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Responding to Colonisation

The preceding chapters strongly suggested that there was greater continuity than change in indigenous survivability in Micronesia because of the strength of their traditional institutions. This suggests that colonial rule in Micronesia was relatively ineffective. The previous two chapters proposed that the reason for Micronesians' endurance stemmed from their ability to rearticulate foreign influences to suit their own context.¹ This chapter deals with Micronesian engagement with the colonial powers of Spain, Germany, Japan and the US. It will discuss how Micronesians indigenised outsiders' influences to suit local contexts despite the seemingly unequal power relations. As history is a forum of intellectual discourses, Micronesian perspectives will be emphasised since they are the least covered of the colonial era. Many of the incidents and attitudes expressed to me about the colonial era are recollections of my parents and grandparents; they are absent from published accounts of this period. By including them here alongside conventional historiography, I seek to broaden the debate and range of sources to stimulate and widen our understanding of Micronesians' perspective of history.

The colonisation process brought many foreign ideologies to the FSM. One such ideology was written history. This form of history is in and of itself a self-serving instrument in the framing and perpetuation of Micronesians as subservient to outsiders' civilisation. This is a misleading

1 Paul D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule on the Indigenous Population of Japan's South Seas Mandate?', University of Hawai'i, 1986 (Unpublished paper), pp. 1–21; Duane, *Clan and Copra*, pp. 200–228.

exaggeration since Micronesians continue to use traditional forms of history to educate subsequent generations about indigenous history. The post-WWII decolonisation period saw the re-emergence of indigenous history that had been suppressed by outsiders for centuries. The question is, how does one intellectually imagine indigenous history within the framework of linear history, or vice versa, since their productions and nuances are different? In other words, how does one reconcile the two different types of history? As this book is written for an academic audience, I am compelled to adopt the chronological order of history, but with relevant elements of indigenous perspectives to open up a new frontier of Micronesian historical discourses. Therefore, this chapter and subsequent chapters will follow the linear approach to hopefully bring together our understanding of how Micronesians perceived themselves during and after the colonial period.

There are many theories about the causes and effects of colonisation, ranging from exportation of European civilisation and Christianisation to economics and empire building.² However, for the purpose of this chapter, colonisation will be defined as an act by a foreign power of establishing a colony to assert control over the indigenous people of an area.³ Hezel expanded on this by framing it in the context of the *terra nullius* principle, which states that:

colonisation is the utilisation of the earth, of the flora, fauna and the above all of the human beings to the advantage of the colonising nation, and the latter is therefore obligated to give in return for the higher culture ... and its better methods.⁴

At least according to their own definitions of relative worth and value.

By applying these two definitions in Micronesia's context, the process of colonisation has its genesis in the sixteenth century, when Spain declared that what is now known as the FSM was part of its colonial empire. Spain

2 See Peter Hemenstall, 'Imperial Manoeuvres', in *Tides of History: The Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century*, edited by K. R. Howe, Robert C. Kiste and Brij V. Lal, University of Hawai'i Press, 1987, pp. 29–39.

3 'Colonize', *Oxford Dictionary*, www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/colonize#colonize_16.

4 *Terra nullius* was a doctrine, and later a component of international law, that the colonial powers used to acquire new territories overseas. It entailed that if a territory did not show any signs of agricultural production as perceived by the Europeans, then the first European discoverer could claim the territory on behalf of the colonial power they represented (Francis X. Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land: A Century of Colonial Rule in the Caroline and Marshall Islands*, University of Hawai'i Press, 1995, p. 132; Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law*, pp. 173–174).

administered its Micronesian colonial territory from Guam and later from the Philippines until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Effective rule beyond Guam was minimal until the late nineteenth century, and most Micronesian islands remained unknown and unvisited by the Spanish until then. An attempt to extend Spanish influence beyond Guam into the area of the present-day FSM saw a Christian mission established on Ulithi in the early 1730s; it was not successful.⁵ Actual Spanish colonisation began in 1866 when Spanish authorities finally decided to establish their presence in Pohnpei and Yap. Micronesians' tacit consent was not just desirable but essential in the absence of effective coercive ability and the need for economic returns to justify the extra effort needed to impose colonial laws by the overstretched and underfunded Spanish forces.

General Perspectives of *Peshe Seset*

*Peshe seset*⁶ are always looked upon with suspicion by Micronesians. Suspicion is an element of survival that allowed Micronesians to keep an eye on intruders. Such suspicion was employed during the colonial era. However, the question is, how did the colonisers perceive the indigenous population? The historical literature speaks volumes about the treatment of Micronesians in terms of derogatory language and labels such as 'savage', 'primitive' and 'uncivilised' in comparison to the outsiders' own standing on the civilisations continuum.

To the Micronesians, the outsiders were pale *peshe seset* who were arrogant and oblivious to the order of the indigenous world. This arrogance led *peshe seset* to underestimate the strength of the Micronesians. They treated the small population as too weak to mount a substantial resistance against colonial occupation. For example, small military detachments were usually deployed to guard the different colonial interests in Micronesia, only to find that their forces were insufficient in the face of serious local opposition.⁷

5 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 58–59.

6 The term '*peshe seset*' means 'salty feet from foreign seas'. I am using the term in reference to the colonists who were not indigenous to Micronesia and yet asserted control of the islands without permission.

7 The Spanish and Germans military detachments in Pohnpei underestimated local resistance and had to send for reinforcements from their headquarters outside Micronesia (Peter Hempenstall and Noel Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, University of the South Pacific, Fiji, 1984, pp. 109–110; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 30–33; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 271–273.

The *peshe siset* mistook Micronesian silence as a sign of weakness. Micronesians used a variety of survival strategies against the colonial authorities that were learned from their past historical experiences. These included open military resistance, patience, passive resistance in the form of non-compliance and political manipulation. This is part of their history—to adapt to new circumstances based on past experience and observation as to what strategies to implement for effective protection under any given circumstance. Invariably, indirect resistance rather than direct confrontation against a foe armed with modern weaponry proved most effective. At other times, Micronesians gave the appearance of patiently accepting colonial demands while covertly continuing the traditional system of authority and interactions with each other to maintain their identities and continuity.⁸

Having experienced frequent natural disasters and inter-island warfare in their oceanic environment prior to colonisation, Micronesians have developed a significant capacity to rapidly mobilise resources and defend their homes. Centuries of struggle against nature and men to preserve their cultures, regardless of any threats, left Micronesians better prepared for the new external threat of poorly resourced colonial authorities than the colonisers realised.⁹ In addition, rivalries between the colonial powers and the geographical nature of the islands also made colonisation ineffective.¹⁰ The strength of Micronesian continuity and resilience, as outlined in the previous chapter, derive principally from their social system and understanding of their oceanic environment.

Historically, the environment is susceptible to natural threats such as typhoons and drought. This has made Micronesians extremely adaptable and capable of rapidly mobilising available resources to deal with catastrophic circumstances. These threats have influenced the way Micronesians have organised their social, political and economic connections. Their organisational skills stood them in good stead for facing anthropomorphic challenges from beyond the horizon, few of which have matched the intensity of typhoons, with the possible exceptions of WWII (the typhoon of war) and some severe exotic epidemics.¹¹ These survival strategies have been at the heart of Micronesian adaptation

8 Hezel, *The New Shape of Old Island Cultures*, p. 1.

9 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, pp. 112–113.

10 Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 22–23.

11 D'Arcy, *The People of the Sea*, pp. 152–153; Marshall, *Namoluk beyond the Reef*, pp. 26–27; Alkire, *An Introduction to the Peoples and Cultures of Micronesia*, pp. 6–7.

practices.¹² Prior to colonisation, the flow of information between islands was already established via the clan network between islands, which was also the source of developing islanders' diplomatic skills. That is to say that conflict avoidance was crucial to Micronesian survival.¹³ The same network was also used to circulate information about the colonial powers and their activities.

Local Responses to the New Arrivals

Colonisation had both negative and positive consequences for Micronesia. Micronesian life was affected to varying degrees when outsiders started to appear on their shores. Micronesian modes of engagement with the outsiders depended on the intensity of the colonisation process as it differed between the various islands and atolls. For example, on some islands, outsiders met intimidation and violent death at their first point of contact.¹⁴ On other occasions, islanders received the outsiders on friendly terms.¹⁵ The type of responses exhibited by the islanders during the early engagement period signified the nature of the social system present on that island.

Many historians have claimed that the islanders' recognition of iron and other Western goods as being valuable items often created friendly conditions for encounters.¹⁶ Metal tools were highly valued as they shortened the time required for the backbreaking traditional manual tasks. Historian Scott Russell noted the value of iron to an Ulithian man who a Spanish priest 'converted' to Christianity. The Ulithian man, after his conversion, said to the priest, 'as you long for heaven, so we long for iron'.¹⁷ This statement demonstrates the manipulative dimensions of exchange used by islanders and the fluidity of negotiation between the

12 Rainbird, *The Archaeology of Micronesia*, p. 245; Alkire, *An Introduction to the Peoples and Cultures of Micronesia*, pp. 86–88; Knudson, 'Resource Fluctuation', pp. 4–6.

13 Gray, 'Modernization in Micronesia', pp. 59–61; Gonzaga Pua, 'The FSM Legal System: Responses to US Influence', Paper presented during the Association for Social Anthropologist in Oceania, Portland Oregon, 6 February 2011, pp. 3–4.

14 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 100–101.

15 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 96–97.

16 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 96–97.

17 Scott Russell, 'Roots of the Falawasch', Mangilao, Guam, MARC Library, n.d. (Unpublished MS paper), p. 2.

two sides to achieve their own objectives. No one knows exactly how the Micronesians came to recognise iron, though some have speculated that it was discovered in driftwood and possibly by unrecorded earlier contacts.

Unfriendly relations in early encounters may have resulted from the outsiders intruding into Micronesian spaces without prior permission, especially sacred spaces.¹⁸ Killing was a form of eliminating threat in the local communities. The methods of killing exercised by islanders were ambush,¹⁹ open confrontation and seeking guidance from their ancestors in terms of magic or *paut* (sorcery).²⁰ Selection of the appropriate security measures utilised to suppress any arising threat posed by outsiders was conditioned by the particular circumstances of each island during the contact period. For example, ambush was common in island histories as it was swift, and secretive. It warned enemies to refrain from intruding into unfamiliar spaces. Open confrontation was a display of bravery, ferocity and determination to defeat opponents and involved large-scale warfare between island alliances or extended opposing clans.²¹ Negotiation was used to dissuade warring sides from taking up arms. Physical violence was used to signal to the outsiders that Micronesians were capable of mounting attacks if they were put under pressure.²² The quick realisation that there was a mismatch between the two sides led islanders to utilise a variety of different tactics to sustain their interests. From the patchy record of first contacts, as best we can tell, the majority of first contacts in Micronesia were mainly peaceful, with sporadic violence.

18 My personal opinion. Outsiders may not be aware of the sacred spaces of the gods, which were and continue to be considered off limits to the public. Intrusion into such spaces could result in a fight or possibly death.

19 *Mortlocks Oral History*. Ambush is personal, however, it could develop into full-scale warfare between two extended families.

20 *Mortlocks Oral History*. Sorcery is a psychological element of warfare that involves calling upon the ancestors for support. See David Hanlon, 'Sorcery, "Savage Memories" and the Edge of Commensurability for History in the Pacific', in *Pacific Islands History: Journeys and Transformation*, edited by Brij V. Lal, *Journal of Pacific History*, 1993, pp. 118–119.

21 *Mortlocks Oral History*. Open warfare involved displaying one's bravery and was used as an intimidation tactic against opponents.

22 Violence took many forms, from small and personal attacks to large-scale conflict like in the Pohnpeians' violent resistance against the Spanish and Germans. See Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 287–289; Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 136–144.

Sustained Contact

Having established the basic background of the islands, it should not be a surprise that outsiders were met with varying treatments during the colonisation period. The Pacific Ocean is the largest body of water in the world and promised profits for whalers. The search for more profits led many whalers to the islands in Micronesia, largely by accident. By the mid-1800s, whalers, traders and beachcombers began to arrive in large numbers. Having no whaling stations in Micronesia from which to purchase provisions, they had to rely on whichever islands and islanders they came upon. It meant the outsiders had to give in to the islanders as they controlled the land resources that they required. Pohnpei and Kosrae became known for good provisions. Subsequently, Pohnpeians and Kosreans experienced increasing numbers of visiting vessels to their shores. The islands offered necessary provisions and fine harbours for vessels to shelter during the windy months. Most of the crew members were Europeans and Americans, with a number of other Pacific Islanders among them.²³ New trade ensued between the locals and outsiders as a result of this increased contact. The high chiefs of Pohnpei and Kosrae influenced trade deals to suit local circumstances, leveraging their control of access to the provisions that the visitors required. As the volume of trade increased, there was a commensurate rise in the value of the islanders' commodities.

While in port, sailors rested and indulged in pursuits of pleasure, finding comfort in women and alcohol. The attraction of the island lifestyle encouraged many sailors to abandon their ships; they became the first beachcombers.²⁴ The increased traffic in whaling and trading vessels developed islanders' awareness of international commerce and politics.²⁵ For example, in Pohnpei, the powerful *Nahnmwarki(s)*²⁶ and local businessman Henry Nahnpei exploited this knowledge and manipulated the visiting vessels and foreign residents for personal interests. The *Nahnmwarki* also manipulated the beachcombers into serving them as negotiators in order to acquire more material wealth from the visiting

23 Francis X. Hezel, 'Book Review: *Double Ghosts: Oceanian Voyages on Euroamerican Ships*', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1999, pp. 479–481.

24 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 92–93.

25 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 91–92; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 84–85.

26 For explanation of the title *Nahnmwarki*, see indigenous historian and archaeologist from Pohnpei Rufino Mauricio's *Ideological Bases*, p. 60. Note that there is no plural for *Nahnmwarki*, so I use '*Nahnmwarki(s)*' to refer to the various holders of the title.

vessels. This contest later played out in local politics, especially between local leaders vying to consolidate their power base. In the less-visited, low-lying islands like Ngatik (Sapwafik), Mokil and Pingelap, locals also honed their trade skills to obtain iron, clothes and tobacco.²⁷ Trade precipitated a notably violent massacre in which the male population of Ngatik²⁸ was decimated by a combined group of rogue Pohnpeians and outsiders. This reconstitution of the population demographic became the subject of an interesting scholarly study of ethnicity in contemporary Micronesia.

In Kosrae, the chiefs also exploited the imbalance in the trade relationship and did not hesitate to use violent means such as looting and burning visiting ships to keep the outsiders at bay.²⁹ These acts could be explained in terms of the tension between the chiefs and their subjects against the intruding outsiders. For example, local women were exploited sexually by the visiting sailors. This was unacceptable to the locals and was compounded by a handful of sailors who abandoned their ships against the wishes of the locals. In response to these affronts, violence broke out and two ships were burned and sunk by Kosraens. To avoid further conflict, captains of the visiting ships sought assistance from the high chiefs in Kosrae and Pohnpei by offering rewards for their sailors' return.

In the outer islands of Chuuk, such as the Mortlocks, whalers also occasionally sought provisions but on friendly terms. The high volcanic islands of Chuuk were avoided due to their fierce reputation as portrayed by the early explorers. In Yap, foreigners were mindful of the power of the local chiefs over their subjects and acknowledged this by appeasing them. The chiefs used their influence over their trading activities to demonstrate their power in local politics. This was to send a message to the outsiders that the chiefs were in control. Far fewer beachcombers settled in Yap than Pohnpei, demonstrating the way in which local politics differed and how that influenced the manner in which different communities addressed the common threat posed by the sailors.³⁰

27 *Oral history* indicates that, at least in Chuuk, some of the foreigners who married locals were instrumental in educating Micronesian people about the outside world. For example, many outsiders like Jack Elhers, who married a lady from Lekinioch, mediated between outsiders and the indigenous people during the German period (Hazel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 66).

28 Known as the Ngatik massacre. See Lin Poyer, *The Ngatik Massacre: A History and Identity on a Micronesian Atoll*, Smithsonian Institution Press, London, 1993, pp. 4–22; Hazel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 120–122.

29 Segal, *Kosrae*, pp. 73–74.

30 Amanda Morgan, 'Mystery in the Eye of the Beholder: Cross Cultural Encounters on 19th Century Yap', *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 31, No. 1, June 1996, pp. 27–41.

Micronesianising Missionaries

Unbeknownst to the Micronesians, reports of drunken and disorderly behaviour and the sex trade in Pohnpei and Kosrae reached the ears of religious leaders in the US. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) based in Boston took up the challenge to Christianise Micronesia. It was believed that the success of the ABCFM in Hawai'i could be reproduced in Micronesia.³¹ However, this was not to be the case as the missionaries' lack of knowledge of Micronesian societies handicapped their efforts to convert Micronesian islanders to the Christian faith. Did the American missionaries seek permission from the Micronesian islanders to bring Christianity to their islands? What sort of reception were the missionaries expecting since they did not understand the islands' social structure?

In 1852, a group of ABCFM missionaries sailed to Pohnpei and Kosrae. Benjamin Snow and his wife, in addition to a Hawaiian couple, were permitted by the highest-ranking leader to start their mission activities in Kosrae. The rest of the American party—Dr Luther Gulick and his wife, Mr and Mrs Sturges and their Hawaiian assistant Ka'aikaula—sailed to Pohnpei.³² Immediately upon their arrival in Pohnpei, the missionaries were at the mercy of local politics. The missionaries set up residence in the district of Kiti as encouraged by the powerful *Nahnken* who gave the missionaries land to use. The *Nahnken* took an interest in the missionaries' activities, foreseeing future benefits from hosting them.³³ In Pohnpeian society, the *Nahnken* is lower than the *Nahnmwarki* and yet the missionaries followed the *Nahnken's* demands. This immediately landed them in the middle of the internal politics of Pohnpei as there had also been ongoing problems caused by the unruly behaviours of many foreign residents. Such occurrences delayed the establishment of the Christian faith in Pohnpei.

31 Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 143–144.

32 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 143–144; Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 143–144. There is a discrepancy between these the two authors' comments on the pattern of missionisation in Pohnpei and Kosrae. For example, Hezel states that the missionaries landed in Kosrae first before sailing to Pohnpei, while Hanlon states that the opposite occurred.

33 Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, p. 147.

Lip service was a methodology employed by the locals to convert to Christianity. To manipulate the missionaries, *Nahnken* was converted and, naturally, his followers were too. This was part of the Micronesian strategy of indirectly controlling outsiders and at the same time Micronesianising the foreigners to advance internal priorities, such as chiefly rivalries.³⁴ Manipulation of the missionaries meant that the missionaries had to work harder for many years before Christianity was tolerated in Pohnpei and Kosrae.³⁵

Micronesianising the Spanish Rule

To prop up the Spanish ego as being one of the remaining superpowers in the Pacific, in 1886, Governor Don Isidro Posadillo and his Spanish force set foot on Pohnpei to take control of the region for the Spanish Empire. Spain claimed much of Micronesia with this move, although its actual physical presence was largely confined to the port town of Kolonia in Pohnpei. By the time the Spanish arrived, the Pohnpeians were already aware of the side effects of foreign influence as had been brought by the whalers, beachcombers, traders and American missionaries who had preceded the Spanish by 50 years.³⁶ The Spanish thought that controlling Pohnpei would be an easy affair. Again, like the missionaries, they did not seek permission from the locals to set up their foreign institutions and their knowledge of Pohnpeian societies was poor. What kind of reception did the Spanish think they would receive while imposing their presence in Pohnpei? They would soon find out.

The Spanish incursion in Pohnpei was subdued until Governor Posadillo tested his power over a land called *mesenieng* that was already in the possession of the ABCFM after the local ruler, the *Lepen* of Nett, granted them the right to reside on the land. The governor needed the land to establish his headquarters and looked for a way to acquire it. The governor sought the assistance of the *Lepen* of Nett to claim the land. To the *Lepen* of Nett, this was absurd. The land did not belong to any of the foreign claimants as the land system in Pohnpei did not recognise agreements

34 See David Hanlon, 'Another Side of Henry Nanpei', *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 23, No. 1, April 1988, pp. 36–51.

35 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 175.

36 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 240.

on paper under the customary system called *tiabk en sapw*.³⁷ Doane, one of the American missionaries who represented the ABCFM, resisted the governor's insistence, angering him in the process. Consequently, Doane was arrested and deported to the Philippines for undermining Spanish authority. Doane's deportation highlighted the power struggle between the Americans and Spanish, as well as the simmering relations with the Pohnpeians.

The Pohnpeians did not anticipate anything that would alter their perception of the new arrivals.³⁸ The Spanish initially did not seem to learn from the experiences of the outsiders who preceded them. The Pohnpeians were not going to succumb to the new rulers after having managed the influence of all other arrivals before them. The indigenous people adopted a 'wait and see' approach to observe what the Spanish were up to before responding. Patience is an element inherent in indigenous cultural practices to strategise during both natural disasters and man-made threats. These traits characterised Micronesian strength as weakness in the face of adversaries: outsiders only saw passivity rather than assertiveness in their culturally restricted reading of these actions.

The Spanish failed to understand the dynamics of Pohnpeian society in the late nineteenth century. Kolonia was one of the busiest port towns in the Pacific. For example, Hanlon estimated that more than 50 ships arrived during the windy months when they sought shelter from the storms.³⁹ During the windy season, port life centred on rum and women, much to the displeasure of the missionaries. As well as ships' crews, the community of beachcombers, traders, castaways, whalers and adventurers also threw themselves into the mix.⁴⁰ Islanders and outsiders mingled with each other seeking mutual interests. Pohnpeians understood the need of the foreigners and dealt with them accordingly. The missionaries were preaching to the locals about the bible. However, at the same time, many of the resident foreigners countered the message of the missionaries by their involvement in prostitution and heavy drinking⁴¹ to satisfy the needs of the visiting ships' crews. Pohnpeians also cashed in on the prostitution business and traded local products for tobacco, alcohol and other Western commodities.⁴²

37 *Tiabk en sapw* encapsules all the customary practices of Pohnpei, which defined the Pohnpeian identity (Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 5).

38 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, pp. 106–107.

39 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 112; Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, p. 122.

40 Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 94–95; Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 110–111.

41 Marshall, *The Weekend Warrior*, p. 32; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 155, 157–158.

42 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 93–94.

The indigenous political system in Pohnpei was and still is structured into five chiefdoms. At the apex are the *Nahnmwarki*,⁴³ the paramount chiefs and their spokesperson, the *Nahnken*.⁴⁴ The paramount chief has power over the land and its people. In turn, the people worked the land and paid tribute to the *Nahnmwarki*. The *Nahnmwarki* also assigned titles to his subjects on a competitive basis, trading favours and influence for titles and status. The power of each *Nahnmwarki* is dependent on the size of the land he controls and the size of the population in his political domain. Political and economic relationships between the five chiefdoms were generally fluid but could become more rigid depending on local circumstances. Demands made by *Nahnmwarki* were often carried out by his subjects accordingly.

The relationship between Governor Posadillo and the Pohnpeians became strained when he moved to consolidate his power. Posadillo sought to increase Spanish control by developing a road infrastructure to allow free movement of Spanish officials around the island. He also sought to promote the Catholic faith and for the Spanish language to be the new lingua franca. Both moves were not well received by either the locals or the American missionaries. To make things worse, the governor called on the *Nahnmwarki* to support his ambitious plan to build the road system.⁴⁵ The governor wanted a team of men from each of the chiefdoms to be rotated on a weekly basis as labourers during the construction of the circumferential road. In addition, each *Nahnmwarki* would be required to supply food for the working teams.⁴⁶

When the *Nahnmwarki* of Madolenihmw objected to the governor's demands, he was threatened with punishment. Further breakdown between the opposing sides ensued when the *Nahnmwarki* of Nett was ordered to clean a latrine as a form of punishment for insubordination.⁴⁷ This insult to their leader infuriated the local population as he epitomised Pohnpeian sacredness, power and identity. For Pohnpeians, to receive orders from an alien figurehead without consulting the *Nahnmwarki* was

43 Muricio, *Ideological Bases*, p. 60.

44 Muricio, *Ideological Bases*, p. 60.

45 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 264; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 29; Paul D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule: With Reference to Spanish and German Colonial Rule in the Caroline Islands Identify the Various Parties Influencing the History of this Era? What Perceptions and Objectives Were They Motivated By?', University of Hawai'i, 1986 (Unpublished paper), p. 2.

46 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 29; Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, p. 264.

47 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 267–268; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 29.

unthinkable, let alone to punish and humiliate someone of this rank. This gesture of arrogance brought the simmering tension between the two sides to a boiling point. The Pohnpeians rallied behind their traditional leaders by refusing to comply with the governor's demands.⁴⁸

In response, the governor ordered the closures of schools and the ceasing of local activities like feasting until the road system was completed.⁴⁹ This only hardened the Pohnpeians' resolve to resist, and they were ready to pick up arms to retaliate against the Spanish. Things came to a head when a detachment of soldiers was sent to Sokehs to arrest the *Lepen* and *Wasai* (traditional chiefs of Pohnpei under the *Nahnmwarki*) for subverting Spanish order. The detachment arrived during a local feast and demanded that the two men be taken to the governor in Kolonia. Frustrated at the lack of immediate compliance, the detachment opened fire and killed seven Pohnpeians.⁵⁰ The Pohnpeians responded by killing 17 of the soldiers, including their leader. The *Wasai* then declared that 'it was better to die fighting rather than living as slaves', signifying a new era of engagement between the islanders and the Spanish.⁵¹

This incident initiated a state of war between the Spanish and Pohnpeians. The Pohnpeians took their fight to the colony in Kolonia to demonstrate their determination to subvert any further Spanish demands. Governor Posadillo's style of administration was criticised by his own Spanish priests, but this criticism fell on deaf ears. When Posadillo learned of more planned retaliation against the Spanish, he pre-empted this threat by evacuating his people to a ship anchored off the island. However, the governor and a few of his men remained in the colonial compound.⁵²

To prevent the governor from escaping, the Pohnpeians posted guards in the vicinity of the compound. Fearing for their lives, the governor and his men tried to escape, but they were caught and killed. The rest of the Spanish party remained on the ship, waiting to be rescued. Help arrived when a Spanish man-of-war arrived to deliver supplies to the

48 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, pp. 108–109.

49 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 267–268; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 29.

50 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 267–268; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 30; John Fisher and Ann Fisher, *The Eastern Caroline Islands: Human Relations Area*, Files Press, Connecticut, 1970, pp. 37–38; Paul Ehrlich, "The Clothes of Men": Ponape Island and German Colonial Rule, 1899–1914, PhD thesis, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York, 1973, p. 71.

51 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 267–268.

52 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 109.

colony. Upon hearing of the governor's death, the commander of the ship, de la Concha, opted to remain in Pohnpei to hold the colony until reinforcements arrived from Manila.

A new governor, Don Luis Casadro y Rey, arrived a few weeks later from Manila, accompanied by three warships, 700 soldiers and two artillery batteries.⁵³ Immediately upon his arrival, the new governor bombarded the colony with his naval guns to intimidate the locals. It was sufficient to persuade the *Nahnmwarki* of Kiti, Madolenihmw and Uh and the *Wasai* of Sokehs to meet with the Spanish at the negotiating table.⁵⁴ The governor demanded the unconditional surrender of Pohnpeian agitators and the return of all guns and property taken from the Spanish fort in Mesening. He further demanded that *Lepen Nett* and *Wasai Sokehs* should face Spanish justice and that the rest of the inhabitants should adhere to Spanish law and order. While the people of Nett did not like the new order, *Lepen Nett*, against the wishes of his people, decided to surrender to prevent further bloodshed. The execution of the two traditional leaders was intended as a warning to the local population. However, three locals volunteered to be executed instead of the *Lepen* and *Wasai*.⁵⁵ The Spanish executed the volunteers instead of the two perceived agitators. Given that the Spanish were seeking to demonstrate their strength and supremacy, why did they agree to that deal?⁵⁶

Believing that he had total control of the Pohnpeians after these executions, the new governor pushed for the completion of the road system.⁵⁷ He obviously had not learned from Posadillo's experience. At first, he designed a scheme to pay local people for the road construction, but the Pohnpeians remained unwilling participants. He went ahead with the road program, using whatever labourers he could muster, but it was unsuccessful.⁵⁸ Local politics also played a part. For example, in Kitti, there were two opposing factions headed respectively by the *Nahnmwarki* and the local businessman and pastor Henry Nahnpei, who the American missionaries supported. To shift the balance of power, the *Nahnmwarki* of Kitti associated himself with the Catholic Spanish. He urged the

53 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 32.

54 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 110.

55 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 110; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 274.

56 I have yet to find an answer in any literature or oral history.

57 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 38–40; David Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 311–314.

58 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 111.

Spanish governor to build a church in Kitti.⁵⁹ The Spanish saw this as an opportunity to expand their presence around the island. The church was built next to the Protestant Church and a guardhouse was also erected for Spanish soldiers, signalling a new discourse in island politics. The Spanish believed that their presence in Kitti was a success and were keen to duplicate the experience in other parts of the island.⁶⁰ The governor demanded that another Catholic Church be built in the settlement of Ohwa on the other side of the island in Madolenihmw.⁶¹ He also ordered that a new road be constructed to connect the two churches. The proposed church in Madolenihmw was to be built within a stone's throw of the Protestant Church. The governor ignored the strong Protestant support in Madolenihmw and the advice from his own priests against such a move. Believing in his own superiority, he ordered the completion of the church to coincide with the birthday of the Queen Regent of Spain.⁶² His misjudgement and overall attitude fuelled simmering tensions on the island.

Fighting broke out between the Spanish and the people of Ohwa. Many of the Spanish soldiers and workers were killed. The surviving priests were assisted by Nahnpei to escape. News of the event reached Kolonia, whereupon the governor responded by sending the warship *Manila* to bombard Ohwa. This operation failed when the gunship ran into a reef. The soldiers who were sent ashore did not have the capacity to engage in combat with the islanders,⁶³ and knowledge of the terrain and seashores gave the locals the upper hand. It was mentioned in local accounts that magical power was also used to ward off the Spanish aggressors.⁶⁴ The soldiers were unable to bring order to Madolenihmw and returned to Kolonia to await further orders.

It took a few more months for reinforcements to arrive from the Philippines. The new commanding officer, Colonel Isidro Guterrez, was keen to capture the local leaders and decisively wipe out the opposition.

59 The ABCFM and the Spanish Catholic Church were incorporated into local politics to increase the dominance of certain leaders. For the power struggle between the leaders in Kiti, see Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 311–313.

60 Hanlon, *Upon the Stone Altar*, pp. 311–313.

61 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 114; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 314–317.

62 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 40; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 312.

63 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 40; Hanlon, 'Sorcery, "Savage Memories" and the Edge of Commensurability', p. 114.

64 Hanlon, 'Sorcery, "Savage Memories" and the Edge of Commensurability', pp. 114–115.

His plans were thwarted by his lack of knowledge of the terrain and weather conditions in Pohnpei. His humiliation at failing to quickly achieve his objective eventually led to his suicide the night before he was to launch an attack on Ohwa.⁶⁵ Fighting resumed with the Pohnpeians, who continued to resist the assaults, using their local knowledge of the terrain. After many attempts to subdue the local resistance, the Spanish retreated to Kolonia, but only after they claimed a token victory in securing an abandoned local fort in Madolenihmw. The Spanish were confined to their little compound in Kolonia, protected by what is known today as the Spanish Wall.⁶⁶ The Spaniards' lack of knowledge on local politics, geography and the traditional system doomed their attempt to build a successful colony.⁶⁷ In the end, the Spanish withdrew in humiliation from Pohnpei. The Spanish Wall still stands in the heart of Pohnpei's capital, Kolonia, and is a reminder of Spain's short history in Micronesia.

Spain also attempted to set up a colony in Yap. While they encountered American missionaries in Pohnpei, they came across the already established German commercial interests in Yap. In an attempt to counter this influence, the whole Caroline Islands were awarded to Spain by the Vatican.⁶⁸ Relations between the Yapese and the Spanish were cordial but cautious. Hezel portrayed the Yapese as 'tenacious of their beliefs and practice ... and ... far more discriminative of what they would accept from the outside world'.⁶⁹ The Spaniards were quick to establish open and friendly relations with the local Yapese chiefs to achieve their aims in this well-regulated society.

Yapese resistance to Spanish rule was expressed in many forms. These forms included the continued traditional practices of keeping women in the men's long house for sexual purposes against Spanish wishes and the honouring of traditional gods. The Yapese paid lip service to the newcomers' wishes while continuing to pursue their own priorities behind the backs of the Spanish. The Spanish were quick to learn that maintaining the balance of power between the village chiefs was essential to maintaining their presence in Yap. For example, the chief of Gachpar withdrew his support when he complained about the lack of Spanish benefits reaching his village. In response to this displeasure, Governor Bartola and the senior

65 Hanlon, 'Sorcery, "Savage Memories" and the Edge of Commensurability', pp. 319–320.

66 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 329.

67 Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 108.

68 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 8–9; Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 245–246.

69 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 15.

Spanish priests travelled to Gachpar to appease the powerful chief.⁷⁰ The governor humbled himself before the chief at the meeting. Sensing this humbleness and respect, the chief welcomed the governor, which opened a new frontier of mutually beneficial relations. The governor indicated that a missionary would come and live in Gachpar;⁷¹ the chief saw this as a means of retaining his eroding power. The encounter prevented violence and was used as an educational example for the Spanish to cement peaceful coexistence between the Yapese and themselves.⁷²

In the low-lying Caroline Islands, the Spanish exercised almost no power over the outer islands, which they rarely, if ever, visited. The islands were scattered over a large expanse of water, which was almost impossible to administer.⁷³ The Spanish Empire was also dwindling and lacked the necessary resources to enforce its rule. The islanders continued their cultural practices as usual. The handful of German traders who occasioned the islands to gather copra for the European market did not make significant inroads into inducing change on a large scale. This history of resistance held the islanders in good stead, ready to face the challenges posed by other external powers in later years.

Engagement with Germany

Spain's loss in the Spanish–American War resulted in Spain's ejection from Micronesia. As a spoil of war, the US took over Guam as an unincorporated territory. The rest of Micronesia was sold by Spain to Germany. Micronesians had already experienced German influence since they had been allowed to conduct commercial trade during the Spanish colonial era. However, Micronesians were not consulted about these arrangements.⁷⁴ Like the Spaniards before them, the Germans did not have a coherent policy in Micronesia. Their main objective was economic: to develop the copra industry and, later, exploit phosphate when it was discovered on Fais and Angaur.⁷⁵ In terms of enhancing the social and

70 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 24.

71 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 24.

72 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 24.

73 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 14.

74 Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 30–31; Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 118; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 94–95.

75 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 121–122.

economic welfare of Micronesians, there was nothing much to show as the German companies adopted a laissez-faire approach. This suited the Micronesians as it minimised interruptions to their traditional lifestyles.

Yap and Pohnpei became hubs for German commercial and administrative activities headed by district officers and their entourages. German traders working for the Jailut Gesselshaft copra company in Chuuk and Kosrae were appointed as German representatives. To increase the volume of its copra exports to European markets, Germany encouraged copra production in the islands. The Micronesians understood clearly that the Germans were not in Micronesia to improve Micronesians' economic conditions, but for their own interests. As Micronesian scholar Walter noted, the German 'administration did not come to ... [fulfil] the wishes of the Micronesian people, but according to their own desires'.⁷⁶ In Chuuk, copra was not profitable and so individual traders were left to pursue other business activities from which they might profit.⁷⁷ Elsewhere in Micronesia, copra was profitable due to different growing techniques.

Christianity continued to be used as a tool for Western indoctrination. A buy-back scheme to control the spread of guns was instituted to minimise local conflict in the hope of centring Christianity as the new locus of a renewed colonial era that it was hoped would bring peace and prosperity.⁷⁸ The success of these measures is questionable, given the continued presence of many 'pagan' practices in this period. For example, in the Mortlocks, *waitowa* (communicating to the spirits), *apwarik* (traditional dances), *falifel* (tattooing) and *apupulun fanou* (non-Christian marriages) were revived and continued to thrive. One missionary observed in reference to the islands of Nama and Ettal, 'neither the missionary activities nor the ship[s] [that carried European] civilisation changed their concepts and their mode of living'.⁷⁹ In Yap, the Spanish Missionaries struggled to end the 'institutional prostitution', high rate of divorce, polygamy and practise of *kan* (offerings to ancestral spirits).⁸⁰ Wilhelm Friedrich (a German missionary), who worked in the Mortlocks in the

76 Walter, *Desirability, Problems, and Methods of Achieving National Independence*, p. 34.

77 Francis X. Hezel, 'A Brief Economic History of Micronesia', *Past Achievements and Future Possibilities*, Majuro: Micronesian Seminar, 1984, pp. 11–62, micsem.org/pubs/articles/economic/frames/ecohistfr.htm.

78 Hezel, 'A Brief Economic History of Micronesia'.

79 Duane, *Clan and Copra*, p. 170.

80 Hezel, 'The Catholic Church in Yap: A Foothold in the Carolines', *Micronesian Seminar*, 2003, www.micsem.org/pubs/books/catholic/yap/.

1930s, complained about islanders who professed themselves as being Christians and yet 'continued to make use of magic means whenever something needs to be accomplished'.⁸¹ In other outer islands such as Satawal and Ifalik, Christianity was virtually non-existent until the 1950s.⁸²

Islanders from different parts of Chuuk were recruited on minimal wages to work in the mines in Nauru and Angaur.⁸³ Islanders from the low-lying islands in Yap were recruited to work on German projects on the main island and were also sent to Nauru, Palau and Fais to work in the phosphate mines. Internal island politics also played a role in the Yapese recruitment system as influential chiefs used their power in the *sawei* structure to extract wages from workers. However, at the same time, workers began to disassociate themselves from the *sawei* system when they realised the exploitative nature of the labour system.⁸⁴

In Pohnpei, the German administration attempted to establish good relations with the locals but the memories of the Spanish era were still fresh. The relationship between the two sides was cordial but changed with subsequent German administrators. The Germans reimposed labour requirements for road construction and imposed a new tax regime and an obligation to work for 15 days on public projects.⁸⁵ A new land system based on individual ownership was also introduced in an attempt to drive a wedge between the *Nahnmwarki* and their subjects. The German administrators envisioned that a private land system would be more productive instead of the commoners paying tribute to the *Nahnmwarki* in return for occupying the land.

Local politics and personalities were also involved in the political discourse, and local action at times contradicted the German's administration policy. For example, businessman Henry Nanpei, who many claimed was the instigator of the 'Sokehs rebellion', attempted to turn the southern Protestants and the northern Catholics against each other to consolidate his own personal power.⁸⁶ Nanpei was a shrewd businessman who

81 Lothar Käser, 'Light in the South Seas. Wilhelm Friedrich & Elisabeth Kärcher: The Life and Work of a Liebenzell Missionary Couple', Verlag Der Liebenzeller Mission (Unpublished), p. 134.

82 Hezel, 'The Catholic Church in Yap'.

83 Marshall, *Namoluk beyond the Reef*, pp. 22–23.

84 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 109.

85 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 136.

86 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 134.

benefitted from the trade boom and a key player in the Protestant Church movement. He envisioned an alternative political system in Pohnpei premised on the parliamentary model, with himself as the new ruler of Pohnpei. His naked ambition was well known to the leaders of Pohnpei and the colonial masters.⁸⁷ His machinations were unsuccessful as the traditional system continued its course on the basis of the pre-existing social and political order.

Tension between Pohnpeians and their colonial administrators grew when a new German administrator, Boeder, was appointed to oversee German interests on the island. Boeder was well known for his harsh treatment of indigenous workers; for example, he had used force to put down a labour revolt against German interests in Africa. He came from a military background and was determined to emulate the brutal policies he oversaw while in Africa. He ignored sound advice from his predecessors and executed harsh measures whenever he could to match his Protestant work ethic.⁸⁸

In the rush to complete the road construction, he forced a labour team to build a bridge to join the island of Sokehs and the main island of Pohnpei. He miscalculated the risk the work imposed on the indigenous road workers. Violence broke out when an overseer beat a local worker almost to the point of death. The Pohnpeian response was immediate and swift, and culminated in the loss of many lives on the German side, including Boeder himself. This event was a breaking point, at which the Pohnpeians felt the need to restore their pride and honour as embedded in their local customs and traditions.⁸⁹ The outsiders were oblivious to this reality and, as a result, contributed to their own demise. Like the Spanish governors before him, Boeder's sense of superiority and misjudgement led to the loss of his life.⁹⁰ The Micronesians, like any human group, tolerated external pressures to a certain extent, but they would not tolerate subjugation that undermined the roots of their culture and traditions. Violent resistance against outsiders periodically occurred in Micronesian history, but there

87 D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule', pp. 3–5; Hempenstall and Rutherford, *Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific*, p. 118.

88 D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule', p. 4.

89 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, p. 348.

90 D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule', p. 4.

were internal mechanisms to control and minimise violence. Micronesian intellectuality also played its part to restore internal coherence for the purpose of peaceful coexistence.⁹¹

The news of Boeder's death at the hands of a few locals from Sokehs triggered a disproportionate German response. Germany dispatched gunships with trained troops from its headquarters in New Guinea. Upon their arrival, they bombarded the island of Sokehs with cannon fire in an attempt to flush out the perpetrators. However, those responsible had already escaped before the arrival of the German force. They were scattered around the main island of Pohnpei; many sought shelter with their relatives. After an intensive search for the perpetrators, the leaders of the resistance group gave themselves up to prevent any further bloodshed. The leaders were brought to Kolonia and executed in front of a crowd in the hope of teaching the locals a lesson of the consequence of disobeying their German masters.⁹² The rest of the perpetrators were deported to Palau and Papua New Guinea. After the 'Sokehs incident', the Pohnpeians went back to their normal routine, only to be interrupted a few years later when the Japanese arrived in Pohnpei to establish a new colonial rule.

The German experience in Yap was the opposite of that in Pohnpei. Yap was considered a model colony. For example, the district officers realised that the best way to implement colonial objectives was first to win the hearts and minds of the Yapese people. To do so, they needed to understand the cultural structure of the island. Social relationships were the foundation of Yapese culture, and with that understanding, the Germans were able to develop a cordial relationship with the Yapese, especially with the chiefs.⁹³ It was a policy of inclusion, one that was mutually beneficial. The chiefs mobilised their people to assist in the development of colonial infrastructure such as roads, docks and offices, as well as abiding by the principles of law and order. In return, the chiefs received material benefits and German recognition of their chiefly status. The personalities of the German overseers also played a crucial role in bringing both sides together.⁹⁴

91 The 'Sokehs rebellion' was caused by many factors, including both intra- and inter-clan rivalries (Paul Ehrlich, "The Clothes of Men", pp. 159–167).

92 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 140–141.

93 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 264–265.

94 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 105–106.

One can argue that there was not much difference between the Spanish and German colonial policies in the Pacific. Both were caught up in their own pursuit of being world-class powers in the Pacific, using the islands, as Hezel claimed, as 'the ornament'⁹⁵ of their colonial power. The Micronesians' traditions continued to function as usual, with the incorporation of new ideas learned from the outside world. The lack of support from the motherland countries affected the manner in which colonial policies were implemented in Micronesia.⁹⁶ By and large, the German administrators were left to finance the running of their administration of Micronesia primarily based on their personal view as to what benefits Micronesia offered to Germany. The Germans' overly ambitious plan for Micronesia and their political temperament brought complications, particularly in Pohnpei as previously discussed.

Geography and resources dictated the way the Germans implemented their colonial policies. Violence was more pronounced in the high islands, as in the case of Pohnpei, while lowkey diplomatic tactics were the main norms of engagement in the low-lying islands.⁹⁷ The Micronesians were not easy to dominate since they did not allow the colonisers to have a free hand on their islands, as in the case of Pohnpei. Further, they had seen the different demands of the outsiders who frequented their islands throughout the Spanish and German colonial times. The islanders' responses were framed within the context of survivability and continuity.⁹⁸ They understood that each colonial power had its own weaknesses and thus limitations. The change of colonial flags represented the unsettling politics of the external world, which also enabled Micronesians to frame their mode of cautious responses to the continuing colonial process. In the main, the Micronesians did not have to fight too hard as the external world was unstable and changing.⁹⁹ In the end, Germany was too preoccupied with other affairs, culminating in World War I. The defeat of the Central Powers foreshadowed their territorial concessions to the victors. Great Britain later supported Japan in the League of Nations to take over the political administration of Micronesia.

95 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. xiii.

96 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 136.

97 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 81–82.

98 D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule', pp. 5–6.

99 D'Arcy, 'Spanish and German Colonial Rule', p. 1.

Tolerating Japanese Colonisation

Japanese merchants were not new in Micronesia as many were already working on the islands during the German administration. Many locals were already familiar with the Japanese work ethic and general attitude towards islanders. Micronesia was annexed by Japan as a Class C mandate under strict order of the League of Nations. Under the terms of the mandate, Japan's responsibilities were framed in accordance with international terms to: 1) promote the material and moral wellbeing and social progress of the local inhabitants; 2) eliminate slavery, traffic in arms and ammunition and alcoholic beverages; 3) refrain from building fortifications and military bases or from giving military aid to Micronesians; 4) permit freedom of worship and missionary activity; and 5) submit an annual accounting report to the League of Nations by way of its mandates and commission.¹⁰⁰

Yet again, Micronesia was passed to another colonial ruler without any Micronesian input into the process. Japan was mindful of its mandate, but in practice, its administrators paid only lip service to their obligations. For example, economic development was for the benefit of the Japanese rather than Micronesians.

Lacking the local knowledge to form a coherent policy for the implementation of the league's instructions in the Class C mandate, scores of Japanese scholars and technicians descended on the islands to conduct economic surveys and study the cultures of the area. However, the hidden dimension was the old practice of incorporating the islands into a foreign political structure. Japan built their economic vision on the existing infrastructure left by the Germans. From 1917 to 1922, basic systems for education and health were established and Christianity continued its course. Japanese became the official language of the islands. Copra and phosphate extraction continued, while fishing and agriculture were identified as having future economic potential.¹⁰¹ However, to make these industries viable required a large labour pool from Japan, which also served as an outlet to relieve the overpopulation in their country.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Gray, 'Modernization in Micronesia', p. 40.

¹⁰¹ D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', pp. 10–12.

¹⁰² D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', pp. 3–4.

In 1922, Japan started large-scale implementation of its development plan for Micronesia. Many more Japanese were sent to Micronesia, and towns like Kolonia in Pohnpei were referred to as 'little Tokyo' due to the preponderance of the Japanese population.¹⁰³ Japan upgraded the copra and phosphate businesses left by the Germans and maximised the output of the fishing and agricultural industries.¹⁰⁴ It is estimated that, at its peak in 1937, the fishing industry produced approximately 6,000 tons of *katsuobushi* (dried tuna) annually. The tuna trade brought in around ¥3 million profit annually, which tripled by the end of the decade.¹⁰⁵ Most of the fish exports were produced in Chuuk.

Pohnpei was developed into an agricultural hub. Large tracts of land were cleared to plant crops such as tapioca, cotton, coffee, eggplants, cucumber and others. Over ¥400,000 was earned from the export of tapioca alone.¹⁰⁶ Phosphate production increased from 60,000 tons before 1935 to 120,000 tons at the end of the decade. Copra production increased from 4,733 tons in 1922 to 13,703 tons in 1935.¹⁰⁷ The economic 'miracle' was expressed in the figures from 1935, where exports totalled ¥26 million and imports ¥15 million. Export revenue increased to ¥40 million by the end of the 1930s.¹⁰⁸ Many Micronesians entered the workforce on their own accord to earn money to supplement their needs, although for some it was by Japanese demand.

By the 1930s, the Japanese population in the islands outnumbered the Micronesians. The Japanese reaped the benefits of the economic boom, reinforced by a racial policy that created social divisions between Micronesians and non-Micronesians.¹⁰⁹ The Japanese occupied the upper echelon of the class structure, followed by Okinawans and others in the middle, and the *tomin* (Micronesians)¹¹⁰ at the bottom. This racial division ran deep in the education system and the employment sector.

103 The development plan was to benefit the Japanese, whereby they would eventually outnumber indigenous Micronesians and build Japanese commercial centres like little towns in Japan (Hezel, 'A Brief Economic History of Micronesia').

104 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 195; Duane, *Clan and Copra*, p. 216.

105 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 197.

106 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 197.

107 D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', p. 9.

108 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 198.

109 Hezel, *Strangers in their Own Land*, p. 204; D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', p. 12.

110 '*Toming*' is a Japanese term for Micronesians. According to Mortlockese who survived the war, it was a derogatory term distinguishing between the so-called 'sophisticated' Japanese and the low-class Micronesians at the bottom of the class structure during the Japanese era. '*Kanaka*' was a similar term.

For example, D'Arcy noted that in the phosphate industry, Japanese workers earned ¥5.7–6.5 per day, whereas Micronesians received ¥1.2–1.5 per day.¹¹¹ In the public education system, Micronesians received three years of basic education compared to the six years required for Japanese children. Physical segregation continued in the classroom, where Micronesian children were taught separately.¹¹² Likewise, in the health sector, Micronesians occupied the lower levels in terms of employment and received meagre health treatment compared to their Japanese counterparts.

Micronesian responses to Japanese occupation continued. This was based on traditional social networking, where circulation of material goods for survival operated and benefits were shared among families. Micronesians entered the workforce to supplement their local lifestyle. Their participation in the workforce enlarged their understanding of the new immigrants, allowing them to strategise for the future. Such strategies became important when the Japanese fortified the islands in preparation for WWII. The Japanese sense of superiority over the Micronesians was soon to be shattered when they were humiliated and forcefully ejected from the islands at the hands of another outside power, the US.

Japan and Its Iron Fist

Survivors of WWII described the Japanese occupation in Micronesia as 'harsh', 'brutal' and 'unjust'.¹¹³ Infliction of cruel punishments, land appropriation, slave labour (which the islanders called *kinrosy*), unwarranted execution and forced prostitution are some examples of the Japanese brutalities that the islanders were subjected to. Japan's misconduct was in defiance of the instructions of the League of Nations, which was to supposedly promote the welfare of the Micronesian people. Anthropologist Lin Poyer discussed such cruelties and brutalities and noted them as deliberate aspects of Japanese intimidation, intended to

111 D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', p. 11.

112 According to family history, some of my uncles attended the school catering for Micronesian students, which was equivalent to elementary level. See Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own land*, pp. 172–173.

113 *Oral history* as told by my family members about the Japanese period of administration. See also D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', p. 19.

force Micronesians to obey Japanese policy.¹¹⁴ It was a deliberate attempt to break the spirit of the indigenous people to serve the war agenda of Japan.¹¹⁵ The need to survive strengthened the extended family network that was itself the social net for survival. Gale noted:

never before in Micronesian history had the transfer of authority from one regime to another been carried out by violence ... the gradual build-up in American naval strength led to the imposition of blockade that brought severe food shortages in its wake and in some places led to starvation and Japanese atrocities.¹¹⁶

A German Missionary who was in Chuuk during WWII also stated:

even in plain view ... Japanese soldiers commit the most gruesome atrocities against the islanders. During one of [many] air raids many women, most of whom had to serve in forced prostitution for the imperial army, flee into a roofed-over trench close to the harbor. The commander in charge fears that the invasion of the American marines is just about to take place and he also fears that the island women he abused could speak out as witnesses against him. He therefore gives orders to kill the women. He calls three corporals to the trench. These fire their machine guns through the entrance into the deep darkness inside until the screams of the women are heard no more. With the help of a flashlight they then count about seventy bodies lying there in their blood.¹¹⁷

Starvation, enslavement of islanders and cannibalism also began to emerge in Chuuk.¹¹⁸

The main Japanese naval base in Micronesia was located in the Chuuk lagoon. The US did not invade the lagoon, instead employing its air force to bomb the Japanese fleet, airports and main installations. Many lives were lost during these bombardments. In the outer islands, bombs were dropped on Japanese installations but inflicted minimal damage.

114 Lin Poyer, 'Yapese Experiences of the Pacific War', *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Dry Season 1995, pp. 223–224, 239–241; Suzane Falgout, Lin Poyer and Laurence Carucci, 'The Greatest Hardship: Micronesian Memories of WWII', *ISLA: A Journal of Micronesian Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Dry Season 1995, pp. 210–211.

115 D'Arcy, 'What was the Impact of Japanese Rule', p. 12.

116 Gale, *Americanization of Micronesia*, p. 40.

117 Käser, 'Light in the South Seas', p. 116.

118 Falgout, Poyer and Carucci, 'The Greatest Hardship', pp. 203–222. Micronesian scholar Myjoylynn and local person Chero Erwin stated that Japanese cannibalism was true in regard to a person from their village nearby (pers. comm., 20 April 2015 and 2 February 2014). Their accounts are based on family history and local connection.

Most islanders in the outer islands escaped this nightmare as they had already been relocated elsewhere as part of Japanese security measures. The memories of such atrocities are still fresh in Micronesian minds today as the stories are told and retold by subsequent generations. Micronesians today ask the question, what did the innocent Micronesian civilians do to the Japanese that warranted their massacre? Micronesian suffering was neglected or treated as secondary to the sufferings of the combatants.¹¹⁹

Subsequent generations of Micronesians still possess the historical knowledge of the Japanese activities on their islands, as passed down from their families who survived WWII. In the low-lying atolls, islanders share stories of indigenous forced labour teams called *kinrosi*. The Japanese organised these teams, and every morning, islanders had to assemble for *antere*¹²⁰ to ensure they were all ready to execute the daily tasks. People were severely beaten even if they had an authorised break or simply stood up to straighten their back after being bent over for hours.¹²¹ Youth groups called *sainentang*¹²² were created to spread Japanese indoctrination. For example, the Japanese required islanders to bow in the direction of Japan as a show of respect to the emperor when passing particular Japanese symbols placed along the roadside. If they forgot to bow, they were beaten.

Songs were recorded and sung on special occasions, which captured the collective imagination of the new generation about Japanese ill-treatment of their forebears.¹²³ People in the Mortlocks, the Chuuk lagoon, Kosrae, Pohnpei and elsewhere were removed from their homes to make room for the Japanese war effort.¹²⁴ Today, the end of Japanese occupation continues to be celebrated with community holidays. For example, the people of Satowan celebrate their holiday as a reminder of the islanders'

119 Falgout, Poyer and Carucci, 'The Greatest Hardship', pp. 204–205.

120 '*Antere*' was a term used by the Mortlockese to refer to morning roll call before the *kinrosi* teams started work. *Oral history* indicates that if someone was a no show, Japanese guards would look for the absent person and, once they were found, punish them with brutal force. See also Peter, 'Eram's Church (Bell)', p. 283.

121 My grandmother told me about the Japanese treatment of islanders during clean up. She was one of the victims of this brutality.

122 '*Sainentang*' is a Japanese term adopted by Mortlockese to refer to youth teams graded in terms of their skills and strength. See also Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 174.

123 Florian Seady, '*Eshemeto papa mama ren ar riaffou*' is a song often sung by the Satowan people, reminding them of the hardship experienced during WWII and the day they finally returned to their island after being displaced by the Japanese military. The people of Satowan celebrate their freedom from the Japanese on 1 November (*Satowan Oral History of Japanese occupation of Satowan*).

124 Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, pp. 225–226.

resilience under the Japanese regime. Despite the displacement of islanders and the slave labour system imposed by the Japanese, the Mortlockese people continued to live traditionally by way of the *ainang* system. It restrengthened their identity and continuity as a people totally separate from the Japanese.¹²⁵

However, it should be remembered that the islanders were not merely passive actors under the Japanese rule. The Micronesians exercised discretionary measures in an attempt to neutralise the Japanese system of oppression and subjugation, at least at the psychological level. For example, when food was in short supply due to the American blockade, agricultural products were reserved for Japanese soldiers. Any islanders found taking food crops from their own land were beaten. However, such brutality did not deter Micronesians' access to their land. They organised food-raiding parties at night, many of which were successful.¹²⁶ They devised an underground network based on kinship affiliation (or just being an islander bonded by their opposition to the Japanese) to share resources and enable them to patiently sit out the war. They reinforced each other's self-esteem and spied on the Japanese activities to shield each other.¹²⁷ The Micronesians knew the war was between outsiders and would eventually come to an end. Once the Japanese were defeated, the Micronesians regathered their lives and continued to live in accordance with their traditions while awaiting the new world order and whatever new colonial power that might bring.

Engagement with the US

Micronesians who survived WWII spoke of Japan's harsh mistreatment of them, which came to an abrupt end when the US dropped atomic bombs on Japan and forced it into accepting unconditional surrender. Some accounts of Micronesian experiences were recorded by non-Micronesians during the war but these are largely still missing from the records.¹²⁸ As in the past, oral history is relied on to portray a Micronesian

125 I heard Satowan people's experiences during the Japanese administration from Krispin Carlos, an uncle, when he attended the Mortlocks Junior High School in the early 1970s.

126 *Oral history* and family experience recounted by Kaiko Muritok. I heard this history when growing up in the Mortlocks during the 1970s. On the Japanese's cruel treatment of islanders, see also Käser, 'Light in the South Seas', pp. 159–163.

127 *Mortlocks Oral History*; Hezel, *Strangers in Their Own Land*, p. 240.

128 Käser, 'Light in the South Seas', pp. 162–168.

perspective of WWII. Micronesians were appreciative of the Americans when they expelled the Japanese from their islands. The US was not a new interloper in Micronesia. Its interests in the islands dated back to Captain Truxton of the USS *Jamestown* who signed a treaty in 1870 with the *Wasai* of Sokehs.¹²⁹ American ideologies had also spread via the ABCFM missionaries who had earlier established themselves in Pohnpei, Kosrae and later the Mortlocks and Chuuk lagoon.

Oral accounts record that the Mortlockese composed songs to welcome the Americans to their islands. The American flag was displayed in many public spaces as a symbol to represent their newly found freedom and peace. I remember clearly a song composed for the Americans that says, ‘*a urute ash filaik, filaik mi kirier o parapap*’ (‘let us raise our flag in stripes and red’), referring to the colours of the American flag.¹³⁰ It was a time for islanders to rest, rebuild their lives and contemplate their future. While the islanders did so, the US was formulating a plan for how to acquire the islands as part of its forward strategy to defend itself in the Pacific.¹³¹

While the US had favoured self-determination for Micronesia, its position changed when it realised Micronesia’s growing strategic importance during WWII. This position led the US to negotiate with the UN to place the islands under a strategic trust territory, later known as the TTPI. This paved the way for the US to have an exclusive free hand in the islands. Having experienced WWII, the Micronesians understood that reliance and patience was the best possible survival approach to maintain their integrity and continuity. Colonialism was an anathema to their future survival. The US was in no hurry to improve the islanders’ economic situation, which had been devastated by the war.¹³² There were more pressing issues on the US’s Pacific agenda, like using the Marshall Islands for nuclear tests and Saipan as a CIA training camp to subvert communist activities in China. Micronesian interests were put on the political backburner.

129 Hanlon, *Upon a Stone Altar*, pp. 202–205; Hezel, *The First Taint of Civilization*, pp. 231–232.

130 I learned the oral history of the war from my family members who experienced the war. I grew up listening and singing the song. During the Vietnam War, US naval ships would stop by Lakinioch Island and entertain the people by playing baseball and socialising. We sang the song of the US flag, but in retrospect, I wonder whether the Americans understood the song.

131 Rinn-Sup Shinn, ‘Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands’, in *Oceania, A Regional Study*, edited by Frederica M. Bunge and Melinda W. Cooke, Area Handbook Series, Foreign Area Studies, The American University, 1984, pp. 303–304.

132 Hanlon, *Making Micronesia*, p. 79; Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 60–61.

The thousands of American lives lost in WWII and the close proximity of Micronesia to Asia fuelled the Pentagon's desire to retain possession of the islands.¹³³ Since then, the Pentagon's interest has been one of the main drivers of American policy in Micronesia, featuring in successive policies of the US Government. First, the US Government required the US Navy to administer the islands immediately after WWII. The Pentagon then imposed a wall of silence by sealing off the islands from the outside world as they were considered a sensitive military zone.¹³⁴ This policy denied Micronesians access to the outside world without the US's approval. When successive American policies were no longer effective due to Micronesian political pressures, the US's final tactic was the Compact of Free Association—a document framed in military terms and created to provide the US with a foothold in the FSM in 'perpetuity'.¹³⁵

The US Navy supplied free food, education and healthcare and imposed a system of government based on what the US thought was appropriate. Inherent in this was the three levels (municipal, district and Trust Territory Government) and branches (executive, legislative and judiciary) of government that were slowly instituted. Six districts made up the TTPI: Palau, Yap, Ponape, Truk, the Marshall Islands and the Marianas Islands. Each island in the district formed a municipality and each district was comprised of a collection of municipalities grouped together on the basis of a shared perceived culture and language similarities.

At the municipal level, especially in the outlying islands, the inhabitants continued their traditional ways.¹³⁶ That is because the field trip ships that delivered supplies from the district centres were infrequent and there was thus less reliance on them. Sailing canoes continued to be used to maintain connections between islands, especially in Yap and Chuuk. Traditional social and religious practices were in the hands of traditional elders despite the presence of Christianity and the new system of American-inspired government.¹³⁷ The land system was largely unaffected in the villages, and law and order was left to the islanders to administer. Traditional agriculture and fishing remained the primary economic mode

133 Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 60–61.

134 Paul D'Arcy, 'American Administration of Micronesia: 1946–1958', University of Hawai'i, 1986 (Unpublished paper), pp. 2–5.

135 *Compact of Free Association between the Federated States of Micronesia and the United States of America*, Compilation of Documents as Amended, Palikir, Pohnpei, FSM, 2003, Title Three, Articles I, IV, V.

136 D'Arcy, 'American Administration of Micronesia', pp. 2–5.

137 D'Arcy, 'American Administration of Micronesia', pp. 4–5.

of production despite the occasional USDA assistance and the free lunch programs distributed throughout the far-flung islands.¹³⁸ In some ways, the islanders adopted the newly introduced government model, but the substance of daily life remained largely Micronesian. The ongoing adaptation process to outside influences remained at the heart of continuity; that is, the rearticulation of relevant elements of the modern world was carefully crafted to suit the Micronesian context. Although Micronesians slowly entered the TTPI government structure at every level, political power remained in the hands of Americans. This reinforced the continuing feature of the colonial system, whereby Micronesians were always rated as second-class citizens.¹³⁹

At the district level, administrators received their orders from the US high commissioner in Saipan, who in turn received his orders from Washington, DC. The district governments ran on a shoestring budget as infrastructure for development remained a problem. People who worked in the port towns began to derive benefits from the new post-war activities, though these were unevenly distributed. For example, in the Chuuk lagoon, inhabitants of the islands close to Moen (the port town) began to receive benefits from working in the capital.¹⁴⁰ This was not the case in the far-off islands in Yap, Pohnpei and Chuuk. Naturally, Micronesian cultures and identity were the foundation of continuity with these islands. The US concentrated on its own interests, leaving the Micronesians to think seriously about their own future.¹⁴¹ Colonisation after all was about the self-serving interests of the outsiders at the expense of the traditional inhabitants. Once again, Micronesians were aware that the external world had undergone yet another reconfiguration process after WWII.¹⁴² Perhaps most relevantly, decolonisation was underway across the world, prompting serious thoughts of independence among Micronesians. Micronesians wanted their islands to also be free from outside control and were not afraid to govern their islands under the new international order.

138 My personal experience growing up in the Trust Territory era. Free lunch programs were provided to elementary schools and in the aftermath of typhoons. See also Marshall, *Namoluk beyond the Reef*, pp. 65–66; Nason, *Clan and Copra*, pp. 266–267, 276.

139 Hanlon, *Remaking Micronesia*, pp. 40–41.

140 Goodenough, *Property, Kin and Community on Truk*, p. 26. I attended high school in Weno during the 1970s. At the village level, most villagers relied on traditional food production and the sharing of this produce.

141 D'Arcy, 'American Administration of Micronesia', pp. 1–2.

142 Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 60–61.

In response to the emerging decolonisation process, the US Department of the Interior (DOI) took over responsibility for the islands from the Department of the Navy in 1957. This was to create the image that the US was not another colonial power but an interim administrator, responsible for stewardship only until the inhabitants chose their own political future. American policy under the DOI was slow and cautious; it was business as usual. The DOI was oblivious to the political undercurrents gathering strength and unifying the islanders' voices in seeking an alternative to the status quo.¹⁴³ The policy of benign neglect was exposed in the 1960s when the US was criticised by the UN Security Council for the dereliction of its duties under the trusteeship agreement.¹⁴⁴

Nevertheless, military interests remained influential in the formulation of policies regarding Micronesia's future. Micronesians, after a long period of waiting, took matters into their own hands. They established the COM in the mid-1960s as a forum for political dialogue between the districts in their efforts to consider different options for the future. When the US realised that the Micronesians were seriously considering their future, they pre-empted the issue by offering the Micronesians commonwealth status.¹⁴⁵ This offer was rejected outright and, after a series of negotiations, the US realised that it could no longer stop Micronesian leaders from pursuing independence.

To retain its strategic interests in Micronesia, the US crafted the Compact of Free Association. Under the Compact, the US proposed to have 'veto' power to override a future constitution in the event Micronesians pushed for independence, effectively continuing US administration of the islands. The Micronesian side disagreed and continued to push for full independence. Independence meant a break from its colonial past and a renewal of Micronesian freedom enshrined in international law, yet framed in terms of Micronesia's traditional past.

The islands were the sites of many fierce battles in the Pacific, where the US lost many soldiers fighting the Japanese.¹⁴⁶ It was this experience that prompted the US to keep the islands as part of its security zone to avert future aggression from Asia. The Pentagon was at the forefront of

143 Hanlon, *Making Micronesia*, pp. 161–162.

144 D'Arcy, 'American Administration of Micronesia', pp. 1–2.

145 Hanlon, *Making Micronesia*, pp. 220–221.

146 Bill Jeffery, *War in Paradise WWII: Sites in Truk Lagoon, Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia*, Chuuk Historical Preservation Office, 2003, pp. 3–8.

this push to keep Micronesia within the US's sphere of influence. Like before, the traditional inhabitants were not consulted¹⁴⁷ because they were considered too weak to resist the US's wishes. While other trust territories were quickly decolonised, the TTPI was in political limbo since the US had its own plan for the territory's future.¹⁴⁸

Micronesians were stateless people in the sense that the US controlled all matters concerning the governance of the territory. For example, the TTPI granted America authority over passport control and thus over the international movement of all of Micronesia's inhabitants. The passports issued to Micronesians read:

the rightful holder of this passport is a citizen or inhabitant of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under United States administration and is entitled, under Article Eleven of the Trusteeship Agreement between the United States and the United Nations Security Council ... to receive diplomatic and consular protection of the United States of America. This passport is not valid for travel to the following areas under control of authorities with which the United States does not have diplomatic relations: Albania, Cuba, North Korea, and Vietnam.¹⁴⁹

This restriction on Micronesian travel could only be lifted if Micronesia achieved its independence as a nation state.

Discontent towards the US increased, and the leaders of the TTPI banded together to inform the US that they wanted to run their own government in accordance with their own political design.¹⁵⁰ They demanded independence on the basis of the principle of inalienable human rights under international law. The question was not how Micronesians should achieve their independence but, rather, what was the quickest way to achieve this goal.¹⁵¹

147 Robert Kiste, 'Termination of the US Trusteeship in Micronesia', *Journal Pacific History*, Vol. 21, No. 3, July 1986, pp. 127–128.

148 Robert Kiste, 'Overview of US Policy', in *The Ninth Annual Pacific Islands Studies Conference Proceedings: History of the US Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands*, edited by Karen Knudsen, University of Hawai'i, 1985, pp. 1–4; Gale, *The Americanization of Micronesia*, pp. 60–61.

149 Gonzaga Puas, *TTPI Passport* (issued in 1982). I am still in possession of this passport, which instructs the bearer not to enter the countries listed on the passport.

150 Glenn Petersen, 'Differences, Connections, and the Colonial Carousel in Micronesian History', *Pacific Asia Inquiry*, Vol. 2, No. 1, Fall 2011, pp. 14–16.

151 Petersen, 'Lessons Learned', p. 61.

To the US, the wish was laughable; they thought the Micronesians were unsophisticated and incapable of running their own affairs either domestically or internationally, having been cocooned politically by colonialism.¹⁵² The downside of this assumption was that the Americans did not bother to understand the Micronesians' desire. The US's resistance only hardened the Micronesian position, and TTPI leaders rejected all American offers short of independence. Faced with mounting pressure, the US caved and started negotiations for Micronesian independence.

To achieve independence, a constitution was required to attain Micronesian sovereignty, as demanded by international law. In 1979, the Constitution was finalised and became the law of the land and the basis for formulating relations with the external world.¹⁵³ Losing the islands again to a foreign power was unthinkable according to the FSM's leaders.¹⁵⁴ However, Micronesians were happy to retain some form of loose association with the US in exchange for assistance regarding economic development and support for international recognition of Micronesian independence. After many years of negotiations, the FSM finally gained its independence on 3 November 1986 after the UN Security Council formally terminated the trusteeship agreement with the US. This date is considered the end of colonialism in the FSM and is celebrated as FSM Independence Day.

Since independence, the Compact of Free Association has been used by the US to remain in Micronesia, with the FSM Government receiving billions of dollars of necessary funding in return. The Compact was renegotiated in 2001 and extended to the year 2023, at which time certain Compact funding will be under review. However, after 2023, the FSM will access its trust fund, set up to replace the Compact funds. It has been estimated that there will be an annual shortfall of US\$600 million in the trust fund,¹⁵⁵ and thus a blowout in the FSM's budget unless other sources of income are found.¹⁵⁶ As pointed out in the DOI's report on the FSM economy dated 16 November 2011, 'the most devastating conclusion of the report

152 Petersen, 'Lessons Learned', pp. 17–18.

153 Puas, 'The FSM Legal System', p. 3.

154 John Haglegam, Interview, College of Micronesia, Palikir, 7 January 2012.

155 President Emmanuel Mori, *State of the Nation Address*, Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia, Palikir, Pohnpei, 18 May 2012.

156 Pers. comm. with many officials in the FSM Government, especially in the Departments of Foreign Affairs and SBOC during field study in July 2013. President Mori's Speech, *President's State of the Nation Before the 18th Congress of the FSM*, 29 May 2014, Palikir, Pohnpei.

is FSM's 2023 estimated \$265–\$600 million trust fund shortfall of the \$1.82 billion target' to live off during the post-2023 era.¹⁵⁷ These future challenges are discussed in Chapter 4.

Conclusion

Colonisation in the FSM took many forms and was dependent on the policy of the particular colonial power. Micronesian continuity relied on the strength of their customs and identity in their engagements with the colonial powers. For example, Micronesians survived by utilising their network via the *ainang* system. The colonists misunderstood this and the geography of the islands. Despite all the colonial policies implemented to disempower Micronesians, colonisation was not successful in Micronesia. Micronesians developed an understanding of the external world and the changing alliances within it as a result of their exposure to colonialism. The changing colonial masters in Micronesia were part of a bigger picture beyond the horizon—something quickly understood by the islanders. The islanders understood that they had to be patient and wait, and eventually political control would come full circle. Micronesian history is about a people with patience, respect for reciprocity, connectivity and intellectual prowess. These values formed the basis of Micronesian identity and continuity as an independent people, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

157 Tammy Doty, 'Interior Releases Report on FSM Economy', *Micronesia Forum*, 16 November 2011, www.micronesiaforum.org/index.php?p=/discussions.

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