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Orientalism, Mass Culture and the US Administration in Okinawa

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Introduction

In this article I examine the historical, political and cultural phenomena related to the United States military occupation of Okinawa after World War II. I argue that the US authorities encouraged an ‘Orientalist’ discourse about Okinawa in order to justify their own position in the islands. This discourse can be found in the post-war mass culture products which called for an American intervention in the Ryukyu Islands. In order to interpret this discursive process, I have found useful to borrow concepts from different theorists. In particular, Edward Said’s work on Orientalism, Michel Foucault’s theory on the creation of discourse and Frederic Jameson’s theory on mass culture have inspired this essay.

This essay is divided in three sections. First, I set the context for the American position in Okinawa in the early 1950s. I argue that the wartime US role and structure of governance in Okinawa had to be redefined in order to combine the post-war US military objectives in the region and the welfare of the local population. Second, I scrutinise the formation of a new historical narrative on Okinawa during the post-war years. Indeed, the US authorities developed a new cultural discourse about Okinawa which emphasised the uniqueness of the Okinawan people. Here I argue that the Americans depicted the Ryukyans as the ‘Other’, in a fashion that benefited their own interests there. This representation was partly based on the stories and travel diaries written by sailors and explorers in the nineteenth century, but it was also a

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a product of the cultural and historical contingencies of the Cold War years. Third, I analyse in sociological terms the story of the singular US 1956 film ‘The Teahouse of the August Moon’. This story, oriented to an American audience, describes an Okinawan village and reproduces the above-mentioned new discourse on Okinawa. I argue that this story, as a mass culture product, tells us more about the Americans and the American objectives in the region than about the social and political situation in post-war Okinawa.

The post-war US military position in Okinawa can shed light on contemporary issues and problems in Okinawa. Although the American administration of Okinawa ended in 1972, Okinawa has kept its military nature due to the ongoing presence of American military and Japanese Self Defence bases. Thus, this essay analyse the early stage of a process which has not concluded.

Historical Context and Redefinition of the US military role and structure of governance in Okinawa

The United States defeated the Japanese forces and attained control of Okinawa prefecture in June 1945. In August 1945, Japan surrendered to the allies, and like the rest of the country, Okinawa became an ‘occupied enemy territory’ until the treaty of San Francisco went into effect in 1952.⁷ The United States government, while preparing the end of the occupation in mainland Japan, organised a dual system of government in the Ryukyu Islands. On the one hand, the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu (USCAR), established in 1950, could exercise all the rights of sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands. On the other hand, the local Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI), created in 1952 to ‘further the economic, governmental and social well-being of the Ryukyuan people’, could exercise ‘all powers of government within the Ryukyu Islands’.⁸ In sum, the San Francisco system gave birth to a new hybrid state.

The American position in Okinawa needs to be analysed within the framework of the first years of the Cold War. The triumph of the People's Army in China and the outbreak of the Korean War hastened the negotiations between Washington and the Japanese government to conclude a peace treaty and bring to an end the post-war occupation. The term 'San Francisco System' has been used to refer the Japan's peace treaty with other 48 countries and Japan's alignment with the United States policy. From an American point of view, the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT) and the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in 1951 legalised — and more importantly perpetuated — its hegemonic military position in the Pacific.⁹

The American retention of the Ryukyu Islands was widely discussed in the years prior the SFPT. Okinawa had become a US military hub to support military action in East Asia and an important link in the US defence perimeter in the Pacific.¹⁰ Thus, the US government considered the long-term retention of the Ryukyu Islands an essential element in their strategic plan in East Asia. Consequently, in the SFPT the United States claimed the rights of administration over the Ryukyu Islands from Japan.¹¹

