Patron Saints and Pagan Ghosts: The Pairing of Opposites

By

ROGER E. MITCHELL
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI

INTRODUCTION

"TO OUR LITTLE LADY OF CAMARIN: IMPERIOUS AND TENDER STABILISER OF GUAMANIAN LOYALTIES." With this dedication, Father Julius Sullivan, O.F.M. Cap., begins his spirited account of the at times tumultuous Christianization of the native people of the Mariana Islands (Sullivan 1957: 5). While a less devout individual might demur at times to some of the father's descriptions of the glories of martyrdom,[1] he certainly cannot quibble with Sullivan's selection of the Lady of Camarin as the enduring symbol of Guamanian Catholicism. In a recent article prepared for inclusion in *The Handbook of American Folklore* (Mitchell 1983: 233–236), I urge American folklorists to give more attention to the changing lore of American possessions and territories, and in passing, comment on the strong role played by the nearly four hundred years of Spanish sovereignty over the Island of Guam (1521–1898) in the formation of its contemporary oral traditions.

I use "oral" cautiously, for year after year, over and over, Guam's favorite traditions appear in all kinds of ephemeral printed sources. Guam has had its fair share of spirited antiquarians who at times borrow generously from their predecessors, and who, by failing all too often to credit their sources, can lead the unwary to false assumptions concerning the oral nature of certain Guamanian traditions. A convenient example of this process is to be seen in the Guamanian variation on Motif S11.3.3. "Father kills son." A jealous chief observes his infant sons' growing strength and tries to kill him. The child flees, comes to a cliff, and leaps to the next island, leaving his footprint

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in the stone behind him.

Two variants were printed in Guam's English language newspaper (1924, 1928); then came the third, the one most often encountered in more recent publications of Guamanian folktales. The first variant was contributed by a Guamanian, the second by a museum collector from Hawaii, and the third, and thus far the most often quoted, by an American schoolteacher, Mrs. Buehler, who had come to Guam with her husband, a U. S. Navy officer. Her contribution was later reprinted in the same paper but her name was omitted. Thirteen years later, a condensed reprint in a short-lived magazine again credited Mrs. Buehler. In 1970, I was given a mimeographed collection called "The Legends of Guam: As Told By Old Time Guamanians." The legends had been taken from the long defunct newspaper's files, largely verbatim, and once more I found Mrs. Buehler's "Puntan Patgon" with no credit given to its original source of thirty-seven years previously.[2]

Despite this constant process of print and reprint, I have not found in my collecting activities on Guam that many of these tales are well-known, especially by the younger generation. The part of Guamanian lore that has proved most vigorous among young and old alike is that dealing with the supposed malevolent activities of the spirits of the pagan dead (the *taotaomona*) and the well publicized accounts of martyred priests and miraculous statues.

Ancestral Spirit and Christian Saint

Belief in the spirits of the pagan dead, the *taotaomona* ("man" + "before") has long been condemned by church officials and laughed at by non-Guamanians. Needless to say, the *taotaomona* is a sensitive topic, one that many Guamanians are reluctant to discuss. On the other hand, such a miraculous statue as Santa Maria del Camarin is a matter of insular pride, both secular and religious. Each and every Guamanian of mature years can give the newcomer a full account of Santa Maria's fabled activities and her importance. Here and there an individual may play down some of the more miraculous happenings, but in my opinion, much more time will pass before Father Sullivan's Imperious and Tender Stabilizer of Guamanian Loyalties becomes just a statue occupying a niche in the Cathedral of Dulce Nombre de Maria, in the city of Agana.

These two vigorous shoots of Guamanian tradition—the one disparaged, the other encouraged—have their roots in beliefs common to both the Christian veneration of saints and the aboriginal Guamanian's respect for the shades of his dead ancestors: the spirits of the

departed can help or hinder the living, and contact can be maintained with the helpful (or sainted) dead by paying respect to their relics, their past abodes, or their representations in such forms as statues, pictures, or selected fetishes. In retrospect, it is not surprising that while the early Spanish padres were able to graft veneration for the Blessed Virgin onto Guamanian belief in the supernatural, they and their successors have not as yet managed to erase the functionally related aboriginal belief in the power of the spirits of the ancestral dead.

Although the Spanish missionaries preserved little record of early Guamanian oral traditions, seventeenth century religious writings do include ample accounts of the padres' dual task: on the one hand, to break the power of the native religious practitioners, and on the other, to inculcate in their unwilling charges the proper respect for the Trinity and for the Mother of Christ, who in years following would become the patron saint of the Mariana Islands.

According to extant records, the battle lines between Virgin and *aniti* (the aboriginal term for ancestral spirit), priest and medicine man, were quickly drawn. From the beginning, the Spanish padres showed a marked lack of enthusiasm for native beliefs (" These people do not acknowledge any divinity . . . they did not have the slightest idea of religion "). As for the medicine men, the Hispanic verdict was even more negative:

> Among them were some charlatans who pretended to make prophecies. . . . They duped the people into believing, that through the invocation of the Anitis, i.e., their deceased, whose skulls they kept in their homes, they had the power to command the elements, restore health to the sick, to change the seasons and give them an abundant harvest and a plentiful catch of fish (Le Gobien 1700: 18).

