PAKAKA I PACHOT-MU! CHAMORU YU’!: A MESTISA RHETORIC ANALYSIS OF GUAM’S CHAMAOLE NARRATIVES

BY

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Abstract

In my project, I investigate identity formations of a specific Mestisa/Mestisu group from Guam, locally known as Chamaole. Chamaoles are defined locally as individuals who are descendants of both native Chamorros and White Americans, and have been identified as one or the other in various social contexts. This research analyzes Chamaole individuals' encounters with identity ambiguity in Guam and the United States. This research deconstructs the various identity formations described in the published poetry of three Chamaole authors from Guam: Jessica Perez-Jackson's "Half Caste," excerpts from Lehua Taitano's *A Bell Made of Stones*, and Corey Santos' "Chamaoli." Works by these poets primarily document cultural, ancestral, racial, linguistic, and political ambiguities. In addition to conducting a literary analysis of their poems, multiple interviews conducted with the poets over several weeks provide additional data. My reflections on Chamaole identity are included in the study, documenting changes in my understanding of Chamaole identity throughout the stages of the research process. This study draws evidence from layered accounts of poetry, oral narratives, and autobiographical commentary. Interpreting data from layered accounts, this study analyzes strategies that Chamaoles use to navigate and overcome encounters with prejudice and aggression. This study of Chamaole identity formations contributes to both Chamorro Studies and Critical Mixed Race Studies scholarship. Because this project focuses on Chamaole participants from Guam ages 20-40, future research may include intergenerational studies, incorporation of participants from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and additional Mestisa/Mestisu Chamorro groups.
Keywords: chamaole, autoethnography, mixed-race, Chamorro, Guam, identity
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Chapter 1: Chamaole Identity(ies) from Guam

1. *Hayi hao? Kao Chamoru hao? Are you Chamorro?*

At 10 years old, finishing up my last year of elementary school in the heart of Sinajana, Guam, my identity as a Chamorro girl first came into question. As a 5th grader, a new transfer student, and a bit socially awkward, I was ill-prepared to have my Chamorro identity challenged in the hallways of Carlos L. Taitano Elementary School, Home of the Deerlings. I was a girl of average Guam height, with white skin, a freckled face, hazel eyes, light brown hair with sun-bleached, almost golden streaks, overweight and therefore taking up more space than some of the other kids. It was just an ordinary day. I was carrying my book bag through the hall. I remember being shoved, two palms pushing against my body with full force, throwing me off kilter. “Get off my island, you *fucking haole*!” he yelled. I can still see his face, twisted up with anger. His name was Joseph. Like most of the island boys, he had short black hair, dark brown (almost black) eyes, and could give the kind of glare akin to throwing the first punch in a fight. He probably felt the need to show how tough he thought he was. Ironically, I thought his skin was a bit pasty. I guess he still looked more Chamorro than me because his eyes were dark and his hair was black.

My encounter with Joseph wasn’t the first time I heard the phrase “Get off my island you fucking haole!” Members of my family, my mom included, said the phrase often. However, it was the first time I heard someone use the phrase towards *me*. This encounter with Joseph was the first of many that have led to the writing of this thesis.
1.1 Investigating the Identities that Chamaole Bodies Straddle: Where do Chamorro and Haole Identities Begin?

The tensions between Chamorro and haole identities that I first experienced in elementary school continued throughout my middle school, high school and college years. Most encounters led to me asking “What am I?” As I grew older, I would continue to probe and search for answers. In my thesis project I seek to identify reasons for the conflict between Chamorro and haole identities, and the effect these conditions have on those who are descendents of both Chamorro and haole families. In the same vein, I hope to gain a comprehensive understanding of the privileges and oppressions of each identity, and to what degree mixed-race Chamaoles experience them.

Using a mixed methods study of literary analysis and qualitative inquiry, I argue that contentions between Chamorro and haole identities stem from the historical relationship between Guam and the United States. I argue that on Guam, Chamorro identity as a race and ethnicity remains the center of social power. However, Guam’s political status as an unincorporated territory of the United States since 1898 has brought with it over 100 years of administrative policies that have drastically changed the lives of Chamorro people. In the next section, I discuss the Chamorro identity that Chamaoles inhabit, and the emotional baggage that comes with it.
1.2 Chamorro Identity in the Chamaole Body: Proving that Chamorro People Exist in the 21st Century

Boy, there’s no more real Chamorros. We all mixed with the Spanish. Even look at our language. The Chamorro language is dead. It’s all Spanish now. There’s not even such thing as full or pure Chamorro. They all died out when the Spanish invaded.¹

As descendants of the native Chamorro community, Chamaoles who inhabit and claim a Chamorro identity must grapple with the same identity questions that all Chamorros face. Chamorro scholar Mary Cruz explains how “identity is socially constructed, carried in language, expressed in mundane routine, liable to revision and routinely contested” (vii). Chamorro identity, like many other indigenous identities, is based on threads of ancestry, clan, land, language, and culture. Today, many Chamorro people face the following arguments, primarily as a result of their first wave of colonization: 1) Spanish colonization killed off all of the real Chamorros, or 2) the Chamorro bloodline is so diluted with the blood of colonizers that there are no real Chamorros left.

In her dissertation Proving Chamorro: Indigenous Narrative of Race, Identity, and Decolonization on Guam, anthropologist Laurel Anne Monnig argues that multiple waves of Spanish, Japanese, and American colonization have created an identity atmosphere that frequently challenges the authenticity of Chamorro identity, and subsequently the

¹ Italicized epigraphs in this thesis represent my experiences of hearing the ways people around me conversationally engage in Chamorro, haole, and Chamaole identity formations.
existence of Chamorro people. Monnig tackles these arguments and investigates what she calls “proving Chamorro narratives.” A review of Chamorro studies literature demonstrates that Chamorros have collectively and individually developed the following “proving” processes: 1) Proving that Chamorro people genetically and culturally exist as an indigenous group. 2) Proving the inalienable native rights of Chamorro self-determination in their homelands.

Addressing these proving processes simultaneously, Monnig writes: “The concept of ‘who is Chamorro’ is infused with a complex racial tapestry; one woven through three periods of colonization and corresponding racialization (Spain 1565-1898, Japan 1941-1944, United States 1898-present)” (ii). Monnig’s work effectively demonstrates how authenticity can be weaponized by a colonizing power to disenfranchise native people. While my thesis focuses on the effects of U.S. colonization, Monnig’s work highlights how presently, the defacto “mestizo Spanish-Chamorro” ancestry of Chamorros, is a dominant argumentative point employed to de-legitimize Chamorro identity in Guam’s American era. More than any other scholar, Monnig’s work helped me problematize issues of Chamorro “blood quantum” authenticity in a colonial context. Her work helped me to recognize, deconstruct, and refute these arguments that occur in daily Chamorro lives. Along with Monnig, in this next section I discuss several additional Chamorro studies scholars who have informed my understanding of Chamorro identity formation.
1.3 Chamorros as a Recognized Indigenous People

Layered with the popular arguments that Chamorros “all died,” or have been diluted into a state of inauthenticity from Spanish intermixing, is another: that Chamorros from Guam are too Americanized, and that Chamorro cultural identity has been saturated by the introduction of American popular culture and national identity. While many Chamorros subscribe to this ideology, many other Chamorros have resisted these narratives of “over-Americanization.” An example of Chamorros arguing for their existence as a distinct indigenous people with specific inalienable rights, even after three periods of colonization, and especially after American colonization, can be seen in Dr. Robert A. Underwood’s “An Appeal for Recognition of Chamorros as an Indigenous People,” a speech he conducted as a Guam delegate to the United Nations in 1998:

The Chamorro, the indigenous people of the Mariana Islands, have a history dating back more than four thousand years . . . Admittedly Guam, like any other non-self governing territory, assimilated some customs and habits from it’s [sic] administering powers. The ancient language of the Chamorro people has many Spanish influences and we have many historical / cultural ties to the Hispanic World. More recently, the majority of our youth speak English perfectly and their attire and addiction to McDonalds and television sitcoms are obvious signs of America’s western influence. However, our culture has

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2 For further reading on the concept of the “Over-Americanized” Chamorro, see Anne Perez Hattori’s “Thieves,” which describes rhetorical attacks on Chamorro identity authenticity.
survived and our elders are still passing the stories of our past. We continue to exist. (3-4)

Underwood’s appeal to the United Nations in October of 1998 is an example of how Chamorros need to prove their existence as an indigenous people in the local, national, and international levels. Underwood’s speech to the United Nations demonstrates how along with needing to prove their genetic and historical indigeneity after Spanish colonization, Chamorros must additionally prove their cultural indigeneity after waves of American influence. Along with Underwood and Monnig, Chamorro scholars such as Anne Perez Hattori, Michael Lujan Bevacqua, and Mary Cruz discuss how American assimilation pre- and post-World War II on Guam has challenged notions of Chamorro authenticity as an indigenous people.

1.4 Is the “Semi-American” even Chamorro?: Effects of American Assimilation on Chamorro Identity

In “Navy Blues: US Naval Rule on Guam and The Rough Road to Assimilation, 1898-1941,” by Anne Perez Hattori and in “(Re)-Searching Identity: Being Chamorro in an American Colony” by Mary Cruz, these scholars describe how the combination of U.S. Naval Era policies from 1898-1941, the Japanese Occupation of Guam, and the U.S. re-occupation of Guam from 1944 to present, have all played a role in solidifying the goal of American rule on Guam to “achieve a transformation in the in the bodies and minds of the

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3 For this terminology “Semi-American” see Michael Lujan Bevacqua’s article “The Exceptional Life and Death of a Chamorro Soldier: Tracing the Militarization of Desire in Guam,” and poem “My Island is One Big American Footnote” to describe the second-class U.S. citizen status of Chamorros.
Both scholars describe how the American assimilation of Guam created Chamorro patriotic values toward the U.S., established English as the primary language of communication, and immersed Chamorros in media dominated by American popular culture. Additionally, both scholars reveal U.S. self-interest in establishing Chamorro patriotism, and how “benevolent assimilation” was a façade for imperialist goals.

In their works, these scholars emphasize loss of land, loss of language, loss of population majority, loss of ancestral sites, unequal representation in media and government, and hyper-militarized environment as the negatives consequences that Chamorros from Guam have experienced since the shift to U.S. power (Cruz 4-7; Clement; Hattori 14-17). I argue in the section two of this chapter, “white bodies in Chamorro consciousness” (refer to page 15) that such losses in Chamorro consciousness often become associated with the presence of white American bodies on the island. While formal scholarship has yet to comprehensively trace the impact of specifically “white” American bodies in positions of power on Guam, many Chamorro elders recall having white schoolteachers, and various Chamorro scholars have made brief comments on Chamorro experiences during the pre-civil rights American era. For example, Hattori writes: “Teaching the Chamorros to speak English would ultimately enable them to serve the Navy in jobs with salaries that were substantially lower than whites due to blatantly

Both scholars refer to Robert Underwood’s article “Red, Whitewash and Blue: Painting Over the Chamorro Experience,” which explores reasons for Chamorro patriotism to the United States. See Michael Lujan Bevacqua’s article “American Style Colonialism,” for perspective on how the U.S. fails to reciprocate Chamorro patriotic devotion.
racist pay scales that existed before civil rights legislation” (27). In my study, I argue that many Chamorros developed negative associations with white American bodies because of their experiences with American militarization and assimilationist policies. While a quantitative sociological study is yet to be conducted to gauge the depths of this argument, and has yet to be conducted to isolate empirical evidence of white American institutional power on Guam, I hypothesize the existence of certain white privileges in Guam’s socioeconomic environment. I leave the exploration of this notion to future scholars, and instead focus on preliminary, qualitative perceptions of whiteness, from the participants in my study.

1.5 (White) American Self-Interest: Perks of a Post-Chamorro, Neoliberal, Patriotic Guam

Some explanations for these modern-day conflicts regarding Chamorro identities can be observed through critical race scholar Derrick Bell’s theory of material determinism / interest convergence. While Derrick Bell’s scholarship on critical race theory comes from a discourse of Black experiences in U.S. critical legal studies, some parallels can be carefully made between Black and Chamorro experiences of being “othered” in a government founded upon white supremacist ideologies. Bell’s notion of material determinism argues that racism advances the “interests of both white elites (materially) and working-class whites (psychically)” and that “large segments of society have little incentive to eradicate it” (Delgado and Stefancic 8). Hattori’s description of U.S. Naval Era policies demonstrate these ideas of white supremacy described by Derrick
Bell, especially considering that Hattori’s main argument is that Chamorro lives were changed solely for the purpose of serve a white-dominated U.S. Navy. In a Chamorro sociological context, Bell’s theory of material determinism theory invites us to look at reasons for Guam’s marginalization in U.S. and global discourse, and why little incentive exists for the U.S. to elevate the rights of Guam’s people, especially the native Chamorros.

Applying Derrick Bell’s interest convergence theory implies that if Chamorros do not exist, the island of Guam, all of its natural resources, become readily available to militarization, foreign investors, and settlers alike. Hattori herself mentions, “For the United States, control over the island was undertaken for strategic purposes. Military documents continually identify the island’s proximity to Asia, as well as the value of Apra Harbor, “the best harbor in the Western pacific” (NGG AR 1904 2), as the primary factors for American interest in the island” (14). Along with changing Guam’s economic system, American rule has drastically shifted the demographic power of Chamorros on Guam, controlling immigration policies which have resulted in Chamorros no longer being a population majority in their homeland. In this same vein, employing the rhetoric of Chamorros as solely “American,” becomes a weapon to erase Chamorro identity, thus disassociating Chamorros from their rights as indigenous peoples.

