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Decolonizing Okinawa: Social Science, Agriculture, and US Militarism, 1945-1972

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A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2017

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

History

University of Washington

**Abstract**

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In 1945, as World War II drew to a close and the US assumed control of the failed Japanese colonial empire, the US detached Okinawa from the Japanese mainland to initiate a military occupation that lasted until 1972, when Okinawa was reverted to Japanese sovereignty. During this period, the US cordoned off much of the land in central Okinawa to establish military bases that allegedly deterred the threat of global Communism. Today, the US military empire continues to thrive despite the Cold War's end. Indeed, Okinawa hosts nineteen military installations and nearly 47,000 US troops. The US military's occupation of physical space and unequal relationships with surrounding communities have, in turn, instigated a vibrant anti-military movement that continues to inspire academics and activists alike.

How did the US military turn Okinawa into a military stronghold, its precious “Keystone of the Pacific”? Accepted literature tends to conflate ethnic nationalism with anticolonial resistance. This scholarship highlights the deliberate disregard of Okinawan identity under both the US and Japanese empires to emphasize Okinawa’s prolonged victimization. It also correlates subsequent evidence of anticolonial resistance in Okinawa with the mass reassertion of Okinawanness.

“Decolonizing Okinawa” destabilizes the alleged opposition of colonialism to nationalism to reconceptualize the assertion of radical anticolonial politics. It argues that the US military exploited the popular desire for ethnic self-determination to naturalize its presence and reframes anti-military mobilizations as the unraveling of military-imposed frameworks. Examining the records of the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI), the dissertation shows how US Occupation officials drew from progressive social scientific studies promising to foster self-determination. Such modernization theories tied the possibility of advancement to economic development, and so USCAR and GRI authorities set to reforming Okinawa’s agricultural economy, which both said was distinct to the island culture but also the root cause of backwardness. Ensuing USCAR and GRI collaborations aimed to make concrete an abstract entity called “the economy” where Okinawans freely traded with similar races in the Far East, but this arrangement only naturalized the US military presence. It re-presented the US military as a benign trade partner, reoriented Okinawan production to meet US military needs, and initiated surveillance efforts guaranteeing Okinawan compliance to military objectives. Local attempts to recover a united ethnic identity, therefore, replicated USCAR and GRI logics to set off calls for more reforms that further entrenched the military presence. Anticolonial mobilizations, on the other hand, broke free of

USCAR and GRI social scientific thinking. This dissertation shows how protestors refuted the idea that economic evolution gave rise to ethnic consciousness to assert their own, unprecedented understandings of democracy in moments of intense politicization.

“Decolonizing Okinawa”’s opening section illustrates how commonalities between the US military and Okinawan nationalists opened the space for US imperial expansion. Chapter one examines two US social scientific reports about Okinawan society that laid out the epistemological groundwork for the US occupation. Chapter two discusses how the US used agricultural cooperatives to incorporate Okinawan leaders into the military apparatus, substantiate their foothold, and police a fledgling money economy. Chapter three explicates ways actors in the so-called Global South affirmed the postwar colonial order. Wanting more political economic self-sufficiency, USCAR, the GRI, and Latin American governments promoted emigration plans resettling Okinawans in colonies that displaced local populations and affirmed racial hierarchies.

Part two argues that anticolonial resistance in Okinawa upended USCAR and GRI assumptions about promoting ethnic identity. Chapter four presents evidence about the island-wide actions intensifying throughout the 1950s in response to US land acquisitions. To stall the military’s efforts to resolve the land question, villages articulated numerous definitions of land value and defied military ideas about what “all Okinawans wanted.” Chapter five highlights farmers on the outlying island of Miyako, who undid USCAR and GRI assumptions about how and from whom protest erupted. These actions give an unprecedented case in which locals understood democracy to center on their needs.

To date, accounts of the US empire’s postwar ascension in East Asia have underemphasized the ways the Okinawan quest for self-determination aligned itself with US

military interests. Prevailing research takes postwar anticolonial nationalism as the paradigmatic form of resistance. By foregrounding USCAR and the GRI commonalities, I not only explicate a historical form of the US empire, but also that protest exceeded the search for ethnic identity.

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## Acknowledgements

If it takes a village to raise a child, then it certainly takes one to see a dissertation to completion. This is especially true when the academic industry is in crisis. Tani Barlow, Vicente Rafael, and Moon-Ho Jung served on my committee and I owe them a great deal. Their collective works cleared ground for me to entertain my own questions and their pointed comments took my work in fresh directions. Tani especially listened to my ideas even in their embryonic stage, read every draft, and showed me ways to better articulate them in writing. Vince and Moon's intellectual breadth helped me see connections across fields that are intended to be separate. I appreciate my committee's generosity, rigor, and patience.

At the University of Washington, I received a generous fellowship from the Simpson Center Society of Fellows that allowed me to concentrate on writing. My chapters on anticolonial resistance reflect the center's support. Many UW professors also kept an eye out for me and served as wonderful interlocutors. I enjoyed many laughs with Davinder Bhowmik, Ted Mack, Scott Kurashige, and Chandan Reddy. Ileana Rodriguez-Silva and Hwasook Nam were truly indispensable mentors. Their honesty, advice, and physical presence in the academy helped me navigate an unwieldy institution full of politics.

With the support of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Sciences, I was able to spend a year in Okinawa doing research. I thank Ruri Ito and Chiyo Wakabayashi for taking a chance on an American scholar they never met to facilitate my trip. Ikuo Shinjo warmly welcomed me to his graduate seminar. He and his students' engagement with Okinawa and its history of colonialism was heartening. Their works gave me the courage to pursue my own line of questioning. At the Okinawa Prefectural Archives, I benefited from the expertise and efficiency

of Kazuo Nakamoto, Miyaki Gakiya, and Kasumi Akamine. They welcomed me into their group and made the tedious business of collecting materials congenial and fun. Doi Yoshigoro, Nanako Nashiro, Rise Maeo, and Emma Tome were wonderful friends, dinner companions and occasional partners in crime. Over many difficult conversations and delicious meals, they provided invaluable insights about the US military base problem, forcing me to think and rethink my analytical positions.

I am also very fortunate to have Wendy Matsumura, Tze Loo, Hsiao-Wen Cheng, Chong Eun Ahn, and Kazumi Hasegawa as my fierce senpai. All have generously shared thoughtful advice and materials without hesitation, and I have learned from their struggles as a result. More importantly, their wicked senses of humor brought raucous laughter to difficult situations. Emily Anderson Hall, Eleanor Mahoney, Ryan Archibald, Shruti Patel, Casey Nichols, Terry Park, and Karen Hanna are my graduate comrades. I enjoyed writing together, sharing ideas, and commiserating.

I would not have not been able to finish without a community of supporters cheering me on from the sidelines outside the academy. Ellen Somekawa, Neeta Patel, Betty Lui, and Helen Gym—the “wild women” of Asian Americans United—met me when I was still sixteen, when I was attempting to make sense of my high school education and certainly before I heard of graduate training. They emboldened me to speak, taught me how to advocate for myself and others, and offered me opportunities to refine and practice my critiques. They served as models for critical thinking and principled engagement that I later took to my research and teaching. Through Asian Americans United and many adventures in Philadelphia, my network of supporters expanded to include Kay Yoon, Ken Hung, Lai Har Cheung, Sookyung Oh, Alix Webb, Deborah Kodish, and Nijmie Dzurinko. I draw much inspiration from their commitments

to building other worlds through personal and collective change. Wendell Davis, Larry Atencia, Jacob Greenberg, and Sophie Men kept me grounded, kept it real. Towards the end of my writing, Bridget Donnelly, Maggie Lakis, and Hsiao-Wen Cheng welcomed me unconditionally into their homes, providing crucial space, sustenance, and support. They freed up the precious time and energy I needed to cross the finish line.

My family, Bey-Wey, Jasper, and Isaac Lai, has supported me through this entire endeavor and the extent of their faith in my choices are truly moving. They are not familiar with the culture and intricacies of the US academy. Our economic circumstances further suggested that my pursuit of degrees in the humanities was neither practical nor wise. Still, they saw the basic value of reading, writing, and learning, and I appreciate their giving me the space to spin these crafts into a profession.

## Introduction

I was turned away from the first anti-base meeting I attended in Okinawa. In the middle of a sweltering summer, I had arrived in Naha to conduct fieldwork examining how the US militarized Okinawa through agricultural reforms and how such policies shaped the local anti-military movement. It was my first time in Japan and friends in US activist circles had kindly connected me to people involved in the local anti-base movement. Full of good intentions, they wanted to help reduce the feelings of isolation that might followed my experience with culture shock. After a flurry of email introductions, I was invited to an event sponsored by a group organizing around the ongoing base problem. Their theme asked where to go for independence and they invited speakers from Taiwan, Guam, and Micronesia. By situating Okinawa alongside indigenous groups in the South Pacific, they hoped to forge transnational solidarities based on shared experiences with US militarization or indigenous dispossession.

By chance, and like a fresh newcomer, I misread the flyer and arrived the day before the actual symposium. To my surprise, the local group had sponsored another meeting that I unexpectedly interrupted. The gathering was for Okinawans who also identified with the specific group, and when the event's organizers politely explained my mistake, they added that these measures were necessary. Unless they protected their space, they feared that Japanese from the mainland would intrude. I did not know the group's longer history or what series of events brought the organizers to this decision. I was also unfamiliar with the dynamics of the larger anti-base movement, and so I nodded in agreement and apologized profusely. This was their world and their struggle after all. It was not my place.

I returned the next day to attend the larger symposium. The language and model for radical politics felt familiar because they draw from activist models that continue to dominate conversations about racial justice in the US and around the world. Okinawans needed independence. Their culture was under attack, first by the Japanese and, then, the Americans. They, like the delegates representing Guam, Micronesia, and Taiwanese Aborigines—like everyone else in the so-called Global South who shared experiences of being colonized—wanted an independent state. In order to accomplish this, they needed to reconnect with their true culture in a space that was undeniably theirs. The alternative was sabotage from detractors who infiltrated their ranks, which was why organizers believed they needed a separate space.

Subsequent speakers from other Pacific islands shared the pains of their continued colonization. The representative from Taiwan criticized the movement for Taiwanese independence. After opening his talk with an Aborigine song, he displayed a map depicting the original homelands of the Taiwanese Aborigine tribes before they encountered the Portuguese and before the Han, migrating from southern China, snatched up their land. The man proposed a solution that went beyond recognizing the continued Aborigine presence. He wanted a return to those borders, for people to go back to a time when Aborigine owned the land regardless of how long a person might have called Taiwan home. Subsequent speakers encouraged this view. Their ethnic groups had won control of their governments and they proclaimed the joys of national independence. These included stringent restrictions on immigration and protective economic policies to reserve land and jobs for “rightful” benefactors. Each boasted of the progress they made as a result of their policies such that the representative from Micronesia even claimed of having eradicated homelessness.

I left the meeting unsettled. Although I identified as an Asian American woman of color in the US, my subject position shifted dramatically when I arrived in Okinawa. Where my identity in the US had allowed me to participate in discussions about racism and imperialism without incurring much skepticism, I now read as the fancy academic from the imperial metropole, representing a tradition notorious for capitalizing on local cultures without abandon. More still, I was new to Okinawa, an adult-learner of Japanese, and vastly ignorant of the political cultures outside the US. Organizing models held that I, occupying a place of privilege, could not be an ally if I vocalized doubts. At the same time, I had questions. Foremost was where the conversation could go from their premise. When one result of colonialism was to clarify the boundaries of ethnic groups and tribes, what can come when activists themselves re-legitimize those assumptions? Furthermore, is removing “colonizers” from the land possible and who wields the power to determine who stays and who goes?

Few places can elicit the type of visceral reactions to the US military empire than Okinawa. While the US military keeps bases around the world and domestically, one might not experience the same anger or disbelief at their presence until one encounters central Okinawa, the most populated island of an archipelago comprising Japan’s southernmost prefecture. New construction often excavates unexploded bombs lodged in the ground from the Battle of Okinawa, the only ground fight to take place in Japan during World War II and an event the Okinawan prefectural government takes pain to commemorate every June 23. After Japan conceded defeat, the US never left. They occupied Okinawa from 1945 to 1972, and at this time, remade Okinawa into its prized “Keystone of the Pacific.” Upwards of nineteen US military installations are etched into the landscape to dominate nearly 19% of the available land on a

single island two-thirds the size of Rhode Island.<sup>1</sup> The US claims that all this land is necessary for the protection of both Okinawa and the world. As such, they say that US servicemen ought to be honored for their sacrifice.

Yet, the argument that US military bases are needed seem either trivial or altogether baseless when one encounters the barbed wire encircling the military holdings for the first time. From the outside, the bases appear merely large swaths of land, serene and unused save for a road cutting through to connect living quarters with a facility or to give a lone farmer access to the misplaced plot of land he continues to tend. Inside some like Kadena Air Force Base, one is transported to a model of suburban America with access to fast food and chain restaurants, Bank of America ATMs, American TV channels, and commissaries offering staples for the American palette and clothes that fit American proportions. In others like Futenma Marine Base, where troops are mostly young men, the luxuries are fewer with less extravagant options for shopping and food. Throughout the main Okinawan island, one will at times witness troops running missions and reviewing exercises, but when I visited in the summer of 2013, it seemed as if official priorities were to entertain. Hoping to combat the lure of being young and stationed in exotic tropics with disposable income to spare, the bases offered motorcycle-riding lessons or reimbursements for activities unrelated to drink. The intent was to distract troops from excessive partying so as not to offend their Okinawan hosts. At the same time, US authorities also inculcated recruits with hypermasculine mores before deployment and allocated financial privileges liberally in a place where wages were the lowest in all of Japan.

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Fackler, "Okinawan Views on U.S. Military Presence Are Nuanced," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/15/world/asia/okinawan-views-on-us-military-presence-are-nuanced.html>. Yoshida Kensei, "US Bases, Japan and the Reality of Okinawa as a Military Colony," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, no. 8 (August 1, 2008), <http://apjpf.org/-Yoshida-Kensei/2857/article.html>.

This is to say, the base problem in Okinawa is not an exercise in abstract theory. The contradictions are on naked display. As a result, a sense of urgency often permeates discussions about the environmental degradation, military accidents, sexual violence, and disparities in wealth accompanying US military rule. I suspect the stark injustices inspire many residents, activists, unassuming tourists, or even US servicemen to join the collective questioning of postwar US expansionism. Like the Okinawan organizers and speakers who participated in the symposium that day, they justifiably want immediate recourse. Most often, they demand ethnic self-determination. After all, injustice in Okinawa is rife and racialized groups elsewhere have increasingly won such rights after World War II. This answer is basic, easy, and hard to deny.

Academic literature about postwar Okinawa mirror these claim. Hoping to support the anti-military cause, scholars rally around the question of Okinawan identity and its connection to anticolonial resistance. The prevailing explanation for Okinawa's current predicament emphasizes the longtime denial of Okinawan expression under both Japan and the US. The narrative usually begins with an account of the independent Ryukyu kingdom that flourished in profitable trade partnerships with China before succumbing to relentless waves of Japanese aggression. The Satsuma domain came first to siphon off profits that ought to benefit the Ryukyu kingdom. Then came the expanding Meiji state to make the Okinawa archipelago a prefecture. Since then, according to this narrative, Okinawans have languished first as expendable labor to fuel Japan's expanding sugar industry, then as martyrs to protect the main islands from American invasion in World War II, and finally as sacrifices to the US for protection from encroaching communists. Because this framework hinges on the denial of Okinawan self-determination, it alternately equates the re-articulation of Okinawan cultural

identity as radical acts of resistance.<sup>2</sup> Drawing from the same set of assumptions inspiring the participants of the anti-base meeting I attended, they hold that a universal desire for a strong identity motivates the numerous acts of anti-military protest so visibly on display.

In other words, can the subaltern speak, under what conditions, and does subaltern speech necessarily produce the desired result of widespread emancipation? I am reviving the same questions Gayatri Spivak did generations ago to insert the Okinawa case within broader debates central to the now vibrant field of postcolonial studies. Against the wave of New Left scholarship documenting the role everyday people had in affecting large-scale change, Spivak concluded that scholars could not extricate a subaltern voice free from the corrosive influences of colonialism. Her targets were members of the Subaltern Studies Collective, and her analysis of their work demonstrated that attempts to excavate an authentic subaltern voice fell prey to Orientalist impulses at worst or reinstated the evolutionary timelines postcolonial scholars set out to critique at best. She denied activist-scholars of easy answers to the troubling fact that formal independence for colonial holdings brought neither less authoritarianism nor more equitable distribution of resources. Perhaps this is why many scholars have developed methods that continue to document the ways subaltern classes have used their subalterity, always in the domain of the alleged “non-West,” to resist.<sup>3</sup> When the consequences of colonialism are so

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<sup>2</sup> Laura Hein and Mark Selden, *Islands of Discontent: Okinawan Responses to Japanese and American Power* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003).

Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012).

<sup>3</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (Harvard University Press, 1999). Scholars who have responded to Spivak’s problematic use of translation and the catachresis include Tani E. Barlow, *The Question of Women in Chinese Feminism* (Duke University Press Books, 2004). Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society Under Early Spanish Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1992). For scholars who have shown the vibrancy of protest movements in the study of US empire, see Moon-Ho Jung, ed., *The Rising Tide of Color: Race, State Violence, and Radical Movements across the Pacific*, Reprint edition (University of Washington Press, 2015). Vivek Chibber has also argued that the default to culturalist paradigms in postcolonial theory skews our understanding of subaltern protest. See Vivek Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (London: Verso, 2013).

devastating and so rampant, it is not easy to admit that the distinctiveness of everyday people is yet another effect of colonial destruction.

At the same time, evidence of anticolonial protest abound beyond academic conferences dedicated to educating the public on US militarism. Okinawa is easily recognized as an area where the US military is highly unpopular and anti-military protest varies in scale and form. Any movement from the US military—military crimes, the deployment of more equipment and troops, and the threat of base expansion—provoke massive demonstrations numbering on the thousands. They also inspire quiet confrontations like daily sit-ins blocking the entrance to the Northern Training Center, around the clock encampments guarding military movements at Henoko, and open-sea skirmishes between activists in kayaks and Japanese coast guard attempting to carry out US orders. Indeed, the longevity and strength of the antimilitary movement in Okinawa has forced the resignation of the Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama in 2010 and an unprecedented split between Okinawans and Japanese in the conservative Liberal Democratic Party.<sup>4</sup> Vocal refusals to permit further military encroachments despite US and Japanese pressures have, alternately, buoyed the careers and popularity of many including former governor Masahide Ota, who demanded that the US leave immediately after the 1995 rape of an Okinawa 12-year-old, and Susumu Inamine, the Nago mayor that won re-election in 2014 after declaring his opposition to Henoko plans.<sup>5</sup> These examples of resistance are an opportunity to think past Spivak's conundrum. Challenges to the US military presence are

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<sup>4</sup> Justin McCurry, "Japan's Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama Resigns," *The Guardian*, June 2, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/jun/02/japan-prime-minister-yukio-hatoyama-resigns>. Martin Fackler, "Okinawa Voters Replace Governor With Opponent of U.S. Base," *The New York Times*, November 16, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/17/world/okinawa-elects-governor-who-opposes-us-base.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Fackler, "In a City on Okinawa, Mayor's Re-Election Deals a Blow to Marine Base Relocation Plan," *The New York Times*, January 19, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/20/world/asia/city-on-okinawa-deals-blow-to-plan-to-move-marine-base.html>.

apparent, but as a multiply-colonized site, one cannot easily equate anticolonial action with the recovery of ethnicity without denying Okinawa's historicity.<sup>6</sup>

This dissertation asks if there are better alternatives to proceed in anticolonial resistance. I focus on Okinawa's crucial Occupation period between the Battle of Okinawa's end and reversion to Japan during which the US military established its Pacific stronghold. Although scholars generally agree that the US merely replaced Japan as a colonial force in Okinawa at the end of World War II, less recognized is the well-intentioned benevolence motivating US decisions. Drawing from works on the US empire linking the rise of US military power to the spread of US liberalism, I focus on the actions of the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR).<sup>7</sup> Undoubtedly a military government set up to protect US interests, USCAR was also a manifestation of the most progressive trends in not only US government but intellectual circles. Officers often graduated military schools specializing in civil affairs and these institutions incorporated theories from prominent social scientists spearheading the shift away from scientific racism.<sup>8</sup> Instead of arguing that societies evolved on different paths because of biological capabilities, anthropologists and sociologists increasingly held that distinct racial and ethnic groups evolved in the same way but with help from different tools. At their most evolved state, all societies had independent governments, self-sustaining economies, and

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<sup>6</sup> Scholars in Okinawa have tried to problematize the category of ethnic identity in different periods of Okinawan history. They include Alan S. Christy, "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa," in *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, ed. Tani E. Barlow (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 141–70. See also Wendy Matsumura, *The Limits of Okinawa: Japanese Capitalism, Living Labor, and Theorizations of Community* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015). I build off their efforts.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Belknap Press, 2007). Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> On the military's Civil Affairs school, see Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands, 1945-1950* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific, 2004). On the shift in anthropology and its subsequent appropriation by the US state, see Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

cultural institutions speaking to a strong sense of racial and ethnic identities within the international realm. Where indicators of the evolutionary ideals were absent, both social scientists, and by extension the US government, had the responsibility to manipulate the society's foundations—the economic base—to promote the desired results. That doctrines like self-determination and economic development won widespread acceptance in public discourse helped the US make allies out of skeptics in the decolonizing Third World.<sup>9</sup> In Okinawa, it allowed the US military to position itself as an anticolonial friend to Okinawans who had, for too long, been denied their sense of self under the Japanese.

I also emphasize the role the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) played in substantiating US military rule. Hoping to relieve their administrative burdens, USCAR convened the GRI to train Okinawan leadership in the practice of self-government. The GRI, therefore, was more than a shiny example of US benevolence. This crucial apparatus allowed the US to implement its policy of “indirect rule.” GRI officials drew from the best and the brightest. They were what Okinawans should be according to US measures: educated, cosmopolitan, and experienced in the daily operations of government. Most importantly, they were equally invested in political economic self-strengthening. As such, GRI leaders heartily advocated the economic policies that USCAR said would generate independence and ensured that activities on the ground never strayed far from the type of society the US wanted. When disagreements with the US occurred, GRI representatives rallied their Okinawan constituents so that they could negotiate. Their resulting resolutions, which often aimed to increase the awareness of Okinawans as a distinct people, only prolonged the military's arrangement. My

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<sup>9</sup> David C. Engerman, ed., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present*, 1 edition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

focus on the GRI disaggregates the exaggerated connection between Okinawan ethnicity and antimilitary protest maintained in scholarship. I show that Okinawans did not unite in opposition to US military rule by nature of their ethnicity or even as a result of their collective experience with dispossession.

Once I clarify the limits of academic analyses valorizing the desire to cultivate an ethnic identity, I return to re-examine examples of anticolonial protest. I hold that arguments connecting assertions of Okinawan culture and ethnicity with anticolonial resistance underestimate the undertakings of local activists. They forget that components within a given culture can, in fact, bind together conservative elements.<sup>10</sup> Thus, a fuller analysis of the public debates and direct actions opposing the US military highlights the resourcefulness of anticolonial detractors as well as the innovation involved in unraveling existing discourses privileged under the Occupation.<sup>11</sup> The US military enterprise hinged on generating a sense of Okinawan difference as well as GRI collaborations. Mobilizations consequently required that protestors put at stake an ethnic bond social scientists claimed should universally exist.

In other words, people chose to protest. USCAR and GRI perspectives asked Okinawans to relish infrastructural improvements and jobs that purported to improve standards of living. Activists, on the other hand, cohered around principles of justice. Their tactics also varied, extending beyond dances and fiction that rightfully criticized US imperialism as secondary

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<sup>10</sup> Feminist critiques of anticolonial nationalist movements have made this point in showing how traditional hierarchies continued well into the colonial period.

<sup>11</sup> I am borrowing from Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony And Socialist Strategy: Towards A Radical Democratic Politics* (New York: Verso, 2014). Rather than conceptualizing radical resistance as the emergence of a unified totality as stated in conventional Marxist frameworks, they argue that resistance occurs when movements unravel the underlying social scheme to assert their own hegemony. Chibber also makes a similar point about subaltern protest but he does not provide examples.

scholarship has amply documented.<sup>12</sup> In the 1955 island-wide protests against military land acquisitions and the 1965 Miyako protests against sugar liberalization, I identify how conflicts effectively blocking US and GRI agendas arose when protestors asserted alternatives. They unraveled the closed political circuits and economic channels rendering Okinawa society a unified whole that conveniently accommodated the US military. Perhaps activists today might themselves forget that if the military situation in Okinawa today appears unnatural, it is due to the continuous and careful efforts of people who articulate counter-logics alongside clear refusals.

The dissertation has five chapters. The first part traces the growth of the US military system on Okinawa to demonstrate how the US institutionalized its presence on the basis of Okinawan identity. Chapter one outlines the epistemological groundwork guiding US plans for the islands' imminent occupation after World War II. Analyzing two key US social scientific reports, I show how the authors Alfred Tozzer and George Murdock prioritized, rather than neglected, the promotion of Okinawan ethnic identity. Both Tozzer and Murdock argued that Japanese colonialism had distorted the natural development of Okinawan society particularly the ability of Okinawans to identify as a distinct ethnic group. Drawing from trends in cultural anthropology and functionalist sociology, the two scientists believed the economy propelled their desired transformations and named the underdeveloped agricultural sector as the cause of Okinawa's lack of identity. They urged the US to concentrate on agricultural reforms, and in doing so, made the military occupation into a benevolent force.

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<sup>12</sup> Davinder L. Bhowmik, *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 2008). Christopher T. Nelson, *Dancing with the Dead: Memory, Performance, and Everyday Life in Postwar Okinawa* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2008).

Chapter two examines how the US military government instated their rule in the immediate postwar years. Following the Battle of Okinawa, the US faced the task of securing military interests in the face of widespread devastation and mounting criticism of foreign intervention. Military planners deflected accusations of colonialism by establishing an Okinawan government to share administrative burdens. They also positioned themselves as an economic partner whose presence fostered the formation of a self-sustaining Okinawa. Plans to rehabilitate the Okinawan economy necessitated a uniform system of assigning value, and so the military government reinstated money so that they could calculate productivity, police the proper use of investments, and make postwar Okinawa into a single political economic unit. Agricultural cooperatives made sure money and US propaganda reached far-flung rural areas. Led, too, by Okinawans who worked in prewar associations, the revitalized agricultural cooperative network secured US objectives while initiating Okinawans into the military fold.

Chapter three investigates Occupation plans to promote Okinawan emigration to Latin America. As the occupation progressed, military policy continued to clash with its social objectives. The military wanted more land for its bases yet its ability to present as an economic partner depended on Okinawa's continued development. Particularly in agriculture, social scientists found that the population consistently exceeded the amount of land available for production. Their answer was to remake displaced Okinawans into pioneers of the virgin wilderness. Ensuing policy celebrated the intrinsic ability of Okinawans to farm and encouraged emigration to unruly outposts where both USCAR and GRI said development had not occurred. Latin American countries, hoping to contend on the world stage, welcomed Okinawan emigrants. They believed that Okinawans worked better than indigenous peoples and granted permits to establish colonies expressly for Okinawans. How USCAR, GRI, and Latin American

governments rallied around the discourses of self-determination and economic development exemplifies a form of subimperialism, which this chapter argues fitted colonialism to calls for international cooperation.<sup>13</sup>

Having established the commonalities between USCAR and the GRI, chapter four begins my discussion of radical resistance. The focus here are the island-wide responses to US land acquisitions escalating through the 1950s. Continued base presence rested on resolving landowners' objections and upholding the military's economic model. To these ends, the US struggled to pinpoint individual actors and one unified demand to which it could swiftly and logically respond. Eventually, the US government argued that Okinawans disagreed only on the money they were paid for their land, and to accommodate Okinawan demands, policymakers reverted to social scientific models tracing the conflict's source to the absence of a real estate market helping average Okinawans see value in proper numerical terms. Far from assertions of a unified Okinawan identity, what troubled the US was how the definitions of land value changed and multiplied in the dissenters' actions and claims.

The final chapter examines an unexpected protest erupting on the outlying island of Miyako in 1965 to oppose the rationalization of the sugar industry. In addition to tying local agricultural production to military demands, the proposed reforms to the sugar industry confined discussions about the allocation of power and resources to modernizationist rubrics. Neither USCAR nor the general Okinawan public expected a protest to erupt on Miyako. The US held no military installations there and both government officials and Okinawans considered Miyako farmers more backwards than most. They were less likely to understand politics. The frantic responses by military ranks and surprised reactions from the Okinawan public show how radical

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<sup>13</sup> Marshall Johnson and Fred Y. L. Chiu, "Guest Editors' Introduction," *positions: east asia cultures critique* 8, no. 1 (2000): 1–7.

resistance unraveled military thinking. Through strategy and organization, the farmers momentarily transcended their prescribed place and posited new definitions of politics, protest, and government celebrating their political agency and centering their concerns in policy.

As I became more familiar to Okinawa in the year I spent there, I realized that I was not alone in my initial hesitancy. In the course of many difficult conversations, I learned that a third space where ethnicity did not determine participation in anti-military discussions was sorely needed. Many scholars, activists, and residents agreed for they either expressed reservations at the rigidity of ethnic nationalist thinking or were themselves engaged in widening the circle of anti-military supporters. In this dissertation, I document how US military schemes relied on the cultivation of Okinawan identity and how Okinawan themselves articulated the same logics when attempting to find an essential self. More importantly, I show how anticolonial protest posited alternatives supplanting ethnic nationalist discourses. In so doing, I hope my work helps anti-base activists carve out more spaces where discussions for anticolonial futures can flourish.

## Chapter One

### (R)evolutionizing Okinawa: Postwar US Anthropology and the Beginnings of US Militarization

#### Introduction:

This chapter begins a longer examination of the means by which the US occupied Okinawa at the end of World War II. My central inquiry is the problem of Okinawan identity, which garners much attention from practitioners in contemporary Okinawan Studies. The islands' postwar period demonstrates how the US and Japan sacrificed indigenous Okinawan interests for the sake of regional stability. To this end, scholars have highlighted how US troops used brute force to evict Okinawans from their lands and the general injustice of military treatment. According to this narrative, US militarization entailed erasing Okinawans and the disavowal of democratic principles for military ones.

In an effort to remedy the blatant disregard of Okinawan interests, scholars have also focused on the ways Okinawans resisted. Indeed, many Okinawans have actively challenged US and Japanese plans and prevailing literature considers this resistance expressions of Okinawan identity.<sup>14</sup> At the same time, equating identity with resistance is problematic not least because defining an identity has long been an integral part of colonization. The long alliance between colonialism and anthropology demonstrates as much. Anthropology provided colonial states an important technology for rule. The branch of modern social sciences purporting to illuminate

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<sup>14</sup> See for example Matthew Allen, *Identity and Resistance in Okinawa* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield, 2002); Laura Hein and Mark Selden, eds., *Islands of Discontent: Okinawan Responses to Japanese and American Power* (New York: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2003); Glen D. Hook and Richard Siddle, eds., *Japan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

man's prehistory and racial character made legible primitive subjects, which enabled the colonial state to concoct justifications for its intervention. The discipline also translated highly subjective accounts resulting from contentious relationships into objective facts. With its fellow social sciences, anthropology built a vast knowledge base, which permitted the state to understand, interpret, and regulate subjects within its jurisdiction.

Directly linking "Okinawanness" to agency and resistance further ignores the historic relationship between "Okinawan identity" and Japanese colonial practices. As many scholars have shown, if Japan incorporated the neighboring island chain into its empire or expanded through various attempts at nationalist modernization, it was precisely by making "Okinawa" a viable category. After the Meiji restructuring, portraying "Okinawa" as the poor, distant relative of Japan undergird the so-called, benevolent education policies established to foster imperial allegiance.<sup>15</sup> In the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> ce, Japanese intellectuals founded the academic discipline of "Okinawa Studies" to further strengthen Okinawa's identification with Japan. Scholars pioneering fields such as folklore studies intended to prevent the eradication of Okinawan culture and to counter accusations of backwardness. Yet, they paradoxically presented "Okinawa" as either a precursor or peer to the Japanese mainland.<sup>16</sup> "Okinawa" as the subject of the academic field, consequently, shored up Japanese colonial discourse. Although I do not go into much detail about the convergences of the two empires in this chapter, I do want to note that these Japanese-language documents, produced in a colonial setting, were the

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<sup>15</sup> Alan Christy, "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa" in *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, ed. Tani E. Barlow (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 141-169.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Barshay, *The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: The Marxian and Modernist Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) 37. See also Ruri Ito, "The 'Modern Girl' Question in the Periphery of Empire" in *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, Globalization*, eds. The Modern Girl Around the World Research Group (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008) 240-262.

epistemological materials from which US social scientists later drew when devising their own reports. For this reason, this historical context is inseparable.

In this chapter, I build on existing literature demonstrating the role the production of identity played in substantiating colonial relations. I argue that literature about the onset of the US Occupation does not account for a significant shift in evolutionary theory following World War II. As World War II drew to a close and conventional forms of racism became increasingly untenable, a new discourse emerged to suture the crisis. Whereas prewar anthropologists ranked a group's development by bodily forms, the postwar cohort no longer believed race determined a group's potential for growth.<sup>17</sup> Race was a non-factor, they argued, and to show how different but equally endowed people populated the world, postwar anthropologists focused on indigeneity. In their new rubrics, indigenous groups gave birth to modern races who were all moving towards independent nationhood. As I demonstrate through the Okinawa case, what substantiated progress under the revised, multiculturalist theory of evolution was "indigeneity," not race.

For this reason, I propose modifying the accepted narrative of the US and Japan's ongoing disavowal of Okinawan interests in the postwar period. I read two reports that renowned anthropologists Alfred Tozzer and George Murdock authored to prepare the US military for its task of reconstructing Okinawan society. I show how, far from their alleged neglect of indigenous experiences, the US postwar regime was very concerned with Okinawan people and culture. Both Tozzer and Murdock solicited careful depictions of Okinawa and both of their works embodied the discipline's most progressive trends. Still, their reports helped US administrators clarify the "people" and "culture" over which they would preside not unlike

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<sup>17</sup> See Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

anthropologists of the prewar colonial era. More still, Tozzer and Murdock's studies helped locate specific aspects of Okinawan tradition that had historically obstructed its advancement. These early diagnoses of Okinawan society, I contend, allowed US authorities to conceptualize policies that furthered the colonial agenda at the same time they professed reform.

### **Alfred Tozzer and *The Okinawas of the Loo Choo Islands: A Japanese Minority Group***

Of the reports completed in preparation for the impending postwar US military occupation, Alfred Tozzer's study for the Office of Strategic Services, *The Okinawas of the Loo Choo Islands*, was among the earliest.<sup>18</sup> Secondary literature often cite this report to illustrate the willful disregard of indigenous desires. Instead of adhering to the principles of objectivity and empiricism that rendered the social sciences a venerable project, practitioners succumbed to US military interests to forfeit ideals for ideology. For Okinawa, this meant that Tozzer unjustly heeded the military's call for a base over the voices of Okinawans themselves. Whereas Okinawans would have preferred to remain a part of Japan so that they could benefit from the radical reforms implemented on the main islands, prevailing literature holds that Tozzer's report mistakenly emphasized the cleavages between the two groups. As this argument goes, the idea that Okinawans and Japanese were categorically different allowed the US to detach the former from the latter and to implement different, less thoughtful policies including the establishment of military bases.<sup>19</sup> For many historians, the main factor contributing to Okinawa's continued underdevelopment was this initial separation of Okinawa from Japan at the end of World War II.

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<sup>18</sup> Alfred Tozzer, *The Okinawas of the Loo Choo Islands: a Japanese Minority Group* (Honolulu: Office of Strategic Services, 1944).

<sup>19</sup> Masahide Ota, "The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper," in *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, eds. Robert E. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987). David John Obermiller, "The U.S. Military Occupation of Okinawa: Politicizing and Contesting Okinawan Identity, 1945-1955" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 2006) 76-77. For critiques of anthropology's complicity with the US military during World War II and the Cold War, see David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The*

Yet, such a view overlooks Tozzer's methodology as well as the specific contents of his report. Through a close analysis of both, I show that the construction of Okinawan identity was integral to US colonialism. In addition to rendering legible the object of US rule, Tozzer's portrayal of Okinawans put forth an epistemological framework that fixed not only a new administrative unit conducive to US geopolitical strategies but also the discursive condition justifying postwar interventionism: "agrarian underdevelopment." Thus, even though Tozzer does attempt to exploit potential cleavages among Okinawans and Japanese for the immediate benefit of US wartime interests, his endeavor never exceeds its underlying paradigm. It is, instead, only one possible course of action derived from a larger picture.

### *I. Cultural Anthropology and the New Evolution*

A professor at Harvard, longtime contributor to the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, and close ally of Franz Boas, Alfred Tozzer was a vociferous champion of cultural relativism when it first emerged as a scientific theory. At a time when most anthropologists believed race to be a main factor determining a person's potential or evolution a singular path open only to Anglo-Saxons and other Nordic descendants, Tozzer pushed the idea that race, in the manner of physical differences, mattered little. Though he still differentiated races according to categories like sitting height, arm length, cephalic indexes, hair form, and eye folds, Tozzer, like Boas, held that that the scientific measurements supporting strict

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*Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

classifications never held up. Much like Boas, he believed that more variation existed within a single group than between two different races.<sup>20</sup>

Furthermore, contrary to likes of Herbert Spencer and other racial theorists, Tozzer did not believe in a single, predetermined developmental path that only the Nordic race achieved. He argued that local environments shaped evolutionary trajectories, which were multiple. In other words, it was not that “Man is many, and civilization one,” but the reverse: “Man is one, civilizations are many.”<sup>21</sup> If similar phenomena appeared across vast spaces, Tozzer said it resulted from contact or the “psychic unity” of all mankind.<sup>22</sup> People and populations, therefore, thought and acted in similar ways. They formed monogamous, heterosexual families first before expanding into complex groups like tribes and social classes organized around property ownership. Eventually, people wanted a democratic government, and this official body always comprised of legislative, executive, and judicial branches. For Tozzer, societies always looked like “an aggregation of human beings with a common basis of subsistence, banded together through instinct or volition for purposes of mutual welfare and common defense” despite cultural differences.<sup>23</sup>

Still, it must be said that even though Tozzer strongly refuted the scientific basis of eugenicists and other racialists, the two opposing camps agreed that distinct groups evolved from simple and primitive to complex and civilized. Within his formulation, groups lagging in evolution tended to be insular, rooted in locality, and strongly based on kinship ties.<sup>24</sup> Advanced

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<sup>20</sup> Leslie C. Dunn, based upon data collected by Alfred M. Tozzer, “An Anthropometric Study of Hawaiians of Pure and Mixed Blood,” *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University* Vol. 11, No. 3 (1928) 94-211; Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>22</sup> Alfred Tozzer, *Social Origins and Social Continuities: A Course of Lectures Delivered before the Lowell Institute, Boston, Massachusetts, February 1934* (New York, MacMillan Company, 1934) 17-28.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-38, 127-129, 144-145, 199-200. See also Chapter 5, “Organization, Associations, and Classes” for Tozzer’s theory regarding the development of social ranks and classes.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 180-187.

societies, on the other hand, had more varied populations, a testament of their having had contact. Central governments ruled instead of tribal leaders, and so laws in advanced societies codified “those customs which [were] so fundamental in the life of a group that society...found [them] necessary to enforce.”<sup>25</sup> According to Tozzer, they denoted a sense of “collective responsibility,” and in the matter of ethics, “personal choice,” not tradition, governed the morality of the more advanced.<sup>26</sup> Though his theories did not render evolution a function of culture, Tozzer certainly clung to the idea that societies were not all equal.

Tozzer also believed that progress was not inevitable. His “universal man” possessed the innate capability to evolve yet he stated that “it [was] only when a certain point [was] reached that there [was] any momentum to [man’s] cultural advance.” Likening civilization and society “to a great snowball,” he pictured “the savage” rolling “the core of this cultural sphere...up the long ascent” “with painful effort.” Change occurred when cultural forms “topped the rise” for only then did the snowball accumulate enough energy to “[roll] downhill with accelerating rapidity” and “[increases] in magnitude.” Anthropologists needed to ensure that societies met the criteria to progress, and once “gravity and momentum” propelled change, the “task...[was] to direct its course.”<sup>27</sup> This was the role Tozzer envisioned for himself when he partnered with the US military.

## II. *Remapping Race and Okinawa*

Touting his innovative theory of cultural relativism, Tozzer advanced a fresh matrix facilitating US Cold War expansionism in *The Okinawas of Loo Choo Island*. For Tozzer, the

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 216-218, 231.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Japanese were clearly a separate race, and to locate their evolutionary trajectory, he focused on the indigenous Ainu and their development. Most native to Japan, the Ainu yielded other groups like Okinawans and Japanese, and his account of how Japan's population came about clarified the geographic unit on which later officials mapped their policies. They also initiated a set of relationships conducive to US plans. In a world-system that increasingly renounced classic forms of colonialism, Tozzer's explanations shored up the "nation" and "nationalist consciousness" as the standards rationalizing intervention. Further still, Tozzer charted the parameters of "underdevelopment," the problematic state nations and international organizations alike targeted in official policies.

Given his endorsement of Boas, Tozzer's first task was to cast Okinawan racial development so that it conformed to emergent liberal takes on evolution. To that end, Tozzer began situating Okinawans in several possible histories, all of which roughly sketched the set space where US interests lie. First, he defined the Ainu. The "aboriginal population" of Japan, the Ainu were "an early white type" and "[seemed] to have been at the Neolithic level of culture."<sup>28</sup> Although they were, at the time of Tozzer's writing, confined to Japan's northern islands of Hokkaido, archaeological and linguistic evidence revealed that the Ainu dominated the Japan-Okinawa island chain in antiquity. Tozzer reported that words in modern Japanese and Okinawan bore traces of the Ainu language and that evidence of ancient Ainu burial grounds were scattered across Japan proper and Okinawa. Clearly, the Ainu were "the earliest people to enter the Japanese islands."<sup>29</sup>

But the fact that the Ainu only occupied small portions of the Japanese archipelago after World War II indicated to Tozzer that they must have migrated after their arrival. He posited

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

two theories regarding the Ainu's ancient movements. The first suggested that the Ainu naturally spread across the Japanese islands. Tozzer surmised that the Ainu moved "southward along the Asiatic coast, reaching Indo-China where it divided."<sup>30</sup> Whereas "one part probably went westward and [was] represented by the Dravidians of India," he guessed "the other went southeastward as far as Australia where this early race is found today as part of the composition of the 'Australian black.'"<sup>31</sup> In his second hypothesis, he emphasized an Ainu retreat. Citing Japanese and British scholars, he recounted how "the original Japanese [entered] the islands from southwest Korea and [spread] over all Kyushu."<sup>32</sup> Antagonistic to indigenous groups, they "drove the aboriginal Ainus northward or acted as a wedge pushing part of them northward...and a small part to the south."<sup>33</sup>

Regardless of where the Ainu migrated over time, that there existed a "short, long-headed hairy type of man" that was the indigenous Ainu at all allowed Tozzer to derive Okinawans and Japanese as separate groups in the same evolutionary order. Okinawans, under this logic, had copious amounts of luxuriant, curly hair on their heads while the Japanese did not. Considerable amounts of hair too covered the arms, legs, and chest of Okinawan men more often than it did the Japanese. And if one of the distinguishing traits of the Ainu were the amount, texture, and placement of hair, then it followed that the hairiness of Okinawans signaled a closer relation to their indigenous forebears than their Japanese relatives.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, for the Boasian Tozzer, the shared Ainu ancestry of both Okinawans and Japanese marked off a developmental trajectory unique to a newly designated geographic space.

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

Turning once more to hair, Tozzer plotted the dispersal of Ainu blood. Okinawans and Japanese were both capable of sprouting thick, wavy Ainu-like hair, but what was a dominant trait for Okinawans appeared far more recessive in Japanese.<sup>35</sup> When such rarity did occur among the Japanese, Tozzer noticed it in the southern part of Japan proper. Based on the distribution of Ainu traits, one could place Okinawans and Japanese in one continuous island cluster that included both “Japan proper” and the “Loochoo Islands.” For future planners, this was the natural, unadulterated history that must be respected in policy.

In his second narrative, Tozzer measured Okinawans’ proximity to a pure Mongolian blood line. Again prehistoric migrations to the islands determined the degree to which two peoples descended from the same racial stock, and so Tozzer named three other original types in addition to the Ainu: the Mongoloid, Kumaso, and Sushen. The Mongoloid, or the “Yamato Race,” entered the Japan-Loochoo archipelago by way of Korea. According to leading anthropologists, they reflected the present-day fine daimyo (chieftain) types and exhibited the highest level of civilization in East Asia.<sup>36</sup> The Kumaso pushed into Japan from Formosa. They scattered throughout Japan’s southern islands but not without spreading the bits and pieces of Malay or Indonesian they collected from their ancestral homeland in southeast Asia. As for the Sushen, this was a Tunga stock akin to the Manchus. They were known more for their invasion of Japan in the sixth century than any enduring exchange, and so Tozzer conjectured that they “probably contributed little in the way of blood.” Based on the haphazard migrations of the

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 7.

