

= Japanese settlement in Palau =

There is a small Japanese community in Palau , which mainly consists of Japanese expatriates residing in Palau over a long @-@ term basis . A few Japanese expatriates started to reside in Palau after it gained independence in 1994 , and established long @-@ term businesses in the country . Japanese settlement in Palau dates back to the early 19th century , although large scale Japanese migration to Palau did not occur until the 1920s , when Palau came under Japanese rule and administered as part of the South Pacific Mandate . Japanese settlers took on leading administrative roles in the Japanese colonial government , and developed Palau 's economy . After the Japanese surrender in 1945 , virtually all of the Japanese population was repatriated back to Japan , although people of mixed Japanese @-@ Palauan descent were allowed to remain behind . People of Japanese @-@ Palauan descent constitute a large minority of Palau 's population as a result of substantial intermarriage between the Japanese settlers and Palauans . They generally identify with , conforming to cultural norms and daily lives with the Palauans .

= = History = =

= = = Early years (1820 ? 1945) = = =

The first recorded account of Japanese contact in Palau occurred in 1820 , when a coastal sailing ship was blown off course and eight surviving men spent five years in Palau until 1825 . Japanese traders began to establish settlements from the mid @-@ 19th century onwards , and by 1890 two Japanese trading stations had been established . Many of these traders married the daughters of local chieftains and raised local families . When Japan annexed Palau from Germany in 1914 , Japanese settlers and their descendants acted as state liaison officials and interpreters for the Japanese military administration .

A civilian government was established in 1922 with its headquarters at Koror , replacing the military administration . The civilian government initiated a programme to identify and collectivise unused land between 1923 and 1932 for redevelopment . Much of these land were used to build new industrial estates and expand towns to accommodate immigrants from Japan and Okinawa . In Japan , the government actively encouraged the Japanese and Okinawans to resettle in Micronesia , including Palau , and began establishing farming settlements . The first farming settlement was established at Ngaremlengui in 1926 , but the settlers encountered problems with its humid tropical environment and abandoned it by 1930 , although later settlements were established more successfully .

As the Great Depression resulted in massive unemployment in the late 1920s and 1930s , more Japanese and Okinawans migrated to Palau . Immigrants brought along their families and sought employment in various professions . The Japanese immigrants held administrative posts , while the Okinawans and a few Koreans worked as labourers in the agricultural , fishery and mining industries . By 1935 , the Japanese constituted at least 60 % of Palau 's population and were concentrated in urban areas such as Angaur and Koror . Some Japanese settlers took Palauan wives or mistresses , and there was a sizeable minority of mixed Japanese @-@ Palauan children towards the later years of the Japanese administration .

The Japanese navy expanded their military facilities from 1937 onwards . More labourers from Japan and Korea were employed to construct the facilities to complete the facilities within a short period of time . The number of indentured labourers rose to more than 10 @,@ 000 throughout Micronesia , and placed a heavy strain on the islands ' scarce resources . Many Okinawan and Japanese labourers and permanent settlers were repatriated back to their homeland . Japanese men were conscripted into regular services , and Palauans who held administrative posts in the police force were reallocated jobs in the agricultural sector . The Japanese civilians played an important role in the islands ' propaganda activities . As food resources were cut off from Japan , many Japanese encountered greater difficulties in dealing with starvation than their Palauan

counterparts , who were more knowledgeable with tropical survival skills .

= = = Recent years (1945 ? present) = = =

Following the Surrender of Japan to the Allied forces , Japanese military personnel and civilians were repatriated to Japan between 1945 and 1946 , although some 350 labourers and technicians were permitted to remain behind to carry out repair works to Palau 's infrastructure . However , offspring of Japanese @-@ Palauan intermarriages were allowed to remain , although a few migrated to Japan with their fathers . In the 1950s , Japanese @-@ Palauans formed an organisation , Sakura @-@ kai to assist Japanese @-@ Palauans and Japanese youths who were abandoned by their parents to search for their parents and kinsmen who were forcibly separated as a result of forced repatriation of Japanese settlers back to Japan . The organisation became a cultural organisation from the 1980s onwards , as most Japanese @-@ Palauans had reunited with their Japanese families or voluntarily chose to leave certain family separations as they were .

Palau 's interaction with Japan was kept to a minimal level during the post @-@ war years , although Okinawan fishermen occasionally visited Palau for catches from the 1960s onwards . A few Japanese nationals resettled in Palau in the 1970s , and married local Palauans . In the 1980s , Japanese businessmen set up businesses in Palau , and by 1995 there were 218 Japanese nationals residing in Palau . Of these , about half of them expressed a desire for permanent residency in Palau and a few married Palauan or Filipino women . However , the majority brought their families from Japan along , and maintained frequent contacts with Japan . Some settlers from the 1980s also consisted of former Japanese settlers who were repatriated back to Japan after World War II . Former settlers who returned to Palau usually consisted of individuals over 60 years of age , and often worked as tour guides or restaurateurs in Palau .