The Christianization of Guam

Following Magellan's landfall at or somewhere near Guam in 1521, the Spanish did not move quickly to Christianize the Mariana Islands. The islands played host to various shipwrecked Spanish sailors and an occasional Catholic priest for the next century and a half, until finally Padre Diego Luis de Sanvitores and his determined little band established their beachhead at Agana, Guam, in 1668. But according to the biographers of this momentous event, the Blessed Virgin had already interceded and had smoothed the way somewhat for the amiable reception that Padre Sanvitores enjoyed on his initial arrival in Agana. Drawing on Sanvitores' own writings, Padre Francisco Garcia wrote:

> This hospitable reception was attributed to a visit that the Virgin Mary was believed to have made to these Islands, appearing on the Island of Tinian. . . . Of this vision Padre Sanvitores says that fresh memories still remain on the Island. The Virgin appeared to an *Indio* called Taga, and urged him to be baptized and to help the Spaniards who were cast ashore that year (1638) on that island (Garcia 1683: 21).

One might also hazard a guess that this convivial first encounter was allied at least in part to the reputation that the Guamanians enjoyed for hospitality. Despite his largely negative comments concerning Guamanian culture, Le Gobien is moved to describe them as honest, non-homicidial, and when not stirred by a desire for revenge, a pleasant enough people:

> They are naturally liberal and love to please. The Spaniards learned this in the famous wreck of the ship Conception. The people favorably received those who were able to save themselves and tried to lighten their misfortune with all kinds of good treatment (Le Gobien 1700: 17).

Le Gobien also pens less favorable epithets, such as vain, caste-conscious, quick to anger, and dissembling. All this the padres were to discover as original hospitality was transformed to outright hostility. Apparently Jesuit training in these early days did not include a short course on the virtues of moderation. The padres had got off to a good start. Not only had they experienced a rousing welcome at the major village of Agana, but the high chief, called Quipuha, also gave the small band of missionaries a piece of land on which to build a church. This church, the first to be erected in the Mariana Islands, was completed in the following year, 1669, and still today a religious edifice stands on that spot, now host to the famous statue of Santa Maria del Camarin.

Apparently anxious to please, Quipuha consented to conversion and baptism, taking for himself a new name, Juan, in honor of John the Baptist. Moreover, Chief Juan Quipuha was the first to be buried in the new church, and tradition had it that his spirit appeared to his son " . . . and told him that he was in heaven, a matter which confirmed in the Faith many of the new Christians and encouraged the catechumens " (Garcia 1683: 10).

Padre Garcia also makes it plain that behind the choice of such an illustrious resting place for Guam's first adult Christian was the desire to wean the natives from the practice of burying at least some of their dead under their houses. The basic objection to this intriguing cus-

tom was that such burials so close to the hearth were in turn tied to the veneration of ancestral remains. Padre Sanvitores met these heathen practices head on:

> Before baptizing adults, Padre Sanvitores banished from their hearts all superstitions and idolatrous thoughts, not without great effort. He made them bury the skulls and bones of their ancestors, and he burned the images which they had made of wood and had even carved on trees (Garcia 1683: 10).

Indeed, he went so far in his initial enthusiasm as to assure the natives " . . . that the souls of their grandparents were burning in hell " (Garcia 1683: 10).

Strong stuff for a tiny band of foreigners living amid literally thousands of natives whose religion revolved about the propitiation and veneration of the spirits of dead relatives who they believed could and would intercede in human affairs, for better or often for worse. Despite Garcia's assertion that " with the grace of Holy Baptism and the words of Padre Sanvitores, the new Christians acquired a real horror of sin . . . " (Garcia 1683: 10), it soon became apparent that these first Christians also had a corresponding tendency to backslide. It is not long before one begins to read of native treachery, uprisings, and death. Chiefs who had at first welcomed the Spanish begin to appear as leaders of native bands intent on hurrying *all* the Spanish interlopers along the road to martyrdom.

Small wonder, for in addition to their headlong attack on native religious relics, the padres also threatened the rigid status system. The upper class did not approve of sharing the new god with the lowest class, which was both landless and living in virtual serfdom. Of even more immediate concern was the practice of baptism. Concerned for the souls of children in a land of high infant mortality rates, the padres made a concerted effort to baptize all those innocents who had as yet no pagan errors for which to repent. However, it was not difficult for the opposition to identify the high correlation between baptism and death, thus raising the question: blessing or curse? To quote one such incident:

> [The] mother had not wished to bring her child to the church, fearing baptism as she did, on the advice of Choco, and believing that the water (of baptism) might harm the child who was already ill. Padre Sanvitores found the child at the point of death, but the mother still resisted. On the insistence of her husband she gave the child to the priest, who baptized it. That same night

it died (Garcia 1683: 34).

Garcia says the father was resigned to the loss as the will of God. He does not, however, give the reaction of the bereaved mother as to whether or not the death reinforced Choco's contentions that baptism was a particularly devious Spanish method of murder. In this trying period of native attacks and counterattacks by Spanish soldiers (the Cross had been accompanied by the Sword), the Virgin once more came to the aid of the much harried Sanvitores, even if at a distance. The above-mentioned Choco was a castaway Chinese who had become an influential member of the native aristocracy and was pivotal in mounting resistance to Spanish attempts at further proselytizing. At one point Sanvitores had maneuvered a meeting with Choco, and in a true Jesuitical fashion had both debated him to a standstill (it took three days) and *baptized* him a Christian (Le Gobien 1700: 33).

