

The Chamorro Village after Resettlement: The New and the Old

Introduction

At the founding of the first Spanish mission there, the Marianas archipelago, which extends several hundred miles from Guam in the south to the much smaller islands in the north, had four well populated islands: Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Guam. Of these, Guam was the largest, with half the total land area of the entire chain, and the most heavily populated. Even the tiny northern islands were occupied at that time, with eight of them sharing a population of a few thousand. Estimates of the total population size at the time of Spanish contact vary widely, but the figure for the entire island chain is generally thought to have been about 40,000.¹ Half of that number were thought to be living on Guam, while the islands of Rota, Tinian and Saipan also had a large population.

The islands were politically fragmented at the time of early European contact. Not only was there no paramount chief linking the various islands together, but there were not even island chiefs, or the type of sectional chiefs found in other island groups in the region. The weak chiefly system was a source of amazement for the earliest European visitors: Magellan and Legazpi's crew both marveled at an island society without *señor ni capitán* (lord or captain).² The village chief represented the highest authority figure in the Marianas. As one of the Spanish missionaries wrote: "Neither the islands taken altogether, nor the individual villages have a head who governs the others."³ This statement is supported by everything else that we know of the early social and political landscape in the Marianas. Yet, despite the lack of centralized political power, the Marianas Archipelago displayed a common cultural unity. All the inhabitants of the island-chain spoke a common language, Chamorro, a member of the Austronesian language family. Other strong cultural features were its matrilineal system, affording considerable authority to women, its young men's houses in the village, the practice of marriage outside the clan, and the intense trading activity of the society throughout the years.

The Mariana Islands were, according to recent archeological discoveries, the first island group

¹ Jane H Underwood, "Population History of Guam: Context of Microevolution," *Micronesica: Journal of the University of Guam* 9, no. 1 (1973): 11–44; Richard J. Shell, "The Ladrones Population.," *Journal of Pacific History* 36, no. 2 (2001): 225–36. Shell, Richard J. "The Ladrones Population." *Journal of Pacific History* 36, no. 2 (2001): 225–36.

² Jaime Marín y Diego Martín, pilots on Legazpi expedition wrote in 1565: "A esta gente no se le reconoció señor ni capitán". Derrotero de los Pilotos de la expedición de Legazpi Jaime Marín y Diego Martín, Archivo General de Indias (AGI) MP-Filipinas, 2, f. 6. In 1521 Pigafetta observed during the first contact between Europeans and Chamorros that "these people live in liberty and according to their will, for they have no lord or superior" See Pigafetta, Antonio. *The First Voyage Round the World by Magellan: Transl. from the Accounts of Pigafetta and Other Contemporary Writers* Edited by Henry Morton Stanley (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010), 69.

³ Francisco García, *The Life and Martyrdom of the Venerable Father Diego Luis De Sanvitores of the Society of Jesus, First Apostle of the Mariana Islands and the Happenings in These Islands from the Year of One Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty-Eight, to That of One Thousand Six Hundred and Eighty-One* (Mangilao, Guam: Micronesia Area Research Center, University of Guam, 2004), 172. The original in Spanish García, Francisco. *Vida y martirio del padre Diego Luis de Sanvitores, de la Compañía de Jesus, primer apostol de las islas Marianas y sucesos de estas islas* (Madrid: Juan Garcia Infanzon), 1683.

inhabited in Remote Oceania.⁴ A seafaring people navigating from the west, most likely Luzon, settled in Guam and Saipan between 2000 and 1500 BC. This extraordinary navigational event took place several hundred years before those seafarers with their distinctive Lapita pottery reached Fiji, Tonga or Samoa and two millennia before humans reached Hawaii or New Zealand.⁵ What little we know of the lifestyle of these early settlers is suggested by the archaeological evidence unearthed in recent decades. The people appear to have lived in small settlements along the coast where they had easy access to abundant marine resources. They lived in dwellings raised on poles along the shore but made use of nearby caves for meetings and other purposes. Within a few hundred years of their first settlement in the islands, these people began wandering inland to plant root crops and fruits and so develop an early agricultural system. Even in this earliest era the islanders used ornate pottery with markings to designate their group identity and buried their dead with shell and stone ornaments to celebrate their status.⁶

The archaeological evidence suggests a significant transformation of the culture that began about a thousand years ago, at the beginning of what is known as the Latte Period.⁷ This period is distinguished by the giant latte pillars and capstones that were found throughout the islands. The mortars used in the preparation of food and medicines began to be made of stone rather than wood. The style of shell ornaments also changed markedly. Even more significant was the change in bone size and structure discovered in the burial remains from this later period. The body form of the people themselves, like the structures they erected during the Latte period, had become significantly larger and more heavy-set.⁸

The people of the Marianas had from the earliest times always lived in small settlements scattered through the islands. On Guam, the largest island of the archipelago, one early visitor estimated 400 different settlements,⁹ while a later missionary source put the number at 110.¹⁰ Whatever the number, it is easy to accept with confidence the statement of the observation, made about 1700, that “these islands are very populous. [...] and are full of villages scattered over plains and mountains, some with as many as hundred or a hundred and fifty huts.”¹¹

⁴ Mike T. Carson, *First Settlement of Remote Oceania: Earliest Sites in the Mariana Islands*, Springer Briefs in Archaeology (New York: Springer, 2014).

⁵ Patrick Vinton Kirch, “The Pacific Islands as a Human Environment,” in *On the Road of the Winds: An Archaeological History of the Pacific Islands Before European Contact* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 42–62.

⁶ Carson, Mike T. *Archaeological Landscape Evolution: The Mariana Islands in the Asia-Pacific Region* (New York: Springer, 2016). Moore, Darlene. *Measuring Change in Marianas Pottery: The Sequence of Pottery Production at Tarague, Guam* (MA diss., University of Guam, 1983). Amesbury, Judith R. “Changes in Species Composition of Archaeological Marine Shell Assemblages in Guam.” *Micronesica* 32, no. 2 (1999): 346–66.

⁷ Carson, Mike T. “An Overview of Latte Period Archaeology.” *Micronesica* 42, no. 1 (2012): 1–79.

⁸ Heathcote, Gary M., Vicente P. Diego, Hajime Ishida, and Vicente J. Sava. “Legendary Chamorro Strength: Skeletal Embodiment and the Boundaries of Interpretation.” In *The Bioarchaeology of Individuals*, edited by Ann Lucy Wiener Stodder and Ann M. Palkovich (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 44–67

⁹ Martínez Perez, Jesus, ed. *Fray Juan Pobre de Zamora: Historia de la pérdida y descubrimiento del Galeón San Felipe* (Avila: Diputación Provincial de Avila - Institución Gran Duque de Alba, 1997), 448. Translated in Driver, Marjorie G. *The Account of Fray Juan Pobre’s Residence in the Marianas, 1602* (Guam: Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam, 1989).

