

Rise Up: Okinawa Protests Against Foreign Occupation

by

John Edwin Dietrich III

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Approved by:

Major Professor  
Lisa Melander, Ph.D.

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## **Abstract**

Okinawa, Japan has a long history of struggle with Japan and the United States of America. Okinawa was annexed by the Japanese during the Shogunate, mistreated by Imperial Japan during World War II, destroyed during the Battle of Okinawa, and occupied by U.S. military. Okinawa hosts some of the largest U.S. military bases outside of the Continental United States. Since Okinawa has been occupied by the U.S. military since World War II, it also has a history of contentious politics and protests against the occupation. Okinawa's economy and cultural identity within the domestic and international spheres with the U.S. military and the Government of Japan has shaped its political protest identities. The "Okinawan Struggle" has evolved and into a new form, but often seen as a long lasting and unified struggle. This thesis explores Okinawa's different protest episodes during different governing administrations and different economic structures.

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## **Dedication**

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction

*“Even the weeds are burnt. By the end of June, there will be no more food. This is how the Okinawan people have fought the war. And for this reason I ask that you give the Okinawan people special consideration this day.”*

-Admiral Minoru Ota, Imperial Japanese Navy 1945

Admiral Ota wrote this telegram to the Imperial Japanese Army 32<sup>nd</sup> army before committing seppuku (Kerr 1967). In the telegram, Ota described how Okinawans suffered throughout the war. He complained how the Japanese army was negligent and that the assault by Allied Powers had ruined Okinawa and left its people in destitution. Okinawa lost a third of its population during the Battle of Okinawa. Instead of honoring Ota’s request, the mainland government first abandoned Okinawa during the battle and as well as a second time to the U.S. military in 1952 (Kerr 1967). Okinawa’s subsequent return to Japan in 1972 was expected to be viewed as a strong reunion like that of a father and son. However, the Japanese fatherland treated Okinawa more like a distant cousin than a close son (Kerr 1967).

Okinawa was a colony under the Japanese feudal Shimazu clan of Satsuma. After it was annexed by Japan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Okinawa was treated more like a colony than a prefecture like others on the mainland and thus more expendable to the Japanese (Kerr 1967). Japan then handed Okinawa and its people over to the U.S. military under the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Okinawa’s return to Japan in 1972 from the U.S. military regime proved to be no different. Japanese again treated Okinawa like a virtual colony and Okinawa became Japan’s poorest prefecture, holding the highest rate of unemployment in Japan. The U.S. military, meanwhile, maintained a significant military presence on the island.

During the U.S. occupation of Okinawa, Okinawa relied heavily on the “base economy” (Tanji 2007). When Okinawa returned to Japan, its economy shifted its dependence from the U.S. bases to government subsidies from Tokyo, and a service industry focused on Japanese tourism (Hiroshi 2011). Okinawa’s service economy emerged during the U.S. occupation and catered primarily to Americans (Hiroshi 2011). After 1972, Okinawa’s service economy refocused on Japanese tourists. Mainland Japanese businesses bought the best beaches and built resorts for mainland Japanese patrons. The Mainland businesses benefited from Okinawa’s resort tourism. However, local businesses have only benefited from off-resort souvenir shopping by resort tourists. Before and after 1972, Japanese tourism strategists pushed Okinawa to become exotic (Figal 2008). The strategists urged Okinawans to develop their unique “Ryukyuan/Okinawan” heritage and improve Okinawa’s subtropical environment to attract more Japanese tourist (Gerald Figal 2008).<sup>1</sup> Japan pushed to reinvent Okinawa’s image as the “Hawaii of Japan.” But Japanese tourists regarded Okinawa’s war experience as a part of the Okinawan heritage. The Okinawan war tourism attracted Japanese tourists. Okinawan pacifists, in the meantime, used the images of war to protest against the U.S. occupation and war.

Shifts in the service sector (especially tourism) between the 1950s and 1960s affected the political and social movement structures. The service sector ultimately drove a political wedge between the Okinawan protest communities. As a result, Okinawan protest communities questioned Okinawa’s dependence on “imperial money” provided by the Japanese and U.S. governments. Okinawa’s economic and political structure was dependent on foreign governments. Okinawa’s economy depended on the U.S. government for a government budget,

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<sup>1</sup> Nago District, Okinawa, hosts the US Marine Corps military base Camp Schwab. As Matthew Allen (2002) explains, Nago has a history of military related crimes and mixed protest.



public works, aid, and industry during the U.S. occupation. The U.S. military administration dictated Okinawa's legislation as the highest authority in Okinawa's government. The U.S. military used Okinawa's dependence on the U.S. bases as leverage to control certain parts of Okinawa's social structure. Okinawa was less economically dependent on the U.S. military after its reversion to Japan. Instead, Okinawa depended on aid from the government in Tokyo and mainland Japanese tourists. Okinawa's protest communities potentially threatened Okinawans that relied on government aid or Okinawa's single most important industry. Okinawan protest communities avoided confrontational rhetoric that economically threatened Okinawan livelihoods.

The "Okinawa Struggle" is not a linear social movement (Tanji 2007). Although the U.S. military was identified as a primary opponent by Okinawan social movements, the social protests took different forms within an episode of contention. Each one of these episodes demonstrated a stage in evolution of the "Okinawan Struggle." Okinawa's political structure under U.S. military rule hanged constantly. Furthermore, there was little continuity in U.S. military administration policies. There were distinct structural changes and identity shifts through each episode of Okinawan protest. Okinawan protest identities shifted to parallel the political and economic structure at any given time. The protest communities' identities did not shift instantaneously with structural changes. Instead, available protests identities took advantage of opportunities within structures. The U. S. government provided political opportunities for protests communities by allowing civilian participation in the government. Economic incentives were important for protest repertoires, but the protests became more abstract. The "Okinawa struggle" connected different protest communities by symbolizing as a single protest community throughout

Okinawa's political history. The "Okinawa Struggle" is an illusion of a long standing social movement.

Each episode contributed to a distinct era of Okinawan protest identity. The Japanese and U.S. national governments did not dictate Okinawa's political and economic structures. Numerous local governments and organizations, such as landowner and the Okinawa Teachers Association (OTA) also played major roles in the formation of the Okinawan protest communities. To understand the formation of the Okinawan protest identity, it is important to analyze these organizations and their engagement with other economic and political organizations. The purpose of this thesis is to understand the progression of the Okinawan sentiment towards the U.S. military bases. The anti-base sentiment in Okinawa is presented as a consistent and linear protest movement within the world order. I will study Okinawa's cultural and protest history to see: Okinawa's protest ability within the U.S.-Japan Alliance; the differences between each major cycles of contention; if the "Okinawan Struggle" is not linear, how has evolved as a local struggle into an international struggle. This research will help understand where the anti-base sentiment comes from and who typically participates in anti-base politics.

Protest communities used their society's political structure as a criterion for mobilizing supporters and creating repertoires. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Okinawa went through a series of economic, political, and social changes. The Okinawans, Japanese, and U.S. officials' perceptions of Okinawans changed with the structural changes. Okinawan protest communities created their identities based on the political-economic and social environment. Okinawa's economy relied largely on a one industry and one foreign government/consumer. In the 1950s, Okinawa relied on the economic and political aid the U.S. government and military. In the 1960s

and 1970s, Okinawa's service industry's consumer base was U.S. military personnel. In the 1990s, Okinawa relied on the government in Tokyo's economic aid and a tourist industry dependent of Japanese consumers. Theories of social movements regarding cultural framing, ideology dynamics of contention, political processes, and tourism framed Okinawa's political and economic development in post-war Okinawa. Social movement theories explained the ebb and flow of social movements and changed protest community identities within certain political environments (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly 2001). Tourism theory explained the effects of tourism/service on an economy that relied on one industry and one consumer market (Enloe 1989).

Social movements rise and fall in cycles of protest and are always changing. They are greatly influenced by domestic and international trends. An analysis of social movements as contentious politics allows us to see how Okinawa was influenced by domestic and international politics over time. Contentious politics are episodic, collective political struggles between at least two claimants – a challenger and authorities (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Changes within the political structure provide political opportunities that may encourage claimants to take action against the legitimacy of another claimant (McAdam 1999). Episodes represent an increased frequency of contentious politics between claimants that began with changes or threats from the political structure (McAdam et al. 2001). This framework of analysis focused on the incentives that political structures provide to social movements.

Political conflicts (contention) are important to political opportunities for collective action. Contention can reveal the weakness of authorities and opportunities for potential allies to act against authorities (Tarrow 1998). Political opportunities are not contentious unless challengers use them, and contention increases as more people join in contentious action.

Challengers encourage would-be challengers to mount challenges of their own, which increases the potential for action. Changes in government policies expose weaknesses in the polity and create opportunities for contentious actors (Tarrow 1998). The political and environmental context is important for a movement organization's activity – whether they are interest groups, grassroots groups, or political parties (Dieter Rucht 1996). Challengers in a repressive regime are less likely to establish political parties because they are easily targeted for repression. But when a state's capacity to repress challengers becomes limited as a result of reform (public elections), previously repressed challengers may view this as a new opportunity that they can exploit. This may create an atmosphere that encourages other groups to act.

Of course, challengers must work within the political-cultural climate that they live in, whether that is a restrictive military regime or an open democratic government (Gamson and Meyers 1996). In contrast with restrictive regimes, challengers expect the regime to repress any challenges to its legitimacy. Challengers typically rely on big opportunities, such as public elections to mount protests, though the types of protests they adopt will be designed to fit within a regime's political and cultural structures (Gamson and Meyer 1996).

Social movement organizations prescribe a set of cultural rules about what organizational models actors may or may not use and what they can expect (Clemens 1996). Changes in the political structure will change the repertoires set by social movements (Tilly 2004). "Repertoires of collective action" are shaped by the ongoing development of an organization's models within a society and that society's shifting political conditions (Clemens 1996; Tilly 2004). Social movements try to adopt a repertoire that fits the political situation (Zald 1996). That organization's repertoire is only sufficient for mobilizing actors if it is culturally acceptable

(Clemens 1996). The external and internal conflicts of social movements provide the base for future repertoires (Gamson and Meyer 2006; Zald 1996).

Nationalist movements often treat women as symbols rather than as active participants (Enloe 1989; Hein 1999). Women who participate in movements compete with contemporary images of citizenship, race, gender and human rights by expanding the role of women in protest communities and society. Prostitution was an issue in entertainment districts, but Okinawan and U.S. officials overlooked prostitution because prostitution was a major part of the Okinawa's service economy. Issues regarding prostitution are often subject to be overgeneralized in national movements and women take on a different role in the movement. Nationalist movements frame prostitution as a small problem that will be resolved when the movement for citizenship and national rights are met. Prostitutes in Okinawa were either Okinawan women or women trafficked from Southeast Asia through the sex-trade. Prostitution in Okinawa became an issue of citizenship, race, gender, and human rights for women in Okinawa and in international communities against prostitution (Hein 1999).

Tourism, as a part of an imperialist system, is a way to exploit and influence foreign territories with imperialist ideologies (Enloe 1989). Imperial nation-states promote tourism as an industry that can turn the poverty of poor countries into a tourist attraction (Enloe 1989). According to Eloe (1989), tourism replaces industrial sectors and agricultural sectors and creates poor country's dependency of "foreign" money. Tourism simultaneously asserts the cultural dominance of tourists over a poor country and legitimizes their power as nation-state (Enloe 1989) Okinawa's heritage tourism was promoted heavily by mainland Japanese officials and tourism experts. Japanese tourism experts pushed Okinawa to promote what mainland Japanese perceived to be exotically "Okinawan," even if something was not indigenous to Okinawa.

Tourism is regarded as a service industry. The literature on Okinawa's economy in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s does not pay much attention to the tourist economy. Heritage tourism is a particular kind of tourism, which has been actively promoted by local governments and private business in some countries (Enloe 1989; Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois 1999; Chhabra et al. 2003). In terms of urban revitalization, "touristification" requires functions and infrastructures that are new to urban communities (Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois 1999). Tourism is a long-term commitment at all level of the community and political structures. A successful tourism market needs political support, social and economic (financial) sponsorship, and incentives for innovation (Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois 1999). Tourism's capacity to revitalize and develop new products requires cultural and heritage resources (castles, museums, crafts, performances, food) (Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois 1999). Chhabra et al. (2003) explains that heritage tourists seek direct experiences with past and present cultural landscapes, crafts, foods, and performances.

Chapter Two discusses Okinawa's history from when it was an independent kingdom in the 14<sup>th</sup> century to its experiences during World War Two, and the years leading up to the United States-Japan Peace treaty in 1952. Okinawa's feudal history as an exotic sovereign kingdom became important to Okinawa's heritage tourism economy after the war. It demonstrated that Okinawa was different from the Japanese feudal culture, and had a special cultural and political relationship with feudal East Asia. This chapter discusses Okinawa's annexation by Japan in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the Meiji Restoration, the colonial relationship Japan established with Okinawa, and Okinawa's experience as a Japanese prefecture. Okinawa's colonial treatment by the Japanese was made clear by Okinawa's slow assimilation process: politically, economically, and culturally. The government in Tokyo was

slow to implement mainland policies in Okinawa, because they believed that Okinawa was too incompetent to follow their directive.

Okinawa's treatment as a Japanese colony became clear during and after World War Two. First, the Imperial Japanese Army used violence to suppress the Okinawan language. Second, Tokyo sacrificed Okinawa as a battleground without providing Okinawa with proper provisions to fight the Americans. Third, Okinawans endured atrocities at the hands of the Japanese and Americans. Okinawa lost a third of its indigenous population, which was more than the Japanese and Americans casualties during the Battle of Okinawa. Before the Battle of Okinawa ended, the U.S. military took administrative measures to control the civilian population. More importantly, U.S. forces built and rebuilt military installations. For the Americans, constructing Okinawa as a military base was more important than reconstructing civilian life for people in Okinawa. After Japan surrendered, Okinawa went through a period of political and economic limbo. The U.S. military treated Okinawa as conquered territory. Conquering Okinawa allowed the U.S. military to build bases without conflicting with the Atlantic Charter. During the war, the U.S. government and British government agreed not to expand their territory through war in the Atlantic Charter. Politicians in Washington believed that rebuilding civilian life and complete political administration in Okinawa conflicted with the Atlantic Charter. Slow international politics kept Okinawa from rebuilding social, political, and economic structures.

Chapter Three begins with the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1952. The treaty established Okinawa's legal relationship with the U.S. and major structural changes within the U.S. military administration and the civilian government. As a result of the treaty, Japan handed Okinawa to the United States. Although U.S. officials provided a civilian government, it was under careful scrutiny of the military government. The reformed Government of the Ryukyu

Islands (GRI) had legislative, judicial, and executive authority over the civilian population, but the GRI greatly influenced by the military authorities. Military officials had the final word over GRI legislation and economic investments.