This meant that the United States could use Okinawa's soil for military purposes but also that, at least in the eyes of international public opinion, the American government was responsible for the local population. Since US troops were no longer an occupation force, and the Okinawans were no longer the enemy, the US military's structure and role (or its discourse) in Okinawa had to be redefined.¹² In terms of the military structure, the chain of command governing Okinawa was modified in December 1950 when the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) was established.¹³ The new structure of governance was headed in Tokyo by the Commander in Chief, Far East who became the 'Governor of Okinawa'. Also based in Japan, the Commanding General, Ryukyu Command became the 'Deputy Governor' (and from 1957 was called 'High Commissioner'). Finally in Okinawa itself, the military structure was completed with the 'Civil Administrator' who was until 1962 an army active-duty member.¹⁴ In sum, due to its strategic weight the Ryukyu Islands were kept within the American Far East Command and the chain of command was superficially adjusted. As in the novel *The Leopard* we could say: 'if we want things to stay as they are, things will have to

change'; the chain of command was modified to remain the same. The new structural element was the creation of an agency (USCAR) to perform the duties of sovereignty over the civilians. But ultimately, the island and its inhabitants remained subject to the military's decisions.

Orientalism and the construction of a new historical narrative in Okinawa

The SFPT made the American government responsible for the local population. It should be noted that before and during the war the United States claimed not to seek aggrandisement, but nevertheless, it retained possession of the Ryukyu Islands.¹⁵ In the 1950s, terms like 'The Rock' to refer to the island of Okinawa, or any detrimental expression against the Okinawan people or culture, so common in the early post-war years, were no longer valid in the American Okinawa.¹⁶ Instead, a new historical narrative which emphasised the local culture and the US mission in Okinawa was developed.

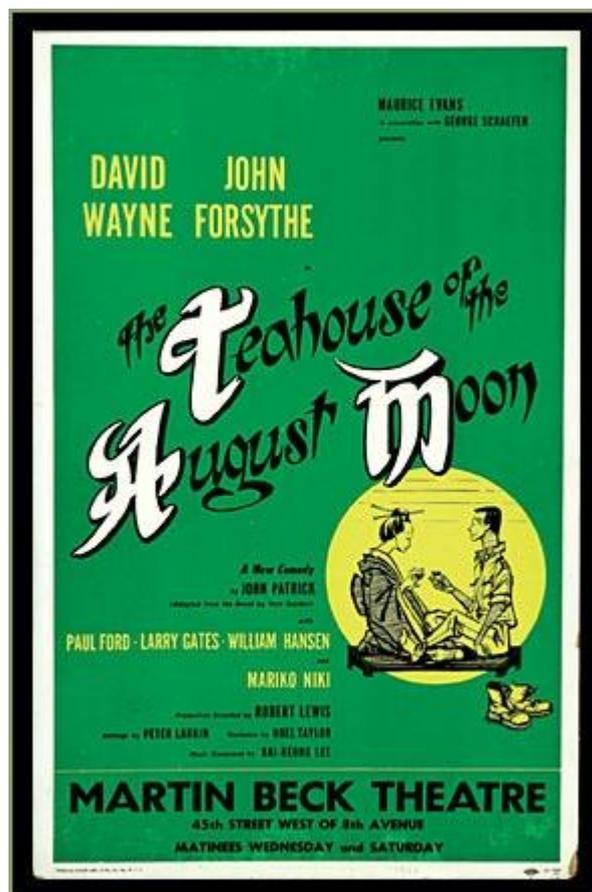
In terms of the local culture, the American authorities used the extensive research done by the military occupation experts in the 1940s and sought to encourage the re-emergence of the native culture and customs. This was an effort to reverse the pre-war Japanisation of Okinawa (*dejapanisation*) and to win the hearts of the local people for the occupation. The clearest example of this effort is the change in the name of the country from Okinawa, the name used by the Japanese, to Ryukyu which was the name that the region had when it was an independent kingdom.¹⁷ In terms of the US mission in Okinawa, the military encouraged a discourse about 'the other' (Okinawa and the Okinawan people) so that it served their system of interest.¹⁸ As seen above, the American system of interest in the Ryukyu Islands was markedly military and aimed to strengthen the islands' military potential (even to the detriment of its people).¹⁹ Consequently, in order to serve this system of interest as well as to redeem their role in the islands, a new discourse of power aimed to unite Americans and Ryukyuan in a teleological scheme based on the development of Okinawa.²⁰

E.W. Said defined Orientalism as ‘a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient- dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it(...) in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’.²¹ This definition evokes the Marxist idea that the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and material intercourse of men.²² Indeed, Orientalism is ‘a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* (...) of a whole series of ‘interests’ which, (...) it not only creates but also maintains’.²³ In the case of Okinawa, the relationship between Americans and Okinawans was a relationship of power and domination, so it is not surprising that an Orientalist depiction of the other was elaborated for the administrator’s own interest.²⁴ Similarly, the *dejapanisation* of Okinawa and return to the local culture has been interpreted as ‘the consciousness of emancipation from discrimination’.²⁵ In other words, the new discourse of ‘the other’ emphasised a position of superiority of the Americans, giving them a libertarian role, whilst at the same time highlighted the native cultural elements.

