

The Emergence of Okinawan Ethnic Identity in Hawai‘i: Wartime and Postwar Experiences

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INTRODUCTION

In *People and Cultures of Hawaii: A Psychocultural Profile*, an influential text that has been widely read for more than three decades by Hawai‘i’s educators, business people, journalists, and public officials, Okinawans are treated as an ethnic group distinct from Naichi Japanese.¹ Okinawans have their own cultural center and host an elaborate Okinawan festival every year. They indeed seem well established as an ethnic group. Before World War II, however, Okinawans in Hawai‘i were largely viewed as just one of the groups of Japanese, like those from Hiroshima or Yamaguchi. How did they come to be regarded as a separate ethnic entity?

Few have attempted to answer this question in detail. In 1957 George Yamamoto suggested: “The two subgroups among the Japanese in Hawai‘i may be regarded as two distinct ethnic groups rather than mere economic or prestige subdivisions of the same ethnic group.”² Yamamoto failed to explain, however, how Okinawans became a “distinct ethnic group.” Yukiko Kimura researched social organizations in Okinawan communities during the pre- and postwar periods, but she largely ignored the

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creation of their unique ethnic identity.³ William P. Lebra, a contributor to *People and Cultures of Hawaii*, does not even question the separate ethnic status of Okinawans. Like Kimura, Lebra examined Okinawan experiences during and after World War II, but he did not link them to the development of Okinawans as a discrete ethnic group. In addition, no previous research has been done on the postwar Okinawan relief movement as being the basis for establishing a distinctive ethnic entity.⁴

In this article I examine the origins of an Okinawan ethnic entity in Hawai‘i. During and after World War II Okinawans experienced significantly less racial discrimination by Naichi Japanese, and this was critical to their establishing positive self-awareness and pride in being Okinawan. The wartime experiences of Okinawans and Naichi were quite dissimilar, and Japan’s defeat affected each group differently. In fact, the U.S. Occupation of Japan and U.S. military rule in Okinawa had a positive influence on the Okinawans in Hawai‘i, by helping them alleviate feelings of social and racial inferiority. Also significant was the wealth they accumulated during and after the war, which allowed them to advance economically and contribute substantially to postwar relief efforts in Okinawa. Relief activities united them, strengthened bonds with their homeland, and bolstered ethnic pride, culminating in the creation of the United Okinawan Association of Hawai‘i (UOA) in 1951. The postwar flowering of Okinawan culture in Hawai‘i can be tied directly to these relief organizations.

World War II brought positive changes for Hawai‘i’s Okinawans: economic advancement, improved social and political status, and freedom from discrimination by other Japanese. Pride in Okinawan traditions, the assertion of Okinawan values and culture, and the open enjoyment of Okinawan music and dance—all contributed to the formation of a unique ethnic identity in Hawai‘i. It is ironic that these changes can be traced to Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor and Okinawans’ success at pig farming, which was considered a lowly occupation by most Naichi Japanese.

PREWAR DISCRIMINATION

Okinawa’s history differs from that of the rest of Japan. An independent kingdom until the Satsuma Clan invasion of 1609, Okinawa became one of Japan’s prefectures in 1879; however, given its distinctive culture and way of life, it has never been a part of mainstream Japan, politically or culturally. In prewar Hawai‘i, this “non-Japaneseness” caused

Naichi to discriminate against Okinawans, but prejudice alone was not enough to unify Okinawans into a cohesive ethnic group.

The first Okinawans in Hawai'i, a group of 26 men, arrived in January 1900 as contract laborers for the Ewa Sugar Plantation. During the next ten years, Hawai'i attracted increasing numbers of Okinawan immigrants: In 1903 a second group of 40 men arrived. A year later the Okinawan population grew to 262. In 1905 it was 1,233. And by 1911 it reached 10,000. Before the Immigration Act of 1924 banned immigration from Asia, nearly 20,000 Okinawans had crossed the Pacific to Hawai'i.⁵ According to 1924 statistics compiled by the Japanese consulate, Okinawans numbered 16,536, making them the fourth largest group of Japanese immigrants, following those from Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, and Kumamoto Prefectures.⁶ Initially, they were mostly young males in their twenties and thirties who were escaping poverty, heavy taxes, and military service. Okinawan women did not arrive until 1905, after the first groups of male immigrants had saved enough money to send for wives and families or picture brides.⁷

Generally, Naichi did not treat Okinawans as equals. Among Japanese in Hawai'i, Okinawans were known as "belated immigrants." By 1900, Naichi already numbered around 60,000, or about 40 percent of Hawai'i's population. They were settled and had an established community. On the plantations, Okinawans were assigned more difficult and dangerous work than Naichi and were housed in separate camps. In addition, the language Okinawans spoke at the time was so different from Japanese that they needed a translator whenever they communicated with Naichi. This further limited interaction between the two groups. Made to feel inferior and isolated, Okinawan immigrants dedicated themselves to helping one another. But as subjects of the Japanese emperor, they were also eager to see their children become respectable Japanese and sent them to the same Japanese language schools as Naichi children.⁸ At home, parents spoke to each other in Okinawan, but often they did not teach the language to their children. Some even changed their "peculiar" Okinawan names to similar-sounding Naichi ones.⁹

In Okinawa, within each village or town, the lives of its members were closely interconnected and self-sufficient. Marital partners were chosen from within one's own village or town, and greater importance was attached to the community than to the individual. Okinawan communities in Hawai'i continued this tradition and organized close-knit locality clubs whose members all hailed from the same area. The first Okinawan

locality club was organized in 1908, but most were established in the 1920s and 1930s when large numbers of Okinawans left the plantations for Honolulu. When faced with discrimination and segregation by Naichi, Okinawans found solace and camaraderie with fellow club members, who together helped fund *tanomoshi-kou* (mutual aid societies), organize recreational activities such as New Year's celebrations and summer picnics, and strengthen community unity.¹⁰ Clubs were also vital in maintaining homeland culture and identity.

Geographical divisions, rather than economic class or ancestral status, weighed heavily among Okinawans. Factional rivalry between locality clubs was conspicuous, and the autonomy of locality clubs worked against the founding of a single Okinawan organization. The first attempt was made in 1921; general rules were adopted four years later, but dissension among the clubs caused delays. In 1940 yet another attempt was made, but it failed due to the outbreak of World War II.¹¹ It was not until after the war, in 1951, as mentioned, that the UOA was organized.

