

みんなくりポジトリ

国立民族学博物館学術情報リポジトリ National Museum of Ethnology

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1. Introduction

1-1 Perspective of this study

From 1914 to 1945, the greater part of Micronesia, including the Caroline Islands, the Marshall Islands, and the Mariana Islands except for Guam, was under Japanese colonial rule; and it was called ‘*Nanyo*’ (South Seas). Especially in Palau, where the Japanese headquarters of *Nanyo-cho* (the colonial government) was based, many Japanese immigrated to the islands, and this influx strongly influenced the lives of local peoples.

Even today, one can observe many Japanese influences in the daily lives of Palauan people; such as loan words from Japanese, the custom of eating rice, elderly people who understand Japanese and watch NHK international programs on TV, Japanese songs which have been arranged in Palauan, Japanese personal names and so on. From the Palauan perspective, Japan has remained a close presence for them to this day.

On the other hand, from the Japanese perspective, Palau is not well known. Only a few Japanese could say where Palau is located. Most Japanese tourists who visit Palau intend to enjoy scuba diving, or to pray for their relatives who died in Palau during the war. They come to Palau, and look at the beautiful underwater world or the wreckage from the war, but they rarely look at Palauan people. For the Japanese of today, Palau



Nanyo-cho Palau Branch Office in Koror (photo: Belau National Museum)

is a distant foreign island, imagined as a ‘tropical utopia’ or a ‘place of war memories’. This attitude of the Japanese stems from historical circumstances following the Second World War. Soon after the war the Japanese who lived in Palau were repatriated to Japan, and were prohibited from visiting Palau for some decades. Japanese people rarely discussed their colonizing past; and even in school history classes, *Nanyo* was almost ignored. The long absence of serious consideration of colonial history in *Nanyo* led to a strange lack of Japanese interest in this area.

This imbalance of interest reflects the power relationship between Palau and Japan from the colonial period. When I was staying in Palau as an anthropology researcher, I came to regard this ignorance of the strong Japanese relationship with Palauan history as a ‘violence’ to the Palauans who lived this history. Just at that moment, a chance to pursue this theme was given to me by Palauans. I was asked to create an exhibition on the Japanese colonial period of Palauan history, which would form a major section of the Belau¹⁾ National Museum’s 50th anniversary exhibition. In the process of researching the exhibition, I held several interviews with Palauan elders (M. Mita 2005, 2009). This experience confirmed my desire to learn the history of the Japanese colonial period in Palau from the perspectives of Palauan elders. Fortunately, I was able to conduct this study as a project of Belau National Museum. This book documents the interviews which I undertook on this project. The purposes of this study are described below.

Firstly, this study aims to pass on the colonial experiences of Palauan elders to the coming generations of Palauan people. In Palauan tradition, histories were passed on orally. Through the storytelling of their (grand) parents, and through learning the stories carved on the *bai*, Palauan children have learned their history from legendary times to today. However, these customs are fading, and the elders’ memories will be buried with them as they pass away. These interviews will aid their descendants to learn their own history, enabling them to look at today from an informed and critical viewpoint.

As citizens of a small island country under the strong influence of the United States, Palauan children need to cut their own path to the future. This can be assumed to be a difficult task, but their grandparents’ experiences might give them bearings to place themselves in the flow of history, and in the map of the world system. Each elder’s story is very personal, but each reflects the wider theme of being colonized and made subordinate in the world system. To date, there are several valuable works conveying the modern history of Palau (e.g. Palau Community Action Agency 1976; Rechebei and McPhertres 1997; Micronesian Area Research Center 1986), and the exhibit at Belau National Museum supplements these. Together with these works, this study is intended to provide further understanding of colonial history from personal experiences.

A second objective of this study is to increase Japanese awareness of what happened in Palau during the Japanese era; to provide a resource to promote consideration of Japan as a colonizer, from the perspectives of those who were colonized. As mentioned, Japanese knowledge of *Nanyo* is very limited. This lack of knowledge has led

to two simplistic and opposing opinions regarding Japanese colonization. One is that the Japan of those days was just ‘wrong’ and ‘guilty’ in its subordination of subject peoples to the national will; the other is that Japan was in essence a benevolent guardian which did ‘good things’ in its colonies (Kobayashi 2005). In the latter view, which is growing in influence in Japan, Palau is often used as an example to justify Japanese colonization; for Palauans are regarded as ‘pro-Japanese’ compared, for example, with the peoples of Korea and China.