Later it was learned that the Virgin had made another appearance, again on the nearby island of Tinian, and the Spanish fathers were of the opinion that her intercession was probably related to Sanvitores' victory over the heathen Choco. Garcia presents the scene in Sanvitores' own words:

> We usually pay no attention to the aparitions of which the *Indios* tell, because they are Anites or evil spirits, who try even against their will, to possess the poor Christian natives with their own fears and mistreatment, from which they have been freed by means of Holy Baptism and the Holy Cross and Holy Names of Jesus and Mary and other Saints written on the crosses which they placed in their houses with very good effects. Sometimes they mention good spirits and the Holy Virgin, such as we hear from the mouth of an *Indio* called Ignacio Ipaga. . . . Dreaming, or perhaps awake (as he says), the Holy Virgin appeared . . . complaining with her own voice . . . of the wickedness of Saipan [where a native uprising was in progress]. The form in which she appeared . . . was the same as the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe . . . which he had seen in an oratory in the residence of the Padres . . . she was holding two children . . . and besides these there were eight larger children who . . . led a dog to the feet of the Virgin, in spite of its resistance and barking.

The vision was interpreted thus: innocent children should be baptized and the dog (" the idolater Choco ") had been subdued by the wish of the Virgin and the prayers of baptized Guamanian children (Garcia 1683: 40).

In this early account of over three hundred years ago are to be found the twin themes that still run through Guamanian belief today: the spirits of the pagan ancestors lie in wait to harm their Christianized descendants, and the Blessed Virgin stands ready to intercede for the faithful in times of trouble. Moreover, these intercessions are often tied in some way to a blessed statue enshrined in some church or sanctuary. Corresponding to this, the *anitis* or *taotaomonas* are most often contacted in areas containing such pre-Christian relics as old village sites, aboriginal building foundations, and like spots rumored to be haunted by unshriven ghosts.

These early reports by the first missionaries list many of the devout providences common to Western religious literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are healings, relief from drought, protection from mortal danger—all apparently due to God's divine intervention and to His protection of these soldiers of the Cross. From this clustering of small marvels I will single out those few that point unerringly to one of the future roles of religious statues in the history of the Catholic church on Guam. During their armed conflicts with the aborigines, the Spanish had erected a fort of sorts about their church in Agana. One tower-like structure had been put under the divine protection of the Virgin, and the long battle had begun. Finally, besieged on all sides by crowds of hostile warriors, the Spanish had cried out to St. Michael, who sent rain to quench the fires set by their adversaries. As the Guamanians continued to press their advantage of numbers, there came a typhoon which destroyed all in its path:

> But the signs of God's providence and the protection of Saint Michael were also clear and evident. The church had been blown down, but the roof's central beam remained, resting as it were on the shoulder of the statue of Saint Francis Xavier. . . . The image of Christ crucified and of the Blessed Virgin remained unharmed . . . (Risco 1970: 182–183).

More importantly for the Spanish, this marked the last concerted, large scale battle, and from then on the padres and the soldiers were able to complete in a more orderly fashion the subjugation and Christianization of the Mariana Islands from their stronghold at Agana.

However, to continue to trace the fortunes of the Virgin Mary and her earthly representations on Guam now calls for a two century shift into the future. And it is more than a movement in time, for the process set in motion by Magellan and Padre Sanvitores very nearly destroyed the aboriginal inhabitants of the Mariana Islands. As the padres struggled with the natives and the natives resisted, other unplanned

factors entered into the balance that would tip the scales in favor of the West. The aborigines soon found themselves harassed on all sides by newly introduced diseases, earthquakes, social disorder, and of course that chill horseman, Famine. Suffice it to say that by 1672, four short years after his arrival on Guam, Padre Sanvitores was slain by an enraged father when Sanvitores insisted on baptizing a child over the father's objections. Sanvitores was not the first to fall, a martyr to his cause, nor was he to be the last. But from today's perspective, the 131 Spanish casualties (eighteen officially listed as martyrs) seem few, very few, compared to the thousands of natives who were swept away (Risco 1970: 221–222). From Padre Sanvitores' estimate of 50,000 to 100,000 Chamorros in all the Mariana Islands in 1668, the islanders had dropped to 4,000 by 1772. By 1783, little more than another decade, the number had been reduced further, to a bare 1500. Wrote a sympathetic contemporary:

> Such savages could not resist the European troops and arms. . . . A great number of them were the victims of the disgraceful maladies which their inhuman conquerors had introduced among them. . . . The population decreased, throughout the whole Archipelago, to such a degree, that it became necessary, five and twenty or thirty years ago, to unite the feeble remains of them in the single island of Guam (Carano, Sanchez 1964: 104–105).

The centuries following this population nadir have witnessed extensive Guamanian intermarriage with various other ethnic groups: Spanish, Filipinos, various Europeans, Japanese, and especially since World War Two, Americans. This transformation of Guam's native stock went hand in hand with a gradual resurgence in numbers, until at the turn of the 20th century the count had inched back to about ten thousand people living on Guam. The Spanish were to maintain their control of the Mariana Islands, via the Philippines, until 1898, when following the Spanish-American War, the United States took over Guam and the Philippines. Germany purchased Spain's claims to the rest of the Mariana Archipelago, which was once more becoming populated in a slow trickle from Guam and the Caroline Islands. The literature covering the long period following the breaking of native resistance in the late seventeenth century until the beginning of the American period in the late nineteenth century consists largely of church records. That portion of it which I have been able to locate contains scattered references to the religious statues whose fortunes are part of the emphasis of this paper. These several sources would strongly indicate that these religious relics had become important rallying points

for Guamanian Catholicism. Twenty years before the American take-over, Padre Ibanez records in his journal the arrival of the mail boat from Manila, which was transporting, along with several Spanish notables, the Village of Asan's " statue of the Blessed Mother ", which had been sent to the Philippines for repair (Ibanez, Resano 1847–1898: 83).

