

Welcome to the first issue of “PasiRena Newsletter”!

Rapid modernization in the postwar period has caused changes in lifestyle and the decline of traditional cultures that had been inherited as wisdoms of peoples for thousands of years in the Pacific Island nations. In addition, traditional knowledge has been often lost without proper documentation, and accessible information on their cultures and histories by the local people are largely limited. We believe that learning one’s own culture and history generates and enhances respect to one’s origin and identity and further creates the present and future culture based on these traditions.

For the achievement of such societies, NGO Pasifika Renaissance (“PasiRena” hereafter, pronounced “pasi-rene”) was established by former Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) members and researchers in Japan in September 2014 (registered

as a nonprofit organization) to endeavor to preserve and promote cultural and historical heritage in the Pacific Islands to contribute to Pacific Islanders’ revitalization (“renaissance”) of traditional cultures and empower local communities.

This newsletter will report PasiRena’s major activities from its establishment to the end of 2015. During this period, our activities have been mainly focused on the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and on dissemination of information through the internet, targeting Pacific islanders.

Traditional media of transmitting information over a distance on the Pacific islands, conch shell blowing is included in the header of this newsletter designed by our Micronesian pro bono volunteer, Mr. Davidson Syne, expressing our wish to deliver our stories to you...

DOCUMENTATION, RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Preserving oral traditions in Micronesia

On the Micronesian islands, where people originally didn’t have writing system, traditional knowledge has been passed down orally through generations. Although listening parents or grandparents’ stories before sleeping used to be a children’s custom, oral traditions face extinction due to prevalence of modern media (e.g., videos) and young people’s indifference.

This project is continuation of PasiRena’s Executive Director Takuya Nagaoka’s work on Mwoakilloa (2002-2004) and Pingelap (February-March, 2014) in Pohnpei State, Federated States of Micronesia. Although he previously recorded elders’ narrations by a sound recorder to produce a book, oral traditions (legends, tales, historical accounts, chants, songs) started to be recorded from elders by a video camera from 2014 to be uploaded on to the internet. This method of documenting and publishing by the modern technology and media has great potential for future applications due to the ease by which it can record information in detail which can be readily be diffused to a worldwide audience via social media. In 2015, from February to April and October to December, Takuya documented traditions from elders

of Kapingamarangi, Nukuoro, Sapwuahfik, Pingelap, Mwoakilloa and the Mortlock Islands (Chuuk State) on Pohnpei and during his visit to the former three islands during his visits in April and November.

Many of those videos on Sapwuahfik have been uploaded on our NGO’s YouTube page (www.youtube.com/channel/UCnmyAfrAD0u4MpUF9jLgjjag) (see page2). This project was covered by a local FSM newspaper “Kaselehlie Press.”



Interviewing a Pingelapese woman

Providing historical and cultural info on the internet

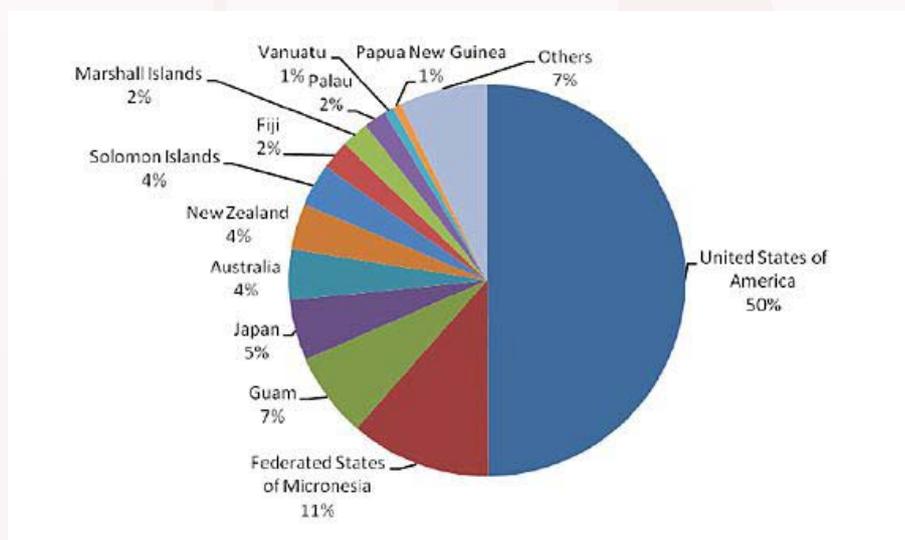
We have used our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/PashifikaRenaissance) weekly to provide Pacific Islanders with cultural and historical information for educational purposes since June, 2014. Our posts intend to introduce old and new research results and archival materials (historical photographs, for example) that are held at foreign institutions and are unfamiliar to most Pacific Islanders. We have gained more than 4,700 fans of our page at the end of 2015, which makes it one of the most supported NGOs of a similar type serving the Pacific Island Region. The followers are mainly from US and its territory Guam (57%), where one third of the total FSM population emigrates, FSM (11%), Japan (5%) and other Pacific countries (20%).

