

**“Cultures in War:
Combatants, Islanders and Settlers
in the Pacific War and Afterward”**

**A one-day conference held in conjunction with the
70th Anniversary of the Battles of Saipan and Tinian**

**Saturday, June 14, 2014
9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Ballroom
Saipan World Resort**



**Sponsored by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council
in cooperation with the 70th Anniversary Organizing Committee**



Michael R. Clement, Jr. is an Assistant Professor of History and Micronesian Studies at the University of Guam (UOG). He holds a BA in History and a PhD in Pacific History from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He also holds an MA in Micronesian studies from the University of Guam. Clement's work has focused on political and cultural history in post-World War II Guam. His 2011 dissertation "*Kustumbre, Modernity and Resistance: The Subaltern Narrative in Chamorro Language Music*" examines cultural change and Chamorro identity through the lens of Chamorro language songs.

"Militarization and Music: Stories of Cross-Cultural Encounters in Guam and Saipan during World War II and the Early Post-War Years"

An under-examined aspect of World War II and its immediate aftermath is the impact that the tens of thousands of military men who passed through the island had on the cultures of the Marianas. For many Northern Mariana Islanders, these GIs were the first introduction to American culture. On Guam the sheer scale of the military presence ensured fundamentally different dynamics between locals and military personnel than had existed under pre-war naval rule. Among the significant cultural influences that came with these men was Armed Forces Radio (AFRS) which gave islanders unprecedented access to American music. Through radio, but also through live performances at formal and informal settings, this music played a role in bridging cultural divides and becoming an aspect of life on the island that GIs and islanders shared. From a local perspective, the music of the military represented America, but in fact, it was less a representative snapshot of American music than it was a snapshot of the musical culture of the United States military. The music had a profound impact on the sounds of the islands for decades to come leaving a legacy of Chamorro and Carolinian music which continues to bear the marks of the early post-war years.



Haruko Taya Cook is Coordinator of the Japanese Language and Japanese Language Teacher Preparation Program and Instructor at William Paterson University and Professor *Emerita* from Marymount College of Fordham University. Co-Author of *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New Press 1992, 2008), her research and published articles address many aspects of Japan's modern war history and experience and its cultural representation through lens of memory, trauma, and cultural construction. She integrates comparative literature, film studies, women's and oral history in the study of war and war experience in Japan and East Asia. She holds degrees from Kanazawa University, the University of London, Drew University, and UC California, Berkeley and has taught at several other universities including Waseda, Georgetown, the Maryland, and UC San Diego. Her current research looks at Women and Society in Japan's War of 1937-1945 and the Japanese Experience of War.

"The Meaning of 'Saipan' in Creating Japanese War Memory: The Use and Abuse of a Wartime Myth"

The "*Saipan gyokusai*" did not happen, or at least it did not occur to the extent, or in the way, it was reported at the time or in the years since. Despite horrible scenes of suicide and murder, fear and misery, desperation and despair, what took place in 1944 at key historic sites on Saipan, the facts do not support the conclusion that all Japanese civilians and soldiers "preferred death to surrender." Indeed, the vast majority of the former survived the battle only to be expunged from the war story by wartime propaganda on both sides of the conflict. I ask who did kill themselves on Saipan and explore why the term *gyokusai* ("smashing jewels") was applied to a battle soon followed by mass deaths on islands yet to be invaded and ask why Japan's cities were burnt out from bases built on this and other islands in the Marianas. Drawing on years of research and interviews with Japanese survivors, I also use the eye-witness account of one of the American Marine Corps interpreters who experienced the battle from the other side and shared his unique perspective on the dangers the creation of the myths of Saipan would have on the future course of the war against Japan. I then explore how the story has shaped understanding of the Pacific War ever since.



Theodore F. Cook is Professor of History and Asian Studies Program Director, William Paterson University. He holds the PhD in History from Princeton University. A specialist in the comparative study of military institutions and social and cultural history of war in Japan, he has been a Senior Research Fellow at the Social Science Research Institute, Tokyo University, Visiting Professor of Strategy and Policy and Secretary of the Navy Research Fellow at the US Naval War College, a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar at the Australian Defence Force Academy, a Visiting Foreign Research Scholar at Japan's National Museum of Japanese History and Ethnography. Best known as co-author of *Japan at War: An Oral History* (New Press, 1992, 2008) and his research on the leadership, composition, and creation of the Japanese Army, he recently directed a Collaborative Research Project on "War and Memory in Shaping Japanese Culture" at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyōto, Japan.

