

# MESEISET

Volume 2, Number 2

May 2013



## A Response to Students

by Instructional Coordinator Mariano Marcus

In high school were you excited about going to college? Did you wonder what college life would be like? College is an experience to venture, or it is the freedom to make a choice in life.

At Chuuk Campus you students have already made the choice to attend school. Every day in college, you are faced with many more choices — to skip class or not to do assignments, to be late, to stay with friends on campus, to Facebook all day, to drink alcohol with buddies, to be plain lazy and do nothing academic. These — and many more choices — are presented to you every day, every hour, every minute, while you are attending Chuuk Campus.

So, what is my point? The point is just one word — RESPONSIBILITY — and let me guide you in analyzing this word. We can break down the word and say RESPONSE and ABILITY — or the ability to choose your response. In general human psychology, you know “stimulus” and “response” — two words that define “making a choice”. Every day you are surrounded by numerous stimuli. Sometimes, when you encounter a stimulus, it may be extremely tempting or irresistible, and your response to the stimulus may be equally tempting or irresistible. All the same, you must choose your response. Remember, the choice is yours because you have the ABILITY to choose your RESPONSE.

So, what are you going to do? Today might be the best opportunity to take your girlfriend somewhere you two can share a day of intimate experience because your parents trust you to use the family car appropriately. What an opportunity!!! Or, today you have a test in SS 150 (History of Micronesia), but your friends have already gone to Wouwou Beach for a birthday barbecue picnic, and you do not want to miss the fun. So, you choose fun, not test.

Or, your final draft of an EN 120b paper is due at 5:00 pm today. What choice (response) will you make — fool around, or get the paper done in the quiet library? Well, as tempting and irresistible as the stimulus may be, you still have the final choice of response (good or bad, right or wrong).

Okay, you know how to make choices — that is fine with me. In short, your choice is your responsibility, or RESPONSE-ABILITY. Now, you have the additional responsibility to accept the CONSEQUENCES. So, if you choose to be homesick, fail to understand your instructors,

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### MESEISET DISCLAIMERPOL- ICY

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## SEA CUCUMBERS — Is it a viable industry in Chuuk?

**Editorial Note:** *How do we answer the question above? Some say, “Yes”, and others say, “No”. Two Chuuk Campus students have something to say about this. Read their articles below.*

**YES** — by Kerby Ruben

Sea cucumbers can be a viable industry for the Chuukese people. Our own legislature supports the idea; however, there is a 5-year delay in exporting dried sea cucumber. According to Curtis Graham, whom I interviewed, the purpose of the legislative delay is to build up the sea cucumbers as a plentiful resource, so that we will not gather too much and deplete the resource base.

Yes, there is a profit waiting for us in a sea cucumber industry in Chuuk, but we must not be greedy and rush into it just to make big bucks. Exploitation would be an over-harvesting abuse, and so it is our own responsibility to conserve the sea cucumber resource.

In the next few years our government must initiate a public awareness program. This program must describe how and why the sea cucumber is a profitable business. At the same time, people need to learn about conservation practices, so that we will not over-harvest sea cucumbers. Money is good, of course, but greed can destroy the industry if we over-harvest and exploit.

One way to conserve this resource is to punish individual harvesters who over-harvest or exploit. This means some kind of law enforcement. What worries me is that there are always some greedy fishermen. We really have to strengthen and enforce penalty laws against these people. ☐

**NO** — by Rosella Kim

Harvesting of sea cucumbers can have a devastating effect on the reef environment. We know this, thanks to scientific research at One Tree Island on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.

Global warming, according to scientists in the world, causes a problem in the ocean — this problem is called “ocean acidification”. In other words the oceans are becoming acidic — too much acid in the water, which kills coral reefs. It is bad enough when global warming causes “coral reef bleaching”; it is worse with ocean acidification. Either way, our coral reefs die, thanks to global warming.

Sea cucumbers help by ingesting sand and releasing calcium carbonate ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ). The  $\text{CaCO}_3$  then becomes the nutrient for growing coral reefs. I do not believe that we will lessen ocean acidification, but we can slow it down from destroying our reefs. How? By helping reefs, or polyps in the coral, to get the  $\text{CaCO}_3$  nutrient that they need to grow more reefs!

