

The Japanese in Postwar Guam: Towards a Reconciliation

Maria Cynthia Barriga
Global Education Center
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan

The paper inquires how the concept of “Japanese” transformed from a fluid label that allowed Guam’s Japanese locals a sense of duality before the Pacific War to a racial stereotype that encompasses diverse individuals and boxes them in the category “the Japanese enemy.” As late as July 1944, islanders resisted this stereotype, yet by 1947 they adopted it in their narratives or dissociated their Japanese friends from it by portraying them as “part of us.” Examining archival records from the 1940s, supplemented by published oral histories, the paper finds three factors to this change: dehumanizing violence during the mop-up operations, news articles’ insistence that Japanese atrocities were customary to “the Japanese race,” and the islanders’ participation in the dichotomous us-versus-enemy discourse. Through historical analysis, the paper shows the creation of a racial trope (the anti-thesis to the other racial trope of “the American Liberator”) in order for present-day readers to rethink if such trope is worth maintaining.

Alvin Josephy, a journalist-turned-sergeant, was with the 3rd Marine Division that landed on Guam on July 21, 1944. His account, published in 1946, provides candid stories of the experiences of these American military men, and of the many surprises they encountered while working with CHamoru people. In one part, Josephy (p. 90) admits:

There was one note that puzzled us. Occasionally all the Guamanians would agree that some particular Jap was a good Jap; he had liked the Guamanian people and had tried to help them. Dr. Sablan, for instance, had a sympathetic word for the *Kohatsu* doctor, who he said had been kind to the Chamorros. Father Calvo told us about the Japanese Catholic priests. And men and women whom we liberated in various parts of the island seemed to want us to know that

there had been some humane Japs on Guam who had tried to ease the people's lot.

This observation caught my attention because in the early 1960s, Ritsuko Dejima, the daughter of the Guam's well-known retailer Riye¹ Dejima, shared with a Japanese researcher visiting from Japan that most of the members of the *nisei-kai* [association of second-generation Japanese] had been, at one point, asked if they were a Japanese soldier (Shinohara, H., 1963, p. 21). Then, in the early 1980s, Jesus Martinez Yoshida, the only key informant with a Japanese-sounding name in the oral histories project led by Kathleen Owings (1981), spoke of "the Japanese" to pertain to brutal Japanese soldiers, as if he himself was not the son of a Japanese settler (pp. 666-70).² His narrative, like those of other Chamoru interviewees in the collection, was filled with the tragedy he experienced under this inhumane Japanese invader. Interestingly, the transcriber of Yoshida's account deemed it necessary to note that, "He was urged by the interviewer to tell his story" (p. 666).

Juxtaposing Josephy's 1940s account with Ritsuko's 1960s and Yoshida's 1980s statements, there seems to be more nuanced understanding of "the Japanese" in the immediate postwar than in the decades that followed. Atrocities and violence during the war made people in Guam wrathful, yes, but in 1944 their anger did not encompass all Japanese. Yet, by the early 1960s and more so in the early 1980s, war histories came to have a vivid image of "the Japanese." Persisting up to this writing, it is an image of a brutal, inhumane, defeated Japanese soldier. It is a trope that is made to represent numerous individuals regardless of their participation in the war.

This paper asks how the understanding of diverse individuals transformed into the unitary, generalized racial image of "the Japanese

¹ Names are spelled based on prewar sources in Guam, such as *Guam Recorder*, and may be different from the official transliteration of their names in the Japanese language.

² In the manuscripts of the 1940 census available online in the 1940 Census website of the U.S. National Archives, a "Yoshida, Jesus M." (age 20 years old and born in Guam) appears under the household of "Yoshida, Jose T." (age 60, born in Japan). See National Archives, Official 1940 Census Website.

enemy” that pervades in Guam’s Pacific War histories today. It focuses on Guam’s postwar period. That is, its focus begins after the US forces declared the island secured in August 1944 and ends in 1949, when the racial trope of “the Japanese” became an apparent force affecting people’s telling of the past war. In this paper, “Japanese enemy” does not pertain to the politico-military label ascribed to people of Japanese ancestry living in the US and its territories during the US-Japan War. Rather, it means the character trope in the grand narrative that undergirds people’s narration of the war. It is a specter that follows Guam’s Japanese locals like a stigma and from which they consistently need to extricate themselves.

Employing historical analysis, I examined military reports, newspaper articles, and published accounts from the period under study (1944-1949). Unlike the preceding works on Chamoru war history, archival sources – not oral histories – were primarily utilized. As can be seen in the aforementioned testimonies of Ritsuko Dejima in the 1960s and of Jesus Yoshida in the 1980s, the emergence of the racial trope of “the Japanese [enemy]” long predated the massive oral histories projects on Guam. Thus, while oral histories are used in this study as valuable supplements, it is essential that archival materials be exhumed in order to reveal how the trope was created. In so doing, the paper advances the feasibility of using colonial sources to write local histories and insists on the need for various kinds of historians to apply their energies to the question of the Pacific War on Guam.

In the succeeding sections, the paper first lays out the trends in war history on Guam, notes its limitation, and suggests an alternative approach. Next, it sketches a picture of Guam’s prewar Japanese locals, highlighting their duality as people of Japan and as people of Guam before the war, and demonstrates how this duality was made unfeasible during the Japanese Occupation. Then, it proceeds to the postwar period, tackling it by theme so as to explain how the racial trope emerged. It ends by returning to present-day war history. The way that war stories are written, remembered, and retold have made enemies of those who

had long been part of the island society. Keeping in mind the danger of perpetuating the divisive legacy of the war, I hope that readers will contemplate how islanders can narrate their war experiences without resorting to racial tropes.

