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FROM SOUL TO SOMNOLENCE: THE PALAU COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF GUAM, 1948 TO 1997

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This article provides a narrative reflective history of the founding, growth, development, decline, and near end of the Palau Community Association of Guam. The historical experience of this community association parallels, in some respects, the growth and development also of Guam. It examines the early immigration of Palauans to Guam; their motivations, their success, and their thoughts on the future. A wide diversity of Palauan opinion has been gathered for this study beginning with testimonies from early immigrants following World War Two, to young people who are students and workers.

The Palau Community Association of Guam (PCA) has been a very important social and cultural institution for Palauans on Guam for more than fifty years. A comprehensive history of the development, activities, and social evolution of this association has never been recorded before now. It is important for the present Palauan community of Guam, especially the younger people, to know about the history of this organization, and how it got started on Guam. Some of the questions posed here include: what were the adventures and experiences of the men and women who managed to migrate to Guam in the post-WWII years? How did they manage to overcome their initial culture shock, and cope with the social issues and economic changes they experienced with urbanization? What was it that drove individuals to take that first giant step across the ocean to an unknown place like Guam?

This study provides information on the historical as well as the contemporary experience of the members of the Palauan community on Guam, and also describes the Palauan skill at socio-cultural change in the context of migration and transition to a wage economy, and considers the impact of a new socio-cultural setting on women's economic roles, on traditional customs, and on education. The approach is historical and considers the migration and adaptation of Palauans to life on Guam.

BEGINNINGS

In the months immediately following the end of World War II in Palau everyone the defeated Japanese, the victorious Americans, and the Palauan people who then numbered less than 6,000 (ITPI Handbook 1948) were busy recovering and rebuilding after the devastation. Koror, once the active and bustling capital of

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the Japanese Mandated Islands in Micronesia, lay in ruins. Few Palauans had actually lived there in the final years of imperial rule, having been systematically relocated to the larger island of Babeldaob and elsewhere in Palau (Poyer *et al.* 2001). Peleliu Island in the south of Palau had been developed as a major Japanese military base, and thus had become a target for the Americans, who had invaded and captured it, as well as nearby Anguar Island, during September and October 1944, with tremendous loss of life (Isley and Crowl 1965). Except for 155 Anguarese making up 24 families, most of the people on these two islands had been relocated to northern Babeldaob prior to the attack, and thus their lives had been spared; but their homes and property had been destroyed, and their return was not joyous (Walter 1993).

Guam had been a United States Territory since the Spanish-American War of 1898, and during the Japanese mandate period Palauans could not go to Guam (David Ramarui, in Ballendorf *et al.* 1986). The late director of education during the American Trusteeship in Micronesia, recalled that “Guam was an island we had heard about far to the north, but none of us would ever think of visiting there (David Ramarui, in Ballendorf *et al.* 1986). But the war and the subsequent establishment of the United Nations Trusteeship in Micronesia administered by the Americans changed all this. In March 1947, the American military established a teacher-training program on Guam where selected trainees came from all over Micronesia (ITPI Handbook 1948). David Ramarui was a member of the first group of trainees, and was thus among the first Palauans to come to Guam in postwar times. Besides teachers there were other trainees as well, in the fields of nursing, medicine, public health, dentistry, police, mechanics, and a bevy of other occupations needed to reconstruct and revitalize the Micronesian economy (ITPI Handbook 1948).

Guam had also suffered devastation during the war, and hence there was considerable opportunity for islanders there as well, not only for relatively short-term training and education

programs, but also for permanent jobs, particularly in the private sector. In 1951, the United States and Japan signed a Treaty of Peace that ended the American postwar occupation of Japan. The same year, the U.S. established a civil administration in Micronesia under the U.S. Department of the Interior (ITPI Handbook 1948). The end of the U.S. Naval Administration enabled many Micronesians to immigrate to Guam with permission of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). These circumstances of the immediate postwar period created the opportunities for Palauans, as well as other Micronesians, to come to Guam and establish themselves. This situation, in turn, led to the founding of the Palau Community Association (PCA) of Guam.

