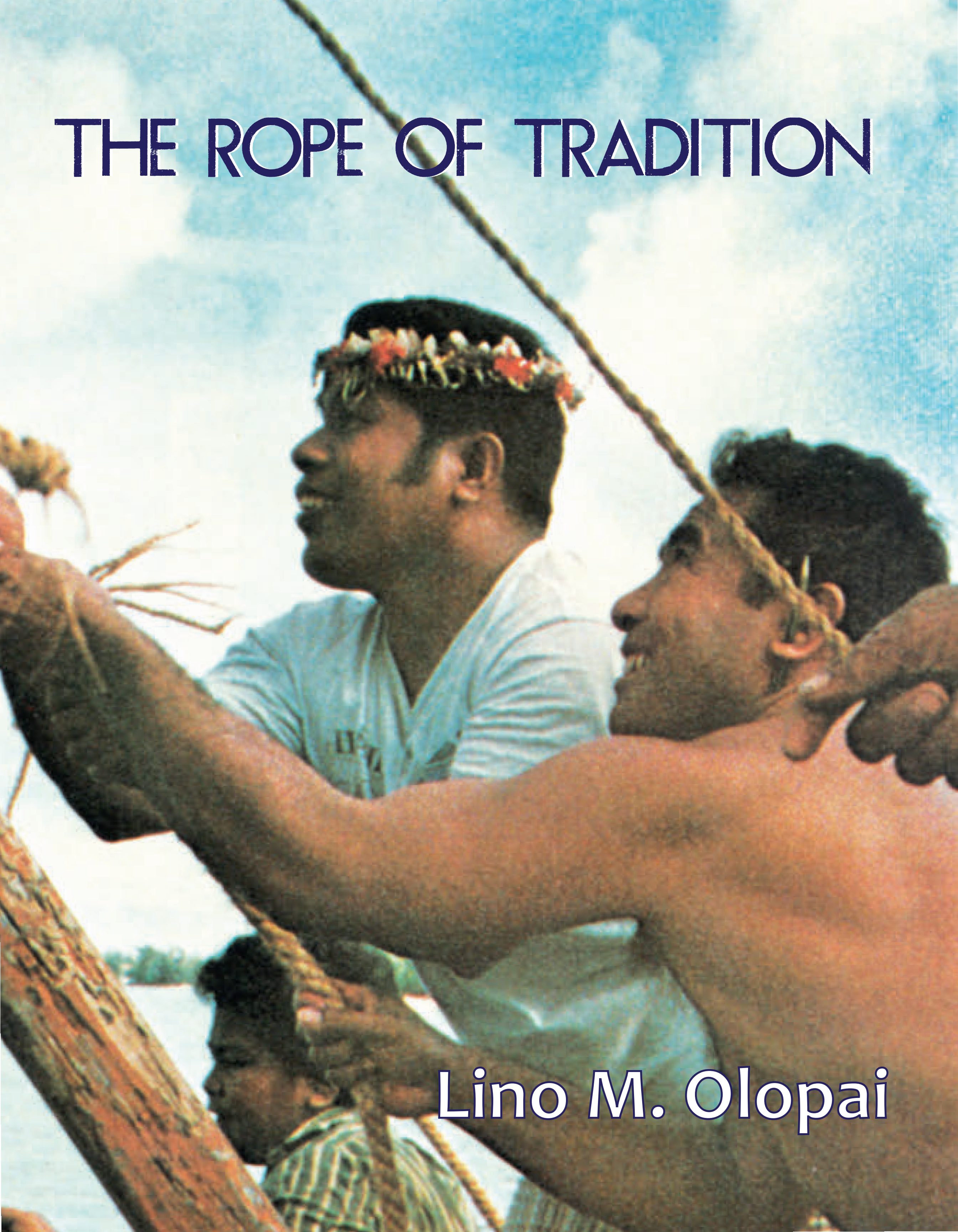
THE ROPE OF TRADITION



Lino M. Olopai

The Rope of Tradition

To my children, David, Typhoon, Alex, Peter, Rosalin and Vanessa, to Uncle Ernesto "Ughurughupi" Rangamar, to Aunt Ilebwughumwar and Uncle Bwitagh, and to all of the people of Satawal.

The Rope of Tradition
Reflections of a Saipan Carolinian

Lino M. Olopai
with
Juliana Flinn

Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities

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Olopai, Lino M. with Juliana Flinn

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Foreword

In late December 2001, a few days before retiring from the CNMI Division of Historic Preservation, I received a letter from Dr. Juliana Flinn, a professor of anthropology at the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, enquiring whether the Division might be interested in publishing a manuscript by Lino M. Olopai, a Saipan resident of Carolinian descent. The manuscript, she explained, was an autobiographical account documenting Lino's longstanding efforts to discover and perpetuate important aspects of his traditional cultural heritage.

The offer was particularly intriguing since I had personal connections with both individuals. Juliana and I had arrived in Micronesia on the same June day in 1974 as young, inexperienced Peace Corps Volunteers. Juliana spent her two years of volunteer service on Onoun Island in what is now Chuuk State, while I spent mine on Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands. Juliana returned to Micronesia in 1980 to complete field research which ultimately led to her doctorate in anthropology. I first met Lino in the early summer of 1974 and have maintained an ongoing friendship with him over the 30-odd years I have called Saipan home. Lino later introduced me to Juliana during one of her several visits to the island in the 1990s, although at the time I had no idea that they were collaborating on a book.

I took Juliana's letter with me when I joined the staff of the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities, a private, non-profit corporation that supports a wide range of public humanities programs, with the intention of exploring the possibility of having the Council publish the manuscript. After discussing the matter with the Council's Executive Director, I contacted Lino in early 2002 and secured a copy of the manuscript. It turned out to be a very interesting and entertaining read that accurately captured Lino's engaging rhetorical style. At the time, Lino felt that the manuscript was not yet ready for publication and promised to work on needed editorial changes as time permitted. I followed up periodically over the next two years but Lino seemed undecided about going forward with publication and I didn't press the matter.

In 2003, as Lino considered what he wished to do with his manuscript, the Council established its Micronesian Authors Initiative under which it gives priority to publishing the literary works of indigenous authors. The first title under this Initiative, *Microchild: An Anthology of Poetry* by the late Valentine N. Sengebau, was published in early 2004 and has garnered very positive reviews.

A few months later, Lino called to advise me of his decision to proceed with publication. Over the next several months, Lino and I met regularly to complete the various editorial changes he wished to make. These sessions were educational, entertaining, and on occasion personally nostalgic, as Lino vividly recounted various aspects of his life as documented in the manuscript in an effort to make them as accurate and understandable as possible.

Gradually, with an added footnote here and a text revision there, the manuscript took final form. The title Lino selected was *The Rope of Tradition.* It derives from a symbolic "jailing" of a group of young men who had stolen and consumed a chicken, an event in which Lino participated during his stay on Satawal. These men and members of their extended families were obliged to sit within a circle formed by a length of traditional Carolinian sennit rope. The chief responsible for overseeing this punishment, which involved nearly the entire island, reminded the gathered crowd that the strength of the rope came from many individual strands of coconut fiber braided in accordance with ancient techniques passed down from generation to generation. He compared the rope's strength with the strength and well-being of Satawal's tiny community, which he noted is achieved by adhering to longstanding cultural practices stressing mutual cooperation and respect. This title is very appropriate for a book that chronicles Lino's efforts to perpetuate traditional cultural practices for the benefit of Saipan's Carolinian community.

The NMI Council for the Humanities plans to publish additional titles under the Micronesian Authors Initiative in the coming years. Readers interested in obtaining a complete listing of Council-supported publications are invited to visit the Council's website at http://cnmi.humanities.org.mp.

Scott Russell
NMI Council for the Humanities

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Introduction
In Search of Tradition

I woke up cold. The room seemed unfamiliar until I remembered this was my first morning on Satawal, the island of my ancestors and newfound relatives. After seven days and 475 miles in the open ocean on a 26-foot sailing canoe, I had arrived on this tiny coral islet not even one mile long.

Over 150 years earlier our ancestors had set sail from this and neighboring Central Caroline Islands in canoes probably identical to the one I had just traveled in. They had sailed north in the wake of a devastating typhoon and the threat of famine to settle the large, fertile, and unpopulated island of Saipan—my home island. I was returning to my ancestral home and fellow Carolinians, but what a strange world I had stepped into! Bare-breasted women with scented flower garlands and orange body paint had climbed into our arriving canoes, biting, hitting, and screaming at the men in excitement and joy at their safe return. Men in skimpy loincloths had danced that evening in circles around a blazing bonfire. Sheet-shrouded figures had moved among the men as they danced. Were these people truly my relatives?

Soon after I had arrived the day before I just went to the house where I would stay and changed clothes. For seven days I had been wet constantly and had developed a rash. I desperately wanted some dry clothes, so I put on a pair of shorts. I had no idea how to wear the loincloth that all the other men were wearing. So that evening I just sat around with my shorts on. I sat among the men as though nothing was wrong, and I thought, "Be like the rest of them! Be brave and strong." Ha! So I sat around in the men's house, just watching the men dance. They looked like Indians—real Indians—jumping up and dancing around the fire! Around they went, dancing, singing, and stamping their feet. I couldn't help laughing and giggling to myself; I didn't think I was related to Indians!

Everything was over about midnight, when they said, "Okay, that's enough for tonight. Let's all go home." When we got home, Mau Piailug, the Satawal navigator and relative responsible for my trip, gave me a loincloth and showed me how to tie it. Showing more confidence than I actually felt, I dutifully put it on, praying that it would stay tied.

I think we were both drunk. Or at least I was drunk! So I talked a little bit about what I'd seen in the men's house that night. He told stories and explained some of the meaning of the dancing and singing. This was exactly why I had come to Satawal! Finally he said, "Okay, let's go to sleep," and we settled down in a small tin house for the night. Previously used to store food and other goods to keep them dry, it had been cleared for us by Piailug's younger brother, Urupa.

Now I was awake—barely—and cold and noticed a hint of daylight in the air. Desperate to relieve myself, I tried to slip quietly through the door of the house without waking anyone.

Then I heard giggling. Looking around to see who it was, I wondered what was so funny. It sounded like a man giggling, but whom was he laughing at? Was it me? Had I done something stupid? Where was Piailug? Was there someone else in the house? Then I noticed Piailug casually sitting in the corner of the house. He was the one giggling! And he was looking at me! "Are you going outside like that?" he asked me, with a gleam in his eyes.

"What's wrong?" I wondered.

"Can't you even keep your loincloth on!" he said, still giggling.

With horror I finally realized I was completely naked! And ready to walk out of the house! Here I was a Carolinian but with absolutely no experience in the basics of living on Satawal. I couldn't even keep a loincloth on while I was sleeping.

Piailug helped me put it on again, but it still took me several months to get used to how it felt. I was very, very uncomfortable just trying to wear one in the beginning, and it was almost a year before I was comfortable wandering around dressed that way. Even then I diligently tied it nice and tight each time to prevent it from falling down when women were around!

This is the story of Lino Olopai, a Saipan Carolinian, anxious to help his people temper their adoption of Western ways with an appreciation for their own cultural heritage. Carolinians on Saipan have abandoned subsistence farming and fishing for paid employment, and Saipan in the 1990s (when Lino told me his story) differed dramatically from the Saipan of his childhood. In the final decades of the 20th century, foreign investors were pouring money into resort hotels, nightclubs, garment factories, and innumerable stores. Immigrant laborers soon outnumbered the indigenous Chamorros and Carolinians. Local Chamorros and Carolinians leased their land for millions of dollars to wealthy outsiders eager to build more hotels and stores. Young people aspired to college degrees from U.S. institutions. People began building sturdy concrete houses on homestead *land. All these changes were welcomed and even promoted by many islanders.*

Lino, however, sees more. He sees families—brothers and sisters—in court fighting over land. He sees families refusing to share their food and money and household goods. He sees youth losing respect for elders, younger brothers losing respect for older brothers, sisters losing respect for brothers. He sees political parties dividing the Carolinian community into competing factions. He sees an emphasis on individualism and materialism rather than family and cooperation. He sees an older generation dying off without having passed on their knowledge. He sees a dependence on money, with the bounty of the land and the sea going to waste. He sees the loss of Carolinian identity and tradition.

Although islanders in the Central Carolines, the ancestral home of the Saipan Carolinians, have not been immune to change over the years, their lives have been much less affected by the series of foreign administrations that have so changed Saipan. Much of what has been lost on Saipan is still alive on the outer islands of Satawal, Houk, Polowat, Pollap, Lamotrek, Elato, and Ifaluk. Lino sees hope for his people if they can reconnect with their relatives and through them revitalize the Saipan Carolinian community. He seeks a balance between the old and the new, between Carolinian tradition and Western ways, between chiefly rule and representative democracy. He wants a choice between antibiotics and herbal cures, obstetricians and midwives, frozen meat and fresh fish. He wonders why formal schooling and respect for siblings cannot coexist, why earning money precludes cooperation and sharing, why Saipan needs ever more hotels and night clubs and golf courses and garment factories.

Lino Olopai has not been alone in his concerns, but he has taken a series of unusual steps to deal with them, concrete actions to shape his people's future by reaching into their past. In the 1970s, he saw his people politically separated from their ancestral homeland and then asked to choose affiliation with the United States. Though raised by traditional parents and surrounded by knowledgeable elders, he still felt lacking in knowledge of Carolinian heritage. At the same time, he felt woefully unprepared to become part of the United States, with a culture even less familiar to him than that of the outer Caroline Islands. So he decided to remedy that situation and to take steps to build a bridge between Saipan and outer island Carolinians. Inspired by Satawal navigators reopening the traditional navigational routes between the two places, Lino left his family *and a secure job to sail with Mau Piailug to Satawal, where he learned about the family and clan system, navigation, healing, and chiefly political system. Later in his life he lived in Honolulu and eventually learned to understand something of American self-reliance, individualism, and independence. He was party to a lawsuit against Continental Airlines because of attempts to build a hotel near a beach of historical and symbolic importance to Carolinians. He helped demonstrate against a Japanese tour company that desecrated a Carolinian burial site. He lobbied for land rights of Carolinians worried about the encroachment of foreign investors. He has recorded some of the knowledge that will otherwise be lost with the older generation. He has helped prepare curriculum materials, spoken in school classes, taught young people how to use a traditional Carolinian canoe, testified as an expert witness in court on Carolinian custom, and testified in legislative hearings about Carolinian land rights. This book is one more way Lino Olopai is actively seeking to shape the destiny of Carolinians.*

I first met Lino in the summer of 1992 because of my interest in learning about the Carolinians of Saipan. I was told he was the person to talk to if I was interested in Carolinian culture. Unsure of who I was, what I wanted, and what potential problems I presented, Lino seemed somewhat reticent at first to talk with me. Later I learned about some of his previous experiences with Americans interested in Carolinians and realized how justified he was in his skepticism.

I think it helped my case that I myself had lived in the Central Carolines. In 1974, the same year that Lino set sail in a canoe for Satawal, I boarded a ship taking me to the islet of Onoun, in the Namonuito Atoll of the Central Carolines, about 200 miles northeast of Satawal and the ancestral homeland of Saipan Carolinians living in Tanapag village. I was a young, idealistic Peace Corps Volunteer, embarking on my own search for another, more appealing way of life, and I had requested the most traditional site available for volunteers at the time. Thus began my fascination with the atolls of the Central Carolines. While teaching at Onoun's junior high school, I heard stories about atolls farther to the south—Pollap, Polowat, and Houk—that had apparently been westernized even less than Namonuito. And I also fell under the spell of the school principal and his stories of his home island of Pollap, and found myself growing ever fonder of the students from that area. Assuming I managed to get into graduate school, I was determined then to return to the Central Carolines for fieldwork on Pollap. I did so in 1980, four years after leaving Onoun and the Peace Corps.

The Pollapese were every bit as fascinating and hospitable as I had expected, and I spent about a year with them together with my husband and two-year-old son. One of the most touching—and in many ways romantic—stories I heard from the Pollapese concerned a young woman kidnapped from Pollap when Onoun attacked the atoll. People on the islet of Tamatam across the lagoon reported the raid and atrocities to Polowat, the chief atoll of the area and the one responsible for Pollap's well-being. Pollapese say that once Onoun heard Polowat warriors were on their way to retaliate, the kidnappers fled on a passing ship to the island of Tinian, taking with them the captured Pollap girl. In recent years the Saipan descendants of that woman—a member of the same clan as the school principal who had so influenced me—and her clan mates on Pollap rediscovered each other and re-established their connections. In the same year that Lino went to Satawal and I went to Onoun, a young woman of the Saipan family arrived on Pollap to live among her long-lost relatives. Several members of the family spent time on the outer islands, and I met one of the sons. I was thus inspired to visit Saipan to find and talk with the family. After all, my dissertation research was about migration and inter-island ties; this was just one more angle!

The family on Saipan generously welcomed the strange woman and small child who showed up on their doorstep to visit, and though we were together only briefly, I knew I wanted to return. It took me 12 years, but I managed to do so eventually and found the family once again. They are the people I now stay with when I come to Saipan. And it was in their house that I was first introduced to Lino Olopai.

Over the course of that first summer as I learned more about Carolinian concerns on Saipan and even participated in a demonstration they held against a tourist company, Lino and I gradually became acquainted. I am no extrovert, and my fieldwork style tends to be a quiet one, but those traits may have helped him slowly open up. He began to talk more openly about his worries concerning the future of Saipan and the importance of maintaining Carolinian traditions. How people talk about and attempt to use tradition intrigued me as an anthropologist, so his story and his concerns caught my interest. He had talked about wanting to write a book or finding someone to help him, so I worried a little bit that some of his initial reticence came from the thought that this outsider, an American academic, might write her own version of the Saipan Carolinians.

One day when I had gathered up all the courage I could muster to ask about recording some of his stories about living on Satawal and learning about his heritage, he interpreted my request as an offer to help him write his book. And that terrified me. First of all, I had no clear idea about what sort of book he wanted. Sometimes I thought he wanted ethnographic descriptions of Satawal customs; other times I thought he wanted an autobiography for a popular audience in the United States. Furthermore, Lino had already met and befriended several professional writers, who seemed far more suitable for the job than an anthropologist experienced only with academic writing. I was also in the midst of a major writing project at the time, leaving little time over the next few years for producing another book.

Lino seemed both unperturbed and patient. If this took time, fine. We agreed to tape record his story—whatever he wanted covered in his book—and I would transcribe and edit what he said. We would go from there. For the rest of the summer I visited daily, usually around sunset, and sat with him at a picnic table outside his house as he talked. We often didn't begin with the tape recorder, and we often continued talking after he asked that it be turned off. Slowly, gradually, imperceptibly, I became captivated, spellbound as he spoke with love and respect for the parents, aunts, and uncles instrumental in his upbringing; with awe for the immense body of traditional knowledge held by the people of Satawal; with anger at current labor abuses; with chagrin about outsider attempts to appropriate traditional knowledge. I became determined eventually, somehow, to communicate his story and his passion for his cause to the outside world.

I was able to return to Saipan the next summer, but it wasn't until 1997 that I was able to return with an edited manuscript. We spent hours every day poring over that manuscript. I bombarded him with questions and requests for clarification and elaboration, while Lino patiently answered—regardless of how obtuse I seemed at times—and pointed out areas he wanted softened or strengthened or corrected. I don't know how many times I revised some passages and asked, "Is this what you mean?" only to hear, "No, not really," spoken always with kindness. If I became frustrated, he managed to calm me down and try yet again to explain himself. And we finally had to face the question of exactly what to do with the manuscript. After all my worries, it was surprisingly easy to agree to the format we have adopted in this book. I wanted to keep Lino's narrative close to his own rhetorical style, so interspersing his story with my commentary seemed the most workable solution. Furthermore, a co-authored book written together *by a local person and an anthropologist intrigued me—though Lino seemed to take it all in stride. I returned again in 1998 with the manuscript organized into chapters and with my commentary, and Lino went through it once more, with suggestions for some revisions and additions.*

What follows, then, is his story. It's not the story of all Carolinians, and not all agree with him, but this is his story. I feel honored to have met, known, and collaborated with him; it is now your turn to meet Lino Olopai.

Juliana Flinn

Chapter I

Parents, Grandparents, Aunts, and Uncles

Saipan is the largest and most populous island in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, which is culturally a part of Micronesia in the western Pacific. Of volcanic origin, the raised limestone island is about 13 miles long, 4 to 8 miles wide, and about 47 square miles in area. Though not large by continental standards, it is big compared with many other islands of Micronesia, which means "tiny islands." The Central Carolines, for example, homeland of the Saipan Carolinians, consist of coral atolls, whose islets are often less than one square mile in area. Satawal is only about one half a square mile—not unusually small for a coral islet. Volcanic islands such as Saipan are not only larger than coral islets, but they have more variety in vegetative zones and topography and usually have richer soils. The soils can support more crops as well as a wider variety of foods.

Discovered and claimed by Spain in the 16th century, Saipan lost all its indigenous Chamorros through death or removal by the 18th century. Spain took official control of the Marianas in 1564 and held the area until 1898 and the Spanish-American War. In 1899 Germany bought the Caroline and Northern Mariana Islands from Spain and held control until 1914 when Japan seized the area after declaring war on Germany. The United States invaded Saipan in 1944, and in 1947 the Carolines, Marshalls, and Northern Marianas were established by the United Nations as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, administered by the United States. Saipan served as its capital. In the 1970s, the Northern Marianas decided to pursue negotiations with the United States separate from the rest of the Trust Territory, and the area is now a commonwealth of the United States.

Islanders from the Central Carolines, Lino's ancestral homeland, had sailed to and traded with Saipan in the pre-contact era, well before the Spanish arrival. They were skilled sailors familiar with the navigational routes throughout the area, but because of the perceived dangers of contact with Spaniards, they stopped trading until early in the 19th century. In about 1815, however, islanders from the Central Carolines asked permission to settle the vacant island of Saipan.[1] *They founded the town of Arabwal, later to become known as Garapan, along the lagoon, enabling them to continue the pattern of male fishing and female gardening.*[2] *Spanish records (Driver and Brunal-Perry 1996) describe the arrival of more immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s. In 1849, for example, canoes fleeing an earthquake and subsequent flooding on Satawal and Lamotrek arrived on Saipan to settle with the other Carolinians already there. The Spanish valued their presence* *because Carolinian canoes and navigational abilities allowed for communication and movement of goods between Guam and the Northern Marianas during their administration of the islands. Over the next few decades, even more Carolinians arrived, beginning in 1865 in larger numbers and in schooners because of interest in agricultural workers. In 1879, a group of Carolinians who had been brought to Tinian from Piserach, an islet of Namonuito Atoll, settled a new site along Saipan's lagoon somewhat north of Garapan, which became known as Tanapag, or Talaabwogh in Carolinian (Farrell 1991:227). Turtles supposedly abounded, as reflected in the original Carolinian name, Lééléèwong, meaning 'turtle pond' (Jackson and Marck 1991:420). This group of Carolinians eventually mixed more with Chamorros and remained somewhat separate from Carolinians in Garapan. Even today the two groups differ somewhat linguistically, socially, and culturally.*

Early in the German era more Carolinians, who had been living on Guam, moved to Saipan, because the Americans in charge on Guam were frustrated with their inability to convince the Carolinians to abandon their seemingly uncivilized loincloths and lavalavas in favor of Western-style clothing. For quite some time Carolinians resisted acculturation. They maintained a distinctive identity, living for the most part separate from Chamorros. They retained their language even as they learned Chamorro, and although they converted to Catholicism, new beliefs mixed with the old ones. Though influenced by Chamorros and foreigners, Carolinians still kept elements of traditional knowledge and skills.

Chamorros, with a culture not only different from the Carolinians but also vastly changed because of Spanish influence, later began resettling Saipan themselves. They eventually outnumbered the Carolinians, viewed them as inferior, and quickly gained political and economic power. In 1865 Carolinians numbered 424, Chamorros only 9. Of the 849 reported in 1886, however, Carolinians still outnumbered Chamorros, but at a two to one ratio. After Germany bought the islands from Spain, Chamorros came in even greater numbers, eager for land available under a German homestead program. By 1901 the ratio had almost switched, with Chamorros outnumbering Carolinians almost two to one: 1,330 to 772. Figures for 1950, 1968, and 1982 for the Northern Marianas indicate a four to one ratio, though on Saipan itself in the early 1980s, it was about three to one instead. The ratio was a little smaller since Saipan has most of the Northern Mariana Carolinians.[3]

A few years later, however, Chamorros on Saipan outnumbered Carolinians about four to one: the 1990 census (U.S. Department of Commerce

1992) indicates a Carolinian population of 2,328 compared with 10,042 Chamorros, out of a total population of 38,896 for the island of Saipan.[4] *Another way of looking at the change is to recognize that in 1990 there were more than 35 times more Saipan Chamorros than there had been in 1886, whereas the Carolinian population had increased by only a little more than fourfold during the same period. The island has also been overwhelmed in recent years by immigrant groups. Filipinos, for example, at 12,812 outnumber even the Chamorros. Koreans, Chinese, and immigrant Micronesians each outnumber the Carolinians, though not the Chamorros.*

Being outnumbered by outsiders is not a new phenomenon on Saipan, however. The Japanese brought in large numbers of immigrants and workers: 20,696 by 1937, just three years before Lino was born. That represents a ratio of approximately 4 foreigners to 1 indigenous person (Chamorro and Carolinian combined), compared with about 2 to 1 today. In other words, for quite some time Carolinians have been a minority—numerically, economically, and socially—on an island which at one time they considered theirs. Furthermore, according to tradition, the clan or group believed to have first settled an island in Micronesia holds rank and prestige relative to others. Carolinians assert such rights because of their 19th century settlement of the island.

Oral tradition contends that a leader of the first Carolinian settlers was a man called Chief Aghurubw from Satawal Island in the Central Carolines. He is said to have brought settlers in 1815, ten years after Carolinians had reinitiated voyaging between their home atolls and the Marianas. Although they had remained skilled navigators and frequently voyaged long distances, they had ceased voyaging to the Marianas about 100 years earlier after witnessing illness and death associated with the Spanish presence. Prior to that time, Carolinians had frequently visited the Marianas. Before the Spanish arrival and contact with the West, they traded turtle shells and golden cowries for dyes and pottery (Farrell 1991:193) and later, after the Spanish took control, iron. Despite the long hiatus in voyages to Saipan, however, Carolinians remained active and skilled sailors, and retained the knowledge of how to sail to the Marianas and back to the Central Carolinian atolls.

After the route had been reopened and a typhoon devastated some of the Carolinian atolls, starvation loomed, prompting some of the islanders to investigate the prospect of relocating to the uninhabited island of Saipan, where they could expect to find plenty of land, food, and water. Aghurubw is said to have formally requested permission from the Spanish governor on Guam, from whom he received a top hat, walking cane, and certificate. Permission was granted in exchange for Carolinian willingness to use their *canoes to carry meat from Tinian to Guam. Chief Aghurubw is believed to be buried on Managaha Island (known as Ghalaghal to Carolinians), an islet inside the reef of Saipan. According to Carolinian tradition, they—not the Chamorros—should be the superior group since they settled an island empty of inhabitants.*

Lino was born into this Carolinian community in 1940 during the Japanese occupation of the island, and as a small child he lived through the war and subsequent U.S. occupation of Saipan. The U.S. first attacked in February of 1944, landed in June, and secured the island on July 9. During the battle for the island, many Carolinian and Chamorro homes and farms were destroyed. The U.S. established a camp for Carolinians and Chamorros near Lake Susupe and after securing the island, set up a military government. Both Carolinians and Chamorros were settled, separate from Korean and Japanese refugees, in a village at Chalan Kanoa in November, where they had to stay until released on July 4, 1946.[5]

In 1947 Saipan, along with the rest of the Northern Marianas, the Marshall Islands, and the Caroline Islands became a Trust Territory of the United States, primarily because of the area's strategic value. Saipan was then administered by the Navy (except for a brief period) until 1962, when the Department of the Interior took over. Most Carolinians remained in Chalan Kanoa after being released from the camp, although some returned to rebuild Tanapag. Chalan Kanoa is where Lino lived during the remainder of his childhood under the U.S. administration.

In 1950, when Lino was ten, and the population of Carolinians was about 1,100 (about half of whom, like Lino, were children under 15), the anthropologist Alexander Spoehr lived on Saipan and described the indigenous cultures (Spoehr 1954).[6] *He found the Carolinians more conservative and cohesive than the Chamorros, with a strong sense of identity. Carolinians constantly assisted one another:*

> *In comparison with Chamorros, the Carolinians display less individualism and less individual desire to raise material standards of living. . . . At the same time, co-operative activities are common. Friends and relatives frequently volunteer to help another Carolinian build a house or complete a job requiring more than one man's work. If a house is to be built, a Carolinian carpenter often does not ask for a fee, particularly if the house is that of a relative. Boats are borrowed and lent. Food is never denied another Carolinian. (Spoehr 1954:331)*

Although some men worked regularly for wages, most men's work revolved around fishing, and women cooked, worked in communal taro gardens, planted sweet potatoes, and took care of the house and children.

Nineteen matrilineal clans are listed but even at that time apparently not everyone knew his or her clan. Matrilineal descent nonetheless still governed land tenure and linked two or three generations. Although matrilocal residence used to be common, extended families began to give way to nuclear families after the war, a process facilitated by the U.S. administration's emphasis on separate houses for nuclear family units. Spoehr speculates that the process started even earlier with German efforts to promote the nuclear family and with the rise of a money economy during the Japanese era that began to undermine the economic basis for the extended family. Family relationships were nonetheless strong and extended beyond just the matrilineal relatives to include relationships through men and through in-laws. Relatives shared food and work, and frequently visited each other. Children could easily eat, sleep, and interact with a variety of aunts and uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers.

My upbringing had so much to do with who I am now. At the time Saipan was rebuilding from the destruction caused by World War II. When the war came I was four years old. I give a lot of credit to my father, who was a very disciplined man and a very traditional man. These traits stemmed from his father, who was my grandfather. Meireng, my grandfather, was very, very well respected, not just here in the Northern Marianas among the Carolinians but also in Chuuk. My grandfather's ancestral roots were in the Western Islands of Chuuk, especially the island of Houk. Although he was born and raised here on Saipan, his mother was from Houk. Recognition and respect were given to my grandfather, and his name was mentioned not just here among the Carolinians but also in Chuuk, especially in the outer islands. My grandfather went to Chuuk, but I don't know if he went all the way to Houk. His name, however, was known even all the way to Yap. Even though Carolinians and Yapese are different culturally, my grandfather's name still reached as far as Yap. Stories I heard about him show that he was fair and very honest and that he was a very straightforward old man when he spoke. He rarely spoke in a group, but when he did speak, he touched everyone, reaching into hearts and minds.

When I was born, my grandfather was long gone, but many people mentioned him. One story I remember was about a San Isidro fiesta. San Isidro is the saint responsible for watching over Carolinians. While preparing for the celebration, people were talking about how much each family would contribute for that fiesta—how much taro, how much breadfruit, how much of this, how much of that. My grandfather worried that people would be hesitant about giving much because they had so little, so he just came into the meeting and said, "Well, don't worry. I will take care of those that can't come up with that much. I'll do this: I will donate two cows, ten pigs, and ten bags, a truckload." And sure enough, he did.

Another story about my grandfather involved a family dispute. Two different clans were unable to agree, reach a settlement, or make peace. It took my grandfather to resolve the problem. He came to talk with them and said, "I have something that will help everybody. I have something to say." And then of course they listened. It was a big, big meeting for the whole Carolinian community. My grandfather stood up and he said, "I have something to say—to help everybody. And this is what I'm going to say." And then he sang a Carolinian song that related to the problem at hand. This story is from Nana Ki, and she told me that as soon as my grandfather stood up and started singing, all the people started to join him because the song opened their hearts and reminded them that they were united as a people. Everybody sang that song together for they understood its meaning. That was the end of the fighting—no more dispute. These qualities of my grandfather extended down to my father, who taught me about our customs and raised me to value tradition and respect elders.

I'm sure life was hard when I was a child, during and after the war, just like it was for any other child at the time. Our tendency when we were children, though, was to ignore the difficulties and just go out and play. Some of our games included marbles, spinning tops, *delemanteni*, and *anu*.[7] I know I had to do some work, and I was certainly spanked when I was small. Yet my father was always careful; he wanted to make sure that we understood why he was spanking us. It could be because of things done months and months ago, but my father would remember. He would remember the place where it happened and the time, whether it was morning or the afternoon, when I misbehaved. So he would remember, and he would make me sit in front of him. Even though my sister Sophie—the oldest—and my brothers Tino, Frank, and John were small then, he would bring in all the family members when he was going to scold me. He would bring in all our relatives or extended family members that were living in the house. He would bring all of them and sit down and address everybody at the same time, not just me. I didn't know then, when I was small, why he brought everybody in. Later on I found out that he was trying to teach the whole family, so that when he talked to me, he wanted to involve the whole family. He did not want to isolate or single out one person. He would say that all the people in the house were the same and they should hear what he was trying to communicate to me.

Lino's father, Simeon I. Olopai, at right. Also pictured from left: Elias P. Sablan and Ignacio Aldan. Circa the early 1950s.

When I started getting older, I began to appreciate what my father was doing and I started learning what he was trying to teach me. That's when the spanking and scolding decreased. When I was small, my father had to exert more discipline, but when I grew older, I began to learn more and the discipline lessened. Then, instead of spanking, he would talk to me, explaining to me why my behavior was not polite or respectful or nice. He would say, "It's not a nice thing. How would you feel if they did the same thing to you? It's not fair; you have a lot of breadfruit, and I don't see why you cannot give him one or two breadfruit." That's how my father talked when I started to become a young man.

Another strong memory I have of my father and my childhood is always having people in our house. I don't know how we got the food, and I don't know how we took care of all those people, but there was always food on the table. I was very small, but I remember. It may not have been the very best food, but we always had food for everyone in the house. People with problems, especially married people, often came to the house, stayed for a week or two, sometimes even months, and consulted with my father. Families here on the island would come, and even people from Chuuk would come and stay with us.

A wife might come and stay with us, and then later on, maybe after a week or so, the husband would come and stay with us. Later on I understood that they were consulting with my father, and he was advising them even though many were not members of our family. He was a mediator and a very trusted advisor. That's how much people respected my father. My father was only of average height, maybe five six and a half, and not that heavy, but he was very, very well respected.

What I also remember from when I was young is how my father would gather the family on small, little things like planning what to do the next day and on major things like somebody getting married. My father would see to it that we would carry out all the details involved in preparing for the marriage ceremony, from going out and getting breadfruit at the farm to making sure that the people invited got enough of everything, especially food. Those are the things that my father did. If somebody died, my father made sure that every family member was notified about it and participated in the funeral activities.

Poor as we were at that time, my father took responsibility for the whole family. What I mean by poor is that we didn't have as many material things as we have today. I'm comparing then and now. We may not have had the material goods, fancy houses, and cars that we have today, but in many respects the life then was very rich because we had everything we really needed. We had a farm, we had produce, we had crops, we had the ocean, and we had the land. And we had a very strong sense of family. So we were rich then. Our lifestyle now, sadly, is different.

Our notion of family is different from the Western one, and we have two words for family. One word is *ailang* 'matrilineal clan'. That refers to a very big, big family and includes people both on the outer islands and here in the Northern Marianas. When we're just going to talk about family here in the Northern Marianas and include relatives like first, second, third, or even fourth cousins, we call that group of people *schóó*. So it includes extended family, like my father's cousin, and includes people related through a man or a woman. It's not like the Western family, where you just have mother and father and then children. According to Carolinian custom, you're responsible for more relatives than just mother and father and children, so my father was responsible for a large extended family, not just his wife and children.

Our life was very rich then. And it was really exciting for me as I started to get older, about ten. When I was younger, though, I hated going to the farm and I hated going to the taro patch.

Lino's mother, Josepha M. Olopai, circa 1945.

Now I can appreciate that by doing those things, by the family forcing me to do those things, I was able to learn valuable skills. I learned how to plant coconuts, bananas, and taro, and I learned to fish. And I was also lucky then, or fortunate enough, to grow up with Carolinian traditions maintained at that time. I'm talking about after the war, the years between the Japanese government and the American government. I was born in 1940, so I don't remember much from the war. I mostly grew up after the war. At the time, the families were very close, and many traditions were still alive. Those traditions and the close families and the ability to feed ourselves from the land and the ocean made us rich.

Lino's sister, Catalina Selepeo Hosono, in front of the family's Chalan Kanoa house in 1949.

Close families meant that many relatives helped raise me. I remember one aunt we called Nana Ki. Her Catholic name, I believe, was Nicolasa, though I'm not sure. But I remember the name Nana Ki. And I also remember Nana Pele, and I remember Nana Mwai, my grandmother. I remember them because I would see them at our house in the evening. Others, too. I remember Nana Pat (Nepateyung was her Carolinian name[x]) and other aunts that would come. It was very common for me to see them at my father's house when I was young, and common for them to stay at other relatives' houses. It was the same for me, too. When I was growing up, I could just walk in another house and stay a week or a month with my other cousins or relatives. I never felt like I was intruding or that I wasn't welcome as part of the household. Those living arrangements just seemed normal then. That's because the family was very close, and Carolinian traditions were maintained.

In the evening, the elders taught us. I enjoyed just listening to my Nana Ki—she was such a wonderful storyteller. We learned from those stories, even though we didn't realize it at the time. She would come in the evening and stay as long as she liked. She could stay at other houses, but when she felt like it, she came to my father's house and spent a night, spent a week, spent a month. And we children always enjoyed her when she came—especially her stories. Sometimes when she didn't come for a week or so, my cousins and I, we would go out looking for her and say, "Nana Ki, Nana Ki, when are you coming to visit us? When are you coming to tell us stories? Where have you been?" Of course, we saw her almost every day, but when we didn't hear her tell stories, we missed her.

Nana Ki had such a marvelous way of telling stories. All of us children, we would sit together all snuggled together listening to her tales. Whenever she reached a scary part or an exciting part, she always deliberately paused.

We could barely contain ourselves. "Nana Ki! Nana Ki! Then what happened? Tell us, tell us!" We were desperate to hear her next words.

She would pause or cough or ask for water or tobacco. Eager for her to continue with the story, we would obediently get the water or tobacco or whatever she asked for and then pleaded, "Continue with your story! Tell us what happened!"

She had no teeth, and sometimes she asked for betel nut when she paused. That meant one of us had to chew some betel nut to soften it for her. "Hurry up! Hurry up with the betel nut! What's the rest of the story?"

That was oral teaching, but I took it for granted when I was a kid. I have more appreciation now that I'm older. Those are the things I remember, though. I tell you—my aunts! Not just Nana Ki, but also Nana Pele and my other aunties who came and told stories, they taught me so much and helped raise me to be who I am now. But Nana Ki—she was the best storyteller!

Carolinian dancers entertain U.S. troops in 1945. From left: Veronica Rabauliman Lisua, Anna Moteiso, Maria Kileleman Eric, Victorian Limes Norita, Delores T. Seman (Nesowtiyer), Donicia Limes Igisomar, Enriqueta "Keta" Somorang, Catalina Selepeo Hosono, Concepcion Itibus Romolor, Clara Itaman Camacho, Clara "Kapin" Igisomar Tebit, Margarita Warakai, Rita Mangarero (Neiwermal), Maria Litulumar, Neiteyong, and Nemar. Not shown Margarita I. Olopai (Neriomway).

Storytelling—oral teaching or not—was our entertainment. Remember that there was no radio and no television in those days—hardly even any cars or trucks. We went to the farm or out fishing by walking then, when I was growing up. I remember the family had just one bull cart, although later on we had an open truck left from the war, one just left on the island to rot. I remember riding the bull cart. In a way that was entertainment, too, because it was so much fun for me as a child—just incredible! I rode on back of the cow, while others in the family sat in back. We also walked a lot. Today we have four-wheeled trucks and automobiles and athletic shoes, but then all we had was our own two legs. We would walk from Oleai to Chalan Kanoa, and the whole time maybe only one car would pass us. Compare that with today's traffic!

Growing up as a kid was fun, but we also worked as children. That was the hard part of my growing up—always that constant work. Children's work was part of the whole traditional system in which the kids played valuable roles in the adult society on a small island. For example, we were constantly sent on errands. "Go get my cigarette! Go get me a lighter! I forgot my betel nut. Bring it for me! Get me some water! Tell your mom this and this and that." That's what I hated when I was growing up, that work. "Carry this gallon of water to your uncles up on that ridge over there." Carrying a gallon of water up a hill when you are little is the hottest thing in your life. I eventually appreciated it because I learned so much. I really learned. I learned about coconuts. I learned to tell which ones are good for drinking, which are good for grating, which are good for medicine. I learned to tell when breadfruit is mature enough to eat. I learned about banana trees. I learned about good fishing grounds and where to find various fish at certain times of the year. I learned about the tides.

Women, men, and children all worked. Women worked on the farms; men fished and cleared the land. And people worked together. On your farm, you would say to the others, "Okay guys, line up. I want all those trees cut down because I'm going to plant sweet potatoes." Then the women would come and plant the sweet potatoes, which we call *ghómwuuti*. They would come after the men had prepared the land. Men loosened the soil; women planted the sweet potatoes.

Those are the things I remember about growing up—those things and how close the family was. My father was responsible for so much of that. And others in the family respected him. I remember recently talking to my uncle Estomwar—Tata Esto—and thinking about my father. Tata Esto was going to a meeting I thought he should avoid, but as his nephew ('son' in our language) it was awkward giving him advice.[9] I sat down beside him and thought, "I don't know if Tata Esto will listen to me. I'm just a kid. I'm his son, and I don't think he will listen to me if tell him, 'Tata Esto, don't go to that meeting, because it really has no relevance for the family.'" But if my father had been sitting opposite him right then, Tata Esto would have had no say. My father could say, "Don't go," and Tata Esto would listen and never even ask why. Such questions would never be put to my father. No one would ever question him.

Tata Esto is one of my uncles. He and Tata Urumwan were the two uncles who could replace my father and continue the responsibility that had been bestowed on him. It was my father's responsibility, even though he was a grandson of the youngest daughter that came from Houk. Children of older sisters are senior to children of younger sisters, so my father's case was somewhat unusual. Three sisters came here to Saipan from Houk, and my great-grandmother was the youngest one of the three. A fourth and even younger sister, Iteireng, stayed on Houk and never came to Saipan. I visited her family, though, when I went to those islands, and I heard stories of my great-grandmother when I went to Satawal in 1974. But when I was growing up I heard stories about relatives on Houk: my cousin Jess (also known as Pipiur) and Eko (also known as Greg) and my aunt Akobwa, their mother. I remember vaguely when Nana Akobwa was here when I was little; I don't remember seeing her, but I remember hearing her name mentioned in the family, because she owned a small piece of property here on Saipan. My family also kept mentioning the island of Houk, which we call Sough. Though I don't remember ever seeing those relatives as I was growing up, I heard all those stories, and they taught me that my ancestral roots were in the Central Carolines. So I grew up in a traditional family—and a family held together and kept strong because of my father—and with stories about my roots.

I heard stories about what happened to relatives when they came to Saipan. One story in particular that I remember concerned a cow that was stolen on Tinian. The thieves were afraid the Japanese would throw them in jail, so they fled for Guam in a small canoe. It had a sail but was very small—the kind that's for fishing within a lagoon or reef, not for sailing between islands on the open ocean. There were only two men, and they ran off to Guam with minimal provisions. That's how desperate they were. They sailed near the south part of Guam and then headed for Houk.

Even though I knew about those relatives and the outer islands, I didn't start looking into my ancestral roots until after my parents passed away. That's when I started piecing stories together. I thought about all I had heard when I was a kid about the family on the outer islands. And then Jess and my aunt Akobwa came to Saipan, and together we started to figure out the family relationships that connected us together.

I knew as a child about being related to those people on the outer islands. I learned about our traditions from my father, and I also received knowledge from my uncles and aunts long before I went to the outer islands. My father was the person who guided the family and had their recognition and respect. My grandfather's role passed down to my father. I rarely asked my father questions about our customs, though. I learned from the way he did things, and as I grew older, I thought about the things that he talked about. In addition, of course, my aunt and uncles talked to me, so I learned from them, too. My uncle, Tata Sitiru (Isidro) Tebuteb, he's one of my uncles that I really liked. The older I became, the more I seemed to enjoy him. Even when my father was still alive, my Tata Sitiru and I talked very often, and I was eager to learn. This uncle of mine, though, he could talk like a young man and was a bit of a rascal! He threw monkey wrenches into situations. Tata Sitiru might say, "Ah, don't listen today. Be like me!" or, "Ah, forget about that. Forget about what your father said. Be like me." If my father called a meeting, 90.99% of the time people listened to him. But Tata Sitiru would throw in a monkey wrench and crack the engine; he would toss in a screwdriver that didn't belong by saying, "I don't think so! I don't think it's good to do that! I think it's not the best thing to do. Forget about the family. So what!"

Lino in 1959.

I remember he tried to get me to drive a truck when I was only nine or ten years old. It was a big truck, like one of the flatbed trucks the armed forces left on the island, and he wanted me to drive that thing. At the time my father was in the Native Police. This was when all the Japanese had left and the Americans were here, trying to control the island. My father was a policeman then, so he knew about the driving laws, and at least his family members should have been observing them. Despite my father's position and even though I was far too young to drive legally, my Tata Sitiru nonetheless said, "You wanna drive? You drive! Here!"

I would like to mention two other uncles in particular. One of them is my cousin Ralph's father, Ernesto Rangamar. The other is my uncle from Tanapag, Juan Pua. He was known as Juan Likkep (*likkáp* means "big"—he was a big man and also the oldest brother). His wife, Lúlúghumay, was my aunt because she was my mother's sister.

When I was growing up, especially on weekends, I had the option of spending the weekend up north in Tanapag with Juan Pua or in Oleai with Ralph's parents. I lived down in Chalan Kanoa. I was staying in Chalan Kanoa, and on the weekend, they asked me, "Where do you want to stay?" Sometimes it would be Oleai, sometimes Tanapag. Those are the three places where I grew up: my parents' house, Ralph's father's house in Oleai, and Tata Juan Pua's house in Tanapag.

Tata Juan Pua was from Piserach—or at least his ancestors were. He was a very noble man. I learned about good thinking from that uncle of mine in Tanapag. Good thinking is really listening, not just keeping your mouth shut, but really listening and trying to understand and then picking just the right time to speak up and address the problem at hand. I also learned a little bit of medicine from him, and I learned about using fish traps.[10] I remember one year when I was about 13 or 14, almost every day he would come in with a boatload of fish; he was always able to fill up a boat. I remember because we would go out there and just fill up the boat and bring it back in, and there were still fish in the net. The next day we would again go out and there would be more fish. Ah! That was a good season.

From Ralph's father I learned a lot about patience, and I learned to think and to say very little. He was a very quiet man, always staying in the background with the family. Yet at the same time, he was one who very quietly advised my father. I also learned farming from him. I learned how to take care of animals and I learned how to fish and I learned how to sail from him. We didn't have canoes on Saipan, so we sailed boats built out of plywood, and Ralph's father was very skilled in building them.

I loved sailing, and Ralph, Ralph's father, and I did a lot of fishing. In fact, we helped feed the family. Right after the war there were maybe five or six boats that went out fishing, boats that were left on the island by Okinawans, who, during the Japanese era, had been active in tuna fishing. Fishermen would go out, catch bait, go fishing, and come back in with tons of tuna. Then after the war, about six of those boats were left for the Carolinians. And Ralph's father was one of the captains and so was my cousin Abel's father, Juan Olopai.[11] It made sense to leave the boats for Carolinians, because we have always been known for our sailing skill. That was the case even during the German and the Spanish times. The Spanish, for example, used the Carolinians and our navigational skill for moving cargo among the Marianas. So the Okinawan boats were left with the Carolinians, and I grew up when there were a lot of Carolinians going out fishing using those boats. I learned a lot from Ralph's father, who was good not just at building boats and catching tuna; he was also very good at reef fishing with nets in the lagoon. He seemed to have good luck with the water; the spirit of the ocean loved him! He always came back with a lot of fish. I went out a lot, too, when I was growing up.

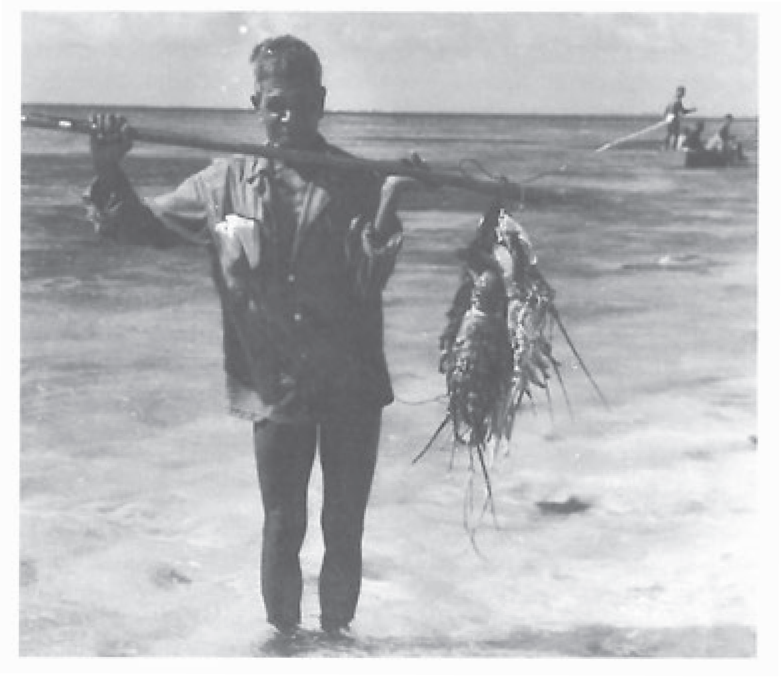
I also went deep-water fishing which involved using a spear gun and diving down into the water to spear a fish. I learned that technique from a friend from the northern islands, Ben Kaipat. He and his brothers and others came from Agrihan (Aghéiighan in Carolinian), where people are known for their spearfishing skill. This is probably because they have no lagoon at Agrihan, just deep ocean. As soon as you step off the beach, it drops into deep water. Since diving in deep water is more dangerous than fishing in a lagoon, they are also known for their bravery.

On Saipan we were chased by sharks on several occasions while going spearfishing. It wasn't fun when it happened, but then when we got home and started drinking beer, it seemed like a lot of fun! With one style of fishing, we swam way off beyond the reef and used a line. We carried a fish line, hooks, bait, everything, and any fish we caught we put on a string and tied to our waists. When we were way out there and looked down, it was very deep. You could even see the reflection of the sun way down deep in the water. You had to be careful because sharks were down there; sometimes when you pulled your fish up, a shark would follow it up. When that happened, you let the fish go so that the shark would go back down without eating the fish or biting you. Then you pulled your fish back up again and hoped the shark wouldn't follow. That didn't always happen; sometimes the shark would come all the way up to you when you pulled the fish up.

One time we had problems was in the Obyan area when we were chased by a school of small sharks. They were only about a foot or a foot and a half long, but there were 30, 40, maybe 50 of them. We were way off the shore, just swimming with no boat, on the southern part of the island. We were spearfishing in water 30, 40 feet, maybe 50 feet deep when a school of those sharks came and wouldn't leave us alone. Our uncles had told us that those are the sharks you have to be careful around. You can get away from them, but there are certain things in their behavior you have to watch out for. When the sharks came, they were already in a feeding frenzy. Something had probably stirred them up before they found us spearfishing. The first one came right into our midst where there were four or five of us spearfishing way outside the reef. That shark just charged right into the middle of us, and we could see all its teeth. That small thing, it just came charging right into us. One of the guys said, "Come on! Let's swim! Hurry up!"