In his continuation of Ibanez's journal, Padre Resano records a similarly stirring event: the sacred statue of Mary, the Santa Maria del Camarin of present-day fame, had also arrived home:

> On October 19th of this year [1894] the mail steamer *Venus* arrived from Manila, bringing the statue of the Blessed Mother which had been sent to Manila for retouching and gilding at the expense of Don Julio de Torres. As soon as it was known that it had arrived, which was at 10 o'clock at night, a general ringing of bells announced to the people that the Virgin had returned. . . . To welcome the Virgin as she came from Asan, the parishes of Inarajan, Merizo, Agat and Agana, each headed by its parish priest and in the order stated, processed to Anigua. So many people came that it is the only time I have seen such a large gathering of people in the Marianas. It is estimated that the procession totaled more than 7,000 people. The streets were lighted and decorated with bunting and triumphant arches, and there were many lights in addition to the more than 400 lanterns carried in the procession. . . . All this is reported and verified herein so that a record will remain of these solemn festivities, celebrated in honor of the Blessed Mother to whose image all these Chamorros have a great devotion because they believe her to be very miraculous. According to tradition, she came to the Marianas in a miraculous manner, washing upon the shores of Merizo, in spite of the great weight of the statue (Ibanez, Resano 1847–1898: 108–109).

Also noted in the Ibanez portion of the chronical there is a special link existing between the Blessed Virgin and, by extension, her statue. She had been called upon by the people of Agana in 1825 and again in 1834 for relief from the earthquakes of those two years. Thus began the yearly novena described by Ibanez:

> All the inhabitants of this city of Agana and its barrios pledged themselves to a perpetual vow to celebrate yearly a novena of solemn masses with sermons and processions in honor of Mary in the Mystery of Her Immaculate Conception . . . (Ibanez, Resano 1847–1898: 97).

In these last, at times lengthy, quotes, the reader finds the stage set for the strong contemporary role played by Santa Maria del Camarin and her associated traditions. The important parts of her legend are already in place: her arrival in Guam is seen as contrary to nature, and hence miraculous, and she is considered to have special powers. To move from the symbol to the saint, all the early accounts of the missionizing of Guam and other islands in the Mariana archiplelogo are heavily interlarded after the fashion of the times with curious providences, many of which are attributed directly to the divine intercession of the Virgin. The church which provides her special niche, called, not accidentally, the Cathedral Dulce Nombre de Maria, stands on the traditional spot where the first church was built in 1669, a gift from the high chief of Guam's most important village, Agana. In turn, the giver of this gift was also the first adult native to be baptized into the faith and was himself buried in this sacred plot.

The American Period

This then was the sleepy and devout backwater of the Spanish empire into which of June 20, 1898, the United States Navy made its abrupt entrance. The *U.S.S. Charleston* sailed into Guam's Apra Harbor, fired a few hostile shots at Fort Santa Cruz, and announced to the surprised Spanish officials that they had just lost the Spanish-American War. There was much confusion, for the Spanish had thought the shooting represented the usual military courtesies offered when entering a foreign port. The Spanish gunners had not fired back, for they were a trifle short of powder and balls. After a couple of months of continued chaos, Captain Richard P. Leary arrived on the scene and began the series of Naval governors that was to last until after World War II.

Captain Leary was both a Baptist and a formalist, and he did not approve of the Catholic priests and their tight regimentation of their flock. And since Leary was to set up headquarters in Agana, which in turn served as the nucleus for most of Guam's population, his uncompromising attitude concerning freedom of religion would cause the devotees of Mary no end of problems. Leary's orders as Military Commander of the Island of Guam read in part:

> It will be the duty of the military commander to announce . . . that we come . . . as friends, to protect the natives in their homes, in their employments and in their personal and religious rights (Beers 1944: 18).

In a proclamation issued three days after his arrival on Guam

(August 7, 1899), Leary gave strong indication that he did not see the existing situation as conducive to religious freedom. In part, the proclamation stated:

> That, all political rights heretofore exercised by the Clergy in dominating the people of the Island, are hereby abolished, and everyone is guaranteed absolute freedom of worship and full protection in the lawful purusits of life, so long as that protection is deserved by actual submission to and compliance with the requirements of the Government of the United States (Beers 1944: 22).

In a few short weeks Captain Leary informed the Department of Navy that he would deport all the Spanish priests to Manila, for he had through "personal observation and investigation" decided that their continued presence on Guam "would be subversive of good government and prosperity, injurious to the interests of the community and incompatible with the moral teachings of civilized society" (Beers 1944: 24–26).

Lest it seem Captain Leary was primarily concerned with harassing the church, I would point out that there were many things in Guam's body politic that he and his successor set about changing. Stray dogs, tax policy, concubinage, abuse of alcohol, land titles, illiteracy, illegitimacy—these, and many others were dealt with in Captain Leary's first fourteen General Orders, from August 16, 1899, to February 3, 1900. However, since it is religious traditions and not administrative concerns that are the focus of this paper, it will be Captain Leary's attempts at regulating certain religious practices and traditions that will occupy the limelight.

