own possessions.²⁵

Each side affected Pacific Islanders in direct and indirect fashion. For those located in Hawaii, American culture imprinted itself on the government structure, the military ports and bases, and the population makeup of the islands. Those in Hawaii abided by American values, at least for those living in the populated areas of Pearl Harbor, Honolulu, and the surrounding landscape. The population may have consisted of different races and ethnicities, but they mostly understood or spoke American English. Such a mix of groups led to a veritable mixed plate, in both cultural lifestyles and food culture.²⁶

For those under Japanese rule, Pacific Islanders were to be assisted in the eventual route to self-determination, as dictated by the Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.²⁷ The Japanese ignored the wording of the Article, and proceeded to treat their Pacific mandate as an economic tool. While not actively encouraging migration into the islands by Japanese civilians, they did little to halt the incoming rush of people. In a few years, Japanese outnumbered Pacific Islanders, with roughly 96,000 Japanese in Micronesia by 1942.²⁸

The Changing Palate

One notable example of Hawaii's expanding food tastes was the town of Kamuela, as it expanded from 400 residents to later house 50,000 Marines in a tent encampment called Camp Tarawa. These servicemen desired the taste of home, like hot dogs, hamburgers, and ice cream, items not readily available in Hawaii.²⁹ Other commodities, like SPAM, were readily available to these servicemen, and the brand became an established staple in the islands. With martial law declared on Hawaii after the bombing, residents followed curfews and blackouts, and also rationed food items like meat, sugar, butter, and coffee. Growing "Victory Gardens" as a

²⁵ Mark R. Peattie, *Nan'yō: The Rise and Fall of the Japanese in Micronesia, 1885-1945* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), pg. 60

²⁶ Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands*, pg. 139

²⁷ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, pg. 81

²⁸ Peattie, *Nan'yō*, pg. 160

²⁹ Arnold Hiura, *Kau Kau: Cuisine & Culture in the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, HI: Watermark Publishing, 2009), pg. 80

means to procure fresh food, local residents expressed their patriotism and endured food shortages during the war.³⁰

World War II: Effects on Pacific Food Culture

With World War II gaining momentum, war-time measures were imposed on the islands with varying conditions. Some areas rose up to the challenge of providing not only manpower but food for their respective colonial powers; New Zealand sent not only their native sons into battle, they also sent agricultural surplus to Great Britain.³¹

The island of Guam received Japanese reinforcements during the Allied push to Tokyo, and saw increased quotas for food and labor.³² Some places suffered from food shortages from Allied blockades and attacks on Japanese ships; these areas were bypassed on the push to Tokyo, and both Japanese and Pacific Islanders experienced disease and hunger.³³ Fire fights between the Japanese and Allies forced Pacific Islanders to abandon their homes, plantations, and gardens; with military expediency in mind, these areas were situated as airfields and other installations to continue the fight.³⁴

As the war came to a close, the task of helping the islands recover fell on the Allies. While Australian and New Zealand authorities attempted to institute the old colonial system in their holdings, the Americans took responsibility of Japan's Pacific Island possessions and established the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in 1947.³⁵ The situation on Guam exemplified the problems Pacific Islanders had to deal with; having lost records and landmarks of where their land holdings began, land was acquired at will by the military. While some lands have returned to their owners, much of the land distribution has remained evenly

³⁰ Hiura, *Kau Kau*, pg. 81

³¹ Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pg. 206

³² Lin Poyer, Suzanne Falgout, Laurence Marshall Carucci, *Typhoon of War* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), pg 163

³³ Poyer et al, *Typhoon of War*, pg. 169

³⁴ Lamont Lindstrom and Geoffrey M. White, "War Stories," *The Pacific Theater* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), pg. 24

³⁵ Robert C. Kiste, "United States," *Tides of History* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1994), pg. 227

divided among the US federal government, the Guam government, and private citizens.³⁶

Some American soldiers provided their own food stores and other materials to the islanders, giving them a more egalitarian quality to the local people; in contrast, British and Australian troops subjected islanders under their jurisdiction to have any goods or material provided by the Americans to be confiscated and/or destroyed.³⁷ The American military had been ordered by the British colonial authorities to not give the local islanders a single item, but American soldiers disregarded such orders and gave willingly to help the islanders in any way, sharing food freely between the two groups.³⁸ Such actions cemented the image of the American soldier as generous, while the British were regarded with resentment.³⁹

Overall, the war made some changes in food culture and brought newer food staples to the diets of Pacific Islanders. While the war devastated most of the Pacific Island landscape, islanders found ways to survive the war. American soldiers left their mark on Pacific Islander memories in their generosity, the most potent memory concerning food sharing. Years after the war, other food items, especially SPAM, established their part in the Pacific Islander food culture, and played a role in the changing dynamic of food identity as well.