POSTWAR ECONOMIC BOOM ON GUAM

When WWII ended, the population of Guam was some 236,000 people—about 216,000 military men and women—were on Guam then, and getting them back to the U.S. mainland and discharged from military service was a major undertaking. At the same time the Navy had ambitious plans for five major civilian rehabilitation projects for construction of new villages and a general hospital, all at an estimated cost of \$20 million (Rogers 1997, p.208).

The construction projects, and all other related demobilization activity on Guam called for a large amount of manpower to fill the needed jobs:

After the postwar military demobilization, the navy began

- bidding out construction of new military projects to American civilian
- contractors. The largest contracts were for construction of the Apra
- harbor breakwater for over \$8 million in 1945-1948 with the J.H.
- Pomeroy Company of San Francisco; for the dredging of the harbor
- by the Guam Dredging Contractors 1946-1950, for \$13 million; and
- for general construction island-wide by the Brown-Pacific-Matson
- (BPM) consortium over the period 1946-1956 (Rogers 1997, p. 217).

This construction boom created an economic environment on Guam friendly for Micronesians to immigrate.

Palau's political status immediately following WWII is relatively easy to explain. Technically, from the cessation of hostilities in 1944 until the signing of the Trusteeship Agreement between the United States and the United Nations in 1947, Micronesia, including Palau, was a "warspoil" with the U.S. Navy in charge. Travel among the islands by ship or plane was on U.S. Navy carriers, and all that was needed for passengers was official permission; no commercial-type tickets were used.

Many educational programs were set up by the Navy, not only for the training of people from Micronesia, for which the Navy was responsible, but also to train *Chamorros* and other locals in construction skills. George Washington High School reopened almost immediately and graduated its first postwar class on 30 June 1946. In 1948 the Catholic Bishop Apollinarius William Baumgartner started the Father Jesus Baza Duenas Memorial High School in Mangilao, named for the martyred Chamorro priest. The educational and work opportunities brought the first Palauans to Guam, as well as Micronesians from other districts as well.

But, all who desired to come to Guam couldn't or wouldn't do so. It took a certain kind of individual. A number of the studies I consulted in my review of the literature have alluded to special motivational considerations on the part of the migrants.

Margo Vitarelli noted that:

... 29 out of the 46 subjects [in her study] considered Hawaii a desirable place to be because they felt that [there] they could "learn new things, have new experiences, and meet new people" (Margo Vitarelli 1981, cited in Rehurer).

Anthropologist Lin Poyer in an essay about the people of Ngatik island who immigrated to Pohnpei and who expressed their feelings about cultural identity, observed that:

Important to Sapwuafik (Ngatik) concepts of . . . individual identity is the contrast of loleb "inside" and liki "outside." Applied to persons the contrast

refers to intentions versus actions, or words versus deeds" (Poyer et al. 1997).

Applied to Palauans coming to Guam, these terms apply to those who wanted to come to Guam, but did not, and those who wanted to come to Guam and did. Also, G. Gmelch, in writing about one of his subjects, Roy Campbell, who left his native home in Barbados, West Indies, to go to England, quoted the latter in his motivations for uprooting himself from the comfort of his home, and defying even the wishes of his father:

I went to England because I wasn't getting anyplace in Barbados and I wanted to see what England was like after hearing so much about it in school. . . . I was nineteen and many of my friends had gone over already. My eldest brother was there, and my sister and her husband were there too. Plus, I felt that by going there I could learn a trade better than by staying here" (Gmelch 1992 p.167).

This statement can be applied precisely to many of the Palauan emigrants to Guam.

The relative commonalities in these immigrants' stories suggest that they are people with special determination; people who look outward, and who are inclined to act in furthering their own best interests. They may also be suggestive of sociologist David Reisman's "inner-directed," as opposed to "other-directed" persons.