If we over-harvest sea cucumbers, we will be destroying our own coral reefs. It is wrong to make quick profit in a sea cucumber industry and, at the same time, to destroy the reef environment. Without our reefs, we may have no future in our island environment. As ugly as the sea cucumber is, its role in reef-building is too vital to lose. ☐

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## TOURISM VS. ECOTOURISM IN CHUUK, by Gary Kanto

I am against tourism development in Chuuk, but I support ecotourism in our state. What is the difference between tourism and ecotourism? One is more good, and the other is more bad. Let me try my best to explain in this essay.

Both tourism and ecotourism begin outside of Chuuk. People from America and Japan, for instance, hear about Chuuk, and they want to visit our islands to see the place and meet the people. So, these foreigners check out brochures, make hotel reservations, and rent cars. In other words, they spend a lot of money in Chuuk, and Chuukese citizens can get jobs in the business of hosting visitors. That sounds good because we all

need and want money in our economy. Also, at the present time, many tourists in Chuuk go scuba-diving among the sunken ships — ships that sank during World War II (February 1944) when allied forces attacked the Japanese navy in the Chuuk Lagoon.

However, there are lots of Internet reports that describe negative impacts of tourism in the Pacific, such as Hawaii and Guam. The worst impact seems to be environmental destruction or loss. As far as I am concerned, I do not want to see this loss in Chuuk, and that is why I am in favor of ecotourism.

*(continued on page 3)*

## TOURISM vs. ECOTOURISM

(continued from page 2)

Ecotourism, according to Lobban and Shefter's book, Tropical Pacific Island Environment, is "responsible travel to a natural area that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people". Conservationists add a second point — that these ecotourists should take pictures of the scenic beauty and leave only their footprints in the sand. In other words, they must not ruin the environment by their visit. That is the reason for the word: eco-tourism, or ecology tourism. Ecology is the study and concern of nature in an environment, and that is what ecotourists must do in Chuuk — study what the environment offers and concern themselves with keeping the environment clean and safe, no environmental destruction or loss.

So, yes, ecotourism teaches the ecotourists an understanding of conservation and protection of the environment, and it will definitely bring eco-

nomie growth to our people who need to find jobs. Plus, these jobs must require the Chuukese workers to have knowledge and skills in traditional culture.

You may be wondering at this time why I am discussing traditional culture. So, let me paint a picture of an ecotourism site in Chuuk. Right now the picture is make-believe, but it can become true if we make it happen. The scenario is presented below:

- A hotel can include a dozen or more huts — outside can be traditional thatch, and inside can still be air-conditioned. A restaurant can serve much more local food, rather than imported food such as steak.
- A sailing canoe can take male tourists out in the shallow lagoon. The canoe will be capsized or tipped over, and the tourists must learn to upright the canoe. We can teach these tourists the Chuukese phrase, *pwangún le pwokó*.
- Workers can take other tourists out onto the reef to learn spearfishing — and taught safety tips so that they do not kill each other.
- Other workers can teach more tourists how to pound breadfruit and taro — and taught safety tips so that they do not smash their own thumbs.
- Tourists can learn to cook local food (including seafood that they themselves catch) over firepits on the beach (not in the restaurant kitchen). In other words, tourists can catch, prepare, and eat what they themselves learn to catch, prepare, and eat.
- Tourists can learn to do traditional dances (such as *tokiya*), sing local songs around a bonfire on the beach, just relax in the romantic moonlight.
- We can encourage tourists to dress traditionally. If they are brave enough, the male tourists can wear *afitita* and the female tourists can walk around bare-breasted. Why not?
- Tourists have to learn coconut culture — how to cut open fresh coconut for drinking, how to grind coconut meat (*assak taka*), how to weave coconut leaves to make their own fans or toys. No, we should not teach the male tourists how to climb a coconut tree because they might fall and sue the hotel owners.

There is so much more for tourists to learn about us and our culture. This just the beginning of ecotourism in Chuuk, and it is time to start thinking about doing tourism right. So, let us get started now! φ

### DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIES

by SS 150-2 Students\*

Chuuk's economy can be expanded if our leaders encourage growth and development of diversified industries. We therefore recommend that our Chuuk State Government support certain industries (other than fishing, sea cucumber, and tourism) such as the following:

- African snail (*pweechar*)
- agriculture (including the return of the copra industry)
- handicrafts
- seashells (including mother-of-pearl), and
- turtle shell.

First, did you know that African snail is an expensive delicacy in Europe and America? As a food item, it has a French name — *escargot*.