Contemporary Issues

With the introduction of more Western foods in the Pacific Islander diet, the focus of meals shifted from a more traditional family setting to a much more individualized and recreational outing, one that did not reflect truly on the values held on by families. Values like convenience and ease established a greater promotion and consumption of Western style foods compared to traditional foods.⁴⁰ However, the change in diets led to a higher increase of disease in Pacific Island communities,⁴¹ and obesity rates rose as well. Food security posed a problem as well for Pacific Islander communities, as natural disasters exacted their toll on the food supply of those communities. Pacific Islanders have responded in a

³⁶ Kiste, "United States," *Tides of History*; pg 241.

³⁷ Lindstrom and White, "War Stories," *The Pacific Theater*, pg. 12-13

³⁸ Lindstrom and White, "War Stories," *The Pacific Theater*, pg. 10

³⁹ Lindstrom and White, "War Stories," *The Pacific Theater*, pg. 11, 13

⁴⁰ Roger Haden, *Food Culture in the Pacific Islands*, pg. 151

⁴¹ Liz Glasgow, "Dramatic Shift in Pacific Disease Patterns," *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1987, pg. 42

number of ways to tackle the food issue, whether calling for a more active lifestyle or a change in promoting certain foods to the Pacific Islander diet.

Eating Out

Fast food restaurants in the Pacific Islands enabled people with low incomes in the Pacific Islands to buy themselves a meal.⁴² Fast food culture like McDonald's and KFC established franchises in places like Fiji and Western Samoa,⁴³ as well as Hawaii and Guam. Localized versions of fast food culture were established in Hawaii like KC Drive In, at the corner of Ala Wai Boulevard and Kalākaua Avenue, and Andy's Drive In, located in Kailua. These establishments rose in popularity as a younger generation of Hawaiian residents gained better access to cars, money, and other freedoms their parents and grandparents never experienced.⁴⁴

Overall, the effect of introducing fast food culture into the diets of local people offered cheaper but unhealthier alternatives. The quality of life for some Pacific Island communities declined while the presence of fast food establishments steadily increased. Dietary changes for healthier living required islanders to take a more proactive stance on their personal health. Some communities succeeded in taking control of their health standards. Still, issues with health remained an issue to continuously work on, as not only diets needed to change but how Pacific Islanders viewed fast food in their daily diet.

Impact on Pacific Island Health

The emphasis on food culture to ease and convenience affected the overall health of islanders. Rotten teeth and malnutrition appeared among children, as they replaced coconuts and mangos with sugary drinks and chips.⁴⁵ Along with the obesity and malnutrition, death rates from diabetes and heart disease steadily rose.⁴⁶ The increased disease rate corresponded with an increasingly Westernized lifestyle,⁴⁷ as more islanders and their families accommodated their eating habits with newer food staples. An example pointed how the people of Nauru adapted to having access to more food, but became sedentary due to the use of cars and

⁴² Haden, *Food Culture in the Pacific Islands*, pg. 153

⁴³ Chris Peteru, "Food for Thought," *Pacific Islands Monthly*, July 1996, pg. 41

⁴⁴ Arnold Hiura, *Kau Kau*, pg. 85, 87

⁴⁵ "This Food and Drink Eats Away at the Good Health of Pacific Children," *Islands Business Pacific*, August 1994, pg. 13

⁴⁶ Chris Peteru, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, July 1996, pg. 41

⁴⁷ Liz Glasgow, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1987, pg. 42

motorbikes to travel around the island. The rise in their caloric intake along with their decreased mobility skyrocketed the rate of diabetes in the island, with a third of Nauruans having diabetes.⁴⁸