I argue that in resistance to narratives that claim Chamorros are “too Americanized,” many Chamorros have adapted a reflex of aggressively negotiating Chamorro identity. The threat of erasure experienced by the Chamorro people heightens the racial tensions in Guam’s social environment, creating a dichotomy between natives
and outsiders in certain environments. Looking at Guam’s native/outsider binary, racialized tension between Chamorro and white Americans on Guam are one of the effects of American colonization. I explore Chamorro identity in my project as the central identity of my project’s Chamaole participants, and how Chamaoles with some white American physical features are facing unique and magnified Chamorro versus white American confrontations.

2. White Bodies in Chamorro Consciousness

What remains absent from scholarship that covers American influence in Guam, is a comprehensive inquiry about the identity formation of “whiteness” in Chamorro consciousness. In this thesis, I argue that during the shift from Spanish to American administration, the shift of Japanese to American re-occupation, and especially after the post-WWII land-takings, Chamorro consciousness solidified an image of the white American military body. This image of what Chamorros would eventually call the “haole,” associated white American bodies with positions of executive and militarized power.

Somewhere along the linguistic mapping, Chamorros from Guam borrowed the Hawaiian word “haole” to refer specifically to white American identity, appearance and behavior. This is where haole identity on Guam began, and remains commonly associated today. While American whiteness represented power in federal government and formal educational structures, many Chamorros fought back (both figuratively and literally) in Guam’s social spheres (the school playground, the village, night life) and activism communities (establishing a local government, implementing mandatory Chamorro
language and Guam history courses, and representing Chamorro identity through art and media).

### 2.1 Critical White Studies in Guam’s Context

Additionally, the theoretical lens of critical white studies allowed me to ask research question #1 of my project, “What does Whiteness on Guam represent?” In “White Fragility,” Robin DiAngelo outlines how Whiteness is racially centered in United States’ culture. DiAngelo discusses how white bodies tend to be “racially comfortable,” in the U.S., through the creation and reinforcement of “positive images of the white self” juxtaposed with “strongly negative images of racial ‘others’” (qtd. in DiAngelo) in U.S. media and history. I hypothesized that the introduction of Whiteness on Guam primarily took place during the U.S. Naval administration of Guam in 1898, and brought with it notions of the “positive white self” while reinforcing notions of “negative” qualities of the local Chamorro. DiAngelo writes: “Everywhere we [whites] look, we see our own racial image reflected back to us — in our heroes and heroines, in standards of beauty, in our role-models and teachers, in our textbooks and historical memory, in the media” (62). On Guam, DiAngelo’s list of dominant and “positive” white racial representation is most explicitly evident in modes of American assimilation: military, media, government, and education systems.

DiAngelo claims “in the dominant position, whites are almost always racially comfortable and thus have developed unchallenged expectations to remain so (DiAngelo, 2006b)” (60). If we consider DiAngelo’s claim about whiteness as the center of the U.S. narrative, it calls into question the role of whiteness outside of the contiguous U.S.
discourse. On Guam, whiteness as a status symbol is most dominant in militarized, (federal) government, Guam education systems, and in Guam’s popular media consumption. However, beyond these structural environments and into the everyday lives of locals, whiteness on a micro level is marginalized by dominant communities of Chamorro, Filipino, and additional “brown” islander bodies.

In regards to race, I hypothesize that standardized Chamorro features (to be described in later sections) are the socially dominant and most racially comfortable identity in most of Guam’s social spaces. Simultaneously, whiteness remains racially dominant in federal institutionalized spaces. While the confines of my study do not permit time to investigate these hypotheses through (what I would deem necessary) quantitative methods, I seek to investigate qualitative perceptions of whiteness on Guam from the data collections of my study (poems and interviews), how the power of whiteness inflates and dissipates in certain Guam environments, and how Chamaole experiences provide insights to these social paradigms. For future projects, I recommend a mixed-methods study to explore and verify these phenomena.

2.2 Creation of a Chamorro versus Haole Binary

The encroachment of American whiteness into Guam’s center is most evident in the militarization of Guam, Guam’s Americanized education and media systems, and Guam’s political status as a modern day U.S. colony. As a result, Chamorro identity and white American identities collide in Guam’s everyday social world. For individuals like myself, who have parents or grandparents from both Chamorro and white American communities, the collision between these two identities can feel especially magnified and oppressive on
racial, political, linguistic, and gendered levels. In Guam vernacular, those who are recognized as having both Chamorro and white American ancestry are often called “mestisu” (for males, derived from the Spanish word mestizo meaning ‘mixed’) or “mestisu amerikanu” (mestisu with the adverb amerikanu, specifying ‘mixed with American’), “mestisa” (for females, from mestiza), and/or “Chamaole” (combination of Chamorro and haole), from the word “haole” (in Guam vernacular, strictly means ‘White American’). As mestisu Amerikanu, or Chamaoles, we experience the clash between these two cultures from a unique context. To help me unpack and acknowledge the complexities of the Chamaole identity, I asked the following:

1. What does Whiteness on Guam represent?
2. In what ways do Chamorro identity and white American identity grate against one another?
3. What racial identities on Guam are the most racially comfortable, and when?
4. What identities do mixed race, mestisa Amerikanu / Chamaoles, inhabit simultaneously?
5. What specific identity ambiguity encounters do Chamaoles face?
6. What rhetorical strategies do Chamaoles use to negotiate conflict caused by identity ambiguity?
7. What strategies would help Chamaoles reconstruct their identities in psychologically positive ways?
8. What can we learn from the Chamaole experience?

While I have started to answer questions one through three of my list, I continue to discuss these and begin to answer the fourth in this next section of my introduction. I will then tackle questions five and six in Chapter 2, and continue to illuminate and answer remaining questions in Chapters 3 and 4. As I wrote these next few sections I asked
myself, what makes up Chamaole identity? Since the word Chamaole itself is a combination of “Chamorro” and “haole,” these were the two identities I sought to deconstruct.

2.3 Guam’s Haole Archetypes: The Colonizer, the Militát, the Bourgeois, the Baptist, or the Californian Hippy

_Some people call your Papa the Green-Eyed Devil!

My experiences in Guam and in the states with American whites have been varied. A couple of times, a white American student on my campus has reached out to me, as if relieved to find someone like them on a small island such as Guam. “Are you from the states too? It’s so nice to see someone who is also from America. Wow! I’m saying hi to you because you’re the only other white person in this building! Oh, you’re local? I didn’t think you were, honestly!” Or on a flight from Honolulu to San Francisco, where a ticket agent told me, “Oh good, you’re going home!” While there are still moments where I have been othered by whites as something exotic and ambiguous: “Wow, you have so much color! That is really some great color you have! You’re like a jungle cat!” I have come to observe through my day to day life, that I am most visually read, upon first impression, as white American or “haole” both in the states and in Guam.

On Guam, “haole” is the more common vernacular used when referring to white American bodies. “Haole” is the second part of the blended word “Chamaole,” and represents the white identity that Chamaoles inhabit. In this section I will explore its use within Guam’s communities. In Laurel Monnig’s dissertation, she defines how “haole” is used on Guam:
As with any racial and ethnic category, being “white” and “American” is culturally and contextually defined – and being “white” and “American” on Guam is about being haole . . . The term haole is borrowed from Hawaiian, and although there is some dispute about the actual etymology of the word, it means “foreigner” . . . [However] on Guam, the term is exclusively tied to white Americans. (377)

Answering my first research question, Monnig argues that the notion of haole-ness on Guam is limited to white Americans. Since my closest non-Chamorro ancestors are white Americans, and since I am visually read as white American in many Guam settings, I was often curious about other visibly white bodies, such as visiting Russian tourists, and whether or not they would be considered haole. Monnig’s argument establishes that despite the anglo features inherited from shared European ancestors, white Americans are socially separated from other white European ethnic groups, such as German, Irish, Italian, or Russian groups, and as a result these non-American anglo-featured ethnicities are not attached to the haole identity in Guam. In Guam’s communities haole and white American are synonymous. As a descendant of individuals who either self-identify or have been socially identified as white Americans, it took me twenty-three years of my life, up until this study, to clearly understand haole as referring exclusively to Americans.

To expand more on Monnig’s claim that haole is “culturally and contextually defined,” Judy Rohrer, race scholar and author of Haoles in Hawaii, unpacks haole identity in her essay “‘Eh, Haole’: Is ‘Haole’ a Derogatory Word?” In her essay, Rohrer argues that beyond a visual marker, to be labeled haole is “also a marker of a certain set of attitudes and behaviors that are distinctly not local, reminding us that racial
constructions always include more than skin color” (59). Rohrer’s claim points out that haole is not just appearance, but also a set of cultural behaviors that at times clash with local islander culture. Using both Monnig and Rohrer’s arguments, I have looked into the behaviors commonly performed by and associated with white Americans that grate against Guam’s local culture. Both Monnig and Rohrer indicate how being white or haole on an island is to be assigned an “outsider” status. This outsider status refers not only to skin color, but also an outsider to language, values, and practices of the local people. Additionally, Monnig’s study claims that whiteness or haole-ness on Guam comes with certain socioeconomic powers:

. . . despite their relatively small numbers, haoles tend to have a disproportionate amount of hegemonic control over the local power structures. They are the most literal agents of colonial power on Guam, whether knowingly or unknowingly (377) . . . They come with expectations that Guam should be like the US in many ways, and, in the process, they sometimes conveniently overlook the colonial relationship the US has with Guam. (380)

So while an outsider, the outsider positionality of haole identity is one that usually comes with a package of privileges that is associated with being from the states.

Monnig further describes the perception of a haole attitude to believe in superiority over locals, to reject or dismiss U.S. colonization of Guam, to flaunt and argue for blind patriotism to America, and to demand gratitude from locals for the gift of
American influence and assistance (382). Synthesized, Monnig’s articulation of the haole identity category asserts that white American bodies on Guam are assigned a simultaneous “outsider” and “economically elevated” status.

From my observations and experiences within Guam’s context, calling somebody white or haole can either be intended as descriptive, light-hearted, or pejorative, depending on the speaker’s use and intention. Of the possible Guam haole archetypes of the colonizer, the military member, the bourgeois, the Californian, and the hippy, I’ve observed white and haole used as physical and geographical descriptors; however, I have also observed “you [fuckin] haole” as a pejorative dominantly asserted toward the colonizer, the military member, and the bourgeois who display the unconscious, misinformed, privileged, and culturally insensitive attitudes toward locals that Monnig previously listed. I have also, in my own experience, been called this pejorative despite only looking the part and not performing the list of mentioned attitudes and behaviors. While obviously not all white Americans on Guam strictly belong to these listed identities, and not all perform these negatively associated behaviors, it would be interesting for future scholarship to comprehensively investigate these attitudes, associations, and perceptions, along with the inciting environments for Chamorro versus haole identity conflict.
2.4 Theory of Racial Formation in the Chamorro vs. Haole Binary

The thread of *race* as an identity category and site for ambiguity is perhaps the most explicitly discussed isolate shared in the Chamaole literature of this study. Several CRT scholars provide useful lenses to investigate Chamaole encounters with race-based identity ambiguities. In *Racial Formation in the United States*, sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant argue that instead of being biological, genetic categories that correspond to our physical features, race is instead a socially and historically constructed master categorization of people according to shallow patterns, especially in physical features. Omi and Winant assert their “theory of racial formation” to be defined as “the process of race making . . . its reverberations throughout the social order . . . the sociohistorical process by which racial identities are created, lived out, transformed, and destroyed” (109). In the same vein, critical race scholars Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic similarly argue that “race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent, or fixed . . . categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient” (9). Suitably, both sources, after asserting that race is socially constructed, further argue that race may be invented, manipulated, and transformed by society in a time of sociopolitical convenience.

2.5 Genetic Lottery: Mixed-Race Children of Chamorro-Haole Unions

In a Chamaole context, we might ask how the physical features of children of Chamorro and haole couples determine their dominant socially-assigned identity. Race formation allowed me to recognize the arbitrariness of physical race-based identity markers. These lenses, then, applied to the formations of Chamaole racial identities,
support an investigation into how Chamaole racial identities form, what varieties of racial identities take shape, what convenient purposes they serve, and how society constructs them. Importantly, both sources argue that the construction of race as a category of social organization has historically and systematically maintained “white-over-color ascendancy,” also known as white supremacy. This lens allowed me to examine the race category of Chamorro and haole identities, along with the privileges and oppressions that come with each identity that Chamaoles inhabit.

3. **Chamaole: Endearment or Pejorative?**

*Hey have you ever heard that song that goes, “you’re a cha-cha-Chamaole, half Chamorro half-a-haole!”*

Growing up in a strong Chamorro household, I didn’t realize I was white until I was about 19 years old. There were many moments, before then, when peers would call me *white girl*, and I just could not identify with the term. Despite finally being able to say “Yes, I am white” at the age of nineteen, it wasn’t until age twenty-four that my racial self-awareness solidified. My middle school, high school, and even college years are still littered with reminders that my familial- and self-identity as a Chamorro woman remains visually vague, even unrecognizable, to many people from Guam and from the states.

As I have gotten older, encounters with my identity ambiguity have gotten less aggressive, but still remain present as ever. On Guam, abrasive phrases from middle school such as, “*Fuck you, white shit!*” have gradually lightened in high school and college to ones like “*OMG I thought you were a military kid,*” “*Where in the states did you come from?*” or even “*Wow, I didn’t know you are Chamorro!*” These more recent
encounters, although less startling, still echo the stamp of otherness that I experienced in my first encounter with Joseph.