The 1950s were a politically contentious period, which pitted landowners against the military government. Anti-base sentiments grew among Okinawan political parties regarding the legal use of private land and unfair treatment of Okinawans by the U.S. military. The landowners' disputes persuaded the GRI to adopt the Four Principles for Land Protection, which provided fair compensation to landowners if their property was appropriated or damaged by the U.S. military. The Four Principles provoked a special Congressional subcommittee to investigate Okinawa and the landowners' claims. The subcommittee chairperson, Senator Melvin Price, issued a report on Okinawa after a short, three day visit. Report ignited an "Island-Wide" protest against Price's report, which included landowner and non-landowners. The U.S. military and landowners agreed to a fiscal settlement. The protest community thought the settlement ignored the Four Principles, because it failed to stop the U.S. military's appropriation of land. The protest community moved onto other issues against the U.S. military, except for a few landowners. These landowners denied the United States' compensation, keeping to the Four Principles. Some protesters bought land, as small as 35.5 square feet or one Tsubo, to defy the United States (Tanji 2006).

Chapter Three analyzes the growth of Japanese nationalism and the "Reversion" movement in the 1960s. In attempt to appease the reversion sentiment among some Okinawans, U.S. High Command (HICOM) and Washington officials relinquished more legislative powers to the GRI. Nonetheless, Okinawans objected to the moves, because HICOM still had the power to veto any legislation proposed by the GRI, allowing HICOM to maintain its authority over



Okinawa. In 1967, the reversion sentiment grew when the GRI Department of Education and the conservative Democratic Party attempted to pass two legislative bills that introduced mainland Japanese educational standards and an obstruction of civil service pay, and protests erupted. The bills imposed limits on teachers' ability to participate in protest activities. The "Twin Bills" sparked major political unrest involving teachers, civil servants, and reversionists. Although the biggest structural change for civil Okinawa was the GRI's first public election in 1968 and the election of a prominent reversion activist, it was not enough to end tensions between Okinawans and the U.S. military government.

An absolute pacifist sentiment grew in Okinawa. The images of war in Vietnam reminded Okinawans of their experiences of war. Okinawan pacifists felt responsible for the atrocities committed against the Vietnamese, because Okinawa hosted the U.S. marines. The Vietnam War received the number of U.S. troops moving through bases in Okinawa. Military personnel contributed to Okinawa's base and service economy. Okinawa's service economy laid down the foundation for Okinawa's tourism economy. But service industry businesses built communities near military bases, which contributed to high crime around residential and entertainment districts in Okinawa. Okinawa's pre-reversion tourism economy compared to its post-reversion tourism economy was a new concept and underrepresented in pre-reversion protest communities. Reversionists wanted Japanese citizenship to increase their quality of life in Okinawa. Meanwhile, entertainment business workers were cautious to protest against their main clientele. Crimes related to military personnel in entertainment districts went unreported and unrepresented in protest communities. But after a traffic incident in 1970, a riot ensued, in which five thousand people participated. The riot occurred in the entertainment district of Koza city. Okinawans

rioted as a new form of protest against the U.S. military. Although an isolated incident, the riot represented an underrepresented community in Okinawa, the service industry.

Major structural changes occurred in preparation for an after Okinawa's reversion to Japan. In 1972, political activity against the U.S. military in Okinawa began to decline. There was some small-scale defiance, by the "one-tsubo" landowners, but there were no large-scale demonstrations. Chapter Four explains the infrastructural and the political changes, which includes the assimilation of Okinawan organizations, such as the OTA, into their Japanese counterparts. Although Okinawa was returned to Japan, and Okinawans' regained Japanese citizenship, the U.S. military maintained a significant presence on the island. The Okinawans did not mobilize against the continued U.S. military presence. The Okinawan organizations that spearheaded the reversion movement, such as the OTA and GRI, lost their ability to mobilize their Okinawan supporters when they assimilated into the Japanese Teachers Union and the Okinawan Prefectural Government. Pre-reversion organizations functioned within larger political organizations that did not protest against the Japanese Government or U.S. military.

Chapter Four explains Okinawa's shift from a base-economy to an economy dependent on Japanese government subsidies and tourism. By the 1990s, Okinawa's three major industries were government subsidies (public works), tourism, and the U.S. military's payments to use civilian land and on-base jobs for Okinawans. These industries, similar to pre-reversion base and service economies, relied on money from government in Washington and Tokyo, and from mainland vacations. There are two aspects to Okinawa's tourism economy. The first aspect is the unique cultural and beach resort tourism, which was pushed by mainland business strategists in the 1960s. The second is the peace tourism, which includes visiting battle sites and museums displaying the horrors of war. Although mainland strategists applauded the battle site tours, they

also asked the Okinawa Tourism Association to focus on making Okinawa a more exotic place, a “Hawaii of Japan” that catered to Japanese vacationers. Although both were important to Okinawan identity, the idea of a “Japanese Hawaii” was reinvented by mainland Japanese and the Okinawa Tourism Association. Okinawa’s image was created by mainland Japanese perceptions of Okinawa. The idea of “Japan’s Hawaii” contradicted the reversion movement’s image as Japanese nationals, by differentiating between Okinawans and mainland Japanese.

Chapter Five evaluates the relation between the political, economic, and social structures and social movement identities during each set of protests. I explain how the political-economy structure, especially Okinawa’s service and tourism industry, played an important role in decision-making in Okinawa. The literature on Okinawan social movements has alluded to the effects of the political-economy, but has downplayed its significance.

## **Literature**

Miyume Tanji (2006) explored the concept of the “Okinawa Struggle” as a homogeneous and continuous social movement. In fact, the “Okinawan Struggle” is a fragmented and diverse group of social movements that deployed different methods of protest (Tanji 2006). Although the depiction of the “Okinawan Struggle” as a unified protest movement is a myth, it serves to provide a diverse protest community within a common cultural identity (Tanji 2006). The “struggle” represents Okinawa’s distinct history and culture from the mainland Japanese, before and after World War II. The myth is the collective and shared experience of the Okinawan, which protest communities used as a symbol of unification between numerous protest organizations (Tanji 2006).

Tanji (2006) explains that “island-wide” protests in the 1950s focused on the rights of the Okinawan landowners, which was comprised of different groups: landowner associations, the

Okinawa Teachers Association, labor unions, and left/socialist political parties. The different groups shifted their attention away from the landowner disputes after many landowners accepted lease agreements with U.S. authorities, which undermined the ‘island-wide’ protest community’s initial demand for “Four Principles for Land Protection.” Landowners’ acceptance of lease agreements split the pro-base landowners from “anti-war” landowners (Tanji 2006). The protest community then focused their attention on anti-militarism and the Japanese nationalist movement, also known as the “Reversion” movement. The Okinawan protest community broadened its repertoire to include more organizations and Okinawans sympathetic to the “Reversion” movement.

The 1960s set of protests were made of different organizations with different repertoires. But the protest community regarded Japanese citizenship as an end-all solution to Okinawa’s problems with the U.S. military. A few groups, such as the Anti-War Student’s Congress, opposed the reversion movement (Tanji 2006). The Anti-War Student’s Congress and other groups argued that the reversion movement undermined the Okinawan identity by trying to assimilate with the Japanese identity. The anti-reversion groups argued for options other than assimilating with Japan or disregard Okinawa’s return to Japan entirely. But the reversion movement viewed the Japanese nation-state as its protector and disregarded the differences between the Japanese identity and their own (Tanji 2006).

The term “Okinawa Struggle” was first used by the Okinawan protest community during their anti-war protest against a meeting between President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato (Tanji 2006). But authorities in Tokyo and Washington paid little attention to protests in Okinawa. Okinawa’s reversion to Japan marked a downturn to in activities by Okinawa’s protest community. Many groups banded or merged with their Japanese counterparts.

For instance, the Okinawa Teachers Association merged with the Japan Teachers Association. The anti-war “One-tsubo” landowners continued to defy the U.S.-Japan alliance by taking legal actions whenever the opportunity arose. During this low period of Okinawan protests, some people organized women’s and environmental groups. The Okinawa protest community was mostly divided and inactive throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. In 1995, the rape of an Okinawan school girl reinvented the Okinawan protest community into the “Okinawa Struggle” (Tanji 2006).

The “Okinawa Struggle” has three distinct “episodes of contention” (Tanji 2006). In *Power in Movements*, Sidney Tarrow (1998) agrees that protest movements ebb and flow through cycles of contentious politics whenever opportunities for mobilizing protest arises. Cycles of protests rely on the relationships between political structures. Political structures are anything from government organizations/regimes to the protest communities. Internal regime changes can provide resources for other resource deficient institutions (Tarrow 1998). The combination of structural relationships that provide opportunities are numerous and an in depth study of an “episode of contention” explores those structural relationships. Tanji’s application of Tarrow’s theory of social movements provided a framework to study Okinawa’s three major protest episodes as cycles of protest for the same movement. Once the political structure is mapped out, Tanji applies Benedict Anderson’s theory that communities, such as the “Okinawa Struggle” and Japanese nationalism, are socially constructed through a broad context, without face-to-face interaction. The nation-state is imagined because citizens perceive that equality transcend throughout the entire nation to each individual, regardless of any inequalities (Anderson 1983). According to Tanji (2006), the “Okinawa Struggle” demonstrated that

Okinawa's protest identity was constructed through the political relationships between authorities in Okinawa, Japan, and the United States.

Masamichi S. Inoue's (2007) study of the collective Okinawan anti-base supporters, "We Are Okinawan," and the pro-base supporters, "We Are Okinawan of a Different Kind," demonstrated the importance of economic opportunity, gender relationships, and class relationships to Okinawan identity and the political choices that different groups made. It was an extension of his article, "We Are Okinawans of a Different Kind," which explored the social issues of citizenship, culture and identity, and local life under the U.S.-Japan alliance (Inoue 2004). Inoue (2004) argued that the U.S.-Japan alliance caused the fragmentation of a once unified people in Okinawa. The structure changed from: Okinawan people under U.S. occupation to Japanese citizens in Okinawa under an U.S.-Japan alliance. Okinawans realized their position in the U.S.-Japan alliance was unbalanced and reevaluated their identity within the Japanese nation, especially residents of Nago District.<sup>2</sup> Inoue expanded his argument and addressed criticisms of this article in his book, *Okinawa and the U.S. Military: Identity Making in the Age of Globalization* (2007). Inoue (2007) argued that the Okinawan anti-base identity was historically rooted in pre-war Okinawa. Okinawan opposition to military bases grew out of their experience as Japanese Imperial subjects in the pre-war period, their experiences during the Battle of Okinawa, and their experiences with U.S. occupation after the war. The U.S. occupation treated Okinawans like Imperial Japan did. Okinawans had no citizenship or authority over themselves and were underdeveloped compared to mainland Japan. Japanese

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<sup>2</sup> Nago District, Okinawa, hosts the US Marine Corps military base Camp Schwab. As Matthew Allen (2002) explains, Nago has a history of military related crimes and mixed protest.

citizenship meant the protection of Okinawans' human rights and economic prosperity for the protest communities during the 1960s (Inoue 2007).

After Okinawa was returned to Japan, there was little political activity from anti-base Okinawans, but in 1995, after a 12-year-old school girl in the Henoko District was raped, the Okinawan anti-base movements re-emerged. Okinawans were now citizens under the U.S. – Japan alliance and organized an anti-base movement with a reimagined Okinawan identity: “We are Okinawans.” Okinawans shed their identity as an oppressed people and adopted a new self-confident identity, with diverse backgrounds and protest repertoires (Inoue 2007). “We are Okinawans” disregarded the importance of working-class Okinawans, especially in Henoko. Since the 1950, Camp Schwab restructured social ties by generating economic opportunities for working class residents in Henoko (2007). The Henoko community relied on Camp Schwab for its economic development since the 1950s. Even after Okinawa’s reversion, the Henoko community relied on the base directly and indirectly, whether it was for jobs, service industries, lease agreements, or federal financial aid. The anti-base “We are Okinawans” movement threatened the livelihood of many Henoko residents who depended on the base and did not provide them with economic alternatives, should the base be removed. This was when, as Inoue (2007) argued, the Okinawans split into two groups; anti-base, “We are Okinawans” and pro-base “We are Okinawans of a Different Kind.”

Inoue focused on Okinawa’s economic effects on Henoko’s protest communities. Okinawa’s economic and social ties are much deeper than Henoko’s experience, but it is still an important part of the experience. Today, the largest contributor to Okinawa’s economy is Tokyo’s financial aid; the second is the tourist industry, then the base. Okinawa’s tourist industry relies heavily on mainland tourists seeking a subtropical vacation in an exotic culture that is

different from Japan's own. The tourist industry promotes Okinawa's cultural and geographical differences. Part of that culture, as Inoue (2007), Tanji (2006), and Allen (2002) argued is Okinawa's experience during the war and the presence of the U.S. military bases. Okinawa's tourist industry contributed very little to the economy in the 1950s and 1960s. Okinawa's tourist industry first developed during the political contention against the U.S. occupation and focused on Okinawa's war experience (Figal 2008). After Okinawa's reversion, the tourist industry celebrated Okinawa's history as an independent kingdom. Studying the differences and transformation of Okinawa's tourist economy will help understand Okinawa's anti-base and pro-base social movement identities.

Matthew Allen (2002) argued that the perception of the Okinawan identity overlooked the diverse local cultures in Okinawa. He explained that the two villages on Kumejima (Kume Island), which was removed from Okinawa's protest communities, demonstrated two different Okinawan identities. Kumejima was removed from Okinawa's protest community because it is disconnected from Okinawa's mainland and it never hosted a U.S. military base. Kumejima's residents did not have the same problems as the rest of Okinawa. Kumejima's political and economic structures were left alone by the U.S. military, politics in mainland Okinawa, and politics in Tokyo. The two villages on Kumejima differed from mainland Okinawa because they were isolated from mainland Okinawa politics and culture. The villages differed from each other because their basic day-to-day lives were different such as: food, industry, history, and locality (Allen 2002). Allen (2002) explained that Kumejima's political dialogue about the tourist industry showed their differences. Kumejima officials realized they had different visions for the tourist industry and different ideas of what it meant to be a Kumejima resident. In order to promote the tourist industry, the Kumejima officials attempted to restructure the two villages'



cultural identity so that it was marketable to mainland Okinawan and Japanese tourists (Allen 2002). During the process, the Kumejima residents evaluated what was most important to their identity as a Kumejima resident and what was most marketable to tourists. The tourist market perceived the residents on Kumejima as the same. The market pushed Kumejima officials and residents to culturally unify to accommodate the tourist market (Allen 2002). Tourism forced the different Kumejima villages to identify as a unified culture, which began to identify with the protest communities on mainland Okinawa (Allen 2002).

