

Navy Blues: US Naval Rule on Guam And The Rough Road to Assimilation, 1898-1941

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Abstract

Before turning control of Guam over to the Department of Interior in 1950, the US Navy published the *US Navy Report on Guam, 1899-1950*, summarizing its achievements as the island's administrators since 1898. In it, the Chief of Naval Operations depicted Chamorros as a physically, intellectually, and culturally backwards people whose lives focused on achieving nothing more than the bare minimum requirements of survival. To deal with such a forlorn people, the Navy enunciated for itself a fourfold agenda “to rehabilitate, to organize, to administer, and to make productive” the Chamorros. The colonial project, therefore, sought not simply to rule over the Island’s government, but more broadly to transform the bodies and minds of its natives. This paper interrogates naval efforts to implement its goals, examining the rich cache of naval records to underscore the tangle of political, economic, and cultural issues that faced Guam's 20th century colonizers.

Before turning control of the island over to the Department of Interior in 1950, the US Navy published the *US Navy Report on Guam, 1899-1950*, summarizing Guam’s prevailing political, economic, educational, and health conditions, in particular boasting of its phenomenal achievements as the island's administrator since 1898. In this report, the Chief of Naval Operations described the Chamorro people of Guam as:

A population so abused and oppressed over the centuries, so disease-infested, so isolated from the world, so haunted by superstition, that it was a listless, ambitionless, unorganized mass of humanity stirred only by the hope for individual survival. That was what was handed to the Navy Department 50 years ago *to rehabilitate, to organize, to administer, and to make productive.* (2-3, emphasis added)

The onus “to rehabilitate, to organize, to administer, and to make productive” the Chamorros fell on the shoulders of the United States Navy whose appointed military governors from 1898 to 1941 implemented a system of government in which verbal or written General and Executive Orders outlined their policies for the island. Ostensibly for the benefit of the Chamorro people of Guam, the posted Naval staff believed that their challenge was “not only to better the material circumstances ... but to achieve a transformation in the bodies and minds of the people” (USN 3).

But how, and in what image, would these bodies and minds be re-shaped? Not surprisingly, the Navy believed its duty was to assimilate the Chamorro populace into American society; in plain terms, to Americanize the natives. As historian David Hanlon has similarly evaluated the larger Micronesian region in the postwar American era, the US sought to “better possess Micronesians by remaking them in an image and likeness that was distinctively reflective of and submissive to the dominant values and interests in American society” (136). To achieve this on Guam, school, village, and island-wide events were molded by Naval sensibilities of functionality, protocol, and discipline. Through a critical reading of US Naval documents, this paper examines Navy strategies and projects that aimed to transform Chamorro lives,

highlighting some of the ways in which assimilationist policies were couched as philanthropic, thereby concealing Naval self-interest.

Historical Background

When the United States seized the island in 1898 as part of the spoils of the Spanish-American War, the sovereignty of some 10,000 indigenous Chamorros on Guam came under its control. The Chamorros had been Spanish subjects for more than two centuries, and although the majority of the population could neither speak nor read Spanish, extensive cultural influences were evident, particularly in the form of Catholic beliefs and rituals. Indeed, under Spanish rule from the late 1600s through 1898, scholar Dr. Robert Underwood notes that while "government had very little impact on the daily lives of the people and was poorly funded and managed" ("American Education" 84), the Catholic Church dominated the social, political, and economic life of the Marianas. Historian Dr. Vicente Diaz argues that "Spanish Catholicism can be deemed a virtual Chamorro domain, a kind of surrogate cultural space" (49). Consequently, when the US established its government on the island in 1899, current political realities on Guam pitted the island's new colonizer against the entrenched, indigenized Catholic Church (Hattori 281).

Following America's victory in the Spanish-American War, the Treaty of Paris placed Guam under the authority of the US Congress, but Congressional inaction allowed President William McKinley to intervene, and he sent the US Navy to assume command over the island. In his "Instructions for the Military Commander of the Island of Guam," the President declared that the Chamorros fell "within the absolute domain of naval authority" (McKinley 2). Beginning with Guam's first administrator, Captain Richard Leary, the US Naval governors of Guam exercised absolute authority over all executive, legislative, and judicial functions. In essence, until the 1950 passage of the Organic Act, Guam was run as a military dictatorship with no guarantees of either civil or political rights for the island's residents.

For the United States, control over the island was undertaken for strategic purposes. Military documents continually identify the island's proximity to Asia, as well as the value of Apra Harbor, "the best harbor in the Western Pacific" (NGG AR 1904 2), as the primary factors for American interest in the island. Dealing with the civilian population was a matter far outside the normal responsibilities of naval officers, and they consequently "administered the affairs of the island in a manner reflecting their naval training and experience" (James 413). Leary established an autocratic system and style of government that served as the precedent and model for all succeeding naval governors; a government that implemented what Leary himself referred to as "the strong arm of authority" ("Proclamation" 2).

Including Leary, a parade of 32 naval officers reigned over Guam in the years from 1899 to 1941. While some might argue that these were 32 separate individuals with varying histories, perspectives, and agendas, on a fundamental level, they formed essential pieces of a larger colonial apparatus. Collectively, they represented the interests of the US Government and the Department of the Navy. Even Commander M.M. Leonard of the US Navy agreed; in the December 1935 *Guam Recorder*, he wrote:

The story of the Navy in Guam, as written in the annual reports of its Naval governors, is a story of progress and achievement in the face of harassing difficulties . . . Through these reports the reader is impressed with the evidence of *a consistent singleness of aim*, prosecuted with vigor and determination, which

gives to them all a *singular unity*. Except for minor differences of expression, they might have been written by one man. (239-240, emphasis added)

At the very least, Leonard's homogenization of Guam's navy governors in terms of their uniformity of purpose -- as he says, their "consistent singleness of aim" and "singular unity" -- suggests the importance of evaluating their actions comprehensively.