The Palauans who came early to Guam were people who had been born and nurtured in Japanese Palau, and who had endured the disruption and horrors of WWII. Their education had been limited but strict, and although they came in most cases without highly developed vocational skills, they did have a determination to work. The same could be said for those who came to participate in educational programs. In all cases, they spoke rudimentary Japanese, and had learned some English in the American schools that the Americans had established in late 1945 and early 1946.

Social status among Palauans also played a role in motivation for emigration. Some from higher social status groups came because they were selected to participate in educational or training programs; others from lower social

groups took advantage of work opportunities in Guam, or with the U.S. Navy.

The late Mad Sibetang of Ngaraard was one who came early and actually combined his motivations for getting an education and also working. During the Japanese times he attended *kogakko* in Ngaraard, and then went to Koror for two more years. He then took a written examination for admission to the seamen's training center that the Japanese had established at Makassar, Celebes, which is today part of Indonesia. He passed the test and went along with several other Palauans, including the late President Ngiratkel Etpison. They were trained as general able-bodied seamen that could perform a variety of menial tasks aboard ships. Sibetang served for several months aboard ship, and in fact was shipwrecked while returning to Palau from Indonesia during the war. Hence, he had acquired skills and experience during the Japanese period.

Sibetang enjoyed his life as an able-bodied seaman, and was able to see a lot of Micronesia through his work. He was also able to become familiar with Guam, since he was based there, and decided that he wanted to settle there.

In 1952, Mad Sibetang became a permanent resident of Guam and received his "green card" enabling him to work. In the following year he got his "seaman's card" which certified him as a ship's pilot and oiler. In 1957 Sibetang married Kitang, also from Palau, and they lived at first at Camp Witek, a construction camp in Yona, and later moved to Tamuning. Finally, they bought an acre of land for \$2,400 in Mangilao just off the back road to Andersen Air Force Base where they built a house that the family still lives in today.

Felix Yaoch, S.J., Palau's first Catholic priest, also came to Guam during these very early years. He attended Father Duenas High School, and then later went to New York to attend the seminary. Prior to his death in November 2002 he was the head of the Koror Catholic Mission, and Jesuit Superior for the Caroline and Marshall Islands.

Tutii Ngirailild came to Guam from Palau in 1952 when he was 19 years old, aboard a U.S. Navy seaplane. His sponsor was a man

named Albert Bronson who was a scientist working for the newly-formed Trust Territory of the Pacific Island (TTPI) government. He was taken to Mangilao where he lived with and worked for Duane Kip of the Brown-Pacific-Matson (BPM) Company. BPM had a large camp for its workers in the area which now forms the University of Guam's campus. Tutii had attended *kogakko* before the war, and then the American school in his home village of Ngerchelong. In Koror he went to the Protestant Mission School, Emmaus, and on Guam entered George Washington High School. He fondly remembers his experience:

I worked raising chickens and agricultural produce at the BPM In Mangilao, and stayed there for three years. When I arrived Thomas Remengesau was here, and also Iengelkei, Muzose, Masato Kumangai, and later John O. Ngiraked and his wife Erminia. We used to associate together on the weekends and have dinners and parties" (Interview, Tutii Ngirailild 1999).

The beginning semblance of a Palauan community association began to take shape as more and more people arrived. Mad Sibetang gives the best description of how a critical mass of Palauans formed and behaved:

. . . the only time I got to see and be with other Palauans was on Sun- days. We knew a few Palauans living in Agana, and looked forward to our Sundays when we could buy rice and sardines, cook, and have a feast. I didn't eat this way with my sponsor. Because there were so few of us, we needed each other for support, security, and a sense of belonging to a group, and to keep from being so lonely and homesick.