<sup>36</sup> The allusion to Yamato Race is significant because it refers to racial discourse used to justify Japanese expansionism. According to this line of racial thinking, Japanese were descended from the Yamato Race, the most civilized people in Asia. Having attained the highest level of evolution, the Japanese considered it their duty to educate their less fortunate Asian brethren through colonization. See the introduction in Michael Weiner, *Japan’s Minorities: the Illusion of Homogeneity* (London: Routledge, 1997) for a brief overview.

Kumaso and Sushen, Tozzer concluded that the “Japanese are fundamentally of Mongoloid blood.”<sup>37</sup>

Once he named Mongoloid as the Japanese’s predominant stock, Tozzer began developing a theory about Okinawans’ racial background. Since American scientists knew little about Okinawans, he faced having to explain how two visibly different populations could possibly come from similar origins. Okinawans were “shorter in stature than the people of the north.” They also had stockier bodies, darker skin, bigger noses, higher foreheads, and less prominent cheekbones. Tozzer, therefore, found Okinawans to be descended from Chinese Mongoloids, Malays, Indonesians from the Philippines, Formosans, Koreans, and Ainu. A composite race, they were “not quite so ‘Oriental’ in appearance as [were] other Japanese.” Older written sources concurred with Tozzer’s conclusion that the “general agreement” was in error. Experts previously concurred that Okinawa inhabitants were a mix of Japanese “types” yet the stark disparities in physical forms demanded a better explanation.<sup>38</sup>

To resolve the contradiction between physical difference and common racial ancestry of Okinawans and Japanese, Tozzer resorted again to inscribing the course of evolution on a shared spatial unit. Kyushu became his key pivot connecting the two unlike populations. He cited scholars who had tried to disaggregate the racial mixture that comprised modern Japanese to note a possible “change in physical type and corresponding variation in the life and customs of the people.” When one moved from north to south on the Japanese mainland, one saw that the Mongoloid strain prevailed in the north. The Kumaso type was only “noticeable after one [crossed] the straights into Kyushu.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Tozzer, *The Okinawas of the Loo Choo Islands*, 5.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

Okinawans, therefore, resembled a certain sub-group of Japanese characteristic of Japan's southernmost islands. More specifically, Tozzer found that those living in the northernmost sections of the Okinawa exhibited physical attributes most like the Japanese living in Kyushu. In places like Amami which connected Okinawa to Japan, scholars identified two types of people: one resembling typical Japanese with sharper chins, better noses, larger eyes, and less protruding jaws, and the other nearly as hairy as the hairiest European and certainly related to the hairy Okinawan. More still, Tozzer pointed out the growing racial variations as one travelled to Okinawa's southernmost island groups.<sup>40</sup> Not unlike his account of Ainu diffusion, Tozzer created a map of racial distribution that seamlessly placed Okinawans and Japanese within an incipient administrative framework.

Curiously, Tozzer extended the borders demarcating his rehabilitated evolutionary chain in his diagram of Mongoloid ancestry. He offered a second spatial order that surpassed the limits of his first attempt at demarcating the ideal administrative unit on which officials could graft policies. By affirmatively alluding to older scholarship, Tozzer began linking Okinawan racial origins to parent stocks in the south. For instance, he relied on Commodore Perry's observations that "Malay blood comes out strongly in some of the Okinawans." Tozzer also reiterated the findings of fellow anthropologist Dr. Frederick Hulse, who had previously "[accented] the Malayan or Indonesian component" of Okinawan heritage. For Hulse, "Okinawas [sic] [differed] from other Japanese only in having a higher proportion of Indonesian ancestry," and so Tozzer stressed the proximity of Okinawa to Taiwan, where people sprang "almost exclusively" from Mindanao and Borneo tribes with Malayan or Polynesian origins before the 16<sup>th</sup> ce.<sup>41</sup> In a third sense, Tozzer's conclusions echoed that of Japanese scientists working in the interwar

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-8.

period. Just as interwar Japanese scientists compared Okinawans to the people of the “South Seas” to undergird Japan’s southward onslaught, Tozzer, too, stretched the racial history of Okinawans to Southeast Asia.<sup>42</sup>

### *III. Ethnic Nationalism, Commerce, and the Okinawan Farmer*

While Tozzer certainly deployed racial descriptors reminiscent of the Social Darwinists dominating prewar anthropology and social sciences, his Boasian influences aligned him with more liberal practitioners in anthropology. Nineteenth-century evolutionists took race as a factor determining one’s intellectual and developmental potential but Boasians, like Tozzer, removed race from the equation. Though they still thought groups transitioned from savagery to civilization, they also believed that people ultimately learned the behaviors signaling a certain level of development regardless of bodily features. Boasians also held that the environment shaped evolution and Tozzer specifically argued that a group’s frequency of contact with outsiders affected development even more than local surroundings.<sup>43</sup> For him, the more isolated a group, the less likely their behavior and social organization exhibited the complex characteristics of more evolved cultures.<sup>44</sup>

That Tozzer situated Okinawan culture behind Japan’s in level of development is clear in his discussion of Okinawan political consciousness. He believed that all humans had equal intellectual potential yet not all were exercising their talents in the correct way. His OSS study revealed that Okinawans could not comfortably voice a common subjectivity when faced with

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<sup>42</sup> Tomiyama Ichiro, “Colonialism and the Sciences of the Tropical Zone: The Academic Analysis of Difference in ‘the Island Peoples’” in *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, ed. Tani E. Barlow (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

<sup>43</sup> Tozzer, *Social Origins and Social Continuities*, 51-52.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 18-20.

undue stress. This insight about stress and fractured mass subjectivity led him to theorize about it anecdotally. For instance, Tozzer cited a story in which “a number of Okinawa girls wished to form a society”:<sup>45</sup>

“According to the rules, each club is directed by a member of the Committee who is of the same racial strain as the members of the group. As a consequence of a Japanese being ‘mistakenly forced upon them as a leader,’ silently and with no word of protest the Okinawa girls refused to attend the meetings and the Club quickly faded away. Later, the same girls ‘with tears in their eyes’ petitioned for a white leader and, relieved from its former handicap, the organization prospered.”<sup>46</sup>

There are a number of oddities in this anecdote. The primary point is that Okinawans and Japanese cannot coexist. Another is that given a choice, Okinawans gravitate to white leadership. But, the account further illustrates the incapacity for Okinawans to defend their right to organize as an autonomous or discrete ethnic group. Though the Okinawan girls in question had in their minds to start a women’s organization where they could congregate as a community, they did not have the confidence to see the goal through even after they had established clear organizational rules. When Occupation authorities mistook for Japanese, the Okinawan girls did not say anything. They simply abandoned their goal and disbanded without complaint.

Having linked Okinawans’ inability to express a cohesive ethnic identity to backwardness, Tozzer then searched for the conditions encouraging a regressive response. While the stifling, oppressive nature of Japanese colonial aggression certainly discouraged self-determination, Tozzer argued that other circumstances had aggravated deficiencies entrenched in Okinawan society even prior to Japanese conquest. Indeed, Tozzer believed that so-called Okinawans had a longstanding aversion to the concept of “national sovereignty.” Reaching back to an alleged pre-Japanese antiquity when “Okinawa” had a traditional monarchy, Tozzer

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<sup>45</sup> Tozzer, *The Okinawas of Loo Choo Islands*, 81.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

portrayed Okinawa as an enthusiastic trade partner with little regard for political development. In other words, he theorized an original difference between “Japanese” and “Okinawans” and attributed to the Okinawans a pronounced tendency to avoid politics. Though the islands clearly benefited from some exchanges with “the Japanese,” it also learned the injurious habit of rejecting sovereignty.

The earliest instance of this deleterious behavior was, according to Tozzer, Okinawa’s eager acceptance of China as a superior trading partner. Beginning in the sixth and seventh centuries with a few skirmishes against the Mongols of the Yuan dynasty, Okinawa progressively welcomed a place in China’s profitable tributary system. Though offering tribute subordinated them to China, entrenchment in such a network not only offered Okinawans the language and education techniques forming the basis of the islands’ high culture but also fulfilled their inherent desire to do business. For these reasons, by the time the Ming assumed leadership, Okinawa “virtually accepted ‘the annexation’ of the country as part of Chinese territory” without provocation not three years into the new dynasty.<sup>47</sup> In fact, because the islanders so thoroughly relished “[trading] and the exchange of presents,” a Ming successor had deemed Okinawans “the most obedient among the dependencies.”<sup>48</sup>

A later example of Okinawa’s over-zealous desire to trade was, in Tozzer’s view, the willingness of Okinawan rulers to confuse their political affiliation: they allied themselves to both China and Japan. Although Okinawa enjoyed its subordinate position as a Chinese tribute, Japan soon proved to be a formidable barrier to this idealized trade arrangement. Japanese pirates, for one, terrorized ships en route to the mainland in earlier periods.<sup>49</sup> Later on between

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 41-42.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-43.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 29, 46.

1440 and 1470, the Satsuma shogunates established rule in southern Japan and asserted exclusive rights over Okinawan trade.<sup>50</sup> By the early 17<sup>th</sup> ce, this rogue Japanese clan had marched 3,000 soldiers into Okinawan courts, captured the Ryukyuan king, apprehended his royal treasures, and coerced a firm declaration of allegiance. It was under the watchful eye of the Satsumas that Okinawa resumed its tributary relationship with China, and while this allowed trade to flourish, Tozzer concluded that “the clan sacrificed for its own interests any attempt to impose on the islands a single and undivided allegiance to Japan.”<sup>51</sup> From then on, Okinawa began compromising its political sovereignty at great risk.

To illustrate the consequences of Okinawa’s innate love of trade, Tozzer recounted Okinawa’s desperate solicitation of Commodore Matthew Perry’s American envoy. On Perry’s first visit alone, Okinawan officials had virtually boasted of the “great pride [it was] to be ranked as one of the outer dependencies of China.”<sup>52</sup> So inured to trade were Okinawans, in fact, that they forgot their overall welfare and rejected Perry’s generous offer to elevate the island kingdom’s standing from Chinese subordinate to independent nation. “Such an assumption...would get [us] into trouble with China, to which country [we] owed allegiance,” the Okinawans allegedly said, but not without first offering Perry a stone as tribute to their new American trade partners without prompting. Tozzer theorized that the Okinawan idea of good government was simply to trade as much as one could, not a carefully crafted policy balancing commercial interests with political ones. Indeed, shortly after they signed Perry’s 1854 treaty, Okinawans entered into similar agreements with France and Holland.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 27, 54.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30, 54.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

Tozzer believed that indulging their natural desire for trade caused Okinawa's fall to Japan. By the 1870s, the once lucrative arrangement of split sovereignty to China and Japan had ossified such that it rendered Okinawa impotent in the realm of international politics. Facing a "massacre" of Okinawan traders by Formosan aborigines, the kingdom could obtain neither redress nor aid to right this transgression in Tozzer's view. In fact, when Okinawa petitioned Tokyo for help, Japan cunningly turned the inquiry into leverage for ousting Chinese claims. "An expedition against the Formosan savages would both vindicate the national dignity of Japan and support its claim to the Loo Choo Islands," Tokyo declared, and Tozzer described how the "inert and acquiescent" China passively let the "energetic and awake" Japan obliterate "every trace of dual dependence" in Okinawa.<sup>54</sup> A mere five years after Japan severed Okinawa's relationship with China, the kingdom succumbed fully to Japanese colonial rule. That Okinawa was too quick to trade had ultimately proved its downfall.

In addition to their gluttonous desire for commerce, Tozzer identified a predisposition to agriculture as another troubling condition. Specifically, he believed that Okinawan agriculture obstructed the growth of ethnic nationalism. Recall from earlier that the primary objective of Tozzer's study was to evaluate the strength of Okinawan nationalist movements for exploitative, geopolitical purposes.<sup>55</sup> Aside from emphasizing the mutual aversions between prefecture and metropole, Tozzer attempted to locate specific classes within the broader ethnic group that was most responsive to future calls for self-determination. Among the overseas Okinawans at the center of Tozzer's study, they were the university students and, to a lesser extent, the plantation workers. Of the islands' residents, they were, foremost, the urban, educated class and, less significantly, the indigenous elite who identified more with China. Excluded from Tozzer's

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 34-35.

<sup>55</sup> Tozzer explicitly lists this as an objective in his concluding section on page 91.

sample were two types: first, the Okinawans, whom Japan's insidious assimilation campaigns had brainwashed, and, most notably, the farmer. Regarding the farmer, Tozzer wrote:

“In an examination of a score of these people, almost exclusively from the center and the southern third of the island of Okinawa, it was found that their schooling never went beyond primary grades, averaging less than six years. They were completely ignorant of the history of their islands and had little knowledge even of Japan. In their villages there were few or no Japanese and they had seldom come into any contact with them. From this farmer type little can be expected along the lines suggested here.”<sup>56</sup>

Farmers, with their provinciality and lack of education, differed most from Tozzer's ideal: a group that saw themselves as a unified community deserving and desirous of sovereign nationhood. The purported lack of political consciousness among farmers also hindered US strategies which relied on identifying burgeoning nationalist movements to exploit. Okinawa, however, was “primarily an agricultural region,” and if the US wanted to breed claims for sovereignty, then Tozzer saw farming as a hindrance.<sup>57</sup> Though slight, he both asserted ethnic nationalism as the evolutionary ideal and tethered Okinawa to an unchanging, agrarian state. This inaugural move, I argue, set the stage for further attempts at defining “agrarian underdevelopment,” the problem that prompted continued US military intervention.

### **George Murdock and the *Civil Affairs Handbook: Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands***

Around the same time Tozzer struggled to define Okinawans through a Boasian culturalist perspective for the Office of Strategic Services, the US military commissioned a separate report. The US forces knew little but it seemed clear that it would be inheriting the Japanese empire. Armed with a new approach that considered regulation of civil affairs an indispensable part of occupation, the military turned to George Murdock, preeminent Yale

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<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

anthropologist. Murdock was among those who advocated a softer, gentler, and what its realist critics called “more idealistic” form of military rule. In 1937 he contributed the Human Relations Area File. The file pioneered cross-cultural comparative methods.<sup>58</sup> A noted follower of Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, and William Graham Sumner, Murdock endorsed an interdisciplinary approach to populations that fused the rigorous quantitative methods characteristic of classic sociology with both psychology’s interest in individual behavior and anthropology’s affirmation of abstract, generalizable theories of human cultures at large.<sup>59</sup> This integrated approach, the Human Relations Area Files, created a holistic view that explained the similarities of all peoples through verifiable statistics while simultaneously accounting for group and individual particularities.<sup>60</sup>

In many ways, Murdock’s worldview fell in line with Tozzer’s despite their opposing intellectual lineages. Herbert Spencer, for example, famously argued that all mankind progressed through universal stages of development distinguishable through the complexity of their social arrangements. William Sumner believed that race, understood as physical features, limited a group’s ability to move through the preordained evolutionary stages. But, by the time Murdock received the torch, the post-Nazi political climate no longer warmed to racialist theories of evolution. Murdock, then, not only welcomed Boas’s contributions but also adapted the core precepts of his predecessor. “[Boasian anthropology] combatted, nearly always with eventual success, not only unilinear evolutionism, but also geographic and economic

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<sup>58</sup> Arnold G. Fisch, Jr. “The Governors,” in *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands, 1945-1950* (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1988) 7-29.

<sup>59</sup> George Peter Murdock, “Sociology and Anthropology,” in *Culture and Society* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1965) 14-34. *Culture and Society* is a collection of Murdock’s essays. The particular essay I cite was first published in 1954.

<sup>60</sup> George Peter Murdock, “Feasibility and Implementation of Comparative Community Research: With Special Reference to the Human Relations Area Files,” *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 15, No. 6 (Dec., 1950): 713-720.

determinism, the organismic analogy, the group mind, racism, instinctivism, eugenics, and theories of primitive mentality,” Murdock declared. In Murdock’s estimation, Boas had “swept the decks clean” of crude, unscientific moralizing around cultural evolution and had, by so doing, “rendered a genuine service to the human sciences.”<sup>61</sup>

For Murdock, if anthropologists still benefited from Spencer, Durkheim, and Sumner, it was in accordance to his re-reading of these earlier evolutionists. Instead of the more popular but increasingly maligned *Principles of Sociology*, Murdock cited Spencer’s attempt in *Descriptive Sociology* to methodically organize, classify, and compare the world’s people as the inspiration for his own Human Relations Area Files. Durkheim’s functionalism, Murdock argued, explained outwardly obsolete behaviors as vital parts of an overarching system rather than the answer classical evolutionists offered: relics of a static primordial state. In the case of Sumner, Murdock commended his insistence that cultures adapted over time, not only to individual and group needs but also changing living conditions.<sup>62</sup>

Building on the redeemable qualities of his predecessors, Murdock posited his own theory of culture and evolution. With very few mentions of race and its role in human development, Murdock advanced a multiculturalist perspective not simply analogous to Tozzer’s but even more fully realized.<sup>63</sup> Best exemplified in his 1934 book *Our Primitive Contemporaries*, his world was full of different people who possessed the same biological materials but whose geographical location shaped different evolutionary trajectories.<sup>64</sup> In eighteen brief ethnographies, Murdock highlighted respective economic, political, and social

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<sup>61</sup> Murdock, “Sociology and Anthropology,” 20.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 17-18.

<sup>63</sup> In all of the articles I read of Murdock’s, he only mentions race to refute the role it played in defining human development in 19<sup>th</sup>-ce evolutionary theories.

<sup>64</sup> George P. Murdock, *Our Primitive Contemporaries* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934).

configurations of “primitive peoples representative of all the great regions and races of the world and of all the major types and levels of culture.”<sup>65</sup> These sketches, in turn, marked out the points of comparison between racially distinct developmental paths. For “the intelligent lay reader,” Murdock believed his volume enough to demonstrate how “there [was] no culture which [did] not possess some form of religion, marriage, economic organization, and the other major social institutions.” His argument was that “all cultures, including [his] own, [were] built according to a single fundamental plan, the so-called ‘universal culture pattern.’”<sup>66</sup> Classified first by continents (though not Europe) and then region second, these “primitive contemporaries” served as the savage other anchoring the identity of civilized leaders as well as future calls to modernize.

Murdock, like Tozzer, saw culture as the variable governing changes in living arrangements. Denoting social organization, culture separated humans from animal species and its transmission was acquired through learning rather than biology. Culture, therefore, replaced race in explaining continuities from generation to generation. As Murdock would have it, groups transmitted certain behaviors to subsequent descendants through a biological family unit, the larger community, and finally social institutions. These informal apparatuses served as a repository for social norms constricting individual action. What determined a group’s retention of certain traits was the ability of the behavior to meet basic needs derived from biological imperatives.

Yet how practices in a given culture met human drives only partly explained cultural evolution within Murdock’s framework. More than simple responses to positive and negative

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

stimuli, “habit formation” drove cultures to acquire new characteristics.<sup>67</sup> Drawing from psychology, Murdock theorized that individuals tended to adopt new behaviors when encountering stressors, which impulses could not immediately satisfy. Under extreme, stimulating circumstances such as war and other catastrophes, humans likely adopted new strategies to allay frustrations that old behaviors no longer gratified. The form innovations took, however, depended on environmental factors. Like the human body, geography and climate limited the types of responses developed in the aftermaths of drastic change.<sup>68</sup>

Irrespective of any revisions, the fact remained for Murdock that cultural units did indeed grow increasingly complex over time. As he concluded, one could detect the degree of evolution of a specific group by the intricacy of its internal structure, particularly with regards to its political organization. By the 1950s, he believed that individuals and family units tended to congregate as a community in the earliest stages. There, distance between households was near, face-to-face interactions frequent, and informal pressures to conform sufficiently adequate to regulate behavior. These communities of approximately 50 to 300 individuals eventually applied more sophisticated means of irrigation, participating in increasingly complex trade networks, and adopting more varied types of work. More populous towns and cities, therefore, developed. Interactions with neighbors decreased as well, and without such mechanisms to shape acceptable behaviors, people turned to governments to maintain social order. For Murdock, the existence of such an authoritative supra-organization signaled the pinnacle of social evolution.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> George P. Murdock, “The Common Denominator of Cultures,” in *Culture and Society* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1965) 97. Originally published in 1945.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-106.

<sup>69</sup> Murdock, “Feasibility and Implementation,” 715; “The Common Denominator of Cultures,” 102-103.

But not all governments ruled fairly. Early on, Murdock knew that “only the naïve [expected] good government at no cost.”<sup>70</sup> He wrote that “the social problem [was] more commonly that of keeping exploitation with moderate limits—by revolution or ‘voting the rascals out’—rather than that of finding somebody who [would] assume the responsibilities.”<sup>71</sup> As the Cold War progressed and “absolutist states” emerged, Murdock further feared the proliferation of immoral rulers who seized power for selfish means or groups that granted their government too much authority. In these cases, the mounting tensions between leaders and constituents likely ended in revolutions, which only marked the beginning of another cycle of political formation, maturation, and inevitable conflict. Thus, Murdock held political democracies the best type of state to come out of mature communities. It was the only form to incorporate in its institutional structure channels making government accountable to people. Anthropologists and sociologists mattered because they could identify in any culture the practices people preserved to help their orderly propagation.<sup>72</sup> This was the goal informing Murdock’s comprehensive account of Okinawa and Okinawans.

### *I. Indiginity and the Recuperation of Evolutionary Backwardness*

Like Tozzer, Murdock’s *Civil Affairs Handbook* set a new approach. Far from separating Okinawa and Japan, Murdock recovered an evolutionary discourse positing a developmental timeline ideal for US administrative purposes. Through an account of prehistoric immigration waves to archipelagos, Murdock defined the two races that had ultimately evolved into Okinawans and Japanese. Even though he distinguished Okinawans according to earlier racial

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<sup>70</sup> Murdock, “The Common Denominator of Cultures,” 103.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-103.

<sup>72</sup> Murdock, “Feasibility and Implementation,” 716.

categorizations, he interestingly shied away from using biological features to explain his evolutionary narrative. Rather, he attributed Okinawa's level of development to a set of characteristics found in Okinawan society: lack of contact, lack of government, and lack of urbanization. These signs of backwardness identified Okinawa as such, but they were also potential targets for reform by US occupiers.

Using *Our Primitive Contemporaries*, Murdock outlined Okinawa's evolution. Like his earlier work, he once again used the Ainu as the region's indigenous representatives to demarcate the general type of people who belonged in his narrative. This "primitive Caucasoid stock" of "stocky, light-skinned, hairy people" did not go unperturbed for long for Murdock believed prehistoric Malays, who delivered the aborigines of Taiwan and the Philippines, swept up from the south and exterminated, absorbed, or cornered the Ainu in Japan's northernmost islands. Around the same time of this first wave of migration, early Mongoloids like the Tungas and Manchus crossed over to Japan from Korea, intermarried with the Malays, and sent a set of their progeny to the Ryukyus. More advanced Mongolian people infiltrated again through Korea though at a later time, and eventually these four ethnic elements mixed and fused in equal proportion to produce the modern Japanese and Ryukyu populations.<sup>73</sup>

That Okinawans and Japanese were fundamentally comparable allowed Murdock to distinguish the two. As both populations had sprung from the same aboriginal source, Murdock teased out succeeding ethnic groups by measuring their likeness to the Ainu. Fastidiously he named the physical forms Okinawans shared with his indigenous parent stock to demonstrate the greater predominance of Ainu heritage among Okinawans than the Japanese. "Their hair," Murdock noticed, was "more often wavy than in the Japanese, and the development of beard and

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<sup>73</sup> U.S. Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *The Civil Affairs Handbook: Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept., 1944) 43.

body hair is appreciably greater, particularly in certain rural areas, reflecting a heavier admixture of Ainu blood.” Like Tozzer, he, too, imagined an Okinawan that was shorter, sturdier, and darker, with protruding noses, elongated heads, and indistinguishable cheekbones.<sup>74</sup>

Now that Murdock had differentiated the two populations from their common source, he resorted to measuring each group’s evolutionary maturation. Here Murdock aligned himself with his predecessors, Japanese scientists who “never [tired] of pointing out the racial and linguistic and other cultural similarities of the two peoples.” He affirmed earlier conclusions that Okinawans were “somewhat rustic and inferior Japanese,” the “poor cousins from the country, with peculiar rustic ways of their own.”<sup>75</sup> Yet, he also held that the unsophistication of Okinawans spoke less to a biological essence than their having fallen behind in development. After all, the Okinawan’s racial makeup mirrored the Japanese. How and why Okinawans lagged in developed what Murdock wanted to know.

The reformed Murdock shifted attention to key traits in Okinawa that deviated from what he considered an “advanced society.” First, he argued that Okinawa was excessively alienated. After an early burst of contact with the outside world, Murdock’s Okinawa had only intermittent opportunities for communication and trade. It encountered China in the 7<sup>th</sup> ce, for example, but these meetings numbered only a few. “For several centuries thereafter”—until 1372, when Okinawa became a tributary state—Murdock held that “no further official intercourse, either diplomatic or military took place.” With Japan, he characterized relations “even more tenuous than those with China.” Okinawans only tried to gain audience in Japanese courts in 617, 618, and 753 A.D. They did not encounter Japan again until 1451 when the Satsumas arrived. This

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 43, 104.

instance, too, was by chance as a storm had accidentally stranded Japanese sailors. Needless to say, Okinawans did not happen across Europe until 1543.<sup>76</sup>

Murdock further rendered Okinawa's interactions highly detrimental. Corroborating Tozzer's claim regarding Okinawa's ineffective government, Murdock told of how Okinawan rulers failed to convert their profitable position as the gateway between China and Japan to political power. Both of Okinawa's larger neighbors had forced concessions. If arrangements were profitable, what little trade trickled in remained concentrated in the monarchy or were passed on to the Satsuma leaders after they deviously transformed Okinawa into a front for clandestine operations. For these reasons, Murdock judged that "tranquility and prosperity reigned in the Ryukyu Islands throughout most of this period."<sup>77</sup>

Murdock believed that Okinawan officials had grown complacent over time. Because he saw no signs of protest from the rulers, he assumed that it could only be because Okinawans warmed to their subordination to "Japanese overlordship." That is, Okinawans "tolerated" this arrangement because it allowed them to do quick and easy business without severing cultural ties with China. Yet, the situation deteriorated by the time Europeans arrived. Without political clout, Okinawan leaders gained only some firearms, machinery, and a coaling station from their European partners and once the West warmed to Japan, these meager concessions altogether stopped. "The Ryukyu Islands ceased to be of importance to the western powers and relapsed again into obscurity," Murdock declared with authority. He said that Okinawa had "not figured prominently in world events" since becoming a Japanese prefecture.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

Perhaps because Okinawa had remained in anonymity and under the leadership of an effete government, Murdock likened its internal organization to scattered, backwater outposts. They were not the lively urban centers where socioeconomic arrangements tended to be complex and good government more likely. He counted only nine settlements that were of “sufficient size to be ranked as towns (*machi*) or cities (*shi*),” and any institutions he noticed were embryos at best. He called the towns “overgrown villages, differing from smaller settlements chiefly in size and in the presence of a number of modern businesses, industrial, and government buildings.” Living arrangements also followed no recognizable logic, containing a village center, some random settlements, and whatever plot of countryside was adjacent.<sup>79</sup>

Materially, Murdock’s Okinawa lagged too. The standard of living and wages were low in relation to Japan and even less when compared to the West. Unlike more advanced, urbanized groups, not much diversity or specialization existed in work. In fact, Murdock counted a total of ten occupations. In a chart tabulating employment among Okinawan men and women, he found an alarming 44.2% of men and 58.5% of women without jobs. 42% of men and 29.1% of women worked in agriculture, and after that Okinawa diverged from two important marks of advancement: skilled, wage labor and male industriousness. In both manufacturing and commerce, he said only a minority engaged and they tended to be women, not men.<sup>80</sup>

Murdock then elaborated on why gender relations in work was skewed. He settled on this: “Traditionally, the men of the Ryukyu Islands [were] agriculturalists who, except for a modicum of fishing and decorative artistry, loathe all other types of work.” His evidence was official, historical, and authoritative, and “virtually all” mentioned men working in the fields or on boats while women “almost exclusively” shouldered the burdens of supporting the family. A

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<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

1930s census, for instance, highlighted more starkly the gender imbalance. Comparing Okinawa to Japan, the table showed Okinawans slow to adopt manufacturing positions and yet the proportion of Okinawan men working outside of agriculture was “considerably smaller.” On the other hand, the number of working Okinawan women was “much larger” than their average Japanese counterparts.<sup>81</sup> It was as if Okinawan men left less-desirable forms of manual labors to women who already pursued more advanced work with greater diligence. The conclusion here was simple: if Murdock situated Okinawa at the lower end of evolution, it was because he ascribed the prolonged isolation, government ineptitude, and sparse settlements to its overwhelming rural nature.

## *II. Climate, Space, and the Discourse of Agrarian Underdevelopment*

Being agricultural, however, did not necessarily denote permanence. Drawing again from Boasian culturalists, Murdock refuted the idea that race limited Okinawa’s growth. His previous convictions said that immediate surroundings affected Okinawa’s underdevelopment more than any bodily features. For a society inclined to farm, the fact that it possessed such unfavorable topography, weather, and water supply seemed to render agriculture a futile ambition. Regardless of technological advancements, the new “natural” categories Murdock extracted appeared on the whole immutable. Aided, too, by a set of redrawn boundaries, Murdock implicitly relegated Okinawa to a perpetual state of underdevelopment.

Preceding any discussions of race or social structure, Murdock extensively detailed Okinawa’s geography and natural resources in the opening section of the *Handbook*. He painted the archipelago as a number of sprawling, inhospitable bits of land that were too many to

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<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

manage. He counted eleven main island groups and within those over 140 islands or islets and “innumerable” rocks and reefs. Of all those morsels of land, he found only 30 that were large or populated enough to warrant the label “important.”<sup>82</sup> This euphemism, of course, referenced land’s innate potential to sustain people and it appeared that Murdock had generously stretched the indicator to its limit. He described the islands “peaks of submerged mountains.” Their coastlines were dramatic with raised coral and limestone plunging into the sea. Still, Murdock worried. He saw that the terraces were too high and too littered with thick gravel beds.<sup>83</sup> Without a uniform topography, the scientist said available plots were too small to sustain large settlements.

Second to the dispersed and jagged terrain was Okinawa’s tropical climate prone to unpredictable and destructive monsoons. To reach this determination, Murdock pulled from previously gathered data to calculate a template for Okinawa’s typical weather. With confidence, he predicted the average temperatures over a year, fluctuations in atmospheric pressure down to the day, humidity across all islands, and percent of cloudiness at two separate locations over different monthly spans. He even estimated that sunshine could not be expected for more than two days, with approximately one-third of daylight hours, during the months of peak cloudiness and four days at most through less cloudy periods.<sup>84</sup>

But whereas Murdock could accurately forecast temperature, pressure, humidity, cloudiness, and sunshine, the barometers associated with the monsoon were another story. Again Murdock sought answers in weather station reports, but this time even observations from 13 sites offered no clear model. Though heavy on the whole, annual rainfall seemed atypical and

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 12

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

indeterminable, varying from place to place and year to year.<sup>85</sup> Of wind, Murdock could only speculate that they were “monsoonal in character” and extracted from the measurements a single generalization about the rarity of calms and how they occurred at most three days a month in winter and seven days a month during summers.<sup>86</sup> All this volatility was because the islands, according to Murdock, were a magnet for storms. He noted that anywhere from 12 to 45 typhoons came through this region each year, of which 3 to 6 hit directly. These typhoons brought erratic rainfall, strong winds, and, most alarmingly, damage to property and crops, a setback the largely agricultural Okinawa could not afford to sustain.<sup>87</sup>

Next on Murdock’s list of Okinawa’s unsuitable natural characteristics was the shortage of usable water sources. Although the archipelago was, in fact, surrounded by water, Murdock nevertheless proclaimed that this “major problem” of “the very restricted supply” had afflicted Okinawa for years and effectively hindered Okinawan self-sufficiency. No other reason but the original deficit could account for the water shortage in Murdock’s mind, and so he indicated how natural sources were located on larger islands. Already scarce in number, the sources barely held enough for the population’s personal needs much less those of crops. Artificial irrigation were not only limited as well, but also “completely out of the question” on many cases. Thus, islanders had to import water to meet basic demands for drinking.<sup>88</sup> That Okinawa had managed on such short supply thus far was a wonder in itself.

What little potential for sustained settlement after the hostile topography, unpredictable climate, and scant water resources had to overcome the lackluster quality of soil. Painstakingly, Murdock documented the color, consistency, and density of soils on small, low-lying islands,

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<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

soils on larger islands, soils along beaches, plateaus, and high plains, soils in Naha, soils on the central mountains of the main island, and soils on any peak between the central area and coast. He found the dirt too thin and basic in some parts, too sandy in others, too shallow along the coast, too tightly packed in the city, too trapped in random pockets in the mountains, mixed with too much gravel, and, if not that, then with too much clay.<sup>89</sup> For Murdock, it was clear that the majority of land on Okinawa was inherently unsuitable for normative evolutionary growth, itself contingent on transitioning away from dispersed rural lifestyles towards denser, more populous urban living. To retain agriculture as the primary industry only held Okinawa at a continuous disadvantage.

Murdock's account of the Okinawan sugar industry is one example of the extent to which he considered the environment a handicap. Historically, sugar was the most profitable of the islands' food industries, and Murdock himself considered its cultivation the best way the US could revitalize Okinawa's postwar economy. Introduced far before Japan's incorporation of Okinawa in 1623, this presumably "local" food had proven to be "the principal commercial crop" fueling the islands' growth. Besides netting Okinawa prefecture alone ¥14,100,685 in 1939 for more than one million tons, sugar further sparked other promising modernization ventures. Because of its success, local governments established research programs; households attained greater levels of employment; farmers adopted more advanced, labor-efficient technologies like animal, water, gasoline or electric power; and companies invested in modern refineries that subsequently encouraged the formation of a modern, industrial workforce. If Murdock sought to locate an indigenous trait that had traditionally spurred Okinawa's metamorphosis to a stable, self-sufficient political democracy, sugar apparently was key.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 240-241.

Yet, for all sugar's potential value, Murdock simply could not see the crop overcoming immediate environmental constraints. For one, the mercurial weather unsettled any attempt to project an ideal pace of sugar output and, as proof, Murdock pointed to the years between 1930 and 1939 during which Okinawa averaged 101,045 tons of sugar. The number, he argued, actually belied the fact that output "[varied] considerably from year to year depending upon climatic conditions." For example, in 1938 the industry was en route to surpass previous record highs in 1935. Without warning, however, the weather changed mid-season in 1939, devastating precious crops and infrastructure in the process. Several months later, sugar producers had recovered. "Prospects looked even brighter, with good weather prevailing," Murdock recounted, until "an excessive rainfall endangered the first harvest" in September and "a typhoon struck the islands, ruining the cane fields and damaging many of the refineries" in October. Exacerbated by labor and fuel shortages, "sugar production for 1939 fell sharply below that for the previous year."<sup>91</sup> Instead of becoming increasingly more lucrative with each progressive year as evolutionary theorists would expect, the Okinawan sugar had actually regressed with one annual output dipping below its immediate predecessor in Murdock's estimation. Put simply, nature, over which no one had control, consistently derailed Okinawa's efforts at steady improvement.

Yet, Murdock believed Okinawa's terrain fit well within US goals despite its deficits. Whereas Tozzer had traced the borders delimiting a natural, evolutionary relationship bound by race, Murdock's spatialization enabled a perpetual production of backwardness. In addition to tracing the two courses of evolution through an unbroken archipelago, where the inhabitants in Okinawa's north most resembled the Japanese, Murdock subsumed formerly disparate parts under a recycled "Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands" label. Within this unit, he bracketed the "entire

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.

chain of islands extending southwestward from Kyushu in Japan proper nearly to Formosa.” Japan had drawn the borders differently, but Murdock now “[included] the entire Okinawa prefecture...together with a number of islands which are administered under the Kagoshima prefecture.” Kagoshima itself, Murdock continued, encompassed “the Kumage and Oshima districts and part (the Koshiki Retto) of the Satsuma district of the Kagoshima prefecture, the rest of which lies in Kyushu.” He reoriented former referents to correspond with his own visualizations to naturalize his novel category. Not only did geographic markers like “Ryukyu Islands” replace the “Nansei Shoto,” terms that had signaled a single prefecture like “Ryukyu” and “Loochoo” now represented the entirety of Murdock’s revised map.<sup>92</sup>

Once Murdock had summarized the deficiencies of “the Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands,” his assumption was, maybe oddly, that if government past and present had functioned properly few variations within the administrative space should have occurred. The problem was that by unifying disparate parts, Murdock had instilled a new optic. In other words, variation was only legible if set in relation to some standard. Murdock’s “Ryukyu Islands,” therefore, posited a norm by which all other entities were judged. As a result, Murdock now saw too much diversity among the individual islands. Instead of the large, cohesive congregation of settled people, who likely wanted more government, Murdock’s Okinawa was disjointed and glaringly backward. To reiterate a quote I cited earlier, even though the texture and amount of hair reflected a larger percentage of Ainu parentage than what Murdock found in Japanese, he also noted how Okinawans more closely resembled the Ainu “particularly in certain rural areas.”<sup>93</sup> Thus, while Okinawans “closely resemble the Japanese in physique,” they actually “reveal few significant

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

differences in the various parts of the archipelago,” specifically between the northern and southern islanders:

“They are short in stature, adult males averaging two or three inches over five feet in height and the women about four inches less. They have olive complexions, black or dark brown eyes (with the Mongolian eyefold appearing in about two-thirds of the population), noses of medium breadth (nasal index ranging from 71 to 74), and moderately broad heads (cephalic index about 80 in most islands, 81 and 82 in the northernmost islands).”<sup>94</sup>

Much like the variation in physical form, Murdock further pointed to the “considerable dialectical differences [that] exist between different islands of Okinawa prefecture and between the northern and southern portions of Okinawa Jima.” Particularly “in the last-named area[,] standard Japanese has to a large extent replaced Luchuan,” he remarked.<sup>95</sup> Through his new spatialization, Murdock had not only generated divergences but also posited the unified ideal ensuring the continued reproduction of both variation and backwardness. Far from a passing phase, underdevelopment had quickly become the condition fueling future effort of reform by the US state in this early planning phase.

### **Conclusion:**

In this chapter I have showed how important US social scientists redefined “Okinawa” to suit US postwar interests. I have called to crisis the assumption governing much secondary literature that colonialism erased Okinawan indigenous culture. Instead, as I have demonstrated, understanding who or what the Okinawans were proved crucial to the US colonial project. Far from obscuring Okinawan tradition, Tozzer and Murdock used it to rehabilitate an evolutionary scheme unburdened from its 19<sup>th</sup>-ce racialist associations. They de-emphasized the role the body

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

played in development, but then set to explicating the effects of culture. Studying Okinawa culture helped the two anthropologists redefine backwardness, identify the conditions that fostered it, and envisage a space ideal for the future US interventions. Indeed, I have argued that Okinawa's militarization did not begin with the US's willful disregard of the islanders but with a careful cultivation of "tradition" to render future involvements more benevolent.

Because both Tozzer and Murdock maintained that ties to farming barred proper development, foremost on the US agenda for postwar recovery was the question of Okinawan agriculture. For Tozzer, the Okinawan farmer blocked proper development despite their numerical dominance. The faction least likely to embrace ethnic nationalism, their sheer presence explained why Okinawans never embraced concepts like government or sovereignty. For Murdock, farming represented a useless enterprise. Even if it eventually led to the development of more complex political institutions, Okinawa's environment—the paucity of land, poverty of soil, and changeable weather—all precluded achieving Murdock's evolutionary ideal. For both scholars, the issue for postwar administrators was this: given the people's predilection for farming and the islands' lack of resources, how could the US reform agriculture such that Okinawa had the potential to become self-sufficient both politically and economically? These are the issues I explore in the next chapter.

## Chapter Two

### Cooperative Militarization: Agricultural Reform and the US Occupation of Okinawa

#### Introduction

In 1951, the Civil Administrator of the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) issued proclamation number 45, the Ryukyuan Cooperative Association Ordinance. In addition to recognizing mutual aid associations encouraging farmers to pool their resources and make investments, proclamation 45 formalized nearly six years of local Okinawan effort then feverishly working to overcome the devastations of World War II. Okinawans responded enthusiastically to the occupation government's new law. Gathering in their villages across the Amami, Okinawa, Miyako, and Yaeyama archipelago, they prepared and submitted required forms asking the freshly-minted Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) and its US superiors to recognize their cooperatives. Once formally established, individual cooperatives went a step further. They joined forces and sent village cooperative representatives to forge increasingly broader associations. The largest was the Ryukyu Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, which unified local interests under the US-occupied "Ryukyu Islands."

At the onset of a military occupation that would last from 1945-1972, the institutionalization of agricultural cooperatives seemed not only unprecedented but an example of US altruism. This chain of approximately fifty-five islands and islets was home to a distinct ethnic group called the Okinawans, and according to anthropological evidence, they had their own independent kingdom before they were annexed by the Japanese and forced to live under colonial rule. As such, the military considered its decision to detach the islands from Japan to be

an act of benevolence. Years later, Okinawans leading agricultural cooperatives would continue praising the US support of their mutual aid associations. When the presidents of all the cooperatives convened in 1951, they thanked the military government for “greatly [helping] the cooperative associations develop to date through its timely legislation.” “We are deeply grateful for that, and we feel keenly the great importancy [sic] of the mission we bear,” they added.<sup>96</sup> Here was proof that the stationing of approximately 47,000 troops on nineteen bases today was not always all that bad.

This chapter poses a different set of questions. Rather than take the military’s focus on agricultural reforms as a departure from postwar colonialism, I ask how acts of goodwill furthered the American occupation and how widespread support of agricultural cooperatives played into US military objectives. I argue that the reinstatement of native institutions like cooperatives transformed an unequal neocolonial relationship of military occupation into a benevolent policy marked by mutual cooperation and Okinawan self-determination. Agricultural cooperatives not only incorporated Okinawans into the burgeoning native government that the US wanted established, collectives disseminated knowledge and formalized behaviors underpinning a racialized regional economic bloc that presented US military presence as being normal and natural.

## **US Benevolence and the Postwar US Empire**

As World War II drew to a close, growing calls for self-rule emanating from the outposts of prewar empires forced the US to revise its approach to imperial expansion. Before the war,

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<sup>96</sup> “Declaration of Convention of All Ryukyu Cooperative Presidents,” 31 Oct. 1951, Documents about the Ryukyu Cooperatives Law, Matters concerning the US Government (琉球協同組合法に関する資料 米国民政府関係), Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

the US had contrasted its conquest of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico with the harsh tactics of older empires to justify its intervention. Whereas Spain and England had simply exploited their territories for profit, the US always instituted gentler practices to guide its possessions towards self-sufficiency. Yet, criticisms of US intervention accumulated even if Americans alleged to support independence. Across the crumbling territorial empires, movements from the periphery demanded new forms of sociality to organize intellectual, cultural, and economic production. To stop the erosion of its political dominance, the US recommitted itself to the doctrine of benevolent uplift that initially solidified its control over the Philippines. They limited their understanding of colonialism to the denial of racial and ethnic self-determination, and so in the US view, intervention could not be considered colonialism if it coincided with nationalism. US advocacy of international cooperation further shored up American ideas of goodwill. Because international organizations continued to protect national sovereignty, US calls for mutual assistance only volunteered solutions that legitimized the nationalist discourses rendering US involvement a possibility.

Despite its pledge to support sovereignty movements and foster international camaraderie, the US faltered. In Okinawa, the link between US benevolence and colonial violence was complex because during the Battle of Okinawa, destroying Japanese colonialism required a US military invasion that blurred distinctions between civilian and state. More than 12,000 Americans and 150,000 Japanese, including many Okinawan civilians died. The Battle of Okinawa proclaimed Okinawa to be free. However, continued US protection meant incorporating Okinawa into a vast Cold War military network encompassing Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and beyond. To maintain the appearance of benevolence while installing bases required that the US erase reminders associating the military presence with local

disruptions. Yet, as is characteristic of colonial contexts, enacting the narrative of uplift entailed steady reproductions of social difference. Who were the Okinawans? How were they backwards? And what did the US have to do in order to remedy the societies' failure to evolve?

Efforts to transform the military presence from representatives of ongoing violence to that of US benevolence began immediately. Like travel writers who set romantic tales of adventure against the untamed wilderness or anthropologists who extricated their objects of study from historical time, the common refrain of US reports summarizing immediate postwar activities dwelled on the complete annihilation of Okinawan society.<sup>97</sup> In the same way authors, scientists, and earlier agents of empire erased the complexities of people and place to enable imperial rule, military authorities avoided discussions about the loss of human life, environmental damage, and ensuing grief. Instead, their surveys emphasized how the civil government, property rights, law enforcement organizations, as well as all banking, credit, and insurance were “completely disappeared,” “almost nonexistent,” and “disrupted.”<sup>98</sup> Their Okinawa was a ready canvas not only lacking in components independent nations possessed but also eagerly awaiting the vast rehabilitative projects the US occupation promised.