While I have chosen Chamaole as the identifying term for my project’s participants, it is important to note that not all of my participants embrace the term Chamaole as their default or dominant identity marker. My project’s Chamaole participants primarily identify as Chamorro. However, participants of my project all related that the term Chamaole, as socially defined in the Chamorro community, has been used by Chamorros to identify them. Chamaole is used by people from Guam as either a descriptive, pejorative, or empowering marker depending upon context. Here, I will provide the most socially understood definition of Chamaole in Guam’s community today.

To be Chamaole is to be socially and self-identified, at simultaneous or separate instances, as a descendant of both Chamorro and haole parents. Chamaoles are often dominantly perceived by Chamorros as haole, and are often dominantly perceived by white Americans as “brown,” “mixed,” “Hispanic,” or “exotic.” Because Chamaoles on Guam are often racialized as haole, they usually face the following stereotypes: 1) She or he “must be in the military” 2) She or he “must be from the States.” While my operating definitions, like all parameters of race construction, are susceptible to change, they reflect the social realities of how American whiteness is perceived on Guam, and how Chamaoles likely racialized in both Guam and U.S. settings.

As I discuss the socially recognized Chamaole group on Guam, it is important to note that a distinction exists between someone who is Chamaole versus someone who is a
“light-skinned Chamorro.” Chamorros who are not descendants of American whites, but who have lighter skin because of their Spanish ancestry, are who Monnig refers to as Chamorro-Spanish mestizos, and are not included as participants of this study. It is common, however, for Chamorro-Spanish descendants with lighter skin to be mistaken as Chamaole, and perhaps face similar encounters with Chamorro “blood quantum” and/or “appearance” politics.

3.1 No Longer Alone: Finding Chamaole Narratives in Published Text

Yeah I figured or thought you were Chamorro when I saw you. My daughters are also Chamaole.

As a teenager, I would often forget that I wasn’t alone in facing the challenges of a Chamaole identity. My parents, maternal grandparents, eight of my immediate aunts and uncles, and a handful of classmates, shared their stories about being mestisu from Guam. Despite these rich and informative narratives, something special happened the first time I read a mestisa story written and published in a book. I was nineteen years old when I read author and painter Jessica Perez-Jackson’s poem “Half Caste,” in the thirteenth edition of Storyboard: A Journal of Pacific Imagery. In the following year, I read another published text that told me a story I recognized. This time, however, it was a mestiza Chicana narrative by author and theorist Gloria Anzaldúa, assigned by my American Literature professor, Dr. Evelyn Flores, in 2015. With its formations of Borderlands and mestiza consciousness theory, Anzaldúa’s organic and theoretical essay “La Conciencia de la Mestiza,” opened my mind to the idea of embracing both identities that I floated between. Despite our different ethnic backgrounds, Anzaldúa’s personal narrative and
poetry resonated with me through our shared mixed-race, white-and-indigenous, experience. Anzaldúa’s idea of straddling opposing identities opened for me a path of inquiry, fueling my search for more scholarship on mixed-race experiences. Though I have stumbled upon scholars beyond Anzaldúa, I continue dominantly to use mestiza consciousness theory in my identity politics research. The same year I encountered Anzaldúa, I found Lehua M. Taitano’s A Bell Made of Stones, a collection of poetry on Chamaole, queer, and diaspora identity. Most recently, I read “Chamaoli” by Corey Santos, published in Local Voices: An Anthology, which also shared his struggles with navigating identity ambiguity and the differences between Chamorro and white American cultures.

Reading the works by Anzaldúa, Monnig, and these Chamaole poets, showed me that I was not alone in my identity ambiguity journey. I discovered a community to lean on, whose company alleviated my own painful echoes of ambiguity encounters. Having discovered written and published Chamaole stories, along with the works of mixed-race scholars, I asked myself, “What can I do to bring these stories together? What is the value of placing these voices side by side?” Using a mestisa rhetoric lens in this thesis, I examine the poems and oral narratives of Jessica Perez-Jackson, Corey Santos, and Lehua M. Taitano to deconstruct Chamaole identity ambiguity. My project is the first of its kind to compile and analyze Chamaole narratives, providing a comprehensive examination of Chamaole experiences from Guam. While I wish I had found this literary community and understandings of Chamaole identity earlier in my life, I hope my project can help other mixed-race Chamorros discover these communities and ideas earlier rather than later. In
my project I provide a new chapter in critical mixed-race, critical race theory, indigenous, and Chamorro studies. I advocate for mixed-race identity to be taught in Guam classrooms and discussed beyond the page, a much needed discourse in our world’s continuously growing interracial landscape.

3.2 Critical Lenses for Mestisa Analysis: Mestiza Consciousness, Critical Race Theory, and Critical Mixed-Race Studies

I chose to use multiple theories within critical race and mixed-race studies to shape my thinking and interpret my three primary texts: Jessica Perez-Jackson’s “Half Caste,” Corey Santos’ “Chamaoli,” and excerpts from Lehua Taitano’s A Bell Made of Stones. In U.S. critical race studies, scholars have dominantly focused the lens of the CRT microscope on the sociopolitical climate and conflicts that create and inform racial identity categories in the contiguous states, especially between white and Black race-based identity categories. While emerging studies on Hispanic and Asian-American race categorical construction in the U.S. have emerged and established their narratives within race and ethnicity scholarship, the racialized experiences of indigenous minority groups remain omitted, in the periphery of, or just begin to enter canonical and anthologized bodies of literature and scholarship. While Chamorro studies has erupted within the past 20-40 years, there has yet to be a comprehensive study on the construction of race in Guam’s context, especially with a focus on multiraciality, mixed-race narratives, or

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5 For further reading on Hispanic Identity Formation, see Christina Mora’s Making Hispanics: How Activists, Bureaucrats and Media Constructed a New American.
critical white studies. When woven together with Anzaldúa’s mestiza consciousness, racial formation theory gives a critical vision of the role that race plays in Chamaole experiences. Applying the following theories toward Chamaole identity narratives continues the mixed-race Chamorro conversation in Chamorro studies and introduces Chamaole identity to the scholarly community in critical race / mixed-race studies and critical white studies.

3.3 Borderlands Theory / Mestiza Consciousness

As previously stated, the theorist whose work I primarily apply is Gloria Anzaldúa, a now famous (some would say canonized) mestiza Chicana writer. In her essay, “La Conciencia de la Mestiza,” Gloria Anzaldúa theorizes a cognitive developmental process of coming to terms with multiracial and multicultural environments. Anzaldúa employs what she calls “organic life-writing” (Lunsford 35-36), using layers of autobiography and poetry to present her process theory of mestiza identity development: 1) Living in the Borderlands; 2) Experiencing un choque, a collision of cultures; 3) Experiencing identity ambiguity, a cultural-racial incongruence within one body (what sociologist W.E.B. Dubois calls cognitive dissonance); 4) Pledging allegiance to a dominant identity (usually the marginalized identity), while forming a counter-stance against her “othered” or privileged (usually anglo) identity; 5) Transcending the counter-stance through acceptance: she learns to accept and fluctuate within and between all of her assigned identities; 6) Identifying the histories and cultural responsibilities of each of her identities; and 7) Developing a new consciousness, a mestiza consciousness, that allows her to tolerate and understand the reasons for her ambiguity. She solves the un choque within her psyche by
seeing beyond false cultural binaries. She then aims to solve the *un choque* of the world (Anzaldúa 100-104). Anzaldúa’s comprehensive process ultimately argues that a biracial, multiracial, multicultural individual does not need to choose or reject either / any of her straddled identities. Anzaldúa provides what she calls the “third, fourth, fifth space” where mixed-race individuals may be empowered to transcend the duality of cultural collision, while simultaneously seeking to understand which aspects of each culture help or harm the world’s healing process. In my project, I use Anzaldúa’s theory to map the ways that Chamaoles find, enter, and take ownership of their “third, fourth, fifth” spaces.

### 3.4 A Mestisa Methodology: Pro-Indigenous Blending of Traditional Literary Analysis and Autoethnography

In addition to literary analysis, I chose to conduct a qualitative study informed by autoethnographic methods presented in Chapter 3. For my population sample, I interviewed poets Jessica Perez-Jackson, Corey Santos, and Lehua Taitano as my participants. While interviewing participants beyond this limited population sample would have been ideal for further triangulation, my study was conducted within the M.A. thesis genre, where project length is strictly limited. Choosing to interview these poets additionally gives a holistic and discursive view beyond the confines of their published poetry, opening up a space for expression beyond the page. After conducting a literary analysis of these texts, I used my findings to shape interview questions for the authors. Questions about their personal narratives, intriguing patterns in their poems, and inquiries about their identity development processes through their writing were discussed during the interviews. The framework of autoethnography allowed me to look at mestisu
identities within a Chamorro cultural window, and observe how Chamorro and white American cultures influence Chamaole experiences.

Autoethnographers Carolyn Ellis, Tony Adams, and Arthur Bochner define autoethnography as the junction of autobiographical writing through narrative and literary conventions (with a focus on transformative experiences) and ethnographic content (material and immaterial culture; rich, detailed descriptions of a culture; shedding light on cultural practices and identities) (1). Therefore, to write an autoethnography is to creatively write about personal experiences within a culture, while analyzing experiences of others’ in the same cultural group, triangulating shared experiences with the culture of interest. The autoethnographic elements I used for my project include autobiographical narrative and ethnographically informed data collection of Chamaole identity narratives. Also autoethnographically informed, I layered my personal accounts with my participants’ narratives and cultural testimonies. While I sought to bridge literary analysis with these socio-anthropological research methods, I hoped the result would offer a holistic view of ways that Chamaole stories overlap, differ, and add to critical conversations on identity.

My interview methods were informed by qualitative researcher Joseph Maxwell (105). Critical mixed-race studies scholar Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu in *When Half is Whole: Multiethnic Asian American Studies* also uses similar autoethnographic methods in his compilation of eleven mixed-race narratives. Using Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, I prioritized pro-indigenous approaches and environments for collecting and assembling research. I
designed my autoethnographic project to employ Chamorro cultural protocols, which foreground relationships of reciprocity between community members, in this case between researcher and participants. My interview questions sought to open up encounters described in participants’ poems, while also offering a platform to share other thoughts and encounters which may have been omitted from the text. Synthesizing mestiza rhetoric and autoethnographic analysis techniques enabled me to pinpoint and explain shared phenomena in the narratives.

My introduction closes with these lists of theories and established methodology, I applied the expanse of these theories in my next chapter, “Mestisa Rhetoric in Chamaole Poems” by conducting a mestiza rhetoric analysis of Perez-Jackson, Santos, and Taitano’s works. In Chapter 3: Chamaole Stories Beyond the Page, I synthesize the data from my interviews with the participants, organized in the chronological order of Anzaldúa’s mestiza consciousness process, while outlining additional dominant identity categories mentioned by my participants alongside race formation. Organizing my data this way provides a holistic mapping of Chamaole identity and deconstructs its ambiguity.
Chapter 2: *Mestiza Rhetoric in Chamaole Poetry*

In “Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality,” Andrea Lunsford defines mestiza rhetoric as “a new kind of writing style” which uses specific strategies of theorist Gloria Anzaldúa’s *mestiza consciousness* or borderlands theory (35). Lunsford explains that mestiza rhetoric is an integration of *mestiza consciousness* into the writing process, with a central goal of challenging multiple systems of oppression. Lunsford emphasizes that mestiza rhetoric uses a multiplicity of voices to write-into-existence non-binary identity. Applying Anzaldúaan process theory of mestiza consciousness, I conduct a mestiza rhetoric analysis of my primary texts: “Half Caste” by Jessica Perez-Jackson, “Chamaoli” by Corey Santos, and excerpts from *A Bell Made of Stones* by Lehua Taitano. Applying a mestiza rhetoric analysis to my primary texts reveals how my participants challenge multiple “isms of domination” (qtd. in Smith) within the Chamaole experience, and identify tools to navigate categorical conflicts of culture, language, race, ancestry, and nationality.