Tourism is typically regarded as a service industry. Hiroshi Kakazu (2011) explained that tourism is more complex than simply service. In fact: Okinawa, for example, aside from the conventional tourism industry such as hotels, travel agents, transportation, souvenirs and travel guides, the industry is deeply and extensively related to local cultures, production sectors, information and communication technology (ICT), various entertainments and sports, transportation, marketing and promotional activities, conventions and preservation of natural and cultural assets (Hiroshi Kakazu 2011: 4). Besides government subsidies and base revenues, Okinawa relies on a relatively unsustainable tourism industry that threatens Okinawa's limited environmental resources (Kakazu 2011). Kakazu (2001) explained that reconceptualization provided a "development framework to diversify and revitalize diminishing local agriculture and manufacturing as well as conserving tourism resources including marine and historical and cultural assets" (2011: 4).

## Chapter 2 - The “Okinawan” Experience

The identity of the people in Okinawa has been shaped by three different, historical periods: as the Ryukyu Kingdom, Imperial Japanese subjects, and during World War II and the U.S. military occupation. The political and economic context of each experience shaped the Okinawan identity. The “Okinawan Struggle” focused on the similarities in experiences by the Okinawan people. Okinawans’ shared experiences influenced their cultural identity, which was expressed through clothing, food, music, and religion. Cultural identity is the identity of a group that is influenced by the culture and heritage they belong to. The political, economic, and cultural environment in each period was different enough to suggest that Okinawan protest communities were not one continuous entity.

### Ryukyu Kingdom

Okinawa’s cultural identity was first shaped by the Ryukyu Kingdom. The archipelago, which ran from Formosa to Japan, was first referred to as the Ryukyu Islands by the Ming Dynasty in China. It was ruled by Shuri<sup>3</sup> and in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, the island chain entered formal trade relations with China under China’s tributary system.<sup>4</sup> After years of appeasing the Chinese courts, Ryukyu was dubbed the “Land of Propriety,” which came with additional tributary benefits. Shuri’s maritime economy reached from Korea to South Asia. During this period Okinawa’s calligraphy, architecture, clothing, behavior, and mannerisms were inspired by the Chinese. Chinese influences largely affected the Shuri’s Royal Court, but those influences

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<sup>3</sup> Shuri refers to Ryukyu’s government, a monarchy. It also refers to Shurijo Castle, home of the monarchy and government ceremonies, centered above the port village of Naha (Kerr 1967).

<sup>4</sup> China’s tributary system required countries to send tributes to China before they were permitted to trade at Peking. Faithful tribute countries would be left alone by China. It is noted that large powers like Russia and Britain traded often in Peking and only sent one tribute (Mark Mancall 1968). The Ryukyu Kingdom was regarded as one of the most loyal tributary countries (Kerr 1967).

slowly spread throughout the kingdom. The Ryukyu Kingdom was not always culturally unified (Gregory Smit 1999). The islands that made up the Ryukyus were spread far and wide. People on some islands were isolated, and people spoke different languages on islands across the Ryukyu Kingdom, which meant that an officer of the Shuri court needed a translator to speak with a native of Miyako, an island south of Okinawa mainland – Chuzan (Smit 1999). Sometimes, Ryukyu's strong maritime economy introduced goods from different parts of Asia, but Chinese trade and influence dominated Ryukyu culture.

Japan's interest in Ryukyu grew during the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century (Kerr 1967). Japan was continually in conflict with China and rarely abided to China's tributary terms, Japan used their relationship with Shuri to trade with China. Shuri even mediated between Peking Kyoto during an early 16<sup>th</sup> century dispute. During this period trade expanded across Asia, but they stayed out of Japan, which was fractured into feudal domains but was unified as isolationists. As Europeans became more aggressive, with the Spanish conquest of the Philippines and the British aggression in China, Japan saw Ryukyu as a weakness because Shuri had no standing army. The loss of Shuri's capital, Naha, would cut Japan's point of trade with China and Ryukyu could be used as a mean to undermine Japan's isolationist policies.

In 1609, the Shimazu clan of the Satsuma domain, Japan, invaded and conquered the Ryukyu Kingdom. Shuri, which banned weapons a century earlier, was unable to defend the country against the well trained and well equipped Satsuma army. After a swift victory, the Shimazu clan imprisoned the King of Ryukyu in Satsuma until he agreed to the terms of surrender, which required Shuri to pay yearly proportion of the island's crop to the Satsuma clan. In addition to sending yearly payments, Shuri was required to continue paying tributes both to Peking in China and Kyoto in Japan. The Satsuma clan's primary interest in Ryukyu was its

trade with China. Japan-Sino relations and the government in Kyoto had no direct means to trade with China. The Satsuma clan monopolized Japanese trade with China through Ryukyu. In order to hide Japan's relationship with Ryukyu, Satsuma officials banned Ryukyuan from speaking Japanese and restricted their contact with foreigners. Satsuma officials minimized their communication with the Ryukyu Kingdom to avoid rebuke by China.<sup>5</sup> Satsuma officials insisted that Ryukyu trade only with China and Ryukyu to rely on agriculture, not maritime trade. Because Shuri relied on a barter system, it made trade worth very little through currencies. The Ryukyu Islands barely met standards for sustainable agriculture and relied on the maritime economy to procure building supplies and additional food items (Kerr 1967). Ryukyu cultivated sugar cane and Chinese sweet potatoes, which were considered luxury items in Japan. The loss of its maritime economy forced the Ryukyu Kingdom into poverty. The Ryukyu Kingdom became a Japanese colony, though it was disguised as an independent nation.

China discovered Shuri's relationship with Japan in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and promptly cut trade with Shuri to the bare minimum. Satsuma officials urged Shuri to recover the lost trading rights – the loss was more economically damaging to the Satsuma clan than to Shuri. Although the relationship between Ryukyu and Japan was discovered by China, Satsuma officials required Shuri to maintain their outward appearance well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which was designed to deceive Westerners about their real relationship. Shuri regained some trading rights with China after a long tributary obedience, but the trade never fully recovered (Kerr 1967).

U.S. Navy commodore Matthew Perry made first American contact with the Ryukyu Islands before sailing to mainland Japan. During attempts to establish a formal relationship,

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<sup>5</sup> The Satsuma clan only sent detailed instructions to the Ryukyuan magistrate and dispatched agents to investigate the behavior of Ryukyuan officials and to maintain prohibitions set by the Satsuma clan (Kerr 1967; John King Fairbank 1968).

Perry realized there was a relationship between Ryukyu and Japan, but not its full extent.<sup>6</sup> Perry proclaimed that the Ryukyu Islands were under “limited authority” of the United States, though this had little effect on Perry’s negotiations for open trade relations with Japan. Still, Japan became concerned that Okinawa might be a liability as a means to invade Japan (George Kerr 1967). Perry successfully opened trade relations with Japan before ending his tour in East Asia. He negotiated a compact between Ryukyu and the United States, which allowed favorable conditions for U.S. ships.<sup>7</sup>

### **Annexation and Assimilation**

In January 1868, the Meiji Restoration began in Japan. It began a set of dramatic political, economic, and social changes in Japan. Independent lords surrendered their authority to the new government in Tokyo. In return, the emperor appointed prominent lords as prefectural governors like the prince of Satsuma. Tokyo feared that Ryukyu might be used as a place to launch invasions of Japan. In 1872, a crew from a Ryukyu tribute ship sailing from China was shipwrecked on the coast of Formosa. Its crew was slaughtered by aborigines. Tokyo took this opportunity to claim their sovereignty over the Ryukyu in order to secure Japan’s weak southern borders. Tokyo’s initiative to “protect” Ryukyuans and to procure Shuri’s trade agreements with

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<sup>6</sup> Commodore Perry recognized that the Japanese lied on Ryukyuans. He did not know the status of their sovereignty though. Perry’s inquisition of the Ryukyu Kingdom during the negotiations with Japan taught him that the Prince of Satsuma had some governance over Shuri, but Japan did not admit nor deny its sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands (Roger Pineau 1968; Wallach 1952).

<sup>7</sup> 11 July 1854. The compact allowed United States’ ships to harbor in any port and trade. Ryukyu was required to assist shipwreck American sailors, provide furnishings for anchored ships in Naha to purchase. During the compact’s negotiations, Shuri refused to declare they were fully independent, because of their alliance with China – both parties avoided mentioning Japanese governance (Wallach 1952). The compact ended the first United States’ occupation of Okinawa (Kerr 1967).

the United States, Brittan, and France strengthened Japan's claims over the Ryukyu Islands (Kerr 1967).

Shuri resisted the Meiji government's claim and publically disobeyed the Tokyo's new domestic and international laws (Kerr 1967). Shuri did not prosecute Ryukyuans for breaking Meiji law and had sent a tribute ship to China in defiance of the Tokyo government, which angered the Japanese (Kerr 1967). In response, the Meiji rulers dissolved the Ryukyu monarchy and exiled the king to Tokyo. In 1879, Ryukyu became Okinawa, a Japanese prefecture with a Japanese governing body. The Shuri government was replaced with Japanese politicians, and the Japanese established police and army garrisons on the islands. Leaders in Tokyo angered that they had the best intentions for Ryukyu in Formosa and Ryukyu's sovereignty – that Ryukyu was their responsibility (Kerr 1967).

Under the Meiji government, Okinawa was marked with economic, political, and cultural strife. Leaders in Tokyo treated Okinawa as a political and economic colony, similar to their colonies in Korea and Taiwan – this was particularly true in the application of Japanese cultural assimilation policies (Kerr 1967; Aiko Watanabe 1970; Steve Rabson 1996). Okinawan governors were upcoming mainland politicians who served short terms and then returned to the mainland. Okinawa became a “political training ground” for Japanese politicians.<sup>8</sup> Japanese officials were biased, by politically and socially, against Okinawans. A prince of Japan sent a Japanese representative from the mainland to investigate complaints that the Japanese mayor and police had treated Okinawans unfairly (Kerr 1967). The representative's arrogant and hostile behavior during the investigation sparked riots and protests by Okinawans. Japanese Officials

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<sup>8</sup> Kerr (1967) referred Okinawa as a political training ground for upcoming Japanese politicians. Tokyo officials cycled through governors often. Okinawa was governed by eight different governors within thirteen years.

believed that Okinawans were incapable of handling Japanese political life and were behind Japanese standards of education. Even prominent Shuri officials could obtain only positions at the lowest political echelon (Kerr 1967). Japanese politicians and law enforcement officials viewed Okinawans as “rustic second-class” citizens (Kerr 1967).

Early on, Japanese administrators attempted to suppress non-Japanese cultural practices such as local tattoos, dance and music, religious ceremonies and leadership and they worked hard to organize the Japanese language on the inhabitants (Rabson 1996). Standardizing language through the school system was not successful or well received by Okinawans.<sup>9</sup> Prominent pro-Chinese Okinawans rejected Japanese assimilation policies and saw no value in learning Japanese (Rabson 1996). Pro-Chinese attitudes declined after a series of Japanese victories during the first Sino-Japanese War in April 1895 (S.C.M. Paine 2003). Okinawans promoted Japan’s assimilation process after Japan defeated China, largely because they thought it would be beneficial to assimilate with the victorious and prospering Japan.<sup>10</sup> In conjunction with Japanese teachers, the All-Okinawan Teachers Association taught Japanese more enthusiastically and implemented more drastic punishments against students who spoke native Ryukyuan (Okinawan) languages (Rabson 1996). The government in Tokyo waited to reform the Okinawa prefectural government ten years after mainland Japan implemented similar reform policies. Okinawa’s political, social, and economical systems fell behind to mainland Japan (Matthew Allen 2002 &

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<sup>9</sup> Asserting language assimilation through the school system was unsuccessful because: 1) Okinawan children were from farming families and school was burdensome to family labor; 2) the spread of education in Okinawa was much slower than mainland Japan; 3) Okinawan children were often mistreated by mainland teachers and were not invested in their lessons (Rabson 1996; Kerr 1967; Watanabe 1970).

<sup>10</sup> Rabson (1996) argued the effect of Sino-Japanese War decreased pro-Chinese intellectuals and the majority of Okinawans promoted a “bottom-up” culture shift because it was more beneficial for Okinawa. Watanabe (1970) and Kerr (1967) argued that the Sino-Japanese War allowed Japan to accelerate its assimilation policies in Okinawa, because there was less resistance by pro-Chinese intellectuals.

2003; Watanabe 1970). Okinawans began to immigrate to Japan with the promise of work, but “mainlanders” reminded them of their second class citizenry whenever they spoke or acted Okinawan; such as eating pork, a staple of the Okinawan diet. On occasion, Okinawans caught speaking Okinawan were arrested and convicted for spying (Rabson 1996; Yoko Sellek 2002). The Japanese displayed Okinawans with other Japanese colonial “barbarians in the 1903 anthropological exhibition in Osaka; which prompted an Okinawan editorial complaining that the Japanese treated Okinawans not as Japanese but as a colonized people (Rabson 1996; ben Takara 2007).

Japan’s Meiji parliament, the Diet, evolved similar to Britain’s parliament in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Diet, which elected the Prime Minister, agreed to expand Japan’s power across Asia. Japan warred with Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and China during the second Sino-Japanese war. Although Japan was at war during the years leading to World War II, Japan kept only a small military garrison in Okinawa (Kerr 1967). Much of Japan’s military was spread throughout Asia conquering and policing new territories. Japan’s generals were uncertain of Okinawa’s loyalty and were reluctant to have Okinawans join the Imperial Japanese Army (I.J.A). Some Okinawan soldiers, served as non-combative soldiers outside of Okinawa (Kerr 1967). By the 1930s, the Diet of Japan’s supreme political power was given to the emperor and generals of the I.J.A., who adopted a kind of fascist policies. Japanese officials tightened policies to suppress the Okinawan language. Wartime policies charged and executed Okinawans who spoke their native tongues as conspirators and spies (Kerr 1967). Okinawans felt like second class citizens because they had little political influence with the central government and experienced prejudice by mainlanders, such as being required to sell their natural resources to soldiers from the mainland (Kerr 1967; Watanabe 1970).



## World War II: The Okinawan Experience

After Japan declared war against the United States and attacked Pearl Harbor, fighting intensified across Asia. Japan fought the Chinese, British and Soviets in Indochina and Burma, in China and Manchuria (Korea) and then fought the Americans and Australians on islands in the Pacific. Okinawa did little to contribute to the war effort, but the Japanese regarded it as a last defense: “The Ryukyus were not Kyushu, or Shikoku, or Honshu; Okinawa retained importance only as a potential field of battle, a distant border area in which the oncoming enemy could be checked, pinned down, and ultimately destroyed” (Kerr 1967: 466). Eventually it became evident that Japan was losing ground to the Allies and that the Allies would eventually reach the mainland Japan. The I.J.A. was spread thin and Japan reinforced its forces in China and Manchuria to hold back the British, Chinese and the Soviets. They did not reinforce the Imperial Japan Army’s 32<sup>nd</sup> Army in Okinawa, but instead reinforced the mainland’s defenses. Although Okinawa was Japan’s last line of defense in the south, and Japanese military leaders did little to prepare its defense.