Toward an Alternative Approach to Writing War Histories

Scholarship on the Pacific War on Guam has developed significantly. Early on, Pedro A. Sanchez's book, *Uncle Sam, Please Come Back to Guam* (1979), entitled after the popular wartime song, presented the "Guamanians" as loyal to the United States. Other works in the 1980s similarly focus on CHamoru experiences, albeit notably without the weight of loyalty to Uncle Sam. Tony Palomo's book, *An Island in Agony* (1984), for example, highlights the tragedies experienced by the islanders and their resiliency. Don Farrell's book on the 1944 liberation of Guam (1984), though largely a military history, devotes a chapter to CHamoru tragedy after the 1944 U.S. military bombardment of Guam in 1944. He achieves considerable impact through the photographs presented. The extensive oral histories project supervised by Kathleen Owings refuses to be boxed within a single theme. Conducted as the civilian counterpart to the research of National Parks Service historian Russell Apple on the U.S. military operations, the collective biography includes a staggering 74 key informants.³ These early works present a holistic war history, which covers not just military operations but also the experiences of ordinary islanders.

In 2001, Vicente Diaz faced the dilemma posed by the Liberation grand narrative, in which the CHamoru is portrayed as the loyal subject of the United States. In this grand narrative, the CHamoru was liberated from the Japanese and now remembers the period with gratitude and increased devotion to the U.S. Referencing preceding historians such as Sanchez and Palomo, Diaz (2001, p. 157) acknowledged CHamorus' love and loyalty to the U.S.; however, he was also quick to note that such love and loyalty were unrequited. Reflecting not a relationship, but the

³ Some were interviewed in dyads.

devotion of one to another, it shows, rather, the inner strength of a people (p. 175). Moreover, because of continuing postwar issues, this devotion – as well as the Liberation grand narrative itself – is being questioned. As Diaz observed:

...for unresolved issues such as postwar land con-demnations, war reparations, and Guam's neocolonial status, and for the unprecedented economic and social growth and impact on indigenous culture and the land itself, the postwar commemoration of Liberation Day has also begun to feature public challenge and opposition, even through mimicry and sarcasm. It is contested even as it is commemorated.

In the 2010s, more examinations of war commemoration and history-writing were published. In his book, *Cultures of Commemoration* (2011), Keith Camacho juxtaposed the commemoration of the war on Guam and on the islands of the Northern Marianas, specifically Saipan. Camacho argued that the increasingly diverging histories of CHamorus in Guam and in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) are rooted in their respective colonial histories under the U.S. and Japan before, during, and after the war. Further, Camacho insisted that history-writing is done not only by the U.S. and Japan, but also by the islanders themselves. Thus, the responsibility of writing history and liberating themselves from this divisive history is on the islanders themselves (p. 177). Taking a tougher stance, CHamoru scholar activist, Michael Bevacqua, directly criticizes the Liberation grand narrative (2016, p. 115): “The Scene of Liberation reduces history to two basic subject positions. There is the Chamorro, the passive victim of war... who can do nothing else but wait for sustenance... Towering above this Chamorro is the United States marine, the soldier, the liberator.” As Bevacqua succinctly points out, “According to the Scene, the Chamorro is made to feel as if life could not be possible without the U.S. figure present.”

Noticing the gaping absence of studies utilizing Japanese archival sources, Wakako Higuchi presented a politico-military history of – as the

title of her book clearly states – *The Japanese Administration of Guam, 1941-1944*. Not only does Higuchi provide the much-needed clarification on Japanese terminologies (e.g., official titles, institutional names, and translations) and the organizational structure of the Japanese navy in the Marianas, she also elaborates on the underlying ideologies that guided the Japanese Navy's administration of Guam. In addition to the main text, Higuchi appends a wealth of accounts, some from her interviews, others from non-official archival materials (e.g. diaries) by Japanese individuals who were in Guam during the war or were somehow involved in its administration.

In a recently published book, Keith Camacho likewise veers the attention on individuals affiliated with the Japanese empire. Camacho examines archival documents related to the cases tried in the war crimes tribunal on Guam, especially those concerning Japanese soldiers, Chamorros from Saipan, and a Japanese citizen who had lived in Guam for decades since before the war. In doing so, he "demonstrates that the [US] navy's tribunal prosecuted Japan's nationals and its native subjects in an effort to impose the U.S. rule of law in Guam and other formerly Japanese-occupied islands" (2019, Introduction). Moreover, he shows that Chamorro memories of victimization "functioned as vital testimonies for the navy's court." Showing the various "inclusive exclusion" experienced by these men in the tribunal, Camacho argues that they are "homo sacer" (sacred men), that is, persons who may be killed but not sacrificed.

Like Higuchi and Camacho, I focus on the Japanese in Guam. However, unlike Camacho who did so to critique US imperialism on the island and Higuchi who illuminated Japanese empire's designs in Guam, this paper is concerned with the writing of war history. What it critiques is the configuration of the historiography undergirding the narratives of the war. For example, in advancing CHamoru agency to counter the image of the dependent CHamoru subject, Bevacqua placed the spotlight on CHamoru resistance (both active and passive) against the Japanese invaders. In doing so, the brutality of the Japanese was highlighted. Yet,

Jessica Jordan (2015) insisted in her dissertation that the Japanese Colonial Period in the Northern Mariana Islands was far more complex than the oppressive period it is often portrayed.

Like in Jordan's dissertation, Japanese atrocities are not denied in this paper. Rather, here is an opportunity to nuance the idea of "the Japanese"—the third character trope in war histories, alongside "the American" and "the CHamoru." Who are included in this category, "the Japanese?" Does the label pertain to those who arrived in December 1941? If so, what of the Koreans and the Taiwanese who served in the Japanese military? To further complicate the idea, are Okinawans part of "the Japanese?"⁴ What of the Japanese mestizos born on Guam who went to Japan for a year or two to study? What of their parents who were born and raised in Japan, but who lived on Guam for years? Instead of directly answering those questions, this paper shows how the concept of "the Japanese" transformed from a fluid notion before the Pacific War to a rigid stereotype postwar.

