Bonin Islands & Borodino Islands

History of the “twin islands”

The islands of Bonin (Ogasawara) and Borodino (Daito) both thrived thanks to the activities of immigrants from Hachijo Island located 300km south of Tokyo. However, the Daito islands were made part of the cultural-economic zone encompassing Okinawa and Kyushu, while those of Ogasawara served as a wartime relay base for the South Sea Islands. New traditions were created reflecting their respective environments: While Palau and other South Sea dances became popular on Ogasawara, Daito witnessed the spread of Ryukyu folk songs accompanied by the sanshin – a three-stringed Okinawan musical instrument. Meanwhile, traditions from faraway Hachijo Island, including shima (meaning island) sushi, shima-daiko drums and shome bushi songs, remained alive on Daito.

The islands of Bonin (Ogasawara) and Borodino (Daito) were two twin islands that shared similarities and differences in their cultural and economic development, influenced by their geographical locations and historical contexts.

Bonin Islands

Ogasawara

Emergency transportation (Peel Island or Chichi-jima)

Area around Kaigunbo baseline post (South Bonin Island or Minami Daito)

As there is no airport on the island, an amphibious flying boat belonging to the Maritime Self-Defense Force is used. As shipping services run only once a week between Tokyo and Haha-jima, residents receive a week’s worth of newspapers. Newspapers and magazine subscriptions (Hillsborough Island or Haha-jima) Ferry boarding (South Bonin Island or Minami Daito)

Bonin Islands & Borodino Islands

Borders of Southwestern Japan

The Sea Front of Eurasia

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From Okinawa to Taiwan

1895～1945

The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 resulted in the cession of Taiwan to Japan. Unrestricted passage was granted to all, and a regular boat service between Kobe and Keelung was introduced. Commodities such as sugar and coal were transported to mainland Japan.

Okinawans formed settlements on Taiwan’s eastern coast and other parts of the island, and their population in Taiwan reached approximately 15,000 in the 1940s. Many worked as government officials, policemen, construction workers, merchants, maid servants and fishermen. Many more traveled back and forth between Taiwan and Japan to engage in activities related to fisheries, employment far from home, apprenticeships in the running of households and school excursions. This formed a sphere of livelihood activities and an economic block connected by sea.

\[\text{Restricted passage during wartime} \]

With the escalation of the Asia-Pacific War, control of commodities, transportation, labor and the like was tightened, and the freedom to come and go was also limited. "Kenchiku Ryoku Shomeisho" (lit. "out-of-prefecture travel documentation") was issued to allow fishers from Yonaguni Island to make trips over a period of approximately six months to the Port of Hualien in eastern Taiwan for "fishing purposes."

1944～1945

Forced evacuation to Taiwan

\[\text{Burden on the military and evacuation to areas outside the prefecture} \]

As Japanese and U.S. forces engaged in fierce wartime exchanges in the Pacific island region, the Japanese government moved residents of the Yaeyama Islands (located among the Ryukyu Islands) out of the prefecture. Roughly 80,000 people left the islands until immediately before the unconditional surrender of Japan. Among them, the number of those who went to Okinawa is estimated at about 13,000, the majority of whom were from the islands of Yaezama and Miyakojima. Because securing food for troops stationed in Okinawa was an important part of preparations for imminent ground warfare, it was "necessary to move elderly people, women and children (considered national-defense burdens on the military)" away from the islands for safety.

Separated families

"Move-out certification" was issued in the form of notification of suspended food supply and commodity rationing for families required to leave theYaeyama Islands. The 51-year-old male head of household in this case was exempted because those required to leave the prefecture were "noncombatants," i.e., those aged 60 or over, those aged under 15, women and the sick.

1945～1972

Passport for travel between Okinawa and mainland Japan

From Okinawa to mainland Japan

Conversely, those living on mainland Japan who visited Okinawa before 1972 had to carry a "Mibunshomeisho" (passport) issued by the General Administrative Agency of the Cabinet.

From mainland Japan to Okinawa

When the certificate to travel to mainland Japan was renamed Nippon Toko Shomeisho in 1960, it was stipulated that the certificate of permission to travel should be named "Mibunshomeisho" (passport). Before that (after 1952), Ryoko Shomeisho documentation was issued to those traveling overseas.

\[\text{Passport for travel between Okinawa and mainland Japan} \]

| October 1950 | The U.S. changes its economic control policy and authorizes private free trade between Okinawa and mainland Japan. At around the same time, a system of Ryoko Shomeisho (lit. "travel document") issuance is established. |
| December 1950 | The U.S. military government of the Ryukyu Islands is replaced with the U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands. The Ryoko Shomeisho documentation system is abolished. |
| 1952 | Ryoko Shomeisho documentation is renamed Nippon Ryoko Shomeisho (lit. "Japan travel document"). |
| 1960 | The documentation is renamed Nippon Toko Shomeisho (lit. "Japan passport document"). |

\[\text{Three types of passport within the Yamasato family} \]

