
The Ryukyuanist

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CONTENTS

<i>A. P. Jenkins: Digging into Memories of the Past</i>	1
<i>Publications (XIX)</i>	4
<i>Members' news</i>	7
<i>Announcement</i>	8

Spring is bringing subtle changes to Okinawa, and to *The Ryukyuanist*, as readers of this and future issues will see. To begin, we have a contribution from a British professor at the University of the Ryukyus who has become an increasingly active contributor to Okinawa during these past nine years of his residence here. A. P. Jenkins reports here an on-going project of Okinawan oral history collected principally by university students under guidance and direction of an intercollegiate group of faculty. Prof. Jenkins brings to that project not only his leadership but his academic degrees in history from the University of Oxford, ten years of work as an archivist at the Bodleian Library, and several years of publication in English of news of Okinawan interest in *The Ryukyu Shimpo*. Following his welcome article, we are grateful to present another long section devoted to

publications received. In the members' news section we look forward to this year's annual meetings of two academic societies, the Association of Asian Studies (April 11-14 in Honolulu) and the Association of Japanese Business Studies (June 10-12 in Nagoya), where Ryukyuanists will be contributing their share. It is hoped, of course, that readers will not overlook the important announcements section at the end of the newsletter. With such an inspiring spring issue, let us hope that we have a good summer and reap an abundant harvest in the fall. *The Ryukyuanist* survives on the labor and effort of its contributors and supporters, to whom we all feel a great debt.

Digging into Memories of the Past

In the early 1990s, while teaching Freshman English to medical students and English majors at the University of the Ryukyus, I happened across a topic that would motivate them to write, that would stimulate their creative and analytical thinking, and that would improve contact between them and older generations. What started out as a classroom exercise and homework assignment ultimately developed into the long-term project reported here.

Because students frequently deprecated their limited knowledge of Okinawan culture,

it seemed that undertaking an oral history project might be an effective way of encouraging them to write with greater enthusiasm. Eventually a small team of four colleagues worked with me to have the students in certain composition classes at Meio University, Okinawa Christian Junior College, Naha-Nishi High School and, principally, at the University of the Ryukyus interview elderly informants who had both a willingness to talk and clear memories. The students were to take notes in Japanese and return to class ready to plan a report in English. After the first draft was written and submitted, the instructor would then suggest how a specific theme or themes could be developed and particular lines of inquiry were suggested for gathering greater detail. During a second interview, these suggestions provided the means for obtaining a deeper understanding.

So far, over 400 such reports have been acquired, among which 53 have already been published in the Shimpo Weekly News. The published accounts provide a variety of specific but edited accounts of life in Okinawa earlier this century (mostly pre-war), and occasionally of the lives of Okinawans elsewhere. Not all reports, however, were successful, sometimes because the selected informant was either unable to convey precise and coherent details or reluctant to do so, and sometimes because the student engaged in the task was deficient in either understanding or commitment. In addition to the students' efforts, however, a number of volunteers have interviewed septua- and octogenarians, and have acquired additional information, often on tape and at far greater length. The reports have been compiled in photocopy form at the University of the Ryukyus, and a register has been initiated for numbering, summarizing, and ordering the reports, though of course this requires efforts of retrospective analysis in order to include all the submissions.

The project instructions ask the students to give a free hand to their selected informant, allowing him or her to recount uninterrupted childhood or early adult experiences, preferably concentrating on one, two or at most three topics. Where prompting seems desirable, a list of basic themes is provided, the original list of twenty items having grown now to thirty.

Most reports cover the second through fourth decades of this century, with another large group concerning the Battle of Okinawa. It seems to me that the dominant theme has been one of poverty, expressed by common experiences within a range of daily activities involving education, food, and the kinds of cottage industries necessary for eking out a living.

One impressive indication of poverty is seen in the reports of children's education having been compromised, with the ambitious being prevented from proceeding beyond the often irregularly attended elementary school. It was apparently commonplace at the time for elementary school children to be responsible for the care of their pre-school siblings while themselves attending class. Yoshiko MATAYOSHI recalled, "I carried my small brothers and sisters to school on my back. Sometimes in the middle of a lesson the teacher demanded that I return home because their cries were disturbing the class." On the other hand, in the days before *juku* (cram school), Masako OKUMURA and three friends were provided evening tutoring by their teacher at his home for three months so that they could take the technical school entrance examination, the tutoring having been given without charge.