In addition, we created a Facebook group (www.facebook.com/groups/1424775454486112/) in March 2015 to post various information and promote the Pacific islanders' participate in the discussion. 1900 people had joined the group by the end of 2015, and actively utilize the page.

Further, we set up our NGO's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/channel/UCnmyAfrAD0u4MpUF9jLgjag) in March 2015 to show the public our videos, including elders' narrations, cultural activities and interviews. Since the contents of many videos are on Micronesia, we have gained a lot views from Micronesia (7 percent of the total views) and United States (73 percent), where one-third of the whole FSM population emigrated.



The number of PasiRena FB page's fans



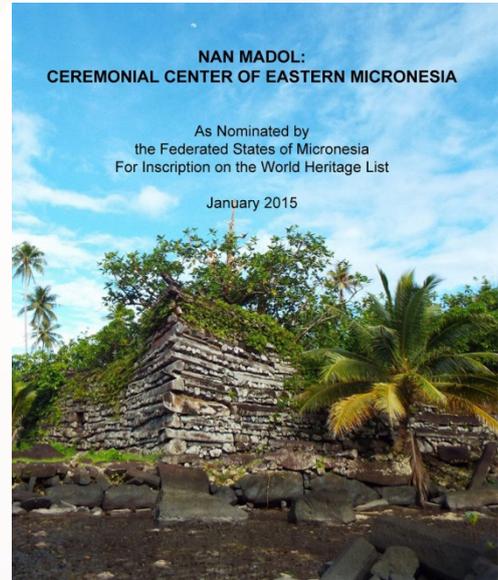
Countries and regions of PasiRena FB page's fans

Submitted Nan Madol World Heritage Application!

Nan Madol, which consists of more than 90 artificial islets built on shallow reef, is the largest megalithic site in the Pacific islands. Past archaeological studies showed that the site was constructed from AD 500 to 1500 and was the religious and political center of the island. Although inscribing Nan Madol on World Heritage List has been a long time dream for FSM, disagreement on the land ownership between the governments and locals and technical problems had prevented application for this to occur. Based on the UNESCO Pacific Office's request, however, Japanese, American and Australian researchers began to provide FSM with technical assistance in 2011, which allowed FSM to move closer towards making such an application.

PasiRena's Executive Director, Takuya Nagaoka, has been assisting FSM National Historic Preservation Office as a member of an international collaboration team in this endeavor since 2012. In 2014, Takuya coordinated the Pohnpei State Historic Preservation Office and other researchers to prepare a nomination dossier in Pohnpei, which we succeeded in formally submitting to UNESCO World Heritage Centre in

January, 2015. In February, FSM HPO received a letter from UNESCO, stating that FSM's dossier met all of the technical requirements according to the criteria for nomination to the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee will make the final decision on the inscription in July 2016.



The cover of Nan Madol nomination dossier

Workshop on the survey and documentation of stone money sites on Yap

On Yap Island in Micronesia, stone money, disc-shaped stone of 20 cm to 3 m in diameter, is still used in the occasion of social exchange. Until the early 20th century, stone money had been quarried on Palau, 500 km in distance from Yap, and had been transported to Yap by canoes during the prehistoric period and by westerners' ships after the late 19th

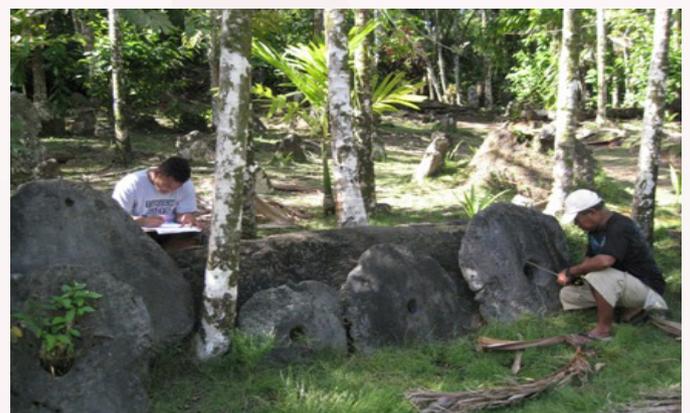


Measuring a large stone money disc, Tamil Municipality"

century. Many of those stone discs are displayed at traditional dancing grounds, often called "stone money banks", which are associated with community meeting houses or men's houses.