"Defending a Japanese 'Bastion' in Wartime: Soldiers' Perspectives on Saipan"

This paper looks at the war from the ground level on the Japanese side of the battle for Japan's "island bastion" of Saipan. It examines the soldier's struggle on the beach and in the hills, beginning before the American landing, then through the "death before surrender" battle and "banzai charge" in which they were all supposed to have died, and touches on the months following the battle when the many survivors of this "final battle" hung on, even though they had already had their names stricken from their family registers back home. The paper marshals the latest Japanese scholarship and interviews with some of these survivors and links the story of soldiers and sailors trapped on Saipan with their command's supposed decision that all "the Emperor's children" should die rather than surrender. In recent years, revivals for TV of an old tale of ghost soldiers' returning from the battle and a film lauding one officer's efforts to "save his men" have complicated the picture that an Imperial visit to the former colony had left in place. This paper deepens our understanding of the impressions left by the ubiquitous image of a young woman plunging to her death that appears in every documentary of the Pacific War.



Don Farrell was born in Redmond, Oregon. He served in the US Air Force from 1965-1971, then earned a B.A. in Biology from California State College at Fuller in 1973 and a degree in Secondary Education from California State College at San Bernardino in 1975. Farrell began teaching on Guam in January 1977. In 1981 he published *The Americanization of Guam: 1898-1918*, which was followed by *The Sacrifice of Guam: 1919-1943* and *Liberation—1944*. Farrell moved to Tinian in 1987 and published the first *History of the Northern Mariana Islands* in 1991. Last year, Mr. Farrell published the first *History of the Mariana Islands to Partition*, and is now completing a new *Modern History of the Northern Mariana Islands*. Farrell served four years on the CNMI State Board of Education, two as chairman, and is currently Chief of Staff to the Mayor of Tinian and serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council and the CNMI State Historic Preservation Review Board.

"Operation Centerboard: The Plan to Drop Atomic Bombs on Japan"

This paper explores the events surrounding the atomic bomb missions launched from Tinian during World War II. On July 16, 1945, the experimental plutonium implosion-type bomb was successfully tested. Shortly thereafter, the remainder of Project Alberta, the team of scientists tasked with assembling the bombs and measuring their impacts, moved to Tinian to begin final preparations for the atomic missions against Japan. These missions were code named Operation Centerboard. With the pending invasion of Japan weighing on the minds, the Project Alberta team completed the final testing of the Little Boy and Fat Man, then rode in *Enola Gay* and *Bockscar* to supervise the drops. Although the Little Boy mission was a "milk run," the Fat Man mission, though problematic, proved to be the decisive factor in Emperor Hirohito's decision to accept the Potsdam Declaration and bring the Pacific War to an end.



Alfred Peredo Flores is of Chamorro and Korean descent, born in Seoul, South Korea and raised in Southern California. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at the University of CA, Los Angeles. He received an M.A. in public history and his B.A. in history at the University of CA, Riverside. His specialization is 20th century U.S. history with an emphasis on American empire, immigration, race/ethnicity, and labor with subfields in Asian American history, Pacific Islander history, and Native American history. His dissertation, titled “Little Island into Mighty Base: Land, Labor, and U.S. Empire in Guam, 1944-1972,” examines the U.S. military expansion of Guam through indigenous land stewardship, Filipino labor activism, and interracial relations. In addition to his scholarly pursuits, Alfred is a co-founding member of the UCLA Graduate Coalition of the Native Pacific (GCNP) and Famoksaian.