I said, "Yeah, let's hurry up, because I think there will be more than just that one."

Sure enough, a few minutes later, there were 50 or 60 of them. A whole school just came. We were outside the reef, and we were trying to swim back up on the reef, but those small sharks came all the way in. That's exactly what they did to us! They chased us all the way up to the reef and all the way up to the beach!



*A Carolinian fisherman, Simeon Rabauliman, with his catch of lobsters circa 1949. Fishing gear during this period consisted of locally made goggles and a hand spear(*fisigha*).*

We placed ourselves back to back in the water, and the sharks were circling around us. We had to swim very slowly because they were already excited. We swam very slowly back to the reef. You have to swim slowly; if you try to do the kind of swimming they do in the Olympics, that's the end of you! You don't splash or do anything to excite them. Even the small bubbles that come from your finger movements they will chase.

I started shouting, "Slowly! Slowly!"

Then another guy shouted, "Hey, one is coming toward my side!" So we opened up. Then we moved back together and someone else yelled, "Another one!"

While we were swimming back, we just couldn't control the sharks. We probably attracted the sharks in part because of the way we kept our fish tied on a string to our waists. I know my line was full with fish. One of the guys said, "Wait, wait, I'm going to give them a fish." So he took off one fish and threw it as far out as he could. He threw it out and then all those sharks followed. Then we were back to back again with the sharks after us. Sometimes they came in at us like a torpedo and wiggled. They came right up and showed their teeth. So we were lucky that nothing happened to us. We went all the way up to the reef and stood on the reef. We thought then that they would leave us alone because we had reached the shallow area. But no, even on the reef, they came after us. So we ran all the way on the reef up to the shore.

Another time we ran into sharks was when we went spearfishing just off Marpi. On our way back we came across a delicious fish, a very tame, beautiful, and delicious fish called *aefil* in Carolinian and *hamala* in Chamorro. If you see one like this, you are guaranteed to catch some because they are very tame. When you dive down to shoot that fish, it will come up to you, very curious and very tame. It will come right up, and you can shoot it. But there were two, three, four sharks. Those sharks had been following us all day while we were fishing. One shark actually seemed to be guarding that fish. I tried at first to dive down to catch one, but every time I dove halfway down, I saw the sharks closing in. I would return to the surface, look at my cousin Ralph, who looked at me. The rest of the fishermen kept eyeing the fish and all the sharks. Finally we said, "Ah, forget it! Let's go home!" Then we started swimming back in. I looked back and saw crazy Ralph preparing to dive down and shoot the fish. And sure enough, Ralph went down. So we swam back and waited for him. He went down and shot the fish even with all those sharks around. Ralph dove down and speared the fish with his spear gun. He grabbed the fish, and all the time the fish were wiggling and making noises, enticing the sharks, who were all swimming around Ralph. So we went down to help him. I think there were two of us that went down and started poking those sharks away from Ralph. When we got up, we took some of the flesh off the fish to give as an offering to the spirits.

That was one of our customs. As soon as fishermen reached the beach, Chalan Kanoa or Oleai or wherever, they put fish up in a tree for the spirit of the ocean. They would leave one big fish hanging up. Or if we went to Managaha to barbecue, we took some fish to the grave of Aghurubw, the navigator who brought our ancestors to Saipan, and we always made sure we had some fish for the spirit of the fire. When Chamorros walk around and see something like that, they know it's a Carolinian gift to a spirit. We don't do that anymore today, except perhaps only Ralph and me. Today in this generation we don't make such offerings—*asoomá* and *asootubw—anymore,* but they do in the outer islands. These are both offerings to spirits, but *asootubw* involves mentioning the person the offering is for. If, for example, we are sailing and reach an area where a Carolinian died, we make an offering there. We say the person's name and offer betel nut or a cigarette or something when we pass that area. The offering could be for someone who died in an accident, perhaps by getting his hand stuck under coral and then not being able to come up for air. Or it could be for someone who got a cramp while under water. I don't know anybody who was bitten by a shark, but that would be another example.

So anyway, I experienced a combination of fishing activities when I was growing up. I went net fishing with Ralph's father, my uncle. I went spearfishing on the reef. I went line fishing. And all those activities involved the sailboat. When the boat was old, my uncle gave it to me.

One thing I remember about my upbringing was when Ralph's father, Tata Ighúrughúpi, build a plywood sailboat. It was probably the fastest sailboat on the island! One weekend when I was 13 or 14 years old, I had an adventure on that sailboat with my aunt—although I didn't realize it until years later. Ralph's mother was Nana Marakita. She lived in Oleai and wanted to visit my mother, who lived in Chalan Kanoa. Since they had made arrangements that Sunday for my aunt to come to Chalan Kanoa for some sewing, Nana Marakita asked me to take her to Chalan Kanoa on the sailboat.

I said, "Sure. Wait. Let me finish up my chores and go to church. Then I'll take you to Chalan Kanoa." And I was very, very excited. I don't think I did any praying at the church! I was just eager to get to the house, prepare the boat, and sail my aunt to Chalan Kanoa. How I loved to sail! Finally I took her down to Chalan Kanoa. I left her there, and she told me to check back with her later on in the afternoon. So I had a great time just cruising around on the sailboat. In the middle of the afternoon, I went to check on her, and she was finished with her sewing. Now Nana Marakita, she's big, probably close to 300 pounds. So was my mother, but my mother was taller than Ralph's mother. You could not take both of them at the same time on that boat, they were so big. You had to take one at a time. Nana Marakita would sit right in the middle of the boat, with her hands holding either side of the boat. When the boat tilted to one side, she would sway to the other side to compensate, and from where I sat behind her, it looked like she was dancing a hula!

What I didn't know at the time was that she was pregnant. In fact, she was nine months pregnant. It was probably hard for me to tell just by her size. Anyway, I was taking her back home, and we needed to tack to get into Oleai. We needed to sail part of the way past Oleai village and then tack because of the wind conditions at the time. The wind would then take us all the way into the beach. It was possible to do it with only one tack. But if you weren't careful, you might have to try again, and Nana Marakita understood that.

On our way up, every now and then my aunt said, "Well, don't you think we can make it if we tack from here?" I didn't know why she was so anxious.

The first time she asked me, we hadn't yet gone far enough. I said, "No, auntie. I think we need to go up a little farther in order to make it in just one tack and reach the beach." So we continued.

She asked me a second time, "I think we can make it from here. Don't you think we can make it now?"

I checked and looked at the beach and checked the wind, and I said, "Just a little bit more." We could have made it then, but I was having a nice time because it was such a beautiful day with a nice wind. I didn't know my aunt was pregnant. If I had known, I would probably have paddled that boat back to shore! The third time she asked me, I finally tacked and we went straight in.

Usually when I took my aunt around on a boat, she waited and helped me secure the boat. And she'd help me carry some of the stuff home, things like paddles and the box of fishhooks and fishing line. She usually waited, and we walked home together. So on this particular day, I was surprised to see that as soon as we hit the beach, she just took off, and without looking back, she said, "Lino, I'm going ahead. I'm going up to the house. Go ahead and secure the boat, and I'll see you later up at the house."

A little surprised, I nonetheless said, "Sure. I'll come up later as soon as I secure the boat." But it was unusual that she didn't stay and help the way she always had before. Anyway, I went ahead and secured the boat, bailed the water out, tied up the sail, checked the anchor. It took about half an hour to forty-five minutes. When I got to the house, my aunt was in the hospital delivering my cousin Delgadina. It wasn't until years later, though, that I realized that my cousin had almost been born right on the boat! What would a 14-year-old boy have done then?

Ralph—the very best sailor for handling those small sailboats—and I, we had a great time, and our boat was a very fast one. This boat was not a canoe but a plywood boat—a very common sight after the war. Ours was fast, and we had races sometimes. Sailing out from Oleai, we passed others coming from Chalan Kanoa and prided ourselves on our speed. What we failed to recognize, however, was that the race was not exactly even! We failed to realize that boats coming up from Chalan Kanoa were loaded with men and nets and fishing gear. So of course they would be going slowly! In addition, we were coming from Oleai, where the wind was in our favor, but they would be coming up against the wind. We were launching our boat so that we could go downwind and really move, so of course, we passed right in front of them. We would go around, turn around, tack, and come back again. We would sail all the way to Managaha Island and pass all the other boats. No kidding!

On some Sundays we were free. Of course, we always had some work to do, such as feeding the pigs and the chickens. If we were running low on food for the pig, we'd go up the mountain and get something like pumpkins or papayas that had fallen down or breadfruit that had fallen. After those chores were done, if our parents didn't send us off on anything else, then we might do something like race. Ralph was very good with the boat. He could tilt it at an angle without overturning it or letting water get in. He knew all sorts of fancy tricks. He liked doing it, too, where there were a lot of ladies on the beach! He was showing off. I tell you the truth! Ralph was good at that!

One of our cousins, Ray Kaipat, had only one arm, and this guy, he really liked to show off, too. One Sunday there was a funeral or something in Oleai, some sort of big gathering involving several families. Ray went out on the boat to do the same trick as Ralph—but with only one arm! He was pulling in the sail and tilting the boat so that the water would run on the edge without getting into the boat, and he tried to tilt it without capsizing. Ray was trying to imitate what Ralph had been doing. He was very good the first time. I think it was the second time he tried it that the boat turned over. Everybody on shore started to laugh, even though it was a ceremonial gathering. At least the ceremony was over with and people were relaxing. Ray decided to show off in front of people, to show that he could do what Ralph could do. Ralph had a reputation for it, and Ray was trying to imitate Ralph.

Ralph and his father weren't the only ones I went out with. I also used to go out with my cousin Abel's father, Juan Olopai, who had one of the fishing boats left by Okinawans after the war for the Carolinians and tuna fishing. We trolled for tuna, and those boats were built especially for catching tuna. On weekends, especially Saturdays, I liked to go with Ralph's father or Abel's father. And they knew that my presence was good luck.[12] They knew that they would catch a lot of fish if I went with them. When they found out I was good luck, they would say, "You go with Mr. Apolisan. Go with them this Saturday." Actually, it was a test. They believed there was something about me that seemed to attract fish, and they figured they could prove it if I went out with someone who was having a run of back luck. Mr. Apolisan had gone fishing for two or three days without much luck, so Abel's father wanted to test his theory about me bringing good fishing by having me go out with Mr. Apolisan. Sure enough, we caught plenty of fish!

When we planned to fish for tuna, early in the morning we would jump in the water looking for bait, which we needed for catching tuna. Sometimes we caught bait at Tinian, sometimes at Goat Island (Iwal). Even though it was very cold and dark early in the morning, that was the best time to go. We looked early because tuna bait is silvery and therefore easier to see in the dark. They're almost invisible during the day. Furthermore, they are shy in the daylight and won't come close, whereas at night, they flash and wiggle and seem very tame. They'll swim right over to a net, or you can scoot them over and easily fill up the net. We caught them alive and put them in a tank on the boat. Then whenever we came to a school of tuna, we scooped a handful of bait out and threw it overboard. With nowhere to go, the bait swam back towards the boat, and tuna would chase them. The tuna would swim right up to the boat trying to grab the bait.

Sometimes we headed straight west and then north beyond Saipan and back again looking for tuna. I'd be sitting on the back of the boat with three or four lines out. Abel was there as well as other cousins of mine. Since I was the youngest and the smallest, they had me sit in the middle so they could help prevent me from falling off. So my line was in the middle. Guess whose line always caught the first fish? Mine! We could see the fish coming in, with maybe two or three interested in the bait. Then we would see more. I would be sitting with my line in the middle and thinking, "Oh, oh. This line will get a strike. Oh, oh, that line will get a strike." I was thinking about the lines my cousins had. But no way. The tuna would come right up to my line instead, passing by the outside lines to choose mine. Whenever I went fishing, I caught a lot of fish because the ocean spirit liked me.

Uncles who contributed to Lino's upbringing. From left: Francisco Teregeyo (Franse), Juan Pua (Likkep), Pedro Apolisan (Yobo), and David Marciano. Mr. Pua was known for his skill in catching fish using gigao *(fish trap). Mr. Apolisan was the captain of one of the tuna fishing boats that Lino often went with. Photo circa the early 1970s during the San Isidro Fiesta in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan.*

I didn't get seasick, and I had so much fun. This was when I was in elementary school and went fishing on the weekends. Whenever there was no school, I liked to go out fishing with them. I couldn't even pull in a tuna, I was so young. When I got a strike on my line, I couldn't even pull it in, so one of my uncles, Benigno Rabauliman (Asayoung), had to come and pull the tuna in for me. Then after that, he would fix the lure on my hook and give it to me to throw back in the ocean and give me back my line to hold. Those were the days!

Another activity was gathering trochus shells late in the summer, when the season opened, and selling them to make some money. We would wade around on the reef, collect shells, put them in a sack, and then fill up the boat. Later in the season when only smaller ones were left on the reef, we started going over the reef. We continued to move farther away from the reef. The farther from the reef, the deeper the water, so I was doing lots of diving with my uncle. Perhaps because I was young, my vision was very good and I could hold my breath longer than most of my uncles. They watched me closely and reported back to my father about how I did. I didn't know that the spirit of the ocean liked me! I was so young, but I was catching more fish than the others. I could tell where to go to catch a lot of fish. Even when the water was deep, I could see trochus shells. I could see two, three, four, maybe ten, of them at one time. I'm talking about 30, 40, maybe even 50 feet down. Some of my uncles would dive about halfway down to check on the location of trochus shells, but then they would have to come up for air before going back down. Me, I could check them out from the top, just dive down, collect them, and put them in a pail. I was also able to shoot accurately with a spear gun.

As the oldest son, I took on more and more work in the family and with my uncle. Eventually my father had me quit school to help him bring in enough food for the rest of my siblings. So I went from Chalan Kanoa to our properties throughout the island. I walked and hitchhiked and rode on a bull cart. I farmed and went fishing. Looking back now I realize that Ralph and I helped our parents and uncles and aunts feed our brothers, sisters, and cousins, though today I think they have no inkling of it. It was a good way to grow up, and I learned about surviving on an island, carrying on traditions, and taking on responsibility. It was a good time to grow up on Saipan, and I feel lucky to have grown up with my parents and the aunts and uncles of my family.

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1. Although 1815 is the generally accepted date, the actual date may have been a few years later (Russell 1984:13).

2. Scholars who have described the resettlement of Saipan based on historical documents include Farrell (1991), Joseph and Murray (1951), Spoehr (1954), and Solenberger (1960).

3. Population figures come from Alkire 1984:272-273.

4. A more exact ratio is 4.3 to 1.

5. Some details about the camp can be found in Embree 1946.

6. Slightly earlier work is that of Joseph and Murray 1951.

7. Other games we played included:

> *Likairas*: This is a form of self defense played by both children and adults. It is similar to Japanese *Sumo*. This game is played only on the beach to prevent injury;
>
> *Samamalu amala*: A dancing ghost game played at night by children. A single line is formed where everyone is holding on to the waist of the person in front. One person will act as a ghost. The lead person will spread his/her arms out, teasing the ghost by swaying to and fro while singing, "*amamalu amal*." Whomever the ghost grabs becomes the ghost.
>
> *Annu* "The white face ghost": This game is played while swimming. One is chosen to be the ghost. While wet, the ghost person will purposely bury his face in sand so that his face will looked very white--like a ghost, especially with our brown skin. The object of the game is to tease the ghost, while avoiding the ghost's touch. Once you are touched, you become the ghost. You become the ghost only if contact is made on the beach. The ghost is not permitted to enter the water. Should the ghost touch you while in the water, that person remains the ghost.
>
> We also played various games that involved sailing and paddling competition, fishing, running, and fighting on rafts and boats using long bamboo poles to knock our opponents into the water.

8. Most Saipan Carolinians have had a Catholic name, required by the Catholic Church, as well as a traditional, Carolinian name. Lino often wanted both names mentioned.

9. In the Saipan Carolinian kinship terminology, sons and daughters are classified together with nieces and nephews.

10. These are but a very few of the known fish traps:

> *Ul Bwiyóm*: A small fish trap for small fish such as *Weschigh* (baby goatfish). This trap is used in shallow, sandy areas.
>
> *Ul Bwiyow*: A good-sized fish trap used on the reef for general reef fish. This trap is set between cracks and openings in the reef.
>
> *Ul Roop*: This fish trap is about five feet wide, ten feet long, and five to seven feet high. It is used on the reef. It requires several men to chase the fish into it. Fish are not chased by splashing or hitting the water, but by having the fishermen swim slowly toward the trap. As soon as the trap is filled, it is lifted on to the boat and emptied. It is then reset and the process is repeated.
>
> *Ul Apeipei*: This is a medium-sized fish trap that is used when floating logs are found in the open ocean. Once the trap is securely set behind the floating log, the canoe gently pulls the log through the water. During this process the fish are forced toward the back of the log and into the trap. This is a special form of fishing that requires that respect be extended to the spirit of the log and the ocean. Diving masks, spear guns, or things made of metal may not be used. Also prohibited are loud noises. Young men who went out dating or married men whose wives are pregnant or menstruating are strictly forbidden from participating.
>
> *Ul Faighé*: This is a large trap about the size of a sheet of plywood or bigger. It is used in deep water (100 to 150 feet). Rocks are placed on top of the trap to weight it down. The trap is left in the water for two to three days. To find them, fishermen use landmarks and reflective mother of pearl shells (*Bweii*) that are secured to the top of the trap. The trap is then retrieved by using a long rope equipped with a stone or metal hook. Once hooked, the trap is pulled to the surface. Once emptied, the trap is reset at another location.
>
> *Asusch*: This is a large stationary trap that is used in the lagoon, preferably in an area with little or no current. It consists of two parts. The first is the circular trap consisting of an outer trap and an inner trap. The outer trap, measuring roughly 15 to 20 feet in di-

ameter, serves as an area for the fish to congregate. The inner trap, slightly smaller than the outer trap, is the main trap. The second part of the trap consists of up to three long arms that extend out from the trap up to 300 feet. They are designed to funnel the fish into the trap. Both the trap and the arms are made of wooden stakes that are driven into the seabed and covered with netting or wire mesh. *Asusch* remain in use for years. They are relocated to more productive areas when fish yields diminish.

11. Juan Olopai's Carolinian name is Wisayóng.

12. "*Sáát Maschemasch*" (literal translation "ocean that stinks") is used to refer to a person who caught more fish than others. The term "*Óó Bura*" (literal translation "the brave [fish] line") may also be used especially when line fishing. It is believed that *Sáát Maschemasch* and *Óó Bura* are liked by the ocean spirit or are in possession of a good luck stone found only in fish.

Chapter II
Contemplating the Ancestral Homeland

A renaissance in voyaging between the Central Carolines and the Marianas that began in 1969 helped revitalize ties between the two areas and raised interest among Saipan Carolinians in their heritage.[1] *Although Central Carolinians had retained their navigational knowledge and sailing skills, and continued inter-island voyaging in the Carolines, they stopped the long-distance canoe traveling to the Marianas in about 1905. Both the German and Japanese administrations discouraged such voyaging, and Carolinian canoes were no longer needed for transporting goods as had been the case with the Spaniards. Nonetheless, the knowledge of the old sailing routes remained alive in the navigational lore.*

Meanwhile, outside academics argued over settlement of the Pacific Islands and the sailing abilities of the islanders themselves. Were the islands settled by accidental or deliberate voyaging? Were the islanders capable of deliberately navigating over long distances? Academics began looking to the Central Carolines for answers to such questions because there it seemed that traditional navigation was still very much alive. David Lewis was one such man, who traveled to the atoll of Polowat, about 130 miles east of Satawal, to work with the navigator Hipour.[2] *In 1969, using knowledge of the route that had been handed down over the years, Hipour navigated Lewis' vessel,* Isbjorn, *between Polowat and Saipan, which involved covering 450 miles of open ocean.*

The following year, Satawal navigators made the voyage from Satawal to Saipan in a traditional sailing canoe. There was interest on Saipan in such a voyage in order to help strengthen ties between the two areas and reinforce Carolinian claims to Saipan. Carolinian claims to have settled Saipan played a role in political discussions at the time about the future status of the Marianas and the other parts of Micronesia.

Repangalap and Repangalugh, two half-brothers related to the Satawal chief and renowned navigators, made the voyage to Saipan in a single canoe.

> *They chose to use a canoe belonging to their clan and it was made ready for the voyage. The canoe, adzed from breadfruit planks in the traditional Carolinian manner, is approximately 26 feet long, and at the time was equipped with a canvas sail. As provisions for the voyage, the men took approximately 60 pounds of pounded taro and a lesser amount of breadfruit, as well as drinking coconuts and*

> *copra nuts. As on any long voyage, the men also took a large basket of cured coconut fiber for making rope, and extra poles to splice booms, the mast, or outrigger supports that might be broken during the trip. On April 26, they departed from Satawal with a crew of three, including one Saipanese man who had been residing on Satawal. Watching on the beach as the canoe sailed out of sight were all of the island's 400 inhabitants, as well as the sailors and navigators of four canoes from Puluwat who happened to be on Satawal at the time. (McCoy 1983:357)*[3]

They sailed first for West Fayu, about 52 miles north, and then traveled the 422 miles to Saipan using their traditional methods of sailing and reckoning direction and route. They arrived at the Saipan village of Chalan Kanoa, where Lino lived, inspiring him to learn more about his homeland.

A Polowat navigator sailed to Guam in 1972, followed by other Satawal-Saipan voyages and an even more sensational trip by Repungalap in 1975, all the way to Okinawa. Otoligh and Mau Piailug, two more of Satawal's great navigators, led a voyage to Saipan that finally inspired Lino to join the crew sailing back to Satawal so that he could learn more about Carolinian customs still practiced in the outer islands. Piailug was later asked to navigate the voyage of the Hokule'a *from Hawaii to Tahiti in 1976 as part of the Polynesian cultural revival. It became a source of pride for Carolinians and other Micronesians that one of their own played such a pivotal role. Carolinians could finally be proud not only that their people had such navigational knowledge but that it was finally being recognized and valued by others. The answer to the question of the academics--though the islanders themselves had had no doubts--was a resounding yes, these islanders deliberately and quite skillfully navigated over very long distances. They did so in the past and continue to do so in the present.*

Repangalap and Repangalugh, two brothers from Satawal, reopened the sea route between Satawal and Saipan; they made the long-distance voyage between the two places. It was a tremendous effort on their part because Satawal and the Central Carolines are so far from Saipan. And nobody here knew they were coming; nobody knew. Their accomplishment was one of the events that eventually prompted my trip to Satawal.

We Carolinians here were losing our culture and our tradition. People were even beginning to have doubts about our heritage and seafaring abilities. Many of the old people, those who knew the traditions, were dying after the war, perhaps because of all the shocking experiences they went through, being removed from their families and witnessing the destruction of their homes and farms. Although our elders knew about our navigational ability, scientific research and the *Kon Tiki* voyage implied that people in the Pacific Islands only drifted by winds or currents. Nobody would believe that we sailed, that we knew how to navigate, and that we purposely, deliberately sailed to this place. But we did. So it was lucky for all Pacific Islanders that the Hawaiians took on the *Hokule'a* project. Although they knew they were Hawaiians, and they knew songs and dances as part of their heritage, they felt that somehow they still lacked something to show to the world. But then they successfully sailed the *Hokule'a* between Hawaii and Tahiti, exciting Hawaiians and all the people of Polynesia, who were jumping and crying, "Yes! Yes!" But they needed Piailug to come and show them. It took a Micronesian to help them build and navigate the *Hokule'a*. That voyage that Repangalugh and Repangalap made when they reopened the road between the Central Carolines and Saipan was another big boost for Saipan Carolinian morale.

To tell the truth, though, not much was made of their arrival compared with later canoe voyages, because there was no advance notice of the trip. Only a few Carolinians turned out to greet them at that time. They came for a week or two weeks, and then they had to go back. The visit wasn't ignored, though. In fact, some Chamorros started making statements like, "What are those guys saying about how they got here? How could it be true that they deliberately sailed here? Look—they have a motorboat. They must have gotten lost; they only accidentally found this place. They couldn't have sailed here deliberately." It was just like some of those scientific theories. They were doubtful—just like the scientists.

At the time of their arrival, I was working with the Peace Corps as a language coordinator, training a group of Peace Corps volunteers at Hopwood Junior High as part of an in-service program. Repangalugh's younger brother, Joseph Tawegh, who was part of the Peace Corps program, told me the year before, "My brother will be coming up to Saipan. Please, take care of him." Well, I didn't pay too much attention to him, though he told me that his two brothers would be coming up on a canoe. He had heard about the planned trip from Repangalugh before coming to Saipan for the Peace Corps program. So when he arrived, he told me, "Be on the lookout for my brother, because he'll be coming up here by canoe. Take care of him." And he gave me Repangalugh's name. That's how I knew of Repangalugh before anybody else on Saipan knew they were coming.

So I finally saw the canoe, and I went running down to the house in

Chalan Kanoa on the beach. I saw that canoe, and I said, "Ah! I've never seen that craft before." I was overwhelmed. It seemed to be from outer space. My parents had talked about canoes, but I had never seen one. The only canoe I'd seen was one built by my uncles out of plywood. What I saw was just one canoe; that's how brave those guys were, willing to sail up in a single canoe. I don't know, maybe they were crazy!

Joseph Tewegh and Lino. Joseph advised Lino of Repangalugh's plan to voyage to Saipan in 1970. His subsequent visit was the first to Saipan since the Japanese period and reestablished the traditional navigational route between the Central Carolines and the Mariana Islands.

I went running down to the beach because it was not far from my place. Dr. Benusto R. Kaipat, a prominent Carolinian leader, was giving a speech, and people were talking. "Yes, we should host those people. Whatever you have in the house, bring it as we always do for visitors." We have a word, *waaseela*, for people who come to visit our island. We always show them the utmost respect, host them, feed them, house them, entertain them. And that's exactly what we did for Repangalap and Repangalugh. The image of that reception—even though it was smaller than later ones—stuck in Repangalugh's head, and he took it back with him to Satawal. It was such a big event that when he passed it on to people in Satawal, they were motivated to continue voyaging and building connections with Saipan.

So it was a big boost to us, because we were losing belief in our tradition and culture. We were losing a lot of our heritage, but the

Chamorros were advancing in Western ways. As far back as I can remember, I knew that the Chamorros were afraid of the Carolinians. They were afraid because of our strong, cohesive family structure, because of *ailang* (matrilineal clans) and *afaghúr* (children of the men of the matrilineal clan). When we talk about *ailang*, we should know all our clan members—even down to those living in the Central Carolines. All those people make up our families, not just a husband and wife and children.

Repangalugh, the master navigator who led the first two voyages to Saipan in 1970 and 1972 on canoes Mai Sukun *and* I Am Sorry, *respectively. Photo taken on Saipan in 1972.*

Even when I was very young and going to grade school, I knew about an old saying among the Chamorros: "Hurt one Carolinian and you hurt the entire tribe." In other words, the whole group of Carolinians would retaliate, not just one person. For example, after one of my cousins had been beaten up at school, some of my aunts went down to the school, beat up a teacher, and broke chairs and tables in the classroom. And I'm not talking about one aunt; I'm talking about many aunts that went to school and wreaked havoc. The police came, but not even they could handle my aunts. It took my father to come before those women were willing to leave. I'm talking about adult women, women probably in their mid-thirties or early forties. Even old women, they came and took part. They grabbed the teacher; they pinned him down on the ground and pulled his hair and I don't know what else! The uncles tried to stop them, but they couldn't. Usually when women fight, men run away.

Repangalugh and Otoligh led the second voyage to Saipan in 1972. The canoes are pictured here on the beach at Chalan Kanoa. In front of canoe, from left: Luis Repangalugh, Ignacio Ighipa, Joseph Sunnun, Andrew Rapow, and John Loalogho. Behind canoe from left: James Seremaligh, Thomas Lamelug, Francisco Emoilug (Fia), Rawei Betiu, and Petrus Otoligh (face not shown). At far left seated: Ben Tebuteb (Ugha) from Saipan. Canoe in foreground is Mai Sukun *and* I Am Sorry *in background.*

Women fight about their children, especially if it's a favorite, pampered child. If you hurt that child, woow! It's a riot! A child becomes a favorite because of that child's behavior, but it also stems from parents or even grandparents. Parents or grandparents might have spoiled a child, given it more attention, so others continue the behavior. Brothers or sisters might be jealous of the favorite child, but you rarely see the jealousy because according to Carolinian custom, you never speak up against your brother if he asks you to do something. When your brother says to do something, you never say, "No" or "I refuse! Your decision is wrong!" You don't do that; you never talk to your brother that way. You may tell him he is wrong, but you do it in a polite and respectful way. You say, "I think if we do that, I think we're going to insult others in the family. This is how I see it. I know it's not how you see it. This is how I see it."

So anyway, when Repangalap and Repangalugh came, it was a big occasion for Carolinians, and it boosted our spirits. We were going around the island saying, "You see those Satawalese? They came on the canoe! They came using traditional navigation! This is it! This is just the beginning! They came here, and we are hosting them. It's always been our tradition to host visitors." Oh, that was the biggest news at that time!

I think I started thinking seriously about going to the outer islands when I started working with the Peace Corps program. This was when I was responsible for coming up with language materials for the volunteers. But before that I was a police officer, and my job was to go out and try to teach the old people: "Look, now we have a law. This is what you should do when you drive a car on the island. When you come to court, this is how you should behave." I was educating people. I tried to give them a break and not give them a ticket. Instead, I would say, "Now this is the law." I tried teaching, making them aware of the laws. I realized that many people were having problems understanding the Western ways coming to the island. This was in the early 1960s. Even though I was really just a patrolman, I did a variety of jobs. I could be put anywhere; I might work in the courtroom, translate for the court, or serve as a bailiff. Whenever officers were on leave, I would perform their duties in an acting capacity.

However, when I started working with the Peace Corps, I was given responsibility for writing curriculum materials for both Chamorro and Carolinian language training. We had Chamorro language materials at the time, but not Carolinian. So that was my responsibility. It was the hardest thing! Even though I speak the language and know its meaning in English, it's hard to write down my language for others to read. A linguist in the Peace Corps office helped me, and we produced the material. When we put it to a test in a workshop, it was wonderful—and so very lively! It was the best workshop I've ever experienced because of how much I learned about teaching, curriculum development, and student-teacher relationships.

When I was working with the Peace Corps, I realized that a lot of words in my language were not used anymore and had been replaced by borrowed words. People in the new generation didn't even know the old words anymore. For example, *angaang* is the traditional Central Carolinian word for 'work', but people say *tarabwaagho*, which is neither Carolinian nor Chamorro, but a Spanish word for 'work'. In Carolinian it should be *angaang*. And *ghasiila*, which is used for 'kitchen', comes from the Chamorro or Spanish word *cocina*, when the real Carolinian word for 'kitchen' is *mwóluumw*. So even then, when I was working for the Peace Corps, I was thinking about our tradition and the new changes taking place on Saipan.

Chief and master navigator Otoligh. This photograph was taken on Saipan in the summer of 1972 during the second voyage.

While I was a police officer, I became friends with John Phillips, a member of the Peace Corps staff responsible for programs that year. The following year John was again going to coordinate the program. We were friends, and he asked me, he said, "Lino, I need you. I need a Carolinian to work for me this summer."

I said, "I cannot. I'm a policeman. Not only that, I don't know anything about teaching. I'm a fisherman by trade." I told John, I said, "No." This was one night when we were drinking.

John said, "Seriously, I've been recruiting teachers, and I know you can do it. I know you're going to be a great teacher. And I've heard a lot about you from people in the community."

"I don't know anything about teaching. I'm a policeman. How in the world—?"

John said, "I want you to come and take a test."

"John! I don't know anything about tests, much less teaching!"

"I mean, just come and attend this training that I'm conducting at Hopwood Junior High school. It's on Saturday and Sunday. So come down. I really need you. I need to have a Carolinian."

This is when we were drinking together on a Friday night. Saturday I couldn't make it because I had a hangover. He came over to the house, though. He scolded me, "I was expecting you this morning. How come you didn't make it?"

I said, "Sunday for sure I'll be there."

So I went down and sat in on that one-day training for teachers. It was a workshop to teach people how to train the Peace Corps volunteers coming to the island. I attended that day, and I said, "John, give me a medal for making it through the day!" Anyway, I was one of the teachers selected that summer. My work with the Peace Corps helped me realize how much I didn't know about my people, about the Carolinians. Even then I was probably planning eventually to go to the outer islands.

At the end of the summer program, when I worked as a language teacher for John, I didn't have a job with the police anymore. Finally, the Peace Corps had a kind heart and said, "Ah, we caused Lino to have some problems with his regular police work, so let's give him a job." So again that year, they said, "Well, you and David Burns the linguist in the office write up Carolinian materials for next year." So I added to what I had been doing as a language teacher, and we started to write language materials for the following year, including the first Carolinian orthography. I ended up coordinating the next year's language program instead of John. I took over the program—training the teachers, hiring the teachers, firing the teachers, paying the teachers—you name it. Talk about a headache! Especially for me, because I didn't go through much formal schooling myself. I only went as far as elementary school, Chalan Kanoa Elementary School. I never went to an American school. Most of my education has been self-taught from observing, learning, and listening, mostly listening.

That following year when I ended up coordinating the Peace Corps program is when I really became interested in looking into Carolinian tradition and culture. I had been brought up in a very traditional family, but the Peace Corps experience reinforced my intention to visit the outer islands. I had no particular place in mind except perhaps Houk, where my ancestors came from. Until Repangalap, Repangalugh, and Piailug, I hadn't focused on Satawal.

I ended up coordinating the program for two years with the Peace

Corps. After that the Department of Education invited me to take over the federal Adult Basic Education Program. The man responsible for the overall program in Micronesia was a friend of mine who asked me to take the position for the Marianas. I said, "But look, I don't . . . I . . . there is something in my throat. I don't know what to say." Others might have been honored, but I was scared.

But he said, "Ah, it's a piece of cake! Look at what you've already done! You handled the Peace Corps program for two years. I don't see why you cannot handle the adult education program in the Marianas. You speak both Chamorro and Carolinian. Just because you didn't go to American schools doesn't mean you cannot do the job. And on top of that, you will have three months' probation on the job. And during those three months, we're going to train you. We have a good training program; we have a way to train you to become an adult education teacher."

I finally said, "Okay. If you have a three-month probation period, fine. If I'm good at the job, I'll stay. If not, I'll just turn my canoe around and be on my way." But I didn't have to turn my canoe around. I ended up coordinating the Adult Basic Education Program for the Marianas. Working on classes about Carolinian history reinforced my desire to go to the outer islands. I hired teachers to teach English, math, science, social studies, Carolinian history, and Chamorro history. When there were no written materials, I invited people from the community to come and talk about their experiences, especially things that had not been recorded, because we had no curriculum then in the 1960s. I knew then that I wanted to visit the outer islands to learn more about Carolinian culture. Yet I was caught up in modern life on Saipan and a good-paying job. Not only that, but I had married and had several children. I wasn't willing to leave all of that; I had responsibilities and a secure life.

But then Piailug came. Piailug came in 1974, and that's when I finally decided to go to the outer islands. I didn't make the decision on the spur of the moment, however; it took me a while. And good fortune played a role. When Piailug first arrived and we started to talk about our families and clans, we found out we are of the same clan. We talked about our relatives to determine our relationship, and it turned out that he is my cousin. So I hosted Piailug many times, and he often stayed with me at the house. The rest of his crew stayed in the men's house in Chalan Kanoa. I learned a lot from Piailug because when he stayed with me, I asked him about Satawal. "Is our traditional way of life still alive? Do we still maintain our traditional chiefs? How about the family and the clan system? Are these things still practiced? Is it true that they're still being practiced?"

Piailug would say, "Yes! Yes! As a matter of fact, there is no electricity; there are no cars, no supermarkets, no tennis courts; there's no ice cream."

Master navigator Pius "Mau" Piailug.

His stories really motivated me to go to Satawal to learn for myself, because they matched the pictures in my mind that formed while I was growing up. I just had to go; I thought to myself, "I've got to go! I've got to go!"

I talked with my wife, Vicky, and she answered, "It's up to you. It's going to be hard, but it's up to you."

I said, "Yes. Because I have a responsible job, I write my own ticket, I do my own traveling." I had a very good job; it would be very hard to leave it all behind me.

Piailug and his crew left Saipan to return to Satawal. They left, and my heart was all scrambled up. I had been on the verge of announcing, "Piailug, I'm going with you. I'm going to the outer islands." At the same time, I felt caught between my life on Saipan, leaving my family, and my wish to see the outer islands to study my ancestral roots. So I didn't tell him that I wanted to go. Instead, I bid them farewell and said goodbye with many tears.

I was relieved somewhat at the idea that at least one Carolinian, a young man, John Fitial, was headed for Satawal. He was young and active but unfortunately not well versed in traditional Carolinian customs. In fact, once it was known that he was going on the trip, he started behaving disrespectfully—stepping over old people and interrupting elders when they were talking with the Satawalese. Just before Piailug left, the boy's family came and talked with their son and with Piailug about the situation, but Piailug said, "No, I'll take him anyway, regardless of his behavior. That's our tradition. Whatever they've done, if people decide to go, we take them." So the boy went with them. I had been thinking about going but couldn't make up my mind, but I could be grateful that at least one Carolinian was going and would have an opportunity to learn about our heritage.

Well, when they left, my heart was all twisted. I was depressed, angry. "When will I have another opportunity like this?" I had been so close, on the verge of grabbing that opportunity, but it felt like too big a sacrifice. My family, my job—everything was at stake. Saipan was very modern, even then. Land values were skyrocketing. And my family line was crumbling. There were so many opportunities here, and I had a chance for a comfortable life, but I was watching the family system crumble. I was torn between the two choices of staying with my secure life or sailing off to explore my heritage and perhaps restore it to Saipan.

So the Satawalese left without me, but then good fortune stepped in. They left, but they ended up with bad weather just east of Rota, which meant they couldn't continue on to Satawal. They couldn't do anything at all because the wind had died down. They had to stay and stay and stay for several days out in the ocean. Then they ran low on supplies. When they ran low on food and water, they decided to return to Saipan because they did not have enough left to make it to Satawal. Food and water would run out, so they decided to come back. Ah, when I saw Piailug and the canoe coming back in the Chalan Kanoa channel—wow! My heart was singing again! That's when I finally decided to just give up everything and go. The Carolinian boy's family decided not to let him leave on the second try because of his behavior, so there certainly would be room for me to go.

I didn't tell Piailug about my decision right away; I waited. We hosted him again and took care of him. After a few days, I told him that I wanted to go with him. He said, "Yeah, I thought you were coming with me last time.

I said, "Yes, but I kept thinking about all my obligations here. But this time I'm going."

"Okay."

So I turned in my resignation at work. At the time I didn't tell most of my family, because if I did, they wouldn't let me go. The only ones that knew were my wife and my children, but none of the rest of the family. I knew they would talk me out of it. They would do anything to talk me out of it.

Loading supplies for the return trip to Satawal in 1974. Pictured are canoes Pacific *and* Aellingala*. Lino crewed on canoe* Pacific *navigated by Mau Piailug.*

So that was that. That was the beginning of my trip to Satawal, the beginning of an adventure, an education, an awesome experience for me, going back to my roots, going back to where my ancestors came from. It was more than I could imagine at the time. I knew even before I left Saipan that there would be a lot of adjustments, such as eating the local food. I had eaten local food here on Saipan but not constantly the way they do in the Central Carolines. There they eat breadfruit, bananas, taro, day in and day out. Those are the main staples. Here we eat rice, bread now and then, butter and jam, bacon and eggs, coffee, cream and sugar.

Just getting there was an adventure! Going on a canoe—aah! That first canoe trip, I don't know what to say about it! It was like no other experience, and I was mostly just scared. I didn't know what to do. I just watched, with my eyes wide and my big mouth open. I was scared for most of the trip, even with Piailug constantly reassuring me.

For example, when it showered, he assured me that we were only having some light rain. "Yeah, but what if the mast breaks?" I asked. A few drops of rain were a veritable typhoon to me!

"See that small thing over by the outrigger? We'll use that. We'll just take it down and make a patch."

"But what if we turn over?"

"I've been telling you about that ever since we were back on Saipan! Now we're in the middle of the ocean, and you're asking about it! Why don't you wait until we capsize?" Piailug made a joke out of it.

It was a very enriching, very rewarding experience just going in that canoe from here to Satawal. The trip itself took seven days. That canoe had a lot of provisions, and we needed them. Old stories say it might take a month to sail between Saipan and West Fayu, so seven days was like traveling first class! Those seven days felt like at least at month. Our navigators long ago, who were able to sail from Satawal, used to stop at West Fayu, which was more or less a gathering or meeting place between the Central Carolines and Saipan. This was the beginning of my adventure.

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1. Details of the first voyages can be found in Lewis 1994 and McCoy 1983.

2. Gladwin (1970) presents an analysis of Polowat's (previously known as Puluwat) navigational system.

3. Lino lists a crew of five: Repangalap, Repangalugh, Shapwamwai, Ikilap, and Joaquin T. Roppol. Roppol was a man from Saipan.

Chapter III
Encountering Satawal

Satawal lies in the Central Carolines at the eastern end of Yap State in the Federated States of Micronesia.[1] *Its language and culture are related to those of the outer islands of Yap and east into Chuuk. Satawal and neighboring atolls comprise the ancestral homeland of the Saipan Carolinians, and their way of life has not changed as dramatically as it has on Saipan. Subsistence is still based primarily on fishing and taro gardening rather than wage labor, the matrilineal clan system continues to regulate land tenure and local political affairs, men still build canoes and navigate using knowledge passed down from earlier generations, women still show deference to their brothers, and people still perform the old songs and chants and dances.*

Satawal is a slightly elevated coral island about one-half square mile in area, with soil somewhat more fertile than many other coral islands (Gillett 1987). With no lagoon and less than a half square mile of reef, the island has a scarcity of reef fish, normally an important part of the Carolinian diet. Most of the fishing grounds are out of sight of the island, making navigation essential to their livelihood. The land and ocean support approximately 500 people.

Satawal today is part of the Federated States of Micronesia, an entity in free association with the United States and politically separate from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Until the mid 1970s, however, the two areas were together as part of the U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in the wake of World War II. Entry of the U.S. precipitated many changes for Satawal, including conversion to Christianity in 1953, but the pace of change has been much slower than on Saipan. For Lino, visiting Satawal was as close as he could get to returning to the past to learn more about his Carolinian heritage.

To tell you the truth, on the trip to Satawal I was afraid and nervous. I had no idea what I was doing, even though Piailug had explained it all to me while he was staying at my house. On the trip, he encouraged and reassured me, telling me not to be afraid because he knew exactly what to do. But for somebody who knows nothing about navigating, it was a very scary experience—very, very scary. I didn't even know where we were heading. I didn't know whether we were heading up east or down west or north or south. And we saw nothing but ocean and more ocean, wave after wave, rain and sun and wind and white caps. Weew! It was crazy!

And it was also very tiring. The hardest part was bailing. Whenever water washed into the canoe, we had to jump all the way down to the bottom of the canoe and sit there to bail. And it's not easy. The canoe is very deep when you sit at the bottom to bail. You scoop the water with the bailer, and when you get the water almost to the top, you jerk the bailer to release the water, and the wind carries it off the side. The wind always comes from the outrigger side. You sit facing the back of the canoe, and on the right is the outrigger and on the left is the leeward platform, where Piailug sits. All the time you're sitting, your feet are wet because of the water in the canoe. So you're trying just to stay as dry as possible. You have to push the bailer to get the water far up enough so the wind will blow the rest of it out in the ocean; otherwise it falls back in the canoe. And you have to be careful that you don't wet the guy who's on the back of the canoe steering. By the time I got to Satawal my arms were just dead! I couldn't lift them up for a month. But bailing was the only job that I could do on that first trip.

On the way to Satawal we stopped, of course, at West Fayu, a resting place before reaching Satawal. Long before we reached West Fayu we could smell land. In fact, one of the crew jokingly said that he could smell barbecue turtle and it was making him hungry. We arrived at night and waited until the next morning to go ashore. West Fayu is a tiny atoll, surrounded by clear water and a wave-fringed reef that extends about a mile to the south. It was a beautiful sight after two weeks on the open ocean! As we approached the beach we saw Urupa, Mau's brother and several other men from Satawal who were awaiting our arrival. We were going to leave that evening, but the other navigators, they wanted to drink beer and whiskey. They wanted some fun! Drinking was not allowed on Satawal, so when we arrived—with beer and whiskey—they started drinking and drinking and drinking throughout the day until night. So it was not until the next morning that we left West Fayu for Satawal.

Arriving at Satawal was quite an experience. The day we arrived, it was beautiful, very calm with hardly any waves, and we cruised right into the channel through the reef. But the Satawal channel, unlike the Houk channel, is a tricky one; there's just barely enough room to get a canoe through the reef. If you miss it, that's it! You're done for. But that day was calm, and we just came right through. As soon as we cleared the channel, we came into the lagoon. As we sailed in, I saw people sitting on the beach, and I saw men's houses, *utt*, all over the island. I saw children running around and people just sitting around at the *utt*. And suddenly, as soon as we reached the beach, topless women came charging down! I couldn't believe it! I was just staring at them, my eyes big and my mouth wide open. The women surged toward us, rushed up to the canoe, and tore open whatever they could. They went up to some of the crew members, beat them on the head or grabbed them, they were so very, very, very happy that the men made it back. They were hugging them, biting them, pulling their hair, or drowning them! They even accidentally broke the outrigger boom, the *ghiyó*, when they ran up over it in their excitement. (Luckily we had taken down the sail, or they'd have broken that, too!) While that was happening, we didn't do anything. We just let them come. They were all dressed up with flowers and other decorations like *mwáár* (head garlands) and *raang* (an orange powder).

Utt *Lugerhig on Satawal in 1972.*

When I saw them, I was afraid; I had forgotten about that custom of dressing that way, which made the women look very scary. They knew I was a stranger, so they didn't treat me the way they treated the other men. They left me alone, and I was just as glad when I saw what they were doing to those men!

The women were the ones who took the canoe up and beached it. And those canoes are heavy! It usually takes several men to pull a canoe up on the beach. We were putting down *lóng*, coconut midribs and leaves (or other soft material) to cushion the canoe and prevent the keel from getting scraped. That way the canoe just slides up; otherwise sand scrapes the canoe and ruins it. We were putting these down, and the women just pulled on the rope and soon the canoe was right up to the *utt*. That was my first experience on Satawal. Seeing those people, I was nervous and afraid and excited all at the same time.

My second experience came that evening. I didn't know there was to be *úúmaaw* (ceremonial dancing bringing all the people together). I didn't even know what *úúmaaw* was, and Satawal was right in the middle of one. I was scared—it was like movies about Indians. The islanders had built up a bonfire under the *utt*. I couldn't believe that right in the middle of the *utt*, they had a bonfire! Younger children circled the fire up front. Looking back from them, I saw circle after circle after circle, with young men behind the children, then adult men, older men, and then the very old. Big as the *utt* was, it was not large enough to house everybody for the *úúmaaw*. People sat even beyond the *utt*. Women sat in the farthest circles. They didn't dance, but they joined in the singing, and they certainly were checking out the men!

This dancing takes place when the island is under a restriction, or taboo, called *meschang*, which is a chief's prerogative to call. When this happens, no one should walk around without permission from the chief. People are allowed to go to certain places only at limited, specified times of the day. A conch shell is blown to indicate when people may leave and when they should come back. Someone blows the conch shell in the morning to signal when people can go to their gardens and then again in the afternoon when they have to return. They can work in the gardens and tend them, but they should not harvest food. Every now and then the chief says, "Okay, you go out and each man should bring two coconuts and each woman should bring several taro for each house. But only go to the open areas, not the restricted ones." A restriction might be put on one side of the island, and people are allowed only in one area. "Over here, you may get food. Over here you may go fishing. But over there, you can't."

Remember, we're talking about a small place, a small island, so there's a need to control the food supply. They put a restriction on half of the island and then cultivate the other half; it's a form of conservation. Restrictions might be put on the ocean, too. When the *meschang* is on the island, it continues until the chief stops it. It could last for months and months and months or a year. During all that time when we have those restrictions, every evening we have an *úúmaaw*, because it brings people together. When the food is low on the island, that's one way of making sure that everyone is entertained. Otherwise, people will go home and think of nothing but their hunger. That would encourage the tendency and temptation to sneak out at night to get coconuts, go to the restricted areas, pull down some breadfruit. Dancing is one way of keeping people entertained. The island is so small that everybody knows everybody; people will notice if someone fails to show up. If you don't see someone at the *úúmaaw* and something is missing the next day, then you say, "Well, Julie wasn't at the *úúmaaw* last night. She probably sneaked off to her taro patch." When they see you that day, they will say, "Everybody was present, Julie. Do you want to give us your account of what happened last night? Where were you?"

A chief decides to make these restrictions when the island is getting low on food. Here on Saipan we take food for granted, but on the outer islands they have to take measures to ensure they have enough. Coconuts are a major food out there. On Satawal taro, breadfruit, yams, and bananas are the staple foods, but coconuts are also very, very important to the diet. When coconuts are running low and when the number of fish coming in through the reef are also low, the chief puts a taboo on certain parts of the island to help conserve food. He keeps track of the food production. Elders get together regularly. "How's the taro patch? How are the coconuts? How are the bananas?" The chief hears all of this and tries to maintain a balance. "Okay, I think we have more taro. Yams are okay. Those people over there are eating." When the chief hears that they have enough, he finally lifts the restriction. Everyone benefits in the long run. And when the taboo is lifted, everyone runs! The women run to the taro gardens; the men run to go fishing. Excitement!

Another reason for such a restriction is the death of a chief or *afaghúr* to the chief. When that happens, you cannot make loud noises or bang on tins. In fact, you must remain very quiet from the time of the chief's death until the burial or until the restriction is lifted. Then everyone can go back to shouting and singing. But the restrictions could last months and months.

There could be a boundary dispute between families, and the two feuding families put a *meschang* on that area. They draw a line and say, "Well, this is my property." It could be a minor issue, though. Say you have a coconut tree on another family's property because another clan liked you and gave you maybe one coconut tree on their property. Now ordinarily everyone in that clan can go to that property for food—coconuts, breadfruit, taro, it's all theirs. But you, who are not in that clan, could put a *meschang* on that tree to tell them, "This is mine." And they will respect that. They will know it's yours and will leave it alone.

Topias Urupa, Piailug's younger brother, leading a women's dance in front of Lugerhig Uut in 1986 during a meeting of the chiefs. Dancers from left: Nemwaisou, Nisoumwai, Gregoria Negasgur, Neraeknig, Naeibwog and Naeiwimaan.

"Whose is this? Oh, it's Lino's."

"But he's not in that clan."

"Well, he has a coconut tree on their land. It's because the head of the clan said it was his, so it was given to him." That would be respected, and that's another type of *meschang*.

At the *úúmaaw*, they had what they call *lúghúlúgh,* when women cover themselves from head to toe with a white sheet and no one can tell who is hiding under the sheet. Only their eyes are visible. That way the family and brothers will not be insulted or offended by the women's behavior. These women will come in the *utt*, and if they like you, they will come in and look at you, and put a lei on you. Another woman might come in, take off the first woman's lei and put on another. Sometimes a woman will put you in there under the sheet, and you both stay hidden. The woman may then take you out of the *utt*! I guess sometimes you're lucky, and it will be a lovely, nice young woman, but sometimes you end up with an old lady. But you cannot jump up and leave or say, "I don't want to go with you, Gramma!" That would be rude. Whether you like the lady or not, you leave with her. You go way out to an isolated area where no one can see you to avoid shaming or insulting the family. Sometimes you find two women under those sheets!