To me, one of the most convincing indicators of poverty was the nature of the food and the daily hunt for and improvisation of dietary supplements from the surrounding natural environment. Nae OSHIRO's father

was a piece worker and when out of work the family had to eat *sotetsu*. Nae further reported, "If it rained, we picked up snails and kept them for one day because that made them discharge their feces. The next day, we boiled them and added them to *miso* soup. The taste was so-so! To make *miso*, we dehydrated cycad seeds and later soaked them in water, and then stacked them up to let them rot. After that, we roasted them and collected the resulting *koji*. Last of all, we mixed the *koji* with treated soybeans and so the *miso* was completed."

Kanryo SUNAGAWA, whose family lived by farming on Miyako, reported that in summer they relieved the monotony of their sweet potato diet by catching grasshoppers, cicadas, lizards and frogs from the hills. At other times, he would go down to the sea and try to catch fish with an improvised harpoon and other homemade equipment. By contrast, Ryoko OSHIRO, rather than eating his catch, instead supplemented his family's budget in his elementary school days by catching *dorogasami* crabs at his secret location on the beach at Nishihara. He then sold them fresh to a *shokudō* in Yonabaru. For similar reasons, Kiku NAKAYAMA used to gather seeds necessary for the manufacture of the Okinawan pepper *fifachi*, or *hippachi* as it was pronounced on Kuroshima. "The vine creeps up stone walls. I used to pass these seeds on to someone who would go to Ishigaki. He would then exchange them for money. What I gathered each time would fetch 10 sen." A recurrent topic is the description of young people's earning of vital financial supplements to the family income by means of the widespread Panama hat cottage industry.

Another indication of poverty was the forms of school-time and after-school entertainment, which of course had to be free. One report describes how elementary boys, whose morning chores included cutting grass

to feed their goats, would cut additional swaths of grass and line the bundles up during school break times. Then standing some meters away, the boys would compete to throw their sickle at their bundle, with the aim being to have the sickle remain embedded in the bundle. The winner gained the admiration of his peers while the least successful contestant was obliged to tote all the grass at the end of the school day.

Yoshiko Matayoshi also reported a number of forms of play utilizing what was available at hand. ~~She said that she used to~~ "make crabs fight each other," and that she also gathered *mozuku*, a kind of seaweed, with which she covered a grassy slope to make a slide, claiming that she knew of no one in those days who ate *mozuku*. She also enjoyed catching fireflies, putting them into large snail shells and peeping at them between her fingers to watch their glow emanating from within the shell's inner recesses.

As shown briefly above, poverty is one topic which illustrates the use of this data for support of particular themes. Many other well-represented themes are possible, such as agricultural methods or attitudes within specific communities, to mention only two.

Taken in isolation, each of the anecdotal stories may seem merely sentimental, antiquarian, or even trivial, but together they provide detailed accounts of certain aspects of the society which are seldom recoverable from formal sources, and they can provide basic or supplementary data for cultural anthropologists. There is furthermore a great deal of historical value in multiple biographies, especially for purposes of assembling, for example, a picture of the young women who went to the mainland to work in the textile mills and of the young men who participated in a variety of heavy industries. The collection of multiple biography of those who were refugees in the Battle of Okinawa is another

worthwhile outcome of the project, worthwhile not only for future generations but for those who relate their stories. For subsequent research purposes, of course, it is necessary to provide a great deal of carefully guided follow-up inquiry in order to establish reliability and coherence of time and place, as for movements during a mainland sojourn or during the periods before, during, and after hostilities.

Having acquired two years' experience of collecting and guiding such reports, our aim now is to expand this work along the same lines and to develop a questionnaire-based collective project which can be taken to homes for the aged (*rōjin homu*). The last two years have suggested that a number of varied but specific areas seem to be especially fruitful: children's means for supplementing family income and family diet, children's games and entertainments, social and economic mechanisms involved in work migration to the mainland in the 1920s, and activities unique to specific communities such as betrothal, marriage, childbirth, funerals, and festivities.

Although the data gathered to date is not yet ready for consultation by academics or other interested parties, it is hoped that in time, subsequent to full registration and indexing, there will be those who wish to consult these reports.