Imperial High Command of Japan appointed Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima as the commander of the I.J.A. 32<sup>nd</sup> Army in Okinawa, along with veteran General Isamu Cho and Colonel Hiromichi Yahara. Ushijima knew that he could not stop the Americans, so he decided to hold them off, and devised a three point: 1) one plane for one warship; 2) one boat for one warship; 3) one man for ten men or one enemy tank (Kerr 1967). The 32<sup>nd</sup> Army conscripted thirty-nine thousand Okinawans between the ages of 18-45 in labor battalions to work eighteen hour work days, which made them comparable to slaves. Boeitai (or auxiliary troops called Home Guards) were sent to the frontlines (Kerr 1967). School students were also drafted: senior middle school boys became Iron and Blood Volunteers and senior school girls were trained for

medical service as the Himeyuri Student Corps, which were assigned to the frontlines (Thomas M. Huber 1990). Once invasion seemed imminent, Japanese military families were sent home and Okinawan parents with enough money sent their children to schools in the mainland, but civilians were not evacuated (Kerr 1967). Colonel Yahara devised a defensive stratagem, which had the 32<sup>nd</sup> Army and the labor battalions fortify the southern island around Shuri and Naha with a labyrinth of cave entrenchments and bunkers (Werstein 1968).

U.S. air raids on Okinawa (March 1945) began before the end of the Battle of Iwo Jima (March 1945). Operation Iceberg began with continued heavy bombardments by naval and aerial assault before U.S. amphibious regiments landed. The Battle of Okinawa was known as the “Typhoo of Steel” because of the extensive amount of artillery, tanks, planes, and ammunition that was used during the operation (Kerr 1967). There were no U.S. casualties during their landing on the mid-western beaches of Okinawa and they quickly overran two airfields without meeting any resistance (Laura Lacey 2005; Werstein 1968). Several days later, U.S. forces met the fortified I.J.A. 32<sup>nd</sup> Army in the south just north of Naha. Yahara’s entrenchments and bunkers survived the artillery assault and his strategy to fight from caves was successful at blocking U.S. forces (Werstein 1968). The U.S. advance was slow, but a suicide offensive urged by General Cho allowed U.S. forces to gain considerable ground. Before advancing, naval and aerial attacks bombed Shuri for over 48 hours before they broke through its 500 year-old stonewall (Werstein 1968). The U.S. troops advanced into Shuri as General Ushijima, Cho, and Colonel Yahara ordered Japanese forces to make a defensive retreat south. Although Shuri was captured and the 32<sup>nd</sup> was retreating, Yahara’s defensive strategy inflicted heavy casualties on the U.S. forces (Werstein 1968).

Shuri was captured in May, but the battle continued until 20 June 1945. The Battle for Okinawa lasted 89 days, much longer than U.S. military command anticipated, and included island jumping around the Ryukyu Islands (George Feifer 2001). The Battle of Okinawa was the bloodiest and most destructive campaign in the Pacific. The U.S. forces consisted of 540,000 troops, of which 183 combat troops; the I.J. 32<sup>nd</sup> Army of approximately 120,000 troops and 30,000 conscripted Okinawans as Boeitai, Iron and Blood Volunteers and medics; and there was an estimated of 300,000, Okinawan civilians drawn into the battle (Bill Sloan 2007). By the end of the battle Shuri was demolished, the hill it sat on was leveled, and Naha was unrecognizable. U.S. casualties totaled 49,141 in which 12,520 killed or missing and 36,631 wounded; approximately 110,000 Japanese soldiers and conscripts were killed. Okinawans suffered the most, with an estimated 140,000 dead, maybe more, due to the bombardments, crossfire, suicide, but also from starvation, malnutrition, and disease (Feifer 2001). Although Japan's occupation was ended, Okinawa lost about a third of their population and most of its historical relics.

There are countless stories that Japan forced Okinawans to commit or forced Okinawan men to kill their families because Japanese propagandists told them that U.S. troops would “rape their wives and eat their children” (Feifer 2001; Lacey 2005). There is evidence that the I.J.A. executed Okinawans accused of spying without a trial (Feifer 2001). Americans cleared out homes, caves and family tombs by throwing a grenade or shooting indiscriminately into them without regard to civilians who might be caught in the crossfire (Sloan 2007). Death was not the only atrocity Okinawans endured. Okinawans accused Japanese and Americans of rape during the war. For example, an article “Okinawan Nights” written by Lisa Cullen and published in *Time* on August 13, 2001 retold a story of three Americans who raped an Okinawan girl, which

prompted local villagers to kill the soldiers and bury them in a cave as retaliation. Okinawa caught between the interests of the government of Japan and the U.S. became a lasting them.

## **Rebuilding Okinawa**

Even before the battle ended, the United States Civil Administration (USCA) began building additional camps and hospitals for refugees as the U.S. Army rebuilt bases and roads. USCA provided shelter and medical treatment while they evacuated civilians. The U.S. forces efficiently rebuilt military installations and airfields to prepare for the operation to invade mainland Japan. But the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki devastated Japan. Emperor Hirohito of Japan announced the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945, but that did not stop Japanese violence against civilians in Kumejima, Okinawa.<sup>11</sup> On 2 September 1945, Japanese officials signed an unconditional surrender, which resulted in the acquisition of Okinawa by the United States for a period. The military confiscated 85 percent of Okinawa's land in preparation for its invasion of mainland Japan (Kerr 1967). They confiscated land from displaced Okinawans that were evacuated by USCA. Army Base Command's objective was to establish a permanent American stronghold in East Asia on Okinawa, but officials in Washington were uncertain about Okinawa's development. The Atlantic Charter between the U.S. government and the British government agreed to not expand territories in other countries through violence. Washington officials were uncertain if establishing permanent bases broke the Atlantic Charter.

After the war, President Harry S. Truman and his administration were uncertain about procuring the Ryukyu Islands and establishing permanent bases there. U.S. Navy Colonel Murray governed military and civil administration on Okinawa. Colonel Murray wanted to maintain and secure bases in Okinawa. The U.S. military prioritized civilian problems second to

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<sup>11</sup> Kumejima Massacre took place on an outer island of Okinawa, Kumejima.

securing the U.S. military's foothold in East Asia because of the spread of communism. Okinawa was unrecognizable after the war. Villages, cities, roads, and vegetation was destroyed.

Displaced Okinawans were moved continuously from one tent city to another, and suffered from overcrowding, starvation, and disease. The biggest problems Okinawans suffered were from a shortage of housing and food (Belote 1970). Although Japan had stored plenty of food rations in Okinawa, many starved. Poor road conditions made it difficult for USCA to deliver food to civilians (Belote 1970). Okinawa was hit by typhoons and torrential downpours; making it impossible for U.S. military vehicles to use the islands dirt roads. Displaced Okinawans were covered in lice and stricken with malaria and other diseases from poor living conditions.

Shortages of basic supplies such as soap, homes and clean water perpetuate problems with disease control. The Navy used its resources for disease control, but the general conditions of Okinawans were considered very poor. There were no sewers, running water, or electricity available for Okinawan civilians (Sarantakes 2000). After John Caldwell, a scholar working for the military, suggested reviving Okinawan autonomy, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific proposed his goals for Okinawa's recovery, which included restoring property, improving health and sanitation, establish self-governing communities, institute economic development, and education.<sup>12</sup> Caldwell suggested that locals should be provided land for farming for sustainable agriculture and given local authority over civilian problems (Sarantakes 2000). On 1 July 1946, the U.S. Naval administration transitioned all administrative duties to the Army's U.S. Civil Administration (USCA). Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP) held the title of Governor of the Ryukyu Islands.<sup>13</sup> Okinawa was divided into mayoral subdivisions. Okinawans'

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<sup>12</sup> The Far East Command (FEC) in Tokyo was headed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Far East, whom was titled the Governor of the Ryukyu Islands.

<sup>13</sup> SCAP refers to General Douglas MacArthur or his staff.

authority was limited to mayoral administration and local police. Mayors had little contact with USAC, aside from military memorandums. The local police were supposed to control civilians, but they had no authority over foreign military personnel. Okinawans were treated unfairly by foreign military forces, which made unwarranted raids on civilian homes. Paul H. Skuse (Director of Public Safety Army Base Service Command II [ABSCOM II]) and I.H. Rubenstein (Acting Director for USCA Legal Department) expressed continued concerns about the unwarranted search seizures of civilians by the military government to SCAP (Warner 1995). Skuse equated the search and seizures to the British oppression of colonial Americans (Warner 1995). Okinawans specifically asked that Filipino forces be withdrawn (Warner 1995). After due consideration, SCAP removed Filipino forces from the Ryukyus and ordered USCA to obtain warrants for search and seizures (Warner 1995).

### ***Education***

USCA sought to educate Okinawans as early as possible to promote Ryukyuan development and future sustainability, but the development of education programs was slow. Before the Battle of Okinawa concluded, USCA implemented an education initiative. Teachers taught classes with several hundred students in refugee camps wherever space was available (Japan International Cooperation Agency: Okinawa International Center 2006). Pre-war Okinawan teachers taught nationalistic Japanese militarism and were scarred to teach for USCA. These teachers had to be coerced by familiar Okinawan teachers and administrators that worked for USCA, but there was still a significant deficit of teachers (JICA: OIC 2006). Many qualified pre-war teachers avoided poverty by working for the military government in new fields. This left many lesser educated teaches to work in classroom. The pre-war campus or training new teachers and USCA needed to produce more teachers. The military government and USCA

created a new Ryukyuan Education program to train teachers. But to keep up with an increasing demand for teachers, USCA lowered the standards of the Ryukyuan Education program. The program expedited subpar teacher training in order to meet the quota. Thus, some of the better teachers were educated professionals from different backgrounds teaching students wherever they could.

Okinawa's schools were short on books and other essential supplies, such as pencils and paper. Most school materials used before the Battle of Okinawa were destroyed and USCA had trouble keeping up with demand. Teachers were allowed to travel to Japan to raise money and materials for Okinawan schools only after the U.S.-Japan Peace Treaty in 1952. Compared with Ryukyu's counterparts in mainland Japan, the Ryukyuan Education program produced underqualified teachers, poor or no teaching facilities, and no formal school system (Warner 1995).

Teachers were able to organize shortly after the military government's Directive #7 (Warner 1995). Teachers established the Okinawan Federation of Education and requested compensation for teachers' relocation after graduating from the Ryukyuan Education program, the reestablishment of a functional school system, building materials for schools, and school supplies. Elementary education was a low priority for the military government. The military government saw elementary education as a means to organize and control the population during and after the war. English speaking Okinawan professionals were more important to military operations on Okinawa.

The military government heavily invested Government and Relief in Occupied Areas funds to educate qualified students in Continental United States colleges or universities. The military government could not hire Okinawan civil service employees because the language barrier prevented Okinawans to communicate effectively with military personnel. Okinawans

needed to be fluent, or at the least efficient, in English so that could employ them for direct and indirect base functions. Okinawans that returned from the continental United States with a Government and Relief in Occupied Areas education were fluent in English. But the military found that the Okinawans were unqualified for the jobs the military needed them the most (Warner 1995). The military's plan failed to educate Okinawans for professional occupations on U.S. bases. Educated Okinawans, efficient in English, were more likely to enter military employment, because it offered better pay and benefits than civilian occupations in Okinawa.

### **Government and Politics**

Okinawa's social and economic recovery was slower than Japan's recovery. Political parties under USCA administration were limited to small districts and had no authority over the U.S. military. Political parties reorganized frequently during the early years of military occupation. Between 1946 and 1951, the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party, Okinawa Democratic League, and Okinawa Socialist Party amalgamated into the Republican Party, which became the conservative pro-U.S. Ryukyu Democratic Party in 1952. Political parties and USCA focused on subsistence, food security, and transportation. USCA provided land for farmers and permitted offshore fishing for fishermen. But USCA limited Okinawans to selling their products within Okinawa. Public transportation was nonexistent. The war destroyed Okinawa's railways and roads. Typhoons made dirt roads impassable by civilian cars and buses. USA eventually supplied Ryukyuan with 2 ½ ton trucks with four-wheel-drive to bus civilian base workers – suitable for the island's muddy road conditions (Warner 1995). Washington officials' indecisiveness caused Okinawa's reconstruction to stagnate. According to Japan's surrender agreement, Japan was supposed to fund Okinawa's reconstruction, but Japan had no post-war economic surplus and contributed little to the reconstruction efforts (Sarantakes 2000).



Okinawa's reconstruction efforts were inhibited by war time agreements between Allied forces. SCAP General, Douglas MacArthur, suggested that the U.S. annex Okinawa (Hara 2007). Annexation would have provided the U.S. government with the rights to administer civil law, land seizures, and constructions. But officials in Washington felt that Okinawa was an economic burden and annexation would have violated the Atlantic Charter 1947, which stipulated that the British and the Americans could not seize territories from the war (Hara 2007). The Soviet Union and China saw reconstructing civil administration before obtaining the rights to Okinawa as annexation (Hara 2007). Russia and China denounced the U.S. presence on Okinawa and supported Okinawa's reversion to Japan. None of the major post-war agreements like the Cairo Declaration, Potsdam Declaration, and the Yalta Agreement mentioned the Ryukyu Islands. The Language in many treaties regarded the Ryukyus as minor islands and never specified what should happen to "Ryukyu" or "Okinawa." The vague language allowed U.S. officials considerable flexibility when they drafted the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

The confiscated land used by RYCOM became an important legal issue for officials in Washington. The land was legally appropriate according to the Army Field Manual 27-10 (FM 27-10), "The Law of Land Warfare." FM 27-10 stipulated that public and abandoned private property captured on the battlefield became property of the United States. Immoveable private property could not be confiscated, but it could be requisitioned, if deemed necessary for military operations. The military must provide a receipt of payment if any immoveable property or moveable property, such as homes, were requisitioned.

During the U.S. occupation of Japan, U.S. officials were determined to demilitarize Japan. Japan's war industry and military had largely disintegrated. General MacArthur sought to reconstruct Japan as a pacifist nation, an Asian Switzerland (Edwin O. Reischaur 1981). SCAP

drafted Japan's constitution and modeled it after Japan's pre-1930 constitution, which was similar to Great Britain's. Japan's new constitution renounced war and the war potential forever (Reischaur 1981). The Diet of Japan returned to its pre-1930s legislative structure as the sole law-making branch. Japan's new constitution took effect in May 1947, but it did not include Okinawa. Japan was self-sufficient in administration and economy much earlier than Okinawa. Although Japan was heavily bombed during the war, many industrial sectors and farming land were untouched. Japan had a functioning transportation system, such as roads and railroads.

### **International Environment and Politics**

Redevelopment in Okinawa lagged behind Japan. SCAP officials were reluctant to develop Okinawa before the wartime agreements were settled. Controlling sanitation and health proved to be a difficult task, and education remained a low priority of USCA, except for university education. USCA appropriated enough money to build the University of the Ryukyus in 1950 on the spot Shuri Castle once stood. The University of the Ryukyus was built under the auspices of USCA and in conjunction with the University of Michigan. The University of Michigan and USCA provided an exchange program that allowed Okinawans to study in the Continental United States.