1. **Jessica Perez-Jackson’s “Half Caste”**

In “Half Caste,” a narrative poem composed of seven stanzas, Jessica Perez-Jackson conveys a difference between Chamorro and haole identities as she describes two central narratives in her poem: 1) her effort to prove her belonging to Guam’s Chamorro community 2) her struggle with (in)visibility of Chamorro identity in the States. In the

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7 In this analysis, I shorten “contiguous United States” to “the States,” a commonly used terminology in Guam’s vernacular.
first stanza of “Half Caste,” Perez-Jackson describes a split between Chamorro and haole world views. She writes:

I almost got beat up a few times just for being the new girl from the States.
But I’m not from the States, I was just there because my mom was going to school.
And now I’m here. Fighting furiously to show — to prove that I’m just as Chamorro as you.
So I may have a haole accent when I pronounce words like salmon

with a silent l.
But I am just as Chamorro as you. (lines 5-14)

In this passage, Perez-Jackson straddles both Chamorro and haole identities. Evident in the expression of her consciousness in this stanza, Perez-Jackson describes a Chamorro world view where being Chamorro means being from Guam, and that being haole means being “from the States” (4). In her poem, Perez-Jackson describes herself as “one quarter” or “one-fourth” haole, quantified not only in her ancestry, but also in her haole accent when saying certain words, and in the time she spent in the States as her mother went to school. However, despite this “one-fourth fraction of haole-ness” being the lesser of her two identities, she is commonly perceived by her Chamorro peers from Guam to be “half caste” (a phrase more commonly used for those who are “one-half” haole) or “haole” entirely. Throughout her poem, Perez-Jackson magnifies several moments that distinguish some differences between Chamorro and haole cultural perceptions, layering these descriptive moments with her commentary on her dominant Chamorro identity.
1.1 Chamorro versus Haole Cultural Collisions in “Half Caste”

In the second stanza of her poem, Perez-Jackson emphasizes linguistic differences between Chamorro and haole worlds. She moves beyond her commentary on haole accent into a collision between Chamorro and English languages, addressing the role that Chamorro language proficiency plays in quantifying Chamorro identity. Perez-Jackson writes “And now I’m in my thirties . . . Still trying to prove my Chamorro-ness. / Taotao Inalahan. / I na’an hu si Jessica. / Nalang yu’ - / Hungry to learn more than just some memorized sentences in my / language. / Can I even call it mind if I can’t speak it?” (4). In this stanza, Perez-Jackson addresses the linguistic clash between Chamorro and English: she proves her Chamorro heritage through her Chamorro language use, while also contemplating the limited nature of her Chamorro language knowledge, consequences of the U.S. assimilation of Guam. These English-only policies disguised as patriotism resulted in a generation of Chamorros who often failed to teach the language to their children; this linguistic shift, importantly referenced by Perez-Jackson and evidenced in her work, is often a point of contention that causes many Chamorros to question their authenticity. On the other hand, Perez-Jackson resists these traces of English-only policy, choosing to use phrases within her linguistic knowledge as a rhetorical move to both resist the hegemony of English language and simultaneously prove her cultural upbringing in a Chamorro household. The multiplicity and layers of Chamorro language identity within this stanza comment on both Perez-Jackson’s desire to use the Chamorro language as both an argumentative strategy, and as a means to express her sense of belonging.
In the third stanza of her poem, Perez-Jackson describes where Chamorro and stateside cultures collide, and how these tensions affect her day to day life. Perez-Jackson writes:

And then there was that elevator ride in San Francisco when I was sandwiched between three suits.
White suits.
Staring down at me
... like a piece of
brown meat,
succulent, tender, exotic, small,
And weak.
HA! They’d like to think so
...
You’d like to conquer me
Like they conquered my island, wouldn’t you? (lines 24-35)

In this second part of her poem, Perez-Jackson integrates the near invisibility of Chamorro identities in the States, the exoticized stereotype of the island woman, along with a continued list of assumptions and stereotypes about islanders. In this passage, Perez-Jackson points out several differences in cultural thinking that cause haole identity to grate against her Chamorro identity. Perez-Jackson continues:

Are all girls from Guam pretty like you?
Are all you Guam people so nice and do you all like to eat so much?
Where is Guam by the way? Do you wear hula skirts and run around topless?
Do they have MTV?” (lines 46-51)
Perez-Jackson uses multiple images of feeling belittled during encounters with statesiders: white suits looking down at her, thinking she is Mexican, not caring to know anything about Guam, and even asking if Chamorros run around topless. To this encounter Perez-Jackson comments, “I don’t like to feel small and insignificant, / something to be used and trampled on and controlled” (5). In this sense, Perez-Jackson criticizes those who display ideologies of “statesider” as bigger and dominant, and islanders are “little,” “tiny,” “invisible,” and “powerless.”

1.2 Ambiguity / Incongruence in “Half Caste”

Listing these cultural collisions helps gain an understanding of the incongruence Perez-Jackson feels when she is socially-assigned a haole identity by her Chamorro peers. Because of her appearance, she is labeled as haole; because she is Chamorro, she feels this affront on several levels. Considering her perceptions and encounters with haole identity, especially the list of negative encounters in her poem that grate against her values and epistemology, the wound inflicted on her by being labeled haole is twice as deep. Perez-Jackson’s first few lines of her poem lists these labels: “Half caste. And I’m not even half. / A quarter, but in high school I was called 75 cents. / A term of endearment maybe, not meant to be offensive / You haole” (4). Initially, these labels are used to “other,” to signify and emphasize a person who is not from Guam, not Chamorro, or not Chamorro enough to be considered a member of the community. Beyond this initial “othering,” Perez-Jackson must wrestle with the incongruence of identifying as Chamorro, being recognized and accepted as Chamorro in many spaces, while
simultaneously being signified as a white statesider, at times in aggressive and violent ways.

1.3 Counter-Stance in “Half Caste”

In the closing stanza of her poem, Perez-Jackson gives a summary of the encounters she faces both in the States and in her home island of Guam. She writes: “When I’m home I feel like I have to earn my membership / And when I’m away I have to fight off ridiculous questions and / stereotypes because no one knows what I am. Who I am. / I’d like to think I’m just as Chamorro as you are / Because I am not 75 cents” (5). Ending her poem on this note, Perez-Jackson refutes the notion of a “part Chamorro,” what critical race scholar Neil Gotanda refers to as “fractional composition,” where identity and belonging is quantified by parentage / ancestry (275). In this same vein, Perez-Jackson performs a proving process, “earning her membership” into Chamorro community, which Chamorro scholar Laurel Ann Monnig argues is a common burden for Chamorros today. Refuting the notion of being “75 cents,” or three-fourths Chamorro and one-fourth haole, Perez-Jackson argues that her Chamorro identity is whole and unbroken, providing the same ethos of belonging as others in the Chamorro community. Throughout the text, it is important to note that Perez-Jackson stays consistent with a dominant assertion of Chamorro identity. As she discusses haole interactions and attitudes in this poem, she only admits to an accent, her use of English, and her brief stay in the States, showing no alignment to the haole cultural views listed.

In response to both encounters with identity ambiguity, where she is either labeled “haole” or “the little island girl,” Perez-Jackson performs what Anzaldúa calls a counter-
stance: a rhetorical move to inform or convince a listener of the speaker’s primary identity. Not only does she argue with her phrase, “I am just as Chamorro as you”; as mentioned, she uses phrases in the Chamorro language to signal her identity (4). This code-switching strategy is a tool that Perez-Jackson uses in her identity negotiations. Using the language is one effective method Perez-Jackson uses to signal her belonging.

1.4 Links Between Perez-Jackson, Anzaldúa, and Chamaole Experiences

A mestiza rhetoric analysis of “Half Caste” reveals the degree in which Jessica Perez-Jackson expressed the following stages of mestiza consciousness: 1) Identifying the borderlands 2) Identifying the collisions between the border cultures 3) Identifying ambiguity, incongruence, and the space between the borders that one may occupy 4) Forming a counter-stance (asserting a dominant identity). Perez-Jackson’s poem gives examples of a Chamaole individual being excluded from both Chamorro and haole communities in a given setting. She provides examples of clashing world views between Chamorro and haole cultural consciousness by using two scenarios: a Chamaole proving belonging on Guam and enduring stereotypes and invisibility in the States. She demonstrates Anzaldúa’s process theory by identifying the bordering cultures and their differences, refuting exclusion, asserting the fullness of her Chamorro identity and belonging, and refuting association with the negative haole behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes she encounters. Additionally, Perez-Jackson used mestisa rhetoric writing techniques of organic life-writing, code-switching to native language, and asserting a new mestisa consciousness. Perez-Jackson primarily uses the Chamorro language and her
village identity to assert her Chamorro-ness, using mestiza rhetoric to challenge issues of
culture, language, race, ancestry, and nationality consciousness.

2. Corey Santos’ “Chamaoli”

In “Chamaoli,” Corey Santos uses a first person narrative structure for his poem,
describing his internal negotiation with his Chamorro and haole identities throughout his
childhood. While Santos foregrounds his dual identity in his opening lines, the rest of his
poem illuminates the journey he took to arrive at a consciousness capable of claiming
both identities. In the first setting of his poem, Santos writes: “‘White boy? Leche
på’ka’ka’ pachot mu. / As my fist connected with his chin I could’ve sworn we had / the
same skin tone. / ‘My dad’s Chamorro!’ / ‘Yeah, but you’re still white.’ / What the heck
did that even mean? / I was nine” (lines 5-11). This passage tells the story of Santos’
(likely first encounter) with being socially-identified by his Chamorro peers as haole at
just nine years old. Santos’ tone expresses shock, anger, and offense at this encounter,
indicated by his response “leche på’ka’ka’ pachot mu” (Chamoru for “shut your mouth”).
In this stanza, Santos describes his first encounter with being racialized as white in
elementary school, and how blatantly he rejected this categorization. Along with
engaging in physical aggression, Santos employs the Chamorro language as a signal of
his cultural and ancestral belonging. Considering his encounter with being white-coded in
elementary school, Santos likely inherited certain physical features associated with haole
identity, which became a key factor in determining his socially recognized identity. From
this encounter, and likely from subsequent similar encounters, a haole, or white
American, category became Santos’ dominant, socially-recognized and maintained, racial identity in Guam’s community.

Santos’ work primarily explores the race category of identity. Critical race theory scholarship helped me understand how encounters with race politics should be distinguished from culture, nationality, and ancestry. For instance, critical race scholars Michael Omi and Howard Winant in *Racial Formation in the United States*, along with Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic in *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, claim that society has constructed categories solely based on sets of physical features, i.e. skin color, hair type, eye color, facial structures, and has assigned behaviors, privileges, and oppressions that correspond to these physical features (109; 9). Importantly, these scholars argue that race is an unreliable category for determining an individual’s character, belief systems, ancestry, and nationality. These tenets of race theory allow me to deconstruct the race-based ambiguity in Santos’ poem.

### 2.1 Cultural Collisions in “Chamaoli” and Incongruence

As Santos gained awareness of his physical differences from his peers, he then began to learn what whiteness on Guam represented, and which consequences resulted from his different appearance. Santos writes: “I recall one of my Chamorro teachers saying / ‘if you’re brown stick around, / and if you’re white get out of sight. . .’/ Isn’t it funny? / To have learned how my ancestors / carved out their proas, / in the same day those words were carved / on the inside of my skull” (lines 12-19). Deconstructing these lines, Santos begins to navigate what Anzaldúa describes as incongruence: Santos simultaneously gains awareness of his white appearance, still primarily identifies
culturally and ancestrally as Chamorro, but must now battle with a collective Chamorro consciousness of resistance to white bodies. In these lines, Santos is simultaneously being taught how a Chamorro must avoid white bodies, yet wonders about his own whiteness, and whether or not that means he should be excluded from his Chamorro community. In the third school setting of his poem, Santos writes: “New school, new faces — / ‘Dude, you’re so haoli.’ / ‘Aww, you’re such a white boy.’ / . . . I wanted to scold them in Chamorro but my tongue / couldn’t find the words / because my mind had lost them. / I was so confused: ‘I swear my dad’s Chamorro, guys,’ / I heard myself say / but am I Chamorro? / They’re right: I don’t even look it” (lines 29 - 39). In this passage, Santos provides his second unsuccessful attempt at using his ancestral identity — being Chamorro from his father’s side — to prove his Chamorro identity and convince his Chamorro peers to claim him as one of their own. Compared to his encounter in elementary school, this time Santos no longer has his Chamorro language skills as a rhetorical move to convince his peers. In this vein, the incongruence continues: despite his father being Chamorro, and his dominant identity being Chamorro, his haole appearance excludes him from his peer community.

2.2 A Lose-Lose Situation: Social Exclusion from Both Communities

In the second school setting of his poem, Santos describes his experience transferring schools, and the shift in cultural environment that came with it. Santos writes:

   New school, new faces —
   Dead saints were suddenly more important
   than dead chiefs.
I spoke Chamorro but I got funny looks.
“Woah, you can speak Chamorro? You’re so *chaud!*”
I just wanted to be accepted,
and since no one else spoke my language, I didn’t either.
What little native vocabulary I had would diminish.
But I fit in, so that was nice. (lines 20-28)

In this school setting, Santos makes clear how this particular social environment favored English over Chamorro, and in stark contrast to his other school encounters, this school community rejected his Chamorro identity. Santos writes: “I’m ignored when I go to the ‘white places’ because my skin is brown / and I can hear people change the way they speak / so the simple island boy can keep up with their *white* talk” (lines 65-67). This situation is an example of Omi and Winant’s theory of racial formation, which states that race categories and behavior association are not fixed, but are instead subject to change depending on the social environment (109). While Santos has been dominantly racialized as white, in this particular context, his dominant identity, which is rejected by his peers, is his Chamorro identity, perceived to be the less educated, “primitive” islander. This variation in his racialization adds additional layers to his incongruent set of social and self-identities. In this sense, Santos feels a magnified and dual loss: rejection from both Chamorro and haole communities.

2.3 Developing New Consciousness and Asking Critical Questions

Along with the four stages of mestiza consciousness displayed in Perez-Jackson’s poem, Santos’ work touches on Anzaldúa’s fifth stage “Identify the false dichotomy.” Anzaldúa writes: “It is not enough to stand on the opposite river bank, shouting questions,
challenging patriarchal, white conventions. A counterstance locks one into a duel of oppressor and oppressed; locked in mortal combat, like the cop and the criminal, both are reduced to a common denominator of violence” (100). In line with Anzaldúa’s process, Santos takes “a step back” from trying to earn or fight his way to get communities to claim him. Santos instead makes moves to balance the two identities that he socially juggles, transcending the ways that each community rejects him. Santos writes:

Doubts of that sort danced in my mind for years.
Back and forth, I would argue with myself:
I’m too Chamorro to be white.
But am I also too white to be Chamorro?