Onto this backdrop, the military hurriedly established their colonial order of things. The battle unleashed disorder and dislocations inimical to the nation-building ventures justifying military operations. Early efforts thusly concentrated on demarcating the legitimate epistemological and physical boundaries for US activities. Military summations reduced the

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<sup>97</sup> Alan Christy, *A Discipline on Foot: Inventing Japanese Native Ethnography, 1910-1945* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012). Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London : New York: Routledge, 2007). Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

<sup>98</sup> “Political Affairs” and “Economic Activities,” Pacific General Headquarters, United States Army Forces, *Summation No.1, United States Army Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands, for the Months of July-November 1946* (Washington D.C.: U.S. War Department, 1946) P. 3-4, 6.

wide spectrum of possible interactions to three, neatly-divided classifications earlier social scientists determined were universal components of nation-states: political, economic, and social. The categories, then, reported activities US officials believed led Okinawan to modernity. Righteous “political” activities included building a civil government that would enact regulations and enforce a normative “culture” aimed at consolidating Okinawans into a distinctive “population.”<sup>99</sup> In addition to tracking birth and death rates, development policies included restoring physical markers like Shuri Castle and resuming traditional dances to connect present day islanders to their unadulterated ancient Ryukyuan kingdom.<sup>100</sup>

As they anticipated retaining land acquired from Japanese forces for use as bases, US military officials also pressed for quick resettlement of displaced or repatriated Okinawans. The ideal organization of space demanded clear demarcations to determine whether an area was intended for Okinawans or Americans, and so the military called for the immediate reinstatement of property rights and village (mura) governments.<sup>101</sup> Property rights, they reasoned, not only forced Okinawans to stake possible dreams for economic advancement on a set plot of land away from military areas, but also initiated landholding practices facilitating future production. Foremost, it encouraged the ascription of monetary value to abstract space. For their part, mura governments bound Okinawans to their preordained position. They tethered one’s legibility within government structures to a stable residence in the larger village network. Within the emerging colonial discourses linking modernity to the accumulation of wealth and participation in electoral politics, attaining either privilege meant staying off land expressly marked for military use.

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<sup>99</sup> “Political Affairs,” Summation No. 1, P. 3-4.

<sup>100</sup> “Education, Culture, and Religion,” Summation No. 1 for the Months of July-November 1946, P. 53-55.

<sup>101</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 12, 14-15.

Fears of unforeseen interactions between US forces and Okinawans erupted immediately once the occupation officials decided to segregate the two groups. Having rendered their own presence not only normal but welcomed, the US military government argued that if their plans went awry, the fault would lie not in their being in Okinawa per se, but rather their inability to police contact. As one Lieutenant Colonel said in early 1946, his overall “mission” was to “prevent fraternization...safeguard and protect the natives from unlawful acts of violence...[and] supervise public safety.”<sup>102</sup> He recommended road blocks, frequent police patrols, and special escorts for Okinawans laboring in fields adjacent to the newly-formed, “Off-Limits” areas.<sup>103</sup> Okinawa fell under the Navy’s jurisdiction in 1946, but the transfer of power to the Army did little to stop the implementation of the suggested practices. Army authorities bragged in their reports about commanders ordering detachment “to prevent civilians from interfering with military operations.”<sup>104</sup> In their minds, segregation “[prevented] unrest and unnecessary hardship to the population.”<sup>105</sup>

The idea that intensifying surveillance was for the good of Okinawans also meant that when discord or illicit affairs occurred, the military could charge alleged wrongdoers with undermining law. Interactions between US forces and Okinawan locals occurred regardless of military oversight of course, but postwar schematics of race relations assumed that Okinawans feared African-Americans. Because the military also believed Okinawans were grateful for their intervention, they linked unrest to Okinawan associations with black soldiers. One testimony argued that while Okinawans “[were] not outwardly hostile or non-cooperative,” the “good will

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<sup>102</sup> Lt. Colonel William Carmichael to Commanding General, Okinawa Base Command regarding Personnel and transportation required by Provost Marshal Section in event Military Government in this area is transferred to Army, 30 Jan. 1946, Study of Military Government (Ryukyu Area), 1946, Box 181, Folder 1, USCAR: Administrative Office, Historical Background Files, 1946-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 3.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 11.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

of the natives” might turn due to “their treatment by American personnel.” In particular, it worried about “unprovoked acts of violence and criminal assault, especially by negro troops who [were] disliked by the Okinawas [sic]” as well as “the high proportion of negro troops” that seemed certain to violate the “non-fraternization” policy when “native and military installations” were already close.<sup>106</sup> Assuming that Okinawans and whites were natural companions, the report concluded that security risks “would not [have existed] if the garrison were white troops.”<sup>107</sup>

In light of its perceived need to segregate, the Occupation government struggled to maintain the manpower the constant surveillance of Okinawans demanded. Colonel Fremont Hodson, charged with determining the basic troop requirements, pointed out the discrepancy between the ideal personnel levels and the numbers the military could realistically offer. According to his calculations, the “absolute minimum that could undertake the task at hand with any hope of success” was 20,000 troops.<sup>108</sup> He had even reduced his estimation itself to account for Okinawa’s “primitive economy.” The assumption was that the military would have to provide more troops once all the projected 400,000 civilians returned and the island’s society evolved more complex structures. Because “it [was] obvious no Military Government force could be that large,” the officer concluded that “the bulk of the requirements [would] have to come from native Okinawans.”<sup>109</sup> The alternative of abandoning segregationist fantasies undergirding US military rule was, of course, unthinkable and consequently unacceptable.

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<sup>106</sup> A Plan for Organization of a Military Government for the Ryukyus, 2 Feb. 1946, Study of Military Government (Ryukyu Area), 1946, Box 181, Folder 1, USCAR: Administrative Office, Historical Background Files, 1946-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Colonel Fremont Hodson to Commanding General, Army Forces West Pacific regarding Study of Military Government (Ryukyus Area), 10 Feb. 1946, Study of Military Government (Ryukyu Area), 1946, Box 181, Folder 1, USCAR: Administrative Office, Historical Background Files, 1946-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

Hoping to reduce its troop size, the military decided to establish a government expressly for Okinawans. A Lieutenant Colonel William Carmichael initiated the idea, pointing out how “if and when the ban on fraternization [was] lifted and the military population on Okinawa [was] reduced to garrison strength, it [might] be possible to make a corresponding reduction on the number of Military Police.”<sup>110</sup> Other authorities followed suit. Carmichael was, after all, only reaffirming their underlying consensus that interracial mingling would explode without a large military presence. Reasoning that Okinawans might be more inclined to stay put if they understood themselves to be Okinawans, US officials drew on prevailing modernization theory. It held that ethnic identification occurred when governments were founded. Authorities assigned responsibilities to a group of Okinawans they congregated at the battle’s end to procure intelligence.

Ensuing reports highlighted the areas where soliciting Okinawan expertise had an impact. Through the latter half of 1946, for example, military overviews praised the growth of the local Okinawan police force, which shared responsibilities with military police for “[maintaining] law and order, [preventing] fraternization, [protecting] the natives from unlawful acts of violence and [supervising] public safety.”<sup>111</sup> Thoroughly pleased with how local Okinawans were “capable of dealing with most problems of civilian control,” military officials detailed how the Okinawa Police Department “gradually expanded and assumed greater responsibilities” following its official inception in December 1945.<sup>112</sup> They “instituted training of civilians for police work and a Police Training School” in central Okinawa, where the US happened to concentrate its

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<sup>110</sup> Lt. Colonel William Carmichael to Commanding General, Okinawa Base Command regarding Personnel and transportation required by Provost Marshal Section in event Military Government in this area is transferred to Army, 30 Jan. 1946, Study of Military Government (Ryukyu Area), 1946, P. 2.

<sup>111</sup> “Current Status – Military Police Control,” Survey of Military Government Ryukyus, 10 Feb. 1946, Study of Military Government (Ryukyu Area), 1946, Box 181, Folder 1, USCAR: Administrative Office, Historical Background Files, 1946-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>112</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 4, 20.

presence.”<sup>113</sup> Within half a year, they also began training auxiliary forces that the Okinawa Police Department hired after their military police service ended.<sup>114</sup> Encouraged, authorities even remarked that “as the police organizations expanded and increased in efficiency,” Okinawans “were given instructions in the use of arms and issued weapons to maintain law and order.”<sup>115</sup>

More than satisfying the dearth of US manpower, incorporating Okinawans into the fledgling state apparatuses fulfilled the commitment to ethnic self-determination on which the military premised its occupation. To that end, the military introduced voting even before the fighting fully ended. They praised Okinawans for instinctively organizing themselves into representative committees. Just as nation-states developed from cities and cities from villages, US authorities reported that Okinawans, while still in camps, made “hancho or foremen...responsible for groups of 60 to 100 persons” and appointing “local ‘mayors’” who were outfitted with councils.<sup>116</sup> When their camps matured, they adopted “a more elaborate structure with the district as the geographical basis” and held elections in September 1945.<sup>117</sup> From there, self-government seemed inevitable. “A nominating body made up of more than one hundred outstanding Okinawans” vetted candidates to serve on the first Okinawan Advisory Council, and after US authorities selected the members, military observers claimed “a central administration gradually evolved.”<sup>118</sup> “Small research and liaison staff grew into ‘departments’” and “council members became directors.”<sup>119</sup> By April 1946, military accounts celebrated the emergence of all the subsidiary departments constituting the Okinawan government: the

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<sup>113</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 20.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 21.

<sup>116</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 12.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 3, 14.

<sup>119</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 3. The same narrative is later repeated on Summation No. 1, P. 14.

Departments of Public Safety, Health, Agriculture, Industry, Finance, Fisheries, Commerce, General Affairs, Postal Affairs, Judicial Affairs, Arts and Monuments, and Labor.<sup>120</sup>

Of course, self-government was limited. Once US forces consolidated disparate camps and detachments, they restricted political recognition to people who stayed in the newly delimited territories and confined debatable issues to those affecting residents. What the US considered good leadership was manufactured as well. The Advisory Council grew into the Okinawa Civil Administration and a subordinate legislative group became the Okinawan Assembly. Though this development met US expectations, tensions erupted in 1949. Allowed to meet only when the higher ranking Okinawa Civil Administration permitted it, the Okinawan Assembly accused its superiors of convening legislative sessions too infrequently thereby shielding important decisions from possible criticism and debate. Military intelligence appeared concerned with the Okinawa Civil Administration's growing alienation because they wanted their chosen Okinawans to lead others by example. They pointedly noted that while "each [was] well thought of in his own particular village," general constituents agreed that their executive representatives "[did] not know anything about the problems of the people."<sup>121</sup>

To dispose of the criteria limiting political participation never crossed the minds of US officials. Establishing a government to modernize the backwards masses was precisely the military's plan. Intelligence reports of the 1949 Assembly "revolt" suggested that the executive body should explain its connection to the military government. It was oblivious to the reality, which was that the Assembly's disputes illuminated the limits to the US conception of

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<sup>120</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 14.

<sup>121</sup> "The Okinawa Civil Administration," Third Year of Ryukyuan Politics, 1949: 526<sup>th</sup> Counter Intelligence Corps Detachments, Folder 5, Box 104, USCAR: The Liaison Department, Internal Political Activity Files, Societies and Associations, 1951-1969, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

democracy.<sup>122</sup> The military assembled profiles of Okinawan administrators that enshrined not only the qualities the US attributed to good leaders but also how the US imagined postwar Okinawa's place in the growing international system. In addition to being English-proficient, US officials wanted a cosmopolitan Civil Administration that embraced understandings of Okinawan culture corresponding with the US intent to foster ethnic self-determination. As such, all Okinawans serving on the executive body received educational or professional training abroad in mainland Japan, the US, Taiwan, or even Mexico. They participated in activities commemorating Okinawa's primordial past as an independent kingdom or argued for separation from Japan on the basis of Okinawa's immutable ethnic difference. Most importantly, members of the Civil Administration like Shuhei Higa were unlike the troublemakers of the Okinawa Assembly. Kamejiro Senaga, assemblyman, editor of the *Uruma Shimpo*, and spokesperson of the Okinawa People's Party, appeared shiftless from the US perspective, periodically disappearing from the public record and harboring communist tendencies.<sup>123</sup> With clear, traceable professional, education, and even family trajectories, the "Okinawans" that the military considered desirable were legible by the standards of militarized knowledge.

Beyond alleged military benevolence, the commitment to Okinawan self-determination made it possible for the US to recuperate colonial structures instituted when Japan incorporated Okinawa into its prewar empire. Confining understanding of colonialism to repression of ethnic identity meant US officials could re-present their separation of Okinawa from Japan as a rescue and their support of self-determination to be an antidote to Japanese imperialism. Once the US military had excised Japan, it believed it had started Okinawa on its journey towards an idyllic

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> See "The Okinawa Civil Administration" and "The Okinawa Assembly," Third Year of Ryukyuan Politics, 1949, P. 4-26.

state in which it could fully realize its unadulterated past. As a result, US planners announced “the inauguration of a program whose object was the political rehabilitation of the islands along prewar patterns,” the first step of which was to return Okinawans to their “former homes” in villages; villages US sociology had determined were “the basis for local organization.”<sup>124</sup> Far from reflecting the US generosity, however, the effort to remake Okinawa along prewar lines sanitized older forms of control, both institutional and epistemological, that had not only bound Okinawa to Japan but secured the archipelago’s place as a clearly demarcated political economic object. Thus delineated, the US continued to naturalize its presence, substituting itself in place of Japan.

### **Agricultural Reform and the Military Economy**

Although the military introduced practices in self-government early on to normalize its presence, it struggled to maintain momentum. Social scientists, who extracted universal truths about social development, claimed that the economy propelled primitive expressions of democracy towards full-fledged nationhood. They reasoned that once people produced surpluses, they moved to urban centers, at which point they demanded more complex, rational, and bureaucratic forms of control to replace the traditional bonds of family and community upholding accepted norms. Scientists also maintained that as productive forces matured, so too did people’s consciousness and their ability to self-identify with their predetermined categories of race and ethnicity. Reasoning that the Japanese had suppressed Okinawa’s ethnic identity in earlier periods, military officials prioritized economic rehabilitation to consolidate “Okinawanness.” The fact that the US could not consistently provide the amount of resources

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<sup>124</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 14.

needed to reconstruct Okinawa according to its desired image also motivated economic reforms. Planners consequently linked Okinawan self-sufficiency to producing for themselves what the military could not.

Put simply, economic rehabilitation marked a crucial step in naturalizing the US presence more than it did the military's generosity. Premised on the belief that self-determination followed economic independence, military policies formalized what was, in fact, an abstract entity called "the economy." As this section shows, the US military actively choreographed the public and private spheres, supply and demand, import and export, and price before such constitutive elements of the Okinawan economy became self-reproducing under the invisible hand. Once reintroduced, "the economy" served as the common ground bringing together neoliberals advocating for less regulations and proponents for active government intervention. It also allowed the US to position itself as a vital trade partner and employer whose very presence in Okinawa contributed to the larger goal of ethnic economic development.

Despite their incorporation of prewar Okinawan officials into the developing state apparatus, US advisors still struggled to handle the increasing number of people for whose welfare US forces assumed responsibility. The vast majority of Okinawans languished in camps awaiting resettlement, and as early prognoses forecasted, both the birthrate and total population were rising at alarming speeds.<sup>125</sup> Since the cost of the Okinawa occupation threatened to overwhelm the military government, US advisors drafted plans to shift financial burdens onto Okinawans themselves in January 1946. Subsequent moves encouraged economic revitalization through the reintroduction of a money economy. The aim was "to establish a pattern of productive activity in Okinawa that [would] provide as many and as much of the island's

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<sup>125</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 7-8.

minimum needs for food, clothing, shelter, and medical care as [could] be satisfied under existing and foreseeable military, economic, and political conditions.”<sup>126</sup> In particular, economic proposals factored in “the appropriation of most of the island’s former arable land to military use,” which only accommodated Okinawa to the military presence.<sup>127</sup>

Having tied the discourse of economic growth to US military growth, US strategists further defined independence according to how well Okinawa traded with their natural biological kin. Already, the US military was repatriating former subjects of the Japanese empire to their racial homelands to undo colonialism. Their economic reforms operated under a similar logic. In its ideal state, they imagined the newly-freed Okinawan islands a regional hub where trade with like races was free. US officials, therefore, aimed to ensure that “purchases be made from oriental markets rather than the US as soon as...[was] feasible.”<sup>128</sup> They wanted to reintegrate Okinawa first “with the other islands of the Ryukyu chain” and then “with the remainder of the Far East.”<sup>129</sup> To this end, they convened an Import-Export Board “to control trade and establish practices designed to bring about a more equitable distribution of food, trade goods, and other products.”<sup>130</sup> Accordingly, the board identified China, Siam, Korea, Formosa, and mainland Japan as longtime partners with whom Okinawa could resume relations.<sup>131</sup>

Military advisors, therefore, projected an epistemological object called the economy onto Okinawa’s postwar devastation when they imagined Okinawan participation in regional trade. Economies consisted of discernable institutions that shaped rational actors whose behaviors

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<sup>126</sup> “Plans for Installation of Money Economy on Okinawa,” 15 Jan. 1946, Folder 17, Box 50, Plans for Installation of Money Economy on Okinawa 1946, USCAR: The Liaison Department, Internal Political Activity Files, 1946-1972, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P 1.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> “Plans for Installation of Money Economy,” P. 1.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 37.

<sup>131</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 6, 37.

conformed to the rigid definitions of politics, work, and sociality. They possessed a distinct workforce called “labor,” churned out uniform products for mass consumption called “commodities,” and used currencies as a means to ensure the fair procurement of goods in “demand.” US advisors presumed that all modern societies possessed such qualities, and so they fancied themselves partners prodding Okinawa down its path to independence. In their view, the US military was a willing employer that offered Okinawan labor the opportunity to grow. If Okinawan labor did not meet US economic standards, planners blamed the Okinawans for not having enough adult men to fill the jobs awaiting them in the military system.<sup>132</sup>

A similar reasoning organized the military government’s inauguration of a two-year economic rehabilitation plan. Having set their sights on regional integration, military experts identified activities they considered potentially profitable.<sup>133</sup> They settled on “native industries,” longstanding practices like the making of “the famed Ryukyuan lacquerware” and the weaving of hats, mats, and textiles that showcased not only Okinawa’s cultural difference but the Occupation’s reverence for tradition.<sup>134</sup> US officials recognized that production in these activities was still humble, operating often out of people’s homes and utilizing only hand tools. Yet, they believed these activities had potential to become thriving businesses. For one, they provided work for the surplus labor residing in resettlement camps. If pushed and prodded correctly, native industries filled the “absence of commodities for sale i.e., trade goods” contributing to the “slow progress” of Okinawa’s restoration.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> “Current Status,” Survey of Military Government, P. 1-2.

<sup>133</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 6.

<sup>134</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 30-32.

<sup>135</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 32. Summations specifically describe textile production as of the household type. “Current Status,” Survey of Military Government, P. 2.

With the intention to incubate the production of commodities, officials identified themselves as the immediate demand that stimulated economic activity. Rather than an occupying force, they were an unexploited market, ready consumers eager to purchase the goods the newly-reconstituted native industries offered. “Native handicrafts” were souvenirs and military summations correspondingly reported on the promising ways they were “being sold through Post Exchange and Ship’s Services.”<sup>136</sup> Not only did military transactions “offer a sizable market for bamboo and pottery articles,” officials optimistically recorded “20,000 hand-painted Christmas cards [being] placed on sale” in October 1946 alone.<sup>137</sup> “Imitation panama hats,” too, they said “found a ready market among Occupation Forces personnel.”<sup>138</sup> Due to the “importance in handicraft” of hat weaving and its concentration in Okinawa before the war, the military targeted this activity for reform. To their delight, authorities noted that “the best grade of native hat” quickly retailed for 2 yen more than its wholesale price.<sup>139</sup>

If the military government saw their troops as consumers of Okinawan commodities, they also fancied themselves suppliers of jobs and materials to struggling areas of labor and industry. Noting that “Native Ryukyuan industrial enterprises” were “now producing sizable quantities,” authorities quickly credited themselves with the success of the restoration.<sup>140</sup> “Nothing was imported directly for Okinawan industries,” they boasted. Instead, Okinawans “were equipped with tools, instruments, and equipment from decommissioned units of both the Army and Navy.”<sup>141</sup> Their metal industries similarly recovered because “salvage scrap metal [was] the source of raw materials” and “warehouses [were] being set up for the reclamation and storage of

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<sup>136</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 30.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 32.

<sup>139</sup> Summation No 1, P. 32. See also Summation No. 2, United States Army Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands, for the Month of December 1946 (Washington D.C.: US War Department, 1946).

<sup>140</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 29.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

scrap steel, aluminum, wood, quonsets and tools declared surplus by the Armed Forces.”<sup>142</sup>

Construction work blossomed with the US contributing building materials as well as organizational expertise. Spurred by the military’s demand for speedy resettlement and segregation, unemployment dropped. Advisors immediately linked the development to the growing number of Okinawans working in military units. They announced that “these figures [indicated] a new high in employment since the end of the war.”<sup>143</sup>

Still, to ensure the steady growth of a healthy Okinawan economy demanded a system to evaluate whether Okinawans were gainfully employed or met production goals. Before the Occupation, the Japanese yen established the worth of labor and commodities yet both the war and Okinawa’s subsequent detachment from the mainland nullified this preexisting money system. In the “Ryukyu Islands” created for the postwar occupation, the military government declared “all commerce stopped,” with “no money and consequently no prices.”<sup>144</sup> US advisors had little to help assign values facilitating local understandings of equal exchange. Since officials deduced that “all [areas] followed Okinawan trends in proportion to their devastation and lack of self-sufficiency,” they further found problem in the absence of uniformity.<sup>145</sup> Japan and Formosa determined economic trends in areas to the north and south of the archipelago instead of Okinawa, the basic character of the Ryukyu Islands.”<sup>146</sup> Reinstalling money in this context not only formalized the abstract economic measures the military introduced but also ensured continued adherence to US development plans.

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<sup>142</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 30.

<sup>143</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 35.

<sup>144</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 37.

<sup>145</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 37.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

Yet, reintroducing a system to assess the Okinawan economy did not go without problem. Though the stoppage of all production demanded that the US restart a formal money economy, officials also feared inundating the archipelago with worthless currency. Military advisors consequently recommended that money usage only recommence after the “completion of a substantial resettlement of the native population,” “the reestablishment of certain basic native industries[,] and the cultivation of most of the arable land available to the native populace.”<sup>147</sup> They wanted Okinawans to generate “a minimum of exchangeable goods and services” themselves because when the supply of goods kept pace with the supply of money, economic develop proceeded without “[aggravating] any tendencies toward inflation and black markets.”<sup>148</sup> To reinstate currency without meeting this equilibrium was “premature.”<sup>149</sup>

Once the military declared Okinawan production the precondition for a money economy, the value US officials placed on their decommissioned materials grew. Administrators initially considered themselves the wholesaler to reconstituted industries. Yet, their new directives repositioned them as investors and the materials they disbursed assets. Any positive returns they made on their end depended on their ability to monitor their precious gifts. The military government, therefore, formalized both their list of exchanged items and the points of transactions to ensure that Okinawans were using military materials according to official stipulations. They established ration boards and industry associations “to handle distribution of supplies to producers and of products to consumers.”<sup>150</sup> They also assumed control of reopened retail stores to certify that “profits paid operating expenses” and “retailers themselves were

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<sup>147</sup> “Plans for Installation for Money Economy,” P. 1-2.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 38.

allowed a reasonable markup.”<sup>151</sup> Military records of distributed relief goods changed too.

Whereas earlier accounts only generally mentioned how food was obtained from salvaged stocks and clothing from donations, subsequent ones tracked items more carefully. The goal was to effectively differentiate “regular” handouts from the “irregular.”<sup>152</sup>

The desire to stimulate production on the Okinawan end also required the perpetual reproduction of desirable behaviors and relationships. To that end, military economists began assigning point values to the items they deemed necessary to actualize policy on a regular basis. Notably, they revised their food allowances so that Okinawans could theoretically fill lucrative construction jobs awaiting them in military battalions. “Based on calories alone,” the “initial system” was mistaken in its estimation.<sup>153</sup> Without accounting for age or potential productivity, it had simply categorized the general population as “unemployed persons over four years” and allotted a mere 1,530 calories a day, which “had resulted in some malnutrition.”<sup>154</sup> Starvation, of course, contradicted the military government’s interest in generating stronger, healthier Okinawans for employment as well as efforts to replace military food imports with local production. As such, the ration boards quickly created more categories to account for age and employment. They further attached incentives to their allocation criteria. In addition to factoring the amount of land cultivated into their final determinations, they declared their calorie

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<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 37-39. On a table, they listed “supplies issued [by the] civilian administration” like food, gasoline, kerosene, lubricants fertilizer, and seed between the months of July and October to determine what was “standard distribution.” These “regular” items they differentiated from “irregular” ones like reams of paper, suits of clothing, wood frames, flattened asphalt drums, and chalk that aided reconstruction but could not be counted on for the purposes of economic planning (38-39). See also Plans for Installation of Monetary Economy.

<sup>153</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 38.

<sup>154</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 6, 37-38.

count the baseline for food allowances thereby encouraging hungry Okinawans to grow more food.<sup>155</sup>

To make sure that Okinawans could themselves provide the demand that propelled production, the military began setting type of work to “wages,” exchangeable goods to “price,” and the aggregate items necessary for basic sustenance to an overall “cost-of-living.” The idea here was not simply to sustain Okinawan life, but also to encourage Okinawans themselves to invest in local development through the compensation they received for work. To the latter end, military planners used a “flexible” price scale to “maintain a healthy relationship between purchasing power and goods available for sale.”<sup>156</sup> So that Okinawans could themselves generate demand, they recommended “assuring a living wage to workers engaged in producing.”<sup>157</sup> At the same time, they proposed scaling prices “even higher” during the initial stages of postwar rehabilitation “since certain cost-of-living factors, such as rent, medical and educational costs, [would] not exist...for some time to come.”<sup>158</sup> Believing that unrestricted buying power decreased the desire for commodities, military officials concluded that too much money in Okinawan pockets hurt overall demand.

Undergirding the new wage and price structure was a penal system that punished behaviors deemed threatening to the military’s public order. Although military summations reported crime “at a minimum” immediately following the war, officials attributed the calm to “the complete destruction of all material possession,” “the loss of all property rights,” and the

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<sup>155</sup> Pacific General Headquarters, United States Army Forces, *Summation No. 2, United States Army Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands, for the Month of December 1946* (Washington D.C.: U.S. War Department, 1946) P. 19-20.

<sup>156</sup> Plans for Installation of Monetary Economy, P. 7.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

“close surveillance over displaced civilians.”<sup>159</sup> Once the military recommenced the economy and released Okinawans from camps, it had to see that Okinawans followed US regulations defining good prices and legitimate exchange. Unsurprisingly, crimes associated with trade increased as the military settled into its role as the occupation government. From reports of no crime, Okinawan civil police apprehensions ballooned to 1,759 in August 1946, then decreasing to 307 in November.<sup>160</sup> “The bulk of the arrests,” according to military summations, were for behaviors that now undermined a society based on the segregation of US forces from Okinawans and forms of exchange only military economists approved: “unauthorized circulation in restricted areas, petty larceny, black market violations and prostitution.”<sup>161</sup> Lower-level courts within the Exceptional Military Court system prosecuted similar “principal offenses” where Okinawans violated the military’s understanding of space and economic activity.<sup>162</sup>

As the military administration elaborated on their original guidelines and vehicles for public surveillance, so too did their concern for anti-social, un-economic behaviors grow. Among the more notable “disorders” in early 1947 were one investigation by the Okinawa Police Department for the “theft of large amounts of United States Government property including 1,200 suits of pajamas valued at \$2,088 from the Medical Supply depot” and a military “raid” that “resulted in the arrest of 13 prostitutes[,]...seven panders and the seizure of United States Government goods.”<sup>163</sup> Anxieties over subverting the imposed “economy” continued, with

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<sup>159</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 19-20.

<sup>160</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 20.

<sup>161</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 20. See also Pacific General Headquarters, United States Army Forces, *Summation No. 3, United States Army Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands, for the Months of January-February 1947* (Washington D.C.: U.S. War Department, 1947) P. 16-17, 19. Summation No. 3 recounts a problem of illegal shipping between Okinawa and Taiwan or the Northern Ryukyus. This is another example of unsanctioned movement on a larger scale. Detached from both mainland Japan and the Japanese empire, movement between spaces that had been fallen within the same political domain before the war was now illegal too.

<sup>162</sup> Summation No. 1, P. 19.

<sup>163</sup> Summation No. 3, P. 16. For more accounts of the problems regarding price ceiling violations and the black market, see also Summation No. 3, P. 15 of same report.

military officials worrying about “repatriated convicts” whose crimes mostly entailed their unauthorized return to mainland Japan “on black-market shipping.”<sup>164</sup> They also highlighted the 369 violations of the price ceiling uncovered by the Economic Control Section of the Northern Ryukyus Police Department. Charges were cleared only after the department declared “more than 90 percent of the cases...of a petty nature” that warranted mere “admonition.”<sup>165</sup> Among the youth, military leaders saw a surge in arrests for theft which drew attention to potential problems with “juvenile delinquency.”<sup>166</sup> Finally, they detected a rise in crime throughout the Ryukyu archipelago due to bartering, unsanctioned pricing, black-marketing, and larceny.<sup>167</sup> That these acts upended the formal system of transaction through money further meant that imprisoned Okinawans either farmed or “worked on various handicrafts, producing cots, mats, baskets, rope and shoes.”<sup>168</sup>

In short, the decision to make Okinawa into a military stronghold engendered a set of unresolvable contradictions. The desire for global dominance necessitated a demonstration of US military strength yet nation-states, having emerged recently from many years of colonial rule, saw foreign interference as another attempt to infringe on their hard-won autonomy. To diminish fears of US rule in Okinawa, the military remade itself into a civil administration that promised to cure the problems of economic underdevelopment and political immaturity. As their argument went, US troops were necessary and must be stationed on Okinawa not simply to protect the region from the rising threat of communism, but to educate and enlighten newly decolonized areas of their innate ethnic identity. In the era of decolonization, leaders within US

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<sup>164</sup> Pacific General Headquarters, United States Army Forces, *Summation No. 4, United States Army Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands, for the Months of March-April 1947* (Washington D.C.: U.S. War Department, 1947) P. 14.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> Summation No. 3, P. 17. Summation No. 4, P. 14.

<sup>168</sup> Summation No. 3, P. 19-20. See also Summation No. 4, P. 15 for similar accounts.

military ranks and the local population agreed that a collective understanding of self was key to overthrowing the years of colonial oppression. They also believed that strengthening institutions and the material base bolstered such an understanding of self. The US military organized local government and plotted out plans to develop the Okinawan economy to effect those ends, but where autonomy was to flourish, military officials found more need to regulate. In addition to where Okinawans moved and with whom they interacted, what they produced and how they did it soon joined the growing list of problems that potentially undermined US plans. As crime, framed specifically as exchanges subverting ones sanctioned by the military, afflicted the islands, government officials turned to local apparatuses to help instate practices better suited for Okinawa's planned economy.

### **Agricultural Cooperatives and Reforming the Countryside**

The US need to regulate production was even more pronounced in agriculture. Military social scientists emphasized that most Okinawans were farmers and that agricultural practices were very much tied to Okinawan culture in their prewar studies. As such, even though the US occupation claimed to uplift Okinawans, the fact that the US wanted land for military garrisons presented problems. That is, how could military planners promise to effect consistent economic growth when they severely limited the resources available for Okinawans to accomplish this task? How could they industrialize or promote development while maintaining the very agricultural practices they considered distinctive to Okinawan society? Left unresolved, these tensions discredited the US military project. The military government, in turn, embarked on an ambitious plan to modernize Okinawan agriculture. Rather than force Okinawans to relinquish

their ties to farming, they sought to transform this crucial part of Okinawan society into modern industry itself.

Much as the military's vision for postwar rehabilitation retailored a war-torn Okinawa according to static models of government and economy, so too did US economists see agriculture through rigid abstractions. In the same way military officials wanted industries in Okinawa to support the population without prolonged subsidies or active interference by the US government, they thought agriculture, too, should ideally be "self-sustaining." That is, they said that agriculture must meet the food requirements of Okinawa's population at a basic level and presumed to know the components needed to achieve the goals. Their rationale for industry and agriculture were the same. First, they would determine how agriculture ought to function within the larger economy. Then, they looked to currency. By introducing their set system of enumeration, they believed they could decide what constituted fair and profitable prices, wages, and other measures for equal, and eventually profitable, exchange.

A uniform scheme to assign value also ensured that the disparate parts comprising the Okinawan economy functioned together as an integrated whole. Although economists dwelled on the fate of agriculture, they drafted their reforms with close attention to how it interacted with other aspects of the economy. They based their summaries on earlier reports like Murdock's *Civil Affairs Handbook*, a functionalist account of Okinawan history.<sup>169</sup> To them, Okinawan society was comprised of interlinked sectors and each category comprising political, economic, and cultural life broke down even more in smaller components like agriculture, commerce, industry, and finance.<sup>170</sup> The introduction of money ensured that officials take their recognition

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<sup>169</sup> US Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, *Civil Affairs Handbook: Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, 1944).

<sup>170</sup> See for form of Summation No. 1-4 as well as "Plans for Installation of Money Economy."

of connections a step further. Money was a medium that assigned homogenous units of value to the food produced by farmers, the souvenirs made in native industries, and the cost of everyday necessities. It enabled comparisons between farm production and work on a military battalion and, by doing so, ensured that separate entities act as one.

As economists laid plans to replace the system of informal exchange between Okinawans and the military with money, they began extracting expected yields out of each parcel of land. Like their formulations for government, military planners turned to prewar Okinawa for guidance. They considered their ability to manage Okinawa's economy superior to the Japanese, of course, and deemed Okinawan agriculture "considerably less than self-supporting."<sup>171</sup> At the same time, military planners studied the prewar blueprint in hopes of strengthening Okinawa's self-identity. Farming, they said, was "with minor exception...devoted to food production," and so they marked out the staple foods comprising the average Okinawan diet.<sup>172</sup> Of rice, soy beans, and wheat, economists found that Okinawans produced less than what they consumed and far too much sweet potatoes and sugar cane. If Okinawans were to grow what they ate, administrators suggested leveling out the uneven use of land. "Approximately one-fourth of the prewar population of Okinawa-Jima had disappeared since April 1, 1945" along with the "prewar market for sugar cane products" according to their estimates.<sup>173</sup> US planners, therefore, recommended releasing a total of 48,000 acres dedicated to the two crops for other purposes. Under this arrangement, US experts ventured that "Okinawa's population [could] be expected

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<sup>171</sup> "The Agricultural Program for Okinawa," 15 Jan. 1946, Folder 17, Box 50, Plans for Installation of Money Economy on Okinawa 1946, USCAR: The Liaison Department, Internal Political Activity Files, 1946-1972, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P 1.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

within the next twelve months to become self-sufficing in food at the commonly low prewar nutritional level.”<sup>174</sup>

Important to this configuration was that US economists accounted for the military presence. In the same way they imagined the military a partner in Okinawa’s revitalized postwar economy, they factored in military land requirements when projecting target yields and the materials needed for farms to thrive. They “[assumed] that not more than 10,000 acres of arable land [would] ultimately be required for military installations” and accordingly derived the proposed acreages for soy and cereal products from this underlying premise.<sup>175</sup> The fact that this move pressured farmers to produce more on less land did not register in their thinking. Experts saw instead the crowding of people onto farms a convenient, albeit temporary, fix to the problem of overpopulation. Because their Okinawa lacked the same industrial, manufacturing, or entrepreneurial infrastructure of more evolved places, they saw too many people and not enough jobs to absorb the ongoing onslaught of Okinawans being repatriated or resettled. Unless they wanted an unemployment crisis on their hands, military planners argued for keeping people occupied on farms. The glut of labor compensated for the reduction in available land. Farm production ultimately met basic requirements and even more so once farmers learned modern techniques that increased crop yields.

The US position regarding the use of large-scale machinery in Okinawa illustrates how economists rationalized the military occupation. Agricultural specialists widely agreed that large machines allowed farms to save labor and cultivate more land, but in Okinawa, US economists discouraged the introduction of any such tools. Because experts claimed the primary task of farm machinery was not “to increase the production possible from a particular area of land but

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<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

rather to decrease the labor required,” they argued that its introduction would have the opposite effect.<sup>176</sup> “So far, and in the foreseeable future,” they believed “agricultural production in Okinawa [was] not likely to be limited by a scarcity of manpower.”<sup>177</sup> As such, machines should only be used “if required to replace labor drawn out of agriculture by employment opportunities in service, trade, and industrial pursuits, by emigration, or by a greatly lower birth rate.”<sup>178</sup> Absent of corresponding developments in other economic sectors, they argued that machines inhibited the growth of less intensive cultures, exacerbated overall soil leaching and erosion, and fostered an unhealthy dependence on imports.<sup>179</sup> They also “[provided] a less productive use of labor than...a continuation of manual and simple animal drawn agricultural methods.”<sup>180</sup> Missing from the economists’ calculations was the military’s occupation of land, but experts had absolved the occupation by connecting productivity to the ability of Okinawans to be gainfully employed.

Having displaced the impact of occupying forces, US planners proposed an initial program that exploited Okinawan agriculture’s essential characteristics. Likening Okinawa’s predicament to “almost all other areas of the world” where agriculture was prominent, scientists pointed out that the boundaries defining both work and this portion of the economic system were broadly defined.<sup>181</sup> Where factories or businesses did not regulate the characteristics of labor, no individual of any one age or gender worked at a specific locale for a regimented amount of time. Instead, military planners characterized agriculture “by small individual family units where the farm business and family living [were] combined into the same pattern of life.”<sup>182</sup> They added

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<sup>176</sup> “The Agricultural Program for Okinawa,” P. 2.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> “The Agricultural Program for Okinawa,” P. 3.

<sup>179</sup> “The Agricultural Program for Okinawa,” P. 2.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> “The Agricultural Program for Okinawa,” P. 3.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

that “the life and business of these small operators [were] closely connected to the land they use and occupy, the rules, or laws, regulating its use and ownership, and the vicissitudes of weather and seasons.”<sup>183</sup> In other words, work in agriculture blended with private life and was dictated by the surrounding environment. Military advisors acknowledged “these peculiar characteristics,” and, in turn, arrived at an equally distinct conclusion: “the agriculture of a nation [was] made up not only of the actual body of all the farm families but also of the educational service, and regulatory organizations built up to operate the industry as a whole.”<sup>184</sup> The best reforms recognized this integrated system where related sites extended beyond the immediate farm.

Agricultural cooperatives represented one strand of the loose network making up the overall sector. The military government aimed to raise cultivation standards and introduce new techniques and better crops. They wanted badly to create a discrete economy through money, too, but feared the unexpected rise in criminal behaviors undermining US economic objectives. In their research of prewar Okinawa’s economic institutions, US economists discovered that farmers looked to agricultural cooperatives for economic and educational support as well as leadership. Desperate for oversight, military economists touted this relic of Okinawan culture as a tool to indirectly manage a portion of the economy that they also knew was likely the most volatile. Their reports said cooperatives “acted not only in the dissemination of agricultural information but also served as the almost exclusive purchasing and marketing agency for farmers and extended both short term credit for production and long term credit on real estate.”<sup>185</sup> They

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<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> “The Agricultural Program for Okinawa,” P. 4.

were “the farmers’ primary contact with the operation of the monetary economy” as well as “the vehicle by which governmental services and regulations were carried to the farmer.”<sup>186</sup>

Cooperatives also aided military efforts to create a stable political structure amenable to the US occupation. At its broadest level, the occupation government envisioned a discrete political entity called the “Ryukyu Islands” and within this unit they wanted separate island communities to live distinct lives while acting as one in accordance with military interests. US administrators believed they could achieve this by restoring the Okinawan village, a community structure that tied Okinawan political participation to a set plot of land and reduced unwanted meandering onto military space. As US officials hurried to resettle displaced Okinawans into homes, they saw in cooperatives a governing structure that allowed them to extend their reach into the far-flung countryside. The presence of both the military and future prefectural government was less felt there but almost purposely so. The clear segregation of space and limited local interaction was how the US military both ruled and shed its image as an unwanted occupying force.

US economists, to no surprise, gravitated to the fact that cooperatives in prewar Okinawa acted like local government. Their goal was to make Okinawa into a single political economic unit, and so they remarked with interest on similarities found in prewar cooperatives. Just as military officials had hoped, groups “were organized basically on a village and mura basis but were federated by progressive stages into a prefecture-wide organization.”<sup>187</sup> They also provided a class of skilled Okinawans ready grease the military’s institutional structures. US experts, therefore, commended the “steps [that had] been taken to initiate the reorganization of these

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<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

organizations.”<sup>188</sup> In the immediate future, they wanted cooperatives to “perform the functions they previously provided in Okinawa,” but from these humble beginnings, US scientists hoped for more.<sup>189</sup> “As similar cooperative associations [had] in Saipan,” they thought collectives might “bridge the gap in land management between the reestablishment of a money economy and the untangling of the knotty problem of the individual ownership of farm land.”<sup>190</sup> In other words, they saw a possible avenue to effect the military’s legal acquisition of land.

Cooperatives served a third purpose for the military government. At a time when military officials worried over the ability of Okinawans to act in ways they desired, the network of cooperatives performed disciplinary functions. In addition to directing the flow of money to rural areas, the structure of the organizations encouraged participants to embrace the rules of liberal governance. Admission into a local cooperative demanded that people identify either as a farmer or a village resident who had “a reasonable need to utilize the facilities of the association.”<sup>191</sup> Just as US states asked elected officials to serve in the federal government, local cooperatives sent representatives to act as the legislative body to the federated, Ryukyu-wide, organization. The general assembly of the broad cooperative then elected officials to sit as directors and auditors.<sup>192</sup> Directors oversaw the overall management and organizational course. They selected a president to preside as figurehead, kept records of group membership and stock shares, decided on marketing strategies, and drafted business proposals for any future

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> “Chapter 3: Membership,” Agricultural Cooperative Association Law, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government, 1951 (琉球協同組合法に関する資料, 米国民政府関係), Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>192</sup> “Chapter 4: Administration,” Agricultural Cooperative Association Law, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government, 1951 (琉球協同組合法に関する資料, 米国民政府関係), Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

cooperative investments.<sup>193</sup> Auditors were similar to the US judicial branch. If discrepancies arose in how directors applied a specific rule or calculated cooperative money, auditors stepped in to litigate.<sup>194</sup> More than learning about what crops to plant and how best to cultivate them, cooperatives initiated farmers into a privileged form of governance. These were the behaviors that US social scientists and military officials across the board said drove successful transformations despite differences in culture, race, or ethnicity.

They were also the ideals to which many Okinawan leaders themselves subscribed. While the military government ultimately wielded the power to announce and rescind executive orders, the US commitment to benevolent rule and their ability to effectively implement policies on the ground demanded collaboration with willing local leaders. Economists, therefore, pushed the military government to better employ a class of Okinawans trained in agricultural administration under the Japanese. Already short of qualified specialists to guide military interactions, US officials feared that they lose this much-needed talent to aimless wandering in the postwar devastation unless otherwise endowed with more purposeful projects. Okinawan leaders, for their part, readily consented to help. They were proud of their ethnicity, and saw in the military's call for assistance an opportunity to contribute. They, too, were invested in the future of Okinawa and the welfare of Okinawans especially after the war. They proclaimed their collective purpose soon after individual cooperative leaders prepared to organize the joint Ryukyu Federated Cooperative Association. They desired "to plan for the promotion of

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<sup>193</sup> "Chapter 4: Executives and Regular Employees," Ryukyu Agricultural Association Unionization Meeting, Statement of Rules, 7 Apr. 1950, Documents regarding the approval of applications to establish cooperatives (「第四章：役職員」琉球農業組合連合会定款, 協同組合設立認可申請資料), Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>194</sup> "Chapter 4: Administration," Agricultural Cooperative Association Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

business, the raising of the efficiency of agricultural production, the unleashing of economic energy, and the elevation of society.”<sup>195</sup>

Far from ridding Okinawa of its outmoded traditions, US officials borrowed and reworked them. In agriculture, US military officials encountered a challenge to their occupation plans. A sector of Okinawa’s overall economy that counted land as a resource, agriculture stood at odds with military objectives aiming to carve out spaces for US troops. Asked to propose means of naturalizing the foreign intrusion, US planners turned once again to economic reforms. Like industry and manufacturing, they considered agriculture in Okinawa backwards, too dependent on government subsidies and exports. Their reforms recalibrated what self-sufficiency meant and proposed schemes for land use that conveniently accommodated military needs. They did not want to erase agriculture from the modern, industrialized Okinawa US social scientists imagined but merely to adjust it so that it delivered better results.

Re-introducing a money economy played an important role here as much as it did in the military’s resumption of native industries, manufacturing, and businesses. Money helped military economists make concrete what was, until then, an abstract entity called the economy. It allowed US planners to measure, predict, and manipulate growth and also held together the entire functionalist paradigm to which US social scientists subscribed. Agriculture must grow in tandem with other parts of Okinawa’s overall economy, and so introducing a medium of exchange whose value was uniformly recognized across Okinawa ensured this end. Economists accordingly sought to identify structures that helped channel money into rural outposts.