Before inquiring into the idea of "the Japanese," the paper needs to be grounded on a theoretical perspective. In this paper, the Pacific War is not viewed as a clash of nations; but rather, as a race war, a total war. Japanese studies historian, John Dower (1986, Chapter 2) revealed that to justify waging their total war, the U.S. and Japan both portrayed each other as polar opposites. In wartime posters and speeches, each portrayed the other as evil, uncivilized, and "mad." At the same time, each portrayed themselves as good, progressive, and the liberator of subjugated countries. Writing years after Dower, Takashi Fujitani (2011) called the sort of exclusionist racism discussed in Dower's book as "vulgar racism." In contrast, Fujitani concentrated on an inclusivist kind of racism which he calls, "polite racism." By comparing Japanese Americans and colonial Koreans, Fujitani argued: "...the U.S. and Japanese total war regimes shifted decisively toward the strategy of

⁴ Did colonial Korean soldiers fighting in the Japanese imperial forces consider themselves Japanese? Notwithstanding the anti-colonial title of Brandon Palmer's empirically wealthy book, *Fighting for the Enemy: Korean's in Japan's War*, I follow Takashi Fujitani's take that this question has no easy answer. To push the point further, would Okinawans who left Saipan for Guam in 1944 consider themselves Japanese? For a glimpse of the diversity of the backgrounds of the Japanese POWs, see "POW Interrogation Reports," Micronesian Area Research Center.

disavowing racism and including despised populations within their national communities.” To wage their war, both empires had to entice the entire populace to their side and had to prove to themselves that they are not racists as the other side accused them to be. Enticed, the empires’ national minorities and colonials sought to be recognized as part of the empire-nation. Interestingly, Japanese anthropologist Hidekazu Sensui (2018) reached a similar conclusion, albeit writing in Japanese and not citing Fujitani. Comparing an Okinawan in the Japanese military and a Latin American in the U.S. military, Sensui found that both colonial soldiers knew of the discrimination that they and other minorities experienced in their empire, and precisely because they were the object of discrimination, they sought to prove themselves at par with the other nationals.

Relevant to this point of view, war sociologist, Senisa Malesevic, demonstrates that for large scale violence to occur, there needs to be: “highly developed organizational mechanisms of social control and well articulated and institutionally embedded ideological doctrines capable of justifying such action” (2010, pp. 4-5). To rephrase Malesevic’s theory in simpler terms, for people to wage war, they must be organized (institutionally or otherwise) and they must have a justified reason for killing and hurting other human beings. Total wars, therefore, are centrifugal movements of diverse peoples into two or more contesting poles; i.e., the polarization of hybrid societies. In this approach to writing war history, the story is not about one people against another. It is not even about “a people.” Rather, it is a story of increasing polarization of a place.

Following such approach to writing war history, this paper is undergirded by the story of Guam’s polarization, a divide due to colonization and war. It shows how “the Japanese” trope – the pole that serves as the antithesis to “the American” and “the CHamoru” – was completed postwar by protracted routinary violence and racist discourse.

The Prewar Japanese Locals of Guam

The Japanese empire began its expansion to the Pacific in the 1860s, however as argued by historian Terutaro Nishino (1984), the first Japanese to set sail seemed to be part of a Pacific-wide black-birding network rather than to be labor migrants sent by a cognizant country. Late though it was, Japanese business ventures to the Marianas throttled in the 1900s-1910s, bringing with them capital, goods, and migrants; thus linking Guam to Japan. According to Higuchi (1998, p. 155), Kazuji Shimizu of Ibaraki, one of the well-known Japanese pioneers of Guam, had moved to Guam in 1900, married into a respectable CHamoru family, took the Catholic name "Jose," and established the J.K. Shimizu Company. Later, he and his brother partnered to import Japanese goods (p. 156). Besides Shimizu, other Japanese entrepreneurs also settled on Guam. Takekuma Shinohara of Kagoshima also married into a CHamoru family, acquired land, and established an export business which spanned Guam, Japan, and reached even San Francisco (Shinohara, S., 1963, p. 68). These wealthy Japanese merchants imported much of their merchandize and personal properties from Japan, mostly via American vessels.

Along with their transpacific business networks, the Japanese locals of Guam were also well-assimilated into the island society while maintaining links with Japan. According to the Bureau of the Census (1941, p. 10), 288 of the 326 Japanese on Guam were born on the island. Perusing the manuscript of this census, I culled a sample of 35 (out of 43) married Japanese males and discovered that, of the 35, all but one were married to CHamoru women. While Japanese settlers established familial kinship with CHamorus, they also sent their sons to Japan for a year or three for schooling, for example, the sons of Vicente Takano and Dolores San Nicholas. One of the sons returned to Guam and married his childhood sweetheart; another brought home his Japanese wife to the island (War Claims).

Given their overlapping transpacific and local linkages, these Japanese merchants and their organization, the Japanese Society of Guam,

understandably sought harmonious relationships with elites in Agana and at the Naval Government. The Society gave grand welcome banquets to newly assigned American governors, as the *Guam Recorder* reported in August 1929 and April 1938. Shinohara, the Society's president, was also remembered by Naval Station officials for his sukiyaki parties (Giles, 1994, p. 48). Issues of the *Guam Recorder* often announced that younger officers assembled at his restaurant for their regular Rooster meetings (May 1935, June 1938, September 1938), at times fondly calling him Señor Tomas Shin O'hara (February 1936). As the caption in the Society's photo published in the *Guam Recorder* declared: "The Japanese Society is always ready to help with any project for civic betterment and is thus an important factor in the life of the community" (May 1937). Before the Pacific War, Guam's Japanese locals enjoyed plural affinities, belonging to both the island society and the expanding Japanese empire. They were simultaneously islanders and Japanese. Mostly merchants, they also maintained transpacific networks and saw themselves in between the empires of Japan and the US.

Such plurality became untenable since the outbreak of the Pacific War. On 8 December 1941, after the Japanese planes from Pearl Harbor bombed US military installations on Guam, about 35 Japanese locals regardless of nationality were detained in Agana prison under the suspicion of espionage (Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, 1967, p. 40). Although unrecorded, given that the prewar Japanese population was 326, one can safely assume that the 291 others escaped with their CHamoru friends and families. Rosario Mafnas, for example, recalled that her family escaped the Japanese invasion with the help of their friend, Dong Sayama. Whether purposively or not, not once did Rosario mention Dong Sayama's Japanese background, or that his father was one of the Japanese detained in the Agana city jail (Owings, 1981, pp. 374-375). At the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Japanese of Guam were either "Japanese" spies or "CHamoru" islanders; for the first time, they could not be both.