Many Okinawans in Hawai'i owned successful small businesses. They saved their wages, borrowed from the *tanomoshi-kou*, left the plantations for Honolulu, and started businesses that required little capital but relied on special skills, such as animal husbandry and tenant farming. They also engaged in trades and businesses related to these, such as food processing, wholesale and retail food supply, and running restaurants, which, in turn, provided food scraps to Okinawan pig farmers.¹²

In 1944, the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Office of Strategic Services published *The Okinawans of Loo Choo Island: A Japanese Minority Group*, a report compiled in preparation for a postwar occupation of Okinawa. The second section deals extensively with conflicts between Naichi and Okinawans in Hawai'i, pointing out that Naichi discrimination against Okinawans continued, and that mutual distrust and intolerance existed even among second-generation university students. The two groups did not mix socially and they almost never intermarried. The report goes on to mention the disowning of a Nisei woman by her family for marrying an Okinawan.¹³

An essay, "The Okinawan-Naichi Relationship," by Henry Toyama and Kiyoshi Ikeda, incorporated the responses of University of Hawai'i students who were asked about their experiences and observations of prewar relations between the two groups. Some reasons were given to explain why discrimination against Okinawans was even more prevalent

in Hawai‘i than in Japan. First, the population of Okinawans was high—about 10–15 percent of the total number of Japanese in Hawai‘i. Second, close contact between the two groups made Naichi less tolerant of cultural differences and more apt to create stereotypes. Third, many immigrants were uneducated and unsophisticated in their understanding of other races and cultures.¹⁴

Naichi Japanese characterized Okinawans by their “strange” accent and “coarse” speech, love of dancing, facial tattoos (on married women), pig farming, and working in restaurants. Their traditional dances and music were viewed as distinctly “non-Japanese.” Wary of calling attention to themselves, Okinawans practiced their culture indoors or within their own community.¹⁵ They were a long way from celebrating their differences and could not yet see themselves as part of a unique ethnic entity, equal and separate from other Japanese.

Okinawans were also looked down on for raising pigs and eating pork. They began raising pigs in 1910, and households often had several.¹⁶ “The life of an Okinawan begins and ends with a pig” was a common saying. Pigs played an essential part in Okinawan ceremonies and events, particularly at New Year’s, when a family butchered a pig and ate as much “New Year pork” as possible. According to Tetsurou Shimojima, Naichi despised the Okinawan habit of eating pork because consuming meat had long been prohibited in Japan. Shimojima explains that, as a Buddhist, Emperor Tenmu (r. 673–86) prohibited the killing of animals, so those engaged in slaughtering and skinning livestock and selling their meat faced discrimination.¹⁷ In addition, the collecting of food scraps from homes and restaurants for pig slop was deemed lowly work. Naichi children taunted their Okinawan peers by calling after them in pidgin, “Okinawa *ken* [prefecture], *ken*, *buta* [pigs] *kau* [eat], *kau*.”

THE WAR AND INDEPENDENCE FOR HAWAI‘I’S OKINAWANS

During the war, the U.S. military for the most part left Okinawan community leaders alone.¹⁸ With their support networks still intact, Hawai‘i’s Okinawans were able to take full advantage of the wartime economic boom. Increased economic status and newfound pride in the history and culture of their homeland helped many overcome feelings of inferiority. According to the Office of Strategic Services report:

As the result of Pearl Harbor, there often appears among the Hawaiian Okinawans a feeling of elation at their status today and stress is placed on the theory that they are not Japanese, and hence should have no blame placed upon them for what the Japanese are doing. . . . The feeling, "We are better than the Japanese," is allowed full sway.¹⁹

According to one Okinawan student:

During the war, the Okinawans were proud of the fact that they were Okinawans. They felt that it was the Naichi's war with the Americans. Here and there during the war one could hear an Okinawan say, "I'm not a Japanese, I'm an Okinawa." Yes, those who once had that suppressed feeling were getting bold now and claimed they were Okinawas and some went as far as to say, "We are part Chinese."²⁰

For many Okinawans, the United States was not only Japan's enemy, but their liberator as well. The Office of Strategic Services report explained that the Okinawans in Hawai'i wanted their homeland freed from oppressive Japanese rule, and a few even called for its separation from Japan. A plantation worker hoped that Okinawa would be returned to Okinawans "so we can set up our own government."²¹ It is possible that Koreans' nationalistic profession in Hawai'i incited Okinawans to profess the same, though no evidence has been found so far to support this argument. When the war broke out, Koreans began to insist that they were "not Japanese" and therefore not "enemy aliens."²²

When the war ended, Okinawa was separated from the rest of Japan and put under direct U.S. military control. Its future jurisdiction seemed uncertain. This "Okinawan question" attracted much attention in Asia and was of course of great concern to the Okinawans in Hawai'i.²³ It was debated whether Okinawa should become U.S. territory, and many supported this idea. According to Masanori Higa, Okinawans in favor of the measure failed to understand the reality of U.S. military control. Basing their opinions solely on their experiences in Hawai'i, they believed Okinawa would have a bright future under the American flag: "For them, Okinawa's return to Japan simply meant that Okinawa would return to its prewar condition. Because they did not know newly democratized Japan, it was natural to be swayed by such misunderstanding."²⁴

Many others supported Okinawa's independence. In 1947, a student interviewing a fifty-four-year-old man asked: "Would you like to see

Okinawa still be with Japan, be with China, just be under UN care or what?" The man answered, "If Japan will take more interest in Okinawa and help her and do all she can to improve and help Okinawa to advance, it's all right to be with her, but I would much rather see Okinawa be independent." The student agreed: "I, also, wish Okinawa can be independent someday. The Naichis here used to treat us as though we were not part of Japan, yet Japan does not wish to give up Okinawa. . . . Although the Naichi-Okinawan conditions have changed for the better, I still wish to see Okinawa free."²⁵

The peace treaty was concluded in San Francisco in 1951, and Japan regained its sovereignty. While the U.S. government recognized Japan's "residual sovereignty" over Okinawa, even after the peace treaty Okinawa remained under U.S. military rule until 1972, when it was finally returned to Japan.²⁶ Further separation of Okinawa from the rest of Japan enforced Hawai'i's Okinawans' sense of separateness from other Japanese and promoted closer ties with their homeland. During the 1950s and 1960s, many visited Okinawa, and group tours were reported regularly in ethnic newspapers. Many Kibei Nisei who had stayed in Okinawa during the war returned to Hawai'i with brides.²⁷ Relatives were encouraged to visit Hawai'i, and Okinawan organizations in Hawai'i began offering Okinawan students scholarships to study agriculture and fisheries management in the United States.²⁸ After the Immigration and Nationality Act (McCarran-Walter Act) went into effect in December 1952, thus ending the absolute exclusion of immigrants from Asia, the number of Okinawans emigrating to Hawai'i increased.