However, both opinions oversimplify reality; and it is doubtful that these opinions are based on concrete knowledge of Japanese colonization. The reality is always very complex. It is hard to conclude from the evidence either that ‘Japanese soldiers were evil’ or ‘Japanese soldiers were kind’, for example. Some soldiers took food from Palauan people, and some refused to accept food from them even when pressed. We need to become familiar with various aspects of the reported events and try to discern the feelings underlying the statements of the Palauan elders. Even when they say, “The Japanese time was good”, they rarely fail to state exceptions. Most experienced discrimination as ‘islanders’, and they were fully conscious that the war was brought to Palau by the Japanese (M. Mita 2008). To build a better relationship with Palauans, we Japanese people must learn what happened in Palau, and weigh the reports and sentiments of the Palauan elders with careful sensitivity. This study, which will be rewritten in Japanese, aims to contribute to addressing the imbalance of awareness between Palauan and Japanese, and to better our understanding of each other.

The third objective of this study is an academic one. In recent years, the claims to authority of ‘Histories’ written by men in power have wavered, and ‘histories’ consisting of lay people’s perspectives have drawn increased attention (Terkel 1985, Nakano and Sakurai 1995, Thompson 2002). In Micronesia, several works have been completed in this field.²⁾ Especially in Palau, where the main administration of the *Nanyo-cho* was based, a number of studies have researched colonial experiences by collecting oral histories (e.g. Abe 1985, Fukuda 1994, Higuchi 1991, Morioka 2006, M. Mita 2008, T. Mita 2000, 2002, Nero 1989, Shuster 1982). Compared with these studies, this project concentrates more on the recording of oral histories, rather than on analysis.

There are other studies which contain substantial personal historical documents (Micronesian Area Research Center 1986, Yamamoto 2003). In the Micronesian Area Research Center 1986 project, most informants were older than those in my study. In my work, many informants recount the experiences of their childhood or early youth, because they were still very young in the Japanese time. This underlines the fact that this research represents almost the last occasion to hear first-hand experiences of this period (in fact not a few informants of this study have passed away in the years since their interview). In Yuko Yamamoto’s work, written in Japanese, several informants are shared with this study. However, the focus of topics and the method of description are different. In Yamamoto’s work, eighteen people’s stories are re-told by the author based

on their interviews. Yamamoto's work is non-fiction reading describing the history of Palau from the viewpoint of Palauan people, rather than academic oral historiography. Taken together with these works, this study will form part of a collective body of Palauan oral histories regarding the Japanese era.

In addition, as an anthropological researcher who studies Palau, I would argue that the historical experiences of the people will help in understanding their social attitudes. In recent years, the border between history and anthropology has become vague (e.g. Kurimoto and Inose 1999, Hokari 2004). This might be because the ideas that society is a product of its history (Sudo, Yamashita and Yoshioka 1988), and that history is a product of society, began to be seriously considered. The description of Palauan colonial experiences opens a pathway to an understanding of the social attitudes of today; let's say, their attitude to foreign powers including so-called 'pro-Japanese' feelings, and so on.

This study aims to document Palauan colonial experiences in order to bridge the past and future (former and future generations in Palau), and the Self and Other (Palauan and Japanese). At the same time, this study has in view the potential for future ethnographic studies based on the valuable personal histories represented here.

1-2 Palau and its historical background

Palau is located between latitudes 6°54' to 8°12'N and longitudes 134°08' to 134°44'E (Freifeld and Demei 1997). It forms the western edge of Micronesia. (See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 for maps of Palau)

Palauan society is characterized by a matrilineal clan system and strong emphases on reciprocity and competition (Rechebei and McPhetres 1997: 36). Each person belongs to his or her mother's *kebliil* (clan), and performs services for, has obligations toward, and assumes a title and land within the *kebliil* (Palau Community Action Agency 1976). Each hamlet might have seven to ten *kebliil* (Palau Community Action Agency 1976). The male leaders of the *kebliil* are called *rubak*,³⁾ and they hold meetings (called *klobak*) in a *bai* (meeting house). Each *rubak* assumes a title. Even though the *rubak* are men, those who select them are the women of the *kebliil* to which the title belongs. In addition to this, there are titles for women which are parallel to men's titles.

Palau is a highly stratified society. *Kebliil* are ranked in each hamlet, and the titles which belong to the *kebliil* are also ranked. Those who were born in a high-ranked *kebliil* are candidates to be a high-ranked *rubak* who would lead the hamlet. Once someone is chosen as a title holder, especially of a high-ranked title, this person is required to assume major responsibilities for the people in the hamlet.

