

IBERIAN CULTURAL CONTACT AND COLONIALISM IN THE ISLAND OF GUAM: THE ABERIGUA PROJECT

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In this paper, we will present ABERIGUA, an archaeological project that investigates the impact that the incorporation of Guam and the Mariana islands by the colonial network of the Spanish empire had on the local Chamorro population. We are seeking to understand the changes, but also the continuities that survived through this general process. We are particularly focusing on all those changes and continuities that took place in: 1) socio-ecological systems; 2) socio-political systems (with special attention to gender and sexual politics); and 3) the sphere of maintenance activities (a set of practices that, grosso modo, include tasks related with care giving, food processing and cooking, weaving, socialization of children, hygiene and public health, and organization and maintenance of daily-quotidian residential spaces).

We will also present the preliminary results from fieldwork campaigns conducted in June-July 2017 and April-May 2018 at the church and cemetery of San Dionisio and the Palace of the Governor. Both sites stand as archaeological witnesses of the 17th, 18th and 19th century colonial processes. Conflating historical written sources and archaeological information, we seek to contribute a better understanding of the historical-archaeological legacy connected to Iberian cultural contact and colonialism in this part of the western Pacific.

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