American perceptions of Okinawa and mass culture: The Teahouse of the August Moon

Commodore Perry — the US naval officer who made the first officially-authorized visit to Japan in the nineteenth century — had written in 1853 that the people of the ‘Lew Chew islands’ were ‘industrious and inoffensive, and I have already made considerable progress in calming their fears and conciliating their friendly’.²⁶ Before Perry, other explorers of the nineteenth century also spread in Europe and the United States the idea that the Okinawans were honest, inoffensive, generous and friendly.²⁷ Similarly, in mid-twenty century, we can see the same discourse being continued by the Americans who saw the Okinawan people as gentle, easy-going, a bit lazy and a bit crafty. This new discourse about the Okinawan had a good reception in the American public through different popular-culture productions. For instance, these characteristics of Okinawa can be found in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production ‘The Teahouse of the August Moon’ (1956).²⁸

This satire, starring Glenn Ford as Captain Fisby and Marlon Brando as Sakini, his local subordinate, describes the efforts of a group of American army-men to govern Okinawa in the wake of World War Two. In particular, the movie narrates, through slapstick comedy episodes, the efforts of Captain Fisby to bring American democratic values into the village of Tobiki. He is under the orders of a sturdy and stubborn Colonel Purdy who constantly reminds him of his duty of enforcing the Manual of Occupation (dubbed 'Plan B'). However, his translator Sakini, through smart manoeuvring, orchestrates the construction of a teahouse instead of the officially sanctioned pentagon-shaped school. Finally, in a state of helplessness, Fisby accepts the idiosyncrasy of the locals and embraces their customs. In a first reading of the film, the locals are represented as smart, friendly, giving and a little lazy. In other words, the film repeats a discourse on the Okinawan people which matches with the American role of civiliser and democratic force.²⁹



Note: Poster for the 1953 New York play production.

Frederic Jameson argues, in 'Signature of the Visible', the proposition that 'the only way to think the visual, to get a handle on increasing tendential, all-pervasive visibility as such, is to grasp its historical coming into being'.³⁰ This proposition is very useful in order to analyse the development of the story. In this case, the *Teahouse* is based on a 1953's Pulitzer and Tony prize-winning Broadway play which is an adaptation by John Patrick of the 1951's novel written by Vern Sneider.³¹ All three versions follow the same basic storyline mentioned above. Consequently, the variant against which the film will be read are the novel and play. The novel was written during the American occupation of Japan when the new discourse about Okinawa was taking shape.³² It focuses on the difficulties that Captain Fisby had to face when two geisha girls arrive in the village that he commands. Compared to the movie, the building of the teahouse itself is less important than the conflict and division created by the two female new-comers. The play and movie were made after the SFPT and the US long-term administration of the island was a *fait accompli*. Thus, the play and movie focus less on the situation with the geisha (the geisha girls have been reduce to only one, Lotus Blossom) and stress the building of the teahouse.

The idea of creating a depiction of Okinawa by borrowing traditional Japanese elements (that is, the teahouse and geisha girls) is puzzling, particularly since the US government was trying to emphasise Okinawa's cultural difference with Japan. It requires us first to ask who is producing the image and who is the targeted audience. Following Said, 'the Orientalist is outside of the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact'; and thus, the principal product of this exteriority is representation.³³ In the *Teahouse*, the Ryukyu Islands are transformed from a very far distant and even threatening 'Otherness' into figures that are relatively familiar for the American audience (for example, using traditional Japanese symbols). The movie certainly does not reproduce a Japanisation of Okinawa in terms of its political construction, but it tries to provide an image of Okinawa that is not completely foreign for its audience. In this sense, the option for the Japanese elements taken by Sneider and Patrick needs to be observed from the idea of culture as a commodity. The film is governed by the principle of its realisation as value (for example, how many people see the film), and not by its harmonious formation or erudite content.³⁴ In sum, the story is an American representation of Okinawa. It is oriented to the American public and as such it tells us

more about the Americans and the American's image of Okinawa rather than about the Okinawan people.



