

The U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands

Narrated by:

Ese Misiata (Am. Samoa: slides 1-3)

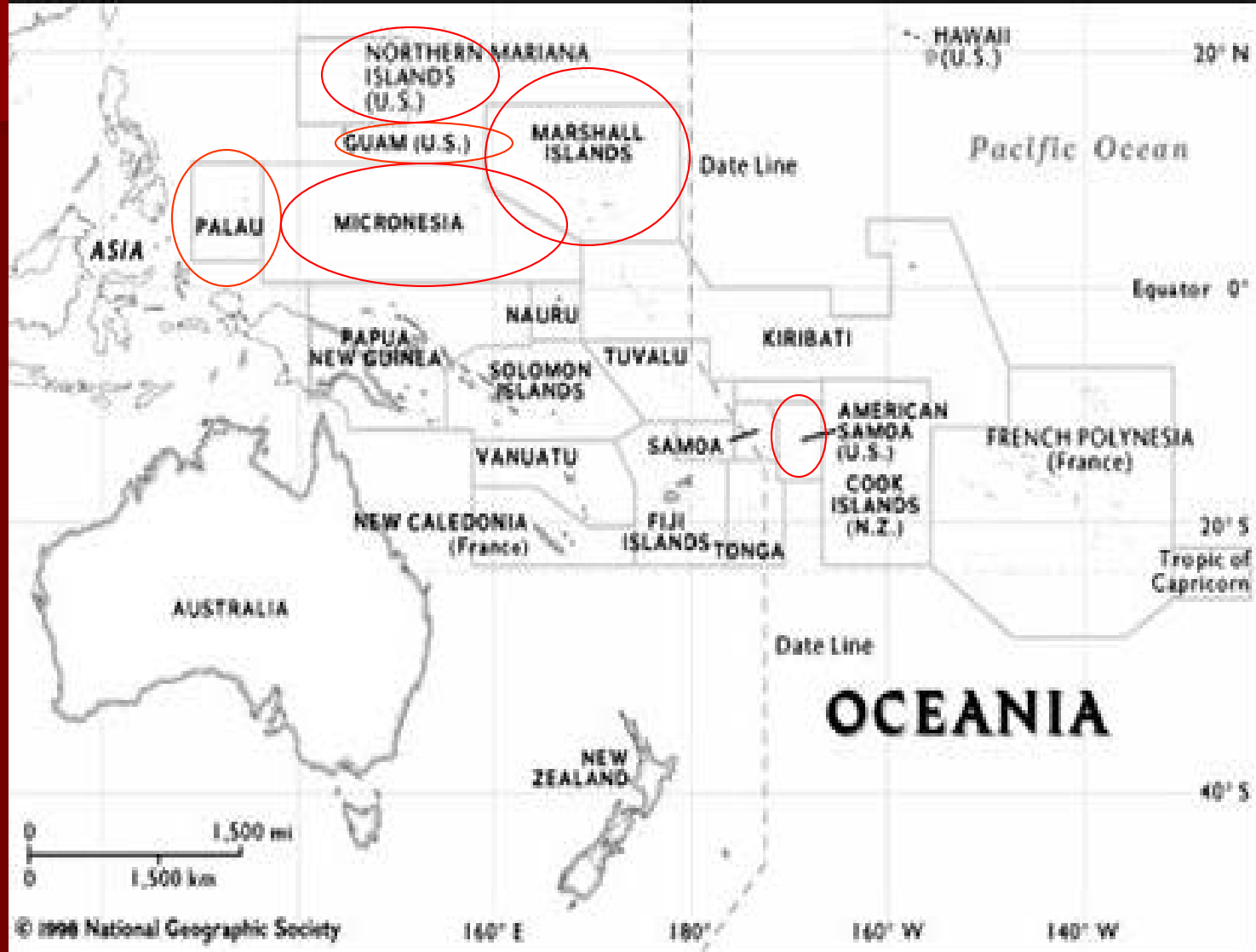
Rose Castro (CNMI: slide 4)

Clarissa Barcinas (Guam: slides 5-6)

Margaret Weital (Pohnpei: slides 7-9)

Merly Nelson (Chuuk: slides 10-12)

GEOGRAPHY



Ethnicities:

Micronesian

Polynesian

Geography:

American Samoa

Palau

Guam

CNMI

Marshalls

FSM

- Yap
- Chuuk
- Pohnpei
- Kosrae

GEOGRAPHY

- Micronesia means 'small islands'
- Polynesia means 'many islands'
- Tropical Polynesia and Micronesia occupy 9.7 million square miles of the Pacific Ocean, including 11,440 square miles of terrestrial land area.
- Islands vary from high islands to low lying atolls



- Many are inhabited while others remain uninhabited

HISTORY

- Common colonizers
 - **Spanish expansion, 1675-1899**
 - **German, 1884-1914**
 - **Japanese, 1885-1945**
 - **UN Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 1947 to 1986 (administered by US)**
 - Current relationships (see Political Status)
 - Nuclear legacy
 - US nuclear tests 1946-58, over Bikini and Enewetok atolls in Marshall Islands

DEMOGRAPHICS

- The U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands include:
 - Guam
 - Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
 - American Samoa
 - Republic of the Marshall Islands
 - Republic of Palau
 - Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk, & Yap)
- The U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands are populated by more than 500,000 people
- The islands and atolls cross five Pacific time zones.
- The people are Micronesians and Polynesians
- They speak over 20 languages

POLITICAL STATUS

- Current political relationship to US:
 - Territory (American Samoa & Guam)
 - Commonwealth (Marianas)
 - Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau)
- Citizen or national?
 - Every person born in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands is a U.S. citizen by birth
 - American Samoans are U.S. nationals but not citizens of the U.S.
 - Citizens of the RMI or the FSM are not citizens or nationals of the United States
 - Not all U.S. nationals are U.S. citizens; however, all U.S. citizens are U.S. nationals.

ENTITLEMENTS

- Nationals do not have the full political rights of US citizens e.g. they cannot vote or hold elected office (American Samoa)
- The following apply to citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands
 - Travel to and residence in the US to seek employment or pursue education, without the need for a visa. However they must possess a valid, unexpired FSM or RMI passport.
 - A person admitted under the Compacts may obtain a Social Security number (FSM & RMI)
 - They are entitled to volunteer for service in the U.S. Armed Forces.
 - They can receive the PELL Grant as eligible non-citizens.
 - Welfare - each state has different requirements for applicants of welfare assistance. This type of assistance is not guaranteed under the Compact.
 - FSM and Marshall Islands qualify for many, but not all, Federal programs e.g. FEMA assistance, EFNEP, Maternal & Child Health funding

ECONOMY

- The economies of the US affiliated Pacific islands are closely intertwined with the U.S. through various mechanisms
- Some islands economies are impacted by a U.S. military presence (Guam, Marshalls)
- The Freely Associated States receive Compact funding (FSM, RMI)
- Marshall Islands receives compensation from the legacy of nuclear testing
- Most islands have small private sectors
- Tourism plays a role in local economies
- Government employment plays a significant role in all island economies

HEALTH ISSUES

- Some of the highest levels of adult obesity in the world are found in the Pacific Islands. In most communities, the rate of obesity is well above 20 per cent, and as high as 80%
- Chronic diseases are prevalent, including diabetes and hypertension
- Alcohol, tobacco and betel nut use are common

FOOD

Dietary change

■ Pre-contact diet:

- Root crops/starches – breadfruit, banana, taro, tapioca, breadfruit (pounded/fermented)
- Coconut milk/cream
- Seafood

■ Contemporary diet

- Reliance on canned/imported foods
- It varies slightly from island to island and is a blend of local foods with European, Japanese, and American influences.

FOOD AND CULTURAL EVENTS

- Food plays a pivotal role in Pacific Island cultures
- It represents prosperity, generosity, and community support.
- Hospitality is extended to visitors, who are usually asked to share a meal. Even if a visitor is not hungry, he or she will generally eat a small amount of food so that the host is not disappointed.
- Food is also often given as a gift, and a refusal of food is considered an insult to the host or giver.

VALUES

- Family comes first - always
- Faith/religions are predominantly Christian and an important part of the culture. The majority of people attend church and church activities are woven into the culture
- *Time* is a more fluid concept than our more rigid 'Western' ideas – 'on time' might mean showing up within 2 hours of an appointment