Groups of hamlets form villages, which historically competed for power through warfare. Two villages eventually became pre-eminent; one was Melekeok in Babeldaob

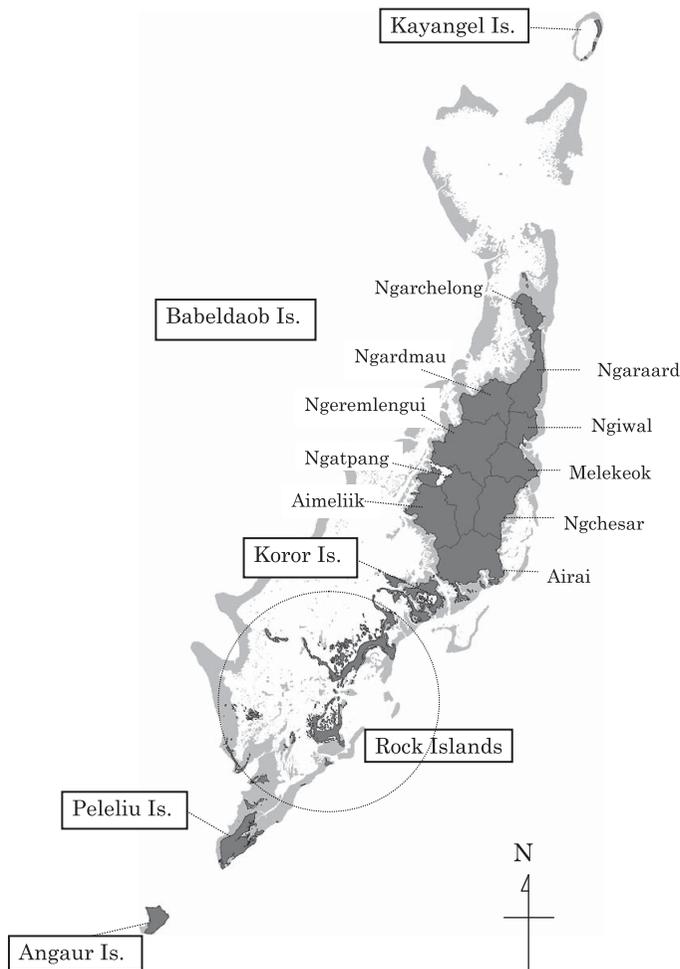


Fig. 1 Map of Palau

(literally, upper sea) and the other was Koror (Oreor) in Eouldaob (literally, lower sea) (Rechebei and McPhetres 1997). The highest chief of Melekeok is called *Reklai*, and the highest chief of Koror is called *Ibedul*; and these two have wielded the strongest power in Palau.

The first time the people of Palau met a colonial power in earnest was in 1783, when the English vessel *Antelope* went aground on a Palauan reef (Rechebei and McPhetres 1997). In those days, the north-eastern village alliance led by Melekeok, and the south-western village alliance led by Koror, were in strong competition. Captain Wilson and the crew of the *Antelope* were taken under the protection of *Ibedul*, the high chief of Koror. In return for his assistance, *Ibedul* asked Captain Wilson to join in the battle with Melekeok. The power of the guns brought by the English astonished the