“The Agony over Land: U.S. Military Land Acquisition on Guam and Chamorro Land Stewardship, 1944-1972”

After World War II, the U.S. military engaged in a significant expansion project that changed the Island of Guam. This program resulted in the construction of military installations, government buildings, and roads all throughout the island. However, the vast expansion of the U.S. military was only possible through the acquisition of land, which was mostly owned by Chamorros. The dominant narrative of the U.S. military’s confiscation of land in the postwar era has been that Chamorros willingly gave up or gifted their land to the U.S. military, because they were grateful for their liberation from Japanese occupation. While this narrative accurately describes the immediate sentiment of many Chamorros, it also elides experiences of fear and coercion that characterized their interactions with military officials of the Guam Land and Claims Commission. By tracing the military expansion of Guam through Chamorro land stewardship and the politics of U.S. military land acquisition, the process of expansion becomes more apparent. The result of these interactions changed how some Chamorros understood the value of land. It also served as the impetus for the creation of Chamorro grassroots organizations that were critical of the U.S. military’s utilization of land during the Cold War era.



Professor Anderson Giles from the University of Maine at Presque Isle has a unique background, which combines decades of research in the Pacific Islands involved in World War II and a career as an accomplished artist, photographer, documentary filmmaker, and University teacher. He wrote, directed, and produced the epic award-winning two-hour documentary film, *THE THUNDER FROM TINIAN*, as well as *ECHOES FROM THE APOCALYPSE*. He has given numerous presentations on his work across the United States and abroad. Giles has lead countless tours for World War II veterans returning to the Marianas and has interviewed hundreds of these veterans in the course of his research. Professor Giles served as lead historical lecturer on a series of lengthy Pacific Theater cruises sponsored by Princess Cruises and Cruise West from 2002 through 2008. Giles’ father was a 4th Division Marine (Saipan/Tinian) and his uncle was a 67th Seabee who helped construct North Field and the Atom Bomb Assembly Facilities on Tinian.

“There will never be anything like this again”

In my presentation, I will make the case for the emergence of a modern mythological tale reminiscent of some of the great legends of antiquity, which tell of incredible scientific, architectural, and military achievements by a group of extraordinary individuals who, after accomplishing great feats, abandoned the sites and vanished. These groups left behind astonishing ruins, which awe us today and are a link to events, which had profound historical significance. I believe that the gargantuan feat of the construction of the world’s largest airfield complex on the small and remote island of Tinian, in conjunction with the top secret construction of facilities in which the atomic bombs were assembled and then deployed against Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is a compelling example of an evolving current mythological scenario. Young warriors coming from far away lands, constructing a facility where some of the world’s most advanced scientific minds, aircraft and weapons were based, leading to the dropping of the atomic bombs, then abandoning the site to see it be devoured by nature, leaving only ruins, is a saga of the emergence of a modern mythological story. These events literally changed world history. My presentation will study all phases of the astonishing construction feat, the great B-29 air campaign, and the construction and use of the atomic bomb facilities and their deployment. I will also discuss the process of how man and nature have transformed the site to the ruins, which tell their own story at present.



Harold J. Goldberg, the David E. Underdown Distinguished Professor of History at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, teaches World War II as well as other history courses. He is the author of a four-volume series on Soviet-American relations, has contributed many articles to the *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, and is the author of articles on the Battle of Saipan in both *Ground Warfare: An International Encyclopedia* and the *Encyclopedia of World War II: A Political, Social, and Military History*. Currently he is a frequent book reviewer for the *Journal of Military History*. His book *D-Day in the Pacific: The Battle of Saipan* was a selection of both the History and Military Book Clubs in 2007. More recently he has published *Fighting Words: Competing Voices from World War II in Europe*, a book that has been published in paperback as *Europe in Flames* and is part of the Military History Series of Stackpole Press. In the summer he leads student study trips to visit World War II sites in England, France, and Germany.

“Marine Veterans of the Battle of Saipan: How Saipan Exemplifies Patterns of War”

The Battle of Saipan stands as one of the decisive engagements of the War in the Pacific. My approach examines ways in which this struggle fits into general understandings of battle and war that transcend time, place, and nationality. I plan to establish a framework based upon the works of three military historians—Thucydides, Clausewitz, and Keegan—and then use their analyses about other wars to evaluate the Battle of Saipan and its place in history. Interviews about the Battle of Saipan I conducted with 200 marine and army veterans place the Battle of Saipan in a broader perspective—one that deepens our appreciation of the events on the island 70 years ago while also providing insight into laws of battle, war, and human behavior that prevail in the midst of chaos. While the historians provide general characteristics of war and battle, the voices of the marines who fought here allow us to see how the Battle of Saipan exemplifies a universal model. Specific themes will include: the rise and fall of empires, friction, the fog of war, group solidarity, leadership, fear and courage.



