

Living on the Periphery: Ryūkyūan and Ainu Third-Space Identity under Japanese  
Colonization

by

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## Abstract

This research focuses on the Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity under Japanese acculturation from the Meiji period (1868-1912). The Ryūkyūans and Ainu are Japanese minorities and their territories were independent from Japan in the pre-Meiji period. The Ryūkyūans established a kingdom in the fifteenth century and the Ainu were self-governed in the land of Ezo. Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūans and Ainu started in the Edo period (1603-1868), and it was strengthened in the Meiji period with the incorporation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom and the land of Ezo into Japan as Okinawa prefecture and Hokkaidō, respectively. *Kōminka* (皇民化, imperialization) education was implemented in Okinawa and Hokkaidō to cultivate loyal Japanese citizens. The Ryūkyūans' and Ainu's identities were profoundly affected by the acculturation. As people living on the periphery of Japan, many Ryūkyūans and Ainu were struggling within an ambivalent third-space identity formed under colonization: they were Ryūkyūans/Ainu and Japanese while simultaneously being neither Ryūkyūans/Ainu nor Japanese. In Chapter One, basic historical facts are provided to justify the foreign status of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu before the Meiji period, with a discussion of the terminology regarding Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūs and the land of Ezo. The motivation for the Meiji government to incorporate the Ryūkyū Kingdom and the land of Ezo is also investigated in this chapter. Chapter Two examines how the *kōminka* education policies were carried out in Okinawa and Hokkaidō respectively, as well as how the Ryūkyūans and Ainu were differentiated in acculturation. As a transition to Chapter Three, the last section in this chapter investigates the connection between the discrimination in *kōminka*

education and Ryūkyūan/Ainu self-alienation. In Chapter Three, Western post-colonial theories from Homi K. Bhabha (1949- ) and Franz Fanon (1925-1961) are applied to the Japanese colonial context to explain the Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity, in combination with Iha Fuyū's (1876-1947) and Hatozawa Samio's (1935-1971) psychological analysis of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu respectively. The disruptive effects of the Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity on Japanese colonial authorities will be discussed at the end of chapter three as well. Chapter Four provides a substantial analysis of the Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity depicted in literary works created by Ryūkyūan and Ainu writers in the Taishō (1912-1926) and Shōwa periods (1926-1989).

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## Introduction

This thesis is to examine Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity under Japanese colonization and how it is conveyed through Ryūkyūan and Ainu literature. Ryūkyūan in this context refers to the indigenous people on the main island of the Ryūkyū archipelago, and the Ainu are aborigines residing in Hokkaidō as a Japanese minority. In this introduction, the overall background to the Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō will be provided. The central argument of my thesis is that under Japanese assimilation from the Meiji period (1868-1912), many Ryūkyūans and Ainu had a strong inclination toward alienating themselves (self-alienation) from their own community and identity, as well as the Japanese people or a collective Japanese identity that they were required to pursue. The self-alienation forms a third-space identity in which the Ryūkyūan and the Ainu were both Japanese and Ryūkyūans/Ainu but at the same time neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūans/Ainu. This suggests that the Ryūkyūans and Ainu should be recognized by Japanese society as different individuals rather than having attached to them stereotypical images formed on the basis of discrimination existing since the Japanese colonization in the Meiji period.

The term “third-space identity” is inspired by Homi K. Bhabha’s (1949-) illustration of the colonial subjects’ hybridity. To further explain the formation of the Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity, I adopted Iha Fuyū’s (1876-1947) explanation of the Ryūkyūans’ “island pain” (*inzerushūmerutsu*) as well as Hatozawa Samio’s (1935-

1971) psychoanalysis on the Ainu hyper-consciousness (*jiishiki-kajō*), and combine them with Homi K. Bhabha's theory of colonial subjects' mimicry and Franz Fanon's (1925-1961) theory of black men's inferiority complex. I also argue that the third-space identity became a disruption of the Japanese colonial authorities' wish for a homogenous nation-state. These arguments will also be briefly explained in this introduction.

### **The Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō as Japanese colonies**

In the Japanese academic field, there has been a trend to define Hokkaidō as Japanese “internal colony (*naikoku shokuminchi*)” in the Meiji period. “Internal colony” is usually used to describe the uneven development between different regions in a nation state,<sup>1</sup> so this concept acquiesces in a notion that Hokkaidō belonged to Japan even before the Meiji period. However, more and more scholars argue that this definition is actually a denial of historical truth. In her insightful work about dominant narratives of colonial Hokkaidō, Michele M. Mason states that the word “internal colony” used in regard to Hokkaidō is very problematic because this is an a priori assumption that “presupposes an internal status before the actual process of internalization and sanctions the unilateral claims of rule over another group of people.”<sup>2</sup> If we look at Hokkaidō as an independent territory, we can see that here are the details before the incorporation in the Meiji period. Hokkaidō was seen as an independent territory other than a part of Japan by the bakufu

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 18.

<sup>2</sup> Michele M. Mason, *Dominant Narratives of Colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 18.

(shogunate) in the Edo period (1603-1868), and the Ainu were self-governed within their own political organization.<sup>3</sup>

In comparison, the independent status that the Ryūkyūs had in the pre-Meiji period is very obvious. The Ryūkyūs were a kingdom under China's tribute system before the seventeenth century. After the Shimazu clan's invasion in 1609, the Ryūkyū Kingdom started serving both the Ming Dynasty and the Tokugawa Shogunate; however, this was due to strong economic and political manipulation by the Satsuma domain. The boundless exploitation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom was hidden under the Japanese requirement of "dual subordination."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is appropriate to say that both the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō were Japanese colonies in the Meiji period, and the colonization of these two regions started in the Edo period. In the Meiji period, the Japanese central government abandoned the "dual subordination" policy and incorporated the Ryūkyūs as its own territory through the deposition of the Ryūkyūs (*Ryūkyū-shobun*) in 1872.<sup>5</sup> Seven years later, the Meiji government changed the Ryūkyūs' title from "*han* (domain)" into "*ken* (prefecture),"<sup>6</sup> and intensified its colonization through various assimilation policies.

The process of Japanese colonization over Hokkaidō was in some ways similar with that of the Ryūkyūs but differed in many aspects. Although the Ainu did not establish a kingdom like the Ryūkyūans, they still maintained autonomy within their own

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<sup>3</sup> Takakura Shinichirō, *The Ainu of Northern Japan: A study in Conquest and Acculturation*, translated by John A. Harrison (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1960), 12.

<sup>4</sup> George H. Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (Rutland, Vermont & Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965), 156-159.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 356-370.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 381.

communities until being colonized by the Meiji government. A village was formed based on several or more Ainu families with a chief for each village who bore certain duties and preserved order within it.<sup>7</sup> Historically the Ainu were not isolated from the outside world. They had been trading with the Japanese and were influenced by both Manchu and Japanese culture.<sup>8</sup> Overall, the Ainu were living independently on their land, with contact with Japanese traders from time to time. However, in the seventeenth century, the Matsumae clan residing in northeast Japan started the exploitation and manipulation of the Ainu and their land to gain more property to maintain a prestigious clan position.<sup>9</sup> The land of Ezo gradually became an economic colony of the Matsumae<sup>10</sup> and during the late Edo period, the bakufu took control of Ezo from the Matsumae clan out of the concern for the threat from Russia.<sup>11</sup> The exploitation continued in the Meiji period and in 1869 the land of Ezo was renamed Hokkaidō as a new Japanese prefecture.<sup>12</sup> Similar to the Ryūkyūs, the colonization was strengthened through assimilation, especially acculturation following their incorporation. The dispute among scholars regarding how to define the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō's position in Japanese colonial history will be further discussed in Chapter One, with a more detailed historical account of the Japanese colonization of the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō.

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<sup>7</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 17.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 51-57.

<sup>12</sup> Takakura Shinichirō, *Ainu seisakushi* (Tōkyō: San'ichi shobō, 1972), 371-373.

It is well worth mentioning here that not only the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō were going through tremendous changes under Japanese colonization in the Meiji period. Japan itself was also experiencing substantial transitions developing into a modernized nation due to the Meiji Restoration. In other words, as an unstable colonial power, Japan was also moulding and defining itself. This indicates that compared to Western colonial contexts, Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō has its own idiosyncrasies. One fundamental reason for Japan to intensify its assimilation of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu in the early Meiji period is that the Japanese central government was conscious of the threat from the Western countries and Russia. Japan needed to incorporate the Ryūkyū Kingdom as fast as possible to guard the mainland from being colonized by the West.<sup>13</sup> In addition, Russia had been coveting Hokkaidō since the Edo period. As a result, Japan had to further incorporate the land of Ezo as its own territory. Regardless of whether the threat from the West actually existed or was just a perception based on the central government's anxiety, Western and Russian power did profoundly urge Japan to accelerate its colonization over the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō. The Japanese central government claimed Hokkaidō and the Ryūkyūs as the northern and southern gate of the empire.<sup>14</sup> Thus, to prevent the colonization by Western powers and invasion by Russia, the assimilation of Ryūkyūans and Ainu as imperial subjects had to be done as quickly as possible. An explicit analysis of the relationship between Japanese social transition and the feature of Japanese colonization will also be included in Chapter One.

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<sup>13</sup> Oguma Eiji, "*Nihonjin*" no kyōkai: *Okinawa, Ainu, Taiwan, Chōsen, shokuminchi shihai kara fukki undō made* (Tōkyō: Shin'yōsha, 1998), 5-9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 36 & 50.

## **Kōminka education in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō**

The uniqueness of Japanese colonization determined the distinctive assimilation policy exploited over the Ryūkyūans and Ainu. Like many other colonial countries, Japan attempted to assimilate its colonial subjects mainly through education. Nevertheless Japanese colonial education was not limited to having its colonial subjects speak Japanese and learn Japanese culture. They also aimed to cultivate colonial subjects to become loyal imperial subjects of the Japanese Emperor. The acculturation was known as kōminka education and it was pursued in Japanese colonies in Korea, Manchuria and Taiwan as well. However, kōminka education was first implemented in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō to produce loyal subjects. The most outstanding feature of the kōminka education in the Ryūkyūs is that the Ryūkyūans were educated with an ideology claiming that they were a branch of Yamato people from mainland Japan.<sup>15</sup> Despite that they have been overly affected by Chinese culture under the Ming tribute system, through kōminka education, the Ryūkyūans would be able to be brought back to their original “Japanese” state.<sup>16</sup>

On the contrary, the Ainu were separated and viewed as a different race from the mainland Yamato and this was also reflected in the education policies adopted in Hokkaidō. Since the Japanese government carried out development (*kaitaku*) policies in the land of Ezo, an enormous number of migrants moved to Hokkaidō from mainland Japan to seek fortune and job opportunities. Hence the central government hoped that

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 46-48.

through assimilation the Ainu could adapt to Japanese lifestyle and live peacefully with Japanese migration.<sup>17</sup> In the late Meiji period, the Japanese government issued Hokkaidō Former Native Protection Law (*kyūdojin hogohō*) according to which most Ainu children were educated separately in schools for former aborigines (*kyūdojin gakkō*).<sup>18</sup> Therefore, the most outstanding difference between the *kōminka* education in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō was that the Ainu were alienated due to their distinctive ethnicity. This difference will be further investigated in Chapter Two, in the discussion of how *kōminka* education was implemented and the actual outcome.

The major issue examined in my research is how the differences of *kōminka* education in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō indicated above have affected the identity of colonial subjects. How the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu alienated themselves from Japanese (self-alienation) under *kōminka* education will be the main focus. In *kōminka* education, the Meiji government wished to remove the general language and cultural differences in many aspects and impose a collective Japanese identity on the Ryūkyūans and Ainu. There is little doubt that many Ryūkyūans and Ainu were turned into loyal Japanese citizens through acculturation. However, I argue that the differences that the Japanese colonial authorities wished to eliminate through assimilation were strengthened because many of their acculturation policies were on a basis of discrimination. In addition, I consider that an Ainu's inclination of self-alienation can be stronger than a Ryūkyūan. This is because the central government claimed that the Ainu was an inferior race compared to the Yamato, while the Ryūkyūans were a branch of the Yamato. However, it

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<sup>17</sup> Takakura, *Ainu seisakushi*, 416.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 550-556.

cannot be denied that individual experiences in kōminka education of some Ryūkyūans and Ainu would also determine whether they would alienate themselves from Japanese or to what extent they would self-alienate. The connection between kōminka education and self-alienation is discussed at the end of Chapter Two as a transitional section to the theoretical chapter of my thesis.

### **Mimicry, self-alienation and the third-space identity**

My central argument is that under kōminka education, the Ryūkyūans and Ainu have an ambivalent third-space identity in which they are both Japanese and Ryūkyūans/Ainu while simultaneously being neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūans/Ainu. This third-space identity directly results from their self-alienation from both the Japanese people/the Japanese identity and their own community/identities. The “recognizability” that the Japanese central government required of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu through making mimic colonial subjects results in their self-alienation from the Japanese people and the collective Japanese identity. The Ryūkyūan and Ainu inferiority complex causes their desire for assimilation and further leads to their self-alienation from their own community and origins. In addition, the Ryūkyūan island pain also results in the Ryūkyūans’ self-alienation from the Ryūkyūan identity but the Ainu hyper-consciousness is mainly responsible for the Ainu’s self-alienation from the Japanese and the Japanese identity. The following paragraphs are a brief introduction on how I bridge my theoretical arguments with Homi K. Bhabha, Franz Fanon, Iha Fuyū and Hatozawa Samio’s theories.

Bhabha claims that mimicry is a colonial desire “for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite.”<sup>19</sup> Mimic men are those colonial subjects who have been assimilated by the colonial authorities mainly through acculturation. There is little doubt that the Japanese colonial authorities had the same desire for a “reformed, recognizable” colonial subjects through producing mimic men. The issue is that in what aspects and to what degree the Japanese colonial power wanted the colonial subjects to be reformed yet still recognizable. Similar to many colonial contexts, Japan was making mimic men mainly through acculturation. The main difference between *kōminka* education in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō is that the Ryūkyūans were incorporated as a branch of the Yamato while the Ainu were assimilated but still alienated as a distinctive race. Japanese colonial authorities required mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu but with different “recognizability.”

In *Black Skin, White Masks*,<sup>20</sup> Franz Fanon vividly depicted black men’s psychological struggle in the white world. Fanon argues that the self-recognition of black men always requires being recognized by the white men, and this desire of being recognized is aroused by the inferiority residing deeply in black men’s consciousness.<sup>21</sup> This is a syndrome of an inferiority complex and it can be found within the Ryūkyūan and Ainu encounters with the Japanese, which is also profoundly related to their self-alienation.

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<sup>19</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 122.

<sup>20</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press; [Berkeley, Calif.]: Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-197.

In his short essay *Ryūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki (A Psychoanalysis of Ryūkyūans)*,<sup>22</sup> Iha Fuyū proposes a concept named the Ryūkyūan's inselwelschmerz.<sup>23</sup> Inselwelschmerz is the combination of German words "insel (island)" and "welschmerz (world-weariness)," which can be directly translated as "island pain." Iha states that as a branch of the Yamato people, the Ryūkyūans migrated to the isolated Ryūkyū archipelago from mainland Japan and since then their sufferings on this infertile land began. He argues that this is the origin of the Ryūkyūan's inselwelschmerz. Although this island pain was released through trading with China in the Ming Dynasty, the Satsuma domain's invasion in 1609 and the deposition of the Ryūkyūs in the Meiji period brought enormous transformations to the island and resulted in the bankruptcy of many local families, which caused the Ryūkyūan's "psychische (mental)-trauma," as well as strengthening their Inselwelschmerz.<sup>24</sup> I argue that Ryūkyūan inselwelschmerz motivated their desire of being mimic men, and that this desire was also out of their inferiority complex when they encounter the Japanese. This further triggered their self-alienation. This interaction of being mimic men and self-alienation creates the "third-space identity," which is the central theoretical argument in my research: they were both Japanese and Ryūkyūans, but they were neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūans.

Hatozawa Samio is an Ainu writer of the Shōwa period (1925-1989). Hatozawa did not establish a systematic theory regarding Ainu's identity, but his views are powerful. His analysis of Ainu hyperconsciousness can be seen as a parallel to Iha Fuyū's

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<sup>22</sup> Iha Fuyū, "Ryūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki: kenminsei no shinkaishaku" in *Okinawa joseishi* (Tōkyō: Heibonsha Library, 2000), 294-312.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 295.

inselwetschmerz. Hatozawa reveals that an Ainu can have a strong inclination to separate themselves when they face Japanese. One example he gives is that many Ainu tend to demonstrate their identity before being questioned if they are Ainu or not. On the one hand, they desire to be accepted and recognized as Ainu, so they cannot help but seek recognition through revealing their identity to the Japanese. On the other hand, they are afraid of being rejected after demonstrating their identity. Hatozawa describes this syndrome as a type of “hyper-consciousness (*jiishiki-kajō*).”<sup>25</sup> From my point of view, an Ainu’s self-alienation from Japanese affected by hyper-consciousness can urge the emergence of a third-space identity. Under the colonization from the Meiji period, the Ainu were assimilated into Japanese society based on the Japanese colonial desire to make “reformed but recognizable” mimic men. Through their incorporation, the Ainu were categorized as Japanese citizens, but their self-alienation from Japanese people and a Japanese identity pushes them into an ambivalent space of identity: they were Ainu and Japanese while simultaneously being neither Ainu nor Japanese.

However, not every Ryūkyūan or Ainu develops this third-space identity, even though they are all required to become loyal Japanese citizens. Those Ryūkyūans and Ainu who are considered “well-educated” in *kōminka* education system have a much stronger tendency to have a third-space identity than those who have never been educated in that way. In addition, with the desire for acculturation, the longer a Ryūkyūan or Ainu is involved in the *kōminka* education system, the closer they would feel towards becoming a “real Japanese,” and the stronger their self-alienation from their own

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<sup>25</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Wakaki Ainu no tamashii: Hatozawa Samio okōshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1972), 234.

community or original identity would be. Meanwhile, a “well-educated” Ryūkyūan or Ainu may experience more discrimination rooted in *kōminka* education, and this discrimination would result in their self-alienation from the Japanese and the Japanese identity. Therefore, a third-space identity is easier to form for the Ryūkyūans and Ainu who spent more time in Japanese education system.