It should be made clear that Okinawans were not monolithic in their response to Japan or Naichi immigrants. Many Okinawans strove for better relations with Naichi after the war. Especially among the younger generation, mutual distrust between the two groups was decreasing. Okinawan and Naichi Nisei veterans had shared the same battlefield experiences.²⁹ They "came to thoroughly know that discrimination within the Japanese immigrant community in Hawai'i was indeed meaningless."³⁰ A student reported that, while older Naichi were slow to change their attitudes, Naichi and Okinawan schoolchildren fought less and antagonism between the two groups weakened after the war.³¹ Marriage patterns began to change. George Yamamoto studied Naichi-Okinawan marriages from 1941 to 1950 and found that one in five Okinawans had a Naichi marriage partner.³²

Even for Issei, the wall between Okinawans and Naichi began to crumble after the war. Sadao Asato, an Okinawan leader and leading figure in the insurance business, held that “Okinawans should actively associate and cooperate with the Japanese from other prefectures” and organized the Economic Study Club of Hawai‘i in 1947 together with numerous Naichi businessmen.³³ When the United Japanese Association of Hawai‘i was reorganized in 1958, members of the UOA joined it as well. In 1963 an Okinawan, Shinsuke Nakamine, was elected its president.³⁴ This was deemed “an epoch-making event, unthinkable before the war.”³⁵

Furthermore, it should be added that among the Okinawan Issei, there were many who believed in “Japan as a divine nation” and strongly identified themselves with Japan. After the war, some of them refused to believe that Japan was defeated and organized *Hissho-kai*, one of the Japan-won-the-war groups. They opposed war-relief efforts to the end because they believed Japan was victorious and needed no relief.³⁶

With such different attitudes toward Japan, however, Okinawans generally felt they had been “liberated” from discrimination and viewed themselves on an equal footing with Naichi. As the following sections show, they no longer kept to themselves but actively and openly participated in Okinawan war-relief efforts and public festivals promoting Okinawan music and dance.

PROSPERITY AND RISING SOCIAL STATUS

In the years leading up to the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. military increased its presence in Hawai‘i. The Pacific Fleet assembled at Pearl Harbor, bringing tens of thousands of sailors to the Hawaiian Islands. The economy of Hawai‘i grew steadily as military workers and servicemen flooded in, and as a result Okinawan restaurant owners and pig farmers prospered.

The pig farming business in Hawai‘i was largely monopolized by Okinawans. According to a February 4, 1939, article in the *Hawaii Hochi*, a pig farmers’ association was organized in Honolulu with 240 members. At the time, pig farming was already a million-dollar-a-year business, with most of the farms located in Honolulu because of the ready access to large amounts of food waste.³⁷ The 1940 national census reveals that there were 1,066 pig farmers in Hawai‘i raising 31,681 animals. Of the 1,066 farmers, 341 lived in Honolulu and owned 22,302 hogs. If the

U.S. military stationed in Hawai'i wanted pork—and they did—they needed the cooperation of the Islands' Okinawan pig farmers to secure a supply. Immediately prior to the outbreak of war, the price of pork soared, and Okinawan pig farmers turned a quick profit. After the war began demand further increased, and pig farming became a two-million-dollar-a-year industry.³⁸ Once the target of insults, these farmers were now seen as important to Hawai'i's economy and the national defense. In addition, workers in food production and food processing were not pressed to serve in the military. In fact, it is likely that many youths became pig farmers to avoid the draft.³⁹

Tetsurou Shimojima interviewed pig farmers such as Akira Sakima, who, as a ten-year-old boy in 1928, woke up at 4:30 every Saturday and Sunday morning to collect four oil drums of food scraps in a Ford Model T. At the age of eighteen, in 1936, Sakima got a group of friends together and won the bid to collect food waste from Schofield Barracks, where thousands of servicemen were stationed. With this success, he was freed from making the garbage rounds himself and expanded his business. After graduating from high school, he became a pig farmer—and was exempted from military service.⁴⁰

Gashin Taira succeeded in both pig farming and the food service industry. In 1935 he purchased Kuhio Cafe from a friend, who was returning to Japan, with \$500 in savings and a \$1,500 loan from a money broker. The restaurant catered to servicemen and was always busy. Okinawan restaurants were successful largely because they served American rather than Japanese food.⁴¹ They also hired fellow Okinawans, allowing them to learn the restaurant business freely, and encouraged employees to open their own restaurants.

In other areas, too, Okinawans worked hard, accumulated wealth, and built firm economic foundations. According to Sadao Asato, "during the war there was a serious labor shortage everywhere due to the munitions boom in Hawai'i. . . . Life of Okinawans altogether changed from pre-war to postwar days. . . . We earned three, four times more and established a secure livelihood."⁴² Unable to send money to their families in Okinawa and prohibited from making bank deposits in excess of \$300, the wartime Okinawan community was literally overflowing with cash. Burglaries were common, and people even felt compelled to bury their money.

After the war, it was said there were no poor Okinawans, and many went on spending sprees. Yasutarou Soga recollects: "It was a strange

time. Old Okinawan women wore two, three, big, shiny, diamond rings.”⁴³ The *Nippu Jiji* criticized Okinawans’ fondness for lavish celebrations to mark family birthdays, wedding anniversaries, and soldiers’ homecomings.⁴⁴ Okinawans also spent their wealth in more constructive ways—for political, economic, educational, and cultural purposes. For the first time in Hawai‘i, an academy for Okinawan dance and music was established, and radio programs featuring Okinawan music were broadcast. Nisei Okinawans began attending college and advanced in professional fields such as law, medicine, and dentistry, as well as business and politics.⁴⁵ During the 1946 election, the first Okinawan Nisei was elected as a representative of Hawai‘i’s Territorial Congress. An August 19, 1947, article in the *Hawaii Hochi* reported on the opening of many new Okinawan stores and businesses, including Aloha Tofu Company and Hawaii Miso and Shoyu Company, both funded with Okinawan capital.

THE BEGINNING OF WAR RELIEF FOR OKINAWA

The relief movement for war-stricken Okinawa mobilized, for the first time, the entire Okinawan population in Hawai‘i—not just individual locality clubs. United in their cause, Okinawans came together as never before. Nearly all of the five thousand Okinawan households in Hawai‘i had relatives who had suffered during the Battle of Okinawa, and many believed it was their responsibility and duty to send aid.

The Okinawan relief effort in Hawai‘i was spearheaded by Thomas Taro Higa, a Nisei soldier of the 100th Battalion. According to Higa’s memoir, he was discharged and returned to Hawai‘i in February 1945.⁴⁶ Having witnessed the devastation in Europe, Higa anticipated the suffering of Okinawan civilians once the Okinawan landing operations became known. He volunteered to serve again and planned to join the army in Okinawa. On the day of his departure, April 20, 1945, a farewell party was held for him at Yasuteru Makishi’s home in Honolulu. At the gathering, Higa’s relief plan for Okinawan war victims was discussed and many pledged their support. On arriving in Okinawa, Higa sent telegrams to Hawai‘i, reporting on the horrible conditions and the progress of his plan.