That was when I arrived on Satawal. I tell you, it was quite an experience. Such culture shock! It's embarrassing to admit I felt that way because it was my culture, but I had to go through many adjustments. It was culture shock even for me, a Carolinian, to learn our traditional ways for the very first time. That was embarrassing! The problem wasn't so much that there were no cars, no supermarkets, no ice cream, no electricity. That didn't bother me. What was overwhelming was the vast amount of information about my Carolinian custom and culture. Even with my background growing up in a traditional family, it was still more than I could take in. I ended up just skimming the surface of knowledge, because there were so many areas of specialized knowledge. I couldn't make myself concentrate on just one area because all of them seemed so important. I ended up learning a little bit of this and a little bit of that. I realized that we no longer have many of those traditions among the Saipan Carolinians. Perhaps I shouldn't say this, but I feel as though I am a few steps ahead of other Saipan Carolinians as far as knowing our tradition, customs, culture, language, because I took some time off to learn about them when I went to Satawal. It was a big sacrifice leaving my wife and my children on Saipan for a while. It was too much.

Anyway, I was lucky they were having the *meschang*, because it doesn't happen very often. I might have missed all that learning; I would have come back to Saipan without witnessing part of what it means to be Carolinian. Satawal can go years and years, even 50 years without a *meschang*, if there is no need for one. You don't do a *meschang* unless you have to. Later I learned that there are songs that are rarely sung except for when we have *úúmaaw*, so I arrived on Satawal at a good time. The *meschang* was a learning opportunity for me, and it went on about two or three months before they finally called it off. So I was able to learn a lot. I started listening and asking what it was all about, and they explained for me. After about a week I started recording the *úúmaaw* and writing about it. The *úúmaaw* mentions events, history, things that happened to people—other navigators, other great people.

Young women of Satawal dancing on Satawal in 1970. From left: Rita Nauwuriyoang, Naeigaeniur, and Niisiur.

I stayed there for a while, for several years. And even now I feel it's not enough. I still have a lot to learn about my culture and tradition. However, if I were elected to public office or became a leader in the community, I am certain that the knowledge I gained about my traditional culture would make me an effective and fair leader.

Several weeks later, Piailug took me to show me how to make *faluubwa*, fermented coconut toddy. To do this, we had to go out and climb coconut trees. Piailug said, "Don't worry, Lino. I have some trees picked out for you already. These are the coconut trees that we've been using for *faluubwa*, and this one is for you. The coconut tree I've picked out for you has produced more than any of the other trees. It will probably make one gallon, two gallons of *faluubwa* a day if you maintain it right. You've never made any *faluubwa* before?"

I said, "No. But I've heard of it. I heard about my uncle getting *faluubwa*, but I've never done it myself."

He said, "Okay. Tomorrow I'm going to show you."

We got our string, which we call *fiif*, made out of coconut fiber, and we walked to the coconut tree—one that seemed to stretch endlessly up towards the clouds. For Satawal men it was very short; for me it was very, very high! Piailug went up first. He looked down, and he said, "Lino, are you coming up or not?"

Lino lived in this thatched roof dwelling with Mau Piailug's family during his stay on Satawal. From left: Piailug's daughter Honora, grandchild Albertha Naposeram, son-in-law, Emwaeipiy (Fiti), daughter Rosina, grandchild Alfreda, and wife Cathrina Nemaito in Nemaenong Village.

Trying to sound confident, I said, "Sure. I'm coming up." But every time I took a step up, I stopped because I was shaking all over. My palms and my feet were sweating. I had to put my feet in notches, the steps they put into coconut trees, and my whole body was just shaking. I was trying not to let Piailug see. Then I looked out and saw people watching me because I was just a newcomer on the island. I was the main attraction. That meant they were watching every move I made. I finally reached the top, and Piailug started showing me what to do. Then he said, "Okay, let's go to the other tree." The other tree was even taller than the first, and the same thing happened. I was sweating and nervous and afraid I would slide back down that tree. Somehow I managed to reach the top and said, "Okay, Piailug. I made it. I'm ready."

Piailug said, "Okay. Put a rope there. I'll grab the shoot, and you put the string around it." And Piailug was enjoying every bit of it, just trying to be very cool.

"No, I cannot do it. I'm afraid." Especially when the wind blew, making the coconut tree sway back and forth!

"Oh, come on. Okay, never mind. You get down." So Piailug went ahead and finished. He took me to other, shorter coconut trees. That was another shocking experience.

I really learned a lot about being a Carolinian and about Carolinian culture. I realized that the culture is designed to be fair to everybody unless the chief is not sensitive enough about the people and their needs. We have *ailing*—clan—and *afaghúr*—those related to the clan through their fathers. We have a chief's clan, the head of which is the chief. Another clan is *afaghúr* and therefore related to the chief's clan. There are many different clans, and which one is the chief's clan is different from island to island. It might be one clan on Saipan, a different one on Tinian, and a different one on Rota. And the *afaghúr* also differs from place to place.

I began to appreciate how appropriate the culture is for a small place. Micronesia means very small islands, and everybody knows everybody on the island. Even if you're drunk and you've passed out, you'll always be taken care of, because people know who you are, who your family is, who your brother, mother, father, and cousin are. They know all that, so they will always carry you into the men's house. Most of the drinking, the men's drinking, is on the beach in front of the men's houses. So if you pass out, the guys will make sure that you're okay. They will carry you into the men's house and take care of you until the next day, whereas in the U.S., they would probably ignore you and leave you for dead on the road. Those are some of the differences that I was beginning to notice.

Everything goes to the chief—the best food, the best everything. When people go out fishing, the best fish, biggest fish, it always goes to the chief. But when the chief receives it, he gives it back to the people. It goes to widows, old women, old men who cannot take care of themselves. Those people are taken care of. All aspects of the culture were designed and set up in such a way so that even widows and their children are taken care of. Old women who cannot take care of themselves will be looked after.

All the children, though, always have parents because even if their biological parents die, there are always cousins, aunts, or other relatives to take care of them. Within an extended family people are responsible for each other. If I die, my brothers and sisters will take care of my children. Or my wife's family will take care of them.

We also have a custom about adoption, but it's very different from the Western practice of adoption.[2] Most Western adoptions are by a non-relative, but our adoption takes place within the family. Someone who is a relative will come and ask to adopt the child, and usually the parents will agree. Adopted children are not prevented from knowing who their birth parents are the way adopted children are in the U.S. In fact, Carolinian adoption gives a child two sets of parents; children are not taken away from one set of parents and given to another. Although some adopting parents try to prevent adopted children from going back to their birth parents, the children always manage to spend time with them anyway, and therefore they grow up knowing both sets of parents, especially on those small islands. When people adopt the child, they don't even need to take the child to live with them, regardless of whether the child is nine, ten, eleven, twelve. They don't need to take the child, but it becomes known in the community that the child is now adopted.

Many things were different on Satawal compared with Saipan. There was no electricity. Instead of driving cars to get around, people walked all the time, and they ate local instead of imported food. I love Micronesian food—taro, breadfruit, yams, and stuff—but I wasn't prepared to eat it every day. Although Saipan has those foods, rice has become the staple food that people always eat there. So when I saw breadfruit on Satawal, I loved it. But there, it's breadfruit every day. So when I saw rice, I went crazy. Those were some of the harder things for me to adjust to during my stay.

One unexpected aspect of Satawal that I can remember is the vast amount of information and knowledge—and answers to so many of my questions. For example, a woman here might ask, "Why do we always have to bend down and show respect for our brothers?" I don't know who could answer that question here on Saipan. It was a common practice on Satawal, however, and they could explain the reasons behind it. I didn't know the significance of it until I went there and started asking about it. I learned that since the men safeguard and protect the family, women show them respect.

In addition, the offspring of the men of the clan, the line of descendants from the men, will fade away from the clan (the offspring of the women, obviously, are the clan members, since it's matrilineal), and the women therefore show respect to those men.

I was particularly interested in the clan system and navigation. Those are the two areas I was most intrigued with. Although there were other areas like medicine, canoe building, rope making, dancing, singing, it was navigation that held the most appeal.

I wasn't trying to be a navigator, but I wanted to learn about many aspects of navigation because so much of Carolinian culture is connected with navigation. If we're talking about navigation, for example, we're also talking about the canoe. You cannot separate the two. Even though the skills and knowledge of navigation and canoe making are different, you need to know both; the two are intertwined when you are out on a voyage.

Making traditional coconut fiber rope. Back row, from left: Juanito, Lino, and Liugiuw. Front row from left: Rophino Nanonpiniug (with back to camera) and Tony Satoilug.

First—before a voyage—you have *bwee* (divination), though. *Bwee* is fortune telling.[3] You tie knots in a coconut leaf and interpret the results. Navigators and fishermen, before they leave, they do the *bwee* to learn whether they are going to catch a lot of fish or get into an accident or have good luck or meet misfortune. These things will show up in *bwee*. Even navigators before a voyage will look into *bwee*. If they know how to do it themselves, they will, of course, do *bwee* themselves. It's a special kind of knowledge, though, that only some people have acquired, so navigators without such knowledge consult those who know it. A few people are outstanding at *bwee*. They can know, for example, about the weather the next day and whether or not there will be a typhoon. Even though navigators and others read the stars to learn about the weather and, on the basis of those stars, say, "Tomorrow will be good," they have more faith in *bwee*. The *bwee* specialist might say, "Well, I went left to right and up and down in my *bwee*, and it says there's going to be a typhoon. It may be good weather tonight, but this is what the *bwee* says." And people will trust the *bwee*; they will start to prepare for the typhoon. That's how strong *bwee* is.

There are all sorts of *bwee*, though I don't know too much about it. The common type of *bwee* involves tying knots in a coconut leaf to find the answers to some questions. Which of a couple of places is the best one for fishing? Of four or five healers, which will cure this patient? Which of two girls likes me? Should we leave on our trip today? A more special type of *bwee* is used for ocean voyages. Will we reach our destination without mishaps? The person who does the *bwee* will call on the spirits that are located at different parts of the canoe, and the answer to the question will come from those spirits. Those spirits all have names, and those names are used during the *bwee*. Each section of the canoe has a spirit, and *bwee* involves calling on them—the spirit on the outrigger, the spirit sitting on the front of the canoe, the spirit sitting at the back of the canoe, and so on.

Certain people have knowledge about *bwee*. There could be many people with some knowledge, but only one or two stand out. It is the same with canoe building. Some people are experts at building canoes, and they are called *sellap*. Although many have knowledge, only a few stand out. Our specialized knowledge, whether it's medicine or navigation or some other area, is passed from one generation to another. For building canoes, for example, we still follow the same traditions as our ancestors followed. We use the same basic measurements: your finger, your eye, a coconut frond, a coconut leaf, grass. It is specialized knowledge, though, that belongs to certain people, and there are rituals involved, so it's not appropriate for me to go into detail about it. The people who own the knowledge have to give their permission for the knowledge to be recorded. It's the same with medicine. I can speak about it in general, but I cannot go into the specifics. The knowledge belongs to a certain clan. If I talk about their knowledge, it's an insult to those people. I'm not even considered an expert on medicine. I don't even want to be, because those people are isolated from all the beautiful women and the good things in life, like dancing at one of those disco places. If you are one of those experts, you must isolate yourself and pray with your gods, and when you are practicing your medicine, there are certain taboos you have to follow.

Navigators have restrictions on them, too: they shouldn't socialize with other people, and they cannot be touched without people getting sick. Even if people put their hand on the head or shoulder of a navigator, they get sick because of the medicine—the spirit—*bwalabwal* placed on the navigator as protection. A navigator might even augment such protection while on a voyage if there is a need. When a group of men traveled, they were all supposed to isolate themselves for a few days before a voyage, and then again afterwards, to let the spirit of the ocean leave before they socialized with other people. It was not appropriate for others to come mix with those who were isolated, although a few might come, such as experts in medicine. The voyagers were supposed to stay in the men's house before and after a journey because of the boundary between the land and the ocean. Before a voyage, they had to prepare to receive the ocean, to move away from the land spirits to the ocean spirits. Then when they returned home, they had to move away from the ocean spirits. If a man had been too long on the ocean and went straight home, a newborn child in that house would get sick because of an ocean spirit.

This was before, though, in the past, not now. Now on Satawal we just come in from sailing and go to sit with other people. We still do many of those rituals, but not as strictly as before. Now that we no longer isolate ourselves, part of our heritage is disappearing. Today we're not sure of our knowledge; we're not sure of our skill. From the stories I've heard, we were always strong because at times the spirits showed themselves. They would appear to you and you could see them. You could actually see those spirits in the form of ghosts. They would come and talk to you. They might even possess you. Sometimes even today people are possessed.

I had an experience with spirits myself on Saipan. I wasn't possessed, but a female spirit fell in love with me. I never saw the spirit, but I was very sick for over a month here on Saipan. This happened when I was married and before I made the trip to Satawal, long before, but these beliefs were still alive in our family. This is when my father and mother and uncles and aunts were still alive. My aunt who was an expert in traditional medicine was still alive. We lived down in Chalan Kanoa where there is a small channel, just on the north side of Hopwood Junior High School. During low tide, coral sticks out. The spirit that fell in love with me would come in from the ocean and go around the elementary school grounds, right in front of our house. She would walk right in front of our house, move around the elementary school, come around to my house again, then return to the ocean. Anyway, that lady spirit fell in love with me. It's my aunt that knew about all of this. The spirit woman loved me and wanted to take me with her. To do that, she had to kill me. I was not ready for that yet. I'm not ready for that even now! I want to be a hundred and one! Maybe a hundred and fifty. So I was not ready just yet.

I was on the verge of dying! I was going to die! I was in the hospital for months and months, and they gave me medicine after medicine. They told me I had hepatitis, so they isolated me in the hospital and gave me a shot. I would get a little better, but then the illness would come back. They released me from the hospital, and then the family decided to give me local medicine. So I stayed home.

During my illness, I would tell the family what kind of food I wanted, although normally when people are sick, they don't want to eat much. They say, "Ah, I don't want that." But I told them exactly what I wanted. "Bring me this. Bring me that. I want water; I'm thirsty." They would bring me food. I would eat and eat, but then I would start to throw up. I would throw up and throw up until my stomach was empty. And I would be very sick after that. And then I would ask for water, and they would give me water. I would drink, and I would throw up and throw up and throw up. So I almost died.

So then they decided to call my aunt, Nana Neyareng, who knew about medicine. She came down and one evening she stayed with us. People wondered if they should keep me there at the house in Chalan Kanoa or move me, but after a discussion my aunt said, "No! No, we're not going to leave him here." She didn't say more.

"Why?"

"If he stays here, he will surely die. Let's move him up to the house in Oleai."

So we moved up to Nana Kina's house. My Nana Kina from time to time was possessed by her sister, who had died, and it was through her that we could get information about medicine, curing, and healing.[4] She would also give advice about family problems. In my aunt's house, they always kept a bottle of perfume and medicinal leaves in a special corner of the house, away from others, especially children. We kept it up high somewhere so people couldn't touch it or even come near. When my aunt wanted to call on her sister, we would make a beautiful lei and put it around that bottle to attract the sister's spirit. It might take a couple of days or weeks before the spirit responded, but each day we would put a new lei around the bottle, and then sure enough, one evening Nana Kina would be possessed by her sister's spirit. So through her we were able to get some medicine to help me.

We moved up to her house in Oleai, and that evening Nana Kina was possessed by her sister. It looked like my aunt was talking, but it was really her sister talking and explaining what should be done. I didn't understand everything that was happening, but Nana Kina started laughing.

I asked, "What happened, Aunt?"

"You have a girlfriend!"

"What?"

"A girlfriend. You have a girlfriend!"

Lino's Aunt, Joaquina M. Rabauliman (Nana Kina) at right, and sister Sophia O. Towai. Kina prescribed the treatment for Lino's supernatural illness. Photo circa the early 1960s.

This was in the evening, when she was using her medical knowledge. "Your girlfriend, your spirit girlfriend, is running around looking for you, crying and crying, looking for you. You have a spirit girlfriend."

The spirit of my aunt's sister told my uncle and aunt what kind of medicine to give me, and from then on, I got better and food stayed in my stomach when I ate. It was through Nana Kina's sister that we were able to get some medicine.

Anyway, one kind of *bwee* involves spirits that are on the canoe all the time. I wouldn't be surprised if there are people who can still put a potion, a spirit, on a certain part of the canoe to keep people away. Then whoever comes to fool with the canoe will get sick. This knowledge is still with us today. We want spirits to surround the canoe when we put it on the beach because the canoe is the essence of the people on the island. It provides life. It brings food. It brings news, help from other relatives, from other islands. So it's awesome that even a long time ago, when there was no metal, we could build canoes. Imagine what it was like when people were very close to their beliefs about spirits; there were spirits of breadfruit, spirits of mango trees, for example. Because they were respected and consulted, the spirits were able to show themselves. But that was then. Today because of the introduction of Western religion, these beliefs are no longer practiced. But the knowledge is still there.

I was trying to learn everything that I could when I came to Satawal, but it was more than I could take in. A year or so before I came back, though, I decided to stop studying and just be like everybody else. I had been taking notes, recording information, and talking to the old people day in and day out. Most of the time I didn't go drinking with men in the evening because I would go and visit these old people at home to interview them. After a time I stopped most of that and just did what everybody else was doing. And I seemed to pick up more that way, and drinking with the men seemed to help that process.

Our drinking is a little different from the Western type of drinking where you go in a bar and drink and brawl and end up on the street. Our drinking is not like that. Our drinking is controlled and confined, and education is integrated with drinking because that's when men discuss community issues, tell stories, gossip, and share knowledge. That's when you learn and find out what's going on in the community. People ask, "What are we going to do tomorrow?" Let's say in our *utt*, we gather together; cousins, uncles, they come to the men's house, and we talk. Let's say we come in from fishing that day. We bring up what happened, and we drink and talk. That's also the time that our navigators, our healers, and others with special knowledge, after a few drinks, tend to become very *mwéél* (generous), as we say in Carolinian. They think and talk easily; they become generous with their knowledge. That's the time that navigators, with the navigational skill, are very generous with their knowledge. They chant; they sing. "Let me explain things to you." They share their knowledge during that time. So that's one of the reasons why I joined them drinking in the *utt*—not to drink but to sit and listen to the men talk. Sometimes, they combined two men's houses. "For tonight, why don't we go drink with the people of Asughulap?" Then they would go and drink there. Or maybe another group would come and join us. So they would chat and tell stories. I still want to go back; there's still so much to learn.

Another incident I witnessed was incorporated into a play written by Michael Cowell, called "Song of the Navigator." This incident taught me about chiefs and the fairness of our culture for Carolinians. We have a chief, *sómwool*, and people in that chiefly clan, and then we have lower-ranking clans. If the people on the island believe a chief has made good decisions, they put extra effort into their work, but if they believe he has made poor decisions, they will probably still do the work, but it won't be good quality work. For example, whenever the chief says, "This is what we're going to do," people who do the job will do it nicely, politely, if the chief has made good decisions in the past. Suppose the chief is expecting a table and the people have been happy with him. When they come to him with the table, the chief will notice it and say, "Ah, I was only asking for a simple table. I didn't know that you were going to paint it, varnish it, write my name on it." In other words, the workers had put in extra effort to make it nice because of their attitude about the chief. At other times, however, when some of the chief's decisions are not so good, the quality of work becomes poor.

A particular incident involving the theft of a chicken on Satawal gave me insights into how the chief system works. Some members of the chief's clan were drunk, stole a chicken, and ran. They stole the chicken and hid the feathers under a mat so people wouldn't see the evidence. The culprits went off together to drink and to feast on chicken. I think this was also at the same time when the *meschang* was going on, which was intended to conserve food so that we could increase how many chickens we had. The thieves were left unpunished because they were of the chiefly clan. If they had been of another clan, they would have been punished through gossip about the offending clan. "Last week the job they did was not very good, and I had to get another clan to go out and do it." The chiefs themselves don't talk. They rarely talk. They have people who talk on their behalf instead. And one of them is my uncle. He's very good, and I learned a lot from this uncle of mine.

The people knew that it was members of the chief's clan who stole the chicken, but the theft was left unpunished. So over several months the people started to work poorly. They were not very cooperative, and every now and then they complained. Concerned and curious, members of chief's clan thought, sat back, pondered the problem, and talked with my uncle. "What's going on? Can you go out again in the community and find out what's wrong?" So some people went out to investigate. A group of people who help the chief is called *teelap*, a group consisting of a representative from each clan on the island. They went out and mingled with the people and listened carefully. They discovered that the problem was the unpunished theft. So they went back and explained to the chief why the people were behaving so poorly.

Now, no ordinary person would put members of the chiefly clan in jail, *ar fiif sómwool*. It's the high clan, so you just wouldn't. If someone of that clan needs to be jailed, only someone of another chiefly clan or *afaghúr* of the clan could act. That's where *afaghúr* can come in. It's the *afaghúr* of the chief, or the next highest-ranking clan below the chief's, that can punish someone of the chiefly clan. So, they sanctioned members of the chiefly clan. They did it in a very polite way so as not to be offensive. My uncle, who is not from the chiefly clan but from Maasalé, spoke for the chief. He did it in such a way as to communicate to everybody that even the chiefly clan can be punished and put in jail. It turned out that everybody went to jail; all the people on the island went to jail, including my wife and me.

Before I left for Satawal, when I was growing up with the family here, they talked about such events. I heard that they would tie people up against a post in the men's house. They might not even feed that person or provide anything to drink. That would be an extreme measure, but I heard that's how they punished people in the Carolines in the past for a major offense.

What happened on Satawal was similar but not so extreme. It was done very politely. To form the jail, they used a rope, *sálil úrúr*, that usually hoists the sail on the canoe. It's also a word that implies tying many things together. My uncle said, "This is a rope, *sálil úrúr*, that we use in sailing. It's always been like this, looked like this. The rope is made out of coconut. These are the same coconuts planted by our ancestors, and these are the same coconuts that we are enjoying today. These are the same fibers that we got off those coconuts and made into rope. It's the same knowledge that we learned from our ancestors. This is the same rope that continues to pull those ancestors of ours together and continues to pull us together today. The rope binds us all together, including the chiefly clan. The chiefly clan is part of the whole system." He was talking about the rope, and the message was about knowledge and ancestors, about who planted the coconuts and gave us the knowledge that continues to pull and tow. The rope tows our ancestors into today, so that our traditions continue to be practiced. "This rope will be placed on the ground as a jail, and it will be a place that will bring us together. So what we are going to do is put the chiefly clan in here to show them that even though they are chiefly, the rope binds us together. I'm going to put this rope down as a jail for those who didn't follow the ways of our people." He didn't need to mention who they were, because we all knew. Through my uncle's words and actions, an ordinary rope became stronger than even steel bars.

He named many of our ancestors and talked about those who came and settled the island. He spoke of our ancestors planting the area with coconuts. He spoke of the knowledge, passed down from our ancestors, held by certain families. He talked of taro and weaving and dancing, the knowledge and skills of our ancestors passed down through the generations, tying us all together. The skills are held by families, and that binds us all together. He spoke about the rope being made of separate strands that hold the rope together so strongly. The rope was a symbol. He talked of how the laws keep us together and how everyone should follow them—even *ailang sómwool*, the chiefly clan.

"The rope will continue to bind everyone together." He was talking about a simple rope, but he brought so much meaning to it. He said, "Really, it was never broken, and I'm going to put it down here." And he laid down the rope to form a jail as punishment for the clan of the chief. My uncle laid out a small circle with room enough for two or three people. Members of the chief's clan went inside the rope—not necessarily the people that stole the chicken, not necessarily those kids, but their elders, their aunts, their uncles. Members of that clan went in. I don't remember who was the first to enter. I think it was one of the women from the chief's clan that came in, bending over, crawling as a sign of respect; she went inside the rope and sat down. And then other women came and sat next to her. This was in the morning around nine o'clock. They sat inside the rope out in the sun. Luckily it didn't rain, but it was outside the men's house, where everybody could see what was happening.

All this time my uncle was talking, reassuring the people about our culture and about how our system has been maintained through the years. So many nice things he talked about!

Every now and then, one or two more, bending respectfully, sat down. People sat down and sat down until there was not enough room inside the rope. So people started to sit outside the rope, more people and more people and more people. And it continued even after noon; they continued sitting out there in the sun. I've been told that sometimes it can go on for weeks and weeks and months and months. People will just sit there. So this was just half a day.

After people had started sitting inside the rope, others brought *ghoow*, gifts to compensate for the wrong that had been done. First the gifts came from the chiefly clan. They were giving the gifts as compensation and to free the people from the jail. They brought gifts and gifts and gifts, and then soon other clans started bringing gifts also to help get them all out of the jail. They brought food, rope, coconuts. They brought taro and breadfruit and coconuts, and the food piled up in the men's house. Around the food people put some lavalavas, fishhooks, flashlights, and money. The food piled up in the men's house. And all that time, people kept going inside the rope.

At some point in the morning I told my uncle, I said, "I'm going to run up to the house and get my book to read so that I can have something to do, and I'm going to go in there and sit with the rest of the group."

He said, "Don't do that. Not yet."

I looked at him, surprised, and I asked, "Why not? I think it's lasted long enough. Look at all those gifts." This was in the morning. "I think it's enough."

He said, "No, no, not yet. Just wait. We want to make sure that people in the lower-ranking clans get the feeling that even the chiefly clan must follow the rules. They are not exempt from the rules that keep our people together. Everyone should behave properly."

That was in the morning, so I didn't go in the jail then. We needed to wait. The key to bringing them out was my wife, the kids, and me, because we were new to the island; we were even a little more important than most visitors because we were links to our ancestors on Saipan. If we entered the jail too early, those who felt hurt by the stolen chicken might not think it was enough. As soon as we went in, people would lift up the rope because they would feel sorry for us being in the jail. "Okay! That's it!" The people hurt by the chicken might still feel resentment. They would think, "It's not enough!"

So my uncle wisely said, "Wait."

The process continued until many, many people were in the jail. There was a big line sitting down in front of the men's house. I think around noon there were almost no more people left outside the rope. Just my uncle and a few older people were sitting in the men's house, outside the jail. My wife and my son Peter and I were also there in the men's house. The people in the jail were sitting in the sun, looking at us sitting in the nice, shady *utt*. Nobody even tried to bring them water. But several people now and then continued to bring gifts. Sometimes somebody would run away from the jail and bring gifts and get back in jail again; people would bring gifts, bring gifts, bring gifts.

Late in the afternoon my uncle finally said, "It's enough. You all can see that it's enough."

They started to speak up, "It's enough." Even those people that owned the chicken that had been stolen said, "It's enough." All the gifts, they more than outweighed the theft. They were worth far more than the value of the chicken.

But it really wasn't about the chicken; it was about behavior. Just because you're of the chiefly clan, you shouldn't push your weight around and burden the lower-ranking people. That's what the leaders were trying to show; that's what my uncle was trying to show. They wanted to make sure that the chiefly clan behaved as it should. We have an old saying in Carolinian, "*U sómwool bwe eyoor lóóngomw*. 'You're chief because you have support.' The lower-ranking clans support you; the community supports you."

Early in the afternoon, my uncle said, "I think it's enough. Look at the *ghoow*, the gifts. I think it's enough compensation. But I will hold this for a little bit longer. I want to continue to punish the chief, to really show him what we are to him and to show him that he is part of us. We all see the gifts. But I think we should punish the chief further to show him that we are together on a small island. I know that other clans, including the one that owns the chicken, were hurt by the behavior, and I know all of you are there in the jail because you feel sorry for the chief. But don't do that! Don't think like that! We need to show the chief that we are all one. We have to be together all the time." So they stayed inside the jail. And the rope, the restriction, the jail wasn't lifted open for everybody to leave until late in the afternoon.

Before my uncle told the people it was enough, my family and I went in the jail. I said, "Yeah, I think it's a good time to go in." So I went in there, and I was in there about half an hour or an hour.

The gifts were given back to the people. The chief redistributed them. He made sure that people such as widows and widowers and old people received a share. The lavalavas and other things were kept for island use such as emergencies. Some of the money was kept aside so that if someone needed medical attention and needed to pay passage to Yap, some of the money that was contributed would be used. It was up to the chief to decide what to do with all those gifts.

That was one of the incidents that really helped me learn about being a Carolinian. If it hadn't happened, I would have missed learning something very important and very beautiful about our culture. I had heard about how we discipline people in the Carolines, but I hadn't ever seen it.

I didn't understand it all then. I understood that my uncle had used some beautiful language in his talking. I knew about the chiefly clan and the lower-ranking ones. But I didn't understand the rest at the time. Several days after the incident I went back to my uncle, and we talked and talked about it all. Several other uncles talked, too. We gathered and talked and talked and talked and talked. I looked at them and I said, "Wow! Such a beautiful tradition!" Our culture is suited to life together on a small island.

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1. Recent anthropological work on Satawal includes Ishimori 1987 and Akimichi 1987.

2. Anthropological works on adoption in the Pacific (with both implicit and explicit comparisons to U.S. patterns) include Brady 1976 and Carroll 1970.

3. An anthropological discussion of Carolinian *bwee* can be found in Lessa 1959.

4. A portion of this incident was incorporated into the play "Song of the Navigator," discussed in a later section of this book.

Chapter IV
Sailing Adventures

Satawal is one of the few places left in the Pacific where people still make traditional sailing canoes and navigate among the islands and reefs of the Carolines—and even farther, as evidenced by the voyages to the Marianas and back.[1] *Using knowledge of stars, swells, currents, birds, clouds, and other signs, navigators accurately sail long distances out of sight of land without the use of a compass. Although after World War II missionaries discouraged the continuation of the initiation ceremony* ppwo *for navigators, the navigational knowledge is still valuable property and continues to be taught. Navigation is central not only to the livelihood of these islanders but also to their sense of identity. Some islanders are even determined to revive some of the old ways; in 1997, for example, a* ppwo *ceremony was conducted on Pollap Atoll, the first in many decades.*[2]

I fell off on one of the sailing trips. We were drinking, and I fell off between Satawal and West Fayu. I sure had some experiences and adventures sailing with Piailug!

Even after a night of drinking on Satawal, we should be able to go out fishing the next day. On Satawal we raise a paddle or pole or whatever is handy as a signal that we are coming home loaded with fish. We raise the paddle for a big catch; people will know, then, that it was no ordinary catch and that we're coming home with more than usual. People on the island will just be watching, watching, to see whether it was a good day or bad day, whether there will be fish or not. When we are loaded with fish in our canoe, we start rehearsing some of the songs we will sing to tease and embarrass those who were not man enough to get up in the morning after all that drinking to go fishing.

There's always competition among men; they compete, compete, compete! For example, after heavy drinking in the evening, a man will still go fishing the next day even if it is rough. Even though you're drunk, you will still go fishing. You decide to leave early—three o'clock in the morning, four o'clock in the morning—to go out tuna fishing. When you get up in the morning, you get up quietly, leaving the others snoring. You don't wake them. You quietly leave the men's house, prepare the canoe, launch the canoe, hoist up the sail, and leave the others, hung over, in the men's house. When you come back from fishing, you sing to tease those men that couldn't make it.

Once the canoe comes in and we've raised the paddle and everybody on the island knows that the canoe has come in, everyone runs to the beach, and what a celebration there is! That raised paddle is a signal that we're loaded, so it gets the people excited. We call that *foto*. The men feel great that they have come with so much fish, especially if they had been coming back empty handed. Men on the canoe will sing, and women standing on the beach will sing. The person who composed a song might start, and then others will join in. Very motivating! Very encouraging! That encourages the men to go fishing again the next day.

A view from the front of a canoe under sail in open ocean.

When you're coming in through the channel, everybody is just watching, holding their breath. Is this boat coming with fish? As soon as that paddle is raised or we call out, everybody will start jumping because they know there will be fish on the island for everybody. There will be singing on the shore. There will be love language in the songs. "I'm the one who refused you the other night! You're going to be all right tonight." Then the women on the beach will sing, "Ah, we'll take you! All of us will take you! I'll take good care of you, because you caught so many fish. Forget about those others that just stayed home." Most times we have to be careful about our language and think about our uncles, aunts, and older brothers, but it's acceptable to sing like that during those occasions.

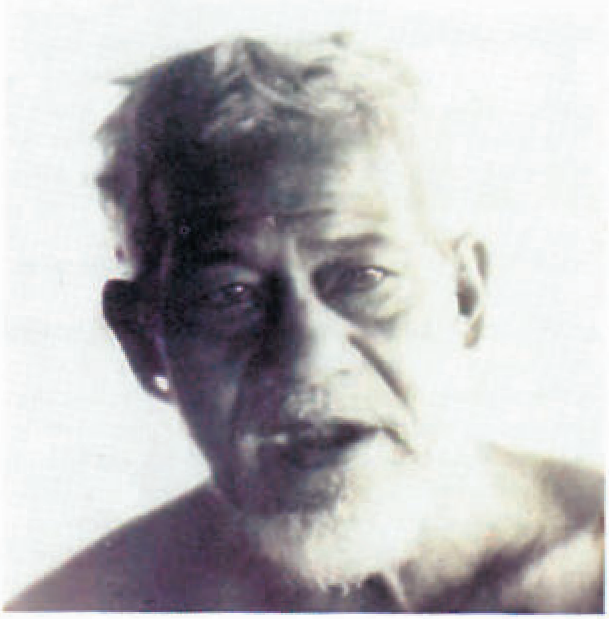
I learned so much on Satawal, and I was especially interested in navigation and sailing. I was a Carolinian but not really a Carolinian until I went to the outer islands and was exposed to the people and the language and the culture. I became a Carolinian then. I was filled with so much knowledge. And every now and then I fooled around like they did, because I guess I was starting to know the customs. And they respected me because I was the first Carolinian that had stayed with them since the halt to voyaging caused by the Japanese and the war. There had been a gap during the Spanish era when voyaging between the Central Carolines and Saipan had stopped because Carolinians were afraid of the Spanish swords and cannons. Some of the stories tell of being blown out of the water by the heavy cannons of the Spanish. So for a while, voyaging between the Central Carolines and the Marianas stopped. Another gap started before World War II. About the only sailing was on the part of men on Saipan that stole a cow and were so afraid of the Japanese putting them in jail and beating them that they decided to run away from Saipan for the outer islands. They took quite a risk because the canoe they used was so small. I'm not quite sure where they ended up, but they made it to safety someplace.

Anyway, one of my adventures was falling off a canoe. It happened between Satawal and West Fayu. Piailug and other navigators had been informally teaching me. Several weeks or a month after I arrived on Satawal, the chief asked me to talk about my purpose in coming to the island. I told the chief and the people about Saipan and how it was changing and pursuing a different government than the rest of Micronesia. I talked about how I was afraid of that big government because I didn't know enough about it and I didn't know enough about Carolinian customs. That's when I decided to come on the voyage to Satawal and just learn whatever I could. That's why I was on Satawal, and I told them I was especially interested in very old traditions, not just the present customs in Satawal. I wanted to learn about the very old ways, the language, the chief system, navigation, canoe building. I mentioned some of those things during that meeting. But what I stressed was learning about how our culture binds us all together. And I wanted to learn about the clan system. The more I knew about the clan system, the more I understood about people's positions, rank, and responsibilities in the community.

Although the chief told the people who owned the navigational knowledge to start teaching me, they were hesitant about doing so. They didn't really want to do it, because I was so very new to the island. They didn't really know me yet. So even though several weeks went past, no mat was laid for me in the men's house, which would be the sign that the teaching was about to begin.[3] Finally, at one of the regular Sunday meetings involving all the people on the island, the subject was brought up again, and the chief mentioned that nobody was responding to the request made by the chief on my behalf. Then one of my uncles, Lamalur, the same one who had laid down the rope for the jail and who was a mentor to Piailug and other navigators, publicly announced, "I will start teaching Lino what I know about navigation. I hope the family that owns the knowledge will do the same afterwards." So what made my learning special was that it was at home, not at the *utt*. When your learning is at home, you learn more because it is just your teacher and you. Down at the *utt*, a lot of time the teachers are reluctant to share some of their personal knowledge because other people might overhear. So for me there was no formal teaching at the men's house, but just the teaching at the family house instead, which usually took place in the evening. Traditionally people first learned at home and then went to the men's house. The teaching of many practical aspects of navigation came more from Piailug. How to sense the wind and tell if it is changing, for example, I learned out in a canoe from Piailug.

One of my adventures took place when there was a restriction on drinking in order to make sure the men stayed sober, strong, and healthy while climbing breadfruit trees, a potentially dangerous activity. There was an abundance of breadfruit so it was time to harvest and to make *maar*, preserved breadfruit. People collect mature breadfruit, prepare it, and store it underground. Later people can remove what they need and close the hole. At the end of the breadfruit season, people make *maar* because there won't be any more breadfruit until the next season. This is when the chief puts a restriction on drinking: "Nobody can drink in the morning. Nobody can drink in the afternoon. Only in the evening can there be drinking. And it will be everyone drinking together rather than in smaller groups associated with individual men's houses."

Those evenings drinking together were good opportunities for me to learn about our oral history and knowledge. Especially since it had become known that I was on Satawal to learn such things, they made a point of teaching me when they were drinking. They might ask, "Lino, are some of these songs and chants still known on Saipan? They originated from Saipan. They are stories our parents brought back that describe events there, and we wonder if some of them are still known."



Lamalur was Lino's mentor in all aspects of Carolinian beliefs and practices. He also instructed Piailug in the art of traditional navigation.

I said, "I heard them when my parents and grandparents were alive, but not anymore."

And they also wanted to check out some of the details in the stories. The place name Laulau was in one story, for example, so they asked, "Where is Laulau? Where is Laulau on Saipan?"

"Laulau is one of the small villages on Saipan."

Exceptions were made to the drinking restrictions for people going to places like West Fayu and Pikelot to catch fish and turtle for the people of the island. Men often sailed to those islands when the weather was good because the reef at Satawal is not very good fishing grounds. During the tuna season there is plenty of tuna, but it only lasts a month or two months. The poor reef encourages us to maintain our navigational and sailing skills since we have to go to other islands for food.

The chief wanted some men to go to West Fayu (we call it Pighélé) to see if the first turtle tracks had appeared, and for this trip, the chief permitted us to drink *faluubwa* beginning early in the morning. Remember, we usually prepare for a voyage or fishing trip from three o'clock, four o'clock in the morning. While I was with the other young men preparing the canoe that morning, Piailug and Repangalap and other men were sitting in the men's house drinking *faluubwa*. In fact, they had probably been drinking all night. Anyway, when I got there in the early morning, they were drinking. I didn't know about the exception to the drinking so I said, "You guys are not supposed to be drinking!"

They said, "Oh, it's okay. When we're going to do something for the people, the chief permits us to drink."

I said, "Oh, okay." I didn't know about that custom until they told me.

So Piailug and his gang were drinking while the young men prepared the canoe. Those young men—including me—were also drinking as we worked. This was about three o'clock in the morning. Finally, just before the sun came up, the tide was changing. When it's low tide in the Satawal lagoon, you cannot even drag your canoe over the reef because the coral heads stick out of the water. So just before the sun came up, we launched our canoe over the reef and anchored it. We started loading our provisions, and by about six we were finished. From then on, it was just drinking. All of us came and sat down in the men's house and drank and drank. Looking around us, we could see other men working, but they could not come and drink with us because of the restriction. Only the crew going to fish, catch turtles, and bring food back to the people was permitted to drink. We were being sent there by the chief. I think we continued drinking up until eight, eight thirty, almost nine o'clock—which is late for beginning a voyage. But we went anyway. And I was so drunk!

We still had about five gallons of *faluubwa* left. I think there were just six or seven of us going on that trip, but we had already drunk dozens of bottles. I told Piailug and Repangalap, I said, "If we're going to go to West Fayu, why don't we take these remaining bottles and put them in the canoe and drink on our way?" I was anxious to get there. I was tired of staying on Satawal and was ready for that trip. Even though I had been making a few trips, I was still tired of staying on the island. Whenever Piailug said we were going on a trip, I was very excited about it.

So anyway, we carried the *faluubwa* out to the canoe, hoisted the sail, and started on our way. We passed around a coconut shell of *faluubwa*. "Your turn! Your turn!" I was sitting on the back of the canoe, handling the rudder. Remember, though, I was drunk!

Under full sail. Rophino Nanonpiniug mans the fatụl bwubwu *(rudder) while Lino helps to balance the canoe.*

When we hoisted up the sail, nobody had said who would be responsible for navigating, Piailug or Repangalap. There was one canoe and two navigators: Repangalap was the senior navigator, and Piailug was the junior navigator. When there are two navigators on one canoe, we usually defer to the senior, older navigator. Or it depends on the level of the school of navigation. You can tell from looking at the height of the notch where the rope is tied toward the base of the mast which school of navigation the navigator comes from, and there is etiquette to follow when meeting a canoe on the ocean. I'm not sure if Repangalap and Piailug were from the same school of navigation, but we all knew that Repangalap was older than Piailug. So we all assumed Repangalap would be the navigator, but he said, "No, no, no, no! Piailug, you take the trip. You navigate. You lead." We continued sailing, and they continued talking back and forth about who would lead the trip. Every now and then they drank a little bit. "No, you take the trip!" And all the time I was on the back. I had already set the course based on what I had been learning. Then finally Repangalap, when he gave me the cup of *faluubwa*, said, "Oh, Piailug! Lino will navigate this trip! He's the one who came from Saipan to learn. So this is it! This is a good test for him."

I said, "This kind of trip I can do blindfolded."

He said, "How can you say that? You can't possibly navigate blindfolded."

I said, "Oh, with you two with me, I can make it. With your help I can make it even though I'm so very drunk. I'll get us to West Fayu." I was joking with them.

Mau Piailug seated on the lee platform, the part of the canoe reserved for the navigator.

Anyway, navigating became my responsibility then. So I was acting so big!

I asked for some more *faluubwa*, and we drank and talked and told stories. Every now and then, because I was in the back steering, I said, "Repangalap! What do you think? Is this all right?"

"Oh, Lino, you're the boss! It's up to you! You're doing well. Just keep at it."

I thought to myself, "Okay, I must be doing all right. Then I'll go on. Is this the wave that comes from the outrigger? Is this the wave that comes from the east? I guess so." I was in over my head, but, oh, I thought I was so very good!

Anyway, we kept drinking and drinking and drinking. And sitting on the end of the canoe is very awkward. I was sitting on the back looking at the front, with wind coming from my right, from the outrigger side, and with the sail on my left. My left foot, which is not as strong as my right foot, was by the rudder. It's especially hard if we're going on full sail, with a good wind. Often a person's left leg can't handle the pressure on the rudder. And the canoe was jumping around. Sometimes I used both hands on the rudder handle; other times I held the rudder with my left hand and the side of the canoe with my right hand.

Heading to West Fayu.

I knew where I was going. It wasn't like that first experience sailing from Saipan to Satawal when I was totally blind and had no idea what people were doing. On that first trip I was jumping around trying to give them a hand, but I was just in the way most of the time. But on this trip—

especially after several gallons of *faluubwa*—I was an expert!

Repangalap was sitting in front of me, and he was in control of the *faluubwa.* At one point he started another round of drinks and turned around to hand me mine, but the water was very rough right then. I was holding on tightly and trying at the same time to keep the canoe going straight, which was next to impossible. Anyway, he handed me the *faluubwa*, and I let go to grab it. At that very moment, a big wave shook the canoe and moved the rudder. I was going to pull back on the rudder to steady the canoe, and then, just like that, I was in the ocean! I wasn't really afraid except for the two or three lines with hooks and lures for fish which I worried I might get hooked on.

The others didn't go very far before they noticed what happened and stopped. They tried to tack in order to reach me, but even over that short distance it was hard to tack. So I told them, "Wait. I will swim over to you."

They said, "Well, okay, swim on over. We'll pull up the lines."

So I swam. Repangalap, who had seen me fall off, jumped into the water, planning to meet me part of the way. I told him not to do that and just to wait for me in the canoe.

So that was that! We lost the coconut shell that we were using as a cup for the *faluubwa.* We lost that! That was a terrible thing, too, because we had to husk a coconut, cut out all the meat, and clean it to use it as a cup for *faluubwa.* That's a lot of work, and with the canoe jumping around, we had to be careful not to get cut.

Anyway, when I got back in the canoe, Repangalap didn't say anything, but Piailug said, "Well, I guess that's the end of Lino's lesson. I suggest, Lino, that you go and stay on the leeward platform. May we suggest you go over there and just sit there, because that's where the navigators go." Really they were teasing me because the lee platform is also where the women and children stay when they are on board.

So that was the end of my lesson. But I really believed I could get us there. Several weeks after that, when we were drinking with others in the men's house and Piailug wanted to tease me, he said, "Tell me, tell me, Lino. I'm curious. When you fell off, where did you think we were?" He was checking to see if I knew where we were.

I said, "Well, I believe we were between Satawal and West Fayu and a little bit off course to the west of a direct line between the two islands."

He laughed, and he said, "You're doing very well. Yes, yes, that's exactly where I placed us also." He was checking, and he liked to show off when we were drunk and everybody was listening. He said, "If we capsized and if the canoe turned off course, how would you correct that?"

I said, "Well, it's very easy. I wouldn't use the same stars."

Remember *lóóng*, support? We also use some stars just above the direct line between the two islands on our trip, to prevent us from drifting off course. We don't use the stars on the direct line because the wind and current would throw us off course. So we add one or two stars for *lóón*g. We follow those stars until we feel as though we're getting close enough, and then we can almost shoot straight for the island and use the direct line. We call those stars that we use for such an adjustment *lóóng*. So that's what I told Piailug.

So he said, "Oh, that's very good. I think you're going to be all right." But I would never go through the *ppwo* ceremony to be initiated as a navigator, because of the many restrictions placed on navigators. Anyway, I'm not very interested in going through the *ppwo* ceremony, but I was so excited to have a chance to see one on Pollap in 1997.

Anyway, that was one of my adventures. A second adventure happened one summer with Piailug's children when they decided to go up to Pikelot, Pik for short. This was soon after the students got home from school for the summer. Pikelot is upwind of Satawal, so we have to tack to sail there. It was a learning opportunity for all of us, for both Piailug's children and for me.[4] So Piailug took us up, and we sailed in two canoes.

Lino and Steve with a turtle on Pikelot. The group caught so many turtles that they had to release some before returning to Satawal.

We had no problem getting there, and then on the island we enjoyed our days and caught turtles and just ate and had a good time. Oh, I loved it when we were there. The reason I loved it I guess is that we could do what we wanted without worries. We had coconuts to drink, and we had food to eat. The best thing is that I could take off my loincloth. I could just take it off and throw it up in a coconut tree or whatever. No women! We could just run around. What fun! We could go fishing and climb trees without our loincloths; we were just a bunch of guys running around naked on the island. We had a good time and caught a lot of turtles.

In preparation for our return to Satawal, we checked for signs of favorable sailing weather each morning and evening for several days. We call this *amal* in Carolinian. Finally Piailug said, "Well, what do you think, Lino? Do you think we should go back?"

I said, "Well, you're the one who should decide when we should leave."

He said, "What do you think?"

So, I said, "Oh!" Then I realized what he was implying. I knew that he meant for me to take us back. "Oh, okay! All right! You think we should go back?" I was kind of nervous.

He said, "It's up to you."

I said, "Okay. Okay. Okay. Early this morning, let's go and check the sunrise for our weather forecast. And let's start checking the weather." And I added, "Okay. We're leaving tomorrow evening. So let's start loading provisions tomorrow afternoon. Then tomorrow at about four or five o'clock we'll go out and fish. We'll fish from the small reef off Pikelot. Maybe by nine or ten o'clock we'll leave Pikelot and sail for Satawal. By early morning, four or five o'clock, we should be able to reach Satawal." It's that close and all downwind sailing. Going down is easy; you just tie up the sail and cruise on the return to Satawal.

And it was beautiful. The wind was just right. Everything was just right. We'd been checking the weather for two or three days. I said, "This is it! We're going to go because we have enough turtles."

Then he said, "Are you sure?"

I said, "Yes. I'm sure."

"Okay!"

So we started in the afternoon. We started collecting coconuts and preparing the canoe. Finally at about five or six o'clock that afternoon, we hoisted up our sail and drifted off to a nearby reef. We started fishing, since I knew the fish we caught would not spoil before reaching Satawal since we would arrive that evening or early morning. The fish could be quickly distributed and then cooked.

So, it was nice! It was just one of those lazy times. It was lovely that night. I think we left Pikelot at about ten or eleven. Then about twelve or one o'clock that night, the wind stopped. Even though we were still much closer to Pikelot than Satawal, it was better to continue on to Satawal because it's downwind and with the current. At about one or two o'clock, Piailug said, "Well, Lino, what do you think? Do you think this calm will continue until tomorrow?" Piailug knew the answer all the time, but I was supposed to be making the decisions on this trip.

IMWENTPIN
FUUN METAW

The small Mariners' Chapel on Pikelot. From left: Alonso Piyobwulmal, Martin Ibweiloamw, Yalmwaii, Lino and Andrew Igomal. Photo taken in 1989.

I said, "No, I don't think so. I think maybe around three or four o'clock we'll have one of those winds that come up before the sun, before dawn."

He said, "Okay."

So we were just drifting, drifting, and there was no wind! You could hear nothing in the ocean except for the waves hitting the outrigger: "Kechah, kechah, kechah, kechah." The pounding of the waves on the outrigger is a beautiful, soothing sound and gives you a lazy, sleepy feeling when you are on a canoe. I guess that's what happened with all of us; we fell asleep on the canoe.

So early the next morning just before dawn, Piailug said, "Well, Lino. Think again. There is still no wind. You know, it's almost daylight now, and we still have no wind. How are we doing on coconuts and other provisions?"

I said, "Oh, we don't have much left, but it will be enough to get us to Satawal." But if we missed Satawal, that would be the end of us!

Piailug said, "Well, we have the option to go back to Pikelot and replenish our provisions and then continue on our way. Lino, it's up to you."

So I looked and looked, and I said, "Well, right now I think we're closer to Pikelot than to Satawal, but I would rather continue on to Satawal."

He said, "Well, you're the boss."

"Okay, we'll continue."

So the crew started paddling. Of course I paddled, too, because I was not a navigator. Piailug was sitting on the leeward platform for navigators, but I was just one of the crew, even though I was the one setting the course. So we paddled. This was early in the morning, around five-thirty. It was already daylight by then. So we paddled and paddled and paddled and paddled and paddled. By eight o'clock, nine o'clock, Piailug said, "Heh! Everybody take a break! Let's have breakfast." So we all ate a little bit of coconut and turtle and fish. And Piailug asked, "Well, what do you think, Lino? Do you still think we should continue on to Satawal, or what?"

"Yeah, I think so. I think maybe by later this afternoon we should have some wind."

"Okay."

So we paddled and paddled and paddled. About one, two o'clock, Piailug said, "Okay! We'll have lunch." We broke again for lunch. And he asked me again the same question. And I looked and I looked, and it was just beautiful weather! Hardly any clouds—and that's a bad sign. It means no winds, just very calm weather.

I said, "I think we're about halfway between Satawal and Pikelot. I think we should continue."

"You're the boss! Should we take down the sail and paddle or just leave the sail up?" He was asking because the sail is in the way when you're paddling.

I said, "No, leave the sail up. I'm sure that by early this afternoon we're going to have a little bit of wind." That was my opinion.

Well, come that afternoon, there was no wind. Come that night, there was no wind. Finally, I said, "Well, take down the sail."

So we took down the sail, and Piailug added, "And secure it."

I said, "Oops!" That was a hint! Piailug was telling me we were going to be a long time paddling. We paddled. We paddled and paddled and paddled and paddled. Come next day we paddled and paddled and paddled. In fact, one of our paddles broke, we were working so hard. I finally realized there would be no wind, and we had to paddle for three days and nights to reach Satawal.