Upon the surrender of the US Navy, Guam's Japanese locals served as mediators between the new imperial masters and the islanders. In Owings' (1981, pp. 84 and 146) compilation of oral histories, CHamorus recall that Japanese acquaintances advised them to procure or procured for them a "pass" by which they could go about their daily activities without being apprehended by Japanese soldiers. The Japanese settlers who knew the Japanese language served as translators, at times not by the order of the military but at the behest of their community (e.g., Owings, 1981, pp. 175-176). Those who accompanied the military also vouched for their CHamoru friends and families, sparing them from death or imprisonment (e.g., Owings 1981, pp. 176 and 314). Those in influential positions, for example Nawo Sawada, had the capacity to pluck an Insular Guard detained as prisoner-of-war out of jail and then send him to work at an electric shop owned by another Japanese local with whom he was in cordial relations (Owings 1981, pp. 227-229). From these recollections of the Japanese Occupation Period, it seems that being "Japanese" and even collaborating with the Japanese military was not deemed a betrayal of Guam.

This does not mean that there were no atrocities because violence, be it individual or systemic, can be gleaned in archival sources. Women were forced into sexual labor. Granted that some of the women who served Japanese officials had been prostitutes since the US Naval Period, it was during the Japanese Occupation that they lost the freedom to choose their clients ("Documentary Evidence; Ms. A. L, Elder Sister of the Victim Woman"). The men who were taken in for interrogations concerning the whereabouts of the American straggler Tweed were abused. "[H]e kicked me, hit me with his pistol and finally he stopped and told me that he would take me to the Army Military Police to be killed because I was telling a lie," Pedro Dueñas Camacho later testified (cited in Camacho 2019, Chapter 6). Moreover, since the start of the Occupation, the Japanese military put in place a racial structure wherein the Japanese military was on top and the islanders were at the bottom. This racial structure dictated the distribution of supplies, thus when famine struck in 1943, no food rations were distributed to CHamorus (Sanbō Honbu

1944, p. 53). Then, in March 1944, soldiers from East Asia poured into the island (Higuchi 2013, Chapter 5). Notwithstanding the fact that islanders had to toil the land to feed themselves, they also toiled to feed both the Japanese administration already on Guam and the 20,000 new comers from Asia. To appreciate that number, one must recall that Guam's prewar CHamoru population was 20,177, including children (Bureau of the Census 1941, p. 3).

As the situation became dire, it became increasingly difficult for Guam's Japanese locals to mediate between the Japanese officials and the islanders. Soon, they were bound to choose a side and give up another. In July 1944, as the Battle of Saipan reached its catastrophic end, the Japanese locals of Guam were physically separated from the rest of the islanders. By order of the military, Guam's Japanese settlers and their CHamoru families followed the Japanese military to its last stand in the northern mountains of the island. Here, US bomber planes decimated their camps, likely killing Nawo Sawada and Jose Shimizu (Palomo 1984, 191). Meanwhile, most islanders, save for a few who accompanied the military as manual laborers, marched toward Manenggon on the eastern side of the island. Besides the arduous march made more dangerous by land mines planted to forestall the impending US re-invasion, CHamoru evacuees also contended with the inexplicable brutalities of their guards. At least two massacres are recorded in CHamoru oral histories (e.g., Owings 1981, pp. 13-14, 199; Bevacqua 2015, p. 97). On the eve of the US landing, Japanese atrocities had so aggravated the natives that CHamoru men began an "uprising" (Bevacqua 2015), killing Japanese soldiers in sight.⁵

The polarization of the island society began at the outbreak of the Pacific War, continued throughout the Japanese Occupation, and (as this paper argues) was completed in the immediate postwar. When the US and the Japanese empires began their war, "Japan" and "the Japanese" came to be enemies of Guam. Such total war conceptions, however, were

⁵ Wakako Higuchi notes, "There are various publications on the Merizo massacre, based on the testimonies of survivors, but neither full hunts for the incident's truths nor research has been carried out by the US military, the Chamorros, or the Japanese side" (2013, Chapter 3, Note 41).

mitigated by the presence of Japanese locals, many of whom were dually Japanese-islander. As revealed by Sergeant Alvin Josephy's observation at the start of this paper, Guam natives did not equate "Japanese" with "enemy" even as late as July 1944. How this equation came about is the subject of the next section. There, "Enemy" is not a politico-military term pertaining to people of belligerent countries; rather, it pertains to a racial trope within the grand narrative that undergirds history-writing. The "Enemy" appears as a character in war stories and consequently influences how such stories are told. How this specter emerged thus deserves academic attention, especially since it dons the face of people who, before the war, have been part of the island community.

The Creation of "the Japanese [Enemy]"

The Dead and the Hunted

In late 1943, Guam became part of Japan's "Absolute Defense Perimeter" and consequently saw the arrival of about 20,000 battle-hardened soldiers from East Asia in March of the following year. Besides these soldiers from the north, fisherfolks and other manual laborers arrived from the Japanese territories of Saipan, Rota, and Palau at around the same time. Thus, in just the short span of a few months, Guam saw a spike in the number of Japanese military and military-affiliated (*gunzoku*) individuals (POW Interrogation Reports). By August, after the US offensive in June and July 1944, many of them would be dead, their bodies lay open for the islanders to see. Japan's official war history, *Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu* [War History, National Institute for Defense Studies] (1967, pp. 62-64), recorded 19,135 Japanese war dead. That is, the number of Japanese lying dead on Guam was almost the same as the island's prewar population.

Besides the dead, prisoners-of-war (POW) were ferried in and out of Guam. A communique dated June 18, 1946 reported that 3,440 POWs, affiliated with the Japanese navy and army from Guam, Rota, and Yap,

were left on Guam. The same report says that just three days prior, 1,600 POWs arrived from Truk (Gaichi Jōhō, p. 1382). A month later, another report counted 989 Japanese left on Guam, including those from Okinawa, Iwo Jima and so forth. On July 9, another repatriation ship left Guam bound for Saipan, Tinian, Okinawa, and finally Kagoshima (Gaichi Jōhō, p. 1379). Again, to make sense of these numbers, one must recall that Agana's prewar population was only about 10,000. The sight of 3,000 POWs trafficked in and out of Apra Harbor must have appeared as a large crowd. Meaning, while their island was littered with enemy corpses, islanders now saw a harbor and surrounding waters packed with prisoners-of-war.