Other foods have become prevalent in Pacific Islander food culture as natural disasters and global events placed food supplies in tenuous circumstances. Storms, droughts, and outside pests caused havoc on local islander food supplies; according to Vanuatu Agriculture Minister Vincent Boulekone, the dependency on imported foods placed them “at the mercy of forces outside of their control.”⁴⁹ Population pressures also placed burdens on the declining food supply, and alternative sources of food highlighted the expense and unreliability of utilizing those sources.⁵⁰

Measures Against Health Issues

Though Pacific Islanders have been afflicted with a slew of health problems, they have initiated steps to tackle the issues. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV of Tonga once weighed at 209.5 kilograms (461.87 pounds), earning him a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records as the heaviest monarch. He undertook an exercise and diet regimen that shed his weight down to 130 kilograms (286.6 pounds). The king's example inspired his subjects to follow suit, and an annual weight loss competition was instituted in the kingdom. Attitudes in neighboring Samoa also reflected a changing opinion on body image, as Samoan women strived for thinner body sizes.⁵¹

While change in diet has been encouraged, it has not been actively pursued, as food denotes many meanings to traditional values. Pacific Island cultures interpreted increased weight gain as a sign of living healthy,⁵² where having a large, meaty stature represented a good society.⁵³ Fatty foods are also priced cheaply, making any transition to a healthier lifestyle much more difficult. As such, health issues in the Pacific Islands have not been resolved, but changing attitudes and better education in health may give islanders a better idea of how to balance their diets and their consumption.

⁴⁸ Pollock, *These Roots Remain*, pg. 208

⁴⁹ Peteru, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, July 1996, pg. 41

⁵⁰ “Fight the Good Food Battle Now,” *Islands Business Pacific*, June 1993, pg. 14-15

⁵¹ Michael Field, “Food and Body Shape, a Polynesian Issue,” *Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1998, pg. 22

⁵² Roger Haden, *Food Culture in the Pacific Islands*, pg. 203

⁵³ Nancy J. Pollock, *These Roots Remain*, pg. 197

Traditional Food: Where It Stands

In the process of food culture evolving over time, traditional foods have remained in the island diet, though they have not been as widely promoted as Western food. Still, traditional foods instilled values into Pacific Island cultures, which made their presence indispensable to the Pacific Islander food culture and identity. Even with the presence of fast food and Western culture taking precedence over local islander tastes, the values and ideals attached to these foods withstood the test of time. For some traditional foods, some enterprising locals have altered how these foods are presented in the wider food plate of the islands.

Western interaction with traditional food created a more nuanced form of the food culture attached to the islands, as they did not find it appealing as much as their Pacific Island counterparts.⁵⁴ In a sense, this allowed Westerners to present their own image of how Pacific Island culture worked, whether through exotic imagery or “dumb-downed” (read: Westernized) representations of Pacific Island food. Though popular among these outsiders, whether tourists or visiting military personnel, these re-worked dishes never fully replaced the foods they were based upon, although some islanders adopted these re-worked foods into their food culture and identity.

Traditional foods have adapted not only in a Westernized sense, but have been used as an economic means. Entrepreneurs like Sione Sika Faka'osi transformed staples like taro and manioc into commodities like bagged chips, which earned a “helluva lot of money,” as Faka'osi put it.⁵⁵ This venture went from concept to reality through Faka'osi's own input, attending a workshop to learn about business practices and befriending a food technologist. Another business venture based in Majuro created chips from breadfruit and taro for a consumer market.⁵⁶

Conclusion

Food culture in the Pacific Islands has changed throughout time, whether through the first forays of Pacific Islander migrants into their new homes or from encounters with Western explorers looking for fresh food and water. As different cultures brought their own ideas and concepts of lifestyles, they also brought new foods and staples that became increasingly part of the Pacific Islander food culture.

⁵⁴ Nancy J. Pollock, *These Roots Remain*, pg. 15

⁵⁵ “Entrepreneur Turns Basic Food into Chips and \$\$,” *Pacific Magazine*, pg. 57

⁵⁶ “Breadfruit, Taro Supply Majuro's Chip Factory”, *Pacific Magazine*, pg. 57

In a sense, Pacific Islander food culture has continuously changed and adapted, and created a new identity onto itself, both entrenched in Western concepts and traditional Pacific Islander values.

