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THE ROLE OF CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS IN THE MOTIVATIONS AND AWARENESS SPECTRUM OF JAPANESE TOURISTS IN THE CNMI

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The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is being actively promoted as a destination to the Japanese market. In addition to 'sun and surf', the Northern Mariana Islands have a multi-layered cultural heritage to offer to the interested tourist. This paper explores whether these cultural sites play a role in the motivations of Japanese tourists to visit the CNMI and whether the tourists have an awareness of CNMI heritage at the time of their departure. The findings have substantive implications on cultural heritage policy if the CNMI wishes to engage the visitor community at large in the appreciation of its heritage.

There are many motives to travel, including the chance to escape the home environment and experience the sun, surf and sand of a destination (eg. Hanefors & Mossberg 1999; Markwick 2001). Iso-Ahola (1982) agrees with this and states that seeking and escaping are the basic motivational dimensions of leisure behaviour. Beyond the sun and surf motif, scenery and climate, and to a lesser degree price, have been suggested as the most critical factors in influencing a decision on location (eg. Sirakaya et al 1996; Mayo 1973).

Culture is also a key source of motivation for people to become tourists and it relates to the desire by tourists to see/learn something they cannot experience at home (Boniface 1999). Wirosardjono (1993 p196) extends this view by stating that 'tourism is based on the strong desire to go beyond the other 'mere'

tourists, to a more profound appreciation of society and culture'.

Cultural tourism has always been high on the agenda of the truly cultured as well as the nouveau riche. The 'Grand Tour' of upper class Americans (Stowe 1994) and Europeans, particularly British (Black 1992), springs to mind. Cultural heritage tourism is on the increase world-wide, focussing on sites, sights, museums and cultural experiences such as festivals and traditional communities (Herbert *et al.* 1989; Prohaska 1995; Richards 1996).

Cultural tourism has been regarded as the panacea to cure the economic troubles of the Pacific Island communities, particularly of the Pacific micro-states. Tourism to Hawaii and Tahiti started early (Douglas and Douglas 1996a), followed by other destinations. General tourism was advocated in the 1960s and 1970s (Lockart & Chandra 1997) leading to resort de-

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velopments in many countries (cf. Lockart & Chandra 1997 for Fiji; Burns & Cleverdon 1995 for the Cook Islands); special interest tourism followed in the 1980s (Milne 1997; Harron & Weiler 1992; Zeppel 1992; Zeppel and Hall 1992).

Large tourism developments were shown to diminish the real cultural experience provided (Burns 1995; Douglas & Douglas 1996b). At the same time, cultural heritage places were seen as an asset by various decision makers (cf. Spennemann & Meyenn 1996), and studies were undertaken to assess the feasibility of using such sites as attractions (cf. Spennemann 1987). Heritage sites have the potential to allow communities to express their political aspirations through directed interpretation (Spennemann 1989).

Mass tourism, particularly from Japan, has long reached Guam (Page & Lawton 1996; Iversen 1997), but also, more recently, Saipan (Page & Lawton 1996) and Palau (Page & Lawton 1996). Indeed, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is being actively promoted as a destination to the Japanese market. Aided by the relative proximity to the Japanese main islands—with flight times of slightly more than 1 hour—Saipan has become a destination for both weekenders and families.

Intrepid visitors have always gone beyond, but several states of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are not major destinations (Page & Lawton 1996; Kuwahara 2001).

The CNMI is interested in the development of eco-tourism and cultural tourism opportunities. The island of Rota had been identified as a potential site for eco-tourism developments, with the island of Saipan focussing on mass tourism (Heather et al. 2000. Look & Spennemann 2000).

Japanese Tourists

Cultural factors need to be taken into account when considering travel motivations, as it is such factors that will set one clientele apart from the other. Japanese tourism has been a major source of income for many destinations,

among them the United Kingdom (Gilbert & Terrata 2001), and Korea (Seo 2004).