The threat of communist expansion in Asia evolved Washington officials' protection "from" Japan into the protection "of" Japan. Civil war in China forced Republic of China's (ROC) leader Chiang Kai-shek to escape to Taiwan. The communist party then established the People's Republic of China (PRC). In North Korea communists established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the United States entered into a Mutual Defense Pact with the Republic of Korea (ROK). The North Koreans invaded South Korea in June 1950, U.S. and U.N. forces joined the war on behalf of the deal. General MacArthur was named

Commander in Chief of U.S. and U.N. forces, providing food, air, and ground support to the government in the South. China supported North Korea. MacArthur's request for logistical support from U.S. facilities in Japan was denied by the government in Tokyo. As a result Ryukyus Command (RYCOM) provided logistical support for Allied Forces, which got the Ryukyus involved in the war. On 28 July 1950, RYCOM reorganized the Government of Ryukyu Islands (GRI) in order to redirect the U.S. military's attention on the conflict in Korea.

The San Francisco Peace Treaty officially ended the war between Japan and Allied Powers.<sup>14</sup> It stipulated that Japan renounce claims to territories taken by force or acquired by pre-war agreements. Tokyo officials were unclear about their stance on whether or not Okinawa was a part of Japan. In Article 3, Japan agreed the Ryukyus would be placed under U.S. trusteeship with the U.S. government as sole administrative power. The U.S. military had the power of administration, legislation, and jurisdiction over the Ryukyus and its inhabitants. The treaty's language was vague about the Ryukyus' future and sovereignty. The Ryukyus' vague future permitted the U.S. government to use the islands without taking full responsibility (Eldridge 2013). John Foster Dulles, Councilor to the Secretary of State, was the chief U.S. negotiator of the treaty. In his address to the San Francisco Peace Conference, Dulles restated Article 3, but added that the U.S. government would permit Japan residual sovereignty over the Ryukyus (Dulles Speech 1951). Dulles' use of the phrase "residual sovereignty" suggested that the United States might return to Japan. Dulles reasoned that the inhabitants of the Ryukyus were

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<sup>14</sup> All Allied Powers signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty except for the Soviet Union and the Republic of China in Taiwan (Formosa). The Soviet Union and Japan signed a Joint Declaration in 1956 to officially end the war. ROC was not invited to participate in the San Francisco Peace Treaty. The governments in China and Japan signed the Treaty of Taipei shortly before the San Francisco Peace Treaty. It officially ended the war and Japan renounced Taiwan and recognized its inhabitants as nationals of the Republic of China in Taiwan.

ethnically similar to Japan. China protested Dulles' statement, though they supported the return of the Ryukyus to Japan (Eldridge 2013).

## Chapter 3 - U.S. Occupation

At the time of the San Francisco Peace Treaty and Conference, Okinawa went through several important administrative, social, and economical changes. RYCOM reorganized the military and civilian government to focus on developing its “Keystone to the Pacific.” RYCOM continued to requisition private property on top of the property it appropriated before the treaty and conference. This aggravated Okinawan landowners who objected to their poor treatment by the military regime and the legality of RYCOM’s seizure of private property. Ten year after the Battle of Okinawa, Okinawa’s livelihood was still threatened by starvation, disease, bulldozers, and armed soldiers. The 1950s were, arguably, the most contentious period in Okinawan history. Okinawan farmers, communists, socialists, university students, working union, and teaching unions came together against RYCOM. Each group was established for different social concerns, but they amalgamated against the military regime and the overarching issue of its land acquisition policies.

During the 1950s, RYCOM reorganized USCA into the U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyus (USCAR). By 1957, the offices of governor, held by SCAP, and deputy governor, held by the head of USCA, were abolished. They were replaced by an army general called the High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands (HICOM). Officials in Washington directed USCAR to assist the civilian government, the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, to be more self-sufficient in developing economic and social standards. The Government of the Ryukyu Islands was officially established in 1952 and was a functioning government by the time HICOM was established (Warner 1995). The Government of the Ryukyu Islands was composed of a publicly elected executive council headed by a Chief Executive. The Government of the Ryukyu Islands had the legislative, executive, and judiciary authority over all matters concerning Okinawan

natives. Although the Government of the Ryukyu Islands was established, HICOM ultimately chose the Government of the Ryukyu Islands Chief Executive and had the power to veto the Ryukyu government's executive decisions. Throughout the U.S. occupation, the government of the Ryukyu Islands was dominated by pro-U.S. Liberal Democratic Party members. Unions and worker associations found little representation in the domestic Okinawan government.

U.S. officials in HICOM and USCAR viewed trade unions as communist and spoke aggressively against the formation of unions. In 1952, the Okinawan Federation of Education became the Okinawa Teachers Association. As an *association* the Okinawa Teachers Association received tax free status, limited government subsidies, and its activities were left almost completely alone – under USCAR's scrutiny. The OTA's members would not have been able to participate in political activities if it was a *union*. A union's sole purpose was to seek better employment conditions for its members. Thus a *union* could have fought for supplies, wage increases, building materials, and training allowances. Whereas an *association* received tax free status, limited government subsidies, and the U.S. military left almost completely alone. When the OTA leader expressed their interest in changing their status to a union, RYCOM'S deputy governor characterized the Okinawa Teachers Association as communist, inspired by communist ideologies. RYCOM held the same views towards the Okinawan labor movement. Supported by the Okinawa People's Party, and "All Okinawa Labor Council" was formed by nine unregistered unions, but the council disintegrated after government officials and employers harassed them (Warner 1997).

The Okinawa Teachers Association was not represented in the Government of the Ryukyu Islands and education was neglected by USCAR funds. Although USCAR helped found the University of the Ryukyus, education was a low priority for the military government. The

OTA and the Council for Reversion Chief Executive, Yara Choby, campaigned throughout Japan to obtain financial aid from Japan for school books, building materials, and necessary school supplies in Okinawa. Yara ran for public office after he retired from the Okinawa Teachers Association and the Council for Reversion. He won public office as the mayor of Naha in 1957.

After the rape and murder of a six-year-old Okinawan girl in 1995 a mass rally was mobilized to demand the conviction of the assailant. Although the assailant was convicted in a U.S. court-martial, his appeal allowed him to return to the United States and was freed. With the increased protests in 1955, the GRI Legislature sent a report to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Legislators expressed concern about the continuing issues of land payments by the United States and the violations of workers' human rights in the Ryukyus. Labor representatives from Japan, Philippines, and the United States were appointed as delegates by the INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS to review the allegations made by workers in the Ryukyu Islands. ICTFU delegates found that workers in the Ryukyus experienced low wages, inflated prices, and poor working conditions. The ICTFU recommended that the USCAR raise its minimum wage to compensate for inflation and provide adequate facilities for Okinawan workers. The INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS state that a worker had the right to join or form a union.

The unfair practices of the military government sparked contentious organizations throughout the 1950s for a multitude of reasons. Reversionists', such as the Okinawa Teachers Association and other worker unions, goal was to return Okinawa to Japan so they could reclaim Japanese citizenship. Landowner unions wanted fair rents. Radical students at the University the Ryukyus wanted to fight against American Colonialism. Farmers from mainland Okinawa's

outer islands, Ie Jima, fought for their farms against RYCOM's land appropriation.<sup>15</sup> Okinawa was riddled with rallies, demonstrations, and protests throughout the 1950s. Working unions went on strike against USCAR's unfair wage practices and poverty stricken farmers went on a "beggars march" through Naha.

### **The Episode for Landowners**

Political opposition to RYCOM's use of private property without paying for it grew during this period. Land was a pressing issue for the Government of the Ryukyu Islands and the U.S. military. RYCOM explained that the Ryukyus were a conquered enemy territory. Although officials in RYCOM and in Washington were reluctant to build Okinawa, they had no problem seizing land from local residents to build military installations. In one incident, USCAR seized land in the middle of the night, even after residents protested against expropriation the day before. USCAR forcefully removed 32 families, tore down their homes, and began building on the site. USCAR did not always observe FM 27-10 regulations when they did not compensate landowners who lost their land and homes to U.S. military occupation. USCAR had trouble determining who owned land, how to pay the owners, and when they could compensate landowners. It was difficult for landowners to prove their claims to land because many displaced Okinawans had lost their land titles during the war and many Japanese government records such as town registries were destroyed.

Even when RYCOM could identify landowners, they needed to compute a reasonable rental payment. RYCOM occupied 42,726 acres of private property. USCAR used the value of the U.S. dollar and the cost of land in mainland Japan over a ten year span, which estimated the occupied land at \$73,943,035 (Inoue 2004). USCAR officials explained the amount was too high

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<sup>15</sup> Ie Jima is a northwestern island off of mainland Okinawa.



because it risked Okinawa's economy to inflation. USCAR deflated the estimate by using Okinawa's devalued version of the yen and Okinawa's price rate of land ten years prior to World War II. The U.S. military government offered Okinawan landowners \$40,562,161 in a one ten-year lump sum payment.

The Government of the Ryukyu Islands opposed USCAR's offer by passing the "Petitions Relating to the Processing of Military Land," also known as the "Four Principles for Land Protection" resolution. Okinawan legislators demanded for options other than lump sum payments because it did not accurately represent economic growth and price inflation. Okinawan government officials wanted the United States to appropriately compensate Okinawan land owners for the land they occupied and any property that was damaged by the U.S. military. The Four Principles for Land Protection opposed any new and expropriation by the United States. The Okinawan officials' petition attempted to limit the U.S. occupation permanency in Okinawa. The "Four Principles" were popular with organizations such as the Okinawa People's Party and the Okinawa Teachers Association. The resolution reached Washington officials and prompted U.S. Congress to send a Special Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives, on an inspection tour of the Far East.

The special subcommittee reviewed Okinawa for three days. The chairman of the special subcommittee, Representative Melvin Price, wrote a report on acquisitions and payments and a variety of other problems. The "Price Report" proclaimed that the bases in the Far East were important, but the acquisitions of land by the U.S. forces should be limited. The Price Report recommended that any land, especially arable soil, be returned expeditiously. If the military needed to acquire additional land, it should do so in moderation. The report did not acknowledge that many Okinawans wanted independence or a reversion to Japan. It supported the idea of a

long term U.S. military presence on the island and of a lump sum payment for lands acquired by the United States. The report did not suggest limiting the storage of nuclear weapons on Okinawa. The Price Report ignited island-wide protests for violating the “Four Principles.”

Approximately 200,000 Okinawans, one quarter of the total population, in 56 different cities, towns, and village rallied against Price’s report. Many landowners expressed support for Okinawa’s reversion to Japan. Activists included the politicians, teachers, union workers, farmers, and students. The island-wide support was short lived because RYCOM offered land owners payment. Many of the landowners accepted the payments because it substantially increased their income. The landowners’ organization fell apart among themselves and their supporters. USCAR coerced other landowners and their supporters by threatening their political careers and businesses. For instance, USCAR adopted an “off limit” policy, which prevented service men and their families from visiting certain civilian areas in Okinawa. The “off limit” policy hurt Okinawan businesses that relied on military clientele for business, especially in the entertainment districts.

Landowners abandoned the “Four Principles” by opting for lease contracts. The protest community based the Four Principles on the landowners’ problem with the United States’ unjust use of their land. Although RYCOM’s payments diffused the land disputes, a few landowners defied the United States. Some landowners owned as little as one “tsubo” of occupied land in order to protest against the U.S. occupation.<sup>16</sup> Reversion organizations set off on a movement to return to Japan and left the rental problems with RYCOM to the landowners that abandoned the “Four Principles for Land Protection.”

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<sup>16</sup> Tsubo is a Japanese unit of measurement for pricing land. It is the equivalent to two tatami mats. (Tanji 2006); Cooley and Martin 2006; Inoue 2007).

The United States undermined the “Four Principles” protest community by targeting the landowners. The landowners’ struggle against land appropriation was the focal point of the protest community. The supporters of the landowners’ against the United States’ land appropriation distanced themselves from the issues, but did not diffuse completely. The protest communities focused on organization specific issues. Labor unions protested against unsafe working conditions. Teacher associations demanded for a better education system. Labor unions, teacher associations, and civil-servants demanded for better wages. Meanwhile, protest communities realized Okinawa fell further behind Japan’s social and economic development.

### **Economic Development**

The government of Japan publicly offered Okinawa aid after the economy in Japan stabilized in the late 1950s. Japanese officials offered to aid Okinawa’s development during the 1960s in exchange for administrative power. Japan’s offer for aid perpetuated the reversionist sentiment in Okinawa and Japan. Rumors began that officials from the United States and Japan were discussing Okinawa’s return to Japan. HICOM refused to exchange administrative power for financial aid, which intensified the reversionist sentiment. HICOM attempted to abate the rumors of negotiations for Okinawa’s reversion between the U.S. and Japanese governments. U.S. policy-makers repeatedly compared Okinawa’s social and economic advantage under the U.S. administration to Imperial Japan’s administration.<sup>17</sup> The social and economic gap between Okinawa and Japan was not ignored by Okinawans.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>U.S. House. Committee on Armed Services. 1962. *To Amend the Act of Providing for the Economic and Social development in the Ryukyu Islands*(H.R. 10937). Washington: Government Printing Office. B)-----, 1967. *To Authorize the Extension of Certain Naval Vessel Loans Now in Existence, and for Other Purposes*. (To Accompany H.R. 12910)...(H.R. 9796). Washington: Government Printing Office.

<sup>18</sup> HICOM and politicians were aware of the problems from Okinawans comparing themselves with Japan during the U.S. military occupation. In Congressional meetings, policy-makers noted the importance of closing the social and

The first task of U.S. officials increased aid to social and financial institutions, and allowed external aid to Okinawa from the government of Japan. Washington and Tokyo officials publicly demonstrated steps to establish an agreement for financial aid at meetings by the Japanese Prime Minister and U.S. President during the 1960s. HICOM and U.S. officials refused to relinquish administrative powers to Japan's government. The U.S. government feared that Japan would undermine the legitimacy of the United States' occupation of Okinawa. The governments of Japan and the United States established a process that allowed Japan to finance HICOM approved social and economic programs.

By 1961, Japan was capable of financing employment in Okinawa.<sup>19</sup> At the time, the United States provided HICOM with only \$6 million. In 1961, President Kennedy directed Congress to increase HICOM's annual budget from \$6 million to \$12 million (Inoue 2004). Congress approved the amendment for the budget increase in 1962, but the amount of financial aid was debated thereafter. The increased budget was important for financing rising costs and deterred growing demands from the reversion movement. With the Help of Senator Price, HICOM continued to campaign for increased appropriations from Congress. Throughout the

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economic welfare gaps between Okinawa and Japan, as a means to abate reversionist sentiments and supporters. A few documents include: a) National Security Action Memorandum (No. 68). 1961. *Ryukyu Islands: Task Force Report, 1961: November-December*. B)U.S. House. Committee on Armed Services. 1966. *To Amend... the Act of Providing for the Economic And Social Development in the Ryukyu Islands*. (To Accompany 14088). Washington: Government Printing Office. C)----- . 1967. *O Authorize the Extension of Certain Naval Vessel Loans Now in Existence, and for Other Purposes*. (To Accompany H.R. 12910)... (H.R. 9796). Washington: Government Printing Office.