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Jon Abraham is a recent graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, with a BA in History. The son of Dr. Isamu Abraham and Felicitas Pangelinan Abraham of Saipan, he graduated from Northern Marianas College in 1999, and served in the United States Army from 2003 to 2008. While his academic focus is on US history, he is also interested in exploring the effects that outside events and influences have had on Pacific Island cultures. Specifically, Abraham is interested in finding out how events like World War II and gradual westernization from exposure to American culture

have affected the identity of Pacific Islanders, whether through cultural values or through diets and mannerisms. He plans to pursue a Master's degree in the future to analyze this topic further.

Close of Day: Guam in Contemporary Art

By Mariquita Davis

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Abstract: *For the past three years I have staged numerous projects using memory and storytelling as a starting point for a chain of events that accumulate into an event where the subjects of the work become the audience. Informal discussions with members of my Guamanian family and community lay the foundation for the works. Taped in the month of July 2010, several hours of home footage, interviews with villagers about Rivera store, and semi-theatrical staging of daily rituals are composed into my version of a visual fugue. I would like to share the experience of taking on such a project and my present my findings after returning home after 20 years to delve into the history in Agat.*

Editor's Note: Text extracted from pdf file provided by the presenter.

Close of Day

Play Pinball

Flirt with your mother

Buy pickled papaya

Pay me ten cents to sweep the storage room

Give me a piece of candy

Ask me to count the change

Pick up some: carnation milk, canned goods

frozen soup, beef, spare ribs, sausage

charizu pica, fresh fish, rice, eggs, spam

soy sauce, zories, jar of daigo, jar of rakkio

RC Cola, empanadas, mickey twist

My mother and my oldest brother make plans to visit and attend a 50th wedding anniversary in San Diego. The bride of 50 years is my grandfather's first cousin. At the wedding reception we are shown her original wedding photos. The church is Mount Carmel in Agat. My grandfather and several relatives flank the youthful newlyweds. It is black and white and the contrast of dark skin and white teeth ripples outward from the bride's stylish modern white gown to the edge of the photograph, the groom handsomely wears a pompadour. The present day party is held in a naval convention center, the ballroom has high ceilings and there is a dance floor surrounded by round tables that seat ten. A quick calculation would

assess there are over a hundred people in attendance, my brother and I recognize no one. At this moment my mother explains to us that we are somehow related to everyone in the room.

This day is made especially for the anniversary couple, but upon my mother's entrance one would have assumed she was the bride. Many of these people had left the island as my mother did, but while most moved to Hawaii or California, my mother found herself in the foothills of Appalachia. All hundred relatives want to catch up.

My brother, Jay, and I are not unaccustomed to the barrage of family members, but what is most overwhelming is the need for our new family to touch us, to pat our shoulders and to examine our faces all while sharing family history. They ask us questions, but they are not looking for answers. They have too much to share. Everyone wants to talk about grandfather's store.

Your grandfather used to...
Pay me ten cents to sweep the storage room
Give me a piece of candy everyday
Ask me to count the change he would give me
Walk me to school when he caught me playing hooky

For the past three years I have staged numerous projects using memory and storytelling as a starting point for a chain of events that accumulate into an event where the subjects of the work become the audience.

This project follows that methodology but attempts to extend the potential audience beyond the primary participants, by opening issues of the personal and the familial out into broader concerns, both formal and aesthetic as well as historical.

Informal discussions with members of my Guamanian family and community lay the foundation for the works, but it is not my intention to present an archive of these exchanges.

Rather, I'm interested in transforming them into an experience that can be shared within the gallery by staging them in the context of objects and atmospheres to create an environment wherein I author an experience vested in both the past and the present.

Close of Day is an exploration of my heritage via the lives and memories surrounding my Grandparent's small grocery store, Rivera Store, in Agat, Guam. It is an invitation for you to share this imagined space, to have a beer and some food and gain a sense of this island and its people.