Smooth sailing with light winds and a calm sea.

It was supposed to be a trip of only a few hours sailing downwind, but we paddled and paddled for three days and three nights. I think we saw Satawal on our third night, but it took us another day to actually get there. And we paddled all the way. We paddled in through the reef all the way up to the beach, that's how calm it was—hardly any waves and no wind at all. What blisters on my hands! And I was so sunburned I was black. The fish was spoiled but we brought it in anyway; they have a way of cooking spoiled fish by wrapping it in leaves.

So that was one experience. Another similar one was with Piailug's younger brother, Urupa. Our navigators are amazing people. For example, Urupa has problems with night vision but can nonetheless navigate out in the ocean at night with such accuracy! He can tell exactly where we are. "Look in front, a little below the mast. Land should be appearing there right now." And yes, indeed, soon we could see the land and sailed right on in.

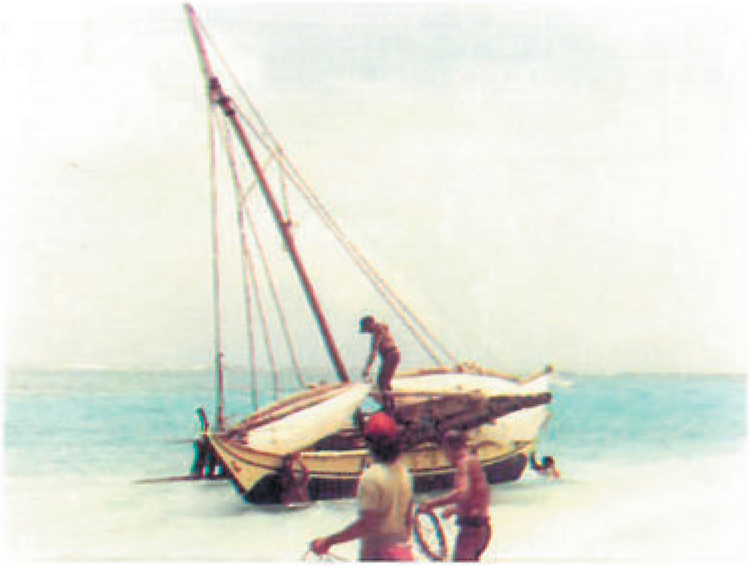
Out with Urupa one time, there was nothing but rain and rain and rain for almost a week, four or five days of nothing but rain, thunder, and lightning. We had gone to West Fayu for fishing, and it rained on the way back. And the chief wanted us to check if the turtles were coming up to lay their eggs, since it was close to that time. The chief sent us to check the turtle tracks.

On that particular trip, the star Aremwoy (Arcturus) was getting ready to rise, indicating bad weather. The way it appears on the eastern horizon gives an indication about what the weather will be, and it predicted a storm. We had nothing but rain for almost a week; because of Aremwoy we knew it was coming.

Anyway, we went to West Fayu, but we didn't bring enough food, because we had just planned on trolling around the island and checking on the turtles. If there were no turtles, we were just to catch whatever fish we could and return without actually staying on West Fayu. We were to just go fish, fish, fish, and come back. That's why we didn't bring many provisions, just enough to get us there and back. We were aware of the approach of Aremwoy and what that meant, so we didn't plan to stay.

Anyway, when we were out trolling, catching a lot of good fish, we saw white caps from some strong wind. We were on the eastern side of West Fayu, going up and down the reef, and the end of the mast, the *meschemesch*, broke and the whole sail came tumbling down. Yikes! I looked out to the east, and there was nothing but open ocean and white caps, and our canoe was damaged! I looked to the west toward the island and saw the reef right next to us! The opening of the reef that would give us safe passage to the island was about a quarter of a mile away. If we didn't do something quickly, the wind was going to push us aground on the reef, and that would be the end of the canoe and the crew. We could probably swim in, but we'd be stranded on West Fayu. We got stranded on West Fayu, anyway, because of bad weather.

When the top of the mast broke and the sail fell, we quickly made a small mini-sail from what was left and cruised along the reef. We barely cleared the reef because of the shape of our makeshift sail. We were so close to the reef that I was afraid the wind would push us up on it; we had to paddle to keep clear. We went through the reef at the southeastern side of the island. As soon as we came in, we jumped off and started bringing in the canoe. We paddled part of the way because it was not as rough inside the lagoon, but we also had to pull, and it was a heavy canoe. When we got in, Urupa said, "Bring the canoe up and cover it, because we're going to have bad weather." So we did as he said. Then Urupa said, "Well, we'll start working on the *meschemesch* right away. We'll probably start having bad weather by tonight." And sure enough, that evening we had strong winds and heavy rain.



Landing at West Fayu. Note the meschemesch, *the curved piece of wood lashed to the top of the canoe's mast.*

I tell you, I was scared when the *meschemesch* broke. I thought, "This is it! We're going to die!" I kept looking at the waves as we were getting close to the reef. I kept shouting, "Urupa! Urupa! We better hurry up and paddle this thing!" He said, "How can you paddle this big canoe? We have to fix it." Everybody was running around trying to use the mini-sail to keep us off that reef in the strong wind and waves.

The *meschemesch* was finished the next day, but we couldn't leave. The winds had already picked up, and we knew we couldn't reach Satawal before the storm hit us. So we stayed there. We ended up staying on West

Fayu for about a month. We stayed there, and we ran out of provisions. We ate coconuts, and after eating coconuts day in and day out, you get tired of them. So we started eating other things; one was a fruit called *leel* that smelled bad, and I threw it up when I ate it. We ate fish, but soon we had to eat it without rice or breadfruit or taro. The others were having a great time, because they were used to that kind of food, but not me. Even with an abundance of fish and coconuts, I got tired of the diet. If I had been a small child, I would probably have cried, "Oooh! Urupa! Take me back home!" But I was a man and had to put up with it. We caught clams, and we caught lobsters, and that gave me a little variety and helped keep me going. But I tell you, if I'd been a kid, I would have cried my heart out to go back to Satawal or to have some rice!

Lino and Juanito with West Fayu in the background.

Even when the weather let up, we decided to stay and fish. We smoked some for about a month. As we were preparing the canoe to leave, a turtle came into the lagoon at a shallow sand bar on the north side of the island. We all just ran and ran and grabbed the turtle, threw it up on the canoe, and left. We left for Satawal loaded with fish, lumber, and one turtle.

We had lumber because of a ship that had run aground on West Fayu loaded with cars and trucks. Some of the cars still started, and some of the radios still worked. Urupa had decided to go there and get some lumber for a shed for drying copra, so we collected what lumber we could from that ship.

So the canoe was filled with fish, one turtle, and a bunch of lumber as we headed back for Satawal. That meant it was heavy; it was loaded. And that night it started to rain. The next morning we were close, but it was so overcast and rainy we could barely see West Fayu. The canoe hardly moved; it was dragging in the water because of all the food and lumber. We kept the sail up, and we also paddled.

The trip from Pikelot to Satawal had been nothing but sun. At nighttime we froze, but during the day we roasted. We could almost feel the heat of the sun even before dawn and the stars started to clear away. I didn't know I was dark from the sun until someone told me, "Oh yes! You're dark!"

I said, "What do you mean? I've been dark all my life!" But I was very black from the sun.

This trip, though, was nothing but rain. My fingertips wrinkled and my lips turned blue. What a trip—first the *meschemesch* breaking, then almost running up on the reef, managing in the storm, and putting up with boring food on the island! I can sit back now and laugh at it all, but it wasn't fun then. Yet if I need to rely on those skills in situations like that, at least I am more prepared than I used to be. I can almost go out on the mountain here on Saipan and find things to eat, some edible roots and leaves, and survive until I find decent food.

Anyway, we paddled in the rain and thunder and lightning. It was scary! It felt like the thunder was right next to me in the canoe. It sounded like dynamite or a bomb or something. When the lightning struck the water, we could see the flash just a few hundred feet from the canoe. I looked at the canoe. I looked at myself. "Am I all right?" The lightning had come; I hadn't felt it and I wondered, "Am I still alive?" I looked at the crew. "Hey! You guys all right?" This was after I saw lightning in the water. I thought I was the only one to have seen it because the others were just quietly and calmly paddling the canoe. They didn't seem concerned. For me, though, this was my first experience with thunder and lightning in a canoe. I kept asking, "Urupa! Urupa! What is that? You see that lightning over there? Is it always like this?"

"Yes, it's always like that. Just keep paddling." I would continue paddling. Then thunder sounded again. "Gosh, I think that came from in front of the canoe! I'll tell Urupa."

The guys cracked up. They said, "Lino, it's very far away."

"No, no, no. I don't think so. I think it's right in front of the canoe." When the next one came, I said, "I think that one is by the outrigger!" I tell you, I was never so scared in my life. But I swallowed my fear and paddled just like the rest of them. But if there had been a cave I could jump into and hide, I would probably have been the first one in! What an experience!

Anyway, we made it back safely to Satawal. When you're in the midst of *riyáfew*, hardship or suffering, you think, "This is it! No more! I'm not going to go on any more canoe trips." On that earlier trip from Pikelot to Satawal I told Piailug, I said, "Piailug, this is it! I think I'll stay on land and learn things from uncles and aunts and that's it! No more canoe trips."

He said, "Okay, okay!" Piailug said, "Okay, okay."

But just a few weeks later, I was saying, "Hey! Piailug! Piailug! Those guys are going fishing. Why don't we launch our canoe and go fishing with them?"

He said, "Oh! Wasn't it just the other day you told me, 'No more canoe voyages for me'?" Piailug laughed. Once when we were drinking, he said, "Lino, it's always like that. I don't know what it is about us men, but we have an old saying that men are *layir úút me yól*, children of the weather, of rain and sun. Men are the children of weather, not really the children of women. We'll always do crazy things. We'll go out and suffer and then we'll go again."

Once when we were drinking, I started poking Piailug. "Hey, Piailug! Those guys are going fishing. Do you want to go?"

He said, "Lino, just the other day you said that was the end for you of canoe trips."

I said, "Oh, I think it is! We may just die on one of those trips."

He said, "Well, that's why our ancestors cried when there was a voyage even just to West Fayu or Pikelot or especially to Saipan, because they knew what could happen. Men are the children of the weather."

On this trip we did make it back to Satawal, but again we had to paddle. I believe it took about four or five days, but I don't remember exactly. There was nothing but rain. We took off our loincloths so that would have something dry to put on later to get warm. We wanted to keep them dry, so we kept them where the navigator sits because it's the only dry spot. So whenever there was a break from the rain, we would quickly dry off. We also chewed on hard coconut meat. We do that when it's cold to keep the jaw moving. Otherwise it could get stuck, frozen from the cold weather, and make it difficult or impossible to talk. Sometimes a man's jaw chatters from the cold, and we believe it can get stuck. Even if you try to massage it, it may be stuck forever.

To try to keep ourselves comfortable and get through the weather, we would massage each other's hands and then work, paddle, stand up and stretch, or dip our fingers in the ocean, which was warm. In the wind we were cold, so we would stick our hands in the water for a while to warm them. We took turns massaging, and we took turns paddling.

When we took a break, I would say, "Me first!" I was the first to lie down for a massage, and they laughed. I said, "Oh! That feels good!"

Then someone would say, "That's enough. My turn!" Massage, massage. "Paddle time!" Then we went back to paddling.

I tell you, that weather! The reef at Satawal was very close, and the wind started to blow. The wind started to blow, and one of my friends, who was holding the sail, said, "This crazy wind! We don't need this wind! We've arrived at Satawal. The reef is just right there. We don't need this wind! And this stupid canoe won't even go very fast. I'm going to pull the sail in and run this canoe up on the reef and wreck it!" He started pulling the sail in, and the wind picked up speed, making the outrigger start to pull up. We picked up speed, and we were getting closer to the reef. We couldn't go through the reef because we weren't at the channel. "I'm going to get us through that reef one way or another. Stupid wind! We don't need that wind!"

Then Urupa scolded him; he said, "Lamalugh, don't talk like that!" In the end, we arrived safe and sound back on Satawal.

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1. Some of the works describing canoes and navigation include Gladwin (1970), a study of navigation on nearby Polowat Atoll, and Lewis (1994), a study of Pacific navigation more generally.

2. Lino Olopai and Raphael I. Rangamar played a key role in the revival of the *ppwo* ceremony. See Chapter VII for details.

3. *Sághi* is a mat made out of woven pandanus and is used primarily for sleeping. When this mat is used in conjunction with teaching special kinds of knowledge, however, such as navigation, canoe building, massage, etc., it becomes sacred and should not be used for sleeping until the teaching has

been completed.

4. On canoe “A’linga” were Mau Piailug, Lino Olopai, Henry Yarofalpiy, Alphonso Reilug, Augustine Sarumai, Peter Sarumai, and Tony Urumeyang. On canoe “Santory” were Alamai, Leo Refal, Isidore Metewalur (Paitae), and Luis Raicheilam (Maton).

Chapter V
Negotiating Saipan's Future

Lino's interest in pursuing his ancestral roots developed during a politically volatile period in Micronesia in general and the Northern Marianas in particular. For several hundred years Saipan and its neighbors had been under colonial rule—Spanish, German, Japanese, and then American—but during the 1970s, the Chamorros and Carolinians engaged in future status negotiations with the United States.[1] *Saipan had been part of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands since the end of World War II, but in 1962 Saipan and the other Northern Marianas joined the rest of the Trust Territory, including the Central Carolines, under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, and Saipan became the capital of the entire Trust Territory. Guam, in the southern Marianas, however, remained a separate political entity.*

As a trusteeship under the United Nations formed in the wake of World War II, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was entitled to eventual self-determination and the possibility of independence. Because of Chamorro cultural connections with Guam, there was considerable Northern Marianas interest in reunification with Guam after the war. Carolinians, however, opposed reunification since they had few connections with Guam; their ties were with people elsewhere in the Trust Territory. In the 1950s political parties on Saipan emerged around this issue, with the Popular Party in support of reunification with Guam and the Progressive Party (later the Territorial Party) in support of Carolinian interests and against joining with Guam, preferring to deal directly with the U.S. The majority of Saipan voters, however, favored reunification, and efforts to reunify continued through the 1950s and 1960s. The United Nations Trusteeship Council, however, disapproved of any district separating from the Trust Territory and conducting separate negotiations about future status. They preferred that the Trust Territory remain a united Micronesian entity. Furthermore, to the dismay of Chamorros in the Northern Marianas, Guamanians voted in 1969 to reject reunification with the northern islands, an area they considered backward and undeveloped. In contrast, a majority of Northern Marianas voters again favored reunification, although the Carolinians instead supported a freely associated state and stronger ties with Central Carolinians elsewhere in the Trust Territory.

Those on Saipan interested in reunification with Guam were also *opposed to the Congress of Micronesia, established in 1964 to be responsible for making laws and policy and for negotiating the area's future political status. Northern Mariana Chamorros saw themselves as much closer to Guam than to the other parts of Micronesia, and they wished to avoid becoming a minority voice as just one of six districts represented in the Congress of Micronesia. In the end, however, they had no choice.*

Future political status negotiations began in 1968, and many members of the Congress of Micronesia began discussing the option of independence rather than free association or integration with the U.S. In contrast, a majority in the Northern Marianas wanted some sort of close relationship with the U.S. Therefore when the Congress of Micronesia's Future Political Status Commission took a stand in favor of free association or independence, the Northern Marianas delegates condemned their view. As for the U.S., for strategic reasons its interests at the time lay with the permanent integration of Micronesia with the United States. Thus the U.S. offer of commonwealth status in 1970 appealed to many in the Northern Marianas, but not to the rest of the Trust Territory or the Congress of Micronesia.

For many in the Northern Marianas, reunification with Guam or commonwealth status was viewed as the key to attaining goals of U.S. citizenship and a U.S. standard of living. A majority of Northern Marianas people, therefore, were unhappy with the Congress of Micronesia and resented the seeming lack of concern in the Congress for the interests of their district. In 1971 the district legislature even announced interest in seceding from the Trust Territory if necessary in order to achieve its goal of association with the U.S.

Carolinians, however, feared secession. Chamorros, who already held political and economic power, dominated the government in the Marianas. Carolinians were particularly worried about unification with Guam, because it would only increase the power of the Chamorros relative to the Carolinians. Instead of being outnumbered four to one, as they were at the time, they would be outnumbered by twenty to one with the inclusion of Guam's Chamorro population.[2] *Losing connections with the rest of Micronesia—including the Central Carolines—meant losing critical allies. The United Carolinian Association (UCA), formed by a young, educated elite to promote the interests of Carolinians, sent a letter to the Trust Territory High Commissioner expressing concern that their views were not adequately represented. In a letter to Ambassador-at-Large David M. Kennedy, the UCA wrote:*

> *The position historically maintained by the Popular Party*

> (which holds a controlling majority in the Legislature) has been that Saipan and the Northern Mariana Islands should be reunited with Guam and become thereby a part of the Territory of Guam. The reasoning behind this position has been that by becoming a part of the Territory of Guam, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands would be granted U.S. citizenship and would benefit through the application of the United States minimum wage laws, and the result, it is popularly believed, would be swift advancement to a high standard of living for all. This line of reasoning is totally unfounded....
>
> Mr. Ambassador, there is a large group of people on these islands who do not want to be connected with this type of erratic and unthinking leadership. We speak now of the approximately two thousand Carolinians who live on Saipan and the neighboring islands. Our ancestors came from the Caroline Islands and we have linguistic, cultural and family ties with these islands. . . .
>
> We do not hold the position that we have no common interest with the rest of the Trust Territory. We believe that we have a great deal in common. In addition to the cultural and ancestral ties noted above, we believe we have an even greater interest in our common need for time and for education. Simply stated, we need to prepare to meet the outside world on equal terms. We need time for education of ourselves and our youth, time for training in the skills which others already have, time for preparation for meeting other cultures, time for the development of a strong internal economy and time for the development of a truly representative, democratic form of government.
>
> We believe, therefore, that the Trust Territory should remain one political unit and that before any changes are made, the consequences of the step should be carefully weighed. The Congress of Micronesia has taken steps in this direction and we support the decision taken by the Congress as a whole. We believe the present district level elected leadership is misguided and we strongly urge that no decision be reached which separates the Marianas from the rest of the Trust Territory.

The UCA associated itself with the Territorial Party (later the Republican Party), which opposed the Popular Party (the one that favored unification with Guam).

The UCA also supported efforts to promote a strong Carolinian *cultural identity and connections with their ancestral homeland, connections that previously had never been highlighted. So it was in the 1970s that a key element of attempts by the Carolinian community to deal with their minority status and inferior social and economic situation began to stress Carolinian historical priority of settlement on Saipan and continuing connections with those relatives. Carolinians assert rights to prestige because of the 19th-century settlement of the island, which had been uninhabited for decades following the evacuation of the Chamorros.*

In 1970 a monument to Chief Aghurubw, said to have brought the first group of Carolinians to Saipan, was built on Managaha islet (known as Ghalaghal in Carolinian) as evidence in support of the Carolinian position. Building the monument was, in many respects, a political statement, and part of Carolinian efforts to improve their position relative to the Chamorros. According to Carolinian tradition, those who first settled an island have higher rank than later arrivals, and Carolinians believed they had settled an island empty of inhabitants and had priority of settlement over the Chamorros. Therefore, they should have been higher in rank than the Chamorros, who arrived later. Instead, they saw themselves as prone to discrimination and subordination, forced to watch Chamorros prosper. Carolinians were perturbed and resentful of Chamorro assertions of higher status, which inverted the prescribed order of relationships. Since Chamorros put little faith in Carolinian oral tradition and dismissed their claims, the monument was erected to support the Carolinian case. The monument was believed to be more effective evidence than oral tradition and chants. Furthermore, Saipan Carolinians wanted to stress their connections with the Central Carolines and stay united with the rest of Micronesia. A united Micronesia made the Chamorros a minority within the larger entity, whereas a separate entity of the Northern Marianas would reinforce the lower social and economic position of Carolinians on Saipan.

A number of other efforts to highlight Carolinian tradition and connections with the homeland developed to "foster unity, historical continuity, and community or ethnic identity" (Alkire 1984:279). These efforts included canoe voyages and heightened contact between Saipan and the Central Carolines (McCoy 1973); in 1974 Lino and another Carolinian family[2] even went to live for awhile in their ancestral homeland so that they could learn some of the practices they believed they had lost. Carolinians wanted to remain politically unified with their ancestral homeland in the Central Carolines rather than separate from the rest of Micronesia to form the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, as eventually happened. Remaining unified was a major objective in efforts to reassert historical and *cultural connections between the two areas.*

The persistence of a strong and viable Carolinian culture was something Carolinians presented as a contrast to Chamorros, who were said to have changed far more than Carolinians and to be lacking a "traditional" culture. These efforts to assert tradition and to mark contrasts with Chamorros were intended to support their social and economic position on Saipan relative to the Chamorros. As evidence for their position, Carolinians even used the name for the island, Seipél, which they say first of all is a Carolinian word—evidence of their priority of settlement: "Why else would the island have a Carolinian name?" Second, they say it means "empty place" (or bowl, land, or voyage), further evidence in their eyes that they arrived before the Chamorros—at least before the Chamorros who repopulated the island.

In the end, however, Saipan and its neighbors negotiated separately from the rest of the Trust Territory and voted to become a Commonwealth of the United States. In 1972 the U.S. agreed to the Northern Marianas' request for separate political status negotiations. During the negotiations, Carolinians continued to oppose commonwealth status; Felix Rabauliman, a founder of the UCA, voiced Carolinian concerns as a member of the Northern Marianas Political Status Commission. A plebiscite to approve the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States was scheduled for June 17, 1975, and Erwin Canham, editor emeritus of the Christian Science Monitor, *was named plebiscite commissioner. Although Carolinians opposed the covenant, and Lino maintains that he was the first to officially vote in opposition to it, the covenant was nonetheless approved by almost 80% of the voters.*

Lino became caught up in these struggles, and during the 1970s he was also party to a lawsuit against the Trust Territory government and Continental Airlines because of his concern with the history and culture of Carolinians. The case, which was eventually dismissed, involved attempts on the part of Continental to build a hotel near Micro Beach. According to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit:

> *Continental applied in 1970 to the Trust Territory government for permission to build a hotel on public land adjacent to Micro Beach, Saipan, an important historical, cultural, and recreational site for the people of the islands. Pursuant to the requirements of the Trust Territory Code . . . Continental's application was submitted to the Mariana Islands District Land Advisory Board for consid-*

> *eration. In spite of the Board's unanimous recommendation that the area be reserved for public park purposes, the District Administrator of the Marianas District recommended approval of a lease. The High Commissioner himself executed the lease on behalf of the Trust Territory government. . . . Following its execution in 1972, the lease was opposed by virtually every official body elected by the people of Saipan. . . . Later in 1972, an action . . . was commenced before the High Court of the Trust Territory to enjoin construction of the hotel.*

For the Carolinians, the beach has special historical and spiritual significance, in part because of its association with the arrival of their ancestors in the early 19th century. In addition to concern about use of the beach, the plaintiffs also worried about the impact on Saipan's water, power, and way of life. They complained that the company originally promised that the hotel would provide its own water and power but then began to use the island's supply. Lino was one of ten plaintiffs[3] *in this attempt, in the midst of future status discussions, to focus on Saipan's heritage and Carolinian ties with their homeland.*

My trip to Satawal took place in the midst of political turmoil. The Northern Marianas wanted to pursue political status negotiations with the United States separate from the rest of the Trust Territory. Soon after that, the people in the Northern Marianas were given the choice of becoming a Commonwealth of the United States. On top of all of that, I was involved in a lawsuit against the Trust Territory government and Continental Airlines. I was desperate to learn about my ancestral roots before I was swept away with all these changes! Shouldn't we know more about both our ancestral heritage and the United States before we could make an informed decision about our future? In order to choose between political affiliation with our relatives elsewhere in Micronesia or independence and a close relationship with the United States, we needed to understand Carolinian custom and tradition and the ways of Americans.

Unfortunately, we knew too little about Carolinian heritage. For example, although I had heard as a child about Aghurubw, the man responsible for bringing our ancestors to Saipan, I had to get to Satawal before I learned very much about him. Just being on Satawal brought up some vague memories of his name from when I was young. I learned very little, though, until I heard about him on Satawal.

Aghurubw was not the only navigator involved in the migration, though his name is the best known. Several other navigators were involved: Piamwon and Nguschul also assisted. The stories vary somewhat from island to island. On Satawal, they said it was just Aghurubw who brought the first group of Carolinians here to settle Saipan. Up on Houk and Pollap, however, they say no, Piamwon and Nguschul were also involved. On Elato, Ifaluk, and Lamotrek, they have a different view, but I don't know the details.

I do know that Carolinians sailed up and settled Saipan because of a big typhoon and tidal wave that hit the Central Carolines. There was no warning at all, and the islanders didn't know what to do to survive. Several months after that, once they had gathered canoes, they came up north. I wouldn't be surprised if that's when all three of the navigators gathered on West Fayu before coming to Saipan. Most of the stories I've heard in the Central Carolines say that they all three came and that Aghurubw was the one who went to Guam. The other navigators were afraid to go to Guam and wanted to go to Saipan instead. They knew that there were no more Chamorros there and nobody was on Saipan. I believe the name for Saipan, Seipél, came along before Aghurubw and Piamwon came. It was a name given by other navigators that sailed up. So there were other navigators before Aghurubw who were familiar with the Marianas.

Other stories tell of Mwaraar, who came after Aghurubw, Piamwon, and Nguschul. I believe he was from Houk. He had knowledge of spirits and magic so powerful that his name was well and widely recognized. Some of the stories about Mwaraar say he received his navigational skill and knowledge of magic and spirits from an old man in Yap. This old man in Yap possessed such tremendous knowledge that nobody could touch him. If you came for medicine, he would give it to you. He would say, "What's wrong with you?" He'd give you medicine. And he was very good. Mwaraar got knowledge from him and added it to his own, so he became very strong. Some of the stories say that when he walked around, he wouldn't mingle with people because of his strength. And when some men were up in trees getting breadfruit and they heard him coming, they said, "Mwaraar! Mwaraar!" They shouted and called out his name even before he came to them. "If that's you, please wait! Wait! Let me get down from the breadfruit tree!" Otherwise they would fall down when Mwaraar approached—that's how strong he was. I think they're exaggerating; I don't know. Some of the stories say that if a bird flew over his forehead (and a navigator's forehead is very respected), the bird would fall down dead. I don't know if you want to believe that or not!

The forehead or head of a navigator is very well respected. You don't talk about that part of a navigator's body or his eyes directly. We use other names for those areas, respectful terms. You can use the ordinary word for your younger brother or your sister and say, "Watch your eye! You may get hurt!" You have to address other people differently because of our respect customs. You have to use the respectful term for "eye."

So anyway, Mwaraar came to Saipan. After Aghurubw, he came and he continued to take food to the outer islands. That's when we started to have other people come and settle on Saipan. We started to have people from Woleai, Lamotrek, and these places—I think even Houk, Pollap, Tamatam, Onoun, and Piserach, those places. This was also a time when navigational skill and knowledge of spirits were strong. Belief in our spirits was stronger than the religion introduced by outsiders. This was the time when missionaries were trying to impose their religious beliefs, but the people in the Central Carolines were pretty much left alone. So the gods they had were in the spirit world that they believed in. People continued to offer food to those spirits. If someone were going to build a canoe, he would take food to the breadfruit tree and give it to the spirit of the tree so that the spirit would help build the canoe. The Carolinians at that time were close to nature and the spirits. Carolinians—especially navigators—acknowledged and respected spirits in the ocean and animals in the ocean.

Mwaraar performed heroic feats. We have two streams on Saipan that come down from the mountain to the ocean. One is Saduk Tasi, and the other is Saduk Mamis. The Chamorros have no history or even a legend about how those two streams came about, but the Carolinians do. And our story is about Mwaraar. The story is still told on the outer islands today. Mwaraar had such powerful magic—medicine—he was more or less a superman. He came to Saipan to get provisions to take to the outer islands, but he could only carry so much because the canoe was very small. The islanders couldn't load too many coconuts or else the canoe would sink, so they tied the coconuts together for Mwaraar to tow behind him. Other navigators had also towed a lot of coconuts from Saipan to the Central Carolines. Just imagine doing that on a sailing canoe! No wonder it took them months and months to make a one-way voyage. Today we can do it in 12 days, 15 days, maybe seven days. The last trip took only seven days—a record!

So when Mwaraar arrived, he and the others went inland because there were hardly any coconut trees out on the beach. Most were at the base of the mountain instead. So the men carried the coconuts out, put them on the beach, and tied them together. But Mwaraar, he collected and collected. He collected tons and tons of coconuts and piled them up as high as a house.

He collected them and called the other men to help him. He got tired of calling them, though, and he said, "Oh, forget it." He called a fish, a *tcheileil*, one that burrows into the sand. It's very delicious and very soft, a bluish, greenish, yellowish fish with a little bit of black. It has a flat head and a little mouth. Mwaraar called on the fish to come and burrow into the sand to make an opening all the way to where the coconuts were. And the fish did just that. Because of his magic, Mwaraar was able to call on the fish. It wasn't just one fish, but plenty of them. Saduk Tasi was formed; that's how Saduk Tasi came about. Once the opening was made, Mwaraar just dumped all his coconuts in the stream, and the current took them out, all the way out to where his canoe was anchored. So they tied the coconuts together to take them to Satawal.

Another time he came to Saipan, he moved further up toward Tanapag (Talaabwogh in Carolinian). Saduk Tasi had been made first. The second stream he made was what the Chamorros call Saduk Mamis today. It happened the same as before; Mwaraar went and collected, collected, collected, collected coconuts, and again he called the fish. The fish came and they made the stream, which became Saduk Mamis. Those are some of the legends of Mwaraar and how strong and powerful he was. I don't know if the Chamorros have a legend about Saduk Tasi and Saduk Mamis. The history of the Northern Marianas has no record of one.

Other evidence of Carolinian presence in the Marianas comes from other place names. Guam is named after a part of the canoe, *aamw* (supports connecting the outrigger float to the outrigger booms). When our sailors first sighted Guam, the island appeared at that part of the canoe. That is some of the evidence of historical ties between the Carolines and the Marianas. We traveled even all the way up to Hawaii, Tchuliyól (Tinian), Saipan, all the way up to Lóngeiraw. Lóngeiraw consists of three islands—small ones, not as big as Saipan. They are shaped like the rocks for supporting a pot over a fire. *Lóóng* is a support, and *raaw* is a pot.

Tchuliyól is another Carolinian term, and it's the name for Tinian. When the navigators before Aghurubw first saw Tinian, it was probably in the afternoon. It was not really overcast, but the clouds hid the sun, and a ray of the sun would come through. One ray went all the way to Tinian. *Tililiyól* is a ray of the sun, and from *tililiyól* we have Tchuliyól. That's the name for Tinian on Saipan. It went from *tililiyól* to Tchuliyól to Tinian. It's like other Carolinian names. Harabwal, the place where Aghurubw landed, became Arabwal and then Garapan.

Luuta is now Rota. When they first saw Luuta, the island was behind them. They passed it going up north. So *luutá* in Carolinian is something that you pass going north or going east. *Tá, téétá* is to get up, go east, or go north. *Luutiw* is west or south. So when they first saw Rota, it was already behind them. They had already passed Luuta, so they said, "There is an island over there. It's behind us. *Saa luutá, luutá*. Luutá, an island over there. There's an island over there."

Because of our close connections with the Central Carolines, I did not want to see us become separated into two different political entities. I worked with the United Carolinian Association in efforts to keep us together with our relatives in the Central Carolines. This started before I went to Satawal. I was in Honolulu when I first heard about the United Carolinian Association, an association just for Carolinians. I was in Honolulu because of a special project between the Trust Territory and the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, an attempt to develop a common orthography for Micronesian languages. I believe that was about 1970. I was selected to participate. At that time I was responsible for adult education here on Saipan. A friend of mine who was a language teacher on Tinian was responsible for my selection. She said, "Lino, look, nobody applied for this, so that means nobody will represent Carolinians. We need somebody from the Carolinian community. You need to apply."

So I said, "Well, let me fill out an application." I filled out an application because I strongly believed that somebody should go. It might have been the very day they were closing the applications. Anyway, I was selected and sent to Honolulu to help with that project.

While I was there, I started reading in the paper about the United Carolinian Association (UCA) organized by the Carolinian community. One of the purposes of the organization was to promote Carolinian customs and traditions and to protect the interests of Carolinians in the Northern Marianas. It was not supposed to be a political group. I was glad about its purpose, because I always felt that unified Carolinians would be in a better political position for bargaining. The two political parties at the time were the Popular Party, which later became the Democratic Party, and the Territorial Party, which later became the Republican Party. Now we have Republicans and Democrats, but back then we had the Popular Party and the Territorial Party. I was happy to hear the United Carolinian Association had been created, and I was looking forward to joining it when I came back. I eventually became an active member.

Even though it was a Carolinian group, the organization was based on a very Western model with bylaws, elected officers, and rules of order for meetings. Since I was young and had senior cousins and uncles in the association, it wasn't appropriate according to our tradition for me to speak out very strongly. I rarely spoke up, but when I did, people seemed to be interested in what I was saying even if they didn't agree. I spoke up because I was concerned even then about our heritage. After all, that's why I had joined. I wasn't interested in politics but in Carolinian affairs. At the time I hadn't even decided on a political party. I had made no commitment to either the Territorial or the Popular Party. I was a Carolinian, so I became a member of the United Carolinian Association. We had many meetings and a number of projects.

Members of the United Carolinian Association meet with Ambassador Williams. From left: Domonina Fitial Olopai, Felix M. Rabauliman, Ambassador Hadyn Williams, Jay Stewart, Juaquina M. Rabauliman, and Dr. Benusto R. Kaipat. Photo taken circa the mid-1970s.

Something made me angry, though, and I eventually withdrew from the group and stopped going to meetings. I became frustrated with how political the organization became; it was heavily Republican and critical of Democrats. Democrats weren't welcome. Carolinians were Republicans, with only a very few Democrats. During campaigns the United Carolinian Association was critical of Democrats. I felt that we shouldn't be discussing political issues. I thought that political parties should be separate from an organization of Carolinians. The United Carolinian Association should have been promoting the interests of Carolinians regardless of their political preference.

I was still involved, though, when the Northern Marianas separated from the rest of Micronesia. Our leaders in the Northern Marianas had decided that we would be in a better position if we separated ourselves from the rest of Micronesia and pursued separate status negotiations. They felt that their counterparts from the other districts of Micronesia were hampering us, and that if we separated ourselves we would have a better chance of pursuing our interests through separate status negotiations with the United States.

I worked to get this issue on the agenda of meetings of the United Carolinian Association. I said, "Look, whatever topics we have on the agenda today, can we put them on hold? I believe the United Carolinian Association should address this issue of separation from the rest of Micronesia. It's one of the most important issues facing us right now." I said that regardless of our political preferences or the type of government we wanted to have, we shouldn't separate ourselves from our relatives in the Central Carolines. We were together and had a Congress of Micronesia representing the people of all the districts. Many were hoping for an independent Micronesia, but some American advisors said, "Well, why don't you think about a freely associated state or commonwealth status?" We had several options, though when we started, we hoped for independence. I was all for that. I said, "Look. It will be a struggle, but in the end we'll be responsible for ourselves. We'll plant our own taro." But I was not in the Congress of Micronesia or in a position to have much influence.

During the United Carolinian Association meeting in which we finally addressed the separation issue, I said, "Whatever our political preference may be, we should address this issue. I see us being separated from our relatives in the Central Carolines. My ancestral roots are there. I cannot see myself saying that I am not part of the Central Carolines, that I'm not part of Satawal or Ulithi or Woleai or Chuuk or Pollap or Houk. Because that's not true. I am from there. My roots are there. And to tell the world that the Northern Marianas people are in favor of separation—that's not true. I don't want to separate from our ancestral roots and claim that we are different from those people. So let's put our political preferences aside and talk about the separation issue and whether or not it's beneficial for Carolinians. I feel that this organization should address this issue. And we should oppose it. We should oppose it because our ancestral roots are in the Central Carolines, and we should not separate ourselves from them. If we are truly to be recognized as Carolinian, then we must remain together. We must not cut the umbilical cord."

So they talked about it. They said, "What can we do? We don't know what type of government would be best. We don't know what type of government the other districts want to pursue. We think the idea of pursuing our own negotiations will help us." This was how some of them were reasoning.

None of the other districts really knew what sort of governing arrangement they wanted. During the meeting I said, "Well, it's not that. Please, please. Understand it's not that. I just don't think it's a good idea to separate ourselves from our families in the Central Carolines. This body is in a position to speak to that issue. We could prepare a letter for our chairman to sign and put in the local paper. We could have it printed or make a statement on television and radio that the United Carolinian Association, representing a minority group in the Northern Marianas, opposes the separation because we are Carolinian and oppose separation from the Central Carolines, our homeland."

I had three heroes in the Congress of Micronesia: Anton Amaraich and Tosiwo Nakayama from Chuuk and John Mangefel from Yap. They cared very much for the people and worked for them. Anton Amaraich, for example, said he was concerned that the views of the Carolinians were not adequately considered during the talks about separating from the rest of Micronesia. And he didn't believe that separation was a good idea. I pointed out that if we stayed together, the Chamorros would be a minority in Micronesia, since they live only in the Northern Marianas and Guam. The majority would be Carolinians. Now with the Northern Marianas separate, Chamorros greatly outnumber Carolinians.

Anyway, I voted against commonwealth status during the plebiscite. This happened when I came from Satawal to pick up my wife. This was at the time people were to vote on what type of government they would like. Even though it was nice that we were given that chance to decide, for me personally it was very scary. I grew up in a very traditional family, and I knew something about our culture, and I knew that I was a Carolinian. Then all of a sudden, they wanted us to choose whether or not we wanted to join the United States. I wanted to look into my ancestral roots before I made a decision like that.

I had come back to pick up my wife and Peter, my youngest son. I wanted my wife to learn about women's roles among Carolinians by living on Satawal. I chose Peter to go also because he was the youngest of my sons. The other three were older then; they had started Western-style schooling, so I thought Peter would be the best choice for a Carolinian education. I was even intending to leave Peter behind on Satawal when my wife and I left so that he could study Carolinians in depth. That would somehow balance the others growing up on Saipan and going to Western schools. But my wife wouldn't agree to that.

I came back to Saipan in 1975, and it was the time of the plebiscite and voting on the covenant. We were given a choice between the Trust Territory and Commonwealth. I knew then that people were going to vote for commonwealth status to become part of the U.S. I had nothing against the U.S., except that I didn't know about the U.S. cultural background and traditions. I didn't even know enough about my own cultural background!

Swearing in of new officers at the Congress of Micronesia. From left John Mangefel, Tosiwo Nakayama, Kaleb Udui, and Bailey Olter. Photo taken circa the late 1960s.

So I came to pick up my wife here on Saipan. As we were getting ready to leave for Satawal, the leaders were setting a date for people to vote. They kept saying that in the following weeks we were going to vote. My wife and I were planning to leave before then, so I looked into using an absentee ballot. I was going to vote against commonwealth status. In fact, I was the first one to vote against commonwealth status. I went down to the office in Gualo Rai and started talking to a friend of mine, Neiman Craley, who was an assistant to the High Commissioner. He said, "You're going back to the outer islands?"

I said, "Yes." I talked to him about my plans to learn about Carolinians and about my objections to commonwealth status.

The man responsible for the plebiscite, Erwin Canham, was not there for me to register and vote, so Neiman said, "Well, why don't you come back tomorrow?" So I went back to the house.

The next day Neiman came down. I don't know how he found out where I was staying because I wasn't at my house; I was temporarily staying at my aunt's house. I was staying there with my wife while making arrangements for the flight to go back to the outer islands. So I don't know how my friend found me. When he arrived, he said, "Lino, we have to go up to the office. Erwin Canham wants to interview you about why you are going to the outer islands. He is interested in your plan to study your ancestral roots."

N. Neiman Craley during the Trust Territory period.

Canham wanted to interview me and send an article back to *The Christian Science Monitor* in the United States. So I went up to his office in Gualo Rai and talked with him. He interviewed me, and we talked and talked and talked and talked. I told him my views about the upcoming plebiscite. I assumed that the majority of the people were going to vote for commonwealth status, but I was against it. I said, "I really don't have anything against it except that I'm not ready for it. It's not so much that I don't understand the American system, but it's more because I don't know enough about my ancestral background. I grew up in a traditional family, but that wasn't enough to get a good understanding of my culture. And now you're giving me a choice? I have to choose between two different cultures, and I don't really understand either one!" Anyway, he wrote all these things down, and we talked and talked and talked and talked. I believe he invited me for lunch, but I turned it down. I said, "No, no, no, I have so many things to do because I'm preparing to leave for Satawal. I think I'll be leaving this weekend." So I asked for an absentee ballot so that I could cast my vote, and he gave it to me.

I was told, "Well, you can go to that corner over there, vote however you want, and drop the ballot in one of those boxes, though I guess you don't really need to do it secretly because we kind of know how you're going to vote!"

I said, "Yes, I'm going to vote against the commonwealth. I'm not ready for it." So right in front of them, I cast my vote against commonwealth status. I folded the ballot and put it in the ballot box.

Neiman Craley took me back home. He was impressed with what I was trying to do and wanted somehow to help. He said, "Lino, I really don't know what to do; I want to help with your plans to study your heritage. Here! I'll write you a check. Will fifty dollars be fine?"

I said, "You don't have to do that."

"Well, I want to help you buy things you need—a tape recorder, pencils, books, pens. I hope this will help you. Good luck on your trip! And keep in touch. Tell me what happens. And I really admire what you're doing. Keep it up! And keep in touch. Okay? Keep in touch. You write!"

I said, "Thank you. I really appreciate your concern and your fifty dollars. It will help me a lot on my trip. Yes, thank you. I will surely be able to use that money; I will get tapes and batteries."

So that's how I was the first one to vote.

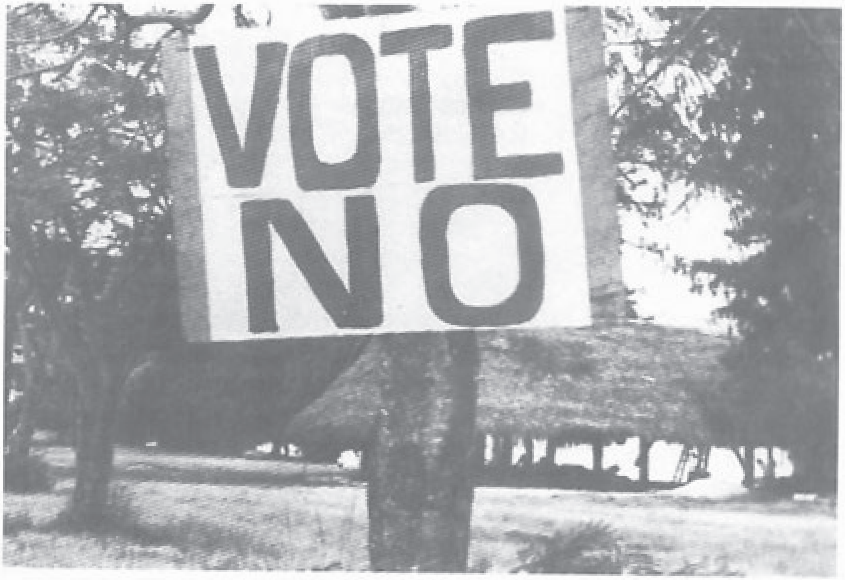
I was very worried about the Northern Marianas, a very small place, becoming part of such a large and powerful nation. American culture is known all over the place. And American history shows how the U.S. has dominated other people throughout the world—the Indians, for example, and the Eskimo. I learned about that when I was part of the adult education program. Leave the Carolinians alone! Micronesia is so small. The Northern Marianas is only part of Micronesia, and even combined with the Chamorro population, we wouldn't be heard or recognized. That's another reason behind my decision. And today even combined with the Chamorros we are a minority on our own island.

A majority of the people in the Northern Marianas, however, voted in the plebiscite to approve the covenant to make us a Commonwealth of the U.S. Felix Rabauliman, who became the first person to head the Carolinian Affairs Office, represented us during the negotiation of the covenant. He didn't sign the covenant, though. Neither he nor Oscar Rasa signed it. If you look at the archives, you'll see that their names are missing. The signing was in Susupe at the Civic Center, where the legislative offices were located at the time. Felix represented the Carolinians, and Oscar Rasa was one of the Chamorros. Neither showed up to sign the covenant. Felix explained in the newspaper that he didn't think we were ready for it. That's what I had been saying from the beginning and during meetings with the United Carolinian Association.

Felix M. Rabauliman, a prominent Carolinian leader, member of the Congress of Micronesia, and Chairman of the United Carolinian Association. Photo circa the late 1960s.

I was a member of the Education for Self-Government task force, because I was with the adult education program. I was involved in education in the area of political affairs, but I didn't know very much about educating people about a commonwealth or becoming part of the United States. All I knew was what I heard our advisors talking about.

Felix was elected as a candidate in designing the covenant. He represented all the Carolinians, not the United Carolinian Association. I wish Felix had made a statement at the time about why he didn't sign. Later on I found out that he had made a statement prior to the ceremony. Before I knew about that, I was talking with him and said, "It's too bad you didn't say anything when you refused to sign the covenant. I felt left in the dark about why you didn't sign."



A sign urging voters to reject Commonwealth status. The traditional Carolinian utt *in the background burned to the ground before the plebiscite. Although the cause of the fire was never determined, many Carolinians suspected that it was politically motivated.*

Felix said, "Oh, but I did make a statement. I made one several weeks before the signing of the covenant. I made a statement, and I believe it was in the paper and on television." If he did make a statement, I didn't see it in the paper or on TV.

"But that was prior to the ceremony." I had been hoping that he would show up at the ceremony, hold up the pen, and say, "My name is Felix

Rabauliman. I'm representing the Carolinian minority group in the Northern Marianas, and I'm not going to sign the covenant because I do not believe that we are ready for it yet," and put down the pen. Something simple like that. It would have been very effective because of the ceremony. It would have been historic. I didn't want to argue with Felix, because it was all in the past. If he had made such a statement, though, it would have had quite an impact, and I would have had enormous respect for him.

I also had reason to be worried because of my experiences as part of a lawsuit against the Trust Territory government and Continental Airlines when what is now the Hyatt Regency was being constructed. They were constructing a hotel and proposing to use part of Micro Beach, which Carolinians call Ppiyal Ooláng, a place with historical and spiritual significance. This process started before I went to Satawal. I was just back from Honolulu where I had been attending a conference, and I believe I was with the Department of Education. This was before I went to Satawal and learned a lot more about Carolinian culture and history. I didn't know why we have *pil*, why women *óppwóró*, or why we have to speak in certain ways to our senior siblings.

At the time I knew a little about the history of Ppiyal Ooláng and Arabwal, which is now called Garapan. Ppiyal Ooláng is a sacred place for Carolinians because it's where our ancestors first arrived to settle Saipan. When they came in to the island, there were no coconut trees along the coast. Arabwal stems from the word *harabwal*, the vine that crawls on the beach. Since there were hardly any coconuts on the beach, the settlers had to walk inland to the base of the mountain before they could find coconut fronds. So when they built a thatched house, they decided to use *arabwal* in place of coconut leaves. So that's how the place became known as Arabwal. Now it's called Garapan.

There are two stories about the name for Ppiyal Ooláng. One story has to do with navigators checking the stars, clouds, sky coloring, and other conditions at sunrise and sunset to determine the weather forecast. They would go out to a sand bar you can walk on during low tide, almost to the reef. Our navigators used to go out there to look at the eastern sky at sunrise. Sunset and sunrise, the times between day and night, provided valuable information about weather conditions. At sunset people on the coast could easily look out toward the ocean, but at sunrise, they went out in order to face the island and look east. Well, the navigators went out at Ppiyal Ooláng. *Wooló* means to look beyond or over the horizon to check the weather. *Wooláng* means to look above, to look up at the horizon. That's what they did in the early morning. *Ppi* means sand or beach, so according to this story, Ppiyal Ooláng means "sand bar where they looked up at the sky."

Another version of the story says that it's named after a navigator called Wooláng, and Wooláng is very close to Ooláng. I really don't know which one is true, whether it was named after a navigator or if it was named for the practice of checking the weather. Now it is called Micro Beach or American Memorial Park!

It is sacred ground for us, however. That's where Carolinian feet first touched ground here, where we established our first residence. That was before we started moving to Chalan Kanoa and Tanapag. Carolinians emigrated from the outer islands to this particular place on Saipan, and it's part of our identity. The place is a sacred place: it's where we left our first footprints, it's where some of our ancestors died, and it's where our first houses were built with *arabwal*. The sacredness was reinforced by *fiirourow*, a custom that involves burning the last bits remaining to a person after he or she has died and been buried. These bits are small articles that belonged to the deceased, and they might be burned a long time after the death and burial, not necessarily right away.

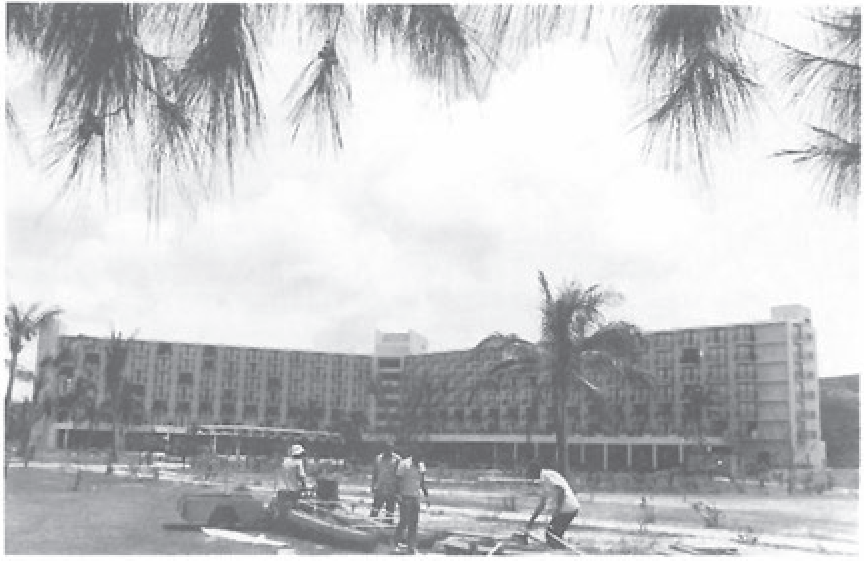
When you die, all your relatives mourn for you. They chant and they wail and they cry and they do *aschíwschíw*, a traditional mourning chant. And they talk about how wonderful you were. Then after you're buried, they look for things that belonged to you. It might be only a cigarette butt. Burial is supposed to be the end, but not for Carolinians. People believe that everything has already been found and buried with the coffin, but they find things later. Whatever they can find after the burial, even some of your hair, will be part of *fiirourow*. They put these things inside a piece of red cloth. We believe that the spirit of a person can come back and communicate with the living, and there are two colors spirits are attracted to: red and black. Spirits are drawn to those colors. So anything your relatives find is put in this red cloth. After the sacred mat, which the body or coffin was laid on and which remains for several days after the body is taken away, is lifted and everyone goes home, this red cloth is kept in the house as though you were still there. The person that died is still there. People address the red cloth as though you were there. That red cloth is medicine for the family. If somebody gets sick, for example, a healer might gather her own medicine and add something extra from the red cloth.

