

Feature

MYSTICAL HEALERS OF GUAM

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ヒーリング療法師・ スルハナの神秘

From the ancient times through today, the Chamorro people of Guam have always been spiritual. In today's modern society, the vast majority of Chamorros are Christian; however, there remains a dedication to the old spiritual beliefs, particularly the use of suruhas and suruhanus and a conviction in the existence of taotaomo'nas, or ancestral spirits.

Suruhana is a Spanish word that means herbal healer. Suruhana is the

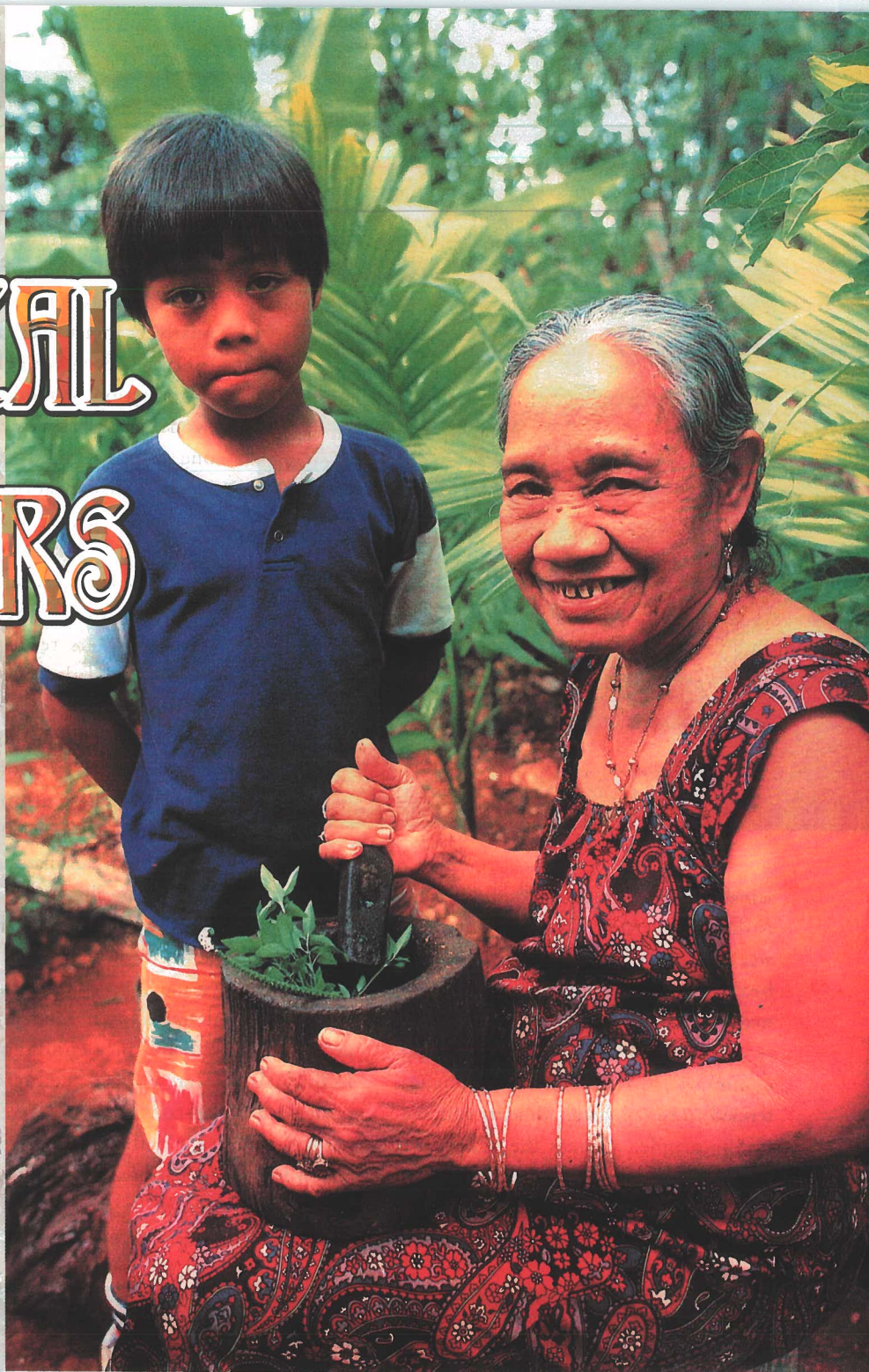


Photo courtesy of GMHA

Illustration by Ric R. Castro



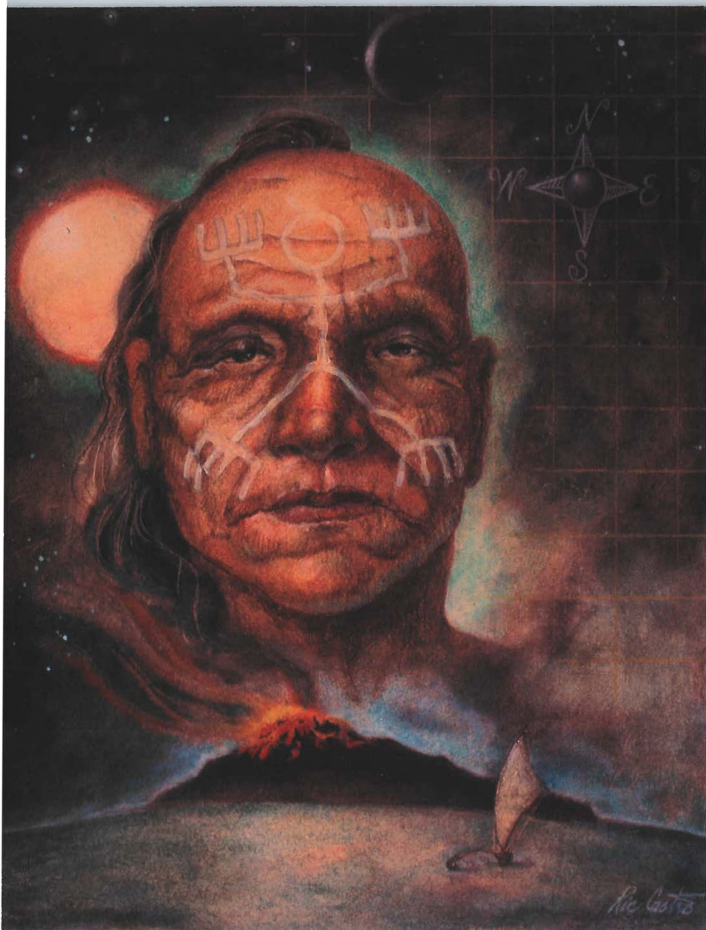


Illustration by Ric R. Castro

female version of the word and suruhanu is the male version. In ancient times, it was typically females who were the herbal healers and male healers were called makahnas, which was similar to a shaman or one with spiritual powers who could communicate with spirits. Suruhanas tended to the physical ailments suffered by the people, whereas the makahna's realm was in treating supernatural afflictions, particularly those believed to be caused by taotaomo'nas.

a conversation about their calling.

And it is a calling. Most suruhana and suruhanu are trained by an older relative who passes down the knowledge because the individual has shown a natural proclivity for the art since childhood. Individuals who are born in the breach position are also considered to have a natural affinity for herbal healing. The reason for this is that breach births were thought to be caused by taotaomo'nas, either because one was nearby during

labor or because the mother encountered one of the spirits while she was pregnant.

