And in a cardinal error for a University of Hawai‘i Press publication, the ‘okina (glottal stop) in Hawai‘i is reversed on the title-page and back-cover inscriptions, and throughout chapter four, Polynesia.

DONALD H RUBINSTEIN
University of Guam


<http://www.npswapoa.org/gallery/AMME-Museum>

On 18 August 1978 the United States Congress authorized and directed the National Park Service “to develop, maintain and administer the existing American Memorial Park . . . for the primary purpose of honoring the dead in the World War II Mariana Islands campaign” (Public Law 95-348). In addition to administering the land for the benefit and use of the public, the park service was also charged with providing educational activities at the park and interpreting the historical aspects of the Marianas campaigns. Decades after the passage of this legislation, the National Park Service and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands government committed $5.7 million in funding and personnel and rallied the public to help plan for what would be the newest and probably most visited museum in Micronesia. The museum’s doors opened on 27 May 2005.

As visitors walk into the lobby of the 10,000-square-foot visitor center, the first things they notice are large portraits of the opposing leaders during World War II in the Pacific, US President Franklin D Roosevelt and Japanese Emperor Hirohito, flanking opposite sides of the exhibit portal. Situated between these two world powers are the indigenous peoples of the Marianas, looking peaceful and calm in a panel entitled “Clouds of War in the Marianas.” This positioning illustrates how the residents of the Marianas would soon find themselves—caught between two warring nations.

Throughout the exhibit, the spatial positioning of images and maps subtly reminds visitors that the people and islands of the Marianas were caught between the crossfire of the United States and Japan. The chronologically and thematically organized exhibit hall allows the visitor to virtually walk through time and learn about the American, Japanese, and Islander perspectives and experiences beginning in the 1900s and continuing into contemporary times. Audio stations containing oral histories recorded in English and Japanese offer additional insight as to what it was like to fight in the war as an American or a Japanese soldier, and also what it was like to try to survive as a civilian. Journals detailing personal experiences also appear throughout the exhibit hall.

On entering the exhibit area, visitors see a replica Chamorro house and are introduced to the indigenous peoples of the Marianas at the beginning of the twentieth century. Continuing along the temporal journey, they encounter large murals and story panels describing the Japanese sugar-
cane industry, the accompanying economic boom, and the improved infrastructure and educational and social services that the Japanese provided before the war. Visitors learn that as the war drew closer, resources dwindled, tensions grew, and the situation worsened.

Next, visitors enter the Strategy Room. On one wall are photos of US Admiral Chester Nimitz, a US submarine, and a Superfortress aircraft, while the opposite wall displays photos of Japanese Admiral Kato Kanji, Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo, and Prime Minister Hideki Tojo. Each wall details the strategies employed by the opposing forces in trying to either capture or defend the ever-important Marianas. Large topographical maps of Saipan and Tinian positioned between those two walls help visitors relate those strategies to local operations in the Marianas. Another large map at the end of this room reveals the US strategy of island-hopping across the Pacific and details how the Japanese were forced to defend each of their island possessions. This places the Marianas campaign within the larger context of the Pacific War.

Turning the corner, visitors suddenly find themselves situated in the invasion of Saipan. They see a gargantuan photo of troops hitting the beach in Saipan and are simultaneously assaulted with the sounds of gunfire and explosions and the flashing of lights. Interpretive texts and stunning larger-than-life-size photos describe events such as “D-Day: Invading the Beaches,” “Great Marianas Turkey Shoot,” “At War on Saipan,” “Garapan Town Devastated,” and “Deadly Obstacles.”

Fronting these panels are American helmets, cartridges, receivers, canteens, maps, and other tools of war. Complementing the interpretive text and audio and visual effects are two additional artifact cases—one containing remnants of the Battle of Saipan, and the other exhibiting the weapons and artwork of the war.

Continuing through the exhibit, visitors learn about the growing desperation of the Japanese forces and their subsequent “Banzai Attack.” The Japanese command acknowledged inevitable defeat and ordered their troops to die fighting as the final way to bring honor to their nation, their emperor, and themselves. An artifact case in front of the panel shows the personal belongings of a Japanese soldier: broken eyeglasses, a medicine vial, a hair comb, toothbrushes, a pistol, and photos of loved ones. These carefully selected artifacts powerfully help humanize the Japanese soldier.

In the next room, visitors find themselves enveloped in a dark cave environment and hear the faint sounds of peoples’ whispered prayers and the crying of babies (figure 1). The “Refuge in the Caves” exhibit details the experiences of those civilians who were forced to seek shelter in the caves once the war broke out. The cave’s design and sound effects strive to simulate the experience of the Islanders who had to hide in these dreary caves in order to survive. On exiting, visitors walk into a brighter area to see that the island of Saipan has been secured. New hope existed for those that survived the cave experience. Additional exhibit panels interpret the battle of Tinian and the
events that occurred on Rota and other islands in the Northern Marianas. Panels also educate about “U.S. Victories by Land, Sea, and Air” and the “Cost of Victory.”