Many Japanese @-@ Palauans assumed key positions in the public service sector and politics . At least one ethnologist , Mark Peattie , suggested that the strong representation of Japanese @-@ Palauans in leading positions in society could be attributed to the mainstream Japanese education which they had received in their youth . Palau 's first president , Kuniwo Nakamura ? who was half @-@ Japanese ? fostered closer diplomatic ties between Japan and Palau during his Presidency . During a state visit to Japan in 1996 , Emperor Akihito personally received Nakamura , and the visit was commended by Palauans and Japanese alike . Nakamura 's visit prompted Japan to channel monetary aid to Palau to facilitate repair work on the Koror @-@ Babeldaob Bridge and securing special trade agreements with Japan .

= = Demographics = =

In the early years of civilian administration , the Japanese population consisted of about a few hundred individuals , and reached a little over 2 @,@ 000 by 1930 . The Japanese resident population increased at an exponential rate from the mid @-@ 1930s onwards , and there were about 15 @,@ 000 Japanese in Palau by 1938 , the vast majority of whom were concentrated in Koror . The influx of Japanese immigrants fuelled the development of Koror into a city by 1939 . The Palauans were quickly outnumbered by the Japanese , and constituted only about 16 percent of the city 's population in 1937 . The Japanese made up more than half of the islands ' population , as well as 27 % of Micronesia 's Japanese population in a 1938 census . A large minority of the Japanese populace consisted of Okinawan immigrants , as well as a few Koreans . Palau 's Japanese population was repatriated after the Japanese surrender , but people of Japanese @-@ Palauan descent remained behind and constitute a large minority of Palau 's population . A study done by the Sasakawa Pacific Island Nations Fund estimated that about 10 % of Palauans are born to a Japanese father and Palauan mother , the vast majority of whom were born before 1945 . Another study done by the Foundation for Advanced Studies in International Development from Japan in 2005 estimates that about 25 % of Palau 's populace have some Japanese ancestry .

The following table shows the increase in the Japanese population in Palau throughout the Japanese colonial era :

= = Language = =

During the Japanese colonial era , Japanese settlers mainly used Japanese in their daily discourse , and Japanese was the lingua franca used for communication between Japanese and Palauans . English was also recognised as a co @-@ official language along with Japanese , and many Japanese had at least some knowledge of the language as well . People of mixed Japanese @-@ Palauan heritage were more competent in Japanese than to Palauan , especially those who attended mainstream primary schools . The Japanese also introduced the use of the Katakana script in Palauan , which was also used in informal settings . After the Japanese surrender , the use of Japanese was discouraged in place of Palauan and English . Most Japanese @-@ Palauans use Palauan in their daily discourse in favour of Japanese or English , although Japanese was used more frequently among Japanese @-@ Palauans than to those that do not have Japanese ancestry . As the number of Japanese tourists increased during the 1990s , Japanese was introduced as an elective subject to Palauan schools and in elections .

= = Religion = =

State Shinto was heavily emphasised in the 1930s as a means to promote Japanese nationalism and acculturalisation of Palauans to Japanese norms . A few shrines were built around Palau during the 1930s . Of particular note was the completion of the Taisha Nanyo Jinja (transliterally the Great Southern Shrine) in November 1940 at Koror , which subsequently served as the central shrine in Micronesia . Civilian participation of Shinto rituals was heavily emphasised , which focused on Japanese cultural ideals and worship of the Japanese emperor . Shinto , Zen Buddhist and Tenrikyo missions were also encouraged to establish religious missions , and the first Buddhist temple in Palau was erected in 1926 , mainly to cater to the spiritual needs of the Japanese settlers . Early Japanese settlers reportedly built small Shinto shrines in agricultural colonies before the civilian government actively encouraged religious missionary activities in Palau .

Christian missions were initially given financial support by the Japanese civilian government and were encouraged to stamp out certain Animist rituals practiced by Palauans , but many were later imprisoned from the late 1930s onwards as the Japanese became suspicious of the missionaries ' involvement in espionage activities . After the war , many of these shrines were abandoned or demolished , and Japanese @-@ Palauans chose to adopt Christianity in favour of Buddhism or Shinto . In the 1980s and 1990s , miniature replicas of the Great Shinto Shrine , Peleliu and Angaur shrines were reconstructed . Unlike Shinto shrines during the Japanese colonial era , reconstructed shrines served as memorial sites for Japanese soldiers who in battles died during the Second World War , and are visited by Japanese tourists and family members of slain soldiers .

= = Society = =

= = Racial segregation = = =

The Japanese civilian administration segregated the Japanese immigrants from the Palauans and adopted policies that were intended to protect the welfare of the Palauans . From the 1930s onwards , focus was later shifted towards providing more for the Japanese immigrants as the civilian administration faced difficulties in meeting the demands of an increasing immigrant population . Racial segregation was practiced in most sectors of society , but was more highly pronounced in the workforce and educational sectors . Palauans faced difficulties in getting employed in administrative positions in the workforce , which was dominated by Japanese settlers . In the educational sector , Japanese children attended mainstream primary schools (shogakko) whose lessons are based on the mainstream curriculum as with other schools on mainland Japan . Palauan children attended " public schools " (logakko) and attended lessons that focused on imparting skills for menial labour .