<sup>19</sup> Act of July 12, 1960 (Public Law 86-629), also known as the Price Act or rice Bill, set HICOM's budget ceiling to \$6 million per annum. Melvin Price expressed their concern that the government of Japan could out finance the U.S. government.

1960s, the budget was debated in Congress and was eventually increase to \$25 million annually in 1967.<sup>20</sup>

Technicians, engineer, and other laborers from Okinawa were integral to vase operations. RYCOM's early occupation used foreign technicians from allied powers such as the Philippines. But USCAR trained Okinawans to replace foreign technicians and engineers, though it paid them much lower wages. A foreign engineer earned \$263.00 per month; whereas an Okinawan earned \$60 per month (Kerr 1967). This wage scale undermined HICOM's mission because it did little to assist the reinvestment of Okinawa's economy. According to HICOM's 1961 Task Force Report Okinawans working as U.S. employees were paid as much as their Japanese equivalents, but did not receive fringe benefits like private Japanese employees.<sup>21</sup> However, USCAR did not offer additional benefits such as severance pay, sick or maternity leave, or maternity allowances to Okinawan civilian workers. The base pay for privately employed workers' base pay in Japan accounted for about fifty percent compensation. Whereas the base pay for USCAR workers in Okinawa accounted for their total compensation. On average, a Japanese employee's total compensation exceeded an Okinawan's total compensation by fifty percent. Hence, only educated USCAR employed Okinawans could earn the minimum amount of privately employed Japanese citizens.

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<sup>20</sup> U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. *Amending the Act Providing for Promotion of Economic and Social Development in the Ryukyu Islands*. H.R. 12617. 89<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1966. U.S. Congress. House of Representatives. *Amending the Act Providing for Promotion of Economic and Social Development in the Ryukyu Islands*. H.R. 4903. 90<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 1967

<sup>21</sup> National Security Action Memorandum (No. 68). 1961. *Ryukyu islands: Task Force Report, 1961: November-December*.

Okinawa's economic reliance on the military bases was seen as a current and future problem by HICOM. Okinawa's economic dependency on the military began early on.<sup>22</sup> SCAP made little to promote industry in Okinawa, except for minor contributions to agriculture and fishing. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, HICOM promoted economic autonomy for Okinawa to Congress; so long it did not affect U.S. military security and interests.

Agriculture was the industry least dependent on the base economy.<sup>23</sup> HICOM even allowed farmers who owned land occupied by the military to farm on its bases. During the U.S. occupation, Okinawa's major crops were sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and pineapples. Okinawa cultivated sugar cane and sweet potatoes for centuries, but pineapples were introduced to Okinawa in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as a cash crop by Imperial Japan. Pineapples require Okinawa's specific subtropical climate, which is not available anywhere else in Japan. Although Okinawa's temperament is ideal for farming pineapples, Okinawa's history with typhoons and limited arable land kept pineapples from being a major cash crop. Yet USCAR promoted pineapples as a major crop. USCAR promoted trade between local farmers and military personnel, but the agricultural industry relied heavily on the Japanese market, especially for its sugar. HICOM used appropriated money to commission consultants from Taiwan to improve Okinawa's subtropical agricultural development (U.S. Senate 1960). But Okinawa's agriculture industry was also limited by the acquisition of arable land by U.S. bases.

HICOM and the Government of Ryukyu Island officials needed to build industries to alleviate Okinawa's dependency on the military bases. Okinawa did not have the political

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<sup>22</sup> During a 1948 visit by US diplomat George Kennan, General MacArthur commented that Okinawans, characterized as simple and good-natured, would be content with an American base economy (Aldous 2003; Foreign Relations of the United States 1948, vol. VI, United States p. 701).

<sup>23</sup> General Mead and Congressman Christmas to the U.S. Senate. Committee on Appropriations. *Mutual Security Appropriations for 1961*. 86 H.R. 12619. March 11, 1960.

leverage needed to make economic decisions, even on commercial transportation. Traveling to Okinawa was difficult for foreign tourists, except from those from the United States or Japan. HICOM required a rigorous visa process and limited transportation for foreign tourist (David Grubnick 1969). HICOM only permitted foreign tourists to fly using the United States' Civil Air Transportation. The United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operated the Civil Air Transportation. The CIA used the Civil Air Transportation for reconnaissance throughout Asia during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Okinawa was used as fueling station between Korea and Thailand, rather than a major exporter of Okinawan goods (Frank Wisner 1952). Okinawa's potential for its transportation industry and even as a trading zone (by air and sea) was restricted by HICOM's authority and endless red tape.

### **Accepting the Bases**

Okinawa's economy relied, directly and indirectly, on the military bases. The military bases were a source of income for landowners, job opportunities for locals, and potential customers for services provided by business around the bases: tire rebuilding, general garages, laundries, and entertainment districts. Many people within the poorer districts of Okinawa saw the bases as their best means for local economic development. The mayor of Kushi Village, Nago District, approved the U.S. military's plans to build another military base (Camp Schwab). The mayor's decision contradicted the "Four Principles" movement's rhetoric. The mayor apologized but explained that the Kushi Village needed the base for economic development. Kin Village in a neighboring district, Kunigami District, followed Kushi Village's example and accepted the construction of another military base (Camp Hansen).

In order to accommodate the bases, the military government and local village built an entertainment district with theaters, hotels, bars, and shops (Fukumura 2007). Accepting the

military base(s) restructured the local community's infrastructure. Local governments promoted entertainment districts and residents established private businesses to host potential American customers. Overall, low-resource communities viewed the military bases as their best means for economic revitalization. Village administrations were more concerned about their economy than the island-wide opposition of military land acquisitions.

Prostitution was common in these entertainment districts and was closely related to bars and hotels. Prostitution catered to military personnel and was a major contributor to local economies. At one point, one-in-thirty Okinawan women were employed as prostitutes (Fukumura 2007). Yehundi Cohen (1958) argued that prostitution reflected the instability of family and community, as a result of the Battle of Okinawa and U.S. occupation. Prostitutes in Okinawa never worked in their home villages and traveled across mainland Okinawa to find work (Cohen 1958). Bars hired prostitutes from Okinawa, the Philippines, Korea, and China, to serve American and Okinawan men (Fukuruma 2007). The criminalization of prostitution was rarely enforced, even though soliciting and conducting sexual acts for money was illegal in Japan. HICOM only deemed certain establishments "off-limits" if the spread of disease threatened military personnel.

The officials in Tokyo accepted the U.S. military's use of Okinawa as a base.<sup>24</sup> The Liberal Democratic Party in Japan and in Okinawa welcomed the U.S. military. Okinawa provided two important services for Japan. First, it limited common social problems caused by U.S. troops in a foreign country. Second, it allowed Tokyo to support U.S. military endeavors in

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<sup>24</sup> Okinawa, as a whole, is referred to as a base in the National Security Action Memorandum (No. 68). 1961. *Ryukyu Islands: Task Force Report, 1961: November-December*. HICOM requested a survey of Okinawa's social and economic development and this was the resulting report. On top of an analysis of Okinawa's social and economic development, the report included information about the United States and Japan's position on Okinawa.



Asia without mainland Japan being directly involved in violent conflicts. Although government officials in Japan welcomed the development of bases in Okinawa rather than in Japan, they continuously expressed their desire for administrative rights in Okinawa.<sup>25</sup> Japanese officials offered financial aid to Okinawa in exchange for administrative rights, but HICOM refused. 1960, a joint communiqué between Washington and Tokyo officials announced that bilateral assistance for Okinawa's economy would begin. The United States refused the government of Japan's request for administrative rights, but Japanese officials gained increase influence in Japanese interests in Okinawa. Japan's Liberal Democratic Party funded Okinawa's Liberal Democratic Party to promote Japan's interests in Okinawa.

### **Tourism**

The U.S. base economy helped develop Okinawa's service industries. Although the service industry focused on serving U.S. military personnel, basic service functions and infrastructures were built to accompany them. Local economies throughout Okinawa had the basic infrastructure to host tourism, but these communities were not part of the tourist industry. HICOM was ambivalent about tourism. Although HICOM did not appropriate money to develop tourism, they did not attempt to discourage it.

HICOM and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands did not pursue tourism as a viable industry for economic development. Tourism contributed very little money to Okinawa's economy (Kakazu 2011). Tourist businessmen convinced the Government of the Ryukyu Islands to promote tourism and create the Okinawa Tourist Association (Kakazu 2011). The Okinawa Tourist Association received little funding and little support from the Government of the Ryukyu

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<sup>25</sup> The report mentioned that the Government of Japan publicly spoke favorably about Okinawa's return, but did not seriously pursue the topic. National Security Action Memorandum (No. 68). 1961. *Ryukyu Islands: Task Force Report, 1961: November-December*.

Islands, USCAR, and Tokyo. During the 1950s, the Okinawa Tourist Association designed sightseeing courses, training tour guides, posting signs, holding exhibitions of Okinawa goods, and hosting important mainland politicians and businessmen (Figal 2008). Tourism did not receive institutional recognition until 1961, when the Government of the Ryukyu Islands created the Tourism Bureau. Although Okinawan officials recognized that tourism had potential, little was done to promote it. Figal (2008) explained that the Okinawa Tourist Association had two major complaints about Okinawans perception of tourism. First, they said that Okinawans lacked “tourism consciousness,” which meant that Okinawans did not recognize Okinawa’s potential as a tourist destination. Second, they said that Okinawa did not know to host foreign visitors. These two problems perpetuated Japanese tourists’ perception of Okinawans kind as kind but “dull-witted” (Figal 2008).

In 1962, the Okinawa Tourism Association commissioned Senge Tetsuma, the executive managing director of the Japanese National Park Association, to evaluate Okinawa’s tourism industry (Figal 2008). Senge recommended remedies for Okinawa’s tourism problems and suggested how the industry might appeal to mainland Japanese tourists. First, he said that Okinawa’s heritage tourism was lackluster. Tourists could embark on “colorful tours” of villages, but Okinawa as a whole lacked the image of a tourist spot (Grubnick 1965). Senge recommended that Okinawa to offer more cultural performances and distinctive “Ryukyuan” culture such as: Eisa (ceremonial drum dancing), tug of war and bullfighting events, glass and ceramic making, dragonboat races, and classical and folk Ryukyuan music and dance (Figal 2008). He said that these activities might appeal to mainland tourists, but he noted that Okinawans did not recognize that day-to-day activities or scenery (nice weather and beaches) were attractions and that they lacked “tourism consciousness” (Grubnick 1965; Figal 2008).

Cultural heritage sights were limited to war memorials and the rebuilt Shureimon Gate.<sup>26</sup> Bus tours were popular with mainland Japanese and were praised by Senge (Figal 2008). Tour bus visited various battle sites and war memorials like the Himeyuri Corps Monument. Shureimon Gate was popular with the bus tours, but Senge criticized its setting amidst the University of the Ryukyus modern concrete buildings (Figal 2008). A.M. Rosenthal (1961) argued that Okinawa's appeal to Japanese tourists was the effects of the "enormous Western fortress in East" had on Okinawa's daily life. Rosenthal (1961) explained that entertainment districts clearly demonstrated what effects the base had local life. Okinawan businesses focused on the "American Way" with pizza shops, "bars" with Okinawan hostesses entertaining U.S. troops, pawn shops, and clubs. Okinawa businesses focused on what Americans wanted and did not expand their market to include Japanese tourists.

Senge and other consultants for Okinawa's tourism suggested that Okinawa was missing "Southern Island" feel (Figal 2008). Senge recommended Okinawa to tropicalize their landscape with nonindigenous flora that Japanese tourists expected to see (Figal 2008). During the 1960s, the Okinawa Tourism Association and Tourism Bureau began reforesting peace and war memorials with hibiscuses, banyan trees, and other nonindigenous flora (Figal 2008). Senge wanted to groom Okinawa to meet Japanese tourists' image of it: "(1) islands south of Kyushu having beautiful southern island scenery; (2) having tropical and subtropical weather with warm winters; (3) green islands of abundant tropical and subtropical vegetation; (4) having a unique, distinctive culture; (5) a place where Battle of Okinawa sites can be seen; and (6) the location of U.S. strategic bases: (Figal 2008: 96).

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<sup>26</sup> Shureimon Gate, or the "Gate of Courtesy," was built to honor the Ryukyu Kingdom's title, "Land of Propriety" in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Shureimon Gate was destroyed during the Battle of Okinawa. It was rebuilt by USCAR and Government of Ryukyu Islands' efforts in 1958 (Kerr 1967; Tanji 2006).

Shopping was a major incentive for mainland Japanese to visit Okinawa in the 1950s and 1960s. Luxury items were lightly taxed in Okinawa. Japanese tourists found shopping to be a bargain compared to buying more heavily taxed products on the mainland (Grubnick 1965). The Okinawa Tourism Association and the Tourism Bureau tried to meet Senge's grooming recommendations, but needed to keep prices low too. By 1965, Okinawa's shopping tourism drained sales from Japan, a development that worried government officials in Tokyo. To the surprise of American and Okinawan businessmen the Japanese government severely limited the amount of tax-free luxury items that Japanese tourists were allowed to bring (Grubnick 1965). The U.S. occupation was already an obstacle to tourism, in 1965, so was the government of Japan. Although the government's legislation came as a shock, tourists from Japan were increasing in the late 1960s. Visitors, mostly from Japan, increased by 32% and their expenditures amounted to \$29 million (increase of 20%) from 1966 to 1967 (New York Times 1969).

### **On the Road to Japan**

Although the 1950s island-wide support for landowners disintegrated, Okinawa was still politically turbulent during the 1960s. By the end of the 1950s, U.S. troops began fighting in Vietnam. In 1961, the United States tripled the amount of troops in Vietnam, and tripled then again in 1962. Okinawa served as a pit-stop for soldiers and logistical support was sent to Vietnam. The surge of troops and logistical support created jobs for Okinawans and increased revenue for local business owners. Businesses around Camp Schwab and Camp Hansen, in the Henoko district, prospered from newly built entertainment districts. Although businesses prospered, crimes and accidents committed by U.S. military personnel rose in residential and business areas throughout Okinawa. Images of the Vietnam War perpetuated Okinawans' fear of

retribution by enemies because the U.S. military kept biological and nuclear weapons on Okinawa.

Military accidents and crimes committed by U.S. personnel increased with the surge of U.S. troops in Okinawa. In 1959, a fighter jet crashed in to a primary school during a training exercise. The crash killed 17 and injured 121, but the pilot survived (Japan Times Online 2009). In 1965, a military vehicle fell from a plane and crushed a school girl to death in Yomitan village near Kadena Air Station. The exact number of accidents before 1972, but traffic accidents caused by U.S. military personnel angered many Okinawans. The local police and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands had little authority over these cases. The High Commissioner made the final verdict, which was commonly “not guilty,” or a lenient punishment. Locals were rarely able to follow up on most cases.