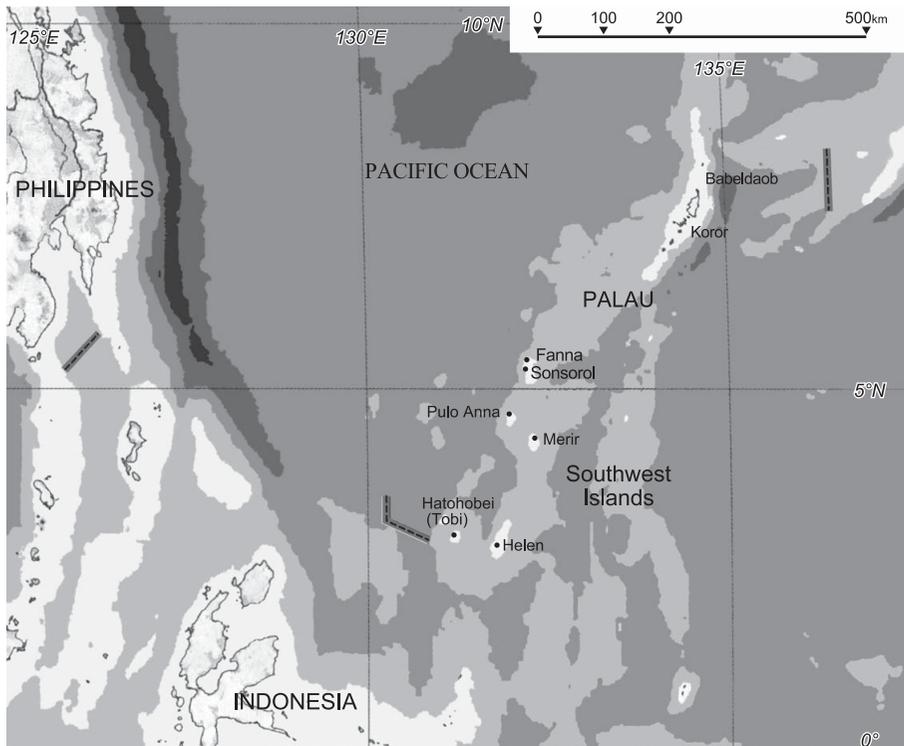


Fig. 2 Location of Palau

Palauans. Koror defeated Melekeok easily in this battle, and the incident made Palauans eager to help foreign vessels, to enlist their strength.

After this early incident, Palauans had sporadic contact with Westerners through visits by trading vessels and whalers. In 1885, Palau was colonized by Spain. The main purpose of the Spaniards was to propagate Christianity. They built Catholic churches, and several priests engaged in missionary work. Catholic priests set up the first school in Koror (*Nanyo Gunto Kyoikukai* 1938).

In 1899, Spain sold its Micronesian territories to Germany, after losing their war with the United States. Germany was interested in developing natural resources. Germans cultivated coconut plantations and started to mine phosphate on Angaur Island. German missionaries also came to Palau, and they ran the school for Palauan children.

In 1914, Japan joined the First World War, and occupied German territories in Micronesia. At first, the military governed this new possession, but in 1918 it was succeeded by a civilian government. In 1919, by the Treaty of Versailles, German Micronesia became a Japanese mandate under the supervision of the League of the Nations (Office of Court Counsel 1995). In 1922, Japan established the headquarters of the *Nanyo-cho* (South Seas Government) in Koror. Even though Japan left the League



Bai (meeting house) in Melekeok in 1932 (photo: Belau National Museum)

of Nations in 1935, it continued to govern Micronesia, leading to the entanglement of Micronesian peoples in the subsequent war. The years from 1914 to 1945 are referred to as the ‘Japanese time’.

In this period many Japanese emigrated to Palau, and in Koror the infrastructure of a town was created; from electricity to public transport. The Japanese population in Palau equaled the Palauan population in 1935 (*Nanyo-cho* 1935), but by 1938 the Japanese population (15,669) was more than double that of Palauans (6,377) (*Nanyo-cho* 1938). There was strong immigration from Okinawa, where standards of living were low. Okinawans accounted for almost half of the Japanese population. Many became involved in fishing, farming and commerce. Several industries were established by the Japanese in Palau: the dried bonito industry in Malakal, the aluminum industry in Ngardmau, the canned pineapple industry in Ngeremlengui, and others. In addition to this, they took over phosphate mining from Germany.

In 1947, Palau and the other Japanese Micronesian possessions came under the control of the United States of America, as the United Nations Trust Territories (Office of Court Counsel 1995). In 1981, the Constitution of Palau came into effect, and constitutional government was instituted (Office of Court Counsel 1995, Rechebei and McPhetres 1997). In 1994, Palau gained its independence as the ‘Republic of Palau’; however it continued to have a strong tie to the United States of America through the Compact of Free Association (Davis and Hart 2002).



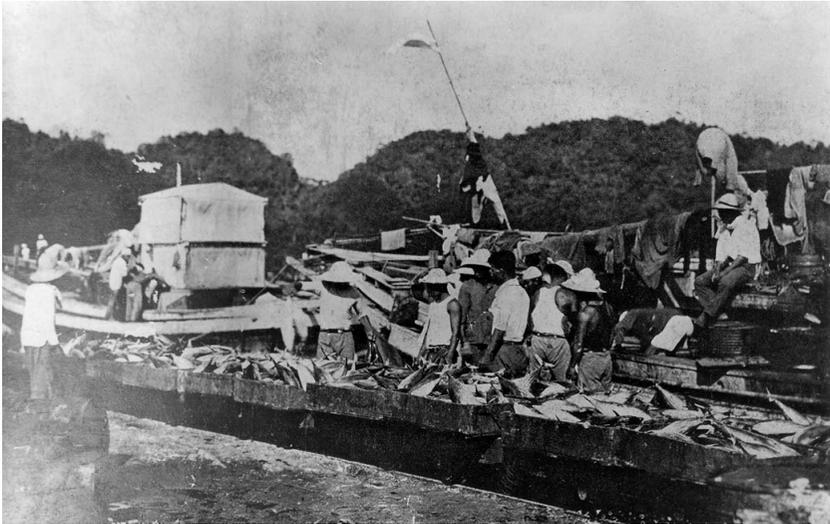
Downtown Koror in the Japanese time (photo: Belau National Museum)