A. P. Jenkins

Publications (XIX)

We gratefully acknowledge the gift of the following publications:

Entropy Association. 1995. *Entoropii* (Entropy) No.35 (November). Comments by participants in the Okinawa Symposium, held in memory of the late Professor TAMANOI Yoshiro, under the leadership of Professor UI Jun of the University of Okinawa.

HIYANE Teruo (ed.) 1995. *Fukki 20-nen, okinawa no seiji, shakai hendō to bunka*

henyō (Twenty years after reversion: politics, social change, and cultural metamorphosis). Nishihara: General College of the University of the Ryukyus. 157 pp. A collection of research reports of ten authors on various types of change observed in Okinawa since the 1972 reversion. HIYANE Teruo leads off with a flashback to Okinawan struggles against land expropriations and human rights violations by the US military during the 1950s. GABE Masaaki describes the US national security policy and National Defense Authorization Acts, 1990-93. TONAKI Akira re-examines "differences" between Okinawa and mainland Japan. NAKACHI Hiroshi assesses changes in Okinawa's autonomy (or lack of it) in the past 50 years. UEZATO Kenichi analyzes the People's Republic of China's and the Republic of China's reactions to Okinawa's reversion to Japan. AKAMINE Mamoru discusses issues of sovereignty over the Senkaku islands (Tiaoyu Tai). INAFUKU Akiko looks into patterns of Okinawan relationships with Buddhist temples. KONAHA Hiroko reports on how Okinawan employees of the military bases acquire English-language skills. MORITA Moshin comments on the literary career of HIGASHI Mineo, the Akutagawa Prize winner of 1972. MAEJO Akira writes on post-reversion economic development and environmental disasters.

Hosei University. 1995. *THE HOSEI*, Vol. 22, Nos. 7 & 8 (September & October). Includes a two-part report on a round-table conversation of contributors to *Chūgoku Fukkeshō/Ryūkyū Rettō kōshōshi kenkyū* (Studies in the history of interactions of Fujian Province of China and the Ryukyu Islands). HIGA Minoru, director of the Hosei University Institute for Okinawan Studies, hosts the meeting.

- Hosei University Institute for Okinawa Studies. 1995. *Shohō* (Institute Report). Includes obituaries of HATTORI Shiro and NAKASONE Seizen.
- Japan Union of Scientists and Engineers, Okinawa Chapter. 1994. *Taikendan yōshi shū* (A collection of reports on experiences, 3314th QC Circle Convention). Naha: Daido Fire and Marine Insurance Co. 139pp.
- KIMURA Masaaki, TANAKA Takeo, KYO Masanori, ANDO Masataka, OOMORI Tamotsu, IZAWA Eiji, and YOSHIKAWA Ikūrō. 1989. "Study of Topography, Hydrothermal Deposits and Animal Colonies in the Middle Okinawa Trough Hydrothermal Areas Using the Submersible 'SHINKAI 2000' System," *JAMSTEC TR Deep Sea Research*: 223-244. Summary in English and text in Japanese. Reports findings of dives carried out in the Izena and Iheya holes. Active hydrothermal vent systems were observed. Several large chimneys stood on mounds composed of fragments of hydrothermal ore deposits on muddy seafloor. White or gray hot water was ejected from active chimneys, around which were developed large colonies of crabs, shrimps, bivalves and others.
- KIMURA Masaaki, ONO Tomonori, MATSUOKA Hiroyuki, NAKAMURA Toshio, and MIYAZAKI Yukimitsu. 1994. "Tectonics in the Eastern Margin of the Okinawa Trough," *JAMSTEC J. Deep Sea Research* 10 (November): 299-321. Summary in English, text in Japanese. Reports findings of recent deep-sea surveys of the Tokara Gap and the Kerama Gap. Limestone samples, whale fossils, and other materials recovered indicate that these under-sea areas were above sea level during the Ice Age of the late Pleistocene.
- KIMURA Masaaki. 1994. "Land Bridges De-
- veloped along the Ryukyu Arc, Based upon Recent Submersible Explorations," *Nanto shigaku* (History of Southern Islands), No. 44:38-53. Text in Japanese. Since 50 million years BP (Before Present), climatic and tectonic dynamics produced frequent "sea changes" and reshaped the topography of the Ryukyu area many times. The article presents inferences on changing land-sea distribution based on recent deep-sea surveys (see entries above). Nine serial geographic illustrations are appended. The land bridge that ran from Taiwan (part of the continent) through the Ryukyu arc to Kyushu existed intermittently during 200,000 - 10,000 BP (Figure 9). The Yamashita-cho humans came over it circa 30,000 BP. The Minatogawa humans did so circa 19,000. After this date, the land bridge broke up, resulting in today's Ryukyu Islands. (See also Kimura, *Mu tairiku wa ryūkyū ni atta* (1991), noted in *The Ryukyuanist*, No.23.)
- Meio University. 1995. *Bulletin*. No.1. Nago, Okinawa: Meio University Faculty of International Studies. 145 pp. A collection of quality research papers on a wide range of topics. Five of 16 articles are in English, the rest in Japanese. Three articles by NAKACHI Kiyoshi relate to Okinawa: "Japan's views of territorial disputes over the Senkaku Islands," "A study of political movement in the military land issues of post-reversion Okinawa," and "Political assimilation to Japan: the Okinawa dilemma twenty years after the 1972 reversion."
- Meio University Library. 1995. *Hiroba* (Quad), No. 3 (December). 16pp. A newsletter. Preface by President AGARIE Yasuharu.
- Miyakojima no Kami to Mori wo Kangaeru Kai (Society for the Study of Gods and Woods of Miyakojima). 1995. *Dainikai kōen to sinpoziumu oyobi sōkai hōkokusho*