Most importantly, the hunt for the Japanese stragglers continued even after Guam was declared secured. As Capt. C. W. Kunz, Jr. (Estimate of Enemy Situation) of the 3rd Battalion reported on October 23, "Scattered enemy personnel are still at large on the Northern end of Guam. Patrols operating in that area have made continual contact with small groups and individuals. There is no evidence of any organization among these enemy troops." The following day a similar situation was reported by Capt. B.A. Hyde of the 21st Regiment. In February 1945, Col. H. N. Stent reported that the tally of enemies killed was 18,063.

Alvin Josephy, the journalist-turned-sergeant with whom we opened this paper, gives a vivid account of the mop-up operation on the ground. When taken together with the military reports by Kunz, Hyde, Stent, and other field commanders, Josephy's account presents three noteworthy points concerning the months-long operation.

First, there were so many Japanese stragglers to kill or capture that the job had become routine. Day in and day out, US forces patrolled the jungles in the north. When they found a straggler, they either took him in or, if he fought back, they killed him. As Josephy candidly shared, what the Marines found more exciting was the "giant modern American base [which] was to go up practically overnight behind our backs," but which they could not see because they were "too busy fighting in the boondocks"

(p. 93). Indeed, while reading through Josephy's account, one gets the sense that the task was becoming mundane. In such an environment, human lives amounted to mere numbers on a map (see Figure 1).

Second, the Japanese stragglers continued to pose a threat. Although military reports from the field did not see the potential of the enemy re-organizing and staging a massive resistance at par with the battles in July 1944, the threat remained. Earlier, an individual assigned to accompany a wounded Japanese prisoner-of-war to treatment was found mutilated, apparently by grenade (Investigation into Alleged Shooting). Understandably, Americans who came to Guam in 1944 held an image of fanatic Japanese soldiers who died fighting, an image probably intensified by news of the so-called Banzai charges by the Japanese defenders in Asan and Agat (e.g., Farrell 1984: pp. 96-97 and 118). The hold of this image on the newly arrived Americans was so strong that, according to Josephy (1946), when the American strategy shifted from *kill-or-capture* to *entice-to-surrender*, "It amounted to a new relationship between ourselves and our enemies – an incongruous relationship that bewildered a lot of our men.... To most of the Marines, accustomed to a fanatical enemy who preferred death to surrender, our new policy was at first puzzling" (pp. 113-114).

Besides the American soldiers' pre-existing image of a fanatical Japanese who fought to the death, there was also the practical risk of stragglers plundering their food and ammunition supplies, ambushing their patrols, and sabotaging their facilities. As E. N. Murray of D-2 Section of the 3rd Marine Division reported on October 18, 1944, "The only recent indications of any aggressiveness have been motivated by extreme hunger." By February the following year, exceptions were already noted. As Col. H. N. Stent reported, "The enemy is, with a few notable exceptions, disorganized and for the most part unaggressive." Of these exceptions, "The weapons tended to be found among the more organized groups which are often well-armed even to the extent of possessing serviceable automatic weapons." In April, another report reiterated the warning. "Scattered enemy remnants continue at large