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<sup>195</sup> “Chapter 1: General Rules,” Ryukyu Agricultural Association Unionization Meeting, Statement of Rules, 7 Apr. 1950, Documents regarding the approval of applications to establish cooperatives (「第一章：総則」琉球農業組合連合会定款, 協同組合設立認可申請資料), Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

Cooperatives lent themselves to the objectives of the growing military regime. A feature of the prewar Japanese system, these organizations served as the first point of contact connecting farmers to official networks of the political economy. They were banking centers, a type of village governance, and training grounds for both the future Okinawan electorate and its representatives. In addition to providing a cadre of trained Okinawans prepared to assume leadership roles within the growing Okinawan government, they were entrenched in the very communities where the military hoped to manage at arm's length. These reasons motivated the decision to resume the prewar cooperative system, but as I will show in the next section, such plans operated better in theory than in practice.

### **Cooperatives and their Problems**

Moves to reinstate the cooperative system started immediately after the cessation of hostilities. Charged with providing quick and effective relief to Okinawans crowded into refugee camps, the military quickly entrusted cooperatives with the distribution of food and military rations. They were run by Okinawan leaders working for the Ryukyu Food and Agriculture Organization (RFAO), an embryonic version of what would become the Bureau of Agriculture and Forestry in the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) in 1950. Since the tasks facing the postwar administration were numerous and urgent, the military allowed Okinawan officials to work without much interference. They simply wanted to start their project of demilitarizing Okinawa. Eager to resume the lives that wartime mobilization had rudely disrupted, Okinawans worked hard to issue the prized rations according to military regulations.

One such person was Shoyu Funakoshi whose efforts to reorganize the first postwar agricultural cooperatives culminated in the founding of the island-wide federation. The All

Ryukyus Central Agriculture Association was launched in December 1949 shortly before the US military government established the broader RFAO in February 1950.<sup>196</sup> Both organizations attest to the success of the postwar agricultural cooperative movement, but US and Okinawan officials wanted to push developments further. As Funakoshi communicated to his military superiors, “the present Agriculture Cooperative Association on [the] Ryukyus [had] no basic law to rely upon and [had] been temporarily managed by the regulations of the Agriculture Association” first learned under the Japanese.<sup>197</sup> In an effort to institutionalize cooperatives as an apparatus of control, the military government asked Funakoshi to draft the first official Agriculture Cooperative Association Law.<sup>198</sup> This enshrined the cooperative as a legal entity within Okinawan society and outlined the rules delimiting its membership and functions. It also became the foundation on which the military government formally recognized any future cooperative.

In 1951, the US Civil Administration incorporated Funakoshi’s 1949 draft into the formal Ryukyu Cooperative Association Ordinance thus announcing its intent to institutionalize and expand the cooperative system.<sup>199</sup> Although US officials practically lifted Funakoshi’s draft verbatim, transitioning from an informal system of operation to one that accurately matched US prerogatives was still easier said than done. Among the considerations facing military administrators were how they might legislate an application process that proceeded in Japanese

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<sup>196</sup> History of the Ryukyuan Federation of Agricultural Associations, 1 Jul. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>197</sup> Letter to Military Governor, Ryukyus Command, Attn: Mr. Ellis J. Koler from Shoyu Funakoshi, Acting Director of RFAO re: Submission of a Draft of the Agricultural Cooperative Association, 17 Aug. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>198</sup> Agricultural Cooperative Association Law, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>199</sup> “Civil Administration Ordinance No. 45: Ryukyuan Cooperative Association Ordinance,” in *Laws and Regulations during the U.S. Administration of Okinawa, 1945-1972*, ed. by Gekkan Okinawasha (Japan: Ikemiya Shokai, 1982).

according to a prewar code that Americans knew only through Okinawan correspondents. As such, the military faced limits to their ability to maintain the very political economic system they desired.

In anticipation of the applications that would flood in from across the archipelago, US officials decided to standardize all possible variations. They knew that cooperatives were only useful insofar as they followed the parameters earlier experts outlined. Consequently, Occupation authorities asked Funakoshi to supply model charters and articles of incorporation. A fill-in-the-blank form, Funakoshi's models recited in English the rules to which all cooperatives submitted and set information that should not be debated in type. These were the definition of a cooperative, the purpose it served, and the mechanisms by which it operated. Permissible variables were member names, addresses, notaries, and the cooperative's name itself. To solicit this information, Funakoshi left underscores in the answers' proper place. Because the military government wanted both US and Okinawans to understand clearly the rules defining the cooperative, one US official asked that Funakoshi's models be printed on stencil paper so that they could copy the forms for mass distribution.<sup>200</sup>

If the US military government struggled to make knowable the rules delimiting the legal functions of agricultural cooperatives, they soon learned that what Okinawans wanted from the cooperatives was not always commensurate with their own expectations. Two early cases brought before the military auditor for review illustrate the unexpected problems resulting from the effort to regulate the circulation of money. The first occurred in September 1950 when agricultural cooperatives operated informally according to prewar understandings and before the

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<sup>200</sup> "Exhibit B: Articles of Incorporation of the \_\_\_\_ Cooperative Credit Association," Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government. A US official wrote in pencil the following note: "Translate: on stencil for reproduction 600 copies."

USCAR Civil Administrator formally promulgated the 1951 Ryukyu Cooperative Association Ordinance. Although farmers across Okinawa organized themselves into groups, allocating loans and supplies, in response to the military's support of cooperatives, USCAR officials discovered that the Okinawa Agriculture Association, which had operated under a military government charter since 1948, was not solvent. Concerned, they called an accountant to determine why. Fiscal auditor Lee Caster conducted an extensive inquiry during which he reviewed the records of central Okinawa's umbrella cooperative from July 1949 to June 1950.<sup>201</sup> His investigation "[disclosed] gross irregularities in operations and improper accounting for funds within the Okinawa Central Agricultural Association."<sup>202</sup>

The main source of dissension between USCAR and the Okinawa Agricultural Association were two competing definitions of a cooperative and its proper role. For Carter and USCAR, cooperatives were rural institutions that promoted economic development. They funneled money to farmers otherwise excluded by plans privileging urban centers and distributed information promoting better techniques for cultivation and everyday management. They also replicated good behaviors to stop illicit ones undermining the fledgling Okinawan economy.

They were certainly not the Okinawa Agricultural Association, which Carter said was exceedingly careless with money. According to the USCAR agent, cooperative leaders assigned values to buildings that were higher than its perceived worth, failed to charge interest for outstanding loans, and employed more staff than it could afford. The organization kept terrible

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<sup>201</sup> Report of Audit, Okinawa Agricultural Association to Chief Audit Section, Finance Department, Okinawa Military Government Team, 7 Sep. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>202</sup> Letter to President, Okinawa Central Agricultural Association, Naha, Okinawa re: Irregularities Disclosed in Report of Audit, 2 Oct. 1950 or 9 Oct. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

books that adhered to “no strict classification”<sup>203</sup> and sometimes paid staff with an irregular “hodge podge of rates, allowances, gratuities, and gifts.”<sup>204</sup> They even issued money and goods for emergencies like typhoon relief, which Carter thought “should be discontinued” because such practices “[did] not appear to be legitimate business expenses.”<sup>205</sup> Unlike USCAR cooperatives that acted like proto-corporations, the agent concluded that “sound business principles [were] not employed in [the cooperative’s] management.”<sup>206</sup> This association appeared to think more about the expediency of its members than immediate profits.

The Amami Oshima Cooperatives to the north of Okinawa island underwent similar investigations. In 1951, military auditors found the umbrella cooperative for 23 individual associations delinquent to the amount of ¥20,612,289.05 and ordered the group to repay its debt in six months.<sup>207</sup> Since USCAR administrators considered their own plans for agricultural cooperatives and rural revitalization unassailable, they emphasized individual error to absolve their elaborate schemes. As military reasoning went, had Amami Cooperatives kept better records of member spending or calculated more precisely the relationship between loans and farm production, the organization would not then have member groups that all borrowed more than they earned.<sup>208</sup> US officials the blamed the reckless management and, accordingly, barred president Yonei Kuboi from acting in subsequent proceedings.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Report of Audit, Okinawa Agricultural Association, 7 Sep. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government, P. 3.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 4.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> Letter to Comptroller from Richard Wynn, Chief of Audit Branch re: Report of Audit, Okinawa Agricultural Association, 8 Sep. 1950, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>207</sup> Amount of Debt of Every Association to the O’shima Federal Agricultural Cooperative Association as of May 1952, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government. Letter to Deputy Governor, USCAR re: Report of Investigation Concerning Amami Agriculture Association, 6 Mar. 1951.

<sup>208</sup> Letter to Deputy Governor, USCAR re: Report of Investigation Concerning Amami Agriculture Association, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*

Fearing that Amami Cooperative's indiscriminate use of money threatened the economy no less than crimes like counterfeiting and black market activities, military auditors additionally took this crisis as a test of the emergent Okinawan bureaucracy. They wanted to know if local government worked, and so to evaluate Okinawan vigilance, USCAR ordered that The Ryukyu Federation of Agriculture Associations send two or more representatives "to conduct the sale, distribution and collections of monies of all agriculture supplies, fertilizer, etc. received by [Amami] until further notice."<sup>210</sup> Amami Cooperatives, for their part, was to give the auditors their "full cooperation...together with office space, warehousing and all other needed and available services."<sup>211</sup> They would furnish their Okinawan superiors weekly reports on the money collected from individual cooperatives as well as weekly payments to the Civil Administration. Each report would "show what items [were] being paid for, how received, when received and from whom received" and payments could only be counted if they proceeded through the proper channels.<sup>212</sup> For example, if Amami Cooperatives intended to pay for supplies it received from the postwar US Gunto Government of Amami Oshima between 1947 and June 1950, they must first submit funds to the Board of Trade (Boeki Cho), who would then funnel the money to the Civil Administration.<sup>213</sup>

The Amami Oshima Central Agriculture Cooperative Association countered with their own plan. Though USCAR expected full payment of delinquent accounts by August 31, 1951, the cooperative continued to struggle well into July 1952. The hapless President Kuboi submitted a petition asking USCAR to fully forgive the cooperative's debt because repayment from members had stagnated. He argued that a number of structural changes had occurred that

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<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 2.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

the US failed to consider. Notwithstanding the “incompleteness of education of members,” Kuboi held that the Ryukyu Islands was a wholly new postwar creation.<sup>214</sup> Severed from Japan, the US-occupied Ryukyu Islands no longer had access to the same markets and subsidies as before and the US impulse was to consolidate their new economic unit rather than liberalize access to money as Kuboi preferred. By restricting and merging groups, the military diverted resources from farm production to the administration of a cumbersome organization. Farmers, too, operated with less equipment due to the “war disaster,” and farm life did not coincide market whims as economists presumed.<sup>215</sup> Because the growing schedule followed a different pattern, Kuboi’s constituents borrowed when interests were high and sold when prices were low.<sup>216</sup> These differences prevented the full resurrection of prewar agriculture as the military intended but, more broadly, showed how US plans acted more as discourse than material truth.

Despite pointing out the limitations to US assumptions, Kuboi himself subscribed to the basic tenets of modernization theory. Like military planners, the president believed that a mature economic base generated mature political expressions. He consequently reminded the US that “as the society [became] poorer and poorer, the thought of the society [would] be bad more and more” and farmers, in particular, were “a weak point from the standpoint of thought.”<sup>217</sup> He believed that “the disparity of the poor and wealthy [would] give a great influence to them,” and so farmers were a threat since they also comprised the majority of Okinawans.<sup>218</sup> Cooperative

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<sup>214</sup> Letter to Deputy Governor, USCAR and Chief, Amami Civil Administration Team from Amami O’shima Central Agriculture Cooperative Association, President, Yonei Kuboi re: Cause of Inactivity of O’shima Agricultural Cooperative Combined Association and the Counter-plot, 27 Jul. 1952, Documents concerning the Ryukyu Cooperative Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 3.

<sup>217</sup> Letter to Deputy Governor, USCAR and Chief, Amami Civil Administration Team from Amami O’shima Central Agriculture Cooperative Association, President, Yonei Kuboi re: Cause of Inactivity of O’shima Agricultural Cooperative Combined Association and the Counter-plot, P. 4.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

associations secured the countryside by bringing prosperity, and on this point, Kuboi, Funakoshi of the RFAO, and US military scientists agreed. They declared their ideal cooperative “neutral to...politics” without giving much thought to how such proclamations undercut earlier promises to foster autonomy.<sup>219</sup> In their formulation, assertions of thought and active participation in change came only after the organization had sufficiently done its job.

Thus, one final problem plagued US plans for postwar agricultural cooperatives. Neither military nor Okinawan leaders foresaw the calculated politicization of cooperative operations. By the 1956, the US and GRI formally recognized Noren, their umbrella organization for all Okinawan cooperatives, and US agricultural experts boasted of its rise. Cooperatives advanced “the theory of unified self-support and mutual reliance by farmers themselves.”<sup>220</sup> They “[rendered] guidance, education, and information services to members of constituent cooperatives for improvement and modernization of farming methods, know-how, and farm management.”<sup>221</sup> Their leaders were “first rate people”: educated, experienced, and dedicated to the protection of farmers from exploitation by private companies.<sup>222</sup>

Yet, such lavish praise barely hid a nagging fear of alternative possibilities. US officials followed changes in cooperative leadership and the political inclinations of the rank-and-file. They worried about the popularity of rival cooperatives like Zenokino, a subsidiary of the Okinawa Peoples Party whose positions too closely mirrored those of communist parties.<sup>223</sup> Indeed, Noren’s continued indebtedness did nothing to discourage US officials. That “Noren’s

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<sup>219</sup> “Chapter 1: General Provisions,” Agricultural Cooperative Association Law, Matters Concerning the US Government.

<sup>220</sup> Memo for HICOM, Acting Civil Administrator re: Noren, 29 Jun. 1962, Folder 17, Box 276, Agriculture Specialist Files, 1953-1970, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.* P. 3.

<sup>223</sup> Noren, 1963-1965, Folder 5, Box 107, USCAR: Liaison Department, Internal Political Activity Files, Societies and Associations, 1951-1969.

management [was] cooperative and friendly with GRI and USCAR” and “[had] been making efforts to counteract OPP agitation and undesirable leftist group activities in farming communities” justified their laborious campaigns to tighten the organization’s belt.<sup>224</sup> As I will show in chapter five, these attempts were futile. In 1965, Miyako farmers, unhappy with orders to rationalize the sugar industry, seized, upended, and reworked the rigid frameworks constituting the militarized rural economy. Protests erupted nonetheless, representing the worst of USCAR fears.

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<sup>224</sup> Memo for HICOM, Acting Civil Administrator re: Noren, P. 3.

## Chapter Three

### Postwar Okinawan Emigration to Latin America

#### Introduction

Some time ago, a respected leader of a newly-found colony sent out three urgent messages to his government superiors requesting emergency reinforcements for the group of settlers under his care. After commemorating their groundbreaking departure with a stately celebration in their homeland, the colonists journeyed by ship to a tropical outpost they henceforth called “home.” Unexpectedly, a mysterious illness they suspected was malaria hit. Eighty-five people fell ill, four died, and another thirteen would join the list of casualties before the epidemic was under control. The crops on which the settlers depended, too, failed. It was no short of disaster for all involved. If the planners, policymakers, organization leaders, or emigrants had considered this journey the beginning of rosier times brimming of opportunities, this event certainly dispelled any illusions. In the months that followed, the settlers’ home government would dispatch medical experts, reputable investigators, and authorize a move of the entire settlement to another location less prone to so-called malaria attacks.<sup>225</sup>

While the series of incidents I’ve related above eerily conjures up vague memories of what transpired when British settlers established Jamestown, America’s first colony, it actually occurred in 1955 after the initial group of Okinawan emigrants departed from Naha to join a small contingent of prewar settlers in populating the Uruma Colony in Santa Cruz Province, Bolivia. At the time, the US military wanted to secure Okinawa to serve their geopolitical

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<sup>225</sup> Jose Akamine, Telegraph information to Chief Executive of GRI and Emigration Company, 6 Jan. 1955, Matters relating to the Protection of Sent Emigrants (移住送出保護関係), Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

interests but feared growing skeptics of US interventions. They formally renamed the occupation government the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) in 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty to reduce any explicit allusions to unbridled US militarism. USCAR also established the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) to solicit support from Okinawan leaders. The objective of both was to reconcile military demands with social ones promising to attain Okinawan self-determination.

USCAR and the GRI collaborated, and in this instance, they wished to solve a longstanding problem both diagnosed as natural and recently exacerbated. In Okinawa, they saw infertile land, water that was unusable, and typhoons that came too frequently to unleash indiscriminate destruction. The two governments consequently argued that Okinawa and the large number of people engaged in agriculture were prone to overpopulation. The number of Okinawans being repatriated from Japan's former colonies outstripped the available jobs in military construction or local industries. The farmers from whom the US military acquired land, too, had no better avenues once they lost their plots. Experts predicted a Malthusian disaster—the rise in unemployment, infiltration by opportunistic Communists, and then an outbreak of rampant revolutions. To offset this certain dystopia, USCAR and the GRI aimed to turn Okinawa's surplus population into “settler colonists.”<sup>226</sup> Thus, the arrival of Okinawans in the

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<sup>226</sup> See Kozy Amemiya, “The Rhetoric of Population Pressure and Emigration: a tool of American Occupation of Okinawa” in *Japaneseness versus Ryukyuanism: Papers Read at the Fourth International Conference on Okinawa Studies* (2006): 169-189. Amemiya's argument treats the failed settlement to Tigner's lack of training. I do not think the malaria epidemic spoke to Tigner's carelessness and another disavowal of Okinawan interests. As I point out later in the paper, the GRI were also involved in implementing the program. That unexpected disasters occurred says more about the inherent incapacity of the abstract social scientific models to accurately capture, analyze, and prepare for differences and dissimilarities. See also Yoko Sellek, “Migration and the Nation-State: Structural Explanations for Emigration from Okinawa” in *Japan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity*, eds. Glen D. Hook and Richard Siddle (London: Routledge, 2003) 82-84; Toake Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration to Latin America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009) 138-169.

Bolivian wilderness marked a triumph of joint labors to integrate a sizeable military force in the Pacific.

While planned emigration captures the extremes that both the US and GRI took to accommodate the military build-up, this episode also begs how an indisputable example of colonialism occurred at all. International organizations like the United Nations were gaining prominence on their promise to secure worldwide political equity and cooperation. The Allied Powers, in their promise to dismantle Germany and Japan, had declared naked land grabs the cause of two costly world conflicts. Anti-imperial mobilizations also reached unprecedented levels of repute, securing freedom from longtime custodians as well as recognition in international organizations. By 1955, the popular tide visibly and vocally rejected territorial conquests. Yet while anticolonial leaders prepared to celebrate at Bandung, so too did Okinawans voyage to backwoods scattered across Latin America. Like their British predecessors, they carried scarce belongings, blessings, and a mission to tame “unruly” frontiers.

The primary questions this chapter poses are, therefore, how this postwar wave of settler colonialism constituted itself and why it took the spatial form of a colony? I argue that while USCAR and the GRI had conflicting motivations for supporting Okinawa colonization of Latin America, they found common ground. The two governments shared commitments to achieve political economic self-sufficiency and imagined equality to be the uniform distribution of resources across a prescribed area. Out of these agreements grew a new form of colonialism, for I show that executing this imagined solvency universalized national sovereignty as an ideal. It also required settlements where Okinawans reigned independent, unhindered, and segregated from hostile races.

My answers intervene in several debates. First, I situate myself alongside scholars of US imperialism and foreign policy. Literature in this field associates the US empire's rise with the emergence of a staunchly conservative coalition that carried out unilateral plots.<sup>227</sup> I demonstrate, however, that bolstering the military buildup in the Pacific was precisely a vision of a world comprised of separate but equal nations. Far from violating liberal principles, transporting Okinawans to isolated outposts was the logical means by which policymakers ensured adherence to popular internationalist ideals. That USCAR, the GRI, and Latin American governments closely guarded channels for migration and trade were merely what achieving such goals demanded.

Second, I engage the studies equating assertions of identity with resistance. Scholarship in this vein praise anticolonial nationalisms for their opposition to systemic inequalities and calls for immediate self-determination.<sup>228</sup> Authors writing about Okinawans in the diaspora, too, hold that proclamations of who one was by subjects themselves exceeded the roles the US or Japan prescribed them.<sup>229</sup> Against this trend, my case study proves that to express one's ethnic identity does not contradict imperial mores. Aspirations for autonomy united suspicious postcolonial governments with their US opposition, and in the midst of successive decolonizations, such agreements ushered in reconsolidated colonial forms.

Third, I advance a rethinking of the organization of modern empires scholars engaged with postcolonial theory have attempted. Marshall Johnson and Fred Chiu have used the term

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<sup>227</sup> Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War, vol. 1* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Holt Paperback, 2006).

<sup>228</sup> Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007).

<sup>229</sup> Taku Suzuki, "Viewing Nations, Narrating Hybridity: Okinawa Diasporic Subjectivity and Japanese Satellite Telecasts in Colonia Okinawa, Bolivia," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1 (2005) 75-107; Wesley Ueunten, "The Okinawan revival in Hawai'i: Contextualizing Culture and Identity over Diasporic Time and Space" (PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2007).

“subimperialism” to describe a “relation between the dominant of the dominated and their periphery.” Hoping to better illustrate the similarities between nationalism and colonialism, they highlighted the way people within colonized societies—native informants—reproduced colonial discourses. Their example was Taiwan’s colonial period, when local leaders applied the study of race to aborigine tribes to accentuate their own level of advancement.<sup>230</sup> Yet, their study does not fully consider the implication of subimperial practices within the overarching empire, and so the reproduction of colonial norms are epiphenomenal to the dynamics subordinating peripheries to metropolises. In the case I present here, establishing Okinawan emigration programs demanded the cooperation of both Okinawans and Latin American officials and linked postcolonial peripheries through agendas without direct US imposition. The emergent imperial form was not tangential to the advent of US power globally, but typified the multilateral development schemes characterizing period’s neocolonialism.

### **James Tigner & *The Okinawans of Latin America***

My analysis starts with James Tigner’s 1954 study *The Okinawans of Latin America*, which provided a blueprint for later emigration. Fearing an explosion of frustrations aimed at high unemployment and low wages, USCAR partnered with the National Research Council to capitalize on an enticing offer of free land by Latin American states. They commissioned Tigner, a Stanford doctoral candidate, to solve the “fundamental and grave problem of overpopulation in the Ryukyu Islands” and furnished him with a budget culled from state and academic sources. In 1951, Tigner traveled widely, consulting with military personnel, accredited social scientists, and local informants from prewar Japanese and Okinawan

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<sup>230</sup> Marshall Johnson and Fred Chiu, eds. *positions: east asia cultures critique* 8, no. 1 (2000): 1-7.

settlements.<sup>231</sup> The outcome was a 644-page tome, in which Tigner modeled ideal emigration after the laws of supply and demand. Responsibility for success ultimately fell to an emigrant subject whose position improved after migration, was fastidiously placed in precise locations, and was segregated for his own protection.

Tigner emphasized foremost that successful emigration was a cooperative endeavor that accentuated a culture's most resourceful qualities. He concluded this after studying Japan's abortive attempts to partner with the Philippines of New Spain. The reasons for this failure Tigner believed was "the struggle for control of the Pacific by European powers...and the recoil of Japan from the first impact of Western culture." He characterized Spain's attitude as of a "monopolistic character," concerned more with chasing quixotic "reports of a new El Dorado" more than "promoting trade." In Japan, Tigner identified a latent narcissism threatening to overtake sincere entrepreneurism. Despite initiating negotiations, the country declared after only a few Spanish rebuffs a policy of isolationism that for two centuries excluded foreigners and brutally punished "on pain of death" prospective travelers. Egos run rampant was Tigner's final diagnosis, and because these flaws "created conditions which proved effective barriers to the growth of this intercourse," he decided "nothing was accomplished in opening direct trade with New Spain."<sup>232</sup>

Tigner's solution was to modernize society such that it followed the laws of supply and demand. He drew once more from history, deeming Japan decidedly pre-modern when the Tokugawa government abandoned interactions with the outside world. With a population that "barely maintained its level in the latter half of the era," the state relied on unpredictable natural

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<sup>231</sup> James L. Tigner, *The Okinawans in Latin America: Investigation of Okinawan Communities in Latin America with Exploration of Settlement Possibilities* (Washington, D.C.: Pacific Science Board, National Research Council, 1954) ii-v.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

calamities and “the prevalence of abortion and infanticide” to regulate growth. Tigner found the Meiji government a better model for resolving population problems. Amidst a renaissance, the government recognized the accumulation of people and eagerly added new territories to offset the supposed overabundance of bodies. Forgetting that these takeovers were de facto expansionism, Tigner remarked that “the colonization of Hokkaido absorbed the attention of the government and of the people during the early years” and calculated that the incorporation of the Ryukyus, Kuriles, Bonins, Formosa, Pescadores, southern half of Saghalin, and Korea more than doubled Japan’s lands.<sup>233</sup> When the frontier was no longer, Tigner saw that Japan took to emigration to maintain the balance between people and available resources.

Okinawa, however, proved a singularity according to Tigner’s formula. Unlike Japan, who managed during its industrialization to find outlets for its people, Tigner pointed out that Okinawa had no such alternatives. Whereas for Japan, “industrial exports were relied upon to pay for food imports” and “urbanization, accompanying the growth of industry, relieved over-population in rural areas,” he declared such programs to have “scant applicability to Okinawa.” In addition to its “lying beyond the central economic sphere of Japan, where opportunities for industrialization were negligible,” Tigner observed that “historically, the Ryukyus have been a deficit area owing to a shortage of arable land, low-grade soils, virtually no exploitable natural resources, and severe population pressure for generations.” Unable to sustain many people, especially if most farmed, he claimed that “the inhabitants have had no more than a marginal, near-famine living standard” and that “throughout the Japanese period, Okinawa was consistently the poorest of Japan’s provinces.” Indeed, Tigner believed the Meiji discerned the endemic problem, for to “keep population pressure below a dangerous level” and

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<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

“materially...sustain the precarious economy,” it organized emigration, which generated valuable remittances from the overseas communities.<sup>234</sup> Never able to strike Tigner’s desired balance, Okinawa’s superfluous bodies were, if not more pronounced, then altogether unrelenting. It necessitated constant vigilance.

Still, that Japan and Okinawa recognized its need for emigration fulfilled only one side of the equation. For Tigner, it was not always the case that receiving hosts desired an influx of both. He knew that the history of anti-Asian movements spoke otherwise, and ever faithful to his economic rationale, he traced the motivations behind skirmishes to competition over scarce resources. From his perspective, if the laws of supply and demand unfailingly produced collaborative and peaceful emigration, then surely outbreaks of ethnic tensions only indicated departures from his model. His proof was the difference in frequency of anti-Asian restrictions between Latin America and the world. “Anti-Asiatic movements” appeared in the US, Canada, Australia, and South Africa, he said, because a drop in labor demand and rise of trade unionism protecting native workers' rights made “the Japanese, as well as all Orientals,...unwelcome competitors.”<sup>235</sup> Ethnic troubles occurred with less vehemence in the Latin America, he continued, because “from the time of their independence...the general policy of [these] countries was to foster immigration.” Particularly for work in agriculture, for which he called the demand “unceasing,” “special demands were made to attract Asiatic immigrants.”<sup>236</sup>

When anti-Asian restrictions did arise in a context that reciprocated need for emigration, Tigner maintained that it had less to do with the basic needs of the host country. With his model for emigration firmly grounded in economic law, he displaced responsibility for troublesome

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<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 11.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

anomalies onto individual immigrant groups themselves. Tigner inferred this through the negative examples of the Chinese in Peru and prewar Japanese in Brazil. He attributed the anti-Chinese sentiment in Peru to the “Chinese coolie trade and its attendant evils.” In addition to the “widespread addiction...to opium,” Tigner decried the Chinese “proclivity towards mingling with the native populations which produced significant numbers of unattended half-caste offspring.” He further complained of the fact that more Chinese became small business owners than farmers. Because Peru’s economy needed agriculturalists, the Chinese failed to ingratiate themselves to their Peruvian hosts in the economic sense. Instead their disorderliness “created threatening social problems,” and true to his form, Tigner decided that these transgressions had “engendered progressive hostility [which] led to anti-Chinese movements.”<sup>237</sup>

Regarding the Japanese, Tigner found ethnic provincialism to be the historic obstacle prohibiting model labor exchanges. From his perspective, the Japanese tendency towards isolationism provoked Brazil to reject its natural proclivity for extreme tolerance. Unlike Peru, which feared race-mixing, Brazil was Tigner’s ideal host. There, he believed that “the process of miscegenation, aiming at the obliteration of alien groups as distinct racial and sociocultural units, [had] long been one of the principal tenets of the Brazilian philosophy of assimilation.” Yet, Tigner believed the Japanese “displayed stronger resistance to this process than any other alien component of the population.” Among the Japanese, he detected the “ability to exist largely as unabsorbed entities” as well as the uncanny “disposition to form homogenous population clusters.” Japanese hostility, therefore, caused Brazil’s nativist turn. Opting instead to soothe its “fear of augmenting [Japanese] concentrations” over the celebration of its natural character, Brazil enacted barriers to emigration that also detracted from economic growth.<sup>238</sup> Assimilation

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<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

was imperative in Tigner's conclusion. His assimilated subject allowed countries to regulate overpopulation while protecting against xenophobic flare ups.

But how, exactly, one encouraged emigrants to assimilate was easier said than done. Tigner realized after studying previous attempts to settle the outlying Yaeyama and Miyako islands that emigrants sometimes refused moving despite state advocacy and indomitable wills to succeed. Onto this anomaly, he imposed a reason: conditions "repelled settlement" and Okinawans considered life in Yaeyama and Miyako "a harsh exile." Home to "malignant malaria" and "destructive typhoons and earthquakes," both locations lacked local markets that absorbed agricultural surpluses and transportation to "outside consuming centers." "An individual could not possibly improve his economic status there," Tigner declared, and so that emigrants felt upwardly mobile he rendered another guarantor of success.<sup>239</sup>

Given the first two criteria for successful emigration—that it must meet the economic desires of two partner states and the emigrant himself—it followed that programs of such ambitious nature required careful state planning. Emigrants could not move to an area that was already overcrowded because it would pit the immigrant against native groups by rendering resources scarce. Nor could emigrants move to land that could not utilize their talents because it would leave them without ready work and, consequently, useless. Both scenarios, Tigner rationalized, would decrease the emigrant's opportunities to improve his economic circumstances thereby triggering the impulse to return home.

Thus, it became of utmost importance that Tigner recorded, with meticulous precision, statistics like the areas, population densities, and geographic features of receiving countries. Brazil, he calculated, had an area of 3,286,170 square miles, a "very sparse population" for its

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<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, 16.

size—52,645,479 in 1950—an estimated capacity to support up to 800,000,000 people, and three main physical regions that, regardless of varying elevation, rainfall, and vegetation, could properly be considered “the tropics.”<sup>240</sup> Bolivia was 420,000 square miles. Based on altitude, topography, quality of soil, rainfall, and temperature, Tigner saw that it, too, consisted of three geographically distinct regions.<sup>241</sup> Furthermore, he found that for every 1,000 people of Bolivia’s total population of 3,950,000, there were 545 indigenous races, 309 mixed races, and 146 white races, and that “approximately 80 percent of the population [lived] at elevations in excess of ten thousand feet.”<sup>242</sup> In less suitable receiving countries like Argentina, Peru, Mexico, and Chile, Tigner tracked the rates of migration, preferred occupation, as well as the proportion of Japanese to Okinawan to enter during each period.<sup>243</sup>

The final statistic comparing Japanese to Okinawans speaks to another supreme concern to US planners like Tigner, particularly with regards to protections for the latter group. Assuming that Okinawans were an ethnic subset of the Japanese, Tigner presented the Okinawans and Japanese together, with slight overlaps and occasional confusion, but unmistakably distinct and deserving of separate chapters. Indeed, his introduction explained that “the Okinawan emigration problem, great as it is, may be understood only against the background of the general problem of Japanese emigration, which must here be sketched in broad outline.”<sup>244</sup> Bound in the same report, Tigner’s Okinawans and Japanese assumed a relationship, in which the Japanese superstructure pre-determined the fate of lesser ethnic experiences, inevitably thwarting Okinawan success. The resolution of this specific account of

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<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 27-29.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, 464.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 467.

<sup>243</sup> Tigner’s account of settlement possibilities can be found in his report’s third part. Argentina has the first chapter, Peru the second, Mexico the third, and Chile the fourth.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

Japanese discrimination, which Tigner both produced and naturalized, was a colony split by ethnicity.

Such thinking is evident in Tigner's overview of the Kaigai Kogyo Kabushiki Kaisha (KKKK). The result of mergers among smaller groups aiding earlier emigrations, the KKKK received government subsidies to normalize outbound trips for Japanese and Okinawans equally. Defying its charter however, the company loaned money to Japanese at better rates and more lenient repayment schedules. Twice, Tigner found, such discriminations provoked Okinawans to abandon posts on coffee plantations. It was only through the help of ethnic Okinawan organizations and Okinawan officials in public office that "Okinawan emigration to Brazil was reinstated to a normal flow." In fact, Tigner discovered that once the specter of Japanese oppression lifted, Okinawans freely and willingly became the liberated and desired subjects of state-planned emigration. He remarked:

"Since Japan's defeat, whether admitted by them or not, Okinawans have invested their long-hoarded savings in land, for today only an isolated few entertain the idea of re-migrating to the homeland. The booming coffee industry has driven the value of these lands upward to as much as ten times their purchase cost, and the rise still continues. Some Okinawans declare that as a group they could 'buy half of the state of Sao Paulo.' This, of course, is an exaggeration not spoken in a serious vein, but it does reflect the confidence which prevails among them."<sup>245</sup>

To Tigner, Okinawans were naturally gifted land owners. They pounced on the chance to accrue more land when opportunity permitted. They also possessed supernatural skill for its cultivation. Okinawan properties were, therefore, "carefully selected," "efficiently utilized," and "remarkably extensive when one [considered] their former poverty."<sup>246</sup> Problems arose only when Okinawans and Japanese mixed. The majority to Okinawa's ethnic minority, the Japanese could not help but dominate and derail Okinawan dreams to become property owners. Tigner's

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<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*

answer was to separate the two. Only then could Okinawans purchase and grow land as their natural character dictated without obstruction.

Most important, Tigner believed the full realization of Okinawan ethnic identity had yet to come. Exhibited in the turn of phrase “whether admitted by them or not,” only a portion of Tigner’s Okinawans saw both the manner and extent of Japanese oppression and why it was they were so inexplicably attracted to purchasing land.<sup>247</sup> That some Okinawans were prone to “exaggeration not spoken in a serious vein” suggested to Tigner that knowledge of self—what it meant to be Okinawan, how this ignorance-of-self came to be, and how such a problem must be rectified—needed practice. Tigner reasoned that such tutelage could only be achieved with protective borders. Confinement to a colony, therefore, purified and protected Okinawan progress.

In the previous section, I have answered to my original question: what shaped postwar empires and why did it revive the form of a colony? Using Tigner’s report on settlement possibilities for Okinawans in Latin America, I demonstrate that colonization occurred because policymakers considered it a means to foster cooperation through reciprocal economic development. Emigration from Okinawa, in particular, Tigner deemed especially crucial because he believed Okinawa wanted the natural means to properly evolve. Overpopulated as a result, it was susceptible to social disasters.

I also illustrate how Tigner’s idealized equilibrium between sending and receiving states hinged on factors that only segregated colonies actualized. After studying outbreaks of anti-Asian movements, Tigner resolved that xenophobia occurred because groups failed to assimilate. Of Okinawans, who tended naturally to provincialism, past failures determined that emigrants

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<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

needed to be upwardly mobile to shake prejudices against foreigners. Tigner's turn to population science attempted to assure that opportunities existed for all, and most especially for Okinawans, whom he discussed alongside the Japanese. By positing a specific relationship between the Okinawan ethnic minority and the Japanese majority, he also fashioned an "Okinawan subject" who could only be victim to Japanese discrimination. Segregation was therefore how Tigner safeguarded and coaxed into being true, autonomous Okinawans.

### **The Government of the Ryukyu Islands and Emigration to the Yaeyamas and Bolivia**

Although the US promoted emigration so that Okinawa could support American troops, it was not the sole actor. The GRI also played a crucial role in executing plans. Indeed, before the US instituted its official 1954 program, migration from the islands had resumed under the provisional guidance of Okinawan officials whom the US had hastily reinstated to help compose the postwar chaos. Prewar migrants, for example, understood apparatuses like the "calling system," an informal practice ensuring emigration from Okinawa, and so they lent first to initial groups settling in Argentina and Peru, and later to Tigner who then incorporated this intelligence into his own recommendations.<sup>248</sup> As emigration programs formalized throughout the 1950s, the GRI assumed responsibilities for the preparation, processing, and transfer of Okinawan emigrants to their destination.

GRI involvement in Okinawan emigration is important for another reason. How the GRI conceptualized and instituted policy throws into doubt the assumption predominating secondary scholarship that the US alone militarized Okinawa against the collective wish of a unitary Okinawan subject. It, in fact, demonstrates that the "Okinawan subaltern," whose voice had

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<sup>248</sup> Matters relating to the Promotion of Emigration (移民促進關係) 1951-1952, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan). Sellek, 83-84.

been oppressed, did in fact “speak” under US administration. More still, what the GRI recommended not only coincided often with US goals, but also shared the perspective of anticolonial nationalists who grew increasingly louder in their objection to what they believed was a wholesale oppression of indigenous interests by colonial aggressors.

In the following section, I unravel GRI plans to develop Yaeyama and to colonize Bolivia. The booklets I analyze—“On the Development of Business in Yaeyama” by Miyagi Yoshihito, who headed the Division of Development in the Bureau of Economics, and “On Immigration to Bolivia” by Senaga Hiroshi, a participant in an envoy sent to survey conditions in Bolivia’s Uruma colony—briefed concerned GRI officials on emigration. They made their arguments made on the same intellectual terrain as US policymaker and social scientists like Tigner. As mediators for the US administration, they also expanded significantly on the US’s original theses. Under the banner of anticolonial nationalism, representatives like Miyagi and Senaga drew up their own plans for unique developments that encouraged Okinawan subalterns. Their proposed accomplishments again called for hard borders of ethnic colonies.

The most glaring feature defining the GRI position is that it bemoans Okinawa’s loss of autonomy under US guardianship. Captured best in the introduction to Miyagi’s report on the Yaeyamas, GRI officials maintained that Okinawans staked their fortunes on whims the US set while forfeiting steadfast traditions. Miyagi, for one, predicted that “things [were] made violent by this dangerous situation.” Even though “military work [grew] stronger” now, he observed that “in two or three years, the construction of bases will be practically finished.” Okinawans were “naturally made to forecast that the dropping dollar will decrease” as a result. Because Miyagi further observed that agriculture, which “served as the main source of the natural

Ryukyuan economy” was “gradually being forgotten,” the unhappy fate he declared was that “lives [would] become worse than what it [was] now.”<sup>249</sup>

Misgivings aside, Miyagi’s position noticeably rearticulated US rationales. Like Tigner, Miyagi linked Okinawan dependence to an assumed lack of productive land. He was convinced, for example, that the Okinawan mainland, which hosted the most bases, had few farmable plots that were also “too narrow.” The fact that the Okinawan population was only expected to grow only exacerbated what he considered an original deficit for the “narrow island nation.” Indeed, he worried that the infusion of bodies forced Okinawans to make “high use of...microscopic parcels” of land to “support a population that [was] overflowing.” The worst was also yet to come. Nothing the dismissal of military workers in certain districts, he augured that Okinawans “[would] encounter great poverty.” “Although the arable land [was] unceasingly being engaged,” he emphasized how “the consequence of the cultivatable land being narrow [was] just the same.”<sup>250</sup>

Similar to USCAR, the desire for economic self-sufficiency also motivated Miyagi’s search for more and better reforms. Defined strictly in economic terms, self-sufficiency in Miyagi’s Okinawa saw exports equal imports and exceed them. For this reason, he associated the drastic rise in imports between 1939 and 1953, and the trade deficit in the year before his publication, with Okinawa’s overreliance on a changeable military economy. “The truth of the current situation,” as Miyagi put it, “[was] that the Ryukyus [had] an economy that [was] limping and [could not] completely achieve an equilibrium in its balance of payments.” The

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<sup>249</sup> Miyagi Yoshihito, *On the Development of Business in Yaeyama* (八重山開拓事業), 10 May 1954, Packet 3, Reference Data (参考資料), 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan) 1.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

“urgent countermeasure” the GRI must implement, Miyagi continued, was one that “[promoted] all production and industry within the Ryukyus first, and actively [made] exports.”<sup>251</sup>

Here Miyagi and his GRI cohorts went one step further than the US social scientists. Because Miyagi had deemed agriculture a “natural economy” that Okinawans abandoned with the influx of US forces, it followed that economic self-strengthening was key to rectifying Okinawa’s precarious situation. Development would not only make up lost ground, allowing Okinawa to catch up with stronger countries, but could nourish essential skills attributable to Okinawans. On these grounds, Miyagi designated agriculture the most difficult to improve among all other industries and named the dearth of land the main cause of its “slump.”<sup>252</sup> He tethered the realization of independence to generating a surplus in food, the success of which depended on the availability of adequately-sized land.

Miyagi applied this logic to his bid for the Yaeyamas as a prime destination for Okinawan emigrants. Whereas the Okinawan mainland precluded plots of ideal sizes for agricultural production, he insisted that such modern farms were possible in the expectant spaces of the Yaeyamas. These islands, he calculated, had “3000 extra hectares of suitable arable land that were undeveloped, virgin forests.” Iriomote, too, had an extra 24,000 hectares of “uninhabited national forests,” which Miyagi considered “sleeping resources,” “untouched” and “waiting for development.” Indeed, in the settlements of earlier emigrants, farmers had “swept clean” the traces of manual labor and dutifully implemented “the management of an ideal agriculture guided by animal power.”<sup>253</sup> Miyagi was certain that if afforded adequate space, Okinawans could effectively perform and nurture their innate roles as agriculturalists.

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<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

Still empty space represented only one ingredient for success. If GRI officials like Miyagi understood economic self-sufficiency to be an excess of exports over imports, then they faced the problem of what they could actually send out especially since they already operated with a trade deficit. Their answer was the Okinawan subject underpinning lofty aims for economic self-sufficiency. Knowledge of agriculture, the GRI reasoned, accrued in a place like Okinawa where farming represented an essential characteristic. It was also transmitted to subsequent generations. By the logic of comparative advantage, endemic skill represented Okinawa's most valuable commodity. Senaga Hiroshi of the GRI subscribed to this belief and argued as much in his pamphlet on emigration to Bolivia.

To Senaga was delegated the unenviable task of satisfying two very exacting criteria while making the case for Okinawan colonization. In one respect, he had to fit his argument within the broader US parameters which made equal exchanges in labor supply and demand and cooperation through assimilation the foundation of ideal emigration plans. In another, Senaga's argument must rearticulate GRI thinking that sought to recover an endangered Okinawa subject by promoting a return to food cultivation sustainable only in open spaces.

To Senaga was delegated the unenviable task of satisfying two exacting criteria while making a case for Okinawan colonization. In one respect, his argument must fit within the broader US parameters that privileged equal labor exchanges and assimilation. In another, Senaga must rearticulate GRI thinking that promoted a return to food cultivation in open spaces to recover an endangered Okinawan subject. The added challenge was that it must take place in Bolivia. As Senaga learned, many of the prewar migrants were assimilated Peruvian-Okinawans coming from the neighboring state and they also dispersed into management positions in La

Paz's brewing and soft drink plants.<sup>254</sup> Too mobile for the US, or too far removed from agriculture for the GRI, the prewar Okinawan migration was no model for postwar plans. Senaga, therefore, saw in these deviations a tenuous relationship between Bolivia and Okinawa that required reinforcement.