Whenever a Palauan got sick, or even died, the news got around fast, and it didn't matter whether the person was a relative or not. the fact that the person was Palauan was reason enough to show up, pitch-in, and take part in whatever function was called for. The group support in terms of money, food, physical labor, or emotional/ spiritual support, was always provided.

If you were a Palauan, you automatically knew what to do for another Palauan in need. No blood ties were necessary or required. and this philoso-

phy—a way of life—is still being practiced today; call it a tradition, custom, or whatever, it is very much alive in the Palauan community on Guam”
(Mad Sibetang, Interview 1999).

As the Palauan community gradually grew and formed, many other nationals also came to Guam in those early years. The construction demand alone outstripped the skilled labor supply, and the U.S. Navy brought in thousands of Filipinos for work. This influx of various ethnicities was bound to cause some social friction. A November 1947 article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, described the character of some of these new arrivals:

Some arrived drunk and stayed drunk as soon as they arrived ashore . . . Bail-jumpers, alimony dodgers, car thieves, artists in the forging of checks, armed robbery and the rolling of drunks— they descended on Guam . . . “I never saw such people,” said a contractor . . . “we are getting scum I never had to work with before. But we need them so badly we don’t try to screen them” (Rogers 1995, p.217).

Palauans, of course, could not avoid these unsavory characters all the time, although several members of the early Palauan community said that there was never any “serious trouble” between Palauans and Filipinos or Chamorros. Occasionally there were fights when people got to drinking too much. The Filipinos had a reputation for carrying knives, and using them when they got into fights. The Palauans coined a special term for these people: *chad ra oles*, “the knife people.”

In general, however, the Palauans got along with the other Micronesians and with other ethnic groups on Guam. Incidents of trouble were merely isolated events. As more Palauan people came to Guam, they took advantage of the opportunities to purchase land at reasonable prices. In Mangilao especially, where many of the early Palauan residents lived in rented quarters, land was purchased in lots just off the back road to Andersen Air Force Base which is now Guam route number 15. The residents themselves built clusters of dwellings for families using cooperative labor and fund-raising customs. Over the years these homes have

been enlarged, developed and modernized as the community grew and increased in affluence.

GUAM CHANGES AND PALAU COMMUNITY CHANGES, 1962 TO 1975

The year 1962 was a significant one for the entire Micronesian area, since it was then that Secretary of the Navy John Connally lifted the Navy security clearance for Guam. On 21 August 1962, President Kennedy issued Executive Order #11045, which discontinued the security clearance for Guam (Rogers 1995, p.237). This order enabled a great boost in the numbers of people who could come to Guam to live and work, as well as to simply visit. The tourist industry could take off with vigor as hotels were built. However, the enthusiasm over new and enhanced economic developments on Guam was crimped when, on the night of 11-12 November 1962, “Super Typhoon Karen” smashed into the island with winds estimated at 173mph (Rogers 1995, p.238). Governor Manuel Guerrero reported that “damage from the storm ran well over \$100 million.” (Rogers 1995, p.238). President Kennedy declared the island a disaster area, and provided for relief funds. Then, only five months later, yet another strong typhoon, “Olive,” hit Guam on 29 April 1963, and again the island was declared a federal disaster area. Historian Robert F. Rogers comments on the bittersweet benefits which came to Guam as a result of these two natural disasters:

These two natural disasters turned out to be the means to over a decade of massive capital improvements on Guam. [Governor] Guerrero flew to Washington, where, assisted by fellow Chamorro Richard Flores “Dick” Taitano, who was then director of territories in [the Department of the] Interior, he obtained a huge financial package from the Congress under the Guam Rehabilitation Act (P.L. 88-170) of 4 November 1963, which provided \$45 million in federal funds, partly as a grant, and about 60 percent as a loan. (Rogers 1997, p. 238).

Such funding resulted in another construction boom for Guam, and hence more labor

was needed. Several hundred Micronesians—including Palauans—came to Guam, along with more Filipinos, under the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Program, on six-month contracts, which were extended until May 1970. The number of alien workers rose again to some 4,500 by the end of 1967 (Rogers 1997, p. 239).