Yap State Historic Preservation Office (HPO) submitted

a joint application to UNESCO with Palau HPO to inscribe Yap stone money sites and quarry sites in Palau on the World Heritage List in 2010, although the application was deferred in the following year. The two HPOs subsequently have been working to resubmit the application. To support this endeavor, PasiRena's Executive Director Takuya Nagaoka provided Yap HPO staff with hands-on training to survey and inventory stone money sites in May, 2015.



Field training, Gagil Municipality

OTHER ACTIVITIES

PasiRena's new logo!

We are very happy to announce that we have new official logo now! Seeking a Pacific taste logo designed by a Pacific Islander, we held a logo design competition in February, 2015 to replace with existing tentative logo. This competition was also aimed at promoting Pacific Islanders' creativity. After spreading the notification through our Facebook page, 24 designs were submitted by five persons. In August, we had the final vote on Facebook from the four finalist designs initially selected, in which 168 people voted. The designer of the winning logo was Mr. Davidson Syne who is of the Mortlock Islands ancestry, living in Pohnpei, FSM, and works as IT Specialist at the FSM National Department of Education. (We also would like to thank him for designing this PasiRena Newsletter.) In addition to the prize for the winner, small gifts were sent to those who contributed their designs.

The various components of the winning logo have the following meaning: The canoe, which is navigated by those frigate birds, is travelling through time, from the past to the present, and is taking us to the future. The orange sun (outer arc)/ moon (inner arc) symbolize passage of time. Three stars represent Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia in Oceania. The coconut tree, the most vital tree to the Pacific Islands, was often

planted for every newborn, it represents birth, revitalization ("renaissance") of traditional culture.



Mr. Davidson Syne's winning logo



Mr. Davidson Syne



Competition entries

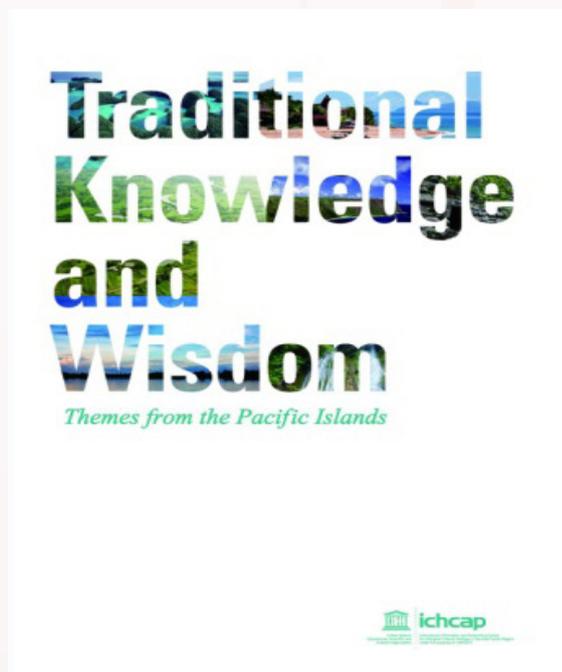
Publications

In 1994, when PasiRena's Executive Director Takuya Nagaoka was a member of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV), he recorded sailing canoe building techniques that was a fading tradition on Mwoakilloa Atoll (formerly, Mokil). Accepting the FSM National Historic Preservation Office's request, Takuya contributed an article on the canoe building tradition in a book on traditional Pacific Islands cultures "Traditional Knowledge and Wisdom: Themes from the Pacific Islands" (ICHCAP 2014), which was published by UNESCO affiliated ICHCAP in December, 2014 (downloadable from http://www.ichcap.org/eng/contents/book_list.php?mode=view&code=B0000586). In March, 2015, Takuya participated the official launching of the publication, and it was picked up by a local FSM newspaper, "Kasehlie Press."