Matthew Hughes was an undergraduate at the School of Oriental and African Studies and then studied International Relations as a postgraduate at the London School of Economics (1989). He completed his PhD in 1995 the Department of War Studies at King’s College London on the topic of the First World War in Palestine. Matthew lectured at the universities of Northampton and Salford before coming to Brunel University in 2005. Whilst at Brunel, he spent two years on sabbatical as the Marine Corps University Foundation-funded Major-General Matthew C. Horner Distinguished Chair in Military Theory at the US Marine Corps University, Quantico, 2008-10, during which time he visited Saipan and Tinian for a second time to examine the experience of islanders during the Pacific war. Matthew’s first trip to the island was with his father, a former Marine who fought on the island in 1944.

“Race, Culture and Combat in the Pacific War, 1941-45”

This paper explores the treatment by US military forces of civilians during the war in the Pacific during World War II, including Japanese and Korean migrants living on the Pacific islands, and the “native” islander peoples such as the Chamorro and Carolinians of the Marianas. The literature on the Pacific war overlooks the impact of the war on non-combatant island populations, preferring to focus on the actual fighting. The paper extends the boundaries of the military history of the Pacific campaign of World War II to include the experience of civilians, contextualizing the debate within what John Dower has described as “war without mercy.” Thousands of civilians died during the course of the battles in the Pacific and this paper balances whether these deaths were the result of mass suicides, Japanese fanaticism, and Japanese maltreatment of their own civilian population, or the consequence of the actions of US forces. This study examines how American forces prepared for the civil care and administration before battle, assesses the impact of American battlefield tactics on civilians, and it explores the role that racism played in dehumanizing the enemy and how this contributed to non-combatant deaths.



Jessica Jordan is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at the University of California, San Diego specializing in modern Japanese history. She received degrees in Japanese and Religious Studies from Arizona State University (2002), and completed Japanese language training at the Inter-University Center in Yokohama (2002-03). She worked as Event Coordinator for the WWII 60th Anniversary Commemoration in Saipan (2004) and afterward worked at the Saipan American Memorial Park Visitor Center (2005-07) where she met many indigenous senior citizens who would become the first participants in her ongoing research. Her dissertation, entitled “Islands Too Beautiful for their Names: (Mis)Representations of Japanese Colonial Rule in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” reorients the dominant narrative of U.S. WWII liberation beneath re-assembled indigenous islander memories of the Japanese colonial days. Citing interviews alongside underutilized Japanese colonial sources, her dissertation argues that the postwar politics of history interpretation in this U.S. territory have constrained and marginalized local islanders’ memories .

“Colonial Subjects and Military Men: Experiences of the Pacific War (1941-1945) in the Northern Mariana Islands Among Common and Elite Indigenous Islanders”

Difficult memories of indigenous Northern Mariana Island Chamorro participation in the invasion and occupation of Guam as scouts and interpreters have predisposed many people to hold negative opinions about the character of these Chamorros, their families, and the NM islands in general under Japanese rule. Records attesting to individual Chamorro police officers and police chiefs who were employed by the Japanese colonial government show that as many as half were chosen for war service because of their prior service in the colonial police forces. To suggest that these elite men’s service records were representative of NMI Chamorro experiences under Japanese military rule would be misleading: about four thousand indigenous islanders were alive in the *Saipan shichô* [Saipan Branch] during the war, and only fifty-five Chamorro men are remembered to have gone with the Japanese military to Guam. Most indigenous Chamorro and Carolinian Northern Marian Islander men, women and children experienced the war as powerless refugees who suffered through devastating battle conditions on Saipan where about one fifth to one quarter of the indigenous population died, while others struggled to stay alive on islands like Pagan and Rota that were cut off from support and strafed until the conclusion of hostilities. The average indigenous person’s experiences of war across the Mariana archipelago were more similar than different as people found themselves fleeing a war not of their own making.