¹⁰ Bibliothèque Nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE D-10208.

¹¹ Morales, Luis de, and Charles Le Gobien. *History of the Mariana Islands*. Edited by Alexandre Coello de la Rosa (Guam: Micronesian Area Research Center & University of Guam Press, 2016), 109.

Early European Contact

The Marianas were the first island group that Ferdinand Magellan encountered in his historic voyage across in the Pacific in 1521. During the brief layover at Guam, Magellan and his half-starved crew were able to secure provisions and repair their battered ships, even as they added the island group to the map and marked it as a suitable stopover for future Spanish ships crossing the Pacific. During Magellan's visit to the island, hostilities erupted between the crew and the islanders when the latter repeatedly made off with items from the ship—a pattern that would be repeated many times over in the course of early visits of Europeans to islands throughout the Pacific. Magellan thereupon bestowed on this island group the unflattering name “Ladrones.”

In 1565, a half century later, Miguel de Legazpi formally claimed for the Spanish Crown the Marianas Archipelago as well as the islands north of the Celebes that he baptized as the Philippines. Andres de Urdaneta, a navigator of this same expedition, discovered the *tornaviaje*—the return route—to re-cross the Pacific so as to avoid the Portuguese, thus marking the beginning of the annual Manila galleon route. For the next one hundred years, the Marianas, known as *Islas de los Ladrones*, were visited annually as a resupply point, even though the Spanish Crown never supported any settlement there nor did the Catholic Church undertake any official mission in the island group. Between 1521 and Legazpi's visit in 1565, however, there were occasional contacts between Europeans crossing the Pacific and the Chamorro people.¹²

In 1522, the *Trinidad* of Magellan's expedition, on its return voyage from Tidore, reached islands that they recognized as the Ladrones and drifted north to an island they called Cyclo, possibly Songsong or Anataham. There they loaded water and firewood and captured a native pilot to help them navigate. When Gonzalo Gomez de Espinosa, now commander of the ship, was forced to return to the Marianas a few months later, the vessel put in at Maug Island, another of the northern islands of the archipelago. While the ship was taking on water, three Spaniards deserted together with the native Chamorro previously captured. Four years later, when Loaysa visited the islands, only the cabin boy Gonzalo de Vigo was founded alive. Yet, the Spaniards were well received, thanks to the mediation of the cabin boy, who by then had made friends with the islanders and was fluent in their language.¹³

The early Spanish visits continued. In 1528, Alvaro de Saavedra, on his return from Tidore where he went to assist Loaysa's expedition, touched at one of the northern Marianas islands and took on water and firewood there. Fifteen years later, in 1543, the *San Juan de Letran*, one of the ships in Villalobos's expedition, also anchored at one of the islands in the group, where the crew exchanged iron for fruit and water. Finally, in 1565, the Legazpi's expedition spent ten days in Guam, probably at Umatac in the south.¹⁴

¹² Our gratitude to Francisco Ruiz Aldereguia, historian and Spanish navy official retired, for the information that follows.

¹³ Navarrete, Martín Fernández de. *Colección de los viajes y descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los españoles desde fines del siglo XV, con varios documentos inéditos concernientes á la historia de la marina castellana y de los establecimientos españoles en Indias*. Vols. 4 and 5 (Madrid: Imprenta real, 1825).

¹⁴ AGI MP-Filipinas, 2, f.6.

These encounters between Spaniards and Chamorros increased in frequency and duration after the establishment of the yearly Manila galleon run from Acapulco to Manila.¹⁵ In 1568, the galleon *San Pablo* was shipwrecked in the archipelago, in 1601 the *Santa Margarita* was broken up on the reefs of Rota, and in 1638 the *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción* sank off Saipan. In 1596, Fray Antonio de los Angeles, together with two Spaniard soldiers, jumped ship and remained in the Marianas for a year.¹⁶ Juan Pobre, a Franciscan friar, did the same thing in 1602 when he left the ship that was taking him to Manila and remained in the Marianas for six months.¹⁷

The Establishment of the Jesuit Mission

In 1668 Spain launched the first mission in the Mariana Islands. This event, the first permanent mission anywhere in the Pacific, marked the beginning of a period of intense Western contact that resulted in the evangelization and colonization of the entire Pacific. Naturally, this event and all that followed also left a permanent imprint on the history and culture of the Marianas.

When Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores and his missionary band—five other Jesuits and a group of 31 lay mission helpers from Mexico and the Philippines—arrived in the Marianas, they were enthusiastically received by a village chief and his people.¹⁸ As the priests and their helpers began their evangelization of the island chain from Guam northward, however, violent encounters soon broke out. Father Luis de Medina, one of the Jesuit priests, was wounded in Nisichan in August 1668. In October 1668, Lorenzo Castellanos and his Filipino translator, Gabriel de la Cruz, were killed in Tinian. Then, in January 1670, the first of the priests was killed when Fr. Medina met his death on Saipan. A year later, San Vitores's young assistant, José de Peralta, was assassinated in Guam, provoking the punitive killing of one of the village chiefs.

Violence was mounting as the number of hostile incidents increased. Part of this was attributed to a story that was being spread by Choco, a shipwrecked Chinese, about the poisonous effect that the baptismal waters supposedly had on children. In addition, the missionaries provoked a hostile reaction when they destroyed the ancestral skulls that islanders cherished on the grounds that they were religious idols. Finally, in April 1672, Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores was killed, together with his young assistant Pedro Calungsod, in yet another outbreak of violence. His death opened a new period, a complex era of alliances, resistance, truces, and fights.

The next thirty years brought intermittent hostilities, provoked by a continued missionary

¹⁵ For a review of the cultural effects of the contacts during these years on the social organization of the Chamorro people see Quimby, Frank. "The Hierro Commerce: Culture Contact, Appropriation and Colonial Entanglement in the Marianas, 1521–1668." *The Journal of Pacific History* 46, no. 1 (2011): 1–26.

¹⁶ Marjorie G. Driver, trans., "The Account of a Discalced Friar's Stay in the Islands of the Ladrones," *Guam Recorder* 7 (1977): 19–21.

¹⁷ Martínez Perez, *Fray Juan Pobre de Zamora*, 421-469.