Suruhanas and suruhanu treat a variety of ailments, from headaches to pneumonia and even illnesses believed to be brought on by an angry taotaomo'na. While traditionally it was makahnas who treated these types of spiritual illnesses, today's suruhana and suruhanu treat them as well. Most illnesses are treated with herbs, massage, magic and their personal powers.

In ancient times, many suruhana specialized in specific areas of treatment. Some were gifted at setting broken bones, others at treating fevers, and some excelled at assisting in childbirth. Once a specific illness has been diagnosed by a suruhana or suruhanu, a cure is prescribed and made from local plants and herbs. For example, the sap from a banyan tree, or nunu, was used to staunch blood and more complex medicines were made using a mixture of different leaves, salt, and water.

Today, traditional medicines are still made to treat a variety of illnesses and body complaints, like headaches. One common medicine is a tea used for treating high blood pressure, made by boiling leaves from the lada tree, more commonly known by its Tahitian name, the noni tree. Suruhanas also made poultices and liquid medicines by



The water that collects in the big leaf of the sunin agaga' is used as an eye wash. スニアガガの葉。大きな葉に貯まる水は目薬として使用される。



The flowers of the alangilang are soaked in coconut oil to make body lotion used to ward off evil spirits or to cure illnesses caused by such spirits. アランギランの花。ココナッツオイルに漬けて作られるボディローションは、悪霊払いや霊が原因で起こる病気の治療薬に使用される。



Alahai Tasi is seen most often growing near beaches. The leaves can be boiled for a tea used to treat chicken pox or crushed and applied directly to the skin to treat abscesses. アラハイタシの葉。主にビーチの近くで育ち、葉は煎じて水疱瘡の治療に使ったり、潰して肌に塗り皮膚炎の薬として使用される。



The leaves of the Batones, or Buttonweed, are crushed and applied to cuts and abrasions to prevent infection. ボタン草。切り傷やすり傷の治療に使われ、菌の繁殖を防ぐ。

crushing leaves, herbs, or roots with a mortar and pestle, called a lusong and lommok.