If you were a favorite child, it might be a long time before they burn the red cloth. When they burned it, they burned it on those coral heads that stick out during low tide at Ppiyal Ooláng. If you're not a favorite, they might burn the cloth much sooner. Waiting gives the family time to get over their grief and come to accept that you're gone. Only the body is gone with the burial. The spirit isn't gone until after *fiirourow*. The family waits until people feel they are ready. At first your body is gone, but your spirit is still in the house for a while. In fact, they might even call on you to possess somebody in the family, to communicate with them about a dispute or an illness. When the spirit leaves it's even worse than the death, because that's the end of both body and spirit. That's why those coral heads out in Micro Beach are sacred ground.

When the time comes and the family is ready to accept the loss, then the family conducts *fiirourow*. They take the cloth and its contents, and they pick a very low tide. The whole family is involved; men will go out fishing, people will bring food, and everybody will sit somewhere away from where they're going to burn the cloth. The women, the aunts, usually do the burning. They take the piece of cloth and walk all the way out. Several women go. They want to make sure that every piece turns into ashes. They go all the way out to the end of the reef. They'll place the cloth on top of a rock sticking up at low tide and burn the cloth and wail and cry. It's worse than when you died. Sometimes your spirit appears through the smoke and flames. That makes them cry more. That's the end. They will never see you anymore, with the red cloth gone. They burn the cloth, they cry, and they wail. All the others are sitting on the beach. The women burn the cloth, and then they wait. They sit around and continue to cry. They wait and wait and wait and wait. They wait until the high tide comes and takes all those ashes away. The tide comes in slowly and then takes the ashes. The women want to make sure all the ashes go back out into the ocean and become part of the ocean. They make sure it all burns and turns completely into ashes. This may take several hours, but the women nevertheless wait patiently until it is all finished properly.

When the women have finished, they slowly leave the place, come back ashore, mingle with the other people, eat some food. They also make an offering of food from what we've been eating. If we have a hundred different dishes, they will take out a little bit from each of those hundred dishes and put it in a basket as an offering to the spirits. Carolinians believe that spirits get hungry just the way we do.

Today there are many hotels at Micro Beach, and there is also American Memorial Park, even though this is Ppiyal Ooláng, sacred ground for Carolinians. At the time of the lawsuit Micro Beach was a developed beach with running water and electricity. Other beaches were without running water and electricity. In our lawsuit we wanted to maintain the area for general public use, and we suggested that Continental build its hotel on one of the mountains. Our thinking was that with a hotel on a mountain, the water and electricity there would benefit the local farmers. We wanted to encourage continued use of local resources, the land and the ocean. In addition, I thought we should also emphasize the cultural aspects of the beach and the sacred ground. At the time of the lawsuit, I didn't understand the full significance of the site. I was born and raised here, but I still didn't fully understand. I knew that we did *fiirourow* at Micro Beach, and I knew about the coral. I knew we did *fiirourow*, and I knew the name Ppiyal Ooláng, but there was much that I didn't know. Why did we do *fiirourow*? Why was the place called Ppiyal Ooláng? Why was the town called Arabwal? I didn't learn about these things until I went off to the outer islands to learn about my heritage.



The Continental Hotel (now the Hyatt Regency Hotel) under construction in early 1974. Lino fought unsuccessfully to stop its construction since it was built at Ppiyal Ooláng (Micro Beach) an area that still is historically and culturally significant to the Carolinian community.

The lawsuit involved ten people—often called the ten Robin Hoods. I asked several Carolinian leaders to come testify in the court about the sacred nature of the beach, but they refused because they worked for the government, and the lawsuit was against the government and Continental

Airlines. While the foundation of the hotel was being dug, the company made promises and said things like, "Well, I don't understand why the ten Robin Hoods oppose development and the economic benefits that will come to the island. We promise you that we won't tap your local water. We'll supply our own water. We'll have our own generators. We will hire local people on Saipan to manage the hotel. We'll train them in management." But I believed none of that would happen and that we weren't educated for such work. We lost the court case.

I mention all these promises, though, because I hear similar remarks today with the golf courses that are being built. Saipan is so small, I would think that one or two golf courses would be plenty. But how many do we have now? Coral Ocean Point. Whispering Palms Country Club. There's another one up in Marpi. Another one is planned out in Obyan and another in Kagman. That's at least five. I keep hearing that they plan to hire local Saipan people, but I am very skeptical about that.

Yet soon we had a garment industry introduced on the island. I read recently that we have something like 20 or 30 garment factories on this island. It looks as though we're not developing the Northern Marianas for the Chamorros and the Carolinians; we're developing it for outsiders. Soon we will even have outsiders running for governor and congressman! Our leaders should control development and keep it at a reasonable, acceptable level. They should say, "Well, let's wait and think for a while. Now we have millions and millions of dollars. Let's sit on that for a while and think," instead of saying, "Wow! How much can I get out of this?"

Anyway, we lost the lawsuit. Micronesian Legal Services represented us in the end. That's how I became friends and eventually brothers with Edward King, because he and Ted Mitchell represented us in that lawsuit. Ted was executive director of Micronesian Legal Services, and Edward King was deputy director. As I got to know Ed, he began learning about Carolinians on Saipan. Before that he only knew about Chamorros.

That's how Ed and I became interested in each other. We started to tell stories to each other, and he started to come down to our house on the beach. We invited Ed and his family, and they would bring their daughters. Our families became very close, and Ed learned a lot about Carolinians from his time with us.

I was a member of the United Carolinian Association at the time, and Ed kept asking me, "Lino, when are you going to introduce me to the United Carolinian Association?"

I said, "I will. I will." For quite some time it really wasn't appropriate because most of the time we talked just about our tradition and our culture.

There wasn't really a role for a lawyer.

Eventually that changed, however, and I thought we needed the advice of a lawyer. There was a project they wanted to become involved in, and I thought we should have some advice. I'd ask members of the United Carolinian Association, but they kept saying they could handle things themselves, that they didn't need to bring in a lawyer. When we were having meetings, I kept thinking we should have a lawyer, but members of the United Carolinian Association said, "No, the issue at hand is not so critical that we need a lawyer right now."

At that time the United Carolinian Association was trying to create a cultural center here on Saipan similar to the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii, but we didn't have any money. The United Carolinian Association and a Japanese company were negotiating, and a meeting was scheduled at Hafadai Hotel to finalize the contract. I was so nervous. I said, "Before we sign ourselves and our land off to that company, we should get some legal advice. We should have a lawyer look at the contract." It didn't have to be Ed, but I thought a lawyer should take a look at the contract. What if we were giving away our land? Could others successfully sue us later for giving up the land? Could the individual members of the United Carolinian Association be held responsible if something went wrong? Could we be sued for repayment of what the Japanese company was investing?

The way I remember it, the Japanese company was going to put up more than half the money and the United Carolinian Association was to fund the rest. Each of us was to decide how many shares we wanted, and the leaders wanted us all to sign promissory notes. Each member of the association was expected to have money deducted from his paycheck to pay for the shares. But I was so worried about that! I didn't want to do that! I was also worried about repaying the Japanese company if things didn't work out. I also disliked a clause that said that in the event that the cultural center fell through, the money could be used for some other project the United Carolinian Association found appropriate. I wanted my money to be used for the cultural center, not for some other nameless project. If the cultural center didn't materialize, I wanted my money back!

So at a meeting when they talked about this I raised my hand to talk and mentioned my objections. But as soon as I started to talk, my cousin, who is senior to me, tried to quiet me down. "Ah, Lino, just forget it. Sit down and go along with us. You talk too much!" I whispered to him about my concerns and tried politely to raise them at the meeting, but he discouraged me. When they canvassed the members, however, asking about the amount of the payroll deductions, I said that I would rather wait and make my entire contribution at the end of the year instead of having it taken regularly out of my paycheck.

I also thought that we should have started out with a smaller project than what was being planned. I had a couple of plots of land in mind. I suggested a small place in Garapan with the idea of expanding later to Managaha Island. What was being planned, however, was a grandiose project on maybe 20 hectares of land in Kagman or Chalan Laulau.

I thought we needed the help of a lawyer, but the leaders told me they could handle things themselves. "It's all right. We can handle it ourselves; we don't need a lawyer." They were very well educated, having been through Western-style formal schooling. This was awkward for me because they were senior to me and I also didn't have much formal schooling, certainly not as much as they had.

I was so very nervous about potential pitfalls. I didn't want to insult them, so I tried explaining, "I'm not saying that you are incapable, but I would feel more comfortable if someone with legal training looked at the contract."

The meeting to finalize the contract was scheduled at the Hafadai Hotel the next day. I was so nervous! I kept trying to hold them off. I said, "Look! I have a friend. His name is Edward King. He just lives right up the street. I can run up there and bring him down. He may have some useful advice for us." It was nine or ten o'clock in the evening, but nevertheless, I was ready to run and bring him down to the meeting right then.

They said, "Don't worry about it."

I said, "Look, it will take only a few minutes just to run up and get him." But they wouldn't let me do it. They went ahead and agreed at the meeting that they would sign the contract. I was so nervous, though, and I said, "Can other members come and attend the meeting at the hotel?"

They said, "Yes, you and other members may come, but just to observe."

"Can we bring guests?"

"Yes, you may bring guests. You may bring guests, but you must pay for lunch for you and your guest."

I said, "That's fine. Okay. What time is the meeting?"

Next morning I went charging over to the Micronesian Legal Services office, which was very close to where I lived. I went over as soon as I knew the office would be open. Poor Ed was right in the middle of a lot of work. Books were all over the place—the floor, the desk, everywhere.

"Ed, I have a problem. I don't know what to do."

"What is it? What's your problem?"

"Remember the United Carolinian Association that you keep asking me to introduce you to?"

"Yes."

"Well, we're having a meeting today, this afternoon, at the Hafadai Hotel, and they're going to finalize a contract about the cultural center that I've been telling you about. I've been trying to get them to let you come to some of the meetings, but they always say, 'Forget it! We don't need legal advice at this time.' Well, today, this afternoon, they're going to sign the contract."

"Yes? What's wrong with that? Is there a problem?"

I said, "Well, I think we should have some legal advice about it to make sure we aren't creating problems for ourselves, but they keep saying they don't want a lawyer involved, that they can handle it themselves. I want you to come to the meeting as my guest. I would feel more comfortable if a lawyer at least sat in on the discussion to make sure we don't sign our land away or put ourselves in a position to be sued."

"Oh, that's no problem. I'd be more than happy to come as your guest."

I said, "Well, there's another problem." I didn't want him to have to pay for the lunches, but I had no choice. I knew he would offer to pay, but I was uncomfortable about it because I had asked him to be my guest and I knew that he wanted to meet the United Carolinian Association. I had no choice, even though I felt awkward.

Ed knew something was bothering me, and he asked, "What's your problem?"

"I don't have any money for lunch."

Ed said, "Forget about that. I'll treat you. I'll pay for our lunches."

"Oh, thank you, thank you!"

Sure enough, that afternoon we went to the meeting. Ed and I were just sitting behind the negotiators while they were talking and talking and talking, going over the contents of the contract. When there was a part of it that someone didn't understand, he looked up and asked, "Well, what do you think, Mr. King?" He put Ed on the spot.

Then Ed looked at him. He looked at me. And we looked at each other. He said, "I'm here just as an observer."

"Well, you came for this meeting, didn't you?" This came from one of the members.

"Yes, we came for the meeting."

"So, what do you think of this?"

I whispered to Ed and encouraged him to go ahead and take a look at the contract. Ed stood up and went over and looked at it. During a break he had a chance to read through it and then said, "There are a number of things to be discussed in this contract." We ended up not signing that contract. Boy, was I relieved!

And that's how Ed was introduced to the United Carolinian Association. From then on Ed was invited to many meetings and asked for his advice. How ironic! Ed was informed of more meetings than I was! I found out about this, because Ed would ask, "How come you weren't at last night's meeting?"

"What meeting?" I would ask. At least I was comfortable that the United Carolinian Association was getting legal help from Ed.

Edward "Ed" King at his desk circa the mid-1970s. Ed provided Lino and the United Carolinian Association (UCA) with legal advice on a variety of issues in the 1970s.

Ed and I became close, and I finally told him about my plans to go to the outer islands. We were brothers, and when he left the island he even gave me his car. It was old but still in excellent condition.

Ed and I talked about appealing the lawsuit decision to the district court in Honolulu. I was going to appear and testify in traditional attire wearing a loincloth and beads, emphasizing Carolinian heritage. I told them that's what I was going to do, to show the district court in Hawaii that I am of Carolinian descent and that Micro Beach is important not just for me but for all Carolinians. That was my intention, but it never came about. I guess they argued about it and decided against it. I was not sent. I was trying even then to preserve Carolinian customs and tradition, but I wasn't successful.

But some other things started happening, like Piailug's canoe voyages and the Carolinian bilingual program. And the people in Tanapag are beginning to look into their ancestral roots. The Chamorros lost a lot of their tradition during the Spanish times, but Carolinians—despite all the development and changes—we still have ours. Even though today we vote and we elect our leaders, Carolinians still know who the oldest brother and spokesman for the family is. I hope our leaders will try to hold both together, combine the old ways with some of the new ways. Some of the new ways are not good, so we should screen the new influences and select those that fit our ways and are appropriate for us. We want to be a part of the larger world. I'm not talking about isolating ourselves from the rest of the world. Why can't we have good things from both worlds?

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1. Details of Northern Marianas history can be found in Farrell (1991).

2. This was Raphael I. Rangamar and members of his family who went to Pollap. His wife, Dionisia Saralu, was a descendent of a Pollap woman.

3. The ten plaintiffs were Herman Q. Guerrero, Lino M. Olopai, David T. Aldan, Jesus A. Sasamoto, Justin S. Manglona, Nick Santos, Ben A. Guerrero, John S. Del Rosario, Rick R. Marciano, and Joaquin P. Villagomez.

Chapter VI
Politics

After the covenant was approved, the people of the Northern Marianas had to create a constitution. So they elected delegates to a constitutional convention held in 1976. The process was supposed to be non-partisan, independent of political parties, but parties nonetheless emerged as central to the election. Most of the delegates ended up coming from the Territorial Party (earlier the Progressive Party and later the Republican Party). From the Carolinian perspective, one key provision of the constitution was the creation of the position of executive assistant to the governor for Carolinian affairs (and thence the Carolinian Affairs Office). Voters approved the constitution in 1977, and it went into effect in 1978.

Meanwhile, Mau Piailug, the Satawal navigator, made news as consultant and navigator for the successful voyage in 1976 of the Hawaiian double-hulled canoe Hokule'a *from Hawai'i to Tahiti, a trip of 2,500 miles in a traditional canoe using traditional navigation. Piailug had been the last man on Satawal to go through the formal initiation as a Micronesian navigator. This event became a source of pride not only for Polynesians but also for Carolinians, since one of their own had made it possible.*

I was thrilled when the United Carolinian Association was first organized, but I gradually became disillusioned and withdrew because it became so political. I felt bad because I thought that was the organization that could really lead the Carolinians. I thought that Carolinians could have become power brokers in elections if we could have followed traditional ways. I wish we could have combined our tradition with the modern elections. In this way, the chief of the island would consult with other elders about the election issues and about the candidates, and then the chief would tell the people how to vote. This would certainly be a different kind of democracy! Unfortunately, we couldn't even identify the chiefly clan. Even in my father's day, they tried to find out. They thought it was one of two clans, but they never came to an agreement.

Later another organization was formed, named the Aghurubw Society after the navigator who played a major role in bringing the Carolinians to settle the island of Saipan. In my opinion, though, using his name publicly was an insult to Carolinian custom and tradition. Although the intentions of those organizing the society were good, using the name was a poor idea. It was also odd to have two organizations for one minority group on the island. We should have remained united.

There was also a heated political campaign going on at the time. Piailug came up to Saipan at the same time, also. He made one of his voyages, and he brought up a canoe designated for educational purposes on Saipan because we thought it would help children to learn about our culture. I said to Piailug, "It would be wonderful to motivate the kids through riding on a canoe. They will love it. And then they'll start asking questions: 'Lino, what's that thing over there? What's the name of that part of the canoe?' That's how their learning would start." From there we could move into other areas of Carolinian culture. That's why Piailug brought that canoe. But Piailug got dragged into politics and the creation of the Aghurubw Society, and the competition between it and the United Carolinian Association.

Piailug came up to Saipan and stayed with me while waiting for his ticket to Honolulu before the *Hokule'a* voyage. This was in the midst of political events and the founding of the new organization. I admitted to Piailug, "I've been hesitating about having you visit people around the island. I'm especially concerned now because of current political issues." Our politics on Saipan are different from what he was used to on Satawal. I tried to explain the political situation to Piailug, and I talked about the new organization that had been formed even though there was already an organization for Carolinians on the island. I warned Piailug as gently and as politely as I could. I suggested that he refrain from going out visiting. "Piailug, there is an ongoing campaign, and there is a split among the Carolinians." We Carolinians were already a minority, and now we were split, making us even smaller in number. I tried explaining all of this to Piailug, but he just shook his head.

That evening one of my cousins came and invited Piailug out. My cousin rarely came by, so this was unusual for him to show such interest in Piailug. He said, "We would like Piailug to come with us."

"I already told Piailug that I think he should restrict his whereabouts here on Saipan because of the political campaign going on at the moment. Carolinians have divided, and I don't want him involved."

My cousin said, "Okay, brother. Don't worry. I know exactly what you're talking about. Don't worry. I know what I'm doing."

I said, "That's why I'm nervous and afraid!" I was afraid that Piailug would be dragged into politics. Unfortunately, my fears were warranted. The Republicans made a tape of Piailug criticizing the Democrats who had taken Aghurubw's name for their organization, and after Piailug left, the Republicans played this tape during the campaign to try and discredit the Democrats.

Piailug went to Honolulu and sailed to Tahiti. After he left, the campaign continued. And they started to talk about Piailug, and they said that he had made a tape for the Aghurubw Society.

I had spoken with the leaders of that society. I said that they shouldn't use the chief's name because it goes against our tradition. "To *sarapeiya*, say the name of our ancestors, especially that chief, is something we shouldn't do. Perhaps after the political campaign is over, then we can take the name back. But now let's use some other name."

Dr. Benusto R. Kaipat founder of the Agurup Society and prominent Carolinian leader.

"Ah, Lino! This promotes our culture."

I said, "It's politics."

"No, Lino. This promotes our tradition and culture."

I said, "All the time I was a member of the United Carolinian Association, I heard those same statements. But that's not the direction we've been going. This is politics." I tried to say all of this politely because I am of lower rank.

Piailug came back, and Carolinians held a big feast for him. The Aghurubw Society had been involved in several projects, impressing the community. The United Carolinian Association decided to host Piailug and celebrate the successful voyage to Tahiti on the *Hokule'a.* To honor Piailug they spearheaded a weekend celebration with food, leis, and dancing.

The Friday before the party, a cousin brought Piailug down to my place. At first I was excited because I would finally have a chance to talk with Piailug privately about the voyage. It was rare for my cousin to leave Piailug alone with me. Before that visit my cousin would bring Piailug and stay while we visited, which constrained our conversations. After my cousin left, Piailug asked to use the gift canoe from Satawal. Apparently the United Carolinian Association wanted the canoe for some demonstrations at the weekend's festivities, when they planned to honor Piailug. I don't believe they told him directly to fetch the canoe, but they probably hinted, saying something like, "We're having this celebration, and wouldn't it be nice if we could have a canoe?"

I was furious that they had treated Piailug that way. They treated a respected navigator like a common errand boy! They should have asked him what was needed at the celebration and fetched everything themselves. They should not have treated a navigator the way they treated Piailug.

So when Piailug asked for the canoe, I refused him. It's disrespectful to refuse a navigator, but I was so angry with the organizers of the celebration! I knew how hard it had been for him to bring that canoe, sailing night and day without much sleep, pulling it behind him through rough water. So I said, "No, Piailug, since you are the one asking for the canoe, I have to say no. If the others—those organizing the party—come and ask, then I will say yes, because they are the ones that should ask. I don't like the way they are using you."

Piailug spoke up for them and said, "But they didn't tell me to come get the canoe."

"I realize they wouldn't ask you directly, but I'm sure they said something to encourage you to request the canoe. They should have done it themselves rather than let you do it. I'll bet you came here because they hinted they wanted the canoe."

I also told him that I'd heard that Ighippa, a Satawal uncle of ours, was in critical condition in the hospital in Yap and had been asking for Piailug, anxious to talk to him before he died. I suggested that Piailug return to Yap that weekend while I explained his absence at the celebration. Piailug declined, however, and stayed for the party.

Another part of the celebration bothered me, and that was the focus on Piailug as one individual. Another clan owns the navigational knowledge, and that whole group should have been acknowledged, not just Piailug.

Celebrating his exploits as an individual is disrespectful to the larger group that owns the knowledge. Piailug had access to the knowledge because a man from the owning clan married into Piailug's clan. I spoke to some of the leaders. "It's against our tradition to focus on the single navigator when the knowledge came from a different clan. It would have been different if Piailug had been from that clan, but he wasn't." But they went ahead and had a big feast for Piailug.

Lino and son Alex cruising on canoe Mai Schogh *or "Angry Breadfruit". This was the same canoe that the UCA wished to use during the celebration to honor Piailug's historic achievement as navigator of the Hawaiian canoe* Hokule'a.

When I try to talk to people about our traditions, they say things like, "But we don't practice that custom anymore."

I say, "Yes, but you're still a Carolinian. If you're going to change, what custom are you going to substitute?"

And I was caught between people, between people who were older cousins and family and responsible for leading the Carolinians. There was a campaign meeting one evening in Chalan Laulau. My son Peter and I had been sailing in the small canoe from Satawal. I could hear a speaker all the way out on the reef and figured it was probably someone in the Aghurubw Society. I decided to go on in and help celebrate the founding of the organization, although I didn't yet know the name of it. I felt as though I would be welcome because it was a Carolinian organization of Democrats. A member of the United Carolinian Association had quit to form a new group and he became a Democrat, joined by other Carolinians who also became Democrats. I was a Democrat, so I knew I would be welcome.

I secured and anchored the canoe but kept listening to the speaker. I went to the house and joined them. They welcomed me and gave me beer. I saw some of the leaders and we started talking. Then I found out about the name of the organization. I tried very politely to state my views. I said, "You know, I'm very happy that we're finally going to do something to promote our chief, Aghurubw, who's buried on the island of Managaha. But I don't think we should use it for political purposes. We should wait until after the campaign. It's against our tradition to use his name this way."

They disagreed. "Oh, Lino, you're always talking tradition! Tradition, tradition, tradition!"

"With all due respect, I agree it's about time that we did something to promote our chief who is buried on the island of Managaha." We call it Ghalaghal in Carolinian. "It's against our tradition to use his name this way. Because mentioning the name of an ancestor, especially a chief, isn't respectful. It's not appropriate to use his name at this time, and it certainly should not be used for political purposes." We believe that it's not polite to mention the name of a person who died and it might be an insult to the family. We can mention the name for some purposes, but it isn't appropriate in a political context. It's against our tradition. That's what I was trying to explain to them. I talked gently, politely, though. I said, "You know, in our tradition, it's not polite to mention the name publicly, especially on a P.A. system."

They almost jumped on me. They said, "Lino, this is the best time to use the name! That's the name of the leader that brought our ancestors to settle this place."

I said, "Ah, come on, guys. You are just using the old man's name because you want to create this political organization. But be cool. I'm all for such an organization, but why don't we come up with a different name? Then maybe when things cool down a bit, change it to Aghurubw and then use the old man's name."

"No, no, no, no."

So that was one of my minor efforts to promote our tradition, but they didn't go for it.

By then, as I've said, I had become a Democrat. The majority of Carolinians are Republicans, but I became a Democrat when I came back from Satawal. When I came back, there were several candidates for delegates to the first constitutional convention. I was interested in helping with writing the constitution because I had just returned from my education in Carolinian culture and thought I might have something to offer of benefit to our people. I was just back from the outer islands where our ancestors came from and where our traditions are still maintained. When I arrived on Saipan, which is very modern, in the midst of a political situation, I was very concerned that our customs be taken into account. I was so excited about the election! I wanted to be one of the delegates! But being a Carolinian, I kept my mouth shut and tried to contain my excitement. I was waiting for Carolinians or members of the United Carolinian Association to come and ask me to run. I wasn't the kind of person who could just go up to others and say, "Look, I want to be a candidate. I just came back from Satawal, and I believe that I'm qualified because I've learned about Carolinian culture." I wasn't like that. I had learned about my tradition and respected the customs about modesty. So I just kept my mouth shut, went on about my business, and waited and waited. I heard that there were meetings and meetings conducted by Carolinians in connection with the upcoming convention.

Pete Guerrero, who is related to my wife, came by my house, and he was a Democrat. He had been sent by the Democrats to extend an invitation to me, because they needed to have a Carolinian in their group. At the time I didn't have a preference for either Republicans or Democrats; I was just interested in Carolinian representation. Anyway, I kept refusing Pete, because I wanted Carolinians to come and ask me, and Pete was not with the party that most Carolinians were members of. Carolinians were supposedly all Republicans. I said, "Wait, Pete, wait. I'm waiting for the other group." I waited and waited and waited and waited and waited.

Pete kept coming and kept coming, and I kept refusing and kept refusing. Finally, Pete said, "Well, this Saturday evening, we're meeting at the old legislature building at seven o'clock. If you are there, then that's the sign for us that you accept our invitation. You have no opposition. Everybody is ready to accept you. As soon as you show up, you're accepted. As soon as you step through that door, that's it. You're one of the candidates in the upcoming election."

I said, "Thank you, Pete. I'm very honored. Let me think about it."

Pete started scolding me. "Why? Are you afraid the Carolinians will say, 'Look at that guy! He's a turncoat. He became a Democrat.'"

I said, "No, no, it's not that. I don't care about political parties; I want the Carolinians to approach me."

Pedro "Pete" Rogolofoi Guerrero was instrumental in convincing Lino to run as a delegate for the first Constitutional Convention under the Democratic Party. Photo circa late 1960s.

But nobody else came to ask me to run, although somebody did come to the house. While I was outside working in the yard, a Carolinian came and said, "Lino, hurry up. Shower and clean up and come to the meeting. We're selecting candidates." This was a Republican.

I asked, "Have the candidates already been selected?"

"Yes, we have selected them."

I said, "Well, I don't need to go.

He said, "We need to confirm them."

My heart was broken because he told me the candidates had already been selected and just needed to be confirmed among the Carolinians. My heart sank.

I said, "Okay, okay, yeah. Why don't you go ahead? I'll finish up and take a shower and look decent. I'll come up and let you guys confirm whoever the candidates are."

So he left. He was in a hurry and didn't act very politely. I wasn't impressed. He didn't behave the way Pete had; Pete had taken time to sit and try to convince me. "I know you're hesitant because Carolinians are Republicans."

I kept telling Pete, "No, Pete, that's not the reason. It's not. I don't really care about which political party I'm involved with because the constitution is for everyone. Just give me time to think. I'm basically waiting to see what the Carolinians will say, especially now that I just came back from Satawal. I want to see what they have to say."

So when the Carolinian man finally came and told me what was happening, I made up my mind to attend Pete's meeting. I said to myself, "I am going to become a Democrat, and I will run under their banner. I will be a candidate for the upcoming election." And I did. I ran as a Democrat. I had never before run for public office. I lost by a close margin. On Saipan, we are divided into districts. I did well in Democratic districts, but I lost in Carolinian ones.

Before the election I went to talk with Carolinian leaders about my candidacy. I said, "I'm going to run as a Democrat. This will put the Carolinians in a good position. If no Carolinian Republican candidates win, at least we will have someone running in the other party." In other words, we had two chances for winning representation in the upcoming debates about our constitution.

They said, "Sure." They were very supportive.

I lost, but we did have some Carolinian delegates. I talked with them about my views, and I asked them to get together with other Carolinians to ensure that our views were considered. Because Carolinians are a minority, we can't be guaranteed representation. Chamorros can always outvote us. So for the constitution, I had in mind rules such as whenever the governor is a Chamorro, then the Lieutenant Governor should be a Carolinian. And if, after an election, there are no Carolinian representatives, then the United Carolinian Association should appoint two to the Senate and two to the House of Representatives. Instead, a Carolinian Affairs Office was created. But it wasn't given any power or budget; it was just a weak office in the executive branch of the government. During the second constitutional convention, I also tried to address this issue. I wrote letters to our leaders suggesting that the Carolinian Affairs Office be separated from the executive branch and have funding guaranteed through the constitution.

Delegates to the first Constitutional Convention held in 1976. Front row from left: Vicente M. Manglona, Benigno R. Fitial, Magdelana C. Camacho, Lorenzo I. Guerrero, Jesus G. Villagomes, Juan P. Tenorio, Oscar C. Rasa. Middle Row, from left: Herman Q. Guerrero, Esteven M. King, Pedro Q. Dela Cruz, Daniel P. Castro, David Q. Maritita, Henry U. Hofschneider, Juan S. Demapan, Dr. Francisco T. Palacios, Felipe Q. Atalig, Jose S. Borja, Jose P. Mafnas, Luis A. Benavente, Gregorio S. Calvo, Vicente T. Attao, Olympio T. Borja, Pedro M. Atalig, Manuel A. Tenorio, Antonio M. Camacho. Back row, from left: Joaquin S. Torres, Ramon G. Villagomez, Luis M. Limes, Hilario F. Diaz, Pedro JL Igitol, Felix A. Ayuyu, and Carlos S. Camacho.

At the time I was very involved in politics. Most of the time I was quiet, but every now and then I would be up there shouting. Some issues I really believed in, and I was trying to maintain my tradition and family. But I was considered a kid, too young to stand up and give advice or even comment on what was going on.

That reminds me of my mischievous uncle, Tata Isidro Tebuteb. My father and uncles were very well respected and well intentioned. They didn't want to see anything go wrong with the family. But Tata Isidro! He was a rascal. "Lino, forget it! Let's go there! Just don't tell them! Can you do that? Come on, let's go!" And then we'd go out and do something naughty. One thing he had me do was drive when I was quite young. "Just don't tell your father, okay? Go and bring the truck." My father was a policeman at the time, and I think I was maybe nine or ten years old. We had been moving from one breadfruit tree to another and ended up maybe half a mile from the truck. He sent me back to bring the truck. I was anxious to drive.

Tata Isidro was involved in an incident mixing politics and tradition at a farewell party for my cousin Tom Tebuteb who was going off to school on the mainland. Among Carolinians, it's been our tradition when our nephews, nieces, and other family members leave the island to go off to school or travel to other islands, we give them what we call *paay*. *Paay* consists of provisions for a voyage. Whenever we travel on canoes, we prepare food to take on the trip. Those are provisions to help us on the voyage. But not all the provisions are food. Some include education and wisdom. Some of the provisions include knowledge given to nieces or nephews going on a trip. Well, in this situation, it was my cousin Tom Tebuteb, who at that time was with the Public School System, who was leaving the island for a Western school. For a while he was working very closely with the Board of Education, and now he's Secretary of Community and Cultural Affairs.

It is a Carolinian tradition for the family to get together when sending nephews and nieces off the island. When our uncles and aunts call us, we should come. We should make it a point to come because they will share some of their traditional knowledge to help us on our voyage and as we go off to school and leave the island for many years. It's primarily a family event; it's rare for others to show up. If non-family members come, the knowledge may not be mentioned at the feast. Certain knowledge should be shared only with relatives, so with outsiders present, it becomes just an ordinary party.

Paay means provisions and refers to food that is prepared for the voyage on the canoe that you're going to take. We say, "*Sa fééri aasch paay* (Let's prepare our provisions)." *Paay* is also knowledge that is given to us during the gathering. On Satawal, for example, our navigators, our elders, will sit with us before we sail. They will say, "Always be very nice to your crew." They will advise the navigator. Or they'll say, "You, too, crew, encourage your navigator. You may think he has made a mistake, but believe in him." For someone going off to school, they give him encouragement. "You're going to learn other things, but don't forget you are Carolinian. Whether you're going to become a doctor or a lawyer or a governor, don't forget that you're Carolinian."

At the time of this particular gathering, there was a political campaign going on. I was one of the candidates for delegate to the first constitutional convention, but I was with the Democratic Party. Since Carolinians were all supposedly Republicans, a Democratic Carolinian was an "outlaw." A Carolinian was supposed to be a Republican, but here I was a candidate with the Democrats.

My rascal uncle Tata Isidro told me about the preparation for the party. He told me there was a family gathering for Tom, who was going off to school. My rascal uncle said, "Come to the house on Sunday. We're going to prepare some food for Tom. Come on over and help us do that." This was an opportunity for *paay.*

I said, "Sure, I'll come," especially since I had just come back from Satawal. Although I'm not Tom's uncle, I'm his cousin and could therefore share with him much of what I had learned on Satawal. I felt that Tom would appreciate that. But it was my uncle who was supposed to provide *paay*, to give us wisdom, so that Tom would use the wisdom on his journey going off to school and on the way back home. I might add a little something to what an uncle said, but I shouldn't speak on my own. That privilege is reserved for the elders.

My uncle was staying in Oleai right next to Oleai Elementary School. My wife and I came up to the house, but nobody was there. We just looked at each other, with no idea of what to do. Finally my wife said, "I bet the party's all up at Felix and Kina Rabauliman's house on Capitol Hill." Felix is more related to my wife than to me. Kina and I, though, we're very close; she is my aunt. In fact, she's the one who cured me when one of the spirits fell in love with me and was trying to kill me to take me with her.

My wife said, "I believe everybody is up on Capitol Hill." Since the political campaign was going on, perhaps she suspected something.

I said, "No, no. I don't think Tata Isidro would do that. I don't think he'd let politics infiltrate a family gathering. Why should politics come into the family? I don't believe it. Let's check Tata Isidro's friend's house. They may have moved the whole family gathering to his friend's house.

They may be there."

So we went to his friend's house, but nobody was there. We looked at each other again, and I said, "Let's go home."

My wife said, "No, it's not polite. Lino, Tata Isidro specifically told you that we should come. It's a family gathering. Whether politics is involved or not, he called the family, and we should come."

So I sat there in our car, and I thought and thought and thought and thought. Finally I gave in. I said, "Okay, why not? Let's go."

So we went up to Capitol Hill where Kina and Felix were living. Before we even reached the house, I could hear tapes of songs being played while they were making food. They were using a loudspeaker, and they were playing campaign songs. "Vote, vote, vote Republican to serve the people."

When we drove up to the house, I heard the campaign songs. "Vote, vote, vote!" And the family was preparing food. People were rushing around, chopping up meat and onions, and boiling water. So I came in. I didn't see my uncle, but I started asking, "Is this for Tom? Is this the party for Tom?"

"Yes, this is it."

"I ask because we came from Tata Isidro's house in Oleai. He wasn't there."

"No. This is it. Everything was transferred over here."

"Oh, okay. This is it."

I just made myself comfortable, because it was a family house. I knew the people there because I am related to them. So I made myself comfortable and started helping with the preparations. This was in the afternoon on a Sunday when there was a meeting of the Democratic candidates, so I left to attend that meeting while my wife stayed to help the family. I told some of my uncles and aunts where I was. I still had not seen my rascal uncle.

They knew I left to attend a meeting of Democrats, which was in connection with my candidacy as a delegate for the first constitutional convention, and they knew I would come back, but people went ahead with plans for a Republican campaign meeting at the house. I attended my meeting, and after the meeting I returned to Felix and Kina's house. But I couldn't find my way through because there were cars and cars and cars and cars all over the place. I had to park a long way off. And you could hear the candidates campaigning at the house.

I said to myself, "Ah, what's going on here? Why did Tata Isidro permit this? Why did he allow politics into a family gathering?" I don't know if it was Kina and Felix or some other Republicans that invited the candidates to come and campaign at their house on that particular Sunday afternoon.

I parked way off and started walking toward the house and the campaigning. The candidates were presenting their views about the upcoming convention. I tried to pick out my uncle, but what I noticed was all the noise from the microphones and loudspeakers. You could hear them from a long way off. Then I looked down, and when I saw my uncle sitting at a picnic table, I headed straight towards him. I was furious! I was angry!

I had two different ways of approaching him, since my father was no longer alive: I could address him as his nephew, or I could address him as my father's replacement. Addressing him as my father's replacement would make me senior to him, allowing me to freely express my irritation. The elders were considering passing on to me the respect and responsibility that had been given to my grandfather and then to my father. My uncles had been discussing it and mentioned it to me a couple of times. "We're thinking of letting you take over your father's role in looking after the family." So I could talk to my uncle on either of two levels. When I talked to him at my father's level, I was senior to him. When I talked to him as his nephew, he was senior to me. In that case, he could tell me whatever he wanted, whether I liked what he had to say or not.

But I wasn't thinking about all of that then. I was just furious because of what he had done. Although this was a family gathering, he had somehow allowed politics to intrude, and I just couldn't believe it. I'd begun to get suspicious, though, when my wife mentioned that the party had probably been moved up to Felix and Kina's place. And unfortunately my suspicions were accurate. So after returning from my meeting, I went straight to my uncle, who was sitting at the picnic table. While I was walking toward him, I heard my name mentioned off to the side by Republican candidates. "Lino, from the Democratic party, has come to our campaign event and to this house. Let's welcome him and ask him to say a few words about his views on the upcoming election." I barely noticed the emcee, however, because I was so intent on speaking with my uncle.

I was furious even before I heard that remark. So I just sat down with my uncle, right in front of him, and I started scolding him from the level of my father. But I wasn't even thinking about rank. I was just so furious.

I sat in front of him and said, "Why did you bring politicians to a family gathering? This is a family gathering. You told me yourself it would be a family gathering. You told me that we were going to get together to help Tom, that we would prepare all this food and make this party for Tom so that we could hear what you have to say. We could hear your words of wisdom. Remember *paay*? Remember the *paay* that we should give Tom for his trip? But how can we hear from you now? How can we hear your words of wisdom now that you have politicians here shouting amidst family? How can we do that now? How can we hear from you?" At least that's what I tried to say; I kept getting sidetracked because the emcee kept trying to get my attention. I was just getting steamed up, but the emcee kept calling for me. I didn't have a chance to really explain things to my uncle.

The emcee kept calling for me. "Mr. Olopai, would you be kind enough to come up and say a few words? Don't be shy." This was a Republican candidate inviting me to get up in front of everybody and say a few words about the upcoming election and the constitutional convention. I believe they called me several times, but I didn't hear them because I was concentrating on my uncle. "Look, you rascal! I could pin you down to the floor!" And my uncle is tall! I think he was about six feet tall, well built and very strong. He had a beautiful, heavy low voice, a very masculine voice. And he can be naughty! And his laugh! It's an arrogant kind of laugh designed to irritate you.

In the midst of my conversation, the emcee repeatedly called me. "Please, Mr. Olopai, come up and say a few words. Don't be shy. Don't be embarrassed."

I thought, "Me! Embarrassed and shy in this house!"

I was angry already, and this just made it worse because I didn't need to be welcomed there. I was one of the family. I would never tell Kina or imply to her that she was not my aunt. I would never betray or show disrespect to Felix. I'd always shown him all the respect that was his due. In other words, I don't think I had done anything at all to justify the emcee trying to welcome me to my own family's house. They welcomed me because I was a Democrat and they were Republicans campaigning at the house. This was a Chamorro who was talking. That shows you their ignorance of Carolinian ways.

Anyway, I just stood up and left the table and grabbed the microphone. I said, "Thank you. I want to make it clear that I am not a stranger in this household. I don't need to be welcomed into this household because I am a family member. As a matter of fact, all the food that is being prepared by this family is for my cousin Tom, who is going off to school. This is a family gathering. I'm surprised that my uncle invited others to come and campaign at this house. I want to make it clear to everybody that I am not a stranger in this household. I am one of the family. I would rather not stand up before all of you and tell you views about the upcoming constitutional convention, because we have our elders—our uncles and aunts—sitting with us today. They are the ones who should talk to us. They are the ones to give *paay*, to give us words of wisdom about this election. They are the ones who should be coming up here, telling us their views, advising us—the new generation—about what we should do. I want to hear the wisdom of the elders. I want to hear what my uncle and aunt have to say. I would like for them to come up and do just that if they are willing to do so."

I looked over and saw tears creeping down my uncle's cheeks, and I noticed that Kina and Felix had also been moved to tears. Nana Kina was saying, "Yes, yes, my nephew. Yes, Lino, my nephew. Yes, my son. I understand exactly what you're talking about."

Then other aunts said, "Yes, Lino, we know what you're talking about."

I guess I reminded them of my father when I made those remarks. Perhaps my father's spirit had come to me when I was talking.

When the elders are going to talk, everything should be shut off so that the place is quiet. The juke box, the band, the dancers should all be quiet. It should be completely silent, and then the elders can speak. But at this gathering, with politicians, that couldn't happen.

So I was furious. There were aunts and uncles present, and Tata Isidro was one of them. And Kina and Felix, I believe, were moved by what I said. Several days after this incident, my wife said, "When you were talking, they were crying and raising up their hands in support of all the things you were saying." It was very emotional for me. I don't know if the Republican candidates fully understood, though.

After my speech, I went and talked with my uncle Tata Isidro. Between his tears and my anger, we were able to communicate. He was holding my hand, and he starting explaining. "Oh, Lino, this happened because my friend suggested that we come up here."

I said, "Oh, Tata Isidro, forget it. Just forget it. It's done with. Now we can never hear the words of wisdom I was hoping to hear from you, the words of wisdom you were going to give Tom before he leaves for school. Now I will never hear them. I will never hear them, because you set this up and allowed politicians to become involved in a family affair. Perhaps that's why we Carolinians don't behave as well as we should anymore. Perhaps that's why when you tell us to do something, we answer you back, and you get mad and tell us that we are being disrespectful. Perhaps we are like that because when we come to a family gathering, you include things that should not be part of such an event. Instead we should be able to listen and learn from what you have to share with us. But what can you say to Tom now? Nothing!"

We were talking. I finally went to him to tell him what I was thinking. I tried to make it a joke. I said, "Tata Isidro, maybe that's why we don't behave, yeah?" We were both laughing. And he was laughing while he had tears in his eyes. He was holding my hand, and his grip told me that he understood what I was saying.

The majority of the candidates at the gathering were Chamorros. There were very few Carolinian candidates for the upcoming election, so the majority of the candidates at the house were Chamorros. I'm not sure they understood the significance of what I was talking about. And I spoke in Carolinian. Even if someone had translated, though, I don't know if they would have truly understood, deep down. Perhaps a few of them, but I doubt it.

I sat with my uncle and he held my hand. He didn't apologize in so many words, but the way he talked was an apology. The way he talked was very moving. I love him, and I will always remember that night.

After I talked with my uncle, I started helping the family prepare food and making sure that everybody had enough. I found out it was all under control, so I started to relax. I got myself a beer and something to eat. I was sitting eating all by myself, way off in a corner. I wanted to be left alone. I didn't want to sit with the family, and I certainly didn't want to sit with the delegates. So I went off by myself to eat and to drink my beer. Then my cousin Ben Fitial, a strong Republican, came over. We didn't say much, but his sitting next to me communicated his appreciation of what I had said.

That evening, we were scheduled to campaign at Oleai Village, where most people are Carolinian. I didn't like to speak first at these events. Instead I preferred to come and speak at the end. And I tried not to talk too much. I must have impressed some of the people at that meeting because several weeks later my wife and some cousins said, "Do you know that so-and-so was very impressed with what you said? They were shouting, 'Yes! Yes, I support you!' Did you hear them? And these were Republicans supporting you."

Midway through the campaign, I found I was using traditional language because of my recent stay on Satawal, although I didn't realize for a while that some of the younger generation didn't understand it. Some of the older generation understood, but not the younger. So sometimes I had to translate Carolinian for them! I had to translate the traditional words into ones they could understand. Instead of respectful words, I had to use common ones that are not as polite. I noticed during the campaign that it was the older generation that clapped. They were the ones that appreciated the traditional, respectful language that I had been using. I eventually noticed that it was just the old people shouting and clapping and stamping their feet and blowing horns. I wondered, "Why is that? Why is it just the old people?" I started thinking, thinking, thinking. Then it dawned on me that the language was too obscure for the younger people.

So I started to change my campaigning. Among the Chamorros, I spoke in Chamorro, a language as familiar to me as Carolinian is. But I changed my campaigning in Carolinian. Although I continued to speak in the traditional, polite way, I'd go back and repeat what I said for the younger generation in terms they could understand. Then when I looked out at the end of a speech, I noticed both older and younger people laughing and shouting and whistling, "Lino, we love what you said! We're for you!"

But I lost the election. I lost, but not by much. It was a close margin. Since it was close, many people, both Democrats and Republicans, told me, "You should run again for some other elected position."

But I told them, "Ah, I hate politics." I ran in that campaign because of my feelings about the importance of the constitution. It was to be for everyone, and I was concerned about Carolinian representation. I wanted as many Carolinians as possible with knowledge of traditional ways to be involved so that our interests would be well represented.

Chapter VII
Canoes and Navigation

Central Carolinians have been key players in the renaissance of Pacific Island voyaging, though canoes and navigation have long been essential to the livelihood of the atoll dwellers and their subsistence economy. Lino hopes that Saipan Carolinians will learn of this heritage, take pride in it, and show it the respect and honor it has traditionally deserved.

A description of a canoe brought up from the Carolines and put on display at Saipan's airport for a few years portrays it as

> *a giant sea bird skimming the floor straight at you. The vessel is nearly beamless, as trim-hulled as a tern. The arch of the outrigger platform makes one wing, the angle of the cantilevered lee platform makes the other. It's a broken-winged sea bird. The lee platform is much the shorter, rising steeply to the bird's elbow and ending there.*
>
> *In the canoe, as in Nature, there are no straight lines. The vessel is composed all of curves; the hull, the outrigger booms, the yard and the boom of the sail, all bend to various demands of wind and the sea—even the mast, the straightness of which is broken near the top by an odd curving segment. (Brower 1984:68)*

After settling on Saipan, the Carolinians remained oriented to the ocean; they continued fishing, but eventually quit building the traditional canoes. So in recent years, Saipan Carolinians have had to turn to their relatives back on the atolls to acquire canoes and reacquaint themselves with their use and care. For many in the Central Carolines, the sailing canoe has remained "not merely a part of their way of life, it is the very heart of it. . . . While the exhilaration of trolling over the reefs can remind men they are men, the canoes . . . and the voyages to distant islands which they undertake suffuse the entire island, not just its men, with a sense of purpose and fulfillment" (Gladwin 1970:36). The canoe is central to their pride and identity and self-respect.

What disappeared, however, even in the Central Carolines, was the initiation ceremony for navigators. Missionaries in the area after World War II disapproved of chants and prayers associated with the ceremony and thus managed to have it banned. In recent years, islanders began to lament *its loss and finally managed in 1997 to reconstruct the ceremony and carry it out on the island of Pollap, said to be the site where navigation originated.*

Central Carolinian navigational knowledge is akin to our notions of intellectual property. Not freely given away to anyone interested, it is confidential and belongs to particular people. Lino describes his ambivalence about what is happening with this knowledge since it has been communicated to outsiders. On the one hand, he is pleased about the general renewal of interest and pride in Pacific Island navigation, but on the other hand, he worries about potential misuse and lack of appropriate acknowledgment given to the property's owners. These issues first arose in connection with the voyage of the Hokule'a, *the double-hulled Hawaiian canoe that Mau Piailug, the Satawal navigator, sailed from Maui to Tahiti in 1976. The canoe was based on drawings made by Captain Cook, and the voyage was instrumental in the renaissance of Polynesian navigation. Lino proudly points out, however, that they needed a Micronesian to navigate because the traditional ways of sailing are still practiced in the Central Carolines. Furthermore, in Lino's opinion, canoes and navigation are central to the identity of Carolinians whether they live on Saipan or on the outer islands.*

For people of the Central Carolines, the canoe is the essence of life on the island. It *is* life because it is the canoe that brings food to the people. When there's a typhoon on the island that destroys all the breadfruit and coconut trees, the canoe and its crew will go out and bring back food. So the canoe is just as important as the navigator; you cannot separate the two.

Suppose a canoe arrived at an inhabited island, one with people and children and canoe houses. Traditional navigators would start putting medicine on the canoe, and someone lacking knowledge might not even notice. The navigator might revive the spirit on the outrigger, the spirit in the front of the canoe, the spirit in the back of the canoe, the spirit in the middle of the canoe. Then when the canoe was anchored or beached, anyone who tried to damage the canoe would get sick. Traditional navigators knew how to do this; navigators today no longer practice these ways, but they know them.

Today the canoe is not as critical as it was then. Today we can always get a motorboat to replace a canoe. So the value placed on canoes today is not as strong as it used to be. Field trip ships are replacing canoes, and motorboats have been introduced. In fact, there were three motorboats on Satawal when I left, even though I'd been trying to prevent the chiefs from letting the motorboats be introduced. They always had an excuse, though:

"Lino, they're for use in emergencies." I told them it wasn't a good idea because they would lose their skills and the knowledge of how to build canoes. And they would also become dependent on the motorboats and on outsiders. Motorboats have to be maintained, parts ordered, problems fixed. If people run out of fuel in the ocean, they won't know how to build a replacement part and bring it back to the island. They will just drift and be stranded out in the ocean—this has happened. With knowledge of canoes, people can always paddle. A canoe is built so that it can be paddled.

I thought we should have a canoe here on Saipan. I remember how excited I was when all of a sudden Piailug sailed up to Saipan, dragging a canoe for me—my first canoe. Before my wife, my son Peter, and I left Satawal for Saipan, I kept telling Piailug, "Well, there are two things we can do. We can take one canoe up and leave it—give it to the kids on Saipan and teach them how to handle it. We could teach them the basics and how to make sure they don't get lost in the ocean and how to handle the canoe. We could either take one from Satawal and sail it up to Saipan, or we could go up and build one." What I really wanted was a canoe for myself that could be used to encourage Carolinian children to ask about their heritage. I believed that taking the children out on the canoe would encourage children to ask questions. "Uncle Lino, what is the name of that part of the canoe? Why is it called that? What's the history behind it? What is that you're doing? Why?" The canoe would arouse their curiosity about their heritage.

It's been very frustrating for me trying to do something to preserve and maintain our tradition because of the fast-paced change in the Northern Marianas. I was very upset to find out about a canoe from Polowat in the Central Carolines being neglected on Saipan. I found out about the Polowat canoe through Scott Russell, who works with the Historic Preservation Office. Scott told me, "Lino, there's a Carolinian canoe sitting out on a trailer at Lower Base. Have the Satawalese been here again?"

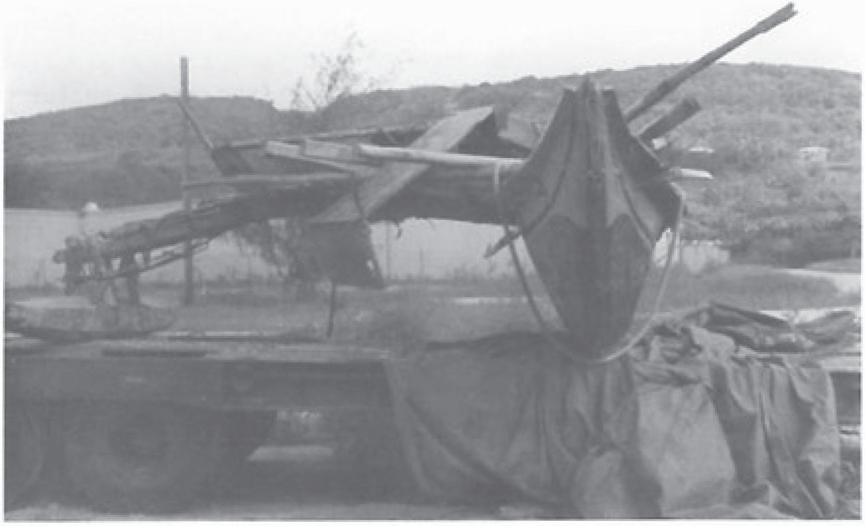
I said, "There can't be a canoe down there! There hasn't been a Carolinian voyage this year. Why do you ask?"