Particularly popular are Pacific and Pacific Rim destinations such as Australia (Reisinger & Turner 2000), Hawai'i (Reisinger & Turner 2000), Guam (Iversen 1997) and the CNMI.

It is important to issue a caution on the risk of oversimplification of this issue. The Japanese market is not a monolithic entity, but is segmented as the market of any other country (eg. Lang *et al.* 1993; Jang *et al.* 2001; Andersen *et al.* 2000; You and O'Leary 2000). Also worth noting is the general age of many of the well-cited studies, most of which were created in the early boom years of Japanese tourism in the 1990s.

Japanese cultural tourism

There is a paucity of data on the motivations and expectations of Japanese visitors towards cultural tourism opportunities.

The Japanese market has particular characteristics such as being more collective and group-oriented, by and large eschewing individualistic travel (Kim & Lee 2000), placing high value on the safety of a destination and largely engaging only in low-risk activities (Pinhey & Iversen 1994; Ahmed & Krohn 1992; Reisinger & Turner 2000) as well as demanding high levels of quality and aesthetics (Turcq and Usunier 1995, cited in Reisinger & Turner 2000). Cha *et al.* (1995) examined the travel motivation of Japanese overseas travelers and identified six motivational factors: family, relaxation, knowledge, adventure, travel 'bragging,' and sports.

A study of Japanese tourism to the United Kingdom identified culture, language and novelty as important motivations (Gilbert & Terrata 2001), but that may well reflect market segmentation with a bias towards the European cultural environment.

In a study of Japanese tourism to the Gold Coast (Australia) and Hawai'i, Reisinger and Turner (2000) looked at a wide range of variables. Both the Gold Coast and Hawai'i are marketed, and have a reputation, as 'sun and surf' and relaxation destinations, and as such

are similar to the overall marketing strategy used by the Marianas Visitor Authority (MVA).

While there are variations in relative ranking between the two destinations, they have in common that the safety of the destination ranked highest, while ‘visiting historic sites/museums’ ranked lowest for the Gold Coast and fourth lowest (out of twenty variables) for Hawai’i. The ability to ‘experience a different culture and customs’ and the ability to ‘experience different food and drink’ ranked in the lower half of variables for the Gold Coast (ranks 7 & 10), while clustered in the exact middle for Hawai’i (ranks 10-11). Compared to variables such as ‘safety of the destination,’ ‘clean facilities’ and ‘rest and relaxation’ cultural attractions appear to rank quite low.

In this paper we will examine the role of cultural attractions in the motivations of Japanese tourists to visit the CNMI. In the second part we will examine to what extent departing tourists are aware of the cultural attractions the islands can offer. We can draw on two sets of data: those collected by the MVA as part of the visitor arrival and customs procedure and those collected during fieldwork.

Studies such as these are important elements in a cultural tourism marketing strategy. The paper forms part of a suite of studies looking into the Japanese visitor experience in Saipan (Sayers & Spennemann 2006a–c).

MVA FINDINGS

All arriving visitors are required to complete an arrival questionnaire for CNMI Customs. The questionnaire requires the respondents to provide their age, gender, occupation, home country and port of embarkation details, along with travel mode and purpose. The reverse of the customs form contains a visitor information questionnaire administered by the MVA. The completion of that part of the form is in essence voluntary, but as the signature line for the customs declaration is on the bottom of that page, most visitors are compelled to complete the visitor information questionnaire.

One question on the visitor information questionnaire asks “while in the CNMI we plan to do the following?” with respondents being

given the opportunity to select as many options as applicable. The MVA data show that the majority of respondents travelled to the islands for pleasure (July: 80.2%/August: 89.1%) (Table 1). A far distant second was diving (15.0%/14.0%), followed by golf (9.4%/7.7%). The MVA travel motivation options do not have specific categories relating to the theme of cultural heritage and island history.