Second, the list above is short, but if people put their minds together, they can easily come up with many more examples of other potential industries in Chuuk.

Third, we wanted to include shark fin, but our SS 150 instructor Alton Higashi vetoed it and removed it from the list above. φ

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(\*) = Jenolyn Hartman, Nellie Kiteuo, Genevieve Liwis, Erson Louis, McKay Ludwig, Arison Osy, Anthony Pisek, Teinin Sam, and Justin Utha

## WORLD HISTORY 1: Mesopotamia and Written Laws

by Erson Louis

Mesopotamia, often called “the cradle of civilization”, had a legacy well-known throughout world history. This legacy was **written laws**, beginning with the **Code** of Hammurabi.

Ancient Mesopotamia was a kingdom in the river valleys of Tigris and Euphrates. Today, this area is known as Iraq. You can see its location in the map below.

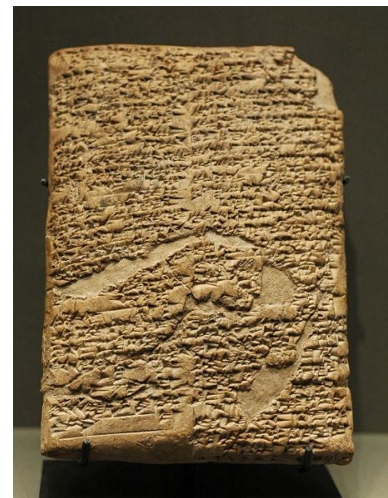
Hammurabi was King of Babylonia, part of Mesopotamia, in the 18th century BC — about 3,800 years ago! Actually, Hammurabi was not the first king to write laws. Two other kings before him — Urukagina (24th century BC) and Ur-Nammu (21st century BC) — wrote laws too, but Hammurabi’s laws became famous. One of the most famous laws was: “*An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*”. We may think of this law as

the **Law of Moses**, but that is not true. Hammurabi wrote this law several hundred years before Moses plagiarized it and copied it in the Book of Genesis (Holy Bible).

Hammurabi wrote 282 laws, and they became known as the Code of Hammurabi. They were written in clay and on stone in the ancient writing system known as “**cuneiform**”. The laws were written because Hammurabi wanted his people to be able to read them. So, citizens were taught to read, and they could then read the laws on their own.

It is now the 21st century AD, and Chuuk has laws too, such as the Chuuk State Constitution and laws passed by the Chuuk State Legislature. Yet, most of us do not really know nor understand our own laws, because our Department of Education does not teach about them in elementary and secondary schools. As some Chuukese leaders say,

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## WORLD HISTORY 2:

### Ancient Greece and Interculturation

by Silvia Sony

We in Chuuk know so little about ancient world history, and we need to learn more so that we can improve our own lives today. I am talking about ancient Greece and one of its great legacies in world history — **interculturation**.

Ancient Greece began a civilization several thousand years ago. During its so-called “Dark Ages” (before 750 BC) Greece was not great like Mesopotamia or Egypt. However, it became a powerful civilization because of interculturation — learning from neighboring cultures and civilizations — taking the best ideas and customs from foreigners and then making them uniquely Greek. Nowadays, we call interculturation by two other names — “**cross-cultural relations**” and “**eclecticism**”.

What did the ancient Greeks learn from other places? From the north (in Europe) they learned economic and political development — how to set up governments and how to train leaders. From the east (in Turkey and Mesopotamia) they learned ship-building, the alphabet-writing system, metallurgy, city-building, and education development, including art and literature. From the south (Egypt) they learned engineering.

In other words, the ancient Greeks received and learned knowledge and skills from foreigners, and then they integrated foreign lessons with their own good Greek knowledge and skills. They rejected



bad foreign lessons and threw away their own bad customs. In other words, learn the good, not the bad. Keep the good, not the bad. The result was a culture and civilization that would get better and better, and that was how the ancient Greek civilization began.

Interculturation in Micronesia began when foreigners first came to our islands in the early 16th century AD. In less than 500 years, Micronesians learned foreign customs. However, I say that this learning was wrong. Why? Let us take Chuuk as an example of interculturation. The Chuukese people have learned the bad ways of foreigners, not the good ways. At the same time, we have thrown away our good knowledge and skills and

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## WORLD HISTORY 1: Mesopotamia and Written Laws *(continued from page 4)*

*“Ina chok ii, mwasereno”*. Who then is the more civilized — the ancient Mesopotamians or the modern Chuukese? I say that ancient Mesopotamia is more civilized! So, how can we the modern Chuukese civilize ourselves?