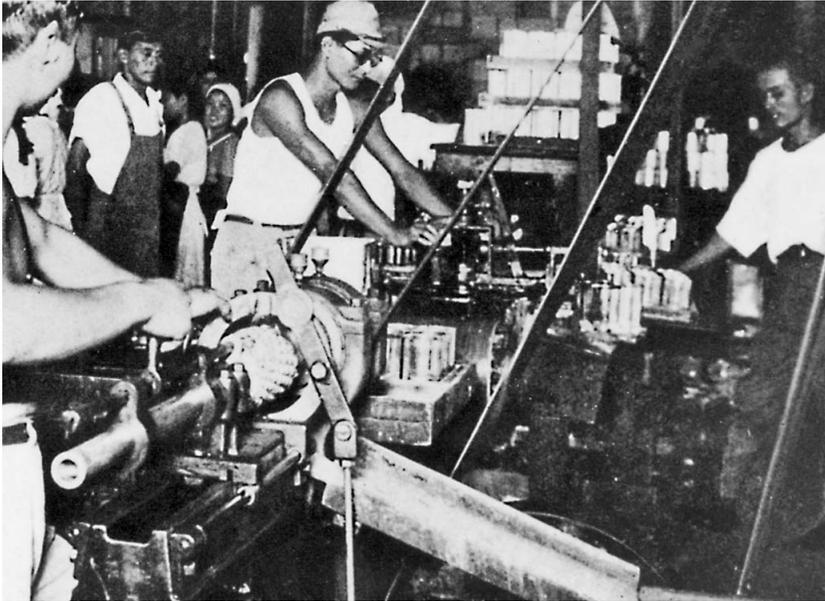
Nanbo Department Store (photo: Belau National Museum)



Taiyo Liquor Store (photo: Belau National Museum)



Bonito fishing boat in Malakal (photo: Nanyo Gunto Bunkakyokai 1938)



Pineapple Cannery in Ngeremeskang (photo: *Nanyo Gunto Bunkakyokai* 1938)

1-3 Outline of Japanese colonial rule

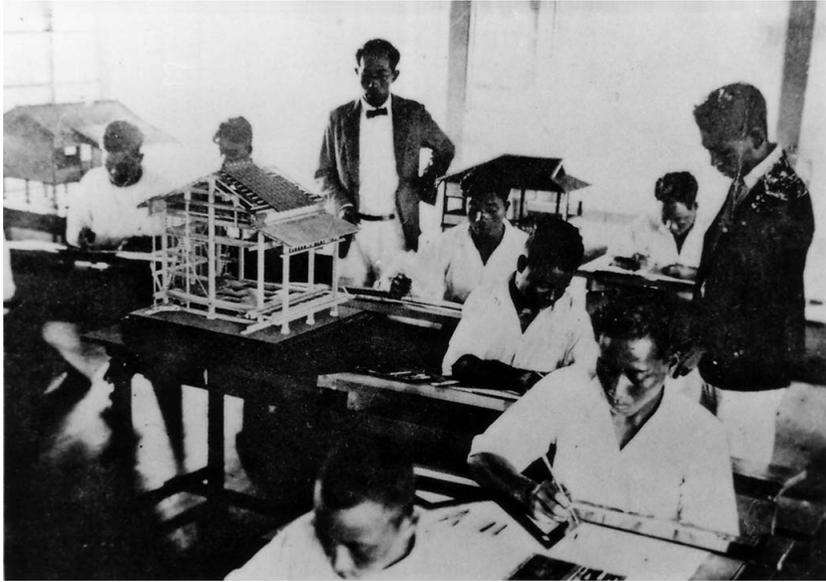
Education

In 1915, the Japanese military government set up their first school in Palau. This school offered four years' education for Palauan children between eight and twelve years old. In 1916, a second school was opened in Melekeok.