Okinawa proved to be strategically advantageous during the wars in Korean and Vietnam. U.S. officials repeatedly proclaimed their determination to stay in Okinawa. In a State of the Union Message in 1954, President Eisenhower stated, “We shall maintain indefinitely our bases in Okinawa.” Deputy Governor of the Ryukyus, Maj. General Ogden, also announced, “... U.S. military bases on Okinawa cannot be separated from administrative authority.” Japan was eventually allowed to help USCAR fiscally, but was not granted substantive administrative authority. In 1960, Washington officials asserted its dominance over Tokyo and Okinawa by updating the terms of the San Francisco Peace Treaty with the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): “The Mutual Cooperation and Security Agreement between Japan and the United States of America 1960.” The reversionists protested against SOFA because it disproportionately favored the U.S. occupation. Article IV of SOFA removed any obligations of the United States to return Japanese facilities to their former state. SOFA exempted U.S. personnel from Japanese

passport and visa laws and regulations. It forced Japan and Okinawa to accept all U.S. driving permits and licenses, including civilian. The Government of Japan agreed to exempt U.S. military personnel from property taxes. SOFA reaffirmed the U.S. government's dominance over politics in Japan and U.S. authority in Okinawa.

The dominant Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, which was supported by big businesses, signed the Security Treaty. The Security Treaty was a contentious political decision, but the Liberal Democratic Party argued that by aligning with the United States, Japan could achieve industrial prosperity. The ongoing Vietnam War, the Security Treaty, and the possibility of Okinawa's return to Japan ignited reversionists in Japan and Okinawa. Pro-U.S. sympathizers dominated Okinawa's government. HICOM had absolute power of the Chief Executive of the Ryukyu Islands. HICOM nominated Chief Executive candidates. The Executive Council of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands voted on the candidate they wanted as Chief Executive. The Chief Executive candidates and the Executive Council were always Liberal Democratic Party members closely tied with their Japanese counterparts.

Similar to the "island-wide" movement in 1956, "Reversion" was supported by numerous organizations. The first organizations to push for the "reversion" were the Okinawa Teachers Association, Zengunro, labor unions, and political parties like the Liberal Party, Liberal Democratic Party, and Okinawa People's Party. Teachers and political organizations wanted to raise the standard of living, a demand that had been ignored by the U.S. military government. Education was a low priority for USCAR. USCAR often ignored the Okinawa Teachers Association requests for funding. Basic rights for labor unions were ignored by the U.S. military and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands was reluctant to help. The Government of the Ryukyu Islands was essential for Okinawa's reversion, albeit its Chief Executive was selected by

HICOM. Okinawa government's legislation was not always in the best interest of Okinawan movement organizations, with Okinawa officials' bias for the U.S. military. For this reason, reversion organizations and supported the Council for Reversion.

In 1964, two thousand protestors stormed the Government of the Ryukyu Island's legislature building to protest against the nomination of a new Chief Executive (Tanji 2007). They demanded for open Okinawa government elections to the public. Although Liberal Party and Liberal Democratic Party members were evacuated from the legislature building, HICOM's nominee was elected as the new Government of the Ryukyu Islands Chief Executive. The protestors' demands were not met. Consequently, the Council for Reversion held mass rallies for governmental autonomy and open elections in which approximately fifty thousand people participated. Although politically contentious and large in numbers, the Council for Reversion and its mass rallies would not win their demands for open elections for another four years.

The Vietnam War created fears of war reaching Japan and Okinawa by Japanese and Okinawan residents. Okinawans and Japanese feared that their links with the US. Military in Vietnam made them a target for China. U.S. military representatives announced that B-52 planes flew directly from Okinawa to bomb strategic North Liberation Front strongholds in Vietnam. An "Absolute Pacifism" sentiment grew in Okinawa with perceived similarities between the Vietnam War and the Battle of Okinawa (Tanji 2006). The "absolute pacifists" were at ends with the pro-U.S. Liberal Party and Liberal Democratic Party. Okinawa's two leading political parties sought to keep the U.S. military presence with Okinawa's reversion to Japan. Meanwhile, absolute pacifists wanted to return to Japan without the U.S. military in Okinawa. Absolute pacifists were publicly critical of using Okinawan civilian military employees in Vietnam. Sympathizers for pacifism in Japan and Okinawa feared their livelihoods were threatened by

Japan and the United States' roles during the Vietnam War. Japanese Leftists saw the Security Treaty as a symbol of Japan's subservience to Washington. Japan's Prime Minister, Eisaku Sato (in office 1964-1972), face major criticisms for his decisions on the Vietnam War, Okinawa's Reversion, and the renewal of the Security Treaty in 1970. These were three major political issues in Japan directly related with the United States. In 1965, Sato visited Okinawa to encourage the Government of the Ryukyu Islands' Liberal Democratic Party's movement for reversion. But the Council for Reversion mobilized 150,000 demonstrators to rally against Sato's support of the Vietnam War. In another demonstration during Sato's visit, Council lost control of twenty-thousand demonstrators on the main street in Naha. Although police broke up the demonstration because it completely disrupted traffic, the Council saw the demonstration as a success (Tanji 2006).



## **Chapter 4 - Okinawa**

Okinawa's return to Japan shook the political and economic communities. Okinawa was restructured to accommodate Japan's infrastructure and politics. Buildings used by HICOM were vacated. Roads were restricted so that drivers drove on the left side as they did in Japan, instead of on the right, as they did under U.S. rule. Okinawan military workers laid-off. Shortly after, they were rehired as Government of Japan employees to work on the U.S. bases. Politically, Okinawa sent representative to the Diet and elected Yara Choby as Okinawa's first governor. The U.S. bases in Okinawa now fell under SOFA's jurisdiction. They shared the same rights and limitations as U.S. military bases on mainland Japan. Although the U.S. military closed some facilities after the reversion, U.S. military retained a formidable presence on Okinawa. Air Stations like Futenma and Kadena are in large residential areas, which still put residents in potential danger of military accidents and crimes. The U.S. military and leaders in Tokyo disregarded Okinawans' rights as Japanese citizens, because the SOFA protected U.S. soldiers from prosecution in Japanese courts. Okinawa makes up only 0.6 percent of Japan's total landmass, but it sponsors 74 percent of all U.S. military installations in Japan, and occupies approximately one fifth of Okinawa's landmass (Tanji 2007).

### **The Hawaii of Japan**

Before reversion took full effect, HICOM and Tokyo slowly built Okinawa's infrastructure. Japan gave large subsidies to Okinawa to raise its standard of living. Government subsidies in the form of public works became Okinawa's major industry. The construction industry benefited government subsidies more than any other industry. By the mid-1990s, revenues made up only 5 percent of Okinawa's economy (Allen 2002). Service became the second most profitable industry for Okinawa. Many Okinawan cities and towns had mature or fundamental service

industry functions and infrastructures. Japan laid the foundations for different forms of tourism during the 1960s. Because Japanese officials saw tourism as the most viable means to end Okinawa's poverty. Japan invested heavily in Okinawa's tourism industry after the reversion, especially during the 1980s and early 1990s. Tropical reforestation and landscaping and promoting Okinawa's distinct culture were high priorities for the government. There were major changes to the tourism industry as a result of Okinawa's reversion. First, mainland shoppers no longer benefited from low taxes on luxury items, as they did before reversion. Second, mainland resort companies bought the nicest beach properties and erected lucrative resorts for prospering Japanese businessmen and families. Japan wanted Okinawa to be a culturally distinct island to promote the tourist industry and create a stable source of revenue. For Japanese government officials, reconstructing Shuri Castle at its original place in Naha was a major initiative (Figal 2008). Officials relocated the University of the Ryukyus' in 1984 for the Shuri Castle construction. The new Shuri Castle finally opened in 1992, and soon became a prominent symbol of Okinawa's heritage and culture. Ryukyuan music spread throughout Japan when Okinawan rock bands mixed traditional Rykyuan folk music with rock music. A Japanese soap opera set during the Ryukyu Kingdom was created by marketing and tourism agencies. The show was supported by national and local governments because it promoted Okinawa's new tourism identity. Officials in Japan and Okinawa spearheaded an exotic reimagining of Okinawa's heritage to Japan. Local businesses recognized marketable culturally Okinawan products such as ceramics, clothing, food and drink, and glassware, which became popular throughout Tokyo (Stinchecum 1984). Japanese tourists saw Okinawa as an exotic getaway within the comforts of Japan's own borders. With Okinawa's unique heritage, tourism became a viable industry to supplement government subsidies and U.S. military rental payments.

Industry officials promoted tourism as a major part of Okinawa's heritage tourism. Many Okinawans felt betrayed by the Japanese Emperor, not only because of the way that the Imperial Army treated Okinawans during the war, but because the Emperor disregarded Okinawa during the San Francisco Peace Treaty (Ota 1989). Officials in Tokyo wanted to focus solely on rebuilding Shuri Castle. But Okinawans felt that remembering their wartime experiences and thereafter with a memorial was important to their heritage too (JICA: OIC 2006). Masahide Ota and his administration built the Cornerstone of Peace and Peace Museum as a means to teach peace through the experiences of the Okinawans. Okinawans taught peace to their children with their wartime and U.S. colonization experiences. The Cornerstone of Peace, the Peace Museum, and Himeyuri Memorial taught young Okinawans and visitors about Okinawa's wartime experiences (JICA: OIC 2006). The memorials were important, because Japanese officials refused to acknowledge their role in the forced labor and coerced suicides, and murders of Okinawans during the Battle of Okinawa (Norimitsu Onishi 2007). The Ministry of Education's order to delete the Imperial Army's actions from Japanese textbooks offended many survivors of the war in Okinawa.

### **One-Tsubo Landowners**

The one-tsubo protesters were the remnants of the 1950s landowner protest movement. The one-tsubo community continued a quiet resistance against the U.S. occupation after the original movement during the 1950s. Although these landowners never agreed to contracts permitting the United States to occupy their land, the U.S. continued their occupation by renegotiating policies to disregard the landowners' rights to their property. The one-tsubo landowners made a small portion of the landowners with U.S. occupied land, which consisted of 2.6 percent of Okinawa's population (Yoko Fukumura 2007). But the small portion of non-contracted landowners posed

domestic and international legal problems regarding the United States' legitimacy to occupy civilian land. According to international law, Okinawa was not an occupied territory of war after its reversion to Japan. The United States was not allowed to forcefully occupy civilian land. Therefore, the Government of Japan was obligated to protect the property rights of Japanese citizens. Contrarily, officials in Tokyo coerced one-tsubo landowners sign contracts by raising the rent of land occupied the United States. The Diet of Japans legalized the use of non-contracted private property used by the U.S. military for five years after 1972. In 1977, the Diet of Japan passed the Land Registration Identification Law. The new law effectively extended the Public Property Law.

After Okinawa was returned to Japan, protest movements in Okinawa declined. The one-tsubo landowners proved to still be defiant, but they did not state island-wide protests as they had in the 1950s. The landowners relied on mainstream political groups like the Iken Kyoto in Tokyo because the one-tsubo landowners had so few members and very little support in the Diet. One-tsubo landowners claimed the United States and the government of Japan violated their rights as Japanese landowners. The Public Property Law was due to expire and the Diet of Japan was about to pass the Land Registration Identification Law to extend the legal presence of the U.S. military in Okinawa. But Representative Uehara Kosuke of Okinawa, a one-tsube landowner and former Zengunro executive, prolonged the Diet's vote. Since the Public Property Law expired, the United States was obligated to allow the landowners access to their land. Non-contracted landowners like Uehara Kosuke entered U.S. military bases to plant seeds or let their chickens loose as a sign of protest. The Iken Kyoto filed lawsuits against the United States because the United States breached Japanese citizens' right to own private property. The landowners' act of

defiance was an important symbol for Okinawan politics in the 1990s. It symbolized the ability of a small group defying the Government of Japan and the United States.

After Okinawa was returned to Japan, groups like the Council for Reversion were disbanded. The disbanded in 1977, though former Council members established Iken Kyoto shortly after. Iken Kyoto focused on supporting one-tsubo landowners. Other pre-reversion groups integrated with their Japanese equivalent organizations. The Okinawa Teachers Association joined the Japan's Teachers Union. Zengunro (the military base workers union) joined its Japanese equivalent, Zenchuro. Political parties merged with their Japanese counterparts: OPP merged with the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP). Okinawa's Socialist Mass Party (OSMP) was the only organization that kept its original structure intact.

Okinawa governors were predominately progressive until the late 1990s. Even when a governor ran on a nonparty platform, they were usually supported by leftist organizations and parties. Although progressive, Okinawan politicians made compromising decisions. Governors and mayors permitted military base relocation plans and renewed lease agreements with the United States and Japanese government. Governor Ota Masahide, elected 1990, was supported by anti-base parties and worker unions. Ota's administration had a strong anti-military policy. After the Soviet Union collapsed, Ota argued that a "realignment and reduction" of U.S. military bases on Okinawa was needed.

### **The Rape Incident and Ota's Response**

The 1995 rape of a school girl put Okinawa back in the international spotlight. Three U.S. servicemen from Camp Hansen kidnapped and raped a 12-year-old Okinawan schoolgirl, but then were kept away from local police and prosecution. U.S. military police invoked Status of Forces Agreement, article 17, which safeguarded the three criminals. Only after a furor of

domestic and international politics were the three soldiers finally handed over to local authorities. In response to the rape, Governor Ota announced he would not authorize the lease contracts that legalized the use of non-contracted landowners by the United States.

The demonstrations against the U.S. military were not a spontaneous outcry. The landowners against the U.S. Military planned an anti-U.S. Military event months in advance. The rape incident was a catalyst for protesters from different groups. As Inoue (2004) explained, the one-tsubo landowners brought attention to the incident; it was not the only group to mobilize protests against the U.S. bases. Groups included environmental conservationists, human rights organizations, and women's rights (Inoue 2004). The rape incident brought issues of SOFA back to light. Although the rape took place on Sept. 4 1995, the suspects were not handed over to the Japanese until Sept. 29 1995 (New York Times 1995). The focus shifted from the rape itself and towards SOFA. The larger protests focused on SOFA's arrangement to deal with crimes committed by U.S. personnel in Japan and the fact that the U.S. occupied 19 percent of Okinawa's main island (CNN 1996). Okinawa's reaction led Prime Minister Hashimoto to announce that he and President Clinton that they worked to "...reduce the burden on the Okinawan people" (CNN 1996). It would be the start of a long line of promises to relieve Okinawa's burden.