Most students from " Public schools " dropped out after completing their elementary education and some children of Japanese fathers and Palauan mothers also faced difficulties in getting enrolled into primary schools , especially for those who were born out of wedlock .

= = = Mixed @-@ race descendants = = =

During the Japanese colonial @-@ era , a sizeable minority of mixed @-@ race Japanese @-@ Palauans emerged . Japanese @-@ Palauans were offsprings of intermarriages between Japanese men and Palauan women . Most of them lived in urban areas , and were brought up in accordance to Japanese norms and values and spoke Japanese in their daily lives . A few sought further education in Japan , and at the same time had limited knowledge of Palauan customs and language , although children that were born out of wedlock reportedly had a greater exposure to their matrilineal customs and spoke both Japanese and Palauan fluently . Although Japanese @-@ Palauan children were generally classified as Japanese in official figures and had access to Japanese social privileges , many reportedly faced discrimination when placed in Japanese and Palauan circles . In rural areas where Palauans formed higher concentrations , spouses and mistresses of Japanese men were shunned upon , and Palauan nationalists (especially Modekngai) actively discouraged mixed unions between Japanese men and Palauan women . The Japanese government encouraged such intermarriages , and provided social benefits to women who had married Japanese men . However , only unions with civilian men were recognised and military personnel were prohibited from marrying Palauan women , although they were allowed to keep mistresses . The civilian government suppressed unions between Palauan men and Japanese women , and there was only one known case of a union between a Palauan man and a Japanese woman during the Japanese colonial @-@ era .

After the Japanese surrender in 1945 , Japanese settlers were repatriated back to Japan , and male Japanese settlers who had raised Japanese @-@ Palauan families abandoned their families in favour of repatriation , reasoning that the offspring would be able to better adapt in Palau than in Japan . Many of these Palauan women raised their mixed @-@ race children singlehandedly , while others were abandoned and adopted by Palauan families . Some Japanese @-@ Palauan families migrated to Japan , but generally faced a cultural shock and petitioned to return to Palau after living in Japan for some years . Most petitions were allowed , although they were not allowed to bring their Japanese spouses along .

Second and third @-@ generation descendants of Japanese @-@ Palauans who were descended from earlier settlers generally chose to remain behind , although those who were raised in Japanese @-@ speaking families reportedly faced trouble conversing in Palauan . Most retained their Japanese surnames , but Japanese @-@ Palauans generally identified themselves as Palauans after the war . Second @-@ generation Japanese @-@ Palauans usually married Palauan women , and became assimilated with the local Palauan populace . In terms of self @-@ identification , Japanese @-@ Palauans usually emphasised their Japanese identities only on occasions when they associate with other Japanese , for instance when they participate in memorial services for Japanese soldiers who died during the Pacific War . Some Japanese @-@ Palauans also chose to be buried in Japanese cemeteries after their deaths , notably those in Koror .

= = Economy = =

The Japanese civilian administration encouraged Japanese businessmen and settlers to the expand phosphate mining and copra production , which came into commercial existence during the German colonial era . During this time , new infrastructure was built between towns ? including road and harbour facilities , and electricity and sewerage lines were laid out . Immigration from Japan , Okinawa and Korea to Palau intensified as a result of new job opportunities . A state @-@ owned enterprise , Nanyo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (South Seas Colonization Corporation) was formed in 1936 to streamline the islands ' economic activities with the administration objective of developing the islands ' self @-@ sufficiency capabilities . In the late 1930s , Japanese pearl divers made

regular visits to the Arafura Sea , and stopped by Palau from October to April . The influx of pearl divers from Japan led to the development of the island 's tourist industry , and some Japanese settlers from Saipan opened new cafés , geisha houses and liquor houses in Koror to cater to the pearl divers during their stopovers in between October to April .

When the Japanese surrendered in 1945 , Japanese business enterprises and organisations in Palau closed , effectively ending the Japanese influence on Palau 's economy . In the first two decades after the war , the American occupation government imposed strict trade restrictions with Japan . Contact with Japan was reestablished in the 1960s , starting with Okinawan fishermen who were granted fishing rights . Japanese tourists began to visit Palau in increasing numbers from the mid @-@ 1970s . The growing influx of tourists to Palau led to the restoration of heritage sites around Palau , particularly memorial sites and administrative buildings built in the Japanese era as well as Palauan longhouses to accommodate to the interests of Japanese tourists , which accounted for half of all visiting tourists . Many of Palau 's tourist sites were run and maintained by Palauan citizens of Japanese @-@ Palauan heritage , whose knowledge in Japanese and Palauan customs and languages helped to facilitate tour groups consisting of Japanese tourists .

= = Education = =

The Japanese Language School of Palau , a weekend supplementary programme , is in operation in Koror .

= = Notable people = =

Santy Asanuma , Senator

Elias Camsek Chin , former Vice President

Hersey Kyota , politician and diplomat

Kuniwo Nakamura , former President and foreign minister

Haruo Remeliik , former President

Peter Sugiyama , former politician