Senaga found two ways to resolve the competing demands. First, he revived an old evolutionary logic to diagnose a need in the host country that only Okinawan agriculturalists could fill. He observed that settlements in Bolivia were backwards, and even if Bolivia was “entirely different from a cultural region such as Okinawa and Japan,” none embodied the height of evolution. Senaga's version of progress praised the “[acclimation of] nature to fit human society.” Both urban and pastoral living arrangements should not only coexist, but blend seamlessly together through the service of well-designed transportation networks. The “victory” he envisioned consisted of “a lively cultural life, private cars, magnificent wide spaces, high buildings standing in a row, and plantations that [were] connected to highways.” “Such a thing [was] not found in any emigrant settlements,” he mused, and so Senaga regrettably saw much work to be done.<sup>255</sup>

If this utopia escaped Okinawan settlements, then so too was it out of Bolivia's grasp. Not without allusions to the disruptions associated with European imperialism, Senaga detailed the symptoms of lack based on his evolutionary model. Bolivia, he began, was once part of the Incan Empire which “sustained an advanced culture.” In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it suffered at the hands of the Spanish, whose desire for gold and silver exhausted all the country's deposits. In search

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<sup>254</sup> Senaga Hiroshi, *On Immigration to Bolivia* (ポリビヤ移民について), 1 Apr. 1954, Packet 3, Reference Data, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan) 6.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

for alternatives, the Spanish settled on tin. There, a single focus grew, eventually warping balanced economic growth.<sup>256</sup>

After independence, numerous coup d'états rocked Bolivia's political climate, which led Senaga to consider the country fractured and badly managed. He surmised that because Bolivia's financial affairs "[broke] again and again," the country "[could not] help but cooperate with North America when it came to its troubles." Even when the government reformed labor, nationalized mining, and implemented land reform, it had mismanaged these efforts. It "turned foreign capital into the enemy," forced "the flight" of investments that "predominantly belonged to Jews," and left an economy that generated 90% of its exports from mining with few options once tin demand dropped following the Korean War.<sup>257</sup>

A final indicator of Bolivia's backwardness was the country's lack of roads, which Senaga said was needed to integrate its disparate parts. Senaga concluded this after examining the distorted population distribution, which he discovered was trapped in the mountains. From all Bolivians, Senaga tallied 14.6% Europeans, 30.9% mixed races, and 54.5% Indians divided between a minority dispersed across the lowlands and a majority occupying highlands above 10,000 feet. Eighty percent of the population also lived in those elevations, which only made up 30% of Bolivia's entirety. "Because there was no state of transportation for the high mountain range," Senaga derided their ossified state. "From the 16<sup>th</sup> century on," he declared that "there was practically no advancement."<sup>258</sup>

Senaga's list of deformations grew only upon closer examination. Senaga recognized companies that were too isolated and agricultural production that was too small, "primitive," and

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<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-4

unable to exceed the roadless region much less the nation's borders. Of the 80% living in the highlands, he detected a "low cultural standard," especially among Bolivian Indians, whose illiteracy rendered them "unfit" torchbearers for the desired agricultural development. Senaga decided that this void was where "carrying out immigration [was] a possibility," and emphatically repeated his pronouncement immediately after. With more clarity, he announced: "Such a thing is felt well by both Bolivian citizens and outsiders, and in particular [called] for the possibility of Okinawan immigration."<sup>259</sup>

With an apparent need in Bolivia identified, Senaga continued to determine how Okinawans would thrive in such a vacancy. His main concern was that emigrants recognize their potential as agriculturalists so central to their ethnic identity even if they resided in faraway lands with few discernable connections to their ethnic origin. He resolved, therefore, to liken features of the prospective colony to those found on Okinawa. He reiterated the fact that "the location...set for Okinawans" took the name of Uruma, a city also on the Okinawan mainland, and approximated the position of the colony to be "715 kilometers to the east of Santa Cruz (the distance between Naha and Nago)." Within the Uruma settlement itself, Senaga found "Ujima" soil, a type that was yellow in color, generally located beneath a thick cover of black wash, with fine and soft grains. It was also indigenous to Okinawa, specifically in Oroku village.<sup>260</sup>

Senaga further connected Okinawan settlements in Bolivia and Honolulu to Okinawa itself, calling to existence a unified ethnic subject composed of people in the diaspora. Reading charts comparing the climate and rainfall, he brought three faraway locations into a single focus. Of the highs and lows in temperature, he found that "Naha's highest [was] 34 degrees and the lowest [was] 9 degrees," but in Bolivia, "the highest [was] 31.1 degrees and the lowest [was]

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<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

34.2 degrees, and [that] the temperature [was] often similar to Honolulu.” “The amount of rainfall in a year,” he continued, was “less than the 2,115 milliliters of Naha...but [was] 970.9 milliliters more than Honolulu.”<sup>261</sup>

Indeed, to reproduce even the ethnic relationship of Okinawans to Japanese, Senaga shifted the points of comparison when he described the location of Santa Cruz to the rest of Bolivia. Rather than continue using Okinawan reference points, he selected distinctly Japanese ones for his scale. Thus, Senaga related the 355 miles from Santa Cruz to the next closest “main city” of Cochabamba to “roughly the distance from Tokyo to Osaka. From the Pacific to Atlantic Oceans, he equated to “about the length of Sendai city to Kagoshima.”<sup>262</sup> Through his coordinates, Senaga encouraged his GRI peers to envision the Uruma Colony within Santa Cruz Province, and Bolivia to the rest of South America, as they would Okinawa to major Japanese cities and finally seated within the Japanese mainland.

One final requisite faced Senaga, however, and its completion necessitated the hard borders of an ethnic colonial settlement. Recall that both Miyagi and Senaga had emphasized in their respective plans the need to create a surplus of exports over imports. For Miyagi, that Okinawa consistently imported more than it exported left it dependent on foreign goods, beholden to US military work, and prone to shocks emanating from the caprices of the islands’ benefactors. Senaga deemed Bolivia lacking because consumption there was not national but regional due to the inability of goods to circulate beyond any particular area. Both officials supposed that there were indeed means to distinguish where a product went that rendered it an import or an export and whether its range of distribution exceeded preordained limits.

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-6. On page five there are two graphs comparing the average temperatures and rainfall of the three places: Okinawa, Santa Cruz, and Hawaii.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

More simply put, central to Miyagi and Senaga's conceptions of economic self-sufficiency and ideal development was that borders existed between a single nation and the rest of the world, a region and the nation, and, for their purposes, an Okinawan colony entrenched in these varying spatial configurations. Because they considered the Yaeyamas a part of the Ryukyus, the US and GRI counted agriculture on those islands towards the internal development they thought spawn self-sufficiency. For Okinawans in Bolivia to generate enough profit for remittances while contributing to their host's national development, the agricultural goods they produced had first to circulate within a self-contained colony and then to surpass it. By demarcating that point at which Okinawan production began and ended, GRI planners decided whether a commodity aided the overall settlement's productivity.

### **Tamaki Yoshigoro and Okinawan Emigration in the Postcolonial World**

Tamaki Yoshigoro advanced an even broader vision of Okinawa's place among decolonized states. Born in 1910, Tamaki grew up in Okinawa, and, except for a brief stint as an infantryman, spent his early professional years as a senior prefectural agricultural trainee and the elected chairman of a local agricultural improvement group. As Imperial Japan mobilized for their World War, Tamaki deployed to China where he first served in the Japanese Northern China Area Army and then as an Assistant Director of the Republic of China New People Society in Huimin County. His military service ended before official hostilities. Thus, when he left, Tamaki returned home where he took up a position in the prewar Okinawan government in its last days.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Tamaki Yoshigoro, Resume (履歴書), Date unknown, Packet 6, Reference Data (参考資料), 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

Though Tamaki's career reflects trends tied to Imperial Japan's decisions, it also reveals continuities that steadied everyday administration despite regime changes. Tamaki's position in the prewar Okinawan government was in the Ministry of the Interior's Population Division, and even as the United Nations detached Okinawa from Japan in 1946, his work in the nascent GRI went on. Struggling to rebuild Okinawa with strained resources and limited intelligence, the US Military Administration commissioned Tamaki in early 1946 to work in the Population and Food Distribution Office. There Tamaki stayed, serving in official posts related to agriculture and the transportation of people and goods while the stopgap native governing bodies transitioned fitfully to the formalized GRI. He gravitated towards establishing emigration programs, and eventually served as the director of an Immigration Mediation Center in Naha, where travelers resided for training and consultation before their departures.<sup>264</sup>

Tamaki's expertise in emigration grew, and between 1954 and 1968, he accumulated an impressive collection of reference materials, demonstrating remarkable intellectual breadth.<sup>265</sup> His papers include articles he wrote about backwater farm cooperatives and the history of Okinawan emigration. He also collected newspaper clippings reporting on distant events like the birth of the European Union and the application of Mao Zedong's theory of contradiction to the rectification campaigns riveting the People's Republic of China in the late 1950s.<sup>266</sup> For my

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<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> For Tamaki's writings after 1966, see: Materials (資料), 1968, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

<sup>266</sup> Author unknown, "How to become a 'Yobiyose' migrant" ("呼寄移住者になるには"), Date unknown, Packet 4, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan); Tamaki Yoshigoro, "The History of the Okinawan Peoples' Development of Emigration" ("沖縄人の海外移住発展史"), April 1966, Packet 5, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan); Tamaki Yoshigoro, "Regarding the Future Existence of Cooperatives in Backwater Agricultural and Fishing Mountain Villages" ("へき地農漁山村の協同組会の今後の在り方について"), Date unknown, Packet 5, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan); Newspaper clipping, "European Situation to Change" ("変転する欧州情勢"), 21 May 1957, Packet 1, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan); Newspaper clipping from *Asahi Shinbun* (朝日新聞), "Chinese Communist Party's New 'Rectification Campaign'" ("中共の新「整風運動」"), 22 May 1957, Packet 1, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

purposes, Tamaki authored social scientific profiles on countries that were potential hosts to Okinawans. Though the GRI might not have launched formal programs to every prospective country, his reports illuminate the assumptions influencing policymakers. More than Miyagi and Senaga, Tamaki saw a broader role for Okinawans. Emigration, Tamaki held, was the key to achieving a sustainable, self-sufficient future for not only Okinawans themselves, but also postcolonial nations jostling for position against struggling imperial powers.

That Tamaki conceived Okinawans' mission an anticolonial one is evident in his choice of subjects. Although Okinawans migrated widely after the war—to work in the factories of mainland Japan, in sugar beet fields of Canada, to US and Taiwanese universities to learn governance, farm management, or tropical agriculture—Tamaki primarily trained his energies on nations that endured periods of turmoil due to successive invasions by alien ethnicities or European powers.<sup>267</sup> In addition to those in Latin America, he scrupulously assembled dossiers on the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Iraq. His Dominican Republic vacillated between French, Haitian, and many bouts of Spanish rule between 1492 and 1865, when the country finally “emerged in control and became a republic.”<sup>268</sup> Iraq, too, was a “land of many ups and downs” that encountered “turbulence from a great many ethnicities invading since ancient times.” Starting with the arrival of the Semeru people in 4000 B.C., Tamaki counted attacks from the Akkadians, the Sema race, the Assyrians, Mongols, and the Ottoman Empire

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<sup>267</sup> For information on a postwar labor migration from Okinawa to industrial cities in mainland Japan, see Masahiko Kisi, *Assimilation and Othering: Mainland Labor Migrants of Postwar Okinawa* (同化と他者化: 戦後沖縄の本土就職者たち)(Tokyo: Nakanisiya Co., 2013). On migration to the US or Taiwan for training and education, see for example: Matters Relating to the Dispatch of Agricultural Trainees to the US (派米農業研修生関係), 1968, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan); Plans for Third Country Training Programs (第三国研修計画), 1966-1967, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

<sup>268</sup> Tamaki Yoshigoro, “Overview of the Dominican Republic, a Pro-Japan Country” (“親日国ドミニカの概観”), Date unknown, Packet 2, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

before the Dutch and English joined the fray.<sup>269</sup> For Tamaki, the next major battleground was clear: rectifying these losses of sovereignty was how Okinawan emigration stood to intervene.

In a political arena especially sensitive to foreign incursions and bent on maintaining the integrity of nations, however, promoting Okinawan settlement was no easy task. To establish where Okinawans held a competitive edge, Tamaki infused nationalist connotations to the development of agriculture. He pointed to Iraq's tortured relationship to oil and contrasted it with farming's trajectory. Oil was one of the country's most profitable industries and it was the reason why "from the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, [Iraq's] international political situation [to have] suffered" according to Tamaki's analysis. He listed the initial takeover by the English "hegemon"; the subsequent flood of capital from France, Holland, and the US; and the reorganizations of principal oil companies to conclude that "the battle for supremacy over the control of oil [was] very violent." Thus, even though oil production prevented the country from falling into a trade deficit, such was the case only because Iraq remained subordinate. The country continued selling to foreign bidders privileged concessions. For this reason, Tamaki observed that "calculations of Iraqi foreign trade...excluded [oil]" because it was "something owned by foreign capital."<sup>270</sup>

Whereas the whims of imperial powers controlled Iraq's oil and wrought continued havoc, Tamaki held that agriculture beget prolonged prosperity. Turning to Iraq's ancient history, Tamaki told how a desert that normally received "poor" annual rainfall and "only a mediocre impact from the Mediterranean" transformed into "the birthplace of humankind's culture" and "the center of commerce in the ancient world." As its former name "Mesopotamia"

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<sup>269</sup> Tamaki Yoshigora, "Iraq" ("イラク"), Date unknown, Packet 10, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.*

implied, Iraq sat “between two rivers,” the Tigris and Euphrates, which Tamaki believed “in this bleak and barren land” was “the thing that [provided] life.” Along the swampy banks of the rivers’ southern regions, Iraq’s original ethnic invaders the Semeru had created irrigation techniques that enabled settled agriculture and eventually the founding of the modern nation in Baghdad. Even at the time of writing, Tamaki saw that the majority of Iraq’s people congregated in areas adjacent to water, where they produced the most lucrative exports following oil: grains, date palm, and livestock. A natural extension of innate physical features, farming allowed “life for the Iraqi people [to] become a possibility,” according to Tamaki.<sup>271</sup> That Iraq’s foreign trade stood in deficit spoke only to its underutilized potential. Here Okinawa entered with an advantage.

International opinion corroborated Tamaki’s sentiments. They also revealed a host of criteria dictating how Okinawans might compete as benevolent producers. For example, Tamaki read the decree that raising wages and the standard of living to match international norms were priorities in a Government of Indonesia Publication issued a decade after independence. Notwithstanding their trumpeting of prospects for remittances or the exclusive tax breaks they offered foreign investors, Indonesia vigilantly guarded the range of non-native activities taking place in its realm. Besides securing promises to employ the local work force and curtailing the duration of foreign property rights, Indonesian law expressly ordered that ventures further the country’s industrialization, take place within territorial borders, and steer clear of indigenous businesses.<sup>272</sup> Taken together, Tamaki estimated that the question of whether Okinawans aided development took less precedence than where their activities warranted welcome.

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<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>272</sup> Tamaki Yoshigoro, “Indonesia’s Policy for Introduction of Foreign Capital: from 7 Dec 1955 Government of Indonesia Publication” (“インドネシアの外資導入方針: 1955年12月7日インドネシア政府公表”), Packet 10, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

For this reason, the reports Tamaki wrote about potential receiving countries cohered to a unique form. Adopting the template for social scientific studies, each brief began with an introduction situating the respective nation within the larger region and in relation to neighboring states. It then followed with descriptions of the country's natural and physical features; the racial, ethnic, and religious composition of national population; prominent industries and their impact on foreign trade; means of transportation and communication; the maturation of political institutions; and finally the main cities that fielded government or commercial activities. The sum effect of how Tamaki arranged his information more than authorized his voice. In addition to erasing the political considerations infusing his choice of topic and rendering his calculated intentions benign, it naturalized the nations in question.

For example, presenting the regular affronts the Dominican Republic endured after Tamaki positioned the island geographically presented the country as timeless. Changelessly, the nation occupied San Domingo Island, which eternally stood "in a line connecting the Florida peninsula of America, South America's Venezuela, and the Greater Antilles Island at the mouth of various West Indian islands." The American territory of Puerto Rico had always sat to the Dominican Republic's east; Cuba, "the island...of sugar and dance," to its northwest; the British territory of Jamaica to the southwest; the Atlantic Ocean to its north; and the Caribbean Ocean to the south.<sup>273</sup> If potential hosts feared erosions of sovereignty, then narrating facts that spatial markers like "Dominican Republic," "Cambodia," and "Iraq" neatly contained eased such anxieties.<sup>274</sup> In their ideal state, without unwanted challenges from alien outsiders, the entities depicted in Tamaki's profiles appeared unassailable.

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<sup>273</sup> Tamaki, "Overview of the Dominican Republic."

<sup>274</sup> Tamaki Yoshigoro, "Cambodia" ("カンボジア"), Packet 10, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan).

Tamaki's nations were also empty of any discernable indigenous inhabitants. His studied accounts of immigration and race and ethnic mixtures implied that who resided in a nation was indeterminate and open to re-interpretation.<sup>275</sup> Though Tamaki detailed the makeup of the national population, he found that it revealed intricate amalgams instead of a basic racial and ethnic character. The "composition of people" in the Dominican Republic, Tamaki declared, "[amounted] to whites at 13%, blacks at 20%, and mulattos of black-white mixed race at 67%."<sup>276</sup> Of Iraq, where "many different races have come to penetrate...from antiquity," he regarded the population "very complex" with Arab and Kurdish majorities, some Turkish inhabiting the northern Mosul region, and "various minority groups in other parts," of which the main ones were Belushians and Jews. Even when Tamaki approximated the Semeru as Iraq's ethnic basis, he quickly undercut his own assertion. Emphasizing their foreignness, he asked "From where did [the Semeru] come?" to which he pointedly responded, "In regards to what race they were, there [was] no established theory."<sup>277</sup>

Who entered and participated no longer endangered a nation's sovereignty, but for Tamaki, this was not enough. Taking cues from Indonesia, Tamaki wanted to guarantee the easy coexistence of newcomers and local residents to appease host country fears. He gleaned his answer from Cambodia, where he believed the segregation of races and ethnicities to have proceeded harmoniously. He discovered that each of the host country's numerous population

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<sup>275</sup> See: Etienne Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology" in *Race, Nation, Class Ambiguous Identities*, Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (New York: Verso, 1991) 86-106. Although I borrow from Etienne Balibar's idea of "fictive ethnicity," my example also differs. Balibar, attempting to theorize the resurgence of anti-Semitism in contemporary France, uses "fictive ethnicity" to describe a key technology through which a nation-state manufactures a population entitled to citizenship. Ethnicity naturalizes their entitlements. He critiques claims to citizenship made on the basis of an unchanging ethnicity by pointing out their methods of production. Tamaki's accounting of racial and ethnic populations is the opposite. According to Tamaki, a nation-state has no racial and ethnic basis and therefore rights are available to all, and so "fictive ethnicity" can be multiple and the citizenry multicultural.

<sup>276</sup> Tamaki, "Overview of the Dominican Republic."

<sup>277</sup> Tamaki, "Iraq."

types resided in distinct areas where they performed select tasks. “Mostly gathered in the capitol,” Tamaki estimated 2,000 Europeans; 200,000 Annamese; and 110,000 overseas Chinese whom he suspected had “seized the real power of Cambodia’s economy” “because they [took] part in business—particularly selling and brokering—and handicrafts, etc.” “Along the coast” lived the Malay and Cham, and Tamaki noticed that both groups “[exhibited] styles that [had] been assimilated with the Cambodians” and “engaged in the fishing industry.” He further detected minority races like the Phong, Chong, and Kuy in the mountains, where they “[engaged] in primitive agriculture” by “[practicing] the slash and burn method.” “Thought to [have] descended from the Khmer group” and his closest guess at the country’s ethnic basis, Cambodians he found both everywhere as the numerical majority, but exclusively as rice producers for those who lived in the farm villages of the plain.<sup>278</sup>

The empirical language of Tamaki’s social scientific reports normalized the segregation of races and ethnicities to render the influx of Okinawans non-threatening. Thus, the GRI could secure official introductions of Okinawans to alien lands all while adhering to the precepts of international camaraderie and multiculturalism. That Okinawans settle in ethnically-pure colonies underpinned the extravagant endeavor. In 1956, the Japanese Director of General Immigration in the Foreign Ministry led a three-person committee to Cambodia. They wanted to investigate the progress of emigration to determine the possibility of establishing a similar program for Okinawans. Though the extent of Tamaki’s participation is unclear, he read through the commission’s findings and annotated what “must be passed in order to attain an understanding” with the Cambodian government. Tellingly, Tamaki suggested abandoning “the

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<sup>278</sup> Tamaki, “Cambodia.”

policy called ‘the dissemination of immigrants among Cambodians,’ which was officially followed.” Instead, he favored a “policy of gathering within a settlement.”<sup>279</sup>

Convincing host countries to allow Okinawan emigrants followed easily after Tamaki’s evaluations. Tamaki had, of course, backed anticolonial criticisms, supported economic stabilization, and affirmed national sovereignty. His immigration proposals also promised not to interfere with local residents. He only worried that countries, emerging from the aftermaths of colonialism, would not favor Okinawans. Tamaki, therefore, gushed about places like the Dominican Republic, where he believed had all the ingredients to successfully absorb Okinawan emigrants. The Dominican Republic, for example, had an open-minded leader. According to Tamaki, General Raphael Trujillo became president in 1930 and was so popular that he “was re-elected four times” in a country that adopted a government of “the republican type with separation of powers.” “Called the patron of the mother country by the people of the Dominican Republic,” Trujillo also “put the country in order” and “left a good legacy.” These exploits included restoring Santo Domingo to its place as a modern city after a 1930 hurricane. The grateful city renamed itself “Ciudad Trujillo” to return the favor.<sup>280</sup>

To Tamaki’s delight, Trujillo had ongoing plans to diversify his country’s industries too. He noted that the Dominican Republic had an unhealthy dependency on sugar production that bound 74% of the working population and 70% of total wages to volatile international markets. Believing that Okinawans could shift the Dominican Republic away from sugar, the Okinawan scientist dwelled on Trujillo’s affinity with the East. He called the family of the current

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<sup>279</sup> Tamaki Yoshigoro, “Acknowledging Mass Emigration: Establishing an Understanding of Cambodian Immigration”(“集団移民を認める: カンボジア移民了解成立”), 1 Mar. 1956, Packet 10, Reference Materials, 1954-1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives (Okinawa, Japan). Sellek also mentions a brief attempt to establish Okinawa emigration to Cambodia on P. 87-88 of her chapter. What became of these efforts neither she nor I can establish.

<sup>280</sup> Tamaki, “Overview of the Dominican Republic.”

president Ector Trujillo “big Japanophiles” who gave “a Japanese name of ‘Haponesa’ to [their] daughter in honor of Japan.”<sup>281</sup> He then reasoned that embracing Okinawans was no far stretch. If the Trujillos already loved Japan, then to welcome the ethnic relative to Japan was wholly logical, desired, and imminently within reach.

The emigration of Japanese agriculturalists to the Dominican Republic Tamaki predicted did, in fact, occur. Actualizing their “Japanophile” tendencies, the Trujillo regime allocated 300 tareas of free land—roughly 44.6 acres—to each emigrant in sparsely populated areas to establish ethnic colonies. The Japanese and Dominican governments additionally offered subsidies for travel and assurances of adequate equipment, housing, social services, and baseline incomes. The first 185 emigrants arrived in 1956 and five years later, about 1,319 families called the Caribbean home. Shortly after the expected tribulations that harden all good colonists’ spirits passed, settlements like Dajabón, Agua Negra, and Constanza sprouted, growing peanuts, maize, tobacco, and coffee—not sugar. Due to their enterprising nature, Dajabón emigrants even surpassed expectations by breeding a profitable new rice crop.<sup>282</sup>

Three points are worth remembering. First is that distinctions between “Japanese” and “Okinawan” were fundamentally unstable despite their appearance of immutable difference. Tamaki—and Tigner, Miyagi, and Senaga before him—slipped easily between the narratives, allusions, and statistics attesting to the absolute, self-evident existence of these separate but equal ethnicities. Ethnic divisions were also transgressable. Indeed, some Okinawans obtained passports from the Japanese government after arriving in the colonies to become “official Japanese.”<sup>283</sup> Rooted in arbitrary criteria alleging differences in physical characteristics and

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<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>282</sup> Endoh, 46-51.

<sup>283</sup> Sellek, 84-85.

cultural norms, the categories were deeply problematic. That emigration to the Dominican Republic in the postwar period exclusively included “Japanese” and no “Okinawans” is far from definitive, and the task at hand is not to parcel out ethnic groups, but to note when distinctions occur in USCAR and GRI documents and why.

Further, the realities of those who settled in the Dominican Republic were far more complex than a colonial archive allows. As such, the second point to emphasize is that Rafael Trujillo was not the hero of Tamaki’s adulations. A thorough and calculating dictator, Trujillo ruthlessly oversaw the Dominican Republic from his ascension to assassination in 1961. In addition to brutally repressing his many detractors, “the Generalissimo” asserted dominance through prosaic means: arbitrary disappearances and widespread surveillance to infiltrate even the most intimate of his subjects’ affairs.<sup>284</sup> What were the unoccupied utopias of Tamaki’s studies were difficult to farm, impoverishing emigrants further before any profits returned. The land also comprised the contentious boundary between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. There, repeating colonial Japan’s policy of deflecting Soviet and Chinese incursions by settling the Manchurian border, Trujillo gambled that the presence of bodies, now legally coded as Dominican, strengthened his claims to the disputed territory. He hoped the certain rise of settled agriculture would rid this contested wilderness of his perennial Haitian rivals, whom he alleged were squatters and smugglers. Trujillo, therefore, turned emigrants into geopolitical pawns. Wielding official grants for “free land,” to which neither Dominicans nor those living on presumably “empty lands” were entitled, emigrants became easy targets against whom the country reconfigured national belonging after Trujillo’s assassination.<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Lauren H. Derby, *The Dictator’s Seduction: Politics and the Popular Imagination in the era of Trujillo* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009).

<sup>285</sup> Endoh, 46-51. Endoh notes the similarity between Trujillo’s use of emigrants and colonial Japan strategy in Manchuria.

The final point reiterates my initial assertions regarding the inextricability of militarization, liberal economics, multilateral cooperation, and political economic self-determination expressed through the rhetoric of anticolonial nationalism. As I have demonstrated, the practice of internationalism and respect of national sovereignty did not contradict the founding of ethnically-pure colonies and partnerships with grisly military dictators. The ideas undergirding the planned emigration programs were bedfellows, mutually reinforcing one another. Their universalization as desirable goals represented the main form of US imperialism this period.

Subimperialism—the acceptance and regurgitation of these beliefs across the postcolonial world—propelled this blend of commitments forward to consolidate a world of independent nations that were simultaneously “free,” terrifying, and starkly segregated. Through their shared belief in strengthening a nation’s political sovereignty and economic stability, the US, GRI, and other postcolonial governments cooperated thereby enabling US militarism’s continuation even before emigrants discovered the illnesses, deaths, and indebtedness intrinsic to frontier life. Such convergences bridged imperial centers to their peripheries and former colonies to their peers. They also shrunk the discursive terrain from which critics of planned emigration drew to levy their harsh accusations of government mismanagement and oversight. As a result, today’s historiography overlooks the fact that states commissioned countless social scientific studies to foresee possible errors. Rather, the literature pinpoints US and Japanese negligence as the wrong and champions the terms on which Okinawan colonization schemes gained popularity: the strengthening of a self-determined “Okinawan identity.” In the subsequent two chapters, I examine what subaltern resistance can be outside these established, subimperial paradigms.

## Chapter Four

### Okinawan Identity, Resistance, and the 1955 Land Protests

#### Introduction:

In 1955, as the US intensified efforts to make the Pacific into a military stronghold, successive demonstrations rocked the most populated island of what had been Japan's southernmost territories. Since the Battle of Okinawa ended in June 1945, the US had occupied the island chain in various capacities: direct military government from the end of World War II to April 1952 when the San Francisco Peace Treaty established the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR). Keeping to their promise to foster self-sufficiency and faced with overseeing peoples whom they knew little about, USCAR established the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) comprised of Okinawan officials, many of whose professional careers began under the prewar Japanese administration. In the ten years it presided over Okinawa, the US had come to consider itself liberators of the islands that imperial Japan annexed in 1878. They were friends to the Okinawan people, an oppressed ethnic group according to US social scientists, and the region's protection against revolutionary disorder.<sup>286</sup> Still despite their efforts to pacify the islands, displeasure at the US presence grew such that in 1955, raucous protests forced both USCAR and the GRI to seek Congressional approval for a uniform set of solid reforms.

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<sup>286</sup> On the construction of "Okinawans" as an ethnic group see Alan Christy, "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa," in *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, ed. Tani E. Barlow (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997) 141-169.

Scholars have debated the significance of Okinawa's volatility. For many, the village meetings, mass rallies, and violent encounters with the US military as it seized more lands for the construction of bases represented a coming of age of all Okinawans, a dawn of a collective identity that manifested itself in the first island-wide struggle. This literature equates militancy with the conscious realization of one's "Okinawanness" at once heterogeneous and expansive because proponents of such a theory maintain that the reservoir for self-identity draw from diverse and creative cultural practices. They define both Okinawan subjectivity and Okinawan traditions broadly, and so argue that in the recognition of such an open identity, subjects become self-determining and political movements emerge to eventually right the injustices of Japanese neglect and US imperialism.<sup>287</sup>

Although uniting as a self-conscious people was one reaction to the military presence on Okinawa, this chapter gestures towards the limits of such a strategy. The political imperatives of US anticommunism foreclosed the impact expressions of ethnic difference could make and uniting under identity was certainly not the only historical response. By the time passions flared in Okinawa, the US was fully ensconced in the fight against Communism worldwide. In accordance with foreign policy advisor George Kennan's theory of containment, the US aimed to stifle the spread of revolutionary movements by surrounding so-called fallen states with hostile anti-communist ones. It ordered troops into war in Korea, sponsored a dictatorship in Taiwan, and planted military bases across the mainland Japan, much as it did in Okinawa, to encircle the Maoist People's Republic of China. Across American universities and academic foundations, the US state also solicited the help of social scientists, who were fully convinced that the product

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<sup>287</sup> Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest, and Struggle in Okinawa* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Christopher T. Nelson, *Dancing with the Dead: Memory, Performance, and Everyday Life in Postwar Okinawa* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

of their academic labors ought to have relevance and positive ramifications for current politics. What scholars today would call the “modernization theorists,” this eclectic cohort formulated an overarching discourse that first described and then dictated through carefully crafted policy how distinct societies, regardless of cultural and racial differences, evolved to realize their separate but equal versions of modernity: a sovereign nation-state where a liberal-democratic government presided, both representing their subjects’ wishes and skillfully manipulating the economy to foster self-sufficiency.

At the root of the various methods US policymakers and specialists dreamed up to stop the spread of communism was the belief that potential dangers ought to be identified and neutralized. If they were states, anti-communist ones needed to quarantine them. If the threat appeared as a group, an agenda defining the organization’s parameters must be clarified and an individual leader discovered so that both could be thoroughly discredited. Anti-communism in Okinawa was no different. As the US attempted to divert mass politicization by singling out dangerous radicals and incorporating Okinawan demands, resistance in Okinawa exploded the terms on which military officials conceived these strategies.

### **US Anti-Communist Strategies and the 1953 Oroku Incident**

On December 5, 1953, as the military began construction on a radio tower in the Oroku district of Naha, a group of 250 people gathered to protest their imminent eviction by the USCAR. Angry, the assembled crowd stood immobile, ignoring US military appeals to harvest their crops for fear of waste. When the troop commander Colonel Reynolds Condon, as an act of benevolence, ordered soldiers to pick the cabbage in front of the bulldozer as it plowed, the people tossed their precious yields in the car’s path to be crushed. Observers threw stones at the

Okinawan driver as well, and soon, people brought the entire procession to a halt by squatting in front of the machine. Not wanting to be outdone, Colonel Condon called in armed troops to clear the field of the extraneous bodies. They dispersed the crowd eventually, and according to the commander's count, arrested only one man and inflicted no injuries.<sup>288</sup>

Even as it appeared that the military had successfully quelled passions and asserted their legal right to the land that day, the situation was anything but resolved. In the ensuing reports, which Colonel Condon passed to General David A.P. Ogden, Deputy Governor of USCAR, and to Lieutenant General P.W. Kendall, commanding the Army forces in Yokohama, Japan, the account of what became known as the "Oroku Incident" changed.<sup>289</sup> That the military encountered opposition to their plans that day is fact. What had transpired and why, however, officials debated. When opposition against the US military actions temporarily spiraled out of control, officials immediately projected their own theories onto the unruly mass phenomenon. They feared that wily communists had infiltrated and provoked the overreaction.

Colonel Condon was first to attempt ascribing the protest's cause to communists. The commander of the unit responsible for that day's evictions, Condon recalled in his December 7 report the presence of communist sympathizers. Out of the assembled mass, he identified "one Uehara Kamado, a resident of the village" who addressed the "natives" before the troops arrived. Although the "[Combat Information Center] files [had] no record of this man," Condon stated that "he was reported to have been seen in the company of Kamejiro Senaga," the fiery and charismatic leader of the Ryukyu People's Party, which USCAR officials suspected was a

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<sup>288</sup> Colonel Reynolds Condon, "Report on the Oroku Incident," 7 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 16-20.

<sup>289</sup> Major General David Ogden to Lt. General Kendall, "Matter of Land Payment," 7 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 12-15.

communist organ.<sup>290</sup> Allegedly Uehara and Senaga had met with American personnel at the USCAR building. Also “observed in the crowd of natives was one Hayashi Yoshimi, Chief of Education and Propaganda Department” of the same People’s Party.<sup>291</sup>

From these two sightings, Condon concluded that there was only one possibility: that the entire village had fallen spell to enemy radicals. Remarking that “of particular note [was] the fact that these people belong to a known Communist settlement in Oroku,” he supported his claim by linking the present episode to past incidents of communist-inflicted turbulence. “Trouble,” he reported, “was previously experienced with these people in the construction of the nearby [Petroleum, Lubricants, and Oils] facilities and the Naha Air Base fence.”<sup>292</sup> Such evidence, Condon reasoned, must have motivated the warning the troops released upon their arrival on December 5. In his thinking, had a threat not existed, the statement that the troops announced before they commenced their actions would not have expressly reminded the villagers that “[one could not] attain happiness and prosperity” by “communist agitation,” that communists “[made] promises but [did] not fulfill them,” and that “this land [was] needed to protect [the villagers] from communist aggression.”<sup>293</sup>

General Ogden verified Condon’s claims. In addition to corroborating the troop leaders’ version of events, Ogden contributed two theories of his own explaining why communist fomented the Oroku affair. In his letter to General Kendall, he first pointed to the ineffectualness of Okinawan leadership. Far from an indiscriminate mass, Ogden had the responsible rabble-rousers narrowed down to only a few “owners” who “[belonged] to a group in Oroku village

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<sup>290</sup> Condon, 18.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>292</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

within which there is a strong communist influence.”<sup>294</sup> Because they had rebuffed at least fifteen attempts by Okinawan officials to negotiate before the December 5 evictions, Ogden determined that the contingent was “antagonistic to the village and the village mayor and [constituted] an opposition group to the great majority of the village residents.”<sup>295</sup> Indeed, he saw this phenomenon reflected in other “owners [who were] being organized by political movements within the island to hold out for very high [land] prices.”<sup>296</sup> Just as “several Communist agitators” managed to overwhelm the village mayor’s authority, the nefarious elements that Ogden alleged had penetrated the upper echelons of the Okinawan government were similarly preventing ordinary people from freely doing as they pleased.<sup>297</sup> With exasperation, he declared: “Many individual Okinawans would have accepted values by the United States Government; but, since [the US was] dealing through the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, the elected representatives dared not to advise their people to accept and would not permit them to accept.”<sup>298</sup>

Second to the protestors’ poor leadership was the fact that the group’s complaints defied what Ogden thought was any reasonable logic. For example, as Ogden indicated, the protestors had no legal basis for their objections and their removal had been a long time coming. The US, which had defeated their then enemy Japan, was able to requisition holdings under the Rules of Land Warfare and the 1907 Hague Conventions. Article 3, Chapter II of the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty furnished the US with the power to exercise eminent domain.<sup>299</sup> Both Colonel

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<sup>294</sup> Ogden, 14.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>299</sup> USCAR, Civil Administration Proclamation No. 26. “Compensation for Use of Real Estate within Military Areas,” 5 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 32-34.

Condon and Ogden confirmed the military's proper execution of these international legal rights. The land that the farmers refused to vacate on December 5 fell within areas the military had earmarked for possible use long ago in June 1950. After the military made sure that the structures for which they needed the disputed land was absolutely necessary, they dutifully paid rent to the landowners on June 1953. The amount was retroactive according to Condon, accounting for the period from June 1950 to April 1952 before the US announced any plans for construction in Oroku. Ogden further reported that the military continued permitting villagers to work on the premises even after the declared taking. In fact, to waste no one's labor, Ogden recounted that "in accordance with legal procedure, on 27 July 1953, the farmers were notified that the planting of crops on Master Plan land was permissible but at their own risk."<sup>300</sup> By the time the US broke ground for construction, the military had already announced their intent to evict in writing twice and, as mentioned earlier, attempted to communicate with the villagers at least fifteen times.<sup>301</sup>

If the protestors' failure to grasp the legal justifications behind the actions the US took that day did not adequately indicate to General Ogden their propensity for irrational thinking, then the fact that the villagers refused to act in their own "best interest" surely did. The most extreme of instances was when the Oroku crowd purposefully destroyed the crops that Ogden emphasized that troops had "hand-picked...ahead of the bulldozer."<sup>302</sup>

Another was that the disgruntled group's reactions contradicted prevailing public opinion. As Ogden carefully outlined for General Kendall, the incident erupted a day after Ogden took special pains to guarantee that the military either compensate for land or return it if it

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<sup>300</sup> Ogden, 15.

<sup>301</sup> See Condon and Ogden's accounts.

<sup>302</sup> Ogden, 15.

was unneeded. The money Congress appropriated for payments would lapse on June 30, 1954, he explained, but “since the condemnation proceedings previously taken on land were most unpopular, [he had] attempted to negotiate leases...without success.” Because he expected the administrative work required to disburse money to take “several months” to complete, Ogden decided he “could delay no longer.” He published on December 5<sup>th</sup> Civil Administration Proclamation No. 26 “to break the impasse.” And, to ensure that the military’s requests were not extravagant, Ogden “conducted careful studies of...land use and requirements and [had] accumulated plots of land totaling about 450 acres which could be released to the Okinawans.”<sup>303</sup>

Ogden informed Okinawans of his intentions and reasoning before taking any official actions, of course. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, he convened the Okinawa Land Advisory Board, the GRI Chief Executive, the Speaker of the Legislature, and the leader of the “opposition party,” the Ryukyu Socialist Masses. During the meeting, he read a statement he had prepared, the press release set for publication on December 5, passed out translations of the proclamation, and answered all ensuing questions. He also reiterated at numerous points throughout, in both speech and writing, that he was “most anxious to see that people [were] paid for the land which the United States [was] using”; that he had “spent much time and deliberation on this problem”; and that he recognized “the continued use of private lands for public purposes without compensation...abhorrent to the Constitution of the United States” and an offense, which “may create hardship among the people of the Ryukyu Islands.” “At the same time,” Ogden made certain to “[announce] the release of approximately 100 acres of very valuable and urgently desired land which [was] no longer required by the military.” He added that forty-six of the total acreage actually fell in Oroku village where the actions erupted.<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, 13-14.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

Upon the meeting's conclusion, the Okinawan contingent appeared to Ogden to be generally appeased. While he acknowledged not knowing how the Okinawan papers would react to the official announcement of his Proclamation No. 26, Ogden comfortably admitted that his pronouncements were "favorably received" during this staged preview. He told General Kendall he believed that the Okinawans "[understood] that they [were] being handed all the money available to pay for the land and while there [was] disagreement as to prices, that [it was] the best arrangement that [could] be made at the present time."<sup>305</sup> The local Okinawan press too supported Ogden's proposed logic soon after.<sup>306</sup> Yet, although Okinawan politicians and newspapers responded positively to Ogden's decisions, the protest broke out nonetheless.

If Colonel Condon and General Ogden's confidence in their abilities to communicate with the masses demonstrate what US officials considered symptoms of communist infiltration, then the article the USCAR Civil Information and Education Department drafted for publication in the local newspaper *The Ryukyu Shimpo* on December 6 attests to how the US sought to manage the unexpected crisis. Since, in both Condon and Ogden's minds, they wholly believed that communists had infiltrated Oroku, the task at hand for USCAR propaganda was to extinguish potential threats. With phrases like "Mr. Senaga and others of the Ryukyu Peoples Party" and "in typical Communist fashion, Senaga and others of the same political faith," the article affixed the names of people, parties, and groups onto a crowd in which the assembled 250 people were mostly unidentifiable.<sup>307</sup> Having thus individuated what was actually a crowd, USCAR clarified the insubordinate subjects and groups future surveillance efforts could target.

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<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>306</sup> *The Ryukyu Shimpo*, "Two Announcements on Land Problems" in USCAR Daily Okinawan Press Summary, 6 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 80.

<sup>307</sup> USCAR, Civil Information and Education (CI&E), Press and Publication, Press Release, "Communist Led Demonstration Peacefully Dispersed," 5 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 82-83. *The Ryukyu Shimpo*,

By divorcing the discontented from their immediate surroundings, the article also rendered an anomaly what may have been a widespread politicization. The responsible culprits were only Kamejiro Senaga and his “petty communists” who “incited,” “exploited,” and “[preyed] upon...emotions.” Their victims—that is, those brainless villagers who rebelled—the article also limited from 250 people to “a small band of Communist-inspired demonstrators,” “the village people, duped by Communist promises,” and the “farmers [who] refused to harvest their crops at the incessant urgings of the Senaga-led Communists.” USCAR officials like General Ogden were establishing only one symptom of so-called radicalism to explain their irrational motivations. As such, the report further pegged general participants as “the uninformed” and those whose “ignorance” the communists manipulated.<sup>308</sup> More than discrediting those who gathered that day in Oroku, however, equating radical sympathizers with those who simply knew no better positioned the people as variables whose loyalties remained ultimately undecided.<sup>309</sup> Communist tactics had only momentarily swayed them, and so they were salvageable with proper education, not completely lost to these dangerous seductions.

Despite USCAR’s certainty that radical infiltration comprised an undeniable threat, the extent to which communists had manufactured the protest or whether or not they were even communists present on the December 5 action was surprisingly unclear. In a secret communication for the Commanding General of the US Forces in the Far East, 8<sup>th</sup> Army in Tokyo, General Ogden revealed a version of events more subdued than what USCAR

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“Communist Led Demonstrations Peacefully Dispersed” in USCAR Daily Okinawan Press Summary, 6 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 78. The first citation is for the prepared text that was later released in *The Ryukyu Shimpo*. The quotes I use are the same in both.

<sup>308</sup> USCAR, CI&E, 5 Dec. 1953, P. 82-83. *The Ryukyu Shimpo*, Daily Okinawan Press Release, 6 Dec. 1953. Again the quotes are identical in both documents.

<sup>309</sup> Peter Mandler argues this in “One World, Many Cultures: Margaret Mead and the Limits to Cold War Anthropology,” *History Workshop Journal* 68, no. 1 (2009): 149-172.

propaganda and even Colonel Condon had let on. Instead of the Director of Propaganda of the Ryukyu People's Party or even Kamejiro Senaga himself, the coded letter reported that while "known Communist agitators [were] very active [in] this case...only lesser figures [were] present and they committed no overt act."<sup>310</sup> Two hundred villagers congregated at the GRI building on the morning of December 6 too, and four individuals comprising the Gushi-ku land committee requested an audience with the Chief Executive, head of the GRI. Though Ogden listed the representatives as Uehara Kando, Uehara Kaeji, Uehara Taro, and Kuniyoshi Tatsuo, he positively identified only one of the four as Kuniyoshi, member of the Ryukyu People's Party. The rest of the Gushi-ku land committee, Ogden surmised could have been any one of three possible identities: "a Uehara, Kameji AKA Uehara, Tsutomu AKA Uehara, Tsuyoshi." Except for Uehara Kameji alone, whom USCAR records definitely cited for smuggling in August and September of 1952, Ogden could not specify the exact names which the remaining information USCAR had collected belonged. He therefore claimed broadly that all—or one—of the suspicious Ueharas repatriated in 1949 from Russia where they—or he—had been prisoner(s) of war, became communist sympathizer(s).<sup>311</sup> The confusion compelled Ogden to launch an investigation to match the names USCAR collected to the Gushi-ku committee members.

American missionary Otis W. Bell further threw into doubt the presence of communists in Oroku on December 5. Disturbed by the growing dissent between Okinawans and American

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<sup>310</sup> Confidential Security Information from Commanding General Ryukyu Command to Commanding General, US Forces in the Far East 8<sup>th</sup> Army, 7 Dec. 1953, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, 77.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 76. The exact sentence in the message is: "Information on file this office indicates that a Kuniyoshi, Tatsuo is a member of RPP; A Uehara, Kameji AKA Uehara, Tsutomu AKA Uehara, Tsuyoshi is repatriate from Russia (1949) where he had been PW, believed to be Communist sympathizer; A Uehara, Kameji listed being involved in smuggling August and September 52. Investigation initiated determine if these individuals same as listed above." I believe Ogden cannot figure out to which name he ought to assign the act of being a former POW and communist sympathizer because of how he relays the information. He makes specific identifications when he is confident of the information like when he takes pains to assign the act of smuggling to Uehara, Kameji after he names all three possible suspects. That he does not clarify which Uehara is the POW suggests that he himself is not certain.

authorities, Bell conducted a separate study that set to incorporate more Okinawan voices. He sent an earlier unsigned and undated version to the Department of the Army's Office of the Chief of Civil Affairs in Washington D.C. Officials then forwarded copies to the USCAR Chief of Civil Affairs and Military Government in San Francisco and Far East Command in mainland Japan.<sup>312</sup> Bell published the final revisions on January 20, 1954 in *The Christian Century* under the title "Play Fair with Okinawans!" In both the anonymous and published reiterations, Bell impugned USCAR's one-sided policies which set land values that were exceedingly low, excluded Okinawans from appraisal boards, condemned lands without first completing negotiations with the landowner, and did not disburse payments in a timely manner. He further reasoned that if the US military had been in Okinawa for eight years to suppress radicalism, then to discover such involvement in Oroku only meant that "the army [had] failed in its professed objective of occupying Okinawa on a friendly basis, and [that] it [had] failed to keep communism out of a country that had no such movement at the end of the war."<sup>313</sup> These reasons led Bell to conclude that while "to the army [Oroku] was a riot instigated by the communists[,] to the Okinawans it was a stand for personal rights to land legally registered to their names."<sup>314</sup>

But where Ogden had projected one set of beliefs about what rebellious Okinawans were, Bell merely posited another that was more sympathetic but equally problematic. The motivations he assigned to Okinawan anger presumed that a united front existed and therefore posited one answer that could resolve the military land problem. Bell proclaimed as fact, for

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<sup>312</sup> Letter to USCAR Deputy Governor re: Land Incident in Okinawa, 27 Jan. 1954, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 39-44. Included in the letter is an unsigned, undated statement referring to the December 5 Oroku Protests. The language and arguments in the statement is very similar to Bell's published article and so I have attributed it to him. This unsigned letter appears to be a draft.