There was the matter of the many church festivals. Says Beers in his summation of Naval government:

> Since they were in effect public holidays, the numerous church festivals . . . seriously interfered with the economic life of the people by keeping them away from their work. In fact, feast days usually accompanied by spectacular processions, which delighted the simple natives, were the occasion for debauches lasting several days (Beers 1944: 27).

Governor Leary's approach to removing this impediment to economic development was to legislate more agricultural activity on the one hand and to forbid most religious festivals on the other. General Order No. 4, August 25, 1899, got to the heart of the matter:

> Public celebrations of feast days of the patron saints of villages, etc., will not be permitted. The church and its members may celebrate their religious feast days within the walls of the church, chapel, or private residence . . . the only public holidays recognized will be Sundays and the holidays authorized by the United States statute laws . . . (Wheeler 1900: 39).

Other moves found necessary were to forbid the tolling of the church bells at 4: 00 A.M. to call the faithful to early mass (the hospital was next door), a decree permitting divorce, and the removal of saints' pictures and crucifixes from public schools. This last decree (General Order No. 12) was not sufficient, and was followed soon with General Order No. 19, which " . . . directed the gobernadorcillos to remove immediately all crucifixes and saints' pictures from the public schools and direct the teachers to discontinue instructions in the church catechism " (Beers 1944: 31).

Needless to say, the Guamanians did not accept Captain, Leary's changes in the spirit in which they were presumably made. According to Beers: " To the natives the typhoon of 1900 was a visitation resulting directly from their failure to parade in April in fulfillment of a vow made after the earthquake of 1858 " (Beers 1944: 41).

A very similar judgment had been rendered a few years previously when a Spanish governor, Don Emilio Galisteo y Brunenque, had hurried the people in the construction of the Colegio de San Juan de Litran. The walls later fell, following an earthquake and heavy rains. The Guamanians felt they should have been setting up their little shrines and celebrating the Feast of the Corpus, not burning lime for the new buildings. Wrote Padre Resano: " Briefly, it was said: ' The walls of the Colegio fell down because the Corpus was scorned in order to make lime for those walls ' " (Ibanez, Resano 1847–1898: 110).

Malevolent ghosts. With the American occupation of Guam, the curtain fell on the long period of Spanish domination of the island, 463 years if one begins with Magellan's landfall, 316 years if one figures from Padre Sanvitores' original drive to Christianize the island. At the same time that much that was Spanish was supplanted by English and American, a popular press was instituted. From the beginning, the Americans who instituted Guam's first newspaper displayed interest in at least some of Guam's native traditions; and once more one finds a repetition of those twin Spanish concerns, the spirits of aboriginal Guamanians (now called *taotaomonas*) and the beneficial nature of certain religious statues. With those troublesome pre-Christian ghosts,

the Spanish had won at least a linguistic victory. In Padre Sanvitores' day, *aniti* had meant "soul" or "spirit". In modern Guamanian (Chamorro) *aniti* means "Satan" or "devil" (Topping, Ogo, Dungca 1975: 14). Thus in American times ancestral ghosts appear under a new name, *taotaomona*, given the apt translation in *The Guam Recorder* as "People of Before Time" (McIntosh 1925: 3).

One does not get the impression, however, from reading the pages of the *Guam News Letter* and its successor, *The Guam Recorder*, that their American editors realized the strength of the Guamanian belief in the *taotaomona*. It had survived the centuries-long opposition of the Spanish clergy, and was not about to go away with the arrival of Americans and their push for literacy, as intimated in *The Guam Recorder's* mock conversation between the *taotaomona* and the printing press (Talking 1935: 331). Commander McIntosh's 1925 discussion of the Guamanian belief in the *taotaomona* is still relevant for the 1980's:

> The "Living Dead" were the constant concern of the Chamorro. . . . Nowadays, the Chamorros refer to these almost indecently active ancestors as Tao-Tao-Mona, or "People of Beforetime", but the real, old word is Anito. . . . He lives "in the bush". . . . Any Chamorro will today tell tales of lost children brought home after dark . . . with the marks of "bi-ig fingers, sir," on their wrists. One Chamorro . . . takes oath that he has not only seen an Anito, but has been roughly handled by one in recent years. Vicente . . . had an opportunity to "have Anito for friend," but refused (McIntosh 1925: 15).

This is little different from stories I encountered when I first did fieldwork on Guam in 1957. Thirteen years later Donald Soker made an extensive collection of *taotaomona* tales and recorded accounts very much akin to those published years ago in *The Guam Recorder*. Soker presented the major themes of his collection as follows:

> In composite form these themes group themselves as (1) ancestral spirits of (2) superhuman strength who frequently (3) play tricks or cause mischief, but also often (4) cause injury, sickness, or death for an offense. Some stories deal with (5) individuals who have a *taotaomona* friend . . . or the (6) "witch doctors" who cure *taotaomona*-induced sickness . . . (Soker 1972: 155).

I would also add that those Guamanians who supposedly accept help from the *taotaomonas* are considered by their devout peers to have

separated themselves from the blessings of the Holy Church. All in all, this complex of belief does not vary a great deal from certain aboriginal beliefs described by the early Spanish missionaries:

> These people are convinced that the spirits return after death, either because the Devil deceives them by taking on the form of their defunct relatives, or because their heated imagination represents to them what they intend to tell others. It is certain that they complain of being maltreated by spectres, who at times frighten them terribly. When they have recourse to their Anitis, i.e. the souls of their dead, it is not to obtain some favor, but rather to have them impede some evil. For the same reason they observe deep silence and make long fasts for fear that the Anitis might maltreat them or frighten them at night in their dreams in which they have great faith (Le Gobien 1700: 19).