"Well, there's a canoe sitting out at Lower Base. It looks exactly the same as those canoes the people use whenever they sail up to Saipan."

I said, "I don't know anything about it. I haven't heard anything."

"So, go check on it. It's sitting out at Lower Base on the back of a trailer."

I went up, and sure enough, it was there. And I was so upset at how that canoe was being neglected! I guess because I was just back from Satawal, I knew something of the history of our canoe and its importance, how it's the life, the very essence, of Carolinians. The canoe brings food, takes messages, brings messages, and moves people to other islands. And you have to sacrifice food just to get one canoe because you destroy maybe two or three or four breadfruit trees just to get one canoe. When you cut down a breadfruit tree, you may discover that part of it is rotten. That leaves the tree useless. This is after it has produced fruit over the years when they decide to cut it down for a canoe. While shaping the canoe, we may come to a rotten spot. It doesn't matter for us here on Saipan, because Carolinians here can buy breadfruit in the market and fish from a freezer.



Waharek Maihar *"Canoe Michael" abandoned at Lower Base. This canoe was later transported to Lino's house and restored by a group of Polowatese in 1978. This canoe is now on display at the NMI Museum of History and Culture.*

Anyway, I found the canoe sitting on the back of that trailer, uncovered and untended, at the mercy of the sun and the rain. Nature was destroying the canoe. I was so angry! I was so angry I was ready to strangle someone!

I went to visit my friend Scott. I said, "Scott, how long has that canoe been sitting out there?"

"Ah, it's been there for several months."

I said, "What! Several months! And all of the Carolinians who work at Public Works drove back and forth in front of that canoe every day and never tried to do anything about it, like cover it or prevent it from deteriorating in the sun and rain?"

He said, "Well, I don't know."

I said, "How crazy can they get?" People who worked there couldn't miss the canoe because it was on the main road leading into Public Works.

The canoe had been shipped up because of plans to participate in the United States bicentennial celebration in 1976. The problem was they couldn't put the canoe on the plane. They would have had to take it apart and then have Polowat people reassemble it again, but they didn't have the time for that. So they left it sitting on Guam, and it eventually was brought here.

Juan Sablan, who was part Carolinian and part Chamorro, used to be district administrator in Chuuk, and people from the outer islands had great respect for him. When the canoe couldn't make it to the bicentennial celebration, the owners of the canoe gave it to him for his use. But because of his position then with the Trust Territory as Deputy High Commissioner, it was not appropriate for him to accept such a gift. He reluctantly accepted it but as a gift to the government, not as something personal. He then had it shipped up from Guam to Saipan, but it was left at Lower Base. I didn't know all of this at the time.

I was frustrated with the Carolinians who worked from Monday to Friday and each day drove right past the canoe. They included people who said they were interested in protecting and maintaining Carolinian custom and tradition, yet they didn't even try to find out who owned the canoe. They didn't ask about protecting the canoe. They didn't ask if they could do something about the canoe. Nothing. That's why I was angry.

I went and talked to Scott. He told me that the canoe had been there for quite some time. Finally he told me that the Trust Territory government probably owned it. So I said, "Okay, fine. I'm going up to talk to the High Commissioner." I just left Scott and rushed right up to the High Commissioner's office. I wanted to ask him if he'd be kind enough to let me have the canoe. If he refused, I was going to ask him if I could buy it. I didn't have any money, so I don't know what I would have done if he had agreed to the purchase. But I was angry and desperate to do something about that canoe.

Well, I went up to the office, and the secretary asked me my business with the High Commissioner. She asked me who I was and what agency I worked for. I laughed. I said, "No, no. I'm not with the government; I'm just a member of the Carolinian community. And I'm concerned about the canoe that's been sitting out in the weather, the Carolinian canoe that's been exposed to the sun and rain. It's at Lower Base just sitting out in the open on top of a trailer. Nobody has been taking care of it, and it's just going to rot—rot and become useless. I was going to see if the High Commissioner would let me have it so that I could take care of it and use it for what it's supposed to be used for—you know, fishing and such."

So she went in and instead of talking to the High Commissioner, she called on the Deputy High Commissioner, who was Juan Sablan. She probably told him I was concerned about the canoe and wanted to take possession of it.

Deputy High Commissioner Juan A. Sablan supported Lino's efforts to restore the Polowat canoe Waharek Mahair *in 1978.*

So Mr. Sablan came out, and we started to talk. That's when I learned about how the canoe got here. I heard about the plans for the bicentennial celebration and how they couldn't put the canoe on the plane and how there wasn't a ship available at the time to take the canoe either. It was supposed to have been one of the ships sailing on the Hudson River during the celebration. Chief Manupy of Polowat gave Juan Sablan the canoe. He told me that the owners of the canoe and some people from Polowat would come shortly, in a couple of months, to restore the canoe. I said, "Well, I came to see if I could take possession of the canoe or if I could buy it, but if you're going to restore the canoe, then I'll forget about my request."

"There's nothing I can do; it's government property."

Then I looked at him. I looked at him and I looked down and I was thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking. I said, "May I take the canoe down to my house and protect it? That way when people come to restore the canoe, there will be that much less work to do. If the canoe isn't protected, then in two or three months, when they arrive, the canoe will be worse than it is today. They'll probably then have a very hard time fixing it. It will continue to deteriorate. As a matter of fact, if you don't mind, I would like them to restore the canoe at my place in Chalan Kanoa. It would be a beautiful place. It's right out on the beach, a perfect environment for that kind of work. And whenever the canoe is finished, we'll try it out there. We can take it right out into the water."

"Yeah! That will be good. Sure, you can do that!"

I said, "Are you sure? Okay."

So we made arrangements for me to take the canoe down to my place for protection. I hadn't met the people from Polowat yet, though. I knew of Polowat, but I had never been there. And I had never met the people coming to restore the canoe. But I was so concerned about the canoe, I decided that didn't matter.

So I tried to take the canoe down to my house. My friends and I first tried to launch it from a dock down by Lower Base. There were big holes in the canoe, though, which we tried to close as best we could. We tried to launch it on Saturday morning, but we couldn't do it. When the end of the canoe entered the water, the water rushed right in and filled the canoe. So we pulled the canoe back up. We were just standing around, not knowing what to do. We almost took the canoe apart, piece by piece. I said, "No, no, no. Let's wait for the people who are going to repair the canoe."

And they said, "And what do you suggest we do?"

I said, "Oh, I will check with the Deputy High Commissioner and see if they can take this canoe down to my house. But for now, let's just cover it." So we covered the canoe with canvas.

On Monday I went up to talk to the Deputy High Commissioner. They didn't take the canoe down to the house, but they protected it better than it had been before when it was on the back of the trailer.

Two months later the Polowatese came.[1] When they came, I showed them my place. They restored the canoe; it's the one that is now on display at the Museum in Garapan. I was introduced to all these people, and I helped them take the canoe apart piece by piece and transport it down to my house in Chalan Kanoa. When they started to get to know me, they started asking me questions: "Lino, do the Carolinian people here still maintain Carolinian traditions and the clan system?"

Waherak Maihar *being off-loaded at Lino's house in Chalan Kanoa. From left in front of canoe: Chief Manupy Rapung, Joash Urumo, unknown, Steve Houkol, Luis Tenner, and Oiluk Ikenur. From left behind canoe: unknown, Ramon I. Kapileo (standing on canoe), Ikefai Onopey (partially visible behind the crane's hook, and Sia Ainam.*

I said, "Sure, we have those clans. We call them *ailang*. We have some of them here, and we also have *afaghúr* of the clans here." They wanted to know about their relatives on the island. According to Carolinian custom, when visitors arrive, Carolinian community members should come and greet them, show respect, and bring food and drinks. We call this *waséélò*, meaning to take care of our guests[2]. They find out what clans the visitors belong to, and when they find someone from their clan, they look into bringing the visitors to their home. For several weeks after the Polowatese arrived on Saipan to repair the canoe, however, nobody came, and I was a little worried. I made an announcement on the radio and went out to visit our leaders and old people. The old people came, because they understood the custom. I invited the Carolinian leaders in Congress. I told them we had people from Polowat, including a chief, who had come to restore the canoe. "I would like it very much if you could come in the evening and sit down and tell stories with them." I put a notice in the paper and on the radio, but few came. A few Carolinian legislators came, but not enough people came, as far as I'm concerned.

Ikefai, at left, lashing the mast of the Waherak Maihar *with the assistance of Lino's son, Typhoon, at right, and Joash Orumo.*

Whenever Chief Manupy asked me about the Carolinian people not coming, I said, "Oh, they'll be here. They are Carolinian." I told him they wanted to come but were very busy. They are Carolinian, but they are not as Carolinian as the outer islanders. Finally, I said, "Well, don't worry, because when the restoration is complete, we'll have a party. And we're going to have it at the canoe house." It's the one in Chalan Kanoa we call Tipiyew.[2]

When they were finally finished, we had a big party for them. I told them, I warned them, I said, "When we go down there, remember that our customs here are a little different because of the development on Saipan. Be prepared for some things that are different. You will find such things as women coming in and sitting with you and mingling with you and talking."

They kind of looked at me and said, "Yes, but not in a public place!"

We talked about it. I pointed out what might happen. "You may also find young people that just come and stand in front of all of you and just talk or whatever without doing *apparo*.[3] You may not even make out what they are talking about."

That's disrespectful in our traditional culture, because young people should sit lower than the visitors. And they should just sit on the floor. But I was telling them that people would be likely to come right up and say, "Oh, you're the guys from Polowat? What are your names?" This isn't respectful, according to our tradition. These are some of the differences between Saipan and outer island Carolinians.

Chief Manupy sewing the pandanus sail for the Waherak Maihar.

Finally we finished the canoe, and we took it out on a trial voyage. The weather wasn't quite right, so we took some people out just for a short trip. There was hardly any wind, so we sailed part of the way and paddled part of the way. But the kids that came with us had a great time. We checked out the canoe, and sure enough, there was no leak. It was in excellent condition. It had been sitting out in the rain and sun, but they were able to fix it.

So, come the weekend we had a party. We planned a big celebration for them. I made an announcement and visited family and friends to ask them to participate. I informed legislators and leaders and Chamorro friends and relatives and non-relatives. We planned dances for them. We started around nine in the morning on Sunday. David Marciano, one of my uncles, was one of the old people that came and sat. I love that old man! From the day he found out that the Polowatese were here, he came and stayed with them as often as he could. And there were some others like him. Almost every day, when they were on errands, they made a point of coming by the house and saying, "Are you guys all right? I brought some cigarettes for you guys." Little things like that. That is part of the Carolinian system. The old people remembered the tradition. "Look, I'm in a hurry. I'm trying to have this paper signed, but I stopped by. I thought you guys might need some cigarettes." But it wasn't the cigarettes that were important. It was just knowing that somebody out there was looking after them. This behavior no longer takes place here on Saipan. I see a little of it, but not much.

We started the party in the morning. There was food and drink. Children came. Women came. We set up a special table for the Polowatese where they could easily be seen. Some old people came and sat around with them and told stories. People came in; when they saw us sitting, they bowed. Those that remembered the custom bowed and said, "*Siro, siro,*" which is "*Tiro, tiro*—excuse me, excuse me." They came and sat down and introduced themselves and then listened.

I was there. People came and went, and then late in the afternoon one of my cousins came. He was working with the legislature. The Polowatese were sitting at their table. They included the crew, the captain, the chief, and some old men from Saipan sitting with them. They wanted me to sit up there with them, but I said, "Go ahead. I'm comfortable here. Other old people will come and sit with you. That's all right." I wanted to stay where I was, sitting down lower to show them respect.

Late in the afternoon my cousin came up and started talking. He said, "Who put on this festival?" He was asking who made the festival possible. That's what he was asking. I looked around, and I didn't see too many Carolinians because this was late in the afternoon, and people were getting tired and ready to go home. And all the time, the Polowatese were sitting there drinking. And they were behaving themselves; it wasn't like when they drank at my house. So my cousin came and he started asking questions, irritating David Marciano and the older Carolinians. He started to give them a hard time. "How come there aren't many Carolinians? We need to have more than what I see today for our cousins, uncles, and chief from Polowat. I'm not satisfied. So who's responsible for this feast? It should have been handled by many, many people, so that more Carolinians would have come." He raised his voice and pounded his fist on the table. One at a time, the Polowatese stood up and left. Every now and then one of the crew members stood up and left. "Excuse me, I'm going to use the bathroom." Or just, "Excuse me." So they went out. Every now and then, one left the table. And then just a few were left. My cousin was still talking. He said he was working for the legislature as a public information officer and needed statistics and information for a report. He kept at it, and I was getting tired and irritated. I was sitting behind the Polowatese men just grinding my teeth in anger. The man was my older cousin, but at the same time he should respect me because he was married to a cousin of mine.[4]

I was getting tired of it all, and so were others. Some of the older Saipan people, including Mr. Marciano, tried to talk to him. They told him of all the many people who had brought food and prepared the feast. "Now people are going back home because it's getting late in the afternoon." My cousin was trying to impress the Polowatese with how concerned he was.

Finally I stood up. I asked to be excused by the chief and the old people and my cousin. "*Tiro*, brother. Would you repeat your question again?"

"I want to know, how many people made this feast possible?"

I said, "Okay, okay. Wait. Let me repeat the question. Let me be sure that I'm hearing you right. You want to know how many people made this feast possible?"

He said, "Yes. I want to know because I am a public information officer in the legislature."

"I'm going to tell you, but I want you to listen, because I'm only going to say it once, and I want you to listen. Okay?"

"Okay."

"This feast was made possible by only one hand. Okay? Now, do you understand what I'm saying?"

He laughed and shouted, and he said, "All right, okay. Now I know." He was so excited. "That's what I've been waiting for. That's the kind of answer I want."

What I was telling him was that although the feast was planned and prepared by many people, it came from the heart of everybody, so it was really only one Carolinian. I was telling him that you could count all the Carolinians as one.

He said, "Now I'm satisfied. I want to thank my brother over here for telling me what I've been trying to find out ever since I arrived here and stood in front of all of these chiefs, which is not nice or very polite, but I needed the information."

Finally I said, "Well, now that you've heard me, then let's leave it at that."

So a few minutes after my cousin left, I told Chief Manupy and the rest of the crew, "Let's go to the house. Let's go up to the house and continue our drinking and partying there. There's still a lot of beer up there. If you want to continue drinking here, we can, but as you can see, a lot of people have already left. It won't make any difference if we leave now. You've been sitting and trying to entertain everybody all day, so if you want, let's go home and continue our drinking."

Then the crew said, "Yes! Let's drink at your place!" I told a cousin of mine to bring a case of beer. We brought it with us to the house. Next thing I knew, there were two cases. Then there were three cases until I lost count. I told them to throw the beer in a small boat of mine and to add some ice to keep it cool. And then when we started drinking, I called Chief Manupy and Ikefai, the navigator. I said, "Come on! Come on! Call the crew over here. See this boat? You guys better hurry and empty the water out, because it's going to get swamped! And you know what happens if we get swamped: we're going to die! So hurry up and empty this thing!"

They started laughing. "Lino, we love this! I think I'm going to jump in this boat." And I think one of the crew members did just that. "Ooh, I feel good!" We went wild.

I think that was the best time of the day when we were drinking at my place. They were relaxed and able to let down their guard. Some of the crew members came up and patted me on my back, and they said, "Lino, I really appreciate what you did when you gave your cousin that answer."

I said, "I don't know where it came from. I just told him what I was thinking."

Then Manupy came up, and he said, "Lino, I really like what you did. I'm glad you stopped your cousin."

I said, "Well, why didn't you tell him to behave more respectfully?" Manupy was a chief. "You had every right to do so."

He said, "No, no, no. I'm new on the island, and I don't know his family."

I said, "Well, I hope you don't mind what I did."

He said, "No, I really appreciate it. I'm glad you said what you did."

Master Navigator Ikefai Onopey braiding (mutch) *coconut fiber rope used to restore the* Waharek Maihar.

"Okay, so let's drink up."

That was the first time the canoe was restored. The Trust Territory government gave it to the Marianas Visitors Bureau to look after. They took it out to the airport. We sailed it from Chalan Kanoa. I believe at that time I was working with airport security. My police work probably helped me get that job. I said, "Let's put the canoe at the airport. If we put it there, I can look after it. I know how to take care of the canoe." So they did that. So after we finished, we sailed from Chalan Kanoa all the way up to Charlie Dock. They brought a crane and put the canoe on a trailer and took it out to the airport. It was an attraction at the airport for tourists. It was just a small airport then, so tourists could easily see it.

About ten years later the Historic Preservation Office approached

Piailug about restoring the canoe again. The canoe was in the way at the airport. The airport was expanding, and it was more in the way than attractive. So they decided to restore it again or store it at the warehouse at Lower Base. They put the canoe in the warehouse, sail and all, and it sat there for a long time.

Piailug eventually restored the canoe a second time through a project supported by the Historic Preservation Office. Others got involved including the Public School System, the Arts Council, the Carolinian Affairs Office, and Northern Marianas College. Part of the contract involved putting everything together in a book so that we would have the restoration documented, not only on film but also in another instructional format that could be used by schoolchildren. It would be written in Carolinian, Chamorro, and English. That booklet was supposed to have pictures documenting each step we took in the restoration process. The Arts Council was to arrange to have a photograph taken of every step, provided that we accepted some of their summer program students. The College wanted to do a video. Piailug was just interested in restoring the canoe. He would bring the materials we needed. Piailug came up to restore the canoe about a year after a documentary film about the voyage from Satawal to Saipan was made. After the canoe was restored a second time, it was put at the Carolinian Affairs Office.

Another canoe on Saipan was a gift from Satawal to the Carolinians here on Saipan. Piailug and I were trying to continue to bridge the gap between the Carolinians on the outer islands and the Carolinians on Saipan. Carolinians were beginning to recognize their roots. They were listening to stories whenever we were back on Saipan. And some of the people on the outer islands were beginning to get comfortable with coming to Saipan and learning about their relatives here.

I went to Satawal and started talking about acquiring a canoe. Finally the people of Satawal agreed, and they gave us a canoe, which was given to the Carolinian Affairs Office. They were to be responsible for maintaining and controlling the canoe, deciding who could use it, and making sure that somebody who knew how to handle the canoe would always be there whenever the kids took it out.

Piailug and I wanted the people of Satawal to donate a canoe to the people of Saipan to show their support for efforts to strengthen ties between the two places. An old canoe was fine, because the youth on Saipan wouldn't know how to care for a canoe properly. Piailug talked about making it a gift from his family, but a gift from the whole island would be more effective and send a more powerful message of support. That was what was arranged—a gift from the island of Satawal to the Carolinian community on Saipan. No money was supposed to be involved, since it was to be a gift. Piailug talked of an old canoe in his family, but it was too big, so a canoe from another *utt* was accepted as the one to be the gift.

After completion of repairs, the Waherak Maihar *is launched for its trip to the commercial port. Sugar Dock is visible in background. From the port it was taken to the Saipan International Airport where it remained on display for several years.*

I had hoped that we would have a special celebration here on Saipan to show our appreciation for the gift. At that time, Felix Rabauliman was the Executive Assistant of the Carolinian Affairs Office. I suggested to Felix that the highlight of the ceremony involve Piailug presenting the canoe on behalf of the people of Satawal and Felix accepting it on behalf of Saipan Carolinians. I wanted this ceremony to be separate from the annual celebration held in honor of Chief Aghurubw. Unfortunately, it didn't happen that way. The presentation of the canoe simply became part of Aghurubw's annual celebration. I don't know exactly what happened, but the canoe was kept at Chalan Kanoa instead of the Carolinian Affairs Office, and something broke. Plans to repair it never materialized, and the new head of the Carolinian Affairs Office could find no documents about Felix accepting the gift. The original owners of the canoe came asking for payment. The canoe ended up being neglected, and I believe it is now being used by Carolinians providing entertainment at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

When we brought the gift canoe up from Satawal, we also brought a canoe for me that I got from Igoman, one of my relatives. It's a much, much smaller canoe. We sailed it from Satawal to Saipan. And we had adventures and many close calls! That canoe got swamped many times in the middle of the night. We had to jump in and bring that canoe up because it was swamped. It was early in the morning in total darkness, out on the ocean. We were towing the small canoe. When we started, I told Piailug that we should have somebody in the canoe. But Piailug said that wasn't a good idea. Several days off West Fayu, a little past midnight, someone yelled, "Oi, Piailug! The canoe we're towing—it's sinking!" Water was covering it. So we jumped in; Juanito and I jumped in. I was hesitant because I was afraid. After all, we were in total darkness and couldn't see what we were doing. But we both jumped in anyway and tried to bring the canoe up. On the first try, we couldn't bring the canoe up because the waves were too choppy.

Piailug said, "Try another method." So we turned the canoe around, and we tried again, and sure enough, all the water drained out, and we were able to get the canoe upright.

That night I told Piailug, "Have Juanito get up on the big canoe, and I'll stay on this small canoe. Maybe we should have somebody on this canoe during the night." It was very scary. You needed to have somebody who could handle it. There was a rope between the two. When the big canoe shot forward, it pulled the small one, and then the rope would slack off. Then the whole cycle would repeat itself. At times I was thrown off the canoe, and I hung on to the very back of the canoe with my feet in the water. Then when the rope slacked again, and the small canoe slowed down, I would jump back and grab whatever I could. It was hard work. During the day, we let go of the rope and took turns sailing. In the evening, we took down the sail on the small canoe, and I would get in it and stay on and get thrown around and even thrown in the water. Sometimes someone would come and relieve me later at night. Sometimes nobody would come and I'd be all by myself on that small canoe.

When we finally got that canoe to Saipan I used it to teach the kids about sailing. Their excitement helped me forget about the hardships that I went through.

One thing I'm very concerned about is the disappearance of the *ppwo* ceremony. This is a traditional ceremony during which a man officially earns the status of navigator. As far as I know, the last *ppwo* ceremony was held in the early 1950s. If the *ppwo* ceremony is lost, one of our important traditions will also be lost. That's why I was very excited when I had the opportunity to participate in a *ppwo* ceremony that was held on the island of Pollap in the summer of 1997.

Although I had never witnessed a *ppwo* ceremony before the one held on Pollap, I had talked about it with people who went through it, Piailug being one of them. Repangalap and Repangalugh are two others, as are several other old people on Satawal. My cousin Eko, from Houk, was probably the last one to go through the *ppwo* ceremony in the early 1950s. People were saying that Piailug was the last navigator to go through the whole *ppwo* ceremony and become a navigator, but that's not really true; my cousin Eko was the last. I think he went through the *ppwo* on Houk, and his ceremony came after Piailug's. So Piailug was not really the last navigator; Eko was. And he's much, much younger than Piailug. A lot of young men—and even older men—are navigating today, but they should go through that ceremony to truly be navigators. When I went to Satawal the last time, I almost succeeded in getting some uncles and older men together to reconstruct the ceremony.

Four or five years ago, the old people could remember only part of the *ppwo* and the meaning of the chants. There is no one person who knows the whole thing from start to end on Satawal, Lamotrek, or Houk. I don't know about Polowat and other places. But those are the three places I visited and where I asked the people whether any of them remembered the *ppwo* ceremony from the beginning to the end. None. None of them. And that worries me, because the old people are continuing to die, the people with this resource. They should get together so they can think and talk with each other and figure it all out, patch it together, and say, "This is what it is." The ceremony is the same in all those places; it's a very standard form. Recently I found out that Epeimwai, from Satawal, apparently knew the ceremony, and he was the one who conducted the *ppwo* ceremony on Pollap in 1997. I suspect he visited with others, including those who had gone through the ceremony in the past.

From what I know about the learning of navigation, you learn through the environment, through your mother, father, uncles, aunts, friends, other uncles, other aunts. They teach you when you are a child. They teach you to *páá fúú*, count the stars, or recite their names in order, the way American children are taught the ABCs. Learning comes from your parents and your uncles and aunts. The reason I'm mentioning women is because important knowledge about navigation is maintained by women at home. Whenever our old people, old men, ancestors, uncles are going to die, on their last breath, just before they pass away, their knowledge at that moment is given to those that are sitting right next to them. And among the Carolinians, mostly they are women. It isn't really all the knowledge, but something the dying need to share. They have something they want to give away before they die. It might be just one word. You probably won't understand it until several years after your uncle or your aunt passed away, but then you start to think, "Well, so that's the meaning of that word my uncle gave me when he died a year ago. He told me that word. So that's what it is!" Other things have been added to your knowledge over time so that it finally makes sense. Those last words may not amount to much, but the women retain them, because they're the ones who take care of the sick. That's how a lot of our knowledge—not just navigation but medicine, herbs, and history—is passed on. So, if it takes six months or a year for someone to die, just imagine all the knowledge you will get! It's not just with the last breath that they share what they know.

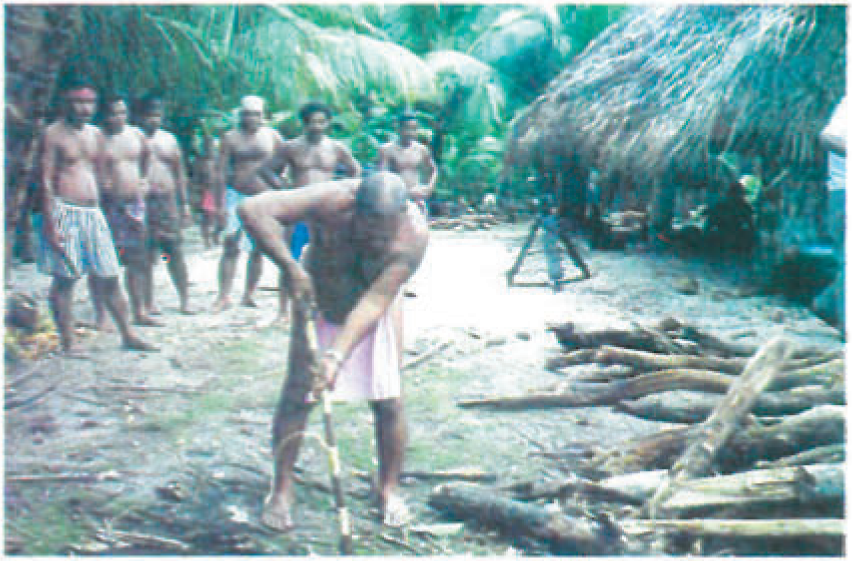
Women preparing taro for the ppwo *ceremony on Pollap in 1997. Man at upper right of photograph is digging a pit for an* uum *(earth oven) that will be used to cook the taro.*

You also learn about navigation when you go out fishing, because you learn the terminology of using the canoe. When you go out with your friends, you learn the terms for tacking and other activities. Maybe your uncle will take you on a canoe and talk about the voyage and reinforce your learning. Your father may be interested in you becoming a navigator, so he will make sure you start learning when you're young. Other family members help. When your father feels that you are ready, that you are mature, he arranges for the *ppwo* ceremony, collects and presents *ghoow*—gifts. The father of the man who is going to become a navigator will need to collect all the gifts and give them to those who know how to do the *ppwo*. These are previous navigators that went through the *ppwo* ceremony. Others included in the *ppwo* are those who know medicine. We have medicine for keeping thinking straight and medicine for making someone brave. We have other medicine for homesickness, headaches, and diarrhea you might experience out on a canoe. There is medicine for anxiety and stress. Part of the ceremony involves giving you these medicines. They may teach you about them also. That way you can think straight and be brave. You can help your crew when they're sick during the voyage.

The ceremony isn't just about navigation. You also need to learn about the etiquette involved in voyaging. I believe that etiquette is something an American failed to understand during a voyage he made with us from Satawal to Saipan. Outsiders often come with very good intentions; they want to learn and understand, and some actually want to help us. But sometimes they unintentionally make mistakes or behave improperly. It's important to learn how to behave, how to conduct yourself, what to do, what not to do. If you're going to be a navigator, this knowledge—not just navigational skill—is given to you. I think the American, even though he meant well, was not aware of these other parts of being a navigator.

So young navigators have to learn more than just how to navigate. Good navigating takes more than skill; it also takes knowledge that is part of the *ppwo* ceremony. This knowledge is part of what they are taught, and it is reinforced during the ceremony. That's why it's very important that the young men who are ready to be navigators today go through the ceremony in the proper, traditional way. We don't want all this knowledge to disappear; it needs to be passed on.

The *ppwo* ceremony is one of the reasons our traditional navigators are so respected. Today's navigators can mingle with ordinary people, but in the past, they could not. They could mingle with people only for some particular reason or need. So navigators were somewhat alone and apart from others. It was even more the case for healers. Healers could sleep with their families, but their mats would be separated from those of the others, perhaps off in a corner. Healers also had separate places to cook, and certain foods and activities were forbidden to them.



Epeimwai, who conducted the ppwo *ceremony, places the sacred coconut husking stick (*ghot*) that is used to mark the location where the* uum *will be dug.*

Restrictions were put on navigators especially before a long, dangerous, or risky trip, such as one between the Central Carolines and Saipan, or to Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, or the Marshalls. Navigators would isolate themselves from others until leaving the island. Today's navigators don't always practice this ritual. In the past, though, the power of their knowledge, their medicine, was such that if they got angry, just raising their voices could make someone sick. We have some of this medicine even today, and we call it *páyit*. If I'm angry with you, I can make you sick if I use that medicine.

There is a story of two navigators, Weriyeng and Fanurh, who were brothers. Fanurh, the older brother, loved the wife of Weriyeng, his younger brother, and therefore killed him. Both brothers had learned to navigate from their father, but because of the way Weriyeng behaved and looked after his parents, his father gave him extra knowledge. So there were animals, birds, seaweed, and other things in the ocean that Fanurh didn't learn about.

Weriyeng and Fanurh are two schools of navigation, and the differences between the two schools result from the differences in what the two brothers learned.

One day when the brothers were out on the ocean fishing, Fanurh pushed Weriyeng into the ocean when Weriyeng came to relieve Fanurh at the rudder. Unbeknownst to Fanurh, Weriyeng used his special powers to summon the *saghúr*, a magical piece of bamboo forever floating on the sea, and he hid himself in the hollow part of the stick, calling on the current to carry him back home. He came ashore at Pollap, where his wife found him. He had his wife hide him in the house, and that's where he was when his brother returned. His brother lied to the people. He had killed his brother, but what he said was, "My younger brother died. He was lost at sea." He lied to the people.

When Fanurh was ready to distribute *mwongol átári*, food prepared by the community as thanks to those responsible for the successful day—the crew, the canoe, the ocean, and the spirits—he did not know that Weriyeng, inside the bamboo, was hidden at the bottom of the bowl. So when Fanurh put his hand in to pull out taro to distribute among the people, he felt something bite his finger. He quickly pulled his hand out, and out came Weriyeng. Then the people knew that Fanurh was not an honest man, and they had no more respect for him. Because of that incident the Weriyeng school of navigation is now the highest ranking and the Fanurh school is lower, even though Weriyeng was the younger brother and Fanurh the older.

These are some of the stories and events that students being initiated need to learn, because they help give navigators ideas about how to deal with problems and think clearly. Navigators learn to keep calm and be brave.

Men learn about navigation at home and in the men's house, and when they are ready, a restriction is put on the men's house for the *ppwo*. The length of the restriction depends primarily on how well prepared someone is. During this period, the navigators are making sure that the initiates have learned all they need to know. A daylong celebration and feast takes place at some point during the period of restriction. But all the people of the island are involved in the process because they bring food to support both the teachers and the students while the men's house is taboo. How long it takes depends on how quickly the students learn.

First the people are informed who is going to use the men's house to learn navigation. The men's house then becomes sacred and restricted, although people can bring food. Fresh food comes every day from the people on the island. The men go fishing, and the women bring taro. They feed you every day while you are studying.

The teaching of a navigator can take several months in the men's house. The students are isolated, and no one is permitted to enter. The best food on the island is sent to the men's house for those who are participating in the *ppwo* ceremony there. The biggest fish, the biggest taro, and the best breadfruit are sent. And they prepare the foods very carefully. The initiates don't drink water, only coconuts. They eat only fresh food, never leftovers, and they never touch anything rotten or foul. People even help them to make sure that they don't accidentally step on excrement, human or animal, when they go out walking. Everything they come into contact with should be pure and fresh. In the past, people would even wash your hands for you with the water from a coconut during the *ppwo* ceremony.

Teaching takes place at any time, day or night. When old people talk about teaching a young man, they say, "Well, if I came in and saw that he was a little tired, then I might sing, or I might tell stories." Those stories are not just for entertainment; they are likely to help the potential navigators. Remember, the learning involves more than just remembering the stars, the way back, the weather, the creatures in the ocean, the reef, the stars, and the moon. Your teachers also teach you how to think, and they make you brave, and they make you strong. They sing or talk or joke or tell stories that you can use when you're out on the ocean or lost, or if your crew is homesick. You can use some of these stories to encourage or motivate them.

When a *ppwo* ceremony is performed on an island, other islands will hear about it. And they will know who is going through the ceremony to become a navigator. They will know on Elato, Woleai, Ulithi, Houk, Pollap, Tamatam, and even Chuuk. The ceremony involves many people with knowledge, not just one or two or three, and they take turns teaching. You learn every day, and you learn at night and during the day. If you're tired, they will come up with stories, songs, or something funny to motivate you. It's not just drill and drill and drill, reciting routes from one place to another, the animals, and the stars. There's more. The teachers take turns. When one gets tired, another takes over. So you learn from all the navigators.

During the teaching, people take turns. If you wake up at night, there is always somebody there. When you get up, "Lino, do you feel like counting the stars?"

"No, no, no. I'm kind of tired."

"Well, why don't I sing for you?" So they chant. That might be at nighttime. When you wake up in the morning, an old man is sitting next to you. He says, "Lino, recite the route from Satawal to Saipan and back."

You recite it. So the teaching takes place during the day and the night, and it's all oral.

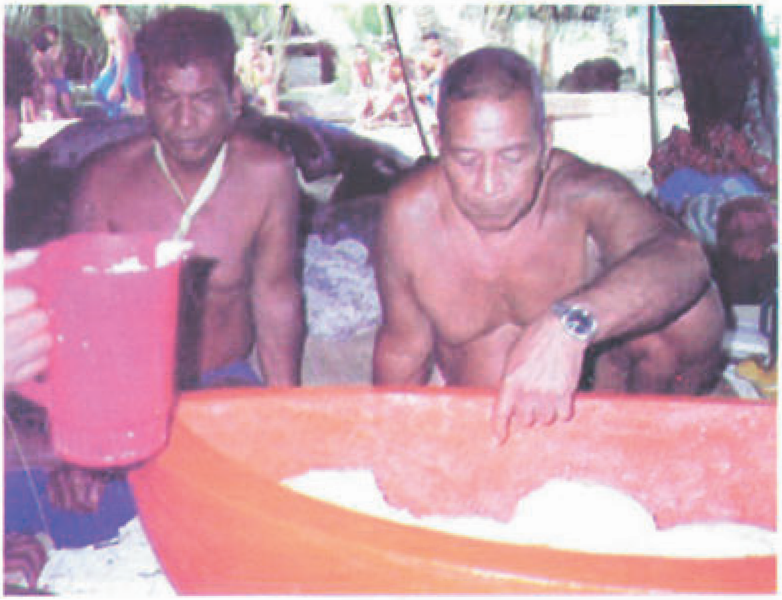
The *ppwo* ceremony involves all the people on the island. It involves all their respect and belief and trust in you, not just the navigation itself. All the food they bring and their hard work in preparing, these are involved. So it's not just the navigator that is involved. Even the breadfruit tree they have to sacrifice is involved; people chop it down to build you a canoe. Cutting down a breadfruit tree risks killing the whole family because the tree provides food for that family. They have to give up that food to give you the breadfruit tree to build the canoe. These are all the elements—the essence—of becoming a navigator.

The *ppwo* involves passing your final exam. They work with you to make sure that you pass the test. They don't hide anything or try to trick you. They want to be sure you have understood. They will say, for example, "Lino, recite the route from Satawal to the Marshalls. Just straight up to the Marshalls." Then I recite everything that I remember about the star courses that should be followed. I also describe the seamarks—such as fish, birds, seaweed, sharks, turtles, to name a few—that should be encountered along the way. But I'm not actually on the ocean. I'm in the men's house, which has become a sacred place while the learning is under way. I say, "Well, reciting the route, I start with Mááilap (Altair), from Satawal." That means I would go under Mááilap, the star that appears in the east. I mention all the things I'd find on the way—animals, seaweed, birds, rocks, islands, coral, channels, you name it. I go all the way to the Marshalls, reach the Marshalls, and come back.

"Okay, you mention Mááilap. What's the star for when you're going to go back to Satawal after you reach the Marshalls?" You need to know the star behind you so you can find your way back.

They want to make sure that you've learned what you need to know and that you haven't missed anything. If you have missed something, they will say, "Wait, you missed something. There is this ugly-looking bird you'll find between Chuuk and Pohnpei."

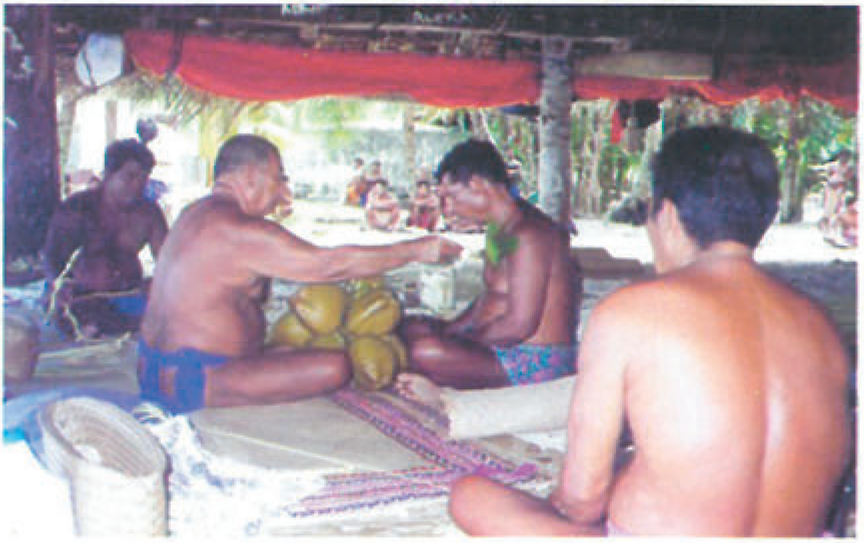
Of course, you learn all these things before coming to the daylong part of the *ppwo*, which involves an elaborate ceremony. When your teachers feel you are ready for this part, they bring in a big wooden bowl and decorate it. All the people come, and they bring food for the ceremony. They prepare special taro, *woot*, and put it in a wooden bowl called *ulong* used only for this ceremony. They put coconut leaves on it to make it beautiful, and they put in *woot*. They decorate the bowl and they dress it up with coconut leaves, beads, *mwáár*, and *raang*. They fill the bowl, which is in the shape of a canoe, with pounded taro. A shiny decorated shell, *bweey*, is thrust into the middle of a bowl of taro. Your teacher puts it there. He will put it in the middle and cover everything with *téér*, lavalavas. The more lavalavas, the better. We call the covering of lavalavas, *bwalabwal*. It is *bwalabwal*, covering, for that food, for that taro. The more, the better, because then the navigator is protected by good wishes from all those lavalavas. Remember that those lavalavas don't come from just your immediate family. We're talking about distant relatives and even people not related to you but who wish you well. Those are *ghoow*, payments to compensate the navigators who have been teaching you to become a navigator.



Epeimwai oversees the placement of pounded taro into the sacred ulong, *a canoe-shaped wooden bowl that is used only for the* ppwo *ceremony.*

The better the dish of taro is covered, the better it is for you. And remember, there are rituals involved in all of this. Someone who knows how, comes up and dances and touches the bowl of taro. During the ritual that person sings, dances, chants, slaps the bowl, and takes off a lavalava. He chants and dances and then takes a lavalava and gives it out. He continues until he comes to the taro.

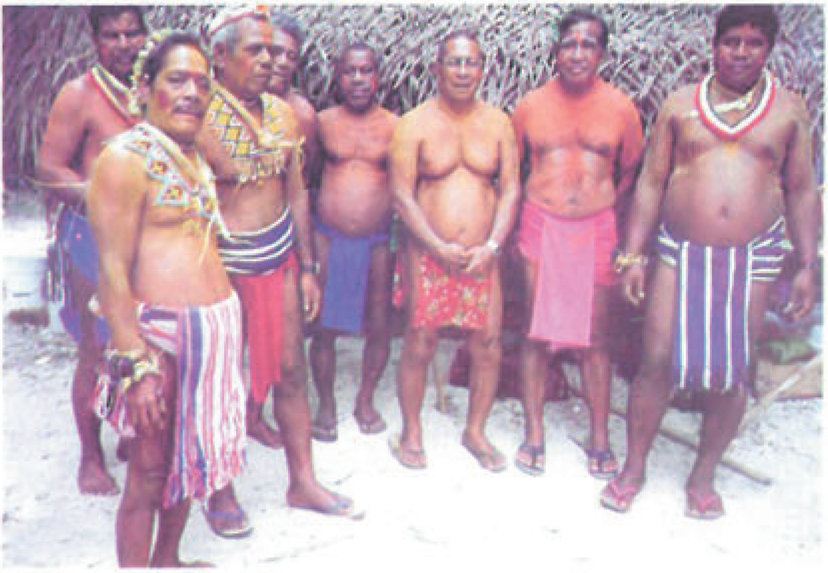
There is a chant and song that accompanies all of this. Then they come down to the taro and the *bweey* in the middle of the taro. The old man that is going to do the *ppwo* reaches for the very best, which is in the middle, just the way Fanurh plunged his hand into the taro, to be bitten by Weriyeng. Then he will give it to you first. Then he passes food out to the navigators. Food is given to the navigators and the initiates.



Epeimwai, left, initiating Topias Urupa, Piailug's younger brother, during the ppwo *ceremony on Pollap. The sacred bunch of coconuts between them symbolizes the unity that navigators must maintain during voyaging. Other* ppwo *initiates include Lampert Lokopwe, seated behind Epimwai, and Martel Ikimaur, with back to camera. Not shown are Francis Sermanyoung and Hillerio Aitiluk.*

People prepare the best taro on the island, the best breadfruit. The whole community will be involved, not just the person going through the ceremony. He may have been chosen as a navigator when he passed his tests, but he had all of the community helping him, and in return he will be bringing back food for them from his voyages. Everybody is there because it's a big feast. It might involve just one person being initiated, but it might be two or three. The ceremony is one that we all see, and many aspects of navigation are brought out. Navigators need to remember what they have learned and apply their knowledge when situations require it.

During part of the ceremony the initiate faces his mentor and puts his hand on a bunch of coconuts. Now these are no ordinary coconuts, but very special ones chosen because they faced the rising of Mááilap (Altair). When they cut the coconuts, they have to make sure that none falls. The coconuts have to remain attached to one another, together in a bunch; none should fall off. They are symbolic; they are individual coconuts, but they are bound together as one. The initiate puts his hand on those coconuts, and he is charged with keeping his crew together and working to keep the community together. He holds the well-being of many people in his hands. His hands are responsible for life and death.



A group photo taken in front of the Utt *Lesewa following completion of the* ppwo *ceremony. From left: Topias Urupa, Martel "Aikinomw" Ikimaur, Joseph "Uruhapw" Hilario, Chief Selestine "Iketik" Lokopwe, Ignacio Lupo, Ignathio Epaimwai, Lino Olopai, and Francisco "Loalomwai" Sermalyoung. Not shown is Lampert Lokopwe.*

The initiate's mentor has woven a yellow coconut leaf bracelet that he will tie around the wrist of the new navigator. First he rolls it back and forth under the initiate's wrist and gives him advice. He reminds him of his duties and responsibilities. "Now keep your cool! No matter how tempted you are, just keep your cool. No matter how rough the ocean or how strong the typhoon or how many months you have been at sea, keep calm. Be strong. Believe in yourself. Believe in what you have learned. Be good to your crew; take care of them. Uphold the rules of the community. Bring food to people on the island. Remember, you handle life and death as a navigator." Later *bwalabwal*, magical protection, is also placed on his wrist. You receive medicine for strength, which will help you when you feel afraid. It will give you power, strength, knowledge, belief, and confidence.

When the coconut leaf is tied on your wrist, you are *payrooro*. Someone who is *payrooro* is a navigator, and we give them our utmost respect because they have earned the status of *Palúw*, or navigator.

The men of Pollap perform a dance in celebration of the completion of the ppwo *ceremony.*

To be recognized as a true navigator, however, one must demonstrate his ability by making a solo voyage. Your teachers will say, "Well, I think he is well prepared. We've checked and tested him. We've given him all the knowledge that we know. Now he is ready, and it's up to him." The final step is up to you, really. The restrictions on the men's house are lifted, and you're free to go home. You now need to make a voyage. You pick your crew, you take a canoe, and you pick a route. It can be a short route—that's fine. It doesn't have to be a long or difficult route. The hardest part of becoming a navigator is making that first voyage. In fact, some never make a trip on their own, and this separates out those with the strong hearts. Others may possess all the necessary knowledge, but they lack the strong heart. This is your last test. You prove to yourself that you have learned navigation by making that voyage on your own.

Once you make that trip and come back, that's it. Now you truly are a navigator! Piailug told me that when he finally made that first trip, he was very scared, but he went through with it. His uncle told him, he said, "You just have to get through it. Once you get through it, that will be it." Piailug told me his heart was lifted, his mind was lifted. All the things that had been taught to him gave him courage. Everything fell into place, everything he had learned, which encouraged him to do more voyaging. From then on, Piailug made voyage after voyage after voyage. He's known today for his continuous efforts to make so many voyages.

People outside of Micronesia who come to study often think they have learned everything, but they will overlook things in the culture and other aspects of becoming a navigator. They don't realize all the people that are involved, people on the island as well as relatives on other islands. They don't realize how many people contribute and how the ceremony is so connected with the rest of our culture.

Airin Amigo, left, and Joilin Joseph from the island of Tamatam prepare for their dance during the ppwo *ceremony.*

I am worried about our culture being used for commercial purposes, like what has happened with Hawaiian hula dances. Many things are sacred to us and should not be misused. Some things are kept only within certain families. Certain knowledge, for example, is in Piailug's family, but now people will say that they know aspects of it without him. And they don't acknowledge the family the knowledge belongs to. We shouldn't even share knowledge with those who are not related to us. But I guess it's better, though, to teach it to non-relatives than to have it be lost completely. It's important for the knowledge to be maintained and passed on. So many of the old people with the knowledge are dying. It's against our tradition to give our knowledge away outside the family. But I feel we need to record this knowledge, write it down, put it on video, put it on television, and put it in documentaries. We need to do it, but we want to do it in our own way, the right way, not because we are paid to do it by outsiders. And we have to make sure that outsiders won't misrepresent or misuse it

We have young people today who are ready for the *ppwo* ceremony. They are navigating. They are taking canoes and traveling—without instruments. They rely on the old ways. Yet they cannot truly be navigators because they have not gone through the *ppwo* ceremony. They are not *payrooro*. I'm glad Epeimwai was able to get together with other navigators to hold the *ppwo* ceremony on Pollap in 1997. But we must be careful about the role of outsiders.

When I was on Satawal, people in Hawaii were trying to get Piailug's assistance with the *Hokule'a* project. I said, "Piailug, I think you should do it, but what about our tradition? Our tradition doesn't allow us to give this knowledge away. We cannot do that. So what can we do? And if we do give it away, people may use it for their own interests. They may not share the same goals of preserving our traditional teaching. Yet the old people are dying, and we are losing our knowledge. We can use the help of outsiders. But our tradition prohibits that. What can we do? My heart goes out to those Hawaiians." I knew that the Hawaiians were involved in the same struggle to preserve their heritage. They had experienced changes because of religion and material things. Piailug was the one who could make the decision to share the knowledge, not me. And I guess he decided to do that. But I said, "You have to be cautious."

We shared the same goal as the Hawaiians of preserving our heritage, but our tradition prevents us from freely giving our knowledge away. But the navigational skill and what they wanted to learn cannot be found anywhere else in the world today except in the Central Carolines. The knowledge belongs to the Carolines. Those islands are where people still know how to sail the traditional way and to build canoes in the traditional way. They still lash men's houses. If they start making concrete houses, they may lose the knowledge of how to make thatched houses. They will lose the knowledge of how to select the right kind of leaves and how to weave them and how to climb the trees. And climbing trees keeps bodies healthy. They will lose the real meaning of being a Carolinian.

Piailug was very brave to decide as he did. I had some reservations. I worried that the knowledge would be misused for purposes other than showing to the world that the navigational knowledge belongs to the Carolinians. The article in the magazine[5], for example, doesn't mention the owners of the knowledge. The article talks about preparing the *Hokule'a* and about a festival in the Cook Islands. People might end up saying, "How could the people on a small Pacific island have knowledge like that! They couldn't possibly. They don't even know how to dress properly; they just wear loincloths!" The knowledge is beginning to drift away from Piailug, from the people in the Central Carolines, but that knowledge rightfully belongs to them.

The women of Pollap perform a dance in celebration of the completion of the ppwo *ceremony.*

I was worried about giving out the knowledge. Hawaii is so developed that it would be so easy to take a clip of a film or video and do something different with it other than protect Hawaiian culture. I cautioned him about doing that first trip. I asked him to be careful. "First of all, you don't speak the language." Now, though, he's very good speaking English, but he wasn't before that first voyage.

Piailug and I were both on Satawal when the first invitation came.

This was for the first trip to Tahiti. He was first invited to put the *Hokule'a* together. Then Piailug was asked to go back and restore the *Hokule'a* and then sail it to Tahiti. There were problems with people having different interests in the project, however. Instead of working together to help revive Hawaiian tradition, people had their own separate interests. I wasn't too concerned when Piailug went to help them put the *Hokule'a* together—lashing, roping, carving, reshaping. That didn't involve navigational knowledge. But navigation was different.

Piailug came back after the first trip and talked to me about it. He mentioned problems other than just communication because of his lack of knowledge of English. He spoke about the lashing, for example, and how it wasn't tight or strong enough. And he had problems with people involved with the project and how changes had to be cleared with certain people. Piailug came back and talked to me about these things.

I said, "Yes, Piailug. My heart goes out to the Hawaiians. I feel sympathy for them. I really feel for these Hawaiians, because they, too, are trying to preserve their tradition. They're doing what we're doing. That's the very reason that I'm here on Satawal. I'm trying to revive our culture for Carolinians on Saipan and close the gap between Carolinians on Saipan and Carolinians on the outer islands. Carolinians of today need to realize that we are all one people. We need to know that the clan system is still alive. People on Saipan need to realize that the Western system of family last names is very different from the clan system. The trip the Hawaiians want to make between Hawaii and Tahiti is like the ones between Satawal and Saipan. And they, like us, are struggling to assert their identity and tradition." I became aware of the situation with the Hawaiians years before when I had worked on the language project. In fact, I learned that some Hawaiians have to go to school to learn their own language; at least we still learn and speak our language.

I don't know if Piailug really understood the problems that might arise from his decisions. I'm not sure he was aware of other interests and goals of people involved in the project. I said, "People have different interests. The Hawaiians are anxious to complete the project. But there are going to be problems because of interests and needs of others. It may be one project for Hawaiians to revive lost ways, but there are many interests involved."

I don't know if Piailug understood. Satawal is not as developed as the Northern Marianas. Saipan is very, very developed compared to the rest of Micronesia, let alone the Central Carolines. So I tried to explain to Piailug some of what he would encounter and some of the reasons behind delays in the Hawaiian project. I told him, "Piailug, be careful. I know our hearts go out to our Hawaiian brothers and sisters, but I'm concerned that other people will have their own interests and turn this project into something else. They may go along with the project and then change it to benefit themselves instead of the Hawaiians."