<sup>313</sup> Otis W. Bell, "Play Fair with Okinawans!" *The Christian Century*, 20 Jan. 1954, Ryukyus, Land Incident, December 1953, Chief of Civil Affairs, Security Classified Records of the Economic Division, 1946-1961, P. 46.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

example, that “if the US army [was] going to occupy Okinawa it must have land,” that “all Okinawans [understood] this,” and that “[Okinawans realized] also that some of them [were] going to have to sell their land to the army or else lease it to the army on a long-term basis.”<sup>315</sup> Because he perceived all Okinawans to be in agreement, Bell identified a central tension that “[did] not arise from the actual use of the land by the occupying forces, even though the islanders [did] not understand why [the US needed] so much land...but [from] the land rent paid by the army and the method employed in arriving at the rental price.”<sup>316</sup> As I will show, these resolutions about what all Okinawans desired was not incompatible with military proposals. The expression of its inverse too—what all Okinawans wanted—was also not the single form subaltern resistance in Okinawa took.

### **Resistance in Okinawa and Radical Heterogeneity**

As the US hurried to resolve the land question, unrest plagued the Okinawan islands. Across disparate villages, residents neither accepted the contracts the military proposed nor moved where US District Engineers asked. How they refused took a myriad of forms, always unpredictable and rarely the result of a single radical consciousness or emergent ethnic identity. Such heterogeneity troubled the US for in the ever-changing cacophony they identified no single individual, perspective, and definition from which they could craft an adequate resolution. This multiplicity the US found unacceptable, and so the USCAR administration also included a Liaison Bureau, a public relations department that measured Okinawan reactions and convinced the recalcitrant to compromise. I examined files that the Liaison Bureau collected about heated exchanges over land. Collated to manage potential crises, the documents not only reveal the

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<sup>315</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*

knottier moments over which US officials fretted, but why certain responses threatened the fragile stability on which military plans hinged.

If an allegedly fair exchange for Okinawan lands demanded that dispossessed people see equivalent substitutes in US compensation, then the fact that villagers constantly pointed out the incommensurability of military offers brought US plans to a halt. Around January 1955, the military decided that it needed land in Mawashi-son and initiated legal proceedings to evict the 130 families living in the Machinato-Naha area. Following their acquisition procedures, US officials in the legal department began working with land representatives at both the son and village levels to locate areas that could receive the displaced families. Officials procured tracts of land in the Yogi Prison Farm from the GRI Public Safety Department. Though US representatives deemed the two areas interchangeable when they offered the new plots as suitable replacements, the villagers declined this resolution. According to a Son official, some families “insisted on being moved altogether into one specific area,” while others indicated that places offered “were in isolated spots [which] gave them no opportunities to earn a living.”<sup>317</sup> When the US proposed yet another alternative within the prison farm, the landowners “claimed [that] the new area was very low, subject to flooding during the rainy season.”<sup>318</sup> Contrary to the logic that the US occupation authorities asserted, the landed villagers reasoned that to move would divorce families from the larger community or separate those who farmed from surroundings that made their work sustainable. Where the US wished Okinawans to see a fair exchange, the villagers instead emphasized the extent to which military efforts to replicate the

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<sup>317</sup> Richard A. Davies, “Status of the Resettlement Move from the Machinato-Naha Area,” Memorandum for the Deputy Civil Administrator, 4 Jan. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*

lifestyle they would leave behind were entirely unfeasible and in specific detail failed to measure up in any way.

At times, voiding the transactions the military desired were of Okinawans' own making. Interviews with village land officials involved in the Machinato-Naha move disclosed that some recalcitrant owners refuted US appraisal because they had added structures to their lands following the initial evaluation. US surveys revealed that 24 families planned to appeal the US land seizure. One landowner was Ibi Nakamoto, whose house also happened to be in a military-designated section where land officers found values to be the least expensive. Because land values increased with structural changes, Nakamoto built a house on his plot after the military filed a declaration of taking. Much to the military's dismay, Nakamoto requested a second appraisal when the deadline to relocate approached. The District Engineer refused to pay for the additional house since it meant having to conduct another evaluation, but Nakamoto's move was worrisome enough. First, he legitimized grounds for his "[refusal] to accept any money unless he [was] paid for all improvements" by creating a discrepancy between the amounts the military established as correct and the ones he believed he deserved.<sup>319</sup> Then, he served as a model to other villagers. The military speculated that "while there [was] no evidence to show that Mr. Nakamoto [was] actively persuading the people to refuse to accept compensation for improvements or to move," other people "[were] certainly following his example."<sup>320</sup>

That villagers refused to adopt a single perspective, too, hindered military progress. As attempts to relocate families to the Machinato-Naha area intensified, US officers learned how futile their efforts to meet the villagers' demands actually were. One land official explained in a

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<sup>319</sup> R. Rose, "Resettlement Move from the Machinato-Naha Area," Memorandum for Record, 13 Jan. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

later report that the deals had only fallen through because villagers reneged on their promises. In the instance when the military convinced the GRI to relinquish land being used for agricultural experiments in the prison farm, the officer recalled that they had only embarked on the negotiations after the villagers “promised to move if this new area could be obtained.”<sup>321</sup> After much work, the military reached an agreement with the GRI. Yet, upon the announcement of a possible moving date, the villagers then decided that “they were not satisfied with the sites selected” and asked instead for a substitute area. The military ultimately “determined [the proposed new site] to be unsuitable” due to the expensive construction it would have required.<sup>322</sup> The land official complained that “the people constantly [raised] new objections,” which compelled the US to design new proposals and engender ever more laborious discussions.<sup>323</sup> By simply finding new variations, changing their minds, and retracting their demands, the villagers rendered the diligent efforts of the military useless.

What made the changing responses of villagers most troublesome for the military was that they insisted on what the US regarded as impossible demands. In their “outlandishness,” Okinawan demands pushed the terms the US thought to their extremes, exposing the limits of the military’s rationale. The putatively unreasonable stipulations extended beyond the request that military duplicate exactly the community and lifestyle the Mawashi-son villagers left behind when moving to their replacement plots. While the US struggled to convince residents to accept standard land values and development schemes promising future prosperity, people replied with exorbitant counteroffers that the military could never logically accept. On Ie-Jima, the tiny island off the northern coast of the Okinawan mainland, residents of Maja-ku insisted on

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<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*

receiving 18 to 20 million yen per year for the remainder of their lives to compensate for their losses.<sup>324</sup> The Sobe community in Yomitan-son of central Okinawa petitioned the GRI for an additional 4,798,111 yen in “livelihood security” to offset the evacuation costs that the original payment failed to cover.<sup>325</sup> The 221 living in Isahama hamlet of Ginowan-son asked the military to either undertake on their behalf an expensive project to reclaim 24,000 tsubo of coastal land or pay 13 million yen “to compensate for their being deprived of their occupation.”<sup>326</sup>

Both USCAR and the GRI denied the villagers’ requests for, whether the stake was explicit or implicit, the villagers’ counteroffers undermined the legitimacy of the monetary economy the military wished to install. As one Isahama resident pointed out in a meeting, the military budget, however expansive, was also limited. The villagers’ high quotes, he reminded his peers, “[had] been turned down for the reason that it [had] no precedence and [that] there [were] no funds to meet it.”<sup>327</sup> To accept the villagers’ rates would have pushed the military past what Congress had already decided it could responsibly spend. In another respect, failing to meet the villagers’ demands called into question the validity of the military’s land acquisition plans. Had the military agreed to the villagers’ requests, they would have flooded the infant Okinawan economy with amounts of money so excessive that it would have rendered their own currency worthless.<sup>328</sup> The military needed landowners to believe that monetary payments could adequately compensate for their loss of land. The extreme sums residents proposed, as such,

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<sup>324</sup> Edward O. Freimuth, “Discussion with Ahagon and other Ie-Son People,” Memorandum for Record, 13 Apr. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>325</sup> “Petition to GRI for Livelihood Security by Sobe Community,” Summary Translation, 7 Apr. 1955, Land, 1955: Miscellaneous, 1953-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>326</sup> “Statements Regarding Military Land Issue of Isahama,” Summary Translation, 8 Feb. 1955, Land: 1955: Miscellaneous, 1953-1955, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>328</sup> This is a likely conclusion based on US efforts to stabilize the Okinawan economy, which included regulating monetary policy. The Price Report later on also names possible inflation as one reason for rejecting the Okinawan Plan.

threatened to overthrow military assumptions, rendering the US military system of land ownership impractical.

Indeed, the value Okinawans placed on their land surpassed even the various outrageous prices they named. Many people refused to assign a numerical cost to their land altogether. They chose instead to see their land's worth in terms of their lives. Repeatedly, and against the push by some Okinawans to determine a fair price for livelihood compensation, many villagers argued that such a thing was unquantifiable. Chinen Seiichi, the mayor of Ginowan-son who periodically updated USCAR on his dealings with Isahama village, hinted as much when he described the "trying position" he occupied "sandwiched between the military and the people."<sup>329</sup> He attributed the "difficulty" he had "persuading" his constituents to follow military plans to "five old couples, who [were] leading a comfortable life" and who each owned significant tracts of paddy-fields.<sup>330</sup> As he recounted, the elderly group had unceremoniously "aroused [him] from sleep" one night and pointedly asked, "Do you intend to kill us by taking us to a pile of sand!"<sup>331</sup> When the military, having run out of patience, finally set Isahama's official eviction for July 18<sup>th</sup>, residents equated the value of land to their mental well-being. In a list of demands they sent to USCAR, they declared that "for those who [were] to move out from their lands, the psychological [sic] blow which they [will] have received will be a permanent one even...evident to a third person [who considered] the monetary compensation...fair."<sup>332</sup> Rather than acknowledge that the monetary offers were just as the mayor and military had hoped,

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<sup>329</sup> "Isahama Land Problem," Summary Translation, 19 Jan. 1955, Land, 1955: Miscellaneous (1953-1955), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>332</sup> "Letter to Colonel Murray, Civil Administrator from inhabitants of Isahama," 13 Jul. 1955, Land, 1955: Miscellaneous (1953-1955), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

Isahama inhabitants repudiated the proposed transaction, exposing it of its improbability as well as the incommensurability of the areas being exchanged.

Many times Okinawans advanced multiple rationalities and temporalities that undermined the type of ideals the US wanted set in place. The residents of Maja-ku on Ie-jima exemplified this tactic throughout their actions protesting their lands' confiscation and their subsequent removal. Their eviction occurred in early March of 1955, and throughout the procedure, the Army maintained that they had not only followed protocol but also demonstrated utmost restraint by permitting access to occupied lands for farming.<sup>333</sup> Groups and individuals from the dismantled village maintained otherwise as they trickled into Naha soon after the encounter to camp outside the GRI headquarters. There they requested audiences with committees that the Okinawan government had convened to study the land problem and displayed signs broadcasting their experiences to passerbys.

Contrary to US efforts to observe acquisition procedures, the Ie-jima evidence revealed how the military arbitrarily and coercively applied legal protections. According to village representative Shoko Ahagon, who traveled to Naha to interrupt a meeting of the GRI Legislative Special Land Committee, a Mr. Namizato "was tied hand and foot like a pig, and taken away" for "only [having] begged to have his land spared, in sign language, and [laid] on his back on the ground hoping to convey the thought that if he lost his land he and his family will have to starve and die."<sup>334</sup> At another meeting where Shoko "demanded to talk," "what [he

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<sup>333</sup> Edward O. Freimuth, "Ie-Shima Group in Front of Chief Executive's Office," Memo for Record, 22 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2. In response to the villagers' requests that the "soldiers stationed on Ie-Shima be ordered to stop taking sugar cane," Freimuth remarks in an additional comment that "Mr. Cox AP Land Office, was contacted and given the above information. He stated that it was his understanding that no soldiers were presently stationed in Ie-Shima excepting for security guards and a small group of radiomen. He stated that he will check into these allegations" (P. 2).

<sup>334</sup> *Okinawa Times*, "Military Requisitioned Land Problem Reaches Culmination: Schools Close in Ie-Jima," 15 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

knew] about the procedure through which money for compensation of the removed houses [was] paid” entailed multiple visits from soldiers and military police to an elderly neighbor.<sup>335</sup>

Shimabukuro Sansuke “was against the receipt of the money offered,” and so Shoko said that he, at first, “tried to hide himself from the said visitors.”<sup>336</sup> When he “happened to be caught by [the military] one day while he was at lunch,” an armed soldier took him to see an official of the GRI executive branch making payments.<sup>337</sup> “Though he positively refused to receive an indemnity,” said Shoko, the military personnel “grasped his finger and forced him to seal with the thumb on two receipts.”<sup>338</sup> These documented his legal surrender of land for both he and his neighbor, over whom he had no rights.<sup>339</sup>

Undergirding the US occupation’s boasts about the idyllic sharing of requisitioned land, too, were the Ie islanders’ memories of indiscriminate destruction, strict regulations, and militarized boundaries. Though orders encouraged troops to minimize unnecessary damage and USCAR officials like Edward Freimuth claimed to the GRI Special Committee that “the landowners themselves were tearing down their houses,” Maja villagers maintained that “no landowner took part in pulling down the houses and that the landowners had no prior knowledge of the removal.”<sup>340</sup> They only rushed to carry out valuables, and while they collected their household items, military crews ran bulldozers, leaving them without even the option to reuse old building materials. Troops buried water tanks, burned stables, tore down alcoves, and

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<sup>335</sup> “Matter Concerning the Temporary Compensation Measure for the Living of the Land Owners in Ie-Shima,” Summary of Legislative Special Land Committee Meeting held from 1 PM, 16 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*; This story was also reported in *The Ryukyu Shimpō*, “Landowners Testify Before Legislative Land Committee on Condition of Land Acquisition in Ie-jima,” 17 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2.

<sup>339</sup> It is likely that this neighbor is Shoko Ahagon, who refers to Shimabukuro as his neighbor.

<sup>340</sup> *Okinawa Times*, “Evicted Families Tight-Mouthed: Sleeping on Grass Under Tents,” 16 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2.

trampled thatched roofs.<sup>341</sup> Attempts to convey dismantled structures to the new village site failed, and so soldiers turned homes over with heavy machinery, ruining precious cornerstones that villagers wanted recycled.<sup>342</sup> Despite being granted permission to harvest crops, the islanders also found their former fields inaccessible. They were cordoned off, and the times when they were allowed to enter severely limited such that, when neither USCAR nor the GRI adequately address the Ie villagers' complaints, tensions escalated again.<sup>343</sup> In July 1955, Maja-ku residents revealed once more the façade of military justice. According to one petition, US forces on Ie-jima did not only restrict harvest times to weekends between 5 pm to 8 am. They posted sentries, who shot at, set dogs on, and arrested villagers as they scavenged for food during the prescribed hours.<sup>344</sup>

The alternative accounts of the Ie islanders accumulated, prohibiting, in a sense, the smooth execution of US policies and timelines. For both USCAR and the GRI, the goal of negotiations was to conclusively resolve villagers' complaints by highlighting the ways both administrations mitigated the disturbances originating from the military takeover. They sought in their encounters with the dispossessed villagers to identify a resolution to the land crisis, which only stopped the spread of discussions questioning the occupation's legitimacy. Thus,

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<sup>341</sup> *The Ryukyu Shimpo*, "Bulldozer Operated After Few Words Requesting 'Yes' or 'No,' Ie-jima Islanders Talk about Actual Conditions of Military Requisition of Land," 16 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2. *The Ryukyu Shimpo*, "Evacuation Finished in Ie-Jima: Legislative Land Committee Finishes Inspection, To Work Out Measures to Guarantee Future Livelihood Today," 16 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2.

<sup>342</sup> "Bulldozer Operated After Few Words," 1.

<sup>343</sup> *Okinawa Shimbun*, "Sit-Down Strike Continues," 17 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar.), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1. The article also reports more on Shoko Ahagon and his groups' remarks on ways in which the military destroyed the homes: "The manner in which the work was carried out could not be considered removal works, but as demolition works. The houses were forcibly destroyed by a bulldozer and we had no alternative but to move to the tents. A certain landowner's pig-pen was burnt. Moreover, the say [sic] that the people consented to the evacuation, but this is not true. The M.P.s coercively made us consent" (1).

<sup>344</sup> Oshiro Kozo and others of Maja-ku, Ie-shima, "Petition to Shuhei Higa, Chief Executive by Inhabitants of Maja-ku, Ie-shima," 23 Aug. 1955, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2. Landowners of Maja-ku, Ie-shima, "Statement of Apology to Our Wise Friends, the Entire Inhabitants," 29 July, 1955, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1-2.

when Shoko Ahagon met with the GRI Chief Executive and his Deputy, the two officials urged him to adopt their perspective, focusing only on what was possible under international law and military edicts. Since requisitions were “a supreme order from the standpoint of tactical operation,” the GRI believed “it [was] not possible to refuse the land acquisition for military use.”<sup>345</sup> “The point here,” as the Deputy Chief Executive explained, was “to have the rental increased drastically and fixed in accordance with the principle.”<sup>346</sup> Though payments ultimately “were a matter to be settled by the US Congress,” he and the Chief Executive deemed the villagers’ energies better spent discussing how they wished the GRI to temporarily subsidize the difference in rents and “what [they] should do hereafter” to rebuild their lives around the premise that the occupation was irrefutable.<sup>347</sup> To interpret their eviction as a violation of ethics, morality, and “right or wrong,” as Shoko did when he compared the villagers to “a little girl who bowed and offered her money after a burglar stuck a gun at her,” only exacerbated the crisis by blocking accords with official bodies and prolonging the villagers’ own discomfort.<sup>348</sup> USCAR’s Freimuth attested as much when he said the villagers let 300 bags of cement that the military provided to install new waterways collect moisture damage while they were in Naha continuing sit-ins and hunger strikes.<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> *Okinawa Times*, “Chief Executive Confers with Ie-Jima Representatives,” 16 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Press Translations (Jan.-Mar), Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>349</sup> Edward Freimuth, “Ie-Shima Group in Front of Chief Executive’s Office,” Memo for Record, 22 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1. Freimuth met with Kaneshi Saichi, a GRI legislator from the Socialist Masses Party, to convey his views of the Ie-jima protestors occupying the Chief Executive’s office. When Kaneshi additionally relayed the villagers’ demands that they be allowed use of the tents the military issued until the issue was “completely solved,” Freimuth sardonically states the following: “This office emphasized that the lack of locating adequate sites, as far as can be determined, was the responsibility of those sitting in front of the Chief Executive’s office. They should return to Ie-Shima to cooperate in locating sites and constructing houses” (1-2). GRI officials independently reiterated this sentiment when they urged Shoko Ahagon and his group to return home (See: “Chief Executive Confers with Ie-Jima Representatives” cited earlier).

Although scholars have attributed the Ie-jima protests to the strengthening of a unified sense of Okinawanness, the basis of villagers' appeals surpassed any appeal to a given prescribed ethnic identity. They did not demand the return to traditions derived from an unadulterated primordial past or to a political domain where jurisdiction over their ethnicity appeared natural. Rather, the Ie villagers solicited support in ways that were decidedly open, igniting additional discussions and inviting more people to participate. The signs they posted for the US Delegation investigating the land problem welcomed<sup>350</sup> and thanked the "intelligent American people,"<sup>351</sup> whose health, "sound judgment,"<sup>352</sup> and "good consciousness"<sup>353</sup> they bid well while boldly relaying the mistreatments they endured and continued to face while living in tents without drinking water six months after their eviction.<sup>354</sup> Because they found USCAR and GRI channels unsatisfactory and unassailable, the villagers beseeched an even higher power that they believed superseded governments and courts. They reasoned that if artificial regulations had reduced them to petty thieves, beggars, and convicted trespassers on lands that had been theirs, then surely they found reprieve in the Christian God and "the truth of the Bible," which taught them in Chapter Five of a Book of Jacob "that a person who acts against God's (truth) will perish after all."<sup>355</sup> In this way, the Maja-ku residents reversed the logic the US wished to impose, reminding the US of its imminent accountability and renaming the legal transactions guaranteeing their rights religious abominations, "inhuman" and "erroneous acts against the will of God" that

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<sup>350</sup> Representatives of Maja-ku Inhabitants of Ie-Shima, "Sign to United States House Military Land Investigation Team," 23 Oct. 1955, Land Files, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>351</sup> "Ie Poster at Naha Headquarters by all the sufferers of the damaged Ie-Shima," 11 Nov. 1955, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>352</sup> "Sign to United States House Military Land Investigation Team."

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>354</sup> "Ie Poster at Naha Headquarters by all the sufferers of the damaged Ie-Shima," "Sign to United States House Military Land Investigation Team."

<sup>355</sup> Chief, Maja-ku and the Ku People, "Petition to USCAR and GRI," Poster at Ie-Shima Headquarters, Naha, 30 Sep. 1955, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, 1. "Statement of Apology to Our Wise Friends, the Entire Inhabitants" also relates the crimes that the military had charged the Maja-ku islanders.

brought them misery.<sup>356</sup> At the same time they opened up discourse and resolutely refused the tools and answers the US readily provided to suture the chasms multiple meanings were then competing to fill. Tellingly, in the face of US claims that it had the legal right to lease the land, one man retorted to a guard that no government owned the land. He was met with silence, for this was not the reality the US military desired.<sup>357</sup>

### **“Getting Realistic”: Referents, Reason, and the Okinawan Subject**

In most secondary literature, the energies bursting from the protests I’ve documented in Part 2 are interpreted to be the groundwork for calls demanding that the US revert Okinawa to its natural jurisdiction under Japan. As this historiographic narrative goes, during their tour of the islands in late 1955, the US Price Commission callously disregarded the Okinawan perspective. A blatant refusal to accord the islanders equal rights and protections eliminated the US military means to defuse the popular anti-base sentiments that were quickly spreading. Bereft of channels, and because the villagers’ social order allegedly condensed, Okinawans realized who comprised the “colonized” and who wielded power as the “colonizers.” Prevailing literatures says that the Okinawan resistance movement radicalized accordingly. Okinawans unified further into a staunch opposition to the military, enshrining what had been loosely-based engagements into a budding nationalist imagination ordered around a common ethnic experience.<sup>358</sup>

My chapter thus far has upended some of the assumptions undergirding this narrative. I have hinted that anti-base sympathies were divided, for it was not the case that all Okinawans

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<sup>356</sup> Delegations, Maja-ku, Ie-Shima, Untitled and undated sign, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>357</sup> “Thanks to Land Delegations Dispatched to the United States,” New Signs put up by Ie-shima, Maja-ku people, 16 Jul. 1955, Land, 1955: Petitions, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>358</sup> Tanji, “The First Wave: Opposition to US Military Land Acquisition” in *Myth, Protest, and Struggle in Okinawa*.

agreed on the issues they took against military land acquisitions. Villagers sometimes clashed with their administrative superiors. Thus, although the military and the GRI viewed the anti-base actions through a narrow prism tying landowner discontent to inadequate compensation, this was but one objection, one definition of land worth and what was at stake. I have established that responses, too, did not conform to an overarching model. They were heterogeneous, adopting multiple forms and advocating for another reality that the military wished unthinkable. What I hope to illustrate more clearly in the following section, is that attempts to merge the voices of protest within a single cultural frame resulted in the construction of a knowable ethnic “Okinawan” subject. Although secondary literature has upheld the radicalness of this moment of ethnic legibility, I maintain that it in fact merely resolved the land crisis for the US military.

By spring of 1955, the series of actions residents in villages like Mawashi, Isahama, and Maja-ku initiated had pushed the land issue squarely onto the agenda of the GRI and the US Congress. As discontent escalated, key GRI officials, who previously might have desired a more restrained approach, began petitioning the US to reform their stance. Because they understood Okinawa in terms of its strategic value for policing the region, Congress accepted the challenge. They wanted to retain their prized holding. As such, they formed a special committee to investigate the issue. Through USCAR, they extended an invitation for a delegation of GRI representatives to visit Washington D.C. to share their approach to the Okinawa problem. Preparations for the impending visit ensued with the Ryukyu Land Delegation struggling to properly represent the unmanageable fury of their constituents and USCAR who now assumed responsibilities of tutoring the diplomatic mission on the art of Congressional testimony.

By the time the selected Ryukyu Land Delegation met with USCAR to discuss their impending testimony before Congress, the GRI contingent had formed several assumptions about

the land issue. Comprised of officials including Chief Executive Shuhei Higa, Hiroshi Senaga who then headed the GRI Economic Planning Board, Akio Nagamine an independent, Ginzo Shinzato of the conservative Ryukyu Democratic Party, Chojo Oyama of the leftist Ryukyu Socialist Masses Party, and the chairman of the Ryukyus Land Federation Choko Kuwae, the eclectic group intended to represent the full political spectrum of opinions in Okinawa.<sup>359</sup> Their work on solving the land problem had started several months earlier in February 1955 when the GRI Special Committee convened. Though this precursor to the Ryukyu Land Delegation had diligently visited Ie-jima after Shoko Ahagon alerted them to the violent seizures, the Committee also trained their energies on establishing acceptable reforms. Thus, they had already debated where households might find substitute lands or how to calculate adequate compensation, but never the legitimacy of the occupation itself. They sought to ensure that displaced landowners could slide into lifestyles equal to the one they had forfeited.<sup>360</sup> As such, the Okinawan delegation drafted the “Compensation Principles,” which the GRI Legislature adopted and the Ryukyu Land Delegation took up.<sup>361</sup> Unlike the protestors’ push for irreconcilable and impossible solutions, this vision demanded static, self-evident data that the US could reliably translate and incorporate into policies rationalizing the land acquisition process.

Though the Ryukyu Land Delegation ultimately aspired to cooperate with the US, they had not fully solidified both their collective stance and reasoning when they met with USCAR’s General Moore. General Moore convened the meeting to inquire about the specifics of the Okinawan petition and how much the GRI intended to ask from Congress in order to distribute

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<sup>359</sup> “Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 12 May 1955, 1530 Hours,” Memorandum of Conference, 17 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 1.

<sup>360</sup> “Summary of Legislative Special Land Committee, Meeting held from 1 PM,” 16 Mar. 1955, Land Issue Files, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. “Summary of the Special Committee for Military Used Land,” 19 Mar. 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>361</sup> “Summary of Special Committee for the Military Used Land,” 3 May 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

adequate rents for requisitioned land. He reminded the group that the GRI that their proposal must fall within the parameters of US constitutional restrictions limiting the executive and military power over national budget allocations. At that point, the group fell into disarray. Shuhei Higa explained that participants wished to begin by presenting “each individual opinion.”<sup>362</sup> Members followed, championing their respective rationales behind their plan for the Congressional hearing.

Several answers to what was at stake emerged from each delegate’s understanding of the Okinawan position from there. For Kuwae, while it was clear that he represented a general consensus opposing lump-sum offers, how the delegation might go about insuring that the land move into military hands was less apparent. He followed his initial remarks about landowners’ strong opposition to one lump-sum and the public’s interest in this matter with an ambivalent list of concerns that included the amount of payment and a disbursement policy. Because he did not think he could address either issue without first knowing the value of land, he returned to emphasize for USCAR his original point regarding the widespread disapproval among landowners of lump-sums. He explained that military efforts to reclassify their compensation as long-term leases had failed for Okinawa landowners continued to interpret one-time reimbursement as a purchase and permanent loss of land.<sup>363</sup>

At this point, Senaga interrupted with his own proposal. He, much like Kuwae, considered the aversion to lump-sums and the fact that it resembled direct procurement rather than long-term leases the basis of Okinawan discontent. Senaga disagreed, however, on pure economic terms. Because lump-sums piqued landowner anxieties over the permanent loss of land, Senaga declared that the amount paid “should be a rental value rather than the land

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<sup>362</sup> “Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 12 May 1955, 1530 Hours,” P. 1.

<sup>363</sup> “Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 12 May 1955, 1530 Hours,” P. 2.

value.”<sup>364</sup> To General Moore’s inquiry about whether 6% of the overall appraisal approximated rents on Okinawa, Senaga replied that it did not. Assuming the voice of all Okinawans, he projected that the “landowner’s idea [was] that each year’s value of the land [was] more like a capitalization than the lump-sum payment.”<sup>365</sup> In other words, how much landowners received from the military Senaga believed varied. Consequently, Senaga thought that “the desire of the public” was that the military conduct annual revaluations to fix standard rents.<sup>366</sup> In his breakdown, he held “the value itself...the important factor.”<sup>367</sup>

Yet, when General Moore probed what Okinawans felt was the value of their land, the group could not provide a uniform answer. USCAR’s translator Captain Harada interjected with exasperation that the Land Delegation “[didn’t] know the value.”<sup>368</sup> “They [didn’t] know the actual value of land,” Harada exclaimed, which only aggravated General Moore’s growing disbelief.<sup>369</sup> Incredulous, Moore asked the group, “Who does know? If the owner doesn’t know, who does know?” His question elicited a chorus of responses.<sup>370</sup> Kuwae maintained that only landowners knew the value of his land. Nagamine agreed with Kuwae, but could not explicate his reasoning because Shinzato chimed in. Shinzato himself confused the explanation Senaga had momentarily advanced. Where Senaga traced the disagreement to a numerical amount all landowners regarded their due, Shinzato once again divorced land value from any monetary calculations. He not only maintained that landowners knew the value of land but not its price, but that that no landowner quite knew what to make of the latter to General Moore’s dismay.<sup>371</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.*

Perhaps sensing the growing confusion, Senaga set about reasserting his view. Projecting his voice onto all Okinawans again, he began explicating “the lump sum payment that they have in their mind.”<sup>372</sup> From his perspective, people absolutely refused rents set at 6% of the overall value of land, but could accept amounts that the US adjusted from year to year to reflect increasing property values. Thus his calculations yielded payments that were theoretically sixteen and two-thirds times higher than USCAR’s current offers. Of course, he could not speak to whose estimations these were since Okinawan land committees were still working on extracting current land values, yet Senaga did not relent. He settled on \$8 million annually as the amount he hoped Congress could transfer to the GRI. He then wanted individual holders to receive proper compensation for allowing the military access to their lands through the Okinawan government. In all, Senaga’s quote exceeded the \$1 million Congress then allocated to solve the Okinawan problem by eight times.<sup>373</sup>

Although Senaga’s algebraic approach appealed to USCAR, his GRI colleagues quickly pointed out that his calculations were also only his alone. Before USCAR could take Senaga’s proposition as fact, Shuhei Higa clarified that “this [was] just Mr. Senaga’s and the GRI feeling.”<sup>374</sup> Neither the legislature nor Kuwae and the local land federations he represented had officially approved Senaga’s counting method. Kuwae himself corroborated Higa’s statements and added that if it were up to the local land federations, the figure they hoped to petition the US surpassed GRI estimates even. Though he slid easily between currencies, Kuwae estimated that Senaga and the GRI would have to reconcile their figures to the ¥60 million that local land groups alleged was their fair due.<sup>375</sup> Adding yet another perspective to the debate over how to fix

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<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*,3.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*

the price of land, Nagamine circled back to the controversial implications of one-time payouts. Echoing Kuwae's opening remarks, he laboriously spelled out that the outcry against lump-sums were overwhelming, that this opinion extended beyond any one faction, and that his duty as an elected legislator was to act as an official conduit of his constituents' feelings. He then alluded to petitions the villagers had registered with USCAR to hint that these objections were also why the present land delegation could not decisively speak to the monetary amounts all Okinawans supported. He requested, therefore, an extension of four or five days for his colleagues to iron out all the contradicting viewpoints that had surfaced during the current meeting.<sup>376</sup>

No closer to a consensus and now contending with a new request to prolong the negotiation, USCAR assumed a more authoritative voice. General Moore emphatically stressed that the land delegation did not have four or five days' time to enter their plea with Congress. Whether or not the federal government invited the group at all depended on the ability of the Okinawan officials themselves to vocalize a coherent or singular stance. As such, General Moore set about reorienting the various positions the parties presently articulated to US law and constitutional processes. In response to the conflicting opinions regarding lump-sums and the proper amount, he reminded the delegates that how landowners received payments was not actually at issue. The trip to Washington was merely to ascertain the aggregate sum Congress should have earmarked in its annual budget to reimburse the entire military occupation. While the US would transfer it to the GRI in one large amount, to disburse money in single or staggered payments was a question entirely for the Okinawan administration to adjudicate. When Nagamine floated again his theory that anxieties stemmed from the tendency to associate the termination of payments with the symbolic loss of land as well as a recommendation to multiply

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<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

current rents by 16.6 times for \$131 million, Moore finally instructed the group: “Let’s get realistic.”<sup>377</sup>

That Moore clarified this dispute steered the Okinawan representatives towards a stance USCAR found more intelligible. Their disagreements and what individual delegates desired narrowed, anchoring the grounds of objection to what Okinawans felt was a fair price for their land. Kuwae’s concerns about the type of ownership being implied when the military distributed single payments faded. So, too, did disputes distinguishing value and price and claims rendering value itself indeterminable disappear. The conversation drifted gradually towards appeals presuming land value—the missing variable—to be a number that USCAR and Okinawans could fix with sufficient study using basic guidelines. In an effort to correct Nagamine’s misfire, Chojo Oyama squarely tied landowner concerns to the prescribed values being too little, too far removed from the amount households were likely to receive before World War II when Okinawa was still under Japanese control. Saying that he was “quite sure that lump sum payment or purchase would be opposed by the people,” Oyama further insinuated that because “the value by lump-sum payment [was] cheaper,” the landowners “[didn’t] think it [was] enough.”<sup>378</sup>

Oyama’s portrayal of mass discontent as a matter over the inferior price per unit of land laid the groundwork on which the Okinawan group began building its unified position. It, for example, elicited the first answer on which the delegates all agreed. To Moore, who asked Oyama to name the pre-war price of land that landowners allegedly desired, the group responded that while they knew the rate to be five yen per tsubo, they found it inaccurate because the value of currency had shifted.<sup>379</sup> However, they unanimously assumed the public’s anger to be rooted

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<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

in low land values. Thus, the members began proposing substitute referents better suited to yield higher rents. Kuwae and Higa thought the current appraisals sufficient barring any change in the economic field.<sup>380</sup> Senaga cited an obscure Japanese law that temporarily reimbursed for emergency evictions.<sup>381</sup> Oyama identified US military policy regarding land acquisitions on mainland Japan.<sup>382</sup> Following a point Oyama had made earlier about annual payments for perpetuity generating greater incomes than one lump-sum, all wished to petition Congress every year for the moneys to lease land.<sup>383</sup>

Moore continued trimming. Exploiting the consensus that higher rents would settle the land crisis, he inquired further into the group's rationale. He asked, for example, how they expected Congress to appropriate enormous sums of money for eternity or why they rejected the first appraisal that USCAR had obtained through the Hypothec Bank of Japan even after they raised values twice.<sup>384</sup> When more delegates warmed to Senaga's theory that Okinawans had a particular way of counting derived from Japan, Moore outlined directly what he took as the reasoning behind Okinawan requests. "What they want the United States to do when they take over land of a person is to pay him the rental equal to the value of crops on that land from them until the rest of his life and his children's lives as long as the United States is here while the man sits in his house and does nothing. Is that right?" he asked.<sup>385</sup> Oyama urged Moore not to approach their perspective incredulously and Kuwae attempted to explain how the higher rents were necessary if the US expected evicted families to relocate smoothly.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

<sup>385</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7.

<sup>386</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

The two Okinawans' advice, however, identified a discrete issue that supposedly represented the ongoing uproar and a coherent logic that undergird this position. Though it might be averse to current US policy, the land delegates delivered a tangible explanation of the public furor. Their reasoning was something the US could grasp and potentially mitigate. To those ends, Moore asked for more directed clarifications such as the amount people needed for resettlement and what, exactly, the Okinawans did and did not want. Before the meeting adjourned, he tasked the delegation with furnishing a coherent stance that represented all Okinawans. "The discussions [were] over," he announced, and "one person will speak for everybody and everybody must agree and sing the same song to get [their way]." Should Okinawans want to negotiate, Moore maintained that this was simply "the way it [would] be."<sup>387</sup> In other words, to speak with "one voice" was coterminous with determining a standard value of land, and the homogenization of both views and values marked not only the emergence but also imposition of a mode of governance palatable to the US.<sup>388</sup>

Eager to resolve the land crisis, the Ryukyu Land Delegation delivered their position the following day. As General Moore noticed, the group was far less impermeable for they could now articulate what it was they desired, why they desired it, and the points where there was "a certain amount of flexibility."<sup>389</sup> They presented to USCAR a solid list of demands that "[deemed] annual rental in the amount of 7,938,000 US dollars to be fair compensation."<sup>390</sup> Though they were still united against lump-sums, it was a stance they took now only "in principle."<sup>391</sup> Not only were they "ready to reconsider the amount" they requested "depending

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<sup>387</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>388</sup> I thank Vicente Rafael for this succinct summary of my argument thus far.

<sup>389</sup> "Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 13 May 1955, 1030 Hours," 17 May 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives, P. 2.

<sup>390</sup> Attachment, "Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 13 May 1955, 1030 Hours," 17 May 1955, Land, 1955: Memorandum and Summaries, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*

upon circumstances in the course of negotiations,” they admitted that “particularly, there [was] no room for consideration of lump-sum payment in the amount of two or three billion yen” as Congress then proposed.<sup>392</sup> Further discussion revealed that any quibbling individual group members harbored against prospective propositions from the US arose around the prospective amount the US intended to pay. The group admitted that \$130 million could dissolve whatever reservations individual members had about the compensation’s designation as a single lump-sum.<sup>393</sup> The delegation stood united, convinced that money adequately compensated for land. They were poised to represent the Okinawan subject.

### **The Price Report: Fixing Value and Okinawan Backwardness**

In the months following the Ryukyu Land Delegation’s meetings with USCAR, the Special Subcommittee of the Armed Services in the US House of Representatives rushed to draft formal legislation to remedy the land disputes. They welcomed the Land Delegation to Washington D.C. in May 1955 to give testimony on behalf of the Ryukyu people, and from October 14 to November 23, 1955, the subcommittee toured the US bases on Okinawa themselves. Their diligent research allowed them to draft a set of recommendations that accommodated two opposing modes of US intervention. On the one hand was the *raison d’être* for US assertion of power on the global stage. As both President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Dulles respectively maintained, a communist threat existed, challenging US supremacy. For that reason, the US must “maintain indefinitely our bases in Okinawa” “so long

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<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>393</sup> Meeting with Ryukyuan Land Delegation – 13 May 1955, 1030 Hours,” P. 2.

as conditions of threat and tension exist in the Far East.”<sup>394</sup> They could not submit to Okinawan appeals for annual reappraisals because such a plan “merely [continued] unrest and dissension by reason of inability to agree as to the rental to be paid each time the property was revalued.”<sup>395</sup>

The US affinity with liberal universalism challenged its desire for military might. This gentler characteristic held that championing self-determined nationhood through economic development was necessary to stem the tide of successive decolonizations. The creation of USCAR and the GRI embodied this as well as the subcommittee’s assertion that “maximum autonomy [was] accorded the native government consistent with its capabilities and, as time [passed], progressively greater authority [was] being assigned.”<sup>396</sup> Regarding land acquisitions, while the resulting “Price Report” firmly advocated that the military compensate using lump-sums, it also recognized that “the US [had] certain responsibilities toward the Okinawans.”<sup>397</sup> If the US wanted their single payments to offset, once and for all, the wildly contentious military occupation for an indefinite duration, the subcommittee believed that US “responsibilities [arose] in the first instance from [the] tradition of fair play.”<sup>398</sup> Not unlike Otis Bell’s earlier criticism, the report reminded Congress that “this concept [found] its manifestation in matters relating to the acquisition of land in the payment of just compensation under the fifth amendment to our Constitution.”<sup>399</sup> Thus, in executing military imperatives, the Price subcommittee was also deeply concerned with instituting and protecting the rights of Okinawans.

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<sup>394</sup> Report of a Special Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, 8 Jan. 1956, Freimuth Collection, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Quote from John Dulles is on P. 7658. Quote from President Eisenhower is on P. 7663.

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, 7664.

<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*, 7653.

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, 7658

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*

Price Report authors did not wholly ignore Okinawan arguments for what constituted proper compensation. From the testimonies they gathered on their inspection tour, the subcommittee validated Bell's pleas; they found that Okinawans only disagreed over the method by which the US assigned values to land. Rather than lump-sum payments that allowed the military indefinite use, the subcommittee relayed that the Okinawan Plan "[proposed] instead a continuation of rental for so long as the lands are required by the US."<sup>400</sup> Not only did these yearly payments amount "in the magnitude of some seven times the current estimated rental value," the subcommittee reported that the Okinawans further wanted lump-sum reimbursements equivalent to five years the annual rate "to all displaced landowners as compensation for their loss of livelihood."<sup>401</sup> Should the US acquiesce to the Okinawan proposal, it faced paying every year \$8,263,178 in rent and \$14,368,104 in lump-sum hardship settlements for the 40,000 acres needed to sustain the military.<sup>402</sup>

In addition to considering the terms the Okinawans put forward, the Price Report further entered into their record the legal precedent for opposing challenges. As much as the Price authors regarded the Okinawan alternative "an extreme request" that "[transcended] any socialistic theory of compensation with which the members of this subcommittee [were] familiar," they nevertheless acknowledged the rationale undergirding the demand for special consideration.<sup>403</sup> Despite much wrangling, the Okinawan contingent's officially settled on Senaga's rationale. They cited an old Japanese law that accounted for the hardships a farmer deprived of his land encountered when substitute lands were unavailable. The law equated dispossession in land-poor contexts with the complete loss of one's livelihood, and so had

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<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*, 7656.

<sup>401</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, 7659.

offered rents that were 80% of a farmer's gross income.<sup>404</sup> Of course, as the commission pointed out, such a remedy was inapplicable since it "was enacted to meet temporary conditions...when it was probably not deemed necessary or desirable for owners to relocate elsewhere permanently."<sup>405</sup> Thus, if applied to the current military land problem, the Japanese law implied that Okinawans could "return and take back their lands when the US forces no longer needed them."<sup>406</sup> What was imperative to the fair resolution of the land issue, however, was that the US develop policy tailored to specific Okinawan conditions. In that respect, the report authors admitted that "our own Government [had] failed to compensate the Okinawans for the loss which he [had] suffered."<sup>407</sup>

Yet, the Price subcommittee traced the source of all discrepancies between the US and Okinawa to an idiosyncratic practice around which Okinawa mistakenly developed. Drawing from prevailing social scientific assumptions that traced alleged social deformities to endemic yet misdirected customs, the US investigators concluded that conditions in Okinawa closely aligned with those characteristic of a "traditional agricultural economy." Like other societies that fell within such a category, the authors inferred that "land [was] the most precious possession"<sup>408</sup> there. As a result, land was "rarely bought and sold, but rather [remained] in a single family for generations."<sup>409</sup> Because their statistics additionally showed that "a family of five [could] subsist on a holding of only eight-tenths of an acre,"<sup>410</sup> the committee further surmised that Okinawans had adapted this custom to their culture as it matured over time.

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<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*, 7656, 7659.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*, 7659.

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>408</sup> *Ibid.*, 7654.

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid.*, 7661.

<sup>410</sup> *Ibid.*, 7654.