I offer two solutions. First, the Department of Education must teach the constitution in elementary schools. It should be in the social studies curriculum, but some central-office educators say, *“It’s too hard or impossible for the students to learn”*. As far as I am concerned, if we do not give it a try, then students will not learn about laws in their own state. Nothing is hard or impossible without first trying and then by teaching it over and over again until students do learn.

Second, teaching and learning are two steps in communication. The Department of Education can easily prepare posters and billboards that teach laws. Other departments, such as Health and EPA, post news and other information everywhere along streets so that all people can easily see and read them. Why does Education not do the same?

Hammurabi wanted his people to read laws and to understand them. Our state government leaders do not think about the goodness of citizens — that they can learn if we choose to teach them. We have the choice — either do nothing so that our people can remain ignorant, or spread information about laws so that our citizens can learn! ☐

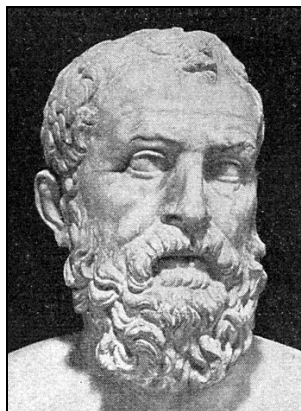


### WORLD HISTORY 3: Ancient Greece and Democracy, by Chonfan Herry

Do you know what democracy is and where it first started? Also, what does democracy have to do with Chuuk? Let us find out.

Democracy is a government in which supreme power is held by the people. It began in ancient Greece in the year 594 BC by a wise leader named Solon. That was 2,600 years ago. Then, 130 years later (in 460 BC), another Greek leader named Pericles increased the ideas and practices of democracy. So, what did this early democracy look like? There was a **legislature** of elected representatives. That is called “**popular election**”. Legislative decisions were approved as **laws** by majority rule, and there was no king to control the legislature.

However, ancient Greek democracy was not perfect. Only free citizens could be elected as legislators, and free citizenship excluded women, slaves, and foreigners.



*Solon*



*Pericles*

In Chuuk today we have popular elections, laws, and majority rule. Also, women are considered free citizens, but foreigners are not. So, it seems that democracy in Chuuk is better than democracy in ancient Greece.

There is another thing which contrasts Chuuk and ancient Greece in terms of democracy. The ancient Greeks had only one branch of government — legislative. In Chuuk today we have three branches — legislative, executive, and judicial. So, again, it would seem that democracy in Chuuk is better than democracy in ancient Greece. All the same, let me add a final thought. As far as I am concerned, democracy is just as good as what people say, not what the leaders want. Unfortunately, in Chuuk, leaders lead and people follow. If our leaders are not wise nor good, then our government is foolish because people follow without thinking.

If we want a democratic government, then our leaders must be smart in decision-making. If they are not smart, then we will not improve. When I observe our Chuuk State Legislature, I worry a lot because too many legislators do not seem to be smart in decision-making. The government must be “of the people, by the people, and for the people”. So, yes, Chuuk’s legislature is “of the people” and “by the people”. I seriously question whether our legislature is “for the people”.

“For the people” means no pachification. Yet, I see pachification as a political reality in Chuuk, and it does not help to improve our lives. So, let me end this essay with advice to all free citizens of Chuuk who elect their leaders. When we vote, let us elect wise and smart leaders (including women) — throw away pachification! ☐

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### WORLD HISTORY 2:

#### Ancient Greece and Interculturation

*(continued from page 5)*

rejected way is good from foreigners. This is not how we learn to improve ourselves. What we have learned is to destroy ourselves.

Here is an example — money. Money is good, but we have used it in wrong ways. The first problem is that money has changed our culture, customs, and lifestyles. So, we prefer to use money to buy rice, canned meat, liquor, and alcohol. At the same time, we have lessened our traditional dependence on local resources, such as breadfruit, taro, and other food items. Sure, we still eat traditional food, but imported food is becoming very popular because of access to money.

If we the Chuukese expect to survive as a people and as a culture, we should look at how the ancient Greeks interculturated correctly. Learn good foreign ways and keep our own good traditions. Reject bad foreign ways and throw away our own bad traditions.