¹⁸ For an approach to historical sources on the contact and first years of the mission see Luis de Morales and Charles Le Gobien, *History of the Mariana Islands*; Francisco Garcia, *The Life and Martyrdom of the Venerable Father Diego Luis De Sanvitores*; Francis X. Hezel, "The Early Spanish Period in the Marianas, 1668-1669" in *One Archipelago, Many Stories: Integrating Our Narratives*, vol. 3 (2nd History of the Marianas Conference, Guam: Guampedia Foundation, 2013), 127–36; David Atienza, "A Mariana Island History Story: The Influence of the Spanish Black Legend in Mariana Islands Historiography," *Pacific Asia Inquiry* 4, no. 1 (2013): 13–29.

opposition to some cultural practices, islanders' retaliation for insults suffered, and simmering resentment at their treatment under the Spanish. From the outset the Spanish mission drew mixed reactions from an island people without a unified leadership system. While many of the Chamorro people came to resent the Spanish, other chiefs and their people were sympathetic to them for a variety of reasons.

By 1690 the hostilities had all but ended, claiming a total loss of life of perhaps 200 Chamorros and Spanish. Even after the end of violence, however, the precipitous drop in the population, caused largely by the diseases introduced by the newcomers, continued. From the arrival of the Spanish, the island population of an estimated 40,000 plunged to barely 4,000 by 1710. In just over 40 years the number of inhabitants in the island chain had been reduced by 90 percent.¹⁹

Resettlement of the Population

The broad dispersal of villages all over the island made the resettlement (*reducción*) into select villages necessary, while the shrinkage of the population, largely as a result of the epidemics, made it more manageable. The practice of *reducción*, a trademark of Spanish colonial administration everywhere, was intended to provide administrators and missionaries ready access to the people, especially where the local population was scattered widely, as it was in the Marianas. Already in 1680, Governor Antonio de Saravia, had taken advantage of a peaceful interlude to begin the resettlement on Guam.

The relocation of the population into well-defined villages is sometimes understood as nothing more than a tool of more effective colonization. Although that purpose cannot be totally discounted, its rationale rests much more on the Christianization of the island population—a goal which, even if neglected at times by the local governor, was affirmed again and again in Spanish royal documents as the main purpose of the original Spanish venture in 1668.²⁰ The Jesuit superior explained the initial relocation in 1680 as follows:

“...this year we have started to reduce the people in bigger towns, taking them out of their retired ranches and tiny villages, where it was nearly impossible to assist them because of the multitude of places that they occupied and the distance between them. With this... we will be able to administer the Holy Sacraments and to teach the Christian doctrine more frequently.”²¹

The assumption of Spanish missionaries, in these islands as in other mission fields, was that merely baptizing non-believers and expecting them to sustain their faith in isolation was to leave their work half-done. In addition, the Jesuits knew, by experience in other tropical missions, that the scattered indigenous settlement pattern with its small and outlying hamlets would have made

¹⁹ See also Francis X Hezel, *When Cultures Clash: Revisiting the “Spanish Chamorro Wars”* (Saipan: Northern Marianas Humanities Council, 2016).

²⁰ Francis X. Hezel, “From Conversion to Conquest: The Early Spanish Mission in the Marianas,” *Journal of Pacific History* 17, no. 3 (1982): 115–37; Atienza, David. “A Mariana Island History Story: The Influence of the Spanish Black Legend in Mariana Islands Historiography.” *Pacific Asia Inquiry* 4, no. 1 (2013): 13–29.

²¹ Fr. Manuel de Solórzano in Coello de la Rosa, Alexandre, and David Atienza. *Scars of Faith: Letters and Documents of the Mariana Islands’ Jesuit Missionaries and Martyrs* (Boston: Jesuit Sources, In Press), 265.

very difficult the administration of the sacraments needed to bring the local people to the faith. Just as important as the initial evangelization was the establishment of what they would have called *crislianidad*, a faith community that would have provided the support needed to sustain the belief of these converts.

The community, of course, would be modeled on a Spanish town, considered a civilized and well-organized settlement. Everywhere in the present-day Marianas we find clear vestiges of this model: the village church and the government office with a public plaza usually situated between them. This layout, established in Hagatña from the very beginning, was introduced into other villages over time until it eventually became a standard feature everywhere in the island group.²² On the other hand, this Spanish town model was itself subject to change as islanders adapted it to their own cultural features over time.

Even before the end of the fighting in the island group, the Spanish governor, with the support of the missionaries, began the “reduction” of the surviving island people on Guam into a handful of the larger villages. This initial work may have been initiated by the Spanish, but it was undertaken in collaboration with several Chamorro leaders who had become supportive of the work of the missionaries.²³ These local leaders were consulted on the selection of the official villages and were afterwards sent to obtain support of the island people.

The initial reduction was carried out promptly on Guam, although adjustments were made in later years. The resettlement was continued in the islands to the north with the dispatch of the Spanish commander in 1695 to relocate the people of Saipan and nearby Aguiñan. Soon after that the policy was extended to the northernmost islands of the archipelago, the group of small islands known as Gani, leading to the relocation of their people on Guam. The resettlement of these people, which concluded in 1698 during the interim governorship of Madrazo, led to so many casualties during the transfer²⁴ that a royal decree was later issued, with the full support of the Jesuit Superior General, banning all compulsory relocations in the future.²⁵ Even so, the consolidation of the population continued for several more years before the entire process was completed. In all, the “reduction” to villages, which was largely accomplished by 1700, extended over a 50-year period—from 1680 until 1731, when the last of the people from Saipan were resettled on Guam.

Resettlement Villages

For the most part the choice of resettlement villages was not difficult. A few traditional population centers had grown up long before the arrival of the Spanish; most of them were

²² After the Second World War, however, the island underwent an intense transformation; see Coello de la Rosa, Alexandre, and David Atienza. “Sobre amnesias y olvidos. Continuidades y discontinuidades en la (re)construcción de la memoria colectiva en Guam (Islas Marianas).” *Historia Social* 86 (2016): 25–46.

²³ Fr. Solorzano, annual report for 1681-1682, in Repetti, William Charles. “The Beginnings of Catholicity in the Marianas Islands.” *Catholic Historical Review* 31, no. 4 (1946): 434-5.

²⁴ Pedro Murillo Velarde, *Historia de la provincia de Philipinas de la Compañía de Jesús. Segunda parte. Desde el año de 1616 hasta el de 1716*, vol. Libro IV (Manila: Imprenta de la Compañía de Jesús, 1749), Cap. XXII.

²⁵ Letter from Fr. Victor Valdes to the General Procurator José Calvo of December 20, 1736. Archivo Histórico de la Provincia de Aragon (AHPA), Spain E-I-c5[h].

located on the coast and would have been readily accessible by land and sea. Unless such villages had a history of hostility to the missionaries and resistance to Spanish influence, they were usually designated resettlement villages.