- (A report on the second lecture/symposium/general meeting). The conference was held in Karimata of Miyakojima on November 23, 1995. TANIKAWA Kenichi, founder-president, presided. NAKAMATSU Yashu and OKAYA Koji lectured on gods, woods, and *utaki*. SADOYAMA Anko showed video on festivals and folklore of Miyako. The lecturers then joined several others at a symposium on gods, humans, and nature. According to the business report, the membership as of November 22, 1995 stood at 232 persons. The Society maintains two offices: one in Hirara, Okinawa-ken and another in Kawasaki, Kanagawa-ken.
- Okinawa Labor and Economic Research Institute. 1995. *L & E* (Quarterly Journal of Okinawan Labor and Economy) Nos. 50/51. Naha. 135pp. ¥500. A special edition reporting the findings of a research project titled "workers of Okinawa and the era of restructuring" which suggest that workers should anticipate increased autonomy of labor or possibly self-employment entailing independence of working life, job selection, and job satisfaction as a result of the restructuring of enterprises. Random samples of 1919 unionized workers in Okinawa provided the base for research.
- Okinawa Labor and Economic Research Institute. 1996. *L & E* (Quarterly Journal of Okinawan Labor and Economy) Nos. 52/53. Naha. 119pp. ¥500. A special edition, titled *Okinawa no kinrosha hakusho* (White paper on workers of Okinawa), marks fifteen years of white papers on Okinawan economy and labor. Part I reviews the past year's global and Japanese economic situations as environmental forces affecting the Okinawan economy, and part II extensively analyses changes in Okinawa under headings such as labor markets, wages and working hours, and household finances.
- Okinawa Society. 1995. *Okinawa*, No. 219 (August/December). Includes reports on this year's winners of the Society's "Research Encouragement Awards": TANAKA Seiho in Science, and DANA Masayuki in Humanities.
- Opera Amawari* (a program). 1995. Naha Civic Center. *Nido tekiuchi* (vendetta of two sons), *Kumiudui*, by TAMAGUSUKU Chōkun, recast in European opera style.
- SAKUMOTO Tomokazu. 1995. *Gijutsu kakushinka no rōdō to nihongata kigyō shakai* (Innovation and the Japanese style of business society: Flexibility of the Japanese labor management system). International Management Studies Institute. 445 pp. A doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Yukio YAMASHITA of Chuo University. A thorough re-examination of the Japanese Employment System in an attempt to explain causes and consequences of stress suffered by workers under the impact of rapid technological innovations, with special reference to *karōshi* (death from overwork). US-Japan comparisons effectively employed to shed further light on the problem.
- TERUYA Yoshihiko and YAMAZATO Katsunori (eds.) 1995. *Sengo okinawa to amerika — Ibunka sesshoku no 50-nen* (Postwar Okinawa and America: Fifty Years of Cross-Cultural Contact). Naha: Okinawa Taimususha. 564pp. Text in Japanese, with English-language abstracts. 16 papers organized in 3 parts, a symposium (Part 4) and documentary sources (Part 5). A special meaning of 1995: the 50-year period of 1945-95 comprises two distinct sub-periods — 1945-72, occupation and government of Okinawa by the United States; and 1972 to date, Okinawa Prefecture of Japan. This volume results from a large-scale project of the