The Ryūkyūan and the Ainu’s third-space identity can be a disturbance to the Japanese colonial power. Bhabha claims that mimicry “articulates the disturbances of cultural, racial and historical difference that menace the narcissistic demand of colonial authority,”<sup>26</sup> so it can be a subversion tool towards colonial authorities in its production of imitators rather than real Englishmen.<sup>27</sup> The Ryūkyūan and the Ainu are incorporated as “Japanese” under Japanese colonization, but the Japanese authorities did not only want to produce imitators of Japanese language and culture. They also attempted to cultivate mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu to be loyal imperial subjects. Based on this, I argue that under Japanese colonization, the disruption would function only when mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu are alienating themselves from Japanese people and a Japanese identity. That is to say, the disturbance towards Japanese colonial authorities is constructed through the interaction of mimicry and self-alienation, which is the third-space identity that I have discussed. The power of the disruption is that the illusionary homogeneity that Japanese colonial authorities hoped to establish was broken down. In Chapter Three, I will further examine this disturbance caused by Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity towards the Japanese colonial authorities.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>27</sup> Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 126-128.

## Resources in Ryūkyūan and Ainu literature

Although the Japanese central government began to massively acculturate the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu in the Meiji period, the actual effects of acculturation takes decades to show. Even though the Ryūkyūans and Ainu were required to master Japanese and Japanese culture through *kōminka* education, their Japanese language limited their capacity to create new literary works, especially in the late Meiji period. Additionally, I consider that the process of making mimic colonial subjects also continued until the end of the Asia-Pacific War in 1945. Therefore, I want to extend the timeline of my research to the Shōwa period and examine the third-space identity as depicted in literary works.

A substantial analysis of these Ryūkyūan and Ainu literary works will be provided in Chapter Four. In his poems “A Conversation (1935)”<sup>28</sup> and “Shell-shocked Island (1964),”<sup>29</sup> Yamanokuchi Baku (1903-1963) explores his third-space identity through fighting with discrimination from the mainlanders. A mimic Ryūkyūan police officer’s psychological struggles are precisely articulated in Ikemiyagi Sekihō’s (1893-1951) short story *Officer Ukuma* (1922).<sup>30</sup> The formation of two Ainu boys’ third-space identity is vividly depicted in Hatozawa Samio’s (1935-1971) fiction *Akashi no kūbun* (*A Proof of Dead Letter*, 1963)<sup>31</sup> and *Tōi ashioto* (*Remote Footsteps*, 1964)<sup>32</sup> respectively.

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<sup>28</sup> Michael S. Molasky and Steve Rabson ed., *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature From Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 46-48.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 49. This poem was first published in 1964 after Yamanokuchi Baku died in 1963.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 58-72.

<sup>31</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Kotan ni shisu: Hatozawa Samio sakuhinshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1973), 5-41.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-181.

## Chapter One

### **Losing Independence: The Ryūkyūs and Ezo as Foreign Lands**

In this chapter, how the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō became Japanese colonies is discussed in detail, with a central argument that the Ryūkyū Islands and Hokkaidō were both independent foreign lands before the Meiji period. The dispute in regard to the terminology used in the academic field to describe the colonized Ryūkyū Kingdom and Hokkaidō is introduced as well. Also, the main motivation for Japan to colonize the Ryūkyūan and the Ainu is investigated in combination with a broader social and international background in the Meiji period.

#### **The history of the Ryūkyū Kingdom**

Regarding the origins of the Ryūkyūans, George H. Kerr provides a thorough explanation in his monograph.<sup>33</sup> He points out that the ancestors of the Ryūkyūans immigrated through three pathways to the islands. It has been proven by the prehistoric sites found in eastern and northern Japan that one group of the migrants were from northern Asia.<sup>34</sup> These migrants moved to the Ryūkyū islands via the Japanese island. The second group of migrants came from the tropical Indies or Southeast Asia.

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<sup>33</sup> George H Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (Rutland, Vermont & Tōkyō: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

According to the sites on Ishigaki Island,<sup>35</sup> it is highly possible that these migrants came to the Ryūkyūs through the Philippines or along the China coast. Another group of travellers were from Mongolia or northeast China and they could possibly have travelled along the Korean Peninsula across the straits to the coasts of Kyūshū.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it is not difficult to see that the Ryūkyūan have a mixed origin and their ancestors were not from a single group of people.

After centuries of tribal life, small *gusuku* were gradually built up in the Ryūkyū Islands from the eleventh century CE.<sup>37</sup> *Gusuku* are castles built with stones, and several massive *gusuku* appeared on Okinawa Island in the thirteenth century.<sup>38</sup> The appearance of large *gusuku* can be seen as a significant prerequisite for the formation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom. In the early fourteenth century, three main castles controlled the northern, middle and southern part of the Okinawa Island respectively and consequently this period is called *sanzan jidai* (Three Mountains Period) in the Ryūkyūs' history. Sanzan refers to Chūzan (Middle Mountain), Hokuzan (Northern Mountain) and Nanzan (Southern Mountain).<sup>39</sup> According to the official historical record *Chūzan seifu*, the Three Mountain Period ended in 1429 when Shō Hashi, the chief of Nanzan, conquered and united the other two castles, becoming the first king of the Ryūkyū Kingdom.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid. Ishigaki Island is located to the west of Okinawa Main Island.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Umeki Tetsuto, *Shin Ryūkyūkoku no rekishi* (Tōkyō: Hōseidaigaku shuppanyoku, 2013), 1.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 2.

It is also well worth mentioning here that the Ryūkyūs had been a vassal state of China even before the Ryūkyū Kingdom was established. In 1327, Satto, the chief of Chūzan, started to pay tribute to the Ming Dynasty and Satto's successor, Bunei was conferred as the King of Chūzan by the Ming Dynasty. This relationship between the Ryūkyūs and China had been maintained even after Shō Hashi's establishment of the kingdom.<sup>41</sup>

The Ryūkyū Kingdom enjoyed its stability and prosperity mainly thanks to trade with other East Asian countries that centered on China. However, because of the collapse of the Ming Dynasty, maritime trade along the coast in China was banned in 1567, after which the Ryūkyū Kingdom gained fewer and fewer profits through trade, causing financial difficulty of the court.<sup>42</sup> Meanwhile, the Japanese central government led by Toyotomi Hideyoshi was preparing to invade and conquer Korea and China. The Ryūkyū Kingdom was called upon to send supplies and labors to Japan, but to Japan's disappointment, the Ryūkyūs not only rejected this request but also reported Hideyoshi's activities to China.<sup>43</sup> Later on, the kingdom was ordered to provide material supplies for seven thousand men through ten months, but the king, Shō Nei (1564-1620) ignored the order again.<sup>44</sup> When Tokugawa Ieyasu became the first shogun of Japan after his victory in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Shō Nei again received an order to pay his respects promptly to the new shogun. Dramatically, the king turned down the request one more

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, 152.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 155.

time. This time, the daimyo of the Satsuma domain<sup>45</sup> appealed for permission to reprimand the Ryūkyūans for being rude to the new bakufu, and Tokugawa Ieyasu granted this request.<sup>46</sup> Ironically, this reason used by the Shimazu clan seems to be an absurd excuse. In fact, the Satsuma domain was isolated in southern Kyūshū after Tokugawa Ieyasu redistributed territory through separating the *tozama daimyō*<sup>47</sup> from the capital.<sup>48</sup> It is highly probable that the Satsuma domain desired to expand its territory and plunder more resources in the Ryūkyū Kingdom through this expedition, so the Shimazu clan used the reprimand as an excuse for its own benefit.

The Satsuma army marched against the Ryūkyū Kingdom in February 1609 and it only took roughly two months for the Japanese to occupy Shuri Castle.<sup>49</sup> Then the Japanese colonization began with manipulation and exploitation on the Ryūkyūs. The Satsuma domain controlled the kingdom's foreign trade as well as the islands of the Amami, which are between Okinawa and Kyūshū including Yoron, Toku and Kikai.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, the Satsuma domain reformed *kokudaka sei* (assessed yield system)<sup>51</sup> in the Ryūkyū Kingdom for gaining more profits but this tax system put a heavy burden on local farmers.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, since the kingdom was still a vassal state of the Qing

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<sup>45</sup> The Satsuma domain was a domain in Kyūshū controlled by the Shimazu clan throughout the Edo period.

<sup>46</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, 157-158.

<sup>47</sup> A *tozama daimyō* was a daimyō considered as an outsider by Japanese rulers.

<sup>48</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, 157.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> It is a tax system based on the amount of rice.

<sup>52</sup> Umeki, *Shin Ryūkyūkoku no rekishi*, 142.

Dynasty, the Ryūkyūans were ordered to hide their true relationship with Japan because the Satsuma domain was afraid that the maritime trade with China would be hindered once their relationship was revealed to China.<sup>53</sup> The Ryūkyūs not only lost their independence but also were under immense pressures of this dual subordination.

After being under the Satsuma domain's colonization for nearly two centuries, the fate of the Ryūkyū Kingdom changed again in the early Meiji period. After the Meiji Restoration, the new Japanese government centered on the Meiji Emperor replaced the Tokugawa shogunate, and initiated a variety of reforms on local political systems. In 1871, the Meiji government enacted the *haihanchiken* (abolition of the *han* system) policy in which the domain system was abolished and all daimyō were ordered to return their authority to the Meiji Emperor. A prefecture (*ken*) system was adopted as a new way to administratively divide Japanese territories.<sup>54</sup>

The incorporation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom as a Japanese prefecture is also known as *Ryūkyū shobun* (The Disposition of the Ryūkyūs). It officially began in 1872 when the Ryūkyūs was declared to be “Ryūkyū han,” and it took the Japanese central government seven years to complete the whole process. However, in 1871, the Meiji Emperor already bestowed the title of “the King of the Ryūkyūan” on Shō Tai (1843-1901), the nineteenth king of the kingdom.<sup>55</sup> This action of the Japanese central government was on the premise that the Ryūkyū Kingdom already belonged to Japan. The Meiji government also attempted to cut off the kingdom's bestowal relationship and other communication with the Qing Dynasty and forced the Ryūkyūans to adopt the era name of the Meiji Emperor.

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<sup>53</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, 166.

<sup>54</sup> Umeki, *Shin Ryūkyūkoku no rekishi*, 197.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 199-200.

In addition, it was requested that the king had to visit the Emperor in person. The Ryūkyū Kingdom did not consider Japan's bestowal as valuable as China's, and it showed objection towards Japan's stance through making a complaint to the Qing Dynasty.<sup>56</sup> This became a flashpoint for the Japanese government to incorporate the Ryūkyū Kingdom by force.

It is necessary to point out here that the Japanese invasion of Taiwan in 1874 also accelerated the deposition of the Ryūkyūs. In 1871, a ship for rendering annual tribute to the Ryūkyū Kingdom from Miyakojima encountered a tempest and drifted off the coast of Taiwan. It was reported that Taiwanese aborigines murdered fifty-four out of sixty-nine crewmembers. The other twelve survivors saved by the local Chinese settlers returned back to Naha the next year and this was also reported to the Japanese central government through Kagoshima officials.<sup>57</sup> The Meiji government was negotiating with China and eventually convinced the Qing Dynasty that the Ryūkyū Kingdom was a part of Japan. Thus the biggest impediment for the incorporation of the Ryūkyūs was cleared and Japan also had an excuse for conquering Taiwan. After Japan's invasion of Taiwan, the Japanese government strengthened disposition policy with no hesitation. The Ryūkyū Kingdom still attempted to seek help from China, yet the Qing Dynasty was struggling with the invasion from the West and had no extra resources for the kingdom. In 1879, the kingdom was incorporated into Japan as Okinawa Prefecture, and the colonization over the Ryūkyū islands continued under the Japanese central government's assimilation.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>57</sup> Mizuno Norihito, "Early Meiji Policies Towards the Ryukyus and the Taiwanese Aboriginal Territories" in *Modern Asian Studies* Volume 43, no. 3 (2009): 683 – 739, accessed September 25, 2016, 688.

## **The land of Ezo and its aborigines**

Historically, the Ainu's suffering was no less than that of the Ryūkyūans. The general history of the Ainu and how they came to be colonized by the Japanese resembles that of the Ryūkyū Kingdom but varies in some important aspects. The origin of the Ainu is still unknown, but most experts agree that they migrated from the Asian mainland and their ancestors were an East Asian people related to the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Okinawans and the people native to the Russian Far East.<sup>58</sup> Normally, the Ainu are considered descendants from the Jōmon people<sup>59</sup> based on their genetic similarities.<sup>60</sup> The Ainu have been residing in northern Japan since the immigration and they were called "Ezo" by the Japanese. In many early Japanese writings, a people called the Ebisu, or Emishi were recorded as barbarians who lived in northern Japan. Ezo replaced Emishi as the name of the northern people, and Hokkaidō was named Ezogashima, or the land of Ezo.<sup>61</sup> Although it is not accurate to say that the Ezo are the present Ainu, it seems that

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<sup>58</sup> Ann B. Irish, *Hokkaido: A History of Ethnic Transition and Development on Japan's Northern Island* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2009), 24.

<sup>59</sup> Jōmon people were the inhabitants of the Japanese islands from c. 14,000 to 300BCE (Jōmon Period). They mainly lived by gathering, fishing and hunting. Jōmon is the name of the pottery from this era.

<sup>60</sup> Donald Denoon, *Multicultural Japan: Palaeolithic to Postmodern* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 22-23.

<sup>61</sup> Irish, *Hokkaido: A History of Ethnic Transition and Development on Japan's Northern Island*, 26. Ezo can also be used to directly refer to the land of Ezo/Hokkaidō as well.

those who were recorded as communicating with Japanese, were the ancestors of the current Ainu.<sup>62</sup>

Before the Japanese appeared to a greater extent in the land of the Ezo in the fifteenth century, the Ainu were living a peaceful life of cultivating crops, hunting, fishing and gathering. The Ainu did not establish a kingdom as the Ryūkyūans did, but it has been attested that they had their own social communities based on different villages. Their villages usually consisted of five to seven houses, and their lifestyle was between nomadic people and settled agricultural people. Normally, the Ainu stayed somewhere close to the sea or the river during the fishing season and moved to other places for the cold winter.<sup>63</sup> As to their own communities, each village had its chief, the central figure of a village. The chief carried out significant duties, such as presiding over death and marriage ceremonies, in addition to directing the hunting and fishing, and supervising the communal property. Each village had its own law, so the chief played an important role in settling disputes and punishing criminals according to the law.<sup>64</sup> As the communication between the Ainu communities and the Japanese became more frequent, the chief bore considerable responsibilities in the trade and negotiation with Japanese merchants.<sup>65</sup> According to the records, the family of the chief was hereditary while the chief himself was selected from within that family based on personal abilities, no matter whether he

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<sup>62</sup> Takakura Shinichirō, *The Ainu of Northern Japan: A Study in Conquest and Acculturation*, translated by John A. Harrison (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1960), 13.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

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

was an illegitimate child or not.<sup>66</sup> Similar to modern society, the married children of an Ainu family in a village moved out and made a new family unit. Since the Ainu were mainly sustained by hunting and fishing, the families were requested to maintain a certain number of members. When the number exceeded the productive capacity, the new households would move to another area to form a new village.<sup>67</sup> This social system was maintained until the Meiji Restoration. It is appropriate to say that the land of Ezo was as independent as the Ryūkyū Kingdom at that time.

It is not a coincidence then that the Ainu also gradually lost their independence since the Tokugawa period. Except for hunting, fishing and cultivating some certain types of grain, the Ainu were also sustaining themselves through trading with Japanese at that time. At the beginning, trades were fairly equal regardless of some small disputes. By the mid-fifteenth century, however, the Japanese started to control the trades due to their growing economic power. There were three major confrontations between the Ainu and Japanese because of the increasing inequality. The first one was in 1456 due to an argument over the value of a sword sold to an Ainu from a Japanese blacksmith. The blacksmith killed the Ainu out of anger and this led to a fierce fight. The Ainu fighters destroyed several Japanese forts and the revolt ended when the leaders of the fight were killed.<sup>68</sup>

At the end of the sixteenth century, the Matsumae family was officially recognized by the Tokugawa shogunate as the daimyo of the area that the family

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 12.

controlled in the Oshima Peninsula, which is the southernmost part of Hokkaidō.<sup>69</sup> The second revolt happened under the Matsumae domain's manipulation of the Ainu. In order to gain more territory and property to defend its clan position, the Matsumae initially attempted to maintain friendly relations with the Ainu and make use of their resources through the Ainu themselves. Although Japanese were forbidden to live in Ainu territory, the suppression increased as the Matsumae monopolized the trade.<sup>70</sup> They prohibited the Ainu to trade in the areas in which they used to trade for centuries. The Matsumae leaders also collected taxes from the Ainu merchant vessels.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, not only were the Japanese fishermen allowed to fish along the coast of Ezo,<sup>72</sup> but the domain also utilized the Ainu as a local work force for the fishing industry that was built in the Kushiro area from 1635.<sup>73</sup> The Ainu's lifestyle unavoidably changed and they had to work under Japanese direction. Even if the Matsumae did not interfere with the political affairs of the Ainu communities, the land of Ezo gradually became an economic colony of Japan. The manipulation led to the Ainu revolt in 1668, in which an Ainu chief named Shakushain and his followers attacked the Japanese in both the east and west coast of Ezo and killed 273 Japanese in total.<sup>74</sup> However, the rebellion failed because of the poor organization of

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<sup>69</sup> Irish, *Hokkaido: A History of Ethnic Transition and Development on Japan's Northern Island*, 45.

<sup>70</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 23.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>72</sup> Irish, *Hokkaido*, 45.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>74</sup> Brett L. Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 49-50.

the Ainu rebels in addition to the more primitive weapons<sup>75</sup> they used compared to the Japanese firearms. Similar to the revolt in 1456, chief Shakushain was killed and the economic suppression from the Matsumae clan continued.<sup>76</sup>

After 1669, the Matsumae domain adopted new policies to regulate the Ainu, but the political control was rather loose. The Ainu living in or close to Matsumae were governed as Japanese, but the number of Ainu like these was very small compared with the total population of the Ainu in Ezo. The Ainu in the land of Ezo except for those in the remote eastern district were allowed to self-govern but with obedience to the general regulations of the Matsumae at the same time. Besides, the aborigines in remote areas such as Karafuto and Chishima were still independent despite the fact that they also had trade relations with the Japanese.<sup>77</sup> In addition, according to a record of an Ezo area boundary dispute in 1767, the dispute was settled based on native customs and the Ainu chief was responsible for the punishment of individuals.<sup>78</sup>

However, loose political control did not equal less economic manipulation through trade. Just as the first major confrontation, the third revolt was also directly caused by a dispute in trading. In 1789, a group of young Ainu attacked Japanese at the mainland of Ezo because they believed that several Ainu died after drinking the poisoned alcohol sold by the Japanese. Thirty-seven Ainu were captured and killed by Japanese soldiers and their heads were displayed at the Matsumae capital. However, the *basho*

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<sup>75</sup> The weapons the Ainu used in this battle were poisoned arrows.