For the Palauans, their community on Guam grew steadily during these years, and they were increasingly prosperous. Johaneke notes that out-migration from Palau during the period 1960 to 1965 averaged 77 people per year, and even up to 100 per year depending on which methods of measurement were used (Johaneke 1984, p.19). Of those Palauans who migrated during this same period, 76 percent did so for economic reasons, and in order to join their families. Most of these numbers reflect Palauans' movement to Guam (Johaneke 1984, p.20). Once settled on Guam, the Palauans joined or organized their own home village clubs.

Although all members of the Palauan community of Guam appreciated the help extended to them by the village clubs, some members and some new arrivals did not want to participate in all community activities. Mr. And Mrs. Paul and Kathy Tobiason are an early example of a family in transition. Paul Tobiason was a U.S. Coastguardsman who met Kathy in Palau when he was stationed at the U.S. Coastguard Loran Station at Anguar Island in Palau. When Paul was transferred to the U.S. Coastguard Loran Station in Saipan in 1962, Kathy went there to join him. In 1963 they were married, and in the following year they moved to Guam where Paul was stationed briefly at Cocos Island, Guam. When Paul was discharged from the service the couple decided to make their home on Guam, and Paul participated in many of the Palauan community activities on the island. Nevertheless, the Tobiasons did not want to be identified so closely with the Palauan community that participation in Palauan customs would become obligatory. Kathy put it succinctly: "Paul and I made our home on Guam precisely because we didn't want to participate in Palauan customs" (Inter-

view: K. Tobiason 1999). Of course, at the time, this was a minority view.

The varied experiences of the Palauans who came to Guam attest to the fact that most wanted to retain their Palauan identity through the practice of traditional Palauan customs, while at the same time some—a minority—did not, and saw the physical break from Palau as a way of getting away from the traditional Palauan customs. Three Palauan customs in particular were undergoing change: (1) *kemeldiil*, funerals; (2) *ngasech*, celebration of the "first born child;" and, (3) *choeraol*, the "house party." The separation from Palau portended other changes coming in the future.

THE PALAU CLUBS AS EMERGENCY ORGANIZATIONS

Super Typhoon Karen, which struck Guam on 11 November 1962, caused havoc and hardship for everyone on the island. After the typhoon, the Palauan community, as well as other organized groups on Guam was sensitized to the need for emergency organization and mobilization plans in times of natural disasters or emergencies. Kathy Tobiason related how such a purpose actually helped to encourage the formation of the various Palau clubs at the time:

GovGuam [sic] was interested in seeing the clubs organized so that they could mutually help one another. Disaster formation and relief information was important for the government. (Interview: K. Tobiason 1999).

By 1970 there were some 2,590 Palauans living outside of Palau, and of this number 1,230 were estimated to be on Guam (Johaneke 1984). The Palauan community was enjoying a prosperity that had previously been unknown anywhere for Palauans. Young people were in the Guam schools, good health care was available at the Guam Memorial Hospital, and all who wanted work could find it. Palauans worked in all sectors of the Guam economy; many worked as civilians in the U.S. military installations on the island.

By the mid-1960s the diversity of Palauans in the Guam workforce, and the institution of many "village clubs," within the Palauan com-

munity of Guam, enabled the government to procure information and organization in times of crises or emergency.

THE PALAU WOMEN'S CLUB OF GUAM IS FORMED

In addition to the Palau village clubs, the Palauan women had also formed the Palau Women's Club of Guam. This association not only made cultural sense for Palauans since women traditionally had their own groups exclusive of men, but it also gave impetus to the formation of the larger and all-inclusive Palau Community Association (PCA). Kathy Tobiason was a prime mover and organizer of this group:

It was in 1967 at the home of Becheselbad, when I proposed the idea to the mechas present that we form a Palau Women's Club to raise funds for scholarships to give to deserving students who come to Guam, as well as to support other charities in the community. The mechas thought it was a great idea, and they suggested that we should sell the idea to all Palauan women on Guam, and not just women from Ngaraard. This way, when we raise funds or give scholarships or support the Palau hospital, or the Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH), it will truly represent Palauan women on Guam. We all agreed to invite women from different villages of Palau represented on Guam to attend our next meeting (Interview K. Tobiason 1995).

