

## I AM CHAMORRO

*Michael Lujan Bevacqua*

I am falling.

Falling from the edge of my cliff of last defiance.

Howling into the fresh searing wound at my side, that feels so unnatural unreal unwanted.

Crashing downward into the trees and the sandful seas, breaking then below the grounds into the layers of pre/post history, past its pages and into its bordered margins of obscurity under Spanish colonial authority.

Others would fall as well, or kneel in this new colonial hell. Subjected to death or subjugation beneath the chokehold of something claiming to be civilization.

But nonetheless, I am living, still static encased and moving in the lifelust and words spoken by those who lived and live long after I fell into the dust of *somethingness*.

From deep beneath the layers of soil, rocks, and roots of trees and coral life I sink my own roots conscious roots, latent for so long beneath and between even the layers of dis and miscolored skins and stacked facial features and flooding/bulging veins of my own conquered people

I am breathing.

Silent, quietly at first.

And I am watching as my people are marinated in the wet greeded gold/God lust of Spanish germs, guns and steel, and fired for centuries and barbequed til the teeter tottering brink of extinction from being over-cooked, over-killed, over-diseased, over-civilized and over-christianized.

I am sleeping. So serenely in this blood that so many say, was spat and splattered into the sea with no funeral ceremony or historical memory.

But I am still swimming in this blood so ceremoniously slaughtered by men who would be saints, and sometimes still tested by "saints" who would be scientists.

But I am crying as I flow, not from the innumerable tears my people have shed from war, famine, disease and violence, or the mantle of shattered and splintering impurity that is constantly shifting on our shoulders, uneasy to burden, yet impossible to put down,  
My tears join this blood bathing all around me, for all of those who would say our impurity controls and cancels out our palpable reality.

I am soaking in the rejection of my people, who drink me daily, but think me dead.

And as well by those others who would cripple and control us for Gold, galleons, coal, tourists, economic prosperity spheres, patriotism, strategical military domainination.

I am sinking in the sensationalism of constant progress and cultural regress.

I am agonizing as the land, the plants, the people my blood pumps life into fall apart more and more each day in more and more decisive, divisive, and disaffected ways.

I am reeling, livid and lost as the cost becomes too much, the price too painful to rethink, as more and more of my blood leaves these shores heading for distant and persistent American dreams (of more and more) that seem to tear at our social seams.

White picket plane tickets to up-tight commuting communities of middle class overrated opportunities who couldn't Survive a night on a deserted tropical island even if they were dumped or castawayed there with Tom Hanks, a movie crew and a script.

I am worrying. That my stand, spear in hand before the hordes of filthy Spanish soldiers long ago, was for nothing, as I am sinking less and less into the science of the present, instead being pressed back into the sacred toppled stones of the past lives of our people.

By being called far from contemporary, "ancient" "old" implying far from necessary.

I am dying.

I feel, as I find my flow slowing, stuttering as the world around me closes in, being killed kindly in politically correct, "multi-ethnic culturally enlightening" patrimonized blood culture clotting

As my twin towering hills of culture and history are smashed, bombed and entombed annually in July and September by pushy little red white and blue terrorist cells.

But now I am responding, as my limits of pressure tolerance are reached

I am turning toiling over and in myself pushing out,

Frothing foaming making my presence known through persistent protests of even this very voice I find myself using

Written in English without a trace of Chamorro?

Bevacqua

I am diluted, even as I am being promoted.

And I am rising now, not because of Spam, diabetes, or because our culture has changed.

But rather, because each day more and more people deny my existence in their daily lives  
In ways I cannot even imagine people announce our extinction, and with sickly distinction proudly advocate that they are proud to be Americans.

Or just dying to be Chamorro-Americans, Guamanians, second-class citizens.

I am simmering over now, stewing intensely with the fury of a typhoon

You were Chamorro long before your birth, I say to all whose veins give me shelter

You chose your home, your family, your island long before you were put on this earth.

Do not deny it, do not write it off with your passport, or with your car, or your job,  
or your dreams of America, colonially cultured in each of us like caustic cancer.

Love your family, love your island, love your history, love your culture.

Shout this from the island's highest mountains, from cliffs like mine of last defiance...

I am rising...  
I am boiling...  
I am here...  
AND I AM CHAMORRO...