Table 1. Travel Motivations in July and August 2001 (Source: Japan Visitors Profile – MVA 2001)

Motivation	July 2001	August 2001
Pleasure	80.2	89.1
Diving	15.0	14.2
Golf	9.4	7.7
Company Trip	9.6	2.9
Attend Sport Events	1.2	1.4
Honeymoon	1.6	1.1
Getting Married	1.8	1.0
Visit Friends/relatives	1.1	1.0
Business	0.4	0.5
Memorial Service	0.1	0.1
Conference/Convention	0.2	0.1
N	21,499	17,715

If the option ‘other’ therefore is classed as including these aspects, then the results show a very low level (2% or less) of respondent interest in such elements (Table 1). On the other hand ‘pleasure’ is an undefined term and wide open to the interpretation of the respondents. It is quite feasible that some respondents will regard cultural tourism as ‘pleasure’ and would thus select that option.

Table 2. Decision influencing factors (%) (Source: Japan Visitors Profile – MVA 2001)

Factor	July 2001	August 2001
Short flight time	20.5	23.1
Climate	11.7	12.4
Previous Trip	10.4	12.0
Price	13.0	9.3
Other *)	55.7	56.8
N	27,859	23,651

*) See Sayers & Spennemann 2006.

A second question asked ‘What convinced you to travel to CNMI?’ Some response options from that question can be used in the present context, while others relating to specific information sources have been discussed elsewhere (Sayers & Spennemann 2006a). The

most dominant factor to be considered here is the proximity of Saipan to Japan ('short flight time' July: 20.5%/August: 23.1%). The other factors have lower representation (Table 2).

FIELDWORK FINDINGS

The fieldwork period took place on Saipan (CNMI) over a four-week period during the months of July and August 2001. A structured questionnaire comprising pre-coded and open-ended questions was administered to departing visitors in the secure departure area of Saipan International Airport. Passengers sampled in this area had passed immigration and security checks and were waiting for their flight to commence boarding.¹ The questionnaire was available in both English and Japanese.

830 questionnaires were collected during the fieldwork period. 699 (84.2%) of the respondents provided their home country details, 705 (84.9%) provided gender details, 693 (83.4%) provided their age category. Of the 699 respondents who provided their home country details, an overwhelming 671 (95.9%) stated that their home country was Japan. Table 3 sets out total sample population by age and gender compared to the MVA arrival data.

Table 3. Age/gender data of the Japanese sample population compared to the MVA arrival data (in %)

Age	Fieldwork		MVA Arrival Data		
	M	F	Age	M	F
18-25	9.4	25.1	18-24	6.1	15.4
26-30	16.6	21.7	25-29	15.9	22.2
31-40	40.4	36.6	30-39	33.6	32.0
41-50	23.8	12.6	40-49	25.3	17.2
51-60	6.3	3.1	50-59	12.5	7.5
60+	3.4	0.9	60+	6.7	5.8
N	319	350	N	23,893	26,021

Overall, the gender and age profile of the respondent population is similar to the MVA statistics for July and August (Table 3). Some differences can be observed: Younger people were more likely to respond to the questionnaire compared to older people, particularly so among 17–25 year old women. Few people over the age of 50 years responded, particularly very few over the age of 60 years. The lack of representation of older people can partly be

attributed to the fact that people in this age group were more likely to refuse to participate when they were approached.

The data

The data collected focus on discovering *why* the respondents chose to visit the CNMI.

The respondents were given the option to tick as many applicable options to indicate their travel motivations. 'To visit the beaches' (82.2%) was the highest rated travel motivation, followed by 'to have a holiday' (74.7%). The third highest option, 'to experience the natural environment,' rated at a much lower (44.8%). Clearly, pleasure was the strongest travel motivation and this directly correlates with the MVA findings. 'The location of the island was convenient' rated 30.1% of responses and this finding also correlates quite well with the MVA findings ('short flight time'). 'To see the sights and tourist destinations' rated (21.9%) and this does not specifically relate to any of the MVA categories. This option would however best correlate as contributing to the high rating 'pleasure' option that is reflected in the MVA data.