This women's club organized quickly and well. Antonia Wong (Toni) was elected the first president in 1968, and there were over fifty charter members. Guam legislators Herminia Dierking and Marilyn Manibusan gave willing assistance to the Palauan women:

The Guam Department of Revenue and Taxation gave us a sample of by-laws and all the necessary information and forms to study and come up with our own constitution and by-laws in order to become legally registered as a non-profit organization. Our constitution and by-laws became officially recognized in 1974 and we registered as a non-profit organization known as the Palau Women's Club of Guam (Interview K. Tobiason).

This organization is alive and well today, and meets regularly once a month at a restaurant or one of the member's homes. During the decade of the 1970s the further growth and organization of various community clubs also grew. For example, the 1970s saw the establishment of the Philippine Women's Club of Guam, the Guam Women's Club, and many ethnic community associations. The Guam government was especially interested in these club organizations since they were very helpful in assessing accountability and funneling help to the community at times of natural disasters. It was at the initiation of the Palau Women's Club of Guam that the Palau Community Association (PCA) was born.

GROWING AFFLUENCE, 1976 TO 1996

Beginning at the end of the 1970s Guam's economy improved dramatically and steadily. Historian Robert F. Rogers explained the welcome growth:

The upturn was due primarily to a massive build-up in Japanese tourism and investments on Guam. Tourism grew primarily because of the Marianas' location; the islands are the nearest and least expensive foreign tropical destinations for Japanese travelers. By 1984 private sector employment on Guam had jumped nearly 28 percent over 1982. Fourteen commercial banks, two savings and loan associations, and three credit unions jostled for the money on Guam. (Rogers 1997, p. 227).

Palauans living on Guam shared in the new prosperity. Many came to work and live on Guam. By 1984 there were 5,092 Palauans living outside of Palau, with 2,100 of them living on Guam (Johanek 1984). This growth, and the existence of all the Palau village clubs, made conditions ripe, finally, for the formation of an all-inclusive Palau Community Association (PCA). The establishment was made carefully and in full consideration of the leadership of all the village clubs on an equal and democratic basis. Tutii Ngrailild articulated the attitude clearly:

The village clubs were informal. The Palau Community Association, when it was formed, had by-laws. Each village club sent two people as board

members. They elected Shoichi Ueda as the first president. The group insisted on decentralization in the Palauan fashion, in order that things among the village clubs would be equal, and the larger villages would not dominate (Interview T. Ngrailild 1999).

Shoichi Ueda was an ideal person to be elected as first president of the PCA. He was a natural leader, and a very fair and honest person. The Palauans recognized these qualities. In addition, Ueda was an important "bridge person" who embodied the best qualities of three cultures: Palauan, Japanese, and American. Raised in Palau as a Japanese, he served in the Japanese Imperial Navy in WWII. Immediately following the war he worked for four years at the large American military base in Yokohama, Japan, where he learned to speak English. In 1949 he returned to Palau, was married, and learned to speak Palauan. When he came to Guam in 1955, he worked for the Black Construction Company, and later for Moylan's Motors where he became a skilled auto mechanic for Volkswagen automobiles.

As a Palauan leader who could speak three languages, he was able to communicate easily with all the members of the Palauan village clubs whose older members all spoke Japanese. With other members such as Ellis Telli, Ichiro Blailes, and Akiwo Murphy, Ueda drafted the PCA by-laws which were later approved. They also sought, and acquired from GovGuam, some temporary facilities for a clubhouse. The buildings which Governor Ricardo J. Bordallo had assigned to the Palau Community Association were quite old, and before long they were destroyed in a fire. The PCA then constructed a Palauan *bai*, or meeting house. This was accomplished in the Palauan way of cooperative labor, and soon their goal of having a permanent meeting place was realized.