. . .
I was furious because I shouldn’t have to prove anything!
I am Chamorro. And I am white.
I am white. And I am Chamorro.
That’s just who I am.” (lines 40-44, 51-54)

By the end of his poem, Santos reclaims his dual identity, gaining a new consciousness that is no longer as easily angered or thrown off-kilter from encounters with ambiguity and incongruence. Santos writes:

Why was I acting?
What was I trying to prove?
And to whom was I trying to prove it?

. . .
I can love my island, and I can love my culture,
but I can also love corndogs and I can get excited when the 4th of July comes around.
And that’s alright.
You see, now I am okay with being Chamaoli.” (lines 48-50; 55-59)

At this stage of Santos’ development, he has claimed both identities, accepting his categories of race, culture, and ancestry that collide. Now, despite the type of community
he enters, Santos’ knowledge of ambiguity and incongruence grants him the mobility needed to flow between these socially created categories.

2.4 Race as Dominant Category of Ambiguity in “Chamaoli”

Similar to Perez-Jackson, Santos identifies several cultural collisions between Chamorro and haole cultures, including linguistic clashes and prejudice on both sides, being labeled haole by Chamorros, and a “simple island boy” by whites. Santos recognizes the fluidity of his identity, and how his race-based identity changes, depending upon the social context. Beyond his race-based identities, Santos recognizes his languages and practices that are associated with each identity (using Chamorro language to signify his Chamorro identity; celebrating 4th of July to signify his white American identity).

Despite his conclusion, however, about his identity fluidity, questions for Santos remain. He writes in his final stanza:

But I am faced with a real problem,
because not everyone thinks the same way as me.
I can speak endlessly about how I’m treated as a second-class citizen
but to some I don’t have credibility because of the colonizer’s
blood that flows through my veins

. . .
There is so much more,
but who would listen?
Because they can’t see my message.
They won’t hear my voice.
Because the color of my skin
always seems to muffle anything I have to say. (lines 60-64, 68-73).

As Santos closes his poem, he reaches a common concern in critical mixed-race studies. For those who are in-between identities have recognized the fluid boundaries they
straddle, how do they get the rest of the world to recognize such fluidity, too? While Santos has yet to answer this question in his published poetry, his text has provided inspiration for my study, directing this project toward finding possible solutions. In “Chamaoli,” Corey Santos uses a first person narrative structure for his poem, describing his internal negotiation with his Chamaole\(^8\) identity throughout his childhood. Santos’ work primarily explores the race category of identity, while also touching upon culture, nationality, and ancestral ambiguity. Santos’ poem shares parallel themes and mestisu rhetorical strategies with Perez-Jackson, adding his more explicitly race-based encounters. Similar to Perez-Jackson, Santos identifies several cultural collisions between Chamorro and haole cultures, including linguistic clashes and perceptions of Chamorro ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship status. Santos also similarly shares experiences of being labeled “haole” by Chamorros, and a “simple island boy” by stateside whites.

Along with the four stages of mestiza consciousness displayed in Perez-Jackson’s poem, Santos’ work touches on Anzaldúa’s fifth stage “Identify the false dichotomy.” In this vein, Santos begins to feel a balance and understanding between the two identities he straddles, and starts a process of claiming both identities.

\[^8\] Santos and I spell the terminology differently, but “Chamaoli” and “Chamaole” refer to the same identity group.
3. “Maps,” “Sisters,” and “Hyphenation” from Lehua M. Taitano’s 

A Bell Made of Stones

In A Bell Made of Stones, Lehua M. Taitano weaves together a compilation of forty-four poems, which often share thematic and numbered titles. Of these thematic threads, I selected “maps,” “sisters,” “a bell made of stones,” and “hyphenation,” along with the preface letter, to conduct mestisa rhetoric analysis. In “maps,” Taitano records her experiences in stateside classrooms, where she must navigate Guam’s ambiguity in her stateside teachers’ consciousness. In “sisters,” “a bell made of stones,” and “hyphenation” Taitano describes her encounters with cultural, ancestral, and racial ambiguity, cultural assimilation, and cultural blending. Closing my analysis, I deconstructed Taitano’s preface, “insidemeanisland,” where Taitano describes the intersections of her Chamorro, white, and queer identities. In unique comparison to the other poems observed in my study, Taitano experiments with form and structure, blurring the lines between poetic form, prose, and visual art. Similar to both Perez-Jackson and Santos, Taitano incorporates Chamorro language into her writing, and starts a journey toward positive identity formation. Taitano’s poetry demonstrates six out of the seven steps from Anzaldúa’s theory of mestiza consciousness.

3.1 Familial, Geographic, and Linguistic Borders

Similar to both Perez-Jackson and Santos, Taitano describes Chamorro language loss as one of the consequences of the Chamorro and haole cultural collisions in her family and educational environment. She writes: “I was born in the summer of 1978. Raised within a Chamorro culture until I was four years old, I spoke Chamorro and
English as concurrent first languages. I learned from my grandmother in Chamorro. I learned from my aunts and uncles and my mother in Chamorro. And then all of us, with the exception of my oldest sister, moved to a derelict farm in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina, and my father forbid me to speak Chamorro anymore. He thought it would prevent me from ‘fitting in.’ (preface). In this account of her family upbringing, Taitano explains how her father sought to assimilate his children to the American culture by enforcing their use of English in the home. With Taitano being uprooted from Guam, without the Chamorro language in her home, there would be little to no community to use the language with. Taitano continues this story in “sisters 3.” She writes: “ny the numbers are in spanish could you speak chamorro or chamoru when came here o — id dad make you stop learning it that really is so sad when you think about what we lo—” (57). Especially fragmented, this poem captures the voice of Taitano’s sister, reinforcing the claim that it was their dad who forced Taitano to stop using the Chamorro language. As a colonized people, Chamorros were institutionally banned from using the Chamorro language in Guam’s schools under American administration; Taitano’s father reflected the oppression of American assimilation by banning the language in the home.

On both national, educational, and a familial level, Taitano’s social institutions banned her use of Chamorro language. Her poetry describes the pain she felt with this deep loss. In “a bell made of stones 3,” Taitano writes “a bell is a throat and my irises cant gri . . . grips cant tip of sound well its time in darkness casts the . . . of dust over lips who know no languages who know no languages set out on ships holds all vessels upturned throats parched now a throat is a bell with reverberant silence . . . taifino” (87).
In this poem, Taitano closes with the word “taifino,” which means “without language.” Her “parched throat” and “darkness cast” from this loss echoes her expression from her preface “I have had my tongue cut out and then have been asked why I don’t have more to say” (preface). Taitano’s expression of the pain of losing her language is a sentiment shared with many Chamorros and with the other Chamaoles of my study.

Despite the loss of her Chamorro language fluency, Taitano reclaims her loss by incorporating her linguistic knowledge throughout her poetry, using Chamorro words, proverbs, and sentences when possible. In “sisters 2,” Taitano writes “sweetheart, the word for ‘air’, as in the breathing stuff around us, is ‘aire’, p—ng i, ree but ya gotta kind of roll that r a little. if you want ‘wind’, as in blowin—round you air, it’s manglo, pronounced monglu —long ‘u’ that’s your chamorro lesson fo—day— hu guiya hao! i hope you know what that means” (47). As Taitano documents one of her Chamorro language lessons, she breathes life into the Chamorro language on the page. She closes this line with the Chamorro phrase for “I love you,” and continues to translate more Chamorro words. Taitano continues: “there are common family names here . .

‘Taimanglo’, meaning no wind ‘tai’, like the ‘tai’ in Tait— eans ‘nothing’ or ‘none’. So our family name ’Taitano’ means ‘no land’, which of cours— not true, because Taitanos have lots of land, just not us. anyway, a word i thin— kind of more what you’re looking for is ‘Chata-an’, which means ‘storm’. we even had—big typhoon with the name” (47).

In this poem, Taitano weaves together the meaning of Chamorro names and links Chamorro language and familial identities. Moving away from a place of being “taifino,” or without language, Taitano carves out a space in her text to document and share her
Chamorro language learning processes. Taitano heals the wounds of cultural conflict through forced assimilation by empowering herself to tap into Chamorro language dialogue with her maternal relatives. In doing so, Taitano opens a path to recover her cherished language.

3.2 Mapping Guam’s Half-Visibility in Stateside Consciousness: Ambiguous Nationality and Geographic Dis-connections

In “maps,” Taitano portrays an image of the spinning globe, where she navigates her way through what she calls Guam’s “half visibility” in U.S. geographic consciousness. The setting of these poems takes place after Taitano’s parents moved from Guam to the Appalachian mountains in North Caroline (preface). In “maps 1,” Taitano writes “I spun a globe too long so it appeared I did not know where I was from even with a trick which is to find japan first and the philippines second and scan the right angled intersection two fingers meeting make i was lost at sea yes i’ve heard it all” (21). The header of the poem “maps 1,” is initially etched out, with its title re-typed underneath. In this poem, Taitano structurally arranges the text into a short column, positioned to the upper left side of the page, where sentences trail off, as if circulating around a globe.

Continuing this globe-like, kinetic structure, in “maps 2” Taitano writes: “mrs. bradley was her name and it bears repeating though she’s long dead i will shout it: MRS. BRADLEY! was her name and she pulled me by my ear away from the map of the world in front of the white kids when i searched but could not find my beloved dot my beloved splotch she said lehua you are wasting our time and it was then i knew i was only half visible” (49). In “maps 2,” Taitano gives the heart of this narrative: a collision of cultural
knowing between Taitano and her American teacher (and white classmates). While Taitano wished to share her home island on the map, her teacher took the opportunity away. Taitano’s classroom story is a shared experience with many Chamorros in the states. Because of the Chamorro identity that many Chamaoles inhabit, many Chamorros like Taitano experience the ambiguity of Guam’s national identity, along with the near invisibility of Chamorro people in stateside consciousness. In “maps 3,” Taitano only writes “maps3.” in the center of the page, surrounded in white space, symbolizing invisibility, space, and distance of stateside consciousness and geographic location between her “beloved” island of Guam (79). In this sense, Taitano captures both the pain of distance from her homeland, and the role of distance in her ambiguity. Alongside “maps,” Taitano describes her feeling of invisibility, distance, and longing for home in the first poem of hers to appear in A Bell Made of Stones: a short, two-lined poem, entitled “insidemeanisland.” Taitano writes: “inside me an island / shaped hole” (13). Taitano paints the image of the island shaped hole, describing the “hollow ache” of loss of her homeland. Significantly, Taitano’s story is shaped by her distance from home and her “lament” or longing for return.

3.3 Looking the Part: Race-based Incongruence and Ambiguity of Chamaole Features (A Lose-Lose Situation Continued)

Taitano primarily addresses the incongruence and ambiguity of her race-based identity category in “sisters 1.” Taitano writes “this guy down at the corner store looks at my i.d. then me then the i.d. says hey you don’t look like your average white person. what the fuck are you supposed to say to th—t’s like the freakin’ woman across the street who
asked me to pray with her. one day i was planting flowers she says to me you’re lucky—with that indian blood you don’t h—to worry about getting burned” (27). In this poem, Taitano provides her response to the way those around her comment on her physical features. A central argument of racial formation theory by Michael Omi and Howard Winant defines race as “a way of ‘making up people’” and that “race-making can also be understood as a process of ‘othering’” (105). In this passage, Taitano appears startled by the comments from those around her, emotionally responding to being “othered” by thinking “what the fuck are you supposed to say to th—” (27). In these encounters with the male store clerk and lady across the street, Taitano’s poem reveals the possible stateside preconceived ideas in which Taitano’s appearance is associated. In both encounters, Taitano is “othered” as a person of color. Taitano’s response here realistically conveys the reactions that people of various races, especially those who are mixed-race, experience in daily conversations in the stores and streets near their homes. Omi and Winant explain these associations are consequences of human social habits, which create racial categories as a way to “navigate the world” and discover patterns of associated behaviors. However, Omi and Winant also argue that such categories of race “prove to be unreliable as supposed boundaries shift . . . and new collectivities emerge” (105). As seen in Taitano’s encounters, both the store clerk and lady across the street turned to their unreliable knowledge of racial categories. In this passage, these individuals use a reflexive social practice of racial othering, fail to seek or accurately recognize Taitano’s identities, and demonstrate how the confines of their cultural knowing limited the realm of identity possibilities that they could perceive.
Despite Taitano being racialized as “indian” or something other than white in these U.S. contexts, the boundaries of her physical features shift in a Chamorro context. Taitano continues: “I used to say a lot of things now I just realize we don— it in anywhere. Not white enough not brown enough. You know what Uncle Jessie calls us’—ind of funny, it’s chamaoles: half chamorro-half haoles. Who even knows which one is t—” (27). In this passage, Taitano becomes racially othered by her Chamorro uncle when he tells her she is “chamaole: half chamorro.” These examples from Taitano mirror the lose-lose situation mentioned in Santos’ poem. Taitano becomes othered by both communities, which generates a feeling of exclusion on both opposing sides, along with her ancestral, linguistic, and cultural identities associated with those respective races. Omi and Winant explain how “defining racial groups is a process fraught with confusion, contradiction, and unintended consequences” and that race categories are “always subject to multiple interpretations” (105). Chamaoles like Taitano provide evidence of these shifting interpretations. Taitano’s interracial ancestry results in a blurring of fixed societal models of the physical features associated with race, which casts her appearance as something unfamiliar in both settings. By failing to interpret and understand her multiple ancestry and provide her with a sense of unquestioned belonging, both Chamorro and haole communities fell short of recognizing the arbitrary nature of physical appearance in relation to race, culture, and ancestry. Omi and Winant argue that “no social category rises to the level of being understood as a fixed, objective, social fact” (105). Considering this notion that racial categories are not fixed, Omi and Winant suggest that dominant understandings and categorization of race can be reconstructed. Chamaole experiences
such as Taitano’s reveal the racial limitations of Chamorro and haole binaries, bringing into question the general understanding of what “Chamorros,” “whites,” and “Americans” should look like.