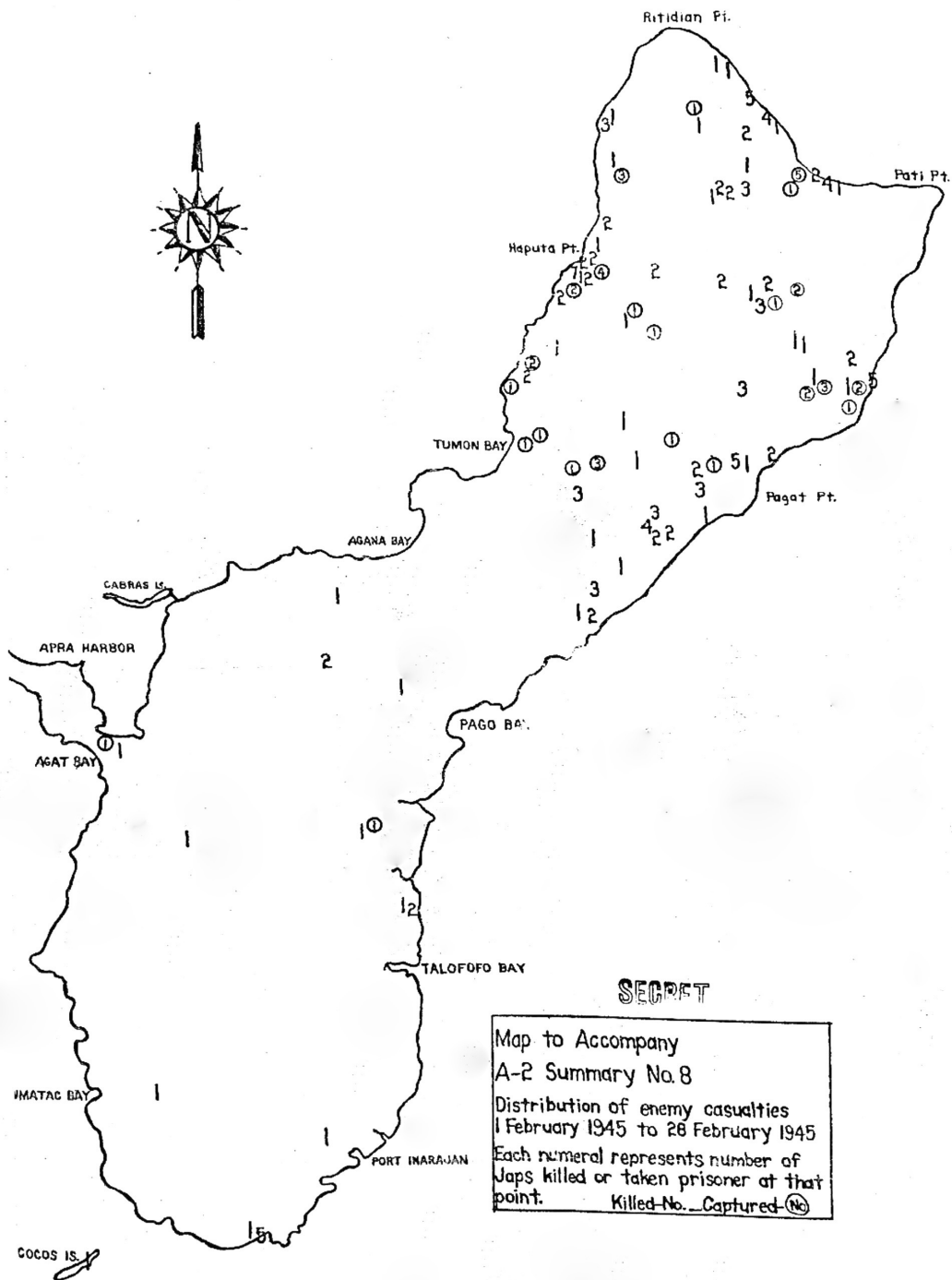


Figure 1. Map of Killed and Captured, February 1945. (Source: Estimate of Enemy Situation, Micronesian Area Research Center, p. 118).

throughout the island. They recently have been discovered to be maintaining relatively large caches of our food, clothing and ammunition taken from dumps and supply areas not carefully guarded." It was thus imperative that mop-up operations continue. The numbers in the map pertain not merely to Japanese enemies per se; but rather, gauge the extent of the danger this enemy posed.

Third and last, CHamoru men were involved in the mop-up operations. As Josephy (1946) narrated, CHamorus "knew the terrain thoroughly, some of them having farms there" (p. 94). Thus, like the U.S. Marines, their CHamoru guides were exposed to the threat posed by Japanese stragglers: "In February 1945 – six months after the island was called secure – five unarmed American sailors and a Chamorro, looking for bananas in the jungle, were ambushed and massacred by a band of Jap stragglers" (p. 142). Considering the danger that they too faced, CHamoru men were allowed to carry guns. Some of them, for example, Alberto Babauta Acfalle and Francisco Chargulaf, were given guns with which to protect themselves and their families (Owings 1981, pp. 9-10 and 153). As expected, they used them: "Once, near one of our camps, a sixteen year-old boy... came on three sickly Japs in an abandoned hut near his farm," wrote Josephy. "He fired five shots with his carbine, riddling one of the Japs through the chest. The other two enemy ran away" (1946, p. 105).

In sum, Guam was besieged by a deluge of militarized bodies, the size of which was almost the same as the total population. By early the following year, most of these bodies would be corpses scattered throughout the island and its waters. Those that remained mobile and breathing threatened the US-established security and, closer to home, were a danger to the lives and properties of islanders. The enemy, thus, must either be captured or killed. It was an environment that was overwhelmingly violent and dehumanizing. Such violence began at the outbreak of the war, shifted gears as the US neared the Marianas, reached climax in July and August 1944, and trailed on in the succeeding

months. Thereafter, writers sought to make sense of the violence, periodically publishing their insights.

“The Japanese” in the News

A war crimes tribunal and stockade existed on Guam, trying cases and holding suspects from as far away as Kwajalein in the east and Chichijima in the north. Keith Camacho has already shown how the trials and Chamorro participation in it, “reified the distinction between loyal [Chamorro] wards, on the one hand, and war criminals, on the other” (2019, Introduction). This paper goes beyond the tribunal and focuses on the associated news coverage.

The broadsheet *Navy News* covered not only the war crime trials in Guam’s tribunal but also those in Shanghai and in Tokyo. Surviving copies of the broadsheets, which are archived at the University of Guam, Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC), show that initial coverage was mostly on the trials themselves. “War Crimes Commission imposes death for five Jap Officers,” it reported on July 3, 1946. On the 24th, the report was, “Jap colonel, four subordinates given long term sentences.” Then, on August 24, *Navy News* reported that the war crimes trials on Guam were open to the public. What followed were three issues of in-depth accounts of the heinous crimes; e.g., “Jap navy lieutenant says he was forced into cannibalism (August 26th).” Finally on the 31st, “Jap medical corpsman gives vivid description of dissection.” By the start of September, the agitation over people eating people had died down and news returned to the regular: “War Trials to convene this morning,” and “War Crimes defense asked adjournment.” In 1946, news on the war crimes trials (save for some spikes) focused on the legal aspects of the trials: Witnesses, defendants, lawyers, and summaries.

From mid-1947, a marked change in reported news was noticeable. Beginning with the news of the first batch of executions, the June 20 headline was: “6 Japs hanged: Pay first death penalties on Guam.” Although, executions by the War Crimes Commission on the island were

kept to a few military officials, readers of the broadsheet were treated to executions in other places: “Thousands gather for Jap execution [in Shanghai],” it reported on the 30th. In August, the series, *History of War Crimes Trials*, began. Running almost every Sunday in the *Navy News*, it was later carried into the *Guam News* in 1948. While the series reviewed the war crime trials, its focus was not on the trials themselves but on the atrocities and the character of the Japanese. “Japanese practice cannibalism here,” headed the seventh installment (*Navy News*, October 12, 1947). On November 9 and 16, 1947, the series extended to the war crimes of the Chamoru interpreters sent to Guam from the neighboring islands of Saipan and Rota. The series continued in this tone for several more issues, reviewing the tortures in Chichi Jima (*Navy News*, December 7, 1947), pondering the Japanese suicide attacks (*Guam News*, 11 January, 1948), observing that Japanese authorities lacked civilized means of boosting morale (*Guam News*, 18 January, 1948), and surveying the Japanese killing of priests (*Guam News*, 28 January, 1948).