As part of a planned transition from military to civilian administration, a new educational system was set up in 1918. This was structured as three years compulsory education in the *honka* (basic course) and for qualifying students, two years further education in the *hoshuka* (advanced course). By 1918 there were five schools for Palauan children, located in Koror, Melekeok, Peleliu, Angaur and Ngaraard. The first school for Japanese children in Palau was established in 1919.

In 1922, the *Nanyo-cho* (South Seas Government) was inaugurated and Japan started to govern ex-German Micronesia as a mandate of the League of the Nations. From this time, the schools for 'those who speak Japanese as a second language' were called '*kogakko*', and they continued the *honka* and *hoshuka* curriculum structure. Children had to attend school from the age of eight. By the time the war reached Palau in 1944, there were *kogakko* in Koror, Melekeok, Peleliu, Angaur, Ngaraard, and Ngardmau.

In addition to this, *Mokko Totei Yoseijyo* (carpentry apprentice school) was established in Koror, and boys who graduated from *hoshuka* with outstanding records studied



Class in Mokko (photo: *Nanyokyokai* 1932)

there. Every year, about fifteen students from all over Micronesia were selected as the students of ‘*Mokko*’.

Nanyo-cho was eager to provide education to children in Micronesia. In fact, the number of Palauan children attending school in 1935 was 410 boys and 404 girls. This number shows that 97.72 percent of Palauan children were attending school (*Nanyo Gunto Kyoikukai* 1938).

The stated purposes of education under the *Nanyo-cho* regime were to provide the islanders with the general knowledge and skills required to improve their standard of living; to take care of their health; and to provide them with moral education (*Nanyo Gunto Kyoikukai* 1938). However, it is apparent that an unstated purpose was to make children obedient to the emperor and Japan. Through morning assembly, textual studies, and other teachings in everyday life, Japanese educators taught the Palauan children to be devoted to the Japanese emperor. This tendency increased after the Sino-Japanese war in 1937 (Yazaki 1999).

The *kogakko* curriculum in 1928 is shown in Table 1. From this table, it is evident they gave high priority to language education. Many informants mentioned that they were prohibited from speaking Palauan in school after the second grade. It was apparent in the interviews for this study that many of the informants, especially those who had more than five years’ education, had attained a high degree of skill in spoken Japanese.

Through the school curriculum, we can see that practical education such as handi-crafts, agriculture, and home economics were also emphasized. It can be said that Japa-



Morning Assembly in Koror *Kogakko* (photo: Belau National Museum)

nese education focused on the enhancement of practical skills which would be useful in the daily life of Palauan children. This principle can also be seen in extra-curricular education. Some of the students went to a Japanese house as a *renshusei* (trainee), and did domestic chores. From this work, they were expected to learn the Japanese way of living and to become familiar with Japanese culture. They earned a small wage through this work, and they were told to deposit some of the money they earned in the post office. The balance was spent on purchasing daily needs or treats. This *renshusei* system might have been intended to make the children familiar with a cash economy.

The Japanese educated Palauan children in Japanese language, practical knowledge and skills, the way to live in a Japanese society, and the Japanese moral and value system. The Japanese thought that they were civilizing a primitive people through education. In fact, the legal status of Palauans and other Micronesian peoples remained ‘*tomin*’ (islander), and they were treated and discriminated against as ‘primitive islanders’.

Religious beliefs in the Japanese time

1) *Chelid*

Traditionally, Palauans believed in deities called ‘*chelid*’. There were several kind of deities in this category; *chelid* in the legends, *chelid* of the hamlet, *chelid* of the *kebliil* (clan), and *chelid* of the house (Aoyagi 1985, Hijikata 1991). There were shamans who communicated with the *chelid* of the hamlet or *chelid* of the *kebliil*. The shamans were

Table 1 School Curriculum in Kogakko (1928)

Subject	First Grade contents		Second Grade contents		Third Grade contents	
	class	values	class	values	class	values
Character Education	1	values	1	values	1	values
Japanese	12	pronunciation/speech/Japanese syllabary/reading/writing/composition	12	speech/Japanese syllabary/reading/writing/composition	12	speech/reading/writing/composition
Mathematics	5	counting from 1-100/spelling numbers/calculation	5	counting from 1-1000/spelling numbers/calculation	5	calculation by whole number
Science			1	observation of the natural things and phenomena	2	plants, animals, minerals, natural phenomena/physics/science/sanitation
Art	1	sketch/copy	1	sketch/copy	1	sketch/copy
Handicrafts	1	handwork	1	handwork	1	handwork
Music		chorus	1	chorus	1	chorus
Physical Education	3	gymnastics/military drill/dance/competitive sports	2	gymnastics/military drill/dance/competitive sports	2	gymnastics/military drill/dance/competitive sports
Agriculture			1	agriculture	2	agriculture
Home Economics			1:girls	housekeeping/sewing	2:girls	housekeeping/sewing

Hoshuka (Advanced Course)

Subject	First Grade contents		Second Grade contents	
	class	values	class	values
Character Education	1	values	1	values
Japanese	10	speech/reading/writing/composition calculation by whole number/calculation by decimal numbers/abacus(soroban)	10	speech/reading/writing/composition calculation by fractions/percentage/abacus(soroban)
Mathematics	4	geography of Micronesia/ geography of Japan	4	geography of the world
Geography	1	plants, animals, minerals, natural phenomena/physics/science	1	plants, animals, minerals, natural phenomena/physics/science/human body and sanitation
Science	2	sketch/copy	2	sketch/copy
Art	1	handwork	2	handwork
Handicrafts	2	chorus	1	chorus
Music	1	gymnastics/military drill/dance/competitive sports	2	gymnastics/military drill/dance/competitive sports
Physical Education	2	agriculture	4	agriculture
Agriculture	4	housekeeping/sewing	2:girls	housekeeping/sewing
Home Economics	2:girls		2:girls	housekeeping/sewing

(Source: Nanyo Gunto Kyoikukai 1938)



Kamata-sensei and his students in *kogakko* (photo: *Nanyo Gunto Bunka Kyokai* 1938)



Post Office in Koror (photo: *Belau National Museum*)

from specific *kebliils*, and they spoke the messages of the *chelid* in several manners (Aoyagi 1985). People would ask the deity the reason for a sickness, for predictions about specific events, and other things. The colonial government did not normally interfere with this belief but there were some exceptions.

2) *Modekngai*

In Japanese Palau, there was a recent and rising religious belief called *Modekngai*, still an important feature of Palauan culture. Based on Machiko Aoyagi (1985), I will briefly outline this belief.

Modekngai began when a deity entered a man by the name of Temedad in 1914. From this time, he started to speak loudly, and sing songs. Two years later, his brother-in-law Ongesi started to act in the same manner. Within a few years they began to preach about the deity. They healed sicknesses with herbs, forbade several specific foods as taboo, and foretold the future. This religious belief started to attract many Palauan people, and increase in influence. They congregated to pray, sing chants, purify themselves with traditional medicine, and raise money.

The Japanese government tried to control their activities. Temedad and Ongesi were jailed several times, and also exiled to remote islands. Before exile to Saipan in 1941, Ongesi was reputed to have said, “When I leave here, I take rice in my lunchbox, but when I come back, I will bring bread with me.” This was believed to be a prediction of the end of Japanese control and the coming of the Americans. During the war, the number of *Modekngai* believers was increased by fear. The believers carried the charms of *Modekngai*, typically a piece of wood in a red sack, in order to avoid danger.

Arthur Vidich argued that *Modekngai* was a political movement against the Japanese rule (Vidich 1949). However, Machiko Aoyagi denied this assertion, after intensive research (Aoyagi 1985).

3) Christianity

From the Spanish time, Palauan people were familiar with Christianity. The Japanese government allowed Spanish Catholic and German Protestant missionaries to work in Palau. Later, the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Japan also sent missionaries to Palau. (See stories 22, 36)

4) Buddhism

Honganji temple was built in Koror in 1926, and according to my research, there was a second Buddhist temple named ‘*Palaoji*’ in Koror. These temples were largely for the immigrant Japanese population, although *Honganji* also operated a kindergarten open to all.

5) *Tenri-kyo*

Tenri-kyo also proselytized in Palau, but succeeded in getting only a few Palauan believers.



Catholic Church in Koror (photo: Belau National Museum)



Kindergarten in *Honganji* (photo: Belau National Museum)



Nanyo-Jinja (photo: Belau National Museum)

6) *Shinto*

Nanyo-jinja (South Seas Shrine) was built in Palau in 1940. This introduced the Japanese state religion to Palauans and other Micronesians. In my research, many Palauans spoke of visiting this shrine from school. This shrine was strongly related to the Japanese national policy which was eager to unite all the peoples in the Japanese colonies.

The war

The beginning of the war in Palau was at the end of March, 1944. On this day and the next, American aircraft attacked Palau. In this attack, Koror was severely damaged. The Japanese who had stayed in Palau started to evacuate to Japan in April.

In June, the Japanese military in Saipan surrendered, and from July the attack on Palau began in earnest. Most Palauans took refuge with relatives in Babeldaob, and those from Koror made a new hamlet in Aimeliik. This hamlet was named Daini-Koror (Second Koror). In September, Peleliu Island and Angaur Island became battlefields. Most Palauans in these islands had already been sent to Babeldaob by the Japanese



Ruins of *Nanyo-cho* Palau Branch Office (photo: Belau National Museum)

military; however, in Angaur more than a hundred Palauans remained. They wandered in the forests amidst the intense battle between Americans and Japanese.

While these battles were taking place in Angaur and Peleliu Islands, in Babeldaob, where most Palauans had taken refuge, lack of food was a serious problem. Even though Palauans had their own taro-patches and gardens, their shelters were deep inside the forest. Because the American airplanes patrolled in the daytime, they harvested crops at night. Sometimes, they were prohibited from taking coconuts or crops from areas controlled by the Japanese military.

As time passed, the situation grew increasingly desperate. Palauans resorted to eating *denges* (very bitter mangrove fruit) and *belloi* (bitter and poisonous fruit) which were only eaten in times of famine. Some Palauans died of illnesses in the forest, and some were shot dead by the American aircraft, especially when they were fishing.

Starvation also befell Japanese soldiers and civilians. Because they did not have the local knowledge of the Palauan natural environment, many died of hunger. Sometimes they received food offered by Palauan people.

Many Palauans worked for the Japanese military. Some went to New Guinea to research natural resources but were instead given dangerous military tasks. Palauan boys who graduated from school were required to do military work; carrying loads, constructing air fields, carrying messages, catching fish, and other tasks. Some were even enlisted as members of the Palauan troops, and trained as associate members of the military. Palauan girls also sometimes worked for the military on domestic tasks

such as food preparation, and clothes-mending.

When Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945, the ‘Japanese time’ in Palau came to an end.

1-4 Methodology

The research for this study was mostly conducted between 2005 and 2007, as a project of Belau National Museum. Fifty-eight people (twenty-four men and thirty-four women) kindly recounted their experiences to me. Most interviews were conducted in Japanese; mainly because the researcher’s skill in Palauan was at the time inadequate to the task of recording their life histories. However, Palauan elders schooled in the Japanese time could speak Japanese, and those with five years’ education spoke Japanese very well. When the informant had limited Japanese, we communicated in English. In one case where the informant had poor hearing, I asked her daughter to translate my English into Palauan, and the informant’s Palauan reply into English.

Interviewing in Japanese had several merits. Firstly, through the style of the informants’ language, the interviewer learned what kind of Japanese people they had interacted with. Some informants spoke very noble Japanese, and others a frank and broken style which might be used by working Japanese people. Secondly, from the vocabulary which the informants used, the interviewer learned which Japanese concepts they were familiar with; *yamatodamashii* (spirit of the Japanese), *kuronbou* (black people), and other concepts. These nuances could be lost in translation if interviews were conducted in another language.

At the beginning of the interview, I told them that I worked for Belau National Museum and was conducting research on Palauan elders’ colonial experiences to create a historical record. The topics of the interviews were: 1) what they had learned from their parents in their childhood; 2) their experiences in school; 3) their experiences after graduation; 4) their experiences during the war. Though I had several prepared questions, I let the informants speak freely and made minimal interruptions. The shortest interview was about thirty minutes, and for those who were most communicative, I arranged several interviews lasting two to three hours each. Interviews were recorded with the permission of the informant.

Though I did not choose informants based on their language skills, many of my informants were good at speaking Japanese. This was partly because I did not sample, but found informants through contacts and acquaintances. As a result, those who were most willing to talk with a Japanese researcher were selected. My informants ranged in origin from the Southwest Islands (the southern limit of Palau) to Kayangel Island (the northern limit of Palau), and in years of birth from 1915 to 1936. I have sequenced their life stories from the oldest to the youngest. The informants are listed in appendix A.

For Palauan and Japanese terms, I have added an English translation in brackets ().

Unclear spellings are indicated with a *[?]*, unclear meanings with a *[?]*. Other interpolated information is in square brackets *[]*. Non-English terms that occur frequently are not translated every time, but when they have not occurred in recent text.

Place names mentioned in the text are listed in appendix B.