<sup>76</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 29.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 38

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

system<sup>79</sup> adopted by the Matsumae domain used during trades with the Ainu from the early seventeenth century is the hidden reason behind this revolt. Under this system, the Japanese merchants (*basho* contractors) needed to pay part of the profits they have gained through trades to the Matsumae officials, but in return they were authorized to control the trade activities in Ezo.<sup>80</sup> The contractors were supposed to trade with the Ainu equally for some special native goods and sell them in the markets of Japan. However, the merchants usually deceived the natives by trading the cheapest possible goods to them and selling the natives' goods for the possibly highest price in the markets.<sup>81</sup> The inequality of trades invoked the dissatisfaction and even anger among the Ainu. Even if this rebellion cannot be counted as a huge success, the Matsumae clan did make some concessions and issued new regulations, in which the clan promised to strengthen the supervision and eliminate inequality during trade. On the other hand, the Ainu resentment did not decrease just because of the Matsumae clan's compromise since the Japanese immigration to the land of Ezo continued regardless of the prohibition of immigration from the Matsumae domain.<sup>82</sup> Meanwhile, the Tokugawa shogunate noticed the geographical values Ezo had for national defense and began to assert more direct management on the northern land. The central government sent out about 130 families led by farmer-samurai to settle in the land of Ezo in 1800.<sup>83</sup> Two years later, the shogunate switched the control of Ezo from

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<sup>79</sup> The *Basho* system was a master-servant relationship between the Matsumae clan and Japanese merchants.

<sup>80</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 30-31.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>82</sup> Irish, *Hokkaido: A History of Ethnic Transition and Development on Japan's Northern Island*, 51.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

the Matsumae to Hakodate, however, it should also be noted that roughly two decades later the Matsumae domain regained rule of Ezo possibly due to the central government's financial reduction, lack of interests and even bribery from the Matsumae family.<sup>84</sup> Matsumae's exploitation of the Ainu in 1820s did not last long since the Meiji government replaced the shogunate as the new regime of Japan. Two-thirds of Matsumae's castle was destroyed in 1869 in a battle between the Meiji government army and local Japanese rebels.<sup>85</sup>

The Ainu completely lost their independence under the new central government's incorporation. Although the Matsumae colonized the land of Ezo for over two centuries, it seems that the domain did not make much effort to assimilate the Ainu into Japanese society.<sup>86</sup> When under the Tokugawa shogunate's direct control, the bakufu attempted to assimilate the Ainu but it caused bitter opposition and did not succeed. Since the shogunate declined soon after the colonization, the land of Ezo was not controlled politically by the central government. In 1869, the central government sent *kaitakushi* (development administrator)<sup>87</sup> to Ezo and changed the name of the land from Ezo to Hokkaidō,<sup>88</sup> officially announcing that the northern land belonged to Japanese territory. This was even before the *haihanchiken* policy was enacted. Also, the Meiji government created a new city called *Sapporo* as Hokkaidō's capital instead of the old one named

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>86</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 38.

<sup>87</sup> *Kaitakushi* are administrators for inspecting the reclamation and development in Hokkaidō.

<sup>88</sup> Takakura Shinichirō, *Ainu seisakushi* (Tōkyō: San'ichi shobō, 1972), 372.

*Hakotate*.<sup>89</sup> After the incorporation, the Meiji emperor visited the northern land in 1876 to declare the sovereignty as well as to please the natives of the regions he visited.<sup>90</sup>

### **The terminology of Japanese colonization**

It is clear that the Ryūkyūs were an independent kingdom before being incorporated into Japan, while the Ainu did not form a nation as the Ryūkyūs did. Due to this difference, within the academic field there is a debate with regard to the status of Hokkaidō in Japanese colonial history. I consider that it is reasonable to say that Japanese exploitation over the land of Ezo is colonization due to the independent status the Ainu had in the pre-Meiji period; nevertheless some scholars tend to define it as *naikoku shokumin* (internal colonization), through which Hokkaidō became a Japanese internal colony (*naikoku shokuminchi*). For example, in his far-reaching monograph *Posutokoroniarizumu* (Post-colonialism), Motohashi Tetsuya considers that in spite of Hokkaidō being a part of Japan historically, the Ainu were excluded from being Japanese so they had to be assimilated through the process of *naikoku shokumin* in the Meiji period.<sup>91</sup> The term *naikoku shokumin* (internal colonization) is typically used to describe the economic or political inequalities of peripheral regions in a nation state due to the exploitation from the central government.<sup>92</sup> Perspectives such as Motohashi's on the dominant-dominated relationship between the Japanese government and the Ezo ignores the pre-Meiji independence of the Ainu. It is based on the consequence rather than the

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<sup>89</sup> Irish, *Hokkaido*, 105.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Motohashi Tetsuya, *Posutokoroniarizumu* (Tōkyō: Iwanami shoten, 2011), 191.

<sup>92</sup> Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 18.

entire process and it aligns with the perspectives of the Japanese colonial authorities rather than considering those of the colonized Ainu.

More scholars have realized the inaccuracy of the term *naikoku shokumin* when it is applied to Hokkaidō. Michelle M. Mason points out that the usage of *naikoku shokuminchi* to Hokkaidō perpetuates “the erasure of the fraught and complex case of colonial Hokkaidō from postcolonial discussions,”<sup>93</sup> and even though the word *naikoku shokuminchi* (internal colony) contains *shokuminchi* (colony), it still functions to “attenuate colonial legitimacy through a distinction between external and internal territories.”<sup>94</sup> Mason considers that since Hokkaidō did not have an internal status before the process of internalization, it is not appropriate to use *naikoku shokumin*. Imanishi Hajime also proposed his criticisms of the word *naikoku shokuminchi* and used *kokunai shokuminchi* (domestic colonies) on Hokkaidō instead. He claims that “*naikoku shokumin*” acquiesce in an inappropriate view of which Hokkaidō belonged to Japanese territory before the Meiji period. He chose the term *kokunai shokuminchi* instead for the description of the domestication of the Ainu after the Meiji period.<sup>95</sup> *Naikoku* means internal, and *kokunai* means domestic, so it seems that *naikoku* and *kokunai* have extremely close meanings. Imanishi did not explain the difference of the literal meaning of these two words, but according to him, the foreign status of the Ainu before the Meiji

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<sup>93</sup> Michele M. Mason, *Dominant Narratives of Colonial Hokkaido and Imperial Japan* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 18.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>95</sup> Imanishi Hajime, “Teikoku Nihon to kokunai shokuminchi” in *Ritsumeikan gengobunka kenkyū* vol. 19 no. 1 (2007): 17-27, 26, accessed September 10, 2016.

period is stressed in his term “*kokunai shokuminchi*.”<sup>96</sup> Kaihō Yōko also emphasized the Ezo Island’s independence before the Meiji era in her article “The Internalization and Unification of ‘Foreign Territory.’” Besides abstaining from using the word “internal colony,” Kaihō chooses internalization (*naikokuka*) instead to identify the Japanese central government’s colonization of the Ainu.<sup>97</sup> I also consider that “internalization” best describes the entire process by which Japan domesticated Hokkaido, and contrary to “internal colonization,” it acknowledges the independent status of the Ezo before the Meiji period. Therefore, “internalization” and “colonization” will be used synonymously in the discussion of Hokkaidō and the Ryūkyūs in this thesis.

### **Japan as a rising empire**

Here it is also necessary to investigate the reasons for the Japanese central government to accelerate its internalization of the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō in the Meiji period. Not only were the Ryūkyū Kingdom and Ezo going through tremendous changes due to the colonization, but as a colonial power, Japan itself was also experiencing substantial transitions to a modern nation in the Meiji era. In the Western colonial contexts such as the British Empire with its colonies in India and Africa, the colonial authorities usually established a rather mature imperialist social structure before their expansion. In the case of Japan, however, the social transition and the colonization of the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō happened almost simultaneously. After the Meiji Restoration, the central government needed resources for modernization. This is due to that in the Edo

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Mason, *Dominant Narratives*, 20.

period, the Tokugawa shogunate exploited a new *sakoku* (isolation) policy,<sup>98</sup> nevertheless the Satsuma domain still gained much profit through the trade between the Ryūkyū Kingdom and China. The domain also developed its economy via plundering resources such as sugar in the Ryūkyūs.<sup>99</sup> As a matter of fact, politicians from Satsuma were a dominant group in the Meiji government, so the leaders considered that the Ryūkyū Kingdom could still provide financial support for modernization in the main island of Japan. This can be taken as a motivation for the government to take control of the islands.

In comparison, the land of Ezo was abundant in resources such as coal and iron. This was extremely valuable for the Japanese Empire, allowing construction such as railways, facilitating a further expansion into East Asia. Also, the Meiji government saw the remote northern land as a perfect place to exile criminals and considering that since there were not enough local aborigines to satisfy the heavy workload of reclamation, the dispatched criminals could also be utilized as labor.<sup>100</sup> In order to accomplish both of these goals, the Meiji leaders had to justify Ezo as a part of Japan in the first place. Right after the incorporation, the government built prisons in Hokkaidō and sent criminals to act both as labor and a military force.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> This policy was the foreign relations policy that restricted Japanese to leave/enter Japan. It also limited trades between Japan and foreign trades. This policy isolated Japan from the outside world in the Edo period until the Perry Expedition in 1853.

<sup>99</sup> Oguma Eiji, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*: *Okinawa, Ainu, Taiwan, Chōsen, shokuminchi shihai kara fukki undō made* (Tōkyō: Shin’yōsha, 1998), 18-19.

<sup>100</sup> Mason, *Dominant Narratives*, 95.

<sup>101</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*, 54-55.

Controlling the resources for modernization was an important factor for the central government to accelerate the incorporation, but the most fundamental reason involved here is the central government's consciousness of the threat from the Western colonial powers and Russia. In the middle of nineteenth century, the Western countries entered the periphery of Asia for more economic profit through trade. Soon the international order in East Asia centering on China collapsed because of the Western invasion. The Qing Dynasty lost both the first and the second Opium Wars and China gradually became a semi-colony of the British Empire. The Meiji leaders worried that if the Western colonial powers led by the British Empire gained control of the Ryūkyū Islands as a military base, then Japan could not escape the fate of being invaded just as the Qing Dynasty had been.<sup>102</sup> To avoid this terrifying situation, the Meiji government had to establish the Ryūkyūs as their base for national defense.

In comparison, Russia had been a threat to Hokkaidō for the Japanese central government before the Meiji period. It is mentioned above that the Tokugawa shogunate controlled the Ezo for a short time because of its value to national defense. In fact, Russia started its invasion to the east of Ezo in the seventeenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, Russians set up a permanent colony on Etorofu,<sup>103</sup> one of the Kuril Islands.<sup>104</sup> In 1853 Russia controlled a part of northern Ezo and according to its government report, the Ainu welcomed the Russian army but they took the opposite attitude towards the Japanese.<sup>105</sup> The Meiji government feared that the Russian army

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 22-23.

<sup>103</sup> Etorofu is the Russian name for Iturup Island.

<sup>104</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 49.

<sup>105</sup> Oguma, "*Nihonjin*" *no kyōkai*, 53.

might invade mainland Japan, therefore the leaders claimed Ezo as “the northern gate of the Japanese Empire (*kōkoku no hokumon*),”<sup>106</sup> beginning its internalization immediately.

For the purposes of taking control of the resources for modernization as well as to strengthen the national defense against the Western colonial power, Japan unilaterally claimed the Ryūkyūs and Ezo as parts of Japan. From that point on, the Ryūkyū Islands and the land of Ezo were no longer foreign lands, but the political incorporation was only the first step in the Japanese colonization. Next the Meiji leaders decided to acculturate the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu into qualified citizens of Japan.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 54.

## Chapter Two

### Kōminka Education, Discrimination and Self-alienation

After the deposition of the Ryūkyūs and incorporation of the land of Ezo, Okinawa prefecture and Hokkaidō were integrated as parts of the Great Japan Empire (*dainihon-teikoku*), and the first step in Japanese colonization was to acculturate the Ryūkyūans and Ainu. The acculturation was named as *kōminka* (imperialization) education. Its aim was to turn the colonized people into Japanese subjects. *Kōminka* education was also adopted in other Japanese colonies when the Meiji leaders planned to construct the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*daitōatsu-kyōeiken*). After the Meiji Restoration, Japanese nationalism and imperialism gradually formed. The task of the education policies on the main islands of Japan was to cultivate Japanese citizens' loyalty to the empire and the Meiji Emperor. This concept is known as *chūkun-aikoku* (loyalty and patriotism) and it was stressed in the Rescript of Education (*kyōiku ni kansuru chokugo*) enacted in 1890.<sup>107</sup> *Chūkunaikoku* was also the ultimate goal of the *kōminka* education in Okinawa and Hokkaidō. However, even if born out of the same purpose, the process of implementation and the actual outcome of this education still differed between the Ryūkyūans and Ainu.

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<sup>107</sup> Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 133.

## **Kōminka education and discrimination in Okinawa**

Although the Ryūkyūs became a Japanese prefecture in 1879, many Ryūkyūans still had traditional and strong sentimental ties with China so they were unwilling to be assimilated into Japanese society. Before 1879, there were approximately thirty schools in Okinawa, and many local families would sacrifice anything to send their children to school for education.<sup>108</sup> However, due to the crisis and uncertainty under the abdication of the Ryūkyū Kingdom's last king, these schools were closed and not reopened until December 1879.<sup>109</sup> However, children who were sent to village schools were still taught Chinese calligraphy and elementary Chinese classical texts and the youth who entered the Kume Village Academy<sup>110</sup> continued to focus on Chinese studies. Only those youths who were allowed to enter the Shuri Academy when they were seventeen or eighteen studied Japanese texts other than Chinese classics. Obviously this could not suit Japan's needs of assimilation, so the Meiji leaders immediately allocated funds to support Japanese education in the two academies as well as other village schools.<sup>111</sup> The government did not charge tuition fees from the local students, and they also subsidized students enrolled in elementary schools and provided them with stationery. This was in contrast to other prefectures in which students were charged tuition fees.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> George H Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (Rutland, Vermont & Tōkyō: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965), 412.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 412.

<sup>110</sup> Kume Village Academy was in Kumejima, a town in Okinawa.

<sup>111</sup> Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People*, 412.

<sup>112</sup> Oguma Eiji, "*Nihonjin*" *no kyōkai: Okinawa, Ainu, Taiwan, Chōsen, shokuminchi shihai kara fukki undō made* (Tōkyō: Shin'yōsha, 1998), 36.

However, the central government did not establish a systematic education policy at first, and the Vice-Minister for Ministry of Education, Tanaka Fujimaro, was the only figure who decided the administration and schooling of Japanese language.<sup>113</sup> In 1880, the Conversation Training Centre (*kaiwa renshū jō*) was set up in Okinawa under his order and later on it was utilized as a teacher training school to cultivate Japanese instructors.<sup>114</sup> Even with extra investment and efforts, the colonial education in Okinawa did not make much progress. Since the Conversation Training Centre could not gather enough students, it not only stopped charging tuition, but also started to distribute subsidization for study and food.<sup>115</sup> An extremely low school enrollment rate compared to other prefectures can be seen at this time. In the early 1880s, the enrollment rate of elementary schools in Okinawa was only around three percent compared to a forty-percent enrollment rate in other prefectures.<sup>116</sup> As a matter of fact, even though the Ryūkyūans were taught Japanese, it was impossible to use the language in daily life with their families. Furthermore, the schools established by the Japanese government were called “*yamatoya* (the house of Yamato)” in Okinawa, and the locals believed that the children who were sent to learn Japanese culture would abandon their families for joining the mainland Japanese.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Patrick Heinrich, “Language Planning and Language Ideology in the Ryūkyū Islands” in *Language Policy* 3 (2004): 153-179, accessed November 10, 2016, 157.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*, 38.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

This situation dramatically changed after the Qing Dynasty's defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war in 1895. Many Ryūkyūans lost hope on China so they began to support the Meiji government, and an increasing enthusiasm for kōminka education can be seen: the enrollment rate of elementary schools rose to forty-five percent for boys and seventeen percent for girls, and it rapidly grew to ninety-three percent in general by 1907.<sup>118</sup> Accordingly, a further educational strategy was adopted in Okinawa as well. In 1896, Okinawan Private Education Association proposed several suggestions regarding the reform of acculturation policies. First of all it was necessary to cultivate the Ryūkyūans' loyalty towards the Meiji Emperor and the empire, as well as their awareness of living in a nation-state. Secondly students should be taught strictly how to obey rules and laws. Last but not least, it was necessary to impose Japanese spoken tests and set up Japanese conversation seminars in elementary schools for universalizing standard Japanese.<sup>119</sup> Due to the obvious achievement of colonial education in Okinawa, these education policies became a blueprint for Japanese acculturation in Taiwan and Korea when they were officially colonized in 1895 and 1910.<sup>120</sup>

Even with a greater desire to study Japanese culture and language, many Ryūkyūans still tended to view themselves as outsiders of Japan. According to an article written by a Japanese instructor for a local newspaper in 1896, it was not just the adults that separated themselves from Japanese and called themselves “Ryūkyūans,” but also

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Davinder L. Bhowmik, *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), 21.

their children viewed the mainland as a foreign country.<sup>121</sup> It became an emergency for the Meiji leaders to nurture the Ryūkyūans' consciousness of being a Japanese (*nihonjin-ishiki*),<sup>122</sup> and for this it was necessary to shape a new view towards the history of the Ryūkyū Islands. The Ryūkyūans needed to be educated that they were Japanese historically and that they shared the same ethnicity with the mainland Japanese.<sup>123</sup> In the textbooks compiled for Okinawa by The Ministry of Education in 1897, Minamoto no Tametomo<sup>124</sup> was written as the ancestor of the Ryūkyūans. His son was described as Shunten, the first king of Chūzan who spread the usage of Iroha kana, as well as reformed the old customs and improved the natives' standard of living.<sup>125</sup>

The local educators in the Ryūkyūs followed the central government's explanation of the Ryūkyūs' history. Besides, they claimed that the communication was cut off between the Ryūkyū Islands and the mainland in the medieval period because of the inconvenience of transportation, thus the Ryūkyūans had forgotten that they were Japanese. Hence the emergency of the current education was to eliminate the locals' "bad habits" and this would "turn the Ryūkyūans back to Japanese."<sup>126</sup> The local educators

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<sup>121</sup> Oguma, "*Nihonjin*" no *kyōkai*, 40.