On Guam, the seven villages initially designated as population centers were: Hagatña, Agat, Pago, Umatac, Inapsan, Mapupan and Fina. By 1700, the last three of these would be stricken from the list, and the southern villages of Merizo and Inarajan added. This was the result of internal population shifts and the heavy resettlement of people from the northern islands in the southern part of Guam. Throughout most of the 18th Century the population of these villages would range between 100 and 300, with Hagatña maintaining a population of about 700.

Rota had a single village, Songsong, with a population that settled at about the same size as the Guam villages throughout the century. Saipan, further to the north, also had one recognized village, Anaguam, with a fluctuating population, but as increasing numbers of its people sailed off to Guam, the church was closed, and pastor withdrawn in 1731.²⁶

Physical layout of the village

As people from the surrounding area were resettled in the villages, the Spanish used the opportunity to try to reorganize the layout of the village houses in a regular pattern. As early as 1682, at the direction of the Spanish, some of the homes scattered at random along the shore were being rebuilt in the heart of the village. These houses and those of the people recently resettled from the outlying hamlets were increasingly laid out in orderly rows. Roads, too, were being enlarged and straightened by Governor Saravia's work crews and a rectangular layout seemed to be the plan for the ideal village.

Family buildings continued to be built with local materials—although some modifications, based on the availability of materials, were made in time. Clay tiles first became available in 1748 when an oven for baking tiles opened in Hagatña.²⁷ The cookhouse, originally a small hut covering a fireplace, was used to prepare the food that would be distributed to the small families that made up the lineage group. Eventually it was modified so that a stone oven could be built above ground to prepare tortillas and roast new foods. The family dwelling was a long building, large enough to accommodate all the members of the extended family. People slept on plaited coconut leaf mats, the same type that were sometimes hung around the side of the building to protect those within.

The large canoe houses near the shore, usually the property of the lineage, also remained largely unaffected by the resettlement (see image 1). Clubhouses—so-called *urritaos* houses—were no longer to be seen in the new village. Nearly all had been destroyed at the insistence of the missionaries, who thought of them as little better than houses of prostitution.

One of the most visible changes in the village, as we might expect, was the church. Even before the reduction, all the main villages of Guam had at least a simple church building, usually built

²⁶ Hezel, Francis X. *From Conquest to Colonization: Spain in the Mariana Islands, 1690-1740*. Occasional Historical Papers Series; No. 2 (Saipan: N.M.I. Division of Historic Preservation, 2000), 27.

²⁷ Letter from José Eduardo del Castillo, March 30, 1748. AHPA E-1-C-6.

of wood. By that time, however, work was underway to replace it with a stone structure, along with a sturdy rectory and a cemetery. Increasingly, the church would become the center of village life, a favored gathering place for the villagers.



Image 1. “The Appearance of Agana From the Pass in the Reef”. Drawing by William Haswell during a voyage from Boston to Guam from 1801 to 1802. The canoe house is visible at the right side of the picture. Courtesy from Omaira Brunal-Perry, MARC.²⁸

Hagatña

Hagatña, by contrast, had already taken on the appearance of a colonial town by 1680. The town included 200 houses occupied by the troops, who numbered over a hundred by this time, and some of the trusted Chamorros.²⁹ Many of the troops—mostly Mexican and Filipino—were married to local women and settled their families in Hagatña, where they remained even after retirement. The whole core of the town was enclosed by a stockade, once made of wood but then being rebuilt of stone. Two gates, one facing the sea and the other the mountains, opened into the stockade. Within the stockade was a stone church that served those living within the enclosure, with the missionary residence alongside. Other buildings included the boys’ school and the girls’ school, with a combined enrollment of nearly a hundred; a newly constructed hospital for the troops; the solidly built governor’s home that doubled as a fort; and the royal warehouse for supplies brought in on the galleon. Outside the stockade, in adjacent barrios within easy reach of the church, were rows of wooden houses that were occupied by Chamorros.³⁰

Hagatña, formally known as the capital and home of the governor, was even in those early years developing residential suburbs. By 1728, the census recorded that six *barrios* had grown up in the surroundings of Hagatña, each one considered a suburb in its own right. Chamorros might

²⁸ William Haswell, [1801-02] “Remarks on a Voyage in 1801 to the Island of Guam”, Historical Collections of the Essex Institute, Vol. LIII No. 8:193-118; July 1917.

²⁹ Fr. Francisco de Borja, 8 July 1680; in Lévesque, Rodrigue. *History of Micronesia: A Collection of Source Documents. More Turmoil in the Marianas, 1679-1683*. Vol. 7. (Gatineau: Lévesque Publications, 1996): 501.

³⁰ Fr. Xaramillo, annual report for 1679-1680, in Levesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 321; Fr. Francisco de Borja, 8 July 1680, in Levesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 501; Fr. Solórzano to Fr. Garcia, 20 May 1681, in Levesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 442.

not have had a place in the town itself, but they were able to build up small villages close by that offered them both access to the town along with the freedom to live their familiar rural lifestyle.³¹

Hagatña was clearly a colonial center without parallel in Guam and the Marianas. Only Umatac possessed any colonial buildings that suggested governmental and religious authority: the *palacio* and a stone church. The Camino Real connected both colonial centers with the port of San Luis de Apra, developed during the mid-18th Century.³² This axis of communication on the western side of the island stood as a geographical marker of the colonial control in the islands, leaving the rest of the island under little more than nominal Spanish authority.

Authority in Villages

In his early attempt to concentrate the population into villages in 1680, Governor Saravia intended that local people provide the leadership in these villages, as long as they did not hinder the evangelization effort. In promoting local leadership, the governor not only recognized the legitimacy of the traditional Chamorro chief in each of the major villages, but he bestowed on each village chief the Spanish military title of *Maestre de Campo* or *Sargento Mayor*. Other prominent individuals in the village, in recognition of their contributions, were granted titles such as *Capitanes*, *Alféreces* or *Alguaciles*.³³ The conferral of these titles, then, was not a means of replacing the traditional chief, but a gesture by the Spanish governor to confirm chiefly authority and to recognize others who had accomplishments to their credit.

But what happened when two or three smaller villages, each with its own matrilineal chief claims, were consolidated into a larger village? In such a case, the chieftainship seems to have gone to the traditional head of the main village, with some formal recognition given to the heads of the other smaller villages. The real authority of the village chief was limited even in traditional days, as we know from the missionary documents. But to exercise that authority in the new system, when there may have been other contenders for leadership, would have been even more difficult and required greater discretion.