After Japan’s surrender, Higa returned to Hawai‘i on September 13 and began organizing aid. On September 16, at Sadao Asato’s home, he spoke to more than twenty Okinawan leaders. Although a few opposed it, many, including Sadao Asato and Zensuke Kaneshiro, supported the

idea of sending aid to Okinawa. Naichi Christian ministers Masaichi Goto and Hiroshi Ozaki and sympathetic white community leaders Gilbert Bowles and Rev. Edward Whitmore also pledged their support.⁴⁷ Higa later obtained the complete cooperation of the U.S. Navy in late November. Higa recalls: "The Navy was the last difficulty. Winning the cooperation of the Navy was such an encouragement and filled us with redoubled courage. The plan the Okinawan leaders had agreed to at the home of Yasuteru Makishi . . . began to materialize after seven months."⁴⁸

Conditions in Okinawa were described by other Nisei soldiers. Takeo Yoshioka's report was printed in the November 6, 1945, *Hawaii Hochi*: "People are seriously suffering and they asked me to let the people in Hawai'i know of their condition. As Okinawa is occupied by the U.S. military, it will be possible to negotiate with the authorities to transport clothes and other items collected by Okinawans in Hawai'i. I saw naked children, and it was very sad."⁴⁹ People in Okinawa were suffering severe shortages since shipping from the Japanese mainland had come to a halt, and a devastating typhoon had destroyed temporary shelters built after the war.

Hawai'i's Okinawans quickly responded. Under the auspices of the Honolulu Association of Christian Churches and with the support of the U.S. Navy, a large-scale effort to collect clothes for war victims was organized.⁵⁰ In late November 1945, William Geiger of the association announced that as winter was approaching clothes would need to be collected as soon as possible. Clothing for women and children was especially needed.⁵¹ Collecting stations were set up all over the Islands, and hundreds of Okinawans volunteered daily to mend and pack clothes. The largest station was at the Honpa Hongwanji Jikouen Temple, whose members were mostly Okinawan. Hawai'i's Japanese newspapers reported its progress daily: "At Jikouen Temple, local men and women volunteer every day for packing and mending. Last night about 200 volunteers worked until past ten o'clock."⁵² At the Honolulu headquarters, 500 boxes were assembled by December 15, with 170–200 articles of clothing per box. More boxes arrived from Maui, Kauai, and the Big Island. Ultimately, 752 boxes, enough clothing for 200,000 people, were collected from towns and plantations on every island. Support also came in the form of donations of food and transportation for volunteers, packing boxes, and cash for advertising and purchasing new items. The clothing drive was deemed a resounding success and ended in early January 1946.⁵³

WAR-RELIEF EFFORTS AND SOLIDARITY

Okinawans continued their relief work. They revived prewar locality clubs and sent necessary items to their home villages and towns.⁵⁴ On a larger scale, they set up relief organizations that crossed locality club boundaries. Among the most successful of these were the Lepta Kai (group), the Okinawan Relief Kousei (renewal) Kai, the Hawai'i Association for Okinawan Relief Kai, the Okinawan Medical Relief Association, and the Hawai'i Christian Society for Okinawan Recovery.

Okinawan mothers in Hawai'i organized the Lepta Kai on July 19, 1946, with support from the Salvation Army. They distributed five thousand savings banks, known as Lepta boxes, throughout the Islands, asking housewives to donate a small amount after each day's grocery shopping. The funds were collected and sent to Okinawan mothers in the form of clothes, books, stationery, sewing machines, lanterns, cooking oil, seeds, reading glasses, bicycles, phonographs, organs, shoes, toys, and candy.⁵⁵ In the first year, the Lepta Kai raised \$6,000 and sent one hundred boxes of goods and seven sewing machines. In Okinawa the Lepta Sewing School was founded in April 1948: "Lepta Sewing School was managed by the Christian Church Association. It offered women, many of whom were caring for children and elderly parents on their own, the means for a better life. They could leave their children at the school's day-care center, talk over family matters, learn sewing without interruption, and prepare for a solid, independent life in the future."⁵⁶ Hawai'i's Lepta Kai members sent relief goods again in 1948 and 1949, paying special attention to the needs of children and the elderly.⁵⁷

The Okinawan Relief Kousei Kai was organized as a legally incorporated foundation on March 18, 1947, for the purpose of reconstructing Okinawa through education.⁵⁸ According to a plan announced by Seiei Wakukawa, its chief organizer, in August 1947, the group intended to raise funds to: (1) establish the first university in Okinawa and educate talented young people; and (2) provide students in Okinawa with scholarships to study in the United States.⁵⁹ The Kousei Kai hoped to raise \$350,000 in Hawai'i and \$220,000 in North and South America, but they were unable to achieve these goals on their own.

The Kousei Kai's plan to advance higher education in Okinawa was shared by the U.S. government. Ryukyu University was founded in 1950 at the site of old Shuri Castle with U.S. funds. Scholarships for Okinawan students to study in the United States were funded by donations collected

in Hawai'i. These were eagerly received. In 1948 five students were selected from eighty-one applicants. The first scholarship students stopped in Honolulu on their way to the U.S. mainland and received "an unprecedented, enthusiastic welcome."⁶⁰

The Hawai'i Association for Okinawan Relief Kai was organized on December 29, 1947. Its sole purpose was to send 550 pigs to Okinawa.⁶¹ In the Battle of Okinawa one out of four civilians was killed and many pigs were lost. Before the war Okinawa had more than 120,000 pigs, more than any other prefecture in Japan, but only 2,000 survived the war. This caused great concern, and increasing their numbers was linked to the very survival of Okinawan culture.⁶² The loss of pigs weighed heavily on the minds of Hawai'i's Okinawans after Thomas Higa's report, "No Pigs in the Pig Sty," appeared in the June 14, 1945, *Nippu Jiji*: "There was a pot by a well. . . . Looking around, I found a pig sty divided into three sections, made from iron and stones. I saw no pigs, not even a piglet." Despite their concern, Okinawans felt they could do nothing.

Then on November 18, 1947, they were inspired by an appeal in the *Hawaii Hochi*: "Rev. Thompson, a resident of Okinawa, sent us a note. He hopes that Okinawans in Hawai'i will send pigs to Okinawa for breeding. He says, though it is not easy to send live pigs, please find a way to send them." Two days later, on November 20, volunteers gathered at Jikouen Temple, discussed the matter, and unanimously decided to send 550 pigs (500 females and 50 males) to Okinawa.⁶³ The Hawai'i Association for Okinawan Relief Kai was born.