That the habit of retaining land explained for US policymakers why Okinawa exhibited what they considered to be troubling deviations from the US norm. They determined, for example, that Okinawa was naturally prone to overcrowding because the phenomenon of hoarding land also occurred on a mere 80,000 of the total 290,000 acres the US deemed farmable. Thus, whereas in India the population density averaged 281 people per square mile, 178 in the Philippines, 123 in China, and 16 in Brazil, nearly 1,270 people lived in an area of the same size in Okinawa according to the report's authors.<sup>411</sup> Indeed, "to point up further the unusual importance of land to the age-old agricultural economy of Okinawa," they compared the islands to the US.<sup>412</sup> They projected that "should population conditions in the Ryukyus exist in the US," the country could sustain 2.75 billion people instead of the current 161.5 million.<sup>413</sup>

The Price authors further argued that the imbalanced population constituted a major obstacle to the islands' self-sufficiency. Citing Okinawa's history prior to the US takeover, they highlighted "the fact that the agrarian economy of the Ryukyu Islands, when under the jurisdiction of Japan, usually resulted in an annual net deficit and required subsidies in various forms from outside sources."<sup>414</sup> The report similarly pointed to the persistence of indebtedness during WWII and concluded that Japanese actions throughout that period merely "contributed to the economic difficulties."<sup>415</sup> They determined that, like Japan, "the taking of lands by the US from the present agrarian economy, in conjunction with the ever-increasing pressure of overpopulation, . . . merely accentuated the traditional deficiencies of the Ryukyuan agrarian economy."<sup>416</sup> Such a claim vindicated the US intervention for it displaced the cause of hardship

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<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*, 7654-7655.

<sup>413</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid.*, 7655.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid.*

from military occupation to an innate lack that naturally occurred when people stubbornly retained impractical conventions.

The committee members found even Okinawans themselves in agreement on this point. Recalling the testimonies of the native witnesses with whom they met during their travels, the commission alluded to troubling behaviors “the average Okinawan” displayed. Regardless of the amount, the Okinawans had testified that the benefits of a lump-sum payment were likely to escape recipients because they were “unable to utilize it properly” and were prone to “find himself in serious economic plight” from “having dissipated the funds received.”<sup>417</sup> “Unused to the handling of money,” these abstract “Okinawans” both signaled to the committee members a consequence of the islands’ underdevelopment and indicated a delinquent behavior military payments could potentially correct.<sup>418</sup>

Written from a perspective that was largely immune from the negative effects of military occupation, the authors of the Price Report presented their own version of the source of conflict regarding land acquisition. They returned to their original assumption that Okinawans only disagreed with the inadequate payments they received in return, and that such disputes were due to the absence of a real estate market for agricultural lands. Their investigations revealed that US District Engineers had used a standard appraisal procedure to arrive at their offer of \$20 lump-sum payments. Yet, as the recommenders readily admitted, this “technique” of extrapolating values from sales and rentals of comparable property only made sense in the US or “any area of the world where [there] was an active market in real estate.”<sup>419</sup> They pointed out that “in the Ryukyus there [had] never been an active market in agricultural lands” and reasoned

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<sup>417</sup> *Ibid.*, 7661.

<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*, 7661.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.*

accordingly.<sup>420</sup> Even if “what [was] being paid for comparable property in a free market [was] without doubt the truest test of its value,” the Price Report maintained that “comparable sales alone [did] not provide a suitable index to the valuation of agricultural lands in Okinawa and the other Ryukyus.”<sup>421</sup> For them, Okinawa constituted an exception to the rule.

On the basis of what it regarded as Okinawa’s cultural exceptionalism, the Price subcommittee recommended a reformed approach to compensation for military land acquisitions. Above all, the report recommended an “alternative” adjusted to Okinawan pleas for US recognition of the singular importance of farm output to a culture where agriculture comprised a centerpiece. Their deliberations yielded the decision that “certainly the present worth of the future benefits of the property [was], in Okinawa, uniquely a factor to be considered if the Okinawan landowner [was] to be fairly compensated for his property and the US [was] to discharge its overall obligations in Okinawa.”<sup>422</sup> Since “it [was] wholly unrealistic to use the comparable sales approach,” they reasoned that they needed to create another yardstick by which to measure land value.<sup>423</sup> They called instead for the US to “give predominate consideration to current agricultural productivity and income data relating to similar lands now in agricultural use in Okinawa.”<sup>424</sup>

For the “average Okinawan farmer” who did not know how to manage money, the report endorsed increased rates of interest. Hoping to avoid offering annual rentals, which would “merely continue unrest and dissension by reason of inability to agree...each time the property was revalued,” the commission turned to their delinquent Okinawan landowner for a

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<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>422</sup> *Ibid.*, 7664.

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.*

resolution.<sup>425</sup> They cited “the concern so often expressed by the Okinawan witnesses as to the adverse effect of paying a lump-sum to an Okinawan landowner” and offered in place of annual rent the highest possible interest for lands that the US would occupy “for the indefinite future.”<sup>426</sup> To generate their desired rates, the subcommittee additionally requested that both methods of calculations and the laws governing appraisals be amended to accommodate the Okinawan situation. “This,” the report declared, “[represented] the only way in which a landowner can receive an amount of money truly adequate to make him whole, and sufficient for him to move to another area—perhaps another Ryukyuan island—to support himself while adjusting to another method of earning his livelihood, or to emigrate to other countries in continuation of the program which was initiated several years ago.”<sup>427</sup>

The report also urged Congress to renew commitments to the islands’ thorough development alongside the decision to better subsidize dispossessed farmers. To those ends, the commission advised the military to maximize the areas within bases where farming could continue and to use its equipment to help clear lands and build structures for relocated households. They identified a class of absentee landlords who allegedly presided over nearly 19,000 to 27,000 acres that were currently “lying fallow.”<sup>428</sup> Despite the reasons “advanced by the Okinawans as to why these lands [were] not being cultivated,” the US group found none that appeared “of sufficient validity as to permit them to remain uncultivated.”<sup>429</sup> Because the committee thought the owners of these holdings had “other means of livelihood, richer farmlands elsewhere, or...[were] employed by the military or private industries,” they convinced the GRI

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<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.*, 7664.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, 7665.

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid.*

to enact incentives for the lands' sale.<sup>430</sup> The GRI subsequently established a government agency to acquire unused arable lands. The agency then made improvements to basic amenities like water accessibility. This was the "prompt and aggressive action" facilitating land transactions.<sup>431</sup>

The goal here was to address the lack of real estate markets that the US diagnosed as the fundamental obstacle prohibiting not only Okinawan self-sufficiency but also a resolution to the military land issue. Regarding the "aggressive" GRI program, it hastened the growth of a sufficient market for agricultural real estate.<sup>432</sup> But, particularly in regards to US requisitions, the Price commission further considered development crucial because it prompted Okinawans to see the value of their land in monetary amounts. Indeed, the US realized that their generous concessions for revised land evaluation techniques and increased interest rates could only temper the numerous land protests if Okinawans, when dispossessed, saw the numerical terms the US offered in return as equal substitutes for their original loss. Should Okinawans fail to recognize the substitute amounts as fair, the subcommittee feared prolonging the discontent with US policies that both destabilized the US administration and gave "a ready political issue for a small and vociferous minority" that possibly stemmed from "communistic agitation."<sup>433</sup> The subcommittee believed that to promote extensive development across the Okinawan territories would raise property values across the board thereby closing the gap between their preferred numbers based on the free market and those put in place to accommodate Okinawa's special deficiencies.

Here the space protestors wrenched open to allow the numerous voices, complaints, and rationales perplexing US and Okinawa officials to proliferate contracted. In their desire to enact

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<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.*, 7667.

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*, 7660.

a decisive resolution to the land issue, both sides set about pouring the heterogeneous discussions and actions into a unified subject grounded firmly in the belief that there existed a group of people whose ethnicity rendered them categorically “Other.” The amendments the US made in the Price recommendations accounted for such calcified differences, accommodating claims about the special place land ownership held in traditional Okinawan culture and the distinct methods Okinawans historically employed to calculate land value. Despite their reservations about US policies, the GRI agreed that land value was best monetized, agricultural lands improved through development, and eventually sold to foster healthy real estate transactions that could legitimize military bids extracted from abstract exchanges in a free market. Contestations and new meanings that once multiplied to call into question the assumptions on which US plans hinged—indeed, what the military had feared—found resolution.

## Chapter Five

### The (Im)possibilities of Protest: Agricultural Diversification and Radical Resistance in Militarized Miyako

#### Introduction

The impossible happened on July 24, 1965. Away from the main island of Okinawa, where heated actions opposing the US military presence plagued the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyus (USCAR), a riot broke out on the sleepy, sugar-producing island of Miyako. A meeting for stockholders of the Miyako Seito (Miyako Sugar Company) had convened that day to approve a merger with two smaller mills operating on Irabu and Tarama, neighboring islands USCAR grouped with Miyako in one administrative unit. Their mission was to implement recommendations USCAR and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) drafted to rationalize a sugar industry bolstered by cumbersome government subsidies.<sup>434</sup>

As attendees arrived at the local Ryuai Theater, a throng of angry protestors, who had spent the night anticipating the meeting, greeted them. The waiting group, mixed with leaders from local unions, pushed into the factory officials demanding that they cancel the scheduled meeting or altogether nullify the entire merger. They pressed further when the meeting participants attempted to leave, crowding the mill owners into the theater. Keigi Makiya, president of the Miyako mill, frantically called for police protection but to no avail. A growing crowd welcomed the officers, corralling them into the theater with fervent shoving and frequent

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<sup>434</sup> DA to ODCSOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate, 24 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Memo for Deputy Civil Administrator re: Rioting in Hirara City, Miyako, 26 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

showers of (debris) empty liquor bottles, stones, bricks, and tiles torn from the roofs of surrounding buildings. Barricading the exits with oil drums and other debris, the “mob” pelted the police with stones whenever one attempted escape. Only when USCAR airlifted 75 riot police from Naha to arrest 26 protestors was calm restored.<sup>435</sup>

This riot on Miyako forces several questions challenging prevailing assumptions about radical resistance. It illuminates, for example, the limits to orthodox Marxist theories positing an inevitable link between political protest and the material base. Proponents of this Marxist variant say that radical consciousness develops only when the underlying economic institutions permit. Because these theorists further believe that foundations mature uniformly regardless of context, they presuppose a model predicting the forms political protests take and, by extension, what constitutes legitimate resistance. Among scholars of Okinawa, the tendency is to idealize the Occupation Era, during which they believe lines between colonizers and colonized clarified allowing people from disparate socioeconomic positions to unite as a common ethnic subject.<sup>436</sup> This chapter, however, demonstrates that even under US rule, Okinawans were not a united group and yet mobilizations occurred nonetheless. It further shows how the very Marxist teleology in fact overlapped with US military logics in significant ways. The chapter, therefore, demonstrates how resistance can fail, how protestors broke up existing rationales undergirding prevailing plans for development and surveillance. The chapter further shows that in moments of intense politicization, people put forward something new. In Miyako, farmers asserted “politics” where it had not before existed.

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<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>436</sup> Masamichi S. Inoue, *Okinawa and the U.S. Military: Identity Making in the Age of Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

## **Agricultural Reform and the Absence of Politics on Miyako**

By 1965, the twenty-year-old US occupation government was at a crossroads. Although US authorities considered their rule of Okinawa fair and benevolent, the reforms they instituted and efforts to negotiate with the GRI failed to pacify the growing numbers of disgruntled Okinawans. Not only did mobilizations against land acquisitions continue even after the US allocated ample resources to appease evicted families, the ranks who supported parties and causes the US identified with the radical left grew. No single meaning of anti-colonialism dominated. Instead, the meanings and movements associated with the opposition multiplied, subverting US attempts to create a unified ethnic subject it could easily address and control. In this context, acting chief W.D. Stout of the USCAR Liaison Office introduced plans to capitalize on efforts among Okinawan conservatives to establish a united, anti-radical front. His memo to the USCAR High Commissioner Donald P. Booth entitled “Two-Party System in Okinawa?” reiterated the importance of political parties to maintaining the US presence and theorized means to establish such institutions. Importantly, he identified an “orbit” not structured by radical elements like the Okinawan People’s Party and Minren, an organization of united progressive, as “one of the most important factors on which a stable and responsible Ryukyuan political community must be based.”<sup>437</sup>

In order to foster the political culture USCAR desired, Stout extracted a solution from the textbook models academic social scientists endorsed. He explained that “in all countries,” parties “[included] in their organization many pressure groups.” Established “for the purpose of influencing public policy,” these units Stout said bridged the gap between everyday people and their government. They translated abstract ideas into concrete, realizable solutions, and so he

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<sup>437</sup> Memo for the Civil Administrator re: Two-Party System in Okinawa?, 13 Aug. 1959, Box 104, Folder 4, The Liaison Department, Political, 1958, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

argued that when the overall political structure functioned properly, the two collectivities collaborated. Parties drew from “the programs and policies of pressure groups to bolster their candidates, and the pressure groups [hoped] to realize from the success of a party’s candidate the translation of their views into policy.” Accordingly, he reasoned that even if the sole “raison d’etre” of parties was “the placement of its key members in public office,” any valid political organization “could not divorce itself from issues and policies” without also alienating itself from grassroots concerns. The situation in Okinawa, however, Stout deduced was starkly different.<sup>438</sup>

Where Okinawa departed from the norm was that across the political spectrum, Stout found no adequate political philosophy to exist. For Stout, only the inability of islanders to grasp ideology explained why no unified conservative party materialized. He pointed as proof to the factionalism that ensued in 1956 after the death of Chief Executive Shuhei Higa, USCAR’s long-time mediator to the rowdy Okinawan public. From his conservative followers, three main cliques emerged—the Ryukyu Democratic Party (RDP), the Shinsei Kai (New Political Club), and the “Thoma Faction” comprised of GRI appointments and businessmen—and none, Stout held, resembled the “single, strong conservative party” the US wanted. Although he deemed the RDP the closest to a “formal political party,” Stout stressed how the latter two were simply “groups of persons already chosen for public office who did not seek office under the group’s banner.” They all seemingly “[grew] up around personalities rather than around political principles,” Stout marveled, and accordingly represented “no real conservative political philosophy...other than support, in varying degrees, of a rather vague policy of cooperation with US authorities.”<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>438</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

That the absence of political ideology did not result in the utter dissolution of the political situation in Okinawa was due, Stout believed, to the inability of the left for abstract thought. Just as the conservative position rallied in support of US policies and goals, he exasperated by the left, nothing “about all there [was] to identify [the left’s position was] its recalcitrance toward or reluctant cooperation with the US.”<sup>440</sup> His example was the “anti-Americanism” of the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party (OSMP). Although he himself did not classify the OSMP as “‘anti-American’ in the strictest sense of the term,” he warned that its membership had drifted steadily to more radical positions like opposing the use and storage of hydrogen and atomic bombs. The reason, Stout surmised, was because constituents simply had no point of reference to anchor their political beliefs. Thus, when forced to compete with an Okinawa People’s Party (OPP) that won votes by proudly broadcasting anti-imperial and anti-base manifestos, Stout found it “almost inevitable” that the OSMP “adopt progressively more of the standard left-wing slogans.”<sup>441</sup> Against concrete evidence that parties existed and chaotic outcries objecting to the US presence proliferated, Stout reduced opposition to the US like that which the OSMP represented to “incessant harping” used as mere strategy to remain relevant. The truth according to Stout was that the “so-called liberal philosophy [was] equally sterile.”<sup>442</sup>

To explain why the popularity of the Okinawan left grew despite the general inability of islanders to grasp political ideology, Stout returned to what he and his USCAR colleagues took as fact. Stout declared, once again, that Okinawa was a “poor and relatively primitive society,” which led him to reason that, like other supposedly undeveloped places, the people there were naturally restless with the “status quo.” He conjectured that Okinawan frustrations translated to

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<sup>440</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 3.

an “inherent strength” for the OSMP because it allowed members to position themselves as “the ‘anti’ group.” For Stout, leftist agendas like reversion to Japan, popular election of the GRI Chief Executive, and “virtually all issues that appear on the surface to reflect the needs of the common people” had “psychological appeal.” They capitalized on a population restive but bereft of satisfactory models to interpret their frustrations. Furthermore, since he already deemed people living in unevolved societies attracted to charismatic individuals rather than ideology, Stout indicated that the OSMP was staffed with “genuinely popular personalities.” The islands’ backwardness, therefore, made “the sincerity of the party leaders and the realism of their demands...immaterial.” The OSMP, Stout warned, was “a dynamic political party in the real, functional sense.”<sup>443</sup>

Indeed, Stout went on to show how the strictures a primitive society imposed similarly undermined the hopes USCAR pinned on the emergence of a united, conservative front. From his observations, he held that USCAR’s naïve and uninspired friends in Okinawa displayed “a tendency...to adopt an attitude of ‘me-tooism’” not unlike the OSMP counterparts who mindlessly aped the OPP. Unmoored from an ideological framework to govern their thoughts, they were content to follow, rather than challenge, the leftist thrust. As a result, Stout foresaw in Okinawa a troubling disintegration, a “danger that the ‘conservatives,’ who [were] conservative only by virtue of their basically pro-American attitude, could, in a mad rush for popularity, move toward the position now held by OSMP should the latter move further left.” Until the US reversed “an apparent inability to create popular issues” among its strongest Okinawan allies, Stout felt that this threat to US legitimacy would always linger.<sup>444</sup>

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<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

Stout proposed a way to deal with this threat: that USCAR introduce the terms “communism” and “anti-communism” into the local lexicon. Since he declared Okinawans unable to grasp abstract theory to begin with, he also found that “to date Communism as such [had] never been a political issue in the Ryukyus.” Whom USCAR classified as a leftist or conservative revolved around the attitudes each took with respect to the American occupation. The US, therefore, remained the fulcrum around which Okinawans, in their early stage of intellectual development, interpolated their impatience. That they then misdirected the anger they felt about their own backwardness towards their US benefactors led Stout to a second assertion. He felt Okinawans conflated countries that “[represented] a doctrine...[constituting] a threat to the Ryukyans themselves” with ordinary “rivals of the United States.” That is, rather than true enemies like China, North Korea, and the Soviet Union, the islanders “[equated] US administrative control...with pure imperialism.” Stout therefore believed that to introduce a formal definition of what “communism” actually was would help Okinawans “understand the threat of Communism and identify themselves with the defense against it.” “If this [was] understood,” he wholly trusted that “the US position on Okinawa [could] be explained logically.”<sup>445</sup>

Because Stout had linked Okinawa’s alleged lack of political ideology to the backwardness of Okinawa society, it then followed that implementing policies intending to improve the standard of living across the island also raised the public’s social consciousness. Having classified Okinawan culture as that of a “traditional agricultural society,” USCAR sought particularly to correct farm and food production. Military officials hoped to make an agricultural industry they deemed underdeveloped profitable so that Okinawans could retain their cultural

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<sup>445</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

identity while becoming self-sufficient economically as well as politically. The prevailing social scientific paradigms furnished by US academics sanctioned this rationale, and so USCAR consulted with agricultural experts to develop appropriate reforms and best practices.<sup>446</sup> They focused on sugar since military officials from the start of the Occupation found the crop most primed to stimulate Okinawa's sluggish industrialization. For Miyako, which US officials thought not only less industrial than mainland Okinawa but also a "one-crop economy," agricultural experts proposed an ambitious program to diversify the types of farm products.<sup>447</sup>

USCAR determined the yields Miyako farmers should cultivate alongside sugar on the basis of its projected profitability. Planting crops like sweet potatoes, rice, wheat, soybeans, adzuki beans, and raising horses, US experts resolved, were an inefficient use of time and space. Mainly grown for home consumption, susceptible to disease, and ill-equipped to withstand Miyako's volatile climate, US officials blamed these "traditional" products for driving the island into a perennial food deficit, which allegedly also fostered a "negative attitude" among the populace. Like the political leftists and conservatives in Stout's account, experts agreed that Miyako farmers unfairly relied on the US and asked too quickly for US-backed government handouts. For example, they petitioned USCAR's High Commissioner and the GRI "annually...for reliefs attributed to typhoons, droughts and recently *even* poor fish catches" (emphasis in original) while "[purchasing] luxury goods [and paying] off previous years' debts, without regard for savings for future requirements."<sup>448</sup> If farmers raised white potatoes, dry

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<sup>446</sup> David C. Engerman et al., eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000). Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

<sup>447</sup> Proposed Cash and Food Crop Production in Miyako Gunto, 18 Sep. 1961, Box 275, Folder 12, The Economic Department, Miyako Gunto, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

onions, tobacco, watermelon, and beef instead of sweet potatoes, rice, wheat, soybeans, adzuki beans, and horses, US investigators trusted that Miyako's farm economy could be relieved.<sup>449</sup>

Yet in their explanations for why white potatoes and beef were more appropriate crops than sweet potatoes, rice, and horses, US investigators presumed that all societies must intrinsically have captive markets to absorb the crops being produced. In other words, they accepted exchanges between abstract buyers and sellers as the universal standard they needed to replicate in Miyako if they were to right the gunto's deficiencies. To these ends, the researchers identified US armed forces as those best primed to consume the surpluses they expected farmers to generate. They additionally stressed how Miyako islanders imprudently left the expectant military markets untapped. These claims naturalized the presence of both markets and US troops, which led scientists to conclude that growers produced below their desired thresholds even after they raised the crops the US consumers preferred. They griped that "altho [sic] a large market for dry onions, white potatoes and watermelons [existed] for sale to the US Forces Okinawa and Korea requirements and the Naha market[,] the end result was negligible." Where they anticipated growth, they discovered instead that "US Forces requirements of watermelons [had] been curtailed from 110,000 pounds to 20,000 pounds per month as Ryukyuan growers [were] unable to meet the Military demands" and that "present Ryukyu production" of white potatoes "[could] only meet one month's requirement of the military during the growing season."<sup>450</sup>

US officials further assumed that all land should generate surplus values. As such, they construed "profitability" in purely numerical terms. They inferred that dry onions could net at least three cents per kin in Hirara City and learned as well that the 1960 tobacco crop brought in

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<sup>449</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-5.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

\$36,217 for 477 farm families.<sup>451</sup> Using the amounts they believed farmers earned on these “cash crops,” US researchers extrapolated the monetary amounts a discrete unit of space could be expected to return. They predicted that sugar yields would increase by 30% to 7,500 kilograms per quarter area on Miyako island, that a three-month crop of white potatoes “[would] easily net \$100 per quarter acre,” and that “grazing capacity” on Irabu island stood to expand from “one to three cattle per hectare per year.”<sup>452</sup> They also observed that places operating below capacity delivered less than the ideal quantities the scientists themselves fantasized were possible. As a result, they suggested that islanders reduce the amount of land reserved for sweet potatoes since the “Witches Broom” disease rampantly inflicted the 0.2 hectares where the crop grew on farms that already averaged a mere 0.98 hectares.<sup>453</sup>

Fulfilling the military scientists’ visions of a social space composed of abstract markets and legible through numerical signs were, of course, Miyako islanders who behaved in ways US military scientists thought befitting of evolved individuals. In one instance, US agriculturalists reasoned that if Miyako women acted as proper “housewives” by learning how to prepare white potato as a main dish to replace rice and sweet potato, islanders would be more open to growing the more profitable crop.<sup>454</sup> In another, military experts maintained that sugar mills could operate at full capacity in islands like Irabu and Ikema if islanders observed the ideal sexual division of labor rather than allowing women to farm while men fished.<sup>455</sup> They further held that if their male farmers fertilized, cultivated, harvested, stored, culled, graded, packed, and marketed in ways the US declared acceptable, farm yields could reach the goals the US

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<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.* 3.

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.* 3, 6.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.* 5.

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.* 1-2.

themselves had also derived. Officials went on to list a string of failures that they felt diminished the islanders' ability to satisfy military market demands they maintained were correct and irrefutable: a "lack of knowledge by farmers in growing specialized crops"; "disinterest shown by governmental leaders, chiefs of cooperatives, and leading citizens of Miyako"; "lack of publicity and promotion of new crops by governmental and private agencies"; and the propensity among growers for "uneconomical production in small [lots]."<sup>456</sup> What farmers and islanders more generally were and were not doing to fulfill their static view of Miyako social space preoccupied the military, and against these compartmentalized spaces and behaviors, farmers revolted.

### **July 24, 1965 and the (Im)possibilities of Protest**

By all objective measures, a riot in Miyako should not have taken place on July 24, 1965. None of the indicators US military officials and scientists observed to measure Miyako's politicization predicted it. In their intensified efforts to teach Okinawans what "communism" was and to promote islanders' identification with the Democratic Party, military observers found Miyakoans the least politically inclined of all. A brief MCAT commissioned to describe people inhabiting the outlying southern guntos of Miyako and Yaeyama confirmed this. The authors likened voting habits to that of other rural areas in Okinawa where, as Stout suggested, local municipal and village preferences for candidates trumped broader political party affiliations. Individual loyalties also jeopardized incumbent leaders who supported the wrong candidate. As they believed, "electioneering in these remote areas, which lack the bright lights of Okinawa, [had] traditionally been a source of community entertainment...[and had] also been able to grow

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<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

into highly emotionalized affairs with violence, vote-buying and community ostracism a somewhat common place activity.”<sup>457</sup>

The MCAT report further maintained that Miyakoans were even less developed than their peers on the Okinawan mainland. These isolated outposts to the south historically enjoyed less material benefits than its northern neighbor, were the destination for exiled political dissidents and criminals, and magically yielded “Okinawans” that were two inches shorter than the average type. Though people’s political commitments were decidedly provincial, the MCAT statement also noticed that Miyakoans largely sided with the US. Because the US bestowed the island generous development that improved the standards of living and leveled economic disparities between Miyako and Okinawa, MCAT analysts accordingly reported that people on the outer islands were friendlier to their American “liberators.” The US-allied Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party (OLDP) reigned in the south while the more radical OPP and OSMP never managed to run a single candidate for the GRI legislature despite making slight inroads among the farmers. Even the recent 1962 legislative election was a resounding success from USCAR’s perspective. Deft maneuvering by the OLDP unseated surefire OSMP candidates, prompting the MCAT brief writers to toy with investing significant US money to manipulate future elections.<sup>458</sup>

The view from local papers in Okinawa like *The Ryukyu Shimpō* and *The Okinawa Times* affirmed the USCAR position towards Miyako. Although the US military advocated the quick resumption of the papers’ circulation after the war to revitalize cultural life in Okinawa, they intended this act of benevolence to mitigate the growing disruptions accompanying intensified

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<sup>457</sup> Miyako and Yaeyama Politics, 1 Sep. 1964, Box 32, Folder 2, The Liaison Department, Miyako, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

Cold War preparations. Just as newspapers helped cultivate nationalist identity in earlier periods, the US military hoped the circulation of local dailies would craft a public sphere fostering an ethnic consciousness to their liking.<sup>459</sup> Screened for content, each issue of *The Ryukyu Shimpo* and *The Okinawa Times* uniformly reported stories the US considered befitting of Okinawans. Often news centered on events affecting the main island of Okinawa where political and economic power was concentrated, international developments that encouraged fluency in state diplomacy like the US war in Vietnam, or relations with Japan particularly once the US began preparing for Okinawa's reversion. Objections to US military policy, too, were carefully manufactured with reporting of the US presence allowed but the opinions USCAR deemed seditious censored.<sup>460</sup> What happened on the outer island was confined to Miyako's own paper, *The Miyako Daily News*, which itself replicated the headlines of *The Ryukyu Shimpo* and *Okinawa Times* in half of its daily content. Miyako, then, rarely registered in the Okinawa public sphere and how people on Miyako felt about the US occupation or the many opposition movements was assumed to mirror their mainland counterparts.

This authoritative version of Miyako military experts and local newspapers popularized and accepted fell apart with the riot's outbreak. Both the *Shimpo* and *Times* set aside their normal storylines about Okinawa's impending re-integration with Japan to cover Miyako's unexpected turn of events. From the front page of their July 25<sup>th</sup> issues, the *Shimpo* declared that "three thousand farmers [collided] with police," resulting in "stone throwing, successive injuries,

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<sup>459</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, Revised Edition*, Revised edition (London ; New York: Verso, 2006). On early policy of cultural rehabilitation of postwar Okinawa, see: Arnold Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands 1945-1950*, First edition (Center of Military History, 1988).

<sup>460</sup> The dismantling of the *Uruma Shimpo*, which radical and OPP leader Kamejiro Senaga edited is an example of USCAR censorship of discourse that drifted too far to the left.

and twenty eight farmers [being] arrested.”<sup>461</sup> The *Times* announced that the mill merger problem had escalated such that a “bloody turmoil” “finally” broke.<sup>462</sup> Whereas news from the outer islands rarely reached the major outlets representing the Okinawan perspective, both newspapers attentively relayed the Miyako farmers’ loss of temper, eruption of discontent, emergency dispatch of police, brandishing of anti-riot weapons, and the uneasy peace that fell over the Miyako police station where protestors convened an impromptu vigil for their arrested comrades. That Miyako islanders opposed and were mobilized against USCAR and GRI policy suddenly asserted itself into the Okinawan consciousness where it had not existed before.<sup>463</sup>

In addition to inserting the possibility of protest into discussions about Miyako, the action itself exposed uncomfortable truths undergirding the US occupation. For one, the Miyako islanders demonstrated the inability of military frameworks grounded in economic determinism to predict the emergence of political expression and its possible forms. Military studies linked the fleeting outbursts of violence on Miyako to the excitement of local elections, but the action turned disorderly without any villages or municipal votes scheduled. The event, therefore, resisted USCAR attempts to impose frameworks that limited political expression to activities at the ballot box and within traditional party politics. Rather than politicians up for re-election, protestors targeted Keigi Makiya, President of the Miyako Sugar Company, his fellow stockholders, and local banks whose loaning practices forced the industry rationalization. By doing so, they drew attention to a fundamental contradiction of US Occupation that USCAR policies tried desperately to obscure. That is, despite being touted as the only path to Okinawan

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<sup>461</sup> “Three Thousand Farmers Collide with Police (農民3千人警官隊と衝突),” *Ryukyu Shimpo*, Jul. 25 1965.

<sup>462</sup> “The Miyako Sugar Mill Merger Problem: Finally, The Bloody Turmoil (宮古製糖合併問題：ついに流血の騒ぎ),” *Okinawa Times*, Jul. 25 1965.

<sup>463</sup> “‘The Sugar Mill Merger,’ Focus on the Political Situation (「製糖合併」政局の焦点に),” *Ryukyu Shimpo*, Jul. 26 1965. The byline of this article reads: “Opposition party gaining on the government. Each party shocked at the farmer rebellion (野党、政府追及へ、各派農民騒動のショック).”

autonomy, development of “the economy” was unnatural, undesired, and undemocratic in its implementation.<sup>464</sup>

The politics on display that day, too, took forms that USCAR officials found disconcerting. Although the occurrence was dubbed a “riot” to accentuate the unruliness and perceived unfoundedness of the protestors’ claims, early statements from the USCAR Deputy Administrator and Harriman Simmons, Director of Public Safety Department, could not help but remark anxiously on the protestors’ organization and level of political commitment. The Deputy Administrator alluded to likely alliances with radicals from the Okinawa mainland, which resulted perhaps in a group picketing the GRI Executive Mansion in Naha the preceding evening.<sup>465</sup> Simmons’s own reconnaissance returned four main “responsible parties”: the OPP-affiliated Miyako chapter of the All Okinawa Farmers Union (Zenokino), Shi-Cho-Son councils, agricultural cooperatives, and speakers association. He further described how the protestors that day knew not only when and where to ambush arriving stockholders but also to follow captured protestors to the police station.<sup>466</sup>

As USCAR administrators unearthed more details, they quickly realized that the July 24<sup>th</sup> action was no aberration. The same political configuration seemed to have surfaced a month earlier on June 25<sup>th</sup>. A group then had similarly startled plant officials attending a general meeting of the Miyako Sugar Seito to push the same objective. They wanted to halt the impending mill mergers, and like the July 24<sup>th</sup> encounter, they held Makiya prisoner until police, once again, rescued the hapless president.<sup>467</sup> Factory leaders had postponed the decisive

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<sup>464</sup> Articles in the local newspapers also reference the protestors’ critique that the reforms are unilateral. See: “The Turn to Rioting. The Background to the Merger Opposition. Anger at the forced integration. Unilateral government recommendations (暴動化した「合併阻止」の背景：強制統合への怒り、一方的な政府勧告),” *Okinawa Times*, Jul. 25 1965.

<sup>465</sup> DA to ODCSOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate, 24 Jul. 1965.

<sup>466</sup> Memo for Deputy Civil Administrator re: Rioting in Hirara City, Miyako, 26 Jul. 1965.

<sup>467</sup> *Ibid.*

assembly hoping to dissipate the mounting passions. The GRI, too, “dispatched 30 police as reinforcements” the day before the July meeting since they “anticipated trouble over the merger problem after the 25 June general meeting.”<sup>468</sup> To the military’s dismay, the July 24<sup>th</sup> event appeared to have a precedent, methods, and structures that USCAR and GRI developmental programs said could not have existed.

In fact, evidence from *The Miyako Daily News* shows that groups, organizations, and leadership questioned the merits of the sugar merger at length, belying the apolitical exterior that USCAR alleged was Miyako’s trait. Beginning before July 24<sup>th</sup> and proceeding long after *The Ryukyu Shimpo* and *Okinawa Times* resumed their normal coverage of developments affecting the Okinawan mainland, *The Miyako Daily News* assiduously reported on the merger debate in its local storylines. They published the stockholders’ original propositions as well as the opposition’s refutations of the mill’s plan.<sup>469</sup> They also announced actions that the anti-merger alliance held in preparation for the stockholder meeting, a citizen’s rally at Hirara Middle School and the departure of a group that was to sit-in at the GRI Chief Executive’s residence in Naha.<sup>470</sup> Once the uproar quieted, arguments against the sugar rationalization continued appearing in the newspaper. A representative of the labor union working in the Irabu sugar mill issued a statement, and the director of the Hirara city agricultural cooperative, too, declared a “dark forecast for sugar operations” in the upcoming fiscal year.<sup>471</sup> If the July 24<sup>th</sup> action represented

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<sup>468</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>469</sup> “The Resolution of the Merger. Stockholders set to meet at Miyako Sugar Factory on the 24<sup>th</sup> (合併の本決議、宮糖 2 4 日に株主総会),” *Miyako Daily News*, Jul. 16, 1965. “‘The Merger’s Pros and Cons,’ Four Organizations Exchange Opinions. Additionally examine the government policies towards the sugar industry (「合併の是非」四団体が意見交わす。政府の糖業政策も検討),” *Miyako Daily News*, Jul. 18, 1965.

<sup>470</sup> “Citizen Rally to Oppose Merger. Today on the campus of Hirara Middle School (合併反対郡民大会、きょう平良中校庭),” *Miyako Daily News*, July 21, 1965. Caption within article reads, “Group to negotiate with the government departs yesterday (政府折衝団はきのう発つ).”

<sup>471</sup> Irabu Sugar Mill Staff Labor Union (伊良部製糖職員労働組合), “Statement (声明),” *Miyako Daily News*, Aug. 1, 1965. “A Dark Forecast for Sugar Operations (見通し暗い砂糖操業),” *Miyako Daily News*, Aug. 28, 1965.

anything anomalous, it was not that the protest serendipitously occurred against the presumed behavioral norm, but that participants furiously overrode the pre-existing political networks that ushered them to the Ryuai Theater where they confronted startled stockholders.

The novelty of how protestors unraveled existing military categories governing thought and behavior was not a fact lost to USCAR officials. Both Simmons and the Deputy Administrator remarked on how protestors' actions exceeded the propriety expected of good citizens. Their statements noted that when participants pressed for demands, they did so not as individuals USCAR and the GRI registered and recognized as legitimate political voices but as an undifferentiated mass that rapidly reconstituted itself again and again. They described how the opposition quickly grew into a diffuse conglomeration that blurred distinctions between supporters who were active and those who simply observed. What had started as "local opposition by farmers," alleged the Deputy Administrator, "resulted in crowd demonstrations by approximately six hundred dissident farmers augmented by leftists from Okinawa, and as many non-participating on-lookers."<sup>472</sup> Simmons, too, shifted repeatedly the signifiers he used to designate the congregants. In name and number, the Miyako protest morphed from "union members," to "farmers" to "mob" and from the original 600, to 1,500, and finally in the thousands.<sup>473</sup> Not only did the opposition outstrip the expectation that local police held regarding their probable conduct when taking preventative measures, Simmons posited a direct correlation between the intensity of behavior and the amount of alcohol the farmers allegedly imbibed. He surmised that people were "under the influence of liquor by [the] time" the protest

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<sup>472</sup> DA to ODCSOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate.

<sup>473</sup> Memo for Deputy Civil Administrator re: Rioting in Hirara City, Miyako.

turned its attention from confronting the irresponsible officials to the sacking of surrounding property.<sup>474</sup>

This indeterminate and heterogenous unity responding with great volatility to the impromptu circumstances also communicated their demands viscerally. Protestors “surrounded” and “restrained” mill officials, pushing them into their meeting spot at the Ryuai Theater. They confined the local officers who came to the factory owners’ aid as well. Simmons said that “the police attempted to break out of the building but were barricaded with oil drums and other obstacles,” and “when [they] made an appearance at the door, they were greeted with a hail of stones.” Even after officers managed to escort mill owners to the Miyako station and apprehended twenty-six rioters, the crowd relentlessly hounded them. The USCAR public safety official stated that the arrests “resulted in 2000 to 3000 people swarming around the police station.” Frightened officers took up carbines and pistols and fired warning shots to drive the crowd back yet people “continued milling around the area” until 9:45 PM.<sup>475</sup>

Most troubling from the USCAR and GRI perspective was that the July 24<sup>th</sup> encounter threatened to overrun even the discrete space both had marked as “Miyako.” The District Administrator nervously speculated that news of the sugar protest had a ready audience eagerly awaiting opportunities to question the US military presence in the riot’s epicenter and beyond. He warned his superiors in Tokyo that “considerable local press attention [was being] paid to this occurrence,” and described a disconcerting breach of military security by three reporters on the Okinawan mainland as an example of this seemingly uncontrollable and, for the military dangerous, demand.<sup>476</sup> Having somehow gotten wind of a curious uprising in the outer islands,

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<sup>474</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>476</sup> DA to ODCSOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate, 2.

the trio of cameramen had “without authorization” snuck onto a base where USCAR was preparing to dispatch a reinforcement of GRI riot police.<sup>477</sup> Apparently they “were discovered taking photographs of the GRI police boarding the [US] aircraft,” and after the “[US Air Force] air police apprehended [them,]...their film was confiscated pending examination by the base photo lab.”<sup>478</sup> Two of the three “chose to remain to await the releasability [sic] of the [exposed] film taken on the flight line,” which signaled to the military administrator that news about the July 24<sup>th</sup> agitation would spread.<sup>479</sup> Miyako would soon join the storage of nuclear weaponry, the retraction of US administrative rule, military labor, military crime, and, so long as the bases were present, military land policy, on a growing list of conflicts with the Occupation that stretched the rigid frameworks US wanted to impose on the revolt.

Protestors, in fact, enacted an alternative logic challenging the developmental paradigms USCAR used to filter and make legible their observations. Wendy Matsumura observed that when Okinawa was first incorporated in the expanding Japanese empire, acts that resembled a peasant’s stubborn fondness for feudal traditions to the untrained eye were actually the staunch refusals of small cultivators to comply with the process of primitive accumulation.<sup>480</sup> The property damage sustained during the July 24<sup>th</sup> protest in Miyako can be regarded similarly in light of USCAR and GRI efforts to convert heterogeneous and unstable realities into empty forms. Where the US saw numbers, future profits, and the rise of government, the surly crowd furiously overturned this effort to graft monetary values and administrative order onto land. Trapping local police who came “to rescue the company officials” in the theater with the

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<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>480</sup> Wendy Matsumura, *The Limits of Okinawa : Japanese Capitalism, Living Labor, and Theorizations of Community*, Asia-Pacific (Durham ; London: Duke University Press, 2015). See also: Aihwa Ong and Carla Freeman, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline, Second Edition: Factory Women in Malaysia*, 2 edition (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010).

unfortunate factory officials, protestors “[threw] empty sake bottles, stones, bricks, and concrete tiles torn from the roofs of nearby houses” when either appeared in doorways to escape.<sup>481</sup> They also flouted the rules of the abstract marketplaces the US wanted established. A tally of the losses sustained from the boisterous day revealed that “rioters had sacked” liquor stores adjacent to the site instead of paying for goods and services.<sup>482</sup>

Most notable was how protestors asserted a new script that inverted the USCAR and GRI position. Whereas USCAR military scientists had trumpeted the natural, predestined evolution of markets and worked to remake the Okinawa islands according to their static image, headlines in *The Ryukyu Shimpo*, *Okinawa Times*, and *Miyako Daily News* proclaimed the opposite true. In addition to the resignation of Makiya, Miyako Seito’s president, the *Times* announced that “plans to merge three sugar mills [were] suspended.”<sup>483</sup> Concurring with the *Times* assessment, the *Shimpo* added that the uprising had rendered “the merger, in fact...impossible.”<sup>484</sup> Their use of “impossible” here signaled a momentary shift in paradigm. No longer was it improbable that politics existed in areas deemed economically lacking as USCAR and GRI models asserted. Because the protestors had proven these assumptions false, the “impossible” after July 24<sup>th</sup> denoted, rather, the capacity of economic reform to bring about political subjectivity as well as the inevitability of development projects that USCAR had, until then, considered universally desirable.<sup>485</sup> When *The Miyako Daily News* proclaimed the conclusion “inadequate” and a

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<sup>481</sup> Memo for Deputy Civil Administrator re: Rioting in Hirara City, Miyako, 1.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>483</sup> “A Red Light to Operations for the Next Fiscal Year: Plans to Merge Three Sugar Mills are Suspended on Miyako (来期の操業に赤信号：宮古製糖三社の合併中止),” *Okinawa Times*, Jul. 26, 1965.

<sup>484</sup> “Makiya, Miyako Sugar Factory President Intends to Resign (真喜屋宮古製糖社長が辞意),” *Miyako Daily News*, Jul. 26, 1965. The byline for this article reads: “The Merger, in fact, is Impossible (合併は事実上、不可能か).”

<sup>485</sup> “The Unauthorized Police Assault (許せぬ警官の暴行),” *Miyako Daily News*, Aug. 1, 1965. By-line reads: “The merger conflict will have repercussions. The human rights association embarks on an investigation (波紋広がる合併騒ぎ、人権協など調査に乗りだす).”

“political situation...the only way,” it referenced an imperative that the farmers’ demonstration laid bare.<sup>486</sup> Economic liberalization could no longer proceed as planned since farmers disagreed with the way in which the policy placed the burden of the sugar factory’s poor performance on producers themselves. The “political,” therefore, indicated a new imperative that the GRI substantially change its existing stance if officials ever hoped to undo the deadlock between opposing forces.<sup>487</sup>

That dissenters forced the recognition, rather than elision, of their agenda marked a radical departure that cannot be underemphasized. Versed in modernization theory, US military scientists and policymakers considered Miyako islanders unprepared for full political participation and prescribed the founding of institutions and formal organizations as a remedy. According to their worldview, the structures they established to govern politics and the economy guided intellectual maturation, re-directing people whose behaviors the universal measures of social science deemed unfit towards the narrow, modern confines of nationalism and nation-building. The privilege of political recognition existed as a distant promise, attainable only if subjects internalized respectable practices and ways of thought, and yet, Miyako farmers, who constituted the periphery to central Okinawa in the US-occupied Ryukyu Islands, insisted that government and factory officials alike attend to their needs before any resolution be declared.<sup>488</sup> They held the GRI and Miyako Seito responsible for the growing deficit in factory operations and attributed the eruption of violence to a willful neglect of public opinion authorized by the GRI under their policy of “non-interference.”<sup>489</sup> No longer occluded in official negotiations,

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<sup>486</sup> “An Inadequate Situation as the Conclusion. A Political Situation is the Only Way (甘かった情勢判断、政治的解決以外にない),” *Miyako Daily News*, Jul. 27, 1965.

<sup>487</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>488</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>489</sup> “The Sugar Mill Merger,” *Ryukyu Shimpō*, Jul. 26, 1965.

protestors bent the existing structures to suit their desires. They declared themselves political subjects regardless of the position US social scientists affixed them within predetermined evolutionary theories. In making officials leading existing state and economic apparatuses answer to them, they reversed the original logic posited by modernization theorists.

In the days succeeding the confrontation, a flurry of meetings and correspondences between worried USCAR officials ensued. That a phenomenon looking, sounding, and acting like political expression occurred where “politics” was supposedly absent threw military advisors into disarray. They grappled with the failure of their social scientific models that had not foreseen the July 24<sup>th</sup> gathering, its rapid growth, its coordination, and its vehement opposition to the proposed merger of the three sugar factories. One official hastily scribbled in his notebook the troubling fact that USCAR “didn’t anticipate the extent of [the] problem.”<sup>490</sup> He then emphatically circled the phrase, signaling its importance, and posed the attendant questions the protestors had thrust on stage for consideration: What “political implications” did the action have? What did the incident mean? Or, given the inability of US guidelines and policies to stem or predict the eruption of violent opposition directed against both the US and GRI, what meanings attributed to the event could they allow?

### **Reconstructing the Narrative of Economic Determinism**

Edward Freimuth quickly realized that the *raison d’être* for both US economic development and military occupation was at stake. Because US intervention purported the ability to nurture Okinawans who thought and acted in modern ways, the fact that protestors had so dramatically upended the terms US officials, economists, and other experts used to predict

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<sup>490</sup> Anonymous handwritten note, Undated, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

behavior and foster stable political economic growth invited criticisms against the US mission. A mere two days after the event, before the dust in Miyako settled, the veteran Director of USCAR's Liaison Bureau set about knitting together an account of the riot that once again reaffirmed US policy. He dismissed the version of politics protestors insinuated on July 24<sup>th</sup>, insisting instead that he could adequately understand the phenomenon using the evolutionary frameworks underlying US social science.