With the end of hostilities and the final reduction into select villages, indigenous chiefs were required to assume a larger leadership role than previously. Somehow the village chiefs seemed to handle their expanded responsibility reasonably well for a while. But within a few years, under a string of governors who were notoriously self-serving, the chiefs would find themselves pressed by the increasing demands from the Spanish authorities for village labor for the personal enrichment of the governor. In the face of such pressure and aware of the burden it would place on their people, some of the village chiefs, pleading inability to carry out their responsibility,

³¹ The settlements near Hagatña were Mongmong, Sinahaña, Anigua, and Apurguan. Around Assan the settlements of Riguan and Tepungan also sprang up, although Riguan later was abandoned. See Census of 1728 in AGI Ultramar leg 561 ff.127-177 and Census of 1758 in AGI Fil 488 ff. 1-82.

³² The Fort of San Luis was erected in 1737 see *Mapa y entrada del puerto de san Luis*, AGI, MP-FILIPINAS,29.

³³ Morales and Le Gobien, *History of the Mariana Islands*, 251. For more detail on the indigenous offices see Atienza, David. "Priests, Mayors and Indigenous Offices: Indigenous Agency and Adaptive Resistance in the Mariana Islands (1681 -1758)." *Pacific Asia Inquiry* 5, no. 1 (2014): 31–48.

appealed to the governor to find someone to replace them.³⁴ Governor Damian Esplana and two of his corrupt successors solved the problem by appointing a Spanish creole or Filipino, usually a retired soldier, as *mayordomo* to exercise de facto authority over the village. During these years these officials abused their authority, forcing villagers to work on the public lands far longer than was stipulated by law. They were also accused of molesting village women and viciously punishing those who resisted.³⁵

By 1725 the worst was over, when the last of the corrupt governors had left office. Soon afterwards Governor Arguelles attempted to reform the abuses by eliminating the office of *mayordomo* and returning authority to the local village chiefs.³⁶ But the local chiefs, we are told, proved unequal to mounting relief efforts in the wake of a severe typhoon—perhaps because of the limitations on the authority of the traditional village chief. Spanish authorities at that time, as they had 45 years earlier, insisted that Chamorros be made leaders of the villages and supervise the Crown lands in the districts (*partidos*), but the Spanish would be obliged to limit their expectations of the village chiefs in the future. By mid-century the Spanish government had appointed five village administrators (*administradores de partidos*) to assist the chiefs in dealing with broader issues; but these men were all living in a section of Hagatña reserved for Spanish and mestizos, it should be noted. Local matters were left in the hands of village chiefs.³⁷

With the reform of the Spanish administration and the enforcement of the Spanish law prohibiting all foreigners from residing in any village other than Hagatña, local chiefs were left alone to handle traditional village matters. We may suppose that the successors of these chiefs were chosen, as they always had been, on the basis of their lineage. There is strong evidence to show that the title was not passed along simply on the strength of educational achievement. According to the 1758 island census, only ten out of 49 graduates of the Jesuit school on the island received any title of recognition from the Spanish. The graduates represented only a small fraction of those 120 islanders who had been granted titles bestowed by the Spanish. This would suggest that the foreign-educated had not replaced those with traditional birth claims in positions of authority.

Spheres of Political and Social Action

³⁴ Ibáñez y García, Luis. *Historia de las Islas Marianas con su Derrotero, y de las Carolinas y Palaos: Desde el descubrimiento por Magallanes en el año 1521, hasta nuestros días* (Granada: Paulino V. Sabatel, 1886) 188-195.

³⁵ For further charges against these governors see AGI Fil. Leg. 99, f.33.

³⁶ After Fr. Felipe Maria de Muscati brought the case to the Royal Court of Manila in 1724 and Luis Antonio Sánchez de Tagle was prosecuted, the *mayordomos* were withdrawn from the local villages. Three years later, however, the Royal Court of Manila approved a similar figure called *administradores de partidos* to assure that the garrison of Hagatña was well supported and the compulsory work carried out in the Royal lands. For more information about the prosecution of Sanchez de Tagle see Atienza, David. "Priests, Mayors and Indigenous Offices", 31-48. See also AGI Ultramar, Leg. 561.

³⁷ In 1758 there were five administrators in Guam: Captain don Jorge Eduardo del Castillo for Hagatña, Captain don Santiago Solis for Umatac, Merizo, and Inarajan, Captain don Juan Antonio Rotea for Agat, Captain Juan Luis Sanchez for Pago and Adjunctant Felix de Arceo for Apurguan. These administrators were married men who lived in the Barrio of Santa Cruz, a district reserved for Spanish and mestizos in Hagatña. The lack of a permanent presence of the colonial control in the villages offered the traditional chiefs greater freedom to exercise their authority at the grassroots level. See AGI Gil. Leg. 488 ff.1-88.

To appreciate the importance of the indigenous villages in the Marianas in the early 18th Century we must understand the political situation of the colony. From the “pacification” of the archipelago at the beginning of the century there were three different spheres of political and social action in the islands. These spheres were not only symbolic but also physical. First was the political and military sphere; second was the missionary agenda; and third was the interests and objectives of the local Chamorros. The interests of the local people, divided as they were, conflicted with those of the missionaries in some areas but coincided in others. The same could be said for the other actors, the military and missionary.³⁸

These areas of political interest generated a distinctive physical and cultural landscape on Guam. The main village of Hagatña, designated as *ciudad* (city), was built and organized according to the Castilian model. The Spaniards laid out the streets in a perpendicular plan. In the center of the town, geographically and symbolically, were the church, the *plaza de armas*, the governor’s palace, and other architectonic symbols of the imperial power. This city, the oldest colonial center in Oceania, hosted Spanish and Filipino soldiers along with their Chamorro wives and very few islanders. Umatac, a secondary governmental residence located in the south of Guam, reproduced on a minor scale the same model, but with a much greater number of local people. Thus, the city of Hagatña and the town of Umatac represented Spanish imperial power and colonial rule in a singular way. The two towns were connected by a road, el Camino Real, and by an artery that linked both with the port of Apra, developed in 1734 and surrounded by two forts, Santiago and San Luis. To complete the colonial infrastructure and landscape, the island was dotted with some *Estancias Jesuíticas*, Jesuit Farms,³⁹ founded to feed the religious and the troops, and a series of *vijías*, or lookout points,⁴⁰ and some additional forts to protect the colonial interest.⁴¹ Beyond this axis of colonial control that ran from Hagatña to Umatac, the rest of the island villages were indigenous in their ethnical composition throughout the remainder of the century and well into the next century.⁴² The further they were from this symbolic center, the less Spanish influence they would have experienced.