Damien O'Connell is a military historian and Senior Fellow for the Case Method at the Marine Corps University. Educated at the University of Arizona, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, *summa cum laude*, in History and Judaic Studies and a Certificate in Middle Eastern Studies. His research interests include military education (especially the German approach to it, from Frederick the Great to 1945), the World Wars, the Vietnam War, decision-making, the Israeli Defense Force, and how fighting organizations learn (or fail to learn) from their wartime experiences. He has presented at the Latvian Defense College, the Finnish Defense University, the Royal Norwegian Naval Academy, and the Baltic Defence College, and since 2012, has taught at the US Marine Corps’ Basic School. Mr. O’Connell has written for the *Marine Corps Gazette* and is presently at work on several book-length projects.

“Fact from Fiction: The ‘Pied Piper’ of Saipan”

In the summer of 1944, Marine Private First Class Guy Gabaldon purportedly did something extraordinary. He single-handedly captured over one thousand Japanese servicemen during the battles for Saipan and Tinian. By combining his knowledge of “street Japanese” and Japanese culture with simple ruses and promises of humane treatment, Gabaldon managed to effect the surrender of a fanatical foe who, as a matter of military policy, was strictly forbidden from giving up. In addition to this, he brought in many civilians living on the island. After the war, the tale of this “lone wolf Marine,” turned legendary, becoming the subject of a pulp novel, a highly successful feature film, and, most recently, a documentary. The Gabaldon story, however, fails to stand up under scrutiny. Indeed, official documents from the battle are silent on the subject or provide little evidence in its support. Furthermore, Gabaldon’s tendency to exaggerate his own deeds and contradict himself in post-war interviews suggest that, while his actions were certainly courageous and laudable, they fall short of the legend that have grown around them. The truth, it appears, is that most of the people Gabaldon delivered to American stockades were not Japanese fighting men at all—but civilians.



Courtney A. Short graduated from Barnard College, Columbia University in 1999 with a BA in History. She earned a Masters in History in 2008 from the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill where she is currently a PhD candidate in ABD status. From 2008-2011, she taught Military History as an Assistant Professor at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY. Her research focuses on race and identity during the occupation of Okinawa, 1945-1952. She has published numerous book reviews in such publications as *The Journal of Military History* and *Michigan War Studies* and has presented her work at numerous conferences to include the Society of Military History Annual Meeting and the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities, where she was also published in the proceedings. She also presented a lecture on strategic military adaptation, racial contention and interservice rivalry in the Pacific War at the United States Military Academy Summer Seminar.

“The Occupation of Okinawa: Considerations of Race and Identity in Naval Military Government Policy”

This paper focuses on the Naval Military Government that operated in Okinawa from September 1945 to July 1946. Following the conclusion of the Battle of Okinawa and the subsequent end of the Pacific War, military government operations and responsibilities for the Okinawan occupation transferred from the Army to the Navy. Despite changed conditions with the cessation of hostilities and the transition towards a peacetime occupation, Naval Military Government continued to meticulously analyze Okinawan traditions, history and the distinctive relationship with Japan much like the Army had. The period of Naval Military Government, however, marked a transition in the American view of the Okinawan people. Unlike during the battle, when soldiers struggled to decipher ethnic identity in order to differentiate the enemy from the civilian population, Naval Military Government seaman wrestled with the complexity of Okinawan identity and ethnicity as they rebuilt communities. American service members previously viewed Okinawans as possible enemy or, at best, docile and cooperative American cousins. Naval Military Government viewed Okinawans as competent and civilized: a group that formed a distinct, separate, unique ethnic community that was neither American nor Japanese in its likeness. Attributes of civility and independent identity assigned to the population, along with practical considerations such as the attrition of Naval personnel due to post-war curtailments of military commitments, shaped policy that led to Okinawan influence in government, medical structure, education and crime management.



Kathleen Broome Williams was born in Charlottesville, Virginia in 1944, grew up in Italy and in England, and returned to the United States to attend Wellesley College. Since then she has lived in Germany, Puerto Rico, Japan, and Panama, and now lives in Oakland, California, near her children and grandchildren. She holds an MA from Columbia University and a PhD in military history from the City University of New York. Her published work includes *Secret Weapon: U.S. High-frequency Direction Finding in the Battle of the Atlantic* (Naval Institute Press, 1996), *Improbable Warriors: Women Scientists and the U.S. Navy in World War II*, (Naval Institute Press, 2001), *Grace Hopper: Admiral of the Cyber Sea* (Naval Institute Press, 2004), and *The Measure of a Man: My Father, the Marine Corps, and Saipan*, (Naval Institute Press, 2013) as well as articles and book chapters on naval science and technology.