The theme stated in the title of the show, Close of Day, reoccurs in several variations throughout the video and installation:

Close of Day is a social hour, it is a time of day when our ancestors are most active and it is the time when we reflect on our present, our past and speculate on our future.

Taped in the month of July 2010, several hours of home footage, interviews with villagers about Rivera store, and semi-theatrical staging of daily rituals are composed into my version of a visual fugue.

1. 'A polyphonic composition constructed on one or more short subjects or themes, which are harmonized according to the laws of counterpoint, and introduced from time to time with various contrapuntal devices' (Stainer and Barrett). double fugue (see quot. 1880).
2. Psychiatry. A flight from one's own identity, often involving travel to some unconsciously desired locality. It is a dissociative reaction to shock or emotional stress in a neurotic, during which all awareness of personal identity is lost though the person's outward behavior may appear rational. On recovery, memory of events during the state is totally repressed but may become conscious under hypnosis or psychoanalysis. A fugue may also be part of an epileptic or hysterical seizure. Also attrib., as fugue state.

There is a decorative practice my mother exhibited within our home during the Christmas holiday. She would unbox several figurines of the biblical nativity scene, small porcelain figures of the Jewish cast: Mary (the virgin), Joseph (the carpenter), Jesus (as a baby), goats (as themselves), cows (as themselves) and last but not least, a donkey (also playing himself). There was also a close to life size replica of the baby Jesus, donning a halo and two fingers posed in a lax version of a peace sign. She would lay felt down into our defunct fireplace, and pose fake lush moss atop the fabric as a bedding for a stage where she would arrange the larger Babe, sometimes as a central figure, but often off center. The smaller nativity cast would be placed carefully on the felt and moss ground. There was a porcelain stable that she usually

placed toward the top of the “stage”. From the stable the scene would cascade: all the major players (Jesus, Mary, Joseph) nestled closest to their “cover” of the stable, while the animals sit toward the base, facing up toward the presence of both the large and tiny savior. The three kings also made their cameo, but as the scene was usually created a week before December 25th, the kings would be placed as far away from the set as possible, moving an inch closer to the stable until finally on January 6th they would be placed at the feet of either the behemoth babe or the miniature babe.

As a child my mother took part in the larger installations my grandfather would create in a small structure he built specifically for these catholic displays. The structure was built adjacent to his store. There were three walls and a roof and there was no facade. This open wall allowed the installations that were created within the structure to be displayed.

As a child I would attend the ceremonies of Novenas at this structure. I remember kneeling on pavement with several elderly women from Agat, who crooned in a synchronous fashion in response to one prayer leader who was also an elder woman. We all faced the structure and the display within. A five year old mind could never forget what a drag it is to kneel on pavement, or the humidity-and-heat-intensified fragrances of the potions and lotions old women wear. All these distractions, but I manage to recollect the scene displayed in the structure: lush green moss, damp and fragrant, and a bearded Jesus kneeling against a rock, hands clasped, large brown eyes gazing at the aged ceiling, with a lemon and lime aura emitting from his profile.

Why radio?

It’s a tool to get sound to the table. It disconnects us from the image spatially and physically, gently disrupting our sense of direction and at the same time asking us to get close to what we hear, to listen.

Why video?

Images echo in long slow cycles, children in the bright light of day, the older generation laughing and reminiscing in the darkness of the evening, the earnestness of memories recounted, the unexpected intrusion of weather – rain, wind, stark calm of a tidal pool. Strange attractors draw us to the center of the room: the relation of the table to the vastness of the gallery, the skewed angle of the table in relation to the tarp, and the image of tables recurring in the video, always a

stage for another story that the video can't show, a reminder or an invitation to get lost in conversations, there and here. Just enough resistance to get traction.

Cross modulation.

Radio literalizes a “tuning in”, not tune in Tokyo, it's tune in Guam.