<sup>122</sup> Translations from Japanese sources are mine unless otherwise noted.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>124</sup> Minamoto no Tametomo was a samurai in the Heian period. He was recorded as a hero in many legends. He fought to defend the Shirakawa-den in the Hōgen Rebellion. After the failure, he was exiled to the island of Ōshima in the Izu Islands. Even nowadays, many Ryūkyūans believed that Tametomo made his way to the Ryūkyū Islands and helped his son found the Ryūkyū Kingdom.

<sup>125</sup> Oguma, "*Nihonjin*" no *kyōkai*, 44.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

also considered that Okinawan culture had no difference from Japanese culture. The only difference was that the inland prefectures were more culturally evolved than Okinawa. They believed that Okinawa would become the same as other prefectures through “evolution,” and the only way to achieve this was to be assimilated with mainland Japanese culture.<sup>127</sup>

It seems that the Ryūkyūans began to grow accustomed to the idea of assimilation. Many boys changed their traditional hairstyle with topknot and pin to the crew cut, which was very popular in mainland Japan.<sup>128</sup> Women also started to adopt the –ko as suffix in their first names, and men began to use –kun as a suffix in their names.<sup>129</sup> Many Ryūkyūans believed that being assimilated was the only way to be successful, so they came to mainland Japan to realize their dreams, but were still discriminated by the mainland Japanese in various aspects. Before 1895 the Meiji government implemented a policy for the “eradication of harmful customs (*akushū haishi*)” in Okinawa.<sup>130</sup> Many Ryūkyūan traditions and customs were considered “harmful” and they needed to be abolished, such as tattooing the backs of women’s hands and *moashibi* (evening dance parties of young people).<sup>131</sup> For the mainlanders, this policy imposed an impression that

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>128</sup> Steve Rabson, “Assimilation Policy in Okinawa: Promotion, Resistance and ‘Reconstruction’” in *JPRI Occasional Paper No.8*, October 1996, accessed October 15, 2016. Page numbers are not identified in this article.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Steve Rabson, *The Okinawan Diaspora in Japan: Crossing the Borders Within* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2012), 26.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 27.

the Ryūkyūan customs were different, and therefore wrong.<sup>132</sup> Even using pork as a main food among the Ryūkyūans was looked down on by the mainland Japanese.<sup>133</sup> This was inherited from Chinese culture, but many Japanese linked it with the despised outcasts (*burakumin*), or butchers, tanners and shoemakers in the old days.<sup>134</sup>

The eradication of Ryūkyūan traditional customs also illustrates an official discrimination from the Japanese government, and this discrimination existed in other education policies as well. In 1894, Kodama Kihachi, the director of Okinawa prefectural department of education as well as the principal of the Shuri Middle School, publicly claimed that there was no need for Okinawans to learn English. He ostensibly clarified that it was for the benefit of the locals since it was a heavy burden for them to master two foreign languages (Japanese and English) at the same time. In fact, Kodama took the natives as a group of ignorant people so English was an unnecessary luxury for them. This caused a fierce social controversy, and the students went on strike after he dropped English from the required subjects at the middle school.<sup>135</sup> The notorious “dialect tag (*hōgen-fuda*)” or “punishment tag (*batsu-fuda*)” used in Japanese language classes also suggests the discrimination in *kōminka* education. Students were ordered to hang the tag around their necks when they were caught speaking Ryūkyūan language in a Japanese

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>133</sup> In the Edo period, eating meat was a taboo in Japan especially for the upper class. Eating beef was seen as civilized in the early Meiji period, but pork was still considered to be unhealthy food for barbarians among Japanese.

<sup>134</sup> George H Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (Rutland, Vermont & Tōkyō: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965), 448-449.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 442.

conversation. They could not take it off until another student was caught using Ryūkyūan language.<sup>136</sup> This punishment was effective in reducing the students' usage of their own language in class, but on the other hand it laid stress on language difference, or even different identities connected with the language. In the Japanese class, Ryūkyūan language seemed to be degraded to an inferior language, and Ryūkyūan students always had to bear the inferior feeling of using their own language in mind. This indicates the contradiction of colonial education in Okinawa. On the one hand, the central government wished to eliminate the differences between the Ryūkyūan and the Japanese through harsh education policies. On the other hand, the differences were strengthened through the discrimination existing in the acculturation.

### **Kōminka education in Hokkaidō**

The acculturation of the Ainu in Hokkaidō in the Meiji period seems less successful compared with Okinawa. The central government did not establish a special organization for making colonial education policy in Hokkaidō in the early Meiji period, and similar to Okinawa, an extremely low school enrollment rate can also be found for the Ainu. In 1883, only roughly nine percent of Ainu children were enrolled in elementary schools.<sup>137</sup> The Meiji leaders realized the necessity to put efforts on the policy-making of acculturation towards the Ainu, so Hokkaidō Education Committee was set up nine years later.<sup>138</sup> The committee was responsible for researching the education

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<sup>136</sup> Rabson, *The Okinawan Diaspora in Japan*, 27.

<sup>137</sup> Takakura, *Ainu seisakushi*, 529.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 531.

situation of the Ainu and universalizing Japanese education in Hokkaidō. Although the school enrollment rate rose after the committee was established, the number of the Ainu who actually graduated was only a small ratio.<sup>139</sup> One major reason responsible for the low graduate rates is the Ainu's poor economic condition during the Meiji period. According to an official report in 1906, many Ainu children dropped out of schools because they had to stay at home helping their parents with housework and farming or fishing.<sup>140</sup> The other reason was being bullied by the Japanese children. The Meiji government adopted a policy called *betsugaku* (separate education) for reducing the contacts between Ainu children and their Japanese counterparts. Under this regulation, Japanese children were educated separately in former aborigine schools (*kyūdojin-gakkō*), and the number of the students was limited for each school. Schools only for Japanese children would also be built in the areas where a large number of Japanese immigrants settled.<sup>141</sup> In spite of this situation, the Ainu children were still discriminated and bullied when they met Japanese children on the way to schools:

One of the fundamental reasons for the Ainu children's absence is that, when they meet Japanese children (on the way to school or back home) every morning and afternoon, a lot of Japanese children would yell "Ainu, Ainu, come on! Come on!" and throw pebbles, hit or kick Ainu children. This humiliation is intolerable for kids, so they hide in grass at first, and gradually they even stop going to school.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 530.

<sup>140</sup> Ogawa Masahito, "'Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō' 'kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei' shita no Ainu gakkō" in *The Annual Reports on Educational Science*, 58: 197-266, accessed September 25, 2016, 223.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 234. Translations from Japanese sources are mine unless otherwise notified.

The local government also lacked motivation to educate the natives. The fees for building aborigine school (*dojin-gakkō*) were largely from local Ainu's "donation" despite the fact that the Ainu were in severe poverty. Many Ainu were exploited as labor for construction of the schools as well.<sup>143</sup> Funds from the government were only provided for former aborigine schools when they were close to being abolished.<sup>144</sup> In 1904, the Hokkaidō government decided to reduce funds used on former aborigine schools as much as possible.<sup>145</sup> The investment in these schools did not increase until the early twentieth century, especially after 1918.<sup>146</sup> However, this was not because of the Japanese government's generosity towards the education of the Ainu. It was mainly caused by the terribly rise in prices of building materials during that time. Funding was used mainly for renovation of the deteriorating school buildings, and as before, this was still not enough money to cover other necessary expenses.<sup>147</sup>

The colonial education on the Ainu was largely based on Education Regulations for Children of Former Aborigines (*kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei*).<sup>148</sup> The compulsory education for both Ainu children and Japanese children was four years before 1908, after which it was extended to six years based on the implementation of a new education policy for elementary schools nationwide. However, the required education for Ainu

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>144</sup> Takakura, *Ainu seisakushi*, 531.

<sup>145</sup> Ogawa Masahito, "'Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō' 'kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei' shita no Ainu gakkō," 213.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> It is part of Hokkaido protection law of former aborigines.

children was shortened back to four years in 1916. Apart from cultivating loyalty towards the empire, another main reason for educating Ainu children was to urge them to be adaptive to living with Japanese immigrants in Hokkaidō. Based on this purpose, the Japanese officials considered that there was no need for the Ainu to obtain higher education, so a four-year elementary education was enough for Ainu children.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, Geography, Japanese History and Science were eliminated from the required subjects for the Ainu, and the remaining subjects were Ethics (*shūshin*), Japanese, Mathematics, Music, Gymnastics, Technical (*jitsugyō*) Lessons (farming lessons for boys and sewing lessons for girls). Teaching hours for all of these subjects were shortened too. Additionally, the school age for Ainu children was raised to seven years old, while comparatively Japanese children were required to enter elementary schools at six years old.<sup>150</sup> The explanation offered by the Japanese officials was that “Ainu children’s minds are not as developed as their Japanese counterparts when they are six years old.”<sup>151</sup>

However, this situation was changed a little due to a British preacher named John Batchelor. He came to Hokkaidō in 1877 and founded a mission school and a hospital for the Ainu.<sup>152</sup> This was an alert for Japanese officials and educators because the Japanese government did not want the Ainu to be assimilated into Western culture and ideologies. Along with the implementation of Special Education Regulation in 1903, Japanese History was added into the required subjects. For example, *emishiseibatsu* (the conquer

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<sup>149</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō,” 220.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>152</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” *no kyōkai*, 59-60.

of the barbarians) was taught to students in higher grades in elementary schools. In the textbook, the Ainu's ancestors, the Emishi were written as betrayers of the Yamato court. Yamato Takeru,<sup>153</sup> Abe no Hirafu<sup>154</sup> and Sakanoue no Tamuramaro<sup>155</sup> were described as heroes who conquered the betrayers of the northern land.<sup>156</sup> Some comments written by Ainu students during the history class can be used to investigate how this was taught:

[Kanmu Emperor, please forgive our ancestors because they did not know that Your Imperial Majesty came to our land. They fought because they thought that our land was being attacked (by outsiders).<sup>157</sup>]  
[We would not have today's life without the Generals (of *emishiseibatsu*). The Generals are our benefactors.<sup>158</sup>]

The Ainu children who wrote comments like the above seemed to appreciate the conquests of the Ezo in the early times. This suggests that the students were actually taught that *emishiseibatsu* was a grace from Japanese Emperors to protect the Ezo. It also displays the superiority of the Japanese, and what is more, it aims to motivate the Ainu children to assimilating to “superior” Japanese subjects.

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<sup>153</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō,” 225. Yamato Takeru was a Japanese prince of the Yamato court in Japanese legends.

<sup>154</sup> Abe no Hirafu was a Japanese general in the seventh century recorded in many Japanese writings. According to the *Nihonshoki*, he won the battle against the Emishi in 658.

<sup>155</sup> Sakanoue no Tamuramaro was a general in the Heian period. He was also famous as the *Sei-i Taishōgun* (Chief Commander of the Expedition against the Emishi).

<sup>156</sup> Sarashina Genzō, *Ainu to Nihonjin: denshō ni yoru kōshōshi* (Tōkyō: Nihon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1970), 14.

<sup>157</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō,” 225.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

## **Racial discrimination against the Ainu**

In *kōminka* education, one outstanding difference of the ideology between the Okinawa and Hokkaidō was that, the Ryūkyūan were taught that they were the descendants of the Japanese people. On the contrary, the Meiji leaders exploited racial differences between the Ainu and the Japanese in acculturation. In Japan, the word “race (*jinshū*)” used as a classification for human beings was first introduced in the late Edo period and it was widespread in the Meiji period. Classifying races mainly based on biological difference was a popular view in the Meiji era, and in Japanese textbooks, human being were mainly divided into five races<sup>159</sup> mainly according to their facial appearance, skin color and skull shape. However, other physical discrepancies such as body hair were also taken into account.<sup>160</sup>

With this prevailing view on racial classification in the Meiji period, Japanese anthropologists often linked the Ainu with the white race, since they have thick hair all over the body and a strong body odour.<sup>161</sup> However, physical difference was not the biggest reason for the Ainu to be considered backward barbarians. In an interview about the Ainu conducted in Hokkaido in 1926, many Japanese interviewees held the view that the adverse factors in the social environment such as disease and discrimination in education resulted in the Ainu’s backwardness. The opposite view emphasized that the

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<sup>159</sup> This is Johann Friedrich Blumenbach’s classification of human species based on human skulls in the nineteenth century. In his theory, human could be divided into the Caucasian race, the Mongoloid race, the Malay race, the Negroid race and the American race.

<sup>160</sup> Takezawa Yasuko, *Jinshū-gainen no fuhensei wo tou* (Kyōto: Jimbun shoin, 2006), 232.

<sup>161</sup> Richard Siddle, *Race, Resistance, and the Ainu of Japan* (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 86.

Ainu were inferior because of “innate (*sententeki*)” and “characteristic (*soshitsuteki*)” difference. This point of view was considered correct in the report.<sup>162</sup> Apparently this was inherited from the stance taken by the Meiji officials in the late nineteenth century.

Iwatani Eitarō, who was a Hokkaidō government official responsible for making colonial education policy, openly declared that “the Ainu is actually an inferior race,” and “it can be said with certainty that the Ainu will be extinct because of their personality.”<sup>163</sup> To explain this attitude, Iwatani gave the following seven points:

First, they do not have hope for the future. Second, they do not know how to save money. Third, being an alcoholic is their only hobby. Fourth, they have no knowledge about hygiene. Fifth, they do not live a regular life. Sixth, they have many evil habits such as idleness, gambling and lying. They are also frauds. Seventh, they have syphilis because of their ancestors’ heredity.<sup>164</sup>

These attitudes suggest an open separation and discrimination from the Japanese colonial authorities, and it is reflected through some specific teaching policies as well. In Ethics classes, the Ainu students were taught with Japanese manners such as *ojigi* (greeting) and *seiza* (formal sitting). They also learned how to be sanitized (*seiketsu*) and how to practice thrift (*setsuyaku*).<sup>165</sup> These manners and habits were educated as “common knowledge,” which means that they were imposed on the Ainu children as universal rules. Just as in the “eradication of the harmful customs” campaign promoted in

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>163</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” no *kyōkai*, 61.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 61-62.

<sup>165</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō,”

the Ryūkyūs, the Japanese educators also believed that mastering the “common knowledge” was a way for the Ainu to live a better life as Japanese subjects. Cultivating loyalty and patriotism was the primary content in Ethics lessons as well. A Japanese teacher in an Ainu school wrote a vow and required the Ainu children to repeat every morning before classes began: “We obey the teachings from His Majesty the Emperor properly, and we are determined to be superior Japanese.”<sup>166</sup> This vow indicates that the Ainu children were taught with the idea that they were a group of inferior people. Acculturation could help them become “superior Japanese.” The same concept can be also seen from the teaching of mathematics. In the Report of Former Aborigines (*kyūdojin ni kansuru chōsa*), the Ainu were described as “a savage people who do not have an idea of numbers,” so only “simple” calculations were included in math classes.<sup>167</sup> As a matter of fact, the Ainu had their own counting and calculating system, which included adding “beginning” and “end” to every count of ten. Instead of using the number “ten” for ten, the Ainu took twelve for ten.<sup>168</sup> This way is unusual and different from the decimal system adopted in worldwide elementary education. Japanese officials and educators took their way for granted and lacked consideration of the Ainu’s own tradition.

For Japanese educators, the urgency of acculturation was to rectify Ainu’s personality and habits “inherited from their ancestors,” and this was also a way for eliminating the difference between the “inferior” Ainu and the “superior” Japanese, but in

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>168</sup> Takakura, *The Ainu of Northern Japan*, 41.

fact the difference was enhanced rather than being reduced or removed in education. We can see this point from an Ainu's experience:

In an ethnic class, our teacher opened the textbook in which two men were drawn in a picture: one men was wearing *haori* (Japanese kimono) and gentlemanlike, the other men was wearing broken kimono and looked like a beggar, [...] the teacher started to explain: “One of the people in this picture was called ‘*natakesan* (Japanese)’ in our Nioi<sup>169</sup> dialect and he is a gorgeous person, while the other one who was begging for food, he is like the ‘*achabo* (an Ainu male)’ in the Ainu village who drinks alcohol all day and doesn’t work. This is why he became a beggar.”

After listening to the explanation like this, even children were very angry.<sup>170</sup>

What is more, it seems that the manipulation of the Ainu for the government's own benefits continued in *kōminka* education program. The officials claimed that Technical classes were set up in aborigine schools because that the Ainu were “lazy” and “idle,” so it was essential to correct this bad habit.<sup>171</sup> As mentioned previously, the Ainu were mainly living on fishing and their lifestyle was half nomadic, but it was largely destroyed under Japanese colonization, due to the massive number of Japanese immigrants and the exploitation of natural resources by the Matsumae clan and Meiji government. According to an Ainu's memory of studying in an aborigine school, the education towards Ainu children was very simple and nothing had been taught in Technical classes except for making boys work in farmlands.<sup>172</sup> It is questionable

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<sup>169</sup> Nioi is a small town in the southern-west Hokkaido.

<sup>170</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō,” 261.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 226.

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

whether “correcting this bad habit” was merely an excuse for taking advantage of Ainu children and exploit them as laborers.

### **Kōminka education and self-alienation**

For Japanese colonial authorities, kōminka education was to assimilate the colonized Ryūkyūans and Ainu through eliminating the general language and cultural differences and imposing a collective Japanese identity. However, for the Ryūkyūans, the acculturation in the Meiji period did not stop them from maintaining their Ryūkyūan identity, and the evidence can be found in their daily life. This parallels the situation among the Ainu. In other words, the difference that the Japanese government wished to eliminate was strengthened through assimilation, and this difference exists in Ryūkyūans’ self-identity. Even nowadays, there is a wide trend among younger people in Okinawa to mix Ryūkyūan expressions into their daily conversations in “standard” Japanese. In mainland Japan, later generations of the immigrants from the Ryūkyū Islands still speak “standard” Japanese with a distinctive Okinawan accent.<sup>173</sup> This accent not only reflects the far-reaching influence of the Ryūkyūan language, but also illustrates a distinctive and strong Ryūkyūan identity. It also shows that the Ryūkyūan have an inclination to alienate themselves from a Japanese identity, and I consider this mental activity to be a form of “self-alienation.” An individual Ryūkyūan’s experience also indicates this self-alienation:

My parents maintained our Okinawan life-style so completely that sometimes we forgot we were in Osaka. We always spoke in Ryūkyūan. Since we were among mostly other Okinawans, it was easy to live this

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<sup>173</sup> Steve Rabson, *The Okinawan Diaspora in Japan: Crossing the Borders Within* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press), 30.

way. My father grew *goya* (bitter melon) in a vacant lot...and made brown sugar. My mother had her weaving implements sent from Okinawa, and wove *kasuri* (splashed-pattern cloth). We conducted all the annual observances strictly by the old lunar calendar, including the spring *shiimii* festival of feast and prayer honoring departed relatives, and the [*eisā*] festival in [late] summer when the spirits of the ancestors are said to return to this world for a brief visit.<sup>174</sup>

I argue that this self-alienation is not merely on account of the cultural or language differences between the Ryūkyūans and the Japanese, it could also be an effect of the emphasis of these differences during *kōminka* education. Usually colonial authorities wish to stimulate the colonized subjects' desire of assimilation through despising the colonized people's customs and traditions so that the cultures of the colonial groups seem to be superior, or more modernized and civilized. Nevertheless this discrimination can cause the colonized subjects' resistance towards the assimilation and the self-alienation is provoked through a stronger sentimental tie with their own language or customs. The self-alienation can be found on many Ainu as well, and it is appropriate to say that Ainu self-alienation can be even stronger since the racial difference between them and Japanese was often emphasized in education. For instance, as an education program, "comparative school trips (*hikaku-kengaku*)" were arranged for arousing Ainu students' desire of "custom reformation (*fūgi-kairyō*)" through a comparison of their own lifestyle with other villages (*kotan*) in Hokkaidō or "advanced cities."<sup>175</sup> This program

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<sup>174</sup> Steve Rabson, "Being Okinawan in Japan: The Diaspora Experience" in *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* Volume 10, Issue 12, Number 2, March 2012, accessed October 10, 2016. Page numbers are not identified in this article.

<sup>175</sup> Ogawa Masahito, "'Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō' 'kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei' shita no Ainu gakkō," 229.

utilized the gap of wealth and the cultural differences between the Ainu and Japanese, while it failed to motivate Ainu children to pursue “an advanced Japanese lifestyle.” On the contrary, this program had to be ceased in 1916 due to Ainu children’s resistance towards Japanese assimilation and the Japanese society because they felt that they were being discriminated as an inferior race during the trips.<sup>176</sup> The resistance suggests that the differentiation in *kōminka* education can provoke Ainu’s self-alienation from Japanese people and the Japanese identity.

We can also see the self-alienation from a story about Chiri Yukie, an Ainu writer and transcriber/translator of *Yukar* (Ainu epic tales) in the Meiji period. Like many Ainu, she was educated under the *kōminka* education program. In her middle school entrance examination, she was required to write about history of *emishiseibatsu* based on what was taught in Japanese history class. As introduced above, in Japanese history textbook the Ainu were described as barbarians while the Japanese attackers were written as heroes who protected the northern land. To show her anger towards the history written for the benefit of the Japanese, she did not answer this question but later on she was still enrolled due to her excellent grades.<sup>177</sup> Chiri Yukie showed her self-alienation through the following words:

To think that way seemed a bit strange to me. I’m Ainu. Completely Ainu. What part of me is supposed to be shisamu (Japanese)?! Wouldn’t I still be Ainu whether or not I called myself shisamu? The idea of becoming shisamu just through that kind of lip-service is ridiculous. Who cares about becoming shisamu? I’m Ainu, so doesn’t that make me another

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Sarashima Genzo, *Ainu to Nihonjin: denshō ni yoru kōshōshi* (Tōkyō: Nihon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1970), 14.

human being? I'm still a human being just like them. I'm happy being Ainu. [...] Because I'm Ainu, I'm looked down upon, but it's still fine. If my utari (compatriots) were looked down upon but I wasn't, what kind of a situation would that be? I'd rather that I was looked down upon together with my utari.<sup>178</sup>

Despite the tendency of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu to self-alienate from the Japanese people and the Japanese identity, it cannot be denied that many of them still have a strong desire for acculturation. Sometimes, they alienate themselves from both the Japanese identity and the Ryūkyūan or Ainu identity as well. This is ostensibly contradictory while it shows the struggles that Ryūkyūans and Ainu have with self-recognition. In the next chapter, the desire for Japanese assimilation and the self-alienation will be further unfolded when connected with both Western and Japanese post-colonial theories.

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<sup>178</sup> Hirano Katsuya, "The Politics of Colonial Translation: On the Narrative of the Ainu as a 'Vanishing Ethnicity'" in *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, Volume 7 Issue 4 Number 3 Jan 2009, accessed October 15, 2016, 9.

## Chapter Three

### Being a Mimic Man: Ryūkyūan and Ainu Third-Space Identity

For some Ryūkyūans and Ainu who experienced *kōminka* education from the late Meiji period, their identity can be uncertain and ambivalent. As briefly mentioned in the introduction, I consider the assimilated Ryūkyūans/Ainu's troublesome identity a third-space identity, which means that they were both Ryūkyūans/Ainu and Japanese, but meanwhile they were neither Ryūkyūans/Ainu nor Japanese. To further explain this identity in this chapter, I borrow Iha Fuyū's interpretation of Ryūkyūan *inzerushūmerutsu* and Hatozawa Samio's explanation on the Ainu's hyper-consciousness, and combine them with Homi K. Bhabha's post-colonial theory regarding colonized subjects' mimicry and Franz Fanon's theory on black men's inferiority complex. The central argument in this chapter is that although *kōminka* education resulted in the Ryūkyūans'/Ainu's alienation from their Ryūkyūan/Ainu identity, the discrimination in the education policy and Japanese superiority caused the mimic Ryūkyūans'/Ainu's separation from the Japanese identity imposed through assimilation. The third-space identity forms when the Ryūkyūan and Ainu self-alienate themselves from both Japanese and Ryūkyūan/Ainu identities. I argue that this third-space identity can act as a disturbance towards Japanese colonial authorities: it hampered the Japanese central government's efforts to establish a homogenous society.

## From Japanese Orientalism to psychoanalysis of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu

Within academe, many Japanese scholars tend to borrow Edward Said's theory of Orientalism to criticize the Japanese presentation of Japanese colonies in the pre-war period. Korean-Japanese scholar Kang Sang-Jung proposed "Japanese Orientalism" on the basis of Said's Orientalism. He has pointed out that "Japanese Orientalism' can be characterized as the simultaneous operation of double desires: the desire to void Western territorial ambition directed at Japan and the desire to use Orientalism's hegemonic power over other Asian/ Pacific regions."<sup>179</sup> It is out of the desire to "void Western territorial ambition directed at Japan" that the Meiji government accelerated its colonization over the Ryūkyūs and the land of Ezo. This accords with the analysis based on historical facts in Chapter One. In his monograph *Posutokoroniarizumu* (post-colonialism), Motohashi Tetsuya borrows the idea of Orientalism to reveal the unbalanced power between the Japanese colonial authorities and the Ryūkyūs/Hokkaidō as the colonized. He states that the Ryūkyūans and Ainu were the "internal others (*uchinaru-tasha*)" within Japanese society. The dominant/dominated relationship between the Japanese and the Ryūkyūans/Ainu was constructed on acceptance and exclusion.<sup>180</sup> That is to say, the Ryūkyūans and Ainu were accepted as Japanese citizens but meanwhile alienated because of their origins.

Although "Japanese Orientalism" is a valuable critique from Japanese scholars on the construction of power between Japan and its colonial subjects, it is a rather macroscopic view which puts much more emphasis on the dominant power of the

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<sup>179</sup> Sudo Naoto, *Nanyo-Orientalism: Japanese Representations of the Pacific* (Amherst, N.Y.: Cambria Press, 2010), 3.

<sup>180</sup> Motohashi Tetsuya, *Posutokoroniarizumu* (Tōkyō: Iwanami shinsho, 2005), 191.

Japanese colonial authorities and somehow ignores the subjectivity of colonial subjects. Also, it is rare to encounter Japanese scholars' works that elaborate on such subjectivity or the identity issues of Ryūkyūans or Ainu in terms of systematic post-colonial theories. Here, two analyses of identity issues proposed by a Ryūkyūan and an Ainu intellectual respectively will be introduced below.

In his short essay *Ryūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki* (*A Psychoanalysis of Ryūkyūans*),<sup>181</sup> Iha Fuyū borrowed Kuriyagawa Hakuson's<sup>182</sup> interpretation in regard to Freud's psychoanalysis of hysteria patients to explain the Ryūkyūans' self-consciousness constructed through their historical sufferings:

[...] Freud discovered that hysteria is caused by the psychische-trauma that the patients experienced [in their childhood]. The patients are spiritually traumatized when their strong sexual desire (what Freud called "Libido") has to be suppressed because of their own morality or the outside environment. However, patients can never realize that they have been traumatized, and they cannot remember the severe pain they have experienced. Nevertheless the pain from the suppression will attack the patients in their "unconsciousness" or "sub-consciousness," and it will remain in their spiritual world like sediment in water.<sup>183</sup>

Iha also believes that person's experience in their early childhood can be reflected in their later life, and the experience can also determine their attitude towards authorities.<sup>184</sup> He investigates this view through the early myth of the Ryūkyūans

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<sup>181</sup> Iha Fuyū, "Ryūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki: kenminsei no shinkaishaku" in *Okinawa joseishi* (Tōkyō: Heibonsha Library, 2000), 294-312. Translations from Japanese sources are mine unless otherwise notified.

<sup>182</sup> Kuriyagawa Hakuson was a Japanese literary critic active in the Taishō period.

<sup>183</sup> Iha, "Ryūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki: kenminsei no shinkaishaku," 295.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 296.

recorded in the *Omoro sōshi*.<sup>185</sup> According to his reading of *Mukashihajimekarano fushi* (*A Song of Opening Up the Ryūkyūs*), “the ancestors of the Ryūkyūs were driven out of mainland Japan to the infertile southern islands.”<sup>186</sup> The sufferings they had experienced in the isolated islands since then aroused their “inselwelschmerz (*inzerushūmerutsu*),”<sup>187</sup> which means “island pain.” The “island pain” was the first “psychische-trauma”<sup>188</sup> of the Ryūkyūans. Iha considers that just as a person’s early childhood experiences can affect his/her personality in their later life, the *inzerushūmerutsu* which had existed since the mythological era still deeply resided within the Ryūkyūan descendants’ consciousness. Despite that the pain of being isolated was released through trade and cultural communication with China in the Ming Dynasty, the Satsuma Domain’s invasion in 1609 and the continuing exploitation of natives resulted in the Ryūkyūan’s second “psychische-trauma.”<sup>189</sup> Iha compares the Ryūkyūs under Satsuma’s manipulation to a teenaged girl who was sold to be a prostitute due to her family’s bankruptcy. She was traumatized and the severe mental stress led to her hysteria. Just as this teenaged girl, the trauma, or the island pain latent in the Ryūkyūans’ sub-consciousness caused their hysteria as well.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 297. The *Omoro sōshi* is a compilation of ancient poems and songs from the Ryūkyūs and the Amami Islands. It was first compiled in 1531, then again in 1613 and 1623.

<sup>186</sup> Iha, “Rūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki: kenminsei no shinkaishaku,” 297.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> “Psychische” is a German word means “psychic” in English. Although Iha did not explicitly explain the origin of this word, it can be assumed that he borrowed this psychological term as well as “inselwelschmerz” from German works that he examined.

<sup>189</sup> Iha, “Rūkyū minzoku no seishin-bunseki: kenminsei no shinkaishaku,” 298.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

Nevertheless, the Ryūkyūans had to conceal this pain with the camouflage of acting as obedient slaves. In the Meiji period, the Ryūkyūs were no longer enslaved by the Satsuma Domain because of the deposition. Iha considers that the Ryūkyūans right after the deposition to be like the hysteric teenaged girl when she becomes a lover of a rich man. Even though it seems that she can live a better life than before, she is still not able to escape from the pain because her longing for freedom cannot be satisfied.<sup>191</sup> Iha also sees the deposition as the cause for the third “psychishe-trauma” since the Ryūkyūans could not avoid the fate of being maneuvered under the Meiji government’s colonization, and similar to the teenaged girl, their sub-conscious island pain was deepened rather than being cured.<sup>192</sup>

On the other hand, Hatozawa Samio’s arguments about Ainu identity parallel Iha Fuyū’s psychoanalysis of the Ryūkyūans. Hatozawa has dedicated his entire career to fighting for the Ainu to eliminate discrimination as well as obtaining equal human rights for them as a Japanese minority. Even though Hatozawa does not establish a systematic theory, his critiques of the Ainu’s psychological conditions are very far-reaching. He reveals that some Ainu tend to be very hyper-conscious (*jiishiki-kajō*) of their Ainu identity when they face the Japanese, and it leads to a strong inclination for them to separate themselves from Japanese. Hatozawa raised an example of being hyper-conscious: an Ainu woman was “proud” of being an Ainu, so she tended to demonstrate her Ainu origin even before being questioned about her identity. She believed that the voluntary demonstration would reduce the discrimination from Japanese as well.

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

However, in fact the woman was deeply anxious about her Ainu identity. She wished to be accepted and viewed equally as an Ainu, but after receiving Japanese's indifferent acknowledgment such as "so you are an Ainu, I see," her anxiety yet could not be relieved and the desire of being recognized could not be satisfied. Then she felt inferior because she could not help but imagine that she was somehow discriminated by Japanese.<sup>193</sup> Hatozawa considers phenomenon such as this voluntary confession as "hyper-consciousness" and states that it strengthens Ainu's inferior feelings when they are in front of Japanese. For many Ainu, the hyper-consciousness can be seen as a reflection of an extremely vulnerable psychological state. They are overly suspicious and anxious, especially when they face Japanese. They are usually in a paradoxical situation in which they wish to be recognized and accepted on the one hand, but on the other, they are afraid of being discriminated after demonstrating their Ainu identity, even though the discrimination is sometimes imaginary. This hyper-consciousness is also shown through Chiri Mashihō's confession about his own psychological condition as an Ainu:

I have a habit of exaggerating things when I think about them. For example, even it's just a small emotional hardship, I would imagine it as an extremely fatal shock. When someone slightly scolds me, I would [feel very bad] and want to die. However, I am not the only one [who has this habit]. It seems like it's a common habit for other Ainu as well. [...] By no means is being an Ainu a guilt, while we are boycotted by this society as if we, as Ainu, were born with guilt. We are all discharged prisoners, racially.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Wakaki Ainu no tamashii: Hatozawa Samio okōshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1972), 234.

<sup>194</sup> Sugai Mitsuo, *Kono tamashii wo utari ni: Hatozawa Samio no sekai* (Tōkyō: Eikō shuppansha, 1976), 93.

### **Kōminka education and mimicry**

In my research, I borrow Homi K. Bhabha's post-colonial theory to examine the complicated interaction between Japanese colonial authorities and Ryūkyūans/Ainu as colonial subjects. Although Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūs and the Ainu has its own context, I consider that it cannot be denied that there are many similarities between Japanese colonization and its Western counterpart. I believe that it is therefore appropriate to borrow Bhabha's theory and adapt it into some specific situations in Japanese colonization.

In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha claims that there is a space “in-between the designation of identity” and “this interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.”<sup>195</sup> Bhabha does not see the relation between colonial authorities and colonial subjects as a fixed and stable dominant/dominated hierarchy. He focuses on the tension in that hybrid space between colonizers and the colonized and the way in which this tension can sometimes turn into a tool for subversion used by the dominated towards the colonial authority. This disrupting power is usually projected by the strong subjectivity of colonial subjects, and it is referred as one of the consequences from colonial desire of making “a reformed, recognizable Other.”<sup>196</sup> However, a lack of subjectivity can be found in many Japanese post-colonial discourses of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu. As “Japanese Orientalism,” Japanese colonial discourses are still limited in the

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<sup>195</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 5.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

articulation of how Japanese colonial authorities have been unilaterally oppressing its subjects.

In “Of Mimicry and Man,”<sup>197</sup> Bhabha claims that mimicry is a colonial desire “for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite.”<sup>198</sup> He borrows Charles Grant’s concepts of “partial reform” to illustrate English colonial authorities’ strong desire of reforming its subjects’ manners for a smoother political control as well as economic exploitation, while it is not necessary to have the colonized be thoroughly reformed into real English men.<sup>199</sup> Similarly, Japanese colonizers also had the desire of producing “reformed” but “recognizable” Ryūkyūans and Ainu. Although the Japanese government aimed at making loyal colonial subjects through *kōminka* education in the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō, they still attempted to avoid overly assimilating the Ryūkyūans and Ainu. Japanese colonial authorities wanted to differentiate them from the mainland Japanese who were modernized and Westernized after the Meiji Restoration. Chapter Two discussed how the central government wished to eliminate the Ryūkyūan’s “bad” habits through *akūshū-haishi* policy. Apparently wearing traditional Ryūkyūan costumes was seen as backward, so Japanese leaders promoted a campaign in which those who wore kimono instead of Ryūkyūan traditional costumes would be rewarded.<sup>200</sup> Although Japanese authorities ostensibly claimed that this policy was for the unification of customs, in mainland Japan, the kimono was gradually abandoned as a daily outfit, especially for women, due to its inconvenience in modern

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 121-131.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>200</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” *no kyōkai*, 42-43.

life.<sup>201</sup> If Japanese colonizers did aim at turning the Ryūkyūans into “real Japanese” as those who residing in mainland as well, it would be appropriate to implement a policy by which Ryūkyūans could freely wear clothes of Western style. Instead, the Japanese colonial authorities alienated natives by making them believe that wearing kimono was a necessary step to becoming a “qualified Japanese citizen.” For the Ainu, it is even more obvious that the Japanese colonial authorities assimilated and alienated them synchronically during colonization. The Ainu were only required to learn some basic knowledge to live peacefully with Japanese migrators so they only needed to accept primary education for four years compared the six-year education program for Japanese children. This not only indicates the discrimination that Japanese colonizers projected towards Ainu, but also shows that Japanese authorities’ desire of making a “reformed” but still alienated and “recognizable” Other.

For both the Ryūkyūans and Ainu, although Japanese authorities wished to turn them into recognizable mimic men, the problem is in what aspects they were required to be different from “real Japanese” and to what extent that they should be “recognizable.” The central government claimed that the Ryūkyūans shared the same ethnicity as the Yamato, while they did not wish the Ryūkyūans to be modernized and civilized as much as the mainlanders. The central government wanted to maintain the “backwardness” of the Ryūkyūans within a manageable extent. On the other hand, the Ainu’s “recognizability” is their distinctive ethnicity. The Japanese government wished to assimilate the Ainu into loyal Japanese citizens, but the leaders did not want to turn them into the Yamato. This synchronic alienation and assimilation in producing mimic men

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

can cause a hybrid identity. One definition of Bhabha's hybridity can be described as an individual "having access to two or more ethnic identities,"<sup>202</sup> while this hybrid identity should not be viewed as a simple combination of different ethnicities. For a Ryūkyūan who was assimilated through education, both "Japaneseness" and "Ryūkyūan-ness" exist in his consciousness and he might still be able to distinguish which parts of him are "Japanese" or "Ryūkyūan." For an Ainu, even though he is acculturated, he is still clearly aware that he cannot be a Japanese due to his ethnicity, while the Japanese he speaks, and the Japanese culture he has learned have already become parts of him. There is always a tension existing among different parts of a mimic Ryūkyūan or Ainu's identity, which cannot be split into separate and isolated parts like a jigsaw puzzle.

### **Inferiority complex and the desire for assimilation**

The psychological condition of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu under Japanese colonization shares many similarities with those of black men in white men's colonies. According to Franz Fanon, the inferiorization of the colonial subjects does not exist in their natural state from the very beginning; it is "the native correlative to the Europeans' feeling of superiority," and "the racist who creates the interiorized."<sup>203</sup> In other words, it is impossible for colonial subjects to feel inferior until they experienced discrimination and differentiation from white colonizers. There is little doubt that colonizers usually feel

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<sup>202</sup> Antony Easthope, "Homi Bhabha, Hybridity and Identity, or Derrida versus Lacan" In *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies (HJEAS)*, Vol. 4, No. 1/2, Theory and Criticism [Part 1] (1998): 145-151. JSTOR, accessed April 10, 2016, 145.

<sup>203</sup> Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, translated by Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press; [Berkeley, Calif.]: Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2008), 73.

superior when they are in colonies. Once the inferiority created through their superiority is projected onto the colonized subjects, the self-recognition of colonial subjects has to depend on white colonizers' judgments. This is the black man's inferiority complex. Fanon further borrows Hegel's statement of self-consciousness to indicate the black man's desire of being recognized by a superior other:

Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose himself on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, it is this other who remains the focus of his actions. His human worth and reality depend on this other and on his recognition by the other. It is in this other that the meaning of his life is condensed.<sup>204</sup>

In an analysis of Juan De Merida's poem, Fanon also reveals how the black man tends to hide his feelings of inferiority through over-compensation, the black man who belongs to an "inferior" race tries to resemble the superior white man.<sup>205</sup> Based on these points, I argue that the Ryūkyūans and Ainu also have the "inferiority complex" when they face Japanese, and it is the inferiority complex that motivates Ryūkyūan and Ainu desire to be assimilated. The Ryūkyūans' reaction towards the "House of Peoples"<sup>206</sup> incident suggests this desire. In the House of Peoples display, a group of people including Ainu, Taiwanese aborigines, and Okinawan prostitutes were standing in a hut with a man,

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 190.

<sup>206</sup> An exhibit in the Fifth Domestic Exhibition for the promotion of industry in Osaka in 1903.

presumably a Japanese, with a whip in his hand.<sup>207</sup> The Ryūkyūans eagerly showed strong objection on their inclusion among ethnic groups through the local newspaper:

Choosing us [Okinawans] with the aborigines in Taiwan and the Ainu in Hokkaidō [for the display] means that we are seen as the same as the aborigines and Ainu. Nothing is more humiliating than this for us Okinawans.[...] People from other prefectures often consider us to be a special race between the Japanese and the Chinese. We admit that we are different [from the Japanese] on characteristics, but the few differences in customs and manners are resulted from the political separation [before the deposition of the Ryūkyūs].<sup>208</sup>

The Ryūkyūans considered that they were not as colonized as the Ainu or Taiwanese aborigines, and they believed that the display was extremely humiliating. This strong emotion indicates the Ryūkyūans' anxiety caused by not being recognized. They wished to be accepted by the Japanese and no longer be seen as an “inferior” and “backward” people. They wished to get rid of the social stigma and discrimination through embracing Japanese systems. Many Ryūkyūans desired to be assimilated and some of them even abandoned their local language that consisted of their identity before the twentieth century.<sup>209</sup> Another example is Urasaki Jun's observation of Ryūkyūan evacuees in Kyūshū during Asian Pacific War. According to Urasaki, although many local Japanese despised Ryūkyūan elderly women for their tattoos and distinctive kimonos, they were surprised when they discovered that the younger Ryūkyūan women

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<sup>207</sup> Davinder L Bhowmik, *Writing Okinawa: Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance* (London; New York: Routledge, 2008), 23.

<sup>208</sup> Toyama Ichirō, *Kindai Nihon shakai to “Okinawajin”* (Tōkyō: Nihon-keizai hyōronsha, 1990), 8.

<sup>209</sup> Bhowmik, *Writing Okinawa*, 23.

and children looked the same as Japanese.<sup>210</sup> Urasaki also noticed that the schoolchildren from the Ryūkyūs were usually more educated and well behaved than the children from rural Kyūshū.<sup>211</sup> This illustrates the success of Japanese acculturation of the Ryūkyūans, while it can also be seen as a camouflage for the Ryūkyūans' inferiority complex.

Furthermore, Japanese superiority projected to the Ryūkyūans was conveyed through the daily observation from colonial Japanese. In *kōminka* education, Ryūkyūan students were watched and regulated by the Japanese in classrooms, through methods such as the exploitation of the punishment tag. The Ryūkyūan diaspora living in mainland was also monitored, and any of their behaviors that could not fit in Japanese customs (such as tattooing) would be discriminated. Any mistakes the Ryūkyūan made in public places such as schools or working places under observation could be explained as “because they are Ryūkyūans” by the dominant Japanese. In other words, “Ryūkyūan” became a label and a prerequisite of Japanese discrimination and differentiation towards a Ryūkyūan in reality. For a Ryūkyūan, speaking Japanese and acting like a Japanese was his/her recognition of Japanese's superiority but also a disavowal of a Ryūkyūan identity. The more a Ryūkyūan was assimilated, the deeper his/her inferiority complex could be.

Similar to the Ryūkyūans, Japanese surveillance and observation on the Ainu projected the superiority of the colonial Japanese. The colonial officials in Hokkaidō consistently watched the Ainu's daily life. Usually they lived outside of *kotan*, but they came to the Ainu village regularly to do inspections such as sanitary examinations,

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<sup>210</sup> Mark E. Caprio and Christine de Matos, *Japan as the Occupier and the Occupied* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 210.

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

banning old customs and alcohol.<sup>212</sup> The inspections acted as a reminder for the Ainu of their “backwardness,” and it imposed heavy psychological stress on them. It gradually led to the Ainu’s inferiority complex and further triggered their desire of being recognized and the longing for assimilation. As the following memory from an Ainu illustrates:

My parent always tell me:“ Listen, my child. We are seen as foolish people [...] because the Ainu’s culture is backward compare to the Shamo’s (Japanese). If you study hard, then you won’t be despised by anyone.”<sup>213</sup>

Except for the desire for acculturation, many Ainu believed that through interracial marriage (*zakkon*) with Japanese, their future generations’ “savage” blood could be eliminated so they would bear less discrimination or even become superior Japanese. As an Ainu confessed:

There are women who think that as long as a man is from *naichi*, anyone will do if only Ainu blood can be diluted (*Ainu no chi sae usumerarereba*), so they produce illegitimate offspring with the labourers who drift into Hokkaido. There are also some who have married for such humiliating reasons and suffered many years of unhappy married life.<sup>214</sup>

The Ryūkyūan and Ainu inferiority complex is no more than a production of Japanese’s superiority. Yet whether they hope to be assimilated through education or interracial marriage, it is out of a desire of being recognized by the dominant Japanese.

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<sup>212</sup> Ogawa Masahito, “‘Hokkaidō kyūdojin-hogohō’ ‘kyūdojin-jidō kyōiku-kitei’ shita no Ainu gakkō” in *The Annual Reports on Educational Science*, 58: 197-266, accessed September 25, 2016, 246.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 260.

<sup>214</sup> Michael Weiner ed., *Japanese Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 27.

When this strong desire cannot be satisfied or when they cannot escape from the fears of not being recognized, the self-alienation from Japanese people and a Japanese identity emerges within the Ryūkyūans and Ainu.

### **Self-alienation and the third-space identity**

As discussed previously, Japanese colonizers had the desire for “reformed” but still “recognizable” mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu, while they required the Ryūkyūans and Ainu to be “recognizable” in different aspects. This “different recognizability” would affect Ryūkyūan and Ainu self-alienation from the Japanese people or the Japanese identity imposed by the central government. In the Meiji period, Ryūkyūans were required to become “Japanese” who were always demanded to be one step behind the civilized and the modernized “real Japanese” on the mainland. Nevertheless Japanese colonizers adopted the strategy through which the Ryūkyūans were brainwashed into believing that they were being “standardized (*futsūka*)” rather than “Japanized (*nihonka*).”<sup>215</sup> Based on this ideology, it might be difficult for many Ryūkyūans to notice the hidden alienation and discrimination behind Japanese assimilation policy. Thus this could impede the Ryūkyūans’ self-alienation from the Japanese people and the Japanese identity to a certain extent, especially for those who did not have frequent contact with mainlanders.

Ryūkyūan’s *inzerushūmerutsu* can also interfere with their self-alienation. Besides the inferiority complex, I argue that this island pain is another major reason responsible for the Ryūkyūans’ desire for the assimilation. This pain is a rather concrete

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<sup>215</sup> Oguma, “*Nihonjin*” *no kyōkai*, 43-44.

cause for the Ryūkyūans to pursue assimilation. Based on Iha's analysis that Ryūkyūan' island pain originated from food shortage and lack of resources, the perception that assimilation would bring about a better life may have been a motivating factor for assimilation. All of the island pain the Ryūkyūans had been through under the Satsuma invasion and the deposition of the Ryūkyūs motivated them to embrace the acculturation and they believed that being a Japanese was the only way to escape this isolated southern island and live a better life. This illustrates the contradiction that the Ryūkyūans bore in their minds: on the one hand, they were aware that the exploitation continued after the deposition; but on the contrary they wished to become Japanese so they could get rid of the differentiation and discrimination and live as mainlanders.

However, even if the Ryūkyūans can be "almost the same," there is still a tendency for them to alienate themselves from Japanese, irrespective of whether the self-alienation is conscious or not. The inferiority complex can stimulate colonial subjects' desire for assimilation. Conversely, it can also arouse their self-alienation from the dominant Other. As argued before, the inferiority is created by Japanese colonial authorities, which is usually conveyed through prejudice against the colonized people. Even if a Ryūkyūan considers himself a "real Japanese," once he is exposed to the discrimination from the Japanese around him, he will start to wonder the reasons behind the discrimination and since that moment he is gradually forced to alienate himself from the Japanese identity he has wished to pursue. Once he discovers why he is differentiated, he will feel the pressure of being a Japanese but meanwhile being immersed into a certain hatred of being a Ryūkyūan as well. In other words, he is alienated from both the Japanese and the Ryūkyūans at this moment, and I call this a "third-space identity": he is

both Japanese and Ryūkyūan but he is neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūan. I consider the “third-space identity” to be a type of the hybrid identity that Bhabha proposes, and it cannot be split. The complicated sentiments of this third-space identity can be seen from an interview of Oyakawa Takayoshi, a Ryūkyūan whose family moved to Osaka in 1925 when he was nine:

I hated Okinawan sanshin music, dance, and the songs with meaningless rhythmic syllables that people sang until all hours of the night. And I despised that word “Ryūkyū.” In one of the ward’s open fields, Okinawan theater troupes set up a lean-to stage and a booth for collecting admission. Mainlanders would gather to watch the plays, fascinated. But they made fun of Okinawans in loud voices, and I felt ashamed. Another thing I hated was when people riding trains or walking down the street spoke to each other in Okinawa dialect. I thought they should be like people from other prefectures and always use standard Japanese or Osaka dialect in public.<sup>216</sup>

In comparison, it is thought that many Ainu had a stronger inclination toward self-alienation. Although it cannot be denied that many Ainu were transformed into mimic men via *kōminka* education, the discrimination from Japanese colonial authorities based on the Ainu’s racial difference profoundly impeded the Ainu’s self-identification as Japanese. Unlike many Ryūkyūans, an Ainu can be well aware of the racial difference between himself and a Yamato. Although he desires to eliminate the difference through inter-racial marriage or speak and behave as a Japanese, the distance between him and the Yamato cannot be simply reduced. Hence he will always feel alienated, differentiated and inferiorized. However, he cannot stop desiring to be recognized by the Japanese due to an

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<sup>216</sup> Steve Rabson, “Being Okinawan in Japan: The Diaspora Experience” in *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, Volume 10, Issue 12, Number 2, March 2012, accessed October 10, 2016. Page numbers are not identified in this article.

inferiority complex, but also has a fear of being rejected once he confesses his identity. This anxiety about confession indicates his self-alienation from the Japanese people and the Japanese identity. In an interpersonal meeting with an Ainu woman, Hatozawa Samio gave an example of this subconscious self-alienation:

(My cousin) only told his Japanese fiancée's family that he is from countryside. He was worried very much that her family would be opposed to their marriage (if he told them that he is an Ainu).<sup>217</sup>

Hatozawa's cousin obviously realized that he, as an Ainu, was different from the Yamato. Therefore he felt obligated to confess this difference but he chose to hide his identity because he was frightened of not being recognized. A contradictory phenomenon is that the inferiority complex residing in an Ainu's consciousness compels him to strengthen his existence in front of "the superiorized Japanese." These all belong to what Hatozawa considers the Ainu hyper-consciousness. The more an Ainu desires to be recognized (no matter as a Japanese or an Ainu) by the Japanese people, the more hyper-conscious he/she could feel about his/her Ainu identity. Accordingly, when an Ainu's wish of being accepted is denied, the hyper-consciousness could strengthen his/her inferior regarding his/her Ainu identity. This can accelerate an Ainu's self-alienation from Japanese people or the Japanese identity that he/she was required to pursue, and I argue that it is this self-alienation that encourages the emergence of the third-space identity. Ainu became Japanese citizens since the incorporation, but as mimic men, they

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<sup>217</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Wakaki Ainu no tamashii: Hatozawa Samio okōshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1972), 232.

were seeking Japanese recognition, with an inferiority complex, while still insisting their own Ainu identity. This paradox leads to a hybrid identity (third-space identity): they were Ainu and Japanese, but they were neither Ainu nor Japanese.

The Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity can be seen as a form of what Bhabha refers as a hybrid identity because the third-space identity is also a space “in-between the designation of identity,”<sup>218</sup> and there is a dynamic existing in the third-space identity. The Ryūkyūans and Ainu who spent more time in the *kōminka* education system are more likely to have a third-space identity. They were usually considered to be “well-educated” colonial subjects and many of them had a strong desire for acculturation. The longer they were exposed to Japanese culture and ideologies, the closer they might feel towards becoming “real Japanese,” and the stronger their self-alienation from their original identity would be. However, the more time the Ryūkyūans and Ainu spent in the Japanese education system, the more discrimination they would experience. The discrimination could force the Ryūkyūans and Ainu to self-alienate from the Japanese people and the Japanese identity. Therefore, many “well-educated” Ryūkyūans and Ainu have a very strong inclination to be trapped in the third-space identity.

For those Ryūkyūans and Ainu who were only being incorporated as Japanese citizens without getting involved in the *kōminka* education system, their tendency to self-alienate from their own community or identity is usually weaker. In the Meiji period, if a Ryūkyūan or Ainu did not have the chance to accept systematic Japanese linguistic and cultural education in school, it is difficult for him/her to feel estranged from his/her Ryūkyūan or Ainu identity, even if he or she were forced to abandon the old customs.

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<sup>218</sup> Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 5.

Therefore, it is much more difficult for his/her third-space identity to form than the third-space identity of those who were “well-educated.”

### **The disturbance of the third-space identity**

The last theoretical argument in my research is the disruption caused by the third-space identity. In his theory of mimic men, Bhabha claims that mimicry can be a subversion tool towards colonial authorities in its production of imitators rather than real “Englishmen” because this creates the ambivalent space of the “not quite.”<sup>219</sup> He states that mimicry “articulates the disturbances of cultural, racial and historical difference that menace the narcissistic demand of colonial authority.”<sup>220</sup> Under Japanese colonization, the Ryūkyūans and Ainu were incorporated as Japanese citizens. Japanese authorities not only wished to produce imitators of Japanese language and culture: they also attempted to cultivate mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu to be loyal imperial subjects. Based on this, I argue that in the Japanese colonial context the disruption functions only when mimic Ryūkyūans and Ainu notice the “not quite” elements of being mimic men, which relates to when they are alienating themselves from the Japanese. Therefore, the disturbance towards Japanese colonial authorities is constructed on the interaction of mimicry and self-alienation, which result in the third-space identity I have discussed.

The most outstanding result of the disruption is that the illusionary homogeneity Japanese colonial authorities hoped to establish was broken down. After the Asia-Pacific War, Japan was promoting hegemonic narratives of Japanese uniqueness, and this is often

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid, 126-128.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 126.

reflected in notions of the homogeneous nation-state (*tan'itsu minzoku kokka*). Popular literature on Japaneseness (*nihonjinron*) began appearing right after the war, and had reached boom proportions by the 1970s.<sup>221</sup> The trend was that Japanese government was alienating minority groups in Japan, and in the most extreme cases, they tried to deny their existence. The official view of the absence of minority populations was illustrated by Japan's first report to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations after ratifications of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. With regard to Article 27 of the Covenant concerning the rights of minority groups, the Japanese government reported:

The rights of any person to enjoy his own culture, to profess and practice his religion or to use his own language is ensured under Japanese law. However, minorities of the kind mentioned in the Covenant do not exist in Japan.<sup>222</sup>

(Human Rights  
Committee, 12th Session, Document No. CCPR/C/10/ Add. 1, 14  
November 1980)

Although the Japanese central government demonstrated that Japan was a nation-state, much evidence shows that this illusionary homogeneity was doomed to be crushed by the ambivalent identity of those who live on the boundary of Japan. Tamaki Natsuko stated the process of her self-alienation from Japanese in her diary. After graduating from high school on Ryūkyū Island, she went to college on the mainland and became a reporter

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<sup>221</sup> Michael Weiner ed., *Japanese Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 40.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

in Tokyo for the *Yomiuri shimbun* newspaper in 1992. She considered herself “Japanese until about five years ago”<sup>223</sup> before she wrote the following words in 2000:

Then, in 1995, I was one among many reporters sent from the mainland to cover Okinawa after the child rape case that year. [...] I’d had no special interest in the military base issue before, but now, as I reported on conditions there, I began to feel estranged from Japan. After finishing my report, I returned to the mainland, where the base problem didn’t seem to exist, and where what was a front-page issue in Okinawa wasn’t even covered. [...] Reporting on the problems of military bases in Okinawa made it seem only natural for me to say, “I am Okinawan, not Japanese.” Perhaps Okinawans will become Japanese when those bases are removed to the mainland.<sup>224</sup>

Tamaki Netsuko can be seen as a typical mimic woman. She was educated under Japanese education system and had no doubt about her identification as a “Japanese,” while the experience as a reporter in her hometown suddenly estranged her from her Japanese identity. Although she explicitly expressed that she is an “Okinawan, not Japanese,” it cannot be denied that she is still a Japanese citizen, and subconsciously it is still difficult to get rid of the “Japaneseness.” Therefore, it can be argued that she was in the third-space identity and this identity disturbed the illusion that Japan is a homogenous nation-state by impeding Tamaki identifying herself as a Japanese.

To conclude, many Ryūkyūans and Ainu, especially who were “well-educated” in Japanese education system have an ambivalent identity in which they were both Japanese and Ryūkyūans/Ainu but they were neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūans/Ainu. Under

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<sup>223</sup> Steve Rabson, “Being Okinawa in Japan: The Diaspora Experience” in *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus* Volume 10, Issue 12, Number 2, March 2012, accessed October 10, 2016. Page numbers are not identified in this article.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

Japanese colonization, Ryūkyūans and Ainu became mimic men through kōminka education, but they were differentiated as the “Other” within Japanese society and had to bear the discrimination. However, Ryūkyūans’ and Ainu’s existence as minorities cannot be denied. Their hybrid identity has become an impelling tool to break down an imagined homogeneous society.

## Chapter Four

### Living Under Colonization: Ryūkyūan and Ainu Third-Space Identity in Literature

In this chapter, an analysis through literary works of Ryūkyūan and Ainu third-space identity will be provided. Since the effects of Japanese colonization over the Ryūkyūs and Hokkaidō continued over several decades, I do not intend to limit my research to a specific time period. Several literary works regarding the third-space identity from Taishō period and the Shōwa period will be introduced. A renowned poet from the Ryūkyūs, Yamanokuchi Baku was fighting with discrimination from mainlanders and struggling within his own identity through his poems “A Conversation” and “Shell-shocked Island”; Ikemiyagi Sekihō depicted a mimic Ryūkyūan police officer’s psychological movements in *Officer Ukuma*. In comparison, Hatozawa Samio revealed two Ainu boys’ transformation of their identities in *Akashi no kūbun* and *Tōi ashimoto* respectively.

#### Yamanokuchi Baku as a diaspora mimic man

In Yamanokuchi Baku’s well-known poem “A Conversation” (1935),<sup>225</sup> his identity as a mimic Ryūkyūan diaspora living in mainland Japan can be considered a third-space identity. Yamanokuchi fell in love with a coffee shop owner’s daughter, and he decided to confess his love to this Japanese girl, but he hesitated to tell her that he was

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<sup>225</sup> Michael S. Molasky and Steve Rabson ed., *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature From Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 46-48.

a Ryūkyūan. This poem was written as an imagined conversation between him and the girl:

“Where are you from,” she asked.

I thought about where I was from and lit a cigarette.

That place colored by associations with tattoos, the *jabisen*, and ways as strange as ornamental designs.

“Very far away,” I answered.

“In what direction,” she asked.

That place of gloomy customs near the southern tip of the Japanese archipelago where women carry piglets on their heads and people walk barefoot. Was this where I was from?

“South,” I answered.

“Where in the south,” she asked.

In the south, that zone of indigo seas where it’s always summer and dragon orchids, sultan umbrellas, octopus pines, and papayas all nestle together under the bright sunlight. That place shrouded in misconceptions where, it is said, the people aren’t Japanese and can’t understand the Japanese language.

“The subtropics,” I answered.

“Oh, the subtropics!” she said.

Yes, my dear, can’t you see “the subtropics” right here before your eyes?

Like me, the people there are Japanese, speak Japanese, and were born in the subtropics. But, viewed through popular stereotypes, that place I am from has become a synonym for chieftains, natives, karate, and *awamori*.

“Somewhere near the equator,” I said.

(Translated by Steve Rabson)

The poem starts with the Japanese girl questioning Yamanokuchi’s hometown. He could not answer the question immediately but began to imagine the inevitable stereotypes of the Ryūkyūs that might arise in the girl’s mind, if he told her where he was from. He struggled to tell the Japanese girl the truth throughout the poem. When recalling the memories of his hometown, Yamanokuchi chose “strange” and “gloomy” on the description of symbolic Ryūkyūan cultural elements and customs. This suggests the distance between him and his original Ryūkyūan identity, that is to say, self-alienation. For mainland Japanese, the Ryūkyūan were considered a people that “aren’t Japanese,

and can't understand Japanese," but Yamanokuchi believed that they "are Japanese, speak Japanese, and were born in the subtropics." He desired to be recognized by the mainlanders as a Japanese, and apparently this desire could not be satisfied. He was afraid that the Japanese girl would also alienate him if his real identity was revealed because he was aware that the symbolic Ryūkyūan customs were considered "inferior." Yamanokuchi wished to be viewed as an individual who happened to be born in subtropics, rather than being attached with stereotypes of the old-time Ryūkyūan culture. He avoided telling the Japanese girl his hometown out of an inferior feeling about his Ryūkyūan identity, because he was anxious about not being accepted as a Japanese, and this indicates a self-alienation from his Ryūkyūan origins; however, I argue that Yamanokuchi also separated from his Japanese identity as well. This self-alienation is strongly shown in his other poem "Shell-shocked Island" (1964)<sup>226</sup>:

The moment I set foot on the island soil  
 and greeted them *Ganjū*<sup>227</sup>  
 Very well, thank you  
 the island people replied in Japanese  
 My nostalgia at a bit of a loss  
 I muttered  
     *Uchi naguchi madhin muru*  
     *Ikusani sattaru basui*<sup>228</sup>  
 to which the island people feigned a smile  
 but remarked how well I spoke the Okinawa dialect

(Translated by Rie Takagi)

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<sup>226</sup> "Shell-shocked Island" was first published in 1964, six years after Yamanokuchi's visit to Okinawa in 1958. Michael S. Molasky and Steve Rabson ed., *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature From Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 49.

<sup>227</sup> "How have you been?" (Molasky and Rabson, 49, n.1.)

<sup>228</sup> "Was even your dialect destroyed by the war?" (Molasky and Rabson, 49, n.2.)

In this poem, Yamanokuchi depicted a scene in which he attempted to communicate with the Ryūkyūan people in Okinawan dialect. The local people replied in Japanese with awkward smiles instead of responding in Okinawan language. *Uchi naguchi madhin muru* and *Ikusani sattaru basui* express Yamanokuchi's sarcasm towards the local Ryūkyūans and illustrate Yamanokuchi's emotional attachment to the Ryūkyūs. He could not abandon the Ryūkyūan identity even though he hesitated to confess it in front of the Japanese girl. As soon as Yamanokuchi returned to his homeland, he eagerly demonstrated his Ryūkyūan identity through speaking Okinawa dialect to other Ryūkyūans. These contradictory behaviors are evidence of Yamanokuchi's ambivalent third-space identity.

### **Officer Ukuma**

Ikemiyagi Sekihō also revealed a Ryūkyūan's third-space identity in his well-known short story "*Officer Ukuma* (1922, translated by Davinder Bhowmik)."<sup>229</sup> The story is set in the early 1920s. The protagonist Ukuma Hyaaku was born in a village referred to as "X," which was on the periphery of Naha, the capital city of the Ryūkyūs. People in this village were Chinese descents, and nearly all of them were poor and engaged in menial work. As a mimic man, Hyaaku hoped that being a police officer for the Japanese government could bring him success. This desire reveals the "*inzerushūmerutsu* (island pain)" described by Iha Fuyū. Poverty in this isolated village

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<sup>229</sup> Michael S. Molasky and Steve Rabson ed., *Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature From Okinawa* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 58-72.

became the island pain hidden deeply inside Hyaaku as well as other villagers including Hyaaku's family members. They believed that Hyaaku being assimilated into the Japanese administration system was the only way to help them to live a better life:

When word had spread of Ukuma Hyaaku's ambition to be a policeman, all the villagers rejoiced as though his fortune would be their own, and everyone prayed fervently for his success. The young man's father excused him from his daily chores to encourage him in his studies, and his mother engaged a shaman, traveling with her to many sacred sites to pray that Hyaaku would pass the qualifying examination. The day before the exam, Hyaaku's mother took him to the family's ancestral tomb, where she recited a lengthy prayer.<sup>230</sup>

When Hyaaku passed the examination through hard work and became a local policeman, his success was considered nearly a miracle. It was not only a triumph for Ukuma Family, but for the entire village, and all villagers came to the celebration banquet for Hyaaku. However, during the celebration, Hyaaku did not seem to be excited about his achievement. While everyone was singing and dancing around him, Hyaaku "looked odd amid all this noisy merrymaking as he sat in a chair someone had brought out for him, like some victorious general, wearing a uniform and cap and carrying a glistening sword."<sup>231</sup> Through *kōminka* assimilation, Hyaaku obtained huge success. His police uniform and cap can be seen as a symbol of being a mimic man. When he was in the uniform, he felt that he was somehow estranged from other Ryūkyūans in the village. This can be viewed as the beginning of his self-alienation from both other Ryūkyūans and his Ryūkyūan identity. After several months, this self-alienation became obvious. Hyaaku was only thinking of achieving much more success as a police officer. He no longer spent

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<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

time with other young people in the village, and they kept their distance from him too.

Hyaaku's family members could also feel an increasing distance between them and

Hyaaku. The self-alienation turned Hyaaku into a bad-tempered stranger to them:

Hyaaku grew more and more short-tempered. Whenever he came home he complained, "This house is dirty. It's filthy!" And, blaming his sister, he bawled her out constantly. After his fellow officers dropped by one day, he got even more upset about the house. Hyaaku's mother cried at the sight of him railing at his sister and wondered what had caused her good-natured son to change so drastically.<sup>232</sup>

Hyaaku's self-alienation was gradually strengthened and he finally clarified his distance from the Ryūkyūans in front of all villagers:

[...] One day during a local festival he stood up in front of the crowd gathered in the village square and, looking as if he'd been waiting for such an opportunity, began to speak. [...] "From now on the sewers must be cleaned thoroughly every day. When it's hot in the summer, many of you go around without clothes. This is a crime punishable by law, so if a policeman sees you, expect to be fined. I'm a policeman, too, and from now on I won't let you get away with anything just because you say you're from this village. We public officials value nothing more than impartiality. So we can't look the other way even if a member of our families or a relative does something wrong or vulgar." [...] "Furthermore," he said, "drinking until late at night and singing is forbidden. You must drink less, work harder, and save your money, so you can get more respectable jobs."<sup>233</sup>

Hyaaku demonstrated the difference between him as a police officer and other villagers. Meanwhile, he became a stranger and a betrayer to people in the village since they were expecting to hear good news that could improve their poor living conditions. Hyaaku's self-alienation from the Ryūkyūans arose from his inferiority complex when he

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 62.

faced his Japanese colleagues. He was upset about the “dirty” and “filthy” house especially when his colleagues came to visit, because he wished to prove that he was no different from them. Most of Hyaaku’s fellow officers were from mainland Japan, and “their lives and feelings differed sharply from his own.”<sup>234</sup> However, the house and Hyaaku’s family members always reminded him that he was just a Chinese descendent from a poor village in Okinawa. Under this inferiority complex, Hyaaku was trying to be more intimate with his colleagues from mainland Japan. He invited them to his home and offered his guests alcohol. Some of them stayed from afternoon late into the night drinking and shouting. “These tough, brawny young men were loud and rude.”<sup>235</sup> As a mimic man, Hyaaku attempted to attain the recognition from his Japanese co-workers, while the “superior” Japanese did not conceal their contempt towards Ryūkyūan villagers. They staggered through the streets on their way home and shouted insults to the villagers who wore few clothes when they worked.

Hyaaku’s inferiority complex was deepened. When he heard his Japanese fellow officers called him “ ‘that X’er’ ,” “he could feel his face grow hot.”<sup>236</sup> Hyaaku could not help but wish to get rid of his Ryūkyūan identity that was cultivated in village X where he was born: “Hyaaku was so ashamed of his birthplace, where he still lived, that he talked to his family about moving, but they could not agree.”<sup>237</sup>

Hyaaku felt extremely anxious and lonely because he could not be accepted by his Japanese colleagues. His loneliness increased with his self-alienation toward the village

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<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

and its people. Hyaaku alienated himself from his Japanese fellow officers as well because among his fellow officers he could not find a single true friend since most of them were from mainland Japan. “Even when they talked at the police station, he sometimes found himself murmuring, ‘They are strangers.’ And he sensed that they also viewed him as an outsider.”<sup>238</sup> From this moment, Hyaaku’s self-alienation from Japanese pushes him into the third-space identity. In comparison, none of Hyaaku’s family members was sharing the same third-space identity as Hyaaku, simply because none of them was educated in kōminka education system as Hyaaku did. Therefore, they did not understand why Hyaaku desperately wished to move out of the village. Meanwhile, Hyaaku was suffering from the psychological stress caused by his bitter and ambivalent third-space identity:

As the days and nights dragged on this way, Hyaaku seemed to wilt like the withered grasses and trees, growing utterly downcast. He could find no relief even in his work, and life had become unbearably dreary.<sup>239</sup>

When Hyaaku was full of desperation about his life, his fellow officer from Kagoshima took him to Tsuji, a renowned brothel district in Naha. Hyaaku met a prostitute called Little Kamarū, who was the daughter of a former local landlord. A while after her father died, she was sold to this brothel to pay for the debt because her brother was deceived by swindlers and lost the family property. Hyaaku and Little Kamarū fell in

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 64.

love with each other very quickly. When Hyaaku visited Kamarū, he could immerse himself in Kamarū's love so he did not have to think about his family or co-workers, or struggle within his troublesome identity. Hyaaku changed into his street clothes before he went to visit Kamarū. In the brothel, Hyaaku was neither the mimic police officer nor the young man from a poor Ryūkyūan village. Kamarū's place became a utopia for Hyaaku that could release the mental stress caused by negotiating with the ambivalent identity.

Hyaaku could not escape for long from the stress caused by his third-space identity. One day, he caught a suspicious man when he was wandering alone after leaving the pleasure quarter. Hyaaku assumed that the man stole some money from a gabled tomb so he dragged the thief to the police station. Hyaaku was very proud because this was the first time that he arrested a criminal. The inspector gave Hyaaku compliments after listening to the report and Hyaaku could not stop imagining "how great it would be if the suspect really turned out to have committed a theft."<sup>240</sup> The confession of the man showed that he was a thief, but Hyaaku was full of fear because he realized the story told by the man was the same as what he heard from Kamarū about her family. Hyaaku panicked when the man said his name: the man was in fact Kamarū's older brother. The chief ordered Hyaaku to bring Kamarū to the police station as a witness, but Hyaaku could only feel fear and nothing else. He "felt all the blood in his body rush to his head," and "his eyes began smoldering with the fear and rage of a wild beast fallen into a trap."<sup>241</sup> The story ends here suddenly. Being a police officer who wished to achieve huge success and get rid of his inferiority, Hyaaku could not be engaged with criminals.

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 71.

Moreover, Bringing Kamarū to the police station would not only reveal his policeman status, but also destroy the space that could comfort Hyaaku's frustration and loneliness resulted from his third-space identity. In the story, Ikemiyagi did not indicate if Hyaaku found a way to ease his rage and fear, but we know that it seems impossible for him to escape from his troublesome identity.

### **Hatozawa Samio and the Ainu third-space identity**

In comparison, the Ainu's third-space identity revealed in Ainu literature is also complicated in its own way. In Hatozawa Samio's short story *Akashi no kūbun* (*A Proof of Dead Letter*, 1963),<sup>242</sup> the identity of "I (*Watashi*)" can also be considered a third-space identity. "Watashi" spent his childhood with his grandmother peacefully and happily and they were very close until one day they were humiliated by a Japanese child on the street:

[...] Until then, I did not even realize that I was an Ainu. That was in my second or third primary school year. My grandma took me to a clinic nearby, and that incident happened on our way back home when we were about to transfer at a bus station. [...] One Japanese child who was about the same age as me, pointed at us and yelling, "Wow, Ainu!" Suddenly I felt like being struck by something like a hammer, and I almost fell on the street... although my grandma was holding my hand until we got home that day, since then I never held her hand again. I even hated to talk to my grandma in front of others.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Kotan ni shisu: Hatozawa Samio sakuhinshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1973), 5-41.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 12. The translations from *Akashi no kūbun* and *Tōi ashimoto* are mine in this chapter.

After this incident, “Watashi” was clearly aware that as Ainu, he and his grandmother were differentiated by the Japanese. His alienation towards both Ainu and Japanese started simultaneously when he was going through the discrimination. Even when he became an adult, he still felt a certain distance from his grandmother. This alienation was caused by the inferiority complex residing in the protagonist’s sub-consciousness. Meanwhile, “Watashi” also hated himself for acting like a Japanese when he was recording Ainu language and culture from his grandmother, as there was a boom in the Shōwa period among Japanese anthropology scholars to “save” and “protect” Ainu culture:

I was going to ask my grandma about her past, Ainu language and customs, and I was holding a pen talking to her. Every time when I was doing that, I could feel the hatred towards myself. I really felt bad because I had to force her to recall the dark memories. Whenever I was doing this, somehow I also felt like that I was carved as a sculpture as well. Then I would realize my isolated life [in that sculpture], and the habits of being discriminated.<sup>244</sup>

In comparison, another Ainu boy named Tameo was vividly depicted in Hatozawa’s novel *Tōi ashimoto (Remote Footsteps, 1964)*.<sup>245</sup> The protagonist’s psychological transformation under *kōminka* education in this fictional work is largely based on Hatozawa’s personal experience. Tameo was born in the early Shōwa period. His father was working away from home so he lived with his mother in a small village located at the foot of the mountain. Tameo was sent to an elementary school in another

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>245</sup> Hatozawa Samio, *Kotan ni shisu: Hatozawa Samio sakuhinshū* (Tōkyō: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1973), 76-181.

village in which the majority of the students were wajin (Japanese). The assimilation started at the school entrance ceremony on Tameo's first day of school. All of the students were required to show their respect and loyalty towards the Japanese emperor and the Empire:

[...] All of the people in the hall facing forward lowered their heads quietly, [because] the Emperor and Empress's portrait was hanging [in the front of the hall].

Tameo also lowered his head because he thought that he had to do so, like the others. When he was taking a breath, Tameo raised his head, glanced aside but went back [to his old posture] immediately.<sup>246</sup>

Tameo was imitating other people's behavior without understanding the reason. Tameo only saw ceremonies like this as a new routine that he had to get used to and he was very excited about going to school. He was enjoying the lessons and learned many new things. However, he had to stop going to school because of a severe sickness in his second school year, and when he returned to school, a lot of things had changed in school due to the start of the Asia-Pacific War. The school strengthened *kōminka* education through promoting militarism. Students were required to go to school together with strict lining-up, and chatting was not allowed. Instead of studying in the classrooms, all of the students had to attend military training outside and learned how to dedicate their loyalty to the Great Japanese Empire (*dainihon-teikoku*). For Ainu like Tameo, this was an extreme way to make mimic Japanese colonial subjects through violence:

Tameo was too scared to look at his teacher's face, so he lowered his head and only looked at [the ground] two or three steps away. At that moment, he saw a tiny ant anxiously swirling at the same spot. The ant looked like it was stepped on by a bear and got injured. Tameo was distracted

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<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 82.

unintentionally with staring at the ant. All of a sudden he heard the sound of someone's face being slapped then he raised his head in shock. Sasaki, the squad leader of Tameo's team, was correcting students' standing posture. Meanwhile, the teacher, Saida, was smacking students' face one after the next including Tameo. "You all get this punishment if any of you makes a mistake, understand?!" "... " No one answered. "Understand?!" Here came the angry voice again. The students responded with "yes" together like they just swallowed bouncing springs.<sup>247</sup>

Besides the physical punishment in military training, students in the higher grades were also ordered to beat those in the lower grades. The older students who were not able to complete this order would have to accept physical punishment. Both the physical and mental stress under assimilation reduced Tameo's enthusiasm for going to school. Additionally, Tameo was also experiencing Japanese discrimination. Each year the school would provide students with a certain number of pairs of rubber boots as an annual supply for Hokkaidō's freezing winter. All of the Japanese students could enjoy this winter supply but not Tameo and other Ainu children. In fact the supply was only provided for Japanese students through an unfair lottery drawing in which the school principal already decided that all Japanese students would win, and none of the Ainu. Another example is that when Tameo requested the principal to scold the Japanese boys who made fun of Tameo by calling him "you Ainu" instead of his name. The principle ignored the request and replied with, "You are an Ainu! So of course they can call you 'Ainu' ."<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 116-117.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., 178.

Tameo's third-space identity gradually formed under the discrimination. At the beginning, Tameo believed that he was no different from his Japanese schoolmates. He did not know why his Japanese schoolmates always called him "Ainu," or "kotan (Ainu village)," until the physical examination, when Takeshi and Shōji, two Japanese boys, were mocking him because of his thick body hair:

In the physical examination, boys were asked to wear underwear, but Tameo was waiting in the line all naked, and he did not care about it at all. However, Takeshi was looking at Tameo very frequently, then shouted: "Tameo, you have such thick hair!" Tameo did not understand what Takeshi was referring to. Takeshi continued: "Oh, because you are [from] kotan!" Shō, the boy standing beside Takeshi, also agreed with him, and said "of course" repeatedly. Meanwhile, Shōji was holding his nose and yelling "Stinky! Stinky!" Tameo was even more confused.<sup>249</sup>

Even though Tameo did not understand the meaning of Takeshi and the other boys' words immediately, he still felt that "his soul was somehow deprived."<sup>250</sup> After seeing Kameo (a Japanese boy) in the examination room, Tameo suddenly understood why he was laughed at. Kameo's body was "white and clean" enough for Tameo to "fall into an illusion that he was about to hit a white wall."<sup>251</sup> Before the examination, Tameo believed that he was no different from the Japanese, while the physical differences between him and his Japanese schoolmates made him realize that he was not the same. He felt inferior because he had darker skin and thicker body hair than his Japanese schoolmates.

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<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

After the examination, Takeshi and other boys still made fun of the Ainu by shouting “Kotan, stinky! Stinky!” in front of Tameo from time to time. For Tameo, “kotan” was no longer an Ainu word simply referring to Ainu villages; it represented the Ainu’s inferiority. Tameo could not invite any of his Japanese schoolmates to visit his home because it was “stinky kotan.” He was trapped in a heavy inferiority complex. Tameo wanted to be the same as Takeshi and other Japanese boys, but he knew that this wish was impossible due to his Ainu origin. Besides being discriminated against because of physical difference, Tameo was also slandered as a liar by Takeshi and other Japanese boys at first, then he was considered a liar by all of his Japanese schoolmates, regardless of how hard he tried to prove that he never lied to them. Not being recognized strengthened Tameo’s depression and anxiety, which resulted in his self-alienation from Japanese schoolmates. He became very aggressive, bullied Japanese girls and fought with Takeshi and other boys. Tameo knew that he could not escape from being an Ainu, however, he did not want to live under discrimination. Tameo had been extremely hyper-conscious of his Ainu identity ever since. In a morning assembly, Tameo happened to see his mother taking Hideo (another Ainu boy) to school. Tameo was irritated when his mother called his name and asked Hideo to stand behind him in the line. Hideo was absent from school very often and he was isolated as “an idiot Ainu,” so Tameo was deeply worried that he might be thought as the same “idiot” Ainu as Hideo.<sup>252</sup>

Tameo’s hyper-consciousness of his identity strengthened his inferior feeling, and accelerated his self-alienation from the Ainu and the Ainu identity. This self-alienation directly reflects through his attitudes towards an Ainu girl named Samiko. Samiko’s father died years ago due to a severe brain disease, and her mother had left them when

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 179.

her father was still suffering from the disease. Samiko's grandmother adopted her and her brother, but she was absent from school very often since she had to help to take care of her little brother. When Samiko came to school, she was always in torn clothes and untidy hair, with big canine teeth when she smiled. During the class, Samiko was either sleeping or staring at the blackboard without understanding what was taught. At first Tameo sympathized with Samiko, but he could not stop his hatred after being laughed at in a conversation with other boys about what girls they liked most in school:

[...]It was Tameo's turn [to tell everyone the girl he liked] after Shō. Tameo felt his heart beating very fast, then he said: "I...I like Moriko..." Shō responded with shock: "What?! Really?!" Just at that moment, Takeshi and Akio (a Japanese boy) laughed together. [...] Kameo also joined the conversation: "Hm... you like Moriko..." Tameo felt like his body became so stiff [that he could not even move], but he still nodded. Shō interrupted in the talk: "What are you talking about? Shouldn't you like Samiko?!" Suddenly, Tameo could feel his body was frozen. He heard someone said: "You are an Ainu! So you should like Samiko!" Then another boy shouted: "You are just from kotan! How can you say 'I like Moriko'? That's ridiculous!" Tameo was very irritated. "You bastard!" He was cursing while lifting a broom in his hand [to hit the Japanese boys].<sup>253</sup>

Tameo had liked Moriko as soon as he saw her at the school entrance ceremony. Different from Samiko, Moriko was a pretty Japanese girl who had long hair with white skin. On the contrary, Samiko had a very stereotypical Ainu image from Japanese aspects: dirty, poor, barbarian-like big teeth and low intelligence because she did not do well in studies. Tameo felt offended and humiliated when the boys joked about him and Samiko, since he believed that they were very different, or even that he was superior to her, despite that they were both Ainu. For Tameo, the typical Ainu images imprinted on Samiko became a fundamental cause of him being differentiated and alienated by his

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 154-155.

Japanese schoolmates. Therefore, Tameo could not stop venting his anger on Samiko every time when he saw her. Finally he became hysterical and released all of the anger through abusing Samiko when he had an opportunity one day:

Tameo went out of the campus to hang around during the break between classes. He went back to the classroom when he remembered that he had something important to do there. No one was in the classroom besides Samiko. She was sitting in her chair in front of the coal stove located in the center of the classroom. Tameo became angry all of a sudden [when he saw Samiko]. “Go away!” He stood at the door and unintentionally shouted towards Samiko.

Samiko turned her head around in shock, but she smiled as soon as she saw Tameo. She did not move at all and she was plugging a stick into the fire through a small window on the stove. Tameo walked towards Samiko with a heavy stepping noise. “Leave the stove!” He said. Then he tried to push Samiko away, but she refused to leave. Tameo was even more enraged and had no more patience. He took the stick from Samiko and hit her head. The stick was burning so Samiko’s hair was burnt immediately. Samiko stared at Tameo in astonishment first then burst into tears.

Tameo was slightly shaking all over his body and was not able to stop.<sup>254</sup>

Tameo did not apologize after hitting Samiko, and he still thought that Samiko was “unstoppably hateful.”<sup>255</sup> He was very frustrated with being considered a dirty Ainu like Samiko. Tameo’s prank on an old Ainu lady also illustrates his estrangement from the Ainu identity. Similar to bullying Samiko, this incident also happened after Tameo was being discriminated against. One day on the way to school, Tameo excitedly shared the news that he fished two big *funa*<sup>256</sup> with several Japanese boys the other day, but as always the boys did not believe him and called him a liar. When Tameo was trying

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 152-153.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>256</sup> Crucian carp.

desperately to convince them, a blind old Ainu lady named Anuteya was walking by. The Japanese boys made fun of Anuteya immediately by saying “*ah, inu ga kita* (here comes a dog)!”<sup>257</sup> At first Tameo was arguing with the Japanese boys because he did not see a dog coming, but later on he understood what they were referring to. Tameo was infuriated again. He could not control his anger when the boys were yelling “Dog! Dog! Stinky! Stinky!” at him and the old lady. Tameo swung his school bag at the boys and scared them away.<sup>258</sup>

Tameo did not want to go to school after the argument. He was sitting alone and recalling his memories of being alienated and called “stinky Ainu,” but it only brought him with more frustration. Tameo decided to play pranks on Anuteya when Anuteya was approaching him. He scared blind Anuteya with shouting “snakes” around her then laughed at her reaction.<sup>259</sup> For Tameo, Anuteya became the reason for Tameo to be discriminated and inferiorized, just as Samiko had been. Not being recognized by the Japanese resulted in Tameo’s inferiority complex, causing his depression and anxiety until he finally accepted that he was different from his Japanese schoolmates. However, Tameo refused to be categorized as an inferior Ainu as Samiko and Anuteya. Tameo was neither Japanese nor Ainu. He was only Tameo but no one else and he would never want to be attached with a label named “Ainu” nor “Japanese.” This is the third-space identity in which Tameo was wandering. Compared to Hyaaku’s attempts to escape from the mental stress caused by the third-space identity in *Officer Ukuma*, Tameo took a more

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 160.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 161.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 164.

aggressive and extreme stance to release his stress. Tameo's third-space identity inspired a hatred towards both the Japanese and the Ainu, as well as led to his resistance towards Ainu's stereotypes and Japanese discrimination.

## Conclusion

As people living on the periphery, many Ryūkyūans and Ainu have a third-space identity resulting from the Japanese colonization from the Meiji period. They were Japanese and Ryūkyūans/Ainu, but they were neither Japanese nor Ryūkyūans/Ainu. To explain the Ryūkyūan/Ainu third space identity, it is necessary to begin with an investigation of the history of the Ryūkyūans and Ainu to clarify their independent status in the pre-Meiji period. Both the Ryūkyū Islands and Hokkaidō were foreign lands before being incorporated into Japanese territory by the Meiji government. Since the Satsuma invasion in 1609, the Ryūkyū Kingdom gradually lost its independence throughout the Satsuma domain's manipulation. Two centuries later, the kingdom collapsed after the deposition of the Ryūkyūs. Although the officials of the kingdom were still expecting a rescue from the Qing Dynasty at first, the kingdom could not escape their fate of being integrated into the Japanese Empire under the Meiji government's strict policy.

On the other hand, although the Ainu did not establish a kingdom as the Ryūkyūans did before the Meiji period, they were still self-governed within their own social system. Apparently the Matsumae domain showed more interest in obtaining profits through economic manipulation of the natives rather than exerting political control. The unfair treatment in trades as well as the slavery aroused the locals' anger and led to the three major revolts. Even if the Tokugawa shogunate realized the significant values that Ezo had in terms of on national defense and attempted to control the northern land directly, it seems that the management of such a massive land far from the capital city exceeded the Tokugawa government's ability. Therefore, it is appropriate to say that Ezo

was not under strict political control until the Meiji period, and the Ainu completely lost their independence when their land was given the name of “Hokkaidō” in 1896.

The incorporation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom and Ezo as Okinawa prefecture and Hokkaidō respectively marks the beginning of an official colonization. The Meiji government accelerated the internalization of the Ryūkyūs and Ezo mainly through *kōminka* education. *Kōminka* education did not achieve huge success immediately in Okinawa prefecture. However, the Qing Dynasty’s defeat in the first Sino-Japanese war stimulated local educators’ enthusiasm for acculturation, and more Ryūkyūans started to embrace Japanese education system as well. On the contrary, *kōminka* education made slow progress in Hokkaidō. The central government did not establish a systematic education system for either Okinawa or Hokkaidō, and in general its leaders seem to have dedicated more to the acculturation of the Ryūkyūans than to that of the Ainu. Regardless, it is certain that *kōminka* education towards both Ryūkyūans and Ainu was rooted in discrimination. The Japanese government degraded Ryūkyūan and Ainu customs and traditions as “bad habits (*akushū*)” and educated them with the idea that the Japanese culture was superior. Apparently, the Meiji leaders wished to acculturate the Ryūkyūans and Ainu into “mimic men” in many aspects, but the central government also avoided overly assimilating the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu. This aligns with what Bhabha states in his theory: mimicry is a colonial desire “for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite.” The Japanese colonial authorities indeed aimed at making reformed but recognizable Others through colonization, but to what extent the Ryūkyūan and the Ainu should be reformed or recognizable obviously differed according to the Meiji leaders’ attitudes: the Ryūkyūans were considered to be a

branch of the Yamato but they should never be quite equal to the more civilized mainlanders; the Ainu were required to become Japanese citizens but they had to keep their “recognizability” as an “inferior” race. The racial bias illustrates why the Ainu tend to have a stronger self-alienation from Japanese people and the Japanese identity due to the racial discrimination.

Many colonized Ryūkyūans and Ainu were, on the one hand assimilated into Japanese society, becoming “well-educated” mimic men through mastering the Japanese culture and language. Consequently, they would be unavoidably estranged from their original identity. On the other hand, when the discrimination towards their culture and people conveyed through *kōminka* education emphasized the difference between them and Japanese, they would tend to alienate themselves from Japanese people and the Japanese identity. Their third-space identity formed when the mimic Ryūkyūans/Ainu self-alienated from their original identity and the Japanese identity that they were required to pursue. The inferiority complex both the Ryūkyūans and the Ainu experienced compelled them to be mimic men. The island pain (*inzerushūmerutsu*) lurking within a Ryūkyūan’s consciousness formed through the historical isolation from other continents became another reason for the Ryūkyūan’s desire for assimilation. In an Ainu’s spiritual world, the inferiority complex can be seen as one symptom of the hyper-consciousness (*jiishiki-kajō*) that Hatozawa has stated. Although the hyper-consciousness could stimulate an Ainu’s desire to be recognized by the Japanese people, he/she would still estrange themselves from Japanese people and the Japanese identity when this desire could not be satisfied.

In a broader sense, I think that the third-space identity functioned as a disruption to the establishment of the Japanese government's illusion of a homogeneous nation-state that only belonged to the Yamato. Furthermore, it is necessary to investigate the daily life of individual Ryūkyūan or Ainu illustrated in their literary works. In Yamanokuchi Baku's poems "A Conversation" and "Shell-shocked Island," he, a Ryūkyūan diaspora residing in mainland Japan, chose to hide his Ryūkyūan origin in order to be accepted by the Japanese, while he showed contradictory attitudes when confronting Ryūkyūans who spoke standard Japanese to him. Yamanokuchi's estrangement from both Japanese and Ryūkyūans showcased his third-space identity as a mimic Ryūkyūan. In comparison, we can see the formation of the Ainu boy "Watashi"'s third-space identity written in Hatozawa Samio's short story *Akashi no kūbun*. "Watashi" was not aware that he and his grandmother were racially different from Japanese until some Japanese boys on the street insulted them. This caused his inferior feelings about his identity as an Ainu. "Watashi" kept a distance from his grandmother but meanwhile he also felt uneasy while acting like a Japanese in front of her.

When caught in a third-space identity, Hyaaku, a mimic Ryūkyūan police officer in *Officer Ukuma*, chose to escape because it was hard for him to bear the loneliness and frustration resulted from his troublesome self-identity; In contrast, an Ainu boy named Tameo showed his strong resistance towards Japanese discrimination when bravely struggling within his third-space identity in *Tōi ashimoto*. Both Hyaaku and Tameo wished to be viewed as an independent individual without being seen through a homogenous identity, as did Yamanokuchi Baku and "Watashi." For the colonized Ryūkyūans and Ainu living on the periphery of Japan as Japanese citizens, they were neither Japanese

nor Ryūkyūans/Ainu. They were a group of people with complicated self-identity that cannot be defined with a single word.

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