I have learned this idea by studying the history of the world, particularly the ancient Greek civilization. The idea of “ancient” may not be popular in our thinking today, but the idea of “civilization” is something that we the Chuukese may never be able to achieve. ☐

## WORLD HISTORY 4:

### Ancient Rome and Road System

by Reason Andrew

The ancient Roman civilization began 2,700 years ago in Italy, and what should we remember about Rome's greatness? Many of us watched the movie "Gladiator" and remember the beautiful buildings such as the Coliseum where gladiators fought against each other. However, what I will remember most is **the road system**.

The roads — a total of 180,000 miles of roads — connected different parts of the ancient Roman Empire — from Spain, throughout Europe (and, of course, Italy), to Greece, into Turkey and Mesopotamia, and down to the Levant and Egypt. Road construction began 2,300 years ago (about 300 years before Jesus Christ was born), and it took 200 years to complete the road system. All roads were built by **private companies** dedicated to road construction, and it took 3 days to complete one mile of road. That is a fact — one mile every 3 days!

Some of these roads had to cross streams and

*(continued on page 8)*

## WORLD HISTORY 5:

### Ancient Rome and Fresh Water

by Robin Ruben

Two thousand years ago, 1,000,000 residents lived in the ancient city of Rome. How did they get enough fresh water to drink and stay alive? The ancient Romans built **aqueducts**.

An aqueduct is like a pipeline — without pipes. It was made with **concrete and cement**. Did you know that the ancient Romans invented concrete and cement? Yes, that is true — they were the first people on earth to invent and use concrete and cement. One more thing about the ancient Roman cement — it was waterproof.

On page 9 is a picture of an aqueduct today in the city of Rome. Yes, the aqueducts were built above ground, all built by ancient Roman construction engineers. The fresh water came from the Apennine Mountains in Italy, and the aqueducts carried the water from mountain springs down to the city of Rome.

In the case of underground water, the ancient Romans built concrete **tunnels** to capture and

*(continued on page 9)*



## WORLD HISTORY 4: Ancient Rome and Road System

(continued from page 7)

rivers, and so the construction companies had to build **bridges** first and then roads over the bridges.

The ancient Roman road construction engineers were experts. They used sand, gravel, clay, and large basalt rocks to make the roads strong. Drainage ditches were built on both sides of the road, so that no road would be flooded. And, did you know that many of these roads are still being used as transportation systems connecting villages and towns in Europe? Truly, the road system is a great legacy of the ancient Roman civilization.

So, what can the ancient Roman road system teach us about Chuuk today?

Well, I want to say that the first lesson for us is to complete the road construction on Weno — one mile every 3 days! But that is not going to happen at all. Already PII has taken a few years to complete only a very small part of the roads on Weno. I heard that the Weno road construction is supposed to build only 7 miles of concrete roads. In other words, PII should have finished the road construction in 21 days! That would be 1 mile every 3 days times 7 miles = 21 days, or 3 weeks! Forget it! PII would never have been hired to build any road in ancient Rome — much too slow!

There is a second lesson — bridges! I was just thinking to myself, *“How about building bridges from island to island in the Chuuk Lagoon?”* And, did you know that this question is not an original idea of mine? I heard, again, that in the 1970s a Chuukese leader came up with the idea. That is true — and his name was Hans Williander. I do not know how many old Chuukese people can remember this. Mr. Williander recommended that simple but strong bridges be built from island to island — from Weno to Tonoas, from Tonoas to Fefen, and so on. From Fefen there would be two bridges — one to Uman, and another to Parem. Then, continue — from Parem to the Inner Faichuk islands, and finally from Inner Faichuk to the Outer Faichuk islands of Paata, Polle, Onei, and Tolensom.

Sorry, I do not think that we can build a bridge from Uman to Nema in the Mortlocks. Not even the ancient Roman road construction engineers would have been able to build a single bridge from Chuuk Lagoon to Nema.



The reason would be money. Our Chuuk State Government does not have enough money to build an **inter-island road system** in the Chuuk Lagoon. So, what is the third lesson in this essay for Chuuk? Since we do not have enough money, maybe we should change our political status from independence to **commonwealth**. After all, a commonwealth budget would be far larger than our present independence budget. Then, we could ask America to help us construct the inter-island road system.