Tetsurou Shimojima published an essay on this topic, "Hogs That Crossed the Pacific—People in Hawai'i Saved Okinawa," that appeared in 158 installments in the *Ryukyu Shimpou* beginning in May 9, 1994, and then as the book, *Hogs and the Independence of Okinawa*. In 1999 NHK (Japan's National Broadcasting Association) produced the documentary "Five Thousand Kilometers across the Pacific: The Great Pig Transport." This moving film incorporates rare footage of the pigs being transported and shows how difficult it was to keep so many animals in cramped cages during a long, rough sea crossing. The film was broadcast in Hawai'i during the Okinawan Immigration Centennial.

How was the transport accomplished? In six months, \$47,000 was raised—enough to send Yoshio Yamashiro, a veterinarian, to Omaha, Nebraska, to purchase pigs that would thrive in the Okinawan climate. Then, in late July 1948, six Okinawans, all pig farmers, were flown on

a U.S. military plane to San Francisco.⁶⁴ They went, together with the pigs Yamashiro purchased, to Portland, Oregon, and finally to Okinawa.⁶⁵

One of the farmers, Ryoushin Akena, in his autobiography, *Watashino kasukana chikara* (My modest efforts), described his feelings at the end of the mission: "The hardships we had faced were nothing! We fulfilled a great responsibility. We were deeply moved and experienced the joy of a lifetime. Though we were men, we wept."⁶⁶

Okinawans enthusiastically welcomed the pigs donated by their friends and relatives in Hawai'i. In distributing the pigs, the number given to each town and village was based on its population. Farmers drew lots for the female pigs. When piglets were born, farmers were required to give four female piglets to four other farmers. When piglets were born to this second set of farmers, they agreed to give four female piglets to four more farmers. By repeating this process, Okinawa's pig population grew and spread. Two years later, in 1950, it numbered more than 100,000, and in 1956 it reached 140,000.⁶⁷ The pigs saved 500,000 Okinawans from starvation. They were a most memorable gift from Hawai'i.

The Okinawan Medical Relief Association was composed of medical doctors, dentists, and pharmacists. It was organized by a doctor, Matsu Yamashiro, in January 1948. At first Yamashiro alone donated medical supplies, but gradually other doctors joined him. They expanded their activities and eventually organized an association. In the first year, they sent \$10,000 worth of medical supplies to Okinawa.⁶⁸ In 1949, another \$10,000 worth was dispatched, and, in 1951, \$150,000 in medical supplies was donated.⁶⁹

The Hawai'i Christian Society for Okinawan Recovery was organized on October 26, 1948, to bring Christianity and milk-goats to Okinawa.⁷⁰ After raising \$30,000, five volunteers were secured and 600 milk-goats were transported over the course of three months.⁷¹ Like the pigs donated by the Okinawan Relief Kai, these goats were greatly welcomed in Okinawa. The *Nippu Jiji* commented: "The demand for milk-goats is vigorous, and a superior goat costs more than 10,000 yen. It is said that the hero of the Okinawan recovery is the milk-goat."⁷² The goats flourished in their new home. According to a 1951 survey by the Social Work Agency of the Government of the Okinawan Islands, "the milk-goats numbered more than 2,700, including the first, second, and third generations."⁷³

In March 1950, a group of younger Okinawans set up the Okinawan Relief Federation of Hawai'i to integrate all relief activities. Although

each aid organization had achieved excellent results separately, they were not well coordinated, and rivalries were common. With the establishment of the federation, “the leaders of 28,000 Okinawans in Hawai‘i came to embrace peace and cooperation.”⁷⁴ One of its Nisei leaders, James Kanashiro, remarked: “Okinawans in Hawai‘i reached a condition of understanding and friendship after a thirty years’ interval. There is no longer fierce rivalry among us.”⁷⁵ In the following year, the UOA was founded as a federation of locality clubs, resolving “to assist in the restoration of a devastated Okinawa.” 300 community leaders attended the association’s inauguration ceremony, and its first president, Henry Gima, declared in his inauguration speech: “There have been so many factions among us. . . . We should cease fighting all the factional conflicts and move forward with common purpose. We should strive for unity, understanding and friendship.”⁷⁶ At first, there was a feeling of caution among Okinawans about uniting the whole Okinawan community in a conspicuous way, and only fourteen of the forty-three locality clubs joined the association. By 1956, however, thirty-four clubs had joined.⁷⁷

Postwar relief efforts truly strengthened Okinawans’ bond with their homeland, their identity as Okinawans, and unity within their communities. Faced with the task of rebuilding a war-torn Okinawa, they came together with a common purpose, overcoming longstanding internal divisions among themselves. Strong ties with the people of Okinawa continued for years after the war, with requests for assistance as well as letters of hearty thanks being sent regularly to the Islands. In October 1951, Shuhei Higa, chairman of the Okinawa Provisional Government, arrived in Hawai‘i to report on conditions in Okinawa and to thank Okinawans in Hawai‘i for their help and generosity.⁷⁸

THE FLOWERING OF OKINAWAN CULTURE

William P. Lebra characterizes the period 1950–70 as one of Okinawan “cultural florescence,” but such florescence can be dated to as early as 1946–47.⁷⁹ According to an article in the *Nippu Jiji* on January 25, 1947, entitled “Okinawan Music and Dance,” “at nearly every celebration, Ryukyuan music and dance enliven party after party. Okinawan music and dance have become a specialty of Honolulu—even Hawai‘i—like Hawaiian music and hula.” Clubs were organized wherever there was an interest in traditional singing and dancing. The first phonograph record

of Ryukyuan music appeared in 1947, and in the same year radio programs began to broadcast Okinawan songs.⁸⁰

In February 1951 cultural exchange began to flow between Hawai'i and Okinawa. The Uruma Young Men's Association of Honolulu, with special permission from the U.S. military government in Okinawa, invited fifteen actors and actresses from Okinawa's Otohime Theatrical Company to perform traditional dances and operettas for a month and a half.⁸¹ Further cultural interaction followed between Okinawa and Hawai'i in various forms and in the areas of art, music, and the martial arts. Reflecting the increased interest in Okinawan culture, the *Hawaii Hochi* issued a special New Year's Day edition on Okinawan music in 1954. Art and music were now a source of pride for Hawai'i's Okinawans. Tamayo Shiroma, a master of Okinawan *koto* (a traditional string instrument) music, recollected in 1965 that for many years she tended to refrain from playing *koto* in public, but "today, it is unbelievable, really like a dream, that performing Ryukyuan music is so widely accepted and thriving."⁸²

One unique aspect of the Okinawan cultural florescence is its direct link to the war-relief effort. According to a female student's report in 1947, Okinawan songs and dances were proudly enjoyed at events organized specifically to raise funds for the relief effort:

Next month Kauai Okinawans are sponsoring a Ryukyuan bon dance in Hanapepe for the Okinawan Relief Fund. Since this event is going to be sponsored only by Okinawans, the dances may be only Ryukyuan. But because many Naichi girls will be taking part, I cannot be sure. Many Naichi girls want to learn Ryukyuan dances!⁸³