Some ingredients in medicine weren't as palatable as plants and herbs. Ashes, considered magical, were made from human sweat or burnt white chicken feathers, the latter used after the Spanish arrived as chickens are not indigenous creatures of Guam. The urine of first-born males was also considered to have mystical healing powers and was often used as either an ingredient or by itself. The Chamorros believed that taotaomo'nas could stun a person in to a stupor that could be cured by washing the face and body with urine from a male relative.

One of the most frequently used healing techniques is massage, though not the type of massage one would receive at a spa. A suruhana or suruhanu's massage is more like being pounded on with the fists. In ancient times, suruhanas would sometimes put small rocks in their palms or use the inner core of a banana tree trunk to give the patient a more forceful massage. Another ancient form of massage was called ugot, where up to four people would walk on a person in the area where the pain was located. They also do a special massage for headaches using only the thumbs.

Traditional healers in many societies

believe that illnesses are caused by both natural and spiritual means. Chamorro society is no exception and today, certain illnesses are still credited with being caused by taotaomo'nas. Today, such illnesses would be treated by a suruhana or suruhanu, but in ancient times, this was the jurisdiction of the makahna, who could not only cure such an affliction, but were also believed to be able to cause them.

Makahnas were spiritual leaders in ancient times and venerated for their ability to communicate with the ante, or spirits, specifically taotaomo'nas. It was believed that they could ward off evil spirits and counter curses. It is interesting to note that records report the makahna

frequently used salt for protection against evil spirits, which is still a popular practice used by many different societies today. Salt is often thrown over one's shoulder for luck or to guard against malevolent entities.

Makahnas were also considered sorcerers, capable of both good and evil magic. While they could cure illnesses by spiritual means, they could also make people sick. It was also believed that they could affect nature, causing crops or fishing ventures to fail. To conjure an evil spell, makahnas would go to places where the antes were known to live. Makahnas were considered friendly with the taotaomo'na and were often called taotaomo'na ga'chong, or friend of the



The jungle is a suruhana and suruhanu's pharmacy, full of plants for healing and curing.

ジャングルはスルハナやスルハヌにとって治療に有効な植物が溢れる薬の宝庫。



The Galak Dikike' or Galak Dalalai grows on the ground, other trees, or on limestone cliffs. The leaves are used in a number of all-purpose medicines.

ガラクディキケ、またはガラクダラライは石灰石のクリフなどで見かけ、葉は万能薬として使用される。



The Bayogon Dangkulo or Gayi Dangkulo is recognized by its long green or brown pods. The seeds are poisonous, but the leaf and stem are frequently used as an all-purpose tea.

バソゴンドアングロやガジダングロの種は有毒だが、葉や茎は万能茶として頻りに使われる。



The lada is better known by its Tahitian name, noni. The leaves are boiled to make a tea for treating high blood pressure.

ノニ。葉は高血圧に効くお茶として煎じて飲まれる。



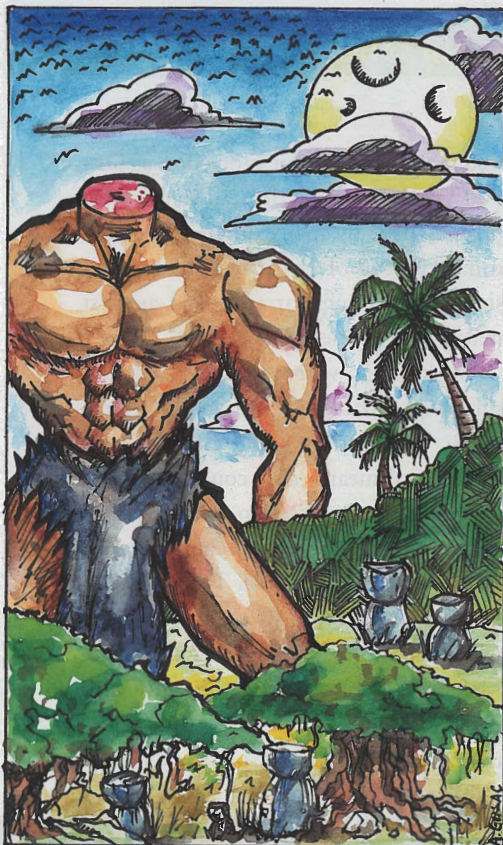
The juice from the nut of the niyok is sterile and rich in nutrients.

ニズク。この実からとれるジュースは無菌で栄養価が高い。



The nunu tree provides a home for taotaomo'na and other small plants that grow in its crevasses.

ヌヌ。タオタオモナの木を住処にする植物。



The Chamorros often removed the head of the deceased as part of their ancestor worship. This is why some taotaomo' nas, or ancestral spirits, are seen as headless. チャモロ社会では先祖を敬う儀式の一部として、亡骸の頭を取り除く習慣があった。先祖の霊タオタオモナが目撃される際、頭部分がない霊が見える事があるといわれるはこのためだ。
Illustration by Andrew Gulac/UOG Art Student

ancestral spirits. Ga'chong means friend in Chamorro.

It was this connection to the ancestral spirits that gave makahnas their prestige. Because the Chamorros practiced ancestor worship, it was also believed that the village chief was able to commune with the spirits. However, when situations were not going the chief's way, he immediately contacted a makahna for

intervention because of their advanced ability to communicate freely with the dead.

Communication with the spirits began by talking to the skulls of powerful chiefs who had died. While it may seem unsavory, it was common practice for the ancient Chamorros to remove the skulls of their deceased. The skulls were treated with the upmost respect, kept in special baskets and handled only by the person designated to oversee their care. It is believed that the makahna were assigned to care for the skulls of chiefs.

The powers of the makahna also included being able to tell when an ancestral spirit had been offended and what needed to be done to appease the angry taotaomo'na, how to cast love spells, cause sickness or death, how to control nature, how to tell the future, and to ensure good luck. They were not altruistic, however, and demanded payment for their services, usually in the form of betel nut, or pugua, food, and shell money.

Today, it is believed that suruhas and suruhas have inherited the spiritual powers of the makahna, including the ability to be a taotaomo'na ga'chong. This spiritual connection is another reason that suruhas and suruhas are shy about discussing their gifts. They believe they were chosen to receive their healing gifts and to speak casually of them is to insult that gift and perhaps

in the defiling, to lose their power. This may seem like silly superstition to outsiders, but the Chamorros are still a superstitious people living in harmony with a modern world.

グアムでは古代から現代に至るまで霊的な力の存在を信じて、進歩する科学技術や先端医療と共存してきました。また、チャモロ人の多くがキリスト教信者でありながらも、霊や霊的な事象の存在を受け入れてきたのです。太平洋に浮かぶ小さな島グアムの神霊の象徴が「タオタオモナ」と呼ばれる先祖の霊です。そしてタオタオモナに従属する「スルハナ」や「スルハヌ」と呼ばれる霊的治療師がいるのです。

「スルハナ」はスペイン語で「薬草治療師」という意味で女性を指します。男性の薬草治療師は、「スルハヌ」と呼ばれました。古代から薬草治療師の多くが女性で、男性治療師の中には、「マカナ」と呼ばれる神霊と交信し予言・治療を行うシャーマンのような存在のスルハヌもありました。

昔のスルハナの多くは骨折、発熱、助産等、各専門分野を治療しました。病名が明らかになると、自生する植物やハーブなどを調合した薬を処方します。例えばバンヤンツリー（チャモロ語でヌヌ）の樹液は止血に使われるなど。植物の他には塩や海水を混ぜることもあります。

頭痛や肺炎、さらにはタオタオモナの怒りに触れたために起こるとされる不可解な病気の治療などは、昔はマカナによって行われていました。現在ではスルハナやスルハヌが行うことも多く、薬草やマッサージに加え、霊術や各治療師のパワーによる治療も行われているようです。

古代から受け継がれる自生する植物やハーブなどを調合する薬（チャモロ語でアモ）作りの技術は、現代の薬が出回るようになってからも引き継がれ、今でもチャモロ社会に根をおろしています。しかし、その手法や技術について語られることはなく、神秘のベールに包まれています。それは、スルハナやスルハヌが代々選ばれしものだけに伝承する神霊から授かる特殊な力であるからです。

The Chamorros would give offerings to the taotatomo' nas, who were believed to live in trees and near latte stones. チャモロ人は木やラッテストーンの近くに住むといわれるタオタオモナに供え物を捧げる。
Illustration by Josie Stevens/UOG Art Student