The initial and continuing success of the Palau Community Association brought praise from the government of Palau as well as Guam. Besides the regular meetings of the association at the *bai*, (sometimes *abai*) there were also a number of charitable and public service events which took place at the meeting house. In 1981 the PCA was asked to host the Palau

all-star baseball team, and for this event the *bai* was used as a dormitory for the two weeks that the team was on Guam. The goodwill and service was repeated many times for the all-star baseball team, which came to Guam on a regular basis.

From the time of its temporary acquisition of the Harmon cliffline property and the subsequent construction of its meeting house, the PCA maintained an active calendar of community and charitable service. In 1983 Continental/Air Micronesia used the *bai* to commemorate its fifteenth anniversary of service. While the essential costs of most activities were born by the sponsors and community and private groups which used the *bai*, there was nevertheless continuous expense of a marginal or ancillary sort which the PCA itself met. But, the prosperity of the community, as a part of the general prosperity of Guam through the years of the late 1970s, 1980s, and into the 1990s, enabled the generosity of the Palauans.

TOURISM TAKES OFF

Some economists have referred to Guam's economy as a "command economy" (Gilliam 1988), that is, one dominated by the military. Although this situation had made Guam prosperous in the past, the end of the Cold War portended military downsizing, not only for Guam, but elsewhere as well. In 1990, one conference between President George H.W. Bush and Premier Gorbachev, resulted in the B-52 bombers of the Strategic Air Command stationed at Andersen Air Force Base, being withdrawn within one week, together with all their support staff, equipment, and salaries; a loss of reportedly "more than \$16 million in one fell swoop" (*Pacific Daily News* 9 August 1990). While people were happy about the cooling off of the Cold War, the loss of money in the Guam economy was nevertheless unsettling. The Guam government sought to diversify the economy, and tourism was a major area of continued improvement and growth. Hotel construction proceeded apace, and with the availability of more hotel rooms together with concerted efforts by the Guam Visitors' Bureau (GVB), more and more tourists from

Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea began to arrive. This growth in tourism not only meant an increase in the number of hotel rooms and hence the attending number of housekeepers and other tourist-related jobs which Palauans shared with others, it also meant development of an infrastructure such as roads, utilities, and public services which would not have been possible with only local capacities, including the military. Guam was truly more prosperous than it ever had been.

THE GROWING INDEPENDENCE OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION

The booming Guam economy, together with the rise in affluence for most Guam residents, proved to have an unforeseen downside for the Palau Community Association. For young Palauans on Guam, all of them who wanted work could find it easily, even students on a part-time basis. The readily available ability to earn money promoted a growing independence on the part of the younger people. Most of them, men and women alike, opened accounts in the local banks. University of Guam students, especially the young women who had no experience personally with banks, used to go privately to consult with a trusted authority figure—usually male—about advising them how to open a bank account. Instances such as these were uncommon regarding the Palauan community until the mid-to-late 1990s, when younger members began to learn how to open bank accounts on their own. The younger Palauans wanted private bank accounts that their relatives did not know about. In this way they could avoid any pressure to share money or contribute money for traditional custom expenses. The result has been a greater independence on the part of the younger generation, and an attending ambivalence on their part in participating in the activities and social events of the Palau Community Association.

Although most PCA events which were held in the Palauan *bai* included young people, they were usually part of the entertainment in the form of traditional dancers who performed for the evening's program. Many of these young people left the events early after their

performances to go instead to the beachfront discos in Tumon, and other night spots, where their peers and friends gathered and partied until the wee hours of the morning.