Traditional performing arts were an important part of fund-raising activities. The Nakama Ongaku (music) Kai organized a charity event, the Ryukyuan Great Performing Arts Festival, featuring Ryukyuan *sanshin* (banjo) music. It was a two-day event at McKinley High School in Honolulu and attracted capacity crowds. To raise more funds, the club held a second festival at Kalakaua Intermediate School in Honolulu the following week and at Hongwanji Temple in Waipahu a month later.⁸⁴ In the following year the club organized another two-day event, the Performing Arts Festival for the Education of Eighty Thousand Children. With the proceeds, the club "ordered eighty thousand tablets [notebooks] and pencils" for Okinawan schoolchildren.⁸⁵

Members of the Miyagi Ongaku Kai were aware that doctors had “started to send penicillin and other [medicine], though far from enough, to Okinawa Central Hospital, which in turn distributed them to clinics all over Okinawa.”⁸⁶ The club held a performing arts festival at Kawananakoa Intermediate School in Honolulu for four nights in July 1948 and contributed the money raised to the Okinawa Medical Relief Association. On the Big Island, “the Hawai‘i Club of Ryukyuan Arts was organized and a fund-raising performing arts festival was held at Hilo Hongwanji Temple.”⁸⁷ In December 1948 the Club for the Study of Ryukyuan Art sponsored a four-night performing arts festival at Kawananakoa Intermediate School to raise relief funds.⁸⁸

Other aspects of Okinawan culture also came to flourish in conjunction with war-relief efforts. In July 1948 the Hawai‘i Association for Okinawan Relief Kai held an Okinawan sumo competition in the garden of the Japanese consulate in Honolulu, attracting ten thousand spectators. Okinawan karate was also demonstrated.⁸⁹ In October the Okinawan Sumo Association was organized to promote the sport in Hawai‘i.⁹⁰ Thereafter, Okinawan sumo competitions were held to raise money for Okinawa.⁹¹

CONCLUSION

World War II saw the collapse of Naichi dominance over Hawai‘i’s Japanese community and fundamental changes to the relationship between Naichi and Okinawans. In the postwar years, Okinawans’ economic status grew steadily as did their pride in things Okinawan; they openly enjoyed and celebrated their distinctive culture, especially music and dance, which in turn helped them (and others) view Okinawans as a unique ethnic entity—and not as a Japanese subgroup. Since then the UOA has worked to sustain Okinawan cultural pride by sponsoring new activities and responding to the needs of the community.

Beginning with the wartime and postwar emergence, Okinawan ethnic identity has continued to grow. Although it is beyond the scope of this article, it may be useful to speculate briefly on how Okinawan ethnic identity has been maintained and developed in Hawai‘i. A major factor has certainly been the close and continuing ties between Hawai‘i and Okinawa. For example, in the 1960s, the UOA welcomed “visiting dignitaries of the Ryukyu Government as well as civic leaders from Okinawa.”⁹² Also, at about this time, the U.S. military government in

Okinawa sponsored the Ryukyuan-Hawaiian Brotherhood Program (1959–72), which sent more than 1,000 Okinawan students, *tokunou seinen* (outstanding young farmers), and others to Hawai‘i.⁹³ Katsunobu Okano argues that the program was intended to give Hawai‘i’s Okinawans a new role as caretakers of Okinawa’s youth. He also claims that the military government manipulated Hawai‘i’s Okinawans by identifying them not as Japanese Americans but “American Ryukyans” and encouraging their separate ethnic identity from the rest of the Japanese community.⁹⁴

After Okinawa’s return to Japan in 1972, solidarity between Okinawans of Hawai‘i and Okinawa itself was further ensured with the creation of the annual Okinawan Jubilee and the more ambitious Okinawan Festival from 1982, in both of which the UOA played a leading role. On the one hand, these festivals were accepted as a part of Hawai‘i’s social events, attracting tens of thousand of people, not only Okinawans but various other people. At the first festival, Governor Jack Burns declared the week as Okinawan Cultural Exchange Week. Shigehiko Shiramizu claims that it was at the Okinawan festivals in the 1970s that the Okinawans in Hawai‘i truly came into their own as a distinctive Island ethnic group.⁹⁵ On the other hand, the transnational aspect—cultural interaction between peoples of Hawai‘i and Okinawa—was prominent. Many artists and musicians were invited from Okinawa to perform at these events, thereby exposing younger generations to Okinawan culture. It should be pointed out that the government of Okinawa was active in strengthening ties between Okinawa and overseas immigrant communities. During the 1980s and 1990s, as Makoto Arakaki points out, distinct Okinawa identity was passed on to the younger generations because young Okinawans in Hawai‘i were invited to Okinawa, fervently welcomed, and awakened to their ethnic roots.⁹⁶ Furthermore, in 1990 the impressive Okinawan Culture Center, first conceptualized by the governor of Okinawa, Junji Nishime, was built in Waipahu, Oahu, with the addition of \$150,000’s worth of special Okinawan red roof tiles sent by the people of Okinawa as a token of gratitude for the postwar assistance they had received from their kinsfolk in Hawai‘i. That same year, the Okinawan government sponsored the first Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, which encouraged many young Okinawans in Hawai‘i to visit Okinawa and learn more about their cultural heritage. Since then, the festival has been held every five years. The close and long-standing ties between Okinawa and Hawai‘i have been the key to Okinawans’ maintaining a strong sense of ethnic identity in Hawai‘i.

NOTES

¹ John F. McDermott, Jr., Wen-Shing Tseng, and Thomas W. Maretzki, eds., *People and Cultures of Hawaii: A Psychocultural Profile* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1980). Japanese immigrants from Okinawa are called "Okinawans," "Okinawas," or "Uchinanchu," and those from other parts of Japan are called "Naichi," "Naicha," or "Yamatonchu."

² George K. Yamamoto, "Some Patterns of Mate Selection among Naichi and Okinawans on Oahu," *Social Process in Hawaii* 21 (1957): 43.

³ Yukiko Kimura, "Locality Clubs as Basic Units of the Social Organization of the Okinawans in Hawaii," *Phylon* 29, no. 4 (Winter 1968): 331–38.

⁴ I have examined the postwar relief activities but did not interpret them as being the origin of Okinawan ethnic identity. See Noriko Shimada, *Sensou to imin no shakaishi* [Social history of war and immigration] (Tokyo: Gendai Shiryō Shuppan, 2004).

⁵ Tomonori Ishikawa, "Okinawa imin tenkai no haikai to sokuseki [The background and footprints of the development of Okinawan emigration]," *Nantoubunka* 23 (2001): 70–71.

⁶ Hawai'i Nihonjin Iminshi Kankō Inkaï, *Hawai Nihonjin iminshi* [History of Japanese in Hawai'i] (Honolulu: Hawai'i Nikkeijin Rengō Kyōkai, 1964), 314.