3.4 Transcending Dichotomies and Birthing a New Consciousness: Hyphens and Spaces In Between

In “hyphenation,” Taitano further displays stage seven of Anzaldúa’s new consciousness by using imagery of the hyphen as the symbol for the “third space” or the space “in-between.” In an epigraph to “hyphenation,” Taitano quotes Theodore Roosevelt, Columbus Day, 1915, which states “There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism . . . a hyphenated American is not an American at all” (41). The epigraph Taitano chooses for this poem emphasizes a sense of belonging (or lack thereof) to American identity, a generally conditional one in the Chamorro experience. Contrary to the idea emulated in her epigraph, which suggests the hyphen, or space in-between, marks an individual as “less than” their “full” counterparts, Taitano theorizes the hyphen as a symbol for transcending opposing identities. Whether Chamorros are labeled as not-American-enough, or labeled as too-Americanized to be indigenous, Taitano writes “hyphens hyphens hyphens mostly to break apart of can join separate . . . hyphenation hyphenation hyphenation . . . a conversation turns to hyphens who we seem versus who we feel we are someone says I can’t be found on either side of the perforation someone says i am am am the hyphen” (41). By claiming the space that is the hyphen, Taitano refutes the idea of eternally opposing sides, claiming the hyphen as a way to “join” these “separate” communities. Taitano writes in her preface letter: “This is
the hyphen inside of me talking. Fused, spliced, separated, compounded. I am with and without explanation. These are y intersections of half-ness. Of -lessness. Of not being brown, white, feminine, masculine, straight, gay enough, according to and because of and compared to” (preface). As Taitano embraces the hyphen, she perforates the boundaries between the identities she straddles, asserting her sense of belonging into both spaces at once. Despite common practice of excluding those who are mixed-race and multicultural, Taitano uses rhetoric of inclusion to set the stage for both communities to acknowledge her belonging.

4. Thoughts on Mestiza Consciousness Processes Exhibited in Chamaole Literature

As this analysis comes to a close, I am most fascinated with the ways that each poet uniquely addressed their encounters with cultural collisions, incongruence, and ambiguity. Each poet demonstrated several of Anzaldúa’s seven-step process, especially steps one through four on identifying the collisions, incongruence, and ambiguities of the borderlands. Both Santos and Taitano demonstrated steps five and seven in their poems, transcending their cultural dichotomies and promoting a new consciousness of mestisu or mestisa identity. Taitano writes: “I am grateful that you are willing to explore the spaces between . . . to approach these pages with what you know of home, of assimilation, of diasporas, of transoceanic communication” (preface). By placing these poems side by side through literary analysis in this thesis, I hoped to promote Taitano’s notion of transoceanic communication. Despite the different amount of time each poet had spent living on Guam, their gaps in age, differences in gender identity, and the unique
conditions of their encounters, these poets connected multiple threads of a shared Chamaole experience. While I have interpreted the poetry that these writers have published, my autoethnographic interests pushed me to seek out, upon their consent, interviews with these writers. In Chapter 3 of my thesis, I will expand on the shared themes between these poets’ experiences, and provide a platform to discuss a step not yet covered in their poetry: Anzaldúa’s sixth step, which argues that a mestiza must recognize the responsibilities she carries with each identity she shoulders. Along with these themes of mestiza consciousness formation beyond the page, I will discuss the methodology that informed my decision to gather oral accounts from Perez-Jackson, Santos, and Taitano.
Chapter 3: Chamaole Narratives Beyond the Page

1. A *Mestiza* Methodology

In the design stage of this thesis project, I felt the desire to gather Chamaole narratives beyond the text in my selected poems. Considering the length constraints of this thesis, I limited my qualitative study to just three interviews with the poets discussed in the previous chapter. As Chamorros, these poets and myself come from an oratory culture. While designing this project, I considered the content of the poems I selected, and based on my experiences and observations, assumed there would be more to these stories than the poetic tradition, even one as flexible as free verse, could cover. While I envisioned gathering numerous narratives from participants of various contexts, I recognized the enormity of such a project, and decided to leave the larger qualitative design for future scholarly work. Launching forth from poetry analysis, I conducted autoethnographically informed interviews with Jessica Perez-Jackson, Corey Santos, and Lehua Taitano.

Seeing that qualitative methods would best gather narrative data from my selected participants, I was happy to find methods compatible to my envisioned design modeled in *Autoethnography: An Overview* by autoethnographers Carolyn Ellis et al., and *When Half is Whole: Multiethnic Asian American Identities* by ethnicity scholar Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu.
1.1 Interview Design

Over the span of three months, I conducted interviews with each of the participating poets. Informed *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* by Linda Tuhiwai Smith, the researcher-participant relations process of my interview methods were guided by pro-indigenous methodology. Prior to these interviews, poets were sent the list of possible interview questions; however, I designed a semi-structured interview that invited an open format for most of the interview, foregrounding an environment that allowed interviewees the freedom to talk-story and share knowledge in a more conversational format. The questions I formulated for my interviews sought to gain insight on the context of the conflicts mentioned in participants’ poems, and also to capture experiences that may not have been included in their poems.

2. Connecting and Categorizing Strategies

The coding process of my data analysis had been informed by Joseph Maxwell’s *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Maxwell writes: “In qualitative research, the goal of coding is not primarily to count things, but to ‘fracture’ (Strauss, 1987, p. 29) the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison . . . and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts” (106). Using matrices informed by Maxwell’s description of categorizing strategy, I juxtaposed transcriptions from each participant according to theme. In this design, transcriptions become fractured and reconnected by shared themes in participants’ testimonies. These categorizing strategies helped me to more clearly view the qualitative data through my selected theoretical
lenses, to provide possible answers for and avenues to further develop my research questions.

The interview data that I will be discussing below contains omissions of interview transcripts indicated by ellipses. As mentioned by Maxwell, the limitation of categorizing is that “analytic blinders” omit the full context of individual narratives, and that such context can never fully be reconstructed (112). While I attempt to contextualize the data in narrative paragraphs below the matrices, contextual relationships from each participants’ overall biographies will be lost. However, Maxwell’s work qualifies the use of categorizing despite this flaw in containing context. While huge sections of individual participants’ stories were omitted, the strength of organizing their experiences by theme provided a visually holistic, ethnographically shared narrative, between individuals labeled as Chamaole. The data below is organized in sequence of most explicitly drawn categorical connections across narratives, to more loosely connected discussions of shared themes. The primary significance of this qualitative report in my study, is that interviews touched upon all of my project’s research questions (refer to pages 11 and 12). Because of my organizational method of most explicitly shared connections to more implicit ones, the research questions answered below are reordered and synthesized when needed.
2.1 Research Question #5 What specific identity ambiguity encounters do Chamaoles face?

Across all my participant interviews, all interviewees shared their first encounters where they had struggled with their identity. Some of these participants had discussed experiences touched upon in their poems, and others had brought up instances that they had not covered in their poetry. These responses below were facilitated by the question “What challenges have you experienced with being “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole”?”

| “Othered” by Chamorros | J. That was seriously my nickname for high school basketball when I was at Oceanview. 75 cents. Because my coach was like “Ay, haole! Haole! Haole!” | C. In 5th grade . . I first realized, wow. I’m different. I look different . . this guy . . he was just a real asshole . . one day during class, he called me a “white boy.” | L. The way my family used haole was a way of saying “other than us”. . . he was my favorite uncle. But he said it like, oh, that’s how he sees us. . . my mom would use the word half-caste. I’m not gonna call myself half-caste. |

In Jessica’s account, she explained that her mother’s father was Irish-American, which prompted Jessica to reply to those who called her haole with the response, “I’m only a quarter!” In this transcription, Jessica relays her basketball team’s nickname for her as “75 cents” or only three-fourths Chamorro. While many Chamaole stories conventionally share perceptions of being fifty-fifty, Jessica’s story illuminates that Chamaole identity can be assigned to individuals of varying ancestral lines.

Critical race theory scholar Neil Gotanda calls this phenomenon where people quantify their ethnicity in halves, thirds, fourths, eighths, and so forth as “fractional
composition” (Crenshaw 258). In his work, Gotanda challenges the idea of being a fraction of an identity, what could be described as the opposite of the “one drop rule” of blood quantum politics. The concept of fractional composition as a social construct to be challenged is one that this project considers throughout, and especially illuminates in the next chapter.

In Corey’s account, he provided context (not listed above) to explain how his father is Chamorro and his mother is haole. He contextualized this transcription by explaining how his parents both supported his use of the Chamorro language and would send him to Hurao Academy immersion school for summer camp. Shortly after his enrollment the summer after fourth grade, he experienced this encounter. Corey emphasized how his 5th to 8th grade years were the peak of his encounters with race-based conflict. Above, Corey shares an encounter with his classmate who gave an unsolicited remark, name-calling Corey a “white boy” in a confrontational way.

In Lehua’s account, she explained that her mother, who is Chamorro, married a Dutch-Irish-American man, who was stationed on Guam as a U.S. airman. Above, Lehua shares her first time being called Chamaole by one of her uncles on her mother’s side, while at a family party in the states when she was twenty-years-old. Contrary to some accounts that describe Chamaole used as an endearment or joke, Lehua describes her uncle using it in a way that emphasized “haole,” as a way to “other” Lehua from her Chamorro cousins.
As shared above, each participant encountered an experience of being “othered” on the basis of race, from their Chamorro communities. In the next set of interview data, each participant expresses their reactions to being assigned these “othering” labels such as “75 cents,” “white boy,” “haole,” and “Chamaole.”

| Incongruence and Pain Threshold | J. I know it was a term of endearment. They loved me and we got along. But one day I was just annoyed and said “I’m not even full haole! I’m only a quarter!” And they were like “nah you’re 75 cents” . . . And so that stuck and that was my nickname. “75 cents! Get the rebound!” It’s like come on man. | C. And that was the first time I heard “white boy” used in a derogatory kind of way. I had always heard it descriptively. And when he did, something in me just snapped. I was really angry. I jumped up . . . I almost tore his ear off. Looking back, it wasn’t until that moment that I realized I was seen differently, and that, really, was the hidden knife in that comment he made. | L. I felt really insulted by it . . . it hurt because he was my favorite uncle. My uncles . . . To me, they represented my Chamorro family . . . It was the first time I felt I wasn’t Chamorro . . . I think deep down it’s something that hurts . . . It is a word of othering, and then when it’s used on you, you’re like “that’s not me.” And that’s serious. That did something to me. |

In these parts of the interviews I conducted with participants, I would like to describe the atmosphere. Participants were each solemn as they described feelings of being told by members of their communities that they do not belong. It is especially clear in Corey and Lehua’s accounts that being called “haole” or “white” felt offensive and insulting. In these stages of their personal development, each participant described it as a painful experience, as they were made to feel they were not Chamorro, or not Chamorro enough.

In her work, Gloria Anzaldúa talks about a pain threshold, and how for a variety
of multiracial individuals, mislabeling has different effects on the psyche of each individual. For my study’s participants, the deep connections to their Chamorro identities through their family ties played a role in the amount of pain they felt in being labeled “haole.” Seeing this shared experience across all three narratives is significant, and is an experience that I also endured in my own moments of being “othered” as white.

Each participant, however, qualifies their experiences in different ways. Jessica contextualizes how she did not feel that her coach and teammates necessarily intended to make her feel alienated. Likewise, Lehua considers how her uncle may have intended to use the term descriptively, and not with the intent to make her feel like an outsider. Differing from these experiences, Corey’s account explicitly describes a physical confrontation as a consequence of his racial identity. These accounts bring attention to the role of whiteness on Guam, and sparks curiosity about the desire of Chamorros to call out the whiteness in the room. As Omi and Winant describe race formation as a “process of othering,” I investigate what makes the “haole” identity an “othered” role by further scrutinizing data from participant interviews.
2.2 Research Questions 1, 2, and 3: What does Whiteness on Guam represent? In what ways do Chamorro identity and white American identity grate against one another? What racial identities on Guam are the most racially comfortable, and when?

In the table below, I share interview data from my participants that address the collisions between Chamorro and haole identities. When asked about what it means to be haole, participants came up with the responses below.

| What does haole identity on Guam represent? | J. I will admit that sometimes I benefit from the haole side . . . My son’s and daughter’s babysitter . . . Old school Chamorro lady . . . I tell people . . . I may be Chamaole or whatever, but here on Guam I have benefitted from that white privilege . . . if I walk into the same establishment as my babysitter, and I ask the same question . . . they will treat me differently than how they treat her . . . We may get teased, sometimes in a loving way, sometimes people judge you, but, ultimately, because you have that bit of white in you, you will always be treated, either with a little bit more fear or respect or something different than, you know like my babysitter . . . I’ve witnessed this. | C. A moment I’m remembering from Hurao academy. A teacher we had, he was an activist, a really angry guy . . . he was telling us about Fena lake and saying “Yeah you know those military there? I know how to shoot an M16. If I knew I was going to die, I would go there and shoot all those fucking haoles for stealing my lake.” And this is where I learned that “I don’t want to be associated with that.” And my peers around me, there were a couple of other boys, and we were all white. You know. And when we all went home we were telling our parents “yeah the teacher, he cussed in class.” | L. The way my family used haole was a way of saying “other than us” . . . My experience with that word is that you don’t want to be associated with it. My cousins are much darker than me. They look like the “quintessential” Chamorro, whatever that means . . . |
In this set of interview data, each participant describes haole identities in a variety of ways. However, it is clear, in Lehua’s words, that “haole is a way of saying ‘other.’” In Lehua’s account, haole is meant to describe someone who is different from Chamorros because of their whiteness (whether that be appearance, ancestry, nationality, or a combination within white American context). In Corey’s account, haole is explicitly tied to white American military identity. Significantly, Corey and I had a conversation about the distinctions in vernacular between being “haole” in a descriptive way, and being a “fucking haole” in a manner of behavior and attitude. Perhaps loosely related, Jessica describes her haole identity as one that grants her access to privilege. This perception in Jessica’s interview infers haole as more educated, serious, and a symbol of authoritative power.

These nuances, which have just surfaced in these interviews, would be interesting avenues of future research. These nuances aside, it is clear in this data set that participants had been taught to view “haole” identity as one to dissociate from. The role of this aversion to haole identity through cultural training appears to be a large component that has shaped how participants’ experiences their encounters with race-based prejudice.
2.3 Research Question #4: What identities do Chamaoles, inhabit simultaneously?

In the table below, I share interview data from my participants that communicate the ways they perceived their identities and sense of belonging. When asked whether or not they use the term “Chamaole” to identify themselves, participants had given the responses below.

| Self-Identification | J. I call myself Chamorro, and I know that’s my dominant culture . . . I definitely identify more with being Chamorro, but at the same time . . . I understand the haole side and that perspective to an extent, just because ultimately I will always say I’m Chamorro . . . | C. I’m Chamaole by blood, but culture is what makes you, you. It’s your values and your beliefs. It makes up who you are. In that regard, I’m Chamorro. I’m 100 percent. It took a lot to get there . . . | L. When people ask me I will say I am Chamorro. As a subtext, I will say I’m white. Just a fact. A fact that came after having a revelation of Chamorros not seeing me as being Chamorro . . . |

In light of the interviews I conducted with these participants, the most conclusive pattern I observed across Jessica, Corey, and Lehua’s narratives was their shared primary cultural “self-identification” as Chamorro. Along with Chamorro as their dominant identity, all three participants claimed haole or white as their secondary racial identity. Most clearly expressed by Lehua, this haole or white racial identity formed later in their adolescent and adult years as a result of numerous encounters of being “othered” as white from their Chamorro peers.

Similarly, all three participants described going through a Chamorro cultural training in their families that instilled the word “haole” to mean “those who are different
from us.” All three participants’ accounts of the definition of “haole” in their interviews and their poems share alignment with Monnig’s definition of haole as “white American” with a specific appearance and set of behaviors.
2.4 Research Question #7: What strategies would help Chamaoles reconstruct their identities in psychologically positive ways?

In the table below, participants shared aspects of their healing processes when encountering identity ambiguity. When asked about the Chamorro language, participants shared the following in their interviews.

| Chamorro Language Speaking Identity | J. I’d still like to be fluent before I die, working on it . . . I asked that question “Can I even call myself Chamorro if I can’t speak the language?” I have come to terms with it that I can, because there’s so much more to our culture than just the language, even though I think it is an extremely important aspect. And I don’t ever want it to go extinct and die out . . . I love that this younger generation is embracing it and running with it and they’re becoming fluent and teaching their kids. And I love Hurao, and we send our kids there every summer. It’s like they teach us. | C. I went to Hurao Academy for summer camp for two years. 4th and 5th grade. My parents enrolled me. I didn’t really say “Oh I want to go to Hurao.” My parents were pretty much like “You’re going to summer camp at Hurao” and I was like “ok” . . . it’s funny when you’re the “white boy” in the room, but you’re speaking Chamorro better than everyone else there. It’s pretty fun time. | L. My father, who was white, he really pushed for assimilation. He would tell my mom “Don’t speak Chamorro to the kids.” As a 5 year old, I lost it. And these are the consequences of being half. It was a very violent decision. That’s a violent act to take someone’s language away from them. The loss of language is not just words, it’s access to ideology. It’s access to indigenous ways of thinking. Access to stories who tell us who we are, words where there’s no translation. If you cut off language, you cut off a shared path from the past. Across the world colonizers used it to erase. An empire doing that to our people, my father doing that to our family . . . maybe the way of healing is to push myself through. |
Woven into their experiences as Chamorros of the 21st century, all participants describe their loss of the Chamorro language as a location of culture conflict between their American education and Chamorro heritage. In this aspect of their linguistic ambiguity, all of my participants incorporate the Chamorro language into their poems as a way of healing the wounds of what they had lost linguistically. Beyond their poems, Jessica and Lehua explicitly mention their process of regaining fluency in Chamoru. While Corey does not mention this particular goal in his interview, it can be seen that his linguistic identity played a strong role in his identity rhetoric. The role of Chamorro language in Chamaole identity development also serves as a possible topic for future research.
2.5 Research Questions 6 and 8: What rhetorical strategies do Chamaoles use to negotiate conflict caused by identity ambiguity? What can we learn from the Chamaole experience?

In the data set below, each participant shared the ways that they balance, juggle, or oscillate between their cultural, racial, ancestral, and linguistic identities. These responses were facilitated by the question “Between Chamorro, haole, and Chamaole, is there an identity that you most strongly identify with?”

| Third-Space | J. I think there’s benefits to it. Because I occupy that space I can see both perspectives of all these interactions . . . it’s a big responsibility too, because if you have that perspective and advantage, use it to help others who don’t have that . . . cultures evolve and change, and the only way to survive as a culture is yes, keep those strong components . . . the fanginge, the respect, those things that inherently define Chamorro culture . . . if we want to survive in the future we need to know how to adapt and move forward while still holding on to our identity . . . doesn’t mean forget about it, it just means don’t be so rigid that you can’t learn how to work together and get the best of both worlds. |
| C. . . I’m a haole, 50 percent of me, but I’m not a “fucking haole.” I’m not “one of those fucking haoles” . . . “Sorry Mom!” . . . My mom is haole, but she’s not a “fucking haole.” I mean even she wonders “why do these haoles act this way” . . . I’m Chamaole by blood, but culture is what makes you, you. It’s your values and your beliefs. It makes up who you are. In that regard, I’m Chamorro . . . It took a lot to get there. |
| L. We shouldn’t have to question “Where do I fit in?” “What do we call ourselves?” . . . it’s some serious work on identity when you’re looking at the space in between. It is a space of yearning . . . the people I work with and enjoy talking to are the people who say “I recognize this story. This is my story.” And there is a lot of us. And we are just talking about ethnicity . . . I don’t exist without intersectionality, without the multiplicity of identities and factors that make up my understanding of myself and the world . . . we often define ourselves in relation to dominant paradigms and structures of power . . . embracing all the ways that I am me, I am not just existing in spite of. I am allowing myself to exist as I am. |
Each participant describes a third-space to the Chamorro versus haole binary, and seek to adjust to each identity according to the environment in which they are placed. In this regard, inhabiting a third-space allows participants to see their mixed heritage as a positive phenomenon, instead of a lose-lose situation. Participants use this rhetoric of the third-space to heal the wounds caused by ambiguity and empower them to view themselves as whole, rather than fractional parts, of existing identity communities.

In Corey’s account, isolating haole racial features from cultural features helped Corey to navigate his position in the space in between. Corey recognizes his Chamaole ancestry and physical features, but also recognizes his world view rests dominantly in his Chamorro cultural way. In this sense, Corey demonstrates Lehua’s idea of “allowing myself to exist as I am.” These sets of data allow me to view how participants, as described by Jessica, “adapt and move forward” from the rigid social world to one that picks and chooses aspects of each identity to occupy, utilize, and synthesize to create a better world.

All participants described accepting their haole racial identity as a part of their process of navigating their ambiguity. Beyond just their racial categories, participants all shared ways that Chamorro and haole cultures differ, and described possible ways for both worlds to come together. In the interview data above, these connections are more clearly seen in Jessica and Lehua’s interview accounts. Significantly, Corey touches on similar ideas in his poem “Chamaoli,” and his self-identification indicates a balanced understanding of his dual ancestral lines yet dominant cultural identity.
3. What We’ve Learned About Chamaole Experiences, Where We Can Expand, and Why It Matters

Qualitative researcher Joseph Maxwell explains that in all qualitative research, information gathered offers an aspect of knowledge that is determined by the relationship of the data to lived experiences and theoretical application. Maxwell argues that conclusions in qualitative research “depends on the relationship of your conclusions to reality, and no methods can completely assure that you have captured this” (121). While my methods and research design have captured threads of similar experiences and perspectives across three published poets, a duplicated project with a different set of participants may show variations in responses. For future studies, I would hypothesize that Chamaoles who dominantly identify as Chamorro may likely share similar narratives as those who participated in my study. For individuals of both Chamorro and white American ancestry who live disconnected from Chamorro culture, the pain threshold of ambiguity may vary from those described in my study.

Maxwell defines this framework of validity analysis as observing “the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account” (121). For my study, I can speak toward the efforts I have made to produce a credible and descriptive account of Chamaole experiences lived through the lives of my participants. Additionally, from my day to day observations, I have seen and heard many Chamaoles voice similar concerns and ideas as those in this study. At the same time, I have also interacted with Chamaole individuals who feel they equally identify with both Chamorro and haole identities, or lean toward more neo-liberal notions of identity that
espouse notions of a post-cultural world and way of life, commonly engrained in American cultural world views.

3.1 Gaps in Acquired Data

During the pre-writing stages of this chapter, I assembled multiple matrices to view relationships between my participants’ experiences. Above, I discussed the themes shared across all three participants’ narratives. For a future study, the gaps in these matrices could be developed into follow up research questions with participants. For example, of all three participants, Jessica discussed how she feels that her Chamaole identity afforded her “white privileges.” While I refrained from delving deeply into a white privilege inquiry, it is a noteworthy topic for further research.

Data from these themes suggests that participants’ family environments may have played a large role in the development of their cultural practices and value systems, solidifying their stronger ties to a Chamorro identity. Future research might look into these acculturation processes, and seek to quantify the impact of family influence, and perhaps additional factors, on the formation of a dominant Chamorro cultural identity despite a multiethnic and multiracial heritage.

3.2 Framework Limitations

It is important that I discuss the limitations of my theoretical framework and research questions on the analysis of these data sets. For instance, I did not discuss gender or class roles in these participants’ identity formations. An intersectional analysis using class, feminist, and gender theory of participants’ narratives could reveal a deeper insight into the nuances of their intersectional identities. Additional theoretical frameworks, such
as postcolonial theory, applied to this data collection would also shift the focus of these narratives.

Similarly, the scope of this project was narrowed specifically to Chamaole narratives from Guam. In future projects, it would be worthwhile to examine the nuances of mixed-race identity from the Northern Marianas Islands, each rich with its own historical variables. Additionally, this project does not control for variables in geographic location, such as time of life spent on the home island versus time spent living in the states. Some scholars may find it of interest to examine homeland and diaspora Chamaole narratives\(^9\), and discover the unique insight such a study would offer.

In the next and final chapter, I will discuss the strengths and limitations of my overall project design, the impacts of this research process on my own identity formation, what I feel are this project’s most salient points, and my visions for expanding this research.

\(^9\) For further reading on Chamorro diasporic studies, see Michael Perez’s “Insiders Without, Outsiders Within: Chamorro Ambiguity and Diasporic Identities on the U.S. Mainland.”
Chapter 4: Lessons from the Chamaole Experience

1. Room for Expansion: Additional Nuances for Future Research

Originally, I hoped to gather many more narratives beyond the three participants of my study. However, due to length constraints, I leave that work to future scholars. Among the ideas for expansion, broadening the participant pool seems like the next worthwhile step. For instance, I would have loved to incorporate accounts from members of my family, who share many similar experiences as those covered in this thesis. The epilogue at the closing of this chapter serves as a tribute to them, as it provides a patchwork quilt of encounters they have shared with me over the years. Beyond my family, I would expect a general call for participants to incite public interest. There are several people in my community who expressed interest in participating in my thesis, and I expect many others in our community have more to say and stories to share. Additionally, Chamorro identity is not limited to the context of Guam, the southernmost island in the Marianas. I recommend future studies to incorporate accounts by Chamorros from the Northern Mariana Islands, including Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

As mentioned in my Chapter 3 limitations, current participants of this project share similar socio-economic contexts. All have completed or are currently pursuing higher education, and each has published creative work in literary journals, with Taitano publishing multiple books of poetry. Additionally, Taitano and Perez-Jackson are in the same age group (early 40s), and Santos and I are in the same age group (early 20s). In addition to the current participants, I feel this study needs to investigate community members of different socio-economic and geographic contexts. Beyond adding more
participants with variations in socio-economic and geographic context, I also envision conducting a comparative inter-generational study with participants currently in their early 30s, 50s, 60s and 70s, to explore the possibilities of generational variations. If this model were to be replicated and applied to more Chamaole participants of varying socio-economic statuses, ages, and from different geographical regions of the Marianas, across the U.S., and across Chamorro communities around the world, such scholarship would possibly provide an increased validity of these narratives.

1.1 Methodological Expansion

While I have no background in formal anthropological training, this thesis provides qualitative evidence and uses methods informed by anthropological practice. The synthesis of literary studies, anthropological methods, and sociological theories in this project are a creative mestisa scholarship that provided the appropriate home for this culmination of stories. To expand my methodology, I suggested a mixed-methods approach, which would use quantitative data from surveys to gather information on the perceptions of mixed-race identity from Guam. Additionally, theoretical changes, such as using grounded theory, would provide a rich collection of narratives which a scholar could attempt to trace back to existing theory, or highlight thought spaces not yet conceptualized, written and published. I would hypothesize that these “knowledges” contain their own, valuable rhetoric of understanding of race, nationality, and culture.

2. Final Thoughts

To further foster this familiarity with the mixed-race Chamorro community, the development of lesson plans on mixed-race Chamorro identity is a dream I had for this
project. While length constraints prevent me from tackling that dream in this thesis, I expect to share my work with the University of Guam Press, who has piloted the teaching of literature from Guam in the Guam Department of Education 10th grade literature classes.

Ultimately, I hope this thesis demonstrates the positive outcomes of seeing oneself as a whole. In “When Half is Whole: Multietnic Asian American Identities,” critical mixed-race studies scholar Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu propels a multiethnic and multiracial consciousness that views individuals of mixed-backgrounds as double, dual, and whole, rather than “less than” their counterparts. Murphy-Shigematsu’s work, much like the work of Anzaldúa, and the perspectives of Perez-Jackson, Santos, and Taitano, articulates a need for mixed-ancestry individuals to feel a complete sense of belonging to their communities. Murphy-Shigematsu, of Japanese and Irish-American ancestry, synthesized and analyzed multiple mixed-race narratives in an autoethnographic collection. He writes, “I present these narratives as a way of combating a pervasive feature of life for many people – being “Othered,” seen as different, marginalized, and isolated” (4). In this shared vein of thought, my project joins the voices of scholars such as Anzaldúa and Murphy-Shigematsu in critical mixed-race studies, who seek to increase familiarity with the multiracial experience.

The ultimate goal of this study lies with, as Lehua describes, those who can read this and say “This is my story.” In this thesis, I highly regard the juxtaposition of all three participants’ poems. Jessica Perez-Jackson’s “Half Caste,” Corey Santos’ “Chamaole,” and Lehua M. Taitano’s A Bell Made of Stones each tell a story of standalone literary
merit; however, bringing their poems and oral narratives together demonstrates how questions about identity are shared across a community of people, and alleviates the sense of isolation that many mixed-race individuals experience. I hope this thesis helps someone discover that the mixed-race journey is not one that needs to be made alone.
Epilogue

“Guam? Is that some kind of a fruit?”

“So where are you FROM from? When did you move to Guam?”

“My teacher in the states tried to tell my class that Guam is part of Asia and that I’m Asian. I told her in front of everyone that she was wrong. I’m a Pacific islander. I am Chamorro. I am from the Marianas. I’m not Asian. She told me I was wrong. Who the hell is she to know.”

“My father didn’t let us speak Chamorro at the dinner table. He didn’t like it. He told us he needs to understand what we are saying, so we were only allowed to use English. My mother still used Chamorro with us when he wasn’t around.”

“Even though I’m both Chamoru and white, the other kids never really picked on me because I was taller than the rest of them.”

“My friend calls your people Guambodians.”

“Haoles are so fucking gross. Oh, I’m sorry.”

“Oh really you graduated from GW? You look like you went to Academy.”

“When I lived on Coronado with your grandpa, a white lady assumed that I as a brown woman could not have been the mother to my blonde and fair-skinned baby girl. She grabbed your Auntie, and took her to the police station as a missing child. She ran all over the island, crying and looking for Miriam. Soon as I walked into the station, there she was with the “good samaritan.” Her mouth dropped to the floor when she found out I was the mother the whole time.”

The dental hygienist holds my mouth open with instruments and says “Oh boy, I’m sorry I’m getting “ kitan.” Have you been living here long enough to know what that means?

The Honolulu airport gate agent scans my boarding pass for flight to San Francisco, then looks at me, and says with a smile, “Oh good you’re going back home.”
“When I first saw you while doing my presentation on anti-militarism, I was like ohhh man, this white girl is probably a military kid and she is going to go off on me.”

The Olive Garden waiter in San Diego cards me for the wine tasting he just offered. I hand him my REAL ID compliant Guam Driver’s License and he says, “Oh I’m sorry we can’t take an out of country I.D.”

“Hi ma’am! Good morning. Where are you from? Really you’re Chamoru? Wow, I really thought you were military or something.”

“Your mother called in the middle of the night again. Why don’t you tell your mother how to tell time in America?”

“You should’ve just started speaking to him in Chamorro that way he’d feel embarrassed for thinking you’re a haole.”

“Wow! I forgot the KFC here in California doesn’t have red rice. The KFC here doesn’t have any rice at all? Not even white rice?” He interrupts me, “our KFC doesn’t have all those weird things. No I don’t mean it like that, it would just be abnormal to have those things here.”

“white settler bitch.”

“I went up to him and he asked if I was Portuguese. I said ‘No.’ He asked if I was Mexican. I said ‘No. Is that all you know?’”

“This kid called me white trash. That’s the one thing I can’t stand to be called. I said I’ll show you white trash, diablu mutherfucker.”

“You know what’s the point of this whole thing of ‘What are you, Are you haole or are you Chamorro . . . ’ ‘Why ask? Why do they care?’ ‘Does it even matter?’
Appendix A

Jessica Perez-Jackson

Half Caste

And I'm not even half.
A quarter, but in high school I was called 75 cents.
A term of endearment maybe, not meant to be offensive
You haole.
I almost got beat up a few times just for being the new girl from
the States.
But I'm not from the States, I was just there because my mom was
going to school.
And now I'm here. Fighting furiously to show – to prove that
I'm just as Chamorro as you.
So I may have a haole accent when I pronounce the words salmon
and almond
with a silent l.
But I am just as Chamorro as you.

And now I'm in my thirties. Not a timid, insecure 14 year old
trying to fit in.
Still trying to prove my Chamorro-ness.
Taota Inalahan.
I na'an hu si Jessica.
Ñalang yu –
Hungry to learn more than just some memorized sentences in my
language.
Can I even call it mine if I can't speak it?

And then there was the elevator ride in San Francisco when I was
sandwiched between three suits.
White suits.
Staring down at me from their towering heights, like a piece of
brown meat,
Succulent, tender, exotic, small,
And weak.
HA! They’d like to think so.
Little did they know I knew what they were looking at
What they were thinking.
You’d like to conquer me
Like they conquered my island, wouldn’t you?
Pay me less than the Chinese girl because you think I’m Mexican.
Tell me that my boots are distracting you because you can’t stop
  gazing at my
nice,
round
dogan.
As I squeezed past their lascivious grins I remember thinking
I don’t like to feel small and insignificant,
something to be used and trampled on and controlled.
The little island girl.
Are all girls from Guam pretty like you?
Are all you Guam people so nice and do you all like to eat so
  much?
Where is Guam by the way? Do you wear hula skirts and run
  around topless?
Do they have MTV?

When I’m home I feel like I have to earn my membership
And when I’m away I have to fight off ridiculous questions and
  stereotypes because no one knows what I am. Who I am.

I’d like to think I’m just as Chamorro as you are

Because I am not 75 cents.
I live on Guam. I am Chamorro
yet I’m also white—
a bao-li.

One of those “white boys”—
“White boy? Leche pa’ka’ka I pachot mu.”
As my fist connected with his chin I could’ve sworn we had
the same skin tone.
“My dad’s Chamorro!”
“What? Yeah, but you’re still white.”
What the heck did that even mean?
I was nine.

I recall one of my Chamorro teachers saying
“if you’re brown stick around,
and if you’re white get out of sight…”
Isn’t it funny?
To have learned how my ancestors
carved out their proas,
in the same day those words were carved
on the inside of my skull.

New school, new faces—
Dead saints wereuddenly more important
than dead chieft.
I spoke Chamorro but I got funny looks.
“Whoa, you can speak Chamorro? You’re so chau’d”
I just wanted to be accepted,
and since no one else spoke my language, I didn’t either.
What little native vocabulary I had would diminish.
But I fit in, so that was nice.
New school, new faces—
“Dude, you’re so haoli.”
“Aww, you’re such a white boy.”
I stuttered and stammered and laughed off their jokes.
I wanted to scold them in Chamorro but my tongue
couldn’t find the words
because my mind had lost them.
I was so confused: “I swear my dad’s Chamorro, guys,”
I heard myself say
but am I Chamorro?
They’re right: I don’t even look it.

Doubts of that sort danced in my mind for years.
Back and forth, I would argue with myself:
I’m too Chamorro to be white.
But am I also too white to be Chamorro?

I found myself acting more Chamorro
when I was with my brown friends
and acting more white when I was with my white friends—
I had to take a step back.

Why was I acting?
What was I trying to prove?
And to whom was I trying to prove it?
I was furious because I shouldn’t have had to prove anything!
I am Chamorro. And I am white.
I am white. And I am Chamorro.
That’s just who I am.
I can love my island, and I can love my culture,
but I can also love corn dogs and I can get excited when the 4th of
July comes around.
And that’s alright.
You see, now I am okay with being Chamaoli.

But I am faced with a real problem,
because not everyone thinks the same way as me.
I can speak endlessly about how I’m treated as a second-class citizen
but to some I don’t have credibility because of the colonizer’s
blood that flows through my veins.
I’m ignored when I go to the “white places” because my skin is brown
and I can hear people change the way they speak
so the simple island boy can keep up with their white talk.

There is so much more,
but who would listen?

Because they can’t see my message.

They won’t hear my voice.

Because the color of my skin
    always seems to muffle anything I have to say.

104  Corey Santos
Appendix C:

mapsl.

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hilippinesse
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tiont wofing
ersmeeti ngm
akeiwaslost
atseayesi'v
eheard it all
MRS. BRADLEY!

A woman with a name and it be
arsrepeatingth
oughshe'slongd
eadwillshouti
t: MRS. BRADLEY!
washernameands
hepulledmebymy
ea ra wa yfrom
themapofthewor
ldinfrontofthe
whitekidswheni
searchedbutcou
ldnotfindmybel
oveddotmybelov
edspotchshesa
idlehuayouarew
attingourtimea
nditwasthenikn
ewiwasonlyhalf
visible.
maps3.
sister.

so this guy down at the corner store looks at my i.d. then me then the i.d. says hey you don't look like your average white person. what the fuck are you supposed to say to that? it's like the freakin' woman across the street who asked me to pray with her. one day i was planting flowers she says to me you're lucky—with that indian blood you don't have to worry about getting burned. i used to say a lot of things now i just realize we don't do it in anywhere. not white enough not brown enough. you know what uncle jessie calls us? kind of funny, it's chamoses: half chamorro-half haolea. who even knows which one is t:
sisters2.

My sweet heart, the word for 'air', as in the breathing stuff around us, is 'aire'. You see but ya gotta kind of roll that r a little. if you want 'wind', as in blowin' wind, it's manglo, pronounced monglu - long 'u' that's your chamorro lesson fo' today - hu guinya hao! i hope you know what that means... hu(long 'u')='me or I'; guinya(pronounced 'guy'a')='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you' there are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you' there are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are other common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao(pronounced 'how')='you'. There are common family names here (li dija-long i)='love'; hao
"There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism... a hyphenated American is not an American at all."
---Theodore Roosevelt
Columbus Day, 1915

hyphen mostly to break apart or

hyphenation process reading

the same El Dorado a conversation turns to hyphens

we feel someone says

someone found on either side of the perforation

i am the hyphen

i remember practice sheets the lines

write your name in this space write your name in this space write your name

i would not mostly to break apart

i would not fit

the practice sheets

Lehua
Appendix D: Interview Questions

General Questions
1. What does it mean for you to have grown up as “mestisa/mestisu” or “Chamaole”?
2. Where did you hear people introducing themselves as “mestisa/mestisu” or “Chamaole” growing up?
3. What does “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” mean to you?
4. What challenges have you experienced with being “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole”?
5. How has the Chamorro language played a role in your “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” experiences?
6. How can being “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” be formed as a positive identity?
7. What would you like to learn about “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” identity?

Questions About Participants’ Published Poetry
1. I’ve taken a look at your published piece ______. Could you share a little bit about what inspired you to write about these experiences and to ultimately publish this piece?
2. How did some of the conflicts you experienced with identity come to manifest in your writing?
3. How did writing this piece help you better understand the issues of identity and ambiguity?
4. I noticed that each poet participating in this study has incorporated the Chamorro language into their poetry. How has your relationship with the Chamorro language shaped the way you experience your identity?
5. What do you feel is the importance of documenting in writing, the ways we experience and negotiate “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” identity?
6. How do you envision “mestisa/mestisu Chamaole” identity being used to promote positive understandings of race and culture?
7. Is there a question that I didn’t ask that you feel I should have?
Works Cited

Identity Formation: Borderlands, Critical Race Theory, Critical Mixed Race Studies


Chamorro Identity Formations

Cruz, Mary. *(Re)Searching Identity: Being Chamorro in an American Colony*. University of Hawaiʻi at Manoa, 2012.


Micronesia Area Research Center, 1998.


Haole and Whiteness Studies


Primary Texts


Methodology


http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095


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