Table 4. Travel motivation in percent (multiple answers possible)

Motivation	Total	First Time	Repeat
Visit the beaches	82.2	84.7	79.8
Have a holiday	74.7	72.3	78.0
Experience the natural environment	44.8	45.1	44.7
Location of islands was convenient	30.1	26.9	34.0
See sites and tourist destinations	21.9	25.6	17.6
Learn about islands' cultural heritage	8.8	9.2	8.3
Learn about the CNMI	8.4	6.8	5.8
Learn about islands' colonial history	5.7	7.3	3.7
Learn about Chamorro culture	3.7	3.3	4.2
Visit friends/ family	3.1	3.0	3.2
Business purposes	2.7	0.8	0.1
Experience the way of life	2.2	3.0	1.0
Learn about Carolinian culture	0.5	0.4	0.5
Other	8.1	9.0	0.2
N	830	451	373

The fieldwork question on travel motivation also contained specific elements that relate to the cultural heritage and history of the islands. The results show that cultural and historical elements of the islands were of little interest to the respondents. With only (8.8%) 'To learn about the islands' cultural heritage' was the highest rated motivation (Table 4). 'To learn about Carolinian culture' was the lowest, rating at a mere (0.5%). This rating however may not necessarily relate to a lack of interest on behalf of the respondents but rather their lack of awareness of the culture's existence. In the process of the data collection comments were made by at least ten people about this lack of awareness. Comments were also written on some questionnaires stating that until such time the questionnaire was completed, the respondents had no awareness of the existence of the Carolinian culture.

The fieldwork data show that 8.1% of respondents visited the islands for reasons other than those given as options. The written responses to this show that diving, golf and the casino were among the travel motivations for this category.

Based on these findings, the Japanese visitor market appears to be most interested in experiencing the 'sun lust' style of holiday, comprising sun and sea holiday packages (Dodson & Courtney 1994; Markwick 2001). These findings support the observations of Eldergill (1998, p447) who stated for the Micronesian setting that 'tropical islands are most often visited by seekers of sun, scenery and surf'.

First time and repeat visits

The questionnaire also queried whether the visitors came for the first time or whether they had been there before. For the purpose of a more detailed analysis of cultural attractions it is desirable to consider these separate clientele.

The travel motivation 'to experience the beach' was stronger for the first time visitors (84.7%), compared to repeat visitors (79.8%). The reverse is true for those who indicated 'to have a holiday' was their travel motivation,

with 78% of repeat visitors selecting this option, compared to 72.3% of first time visitors. Not surprisingly, more of the repeat visitors (34%) selected the option 'the location of the islands was convenient' than first time visitors (26.9%).

Let us now focus on the cultural and environmental aspects. The results for the 'to experience the natural environment' option were nearly uniform for both groups, with 45.1% and 44.7% respectively selecting this option. As it is possible that some visitors construed this question to include beach, surf and sun not too much should be made of the percentage which is significantly higher than that for cultural attractions.

What is of interest, and of concern to heritage management agencies is that travel motivations of the respondents change after initial visitation has occurred and exposure to the islands has taken place—with fewer tourists interested in seeing cultural attractions. For example, a higher percentage of first time visitors indicated that they had travelled to the islands to see the sights (25.6%) compared to only (17.6%) of repeat visitors. That trend holds true for all cultural elements, with greatest drop recorded for the option 'to learn about the Colonial history of the islands' which 7.3% of the first time respondents indicated as a travel motivation compared to only 3.7% of the repeat visitors.