⁷ Kimura, "Locality Clubs," 332.

⁸ M. Alfred Tozzer, *The Okinawans of Loo Choo Island: A Japanese Minority Group* (Office of Strategic Services, June 1, 1944), 18.

⁹ McDermott, Tseng, and Maretzki, 123; Masanori Higa, "Hawai no Okinawa," in *Imin wa ikiru* [Immigrants are alive], ed. Taro Higa, (Tokyo: Nichibeï Jihōsha, 1974), 51, 53.

¹⁰ Yukiko Kimura, *Issei: Japanese Immigrants in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988), 333–34.

¹¹ Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 70; *Nippu Jiji*, June 17, 1941.

¹² McDermott, Tseng, and Maretzki, *People and Cultures of Hawaii*, 121.

¹³ Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 87.

¹⁴ Toyama and Ikeda, "The Okinawan-Naichi Relationship," *Social Process in Hawaii* 14 (1950): 53.

¹⁵ Eileen H. Tamura, *Americanization, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity: The Nisei Generation in Hawaii* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 194.

¹⁶ *Nippu Jiji*, January 1, 1975.

¹⁷ Tetsuro Shimojima, *Buta to Okinawa dokuritsu* [Hogs and Okinawan independence] (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1979), 39–55.

¹⁸ Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 60. Japanese language school principals, journalists, and religious leaders were among the first to be imprisoned; few Okinawans held these jobs.

¹⁹ Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 86.

²⁰ "A Minority Group, 1947," 4, B17F5, Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory, University of Hawai'i.

²¹ Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 87.

²² As Lee Rihwa demonstrates, refusing to be treated as "enemy aliens," Koreans in Hawai'i publicly insisted that they were "not Japanese." They emphasized that their native land, Korea, had maintained its national identity even under Japanese colonial rule and that Koreans in Hawai'i maintained their own ethnic community, language, and identity. Lee analyzes the Korean wartime experience from the perspective of immigrants' nationalism and the U.S. drive to "nationalize" immigrants and says that eventually Koreans pledged allegiance to the United States and established themselves as an

ethnic group in Hawai‘i. See Lee Rihwa, “Hawai kaigenrei-ka no Korian imin no nashonarizum—‘tekisei-gaikokujin’ kara ‘yuukouteki-gaikokujin’ e no katari no keisei” [The claim against “enemy alien” status of Koreans in wartime Hawai‘i: Redefining “Korean” and reconstructing nationalism] *American Studies*, no. 42 (2008): 137–54. Unlike Koreans, Okinawans in Hawai‘i did not have nationalist leaders or organizations, and their desire for separation from Japan was not publicly pursued. A comparative study of Korean and Okinawan wartime experiences seems inviting, but it is not the purpose of this article.

²³ On November 6, 1947, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* reported that China claimed Okinawa as a territory and demanded its unconditional return.

²⁴ Higa, “Hawai no Okinawa,” 54–55.

²⁵ “A Minority Group, 1947,” 4.

²⁶ As for postwar Okinawa, see Hideaki Tobe, “Kichi to kindaisei—Okinawa ni okeru kokuminka no mondai to Amerika” [Military bases and modernity: The issue of nationalization and the U.S. in Okinawa], in *Rekishi no naka no “Amerika”—Kokuminka wo meguru katari to souzou* [American histories: Narrating the routes to nationhood], ed. Hayumi Higuchi and Ken Chujou (Tokyo: Sairyusha, 2006), 165–80.

²⁷ See, for example, *Nippu Jiji*, January 16, June 1, and October 27, 1953. “Kibeii” are Nisei Japanese whose parents sent them to Japan in their childhood to be educated.

²⁸ See, for example, *Nippu Jiji*, October 14, 1952, and September 18, 1953.

²⁹ The number of Okinawan Nisei servicemen was about the same as that of other Nisei. Tozzer, *Okinawans of Loo Choo Island*, 59; Seiji Horie, *Aru Okinawa Hawai imin no Shinju-wan* [The Pearl Harbor of an Okinawan immigrant in Hawai‘i] (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyujo, 1991), 64–72.

³⁰ Mitsugu Sakihara, *Gajumaru no tsudo* [The Gajumaru gathering] (Honolulu: Gajumaru Kai, 1980), 47.

³¹ “A Minority Group, 1947,” 2.

³² Yamamoto, “Some Patterns of Mate Selection,” 44.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Hawaii Hochi*, May 27, 1963.

³⁵ Higa, “Hawai no Okinawa,” 55.

³⁶ For more on the *Hissho-kai*, see Shimada, *Sensou to imin no shakaisi*, 208–10, 222–24, and 250.

³⁷ *Nippu Jiji*, October 11, 1938.

³⁸ Shimojima, *Buta to Okinawa dokuritus*, 65, 72.

³⁹ McDermott, Tseng, and Marezki, *People and Cultures of Hawaii*, 124.

⁴⁰ Shimojima, *Buta to Okinawa dokuritus*, 67–71.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁴² Sakihara, *Gajumaru no tsudo*, 51.

⁴³ Yasutarou Soga, *Gojunen-kan no Hawai kaiko* [Recollections of Hawai‘i over the past fifty years] (Honolulu: Publishing Committee of Gojunen-kan no Hawai kaiko, 1953), 673.

⁴⁴ *Nippu Jiji*, September 19, 1945.

⁴⁵ McDermott, Tseng, and Marezki, *People and Cultures of Hawaii*, 124–25.

⁴⁶ Taro Higa, *Aru Nisei no wadachi* [The tracks of a Nisei], rev. ed. (Honolulu: Hawaii Hochi Sha, 1982), 186–90.

⁴⁷ Gilbert Bowles was a Quaker missionary in Japan for forty years.

⁴⁸ Higa, *Aru Nisei no wadachi*, 194.

⁴⁹ *Hawaii Hochi*, November 6, 1945.

⁵⁰ Higa, *Aru Nisei no wadachi*, 191–95.

