DOG EAT DOG

a game of imperialism and assimilation
on the Pacific Islands
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for Mom

They like you because you're a copycat, want to be just like them.
They like you because—give it a few more years—you'll be just like them.
And when that time comes, will they like you more?

–R. Zamora Linmark, "They Like You Because You Eat Dog"

Dog Eat Dog is a game of colonialism and its consequences. As a group, you work together to describe the conquest of one of the hundreds of small islands in the Pacific Ocean, defining the customs of the natives and the mores of the outsiders arriving to claim it. One player then assumes the role of the Occupation force, playing their capable military, their quisling government, and whatever jaded tourists and shrewd businessmen are interested in a not quite pacified territory. All the others play individual Natives, each trying in their own ways to come to terms with the new regime. The game begins when the war ends. Through a series of scenes, you play out the inevitably conflicted relationship between the two parties, deciding what the colonizers do to maintain control, which natives assimilate and which run amok, and who ends up owning the island in the end.

Setting Up

Here's what you need to play *Dog Eat Dog*:

- At least three players
- A bunch of small tokens, about five per player (coins or poker chips work fine)
- A few six-sided dice; two or three is fine if you don't mind rerolling, eight is probably the most you'll use at once
- Paper and pencils for everybody, plus an extra piece of paper
- This book

Start by describing the Natives and their society. In turn (doesn't matter what order), each player names one fact about the native populace—something descriptive that you can say in one short sentence. It can be as narrow or as broad as you want, as long as it generally applies to most (but probably not all) of the natives, or to their society as a whole. These are Native Traits, and everybody should write them all down for later reference. Once you've done that, come up with a name for the Native country as a group.

Next, going in the opposite order, each player names one fact about the colonizers or their society. The same guidelines apply. These are Occupation Traits, and everybody should write them all down as well. Once you've decided on those, come up with a name for the Occupation country as a group.

At this point, it's time to create the Record—a history of the island, as defined in a series of Rules. These Rules are the unspoken assumptions that govern interactions between the Occupation and the Natives. Right now, there's just one Rule, which you should write down on the extra sheet of paper:

> *The (Native people) are inferior to the (Occupation people).*

Put the Record somewhere prominent, like the center of the table.

The richest player plays the Occupation.

Example of Play, Part 1: Setup

Josh, Shreyas, Elizabeth and Liam are just sitting down to play a game of *Dog Eat Dog*. Let's watch!

Josh: Okay, well, I guess I'll choose a Native Trait first, and we'll go around to the left? *(general assent)* Okay. Um...Let's say, "They are friendly and easygoing."

Everybody writes that down. They each choose traits in turn.

Elizabeth: Okay, we need a name.

Shreyas: Let's say, uh, the Articulans. That's not terrible, right?

Liam: Sure, let's go with that. It's just an example of play, after all. Now we need to choose Traits for the Occupation, right? And I'm first, since I went last. I'll say, uh, "They have a democratic government." That works, right? *(general assent)*

They choose four traits for the Occupation as well.

Natives:

- They are friendly and easygoing.
- They are smaller than average.
- They have a stick-based martial art.
- They eat dogs.

Occupation:

- They have a democratic government.
- They're individualistic.
- They're technologically advanced.
- They believe in spreading civilization.

Liam: Now we need a name for them too. Uh...

Elizabeth: Benelia. *(general assent)*

Josh: Okay. Now the record...and the first Rule. "The Articulans are inferior to the Benelians."

Liam: So who's the richest? *(general muttering and discomfort)*

Josh: Well, I think I have the highest salary, and we've all got a lot of debt. I guess I'm probably the richest, so I'll be the Occupation. What do I have to do?

Liam: Nothing yet; you're done prepping. The rest of us have to come up with personal traits and names, though. Hmm... *(looking at traits)* I'll say, I'm a professional chef. Named Crisanto.

Shreyas: Maybe I'm a really big guy. The biggest guy in my village. Dario.

Elizabeth: Does it have to relate to the traits somehow?

Liam: No, whatever. What were you thinking?

Elizabeth: What if I'm Elzabel, and my thing is, I have the three most beautiful daughters in town. *(general assent)*

Josh: Okay, great. What next, tokens? You all get three, and I get two for each of you, that's six, plus one, so seven. Who goes first?

Shreyas: I do, I'm left of you. Okay....

Example of Play, Part 2: Setting the Scene

Shreyas: Okay...so I need to figure out what my Native would do in response to the Occupation arriving, huh? Hmm...I'm not sure.

Liam: What's your deal, you're a big guy? Are you a warrior, maybe? Or a hunter, or you do hard labor or something? Do we have mines?

Elizabeth: Just because he's big doesn't mean he has to do something like that—he could be a craftsman, or a teacher, or something, and just happen to be huge.

Shreyas: Mmm...no, I think I am a warrior. Maybe the head warrior, so I train the others? That way I'm a teacher too. *(general approval)* In fact, that's probably what I'm doing—I'm meeting with the other warriors. We're organizing a resistance movement, secretly. In the back of somebody's farmhouse, late at night? *(more approval)*

Josh: Heh heh heh. That's good.

Elizabeth: Can Elzabel be there? She's one of the warriors, maybe.

Shreyas: Yeah, sure, that's great. Okay. So we're in this farmhouse, and it's really dark. You can't see the other people in the resistance, but you can hear my voice....*(Shreyas proceeds to act out his character's inspiring speech. Elizabeth waits for her chance to jump in as her character...but Josh has his own plans.)*

Everybody else plays a Native. Each of them should come up with a Personal Trait, a fact about themselves that distinguishes them in some way from the other natives. They also need a name, of course.

Lastly, the Occupation should distribute tokens to the players. All the Natives begin with three tokens. The Occupation starts the game with two tokens for each Native, plus one extra token. The rest of the tokens won't be used in the game.

The player to the left of the Occupation takes the first turn.

Playing the Game

Dog Eat Dog is a roleplaying game—it's a story you tell as a group, with some rules to lend structure to the narrative. The story is broken up into scenes, and each player's turn is one scene. When it's your turn, start off by thinking about what your Native (or what your Occupation government) might do, either in response to the Occupation's arrival in general and the changes they've wrought, or in response to something that's happened in a previous scene. Once you've come up with something, just verbally set a scene in which you start to do it—describe the location, the time of day, what you're doing, and who or what else is around. Try to start as close to the actual action as possible—if you want to hold a protest, for example, don't worry about the part where you get people to show up and paint lots of signs, cut right to giving the big speech to the crowd. (Unless you think the sign-painting is going to be the most exciting part!)

If you want another Native in your scene, feel free to invite them; if you want to join a scene, just ask permission from the players already in that scene. If they give permission, you

The Other Natives

Obviously there are lots of other indigenous people living on the island, but the player's Natives are distinct—whether they're in positions of power or they're disdained outsiders, they're the ones who can make a real difference, because of their station, their passion, or just their willingness to act. After all, it's their decisions that will eventually determine what happens to the island—and the people on it.

What Is Roleplaying?

Dog Eat Dog is a roleplaying game—it's a little like improvisational theatre, with you describing the actions and delivering the dialog of the character you're making up. Part of the fun of the game is trying to create and act out a believable character, with realistic feelings and motivations, and forming an emotional connection with them. The Occupation has a multitude of individual people to play, each having their own desires and their own reasons for working with the colonizers. Some of these will be essentially "bit parts," and don't need to be deeply understood (although it always helps!), while others might call for more depth of characterization. The Natives mostly just have the one character, so they have time to really get into them.

What you have on your sheet is a skeleton—a list of a few things everybody immediately knows about the person you're portraying. You have some idea of their culture, and the culture of the people they clash with, and you have one thing that sets you apart from the other people in your social group. But your Native also has an age, a gender, an occupation, a family, friends, hobbies, quirks, physical characteristics, and all the other things that real people have. Any or all of these things might turn out to be very important to the person your Native has become—so feel free to flesh these things out, either to yourself, or to the group. Detailing other characteristics can really help give life to the game, especially if you think it might be important in the story or help other people understand you better.

Once you have some idea about your character, try to ask yourself—what would my character do in this situation? You'll have to do this when you frame a scene, obviously, but it's also a good question to keep in mind any time you're portraying them. Sometimes the situation gets complex and there are a lot of possible things that could

happen—that's when you really want to find that emotional connection with your Native and feel out what they'd want to do right now. Imagine that you could've been this Native, if things had been different and the whole game wasn't just a story, and see what you'd've done if you HAD been them. Sometimes you'll know that they would do a certain thing, even if you might not know why—that's a connection in action.

Sometimes you might want to ask questions of other people, too—if your character is interacting with somebody else's, what you do in the scene might depend on what they look like, or what they do for a living. If you think it will help your portrayal to know it, and it's something your character could know, feel free to ask. If you're inspired by somebody else's portrayal, and suddenly you just KNOW that Jacob the Native is in an unhappy marriage, or whatever, suggest it to them! Maybe it's a key aspect of their character that they hadn't realized until you pointed it out.

There are countless other little aspects of the world that the rules don't specify—what size is the island? What grows on it? What kind of technology do the two sides have? What about the Natives nobody is playing—what are they like? All of these questions fall into the category of things that nobody has personal control over—they end up in the "group consensus" pot, decided by everybody coming to an agreement about them. If you have an idea about one of them (and you probably do, even if it's just an assumption you made) throw it out there and see what other people think! If you don't have an idea, necessarily, but you really want it figured out, throw it out to the group as a question instead. Don't get too bogged down in discussion or disagreement, though—remember, all of this stuff is interesting and sometimes helpful, but the real story is human—it's the interactions between the character in each player's head, that you've created using the sheets in front of you.

can show up—or maybe you were actually there all along, in the background.

If you're the Occupation, you don't need permission to join a scene, but Natives do need permission from you if you're in it. Moreover, if you want a Native in a scene that you're in, you can just declare they're there, whether they like it or not!

If you're a Native, you get to say what your Native does during a scene. Feel free to ham it up—talk as your character, use gestures and facial expressions, act it out as much as you like. If there are any non-player natives who are following your lead, or strongly sympathetic to your actions, you can say what they do too. If you're the Occupation, you say what any members of the Occupation do, including natives who work for the new government or have otherwise joined up with you. Anything else, like the weather, or the actions of wild animals or whatever, is free for anybody to use, unless somebody objects.

Don't be too timid with your descriptions: don't say "I try to hit him," say "I hit him in the face!" Or even "I hit him in the face and knock him out!" If the person you're hitting disagrees with you, they can just say so—and start a Conflict.

Conflicts

If somebody describes something happening that you don't think your Native, or your Occupation forces, would let happen, just tell them so. If two people disagree over what should happen next in the story, it's a Conflict—and you use these rules to resolve it.

Stage 1: Negotiation

When a Conflict starts, the first stage is all the players in the scene talking it out and attempting to come up with a narrative solution that you can all agree on. If you're in the scene, but you're not interested in what happens in this Conflict, this is also when you can withdraw from the Conflict and not participate in the remaining stages. If the players with a stake in the Conflict can't come up with an acceptable compromise, the Conflict escalates to Stage 2.

Example of Play, Part 3: Conflicts

(It's later in the scene and things have gotten complicated.)

Josh: So the soldiers still have you guys at gunpoint, and they start dragging Kim away.

Shreyas: No way—I'm not letting that happen.

Josh: Okay, I think we're in a Conflict, then. *(general assent)*

Liam: Okay, first stage is Negotiation. I'm not in the scene.

Elizabeth: Elzabel's unconscious, so I think I'm not in the Conflict either.

Shreyas: I want to save Kim. You can beat me up or whatever. Maybe take some other prisoners or something.

Josh: Mmm...okay, I'll have the soldiers leave Kim if Aeris dies fighting them off.

Shreyas: What? That's my wife! No way. What if you take me as a prisoner and Aeris just gets hurt?

Josh: No, I don't want to take you prisoner.

Shreyas: Well... *(general silence)*

Liam: Yeah, I don't think you guys are going to come to an agreement, huh? *(general agreement)* Next stage. Chance.

Shreyas: Okay! The Native have a stick-based martial art, so I'll take a die for that, since I've got my, well, my stick.

Josh: We're technologically advanced, so I'll take a die for the guns and bayonets and stuff. Can I get a die for the spreading civilization thing? They came to break up the meeting because of the primitive superstitions they were talking about.

Shreyas: No way.

Liam: I guess Elizabeth and I have to decide it. *(conferring)* Yeah, no, I don't think that counts.

Shreyas: And I get a die for being the biggest guy-

Example of Play, Part 3: Cont.

Elizabeth: Nope, sorry. Your Personal Trait doesn't count against the Occupation.

Josh: So, one die to start, plus one die for Traits, for each of us. Let's roll. *(clatter)* You win.

Shreyas: Okay...I think what happens is, you beat me up and take me prisoner, and Kim and Aeris are both hurt during the fight. Pretty bad, maybe.

Josh: Mmm...*(agonizing pause)* No, I'll escalate to Fiat. I get to narrate. You get beaten up, but not that bad—but the soldiers take Kim AND Aeris away. *(general dismay)*

Stage 2: Chance

In this stage, the players in the Conflict roll dice to see who gets control. Each player starts with one die, and gets an additional die for each Trait—Native or Occupation Trait, it doesn't matter—that they can justify as supporting what they want to happen. If there's disagreement, the players not in the Conflict judge it as a group. If you're a Native in a Conflict that only contains other Natives, you can both also call on your Personal Traits. To the Occupation, though, Natives are all the same, so they can't use their Personal Traits in a Conflict containing the Occupation at all. Once you've figured out how many dice everybody gets, roll them all, and add up your totals. The player with the highest total has control, and gets to narrate what happens next. (If there's a tie, roll again.) Once

Blowing Up The Moon

The Conflict system is designed to handle disagreements between characters, not necessarily between players. If somebody tries to narrate something that doesn't make sense in the story (such as "At this point my Native blows up the moon") or something that makes some of the other players uncomfortable playing, a Conflict isn't the right tool to resolve that. Instead, take a brief timeout and talk as a group about what you feel is appropriate and inappropriate in the story, then take things back as necessary.

they've done so, if any player is dissatisfied with the result, they can say so. If they do, the Conflict escalates to Stage 3.

Stage 3: Fiat

If a Conflict gets to Stage 3, the Occupation gets control, and can narrate what happens next any way they like. This happens even if the Occupation was in the Conflict—in fact, it happens even if the Occupation is the player who escalated to Stage 3!

Ending a Scene: Judgement

When it seems like there's nothing left to happen in a scene, it's time to end it. When all the players in a scene agree that it's over, the scene ends. At that point, if the Occupation played a character in the scene at any time, Judgement begins. (If they weren't ever in the scene, Indifference happens instead.)

Step 1: Enforcement

The first step of Judgement is determining which characters adhered to the Rules and which characters broke them. For each Rule, and each Native in the scene, the Occupation judges whether that Native followed that Rule or disobeyed it. If a Native breaks a Rule, they must pay a token to the Occupation; if they follow a Rule, the Occupation must pay them a token. Judge the Rules in the order that they were added to the Record. It's also okay to decide that a Rule wasn't relevant to a scene and shouldn't be judged, if all the players agree on it—but not the first Rule!

The Occupation also judges whether the characters they played in the scene followed or broke the Rules. For each Rule the Occupation breaks, they lose a token—put it with the tokens you didn't use, because it won't return to the game. The Occupation can't lose more than one token per Rule this way. All the players can discuss what happened and who they think followed or broke which Rules, but in the end, it's the Occupation's decision—though they should explain themselves if there's disagreement!

Step 2: Reflection

In the second step, the Natives define a new Rule, based on the interactions between the Natives and the Occupation that happened in the scene. If the game is a story, this is where you come up with the moral. From the Native point of view, what behaviors did the Occupation reward, and what behaviors did the Occupation punish? What behaviors did the Occupation model, and what behaviors did the Occupation conspicuously avoid? As a group, the Natives come up with a single sentence that best answers that question, and add it to the Record as a new Rule. Much as in Enforcement, the Occupation can comment, and the Natives should explain themselves, but in the end the Natives make the final decision.

Indifference

If the Occupation was never in the scene, Judgement doesn't happen—tokens don't change hands, and there's no new Rule. However, the Occupation loses a token every time a scene ends that they didn't appear in.

Once Judgement is over (or was averted by the Occupation not showing up), your turn ends. The player to your left goes next.

Running Amok

If you're a Native, and at any point you have no tokens, even if it's between rules during Judgement, things change—you run Amok. As soon as this happens, the Occupation loses a token. While you're running Amok, special rules apply to you.

- You can't get any tokens—if the Occupation would give you some, it just doesn't happen.
- The Occupation can't narrate you into a scene without your consent, and you don't need permission from anybody to narrate yourself into a scene.
- The next time you appear in a scene, you must do something shockingly violent and destructive.
- When a Conflict you're in escalates to Stage 3, the Occupation doesn't get control—you do.

The next time you appear in a scene, you have to die by the end.

Example of Play, Part 4: Judgement

Shreyas: Okay. So we're both out, and the soldiers take Kim and Aeris. Is that it?

Elizabeth: Yeah, that feels like the end of the scene to me.

Liam: Okay. Judgement time! The Occupation was in the scene, obviously, so we start with Enforcement.

Josh: Hm...there's only one Rule to start. I don't think either of you acted inferior in the scene.

Elizabeth: Wait, really? We let you kidnap a bunch of people!

Josh: You didn't let me, you resisted! If you really accepted your position, you'd have just handed them over.

Elizabeth: Well...you're the decider, I guess. So Shreyas and I both give you one token, right? *(clink of tokens moving)*

Shreyas: And now Reflection—so we come up with a new Rule. *(general reflective pause)*

Liam: What really got us in trouble was the secret meeting. What about "Don't conspire in secret?"

Elizabeth: Yeah, that's good. Let's write that down. *(scribbling)*

Liam: All right. My turn to set a scene? Heh, okay. So we're at my restaurant....

What Are These Tokens, Anyway?

The tokens in *Dog Eat Dog* are basically a metaphor—they're a more or less abstract quantification of how the colonization of the island is affecting the Native's will to fight or assimilate, or the Occupation's collective desire to keep on occupying. I used real tokens for effect, but they don't have any direct representation in the story, and they can't be traded or moved around except as the rules of the game require.

Death

Characters may die by running Amok, or just through the course of events—you can always narrate killing someone, after all. When a Native dies, they lose all their tokens. The Occupation also loses two tokens when a Native dies. (This means that if a Native runs Amok, the Occupation will lose a total of three tokens—one when they run Amok, and two when they die as a result.) If you're dead, you don't get a turn or participate in Conflicts, but you still get to participate in group decisions or things all the Natives decide together.

There's one important exception to the normal rules having to do with death—the Occupation can't narrate the death of a Native if they don't have the two tokens per Native they would need to "pay" for that death. Natives can still narrate their deaths and the deaths of others either way—and if two Natives have a conflict between themselves that escalates to Fiat, the Occupation can narrate one of them dying that way, as long as it's in keeping with the scene.

Ending the Game

There are two events that can signal the end of the game: either the Occupation runs out of tokens, or all the Natives run out of tokens. When either of these things happen, even if it's in the middle of Judgement, Endgame begins.

During Endgame, two things change:

Players who are out of tokens can't get any more. If somebody would give them some because of Judgement, it just doesn't happen.

When it's time for Reflection (or Indifference), instead proceed to Aftermath.

Aftermath

Aftermath is the end of the story. It starts with the Occupation and proceeds to the left. When it's your turn, give your character (or the Occupation forces) a brief personal epilogue,

describing what they do and what happens to them after the events that have happened in the story. This epilogue must follow the following rules:

If the Occupation has no tokens left, they must describe how and why their country decides to grant the natives local autonomy.

If a Native has one or two tokens left, they must describe how their struggle against the Occupation has left them changed, embittered, and wounded.

If a Native has six or more tokens, they must describe how they have assimilated into the Occupation and adopted its values as their own.

If a Native has no tokens left, but is still alive, they must still do something shockingly violent and destructive and then die, just as if they were running Amok.

If a Native is dead, they may, if they wish, narrate how, or whether, they are remembered by the survivors.

If none of these conditions apply to you, you can say whatever you want in your epilogue.

When all the epilogues are complete, all of the players who still have tokens collectively decide the fate of the island and its inhabitants, based on their personal epilogues, the beliefs and motivations of their characters, and the events that have already taken place in the story. It might break away and return to being an independent state, remain associated but not integrated with the Occupation country, voluntarily integrate into the Occupation country, or be completely absorbed and its history forgotten...or something completely different, if your game demands it. If nobody has any tokens left, then nobody has any say in the fate of the island—it remains a mystery.

Whoever has the most tokens at the end of the game should play the Occupation next game.

Example of Play, Part 5: Endgame

(It's Judgement time at the end of a later scene.)

Josh: ...so I give one token to you, Liam. I guess I'm out of tokens. Do I judge the next Rule?

Liam: No point—you can't get tokens from us or give tokens to us, so.

Josh: Okay. So, Aftermath. I think the bloody resistance fighting is getting to the population back home. We're just here to spread civilization, after all. Without popular support, we have to withdraw our forces.

Shreyas: I'm...dead already. I think they remember me as a hero of the resistance—probably they build a statue to me somewhere. Dario, Freedom Fighter.

Liam: I have nine tokens, so I'm clearly assimilated. I made a lot of money with my restaurant during the occupation, so I can buy up the buildings and stuff the Occupation leaves behind. I think I invest in an import company, start importing goods from Benelia and selling it on the island. Modern technology and stuff. Gotta move Articula into the new age.

Elizabeth: Well, I'm out of tokens, so I still have to run Amok, right? So I totally get into the armory and set off a bomb. Takes out the whole base, probably.

Josh: Well, that explains why we left, then. Okay, what happens to the island? I guess...Liam, you're the one who decides that? Everybody else is out of tokens.

Liam: Well, I'm pretty assimilated, but there was a lot of violence at the end there. I don't think we'd join up with Benelia, but I think that our culture's probably changing rapidly with the new technology. So we're independent, but we're trying to model ourselves after Benelia, electing a president, wearing their clothes. Probably a lot of Articulans emigrate to Benelia, stuff like that. We're our own country, but our traditional culture is gone. Okay? *(general agreement)* Okay.

Author's Notes

Full Disclosure

"Damn, damn, damn the Filipinos!
Cutthroat khakiak ladrones!
Underneath our starry flag,
Civilize 'em with a Krag,
And return us to our own beloved homes."

— popular song among American soldiers during the Philippine-American War (*n.b.* the Krag-Jorgenson was the standard issue US Army rifle from 1892-1903)

My name is William Liwanag Burke. I was born in 1982, at Queens Hospital in Hawaii, to John Lonergan Burke Jr. and Bess Cabatingan Burke. My father is third-generation Irish; my mother was born in Manila. My parents were originally going to name me Liam, but at the last second they worried that it would be too unusual. (So you see that assimilation takes many forms!)

Both Hawai'i and the Philippines were occupied by the United States near the turn of the 20th century. In the Philippines, they eventually left, but not after permanently changing the

culture of the archipelago; in Hawai'i, we're still around. I attended Punahou School, the descendant of the original school founded by Yale divinity students to teach Native Hawaiians Christianity over a hundred years ago.

Dog Eat Dog claims to be a game about the initial process of colonization, and I hope it approaches that subject well. But I originally wrote it as an attempt to understand my personal process of assimilation, on an island that became a state decades before I was born—how the influences and the education I received during my childhood combined to teach me that I was much better off as a white man than as a half-Filipino. Some of the design choices—such as the fact that it's more or less impossible to militarily oppose the Occupation—stem from this genesis. I can't promise that it's a perfect historical or narrative simulation of what it was like to be a Pacific Islander being colonized in the mid-1800s. But I can say it will give you a pretty good understanding of what it's like to be a Pacific Islander being colonized now.

What Do You Mean, "Richest?"

I've seen people misinterpret, forget or twist many rules during my various playtests of DED, but the rule that the richest player is the Occupation is the only one I've seen intentionally ignored, and it happens all the time. It's not surprising—people who sit down to play the game are probably pretty interested in discussing racism, but the privileges of class are, at least in America, still a very uncomfortable topic for most people.

That's why that rule is there, of course—to make people talk about privilege and status even before the game begins. That's why I don't define the word "richest" any more specifically—the vagueness means that people will bring their own perspective on wealth to the conversation, and perhaps find it necessary to reconcile their different understandings. (See the section on the word "inferior" later.)

But it's also important to remind people that you don't actually get to choose whether you'll be occupier or occupied—factors outside the game's frame of reference, that you can't (in the game) do anything about, determine who has the power and

who lacks it. Life isn't fair, and neither is *Dog Eat Dog*. (Of course, the fact that it goes to the "richest" player might make them feel like they deserve it, even though it's essentially arbitrary. Funny how that works!)

That said, if it's impossibly awkward for you to talk to your gaming group about money, obviously don't do it—judge the contents of your wallet, or whoever has the nicest iPod, or whatever. If it's that difficult you probably don't need this note because you've *already* skipped that rule without talking about it.

But if Reiner Knizia can make you choose the most splendid player in order to play *Full Moon City*, I don't see why I can't make you talk about your bank accounts to play *Dog Eat Dog*.

Magic Numbers

The Native start with three tokens because that's the number I picked arbitrarily when I was designing the token economy. It turned out to be a pretty good number in terms of setting the length of the game. All the other numbers are derived from that baseline.

Natives assimilate at six tokens because that way it takes just as many tokens lost to send you Amok as it does tokens gained to make you assimilate. That way you start the game in a state of perilous balance. Another way of looking at this is that a Native with six tokens has gained at least as many tokens for following Rules as they started with in the first place.

Running Amok costs the Occupation a total of three tokens in order to ensure that the Occupation doesn't benefit from it—they've gained three tokens from the Native (since that's what they started with) and they lose three, so they break even. Killing Natives has to cost a little less, or the Occupation wouldn't have any motivation to do it, but not so much less that the Occupation's life is too easy, so it costs two.

The Occupation starts with just as many tokens as it would take to kill all the Natives, plus one, so that there's at least one moment in the game where slaughtering everybody is a viable option. (See the next section.) Similarly, the reason it's

safe for the Natives to gain tokens, but not to lose them, is so that the Natives can each take two tokens from the Occupation and almost, but not quite, get rid of the Occupation without anybody getting hurt or assimilating. In both cases, the Occupation only gets one extra token, so if they mess up just once in Judgement or end up in Indifference, their cushion is gone forever.

Given these restrictions, you could probably change the game to make it somewhat longer if you wanted to—just scale up the starting tokens for a Native, and adjust all the other numbers to match them. I'd probably be more aggressive about judging Rules irrelevant to the scene, also, since the token economy has a constant acceleration. I haven't actually tried this, though, so no guarantees! I suspect the opposite isn't true, though—three tokens is probably the lowest number you could use and still have all these relationships work properly. So I guess it wasn't arbitrary after all.

Genocide is Painless

If the Occupation really wants to, it can end the game and take over the island permanently in the very first scene. All they have to do is force everybody into the scene and then kill them all. This isn't necessarily genocide—the player Natives are the potential leaders, but there are lots of other natives—but it could be, since Endgame is entirely in the hands of the Occupation.

This might not sound like a very fun mechanic, and frankly, it probably isn't. But I don't think I could write a game about colonization that didn't include the ability of the colonizers to seize control by rounding up and slaughtering everybody who could possibly pose a threat to them.

If this actually happens to you, before you write me an irritated email, consider this: whoever played the Occupation chose to do it, knowing exactly how much fun it would be for the rest of you. I didn't make them! They made a calculated decision that all that mattered in the game was taking firm control of the island, and that cold-blooded massacre was an appropriate price to pay for that.

See, there's one more step to this process: activating Endgame doesn't let the Occupation skip Enforcement. If they want to keep control of the island, they have to kill all the Natives and then say that doing so followed the First Rule—that it was an appropriate act for a "superior" people to do. Historically, people who are willing to do that often win.

Dog Eat Alternate Setting

You can play *Dog Eat Dog* in a lot of different ways, just by varying the setup and the starting Traits. Want to play a hard-hitting sci-fi game?

Natives:

- They're optimistic and outgoing.
- They reproduce quickly.
- They're scarred by recent nuclear war and genetic supermen.

Occupation:

- They're flawlessly logical.
- They're part of a galaxy-spanning Federation.
- They come from a hot, seismically dangerous planet.

How about fantasy?

Natives:

- They have green skin.
- They value strength in battle.
- They improvise weapons from whatever's handy.

Occupation:

- They live for thousands of years.
- They're inherently magical beings.
- They have pointed ears.

Something a little earlier historically?

Natives:

- They have an animistic religion.
- They have a powerful military.
- They're from Eastern Europe.

Occupation:

- They're an monastic order of knights.
- They have a mission to convert everybody.
- They're from Western Europe.

Or perhaps more current?

Natives:	**Occupation:**
• They have a corrupt government.	• They mean well.
• They've been colonized before.	• They're mostly upper-middle-class white college kids.
• They're generally dirt poor.	• They've got lots of fancy consumer electronics.

By changing the names, the Traits, and the overall assumptions about the setting, you can play out a lot of different colonial stories with *Dog Eat Dog*. After all, the interactions—and thus the narrative—of *Dog Eat Dog* don't rely on any specific characteristic about islands or race or the nineteenth century. They're built on just one assumption, the one truth I think so important to understanding colonialism that I organized the entire game around it—the First Rule.

Colonization implies contempt for the colonized.

Whether you're the Elves, the Teutonic Order, or the Peace Corps, if you didn't think you were better than them in some way, you wouldn't be there.

Wait, The Peace Corps?

Take up the White Man's burden-- Send forth the best ye breed--
Go bind your sons to exile to serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness, on fluttered folk and wild--
Your new-caught, sullen peoples, half-devil and half-child.

— Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man's Burden: The United States and The Philippine Islands*

When I originally playtested *Dog Eat Dog*, I had a string of Occupations who were aggressive and brutal in their attempts to crush the Natives and take the island. The intensity of their actions, and the reactions of the Natives, made it clear that the game was effective at handling that interaction. (Oddly enough, most of these Occupations were people of color....)

But after the first few games, I started noticing that some people would do their best to be fair about being the Occupation—trying to meet the Natives partway, letting them win conflicts,

and just generally trying to be kind and even-handed. The funny thing is, it didn't matter. The Natives still fought, and died, to prove that they weren't inferior and to resist the Occupation's lukewarm attempts to control them.

It turns out it really doesn't matter how cruel or well-meaning you are—colonization is still about believing your superiority over someone else, and it's incredibly difficult to build a functional relationship on that basis, even if both parties are trying as hard as they can. So go ahead and play the Peace Corps, or the United Nations, or the Heavenly Host, if you want to. The game should still work. A bad situation doesn't change how good people want to be—but wanting to be good doesn't change a bad situation.

Judgement and Inferiority

Fundamentally, *Dog Eat Dog* is built on the engine of the token economy. Apart from that, the rules don't do an awful lot—they provide a simple structure to help you tell a story, and give you some intentionally slanted tools to deal with conflicts, but without the token economy not a lot would necessarily happen. It's the movements of tokens that mandate—or threaten to mandate—action. The simplest example of this is Inattention. The consequences for the Occupation if they don't enter a scene are both uniformly negative and boring—you can't even make a strong statement by not showing up, since you don't get a new Rule, and you only lose one token. So the Occupation feels motivated to push their way into every scene, and as soon as they do, the story becomes all about them. (Privilege in action.) And, of course, once they show up, you know Judgement is just around the corner.

If the economy is an engine, Judgement is the gasoline. (Or the pistons? Honestly, I don't know an awful lot about cars.) Vincent Baker talks about the "moment of judgement" on his blog—a point in the game where the rules require you to refer to the narrative. If you want people to really pay attention and connect to the story, you need to design the game so that the mechanics require you to do so in order to function. In *Dog Eat Dog*, Judgement serves that purpose—the Occupation

needs to watch every scene in order to Enforce properly, and the Natives need to do the same in order to Reflect on them and write new Rules. At the same time, when you're in the scene, the network of existing Rules, and the knowledge that your action will produce a new precedent, constrains your actions—at the end of the scene, you will be held responsible for them, one way or the other, and your character's life and death depend on them. Because of the constantly growing list of Rules, each scene has more challenging restrictions, and each scene has more riding on it, than the last.

But in order to run an engine, you need one more thing—ignition. That's what the First Rule is for. Once the Occupation is in a scene, the Natives know that if they want to keep their tokens, they need to be inferior, or at least act as though they are—and the Occupation knows that, to take their tokens, they need to push the Natives into refusing to accept inferiority, while ideally retaining their own superior nature. Of course, "inferior," like "richest,"' is an intentionally loosely defined concept. Is it a question of morality? Capacity? Technology? The Occupation gets to decide—and the more they want to take over the island, the more motivated they are to find ways to judge the Natives recalcitrant. It's the First Rule that puts the pressure on and makes sure that each scene revolves around the fundamental theme of *Dog Eat Dog*: what are you willing to do, or sacrifice, to succeed—or to survive?

The Culture War

Here's another aspect of *Dog Eat Dog*'s perspective on inferiority. Go back to that section where I list off a few sets of Traits for the Occupation and the Natives. Flip them around—make the Occupation the Natives and the Natives the Occupation. How does this change the game?

The game says that the Natives are inferior to the Occupation—but all we know about them are the Traits the players have come up with. Inevitably, having little else to hold on to in the setting, scenes will end up incorporating these Traits into the group's understanding of both cultures—and because of Judgement, players will be incentivized to value and seek out

the Occupation Traits and avoid the Native Traits, even though they're essentially arbitrary.

The statement here is hopefully pretty obvious—in *Dog Eat Dog*, the characters think, or are encouraged to think, that certain behaviors or ideas are good and others are bad, not because of any inherent value in either case, but because one set belongs to the people in power, and one set belongs to the people without power.

This is also true of the real world.

Nothing Personal

When a Native makes their character, they choose a Personal Trait—a characteristic that distinguishes them from the other people in their society. But that Trait is only useful in conflicts with other Natives, which are far less likely to happen than with the Occupation—and if they do come up, either Native can escalate to Fiat in any case. Their mechanical impact is essentially nil.

This is a little bit of design sleight-of-hand. Telling people to just think of something about their characters, with no mechanical relevance, would be ineffective at focusing people's attention—as always, if the game still works the same if you don't do it, then you're not going to put much effort into doing it. Attaching mechanical effectiveness to it pushes players to consider it, to incorporate it into their actions and their understanding of their character. If you view it as a potentially useful resource, you'll do your best to bring it into the game as much as you can. The fact that, in reality, it will almost never be a useful resource tends to escape your immediate attention.

The Conflict System

A lot of design is about bricolage—taking bits from other designs and recontextualizing them to make them new again. The conflict system in *Dog Eat Dog* is a great example of this. It's more or less a wholesale lift from Dungeons and Dragons.

No, really. Here's the action loop for D&D (and countless other games built around the same structure):

- You tell the Game Master what you want to do.
- If the GM thinks you can accomplish it without a roll, then you do it. (no conflict)
- Otherwise, the GM says it's not possible or specifies a roll for you to make. In either case, you may now change your declared intentions until you find something you both agree you can do without a roll. (Stage 1)
- If you decide not to change your intention, you roll some dice. Relevant factors from your character and the situation can increase or decrease your odds of success... (Stage 2)
- …however, the GM narrates the result of the roll in any case, so they can partially or wholly subvert the mechanical result with their fiat authority over the events of the story. (Stage 3)

For many roleplayers, this is a process they've gone through so many times that it's pretty unconscious—in fact, one major challenge of game design is making sure that people don't accidentally fall into this loop when you want them to apply some other system. All I did with *Dog Eat Dog* was write it down—systematizing, and thus calling attention to, those aspects of the system which appear to be informal social negotiation.

I also removed the GM and replaced them with another player. Admittedly, like the GM, that player has a unique position, a much larger set of characters to have authority over, and individual goals which are at odds with the other players in a way that encourages them to actively seek out conflict—but unlike the GM, there's no implicit assumption that they have everybody's best interests at heart. You can read this as a critique of traditional roleplaying game assumptions if you want to, but on another level, it's just playing to the strengths of the medium by adapting a system people are familiar with to a subject with which they may have less comfort.

Optional Rule: The Model Minority

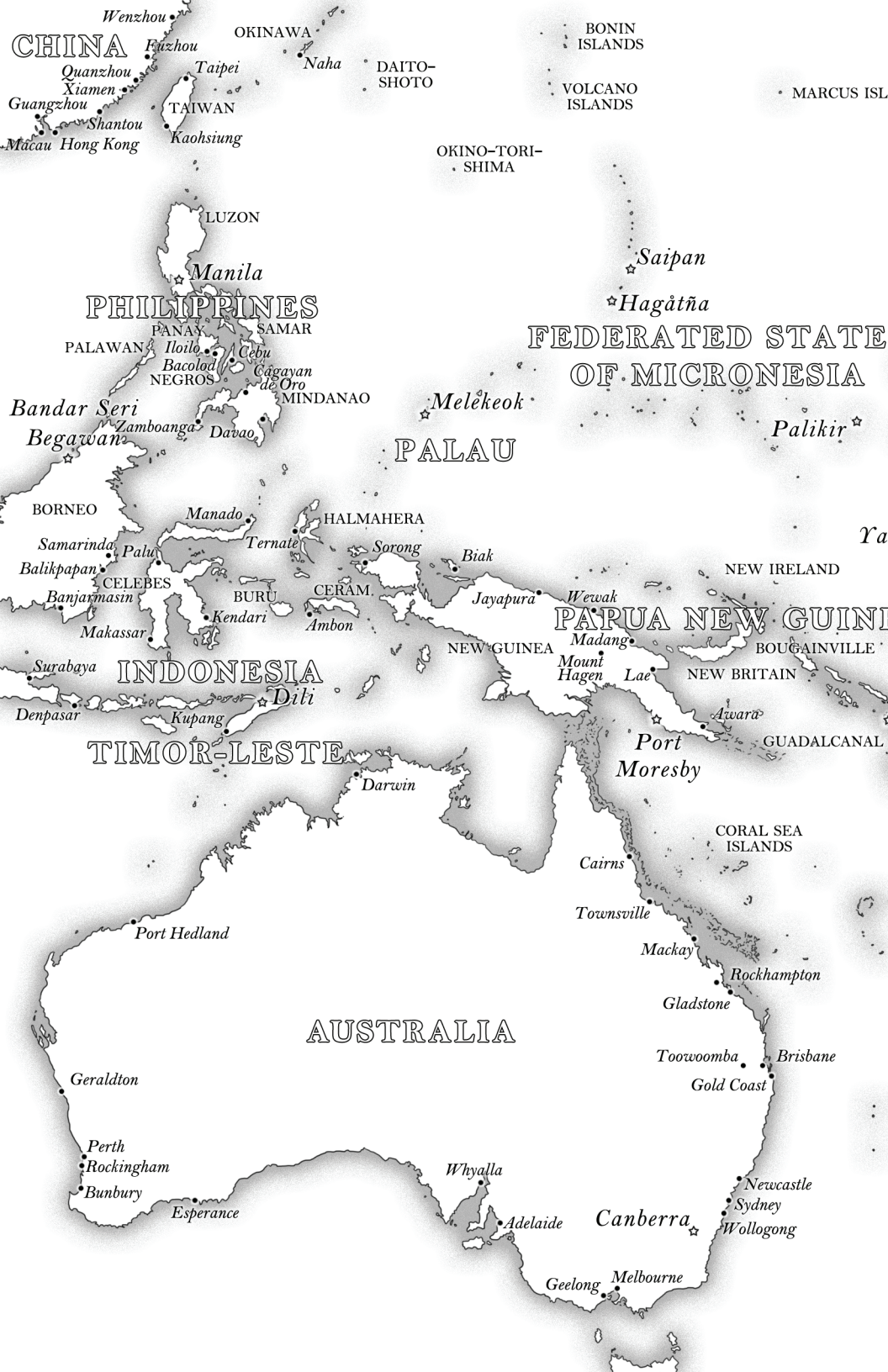
One comment I've gotten from more than one playtester is that, in reality, not all Natives are always the same to the Occupation. Divide and conquer has been a popular strategy of colonizers in a variety of locations, pitting different ethnic groups against one another to shore up the power of the ethnic group in charge.

I've gone back and forth on this—the rule below was in the text for a while—but I think that the game handles this effectively with the existing Endgame requirements. If all the Natives left alive are heavily assimilated and obviously bought into the Occupation's philosophy, then local autonomy just means a puppet government, still controlled from a distance by the invaders. The history of the Pacific is full of just such ostensibly independent countries. It's up to those Natives to accept this outcome, and up to the Occupation to encourage them to do so.

If you disagree, have difficulty getting the Native players to accept a peaceful absorption of the island, or just want to put an even stronger light on the conflict between Natives, you can try using this rule:

> There are three conditions that can signal the approaching end of the game:
>
> - The Occupation runs out of tokens.
> - All the Natives run out of tokens.
> - All the living Natives have at least six tokens.
>
> When any of these conditions obtain, even if it's during Judgement, Endgame begins.

A Brief History of Colonialism in the Pacific


Wenzhou
CHINA
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DAITO-SHOTO
BONIN ISLANDS
VOLCANO ISLANDS
MARCUS ISL
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Taipei
Xiamen
TAIWAN
Guangzhou
Shantou
Kaohsiung
Macau
Hong Kong
OKINO-TORI-SHIMA
LUZON
Manila
Saipan
PHILIPPINES
Hagåtña
FEDERATED STATE
OF MICRONESIA
PANAY
SAMAR
PALAWAN
Iloilo
Cebu
Bacolod
Cagayan de Oro
NEGROS
MINDANAO
Melekeok
Bandar Seri Begawan
Zamboanga
Davao
Palikir
PALAU
BORNEO
Manado
HALMAHERA
Ternate
Sorong
Biak
Samarinda
Palu
Balikpapan
CELEBES
NEW IRELAND
Banjarmasin
BURU
CERAM
Jayapura
Wewak
Kendari
Ambon
PAPUA NEW GUINE
Madang
Makassar
NEW GUINEA
BOUGAINVILLE
Mount Hagen
Lae
Surabaya
INDONESIA
NEW BRITAIN
Dili
Denpasar
Kupang
Awara
GUADALCANAL
TIMOR-LESTE
Port Moresby
Darwin
CORAL SEA ISLANDS
Cairns
Townsville
Port Hedland
Mackay
Rockhampton
Gladstone
AUSTRALIA
Toowoomba
Brisbane
Geraldton
Gold Coast
Perth
Rockingham
Whyalla
Newcastle
Bunbury
Sydney
Esperance
Adelaide
Canberra
Wollogong
Geelong
Melbourne


MIDWAY ISLANDS
UNITED STATES
KAUAI
Honolulu
OAHU
MAUI
HAWAII
WAKE ISLAND
JOHNSTON ATOLL
MARSHALL ISLANDS
KWAJALEIN
Majuro
KINGMAN REEF
PALMYRA ATOLL
Tarawa
KIRITIMATI
NAURU
KARVIS ISLAND
KIRIBATI
RAWAKI
SOLOMON ISLANDS
Honiara
Funafuti
TOKELAU
TUVALU
SWAINS ISLAND
Mata-Utu
SAMOA
Apia
Pago Pago
COOK ISLANDS
VANUATU
FIJI
TONGA
Port-Vila
Suva
Alofi
NIUE
Noumea
Nuku'Alofa
Avarua
CEVA-I-RA
MINERVA REEFS
Kingston
KERMADEC ISLANDS
NORFOLK ISLANDS
NORTH ISLAND
Auckland
NEW ZEALAND
Tauranga
Hamilton
Palmerston North
Hastings

Please note that this is not intended to be a scholarly, a perfectly accurate, or an exhaustive history of the Pacific; the subject in question is too vast for a brief account to be anything more than superficial. Every island chain in the Pacific Ocean has -- or had -- their own unique cultural and environmental factors, their own distinctive encounters with the European invaders, and their own eventual fate.

While I have used some of the traditional terms in dividing the Pacific Islands, I have applied them to the three different though heavily interrelated waves of population -- and later, of colonization -- in the Pacific, rather than to specific islands. This may account for the absence of certain conventional though arbitrary divisions -- such as separating the islands of Micronesia from Melanesia and Polynesia -- and the inclusion of land masses such as Australia, as well as the Malay archipelago.

For ease of writing, I have used the word "European" to apply to all Western presences in the Pacific, including the United States of America. While perhaps distinctive for various reasons, American imperialism in the region is, in the end, part of an overall pattern of interactions with Pacific natives, primarily European, and I have thus included them therein.

Prehistory

The islands of the Pacific were settled in three separate waves. The first, the Australoid people, arrived perhaps 40,000 years ago, during the latest Ice Age. At that time, New Guinea and Australia, as well as the islands of the Malay archipelago, were still attached to the mainland by the Sahul shelf, and the new arrivals spread over time to occupy virtually the entire available area; in addition, though, they moved east, first to the Bismarck Islands, and then to the Solomon Islands. This migration represents the earliest evidence of seagoing boats anywhere in the world.

Over time, as the land masses shifted and the Sahul shelf sank beneath the rising sea, the different areas occupied by these people became culturally differentiated, with the population of New Guinea, and the island chains east of it, developing into the Melanesian people, practicing horticulture and fishing extensively. The people who remained on Australia, taking advantage of the greater land mass to remain hunter-gatherers, became the Aboriginal Australians, while the occupants of Maritime Southeast Asia, much displaced by the later Austronesian settlers, are now known as the Negritos.

Around 8,000 BCE, the changing climate since the end of the Pleistocene caused the sea level to rise, submerging a large portion of what had originally been part of the Asian continent. The flooding of the area in question, Sundaland, left only the higher areas above water, disconnected from the Malaysian peninsula; they are now known as the islands of Java, Borneo, and Sumatra (as well as the smaller nearby archipelagoes).

The sinking of Sundaland displaced a large population of what are now called the Austronesian people (also sometimes inaccurately called the Malay people, from whence the name of the archipelago derives), forcing them to migrate northwards onto the Asian mainland (where they spread across and populated China) and eastwards across the other islands in the area, where they encountered the Australoid people already there -- in fact, although I do not list it here, this event is perhaps the first instance of colonization in the Pacific. In

time they spread east to the Bismarck Islands, where their intermingling led to the emergence of the Lapitan culture, and even as far west as Madagascar.

As early as 1350 BCE, a new culture, representing a mixture of the Melanesian and Austronesian peoples and distinguished by its characteristic ornamented pottery, began to appear in parts of Melanesia, first in the Bismarck Islands, then further east. By 1200 BCE these people, the Lapitan culture, had appeared in Fiji; then, perhaps motivated by the arrival of other Melanesians from the west, they began an extraordinary series of settlement voyages, populating the Samoa and Tonga archipelagoes by 950 BCE. For hundreds of years European anthropologists found these expeditions so unlikely that they propagated instead the theory that the islands were settled by accident, an argument that did not fully end until the voyages of the Hokule'ia in the 1960s.

For the next two thousand years the Lapitan people, or Polynesians, as they have come to be known, remained on their newly settled islands, but in 800 CE they began a second, even more impressive series of voyages, expanding throughout what we now know as the Polynesian triangle. The eventual extents of their settlement efforts stretch from Hawaii, in the north, to Rapa Nui, in the southeast, to Aotearoa in the southwest. There is even some evidence that they may have reached as far south as the Auckland Islands and as far east as South America. At any rate, by the time they completed their travels, nearly every island chain in the Pacific, from Rapa Nui to Indonesia, contained a thriving indigenous civilization.

Melanesia

"The interest of the history of the Southwest Pacific resides in the fact that it is a story of how men of European origin have, in the course of adventuring in far places under the overhang of Asia and just beyond, built up nations of distinctive character on the Euro-American pattern and otherwise assimilated their area to the West."

— C. Hartley Grattan, The Southwest Pacific to 1900

Unlike the Polynesian people, the Melanesians, with older and more autocratic societies, lacked an immediate interest in engaging with foreign invaders. Their aloofness and occasional violent responses, coupled with the difficulty of exploring many of the larger and lusher Melanesian islands, meant that as late as 1830 there was essentially no understanding of Melanesia among the European powers. The diversity of the Melanesian languages as compared to the younger Polynesian ones meant that it was also much more difficult to use a foothold with one tribe to communicate with another. Their aggressiveness, distaste for trade, and often darker skin meant that they were often classified as uncivilized savages by European explorers.

Nevertheless, in the late 1820s imperialist fervor was beginning to mount. In response to the success and expansion of New South Wales, the Frenchman Jules d'Urville mounted an expedition to explore the islands of the southwest Pacific, searching for an opportune location for a French colony. He failed, but his account of the voyage became a defining aspect of the flawewd European understanding of Melanesia, and inspired missionary expeditions (often doomed ones) and eventually further colonial attempts, at first mainly on the part of France.

The first permanent incursions to result from these interactions were generally trade outposts. Though the supplies of sandalwood in Polynesia had been greatly depleted, the supplies in Melanesia were generally untapped. The labor for such outposts was generally acquired by hiring natives from the island or neighboring ones, beginning a slow process of integrating them into a colonial economy. As these outposts, and the Australian colony, expanded, and especially as the American Civil War began to reduce the global cotton supply,

the labor shortages in the southwest Pacific became more acute, and recruitment of Melanesian natives for employment often on other islands or on Australia became a thriving business. These recruitments were frequently carried out using deception or force to secure the necessary quota; however, it cannot be denied that many Melanesians sought out such work and even took multiple voyages, seeing advantage in becoming part of the European economic structure.

Without diplomatic or economic engagement, the occupations in Melanesia took on a character resembling the American interactions with the Native American tribes. Rather than colonizing the people, European powers frequently colonized the land, claiming islands, establishing outposts by force if necessary, and slowly assimilating the local tribes over a lengthy period. As the settlements expanded, the importation of foreign flora and fauna often proved disruptive to the local food sources, and the need for more land often led to displacement of the natives. The violent reprisals that sometimes resulted were met with disproportionate violence and the confiscation of more land. Still, despite aggressive imperial claims, large portions of many Melanesian islands remained essentially uncolonized due to the difficulty and danger of investigating them well into the twentieth century.

Malay Archipelago

"Thus the welfare of the Filipinos coincides with the dictates of national honour in forbidding our abandonment of the archipelago. We cannot from any point of view escape the responsibilities of government which our sovereignty entails; and the commission is strongly persuaded that the performance of our national duty will prove the greatest blessing to the peoples of the Philippine Islands."

— Dr. Jacob Schurman, report from President McKinley's First Philippine Commission

Unlike the relatively isolated Polynesian and Melanesian islands, maritime Southeast Asia was engaged throughout its history with the mainland countries of South and East Asia. Passage from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific Ocean via the South China Sea required travelling through either the Straits of Malacca or the Straits of Sunda, both commanded by the

nearby Indonesian islands. This strategic location allowed the Southeast Asian islands to become major trading powers, controlling the sea route between China, India, and the Muslim countries to the west. The rich natural resources of the area led to the emergence of many separate feuding kingdoms in each archipelago and sometimes even on the same islands. While empires such as Srivijaya would occasionally conquer large areas within Southeast Asia, none were able to form a lasting union.

Spurred by competition over the spice trade, European ships arrived in the Malay archipelago well before they reached the Pacific. The Portuguese, controlling the route around Africa, attacked and seized Malacca in 1511, while the Spanish came through the Straits of Magellan and colonized the Philippines in 1564. The arrival of the Europeans galvanized some natives to unify and fiercely resist colonization, going so far as to seek aid from China and the Ottoman Empire, but other kingdoms saw advantage in temporary alliances with the invaders, and the Europeans continued to expand their territory, seeking to open trade ports in China and Japan as well. Throughout this period the colonization of the area was bloody and ruthless, as was characteristic of imperialism at the time -- these conquests were carried out with no pretense of protecting or civilizing the native people, but with the overt intention of subjugating and exploiting them. Missionary work, when it took place, was used as an intentional military tool, using Christianity to slowly isolate the devout Muslims already in the area.

The strategic and economic importance of the Malay archipelago meant that the islands often served as a battleground for conflicts between colonial powers avoiding a mainland encounter. In this manner the Dutch and the English ousted the Portuguese, and, later, the Spanish were driven out by the Americans. Each new arrival meant the violent imposition of another new order and the attempt at a new cultural hegemony. As a result, many Southeast Asian peoples were colonized multiple times, becoming more impoverished and marginalized each time. As late as World War II, the Japanese occupied Maritime Southeast Asia as a stepping stone in their battles against the various Allied powers who held the islands.

Polynesia

"Aloha 'oe, aloha 'oe
E ke onona noho i ka lipo
One fond embrace,
a ho'i a'e au
Until we meet again"

— Queen Lili'uokalani, Ma Ka Lokomaka'i o ke Akua, Mo'i Wahine o ko Hawai'i Pae Aina

Aside from a few abortive Spanish colonization attempts under Alvaro de Mendana de Neira, there was essentially no contact between Europeans and Polynesians until the eighteenth century, when several voyages in search of the mythical southern continent of Terra Australis made landfall at various Pacific islands. Most notably, in the 1770s, James Cook made a series of voyages originally in search of the Great South Land; in the course of these explorations, he called on a great number of Pacific islands, both Polynesian and Melanesian, for research, preparation, and resupply. The accounts of these voyages, though occasionally naive and inaccurate, provided the Western world with its first general acquaintance with the people of the Pacific, and inaugurated an era of European engagement with Polynesia.

The first Europeans to see advantage in Cook's accounts were fur traders. With the locations of friendly islands at which to resupply (and less friendly islands to avoid), it became practical for the first time to ship furs from the American northwest across the ocean to Chinese ports such as Macao. Soon a variety of trade expeditions were crossing the Pacific, often using Hawaii as their port of refreshment. The establishment of New South Wales in 1788 also contributed to the presence of European ships in Pacific waters, trading for food and supplies, and eventually sandalwood and beche de mer as these commodities were located on Pacific islands. European ships led inexorably to European missionaries, European soldiers and European beachcombers.

Trade with Europeans had several deleterious effects on the island societies engaging in it. The spread of new diseases was an obvious one, but perhaps as important was the constant desire

for food among trade and supply ships, which came directly out of the native diet and undermined the local ceremonial traditions, which often involved feasts. The combination of these effects occasionally led to heavy depopulation; the Marquesas, which had almost eighty thousand inhabitants in the seventeenth century, had only twenty thousand by 1850.

European influence on the Polynesian people was magnified by the cultural forces in play in those societies. The Polynesian mythos contained many laudatory stories of foreign or itinerant heroes (perhaps as a result of their seafaring history), giving them a characteristically open-minded attitude towards European arrivals, their trade goods, and often their weapons and warriors. Politically savvy chieftains, constantly working to maintain their preeminent status, often saw allying with the new arrivals as a practical way to increase their grandeur and hold on to their position. While the European mutineer or marine's firearm might not be more effective than a native warrior's club or axe in the tropical environment such conflicts took place in, Europeans often failed to grasp the showy but relatively harmless place the constant skirmishes between tribes had in the political framework of the islands, bringing a deadly intensity to their victories. Battles that would ordinarily result in a scattering of deaths, but little change, suddenly became wars of conquest ending in burned villages and massacred tribes. The persistent desire on the part of European governments for a fully-recognized monarch to engage with diplomatically also contributed to the new tendency for permanent conquest in Polynesian tribes.

Similar pragmatic reasons lay behind the successes of missionaries in the Pacific. The typical Polynesian religious mindset, involving a variety of competing priests and shamans, each with their own gods, easily incorporated the Christian priests -- many chiefs converted for political reasons, to increase their influence over the European presences in their archipelagoes. Once a chieftain converted, their population would generally follow suit -- and a Christian chieftain, receiving more foreign support than their peers, would often increase the areas under their rule. In addition, as disease, malnutrition and violent conflict ravaged the people of the

islands, many converted on the practical basis that their traditional gods appeared to be failing them. The combination of these effects, for example, led to the near-complete conversion of Tahiti in the 1810s.

Near the end of the 1800s, as the Age of Imperialism began accelerating, European powers began -- often as part of conflicts between one another on the European mainland -- to aggressively annex those Polynesian islands which they had been engaging with diplomatically for many years. There were nations -- Tonga, Hawaii, Tahiti -- which had used European trade to bolster their positions and attempted to resist such colonization, and even came close to doing so, but by the end of the nineteenth century, every inhabited Polynesian island had been claimed, and occupied, by a foreign power.

Modern Day

In 1960, the United Nations adopted Resolution 1514, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and People, declaring a universal right to political and cultural self-determination and directing that all non-self-governing territories be granted independence without undue delay. The eight largest and most active colonial powers abstained, as well as the Dominican Republic; aside from that, the vote was unanimous. A year later, the UN formed a Special Committee on Decolonization to monitor and advise on the process of achieving independence in those territories. Some of the Pacific island chains, such as Indonesia and the Philippines, had achieved independence in the consolidation following World War II; others, such as Tonga, were ostensibly self-governing already, though still acting under significant influence from a colonial power. Many of the rest of them achieved or were granted self-government in the fifty following years.

The newly independent territories, however, would still have to grapple with many of the painful aftereffects of colonialism. Lengthy periods of exploitation and the intentional restriction of development meant that these countries were often, and often remain, heavily impoverished and lacking the infrastructure

necessary for people to support themselves. Cultural importation and assimilation are still dominant and often intertwined with the aid provided by foreign powers, while economic disparity frequently leads to such capitalist-colonial structures as sweatshops or sex tourism. Other territories were absorbed into colonial powers (often the United States) in spite of the UN's actions, and remain under control to this day.

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