The boundary between the colonial and indigenous worlds, as we have seen, was tacitly established. Even though indigenous way of life had been significantly affected by the colonial

³⁸ David Atienza, “The Mariana Islands Militia and the Establishment of the ‘Pueblos de Indios’. Indigenous Agency in Guam from 1668 to 1758.,” in *One Archipelago, Many Stories: Integrating Our Narratives*, vol. 3 (2nd History of the Marianas Conference, Guam: Guampedia Foundation, 2013), 137–58.

³⁹ Peterson, John A. “The Archaeology of Spanish Period, Guam.” In *Spanish Heritage in Micronesia*. (Guam: Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation, 2008), 12.

⁴⁰ Carlos Madrid, “Vigia: The Network of Lookout Points in Spanish Guam,” *Pacific Asia Inquiry* 5, no. 1 (2014): 49–79.

⁴¹ Yolanda Delgadillo, Thomas McGrath, and Felicia Plaza, *Spanish Forts of Guam*, Publication Series 7 (Guam: Micronesian Area Research Center, 1979).

⁴² In the 1728 census, except for a single mestizo, the entire island of Rota was indigenous. On Guam the villages of Apur Guam and Inajaran were completely indigenous. In Umatac there were only four Filipinos. In Pago, three Filipinos and one African. In Agat, two Filipinos and one man from South Africa. In Merizo, one mestizo and one African. Although the ethnic composition of the other villages is not explicitly stated in the census, the indigenous names confirm the identity of most of their inhabitants. The 1758 census does not include explicit remarks about the ethnicity of village residents, but again, the presence of indigenous names confirms the fact that the ethnic composition of the villages of Guam and Rota did not change much in the thirty years between the two censuses.

impact, the real influence of the few priests who remained in Guam after the pacification and the militia of barely 120 soldiers based in Hagatña was not nearly strong enough to maintain an exhaustive control over the lives of the native Chamorros.

Lifestyle in Villages

When an early form of the reduction was first presented in the 1670s to the people living close to Hagatña, years before it became an exclusively Spanish center, some of them were strongly opposed to moving into the village. What finally made the resettlement more acceptable to them was learning that they could retain rights to their family land outside the village.⁴³ Family shuttling between their home and another land parcel over which they held rights was an age-old practice in the Marianas, just as it was in other parts of Micronesia.⁴⁴ In island land tenure systems, family land parcels were often scattered over a wide area. After the resettlement on Guam in the early 1700s, this back and forth movement would have increased, especially for families who had moved into the village from outlying areas. Chamorro families retained their long-held land parcels outside the new village.

The Spanish Crown, the new colonial ruler of the Marianas, permitted the Chamorro landowners to retain these plots on condition that they made productive use of their land holdings.⁴⁵ These land parcels, which came to be known as the *lâncho*, or inland farm, remained an element of central importance in the life of the islanders.⁴⁶ They afforded local people the opportunity to practice traditional agricultural and hunting techniques, along with other indigenous practices that they could transmit to younger generations.⁴⁷ During much of the week some families would reside in the *lâncho*, hidden from any administrative control or foreign influence. On the weekend they would travel back to the villages to attend mass and other Christian formation programs offered on Sunday. These families continued to split their time between their residence in the village and their ranch (*lâncho*)—a practice that would be a standard feature of life in the Marianas for the next two centuries or longer.⁴⁸

43. Fr. Xaramillo, annual report for 1679-1680; Lévesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 311-313.

44. In the López-based map of 1667 some village names (like Mapas and Riguan) are shown on the coast and also inland. (Carlos Madrid, personal communication and presentation in the 2nd Marianas Conference in Guam).

45. Brunal-Perry, Omaira. "An Overview of the Laws Regulations Affecting Land Distribution and Ownership in Guam During the Spanish Administration." In *Guam History Perspectives*, edited by Lee D Carter, William L Wuerch, and Rosa Roberto Carter, Vol. 2. (Guam: Micronesian Area Research Center, 2005), 91-116.

46. The existence of the temporary housing in the interior areas of Guam was a well-documented feature of life during Spanish colonial times just as it had been traditionally. The structural and temporal stability of the *lâncho* made it a force for cultural continuity, just as it had been a center of resistance to foreign control in earlier years. Boyd Dixon et al, Traditional Land Use and Resistance to Spanish Colonial Entanglement: Archaeological Evidence on Guam, in *Asian Perspectives* 59, no. 1 (2020): 61-99." James Bayman et al., "Colonial Surveillance, Lânchos, and the Perpetuation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Guam.," in *The Global Spanish Empire: Five Hundred Years of Place Making and Pluralism*, ed. John G Douglass and Christine D Beaulé (Arizona: The University of Arizona Press, 2020), 222-41.

47. The custom of spending much of the week on family land outside the village persisted everywhere. On Rota, some families seem to have abandoned Songsong to establish their principal residence in other locations. In the census of 1728, new settlements in Sosanhaya, Miune, Seac, and Agtan are listed. See census of 1728 in AGI, Ultramar, leg. 561, ff.127-177 and census of 1758 in AGI, Fil, leg. 488, ff. 1-82.

48. In 1899, for instance, Governor Georg Fritz observed of Saipan: "Besides his dwelling in the village, each Chamorro owns a rancho, in an often distant plantation. For weeks on end, he stays there with his family not so

Making a Living

The island lifestyle in the early 1700s was much the same as it had been formerly. “Local people supported themselves as they always had—by subsistence farming and fishing. They spent much of their time on their ancestral estates—or in the case of those resettled from other islands, on the lands the Spanish had given them to farm—growing rice and corn while cultivating taro and the other usual root crops.”⁴⁹

But there were also some changes in the food they produced. Besides cultivating corn and various kinds of peppers, many villagers raised animals recently introduced by the Spanish—chickens, pigs and cows—for their own consumption or for sale to the passing ships in exchange for trade goods: iron tools, knives, cloth and tobacco.⁵⁰ As early as 1698, one missionary reported that the products taken on by one of the Spanish ships at Guam included “pigs, calves, watermelons, bananas, pineapples, sweet potatoes and melons as good as those in Spain.”⁵¹ The local people living in the new villages could cultivate these new crops with the confidence that they could retain the fruit of their labor, for by royal decree they were exempt from taxes for twenty years following their conversion.⁵²

Besides their food crops, the villagers also planted tobacco. As one of the missionaries explained: “People have become so addicted to tobacco that men and women, boys and girls, walk around with pipes. In the past their only substitute for money was iron..., but now they value tobacco above all else, and tobacco has become the common currency with which one can buy and obtain anything. For a hen we pay two tobacco leaves, and for one leaf of tobacco a man will work all day.”⁵³

The Place of the Church in the Village

The church, which would play an ever larger social role through the years, established new dress standards on the island. Islanders’ dress was one of the most visible changes in this new era. Women had shed the leaf or turtle shell covering over their groin in favor of cloth skirts, which had quickly become fashionable. Men, who had once gone entirely naked, were now wearing loincloths or trousers. In 1691, one of the missionaries could report that “generally speaking,

much working, but in dreamy idleness. There he occupies himself with hunting fruitbats (*fanihi*), wild pigs, roosters, coconuts crabs (*ayuyu*) and with fishing. Only on Sundays he rides with his oxen to mass and to the cockfight in the village.” Fritz, Georg. *The Chamorro: A History and Ethnography of the Marianas*. Edited by Scott C Russell. Translated by Elfriede W Craddock. (Saipan: Division of Historic Preservation, 1989), 25.