By summarizing his article in the above book, Takuya also contributed a shorter article to a

section titled "Traditional Navigation of the Pacific Islanders" in "ICH Courier: The Intangible Cultural Heritage Courier of Asia and the Pacific" published by ICHCAP in April 2015. It can be read as an e-book at <http://www.ichcap.org/ebook/ecatalog.php?Dir=55&catimage>. He also contributed another article on PasiRena's activities, which is titled "Preserving and revitalizing traditional cultures and historical heritage in the Pacific Islands," to a section on "Safeguarding Pioneers" in the same newsletter in October 2015 (downloadable from http://www.ichcap.org/courier/Courier_E25.pdf).

One of PasiRena's members, Ikuko Inoue contributed a article titled "Impact of Compact of Free Association of the FSM on Guam" to The Journal of Economic Studies (Vol. 51, October 2015, Nihon Fukushi University), which can be downloaded from https://nfu.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=repository_uri&item_id=2466&file_id=18&file_no=1.



The cover of "Traditional Knowledge and Wisdom"



The book launching ceremony ©Bill Jaynes



Hanging pieces of cloth for wospwij launching ceremony, Mwoakilloa. © Takuya Nagaoka

Members and pro bono volunteers

Annual membership fees and donations is an important source for PasiRena's activities, as we have had difficulty in obtaining official grant assistance or other income for our activities on this field, in the Pacific region. Your support and participation are very much welcomed and needed for our sustainable activities. Anyone who agrees with our mission is

very welcome to be a member (Regular Members, Supporting Members, Corporate Members), and we would greatly appreciate your assistance. Membership payments can be made to PasiRena's bank account. Please email us at pasifika.renaissance@gmail.com for the details.

Membership	
Regular Member	Individuals who participate in our activities and administration. Obligated to attend general meetings in person, by skype or by proxy.
Supporting Member	Individuals who support our activities with financial contribution. Not obligated to attend general meetings.
Pacific Islands Member	Individuals from Pacific Islands who support our activities with financial contribution. Not obligated to attend general meetings.
Corporate Member	Organizations which support our activities with financial contribution.
Annual Membership Fee (FY, from April 1 to March 31)	
Regular/ Supporting Member	US\$ 50 / unit amount of contribution
Pacific Islands Member	US\$ 10 / unit amount of contribution
Corporate Member	US\$ 200 / unit amount of contribution
Member Benefits	
Regular/ Supporting/ Pacific Islands Member	Members receive our newsletters and event information with the opportunity to be involved preferentially.
Corporate Member	Members receive our newsletters and event information with the opportunity to be involved preferentially, and are introduced, listed, and linked on our newsletters and website.

We would like to express our appreciation to all the members and pro bono volunteers for their support.

- ◆ **Regular Members** (hereafter alphabetical order, titles omitted, only those who agreed to publish their names)
Ben Schultz, Chihiro Shirakawa, Daisuke Takekawa, Hanae Shimizu, Hideji Ono, Hiroyuki Mitsuhiro, Iwabuchi, Saito, Hisao Sekine, Ikuko Inoue, Izumi Kobayashi, Junko Konishi, Ken'ichi Sudo, Masakazu Kawakami, Miyazawa Kyoko, Osamu Monden, Satoshi Toyoda, Takuya Nagaoka, Yumi Schultz, Yoshiko Isozaki, Yuji Inoue
- ◆ **Supporting Members**
Hiroaki Shirakawa, Hiroko Kawabe, Kanefusa Masuda, Masato Azuma, Shiho Ohno, Takako Takeda, Takehiro Nishimura, Takuro Furusawa, Tetsuya Konishi, Umeo Koganemaru, Yasuo Ohno, Yuri Shirakawa



◆ Corporate Members

Morikaku Kanseidou (<http://www.morikaku.org/>, www.facebook.com/morikakukanseidou)

jpms Inc. (<http://www.jpms1125.com/>, www.facebook.com/jpms1125/)



The First Ferry (<http://www.thefirstferry.com/>, www.facebook.com/thefirstferrydubai)



◆ Supporting Members

Yuuki Muroya (Accounting), Davidson Syne (Design), Garry Scott, David Vega, Josh Levy (English Proofreading)

Special thanks to Senator David Panuelo (FSM Congress), The Care Micronesia Foundation and The Micronesia Seminar.

Partners



FSM Historic
Preservation Office



Pohnpei State Historic
Preservation Office



Yap State Historic
Preservation Office



ICHCAP

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YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnmyAfrAD0u4MpUF9jLgjjag>



Pasifika Renaissance is a non-profit organization that endeavors to preserve and promote cultural and historical heritage in the Pacific Islands to revitalize their traditional cultures and empower local communities. The name Pasifika Renaissance means "Pacific Islands'/ Islanders' revitalization of their traditional cultures."