Note: Above left: 1956 film poster.



Note: Above right: Glen Ford as Captain Fisby, and Marlon Brando as Sakini in a scene from the 1956 film.

Ideology, Utopian reality and Military Government

The population of Tobiki, the town where the *Teahouse* story takes place, can be read as a whole as one character with a polysemous function. This polysemous nature is profoundly ideological. The *Orientalisation* of Tobiki requires both the representation of a de-politicised, immoral and backward society, which requires intervention and correction; and also, the representation of a utopian reality or transcendental potential. It should be noted that in the *Teahouse* the people of Tobiki are de-politicised and disempowered. The film depicts them as having no interest in democratisation beyond the committees organised by the US military.

This representation contrasts with the history of resistance and struggle found in Okinawan in the 1950s. For instance, in 1956, the year the *Teahouse* film was

released, US congressman Melvin Price visited Okinawa and concluded in his report that the land expropriation and lump-sum payment should continue.³⁵ The Okinawan people reacted and protested against US rule. Political parties, landowners, students, workers and school teacher unions opposed the US role in the Ryukyu Islands.³⁶ Indeed, some authors date the beginning of the anti-US movement called Shima Gurumi Tōso (島ぐるみ闘争) in 1956.³⁷ In sum, the de-politicisation of the people of Tobiki can be read as an attempt to silence the complex political situation in Okinawa. The film, by depriving the Okinawa people of a political identity, is creating a character who does not question the American presence in the island. In other words, the *Teahouse* empties the people of Tobiki from their political identity, and thus, the problematic in the film becomes the dichotomy between West-led development and a materially happy existence instead of the negative aspects of the American occupation.

In the novel, the people of the village are depicted as immoral, lazy and irresponsible: 'In the morning when Fisby reached the village, no one was up; so he went from house to house, routing out his village officials.'³⁸ And later, after a meeting with the local officers: 'Fisby slumped. For a long time after the meeting broke up, he sat there. 'No sense of responsibility,' he told himself. 'No sense of responsibility whatsoever.'³⁹ This point is emphasised in the play and movie, particularly through Col. Purdy: 'No wonder you people were subjugated by the Japanese. *If you're not sleeping you're running away from work* (author's italics). Where is your 'get-up-and-go'.'⁴⁰ Indeed, in the story the US military found in the idiosyncrasy of the locals an argument to justify their role as administrators of Okinawa, 'Purdy: teach these natives how to act human!'.⁴¹ Outside the realm of fiction, this view was also fanned in other spheres. For instance Daniel D. Karasik described, in an academic journal in 1948, the Okinawan people 'who greatly resemble the Japanese but do not value exactness, orderliness, and cleanliness to the same degree as do the Japanese'.⁴² Conversely, at the end of the story we learnt that the positive elements in the people of Tobiki's character (hard-workers when they have a motivation, generosity, wisdom to appreciate natural beauty, etc.) transformed Okinawa into an ideal society. This utopian reality is emphasised by Captain Fisby's personal journey from being exiled in Okinawa to becoming the leader of the most prosperous village in the island.