EXTENT OF AWARENESS

To a large extent, a natural incentive to travel to a given location depends on the visitor's awareness of what experiences the location can and does provide. This requires the traveller to obtain information from a number of sources, such as promotional material, guidebooks and the like (see Sayers & Spennemann 2006a for analysis). This information can either be sourced before coming to the destination, or after arrival. The key question in that regard is whether the exposure before and after arrival results in an awareness by the visitor, as this will, ultimately, direct what tourism and heritage management agencies can do to improve a visitor's experience through addressing their

expectations and by broadening the horizon of experiences that visitors may have.

Table 5. Lack of awareness of cultural and natural aspects of the CNMI in percent

	How learned? N=830		When earned? N=693	
	I cannot remember	I do not know about it	I cannot remember	I do not know about it
<i>Cultural Elements</i>				
Chamorro culture	16.5	21.2	4.9	26.4
Chamorro history	15.5	28.4	8.7	46.3
Carolinian culture	23.4	43.6	14.3	67.1
Carolinian history	21.4	43.6	16.3	63.8
Traditional local food	12.5	20.7	5.5	30.5
Island culture/lifestyle	12.7	21.6	6.4	31.5
House of Taga	18.4	39	13.0	57.9
Average	17.2	31.2	9.9	46.2
<i>History elements</i>				
History of the islands	11.8	21.9	6.5	27.8
Colonial history	13.4	24.2	7.6	32.4
Religious buildings	18.1	37	11.9	50.2
Spanish Buildings	18.6	38.6	14.8	52.2
Spanish artefacts	19.2	36.7	14.1	53.0
Average	16.2	31.7	11.0	43.1
<i>Japanese Elements</i>				
Sugar King Park	14.2	28.2	8.7	43.1
Museum	15.8	34.1	11.6	51.4
Japanese Hospital	16.0	35.8	11.3	51.9
Japanese Jail	15.7	34	11.6	51.1
Average	15.4	33.0	10.8	49.4
<i>World War Two</i>				
World War Two relics	5.3	9.3	2.1	11.2
Suicide Cliff	6.4	13.0	3.9	16.7
Last Jap. Comnd Post	8.4	20.7	5.7	28.6
Average	6.7	14.3	3.9	18.8
<i>Natural Environment</i>				
Natural environment	11.7	17.6	5.1	25.6
Micro Beach	11.6	24.3	6.8	35.5
Endangered birds	21.4	42.2	16.4	61.2
Average	14.9	28.0	9.4	40.8

To assess this, with respect to cultural heritage matters, three questions were designed.

The first two ascertained *how and when* the visitors learnt about the subject matter and attractions, and the third, what level of knowledge visitors felt they had acquired at the point of departure.

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate when they *first* learned about various elements of the Mariana Islands. A separate question asked the respondents to identify the source of their knowledge. A third question asked the respondents to state *how* they learned about the various aspects, listing the sources. The elements offered in the questionnaire can be grouped into five areas: culture, history, Japanese period, World War II, and the natural environment (Table 5).

Elsewhere we have examined the nature of information provision (Sayers & Spennemann 2006a) and interpreted the mode of information transfer and the timing information contained in these data. What is of relevance for the purpose of this paper is an examination of the 'I don't know about' answers, as well as the answers 'I can't remember.'

Table 5 compiles the responses. While overall percentages between the two questions are not identical, the relative sequence is more or less the same. On average the lowest 'don't know about it' response (ie. The highest level of awareness) was received for elements of World War II with 14.3% choosing that option when asked *how* they learned about it, and 18.8% selecting the option when asked *when* they learned about it. The other end of the spectrum is represented by the Japanese civilian sites with figures of 33% and 49.4% respectively. Importantly, four of the five element groups had rather similar don't know responses. Only World War II stood apart.

Slightly more difficult to interpret are the responses 'I don't remember.' They are particularly high for the two options relating to Carolinian culture (how learned 23.4%, when learned 14.3%) and history (21.4% and 16.3%) as well as in the case of the endangered bird species (21.4% and 16.4%). These high figures correlate with the high responses of 'I don't know' for the same elements. The same overall trend holds true for all other per-

centages of 'I don't remember.' It is possible that this is a cultural artefact in the wording of the question where respondents did not wish to be seen as ignorant (Table 6).