Latching onto the excessive passions on display that day, Freimuth attributed the show to the work of immature mindsets. "The roots of the merger issue," he argued, went "back to the time (pre-WWII and immediately after) when Miyako had only one sugar mill, and the sugar cane farmers as a result were subjects of a monopoly."<sup>491</sup> He noted that "evidently, the farmers were not treated too well," and speculated accordingly that perhaps "ill feelings and resentments exist to this day" due to a lingering "fear of a resurgent monopoly."<sup>492</sup> Believing that the proposed reduction of sugar mills triggered these vestigial anxieties, Freimuth pronounced the action the consequence of mere "sentiment" that the devious OPP leadership, acting under their front Zenokino, irresponsibly agitated.<sup>493</sup> He further recounted as evidence that organizers from various participating groups afterwards "called upon the [GRI] Chief Executive to acknowledge having been in error."<sup>494</sup> For Okinawans to exhibit remorse validated his theory that the rioters succumbed to irrationality, and so Freimuth relished their contrition, taking pains to mention how even Okinawans themselves admitted to being misled.<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> DA to ODCOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate, 27 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>492</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>493</sup> HICOM RY OKINAWA RYIS, 26 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*

Yet, Freimuth also knew it wasn't enough to render the riot an irrational spectacle. It left open the possibility that the farmers' thinking, however "undeveloped," was justified. It also rendered USCAR impotent, without the ability to deploy their usual stockpile of remedies. He, therefore, began recreating an account of material conditions that sought to deflect attention away from the protestors' original complaint. Pronouncing, first, how "the economic facts [found] that the sugar mills at Irabu and Tarama...[were] floundering and would go out of business," Freimuth went on to pedantically list the supposed "benefits" that made the merger a necessity: the liberalization of loan terms, improved efficiency, lowered costs, and the flexibility for production to respond quickly to market fluctuations and favorable pricing.<sup>496</sup> This reality, which judged worthwhile only those endeavors that generated profits, allowed Freimuth to shift the cause of protest from USCAR, the GRI, and lenders like the Ryukyu Development Loan Corporation (RDLC) that relentlessly pushed their economic plan onto the farmers and radicals who objected. He regretfully concluded as such that "lost upon the demonstrators [were] these plain economic facts [which] had been explained...but were not accepted by them."<sup>497</sup>

Freimuth took as an ominous sign the inability of the assembled mass that day in Miyako to act in what USCAR deemed to be a logical fashion warranted by economic circumstance. Seeking to neutralize the fact that opposition to the merger had spontaneously attracted the support of thousands that day, he re-presented the protest as an incident during which the tyranny of a few ruled over many. Freimuth alluded to how the "two off-island communities directly affected, Irabu and Tarama, were all in favor of the merger" as if to suggest that "ordinary"

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<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*, 4. That Freimuth wanted to emphasize the choice the rioters had in dismissing the facts is evident in a correction he made before the final draft circulated as the DA to ODCOPS for Civil Affairs Directorate cited earlier. The original text read: "Lost upon the demonstrators are these plain economic facts which would be apparent." Freimuth's corrections read: "These plain facts had been explained to the demonstrators but were not accepted by them." The edits emphasize the deliberation the protestors exercised in choosing to ignore USCAR attempts to negotiate.

Okinawans sided with US and GRI recommendations even if they occasionally misidentified the economic facts.<sup>498</sup> For further effect, he emphasized that “Irabu leaders went so far as to radio a message to the GRI stating this position before the scheduled merger meeting.”<sup>499</sup> The problem, according to Freimuth, was less that the US and GRI were attempting to implement economic policies islanders refused or that his effort to foster equitable rule was hypocritical, but that Miyako tilted dangerously towards a misinformed, excitable, and undemocratic minority.

Freimuth continued to retroactively search for evidence that substantiated his assumption that mobilizers had manipulated, duped, and cowed the assembled crowd into submission in a subsequent July 29<sup>th</sup> memo summarizing the findings of a US liaison officer dispatched to Miyako. To explain how Zenokino could draw such large, tenacious crowds for what he himself had reduced to a minority issue, he decided that coercion must have been a factor. He alleged that participating agricultural cooperatives had imposed a penalty on members who did not join a rally held three days prior to the July 24<sup>th</sup> ambush and concluded accordingly that “the large amount of people who attended did not necessarily mean opposition to the merger but an effort to avoid a \$4 fine.”<sup>500</sup> He further attributed the extemporaneous coordination the mobilizers displayed that day to another calculated violation of the participants’ free will. According to Freimuth’s aide, protest organizers had deliberately intoxicated their supporters. Reporting that “bottles of sake were distributed” among the farmers the night before the action, the liaison officer said “the farmers proceeded to get drunk” even before the meeting convened and “most...slept in the streets that night in drunken stupor and upon rising proceeded to drink more

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<sup>498</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>500</sup> Memo for the Record re: Follow-up on Miyako Sugar Company Merger Demonstrations, 29 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

sake.”<sup>501</sup> He, and later Freimuth, insisted that this unprecedented challenge to the colonial social order mandated by the US was merely the work “a drunken mob who had been whipped into a state of violence against the sugar company merger.”<sup>502</sup>

Freimuth’s belief that he had uncovered a nefarious plot engineered by a disingenuous minority to incite disorder echoed Stout’s earlier 1958 findings that Okinawans had no grasp of ideology. At best, he found the US-backed DP politicians on Miyako curiously nonchalant, “trying to remain aloof in this crisis” as if the riot had no repercussions on upcoming legislative or mayoral elections in the fall.<sup>503</sup> At worst, local DP members appeared entirely ignorant as one encounter with a DP politician who baselessly opined about the protests’ effects illustrated.<sup>504</sup> Freimuth assessed the remaining Miyako islanders as no better for, according to USCAR paradigms like Stout’s, they were without the guidance political parties supposedly offered. He considered the demonstrators volatile, but little more than malleable and blank slates. Even the local Miyako police, the Director noted, had characterized the farmers as “peaceful enough citizens,” unless they were, of course, “under the influence of too much sake.”<sup>505</sup>

But here, Freimuth was convinced, stood also a chance for the US to extinguish the volatile remnants protestors asserted when they overturned the basic economic assumptions substantiating US governance. Freimuth reasoned that if the islanders’ naiveté made them susceptible to leftist seductions, it also insinuated the likelihood of winning the allegiance of

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<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>503</sup> HICOM RY OKINAWA RYIS, 6.

<sup>504</sup> Memo for the Record re: LO-Katsu Hoshi regarding AA Resolution, Proposed Resolution Against CA, Foreigners’ Landownership Bill and the Political Situation Due to Sugar Company Merger, 29 Jul. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Freimuth wonder at the lack of urgency of Chairman of Political Affairs Research Board of Democratic Party, Katsu Hoshi. In their meeting Freimuth asked Hoshi to provide information about the potential effect of the riots on the upcoming elections. Though Hoshi responds, Freimuth makes the effort to note that “Hoshi failed to provide any concrete basis for his reading.”

<sup>505</sup> Memo for the Record re: Follow-up on Miyako Sugar Company Merger Demonstrations, 2.

former detractors. He therefore saw an opportunity in the minor setback that was his discovery of a nefarious plot engineered by disingenuous radicals. Returning to re-examine the islanders' apparent contrition, Freimuth emphasized in the reports by Miyako police how the drunken farmers, having sobered up "[realized] what they did, [and were] starting to feel sorry for causing so much trouble."<sup>506</sup> He detected a similar but more dramatic change of heart when he reviewed again the USCAR reports of the Naha contingent that held an overnight sit-in before the GRI Chief Executive's mansion. Allegedly, the Naha group requested an audience with the GRI Chief Executive afterwards since they realized that nothing but mass rioting came of their dalliances with the OPP who carelessly "egged-on" the demonstrators that day. Deeply apologetic, this group supposedly expressed that "they were ashamed of their actions, saw the truth of the merger issue, and were going to return to Miyako to talk *for* the merger" (emphasis in original).<sup>507</sup>

In light of the islanders' change of heart, Freimuth called for renewed commitments to establish a consensus on Miyako's political standing. Because he confused the fluid and excessive ideologies animating the July 24<sup>th</sup> protest with a lack of politics like Stout before him, he recommended that the "GRI, friendly co-op leaders, and the RDLC conduct a 'psychological warfare' program on the sugar farmers with respect to the 'right' and 'wrong' interpretations of the issue."<sup>508</sup> Freimuth never disputed the fact that economic necessity compelled the mill consolidations, and so the "correct interpretation" he wished to inculcate merely added to the existing circumstances without altering its terms. Farmers only had to believe that both the GRI and Democratic Party acted on their behalf and that to reorient Miyako sugar mills was an act in

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<sup>506</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>508</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

their own best interest.<sup>509</sup> To the GRI, he therefore advised holding meetings and discussions with local mayors, assembly speakers, and farm leaders reattempt what they had failed to do the first time: “to convince the people that to live was to merge.”<sup>510</sup> This “[laid] the groundwork for the merger,” the Director maintained, and only then could factory officials attempt another meeting with the Miyako Sugar Company stockholders.<sup>511</sup>

The “wrong interpretation” was, of course, what the protestors momentarily forced on stage for consideration. They held a social vision that was open and fluid, where economic determinism neither governed choice nor party affiliation the degree of one’s politicization. The authority to make decisions also did not lie solely in USCAR, the GRI, the RDLC, or factory owners in the farmers’ minds. In other words, what Freimuth could not accept as “political” were motivations that failed to conform to any existing logic. Even when he identified the fear of monopoly that incongruously lingered among the islanders despite the sugar industry’s development, the Liaison Director bemoaned how protestors misdirected their demands and actually facilitated the very fear he believed the farmers wanted to avoid. He was exasperated that the factories on the smaller islands were “going out of business...leaving Okinawa Seito as the only sugar mill in the Miyakoes” should the situation continue without reform.<sup>512</sup> Indeed, he believed that farmers risked bringing about the very “monopoly situation that [they said] they [were] trying to prevent” by opposing the proposed rationalization.<sup>513</sup>

The campaign to foreclose alternate understandings of the social conditions affecting Miyako took three forms. One was to secure a hardened definition of politics that adhered to the

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<sup>509</sup> Draft of Talking Paper, “Miyako Seito/Merger Problem,” 2 Aug. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>511</sup> Memo for the Record re: Follow-up on Miyako Sugar Company Merger Demonstration, 3.

<sup>512</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>513</sup> *Ibid.*

US worldview which refused to recognize that ideological lines existed outside formal parties, that the boundaries set up to concentrate positions were porous, or that Miyakoans could themselves traverse these flexible categories. A cursory summary revealed that “Zenokino [did] not have a chapter on Miyako” and that the exact individuals doubling as both OPP members and leaders of the Miyako Farmers Council “[were] not yet established.”<sup>514</sup> Yet, against such admissions, Freimuth held steadfastly to Stout’s strategy of anchoring motivations to established groups. The Liaison Director stubbornly scavenged for clues—ties that until then had not existed—in hopes of linking the riot’s perpetrators to known radical parties like the OSMP and, more alarming still, the OPP. He named four associates of Zenokino whom he suspected “[had] been fomenting trouble through trips to the island” so that USCAR could begin surveilling future threats to the military government.<sup>515</sup>

A second approach attempted to convince the Miyako islanders that their riotous protests were indeed anomalous. Their destruction of property challenged the military’s promise of economic development, which, in turn, called into question the belief that legible, balanced, and predictable activities made for healthy markets. In activating this possibility, the protestors articulated desires exceeding the objectives and frameworks US social scientists, economists, and military planners endorsed, and so Freimuth in a talking paper his Liaison Office carefully prepared for a meeting with then GRI Chief Executive Seiho Matsuoka worried that the merger was now a “political issue” around which people mobilized to pursue agendas truly independent of the US military presence.<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> Memo for the Record re: Follow-up on Miyako Sugar Company Merger Demonstrations, 1.

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>516</sup> Talking Paper “Miyako Sugar Merger Problem,” 15 Aug. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

From the possible motivations fueling the recurring opposition to the merger, Freimuth was particularly concerned with an allegation that the Miyako Sugar Factory had not paid the rebellious farmers the minimum price for cane the GRI had mandated. “If this [was] true, the demonstrators may have a legitimate complaint,” he mused, and he dutifully encouraged Okinawan officials to investigate more to that effect.<sup>517</sup> In subsequent meetings with Hiroshi Senaga, President of Chubu Seito, a sugar plant on mainland Okinawa, and Kenji Kudeken, the GRI Director of Planning, Freimuth learned of two contradictory assessments regarding Miyako mill President Makiya’s actions. Whereas Senaga believed Makiya, with his “poor sense of timing,” erred when he failed to coordinate the announcement of new GRI-sanctioned sugar prices with factory owners on the mainland, Kudeken implied that Miyako growers likely caught wind of discontent brewing among farmers from the Okinawa mainland. Refusing to grant the unwieldy Miyako growers a reason for their anger, he asserted that the “Miyako Seito had paid the price and the farmers had no ground for complaint.” Nevertheless, he pointed to “some difficulty” that arose because the overall rate the GRI offered for sugar fell below planters’ expectations.<sup>518</sup>

In his recommendations that officials further explore charges of mill mismanagement or miscommunications about the ideal price for sugar, Freimuth displaced a general complaint against the reorientation of sugar production towards US and Japanese markets onto individual misdeeds. Unlike the protestors’ vision which demanded recognition and control over proposed reforms, the facts Freimuth and the GRI hoped to cultivate re-presented the protestors’ motivations such that the resolution to their discontent was both altered and therefore possible

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<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>518</sup> Memo for the Record re: Sugar and the Miyako Merger, 2 Sep. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

through economic rationalization. His narrative diverted protestors' desires from an end to the rationalization of the sugar industry through factory mergers to more conscientious management.<sup>519</sup> Mill owners only had to announce policy changes or issue correct payment in a timely manner to appease farmers who "[were] normally very suspicious lot and [were] even more so in Miyako" according to Senaga.<sup>520</sup> Or, if Kudeken's assessment were to be followed, the GRI could simply pay the mainland farmers more for their crop since what happened on the central island seemed to be the model for actions elsewhere.<sup>521</sup>

It was perhaps because Freimuth and his colleagues in USCAR and the GRI already attributed the upheaval to employer corruption or miscalculation that prompted them to take a third strategy. Both military and Okinawan governments attempted the proposed economic reforms once more. This time, USCAR and the GRI wanted to adhere to the model US social scientists thought appropriate. Because the Miyako islanders had confounded prevailing theories about how, and particularly when, people express politics, Freimuth simply dissembled the chain of events and reordered them in a sequence he believed more likely to bring about the desired result: quiet acceptance by Miyako farmers of USCAR and GRI reforms. He reasoned that if an act to legalize the mill consolidation incited farmers known to be suspicious of monopolies to riot, then perhaps the factory shareholder meeting was ill-timed and premature.

The answer Freimuth proposed was to change local conditions so that they would not provoke such overblown reactions. That is, before it made any official announcements, the company ought first to "assure farmers of the continued operation of mills" regardless of any consolidation. He therefore urged GRI officials to implement "interim" plans for the three

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<sup>519</sup> Talking Paper "Miyako Sugar Merger Problem," 15 Aug. 1965, 2.

<sup>520</sup> Memo for the Record re: Sugar and the Miyako Merger, 1.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid.*

factories to operate “as one entity even though a merger [did] not exist.”<sup>522</sup> So that the mill could win support from the recalcitrant farmers, Freimuth further recommended establishing a separate department specializing in “grower relations,” allowing company experts to demonstrate goodwill and teach farmers how to recognize their best interest. Not least, the crucial shareholder vote legalizing the merger most certainly could not disrupt the position of the US-backed Democratic Party (DP) in the GRI. As such, Freimuth asked factory officials to postpone the contested meeting until impending GRI legislative elections had taken place. That is, USCAR and the GRI could proceed with the merger and obtain approval only after the desired political leadership was in office to secure the grassroots. This, the USCAR official asserted, “[provided] a basis for eliminating political activity from below.”<sup>523</sup>

### **Agricultural Diversification, the Battle over Hearts and Minds, and the Unfortunate Naturalness of Protest**

In March 1966, representatives of the USCAR Liaison Office, USCAR Education Department, and the GRI escorted seven lucky city officials from Hirara-shi, Miyako on an expedition to Ie-Jima, a small island off the Motobu peninsula on the northwest coast of central Okinawa. Fresh off a similar, ten-day investigative tour of neighboring Taiwan, the Miyako leaders arrived by military helicopter exclusively commissioned for the occasion like honored dignitaries. On Ie-Jima, they were treated to what US agriculturalists imagined was the future of Miyakoan agriculture. Much like what planners argued in 1961, they envisioned diverse crop production, which meant interspersing plants that consumer markets rendered viable among

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<sup>522</sup> Talking Paper “Miyako Sugar Merger Problem,” 15 Aug. 1965.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

sugar, itself no less intensely cultivated.<sup>524</sup> US officials made sure to dwell on the successful new planting of exogenous white, Irish potatoes, which put USCAR one step closer towards achieving long-term goals of integrating military food demands with Okinawan production.<sup>525</sup> The mission's objective was "to show [Hirashi-shi officials] what individuals in a similar rural economy [were] doing to 'help themselves,'" and because Miyako officials appeared sufficiently impressed, USCAR announced that the tour had "accomplished its purpose of showing responsible Miyakoans what [could] be achieved in agricultural development."<sup>526</sup>

While the drive for agricultural diversification that USCAR sustained for over ten years seems like an example of unprecedented benevolence by the occupation government, military officials carefully devised the elaborate production in order to reinstate the fundamental terms governing economic rationalization. By early 1966, the elements that Freimuth knitted together to elucidate the July 24<sup>th</sup> outburst had cohered into a seamless narrative. USCAR observers were, once again, convinced that their original prognosis linking reactions to economic causes was unassailable. In every talking paper prepared for conversations with the GRI about the so-called "Miyako Situation," the unwavering alibi of the Liaison Office was that tempers flared only when the economy waned. Theorizing that farmers cared only about the price they received for sugar, USCAR officials warned the Okinawan government of an imminent dip in farm earnings. They further reasoned that "since the farmers of Miyako [were] more dependent on the sugar market than those of most other areas, a drop in income from sugar cane directly [affected]

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<sup>524</sup> Proposed Cash and Food Crop Production in Miyako Gunto, 18 Sep. 1961. On plans for the Ie-Jima trip: Memo from LO to CA re: Approval for Helicopter Trip, 23 Feb. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. HCRI-LO re: Proposed Trip to Ie Shima for Hirara-Shi Leaders, 28 Feb. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Field Trip to Ie Jima, Economic Affairs, 6 Mar. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Disposition Form re: Plan of Action to be Pursued in Miyako, 10 Mar. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>525</sup> Field Trip to Ie Jima, Economic Affairs.

<sup>526</sup> Disposition Form re: Plan of Action to be Pursued in Miyako.

their standard of living.”<sup>527</sup> Military scientists feared radicals preyed in such times of economic distress.

That USCAR expected antagonisms on the horizon indicated also that, at some point, economic growth in Miyako deviated from an unstated, but universal, standard. According to military formulations, normative development was a fixed trajectory where all component economic measures such as “price,” “income,” “farm acreage,” and “production” grew in sync. That is, for monetary returns to sufficiently rise, USCAR supposed that all other factors comprising the overarching system had to shift as well. A forecast that earnings would dip for Miyako farmers suggested only that the general economy was unhealthy because it was unable to reproduce the norm. Filtering their observations through their preordained matrix, they determined production to be at fault. In Miyako’s case, where acreage for sugar production had expanded and sugar prices had risen above previous years, the drop in profits meant only that the output had not kept pace.<sup>528</sup>

The military’s template also herded discussions regarding the root causes of anomalies such as sluggish production away from the overarching framework’s legitimacy, which protestors briefly illuminated. Though the model of economic determinism produced the very failures USCAR wished redressed, conversations turned such that both the perceived problems and proposed solutions legitimized the predetermined metrics comprising the industry. More still, because scientists believed all factors influencing growth to be governed by the natural, impregnable laws of the economy, USCAR officers focused on human error, the only variable in production they considered malleable. They argued that “if growers had used more scientific

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<sup>527</sup> Draft of Talking Paper for CA to hand CE re: Discontent Among Miyako Sugar Cane Growers, 3 Feb. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*

farm management practices...the sugarcane output would have equaled or exceeded last year's," and "the resultant drop in income and discontent among farmers could have been avoided."<sup>529</sup> Having consistently stressed the importance of agricultural reform in Okinawa, they further chastised the GRI for not managing the "large staff of agricultural technicians who [had] the responsibility for instructing farmers in modern farm practices."<sup>530</sup> They pronounced it "unfortunate" that the Okinawan teams "[had] not been more effective in their work."<sup>531</sup>

At the center of USCAR's narrative of economic determinism stood an idealized Miyako farmer whose interests were purely fiscal. Like his counterparts whom agricultural economists extracted from rural contexts to create the "rational peasant," the framework through which he was interpolated and made legible presumed that the desire for material advancement was universal.<sup>532</sup> He wanted creature comforts and protested only in times of palpable financial distress. Around such a figure Freimuth based his conclusions after a visit to the outer island in January 1966. "Miyakoans [were] poor and there [did] not appear to them to be any great possibility of their achieving any significant increase in their standard of living," he began.<sup>533</sup> When the drop in production converged with a rise in the price of consumer goods, Freimuth believed incomes contracted such that locals detected the growing dearth in opportunity. A Democratic Party mayor himself admitted to the Bureau officer that "whereas last year a relatively well-to-do farmer might have two motorcycles, this year he would do well to have one."<sup>534</sup> Freimuth concluded that farmers simply "[wanted] more for their cane than the GRI

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<sup>529</sup> Draft of Talking Paper re: Discontent Among Miyako Cane Growers, 15 Feb. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>532</sup> James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*, 8.11.1977 edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>533</sup> Memo for the Record re: Problems of Miyako Sugar Cane Growers As Seen During a Visit 24-27 Jan. 1966, 1 Feb. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

[was] authorizing” and that “the basic problem with sugar cane growers in Miyako [was] money—i.e., not enough of it.”<sup>535</sup>

The imperative to diversify Miyako’s agriculture, therefore, proceeded from the belief that all farmers implicitly embraced the universal desire for economic development. In addition to actualizing the material bounty residents allegedly wanted, USCAR officials aimed to educate the islanders on suitable expressions of such aspirations. Reminding his colleagues that a one-crop economy left farmers more vulnerable to fluctuations in the international sugar market and likely to rebel again, Freimuth stressed that diversification was “called for if any degree of stability [was] to be attained.”<sup>536</sup> He further argued that prospects of economic stagnation played to the radicals’ hand. Returning to his claim that rioting were the exaggerated reactions of immature minds, Freimuth proclaimed that what farmers “[needed] most [was] an indication of sincere interest in their welfare by those in authority.”<sup>537</sup> Without the guidance of acceptable figures like the GRI and Democratic Party on acceptable definitions of advancement and how to achieve it, Freimuth thought farmers simply succumbed to leftist overtures “no matter how far-fetched.”<sup>538</sup> One Okinawan court official with whom Freimuth met agreed, pronouncing “the Miyakoans,” who resided on a periphery even further than Okinawa itself, “in greater need of ‘spiritual’ aid than of any other type.”<sup>539</sup>

The ensuing anti-radical campaign USCAR waged to stamp out future rebellions centered on the winning of hearts and minds. Reminiscent of the “pastoral power” that the modern state in the early modern era developed to guide, protect, and control subordinate populations

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<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>536</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>537</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.*

according to Foucault, the Liaison Office ordered the GRI and DP to put on calculated performances making clear the government's genuine interest in the mundane dreams of the "man-on-the-street."<sup>540</sup> Liaison Office directives further recommended that the military response anticipate long-term involvement to guarantee the sufficient inculcation of US prerogatives among Miyakoan islanders. Finally, plans asked that USCAR and GRI concentrate its energies on securing the "grassroots level."<sup>541</sup> Such orders sent USCAR to the fossilized versions of "Okinawan culture" enshrined in their handbooks to infiltrate points of contact connecting their imagined everyman to the local power apparatus. Capitalizing on generalizations about the respected positions of "senseis" in Okinawan society or the educational responsibilities agricultural experiment stations and cooperatives had towards farmers, military counterinsurgency schemes requested that lectures by professors of agricultural science from the esteemed University of the Ryukyus be frequently organized and informational pamphlets on preferred planting methods distributed.<sup>542</sup> In particular, they encouraged the use of anti-communist tracts written by members of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (JLDP). Assuming that writing by Japanese authors "[had] the advantage of being influenced by and oriented toward the Japanese psychology," the military considered such literature "more persuasive to the Japanese than are similar articles written by foreigners."<sup>543</sup>

Success of the counterinsurgency campaign further relied on the active manipulation of Miyako's surroundings to reflect ideas of advancement that the military wanted installed.

Protestors had exposed the artifice undergirding economic rationalization, which USCAR, the

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<sup>540</sup> Michel Foucault et al., *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977--1978*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell, 1 edition (New York: Picador, 2009). Memo for the Record re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 16 Feb, 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>541</sup> Memo for Record re: Problems of Miyako Sugar Cane Growers As Seen During A Visit 24-27 Jan. 1966, 2.

<sup>542</sup> Memo for the Record re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 2.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*

GRI, and officials of the sugar factory all agreed was the natural, preordained step in every society's evolution. Against accusations of backwardness leveled by the military scientists, they also asserted a vision in which the producers of sugar determined for themselves the direction their labors took. The military, therefore, encouraged the stifling of alternative definitions of improvement such that Miyako islanders had little choice but to recognize progress in their submission to USCAR and the GRI. Aiming to "[make] clear...that a vote for the opposition [meant] an economic loss rather than the contrary," Freimuth directed the Liaison Office to support as many "eye-appeal projects" in conservative districts as possible while denying alleged radical strongholds all money awards.<sup>544</sup> "Under no circumstances," he emphatically declared, should the military permit sympathizers of the left to "claim that they can secure as much economic benefit for the people as the DP."<sup>545</sup> Moreover, he advised GRI courts to punish the arrested activists with impunity "so that people may see that nothing [was] to be gained through violence."<sup>546</sup>

Over the course of 1966, as the Liaison Office assiduously implemented their counterinsurgency projects, debate arose again among USCAR officers over the efficacy of their efforts. In addition to extending the distribution of pamphlets to neighborhood meeting spots like barber shops and restaurants, they began mobilizing the rank-and-file women in GRI welfare offices to deliver counsel on household management through home visits.<sup>547</sup> Deciding that overtly political JLDP writings hindered their overall mission of neutralizing the excess meanings islanders forced to the surface, the Liaison Office opted to implement even more

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<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.* Disposition Form re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 20 May 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. In second document, Liaison Department reports also state that Life Improvement workers from GRI Agricultural Extension Stations "are visiting farm families regardless of party affiliation" (2).

prosaic methods of persuasion like circulating educational materials that directly advised farmers on how to boost agricultural and livestock production.<sup>548</sup> Discouragingly, the military continued to face possible defeat of DP candidates in local elections. These were the strong, authority figures social scientific theories of evolution predicted should tutor the uneducated masses on acceptable expression of “politics” yet the Liaison Office worried constantly over the troubling lack of energy their Okinawan co-conspirators displayed. One military representative suggested hosting multiple dinners for DP assemblymen during which USCAR, using “lively...’gung-ho” phrases he assumed could “energize,” reprimand their Okinawan allies for not “peddling their wares.”<sup>549</sup> Though his military superiors declined use of such confrontational tactics, they praised the officer’s enthusiasm suggesting that they redirect his intentions towards developing more strategies that prodded the irresponsible Okinawa politicians into action.<sup>550</sup>

What belied the unenthusiastic DP response were simple truths that USCAR hoped to avoid. That is, Miyako islanders simply did not act and think in ways social scientists forecasted and the discursive categories that constituted the basis of military strategies were highly unstable. In spite of USCAR counterinsurgency, protests continued even as the military trafficked their sanctioned ways of knowing into people’s homes. Shortly after July 1965, activists drawing from their respective home organizations formed the Miyako Farmers Suppression

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<sup>548</sup> Memo for LO re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 14 Mar. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Disposition Form re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 7 Apr. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Memo for LO re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 21 Apr. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Disposition Form re: Proposals for Anti-Radical Campaign in Miyako, 20 May 1966.

<sup>549</sup> George C. Smith, Miyako Anti-Radical Campaign, 25 May 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>550</sup> John C. Monjo, Miyako Anti-Radical Campaign, 29 Jul. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

Countermeasure Council in response to the police crackdown.<sup>551</sup> Miyako cooperatives, teachers associations, and labor unions across trades organized a follow-up action in September 1965 to support the July protestors apprehended for public disturbance. Starting in Hirara-shi with 350 in attendance, the event swelled to 1,500 by the time OPP and OSMP figureheads finished their speeches. They ended with a parade to the police station of 1,100 that USCAR alleged were mostly women and children hoping to catch a glimpse of possible excitement.<sup>552</sup> A year later, the radical groups involved in the July 1965 action convened again to commemorate the anniversary of their victory.<sup>553</sup> In March 1966, word of election riots erupting on Ishigaki, another outlying island to the south of mainland Okinawa, set off another round of handwringing, accusations of DP incompetence, and conjectures of opportunistic meddling by outsiders among Liaison Office officials. Although “substantiating evidence [had] not been developed” when they hinted at the possibility of outside interference, the Liaison Office nevertheless insinuated that Miyako radicals had traveled to Ishigaki to stoke the flames of revolution.<sup>554</sup>

Viewed in light of the reoccurring displays of discontent, the emergent paranoia around the existence of a widespread threat to public safety offers two meanings. The generalization of

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<sup>551</sup> Formation of Association to Protect Farmers, 14 Mar. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>552</sup> Memo for Deputy Civil Administration re: Request for Assistance to Contain Anticipated Trouble at Hirara City, 9 Sep. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Report on Demonstrations and Parade in Miyako, 10 Sep. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Memo for the Record re: Joint Rally of Farmers Council and Labor Unions on Miyako, 24 Sep. 1965, Box 31, Folder 15, The Liaison Department, Miyako Sugar Company Merger, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Reference to women and children can be found in Memo for the Record re: Joint Rally of Farmers Council and Labor Unions on Miyako, page 2.

<sup>553</sup> Disposition Form re: Planned Rallies on Miyako, 21 Jul. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Schedule of Farmers Rally in Miyako, 22 Jul. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives. Farmers Rally in Gusukube-Cho, Miyako, 25 Jul. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>554</sup> Memo for Civil Administrator re: Police Situation in Miyako and Yaeyama, 19 May 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

resistance as an act to be feared more than produced a need for repression. It, in fact, signaled the persistent unraveling of military paradigms. Miyako islanders exposed the failures of economic development and the inability of USCAR to fully capture their “hearts and minds.” At the same time, they projected unprecedented understandings of politics and production that overturned their occlusion from discussions about how their fates were to be determined. Indeed, the complaints of one conservative Miyako mayor marks their accomplishment. The mayor lamented that his constituents had come to accept demonstrations as “the natural reactions against conditions which they [found] unsatisfactory,” and that the islanders embraced a “type of thinking” for which the logic was: “if you want something, riot; if not, your needs will not be met.”<sup>555</sup> He intended his remarks to highlight the need for more police on Miyako, yet the change in prevailing attitudes he bemoaned tellingly illuminates the radical politics Miyako islanders sustained.<sup>556</sup> Once considered impossible because their minds were irrational and consciousness premature, protest in Miyako was not only uncontrollable under existing formulas and timelines but, in this heightened state, made the norm.

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<sup>555</sup> Memo for the Record re: Meeting Between Deputy Civil Administrator (DCA) Napier and Mayor Tokumatsu Maeshiro Concerning the Recent Political Situation in Miyako, 3 Mar. 1966, Box 31, Folder 17, The Liaison Department, Miyako Situation, 1966, Okinawa Prefectural Archives.

<sup>556</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

## Conclusion

In 1972, Okinawa was reverted to Japan to much popular jubilation. Amidst growing calls for anticolonial nationalism worldwide, Okinawan proponents of reversion ended the US military's occupation of Okinawa. Because they considered colonialism a foreign power's unnatural rule of another race, activists saw Okinawa's return to Japan as the righting of a wrong. They reasoned that Okinawans and Japanese descended from the same bloodline, and so a government populated by people of the correct race promised to rule fairly. With the support of Japan, Okinawans could finally end the US military's unjust foray onto Okinawan lands that ought to be sovereign. The call for reversion, therefore, yielded multiple mass actions at varying levels including a 1968 base worker strike, a 1969 citizen's rally, and the 1970 Koza Uprising/Riots, which scholars consider a key moment in which assertions of Okinawan identity was generalized and consolidated. Cumulatively, they forced the US to abandon the occupation after twenty-seven tumultuous years. What had started as a fringe movement that USCAR and the GRI regarded with suspicion and associated with communism won widespread acceptance among not only the mainstream public but also the colonial foes themselves. For a brief moment, it seemed as if Okinawan activists succeeded.

Still, the realization of "Okinawanness" in that moment failed to bring relief from US militarism. To this day, military bases dominate Okinawa's landscape and the military presence, in fact, has only increased. Sarah Kovner has shown that the US shifted more troops to Okinawa in response to anti-military protest on mainland Japan. Privileging their relationship with Tokyo and hoping to limit everyday encounters between Japanese and US servicemen, US strategists considered Okinawa a better host to the troops deployed to counter the rise of China and North

Korea. Though Japan itself was small, Okinawa was smaller, and so the US military believed Okinawa's limited space would quarantine their negative impact.<sup>557</sup> In Okinawa, the US operated along similar lines. Despite promising to reduce the size of Futenma Marine Base after the 1995 rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan girl, the US military proposed to build a "sea-based facility" off Henoko Bay. In the same way USCAR officials assumed that "all Okinawans" disagreed over the price of land nearly forty years earlier during the mass mobilizations against military land acquisitions, the US once again reasoned that "all Okinawans" bristled at the fact that the military occupied what little land Okinawans had to spare. The bases took up resources that could be used for cultivation, crowded Okinawans into overpopulated neighborhoods, and annoyed locals with excessive noise and unwanted confrontations with US troops. To shift its presence onto water where it occupied little to no land at all appeared a fair compromise according to US military logic.

At the same time, the ebbs and flows of the local economy continue to thrive off US military decisions as US social scientists intended. The end to active US wars in Asia has left many of the neighborhood surrounding the bases struggling for economic investment. In its heyday at the height of the Vietnam War, Koza, for example, once had the trappings of a thriving city: restaurants, bars, shops, and diverse crowds drawn from around the world. Koza, today, has grown into Okinawa City but relics from that bygone era continues to mark the landscape. The main street that used to entertain US servicemen are empty, the restaurants shuttered. The remaining shops display tired military fatigues and struggle to keep litter and decay at bay. Where the military presence continues, anti-military activists remark on the relatively high standard of living. In Ginowan, schools have soundproof windows and high-tech air

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<sup>557</sup> Sarah Kovner, "The Soundproofed Superpower: American Bases and Japanese Communities, 1945–1972," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2016): 87–109.

conditioning installed to block out unwanted noise from military exercises, and on Ie-Jima, where the military compound recently re-expanded to construct co-ed facilities, activists say that individual farmers receive enough subsidies to make leasing their farmland a lucrative business.

Why did Okinawan Reversion not bring about an end to US militarism as activists promised? Some hold that the continuation of US military power on Okinawa post-reversion epitomizes Japan's unrelenting disdain. Just as the Japanese military sacrificed Okinawan lives in World War II, these scholars say that demilitarization did not follow reversion because Okinawan identity can never find its full and proper expression under Japan. Gavan McCormick and Satoko Norimatsu expand on this assumption, arguing that US imperialism in East Asia claimed Japan as a dependent state. They believe that Japan never fully nurtured its democratic impulses under the weight of US Cold War prerogatives. Japan's persistent disavowal of Okinawan demands reflect not only its prolonged subjugation, but also the erasure of Okinawa enabling the US-Japan arrangement.<sup>558</sup> Focusing on antimilitary actors, Miyume Tanji and Yuchiro Onishi make similar assertions. They see in reversion's failure an inability of Okinawanness to encompass all Okinawans at that moment. Their works demonstrate how progressive coalitions leading reversion never reached the bartenders, musicians, and prostitutes who represented the "seamier" elements that thrived off military excesses. Though both Tanji and Onishi make clear that gendered and class assumptions ultimately divided anti-military radicals, both authors still seem to hold out hope. That Tanji and Onishi emphasize an "Okinawan community of protest" or "racial groove" insinuates their belief that racial or ethnic

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<sup>558</sup> Gavan McCormack and Satoko Oka Norimatsu, *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012).

identification, if appropriately defined might one day engender a broad-based anti-military movement.<sup>559</sup>

In this dissertation, I have presented evidence why ethnic self-determination reproduces—not overturns—the epistemological groundwork on which the US militarized Okinawa. Hoping to win adherents of anticolonial nationalist movements, the US military stressed its support of Okinawan self-determination to justify its occupation. Cultural anthropologists like Alfred Tozzer maintained that Okinawans did not know how to assert their identity having lived under the yoke of Japanese colonial rule. They needed to be completely separated, detached from Japan, in order for Okinawans to realize their full potential. Social scientists like George Murdock expanded on Tozzer’s premise. Drawing from modernization theory, Murdock claimed that economic development was key. He argued that if the US could establish the proper institutions and organizations to make the “Okinawan economy” a self-sustaining unit, a strong, independent, Okinawan consciousness would follow. Whatever policies US military officials attempted after World War II, therefore, claimed to benefit Okinawans even as they re-presented the US military as a well-intentioned partner. The US Occupation allowed Okinawans to flex leadership skills in the GRI and provided vital resources and markets to a struggling Okinawan economy. When calls for demilitarization continue to rely on ethnic nationalism, the solutions activists proposed to extricate Okinawa from its bind retrace the same ground that initially authorized US military incursion. Indeed, efforts to make Okinawans more independent motivated USCAR and the GRI to build Okinawan colonies in South America.

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<sup>559</sup> Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006). Yuichiro Onishi, *Transpacific Antiracism: Afro-Asian Solidarity in 20th-Century Black America, Japan, and Okinawa* (New York: NYU Press, 2014).

Based on my study of the 1955 and 1965 protests in chapters four and five, I would like to speculate on another interpretation for ongoing antimilitary resistance in Okinawa. I have shown that conflicts between Okinawan landowners and military land evaluators arose when the two parties disagreed on land value and that the proclivity to disagree had little basis in one's ethnic identification. If ethnicity alone determined one's politics, then anti-military protests would involve all Okinawans. Yet, some Okinawans abetted military land acquisitions. They counseled landholders to move, resisted requests by villagers to intervene on the behalf of evicted landowners, and promised USCAR their full cooperation. Similarly, acts defying military plans were more calculated decisions than automatic responses. Landholders resolved not to lease their land and developed strategies to question the legitimacy of USCAR procedures. Whereas USCAR wanted Okinawans to see the worth of land in dollars and cents so that the military could compensate for its occupation, Okinawan landholders generated many definitions to undercut military appraisals. Some altered their holdings so that they could say that military calculations were outdated and underpriced. Others refused to tie the significance of land to money altogether. They argued that the land was worth their life or said that any transaction was incommensurable because the replacement plots the military offered could not replicate all the nooks and neighbors characterizing the land the military hoped they relinquish.

Such individual conflicts accumulated and, in the mass rallies that followed, the different interests of protestors aligned under the demand for justice, not identity. Protest tactics prevented the resolution of their disputes through military channels and the military system was well equipped to handle demands that ethnic identity be recognized. Indeed, what allowed the US military to "resolve" the land question was precisely its ability to make legible an Okinawan subject that harbored a uniform set of desires. After forcing Okinawan delegates to supply one

point of view and one basic value per unit of land that Okinawans deemed fair, the US developed the Price Report. US officials proposed a repayment plan that claimed to elevate the economic status of Okinawan farmers while accommodating military land acquisitions. Instead of lump sum payments, which GRI representatives said was the source of disagreements, the US government offered farmers compounded interest and development loans to improve property values. The US offer purported to generate greater profits, but conflicts over land use persisted long after the compromise because money was not, in fact, what the military's detractors desired.

If calls to foster Okinawan independence only inspired the military to enact policies that purported to cultivate Okinawanness, then, this dissertation argues, that anticolonial resistance expressed the impossible. In their opposition, protestors entertained the basic question: what would it be to live without the military and, by extension, an economy where the military was seen as a stimulant? This, I believe, was the overarching consideration that farmers in Miyako forced when they opposed GRI efforts to merge local sugar factories. Due to Miyako's economic backwardness, military scientists proclaimed Miyako farmers less evolved than their peers on the Okinawan mainland. They thought residents of the outlying island more incapable of political action and recommended policies intending to increase productivity, improve the standard of living, and raise the level of political consciousness as they had elsewhere in occupied Okinawa. Their goal was for Miyako islanders, like Okinawans everywhere, to express their convictions through elections within a two-party political system. Farmers refused, and in fact, forced USCAR and GRI to suspend merger plans. In doing so, they realized the unthinkable under prevailing military thinking. Not only were Miyako protestors politicized—that is, aware of the implications of USCAR and GRI policies and maneuvers—they were mobilized to act.

Furthermore, Miyako protestors registered their demands at a moment when USCAR scientists deemed politics noticeably absent. Without resorting to the ballot box, they forced accommodations from both USCAR and the GRI to show that they—Miyako farmers—commanded sugar production. Any decision affecting the local industry must first obtain their collective approval. Where US military scientists established institutions to mold minds, the significance of assertions that put farmers squarely in control of their shared livelihoods cannot be underemphasized.

Unlike the 1955 and 1965 mobilizations, the reversion movement advocated an idea that was already known. The claim that Okinawans were proper Japanese, in fact, structured Okinawa's prewar trajectory. Its emergence corresponded with the Meiji state's decision to annex the Ryukyu kingdom, and the fact that Japanese and Okinawan ethnologists alike conducted study after study measuring the likeness of the two groups rendered a specious dichotomy fact. Whereas subjects within the premodern Ryukyu Islands defined themselves against China or rival kingdoms, Okinawans and Japanese increasingly measured their faults and progress against the other.

The US relied on the same racial discourse when they "liberated" Okinawa after World War II. Thus, USCAR preferred conceding to Okinawan nationalists despite their anti-American stance. When Okinawans across the board actively defined a future free from the military and its social vision, the US preferred restoring the Okinawan race to altogether losing sight of the Okinawan opposition. The former remained with the realm of possibility, and so USCAR prepared for Okinawa's reversion long before May 15, 1972. They negotiated with the Japanese government to provide proper channels for Okinawan participation and encouraged Japanese investment in Okinawa to connect the two economies as the US once did with the military force.

USCAR also convened study groups to identify potential problems so that the US, Japan, and GRI could develop their own acceptable remedies. Of course, the institutions engendering expressions of Okinawan identity after reversion disappointed, but so, too, did those of postcolonial states that seized power after decolonization.

Okinawa is not a sovereign nation, and so the belief that only independent Okinawan state can extricate the US military influence continues to attract many who oppose the US military presence. Because governments and international organizations celebrate sovereignty, that Okinawa ought to be for Okinawans is the easiest, most obvious solution to the military crisis. Many who support the anti-military cause believe this is key, and they accordingly dedicate their energies to reproducing cultural forms they consider undeniably theirs. Yet, the characteristics they attribute to proper Okinawan subjects delimit not only an idyllic culture, allegedly free from outside contact, but also who participates within their anticolonial movement. That social scientific metrics can accurately categorize people and their cultures is itself a legacy of US and Japanese colonial discourse, and such demands that subjects be whole and stable have sustained policies that continue to alienate and conquer.

During my fieldwork, I met many Okinawans and non-Okinawans alike who were paradoxically critical of the military presence but unsure about their ability to engage the anti-military movement. One friend admitted that she considered herself a “bad Okinawan” for her inability to speak Uchinaguchi, the Okinawan dialect, or adequately perform Okinawan traditions. Though she saw the hierarchies within the military system and herself attended the mass rallies against the US deployment of Ospreys or construction on Henoko Bay, she did not think she was capable of contributing further. She preferred to keep her distance and her activities unpublicized. Her inability to feel at home within emerging debates about the US

military problem is not idiosyncratic for complaints about the current generation's ambivalence towards the US, Japan, and Okinawa's future are common. I share these anxieties, too, because I believe critical engagement with one's surroundings is an active choice.

At the same time, I also hope that radical circles broadened the conditions for involvement so that knotty questions could be posed and decisions carefully made. After all, where do Okinawans with ties to mainland Japan or US servicemen stand, for example, when participation in anticolonial politics is contingent on maintaining cultural purity? And what of US troops or Filipinos who come to Okinawa with military contracts and are caught between a public that distrusts their motives and employers that maintain their superiority? Must those who cannot authentically be Okinawa be excluded or subsume themselves to self-proclaimed, full Okinawans in order for anticolonial politics to flourish? This dissertation maintains that they do not for what troubled the US military historically was when activists eroded the boundaries clarifying discrete epistemological objects. In the coming confrontations with US military power, my hope is that activists take on this challenge and advocate for the new and unprecedented within prevailing traditions.