“Another Kind of Valor: Battling the Wounds from Saipan”

This paper examines the cost of war to those who were wounded during the fight for Saipan and the cost to those who loved them. It discusses how they battled their wounds, both physical and psychological, and in doing so reveals another Saipan, the one that lived on in people’s minds long after the fighting ended. This is the Saipan whose ripples were felt over great distances, over the passage of many years, and by many who never set foot there. It is the Saipan that still haunts those connected to the fierce struggle that took place on an island now so peacefully beautiful that it is hard to believe the horrors it once saw. In June 1944, Maj. Roger Broome took part in the invasion of Saipan at the head of the Regimental Weapons Company, 24th Marines, 4th Marine Division. Awarded the Navy Cross for his actions, the wounds he received cost him his life. He died six months later. During his long struggle against death he heard from those who had served with him, many of whom had also been wounded. Their stories and those of other survivors bear witness to another kind of valor.



Yujin Yaguchi is professor in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Tokyo. He studies cultural studies of tourism, including war memories and tourism, with a particular focus on Hawai'i and other Pacific Islands. His publications include *Akogare no Hawaii* [The Longings for Hawai'i: Japanese Views of Hawai'i], which won the 27th Joseph Roggendorf Award in Japan, and "Remembering Pearl Harbor in Hawai'i: A Reflection on an Annual Workshop for U.S. and Japanese Secondary School Teachers," SHAFR Roundtable "Pearl Harbor: Seventy Years Later." (December 2011).

"Japan's 'War Tourism' to the Mariana Islands"

This presentation discusses contemporary Japanese tourism to the Mariana Islands with a particular focus on how it continues today's Japanese memories of the Asia-Pacific War. It analyzes and critiques tourism discourse to the islands to show that the popular image of "paradise" imposed on the Mariana Islands is integral to how the Asia-Pacific war in Japan is remembered today. In order to outline the issues clearly, I will compare how the Mariana Islands are portrayed in Japan with the portrayal of Hawai'i, which is another and more popular (in terms of visitation numbers) Japanese "paradise" destination that was once the center of military confrontation between Japan and the United States.



Lisa Yoneyama's primary research questions have concerned memory politics, violence, and justice. Her publications include: *Hiroshima Traces: Time, Space and the Dialectics of Memory* (University of California, 1999) and *Violence, War, Redress: The Politics of Multiculturalism* (Iwanami Shoten, 2003). The current book project, *Cold War Ruins: A Transpacific Critique of Japanese War Crimes and American Justice*, explores the post-1990s transpacific redress discourse and the Asia-Pacific War memories in relation to the Cold War management of knowledge and the failure of postwar transitional justice. Yoneyama taught cultural studies at Literature Department, University of California, San Diego, 1992-2011, before joining the University of Toronto where she teaches transnational East Asian studies and critical gender studies.

"Coming to Terms with America's *Justus Hostis*: Remembering Japan's Liberal Empire in Saipan"

In recent American Studies scholarship critical of U.S. liberalism and its necessarily supplementary relationship to numerous illiberal formations, it has increasingly become customary to acknowledge that the liberal reforms in the United States, including the formal break down of the color lines, took place during the Cold War rivalry against the Soviet Union and the competition over the newly independent countries of the so-called "Third World." Relying on a handful of historical studies that locate this shift earlier in the midst of the U.S. war against Japan, this paper questions the inability of the hegemonic U.S. historical consciousness to perceive its war against Japan as a clash between two liberal empires emerging in co-figuration. To be clear, the paper is not interested in defending Japan's just cause for its belligerency and expansionism. Rather, the paper is concerned with the conspicuous narrative absenting of Japan, and by extension the areas of Asia and the Pacific then constituting the Japanese empire, in the way the mid-twentieth century U.S. ascendancy to a militarized liberal empire is understood. The paper ultimately hopes to problematize the broader intellectual and political implications this discursive absence has had on America's national ontology and the continuing knowledge production concerning the U.S. relation to Asia and the Pacific.