- ⁵¹ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, November 30, 1945.
- ⁵² *Hawaii Hochi*, December 13, 1945.
- ⁵³ *Hawaii Hochi*, January 10, 1946.
- ⁵⁴ In late December 1947, the Nakagusuku Villagers' Locality Club on Maui and the Nanbaru Villagers' Locality Club on the Big Island were reestablished for the purpose of sending stationery and other goods to their home villages. Takenobu Higa, *Shinbun ni miru Hawaii Okinawa-jin kyujunen* [Ninety years of Okinawans in Hawaii'i as seen in newspapers] (Honolulu: Takenobu Higa, 1990), 59.
- ⁵⁵ *Nippu Jiji*, June 30, 1975.
- ⁵⁶ *Nippu Jiji*, April 21, 1948.
- ⁵⁷ *Hawaii Hochi*, July 22, 1946; Takenobu Higa, *Raihu gojunen kinen Hawaii Okinawa kenjin shasin-cho* [A picture book of Okinawans in Hawaii'i commemorating their fiftieth year since arriving in Hawaii'i] (Hilo, HI: Uehara Matsu, 1951).
- ⁵⁸ *Hawaii Hochi*, March 19 and August 10, 1947.
- ⁵⁹ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, August 20, 1947.
- ⁶⁰ *Kousei Okinawa*, 2nd year, no. 4, October 1948.
- ⁶¹ *Hawaii Hochi*, December 30, 1947.
- ⁶² Yoshihiko Teruya and Katsumi Yamazato, ed., *Sengo Okinawa to Amerika: Ibunka sesshoku no gojunen* [Postwar Okinawa and America: Fifty years of cross-cultural contact] (Naha: Okinawa Taimususha, 1995), 206.
- ⁶³ *Hawaii Hochi*, November 21, 1947.
- ⁶⁴ *Hawaii Hochi*, July 14, 1948.
- ⁶⁵ Sakihara, *Gajumarū no tsudoi*, 202–3. A young man who wanted to visit Okinawa secretly flew to San Francisco to join the men.
- ⁶⁶ Shimojima, *Buta to Okinawa dokuritsu*, 127.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 138, 215.
- ⁶⁸ *Hawaii Hochi*, May 5, 1951.
- ⁶⁹ *Nippu Jiji*, May 26, 1949; *Honolulu Advertiser*, July 25, 1951.
- ⁷⁰ *Hawaii Hochi*, October 27, 1948; *Nippu Jiji*, March 29, 1949; *Honolulu Advertiser*, August 16, 1949. Herbert V. Nicholson, a Quaker missionary to Japan, transported about two hundred goats to Okinawa in October 1947 as a gift from the U.S. Christians. On his way back to the United States, he happened to stop off at Honolulu and had a chance to talk to Japanese Christians about the gift of goats. Probably, the Hawaii'i Christian Society for Okinawan Recovery was organized as a result of this meeting, and Hawaii'i Okinawan Christians cooperated with Nicholson to send more goats to Okinawa. Herbert M. Nicholson, *Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Love Overflows in Peace and War* (Whittier, CA: Penn Lithographics, 1974), 100–106.
- ⁷¹ *Nippu Jiji*, April 15, 1949; *Hawaii Hochi*, November 8, 1950.
- ⁷² *Nippu Jiji*, March 29, 1949.
- ⁷³ *Hawaii Hochi*, November 15, 1951.
- ⁷⁴ *Hawaii Hochi*, March 24, 1950.
- ⁷⁵ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, March 27, 1950. The federation dispersed in the spring of 1952, when relief efforts were drawing to a close after seven years of intense activity. *Nippu Jiji*, May 31, 1952.
- ⁷⁶ *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, September 22, 1951.
- ⁷⁷ *Hawaii Times*, September 5, 1951; Kimura, "Locality Clubs," 337.
- ⁷⁸ In September 1949 Governor Shikiya suggested that Okinawans in Hawaii'i sponsor younger Okinawan relatives to study in Hawaii'i: *Nippu Jiji*, September 13, 1949. Many thank-you messages were printed in newspapers: for example, *Nippu Jiji*, May 26, 1946, and June 12, 1954. For Higa's visit, see *Nippu Jiji*, October 8, 1951.

⁷⁹ William P. Lebra, "The Okinawans," in McDermott, Tseng, and Marezki, *People and Cultures of Hawaii*, 124.

⁸⁰ *Nippu Jiji*, May 28, 1947; Higa, "Hawai no Okinawa," 56.

⁸¹ *Hawaii Hochi*, November 14, 1950, February 19, 1951, and March 29, 1951.

⁸² Higa, *Shinbun ni miru Hawaii Okinawa-jin kyujunen*, 130; *Hawaii Hochi*, January 5, 1965.

⁸³ "A Minority Group, 1947," 5.

⁸⁴ *Hawaii Hochi*, January 24, 1947.

⁸⁵ *Hawaii Hochi*, January 7, 1948.

⁸⁶ *Hawaii Hochi*, July 14, 1948.

⁸⁷ *Hawaii Hochi*, May 17, 1947.

⁸⁸ *Hawaii Hochi*, December 8, 1948.

⁸⁹ *Hawaii Hochi*, July 14, 1948.

⁹⁰ *Hawaii Hochi*, October 6, 1948.

⁹¹ *Hawaii Hochi*, June 3, 1950.

⁹² Yukiko Kimura, "Social-Historical Background of the Okinawans in Hawaii," report no. 36, December 1962, Romanzo Adams Social Research Laboratory, University of Hawai'i.

⁹³ Nobukatsu Okano, "Senryousha to hi-senryousha no hazama wo ikiru imin" [The immigrants who live between the occupiers and the occupied], *Imin kenkyu nenpou* [Annual review of migration studies] 13 (2007): 8.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁵ Shigehiko Shiramizu, *Esunikku bunka no shakai gaku* [Sociological study on ethnic culture] (Tokyo: Nihon Hyouron Sha, 1998).

⁹⁶ Makoto Arakaki, "Hawai'i Uchinanchu and Okinawa Uchinanchu Spirit and the Formation of a Transnational Identity," in *Okinawan Diaspora*, ed. Ronald Y. Nakasone, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 136.

The play makes evident how Okinawan identity is performative, both producing and produced within the complicated matrix of political, cultural, and military power that structures Okinawa's past and ongoing relationship with Japan and the United States. After annexation, Okinawans were coerced and forced to adopt Japanese cultural, intellectual, and linguistic practices, and were interpolated as inferior or more primitive Japanese requiring assimilation into Japan's Empire. Within the context of "The Emergence of Okinawan Ethnic Identity in Hawaii; Wartime and Postwar Experiences." *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 23 (2012): 117-38. Shimada Noriko. "The Emergence of Okinawan Ethnic Identity in Hawaii; Wartime and Postwar Experiences." *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 23 (2012): 117-38.) | false. Search Google Scholar. "Okinawan Diaspora Blues." In Laura Kina: Blue Hawaii. Exhibition catalogue. The Martha and Robert Fogelman Galleries of Contemporary Art University of Memphis. While the Iraq War serves as an ongoing headline in both U.S. and international newspapers, this conflict represents only one element of the military's global presence. Indeed, through a network of bases in over one hundred countries, the U.S. military transforms the nature of local societies, contributing to an ongoing dynamic of identity formation, social change, and resistance that alters local interests, and inserts itself into everyday lives. Examining both Henoko's history and contemporary base-related activism, Inoue places the emergence of the two forms of Okinawan identity--"We are Okinawans of a different kind" and "We are Okinawans"--in the context of economics, kinship, and cultural practice.