An American government that lacked democratic characteristics, including no protections of civil and political rights for those over which it governed, did not sit well with the Chamorro people who attempted on numerous occasions to address the subject of their abject political status. Petitions to the US Congress attest to their desire to clarify and elevate Guam's political status so that the people could participate in a truly American-style, democratic government and attain citizenship. The very first of these petitions, written by a group of 32 Hagåtña men in 1901, described the island's autocratic military government as "distasteful and highly repugnant to the fundamental principles of civilized government" ("Petition" 24). Indeed, as the petitioners point out, "Fewer permanent guarantees of liberty and property rights exist now than when under Spanish dominion" ("Petition" 24). This petition, along with a dozen others that Chamorros transmitted to the US Congress before the second world war, was not acted upon. Thus, for the entire half century of naval rule, the island's government violated numerous basic principles of American democracy: a legislative body without lawmaking powers, a judicial system of trial without juries, and a government without checks and balances (Bordallo Hofschneider 33). In his study of the non-legislative Guam Congress, Roy James expresses that, "In their desire to give the people of Guam a voice but not a real part in the government of Guam, the governors have striven vainly to achieve an impossibility -- a democratic government in which the governed do not participate" (413).

Assimilation = Americanization

Thus the political development of the Chamorro people was never a priority for the autocratic naval officers. Neither was promoting the vitality of the Chamorro culture, and President McKinley's orders to Capt. Leary, in fact, called for the Americanization of the Chamorro people. His "Instructions for the Military Commander of the Island of Guam" directed the US Navy to "win the confidence, respect and affection of the inhabitants of the Island of Guam . . . by proving to them that the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation" (2). Very directly and clearly, then, the US administration on Guam sought to change the habits and customs of the Chamorros so that they aligned with mainland America, albeit achieved in a so-called "benevolent" manner.

The sentiment that Chamorro assimilation into mainstream American culture would be a generous and gentle process is clearly evoked in a 1935 Editorial of the *Guam Recorder* by Jack Flynn. This article exhorts the naval community to assist in the process of Americanizing the Chamorros, stating:

Undoubtedly all of us are united in speeding the day when in thoughts, language and ideals the people of this lovely island are thoroughly Americanized and may truly enjoy the full benefits of an American form of government. It is a fact that inasmuch as the United States governs here, the Chamorro people should make a determined effort to throw off the last remnants of customs, languages and ideas which are detrimental to their advancement . . . To assist in the process is the duty of every American on the Island . . . Take into your confidence the Chamorro

people who work with and under you. They are in your hands and are a kindly and worthwhile people. Help them in their struggles. (Flynn 202)

Flynn's editorial highlights the enthusiasm and sense of patriotism with which the Chamorro culture was undermined. Proclaiming it the "duty of every American on the island" to rid the island of its "customs, languages, and ideas" because they were perceived as "detrimental to [Chamorro] advancement" speaks loudly of the Navy's reigning ideas about progress and culture (Flynn 202).

Processes of Americanization were thus typically expressed as both charity and duty, and governors' policies therefore were assumed to improve the lives of the Chamorros. Yet often their intentions were less than magnanimous. Governor Dyer, for example, recommended in 1904 that the Chamorro people "attain a higher grade of living" (NGG AR 1904 4), but only so that it would benefit the naval community. As Dyer assessed, making Guam a more livable place for navy personnel would ultimately require elevating the standard of living of its indigenous inhabitants. He proclaimed:

It is therefore incumbent on us for our self protection and efficiency to give the natives such care as they are unable to get for themselves, to see that they are kept healthy and free from contagion, are afforded practical instruction in their sole pursuit, agriculture, and to educate some of them to occupy such positions as clerks, mechanics and intelligent laborers in the Naval Station . . . These people must be taught, at once, to help themselves in ways to make themselves useful to us . . . (NGG AR 1904 6)

Although Guam's governors frequently couched Navy policies in terms that portrayed the US as the island's generous benefactor, Dyer's *Annual Report* reveals the military's basic interest of living in a community that could feed and service the Navy, preferably in a disease-free and menial capacity.

In his 1906 study, Charles H. Forbes-Lindsay reiterated Dyer's point, favoring the elevation of the Chamorro status for the benefit of the naval community. Forbes-Lindsay wrote, . . . It is distinctly to the interests of the American Government to give the Chamorros ample educational facilities without delay. At no very distant date the requirements of the naval station on the island will demand a number of men to fill clerical positions and to perform intelligent work as mechanics and laborers. If, when that demand arises, the island can not furnish a large proportion of the needed working force, the positions can only be filled by the Government at comparatively great cost and inconvenience. (238)

In order to fulfill the anticipated need for educated labor, governors such as Bradley expressed the view that the Chamorro people "should be assisted, preferably through the medium of the Navy Department and on a gradually descending scale, watched-over, guided, and encouraged" (Bradley 1280). As Dyer and Forbes-Lindsay demonstrate, McKinley's call for the "benevolent assimilation" of the Chamorros would be economically advantageous for the Navy by providing them with an inexpensive pool of clerks, mechanics, and laborers. How Americanization policies would affect the Chamorro people was not of apparent concern.

"To Rehabilitate": Feeding the Discourse of "Benevolent Assimilation"

Rehabilitating the Chamorros meant, first and foremost, representing them as poor, ignorant people in dire need of rescue. In the Navy's own description, the Chamorros are

described as "decimated, spiritless, and mongrelized" (USN 1); this 1950 *Report on Guam* portrayed the Chamorro people as "[a] population so abused and oppressed over the centuries, so disease-infested, so isolated from the world, so haunted by superstition" (2). Demeaning descriptions such as these, generated and espoused by naval officers, created a stereotypical view of Chamorros that justified not only their assimilationist policies and laws on Guam, but the entire autocratic system of government. According to Navy descriptions, the Chamorro people were simply unfit to govern themselves, at least not until after naval rehabilitation.

Governor Dyer, in his 1904 *Annual Report*, described the Chamorro people as "poor, ignorant, very dirty in their habits, but gentle and very religious" (NGG AR 1904 2), and added a year later that "under intelligent direction they make efficient laborers and excellent artisans, and fill subordinate positions faithfully and well" (NGG AR 1905 2). More than three decades later, echoing Dyer's remarks, lieutenant Frederick J. Nelson wrote that the Chamorro people were incapable of survival without paternalistic assistance. He stated, "To turn this group of more than 20,000 Chamorros. . . over to any other power would probably mean their extinction, since no other nation is prepared to hold Guam as a philanthropic mission" ("Why Guam Alone Is American" 1135). Blatantly paternalistic views such as Dyer's and Nelson's reinforced the notion that the US colonized Guam as an act of charity in order to rehabilitate the languid native people.

Even supposedly "positive" stereotypes served the purpose of representing Chamorros as needy and incompetent. Descriptions of the island as a fertile, Pacific paradise and of the people as docile and law-abiding, for example, were presented as evidence against Chamorro political autonomy. Governor George Dyer, for example, who described the Chamorros as "a sober, intelligent, virile, and docile population" (NGG AR 1905 1-2), also wrote that "they lead lives of Arcadian simplicity and freedom from ambition or the desire for change or progress. They are like children, easily controlled and readily influenced by example, good or bad" (NGG AR 1904 2). The "law-abiding" aspect of the Chamorro persona, according to Governor George Alexander, translates to a lack of "political factions or political unrest," the people having "little interest in public affairs" (NGG AR 1935 4). What these views ignore is a long history of Chamorro resistance to naval policies, as well as a record of political activism in the petition drives for civilian government and citizenship.

Ultimately, the Navy would view themselves as "parents" of the "child-like" islanders, and as "parents," they were responsible for the material and moral development of the Chamorro people. Furthermore, the frequent and unequivocal representations of Chamorros as peace loving and generous quite naturally (de)generated into conceptualizations of loyal, grateful, patriotic Chamorros who were proud to be American, friendly to American rule, and satisfied with the Navy's autocratic rule of the island.

Having portrayed life on Guam in terms of poverty and smallness, and having depicted the wretchedness of the Chamorro people's living conditions, the naval governors could easily justify their political and socioeconomic agenda of reform for the indigenous inhabitants of Guam. According to this view, the Navy could do no wrong, as even minimal intervention would improve upon the paltry existence of the Chamorros. The stage was set, so to speak, for a series of civilizing advancements, all to the credit of the Navy. In fact, self-congratulatory analyses abound in the historical archive. In 1933, for example, former governor Bradley wrote in the *US Naval Institute Proceedings*, "We have brought about great changes- almost a transformation" (1276). Extolling the Navy's accomplishments even further, in 1940, Lieutenant Commander Nelson judged, "Since 1899, the administration of the island by the United States Navy has

effected what amounts to a modern sociological miracle" ("Guam" 83). Continuing in his praise of the Navy, Nelson added that "[f]rom physical, mental, and moral conditions too depressing to describe, Guam gradually emerged into one of the cleanest, most wholesome and prosperous spots in the tropics" ("Guam" 84).

"To Organize": General Orders-R-US

For naval officers assigned to Guam, virtually every aspect of life was fair game in their attempts to organize Chamorro "bodies and minds," and the goal of reordering Chamorro society would guide Governors' Orders that touched on virtually all aspects of daily life. Government ordinances required licenses for land ownership, mid-wifery practice, marriage, divorce, and dog ownership. Laws regulated the width of bull cart wheels, celebration of fiestas, ringing of church bells, and whistling in the streets of Hagåtña. Governors' Orders also mandated the number of chickens and pigs that each Chamorro man was supposed to tend, as well as the number of rats and iguanas that each man was responsible for killing.

Succeeding Leary, Guam's second governor, Seaton Schroeder, instituted an Order requiring the registration of marriages, as well as deaths, births, and entries into and departures from the island. This Order combined with one previously instituted by Leary which banned concubinage in order to enforce the new American moral standards. In Leary's Order No.5, he proclaimed,

The existing custom of concubinage, rearing families of illegitimate children, is repulsive to ideas of decency, antagonistic to moral advancement, incompatible with the generally recognized customs of civilized society, a violation of the accepted principles of Christianity, and a most degrading injustice to the innocent offspring, who is not responsible for the condition of his unfortunate existence. ("General Orders" 1:1)

Leary ordered that "all persons in this island so living together out of the bonds of wedlock are commanded to procure from the Government the necessary marriage license" ("General Orders" 1:1). In the analysis of Chamorro historian Penelope Bordallo Hofschneider, government disapproval of particular aspects of Chamorro culture "were stamped out by decree with an intolerance reminiscent of the Spanish conquerors who had colonized the island 250 [years] earlier" (23). While some co-habiting Natives may have remained unmarried due to prohibitive fees charged by the Church, Leary and Schroeder's combined General Orders redirected the payment of such fees to the government.

The naval governors were able to pull Chamorros in the cash economy, particularly into their naval projects, in large part through the levying of taxes. Schroeder undertook a census in order to ascertain "the exaction of a poll tax and the 15 days labor which the law requires be furnished by every male between the ages of 18 and 60" (NGG AR 1901 9). Although the Chamorro people had been forced to provide labor to the Spanish government at times in the past, the American labor requirement and the new tax structure was nonetheless ill-received. In an account by Lt. William Safford, Leary's second-in-command who virtually ran the island, he registered a commonly heard complaint: "We now pay more taxes than ever before; We are taxed for the guns we carry, the fields we cultivate, the houses we live in, and even for our dogs. Besides this, we have to work on the roads or pay the equivalent in taxes" ("A Year ... Part XXVII" 147). Safford assured the Chamorro protestors that their tax monies were being put to good use on the island for teacher salaries, road and bridge construction, and other purposes.