I learned a saying about the ancient Roman civilization, *“Rome was not built overnight.”* Well, the inter-island road system will not be built overnight either. It will take many years to complete. But I learned another saying, *“A journey always begins with the first step.”*

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a future history to live, and we must begin now to take the first step into our own history. If not, then we might not have any future history after the year 2023. Let's begin as soon as possible. φ

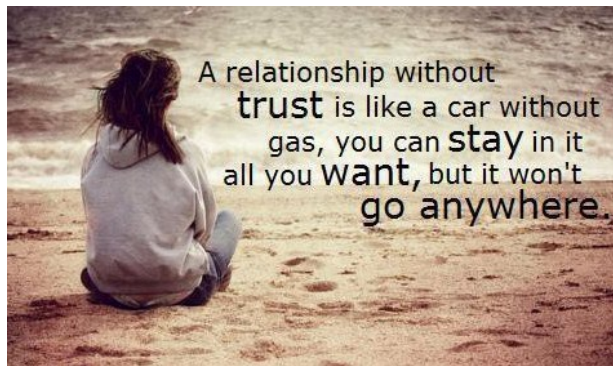


## A RESPONSE FROM THE IC

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use Facebook all day, wait only for your refund check, enjoy time with friends, avoid chores at home — and much more — each choice (response) that you make has its own consequence on your life and on the life of your family.

Making a choice is like drinking water cupped in your palms. Once you open your palms, the water slips through your fingers and is gone. Ren chok Chuuk, “Kaa niamam nge a ser nupwan”. ϕ



### **PREVIEW OF ARTICLES IN THE NEXT MESEISET (June 2013)**

The next issue of Meseiset will be released in the month of June 2013. Look for the following six articles written by more students!

- **Future History of Micronesia:  
The Great Ship Chuuk is Sinking!**  
by Erson Louis
- **Future History of Micronesia:  
A Political Miracle**  
by Genevieve Lewis
- **Future History of Micronesia:  
The Future Economy of Micronesia**  
by Anthony Pisek
- **Future History of Micronesia:  
Please Count My Vote!**  
by McKay Ludwig
- **My Personal Philosophy: Pro-Action**  
by Jenolyn Hartman
- **A Local Food Project**  
by Genevieve Lewis, Jenolyn Hartman, Tein Sam, Anthony Pisek, and Erson Louis

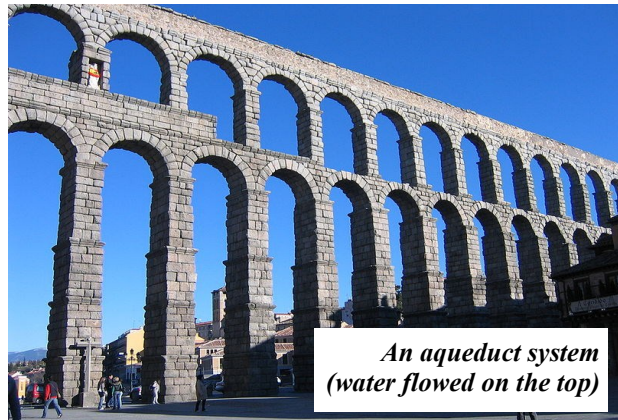
## WORLD HISTORY 5:

### **Ancient Rome and Fresh Water**

(continued from page 7)

move the underground water to Rome.

How did the fresh water travel from the mountains down to Rome on the coast? The aqueduct and tunnel construction engineers knew about the **gravity**. In other words, gravity carried the water down from the mountains.



These engineers also built into the aqueducts special **filtration and purification systems** to make sure that any **polluted or contaminated** water would be cleaned — 100% clean!

The aqueducts and tunnels brought 2-3 million gallons of fresh water daily to every family living in Rome — not just the rich Romans, but also the poor ones. So, all Roman residents had fresh water in or near their homes.

In the case of Weno, the fresh-water situation is bad. According to the latest census, about 25% of all families have piped water from CPUC. Why is this percentage so low, as compared with 100% of the ancient Roman families? Because the Chuuk State Department of Health Services (Sanitation) advised Weno families to use water catchment tanks, since the CPUC piped water is polluted, contaminated, or unclean! The ancient Roman aqueduct and tunnel system was definitely better 2,000 years ago than CPUC's piped water to Weno homes today!

No, we should not build aqueducts and tunnels on Weno. But we should advise CPUC to be more scientific, like the ancient Roman engineers, in supplying fresh water to people and in using adequate filtration/purification systems. CPUC is just not scientific enough to take care of Weno's fresh-water needs. ϕ