Guam's patron saint. In addition to running English translations of old Spanish documents and books relating to the early history of Guam, the *Guam News Letter*, and later, *The Guam Recorder*, began printing various Guamanian legends. In 1918 there appeared an account of Santa Maria del Camarin, the first of the many printed legends concerning the Virgin that have appeared from time to time down to the present day. The familiar ingredients are all present in this first effort: novenas and processions in thankfulness for the Virgin's protection from typhoon and earthquake, plus a short account of her miraculous arrival on Guam:

> That is no way to tell the story—the Chamorros do it better. . . . "Santa Maria Camalin, I know Her. She is alive. One night in the middle of the dark a soldier is fishing on the reef when he sees Her in the water, and in front are crabs holding candles in their feet. She is angry because he does not go home and put on his clothes, and when he takes Her to the land he falls sick and dies (Miraculous 1918: 12–13).

The *Guam News Letter*'s successor, *The Guam Recorder*, was to repeat the same legend three times more before World War II, with the last two variations being contributed by the same person, Remedios L. G. Perez, a teacher in Guam's schools.[3] Perez's tale appeared once again, following the American reoccupation of Guam, in the short-lived *Guam Examiner* (Perez 1952: 10); and a number of other post-World War II variants of "Santa Maria del Camarin" located in the files at the University of Guam's Micronesian Area Research Center

(MARC) show signs of being taken in large part from Perez's efforts. One recent variant includes information showing the continuation of Santa Maria's role as guardian against natural disasters:

> It is from these things that the people believe the Blessed Mother is here helping them. Whenever a typhoon is coming, all the people rush to the church to repent. After Typhoon Karen when the people came back the statue was turned away from them because the people were not as religious as before (Cruz 1968: 244–245).

The informant was speaking of a violent typhoon which had devastated the entire island in 1962. In addition to destroying whole villages and incapacitating the military bases, the storm also killed several people. This was the first loss of life due to storms for many years. Since I was present on the island at the time, I was able to discuss the unfortunate event with Guamanians of my acquaintance. Many of them pointed their fingers at the increasing Americanization of Guam and the decrease in religious observances. Some took things a step further and included in their list of sins that had caused Santa Maria to withdraw her support the short skirts and skimpy bathing suits being worn by young women, and the dances, especially the twist, being performed by mixed couples.

Those who held these views were reinforced in their opinions concerning the scandalous behavior of the young when Santa Maria was *stolen*, not once but twice. The first abduction was a relatively low pressure affair. On May 19, 1968, Santa Maria's sanctuary at Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral was found empty. According to the *Pacific Daily News*, " Police conducted a desperate search and people thronged the church to view the empty niche and pray for the statue's safe return " (Lady 1971: 1).

Among the suspects was a carload of youths reported in the area the night before. Rather than risk damage to an irreplaceable relic, church officials pleaded for its return and promised no action would be taken if the statue was recovered unharmed. Rewards were offered, and after some cloak and dagger activity, Santa Maria returned to her accustomed spot, those concerned took a vow of silence, and the matter was closed. When I returned to Guam in 1970 for a fourteen month stay, I was unable to locate little more than rumor concerning the Saint's forced departure. I did, however, encounter the belief, later printed, that " . . . some of the faithful were in near hysterics, for they thought the ' lady left because of the coming of a great catastrophe ' " (Williams 1971b: 18).

Religion and Guamanian politics. The winter of 1970 and spring of 1971 were to prove hectic for Santa Maria, for not only was she stolen again but she also found herself in the eye of a political storm. Many years had passed since, with a stroke of the pen, Captain Leary as Governor of Guam had removed the religious revelers from Agana's streets, at least on weekdays, and attempted to increase the time spent on their farms in more gainful activity. Following World War II, Guam became self-governing, including the local election of the governor. With the several military bases present on the island, the population had bloomed to the neighborhood of 100,000, with about half that number being permanent residents of Guam. These permanent residents are largely Catholic and much to be reckoned with at the polls.

It was the legislative process that brought Santa Maria to the front in late 1970. The Board of Education had decided to remove December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, from the list of legal holidays. But, December 8 was and is a Holy Day of Obligation for all Catholics, Guam's included. When this annual procession was held in Agana, with the statue of Santa Maria del Camarin occuping the position of honor, attendance was found to have dropped from the usual 14,000 to an estimated 10,000. Church officials blamed this marked decrease on the unfeeling policies of the Board of Education. Hence Bill 44 was introduced in Guam's legislature. If passed, the bill would have established December 8 as a legel holiday in honor of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This posed a nasty connundrum for many of Guam's legislators, who on the one hand saw the proposed law as merging the affairs of church and state and who on the other knew well the feelings of their constituents. Many resolved their dilemma by doing nothing. They abstained and the bill failed.