It should be noted that in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the US military personnel in Okinawa were also depicted negatively, being portrayed as less efficient than in other military posts. This image of the US servicemen in Okinawa presumably began when General Douglas MacArthur appointed men, whom he did not consider good enough to be close to him in Japan, to serve in Okinawa.⁴³ The lack of resources for the reconstruction of the islands during the 1940s and the initial basic conception of the role of the military government, as a means to control disease and population, may have impacted on the public's opinion about the administration of the island.⁴⁴ Mass media reports of the situation in Okinawa also contributed to spread this negative image of the US servicemen. For example, in 1949 the *Time* magazine pointed out that in Okinawa the 'more than 15,000 US troops, whose morale and discipline have probably been worse than that of any US force in the world, have policed 600,000 natives who live in hopeless poverty'.⁴⁵ Similar articles appeared in other prominent US publications such as the *New York Times*, *Christian Century*, *The Progressive*, *Harper's Magazine* and *Life*.⁴⁶

In the *Teahouse* this negative image of the US troops is highlighted in the character of Colonel Purdy, portrayed as a stupid and authoritative man who spends his time reading 'Adventure' magazine and following his wife's advice on how to run the occupied territory.⁴⁷ Therefore, Fisby's success in adapting himself to the local customs and managing to run Tobiki can be read as the transcendent potential of Okinawa. In the novel, more than in the play and the movie, this utopian reality is developed. Captain Fisby is describe as a 'chubby five foot seven' with one trouser leg out of his combat boot and whose 'perspiration stood out on his forehead', overall, 'it could hardly be said that he cut a military figure'.⁴⁸ However, whilst in Tobiki, Captain Fisby learns that the Plan B and military's approach to develop the local villages are impractical since they do not take into account the locals' character and necessities. Indeed, by the end of the novel Fisby had immersed himself into the local culture and learnt to speak the dialect.⁴⁹ In Fisby's eyes, Okinawa has become a utopian reality. He says: 'I have never been happier. I feel reckless and free. And it all happened the moment I decided not to build that damned pentagon-shaped school'; his perspective about the Okinawan people has changed completely. 'FISBY: These are wonderful people with a strange sense of beauty. And hard working when there's a purpose. (...) Don't let anyone tell you these people are lazy'.⁵⁰

In sum, in the *Teahouse* the useless captain redeems himself by leading a buoyant village's economy. Captain Fisby's journey not only emphasises that Okinawa really is a land of opportunities, but it also notes the necessity of the American aid. The *Teahouse*, as a mass culture product, remains implicitly negative and critical of the social order from which, as product and commodity, it springs.⁵¹ The story is critical to the top-down military approach to the occupation, yet, it argues for American leadership in a merry but backward society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the construction of a dual system of government is based on the strategic nature of the Ryukyu Islands and on an Orientalist conception of the Okinawan people held by the Americans. The USCAR had *de facto* control of every aspect of life in the Ryukyu Islands. Moreover, the GRI's activities were framed within the American regulations. In its foundational document, the GRI remains under the authority of the Deputy Governor, who 'reserves the right, in the event of necessity, to veto, prohibit, or suspend the operation of any laws, ordinances or regulation enacted by the Government of the Ryukyu Islands or any civil government or agency of any such government; to order the promulgation of any law, ordinance or regulation he may deem advisable; and to resume, in whole or in part, the exercise of full authority, in the Ryukyu Islands'.⁵² The *Teahouse* describes the post-SFPT's political structure in Okinawa (geopolitical awareness in aesthetics). This description emphasises the Orientalist American gaze on Okinawa and supports the occupation. However, as a mass culture product, it is critical of the society from where it comes. The US authorities, in order to protect their interests, allowed the creation of democratic institutions and showed themselves as benefactors. The establishment of the USCAR and the GRI is an expression of this tremendously unequal relationship.

Acknowledgement

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⁷End Notes

It should be noted that whilst Japan was occupied by the US-led allied forces, Okinawa prefecture was occupied by the US alone.

⁸ Art. II, C.A. Proclamation No. 13, 29 February 1952; in United States Civil Administration:1950–1972, *Laws and Regulations During the US Administration of Okinawa: 1945–1972*, ed. Gekkan Okinawa sha, vol. Book 1 (n/d). p.112.

⁹ This arrangement is what John Dower and many others have called the most inequitable bilateral agreement the US had entered into after the war. John W. Dower, ‘Peace and Democracy in Two Systems: External Policy and Internal Conflict’, in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). p.8.