University of the Ryukyus Society for American Studies concerning Okinawa's experience in culture contact during the half century since 1945. Topics range widely: law, government, politics, education, economy, lifestyle, fiction, journalism, emigration, study abroad, etc. Contributors are mostly Okinawan, but several are from the United States. Of 22 non-US participants, 13 have studied in the US, and 10 hold doctoral degrees. [Compare this with the level of educational attainment as of June 23, 1945, when the guns fell silent and when there was no university in Okinawa, nor any holder of an American PhD degree among Okinawans. "50 years of cross-cultural contact" has produced a highly learned Okinawa.]

Tokyo Okinawa-keizai Kenkyukai. 1995, 1996. *Tōkyō okinawa bunka tsūshin*, No. 95 (December), No. 56 (January). 4pp. each. Includes color photos of scenes from friendship performances of Okinawan dance in Hungary, October 7-14, 1995.

TOMINAGA Hitoshi. 1995. *Okinawa keizairon* (The Economy of Okinawa: Studies). Naha: Hirugisha. 164 pp. A quantitative economic history and analysis. Using carefully scrutinized available data and econometric estimates of missing information, all guided by commitment to rigorous economic interpretation, the author achieves an extraordinary standard of analytical excellence. Covers output, income, population, labor force, currencies, prices, and other relevant aspects of a growing economy with special emphasis on comparison of Ryukyu/Okinawa and Japan since the beginning of Okinawa Prefecture.

United Okinawan Association of Hawaii. 1995. *Uchinanchu*, No. 50 (October). 16 pp. A quarterly newsletter. A major news item was President Clinton's participation in the Labor Day Okinawan Festival, Sep-

tember 2-3. The President addressed the crowd "Aloha! Haisai!" The brief address included this passage: "...in the Pacific, the last and most difficult and most costly battles of the Second World War were on Okinawa. ... Our grandchildren will not remember anything about World War II, they will only have to be told about it..." (p.7).

University of the Ryukyus, Faculty of Economics. 1995. *Ryukyu University Economic Review*. No. 50. A special edition in honor of Professor Emeritus NAKASONE Keisuke. Text in Japanese. Although there are numerous articles in it, only one of them specifically relates to Okinawa: UEMA Takanori, "Choices of Local Business Under the Depression—in Case of Okinawa."

[NOTE: Unless specified otherwise, publications reviewed above are in Japanese.]

Members' News

Ideally, this members' news column should, if possible, serve as advance notice of relocation of ISRS members or as an announcement of current projects or research/travel to be undertaken. It is hoped that with on-going structural changes in production of *The Ryukyuanist*, such as the incorporation of e-mail (see the announcements section in this issue, and the colophon in future issues), news will arrive early enough to be published as news rather than as history.

Word has reached *The Ryukyuanist* that an evening get-together was being arranged by Leon SERAFIM (University of Hawaii) for Ryukyuanists attending the AAS meeting in Honolulu. The date of the get-together was Saturday the thirteenth of April.

In June, Okinawa will be represented at the annual meeting of the Association of Japanese Business Studies in Nagoya by three presentors from Okinawa International

University, one being ISRS member Karen LUPARDUS whose presentation "Myth and the Future of Japanese Management" includes reference to mainland perceptions of Okinawan workers.

Dr. Teruyuki HIGA (Okinawa International University) will spend a year of research abroad, from April 1996 through March 1997, beginning with three months in Malta, then to Northern Ireland, and finally six months in Hawaii. His research involves labor issues in the economy of island nations.

Announcement

Advanced technology has finally bridged the Pacific and put Okinawa and Illinois into the same virtual time-zone. Koji Taira can be reached by e-mail through ktaira@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu while Karen Lupardus uses lupardus@okiu.ac.jp as an e-mail address. Usage of e-mail for submission of manuscripts and correspondence is encouraged. Alternatively, please use the postal addresses indicated in the colophon.

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