Members of the Yamasato family from Okinawa have three different types of passport. One is a Nippon Toko Shomeisho (lit. "Japan passport document") (Ref. 1) used by Mr. Fuiju Yamasato, who was born in the city of Naha, Okinawa, when he went to mainland Japan to attend university in 1962. He had lived in Los Angeles since 1966, and he only used his wife Chiyo's passport when she returned to her hometown of Naha to give birth. Fujio and Chiyo lived in Tokyo after getting married, which became their permanent address. As a result, they needed passports only when they returned to Naha. Their daughter, Chiaki, also obtained a Nippon Toko Shomeisho (passport) upon moving to Tokyo. With the return of Okinawa to Japan in 1972, passports for domestic travel became unnecessary. The third document obtained by Fujio in 1988 (Ref. 3) was a general passport issued by the Japanese government for Japanese people traveling abroad.

\[\text{Certificate of Okinawa nationals} \]

The certificate was issued to Okinawan people who extricated themselves from Japan’s colonial rule and acquired Republic of China nationality. Similarly, those who had built livelihoods in Okinawa but also lost their Okinawan nationality after the Japanese government assumed diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China (Taiwan) in 1972, Taiwanese people with Republic of China nationality became nationals of a country not recognized by the Japanese government.

\[\text{Quarantine certification for overseas Okinawans} \]

Quarantine conditions were imposed on all those desiring repatriation to Japan under the supervision of the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers (GHQ). 1954 saw a system of "Certificate of Eligibility, Re-entry Permit" which provided a means of entry for those who were "bona fide Okinawans" from those to be returned to the mainland. It is considered that the Federation of Okinawan Associations in Taiwan issued such certification based on this agreement.

\[\text{Passport for travel between Okinawa and mainland Japan} \]

\[\text{Entry Visa to Taiwan District of the Republic of China} \]

A Taiwanese people who extricated themselves from Japan’s colonial rule acquired Republic of China nationality. Similarly, those who had built livelihoods in Okinawa but also lost their Okinawan nationality after the Japanese government assumed diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China (Taiwan) and severed those with the Republic of China at that time. Taiwanese people with Republic of China nationality became nationals of a country not recognized by the Japanese government.

\[\text{Stateless existence} \]

Wu Beng-Sheng (Go Chihong-Seng) was born in 1910 and was raised as a Japanese national in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule. After becoming a national of the Republic of China at the age of 35 in 1945, and passed away as a stateless person in Okinawa in 1995. Having moved to Okinawa in 1949, Wu left Taiwan on an illegal boat to escape oppression from the new ruling Kuomintang government and came to Yonaguni Island, then lost the Republic of China nationality and became stateless in 1972. The date on the documentation showing loss of Republic of China citizenship (issued by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of China) was the day before the cessation of diplomatic relations between Japan and Taiwan.

1945～1946

Repatriation from Taiwan

Defeat in the war and repatriation

At the time of the surrender in 1945, 400,000 Japanese people were based in Taiwan. Those from Okinawa were estimated to number about 30,000. Many Japanese people who had lost their livelihood bases hurriedly prepared for repatriation, but those from mainland Japan were returned first and full-scale repatriation for Okinawans was delayed until after 1946.

Establishment of the Okinawa Dokyokai Rengokai (Federation of Okinawan Associations in Taiwan)

To ensure the repatriation of Okinawans in Taiwan, the Federation of Okinawan Associations in Taiwan assumed an important role in negotiating with the Republic of China, Japan and U.S. armed forces, securing food and lodging for Okinawans in Taiwan, assisting with their repatriation and providing them with support after the war.

\[\text{Certificate of carry commodities} \]

Before repatriation was ordered to carry only 1,000 yen in cash in addition to any baggage they could hold with both hands, and were required to obtain permission for any unusual personal belongings from the relevant authorities.

1972～1995

Stranding of individuals between countries

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\[\text{Passport – Republic of China 1966} \]

Issued by the Republic of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs to citizens of the Republic of China living in Japan’s Ryukyu Islands. The passport number consisted of the Chinese character for Ruyi and five Arabic numerals.

\[\text{Certificate of Eligibility, Re-entry Permit} \]

Issued by the Office of Justice. The terms "stateless" and "alien registration certificate number" are written clearly in the section titled "naturalization sections. Wu was handled as a stateless alien resident and had to apply for residence permit renewal every three years.

According to the Ministry of Justice, the number of stateless people in Japan was 1,573 (as of December 31, 2008), while some survey results indicate as many as 10,000 to 20,000.