The leadership of the Palauan Community Association made no particular plans or efforts to groom the younger people to take over the management and direction of the club in the years ahead. This failure was due partly to the social and economic changes on Guam which inadvertently and gradually—but nevertheless really—caused the abandoning of the PCA by the young people; they simply no longer needed the support system which the PCA provided.

The failure was also partly cultural. In traditional Palau with their close age-group relationships, younger people assumed leadership roles when they were ready, and each person decided readiness. Young people in traditional Palau learned all that they needed to know by gradual participation, and through peer age-group associations. The traditional Palauan customary norms faded on Guam and were not bolstered or reinforced.

The older Palauans on Guam who are queried as to why the young people have essentially abandoned the PCA typically say: "they aren't interested anymore." Or, "They are not interested in Palauan custom." Implicit in their statements are the assumptions that the younger people should automatically take an interest, since the older people have set the examples. However, not recognized by the elders, were the external changes in the Guam society which promoted independence, and the resulting waning of interest in the traditional Palauan customs altogether.

THE DEMISE OF THE PALAUAN COMMUNITY BAI AND THE LOSS OF TOURISTS

In 1997 the PCA experienced another set-back when their *bai* on the Harmon cliffline was reclaimed by the Guam government and closed. With no place to have meetings and social events, the morale within the community fell quickly. Future plans were discussed with input from the Palau National Congress (OEK) in Palau. Antonio Bells, a delegate from

Ngaraard State, introduced one plan. This was to have Palau appropriate money to buy land in Guam and construct a new *bai*, which would also incorporate the offices of the Palau Consulate on Guam (Interview Calisto Recheungel 1999). For awhile this caused a resurgence in hope and an improvement in community morale. However, after the 1996 elections in Palau, and the winning of a second term for President Kuniwo Nakamura, the idea was dropped in the OEK; a feeling of despair returned and the PCA leadership went adrift once again.

Meanwhile, the Guam economy worsened. The Guam economy is driven by the yen, not by the dollar, and with fewer and fewer tourists arriving due to the recession-prone Japanese economy, Guam's tourism industry suffered. By 2001, six hotels had closed in Tumon, and the Guam Visitors' Bureau (GVB) said that even more might close. On 2 April 2001, the relatively new Sherwood Hotel closed and over 200 people lost their jobs (*Pacific Daily News* 2 April 2001).

The future of the PCA seemed more and more gloomy.

CONCLUSIONS

There are, we believe, nine definite conclusions that can be drawn from this study of the Palau Community Association of Guam: (1) The overwhelming number of Palauans came to Guam after WWII for work and education; (2) The Palauans did not come to Guam to escape traditional responsibilities or family problems; (3) Those who came to Guam were mostly men who sent for their families after getting established; (4) The motivation for those who came was to seek a better life and greater op-

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portunities; (5) Most who came in the early years knew very little English but they could communicate in Japanese with other islanders; (6) The organization of the Palau community into formal groups such as the Palau Community Association (PCA), and the Palau Women's Club (PWC), was deliberate, determined, and has been sustained; (7) The younger generation of Palauans on Guam are becoming integrated with the wider Guam community and are less interested in joining the older, ethnic associations, and this has caused a shrinking of the PCA; (8) Palauans maintain their traditional customs on Guam, but are modifying and adapting them to fit conditions and situations on Guam; and (9) Generally, Palauans are adaptable and ambitious, and do well as migrants.

Presently, the Palau Community Association of Guam, and the Palau Women's Club of Guam, are alive and somewhat active, although not vibrant. We hope that the future will see a metamorphosis and resurgence appropriate for Guam, and a continuing recognition that the PCA, as well as other ethnic Micronesian community groups are an important and significant part of the social structure and life of the island.

ENDNOTES

This article is an adaptation of the master's thesis of Francesca Kedlaol Remengesau: "A History of the Palau Community Association of Guam, 1948 to 1997," University of Guam, 2003. A copy of this thesis is available at the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Library at the University of Guam, or from University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

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