These are things I said after he came back the first time. His English wasn't very good, but he had tried to understand what had happened in Hawaii and explain it to me. And I, for my part, tried to explain to him what had happened and why. But I don't think Piailug really understood.

Piailug came back, and the Hawaiians were going to select and train the crew. But they forgot that Piailug was a key to the success of the project. This was an example of outsiders overlooking aspects of Micronesian culture. They may have thought they were looking at a very ordinary, simple man rather than a highly skilled and knowledgeable navigator. Carolinians tend to be modest: "I don't know. I'm not good at that. I could try." One has to be very insistent in the face of such modesty. Carolinians don't say, "I know how to do that!" or "I'm the best qualified!" the way many Americans would.

So they sent Piailug back to Satawal. They may have been planning on using someone else to navigate, and the Hawaiians wanted to select and train the crew for the Hawaii to Tahiti trip. Piailug's lack of English might have been held against him. They probably decided to use him as a navigator after he helped fix the *Hokule'a* after it was swamped.

The *Hokule'a* was swamped during one of the training sessions. Piailug and I were on Satawal when we heard about it after a ship arrived. About every three months a ship came, and it was a holiday! It's not often a ship comes to those small islands, so it feels like Christmas when one finally arrives. And for me, when the ship came, that meant news, letters from friends and family. For others, it probably meant cigarettes and other commodities.

Anyway, a letter came from Honolulu with a newspaper clipping and a short note telling Piailug that the *Hokule'a* had been swamped and that it had to be towed back to Honolulu. At first he thought that the whole canoe went under, but when I told him it was only one side, Piailug just started giggling. And when Piailug starts giggling, you have to prod him a little to get him to explain.

I asked, "Piailug, why are you laughing? If you were there, what would you do?"

Understand that Hawaiian and Carolinian canoes are different. Carolinian canoes have the main canoe and then an outrigger that is smaller than the main part. The outrigger can be lifted out of the water with a strong enough wind in the sail. The *Hokule'a*, however, is a double-hulled canoe, with each hull the same size, and it's hard to maneuver. The two hulls and extra weight make it difficult to turn, compared with our outrigger canoes.

"What's so funny, Piailug? I mean, I don't know how to bring it back up. It's totally different from our canoes. We have outriggers. How would you fix the problem?"

He laughed, and he said, "That's very simple."

I said, "What do you mean, very simple? The canoe is huge!"

He said, "No, no, no. It's very simple—just turn the canoe around."

There was a strong wind where they had sailed the *Hokule'a* in; the wind would lift one side and tend to push the other side under the water. Piailug said to turn the canoe around, thus changing which side is upwind and which is downwind and which side has the water in it. Then the wind in the sails could lift up the swamped side allowing the men to bail it out and fix the pump. Then they could turn the canoe again and continue on their voyage. I couldn't help laughing myself once he explained the solution and I saw how easy it was.

The Hokule'a *under sail. Photo taken in the 1990s.*

He said, "We will see. We will see. Just don't forget. When you go on one of those trips and that happens, now you know what to do!"

I said, "Ah, such a simple solution." That's what Piailug was saying. There was such a simple solution, but the Hawaiians didn't think of it. And they didn't think to have him involved in selecting and training the crew.

They got Piailug involved later. But I still don't believe they adequately addressed the issue of credit for navigational knowledge. The credit is owed not to Piailug as an individual. The skill is still maintained and practiced in the Central Carolines in places like Satawal, Houk, Polowat, and Pollap. This project did not acknowledge that you need to credit the clan that owns the knowledge. Nor did the project make it clear that the Central Carolines is the only place where the art of navigation is still alive.

Piailug went back for the Tahiti trip, for the first voyage. There were different interests, and the Hawaiians were furious. They wanted the project to proceed, but they needed money. Fundraising was a critical part of the project. From what Piailug told me, there were two factions. One wanted to build the canoe strictly according to all the old records based on Captain Cook's drawings, but another was most interested in building a good canoe and making a successful voyage.

He went back to help them restore the *Hokule'a* after it had been swamped. Later he was involved with the actual sailing to Tahiti and back. I cautioned him before he left. I talked to him again about the problems that might arise. The morale of the Hawaiians was very low because of the accident with the canoe, and rebuilding that morale was slow. There were other problems, too. One problem was with the lashing. "That lashing is Micronesian, and this is a Polynesian canoe. It shouldn't be lashed like that, because it doesn't look like the sketches from Captain Cook's visit. This isn't based on those drawings." That was the concern of one of the factions. Piailug also added some braces to the canoe to provide extra stability, but they also were not part of the historical drawings.

Before Piailug made the trip from Hawaii to Tahiti, he came up to Saipan. That's when he brought along a small canoe for me for educational purposes. We normally don't take a small canoe on the open ocean, but he did just that. And that lifted my spirits when he did that. With all his focus on Hawaii, I worried that perhaps he had forgotten the project to bring Carolinians together. But when I saw that canoe, I knew that he was still committed. I knew that was a lot of work to drag that small canoe all the way up to Saipan. I knew how hard it was, because I'd been on canoes before. I was very glad and talked very nicely with him, letting him know how much I appreciated what he had done. I said he shouldn't have done it that way. He should have waited, and the family here would have sent money to have the canoe shipped up instead. He said, "No, it's part of our project to maintain our traditions and teach the kids. Take them out on this canoe. Do whatever you would like with it to help educate people."

"Sure. It's here now anyway, so sure, why not?"

Piailug told me then that he was going on the voyage to Tahiti. I said, "Sure. Come and stay with me, and we will communicate with the people in Honolulu about your trip." He left the small canoe, and I invited the kids to take it out. This is when he got dragged into politics. I doubt that he was aware of how he was being used.

Because of Piailug's efforts, we are becoming known to the outside world. "There's this small dot of a place in the Central Carolines where people possess this amazing knowledge! A place where they travel without computers and navigational instruments! These are funny-looking people, but they still have this knowledge." But appropriate recognition of that knowledge was not made. Credit did not go where it should have gone. They talked only of Piailug, not of the clan owning the knowledge. Credit should go to the clan that owns the knowledge. And people need to realize there are navigators from Pollap, Houk, Tamatam, Lamotrek, Woleai, and Ifaluk, not just Satawal. Piailug is not the only one. Nor was he the last. Putting such an emphasis on the one navigator is insulting to Carolinians.

After I was on Satawal I decided to go to Hawaii to learn about American culture. So I was also in Hawaii when Piailug was preparing for a second voyage on the *Hokule'a*. This happened when I was working out of our liaison office in Honolulu. They invited Piailug to come and again help them out. They planned to make the second voyage in stages, to take one leg at a time and then take a break. I knew that would not be the end of it. Piailug was becoming famous, and there would be other projects people would want him to become involved in. Even on that voyage, appropriate acknowledgment about the navigational knowledge was not being made. The emphasis turned toward Polynesians, and the knowledge and seafaring abilities of the Polynesians.

All the time I was afraid about the misuse of the information. People might say, "Well, no. The Carolinians, what do they know?" And then they would make changes and use the information inappropriately. Books would be published, and we would have no control over what was written. Other people would start writing articles on navigation and the constellations. Some of that knowledge should not be made public. Piailug might teach somebody something, but that does not allow the student then to make the information public or pass it on to others. And they might not give the proper acknowledgments. And is it fair for an outsider to make lots of money on a book based on what he learned from Carolinians?

I was delighted, however, and overwhelmed to participate in the recognition the University of Hawaii gave to Piailug when he was awarded an honorary doctorate. It was done in front of the graduating class at the university. And I'm talking about a huge number of people. Piailug and I wore traditional attire: loincloth, lei, and beads. I was moved to tears by the ceremony.

Afterwards, I said, "Piailug! I don't know how you started all this, but I love it! Most people start at the bottom, but you seem to be starting from the top, getting your doctorate first!"

We were invited out that evening to a friend's birthday party. I was so moved by the ceremony that day, though, that I couldn't go. It took me a day to recover after that emotional experience. The president and members of the university board were there. Professors and other important people were there. Many Hawaiians were there and could share our feelings of pride and accomplishment in the recognition of our traditional culture.

I didn't call my friend, but I went to see him the next day. I found out later that he had called a lot of his friends from the other islands of Hawaii to come to the party. "What happened with you? How come you didn't come last night?" he started scolding me. He told me that he had invited a lot of family and friends from the other islands because he was expecting Piailug to come to the party. After all, Piailug was very famous.

Instead of calling my friend on the telephone, I went to see him. I invited Piailug to come with me. "Come on, Piailug. I want to introduce you to some of our local friends. They are as famous as you are and just as good as anybody else in their own ways."

My friend said, "Well, since you two are here, don't go away." This was in the middle of the morning. "We're going to have a party right now. You guys are not going anywhere. You're going to stay right here. We have leftovers from yesterday's party, so we can have another party. Just stay right here." And then he started calling friends. "Piailug is here now. He didn't come last night because he got so tired after the big ceremony and the graduation." So we had a great time. It was wonderful with all those Hawaiians there, and the singing and talking and dancing. It seemed like we were not only bridging the gap between Saipan and Satawal but also between Carolinians and Hawaiians. The bridge was being extended.

I asked Piailug about continuing the plan to link Carolinians together. With all the new outside interest in Piailug and Carolinian navigation, I was afraid of losing sight of our goal of connecting outer island and Saipan

Carolinians. I asked, "Okay. Next year during the summer let's make another voyage from the Central Carolines to Saipan." We had already received a copy of a book on navigation written by a haole, and I had some problems with parts of the book. I don't believe, for example, that he understood Urupa correctly about *epar*, animals in the ocean. I don't believe he was sensitive enough regarding our culture. Writing about Urupa that way was also somewhat insulting and made him look foolish. The author pushed him into saying things a certain way and it made him look inferior to Piailug as a navigator.

While I was still in Honolulu Piailug and I planned another voyage from Satawal to Saipan that summer. I also wanted to visit Houk, where my ancestors came from. I was hoping Piailug would pick me up there so that I could sail with him to Saipan. I wanted to continue reviving the tradition and building the bridge between Carolinians on Saipan and the outer islands.

Piailug left Hawaii for Satawal, and I was going to leave with him but I was invited to participate in a conference for Pacific canoe builders. Piailug was going to be a key person in this workshop. People throughout the Pacific were invited to participate. Summer came, and I heard that Repangalugh was making a voyage to Japan. Repangalugh had previously told me he would take me if I wanted to go. He had been one of my teachers on Satawal. Now he was making a trip to Japan for a festival. I said to the conference organizer, "I'm going to Yap to tell Repangalugh that I'm going with him." Now, however, Repangalugh said no because the group had already been selected and plans finalized with the Japanese.

I heard, though, that Piailug was ready for a voyage to Saipan, reminding me of the plans that we had made. I asked Piailug, "Are you still making the voyage to Saipan?"

He said, "Yes. Come on up. I'll wait for you." I didn't know there was a film crew there already. I didn't know that an American had already made arrangements for a documentary.

I said, "Okay. Next available boat, I'm taking it and heading for Satawal so that I can join you on that voyage."

So I did just that. I went up. Before I left, though, there was a message from the Satawal chief. Things were chaotic on Satawal, what with Repangalugh making the voyage to Japan. And normally there is much crying before a voyage for fear the crew won't return. And the entire island prepares food—the very best food is prepared. The families were heartbroken. "Japan! That's so far! We haven't sailed that route in such a long time!" It's part of the navigational knowledge, but it hadn't been sailed in recent memory.

So there was Repangalugh's voyage. And then somebody died. Third, there was Piailug's trip being planned. People were concerned because of Repangalugh's and Piailug's voyages and because of the recent death. And visitors were converging on the island to pay their respects to the deceased and the family. So things were chaotic on the island. Then a cable came from the film crew about coming to Satawal for the documentary. I thought it was for Repangalugh's trip to Japan, but then I found out that it was for the trip that Piailug and I had arranged.

Together with some others in Yap at the time, I talked about the request. They suggested, "Why don't we advise them to wait because so much is going on right now. It's chaotic. Let's ask them to wait." People on Satawal agreed, so we sent a message to the film crew asking them to wait. I didn't realize the film crew was already there.

When Piailug and I had planned the trip the previous year, I had asked about stopping on Guam. I wanted us to come in on a canoe to Guam, and to ask the governor to facilitate the entrance of our islanders as we arrived by canoe. They normally demand certain legal documents, but most of the outer islanders traveling by canoe don't have them. We would like to be able to stop at Guam, however, in an emergency such as encountering a storm or running out of food. Even though the Spanish era is long gone, the stories from that time are still vivid. We still remember stories about how the Spanish government could blow our canoes out of the water. And now there are strict Customs and immigration regulations. So normally, we always try to avoid Guam. On this trip, though, we wanted to stop on Guam and talk to the leaders there. Piailug agreed. I also relayed to the chief on Satawal a request from the maritime center in Honolulu for a model canoe or full-sized canoe to put in the museum there.

I asked Piailug if we were still going to stop on Guam. "You remember, we talked about trying to stop on Guam?"

"Yes," he assured me, "We're still going to do that."

So Piailug and I talked with the chief on Satawal about the plan. The chief gave me some small gifts for the governor of Guam. The chief brought me a sea shell, a lavalava, and some sennit that I was supposed to give to the governor. I didn't know, though, whether or not the visit to Guam had been discussed with the film crew. The crew had a timetable they needed to keep to in order to catch their next project, so they presumably weren't interested in a stopover on Guam.

We made the trip, but we didn't get to Guam. And some of my fears about our customs not being understood and being misrepresented were realized. Even the preparations for the voyage turned out to be mostly a show for the film crew rather than representing what usually happens. Some of the filming took place even before I arrived, but I saw it later. One part shows people gathered under the men's house, Lebutigh. Piailug was sitting on top of the canoe in front; some of the crew members were sitting on the bottom, and the American was standing next to Piailug. Piailug was sitting above the crew, and the American was standing above the crew. That's impolite. That's rude. He should have been sitting down with the crew. He thought he was like Piailug, when he should have realized he belonged as a member of the crew. And we are usually sitting and talking and drinking together in the evening, not posing the way the men were for the film. And the American mentioned in the film that during the day we would navigate by *lóó*, waves. But we wouldn't mention something like that in reality. They weren't documenting the event accurately. It should have been done accurately, not distorted just to make a film or write a book.

At one point in the film he said that at night we use the stars and in the day the waves. Even though he was probably saying that for the benefit of an audience watching the film, to me it looked as though he was instructing Piailug and the crew—who obviously already knew! Perhaps instead he could have let Piailug look like the expert. He could perhaps have asked, "Piailug, I know that we use stars at night, but could you explain what we do during the day?"

The crew members were interviewed, and each made a statement before the voyage. I said, "It's one of the voyages that will continue to promote customs and traditions long lost on Saipan." They asked about our route. I said, "Oh, from Satawal we'll go to West Fayu and then Guam and then Saipan," because that's what Piailug and I had discussed.

So we left, and we went to West Fayu, because that's the traditional stopping place. We were asked to change our plans, however, and skip the stop on Guam because of the film crew's timetable. That was very pushy. I was knee-deep in the water out on the sand bar at West Fayu, collecting shells, when the leader of the film crew came out to talk with me about bypassing Guam. That's when I found out about their timetable. I could tell he was really desperate and almost begging. I wasn't happy about the idea, but I felt sorry for him. I said, "This is the plan that Piailug and I made a year ago, long before you guys came. I don't know if Piailug will change his mind. I don't know." They were pleading, though, so I said, "Let's go ask Piailug." We went to where he was sleeping on the island. I couldn't even look at him. To the film crew I said, "Don't worry. We'll go on to Saipan. I'll talk to Piailug about it."

When Piailug got up, I said, "Piailug, what is our real trip? Are we going to stop by Guam or just go to Saipan? The film crew just asked about changing our plans and going directly to Saipan, because they have a schedule they have to meet."

Piailug said, "Oh, it's all right, we can postpone our project with Guam. We'll just go on to Saipan." Unfortunately, we haven't yet had a chance to get to Guam.

The American overlooked some of the etiquette involved in being part of the crew. He didn't seem to be aware of the fact that we have a way of working together without Piailug even having to tell us what to do. We already know a lot about maintaining the canoe and keeping it on course. We respect what others are doing and use respectful language. When we're not sure of what to do, we consult Piailug. Piailug is sitting next to us on the leeward platform of the canoe. He's always there, and he knows what is happening. He might say, "Who would like to take down the sail for the coming squall?" when he knows that rain and wind are coming. Although the American had studied a lot about navigation, he didn't really understand how to work as a member of the crew. Several times he sat up with Piailug, when he should have sat where he belonged—with the crew. I believe he thought he was part of the crew, but he wasn't, really.

They wanted a red light on the top of the mast, something we don't normally do. They told us they needed it there, however, so that the accompanying ship could keep track of us at night. They wanted to know where we were all the time. I thought, "How can we get lost? It's just Satawal to Saipan." Piailug and I argued somewhat. I said, "Piailug, if you're going to do an accurate documentary, they are going to have to film whatever happens. If we get lost, then that's what they film. Having a red light flashing at the top of our mast is not the way we normally sail! It isn't accurate." But we tied the red light to the top of the mast, even though we never do that when we sail. And such a pain that thing was! At night we had to stop, take everything down, turn the light on, hoist up the sail, and continue on our way. Then in the morning, we had to stop again, take the sail down, and then turn the light off!

I remember the first evening when we tried to turn the light on. It went on the *irá mwáán* (yard). There were guys already in the back of the canoe maneuvering, and the light was loose, and someone was trying to fix it. And the American was in the way, trying to do things all by himself instead of working with the crew members. I said to him, "Let those guys do their job."

He said, "No, I'm going to put this thing on over here." He was more in the way than anything, and trying to take over what others were doing. So I suggested to the crew in Carolinian to just let him do it. Then he was struggling and struggling and struggling and struggling. Finally, he just gave up, and the guys took it away from him, and they tied it slowly and securely. From then on the American had nothing to do with the light.

I was also upset when we arrived at Saipan and he stood by Piailug at the leeward platform. That's the place for navigators. If we are going to teach outside people about our tradition and culture, we need to tell those people where they belong. That man should not have been standing next to Piailug.

When we got to Saipan after the canoe voyage, I told Piailug I wanted to fly back to Honolulu to continue helping with preparations for the Pacific canoe conference. I suggested that Piailug get to Yap or Chuuk because we were running out of time for him to get to the conference. After the crew left to return to Satawal, I returned to Honolulu. Well, Piailug wasn't able to make it because of an illness in the family. But I was able to continue working with the conference. People from all over the Pacific came, people with knowledge. We had an old man from Yap, a man who didn't speak any English at all. There are a few people left who still know how to build the traditional Yapese men's houses with all the intricate rope lashing. Several people came from Polynesia and from Fiji. Outside the building a group of Hawaiians were building a canoe. Two people from Yap and I sat off to the side, demonstrating how to make a paddle with an adze. Hawaiians were digging out the hull using modern tools, but we were using an adze! A man representing Satawal made rope.

When I was in Honolulu another American approached me with his idea about filming the *ppwo* ceremony. If we don't continue the ceremony, we will lose the knowledge because the old people with the knowledge are dying. Once they're gone, their knowledge will be gone. Many young men today are ready to become navigators, but they need to go through the ceremony. But I was worried about him making the film.

At that time I had never seen the ceremony. I told him that I had never seen the ceremony and that I wanted to witness one before any filming started. I needed to see one first in the real setting, with real young men ready to become navigators. If I went to the outer islands for filming without first having seen it done, I wouldn't know what to record. I wouldn't even know whether it was being done correctly or not. I might not be able to pick up on critical elements of the ceremony. We might focus on people carrying coconuts, but that might not be important. We might miss the importance of someone tying a coconut leaf around the wrist. That was what I discussed with him. He was very, very persistent, though. He just would not accept "no" for an answer. He even asked if people would do the ceremony if he paid them.

I said, "Yes, they will. Of course, if you pay someone, they will do something. But whether or not it's the real ceremony they'll do for the film is another question. Once you pay them, they will perform something for you. It may not be what you want, though."

I heard rumors that he did a film on Lamotrek about the *ppwo* ceremony. I don't know how accurate the documentary is, though. I told him, for example, that we only do the *ppwo* in the summer when there's good weather and plenty of breadfruit, fish, and taro. The water is calm, and fishing is good. The foods play an important role in the ceremony and many people are involved. I don't know if the film makes that clear. And I'm not sure the film was made in the summer.

I'm afraid the documentary won't be accurate. And I'm afraid portions of it will be misused or misrepresented. I'm afraid someone will take an important part of our tradition and use it in a commercial. It could become like the island of Managaha. It's so important for our culture, yet now it's used for commercial purposes. Or like Hawaiian hula dancing today. I wouldn't mind if they used the film to provide information that will promote our tradition, but they might write another script and insert a clip from the movie and use it to sell Toyotas. The Hawaiian hula, for example, is now being used to promote macadamia nuts. They could mislead the audience, who will then have false ideas about Micronesians, about Carolinians. So I'm worried about that documentary on the *ppwo*.

This happened about the time that I was making arrangements to leave Honolulu, and both that American and a Hawaiian man had ideas about films. They made some outrageous proposals. One idea was to have Piailug sail from Satawal to San Francisco. They wanted to show that Pacific Islanders can sail into the wind, not just downwind. I thought to myself, "Sailing to San Francisco? Sailing to San Francisco has no meaning to us. We have no interest in such a project, and we shouldn't do it just because someone offers us money. We should focus on preserving our culture and recording our traditions."

The American insisted, though. He said, "Just go back and ask Piailug. We'll fund everything."

I said, "But we don't need to do that. I see no need to do that."

I made him a proposal. I asked him to do a documentary making it clear that the Central Carolines is where the art of navigation is still alive. I also wanted a documentary on the *ppwo* ceremony after I had a chance to get the old people together, witness a ceremony, and understand it. If he would help with that, then I would do what I could to help with the San Francisco trip.

Then he mentioned filming the *ppwo* ceremony. And the Hawaiian talked of a film about people carving stone throughout the Pacific Islands, and including Nan Madol and the taga stones in the Northern Marianas and the stone money in Yap. Most of the film would be about Polynesia, though. What made me most upset was the talk about filming the *ppwo* ceremony. It's important to record the ceremony, but I wasn't convinced it would be done accurately.

They wanted a film about stone carving, and as part of that film they wanted Piailug to initiate several non-Micronesians in the *ppwo* ceremony. I was furious, but I tried not to show it. I could understand involving the Hawaiians; they are Polynesians and similar to Micronesians. But why haoles? They have nothing to do with us. Why Japanese? Why Koreans? They are not part of the Central Carolines. The *ppwo* ceremony is sacred. So I said, "I don't think we should do that."

At one point the American said, "Are you the spokesman for Piailug?"

I said, "Yes, I am. In the absence of Piailug, yes, according to our culture, I have the right to speak for Piailug when he is not here when the family integrity is at stake. But I'm not the only one. Other members of the family can also speak for him. And I'm going to do what I can to convince Piailug not to participate. Obviously, though, the final decision is his, not mine."

The credit for, or the recognition of this knowledge is now moving away from the Central Carolines. People are writing books and magazine articles. I worry that the navigational knowledge and the *ppwo* ceremony, which are sacred to Carolinians, will no longer belong to Carolinians. Others may even practice the customs and make them theirs. They were talking to me about having Piailug do the *ppwo* ceremony for about five navigators—non-Micronesians. I worried about the knowledge moving out of the hands of the rightful owners. One worry is that others would take the information and misuse it. The other problem is that the rightful owners in the Carolines would no longer be recognized, even though that recognition is an important part of the culture. It will no longer belong to the people of the Central Carolines. It might be okay if others kept acknowledging and respecting the rightful owners and if they made it clear that it is in the Central Carolines where the art of navigation is still alive. It might be okay if they said, "It's theirs. The *ppwo* ceremony came from the people in the Central Carolines." It's not appropriate even for someone who has acquired the knowledge to pass it on without permission. But I'm worried that none of this will happen. I worry that people will try and teach it and not acknowledge where it came from. Once the knowledge is given to outsiders, I worry that the proper respect and acknowledgment and customs won't continue to be followed. They may not know all that's involved and treat the knowledge the way they should. They might use it appropriately, but they might change it or put it on a video or send it to London! They might send it to where it has no meaning. Those are my fears. Someone who learns navigation should learn about all that is involved in protecting that knowledge and avoiding abuse.

I worried about Piailug initiating non-Micronesians. They might give interviews and talk with reporters. "Now I'm a navigator. Piailug, the master navigator, he's the one who initiated me. I can teach you. Sure. You want me to talk about it on television? Sure!" But this is sacred knowledge! If Americans learn something, it's okay for them to teach others, but that's not our tradition. And we are modest. If someone asks a navigator, "Are you a navigator?" he would answer, "Not really," or "I've learned a little bit," whereas Americans would say, "Yes! I know about navigation. I've learned all about it."

I realize we need to grow and prosper, but we should be more in control. And we should be the ones in control of our knowledge. Before we teach outsiders, they have to learn something of our culture.

Finally they said, "It's okay, Lino. Could you just go back and ask Piailug? Relay our requests?"

I said, "Sure, I'll do that. I'll relay your requests to Piailug." But I was thinking to myself, "I don't think this is a good idea. Come on, you guys! Give me a break! I can tell you right now that he won't do that. I don't think so." I planned to go back and get together the old people who know about the *ppwo* ceremony and figure out what it is from the beginning to the end. We also have many people out in the Central Carolines ready to become navigators. "Yes. Yes. I will go back and make a point of mentioning all of this to Piailug, including the trip to San Francisco and the documentary about carving stone and the *ppwo* ceremony." I was furious, but I tried to stay polite with them and control my temper and talk very gently about my worries.

The American said we could go out and film it right then and there. He was so persistent!

I said, "No! No! I really don't want it to be done at this time. With all my heart, I want to revive the *ppwo* ceremony, but I don't think it should be filmed right now." I want to be sure that I understand the ceremony. If I don't have a chance to see it firsthand, ahead of time, we could easily omit filming something very essential to the ceremony. For example, we might miss filming the braided coconut leaf being tied on the wrist. If I don't realize the importance of that part of the ceremony, the filming might concentrate instead on people singing and dancing.

The other man was quietly sitting off to the side. He wanted Piailug's help with two projects, one of which was the stone carving film, with a segment about navigation and a *ppwo* ceremony for about five people. The other project concerned making a canoe from a Tahitian log. He said, "Well anyway, Lino, just go back and ask Piailug if he would like to come to Tahiti and carve a canoe from a tree there."

In the midst of my temper and fury, I said, "Hold on a second! Hold on a second! Let me think about that." I paused for a moment and thought about the problem. I came up with an idea. I said, "You know, we can probably all agree on something a little bit different. Listen a moment to my plan, and see if you can agree to do it this way. Give me a chance to go there and revive these practices. Then we can probably do the project if you can agree to some conditions."

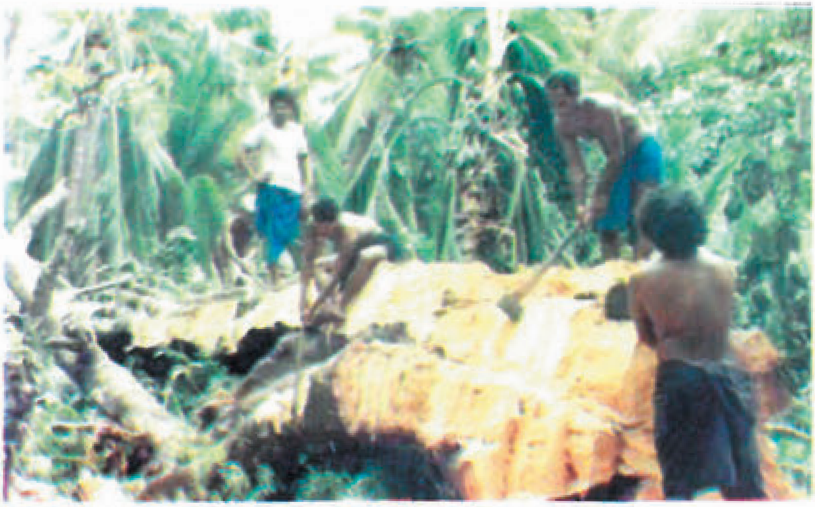
"What are those?"

"We will agree to the documentary about stone carving, though not the voyage to San Francisco. We can also agree to filming the *ppwo* ceremony if you agree to a few conditions. One would be to film a ceremony conducted on Satawal or elsewhere in the Central Carolines, such as Houk or Pollap. In addition, you would make it clear in the film that no other people possess this knowledge. Show that the knowledge belongs to those people only and that the Central Carolines is the only place where the art of navigation is still practiced. We also want the rights to the film and control over copies. If someone wants to use it, they first need our permission."

Well, they didn't go for it. They didn't like that idea. And to my knowledge, Piailug never sailed to San Francisco.

When I was in Yap, I talked to Repangalugh to mention that the American might approach him about filming on Lamotrek. And I told Repangalugh my worries about it as well. I added, "This film will be a record preserved for future generations. If it's going to be done, it had better be done absolutely correctly and must accurately portray the ceremony and its importance." I don't know if Repangalugh became involved or not.

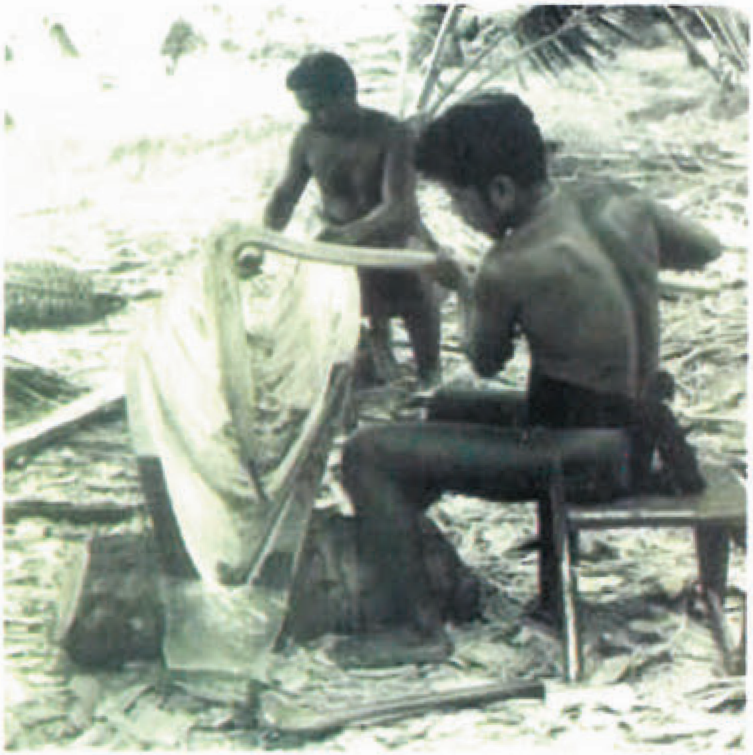
Another art that's on the verge of disappearing is canoe building. Not too many young men in the Central Carolines are learning how to build them in the traditional way. At least a documentary film on canoe restoration was made here on Saipan.



Men from Satawal shaping a breadfruit tree trunk that will be used to make the hull of a sailing canoe.

The canoe gives life to the island. That's one of the reasons the whole island makes food for the *ppwo* ceremony. And the navigators make a sacrifice when they go out during bad times to bring food to the island. It's a form of reciprocity, although they don't actually say, "Okay, you become a navigator and feed us." The more navigators on the island, the better, so that we have more people able to travel, visit relatives, and bring back news. Navigators benefit the whole island. Even if just one person is learning navigation and going through the *ppwo* ceremony, the entire island nonetheless will prepare their very best food for that one person.

So much is behind navigation and canoe building. They have to cut down a breadfruit tree, a tree that otherwise would provide food for families. It's one of our main staple foods. Our ancestors tried other trees for canoes, but they learned that no other wood can compare with breadfruit. It provides for more flotation in the water. When you put breadfruit wood in salt water, it soaks it up much more slowly than the wood of other trees. Other wood soaks up salt water very quickly. Once a canoe soaks up water, it slows down. Breadfruit floats, however. It also means you can load more provisions into the canoe. Other wood might be stronger and be more resistant to damage when running up on a reef or over sand, but breadfruit wood is better for flotation.



Tibwe of Satawal uses a special adze to shape the hull of a small canoe while Tereyong works on the mas *(eye of the canoe). This photo was taken in the early 1970s.*

It might take a week or two weeks to sail from Satawal to Houk because of having to sail into the wind. During that time the canoe absorbs water slowly, so the canoe doesn't slow down too much. By the time we reach Houk, however, the wood will be quite wet—though not as wet as it would be if it were made out of some other wood. Once we pull the canoe up on the beach, the canoe dries out very quickly, whereas other wood could take weeks to dry out. This characteristic of breadfruit wood plays an important role in planning trips. Suppose you knew that when you reached Houk, you would have only a week or so before bad weather strikes. That's enough time for the wood to dry.

Food that the canoe provides feeds not just a family but the entire island. If a storm destroys crops on the island, the chief will control access and distribution to ensure that everyone receives a share. So when you cut down a breadfruit tree, you deprive not just one family but the entire island of a potential source of food. Remember, too, that several trees might have to be sacrificed in order to get appropriate wood for the canoe. *Sellap* are those with the knowledge and skill for building canoes. *Sellap* also know about the spirits of a canoe.

A family doesn't give up a tree right away. They are consulted, and they talk for a while. It's not done on the spur of the moment without planning or thought. And we might start cutting and find soft or rotten parts, in which case the whole tree has to be discarded. It's no good for breadfruit anymore, or for a canoe. Or a crack might open up and run into the middle of the canoe. We might be able to use it for a part of the canoe, because canoes are made from several pieces. But they would probably need to cut down another tree. There is something called *falapil* which takes place after the wood has been brought to the men's house, and the canoe has taken its general shape but before the actual carving takes place. There is a ceremony before cutting down the trees. There are prayers, and people offer food. Even today we have people who can communicate with the breadfruit tree spirits. These rituals still take place but not as elaborately as before.

I witnessed an event that happened one year when breadfruit wasn't very plentiful. People with the knowledge to communicate with the spirits made some magic to induce the spirits to produce more breadfruit, and the next year they had an abundance of breadfruit.

Before cutting down the tree, there's a ritual that involves talking to the spirit. After the tree is cut, the parts that aren't needed are chopped off to lighten it, and then it is hauled to the men's house where men will build the canoe. I haven't actually seen the ritual. The ceremony is carried out before touching the tree, but after it has been selected by the master canoe builder. People have known for a while which tree is involved. Once the family surrenders the tree for canoe building, the master canoe builder says, "Yes, we will use that tree." Then the person with the knowledge conducts the ritual before people come to cut the tree down.

Then we trim the tree and take it to the men's house where the canoe will be built. When they're ready, they do *falapil*. I haven't seen how that ritual is done either. The master canoe builder measures the canoe and this involves spirits. *Falapil* is like asking the spirits, "Please lead us. Help us. Help us." There are prayers, and the people involved in the ritual decorate their arms with coconut fronds. Then the master canoe builder says, "Okay. Let's start." That's when all the men can start helping to carve the canoe. When the canoe is finished, there's another ritual. The canoe is decorated, and food offerings are left for spirits. Completion of the canoe is celebrated. Many rituals are involved in building a canoe; the process is much more than just cutting and shaping a canoe. When the canoe is ready to enter the water, *afeyfey* takes place. This is when people catch fish and offer it to spirits, and then the canoe can be used for voyages. The ceremony has to be done before the canoe is used.

I don't necessarily expect today's young people on Saipan to become navigators or canoe builders, but I want them to know something of that part of our heritage. People should know their heritage, be proud of it, and be able to talk about it.

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1. The men who came to work on the canoe "Maihar" included Chief Manupy Rapung, Ikefai Onopey, Oiluk Ikenur, Sia Ainam, Joash Urumo, Luis Tenner, and Steve Houkol.

2. The Carolinian word *tipiyew* means "to be decided, of one mind, to agree" (Jackson and Marck 1991:175). Many Carolinians speak of this as characteristic of their community and their culture.

3. *Apporo* is a traditional Carolinian way of showing respect by placing yourself lower than the person you are respecting by bowing, crouching, kneeling, or sitting.

4. The Carolinian words for cousin and sibling are the same, so the cousin was a classificatory sister. The husband is supposed to show respect for his wife's brothers and sisters. Saipan Carolinians have a Hawaiian-type kinship terminology, with parents and aunts and uncles referred to by similar terms, siblings and cousins classified together, and children and nieces and nephews classified together.

5. He is referring to an article in *Pacific Magazine* titled "Bringing Pride to Tradition by Voyaging" (Costa 1992), which focused on Polynesian heritage. Although it mentions Mau Piailug's role as navigator in the

voyage of the *Hokule'a*, Lino was concerned that no other mention was made of the Central Carolinian heritage or navigational knowledge.

Chapter VIII
Honolulu

With Saipan Carolinians caught between two worlds—the traditional Carolinian one and the newly introduced American one—Lino felt it imperative that they learn of both. He knew that most people on Saipan wanted to become part of the U.S., so he thought they should learn more about it. He had gone to Satawal to learn more of the traditional Carolinian heritage. In the same vein, he went to Honolulu to learn of American culture. While there he also became involved in the production of a children's play, "Song of the Navigator," dealing with the tensions in Micronesia between the new and the old.

On Saipan it irritated me to hear people talking so highly of the U.S. Why did people talk like that? What was so special about the U.S.? That's what I wanted to know. So I wanted to go to the U.S. to learn firsthand about American ways. I'd been to the U.S. before on government projects, when everything was arranged and taken care of. This time, however, I wanted to be on my own—like other Americans. I needed to live in the U.S. myself in order to write the book I was planning about the American presence on our island. I was divorced and had a girlfriend in Hawaii, so 1980 was a good time for me to go.

At first I felt so lost. At home on Saipan I had been used to always thinking about family and not just about myself. So I felt lost with the American freedom to choose and to think about yourself. I even felt guilty at times if I was sitting idle. I had been used to working to help the family, so I felt guilty when I wasn't contributing to society in Honolulu. Eventually I got used to it, though, and realized the meaning of the freedom to choose. It's not our way, and it's scary, and it contradicted my upbringing, but I began to understand it. My girlfriend helped me a lot in understanding things; she helped keep me focused. She knew how important it was for me to see the difference between Carolinian and American ways.

I had to learn to live on my own, so when I was in Honolulu, I was desperate to find a job before I was kicked out of my apartment. On Saipan, I only applied once for a job. Otherwise, jobs found me. People put me in one job after another. Later they would ask me, "Did you fill out the form for the job? Personnel couldn't find the paperwork."

Sometimes people would come up to me and say, "Lino, you're it. You're the right one for the job. We would like you to take it."

I would say, "But I don't know anything about that."

"Oh, we'll help you. We'll train you."

One of those was the adult education program that I managed for several years in the Northern Marianas. So I had rarely filled out an application or looked for a job. Instead, people came and asked me to work for them.

Then when I went to Honolulu, I had to go out and fill out applications for a job. I was scared. I was afraid. I didn't know what to do. I was running out of money. I didn't know about resource people other than the liaison office in Honolulu. So I had to struggle just like anybody else in America. Otherwise, I would have been sleeping out in the street. Here on Saipan that wouldn't happen because of our extended families. For example, when I came back from the outer islands, my family said, "Why don't you stay with us until you find a place?" It was different over there in Honolulu. People in that situation over there might attempt suicide.

I eventually settled down and became part of the system. I voted against becoming part of that system because I wasn't ready for us to choose to become part of America. I knew nothing about America. I had been to Honolulu, but it was for specific purposes and for very brief periods. The longest I had been there was for a year. This was for a project between the Trust Territory government and the East-West Center when they were trying to create a uniform orthography for the Micronesian languages. We found that it was next to impossible. That was the longest time I stayed in Honolulu. I was given enough money for expenses and had a place to stay. I went to school and visited some professors, so it was not difficult. It was a first-class lifestyle. That didn't prepare me for what it would be like to live on my own in Honolulu.

I went to live in Honolulu for almost ten years. It took me about half of that time to finally settle down and accept things the way they are in the U.S. and to realize the advantages if you don't abuse them. The society has rules to follow. For example, there are rules and regulations involved in renting a house. You have rights, and the landlord has rights. You have to keep an appointment time when you have an interview, because otherwise you hold other people up. Time is of the essence for Americans.

Honolulu was more different for me than Satawal was. I had no relatives or friends that were like me. It was much more Western and big and complex, though at the end I could appreciate and understand it. For example, I understood why they put old people in homes. They have some very lovely ones with nurses and security guards so that no harm comes to these old people. These are people with lots of money, or perhaps it is their grandchildren that have the money and are able to afford the homes. They put the old people in homes because of work schedules. If you miss too many times at work, you will get fired. The boss can easily hire someone else. So it's a struggle.

Here on Saipan we still have our families that we depend on and look after, despite all the changes that are taking place on the island today. We still can call the family together. Carolinians don't realize how important that is. They just take it for granted.

Lino at Waikiki in the early 1980s. The Royal Hawaiian Hotel is at far left.

Eventually I learned about American ways, and I came to appreciate American democracy and the freedom to choose. I could see beauty in both systems—Carolinian and American. And both places have to find ways of structuring relationships and maintaining order. I could see how the American way could do that with all its rules and responsibilities. And I could appreciate how difficult that is in such a large and complex society. It's much harder to maintain order in the U.S. than it is in our small society with extended families and face-to-face relationships.

My experiences in Honolulu were incredible. I started making friends. I went drinking with local people. I went surfing. I got to know the island the way I know Saipan. I started looking into the history of the island. A friend of mine wanted me to work with him as a tour driver. "Lino, you would make a very good tour driver."

I said, "I don't want to be a tour driver." I was shy around tourists. I avoided them when I saw them. If other people wanted to entertain tourists, fine. But I didn't want to. Anyway, my friend asked me to come attend a workshop. I did, and it was wonderful. They talked about tourists, taking people around the island, and the importance of understanding the history of the island.

"Some of you may not be from here, from Oahu. Some of you may be from the mainland or from elsewhere, like Micronesia. But we're all here on Oahu now. So this is our island. And tourists are the people who come and spend some of their money. So we need to show them the aloha spirit. We should talk about Waikiki and Waimea and Waimanalo. We should talk about why the Hawaiians were moved to Waimanalo, what the significance of Waikiki is. We should talk about history, not just night clubs." I enjoyed that. I worked for that company only about three months, though, and then I left. I guess I was too shy.

From 1980 to 1989 I lived in Honolulu. While I was there, I became involved with the Honolulu Theatre for Youth by accident, while I was working out of our liaison office there. I was a medical referral assistant, looking after people referred to Honolulu for medical reasons. I had been very scared about looking for a job—standing in line, filling out applications, writing résumés—but then I got a call asking if I was interested in working with the liaison office. I assumed they wanted a Carolinian speaker in the office that could help Carolinians being referred to Honolulu for medical treatment. I accepted, of course. Since the administration at the time was a Republican one, though, I was a little surprised and told them I was a Democrat, not a Republican.

The liaison officer said, "That doesn't matter. The job has nothing to do with politics. Our sole purpose is to look after the people that pass through Honolulu. That includes our leaders in Congress, our governor, mayors, visitors, and students. Our office is here to help them, especially those sent to Honolulu for medical assistance." So I accepted the position and was hired.

I also helped the Honolulu Theatre for Youth produce and create a play, *Song of the Navigator*. And it was all by accident, all by accident. I was working out of the liaison office, working 12 to 14 hours a day, when I got a call from Mike Cowell, a playwright under contract to the Honolulu Theatre for Youth. The theater had received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to write a play about Micronesia. It hired Mike to write the script for this play.

Staff of the Marianas/Honolulu Liaison Office. Standing: Lino and Linda T. Cabrera. Seated from left: Rita Indalecio Woody, Benny Sablan and Bertha Camacho (now Deleon Guerrero). Photo circa the early 1980s.

One morning I got a call from him. "Mr. Olopai?"

"Yes."

"You don't know me, but my name is Michael Cowell."

I said, "Yes?"

"We just came back from Micronesia, and people there told me you would be the right person to help me write a play about Micronesia." Mike continued to talk about the play and his role in writing the script, and he continued to encourage me to help.

I said, "Oh, but Mike, I don't know anything about acting or writing a play."

Mike wasn't ready to give up, though he didn't want to push too hard. He said, "Okay, why don't we have lunch, and then we'll talk about it?"

I said, "Sure. Let's have lunch at McDonald's—my favorite restaurant," I jokingly told him.

So we got together and had lunch. I don't remember what we ate, but he sat across from me, and we talked and talked. I learned that after the theater got its grant, the people involved toured Micronesia before writing the play. They wanted to see firsthand what Micronesia is like. Mike's job was to write the script, to come up with the story. That afternoon we talked. He started to tell me about the stage and the story and acting. I was kind of nervous listening, looking at him. I kept saying, "Mike, I don't know anything about all that. I'm a fisherman. I don't know about those things. I'm a fisherman."

But Mike didn't give up. "Yes, but people kept mentioning your name. Wherever we went, people mentioned your name as a good person to help me write my story." He went even further. "Just this morning I was sitting outside a building at the University of Hawaii. I was sitting outside the building and I looked over and saw a woman I thought was probably a Micronesian. I went up to her and started talking with her. I mentioned the story that I was going to write. Right then and there she told me, 'Oh, Lino Olopai will be the right person to help you write the play.' In fact, she's the one who gave me your telephone number. And that was just this morning."

So we kept talking. Mike and I kept talking, and I was listening and listening and listening. I was nervous because I didn't know anything about staging and acting and scripts. I said, "I can help you only on one condition—that you help me write a book I'm planning to write."

Mike stopped and said, "You're planning on writing a book?"

"Yes. I'm planning on writing a book, one based on my personal experiences." I told him about the book that I was planning.

Curious, Mike looked at me and said, "What kind of book are you planning to write?"

I said, "Oh, one about the differences between life on the outer islands and on Saipan, about the problems caused by young people coming back from universities and colleges thinking that they know everything and saying that our culture is old fashioned. They are not interested in practicing our traditions and their values are becoming more Western than Micronesian. This is creating friction in Carolinian communities on Saipan as well as on the outer islands."

I was explaining all of this to Mike. Mike learned that I was related to

Mau, who made the voyage to Tahiti on the *Hokule'a*. I told him about some of the friction and the changes that I saw taking place in the Central Carolines. He stopped me. He said, "Lino, Lino! With your permission! With your permission! Can I write down this part?"

I was unsure. I was getting carried away with what I was saying. But I said, "Yeah, sure. Why not? Go ahead." I didn't understand the significance at the time. But what I was talking about ended up being central to the plot of the play.

Cast member Christine Merino and playwright Michael Cowell during Song for the Navigator*'s Micronesian tour in 1986.*

I didn't realize it at the time, though. I just told him, "Sure, why not? Go ahead. You can write it down," with no knowledge of how the play would turn out. I didn't realize I was giving him a story to write for the play. He told me that he'd been trying to decide on something to write about that would be appropriate for Micronesia. Later he told me that I gave him ideas for his script.

We parted. But before we left, he said, "May I call you? I have to submit this by Monday. Lino, may I call you?"

Even though I didn't know the guy, and he didn't know me, I had committed to helping him. So I said, "Yes, Mike. You may call me anytime." And I gave him my home telephone number.

With a deadline coming up, he had to write the play over the weekend. I think he was a little nervous that he hadn't come up with anything yet. I believe he called me up twice, although I forget his questions. They probably had something to do with the language or the ceremony involved in the jailing incident written into the script.

They had me helping with the play, working as a volunteer and attending rehearsals. They told me that I seemed to have answers to whatever they needed. "Sure. I can give you lavalavas for the women to wear. Sure, I have photographs you may look at. Yes, I know a little bit of the chant. Yes, I know some of the dances. Yes, I know how the women should behave."

Cast members of Song for the Navigator *during their tour of Micronesia in 1986. From left: Tremaine Tamayose, James Rabauliman and Ray Bumatai. Also pictured is Don Nahaku (with back to camera).*

Mike asked me, "On Monday, can you come to this rehearsal? We'll go through the script, and then you can tell me what you think of it—especially the Carolinian language that is involved."

I said, "Sure. I'll do that. What time is the rehearsal?" So I was there, and I was able to continue helping them. I was introduced to the director and the cast members. I refused to take a role, but I started helping them and advising them when they needed it. Finally I was put on the payroll as a consultant. I said to the director of the theater, Jane Campbell, "Jane, don't worry about it. I'm more than happy to help out in any way I can."

She said, "I don't think it's right. I don't think it's fair, especially with your busy schedule, for you to work for free."

John Kauffman, the director of the play, called me up late one night. "Lino! I got a video and letter from somebody named James Rabauliman. Do you know this man? Is he a Carolinian or what? Because we need to have a Carolinian." This was after auditions had been closed.

I said, "Yes, Rabauliman is the name of a Carolinian family I know. I don't remember James, but he's presumably one of those kids, probably about 16 or 17 years old."

"Should I consider him? The auditions are closed."

I said, "Well, it's up to you. But, yes, I know the Rabauliman family. If you want to take the Rabauliman boy, sure, fine."

And he did just that. He accepted the boy—even after the auditions had been closed. He got James Rabauliman—the only Carolinian in the cast.

So they went ahead and started performing. They planned to tour all the Hawaiian Islands and then Micronesia and the U.S. mainland. Many of the cast members had impressive acting experience already. I was working with professionals. A Carolinian fisherman was working with professional actors!

I went back again to my old job with the liaison office. Meanwhile, they made some changes in the play.

The first performances of the play were in local schools. Jane and many of the parents told me that the children who saw the play were so excited. "Ma! Pa! You've got to see this play! It has ghosts! It has a woman who gets possessed! It has some guys getting swamped in a canoe!" The kids were so excited about the play. "And they were wearing loincloths! Ma, you've got to see the play."

I was invited to the first public performance. And they gave me extra tickets, most of which I gave to Micronesian students. During the performance, I concentrated on the play, and I was very moved by it. They brought out so much about Carolinians and sent such a strong message. And so much love was in the play.

I didn't know then about appropriate behavior after performances. I didn't know that after the performance, the cast, playwright, and director would stand off to the side so that people could talk with them. So I didn't understand when all of them said at the end, "Lino, you come. Come stand with us over here."

Termain Tamayose, who played the grandfather "Samal" in the play Song for the Navigator, *performing at Kaimuki High School in Honolulu.*

I said, "Why should I stand with you?"

They said, "Come." And they gave me a lei and flowers. I guess they knew that people would want to come and talk with me, because that's what happened.

"Are you the Micronesian consultant for the play?"

"Yes."

People came and held my hand and said, "Thank you. We cannot begin to tell you how much we appreciated the play. It was such a beautiful story. Please, when you go back, tell your uncles and family members to maintain those traditions and the love revealed in that play. Tell them to maintain those customs." People came with tears in their eyes. I'm not talking just about old people; I mean women and men. A friend of mine came up and said, "Lino, would you autograph this for me?"

I said, "Why should I do that? I'm not one of those people. Those are the people whose autographs you want."

He said, "No, no. I specifically want you to autograph this for me."

I found it odd that a personal friend wanted my autograph. I didn't really understand, but I scribbled a note and wrote my name on his program as he asked.

After the play, people came up and asked, "Where is the Micronesian consultant for this play?" Very well-known people came up to me, some with tears in their eyes.

Michael gave me a card. I didn't know that giving cards or flowers was part of the etiquette of putting on a play. Mike gave me a lovely card.

This was the first public performance that was held at Kaimuki Elementary School. I hadn't been paying much attention to what had been happening with the play, but then they called me. "Lino, come and pick up your complimentary tickets. Make sure that you show up for our first public performance. Please come. We want you to come."