At any moment the sound coming from one of the four small radios on the table could be the center of attention, or another voice in the jumble of conversations going on at the table. 4 channels of video and audio were choreographed to work in relation to each other, but at times sounds were allowed to overlap and work against each other, and at other times spaces were left so that attention could drift in silence or to happenstance conversations taking place elsewhere around the table or in the room. So, while sound was an element that was designed, controlled and locked in the cycle of the 4 channel loop, it was also open-ended and dispersed as far as the participation of the audience, their relative placement around the room, their willingness to listen or to speak with each other, to laugh or to play a game of cards or ask for another beer, or to stop and reflect on the banalities of the day. In this sense, you cannot really think about the arrangement of sound in the piece without considering the cues that set into motion a field of potential sound. You have to consider not just the arrangement of radios on the picnic table, but the table itself as an invitation to sit down – along with the availability of cold beer, cigarettes, playing cards. You felt compelled to make good on an unusual hospitality, and at the same time, this scene was frequently being replayed in the videos themselves, people gathered around tables, day turning to night. You eavesdropped on them, but at the same time they invited you to join in, in your own way.

The store is the psychological container for the project. What becomes the distance to the material [the photographs, the videos, and the people in them] if you are placed in the center of this vessel? Do the stories need materialization in order to be understood?

I was born in Gainesville, Georgia in the next year my parents would relocate our family back to Guam because my grandfather was in poor health having suffered from tuberculosis. We stayed on the island for five years, and then my parents decided they would move back to Georgia to be closer to my father's family, and to take advantage of what they believed to be better educational opportunities available was on the mainland. The understanding I had of my mother's origins

came from my childhood on the island, scores of pictures my mother brought with her back to Georgia, a few pictorial history books centered around occupations on Guam, and most importantly, the stories my parents would recount for my brothers and I. Guam became a distant home. For my mother this move meant leaving a community with inherent communal values where the family unit extends well beyond the “nuclear family” common to America. Although my father’s family was large there was a sense that one could have his or her own family, living in a separate household, as far or as close as each household deemed fit. This was not a possibility when we lived in Guam. This loss of a familial and interdependent community made way for my mother to adapt by transforming the idea of family and community. Witnessing this transformation made a strong impression on me, and for this body of work it is a challenge. Is it possible for this transformation to exist, even briefly within the gallery?

Although my initial interest in the community of Agat, Guam comes from a curiosity about my own origins, I began to imagine the ways in which the stories surrounding my grand father’s store could be read on a more global scale. All those stories aren’t just stories about my grandpa’s store. They are stories about a way of living and a way of connecting, an opportunity to revisit something, to remember how a place can ground a sense of belonging.

Installation view. 4 channels of video, 4 radios playing soundtrack, 72 minute loop. Tarp, 16 foot picnic table, photographs, lightbox, cards, cigarettes and beverages.

What does Give me a piece of candy look like? Rivera Store is a haunt. What is it with this store?

This catalog is a companion piece to the show *Close of Day*. The physical book is comprised of two booklets that correspond to one another.

This version is a representation of the booklet that acts as a diary of the artist’s reflections of the objects within the show. The second booklet not represented here is a collage of the ephemera observed as the artist gathered research in preparation for the film. The books, newspaper clippings and encyclopedia were scanned and curated into the pages of the unpictured booklet as physical evidence of her investigations into the history of Guam.

Mariquita practices art under the name Micki Davis. Her and her siblings were the first generation of her mother's Chamorro family to reside off island. Upon moving to California to pursue her Master of Fine Arts she began exploring the origins of her identity, largely due to the exposure of an overwhelming asian pacific islander community in Southern California - something that she had limited access to being raised primarily in the southeastern United States.

For inquiries on the project or to obtain a copy of the video which contains several portraits of her family and community members of Agat, Guam, please contact Mariquita at: mmickidavis@gmail.com

She is eager to share her work and experiences with other islanders or those who focus their energies on the Marianas, asking only for their accounts and knowledge, however feasible, in return.



Mariquita "Micki" Davis is a multimedia artist and educator who has produced several videos, performances and sculptures as part of gallery installations and beyond, experimenting with and expanding the notion of artistic collaboration. She continues to explore circumstances of cultural reclamation within the Chamorro community in southern California and Guam. Davis' art has been exhibited across the United States and Canada, and her first short film premiered at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival in Los Angeles in May 2012. Her early childhood was spent in Agat, Guam, and until she moved to San Diego in 2008, she resided in north Georgia. She currently lives and works in San Diego. She holds an MFA from the University of California, San Diego, and a BFA from the University of Georgia.

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