However, tax complaints would be leveled against naval governors on numerous occasions, and in some instances, governors modified the tax structure due to Native complaints.

The Navy also implemented laws to specifically re-order the lives of women, creating new gender distinctions among the people. As examined by Chamorro scholar Dr. Laura Torres Souder, the American administration which was imposed on the Chamorro people "effected a redefinition of women's proper place" (63). Executive Order No. 308, for example, issued on 3 April 1919, required that "a married woman should bear the surname and follow the nationality of her husband; and further that children should bear the name of their father" (qtd. in Souder, 45). This conflicted with the matrilineal practices of Chamorro society that bestowed the name of the mother on her children. In resistance to this policy, Chamorros began the practice of giving their mother's surname to children as a middle name. In any event, the naval governors failed to realize that the name of greater significance in Chamorro society was the clan name, a name which identifies all members of the clan, thus extending families into the hundreds of members.

The naval introduction of a cash-based economy imposed gender restrictions on employment opportunities that were reflective not of Chamorro society, but rather of late-Victorian conceptions of patriarchy and sexism. The Navy undermined the active engagement of Chamorro women in social, political and economic spheres through a series of policies that attempted to strip power from women's hands. Souder affirms that the Victorian views of the US Naval Administrators curtailed many of the former privileges enjoyed by women in Chamorro society. Instead, Chamorro women were engaged by the Navy to develop careers in acceptably domestic fields such as nursing and education, while men were recruited to work in naval offices, shipyards, and construction projects. Women were not appointed by the naval governors to serve in the Guam Congress, yet became a part of the Congress soon after elections were sanctioned. In the educational system, girls were directed towards courses intended to enhance their homemaking skills. A 1920 *Guam Newsletter* article told of Maria Perez's decision to seek a college education in the United States. Perez explained to a San Francisco reporter that "there are no schools there [on Guam] to prepare us for anything except basket weaving and cooking" (qtd. in Political Status Education Coordinating Commission 75). In the naval curriculum, boys learned carpentry, net-making and other industrial arts, while girls were taught sewing, weaving, baking and cooking (P. Sanchez 125, 153). Yet although naval notions of patriarchy attempted to depress the scope of female authority, Souder notes some of the ways in which women maintained their roles as culture bearers, "sustaining the family and perpetuating traditions which form the core of Chamorro identity" (46). Emphasis on the maternal family has not diminished, nor has the centrality of motherhood in Chamorro culture, Souder asserts.

"To Administer": Step One, Speak English

For naval officers, one of the fundamental requirements for the transformation of Chamorro society was the use of the English language. In 1901, Governor Schroeder reported that the first priority of the naval government was to get a school teacher to teach English (NGG AR 1901 4). Through education and the teaching of the English language, the people could presumably be taught loyalty, patriotism, thrift, hygiene, courtesy, respect, obedience, industry, and a host of other attributes. Furthermore, the English language became an essential instrument through which American patriotism could be voiced by the colonized Chamorros, thus validating the Navy's role as the island's administrators.

In 1900, Leary's General Order 12 established the system of public education for children between the ages of eight and 14, while also forbidding religious instruction in the schools ("General Orders" 1:1). His following General Order mandated that all residents "utilize every available opportunity to learn how to read, write, and speak the English language, thereby improving their own mental condition" ("General Orders" 1:1). Improving the Chamorro people's "mental condition," as Leary asserts, is unverifiable; what is certain is that knowledge of the English language would aid the Navy in utilizing the Chamorro people as a desired source of labor for their needs on the island, as several of the governors note.

Yet despite their considerable efforts, virtually every naval governor expressed frustration at the lack of fluency among the Chamorro people. In 1908, Governor Dorn observed, "As the main object of the schools at present is to teach this generation to speak English, and as, upon release from school, the children naturally relapse into Chamorro, their home language, the progress in English was not satisfactory" (NGG AR 1908 6). In 1916, after assessing that "[o]nly about 10% speak and understand English" (NGG AR 1916 10), Governor Roy Smith attempted to rectify the situation by mandating English as a requirement for employment. Noting that "[t]hey do not learn English as rapidly as they should," he ordered, "Appointments and promotions under the island and Federal governments are now subject to requirements in English" (NGG AR 1917 15).

The Navy's frustrations continued into the 1920s, Governor Price noting that the work of schoolteachers is "tedious and difficult principally because the little children understand and speak only Chamorro, and English is the only possible language in which to carry on instruction usefully" (NGG AR 1924 2). In 1929, Governor Bradley emphasized, "The teaching of English is being stressed in order that the people of tomorrow may have a means of understanding instruction given them, in all matters, by public officials and others connected with the official and business life of the island" (NGG AR 1929 23). Although Bradley was a governor viewed in generally benevolent terms by Guam's historians, even his outlook reflects a view of Chamorros as subservient.

By the 1930s, English language education extended beyond the elementary classroom and into public spaces. In 1934, Governor Alexander emphasized the use of English in public performances, reflecting that, "After 36 years of American occupation it is discouraging that the language of the United States is not in more general use among the native people" (NGG AR 1934 7). Utilizing government policy to address this perceived inadequacy, Alexander wrote: "To encourage the children in the use of the English language, and to develop their powers of expression, entertainments to which the public was invited were held by all schools at Christmas, on Flag Day and on the closing of schools in March" (NGG AR 1935 36). McCandlish concurred with this viewpoint in 1937, saying, "The Christmas pageants and the Closing Day exercises . . . provide an excellent opportunity for the children to develop their powers of expression and to exercise in public their knowledge of English" (NGG AR 1937 13).

In 1936, Adult Education Classes were instituted, "primarily to correct the deplorable degree of illiteracy among the adult Chamorros, many of whom can neither speak, read, nor write the English language" (NGG AR 1936 11). Believing that the Chamorro people would be more likely to speak English if encouraged by the examples of their political and education leaders, Governor Alexander reported that "the speaking of English by the native teachers out of school hours and by the Guam Congress during its sessions has been encouraged (NGG AR 1938 3).

Navy Blues

At the same time, however, there were those who took to the English language and who avidly desired educational advancement above what the Navy offered to the Chamorro people. Yet just as some naval governors complained of lazy and ambitionless islanders, others complained of overambitious ones. In 1932, Governor Root observed:

The Government has viewed in increasing concern a condition which is arising in connection with educational progress. There seems to be a natural spirit of dissatisfaction among the younger generation of boys who have completed their education . . . Everything possible is being done to combat this growing tendency, and it is hoped that the farm school will help to alleviate this situation. (NGG AR 1932 3)

The next governor, Alexander, instituted a policy in 1934 which limited admission to the junior high school in order to "avoid the growth of an unemployed scholarly group" (NGG AR 1934 8). As Governor Alexander explained, "Only the best are chosen by competitive examination. The others are urged to follow agricultural pursuits before too much education destroys the incentive for such employment" (NGG AR 1934 8). Apparently having faced considerable opposition against this policy, in his next report, Alexander further rationalized his position by asserting that "[i]n carrying out this policy, the historical background, environment, and needs of the Chamorro people are kept constantly in mind . . . There is little opportunity for young people to exercise higher academic training" (NGG AR 1935 31). Alexander thus recommended that more vocation training be made available to the community. Of this episode, Chamorro Superintendent of the Department of Education, Simon Sanchez, reported:

Enrollment in the junior high school was limited to 70 or 80 pupils a year. This brought about a protest from the Guam Congress . . . This protest together with the demands for boys with high school education for enlistment in the US Navy and other governmental positions resulted in admitting all qualified students into the senior high school. (286)

As a result of the change in policy, Sanchez reported that enrollment figures of 70 to 80 students in the 1934-36 school years rose to 258 in 1937-38, and by the 1941-42 school year, enrollment has risen to 564 students (286).

Thus at the outbreak of World War II on Guam in December 1941, the Chamorro language was still the language of use in the home, much to the dismay of naval officials. By and large, English was a language used in schools, government offices, and other formal (non-Chamorro) settings, and oftentimes only because official policy prohibited the use of Chamorro in those spaces. Despite the exhortation by naval governors to confine debate to English, even in the transcribed proceedings of the Guam Congress sessions Chamorro language use is conspicuous, discernable from breaks in text which read: "Off-the-Record remarks in Chamorro" or "Off-the-record discussion in the vernacular" (Guam Congress 4).

Even the introduction of American sports and celebrations was understood as an opportunity to increase the use of English. Governor Dorn commented in 1908:

It is noticeable that the small children have apparently no method of play; the introduction into the schools of this branch, with its games and songs, would, without doubt, give an excellent ground work for future education, the children at the most impressionable age, learning the songs in English and using them in their games and play. (NGG AR 1908 9)

Perhaps acting on Dorn's assertion, in 1912 Governor Coontz announced, "Playgrounds are being arranged for all school children, and both boys and girls play ball, the game helping wonderfully

in acquiring use of English" (NGG AR 1912 8). In 1925, Governor Price remarked of exercises in track and field, volleyball and baseball, "This activity has improved the use of English" (NGG AR 1925 12). Baseball and volleyball games soon became enormously popular, with play not only within the clan and village groups but also against military teams. Baseball soon became the island-wide pastime, and Governor Smith commented in 1918, "Some of the natives are excellent players, and with good coaching would do well anywhere. They excel in base stealing" (NGG AR 1918 32). Village fiesta celebrations were soon marked by baseball and volleyball games accompanying the perennially-favored cockfights. Extended families formed their own baseball teams, and villages formed Athletic Councils to coordinate baseball and softball leagues ("News of Island Affairs" 150).

The Navy also attempted to transform the nature of public celebrations, in part to undermine the centrality of Catholic Church festivities, but also as a form of Americanization. Washington's Birthday, Flag Day, Navy Day, Armistice Day, Memorial Day, and Arbor Day were all publicly celebrated, and the Guam Militia Carnival and Guam Fair festivities were initiated, not only to further the use of the English language, but also to emphasize the benevolence of United States, as well as the great progress made by the Island under the naval administration. Governor George Alexander described the 1935 Flag Day celebration as an exercise "at which the progress made and advantages gained under the American administration were emphasized" (NGG AR 1935 82).

The *Guam Recorder* described the 1934 Flag Day as "Guam's Greatest Patriotic Celebration" with ceremonies in the schools and at fort sites in several of the villages, typically paying tribute to "the enriching influence and material helpfulness that came with the American occupation" ("Flag Day" 1). The 1935 Flag Day program at Fort Santa Cruz in Piti involved the singing of patriotic songs, as well as speeches and recitations paying tribute to the flag and America ("Island News" 337-339). That year's celebration at Fort Santiago in Sumay included speeches by villagers James Sablan, his entitled "Brief History of the American Flag" and Mr. Felix T. Carbullido, Commissioner of Sumay, speaking on "The American Occupation of Guam." Another commemoration, this at the Guam Institute, was highlighted by the address "What the U.S Has Done for Guam" by Principal Nieves M. Flores ("Guam Institute News" 340).

Most patriotic and self-promoting of the American holiday celebrations was Navy Day, a "leave with pay" holiday declared by the naval governor ("Notice" 229). The 1934 Navy Day speech by Commander Herbert Dumstrey before a gathering of prominent Chamorro men paid tribute to the naval spirit:

This spirit of devotion to duty, of progress, is exemplified by the Navy personnel here on Guam. Gradually it is being imbued into the hearts and minds of the Chamorro people . . . For the Chamorro people, the officers and men of the Navy and Marine Corps have set an example. It is for the rank and file of the citizens of Guam to catch the spirit of the United States Navy, to respond to the excellent leadership of the Governor with a hearty - 'We are ready now, Sir.' (192)

The Navy Day celebration boasted the year's largest parade; in 1935, the parade drew a reported 3,500 participants. On this day, naval officers entertained the "leading citizens" of the Island by hosting them to a luncheon marked by self-congratulatory speeches in which naval officers outlined the numerous improvements under their tutelage ("Notice: Navy Day" 229). Naval reporter Lt. K.O. Ekslund described the event as "one of the major holidays of the island. The spontaneous enthusiasm of the people in its observance is the highest sort of tribute paid to Naval Administration" (237). Ekslund depicted the cavalcade of students in the parade as "a splendid

tribute to the educational campaign of the present administration" ("Notice: Navy Day" 237). Further, he noted, "a growing appreciation of Naval responsibilities in Guam, and a reciprocal spirit of cooperation on the part of the natives of Guam are but the natural results of such celebrations" ("Notice: Navy Day" 237). J.M. Flores, Chairperson of the Guam Congress House of Assembly, stated in his Navy Day speech before the luncheon crowd of naval officers and Chamorro political leaders,

The people are becoming more appreciative as the goals of the dreams of his Excellency [the Naval Governor] are drawing nearer. He is making the people happier by encouraging them to be more sport-minded and by putting more life into more or less dormant organizations . . . He is doing what he knows to be beneficial for us and posterity, even to the extent of risking his Naval career and health . . . For what he has done, his Excellency has won the love, confidence and respect of our people. (238)

The above examples of James Sablan, Nieves Flores, Felix Carbullido, and J.M. Flores illustrate that those few opportunities for Chamorros to deliver public speeches or write essays in the English language were typically occasions that demanded the expression of patriotism and loyalty to the United States. Thus the very learning of the English language was itself crafted as an exercise in patriotic expression. The patriotic discourse of the people of Guam has been studied previously by Underwood in his interrogation of Chamorro manifestations of loyalty to the U.S. following Guam's "liberation" by the US armed forces during World War II. In explaining the impetus for his 1977 inquiry, Underwood reflected, "The notion that Chamorros were more American than America needed study. This rabid patriotism has roots. It didn't spring up overnight. It was planted and cultivated by individuals with many motives" ("Red, Whitewash and Blue" 6-8). Certainly these roots lie in the prewar era, a time in which Chamorros were learning English-the-patriotic-way, while concomitantly hearing themselves described as impoverished, ignorant people who had fortunately become the recipients of America's largesse.

"To Make Productive": Training "Lazy Natives" to Feed the Navy

In testimony before the US Congress House of Representatives in 1911, former Governor Dyer reported, "A more universally contented and independent people can scarcely be found. The conditions of their life are most simple; there is no real poverty . . . a gentle, subordinate, cheerful, and lovable race" (*Congressional Record* 3606). Similar comments were made in 1918 by Governor Roy Smith, who commented that "[t]here is no poorhouse in Guam. The natives take a certain pride in looking out for relatives who may be destitute" (NGG AR 1918 14). In 1940, Governor George T. McMillin likewise communicated, "Due to a strong sense of family loyalty there are but few charity cases in Guam" (NGG AR 1940 2).

The hub of the above-described support system was the lanchos, or ranches. In 1900, Safford noted of Chamorros and their ranches, "Every family produces only enough for its own use . . . The natives will not readily part with their land. They take great pride in their ownership of farms" ("A Year . . . Part XXVII" 48). Reiterating the ranch's centrality to Chamorro families, in 1901, Governor Schroeder commented that "every family has a ranch which is their first care and interest" (NGG AR 1901 3). Governor Alexander concurred more than three decades later, "Practically every Chamorro family has its own ranch, no matter whether the members of the family are otherwise employed or not. On the ranch they can produce practically everything necessary to sustain life" (NGG AR 1938 2).

Yet rather than appreciating the lack of poverty on the island that resulted from the productivity of the lancho and the generosity of the people, some of the governors viewed Chamorro contentment as an obstacle to economic development. Although the Chamorros were able to support their families, rarely did the naval governors observe an overabundance of food or other commodities, as excess food was typically given away to relatives or friends. In another example of what the Navy perceived as squandered economic opportunity, surplus labor was reserved not for naval employ, but for familial duties. As Governor Roy Smith commented, "The native knows nothing of community work, he works only for himself. If he has more than he needs he gives it away" (NGG AR 1917 41). These types of representations ultimately evoked notions of economic stagnation.

The concern about the Chamorro economy, in fact, began with the island's first naval governor, Richard Leary and relates directly to his ban on fiestas undertaken in General Order #4. Issued on 25 August 1899, Leary's Order reads, "Public celebrations of feast-days of the Patron Saints of villages, etc., will not be permitted. The Church and its members may celebrate their religious feast-days within the walls of the church, chapel or private residence, in accordance with the regulations for the maintenance of the public peace" ("General Orders" 1:1). This assertion suggested that fiestas, due to the large crowds in attendance, posed concerns about the outbreak of uprisings, and this concern for peace was also taken up by mainland media. A front page article in the *New York Times* on 4 January 1900, for example, entitled "Celebrations of Feasts of Patron Saints Forbidden," stated that the ban was enacted "in consequence of the liability of riots" ("A Thanksgiving" 1), although Chamorro historian Pedro Sanchez writes that "[t]here had not been any disturbance of the public peace during or after religious processions as far as any one could remember" (91).

Yet more than concerns for public safety and political authority provoked General Order #4. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, Leary himself provided a substantially different explanation, stating that because of fiestas, "the natives were disabled for work for many days in consequence of over-indulgence" ("Letter to Secretary of the Navy"). Moreover, in a private meeting with Lt. William Safford, he expressed that henceforth only US legal holidays would be recognized and that "no one had a right to cease from work on any but legal holidays" ("Chronicle"). At stake here for Leary was the Chamorros' cessation of work, caused by what he saw as fiesta "over-indulgence." This analysis is reiterated by Dr. Henry Beers, in a report assessing Guam's Naval Administration from 1898-1902 in which he wrote, "Since they were in effect public holidays, the numerous church festivals on Guam seriously interfered with the economic life of the people by keeping them away from their work. In fact, feast days usually accompanied by spectacular processions, which delighted the simple natives, were the occasion for debauches lasting several days. The Governor put an end to this custom" (27).

The concern for maximizing the Chamorros' economic potential was driven, however, not by a material deficiency among the islanders, but rather by the fact that the navy wanted the natives to provide food for the roughly 200 Navy and Marine Corps men newly-stationed on Guam. According to Beers, "The state of agriculture on the island became a serious matter to the administration within a few weeks after the arrival of the expedition, for it became difficult to procure eggs, chickens, meat, and vegetables for the garrison and the men on the station ship. To keep up their health, fresh vegetables were essential, so a means was sought to ensure their production" (28). Navy historian Captain Frederick Nelson corroborates Beers' analysis, stating further that,

One of the most pressing problems faced by this early American administration was to prevent the failure of food supplies on the island.... [T]o provide for an increase in foodstuffs sufficient to supplement the Navy rations of the recently arrived American contingent meant effective stimulation of agricultural activities. ("The History of the American Occupation" 8)

As Nelson's commentary reveals, Leary's ban on fiestas was motivated, at least in part, by the Navy's "pressing problem" of food shortages, exacerbated by fiestas that undermined Chamorro economic productivity. In Nelson's analysis, one factor that "worked against the production of a saleable surplus of food by the Chamorros was their "indifference to raise surplus quantities of fruits and vegetables due to the waste that often resulted from spoilage. In his capitalist critique of the Chamorro economy, Nelson writes, "Unfortunately these people failed to see the benefit of a surplus which they did not store but which through exchange, they could turn into money or an indestructible surplus.... In fact the unwillingness of Chamorros to work for any wages was another indication of their ignorance" ("The History of the American Occupation" 9).

In addition to banning fiestas as a way to control the island's economy, Leary issued five other General Orders that attempted to more directly influence Guam's economy. These controlled the sale of land parcels, banned the export of food items, set minimum standards of agricultural productivity, required the registration of lands, and imposed a tax on land. Order No. 6 stated that "the exportation of cattle, hogs, fowl, eggs, rice, corn, and sweet potatoes from this island is hereby forbidden," a law that essentially restricted the practice of trade between Chamorros and trading vessels during port-of-call visits in order to conserve the island's available fresh food for Navy consumption ("General Orders" 1:1). Furthermore, Order 7 mandated, "Every inhabitant who is without a trade or occupation . . . must plant a quantity of corn, rice, coffee, cacao, sweet potatoes, or other fruits and vegetables . . . He must also have at least 12 hens, 1 cock, and 1 sow" ("General Orders" 1:1). Rather than understanding General Orders 6 and 7 as indicators of Chamorro agricultural unproductivity, in fact they reflect Navy desires to increase the quantity of local produce available for consumption by the military.

General Orders no. 3, 10, and 15 took a longer-term approach to the situation, Leary here attempting to control land use patterns so that agricultural productivity might be increased. Order No. 3, issued just days after his arrival on Guam, prohibited the sale of land "without first obtaining the consent of the Government" ("General Orders" 1:1). Leary stated that this general order was enacted "[f]or the protection of Government interests, and as a safeguard for the residents of Guam against the machinations, devices, and schemes of speculators and adventurers" ("General Orders" 1:1). Although this particular law might be interpreted as an enlightened effort to protect native land rights, navy historian Dr. Henry Beers states that "[t]he object of this order was to afford time to see that all titles were properly recorded in the office of the registrar of land titles" (26). A separate law declared that Chamorros had to register their lands, Leary proclaiming in General Order No. 15 that "All owners or claimants of land are hereby warned that in order that their ownership be recognized they must acquire legal titles to the said land and have it registered according to law . . . before May 15, 1900" ("General Orders" 1:1). Yet General Order No. 10, enacted prior to the land registration edict, established a system of land taxes, payable in cash. According to Beers, Leary "confidently reported" that the new regulations "would have the beneficial result of opening up agricultural lands that had been lying idle" (27).

More than a decade after Leary's General Order 15, Governor Maxwell lamented:

Unfortunately it is believed that there are those who claim large holdings of land who do not want their boundaries defined and who deny the right of the Government to survey the land without their request and consent. The complete settlement of the ownership of land is fraught with some difficulties. (NGG AR 1915 11)

Maxwell claimed that "violent opposition, open and secret by certain ill disposed persons have made the work of the Cadastral Survey of Guam very slow" (NGG AR 1915 10). Defeatedly, he admitted, "So many people believe themselves possessed of the land outright, that few have paid any attention to this oft repeated call of the Government of Guam" (NGG AR 1915 11). Nonetheless, the Naval Government plowed ahead with its Cadastral Survey. Year after year, naval governors reported on their progress, exposing the excruciatingly slow progress of this naval pursuit and some sense of their frustration. In 1919, Governor Gilmer proclaimed that 18% of the Island's area had been surveyed (NGG AR 1919 14); in 1920, Governor Ivan C. Wettengel reported a 1% improvement, but complained that "the work is proceeding much too slowly" (NGG AR 1920 18, 35). More than a decade later, in 1929, Governor Edmund Root admitted, "It was realized some time ago that many of the surveys previously carried out were not wholly satisfactory, and on that account progress was held back considerably" (NGG AR 1931 10). Root's perception of the situation worsened by the next year when he conceded, "Practically all previous surveys were inaccurate" (NGG AR 1932 6). In 1935, a sophomoric Governor Alexander appraised the predicament as such,

A matter of serious concern in the Island of Guam is the Land Survey and Registration situation. For many years efforts have been made to correct this ill condition, but success has been somewhat slow . . . It was hoped that, realizing the seriousness of the conditions, the people would all apply to have their land surveyed and brought under the operation of the Land Registration and Cadastral Survey order. (NGG AR 1935 25)

Thus for the entire period of naval rule, the Chamorro people resisted the military's attempts to define and tax their land holdings, willfully disobeying the edicts of both governors and surveyors. The Navy's land laws, moreover, although enacted to enhance the island's economic development, neither protected Chamorro land rights, nor substantially increased agricultural output. Scholar Don Farrell describes, "The intent of the new tax system was to encourage the agricultural development of the island. In the long run, however, it had the effect of decreasing the amount of privately held lands, and increasing the landholdings of the American government" (104-105). Paul Carano and Pedro Sanchez's *The Complete History of Guam* concurs, stating that "large landowners, finding the tax too much of a burden," lost tracts of their land to the government, thus failing to increase the agricultural use of lands that had been lying idle (194). The Herrero family, for example, surrendered the bulk of their land to the Naval Government, reducing their property to a narrow strip along the shore (Carano and Sanchez 193-194).

The inaction and obfuscation by Chamorros throughout this period demonstrates that they remained largely uninterested in legally defining their lands' boundaries, acreage, and other terms of individual land ownership. It is also clear from the historical record that Chamorro people were shrewdly aware that larger land holdings meant higher taxes, and so the avoidance of taxes is one plausible reason for which many Chamorro people would have avoided land surveys or would have willfully understated the size of their true holdings.

Navy Blues

The bevy of General Orders expresses the wide-ranging attempts of the Navy to re-order many aspects of Chamorro life. Additionally, a close reading of their *Annual Reports* and other pertinent documents of the period demonstrates that, bolstered by a rhetoric of paternal benevolence, the American Navy justified its mission on Guam as a campaign of humanitarian proportions, with the Navy positioning itself as the champions of Chamorro survival. Yet as this paper has demonstrated, the naval agenda was neither as successful nor as benevolent as their Order and reports would lead one to believe. The constant frustrations and challenges faced by the governors indicate Chamorro recalcitrance toward many of their impositions. Furthermore, the naval agenda was not simply benevolent or paternalistic, but rather marked by numerous self-serving interests. Teaching the Chamorros to speak English would ultimately enable them to serve the Navy in jobs with salaries that were substantially lower than that paid to whites due to the blatantly racist pay scales that existed before civil right legislation. Laws governing land, moreover, were largely ineffective both in registering all of the island's tracts and in stimulating agricultural productivity.

Yet we can learn and appreciate much about the resilience of the Chamorro people from an examination of the ways in which military tactics and strategies devoted to Americanization were accepted, appropriated, exploited, rejected, or even disregarded. Underwood describes society in prewar Guam as "more like a continuation of previous patterns, except for changes in the political structure which were evolutionary rather than revolutionary . . . In this time period, social and economic patterns stabilized, and changes were gradual rather than dramatic" ("American Education" 86-87). Perhaps the "evolutionary rather than revolutionary" nature of change during the prewar period can be attributed primarily to Chamorro ambivalence towards the newly-introduced social and economic norms, for the Navy surely desired a radical metamorphosis.

Ironically, the prewar period on Guam is not canonically or publicly perceived as an oppressive, onerous time. Indeed, this period is typically looked upon rather nostalgically by historians, and even by Chamorros, who view it as an idyllic period prior to the calamitous Japanese invasion of World War II. In contemporary Chamorro society, the term "Before The War" elicits recollections of security and tranquility with few memories of any specific governor or navy leader. By comparison, the gruesome experiences of World War II and the immediate post-war years still jar the collective memory of the Chamorro people, consequently obscuring the disturbing nature of the pre-war naval administration. Perhaps because the cultural transformations that took place on Guam prior to the War were less dramatic than the transformations that have resulted since then, this period is recollected nostalgically by Chamorro people for cultural reasons, as well. As scholar Dr. Laura Souder articulates, this naval era is now generally recalled as the time during which "Chamorro-Spanish ways amalgamated with American ways to form a pool of syncretic cultural traits which present-day Chamorros call traditional Chamorro culture or *custumbren Chamorro*" (8). Souder describes the strength and durability of the Chamorro people who resisted the unequivocal Americanization sought by the military, and instead controlled the naval presence by selectively attending to those concerns most beneficial to them. Thus although Chamorro participation in some of the naval activities was interpreted as an indicator of acceptance and appreciation, many of the activities were co-opted by the Chamorro people and placed into a new social context. Team sports and gatherings such as parades and carnivals involved clan members in new activities, yet still organized under

existing cultural parameters. Through baseball games and other forms of public recreation and celebration, Chamorros have unified new generations of clan and kin in further ties of reciprocity and *inafa'maolek*. Thus rather than viewing Americanization in the prewar era as the monolithic marginalization of the Chamorro culture, it can be argued that the navy government itself was appropriated and absorbed into the Chamorro cultural landscape.

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