This put everyone concerned in still more of a quandry. Guam's first elected governor, Carlos Camacho, was a practicing Catholic who had been strongly supported by the church in his bid for office. Guam's first Guamanian bishop, Felixberto C. Flores, was much upset. His flock was in an uproar. Very soon Bill 220 appeared. It avoided the shoals of religious obligations and emphasized the importance of culture and roots. It passed posthaste and was signed by the governor, who is described as having, with a smile, implied " . . . it would be political suicide for him not to sign the bill, either of them " (Williams 1971a: 3).

The above quote from an account of Bishop Flores' Sunday message to Guam's Catholics was published in the church's Sunday newsletter. The Bishop's critique is worth quoting at some length, for it

indicates that in the seventy-one years which had passed since Governor Leary had dismantled the power of the clergy, the church had managed to regain some of its preeminence in local affairs. In what the reporter calls " a stinging blow to the local politicians ", Flores stated:

> The statue in itself has no significance religiously unless it represents the religious meaning of devotion, and veneration to the Blessed Mother under her various titles. . . . Locally our Lady of Camarin has been accepted for the past two centuries. With [Bill] 220, the legislators apparently felt they had an opportunity to " have their pie [sic] and eat it, too. . . . December 8 was a legal holiday before and immediately following World War II. I can't understand how these people who represent us can be so unaware of history, of customs, of traditions and yes, even unmindful of elemenatry theology and basic faith. . . . They say (politicians) that the church can't or won't interfere, or shouldn't interfere. But, I'll tell you now the church will interfere when she has to (Williams 1971a: 1, 3).

As for the official contention that the holiday would cost $380,000 in lost man-hours, the Bishop had little but scorn: " Since when have these socalled advisors of the governor become the champions of the taxpayers' money " (Williams 1971a: 3)?

Guam's most famous statue was given little reprieve after winning back what Captain Leary had so long ago taken away. On Monday, May 3, front page headlines proclaimed " Lady of Camarin Is Stolen." In slightly smaller type a second heading announced " Convicted Murderer Escapes " (Lady 1971: 1). Twenty-four hours later the two incidents were found to be related, the mentally disturbed prisoner back in custody, and Santa Maria retrieved from a ditch alongside a dirt road.

The *Pacific Daily News* took the occasion of this second theft to reprint the several miraculous traditions associated with the statue and to emphasize its importance to Guam's faithful. Other than her fabulous appearance, complete with candle-bearing crabs, the miracles ascribed to the Lady of Camarin are not astounding. She is believed by some to have, at least in the past, gone for short walks about the island, the proof being burrs in the hem of her dress or the hem's being damp from the dewy grass. She is reputed to be able to change her expression to suit the occasion: joy, apprehension, anger, or even in case of impending tragedy, tears. Once, when being repaired, her cheeks bled. She has gone through typhoon and fire without damage. And of course, she stands between the population of Guam and natural

disaster, such as typhoon or earthquake (Statue 1971: 2, 23). If at times her vigilance is relaxed, this is felt by many to be due to irreligious behavior on the part of the Guamanians.

It should be abundantly clear at this point that anyone desiring to make an in-depth study of religion and ritual on Guam would experience little difficulty in obtaining data, both historical and contemporary. There is a caveat to be offered, however. The interested investigator must be fully aware of first, the library holdings at the Micronesian Area Research Center, University of Guam; and secondly, the Guamanian tendency to refresh one's memory of Guamanian customs by going to the Center and doing a little reading. I have in my possession copies of collections of Guamanian legends that owe much more to the library than they do to oral tradition. Nor should one underestimate the role of the press in legend transmission.

The strength of Guamanian belief in the *taotaomona* is a bit more difficult for the newcomer to gauge. Such traditions and beliefs are in shorter supply on library shelves. The Micronesian Area Research Center does have a few good manuscript collections of contemporary *taotaomona* lore,[4] but the investigator is advised to get out, establish tapport, and take the *taotaomona's* pulse himself. It has been my experience that facial expression, hesitation, timbre of voice, and choice of surroundings (such as being alone), are as important in gauging depth of feeling on this almost taboo topic as are the words used in describing this ghostly phenomena. A bit of anecdotal data would seem to fit here.

I was on Guam at the time Donald Soker was finishing his *taotaomona* study. I was Scholar in Residence at the Micronesian Area Research Center and had extensive contacts with Guamanians, ranging from janitor to secretary to legislator to college president. Many professed uneasiness at Soker's determined investigation of *taotaomonas* and their doings. Some expressed the feeling that there were things best left alone, and that little good could be expected from this study for either Professor Soker or his informants. Later in the year Soker had an unfortunate accident in which he was maimed for life. A huge truck ran a red light and crushed his car. Needless to say, this occasion has been remembered as yet another example of the dangerous nature of the *taotaomona*.

Discussion

One could stop here, feeling that a strong case has been made for the historical continuity of two complexes of belief in the supernatural, one aboriginal Guamanian, unhallowed, and officially discouraged; the

other Spanish-introduced, blessed, and most definitely encouraged by secular and religious alike. But deeper reading in the literature cited will raise other questions. Why has Padre Sanvitores failed to grasp the Guamanian imagination? Certainly his career has received far more attention in local church literature than has the more humble statue of Santa Maria. His story would appear to be the stuff legends are made of. He performed his miracles, suffered a martyr's death, and the spot was and is well-marked. The bay where his body was dragged out to sea is reputed to turn red in annual celebration of his death. For years following his passing, religious observances were carried out at the physical location of his martyrdom. Church officials continue their determined efforts to keep his memory fresh and to gain for him the exalted position of saint:

> April 2 this year of 1971 will mark the 299th anniversary of the martyrdom of Ven. Diego Luis de San Vitores, Apostle of the Marianas. It will also mark the beginning of preparation for the tercentennial year of that glorious martyrdom. As our spiritual preparation for that year the following activities will be held. On April 2, Friday, at 5: 30 in the afternoon, there will be a concelebrated Mass of the Holy Spirit by His Excellency, the Bishop, and the Priests of the diocese, to obtain divine guidance for the success of the tercentennial year and the beatification of Ven. San Vitores. It will be held at Tumon Beach, within the site of the martyrdom. . . . The faithful of all parishes, schools and organizations are invited and urged to attend these devotions (San Vitores 1971: 14).

It is not, however, to the scene of Sanvitores' martyrdom that the faithful rush in time of trouble. One might argue that the statue of Santa Maria del Camarin is the representation of the Mother of Christ as compared to a priest who as yet has failed to attain the elevation of a saint. But that is to disregard the stubbornness with which Guamanians (and the related inhabitants of nearby islands) have clung to their belief in the *taotaomona* who have never been granted *any* official position in the religious hierarchy.

A partial reason for Sanvitores' eclipse in everyday Guamanian life could well be allied to geography and demography. The village where the padre met his death was soon depopulated as were many other villages. When I returned to Guam as a teacher in 1957, the general vicinity was deserted. Sanvitores' humble monument was surrounded with weeds and one rarely saw Guamanians in the area, whereas the Cathedral of Dulce Nombre de Maria had been erected

anew after World War II and was located at the very hub of Guamanian activities. Unlike Padre Sanvitores whose legend is tied to a particular spot, the fame of the Virgin is portable and capable of representation in a myriad of statues and shrines. She cannot be omitted from the Faith. Sanvitores can.

One steps on firmer ground in approaching Santa Maria del Camarin and her alter ego, the *taotaomona*, from the point of view of function. Clearly the two phenomena operate in the same sphere, but on different levels. In addition to her traditional role as Mother of Christ, Mary has been for many years She Who Intercedes. It is often stated by anthropologists that religious activity is most intense in those areas of human behavior where there are the greatest insecurities. As Guam's many typhoons and earthquakes illustrate, Guamanians are far from being in control of their environment. A strong tremor can crumble in a few seconds what was raised at great cost, even if it be in steel-reinforced concrete. After a terrifying night of wind and rain, one can emerge from his shelter and find his home gone (my wife and I lost ours in 1962 to the aforementioned Typhoon Karen). Like death, the massive power of typhoon and earthquake is beyond the control of science. At the very least, there is comfort in prayer and faith, even when misfortune is chalked up against ungodliness.

The *taotaomonas* (formerly *Anitis*) have been demoted from their reputed power to control natural disaster. But in many ways these aboriginal ghosts are closer to Guamanians in everyday life than is Santa Maria del Camarin. She has her special days and her emergencies. The *taotaomonas* provide a code for everyday living. Like taboo, this complex of belief provides codes of action and inaction: where to go, where not to go, what to avoid, what to seek out. And again like taboo, many small ailments and greater calamities can be laid, quite conveniently, at the door of the *taotaomonas*, who can and often do punish those who violate the rules. While there is a strong measure of fear in this system, there is also more than a modicum of comfort. There are, still today, those who are said to have a *taotaomona* friend, a helper (*gachong*). Although feared, these same individuals are often sought out for aid and cure of mysterious *taotaomona*-inflicted sicknesses.

I cannot push my data beyond this point. The historical trail is plain, the functions seem reasonable. In dealing with the *taotaomona* complex on the nearby island of Saipan, Alexander Spoehr wrote:

> The belief in the *taotaomona* is deeply imbedded in Chamorro thought. Probably there is not a single adult Chamorro—re-

gardless of how much he belittles the concept as a superstition to Americans—who does not firmly hold to the belief. The reason is that the *taotaomona* concept is not a functionless survival but is part of a system of thought and action, closely related to illness and its treatment (Spoehr 1954: 204–205).

While Spoehr's interpretation is as functionally oriented as mine, the phrase, " a system of thought and action ", intrigues me. It is my opinion that a study more concentrated on Guamanian rituals and their meanings than mine has been could search out that " system of thought and action " that could take the presented data of saint and devil beyond the starting point of functional explanation.

NOTES

1. " The list began with Luis de Medina on Saipan in 1670 and during fifteen years grew to an apostolic honor roll of ten Jesuit priests and two professed Lay Brothers. This does not include the roster of servants and lay catechists who died meekly at the hands of assassins for the Faith " (Sullivan 1957: 74).

2. Sablan 1924: 9; Hornbostel 1928: 251; Buehler 1933: 11, 1939: 244, 1952: 10, 1968: 14; Legends 1952: 14. A common class exercise in education courses at the University of Guam is to make such collections as " Legends of Guam," and little attention is given to the control data so important to folklore scholars.

3. Maria 1927: 286–287; Perez 1936: 13, 1939: 297. There is little agreement in the literature as to whether it is Santa Maria de Camalin, or Santa Maria del Camarin and whether it means Mary of the Crabs or Mary of the Shed. One legend says the statue was escorted ashore by crabs. Another says it was kept in the military barracks or shed.

4. Taotaomonas 1952; Lee 1968, 1970; Soker 1970; Legends 1968. These collections must be treated with caution, for often later compilations include variants from earlier collections, and control data are weak.

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