¹⁰ Indeed, as early as 1944, the US government considered Okinawa to be a good outlet to accomplish military ends at minimum cost to the US in the ‘PWC-123 Japan: Mandated Islands: Status of Military Government’. Masahide Ōta, ‘The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper,’ in *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, ed. Robert W. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1987). pp. 285–289. Later in the document ‘NSC 13/3: Report by the National Security Council on Recommendations with Respects to United States Policy Toward Japan’ (6 May 1949) the National Security Council confirmed the US intentions to ‘retain on a long-term basis the facilities at Okinawa and such other facilities as are deemed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be necessary in the Ryukyu Islands (...) the military bases at or near Okinawa should be developed accordingly’. As for the Okinawan people ‘The United States agencies responsible for administering the above-mentioned islands should promptly formulate and carry out a program on a long-term basis for the economic and social well-being and, to the extent practicable, for the eventual reduction to a minimum of the deficit in the economy of the natives.’ See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*, vol. VII, The Far East and Australasia (in two parts) Part 2. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976). pp.730–736. In other documents such as the NSC 49 and the NSC 60/1 the National Security Council complemented the view that bases in Okinawa and the administration of the former prefecture should remain under US control. In this regard, the NSC 60/1 of September 1950 expressed the view that a future treaty with Japan must guarantee the US ‘Exclusive strategic control’ of the Ryukyu. Quoted in Kensei Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under US Occupation*, ed. Edward H. Kaplan, vol. 23, *Studies on East Asia* (Bellingham: Western Washington University, 2001). p.45.

¹¹ ‘(...) the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters’. See Article 3rd, ‘Treaty of Peace with Japan’ in UCLA East Asia Studies Documents at <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/peace1951.htm> Visited on April 7, 2010.

¹² During most of the occupation the Ryukyu Islands were under the jurisdiction of the General Head Quarters of the Far East Command GHG/FECOM Eiji Takemae, *Inside G.H.Q. : The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (New York: Continuum, 2002). pp.121–123.

¹³ Mikio Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa* (Vancouver University of British Columbia, 1963). pp.23–24.

¹⁴ Usually an Army Brigadier General. Ibid.

¹⁵ This contradiction has been studied in Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under US Occupation*. p.xix.

¹⁶ The term ‘The Rock’ was amply used and had negative connotations. See Maj. Gen. David A.D. Ogden, ‘Keystone of the Pacific,’ *Army Informative* 9, no. 1 (1954). It was also common during the first years of the occupation that U.S military personnel were unwilling to support the war-devastated local population. For instance, Brigadier General William Crist, deputy Commander for the Military Government stated after landing ‘The Military Government will take measures to provide the minimum relief needed for civilian survival under international law’. Ōta, ‘The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper.’ Also it was also depicted as ‘simple minded country cousin’ of the Japanese. See Masanao Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*, vols., vol. 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2008). p.40.

¹⁷ For a complete study on the US efforts to highlight the local culture for their own purposes see Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*. pp.60–101.

¹⁸ For Michel Foucault’s theory in the role of the discourse to create structure of power see Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Leo Marshall Colin Gordon, Honh Mephram, Kate Soper (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1980). p.116.

¹⁹ Mark Selden, ‘Okinawa and American Colonialism,’ *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 3, no. 1 (1971). p.55.

²⁰ As Antonio Gramsci stated, ‘a principle of hegemony [implies that] for its hegemonic apparatus realization, it creates a new ideological terrain, determines a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge’. Thus, the creation of a new discourse (or ideology) is a necessary step in order to attain hegemony. David Forgacs, *A Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988). p.191.

²¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). p.3.

²² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C.J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970). p.47. But, in Said’s works there is strong criticism of Marx’s Orientalist approach to Asia and India.

²³ Said, *Orientalism*. p.12.

²⁴ Ibid. p.5. Following Said, the American version of Orientalism was moulded by the European example. For instance, the foundation of the ‘American Oriental Society’ in 1842 was politically — and not scholarly — framed. In the 1950s, Orientalism in the United States had a Cold War area-studies approach. Said, *Orientalism*. pp.294–296.

²⁵ ‘その非日本化を被差別状態からの’解放’と意識させることであつた’(trans. Is mine) Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*. p.60.

²⁶ Letter to the Secretary of the Navy in George H. Kerr, *Okinawa, the History of an Island People*, 1969 ed. (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1958). p.313.