Table 6. Level of knowledge at departure to the various elements in percent (only valid responses)

	Knowledgeable				Not Knowledgeable			N
	Very	Mildly	Somewhat	Don't Know	Somewhat Not	Mildly Not	Very Not	
<i>Cultural Elements</i>								
Chamorro culture	1.2	9.5	22.7	40.1	5.3	6.8	14.4	675
Chamorro history	0.9	8.1	18.1	44.7	6.4	5.7	16.0	667
Carolinian culture	0.0	3.0	8.4	52.2	6.4	6.0	24.0	670
Carolinian history	0.1	2.8	8.0	54.8	3.3	6.4	24.4	671
Traditional local food	1.5	10.7	24.6	37.8	7.2	4.5	13.7	670
Island culture/lifestyle	1.2	10.7	25.8	36.6	6.5	5.9	13.4	664
House of Taga	4.4	5.4	11.5	48.9	3.9	5.1	20.7	662
<i>History elements</i>								
History of the islands	2.7	13.6	28.0	31.9	6.0	4.6	13.0	667
Colonial history	3.0	11.8	28.8	31.4	5.8	4.8	14.3	669
Religious buildings	0.3	5.1	15.2	47.0	4.6	7.5	20.3	670
Spanish Buildings	0.5	5.0	14.0	48.9	6.2	5.9	19.6	659
Spanish artefacts	0.6	5.0	15.0	47.1	4.7	7.4	20.3	666
<i>Japanese Elements</i>								
Sugar King Park	4.2	10.8	19.6	39.9	3.4	4.6	17.4	667
Museum	3.0	7.1	18.6	44.2	3.5	5.3	18.3	661
Japanese Hospital	4.5	7.7	17.6	43.2	3.6	5.0	18.5	665
Japanese Jail	4.4	10.5	16.7	40.7	5.0	4.4	18.4	659
<i>World War Two</i>								
World War Two relics	7.9	27.7	30.8	18.4	3.9	3.4	7.8	668
Suicide Cliff	18.4	22.2	22.8	20.5	2.8	3.4	9.9	668
Last Jap. Comnd Post	12.1	18.4	19.6	30.0	3.6	3.7	12.4	667
<i>Natural Environment</i>								
Natural environment	4.2	19.2	27.3	29.0	4.8	4.5	11.0	666
Micro Beach	8.9	17.1	20.3	32.2	2.6	3.8	15.2	665
Endangered birds	0.9	5.0	10.7	50.4	5.7	4.8	22.5	663

Table 7. Level of knowledge at departure to the various elements. Mean responses², responses by age group and statistically significant deviation (T-Test) by age group. Significant differences are shown in italics ($P \leq 0.05$) and bold ($P \leq 0.01$).