"Yes. Yes, I'll come. Of course I'll come."

They also said they wanted to have Micronesian handicrafts displayed in the lobby before the performance. I said, "Sure. It shouldn't be a problem."

They asked, "How many tables do you need?"

I said, "I really don't know. Maybe two, three tables."

And we did just that. Out on display in the lobby we had a model canoe, since most of the play was about canoes and navigation, and we also had other crafts and pictures and maps of Micronesia. And the play was well received. There was even a standing ovation. I asked the Micronesian students to make leis for the cast members. "Prepare leis for the cast. At the end of play, when they come out and take their bows, give them the leis." I had learned that at the end, the cast comes out and bows. "When they come out, I want all of you to run up and give them leis."

"Sure." And that's what happened. After the curtain closed, the people continued to applaud. When the cast came out, the Micronesian students ran up and put leis on them. People continued applauding, and the cast came out again and bowed.

After touring the Hawaiian Islands, the company planned to tour Micronesia. They asked me, "Lino, which do you want? Do you want to come with us to Micronesia, or do you want to come with us to the U.S.

mainland? We'll give you a choice of one of them. Do you want to go to Saipan and watch us perform over there? Or do you want to go with us to the U.S.?" I chose the U.S., and there were plans for me to see the performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

The theater in the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. which served as the venue for Song for the Navigator in 1986.

First, though, they toured Micronesia. When they returned, James Rabauliman's contract ran out. He had played a member of the family in Satawal, and he also played a storm. That's an exciting part of the play, when two cousins get swamped by a storm. I had lost track of the people involved in putting on the play, but they called me up again. They asked me to come help someone taking over for James. They asked me if I could help him with some of the Carolinian language he had to use in the play.

I said, "Sure. I'd be more than happy to do so." I did. I helped him for a week or so.

Before that, they had told me they wanted me to take the part, but I refused. When they again asked me to take the part because James was leaving, I said, "Are you guys kidding? I don't know anything about acting! I keep telling you that I'm a fisherman. I'll help you in other ways, but I'm not going to take a part. I'm a fisherman. I keep telling you that. I cannot." So they asked me if I would help the new actor.

I said, "Sure. By all means. No problem."

They went off again to perform on the outer islands of Hawaii. Eventually I ended up taking a part in the play, but it was quite by accident, like so much else in my life. The night before they planned to leave for the mainland tour, they called me up to ask me again to take the role because the regular actor had come down with chicken pox. I finally agreed when they threatened to cut out the scene, one that was critical to the story. And they were running out of time; they were leaving the next day. They assured me that I would be fine because the lines were in Carolinian, and I had written them myself.

So in Seattle, Washington I saw my first snow and made my debut as an actor. We also performed in Washington, D.C. and in Dallas, Texas.

Chapter IX
Seeking Balance

With commonwealth status came rapid economic development on Saipan. Political stability, U.S. protection, favorable labor laws, and a low minimum wage attracted foreign investors. In addition, immigrant labor was both cheap and easy to acquire, and the minimum wage was set much lower than the U.S. standard. As a result, tourism and garment factories began booming. Hotels were relatively inexpensive to construct and attracted Japanese tourists. Soon golf courses, nightclubs, restaurants, and other attractions for tourists sprouted on the island. These are typically owned by outsiders, however, not by Chamorros or Carolinians. A number of garment factories, again owned by outsiders, opened for business because clothing made in the Commonwealth is allowed into the U.S. duty free, unlike clothing made in foreign countries.

"Guest workers" from places like China, the Philippines, Thailand, and Korea began pouring in, and they eventually outnumbered the indigenous inhabitants. In fact, the economic boom on Saipan would probably not have been possible without this immigrant labor. Filipino workers, for example, were largely responsible for building many of the hotels, and immigrants fill the garment factories. Local people perceive a number of problems as a consequence. They complain, for example, about insufficient water, a crowded hospital, and too few classrooms in the schools to accommodate all the new students.

Furthermore, accusations of labor abuses as well as physical abuse and rape have been proliferating in connection with the garment industry and other arenas involving immigrant labor. In addition to drawing the attention of U.S. officials, these problems have also caused embarrassment to local people since they reached U.S. television and the outside popular press. For example, the headline in a 1992 article in Pacific Islands Monthly *reads, "Crackdown on exploitation," and the article states:*

> *The U.S. Government says some Saipan garment workers are being virtually held prisoner. . . . The U.S. Department of Labor has cracked down on what it regards as the exploitive labor practices of a major group of CNMI garment factories whose products are sold on the Mainland. The Department has charged that garment workers are overworked, underpaid, and forced to live in unsanitary conditions while being held virtual prisoners by*

> *their employers. (North 1992:28)*

A 1997 Reader's Digest *article (Hunt 1997) leads with, "Shame on American Soil," and chronicles complaints about physical abuse and rape among immigrant maids, nightclub workers, and others on Saipan and its neighboring islands.*

Clearly Saipan has been grappling with how to deal with these problems associated with development. Lino argues for a balance between the old and the new, the traditional Carolinian and the modern American. He sees hope with renewed and stronger connections with the Central Carolines, even though the outer islanders, too, are contending with change and want so many of the amenities found on Saipan.

When I was young I heard a lot about our tradition and being a Carolinian from listening to the older people, growing up with them, going fishing with them. I was very fortunate to grow up when I did. The family was still very together and supportive of whatever project my father proposed. So today I seem to know a lot about family properties. Now, with all the monetary value in land, people have a tendency to make up stories about how properties were acquired to favor their own interests. I was with my father and those uncles of mine, and I helped with working on the land. Back then all the family would go to work on your farm, maybe 20, 30, or 40 men, and they might clear a whole hectare of land in one day. Women would come and cook food for the men that were working. Participating in those activities helped me learn about our properties and about farming as I was growing up. It was under my father's supervision that a lot of the work was done. I learned a lot because they put me to work. I carried things, and they sent me on all kinds of errands. "I forgot my cigarettes. Go bring one from your auntie." Or they forgot a lighter or they forgot betel nut. When they ran out of water, they sent me to fetch some. I tell you, a gallon of water was very heavy for me to carry at my age!

Much of the knowledge meant little at the time, but today I realize it's very important. I have ended up administering my family's property because I know the history behind the land plots. I know where the boundaries are, I know the sizes and areas, and I know the history of how the land was passed down. When I was growing up, I was lucky to be in an environment with the old people when the family was still very strong. Today it has put me in a position of knowing about our property so that I end up dealing with it for the family. We have problems with those who don't know a lot about the property that we have. Carolinians now value individualism and money and material things. These are some of the changes that are taking place that are replacing the traditional family way.

Today the family in the Northern Marianas is deteriorating, falling apart, collapsing. Today's generation is not as fortunate as I was to grow up learning about Carolinian tradition, and the younger people tend to place more value on Western ways. People here think that they know what the American, democratic system is, but many of them have never been to the United States.

Carolinians are more traditional, though, than the Chamorros, the other indigenous group here in the Northern Marianas. I believe the Chamorros are a mixture of many groups such as the Spanish and Filipino, people imported by the Spanish government when they first came and discovered the Marianas. The Spanish were trying to develop Guam and brought in people for labor. Because of the Spanish, the Chamorros verged on extinction. They were more or less eradicated by the diseases that the Spanish brought in, and many were killed when they refused to become Christian. So as far as I'm concerned there are no real Chamorros here today. Even their names are Spanish.

Saipan Carolinians, on the other hand, though modern compared with our relatives on the outer islands, still maintain our traditional roots. We maintain at least the basis of our culture because we have our language and our clan system. Some families on the outer islands and Carolinians on Saipan are starting to bridge the gap between the two areas.

From being in Honolulu I can appreciate independent living and doing things by yourself, but here it's our tradition to do things that benefit the community instead of things that are just for yourself. Traditionally, Carolinians shouldn't think, "I own this coconut tree. It belongs to nobody else." They should think, "This coconut tree is ours." Here on Saipan, though, Carolinians are starting to say, "Well, this is my car. I paid for it. I took out a loan on it. If I don't make the payments, I'm going to jail. They will repossess the car." So this attitude contributes to the deterioration of the family. This is a difference between Carolinians on Saipan and on the outer islands.

I don't know if understanding something of both the old ways and the new is a very good position for me, because sometimes I feel caught between the two. I say this because every now and then I am asked to testify about Carolinian custom concerning land ownership. I am now being asked to testify in connection with problems in my own extended family. My family asks me to get involved in the disputes, but the side that loses won't be happy with me.

Carolinian men stick dancers posing for a group picture before the Saint Isidro Fiesta in Chalan Kanoa. Front row from left: Jesus "Soupischigh" Ilo, Jose "Naghabwei" Fitial, Francisco "France" Peter Teregeyo, Tito Repeki Laniyo, Rafael "Estomwar" Lisua. Back row standing from left: Juan "Ghiliyomal" Kapileo Pialur, Isidro "Alingmal" Kapileo Peter, Pedro Lairupi Olopai, Joseph Taman Ogumoro, Lino Mettao Olopai, Luis "Lu" Marciano Limes, and Isidro Ogarto. Photo taken on Chalan Laulau beach circa 1970.

We have family land, and I learned about land when I was growing up. I listened to people when they were at my father's house. They would come in and drink and talk about all this. I was a kid and listening to all these things, and I was with them when they went out farming, cutting trees, planting crops. Traditionally, the people who own the land are related through matrilineal descent, but the *afaghúr* (descendants of clan men) also have rights. In my family, there was family land owned by my three great-grandmothers from Houk, three sisters who came from Houk. The mother of my paternal grandfather was the youngest of the three. My great-great-uncle, the man who married the oldest sister, was from the Marshalls. He is an example of men we call *mwáán reto* (men who come), men who marry into the clan. They are there to help the family. Anyway, this man from the Marshalls came and married into the family. Every now and then he might be appointed to administer something, but he could not own the land that belonged to the three women. When the oldest sister died, the man from the Marshalls then married the second sister. Olopai, my great-grandfather, was the name of the man who married the third one, the youngest, my great-grandmother, and that's the line I come from.

Now when the Spanish came, they couldn't believe that women could own property, so they asked, "Okay, who's the head of the household?" Of course the Spanish would never register a woman as head of household or landowner, so they kept asking for a male name. So eventually they registered the name of the man from the Marshalls, instead of his wife. Those records still exist today. The true history, though, was passed on through my grandfather and through my father; my grandfather was the only son of Olopai. My grandfather had only one son, and that was my father. The history of the land passed through them to me. When talking about the family, we should include all descendants of all three sisters from Houk, not just the descendants of the man from the Marshalls. Now there's a big fight among the descendants, and one side contends that the Olopai branch owns nothing because the land is supposedly all owned by the descendants of the man from the Marshalls.

In the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the written law about land mentions that land passes through the female line, but it doesn't mention the role of men. With our matrilineal descent, it is true that land passes *through* the female line, but what is also true is that land passes *to* all of a woman's children, both male and female. That means land is collectively owned by both the men and the women, the sons and the daughters, the brothers and the sisters. And the oldest brother (regardless of the age of his sisters) is the one who should make decisions on behalf of his brothers and sisters. That's part of our tradition, but it's not in the law. What's in the law is only the part about land being passed down through women.

I was asked to testify in court for some land disputes about Carolinian customs regarding land tenure. I explained that inheritance is matrilineal but that the property is managed and controlled by men. I started hearing rumors to the effect that I was talking about old Carolinian customs no longer in practice today. But that's not true! They are still being practiced—especially in the Central Carolines. People here think we're not following our customs. "Well, if not, then whose customs are we going to follow? American ones? Or will we just take the case to the court? We Carolinians have a system."

We've also had land disputes on my mother's side, not just my father's. My older cousins from my mother's line are the speakers for that family. I'm just a supporter, not a speaker, but we have family land through them. In fact, we just resolved a fight about land. I was given responsibility for resolving the problem. It was awkward for me, though, because I'm descended from the youngest female and thus lower in rank than descendants of the older sisters. Yet they wanted me to stand up and speak on behalf of all of them. They wanted me to speak up in front of my senior cousins. My mother would never speak against her brother. The cousins said, "Oh, Lino, forget it! We understand. We know where we belong in rank, and we know where you rank. But we want you to come in and take charge of all this. We trust you. And we believe you can do the job." So now I'm working with land problems on my mother's side as well as on my father's side. And this is all because of the high land values today, because of all the development and all the money people can make on Saipan.

So in our family, I'm a kind of go-between because of my knowledge of Carolinian tradition, and I hope that I am trusted. I don't know if my position is a good place to be or not. I kind of like it, because I'm getting a lot of support from the family. They show me that they respect me, even though I'm a junior person on my mother's side. They show me respect, and that's very encouraging. Despite all the changes taking place in the Marianas, I still believe in our tradition. I try to teach about the importance of the clan structure and family. When I'm invited as a guest speaker to one of the schools, family is what I emphasize, especially when it come to Carolinian children. "Go back home and ask your Mom and Dad about their clans and where they come from.

Ask who your relatives are—your cousins, your nephews, your nieces." When I started out, the parents were shocked, because a lot of them didn't even know what their clans were. They knew their mothers and fathers and probably their grandparents, but not their clans. Most of them also didn't know which island their ancestors came from in the Central Carolines.

When I was growing up, there was no such attitude as, "This is my taro, mine alone." Things were more community or family owned in those days, instead of individually owned. The change in attitude has been the result of Western influence in the Northern Marianas. I grew up when family worked together. I worked with my other cousins. As kids we were sent on small errands. We were sent to the farm to feed the pigs. Or we might be sent for betel nut. There were hardly any government jobs. This was right after the war when we were released from Camp Susupe. We had knowledge of farming and fishing and how to feed ourselves. People knew the best places to fish. They knew the tides and the currents. They could interpret the color of the ocean. I took it all for granted. I was even able to learn the places that fish tended to hide.

Lino's children and nephews executing a tack on a Carolinian canoe Mai Schogh *at Civic Center Lagoon. From left: Rufas Aisolug, Peter Teregeyo Olopai, Alex Teregeyo Olopai, and Tony Urumeyoung. Photo circa the late 1970s.*

There was very little formal schooling. About all we had was an elementary school—without even enough books. I would read a line from a book and then have to pass it on to the next student to read the next line. Many of the books were already written in and we had to decipher the text underneath what had been written. Those who wanted to go to high school had to leave the island to attend a school in Chuuk. And the political situation was very different then. The U.S. appointed a leader for Saipan, who consulted with community leaders. We Carolinians also knew who our clan leaders were. It was a while before we elected a mayor.

It was a time when the oldest brothers spoke on behalf of their siblings. It's disrespectful to speak up against an older brother, according to our tradition. If we show respect within our family, those outside the family will be respectful toward us. They will behave toward the family the way we behave toward our brothers. It will be hard for others to speak out against our family. Our respect within the family is like a protective seal. The younger brothers show respect to the older ones, and women show respect for their brothers. There is respectful behavior and respectful language that should be used. Younger brothers could speak up to their brothers as long as they did so respectfully, with a soft, mellow tone of voice and respectful language. People today don't seem to understand that part of the tradition; they seem to believe that younger brothers could never challenge their older brothers.

A younger brother speaking to an older brother should use respectful terms and take a respectful attitude. He should say, "It's your decision. It's up to you. Whatever you say." If he thinks it's a bad idea, he might say, "Wouldn't it be bad, though, for Julie?" That's all.

The older brother might answer, "I thought about that, but I still think this is what we should do."

Then the younger brother should say simply, "It's up to you. It's your decision." He should never say, "But I don't think it's a good idea! I think you should change your decision. What you've decided is bad for Julie." He should not say this or even raise his voice; it's against Carolinian custom.

When others hear you address your brother, they will use the same terminology. If you don't show such respect, then your entire family will not be respected by other families. That's why a lot of our sisters continue to *óppwóro* and show respect for their brothers even today. (A sister raises her brother up by crouching or stooping in his presence.) They not only show their older brothers their respect; they are sending a message to outsiders.

Any food brought into the family was shared in those days. When we cooked, we sent food to other relatives in Chalan Kanoa. Chalan Kanoa was where Carolinians were located right after the war. Soon some moved to Oleai and Tanapag, and we continued to send them food. "Take this food to there. Take this to there." Things were shared much more then than they are today. Today we have independent thinking and selfish behavior. "This is mine!" In the past, it was "This is ours!"

When I was in Honolulu, a neighbor had a mango tree. When the fruit ripened, it fell and rotted, but the owners wouldn't give any away. They wouldn't! Here on Saipan, people would say, "Take all the mangos you want! They are falling down. As a matter of fact, pick some of those down on the low branches." We would give the fruit away and not let it rot.

When I came in from fishing when I was young, my mother would make sure that others received a portion. "Lino, take some of this to Nana Kina. Take this to your other aunt over there. Take this fish to your aunt in Oleai." It was a common, everyday practice, one we just took for granted. We were always being sent to borrow something, like a little salt. We might be given a whole container, which we brought back after we took the little we needed. Today, however, Carolinians are very reluctant to do so; we feel as though we are infringing on people.

Then the Department of the Interior came, and government jobs started opening up for people. I don't remember if it was the Department of the Navy or the Department of the Interior. Wages were low, perhaps 35 cents an hour. Some started working at those jobs, but most continued farming and fishing. And we had a practice called *atchalowa*, which involved a group of workers cooperating on a project. A group of families would get together and say, "Okay, today it's going to be Lino's farm, Lino's turn." So 20 or 40 men would go to work. You might put some to work fishing. You might put some to work on farmland to be cleared. Those men were yours for the day. You told them what you needed them to do. We call that *atchalowa*. I grew up with that custom of families doing things together.

But I also learned about working for money. I think my first job earning money was as a caddy. I worked on our only golf course! Yes, only one golf course then! Who knows how many golf course we have today! We had only one at that time—Whispering Palms Country Club. We had a farm close to that area, and I would go from our home in Chalan Kanoa to the golf course. I worked as a caddy, and later I started to learn how to play golf.

We had *atchalowa*, but people gradually started looking for jobs. Very few Carolinians worked for the government at first, but gradually more and more started working for money, and they stopped farming and fishing. For a while, though, the family still seemed to be very close. But the amount of money they were earning then was nothing like what people can earn today. And I didn't see the attitude, "Now I have a lot of money, and it's all mine!" The Western influence wasn't quite as strong then. Americans had just started coming and teaching.

Eventually we started electing government officials. And you won't believe what happened. We started campaigning, and Elias Sablan lost to Ignacio Benavente. Angry women went up to the roundhouse, an office building with several poles made to look like taga stones with woven sides and roof. It was beautifully made. Steps led up to it on all sides, and it was decorated with lovely drawings. When Mr. Sablan, who was part Carolinian, lost to Mr. Benavente, a number of older women marched to the office to complain and they damaged the building. These were Carolinian women, and they were angry about the election results. They wanted to demonstrate the solidarity of Carolinians and to send a message that hurting one Carolinian hurts the whole group.

At that time Chamorros were somewhat afraid of Carolinians. A term said to describe Carolinians is *tipiyew*. *Tipiyew* means one-hearted, in agreement together, of one mind. Let's *tipiyew* to build a house. Let's *tipiyew* to go fishing. Because Carolinian families were so close, Chamorros were somewhat afraid of us. What happened at the roundhouse was an example of Carolinian solidarity. Back then, political parties did not divide Carolinians. Carolinians were united in support for Mr. Sablan, and they were united in their disappointment at his election loss. They were angry.

Gradually more and more people got government jobs, and eventually the majority of people were working for wages. That's when some things began to change, though not as much as today. People would still get together now and then, such as on Saturdays, to work on the farm or go fishing. Even before the end of the Department of Interior era, however, most Carolinians were working for the government. On weekends, though, people still tried to farm and fish.

Then war claims money came out. Even before that, people were becoming more materialistic because of Western influence. People had better houses and better paint on the houses. Those were little changes, but they weren't really destroying the families. It was the war claims money that triggered major problems with the family. That seemed to be the turning point. The older people didn't really understand the value of the dollar. People knew money would buy rice and coffee and sugar and a can of sardines, but they didn't realize how money could destroy the family. Today we're talking about millions and millions of dollars coming into the Northern Marianas economy. But the money doesn't benefit local people. It goes back out to the people investing in the Northern Marianas.

When my father's generation put in their claims, they didn't understand the value of property in American dollars. They didn't know how to calculate the value of coconut trees or taro or cows or pigs or human life. All they knew was that a family member, including heart and spirit, was gone. Some of the war claims were for human deaths, other for damaged property. And land ownership and registration of land ownership did not always coincide. The land was still family owned then, even if it was registered in the name of an individual. The land was not owned by individuals even if an individual was registered as a trustee or administrator for a parcel of land. This has contributed to problems today among Carolinians.

It was my father's generation that was supposed to put a value on the land. But many of them passed away before the money was ever given out, and there was no process for dispersing the money and no control over how it was done. If my father made a claim, he made it on behalf of the whole family. When a check came, it would be made out to him. What happened in many cases is that the children of such a man claimed that the money belonged only to them and not to any other family members. There was no guide about how to distribute the money among families, just checks issued to individual people, and it was up to those individuals to figure out how to deal with the several thousands and thousands of dollars they received. That hurt the family among the Carolinians.

Let's say my father made the claim for his cousins. When the check came out, it would be made out to my father alone, not to all of them together. Then came the temptation to misuse that money. It was easy to do, because there was no control over how the money was to be disbursed. This was when walls between family members began to be built. This triggered the changes. You had older brothers who wouldn't share with their siblings. Or you had an uncle who wouldn't give to the children of his brothers or sisters. A person might refuse to share with the children of a younger brother even though he knew that all siblings and children of siblings had rights to the money. The person who received the check could decide to keep it or share it however he wanted to. People giving out the money didn't understand the Carolinian system. They didn't understand that the person making the claim was doing so on behalf of many other people the property was shared with.

The response from the person who received the money was often "No way! The check was made out to my father, so only my brothers and my sisters and I have rights to that money—no one else." That's when families started to fight among themselves. That's when families began to fall apart and started suing each other.

There was also the impact of formal school and the emphasis on independence and individualism. The traditional Carolinian education occurred at home and through the environment, friends, relatives, cousins. Learning was not from books, and it was very practical. You learned by doing things. You learned to husk coconuts by husking them—that way, you remembered how to do it. Even if you became a lawyer, you still knew how to climb a coconut tree. Learning was as strong as any paper document. "This is the property. My grandparents told me it runs from this tree to that tree. This is our boundary."

Formal schooling contributed to our problems; people became more materialistic and more individualistic. "What is mine is mine. What is yours is yours," regardless of whether it was your older brother or uncle. People started to speak up against their older brothers and to show little respect. We still had some respect back then, but I don't know about now.

The language of instruction in school was English. Social studies, American history, and the like were taught, not Carolinian culture or language. There was nothing like that in school back then. There was hardly anything even about Chamorro history or language. I believe the bilingual program came later. By that time many of our elders were gone; they had died. Until I went to Satawal, I didn't know some of the polite, respectful terms.

The interests of my generation changed, and we became more Western. And by then we had started to have a congress, a legislature, a municipal council, a mayor. And we started having campaigns! Back then we had the Popular Party and the Territorial Party. When those faded, others took their place. Western-style politics started, and materialism began taking hold, especially among Chamorros. They were into earning money, putting money in the bank, investing, paying for houses, buying cars. Carolinians were also interested, but not to as great an extent. Some families had good cars. Some didn't. And there was a fair amount of sharing. "Take this can of Spam and take it over to auntie, because they don't have food." That attitude was still common. "We don't have any soy sauce. Can you just run over and ask auntie for some of hers if they have any?" But there was very little distributing of fish when people caught any. In part that's because they weren't fishing, and because of heightened interest in material things. They were more interested in working for money.

We were destroying the Carolinian family with more and more dependence on earning money. People stopped depending on others in the family, so the families started falling apart. Very few families today continue to maintain the old customs. We still know our brothers and sisters and cousins and other relatives, but the respect that should be shown has faded. We depend now on money instead of family; we value money now rather than family.

So when the war claims money came out, that was a turning point for

Carolinian tradition. Western-style politics also played a role. People more and more were following a Western tradition. In the Western-style tradition, people are supposed to have elected leaders. But among Carolinians, we knew who the traditional leaders were who could speak on behalf of their clans. It was all according to clan membership and position. But those elders have passed away. Now we're electing our leaders through the Western system. We started to vote for people in our government. We had the Congress of Micronesia. The Northern Marianas started to pursue negotiations for a government separate from the rest of Micronesia. The Covenant came about, and the Northern Marianas separated. Other parts of Micronesia changed their status, and we became part of the United States. Many Carolinians, though, do not really understand Western culture. Many have problems understanding the language, or know nothing about American history or what it means to be democratic. I was lucky enough to be able to take the time to live in Honolulu and learn something of the United States myself. I realize it wasn't New York or Los Angeles, but it was still an American state.

Carolinians on Saipan don't have a lot of experience with investments and handling large sums of money. Because of our immigration and labor and tax laws, we are swamped by foreigners coming to Saipan. The value of property has skyrocketed. It was hard enough with the war claims money to determine and understand the value of taro or a cow, but it could be a hundred times the amount today. So just imagine the impact on Carolinians! And families are fighting today in court about who owns land. Many of our leaders are making decisions today without regard for the welfare of Carolinians.

I was lucky to be able to learn something of the American system. I had to learn how to find a job. I learned the feeling of being independent and to be able to do what I wanted. I appreciated that, but there are responsibilities that go along with independence. You have to be able to pay your rent, pay your loans, and do it all on time. You may be taken to court otherwise. These are some of the things that I'm worried we Carolinians today don't understand—or we're learning about the hard way. It would be better if our leaders developed the Northern Marianas at a slower, gradual pace instead of all of a sudden having a hundred golf courses and a hundred garment factories with millions and millions of dollars coming into Saipan. We're out of control. Let's grow at our own pace. Let's slow down.

Even in 1974 when I left for Satawal, things were beginning to fall apart. Family solidarity even then was beginning to fall apart. People started losing the respectful language. Women started campaigning. Things are even worse today because families are going to court. Young children even 20 years ago would use bad language toward older people. People campaigning used language inappropriate for addressing large groups. That may be all right for Chamorros, but we Carolinians should remember our roots.

That's why I went to Satawal, and Satawal was very much what I expected. People were practicing the old ways. They wore traditional clothing and still knew appropriate and respectful language. But then I also saw changes being introduced on Satawal. Students coming back from Guam, Saipan, Hawaii, and the mainland were bringing back wristwatches and radios. People were attracted to such things. I didn't care about those material things; I was just trying to learn about our culture. But I saw those changes and noticed that Satawal people wanted a different life.

For example, when the chief of Satawal heard about a USDA food program at the high school on Ulithi, he decided to look into Satawal participating in the program as well. So I had to argue with him—someone who was my uncle—and explain why I thought participating in the federal program was a bad idea. I said, "Well, the government cannot just give you that food. The food is for Ulithi High School." But the chief had also seen the program here on Saipan. I told him, "You know, it's a federal program. And we may become dependent on it, and we never know when the program will be stopped."

He said, "Yes, but we need the security that food can provide, because sometimes we have bad weather and cannot go fishing. When we don't have fish or outside supplementary food, we end up eating just breadfruit and coconut."

I said, "Yes, but if you become dependent on USDA food, it will eventually be hard to return to the old ways of fishing and gardening." I was trying to tell him that once USDA food was introduced to Satawal, they would start depending on it and then lose the ability to survive on their own. Whenever a ship would come, they would stop farming and stop fishing. They might continue somewhat but not the way they used to. I believed that once USDA food was introduced, farming would gradually diminish. By the time our generation has passed away, farming skills will be gone. So will fishing, building canoes, building thatched houses, and planting coconut trees, because people will have food sent in cans and boxes.

That's what I was worried about. So I was telling my uncle, "The next generation will be *affaiyé*, pitiable." That term applies to somebody you feel sorry for. The next generation would be pitied because they would no longer have the skills enabling them to survive on a small island with limited resources.

The chief said, "Just go ahead and ask the administrator in Yap if that program could be extended to us."

I saw that what was happening on Saipan was starting to happen on Satawal. For example, if I am the older one in the family but just a fisherman, and my younger brother is a legislator, the family will not listen to me but to my younger brother. And the people on Satawal were becoming more and more interested in money and in buying cigarettes, radios, batteries, liquor, and motorboats. All these things were being introduced on Satawal.

Ifaluk (farther to the west in the Central Carolines) is one place at least that has been reluctant to accept these changes. In particular, the chief there won't permit motorboats. It's not that they don't want motorboats, although they are aware of some of their effects, but they realize the reef can become polluted and that the noise of the motors can chase fish away. Their reluctance to use motorboats is related to their understanding of the reef and of the fish that enter the lagoon. The reef at Ifaluk has only one opening so that when a school of tuna or other fish enters the lagoon, fishermen can just close the channel with a strong net to prevent the fish from swimming back out. This way they have an abundance of fish in the lagoon. They call it "our icebox." After a month or so, they reopen the channel to let the remaining fish leave. They obviously don't want to kill them all because they want to ensure that the fish multiply and return the next season. They believe the motorboats would disturb this system.

In some parts of the Central Carolines people are starting to build concrete houses. Houk, especially now after a big storm, is starting to do so. On Polowat there was talk of electing a chief instead of continuing the traditional system of chiefly clan leadership! So much for the clan system!

I don't really mind building cement houses. It's like the development here on Saipan. I don't mind a few garment factories, but I don't think that 30 or 40 or 50 or 100 factories are appropriate for an island this size. That's just way too many. The population is being swamped by immigrants sent in to work in the factories. We can't handle that many people.

The money for the houses on the outer islands may be federal money rather than money out of the people's own coffers, but it could be used for other things. What they're doing now is building a concrete house for each individual family, but they could find better ways of spending that money. And we will lose the knowledge of how to build the traditional houses. We will lose the skill necessary for the intriguing lashing.

Young women of Satawal standing with their mothers in front of the menstrual house Lettulseu. *In Carolinian culture, a young girl becomes a woman when she first gets her menstrual period. Isolating women in their menstrual house (*Imwal ghat*) during their menstrual period was a common practice on Saipan. All was stopped after World War II. Pictured from left: Lisa, Iloughutiu, Jacklin, Laighushu, Temaita, Lisagh, and "Pete" Pitoawmwar.*

The way it used to be, people would gather in the evening and the chief would say, "Well, this is what we'll do tomorrow. We'll fix that thatched roof on the *utt* down the path." Now, however, it's become individualized and it's up to people themselves to build their houses. This was starting when I left Satawal, and I saw it starting on Houk. On Onoun, it's really advanced. Polowat was proposing an airport runway. They changed their minds, but now Houk is considering it.

Several years ago I went to Houk to pick up two grand-nieces. I went on one of the field trip ships and started talking with the chief about the airport. The major reason was for emergencies. He talked about people dying before a ship could arrive. I said, "Well, how many people have died from that type of incident?" He didn't know. "How many emergencies are there in a month or in a year to warrant the building of a runway on Houk?"

"Well, we don't really know."

In fact, I think emergencies are very rare. I think that for those emergencies, they can divert a ship to Houk to evacuate the patient. Once you build a runway, many more changes will come to the island. The same changes that are affecting Saipan will come to Houk. I tried to explain this, but I guess the chief didn't understand.

I heard that they approved a runway. I don't know if it will be a good change. But they were just talking about emergencies. I even asked the chief, "Well, who will manage the runway—I mean, the airport? Are you going to pay for the plane when you ride it? What will happen with fuel stored on Houk? Will fuel be stored on the island? What will happen with the taro gardens that will have to be destroyed to build the runway? What about the taro plants and coconut trees that will be destroyed?" So changes are taking place even on the remote outer islands.

But they still maintain the old ways, even with airports and junior high schools and concrete houses. On Saipan today, though, families rarely visit each other. Visits are being replaced by television. People read newspapers to learn what is going on instead of getting together to spread the news. Families are independent because of job security and money from work and leases. When they lease property, they feel they no longer have to depend on other family members. The only time you see an extended family together is when there's a birthday or a wedding or a funeral—especially funerals. That is when families get together. Or they go to court.

We have other problems on Saipan, too. We have too many garment factories. We have too many nightclubs considering the number of indigenous people on the island—Chamorros and Carolinians. We have too many golf courses. I don't think those golf courses are meant for the Chamorros and Carolinians. We have too many things for the small number of people on this island. What I was hoping to see is our leaders taking responsibility and projecting 10 or 20 years into the future and planning carefully for Saipan. I think they should set goals first. They need to come to some sort of an agreement about where Saipan should be 10 or 20 years from today. At the moment it's just chaos. There's a lot of money, but it's not going into the hands of local people. Money comes in, but it goes back out again. We should freeze the situation for a while. We should approve no more businesses. We should lease no more land for golf courses. We should get rid of our nightclubs. We should promote our local resources, like the ocean.

Several years back, they were sending students off to the University of Guam and to Honolulu to study shrimp and prawns for the northern islands. I don't know what happened with that project. That would be natural development. That would be development that could benefit the local people. Perhaps they could look into coffee. We could export coffee or perhaps just make coffee for local consumption.

We should slow down. We should develop slowly and make sure local people take part. Instead, we have so many foreigners coming in. All the businesses along the road are owned by outside people. We don't need this sort of development. It's not meaningful. And it's nothing solid that will benefit local islanders. I do not see that this development benefits the local people on the island, the Chamorros or the Carolinians. I believe it benefits the people coming in to establish their businesses here on the island. Today, in fact, we are outnumbered by outsiders.

Our leaders need to stop and put their heads together and stop what's happening. I say, "Wait, wait." We're benefiting the investors. We don't know where our money goes. Very little goes to local people. The people that are benefiting are the investors, not us.

And the garment factories have one problem after another. Yet the governor and the leaders keep defending the factories. When will we learn? When will we no longer accept or renew working permits? Or cancel business permits? When will we say, "Go do your business elsewhere. One problem is enough!" I wish they would come up with rules to regulate these businesses, so that if a business is taken to court once or twice, that would be the end of them. If they are behaving in illegal or immoral ways, we should get rid of them.

The problems with the garment factories affect the entire population. And we now have a bad reputation in the United States. Not all the factories are bad. Some are okay, but most are terrible and have labor abuses. The problems with the garment factories are giving us a bad name. Headlines all over the United States say, "Slave Practices in the Northern Marianas, Islands of Paradise." This is very bad publicity for us, all because of garment industry abuses. The people running those factories should know better.

Originally I was pleased when they told us, "Okay. You are part of the U.S. Yes, we will let you regulate your own labor issues. You may control immigration. We'll even give you tax breaks." But now we're seeing some of the problems.

I do not believe the garment industry contributes as positively to the Northern Marianas economy as it could. I don't see many local people being employed, for example. Our children will have to pay this debt. My children's children are going to end up paying all this debt. But I'll bet a lot of people will say, "Yes, the garment industry makes a positive contribution." Our money bag has a leak somewhere. All we get is the very bottom of that money bag.

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Two boys in front of one of the many poker arcades that are scattered throughout the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

I wish our leaders would screen the businesses. If they find a problem, they should perhaps reprimand the owners or suspend them from doing business for a month or so. And then if the problem recurs, the businesses should be closed. If not, others will come and the problems will become more widespread. We have lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit with the garment factories. I don't know when our leaders will say, "Something is wrong here." I can understand one lawsuit. But when it happens a second and third time, I become suspicious. What bothers me is having a garment factory go through several lawsuits for labor abuse, for abuse of employees and nonpayment of overtime and the like. It hasn't happened only once, but several times. And each time it gets publicized. And making a settlement out of court doesn't mean that the factory has admitted guilt. I don't believe the businesses are sincere about coming to help the people and grow with the people. I think they come just to make money.

We Carolinians are especially insulted with these problems because we still have the clan system. When people of high-ranking clans are dragged into these problems with the garment factories, it's especially insulting to the Carolinians. It certainly irritates me.

I hope our leaders are sincere when they say they're going to do something about the garment factory problems, immigration, and labor abuses. I wish they would just freeze things the way they are today and not add any more golf courses or any more garment factories. We should start eliminating some of these factories and tell them to go do business elsewhere.

I have mixed feelings about tourism. It's nice for visitors to see places on the island, and some of their money goes into local stores that sell handicrafts. But the touring system is so rigid; they go from the airport to the hotel. They have a package tour for seeing the island. They buy a ticket to visit Managaha. Then they are taken from the hotel back to the airport. Not much of their money goes to local people. I would like our leaders to look into how tourism could benefit local people more.

Our traditions are also being affected by tourism. For example, people of the Northern Marianas speak proudly of Carolinian performers, but the traditional way of dancing is being changed. It's being changed to make it more acceptable and exciting for tourists. A dance that should be fairly slow, for example, is made much faster with lots of movement and stomping. Hawaiian movements have been added to women's dances.

If we can develop the island, keeping in mind how many people we have, and not encourage outside people to immigrate, then we will be all right. But now we accept and approve business after business, venture after venture, golf course after golf course, factory after factory, nightclub after nightclub. We have problems with family land that the government should be helping with. The government should make those problems a priority, not act in ways that slow down their resolution. They should deal with the problems of the people that they're supposed to protect, instead of giving property away for golf courses. They are giving away hectares and hectares of public land. I was interested in some beautiful land in the Obyan area at the south end of Saipan, but they want to lease that area.

Some of our leaders have said that if the factories and immigrant labor leave the island, we'll be back to a coconut economy. I would rather be back there and begin again from there. I would rather do that. That way the development might be appropriate for the people who are here. Because of the Western system of elections, people have a tendency to grab whatever they can during their terms because they may not win a second term.

Women in one of the many garment factories on Saipan.

Well, among Carolinians, when you're born a chief, you're chief forever. Whatever you do, you are chief. Even if you don't do anything, you are chief. So it's hard for people to influence you. No matter what they do, you are still the chief. Here on Saipan voters will say, "Look, if you do this for us, we will elect you again. We will vote for you. Pass this law, and we will vote for you. We'll contribute money to your campaign, and we'll vote for you." Among the Carolinians, however, a chief would say, "Well, what are you going to do if I do what you ask? You going to make me chief? I am already a chief. You going to build houses for my people? Fine. Why don't you do that. You going to build a dock? Is that what you want? You want to build a hotel on my island? Ah ha, I see, I see! Wait,

wait, let me think about that. You going to give me more money? Make me a higher chief? But I *am* a chief. I will die a chief. I will always be a chief." A chief cannot be pressured by constituents or outside interests because he doesn't have to worry about re-election. That leaves him freer than elected officials to make decisions based solely on what he thinks is best for the people. He also has a council he consults with before he makes a decision.

One of the many nightclubs in the Paseo de Marianas *in the so called "Red District" of Garapan.*

I have learned about both systems, and I can appreciate both. They are both appropriate in their own contexts. The American people believe in independence and individualism. "Be yourself! Be whatever you want to be! Forget about others." People step on each other's toes to get ahead in the Western way. Among the Carolinians, we shouldn't do that. The idea of "us" is more important among Carolinians than the idea of "me." It shouldn't be "my" land, but "our" land; it shouldn't be "my" food, but "our" food.

Coral Ocean Point
Saipan, U.S.A.
Coral Ocean Point Resort

Coral Ocean Point Resort, located on the southern end of Saipan, is one of the four major 18-hole golf courses catering to tourists.

For example, let me explain what happened when Continental Airlines had an accident in Yap. I think when a plane landed, one of the tires went flat, so there was an emergency evacuation from the aircraft. Well, they opened the door, but they let the women and the children and the old people out first. This is in Micronesia. So everybody got off very quickly and efficiently and in a very traditional way. If that accident occurred in Los Angeles, what do you think would happen? Everybody would rush out without regard for women or children or old people. They would rush for an exit. You see the contrast? Among Micronesians, we say, "Ah, women and children first. And the old people."

But Americans might say, "Gosh, I'm going to be President! I'm going to be Speaker! So, I don't care. I'm going to accept the money. Yes! Yes! Give it to me. How much? One and a half million? Yes."

There are responsibilities that go with the American system and being independent. We Carolinians don't understand. Honolulu has many ethnic groups, but the U.S. government has checks and balances. Not here, though. Why? Because Carolinians are not prepared. We didn't go to school learning about that type of government. We don't even have schools teaching us Carolinian culture. We should have a solid understanding of ourselves before learning about the Western system. Now we just accept money left and right, regardless of the consequences or who gets stepped on. This is very sad, because we are Carolinians. We are friendly and hospitable. And we are supposed to share.

In the midst of prosperity, we're poor. We're still behind. We still need to learn about the American democratic system. Despite my nine years in Honolulu, I still feel that I'm missing a lot about American culture. It's the same with Carolinian culture. That's why I want to go back to the outer islands, even though I'm part of the United States now.

I think cultural diversity makes our world such a beautiful world. I'm a Carolinian. And there are American Indians. And there are Black Americans. And there are Japanese. We need to learn about each other and then respect each other. That's part of what we need.

We need a balance. We need to allow the two worlds to co-exist. For example, traditional herbal medicine should be available to people in a hospital so that people can choose the Western or traditional medicine. Traditional midwifery should coexist with Western obstetrics. If women could choose a traditional midwife, they might be able to avoid Caesarean sections. But there are all sorts of problems because of insurance companies and malpractice lawsuits; I don't know if having options would be possible. I wish patients could have a choice.

Building a bridge between Saipan and the Central Carolines should help. I'm glad to see some connections being made between Carolinians here and Carolinians on the outer islands. The voyages from Satawal help. Students from the outer islands are now beginning to come to school here.

People have started looking into their heritage. Margaret, for example, from Tanapag, directs the Tanapag bilingual program. And the people in that village have started inviting people from Onoun (in Namonuito Atoll, part of the Central Carolines). People in Tanapag are also discovering relatives they have on Woleai, another part of the Central Carolines. And some outer island people are starting to come to Saipan, helping to build a bridge between the two places. The bridge is being built—right in the middle of all this chaos!

Lino accepting the 2004 Governor's Humanities Award for "Preserving Traditional Cultural Practices." Also pictured are Noel B. Quitugua who was recognized as "Outstanding Humanities Teacher," and Lino's grandniece Vanessa Sinounou Mality.

Striking a balance is not an easy task, but not impossible either. One such balance was when Pius "Mau" Piailug was awarded the Doctor of Humanities Degree, *Honoris Causa*, by the University of Hawaii's Board of Regents for his unique skill in celestial navigation. Celestial navigation is just one of the many unique cultural elements of the Carolinian people that they must protect—protect it from misuse, from being misunderstood as someone else's.

On May 17, 1987 Mau accepted his degree, and this was one of the highlights of my life and an emotional one as well. Instead of wearing the traditional cap and gown for graduation, Mau and I put on our best traditional loincloth attire. We stood on a stage overlooking some 9,000 spectators who had come to witness the commencement exercises … and it was awesome!! Watching Mau deliver his acceptance speech in our native language was exhilarating for me!!!

The occasion brought tears to my eyes so that I choked up when it was my turn to translate Mau's acceptance speech, which I wrote for this historic occasion. I was not nervous. As a matter of fact, I was very happy. My spirit was filled with gladness. I was very high, not on drugs, but with a sense of relief and accomplishment. It has long been my belief that our traditional way can still be useful. Regardless of what other people may have said concerning my Carolinian cultural heritage, this special occasion proved them wrong.

It all started in 1975 when Mau and I started to receive letters from Honolulu, inviting him to navigate the Hawaiians' double-hulled canoe *Hokule'a* on a voyage from Honolulu to Tahiti. Mau told me that Mike McCoy, who married our niece, Angelina Nespeilugh, was the one who introduced him to the small group of Hawaiians that were planning the *Hokule'a* project.

All the correspondence was reviewed and carried out in the canoe house, *Ropotiu,* on the island of Satawal. I would translate all the letters to Mau whenever we received them, and would write his reply for him. It would however be several months (three to four months) before our correspondence could be sent out to Honolulu, due to the scheduling of the field trip ship that serviced the island. Aside from translating and writing Mau's response, I also tried as much as I could to explain to him, or draw a picture, of what might transpire should he accept the invitation.

Over the course of several months, and long before Mau made a decision whether to accept the invitation or not, I considered the impact his choice would make on the Carolinian community and on the rest of the world. I would raise such questions as, "Mau, do we dare spread the sacred knowledge of navigation, the privilege of one special clan, to the whole world? What impact would it have?" "Will the Carolinian society survive if we give up our traditional balance of knowledge and power within families?" "Are we selling the traditional knowledge of centuries for a handful of silver?" "The Hawaiians have lost the skills that only we can help revive; would it be right for us to deny them the chance to restore their old knowledge?" The questions I brought to Mau's attention are the same questions that brought me to the island of Satawal in the first place. Trying to give Mau a good picture of what might happen was like balancing on a tightrope. Eventually, Mau made up his mind and accepted the invitation.

Pius "Mau" Piailug in his traditional attire preparing to receive an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from the University of Hawaii, Manoa, in recognition of his magnificent navigational accomplishments and his role in helping Hawaiians and other Polynesians to revive their maritime skills. Also pictured from left: unidentified University official, Mau, University of Hawaii President Albert Simon and Lino. Photo taken in 1987.

Anyway, Mau's understanding of the English language was very poor, or next to none at the time. We received news that the *Hokule'a* was swamped when one of its hulls sprang a leak due to a malfunctioning water pump. One of its crew, Eddie Aikau, got lost at sea trying to get help. While I was reading the tragic news to Mau, I asked him, "What would you do if you were there in that situation?" After a while he said, "I'd turn the canoe around so that the leaky hull could be lifted up above the water by the wind in the sail, then when the pump was fixed I'd turn the canoe around and continue on its original course." I was stunned and speechless. I was very tempted, right there and then, to tell Mau that he should have stayed in Honolulu and helped train the crew that would be selected to take part in the project. A life could have been saved. I guess, at the time, our friends in Honolulu did not know Mau well, or of his vast knowledge of canoe building and navigation. They were training crew for the voyage at the time.

Mau had just returned from Honolulu when the incident happened. He was there earlier helping our Hawaiian brothers and sisters prepare the *Hokūle'a* for its maiden voyage to Tahiti. This involves securing and changing the lashing, and other parts of the canoe, if needed, to withstand the long voyage. Mau told me that when he got there for the first time, he found that lots of *Hokule'a*'s lashing was loose, not secure, unsafe—that he just had to change it for the safety of the crew. I could not help but feel sorry for Mau for it was the time when his English language skills were not strong. I was to accompany him to assist with all aspects of the project, but lack of funding prevented me from participating.

Nevertheless, the spirit of the project continued and our friends in Honolulu were able to muster up some funding that enabled Mau to return to Honolulu for a second time, and helped prepare and secure *Hokule'a* for its maiden voyage to Tahiti. Mau stayed there until they finally made that first voyage to Tahiti. Afterward we shared lots of stories about his adventures, sailing into the unknown waters for the first time.

Mau began sharing his navigational knowledge and continued to participate in other voyages, including the "Voyage of Rediscovery," until ultimately he was given the recognition he deserved. The Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, on behalf of the people of Hawaii, bestowed the Doctor of Humanities Degree, *Honoris Causa*, upon Puis "Mau" Piailug of Satawal. Of course I was there, and Mau gladly accepted the degree on behalf of our families and the people of Micronesia.

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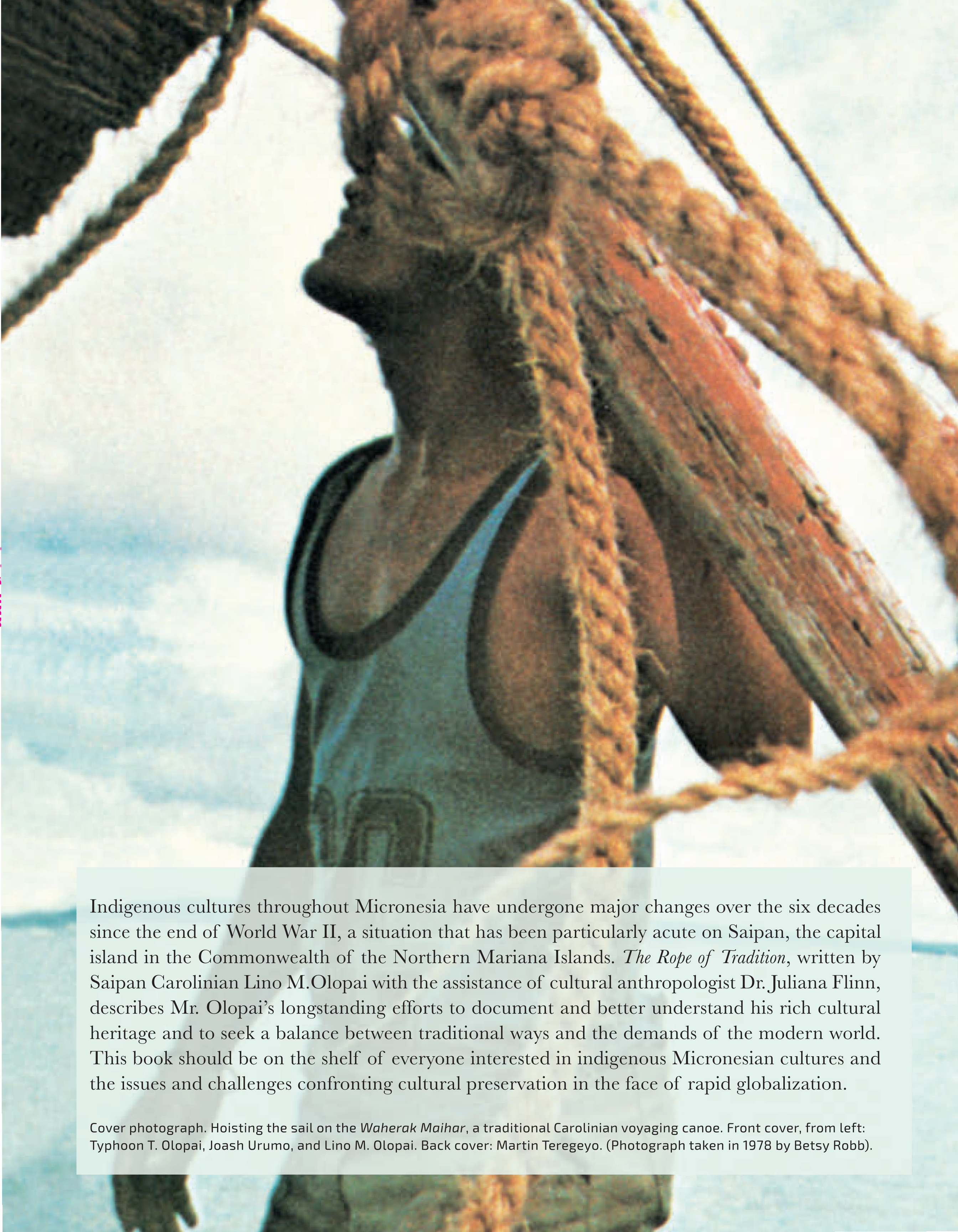

Indigenous cultures throughout Micronesia have undergone major changes over the six decades since the end of World War II, a situation that has been particularly acute on Saipan, the capital island in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. *The Rope of Tradition*, written by Saipan Carolinian Lino M.Olopai with the assistance of cultural anthropologist Dr. Juliana Flinn, describes Mr. Olopai's longstanding efforts to document and better understand his rich cultural heritage and to seek a balance between traditional ways and the demands of the modern world. This book should be on the shelf of everyone interested in indigenous Micronesian cultures and the issues and challenges confronting cultural preservation in the face of rapid globalization.

Cover photograph. Hoisting the sail on the *Waherak Maihar*, a traditional Carolinian voyaging canoe. Front cover, from left: Typhoon T. Olopai, Joash Urumo, and Lino M. Olopai. Back cover: Martin Teregeyo. (Photograph taken in 1978 by Betsy Robb).