Two things about the series are worth noting: First, it synthesized the war crimes, finding patterns in the different atrocities by the Japanese. The article on the Japanese killing of priests, for example, began by raising the case of the martyred Chamoru Father Duenas as evidence that the Japanese targeted religion. Then, the same article linked Duenas’ execution to the cases of the Marshall Islands and the French-Swiss (*Guam News*, 28 January, 1948). Second, the series sought to provide explanations for the actions of the Japanese and others under their tutelage; concluding that there was no rational explanation whatsoever. As the 12th installment mused, “It is hard to understand what provoked this long string of Saipanese and in this case, Rotanese civilians into dealing out such severe and callous punishment to peoples of their own race origins” (*Navy News*, 16 November, 1947). The Japanese suicides were deemed “irrational” and “barbaric.” The Japanese way of ruling was neither “normal” nor “civilized.” As the editor’s note for the 11th installment expressed, the actions of Japanese militarists were predominated by “sadistic tendencies,” overshadowing “more

tangible motives for their crimes” (*Navy News*, 9 November, 1947). The note continued by crediting these tendencies to Japanese custom:

It appears that the custom of the Japanese on this Island as well as other people who came under the rule of the Japanese was to subjugate them into slavery by fear and force and to break their will to resist by sheer ruthlessness.... [I]t also appears that the enemy militarists endowed even the most lowly interpreter with the power to inflict serious punishment against the native Chamorrans (sic) and to judge their guilt or innocence. This clearly brings out a major fault of the Nipponese wherever (sic) they ruled...

The “History of the War Crimes Trials” (later renamed “War Crimes Series”) was not published in isolation. It ran alongside other articles exploring Japanese atrocities. In January 1948, for example, *Guam News* reported that the secret records in which the Japanese ambassador to Berlin concurred with Hitler about sinking all ships and killing all personnel of the enemy was introduced in the trials (*Guam News*, 23 January, 1948). A few days later, it added that two were found guilty for murdering unarmed American prisoners-of-war (28 January, 1948).

While Japanese ruthlessness was emphasized, so was the victimization and the loyalty of the “Guamanians” and of their gratitude to their American liberators. In May 1945, the magazine *Colliers* argued that the Guamanians were loyal Americans who suffered under Japanese brutality. On December 7, 1947, *Navy News* published an astoundingly erroneous article, “Guam Produced No Quislings,” which claimed that no one on the island betrayed the U.S. Just as the news of Japanese atrocities were continuously revisited, the pitiful plight of the indigenous people of Guam was also remembered. “Back in 1945,” *Guam News* reported in February 1, 1948:

“...shortly after the American reoccupation of Guam, a popular stateside magazine featured a picture of a shabby dressed

little twelve year old girl surrounded by four toddling infants all kneeling amid war's devastating ruins... this little girl had safely carried her four brothers and sisters... after her mother had been brutally decapitated."

Needless to say, these articles, written mostly by *Navy News* and *Guam News* correspondents, did not mention Guam's prewar Japanese residents. "The Japanese on this Island" apparently pertained only to Japanese military, particularly those who came since the outbreak of the war. One piece that did mention Guam's prewar Japanese is a revelation. Part of a series of essays by "students of an English composition class," this piece by Louisa Garrido narrated her life during the "Japanese rule." It echoed the tone of Guamanian victimization and Japanese brutality:

I had in mind that the Japanese were harmless, since practically all of the pure-blooded Japanese I had seen on our Island were very small and very kindly. They all looked pale and sickly and I figured it out that they are all alike. But I was totally mistaken for indeed, they are the most merciless and most cold-hearted people ever to come to this peaceful Island (*Navy News*, 14 December, 1947).

Ms. Garrido's well-written composition, describes the islanders' suffering under the invaders by providing vivid anecdotes of their experiences with the Japanese soldiers. Interestingly, there were none to illustrate how the "very small and very kindly" Japanese transformed into the "most merciless and most cold-hearted." Moreover, she does not say whether the descriptor, "pure-blood Japanese," pertained to the prewar residents or to the wartime Japanese soldiers. They were one and all "the Japanese."

Her composition class was held during the summer term of 1947. The essay was published the following December. Apparently, a year and a half after the barrage of rhetoric about Japanese brutality, and three

years of dealing with Japanese stragglers the language of total war to be spoken by a youth of Guam.

Negotiating Japanese-ness in the War Claims

Simultaneous with the war crimes trials was the war claims program, which sought to provide relief to victims of war-related damages. As early as June 1945, war claims applications had been filed. Most important for this paper are three war claims applications: those by Riye Dejima, Carlos SN Takano, and Joaquina Baza Sayama. In all three cases, the Japanese background and affiliation of the claimants were known to the interrogators and were revealed at the onset of interviews. Riye Dejima was a Japanese citizen who came to Guam in 1930 to follow her husband who then died in 1937. Joaquina Baza Sayama, a CHamoru born on Guam, was married to Jesus Sehachi Sayama. Her husband was born in Japan and moved to the island in 1905. Carlos SN Takano, though he did not specify that his father Vicente Kosako Takano was a Japanese migrant, did mention that he went to Japan in 1927 and studied there for about a year, returned to Guam, and then went to Japan again to study from 1934 to 1938. After his wedding in 1939, he and his bride took a trip to Japan, China, and Manila, of which they stayed longest in Japan.

All claimants, as well as their witnesses, were asked the standard question of whether the claimant had “at any time voluntarily aided an enemy of the United States or any National of any country at war with the United States, or any ally of such enemy country.” Those who knew the claimant prewar said “no,” or at least “not to my knowledge.” Interestingly, Jesus Sayama who was interrogated as witness to his wife’s war claim and the only interrogated Japanese witness in all the 1940s war claim records was asked whether he – not his wife – voluntarily aided the enemy. Despite Jesus’s and his wife’s participation in the war effort during the Japanese Occupation, whether willingly or not, he replied, “no.”

Some of the witnesses went further to attest to the claimants' innocence. Tomas Ramirez Santos, who had known Carlos Takano "since boyhood" testified:

This boy played the game like fox. He was married to a Guamanian, the daughter of the superintendent of school system here, and he tried to pretend to the Japanese authorities that he was in sympathy with their policies to protect his family under it all... Sometimes it appeared as though he was in favor of the Japanese but if you watched him you found that he was merely putting up a front to be able to help the Guamanian.... I consider him a person willing to help the Guamanian people at any time. During the war years he was obliging and in many instances that I know of -he gave help to the natives here.

His testimony echoes that of Luis Palomo Untalan, the school principal where Carlos' wife taught. Principal Untalan offered. "This boy, Carlos, was all right. He was not pro-Japanese at all. He was always very nice to all the Guamanian people..." In both testimonies, Carlos was tied more to his wife - a teacher and daughter of the superintendent of schools - than to his Japanese family.

Similarly, when asked whether Joaquina Sayama aided the enemy, Maria Taisague Cabrera, her neighbor in Agana replied, "No, nor did any member of her family. Her husband was badly beaten in 1943 by one of the Japanese authorities for defending his daughter's honor." Notice that Ms. Cabrera volunteered the information that Jesus Sayama suffered at the hands of Japanese military even though her interviewers did not ask for it. In raising Jesus Sayama's victimization, she pulled him into the circle of "us islanders" and away from "them, the Japanese enemies."

Principal Untalan, who knew the Takanos as well as the Sayamas, offered another tidbit of interest.

It was during the war that the father [of Carlos] sent the brother to join the Japanese Army in Japan. Mr. Sayama tried to send the Sayama boys at the same time but Mrs. Sayama would not stand for it and then, before the Sayama boys ever got away from Guam, the bombing came.

Contrary to this statement, Jesus Sehachi Sayama shared with a Japanese researcher (who published the findings in the Japanese language in Japan) that his eldest son died in the Battle for Saipan (H. Shinohara, p. 63). Considering the apparent devotion of the Sayama family's friends to them, it makes one wonder how they would have reacted had they known that the eldest "Sayama boy" died as a Japanese soldier, especially since, by 1947, "the Japanese" had been homogenized as a brutal, barbaric, ruthless, incomprehensible enemy, *othered*, and not human. Whatever diversity and complexity the concept of "the Japanese" had had before the war, and even as late as July 1944, it had been flattened into a racial trope, one of the contesting poles in Guam's historiography of the war.

Discussion and Conclusion

Alvin Josephy's confusion over CHamorus' diverse descriptions of their Japanese enemies greatly differed from Louisa Garrido's account of her experience during the Japanese Occupation. The former was complex, noted varieties, and seemed to seek to counter the generalized image of the Japanese that was held by the American newcomers. The latter was a stereotype of "the Japanese," silent on the diversity of Japanese individuals on the island, and very similar to the image which islanders sought to counter in Josephy's account. Ironically, the former was by an American Marine, while the latter was by a Guam student.

In juxtaposing these two descriptions of the Japanese, this paper does not say that the U.S. Marine is better than the Guam student. What is emphasized is the *time* when their descriptions were made. Josephy's was written based on field notes jotted down in 1944. Garrido's was

written and published in 1947. The point is that between 1944 and 1947, the notion of “Japanese” in Guam changed immensely, and this change explains the difference between Josephy’s and Garrido’s depictions. How this change came about is the subject of this paper.

Although the historiography of the Pacific War on Guam has much developed, the scholarship has yet to make sense of “the Japanese” in local war histories. At present, Guam’s war histories contain racial *tropes*: the American, the CHamoru, and the Japanese. Of the three, the first two have been seriously examined. Diaz (2001) has pointed out that America’s image as Liberator is increasingly questioned because of (among others) Guam’s persisting neocolonial status. Bevacqua (2015) highlighted CHamoru active resistance in order to oppose the image of a passive islander dependent on America. Meanwhile, the third character “the Japanese” remains underexamined.

Left as it is, the historiography sustains an unscholarly simplistic stereotype comparable to “the American Liberator” and “the pitiful CHamoru.” Just as importantly, it sustains the contradictions surrounding Guam’s Japanese locals. For example, in pondering over CHamoru identity, Diaz claimed that those with surnames such as Yamaguchi, Tanaka, Shinohara, Okada, and Yamanaka are CHamoru often mistaken as Japanese (1994, p. 51). Whether on purpose or otherwise, Higuchi contradicted this when she demonstrated that after the war, Guam’s prewar Japanese were discriminated for their affiliation with Imperial Japan (1998, p. 174). In his study on the US Navy’s prosecution of Japanese and colonials of Japan in the Guam’s war crime tribunal, Camacho (2019) used the phrase “inclusive exclusion.” This phrase aptly describes the lack of discussion on the Japanese locals of Guam. They are in a weird position in between the US and the Japanese empires, as well as between Japan and the island. When their three worlds clash – as it did during the Pacific War and as it continues to do so in war histories – they are either excluded or made to give up other identities so as to be included in one.

Like Camacho (2019) and Higuchi (1998, 2013), I also focus on the Japanese of Guam. This paper differs from the other two scholars in that it specifically tackles “the Japanese” character trope in war narratives. Examining archival records from 1944 to 1949, it finds three factors that contributed to the generalized image of “the Japanese.” First, following the deluge of Japanese soldiers in early 1944 and the US offensive that decimated them in July 1944, the US mop-up operations involving islanders further plunged the island into a protracted dehumanizing violence that lasted from late 1944 to 1945. Second, news articles especially those covering the war crime trials interpreted atrocities by persons who fought for the Japanese empire as not only incomprehensibly brutal but also customary, a characteristic of “the Japanese race.” Lastly, in their interview with American officials during the 1940s war claims investigation, islanders participated in the racist discourse in which “Japan” was “the enemy.” Unable to hide the Japanese background of the Japanese war claimants, islanders who were interrogated as witnesses strove to portray their Japanese friends and families as “part of us” and not “the Japanese.”

In arguing this, this paper does not criticize the islanders in the 1940s; they participated in the racist us-versus-enemy discourse in order to protect people who are part of their community. Rather, this paper seeks to pose a question to present-day readers: Given our context today, must we still participate in the dichotomous way of telling the past? Also, this paper does not deny the atrocities committed against Guam locals during the Japanese occupation. What it rejects is the arbitrary lumping of diverse peoples into racial tropes and the approach in history-writing where racial tropes interact as if they are actual, living characters.

Having shown the artificiality of the racial trope of “the Japanese enemy,” the paper invites readers to rethink their own narratives of the war. Rethinking does not mean denying their experiences, but rather reassessing the other characters in the narrative. Is the enemy still a real person or already a conception? A more difficult question to answer: If

the enemy were real persons, what sort of life led them to become the enemy? It is my hope that my readers will reassess the socio-historical borders that continue to divide people into opposing sides. As we do, it will also serve well to recognize those whom we exclude from our social-historical communities, or whose hybridity we stamp out so as to permit inclusion within the borders of our social-historical communities.

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