While the fighting may have finally been over in the Marianas, it is made very clear that the Islanders had little reason to celebrate. The panel “Safety and Survival” details how the Islanders were placed in internment camps, where initially there was very little food and water. Surrounding a mural-sized photo of many civilian children is a recreated barbed-wire pen simulating the fences that were used to keep the Islanders within the overcrowded camps. The look in their eyes clearly shows that the arrival of the Americans did not bring an overwhelming sense of relief. Poignant accounts detail the condition of the camps and document the Islanders’ mixed emotions toward the Americans as a result of widespread Japanese propaganda that made people fear torture or worse if captured by US troops. An artifact case in front of the internment camp fence includes handicrafts created by the Islanders while interned. Items such as ashtrays, humidors, and kerosene lamps made

Figure 1. The “Refuge in the Caves” exhibit is intended to simulate the experience of civilians in the Marianas who were forced to flee to the caves for safety during the Pacific War. While in the cave, the visitor sees personal items Islanders might have brought with them and hears the sounds of whispered prayers and crying babies. NPS photo.
of artillery shells, purses made of pandanus, and miniature “getas” or flip-flops with the words “Marianas” written in English or Japanese characters help show how the civilians took advantage of locally available materials, utilized their artistic talents, and created handicrafts that they sold to the American servicemen.

Extending along the main back portion of the visitor center is the “Wall of Honor.” This exhibit features over three dozen photos of the Americans who fought in the Pacific and the civilians who lived through the Marianas campaigns. Quotes indicate the pride and comradeship that existed among American troops and show the hope they held for a peaceful future. At the end of the Wall of Honor, visitors emerge from the dark and somber main exhibit area and walk toward a thirty-five-foot window-wall that looks onto the grounds of American Memorial Park. Gazing through the glass, the visitor sees quotes placed on the window in English, Japanese, Chamorro, and Carolinian. Known as the “Reflection Room,” this final portion of the exhibit is designed to encourage visitors to honor those Americans who served and to remember the Islanders who suffered. Here, visitors can reflect on what they learned while also thinking of what the future will hold.

Located on an opposite “Recovery Wall” are vibrant photos upon brightly colored walls. This linear exhibit addresses the themes of “Recovery from the Ashes of War,” “Culture,” “Rebuilding Our Community,” “Civic Development and Self-Determination,” “Creating a Future,” and finally looks at the American Memorial Park’s role and function as a living memorial.

In addition to the exhibit hall, the new visitor center also contains a 120-seat auditorium that typically functions as a movie theater where the superb twenty-one-minute movie, “An Island Called Saipan,” is screened in Japanese or English. In addition to serving as a small movie theater, the auditorium also hosts lectures, conferences, and seminars about World War II in the Marianas.

The response to the new visitor center has been tremendous. The emperor and empress of Japan visited the park in June 2005 and this high-profile, well-documented historical visit has inspired many Japanese to travel to Saipan and see the new museum. Most Japanese visitors are surprised at the exhibit’s content, saying they did not know about this era in their nation’s past. Many visiting Japanese vow to study this era further as a result of their visit to the center. Indeed, this exhibit hall often provides visiting international tourists (mostly from Japan, Korea, or China) with their first exposure to the wartime history of the Marianas.

While this exhibit hall is a must-see on the itineraries of international and US mainland tourists, the facility is also visited, utilized, and appreciated by the local community. Many local residents who visit the exhibit hall offer their compliments and express their gratitude to the National Park Service for erecting this facility that showcases their history, documents their memoirs, and resonates with their voices and shared experiences.

Since opening in May 2005, the American Memorial Park Visitor Center has welcomed over 25,000
visitors. Plans are in the works to continue to add more exhibit cases and to supplement some of the preexisting panels with additional images and photos.

TAMMY DUCHESNE
War in the Pacific National Historical Park, Piti, Guam

* * *


In 1988, Arthur Danto, philosopher of art, described a hypothetical instance in which the baskets and pots of two fictitious African tribes were displayed in two museums, one of art and one of natural history, facing one another across a park ("Artifact and Art," in Art/Artifact, edited by Susan Vogel, 1988). Danto referred explicitly to the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in his discussion of how African objects in the art museum are viewed as "vehicles of complete ideas," while those in the natural history museum are "implements that help human beings to live out their material lives" (as discussed by Alfred Gell in his article, "Vogel's Net," in The Art of Anthropology, 1999, 194). The display strategies in each museum thus follow the delineations of their tribal makers, and differentiate the pots and baskets from each area as either poetic "art" or prosaic "artifact."

The ways in which "cultural" objects should be exhibited and interpreted within metropolitan museums continues to provoke lively debate and public interest. Moving forward twenty years, a visitor to the African collections of both the American Museum of Natural History and the Metropolitan Museum of Art might be surprised to find that these galleries are still perfect illustrations of Danto's discussion. The AMNH African galleries reconstruct African habitats and peoples in "life-like" tableaux, or group artifacts together in functional and regional categories. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, African art is displayed in reverent, timeless darkness, individual pieces on stark pedestals or in glass cases, spotlit from above.

However, the Oceanic collections are displayed somewhat contrarily in both museums, provoking us to question our classifications of art and artifact and the contexts usually associated with them. The AMNH Margaret Mead Hall of Pacific Peoples, while organized according to cultural areas and functional themes, is also strikingly modernist in its style of presentation. Divided by evocative panels of color, the central axis of the hall is formed around a large replica Easter Island head, spotlit dramatically as "art," a concept that, in turn, following Mead's explicit intention, becomes the conceptual focus of the gallery (see Diane Losche’s "The Margaret Mead Peoples of the Pacific Hall at the American Museum of Natural History," a paper presented to the New York Academy of Sciences, 24 January 2005).

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Pacific hall of the Michael C Rockefeller wing displaying the Arts