49. Fr. Bouwens letter, 1706, in Ibáñez y García, *Historia de las Islas Marianas*, 191.

50. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 17. For a fuller study of food introduction and change see Pollock, Nancy J. “Food Habits in Guam over 500 Years.” *Pacific Viewpoint* 27, no. 2 (1986): 120–43. Wiecko, Cynthia Ross, *Guam: At the Crossroads of Spanish Imperial Militarization, Ecological Change, and Identity in World History*. (Ph.D. diss., Washington State University, 2011) or the recent work of Peña Filiu, Verónica, *Alimentación y Colonialismo En Las Islas Marianas (Pacífico Occidental): Introducciones, Adaptaciones y Transformaciones Alimentarias Durante La Misión Jesuita (1668-1769)* (Ph.D. Diss., Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2020).

51. Anonymous Jesuit, 19 Sept 1698, *Revista Militar*, Vol 2 (Manila 1885), 66.

52. Fr. Solorzano, annual report for 1681-1682 in Lévesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 557.

53. Fr. Strobach, annual report for 1682 in Lévesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 605.

both men and women try to dress decently, even when they work in the fields”.⁵⁴ At the forefront of this change in fashion were the young students at the mission schools, boys decked out in white linen trousers and blue vests while girls sported “blouses and skirts of fine white cloth.”⁵⁵

Dress may have changed, but other things remained largely as they were. Gender divisions were observed as they always had been in the occupational and social life of the village. Women continued to do light gardening, shoreline fishing, and most of the preparation of the food and cooking, while men did the deep-sea fishing, gathered wild fruit and did the heavy work in the fields. Women assumed the new chore of washing the family clothing, probably in clusters as they chatted (as would have been true in other islands through the ages). This work routine was disrupted when the three notoriously heavy-handed governors held authority, but normal life resumed by 1725.

The church quickly assumed a central role in the social life of the village, as the mission letters triumphantly reported. Church bells rang at different times throughout the day to summon people for prayer and to announce village events. The newly converted islanders learned their Latin mass responses, chanted their devotions, and prayed the rosary together. Those same mission letters enthusiastically highlight the dramatic changes in the life of the “*Indios*” that marked their progress toward Christianity and what the priests regarded as civilization.

But were islanders, now living in the altered village landscape with the church occupying a central position, truly jettisoning all their traditional customs and values? The bachelor houses were gone, and so were the revered ancestral skulls and the chanting to spirits that the missionaries had branded as “heathenish.” At the same time, however, the church offered an institutional template on which the islanders could make their own distinctive marks. What we know suggests that Chamorros, like so many other newly baptized peoples elsewhere, were learning to assimilate some of the features of their traditional lifestyle into this new landscape.

For one thing, church life largely honored the same gender divisions that were found in traditional life. Men were seated on one side of the church, and women on the other. The religious organizations were also largely divided by gender, with men’s and women’s associations providing social outlets for each as they did in Europe and continued to do in the islands almost up to the present. The Congregation of the Holy Name of Mary was one of the first church organizations for women, but others would soon follow.⁵⁶ These religious societies, even as they proliferated, also functioned as important social circles in the life of the village.

Women in the new church continued to play the prominent role that they had in their pre-contact village community. Although the main authority figure in the church was the foreign pastor, select women soon became recognized for their role as *techa*. Always more than simply catechism teachers, these reliable women became the heart of the parish and served as signs of stability even as they helped make key decisions in the life of the church. In other words, women acquired a role in the new church that was similar to the role they would have had in the

54. Fr. Bustillo, annual report for 1690-1691, AGI Ultramar 562.

55. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 20. Fr. Bustillo, 1 May 1691, AGI Ultramar 562, f 390.

56. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 23. Fr. Bustillo, 1 May 1691, AGI Ultramar 562.

traditional village. They might not have announced the decisions, but they certainly had a large hand in making them.

Young people may have no longer sung aloud the old creation myths as they once had, but boys and girls would sing the litanies in harmony as they romped through the hills or worked in the fields.⁵⁷ Young people were not alone in embracing the hymns and chants of the new faith. Women, too, seemed fond of the new church devotions set to music. In Hagatña in 1680, one Spaniard marveled, women would meet in the church to sing their prayers every evening, “with some of the prayers beginning at 7 o’clock, some at 8, and some at 9. Music could be heard even at 10 in the evening.”⁵⁸ In the church that had just become central to village life, there was a rich variety of outlets through which people could express their musical talent: parish choirs, chanted prayers, sung devotions and so many more.⁵⁹

Right from the outset the converts to Christianity displayed a strong affection for Mother Mary, “with many hugging the statue in church and praying the rosary while walking or at home.”⁶⁰ This devotion, so readily elevated to a central place in people’s understanding of their faith, may reflect the importance of women’s nurturing role in the island family and in the society at large.

Overall, we might readily conclude that the church was a significant addition to the old village life. Even so, the flavor of much of the traditional society lived on, even if now embedded in an organization that was expressly religious. Moreover, the church had a unifying effect on the people. It brought villagers together more strongly than ever before, whatever their lineage and clan. Beyond this, the church became an instrument of unification of the people of Guam, for it offered a structure broad enough to embrace all the villages of the island and beyond.

Placating the Spirits

The veneration of ancestral spirits, exhibited through preservation of the skulls of deceased family members and the employment of a spirit medium to consult with them, was as important in the Marianas as in other parts of the Pacific.⁶¹ Upon death, the body might be honored by the family and other villagers for some days before the bones were removed, cleaned and deposited in a cave for future veneration. This continued in the new Christian village, but in an altered form. Christian villagers held a formal procession from the home to the church for solemn ceremonies, and then to the cemetery for burial in a family plot. According to one account, “The priest and his servers would accompany the bier, draped in black cloth stitched with crosses,

57. On the sung creation myths, see Coomans, Peter. *History of the Mariana Islands: 1667-1673*. Trans. Rodrigue Lévesque. Occasional Papers Series, no. 4. (CNMI: CNMI Division of Historic Preservation, 2000), 16-7.