The protest movement declined as several conditions were met, but not necessarily expressed by the protestors as a whole. The eventual release of rape perpetrators from the United States military to Japanese law enforcement allowed Okinawans to charge and convict the service men under Japanese law, opposed to sending the US personnel back to the Continental United States without being tried for any crime - practice by the United States Administration before Okinawa's reversion to Japan. Governor Ota renewed the United States' lease to occupy

land after the Diet of Japan provide Okinawa with a substantial subsidy to host the United States' military. The final piece that derailed the protest movement, in 1996, was when the United States and Japan agreed to reduce the amount of land used by the United States military.

## Chapter 5 - Discussion

Okinawa's protest movements have been a part of contentious local, domestic, and international politics. Okinawa's geographical location is an internationally contentious issue by itself. Often cited as a necessary military location in East Asia, from the Shogunate to the U.S. military, Okinawa's most valuable resource was its strategic military vantage point. Overall issues that overlooked nuanced details like cultural identity and self-reliant economy.

### Analysis

Okinawa's economy relied heavily on the military bases, but also, does not have the means to become more self-reliant. Okinawa was not sought after as a prime spot for manufacturing companies for Japan. The distance was too far from Okinawa and the wages, although very low in the 1950s and comparatively in the 1990s, were not low enough to differentiate the costs for greater profit. These decisions seem to preclude Okinawa's strong tourism economy in the 1990s and beyond. Instead, Okinawa's agriculture industry was the biggest export that didn't solely rely on the military bases. But the military bases took up more than 20% of the arable land, which limited Okinawa's greater export possibilities (Allen 2002). Although the agriculture industry did not rely on the military bases, it did rely on the Japanese market. It traded one dependency for another. The limitations to Okinawa's potential export or tourism markets force its dependency on either the military bases or the Japanese market. This is also demonstrated in the late 1980s and the 1990s with Okinawa's Free Trade Zone potential. Arguably, Okinawa's geography is favorable as a Free Trade Zone. Okinawa attempted to be more self-reliant with the Free Trade Zone. But the attempt failed because it lacked the autonomy from the strong centralized Government of Japan. Okinawa had little to no autonomy in regards to international decision making, like Hong Kong does as a Free Trade Zone. Thus, Okinawa relies on the



subsistence it receives from the Central Government of Japan for hosting the military bases and tourism.

Throughout each episode, Okinawa relies heavily on larger political and economic factors that are out of prefectural control. Whether or not it was intentional, the economy has also been a divisive variable for the protest groups. The contentious politics regarding the landowners during the 1950s was quashed by paying the majority of the contentious landowners. There were contentious landowners that did not agree to the deal, but it effectively kept those contentious owners from mobilizing larger groups as they did before. The reversion movement was not defined purely by money. The Reversionists wanted fair wages, but also other basic rights that their Japanese counterparts received. Once Okinawa returned to Okinawa, the core reversion groups received those same rights as their Japanese counterparts, but also became crippled by their new limitations. Okinawan unions and teacher association now represented a small proportion of their new Japanese organizations. The Okinawa Teacher Association Reversionists became a small proportion in the Japanese Teachers Union. The ex-OTA Reversionists also lost their ability to protest against the military bases as a teacher since the central Japanese teachers' union forbade representing teachers in such a manner. Whether or not the reversion back to Japan satiated the ex-Reversionists' contentious political behavior, ex-Reversionists could not mobilize in the same manner as they once did. The subsequent protests following the 1995 rape incident may seem different. The 1995 protests were sparked by a crime against an Okinawan citizen. The organization was set by prominent anti-U.S. base groups like the one-tsubo landowners, which mobilized other organizations that mobilized other lay-challengers. Most of these modern organizations are not tied quite as economically to the bases as previous groups were during contentious episodes. Their core repertoires are based around human rights,

environmental conservation, or downsizing or removing the bases from Okinawa. But the general populace had been split economically as Masamichi Inoue (2007) explained with “We Are Okinawan of a Different Kind”.

Inoue (2007) explained the importance of citizenship, culture and identity, and local life anti-base supporters and pro-base supporters. The fragmentation of the Reversionists was a reaction to the U.S.-Japan alliance, as I also note within this thesis. Inoue (2007) further demonstrates that the fragmentation is deeper than unions and local economies in relation to broader domestic and international policy. It is also the cultural identification of an Okinawan within the U.S.-Japan system. The most important economic industry, after financial aid from Japan, is Okinawa’s tourism. Okinawa’s tourism celebrates its subtropical and exotic differences from Mainland Japan. The tourist industry also shows its experience during the war – a stark reminder of their poor treatment by the Mainland Japanese during and after World War II and by the U.S. Military. The tourism industry’s plays a dichotomist role of promoting both pro-U.S. bases and anti-bases sentiments. Allen’s (2002) research on Kumejima revealed that tourism help formulate an anti-base sentiment because of Kumejima’s experience during World War II, especially since it was relatively untouched by the U.S. occupation.

Inoue (2007) explained that it was Governor Ota that created the split in the Okinawan identity. It was Ota’s tactic to let Nago and Tokyo deal through the base relocation, which demonstrated the class differences between the middle and working classes needs for economic development. Tokyo took advantage of this split in identity by offering financial aid if Nago accepted the relocation plan. Instead, there has been a split identity since the post-conflict era, but it was not prominent until the late-1990s. The split in identity was propagated by the ongoing political structure and political economy in Okinawa, amalgamated with Okinawans, HICOM,

Washington and Tokyo. Studying the political economy does demonstrate an early difference among the Reversionists. Reversionists diversified into different groups with specific agendas, as the case of the Okinawa Women Against Military Violence as early as the 1980s. The 1995 rape incident and the subsequent years highlighted these different groups more profoundly.

The Koza riot was different from any of the protests. The Koza riot symbolized an underrepresented part of occupied Okinawan society. Okinawa was changing with a strong sense of Japanese nationalism. Taxi drivers were the first at the scene of the first accident that began the sequence of commotion leading to a riot. The riot was spontaneous only in the sense that the accident was not planned. Taxi drivers were and still are a target of violence committed by U.S. personnel. The riot revolved around the entertainment district where prostitutes, bar owners, and taxi drivers worked. Many Okinawans worked for the bases, directly and indirectly, but these groups in the entertainment districts were subjected to petty and violent crimes. They were not treated lawfully equal by the U.S. military regime nor were they being represented equally by the Japanese nationalist movement in Okinawa. As a sign of identification strife, the riot depicted a small group that was not Japanese or American. They, as Okinawans, were culturally reduced and presented as an inferior colonial group without the rights of Japanese or Americans. What were these “riot Okinawans” fighting for? Surely there were many Reversionists among the rioters, but a violent riot was uncharacteristic of Okinawans and the reversionist movement to that point. Not only was the riot a response to political uncertainty as Aldous (2003) argues, it was also the rift in the idea of being Japanese or Okinawan. Part of the political uncertainty was Tokyo’s draft reversion agreements favored Washington over Okinawa. Okinawans, even as a whole, were seemingly underrepresented and the entertainment workers were further underrepresented by all major parties in the reversion “era.”

## Theory and Okinawa

There are distinct ebb and flows between the 1950s, the reversion movement, and the 1990s movements. Authorities bought off or forced Okinawan landowners to sell their land during the 1950 social movements. It effectively cut off important support to the core groups of the landowner movement. The rape of a girl in the 1950s sparked contentious politics that allowed the landowners to mobilize landowners, anti-war advocates, and many others for a mass protest. The landowners were able to use the girl as a symbol that brought additional support to their cause against the U.S. occupation. Tarrow (1998) explained that contention can reveal the weakness of authorities, effectively creating opportunities to move more people to join in contentious action. This is an example of Tarrow's explanation of using political opportunities for contentious politics. An opportunity is only contentious if it is used for contentious action. The landowner movement lost contentious political actors when many of the landowners made deals to rent their land to the USCAR. It was an effective solution by USCAR. It also solved contentious issues regarding illegal seizures of land by an occupying country; a potential opportunity for international challengers against the U.S. military. The anti-base landowners had less support from similar Okinawans, since their repertoire for collective action became relatively moot. Although the larger protest consisted of more than just the landowners, additional landowners challenging USCAR allowed other would-be challengers to mobilize as well.

The riot in Koza could be seen as a non-ideological spontaneous riot against the U.S. Military. Hobsbawm (1959) argued that riots were movements which were not inspired by specific ideologies. This thesis revealed that even this seemingly spontaneous movement was

disconnected from the reversionist movement; it was more organized and had a distinct ideological purpose.

Enloe (1989) explained, women are often treated as symbols to nationalist movements. The rapes had been used to symbolically mobilize would-be challengers to the contentious political realm, even if those would-be challengers are not invested in the repertoire of the core protest groups. Okinawa was not different from what Enloe argued. Although the role of women in Okinawa protests had progressed since the 1950s, it often used women as symbols. Women organizations took more active and international roles. Even with the progress, women were often used symbolically as a point of political contention as a means to for social mobilization. The rape and death of an Okinawan girl in the 1950s was a source of en masse symbolism. The rape of a girl in the 1990s and subsequent protests were similar to that of the 1955 incident. The initial protest gathering was planned by the one-tsubo landowners well before the rape incident. But the landowners used the rape of the girl as a symbol against the U.S. occupation. Central symbols for the 1950s and 1990s large protests were the girls that were raped by U.S. military personnel. Rape is not just committed by U.S. personnel, but by Okinawans too. Although the 1995 rape victim did not want to speak in public, there was an 18 year old school girl that read her statement in her place.

### **Considerations**

The “Okinawan Struggle” as a singular movement or group since the 1950s may be a myth, but it is still an important mobilizer for would-be challengers. Crime among Okinawans is greater than the crime towards Okinawans by U.S. personnel. This fact does not deter Okinawans from unifying on a larger scale to protest against the U.S. military. The cultural identity is fragmented, there is seemingly less unity as there was in the past, but there are certain things that

can still mobilize the larger population. The various organizations in Okinawa are well organized and understand how to mobilize their perspective supporters efficiently. They continue to effectively use contentious opportunities to stage large protests against the U.S. bases. Heinous crimes against young women are a common opportunity to mobilize would-be challengers. Even after the 1995 rape incident, other major protests revolved around assaults against women. The incidents included: U.S. Marine Corp Major Michael Brown's attempt to assault and rape a bartender in 2003 (Allen 2005); the rape and murder of a 20-year-old Okinawan woman, allegedly by a Marine Corps employed civilian base worker in 2016 (Miller 2016). But it also shows that large Okinawa can mobilize large amounts of anti-base supporters without using crime against women as a symbol too. In 2015, Okinawan organizations organized approximately 35,000 demonstrators to rally against the relocation of the Futenma Air Base; arguing it should be removed from Okinawa (Japan Times Online 2015).

The problems in Okinawa with the U.S.-Japan alliance are complicated. It is rooted in Okinawa's history with Japan, the U.S. military, and SOFA. The repertoire focuses on the complete removal of bases from Okinawa, not just the relocation of a base to another part of Okinawa. There is a small but slowly growing Okinawan separatist movement as well. The separatists claim that they need to separate from the Central Government of Japan in order to remove the U.S. bases. This group has yet to gain more traction or support than the overall anti-base supporters. It seems unlikely the separatists ever would, since their repertoire excludes much of the fragmented populace, especially the moderate pro-base supporters that may support a more general cause like amending the SOFA to protect Okinawan citizens.

Okinawa's protest history reinforces Cynthia Enloe (1989) and Hein's (1999) theories that women are often used as symbols within the nationalist movements. Rape of a girl in 1950s

and the rape of the girl in 1995 were major catalysts for “Okinawan” protests. Other groups such as women’s rights, human rights, and environmental conservationists shifted their attention to other larger issues, opposed to using the 1995 rape victim as a poster child to mobilize potential protesters. Japan used tourism, not as a way to help Okinawa, but to exploit Okinawa’s impoverishment in the 1960s and continued to use Okinawa into the 1990s. As Enloe (1989) pointed out, tourism often leads to a dependency on “foreign” money, instead of self-reliance on domestic industry.

This thesis is limited by relying on other researchers’ research and translations of Japanese source material. It does not have the strength to conclude on attitudes and in-depth micro or quantitative research of Okinawans. The thesis benefits from a new perspective and a world-system’s point of view. The thesis acts as a retest to Miyume Tanji and Masamichi Inoue’s research; concluding that the “Okinawan Struggle” is much more dynamic the “struggle” is not a linear protest movement stated often by U.S. media sources. Although Okinawans had protested against the U.S. bases since the 1950s, those protest actors and organizations changed since the 1950s. Researching Okinawa’s protests movement should focus more on the most recent politics concerning the U.S. bases. Research from here on out could see if the U.S. and Japan have kept to the statement of relieving Okinawa of their burden.

The political and world system had important roles in the ebb and flow of Okinawa’s protest movements. Tanji (2006) and Inoue (2004) both explain that the “Okinawa Struggle” is dynamic and adjusted within each cycle of contention in order to mobilize and take advantage of political opportunities. This thesis also shows how external forces seemingly affected the “Okinawan Struggle” identity. It demonstrates how external forces affected the political ability to act on political opportunities when opportunities were available. Studying each episode of

contention separately we see different levels and types of governments. Each government also set the political environment in which contentious actors could act. This is even the case during the Okinawa's periods of annexation and assimilation. Arguably, Okinawans could not effectively act on contentious opportunities since the political environment was hostile; especially during war. But Okinawans did resist against Japan's pre-WWII assimilation attempts. During the 1950s, external forces like the United States Civil Administration, created the political environment were at its strictest during the United States' Administration period. The reversion had the largest impact on Okinawan actors' ability to organize protests. Japan's investment in Okinawa, by providing subsidies, to host to the United States military forced Okinawa to rely on Japan economically. Okinawa also relied on Japan's tourism. Since tourism was recreated as a means to draw Japanese consumers, it created a polarizing cultural effect on the protest movements. The reversion also effectively assimilated prominent protest organizations from the 1970s into Japanese organizations. Since the reversion, Okinawa lacked actors that could effectively use political opportunities to mobilize the wider population to protest against the United States military.

There have been massive anti-base protests since the decline of the 1995 protests. Approximately 100,000 people protested against a new base in 2010 (Al Jazeera 2016). The new base was part of a way to relocate United States personnel from densely populated areas in Okinawa. Anti-base supporters protested against the United States military in the summer of 2016 after the rape of a local woman in April of 2016 (Al Jazeera 2016). The 2016 protests are seemingly similar, but I cannot determine who the major actors have been. It is unclear from my perspective to say if the same actors that took mobilized 100,000 people in 2010 are the same actors mobilizing Okinawans in 2016. Okinawa is currently in the flow of contention, but it is



unclear if the recent protests are a part of the 1995 protests. Isolating and researching the current protests and their actors would be important to understand what would create an ebb or allow for it to flow.

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## **Appendix A - Acronyms and Meanings**

HICOM	Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands
GRI	Government of the Ryukyu Islands
OTA	Okinawa Teachers Association
USCA	United States Civil Administration
SCAP	Supreme Commander of Allied Powers
RYCOM	Ryukyu Command
USCAR	United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyus