

This was a nice honor of course, but also meant a substantial financial obligation on the part of the *pattera*, who was expected to reciprocate with gifts throughout the life of the child.

This video manages to accomplish something few documentaries have done, and that is to present equal parts data and passion. It effectively conveys the spirit of *pattera* while instructing about the social and political context within which they practiced. One is left wishing there were more documentaries made along the same lines, but about other occupational groups, such as healers, fishers, nuns, and so forth.

BARBARA BURNS MCGRATH
University of Washington

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An Historical Perspective of Helping Practices Associated with Birth, Marriage and Death Among Chamorros in Guam, by Lilli Perez Iyechad. Mellen Studies in Sociology, Volume 27. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001. ISBN 0-7734-7677-6; vii + 263 pages, maps, tables, figures, photographs, appendixes, glossary, bibliography, index. US\$89.95.

In certain respects, this book is a conversation between the author, Lilli Perez Iyechad, and Laura Maud Thompson. Thompson, who died last year at the age of ninety-five, came to Guam as an anthropologist in 1938 at the invitation of the US Naval Governor of Guam and studied daily life among Chamorros. Now, fifty years later, Iyechad, a Chamorro doctoral student at Bryn Mawr College, has

returned to her home in Guam to study the changes in traditional forms of reciprocity that have occurred as a consequence of rapid westernization. She considers this research the sequel to Thompson's book, *Guam and Its People*, published in 1947.

The study of gift exchange and reciprocal behavior in Oceania has its own tradition, with numerous examples in Micronesia demonstrating how these adapt to ever-changing social and political contexts. Guam has experienced waves of colonizers beginning in the 1500s and although many Chamorro cultural practices have been altered as a result, the principle of reciprocity continues to function as a major influence on behavior. Among families and their networks, the system of reciprocity not only provides members with a sense of social support, but also outlines prescribed avenues of social interaction.

As a way to understand reciprocity and its impact on everyday life, Iyechad centers her discussion around a core cultural practice known as *chenchule*. This refers to the action of giving a gift or donation during major life events or other meaningful family celebrations. The strength of the book is in the descriptive material in chapters on marriage, birth, and death, with additional analysis of two significant family events, the novena and village fiesta celebrating the feasts of the patron saints. Findings about the "helping practices" during these rituals are placed effectively alongside early Chamorro explanations of the events, accounts by Spanish missionaries who observed Chamorro practices, and descriptions recorded immediately

prior to and after World War II. A series of very interesting photographs depicting individuals and families engaged in normal everyday activities over the past one hundred years supplements the data obtained from archives, existing literature, and original research.

Data on contemporary practices were gathered primarily from two extended families who live in the northern and southern regions of Guam (the southern region is said to be where Chamorro culture is most intact). These families represent four generations, and one of Iyechad's findings was that much of the information on the proper way to do things was known only by first- and second-generation participants. The elders were also the ones who told about the time during the Japanese occupation. Many things changed, including celebrations around marriage. There were few wedding receptions during the war, not only because of scarce resources, but also because all religious ceremonies were outlawed by the Japanese administration, who feared large gatherings would become opportunities for Chamorros to revolt against the Japanese. After the war, "the transformation of marriage rituals incorporated practices of a favored relative, Uncle Sam." Weddings continue to be the first event that prompts a couple to document *chenchule* received. The responsibility to maintain the ledger is in the hands of the women.

Childbirth practices have also changed dramatically from what Laura Thompson documented fifty years ago. Most women now deliver in the hospital with medical profes-

sionals, whereas Chamorro midwives (*pattera*) were used almost exclusively before World War II. The midwives promoted certain practices, such as encouraging the mother to remain off her feet for ten days, and to receive warm douches made from guava and lemon leaves from her female relatives who stayed with her for one month. A footnote mentions that training of nurses and nurse-midwives in Guam began in 1907 when US Navy medical officers established a school, but it is not clear whether these nurse-midwives practiced out of the same ideology as Chamorro *pattera* or followed western biomedical tradition (such as it was at the turn of the century). Although few *pattera* practice today, it is likely that the nurse midwives played an important role in maintaining women's knowledge of childbirth and traditional practices. It would be useful to explore which practices have endured today. The author does this with religion as she describes the coexistence of ideas imposed by Catholic missionaries with indigenous beliefs about the dangers posed to infants by ancestral spirits. Early practices of protecting infants by dressing them in red garments, and applying salt or perfume against evil forces, have been replaced by using religious medals and holy water, and receiving graces during baptism. Some of the changes seem to be less seamless, however. It is customary to refrain from buying items for the infant before it is born because such preliminary preparation might invite mischance. But Iyechad points out that baby showers are becoming more and more prevalent as a way to solicit resources for the

expectant family. Whether or not this change in custom is experienced as a conflict is not addressed.

Baptism provides a good example of cultural change and adaptation. The Spanish missionaries' zeal in baptizing children was initially met with resistance, but eventually the practice was accepted by the local people. The author speculates that the new role of godparent correlates with the traditional role of parent in traditional informal adoption, *poksai*. Acquiring a child by baptism secures a resource for one's family in the same way as adoption, with a similar sense of honor invoked because these ritual kinship ties are voluntary and not obligatory.

Rituals surrounding death are described in great detail and Iyechad shows how traditional practices have become modified because of changing social context. There are also important introduced practices, such as the series of rosaries offered over nine days. A respondent explained, "The more prayers they pray for you, the sooner you get on your way to heaven."

It is clearly evident that the influence of the Catholic Church has penetrated the local culture and determined protocol in the rituals associated with birth, marriage, and death. Less attention is paid to the role of World War II, although its transformative effect on rituals and everyday activities is frequently mentioned. A discussion about the implications of continued US military presence in Guam would be welcome. Similarly, although the author does not address them, she does ask important questions about the impact of US federal aid programs

on traditional support practices among Chamorros, and about the present-day relationship between Chamorros and Japanese. Ties with Japan are complicated by a history of wartime atrocities including the forcing of Chamorro women to serve as "comfort women," yet now the tourism industry relies heavily on funds from Japanese visitors. Analysis of the ways in which social, economic, and political institutions interact with systems of exchange within family networks potentially has broad application in other places in the Pacific because, as the author suggests, the experience of Chamorros in Guam and "the unanticipated consequences of swift westernization can be used by neighboring Micronesian islands as they negotiate political compacts with the US."

This book is Iyechad's doctoral dissertation in social work and social research, and concludes with a section on the implications for social work in Guam. Several chapters are included that are not as relevant for a book as they are for a dissertation (review of the literature, conceptual framework, etc.). Perhaps because of its original purpose, the book does include data and comparative information that will be useful for later scholars as they extend this work. The inclusion of tables with census data and the nine-page glossary are also useful additions. *An Historical Perspective of Helping Practices Associated with Birth, Marriage and Death Among Chamorros in Guam* will make a major contribution to Chamorro culture and the history of Guam. The book will find an eager audience in Pacific studies, social work, medical anthropology, and in the health

sciences. In the tradition of Laura Thompson, it contains concise and detailed ethnographic description, and hopefully will stimulate more research and insight in this line of inquiry.

BARBARA BURNS MCGRATH
University of Washington

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Isles of Refuge: Wildlife and History of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands, by Mark J Rauzon. University of Hawai'i Press, 2001. ISBN 0-8248-2330-3; ix + 205 pages, including figures, maps, photos, glossary (pronunciation of Hawaiian words), appendix, bibliography, and index. Paper, US\$29.95.

In *Isles of Refuge*, Mark Rauzon takes the reader on a journey through time and space, island-hopping northwest from the main Hawaiian islands. He weaves together natural history, human history, and personal experiences as a member of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, serving in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands. Each fascinating islet, atoll, or group of ship-destroying reefs is described through summaries of its geological and evolutionary history, overlain with stories of human discovery, destruction, and tragedy. Rauzon leads us from the days of rampant destruction of habitat into a more environmentally friendly era of conservation and ecotourism.

The natural history of these islands began with their growth from the sea floor as the central Pacific hot-spot built layer after layer of lava. Eventually, as the Pacific plate lurched northwest, a trail of islands formed from

the Aleutians of Alaska to Hawai'i's Big Island, this last still being created by that same hot spot. As soon as lava cooled, whether under water or above, plants and animals began to make themselves at home. As old islands eroded and sank, corals and coralline algae formed encircling necklaces growing upward, staying in the lighted surface zone, forming an atoll. Islands older still were carried northwestward into water too cool for coral reefs and gradually sank below the sea. The most southerly of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, Necker Island and Nihoa, still raise their basalt cores above the sea. In a chain to the north, but still within the zone of coral reef development, are French Frigate Shoals, Gardner Pinnacles, Maro Reef, Laysan and Lisianski Islands, Pearl and Hermes Reef, Midway Atoll, and Kure Atoll. All provide refuges of exquisite if stark beauty for sea birds, reef fishes, sea turtles, monk seals, and their neighbors, predators, and prey. Storms have wiped out whole populations, climates have shifted, and the Pacific plate continues to move. But enough land and near-surface reef remain for recruitment and recovery of most of the populations. Rauzon describes the islands and reefs from south to north, details the life history and behavior of their residents, and emphasizes the importance of these refuges to so many threatened species.

The human discovery of the Northwest Hawaiian Islands, as with the main islands, came in two waves. We know that the ancient Polynesians who became Hawaiians visited and probably spent extended periods on at least the most southerly islands. But we know too little about their tenancy