	Avg		Age Groups							T-Test Age Groups							Gender	
	All	SD	18-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	18-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+	Men	Women	T-Test	
<i>Cultural Elements</i>																		
Chamorro culture	4.17	1.52	4.66	4.35	3.94	3.82	4.00	4.17	0.002			<i>0.024</i>			4.03	4.25		
Chamorro history	4.29	1.50	4.73	4.56	4.26	3.81	4.00	4.03	0.005			0.002			4.20	4.39		
Carolinian culture	4.76	1.45	4.96	5.03	4.73	4.54	4.61	4.45				0.137			4.73	4.83		
Carolinian history	4.75	1.46	4.93	4.91	4.70	4.53	4.71	4.45				0.142			4.66	4.82		
Traditional local food	4.08	1.52	4.43	4.31	3.99	3.64	3.86	3.82	<i>0.028</i>			0.005			3.91	4.19	<i>0.029</i>	
Island culture/lifestyle	4.07	1.52	4.46	4.23	3.99	3.67	3.96	3.83	<i>0.013</i>			<i>0.011</i>			4.01	4.11		
House of Taga	4.41	1.63	4.73	4.69	4.32	3.98	4.44	4.41				<i>0.013</i>			4.40	4.44		
<i>History elements</i>																		
History of the islands	3.97	2.13	4.36	4.08	3.83	3.81	3.61	3.70							3.86	4.04		
Colonial history	3.97	1.60	4.37	4.15	3.86	3.50	3.86	3.96	<i>0.018</i>			0.005			3.80	4.08	<i>0.030</i>	
Religious buildings	4.54	1.50	4.83	4.67	4.47	4.32	4.33	4.32				0.163			4.49	4.59		
Spanish Buildings	4.51	1.48	4.82	4.84	4.46	4.05	4.44	4.50		<i>0.028</i>		0.002			4.42	4.60		
Spanish artefacts	4.59	2.12	4.85	4.73	4.67	4.11	4.46	4.39				<i>0.023</i>			4.57	4.61		
<i>Japanese Elements</i>																		
Sugar King Park	4.11	1.67	4.66	4.39	3.96	3.71	3.89	3.77				<i>0.022</i>			4.10	4.13		
Museum	4.27	1.60	4.78	4.59	4.17	3.84	3.89	3.96	0.002	<i>0.048</i>		<i>0.011</i>			4.17	4.40		
Japanese Hospital	4.23	1.66	4.70	4.54	4.19	3.74	3.70	3.97	0.007			0.005			4.10	4.37		
Japanese jail	4.18	1.68	4.53	4.57	4.07	3.76	3.63	4.21	<i>0.047</i>	<i>0.020</i>		<i>0.017</i>			4.03	4.34	<i>0.035</i>	
<i>World War Two</i>																		
World War Two relics	3.24	1.56	3.74	3.63	3.12	2.77	2.43	3.13	0.003	<i>0.014</i>		0.003	0.007		3.05	3.40	0.009	
Suicide Cliff	3.17	1.77	3.78	3.57	3.08	2.47	2.70	2.97	0.001	<i>0.027</i>		0.000			3.08	3.25		
Last Jap. Comnd Post	3.55	1.77	4.34	4.08	3.38	2.80	2.70	3.35	0.000	0.003		0.000	<i>0.015</i>		3.36	3.73	<i>0.020</i>	
<i>Natural Environment</i>																		
Natural environment	3.68	1.59	3.96	3.95	3.58	3.29	3.57	3.50				<i>0.017</i>			3.54	3.78		
Micro Beach	3.74	1.78	4.29	4.23	3.58	3.19	3.67	3.38	0.004	0.007		0.003			3.80	3.73		
Endangered birds	4.59	1.52	4.96	4.93	4.60	4.08	4.96	3.63	<i>0.020</i>	<i>0.027</i>		0.001			4.56	4.66	0.001	

LEVEL OF AWARENESS

The level of the awareness was queried through another question. Here respondents were asked to indicate how knowledgeable they felt about various aspects of the history of the islands. They were offered a seven-step Likert-scale (Table 6) which was subsequently scored for analysis.³ Table 7 sets out the means and standard deviations for each of the options, demonstrating a breadth of responses.

Overall, respondents felt far more knowledgeable about World War II attractions than any other. The least level of knowledge was nominated for aspects of local culture (Table 6).

As it can be expected, some of the themes and sites will relate more to younger people and others more to the older generation, the mean responses were compiled for each age group (Table 7), and then compared against the mean of the overall population. Overall, the mature generation (41–50) considered itself (statistically) significantly more knowledgeable in all of the themes than the younger generations. The older generation (51–60) considered itself more knowledgeable than the average, but not significantly so. The only exception to this are World War II relics and the last Japanese command post.