²⁷ For instance Basil Hall and Jules Dumont. See Basil Hall, *Voyage to Loo Choo and Other Places in the Easter Seas, in the Years 1816: Including an Account with Buonaparte at St. Helena, in August 1817* (Edinburg: Constable, 1826). p.129. And Patrick Beillevaire, *Ryukyu Studies to 1854: Western Encounter Part 1*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Edition Synapse / Curzon, 2000).

p.355..

²⁸ Daniel Mann, 'The Teahouse of the August Moon,' (United States and Japan: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1956).

²⁹ This film promotes an Orientalist perception of the other; and by promoting it, this movie was contributing to the realization of the discourse. Michel Foucault, *El Orden Del Discurso*, trans. Alberto Gonzalez Troyano (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1970; reprint, 2008). p.18. Cf. Nicholas Evan Sarantakes, *Keystone: The American Occupation of Okinawa and US-Japanese Relations* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University, 2000). p.24–25.

³⁰ Frederic Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1992). p.1.

³¹ John Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider) (New York: Dramatists Play Service INC., 1952), Vern Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (New York: Signet Books, 1956 (1951)).

³² Even though the novel states that the story happens in the wake of the war, there are no elements whatsoever that remind us of the Battle of Okinawa. The play and the movie ignore any reference to a precise date, making the movie simply a story that happened in Okinawa. Similarly the Japanese elements have been almost completely erased (in the novel and play the inhabitants speak local dialect and Japanese).

³³ Said, *Orientalism*. p.21.

³⁴ This, of course, does not hinder the film from providing an 'American vision' of Okinawa. For an essay on Culture Industry see Theodor W. Adorno and Anson G. Rabinbach, 'Culture Industry Reconsidered,' *New German Critique* 6, no. Autumn (1975).

³⁵ Helen Mears, 'Our Blindspot in Asia,' *The Progressive* 21, no. 7 (1957). p.16.

³⁶ The main parties by 1952 were the Okinawan People's Part (Okinawa Jiminto) led by pro-communist Senaga Kamejiro; the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party (Okinawa Shakai Taishuto); Ryukyu Democratic Party (Ryukyu Minshuto). Initially some political parties celebrated the independence from Japan, however from 1952 on all political sectors concurred with the goal of reversion. Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. p.29, 31 Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa* (London: Routledge, 2006). pp.55–56

³⁷ Moriteru Arasaki, *Okinawa Gendaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 2005).

³⁸ Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. p.30.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p.38.

⁴⁰ Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider). p.8.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.13.

⁴² Daniel Karasik p.255. We could add that this vision on the Okinawa people has continued over time even after the reversion to Japan. For instance Kevin Maher, from the State Department, was reported saying in 2010 that the Okinawans were 'lazy (too lazy even to grow goya, the Okinawan staple bitter melon), immoral (there were too many out-of-wedlock children and they drank too much strong liquor), and as 'masters of manipulation and deception'' in Gavan McCormack, 'Deception and Diplomacy: The US, Japan, and Okinawa,'

in *The Asia-Pacific Journal* (2011).

⁴³ John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999). p.222.

⁴⁴ Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands. 1945–1950*, 2005 ed. (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1988). pp.5–6.

⁴⁵ Frank Gibney, 'Okinawa: Forgotten Island,' *TIME*, Nov. 28, 1949.

⁴⁶ Time, 'Okinawa: Unskilled Labor,' in *Time.com* (1958).; Mears, 'Our Blindspot in Asia. '; Otis W. Bell, 'Play Fair with Okinawa!,' *The Christian Century* LXXI, no. 3 (1954).; Barton M. Biggs, 'The Outraged Okinawans' *Harper's Magazine* 1958.

⁴⁷ Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. pp.5–14.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* p.15. In the movie, the character was played by Glenn Ford a leading Hollywood star of the times.

⁴⁹ In the book Sakini becomes less relevant. However in the play and in the movie the translator occupies a leading role.

⁵⁰ Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider)*. p.50.

⁵¹ For a study on mass culture and its critical approach to society see Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible*. p.29.

⁵² Art. VII, CA Procl.13. United States Civil Administration:1950–1972, *Laws and Regulations During the US Administration of Okinawa: 1945–1972*.

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