Regarding the children singing litanies as they romped see Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 20.

58. Quiroga, 10 May 1680 in Lévesque, *History of Micronesia*, vol. 7, 207.

⁵⁹ For a study of the role of music in the cultural process transformation see Irving, Andrew. “Jesuits and Music in Guam and the Marianas, 1668–1769.” In *Changing Hearts. Performing Jesuit Emotions between Europe, Asia, and the Americas*, edited by Yasmin Haskell and Raphael Garrod (Boston: Brill, 2019), 211–34.

60. Fr. Cardeñoso 1693, in ARSJ Filipinas 14, 83-5.

61. García, *The Life and Martyrdom*, 174. For a broader understanding of traditional beliefs and practices related to death. see Jay Dobbin, *Summoning the Powers Beyond: Traditional Religions in Micronesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011).

from the house of the deceased to the church, and after the funeral service... to the small cemetery next to the church for burial.”⁶²

The custom of gathering nightly to say the rosary for anyone who had died in the village began as early as 1698, we learn from the early Spanish sources.⁶³ The celebrated practice of holding the rosary for nine days, which has continued up to the present, has echoes of the traditional wake that might extend to seven or eight days and was attended by most of the villagers.⁶⁴ The mourners in pre-Christian times would “spend these days singing sad songs and having funeral meals around the mound they raise over the grave or near it, decorated with flowers, palms, shells and other objects which they value.”⁶⁵

A spirit venerated by a single family might have sometimes developed enough of a following to become the patron of an entire village. In the Christian village, this was transformed into the honor paid to the patron saint of the village on the saint’s feast day. After the mass was a “procession—led by standard-bearers, with the congregation singing hymns, sometimes accompanied by musical instruments as the faithful wound through the village passing under decorated arches and waving palm fronds all the while.”⁶⁶ The parish fiesta, with all that it involved, soon became the village event of the year.

Besides the ancestral spirits they venerated, Chamorros had to deal with other harmful spirits: spirits of the deceased who felt wronged or nature spirits bound to a certain local feature—a rock outcropping, a tree, a particular shoal—thought to be sensitive to intrusion. The Christian village offered a wealth of symbolic means for affording the protection islanders sought. When an island leader found that rats were attacking the crops in their field, they pleaded for help from a priest. The priest instructed him to raise a cross in the middle of the field and then went out to bless the field with holy water. The missionary reports at this time (1690) are filled with stories of how people sought protection from malevolent spirits. Erecting a cross, drinking holy water against disease, and receiving priestly blessings were all used as means of protection under the new religion.⁶⁷

Summary

Reducción, as the Spanish called it, was a strategy commonly used during Spain’s colonization thrust. It meant the consolidation of local people into a few centralized towns (or in the case of the Mariana Islands, villages), where the population might be better served by missionaries, more fully instructed in church life, and integrated into the Spanish governance system. Sometimes, as in Tinian and the northern islands of Gani, it meant transporting and resettling people on another island.

62. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 20. Fr. Bustillo, 1 May 1691, AGI Ultramar 562, f 406.

63. “Puntos para la carta annua de esta misión de Marianas,” 1698, RAH Cortes 567, leg 12.

64. Atienza, David, and Alexandre Coello de la Rosa. “Death Rituals and Identity in Contemporary Guam (Mariana Islands).” *The Journal of Pacific History* 47, no. 4 (2012): 459–73.

65. García, *The Life and Martyrdom*, 174; Coomans, *History of the Mariana Islands*, 18.

66. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 19. Fr. Bustillo, 1 May 1691, AGI Ultramar 562, f 390.

67. Hezel, *From Conquest to Colonization*, 20-21. Fr. Bustillo, 23 May 1690, ARSJ Filipinas 14, ff 400-1.

The resettlement, initiated by Spanish authorities and missionaries, was at first resisted by some islanders as an imposition. But its impetus was sustained by the attraction that population centers held for many islanders. Some Chamorros voluntarily moved to the centers—in some cases to be closer to the church in which they had been baptized; in other cases, because of the appeal of the wonders of the Western world, including the crops and animals and trade goods more easily available there.

The impact of the *reducción* on Hagatña, at least in its early years, was of a different order of magnitude from the changes in other villages. Hagatña, with its large foreign population, was the capital and official residence of the governor, positioning the town under the direct control of the Spanish authorities in a way that other villages were not.

Change and Continuity in the New Village

The reduction of the islanders into villages, following the tumultuous 30 years of early Spanish missionary contact, certainly produced notable changes in the social environment. Yet, as we have seen, there is also evidence of substantial continuity.

From a comparison of the pre-contact village with the typical post-resettlement village, we may draw these general conclusions.

- § The village after the reduction was not so much larger than it had been before, even if there were fewer villages on the island by then. Moreover, the population of these villages, with the exception of Hagatña, remained almost entirely Chamorro.
- § Villagers depended for livelihood on the produce of the land and the sea as they always had, even if the range of crops had expanded with the introduction of corn and a few other vegetables. Moreover, the family land outside the village (*lâncho*) continued to be utilized after the reduction much as land parcels outside the village probably had been in earlier times.
- § The greatest change in the new village, needless to say, was the emergence of the church as a prominent feature of village life. Although the church had been present for over a decade before the resettlement, in the new village it moved from the periphery to the center of island life.

Hence, the concentration of the population into villages did not mean a sudden and complete break with all earlier cultural practices. Traditional land use patterns, village authority, matrilineality, and the major characteristics of village life did not immediately cease. There was a carry-over of these and other cultural features into the village life at this time, whatever changes might have occurred during the following decades.

The emergence of the church as the center of village life proved to be highly significant, as the records of this period make clear. When the church became the center of village life, it undeniably introduced major new features into the life of islanders. But church life also provided

the villagers with a host of opportunities to display many of the cultural features so important in their traditional social life. Among the more prominent cultural features that were absorbed into the church and its functions are: music, feasting, village gatherings, celebration of the dead and placation of malevolent spirits. The manner in which all these cultural features were expressed may have changed considerably in the new village, but the features themselves remained.

The church, then, played a dual role in the new village of the early *reducción* period and afterwards. It was both the agent of change, even as it served as the vehicle for maintaining many of the traditional elements in Chamorro society. At the center of the new village, the church provided the institutional apparatus—the rituals and devotions, the religious associations, the array of festivals—through which Chamorro cultural features might be maintained. So it was that the flavor of much of the traditional society lived on, even if now embedded in an organization that was expressly religious.

The new village of the reduction period, overall, represented both change and continuity. Hence, it was the seed of the process that would result in a new shape of the island and of its culture.

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