The reverse holds true for those between 18 and 30 years of age, which were all less knowledgeable in the themes and sites. The youngest cohort (18–25) was significantly less aware in most aspects, with the following cohort (26–30) also being significantly less knowledgeable in the World War II sites.

When considering the responses in terms of gender, it is worth noting that compared to men, women felt less knowledgeable in *all* categories (Table 7), but the gender difference was statistically significant only when considering the World War II relics, the last Japanese command post, the Japanese Jail and the area of colonial history.

Chamorro vs Carolinian

We have already alerted to the fact that there seems to be a difference between the aware-

ness and level of knowledge of Chamorro culture and history compared to Carolinian culture and history. This dichotomy has also been observed in other contexts (Spennemann 2003). To ascertain the degree of differential knowledge at the point of departure, the three response categories ‘very knowledgeable,’ ‘knowledgeable,’ and ‘somewhat knowledgeable’ have been collapsed into ‘High’. The same was done for the three negative categories (‘Low’), with the ‘don’t know’ answers identified by a question mark (?). When considering the correlations for culture (Table 8) and history (Table 9), it is self evident that a differential level of knowledge existed at the point of departure. For example 2.1 % of respondents deemed themselves both very knowledgeable in Chamorro *and* Carolinian history, while 7.8% deemed themselves very knowledgeable in Chamorro *but not* in Carolinian history.

The difference in the lack of knowledge between Chamorro and Carolinian culture is statistically significant (Fisher’s Exact Test, $P > 0.001$), as it is for Chamorro and Carolinian history ($P > 0.001$).

Table 8. Correlation between the level of knowledge of Chamorro and Carolinean culture in % (n=667)

		Carolinian		
		High	?	Low
Chamorro	High	2.0	11.4	7.8
	?	0.3	28.7	2.3
	Low	0.3	1.9	19.2

Table 9. Correlation between the level of knowledge of Chamorro and Carolinean history in % (n=667)

		Carolinian		
		High	?	Low
Chamorro	High	2.1	10.3	4.0
	?	0.2	32.2	2.7
	Low	0.5	1.4	20.6

This difference clearly signals a failure to effectively communicate the presence and contribution of Carolinians to the historic and cultural fabric of the CNMI.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper set out to explore whether the cultural and historical sites of the CNMI play a role in the motivations of Japanese tourists to visit the CNMI and whether Japanese tourists have an awareness of CNMI heritage at the time of their departure.

The data demonstrate very clearly that the average Japanese visitor comes to the CNMI for pleasure (Table 1) and to have a holiday (Table 4) with 'surf and sun' being the dominant motivation. While the different natural environment plays some role in the motivation spectrum (Table 4) it does not readily translate into awareness and knowledge at the time of departure. Echoing findings in the literature (eg Reisinger & Turner 2000), cultural attractions do not rank highly on the list. Taking into account market segmentation, we can assume that the Japanese 'sun and surf' segment does not really engage in the cultural and historical environment of the host nation. This tendency is particularly developed among the younger generation.

The findings have substantive implications on cultural heritage policy if the CNMI wishes to engage the visitor community at large in the appreciation of its heritage. As has been shown elsewhere (Sayers & Spennemann 2006a), a substantial degree of knowledge is acquired after arrival. Qualitative follow up research is needed to examine how that information can

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be best conveyed to the Japanese audience in the CNMI and which strategies work effectively.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The amenities that are available to the passengers whilst they are waiting to board their flight, include a Duty Free shop and three eating areas, one of which is a VIP area. Data collection entailed the distribution of the questionnaires to people in the seating area of the departure lounge of Saipan International Airport. The researcher deliberately did not approach people who were sitting in the eating area so as not to disturb them whilst they were eating
2. The responses were assigned numerical values for this analysis. Scoring: 1–Very Important; 2–Important; 3–Mildly Important; 4–Don't Know; 5–Mildly Unimportant; 6–Unimportant; 7–Very Unimportant.
3. See endnote 2.

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