Preface

This is a study in human geography. It is not a complete ethnography, for such an undertaking would have required far more time than was available to me. It is based on a report, Studies in Okinawan Village Life, which I submitted to the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council in February, 1953, as a result of investigations carried on as a field associate in anthropology (I am, however, a geographer, not an anthropologist) for the Scientific Investigations in the Ryukyu Islands (SIRI) program. Without eliminating important detail, I have condensed and summarized many parts of the original report in the interest of a more concise presentation.

Upon arriving in Okinawa in July, 1951, I spent the first few days talking with officials who had, in the course of their duties, traveled widely throughout the island. From them I was able to obtain an idea of the typical agricultural villages and those which in some way were exceptional, like the model village of Oku in the north, or those that had come under direct American influence because of nearness to civil and military installations, or that combined fishing, stonecutting, or the exploitation of the forest with agriculture. With these guides in mind, I decided to select one village whose economy was based on agriculture—this meant primarily the growing of rice, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and soybeans. The number of villages that could meet this broad criterion was large, and it did not seem advisable to spend too much time selecting a village, since the criteria of what was typical might be just as obscure at the conclusion as at the beginning.

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Accordingly, I spent a day or so traveling in the general area south of the Chinen peninsula in the townships of Tamagusuku and Gushichan. These were close to Naha, and yet distant from the main centers of American influence. I wished to select a village in which the customary ways of doing things had been preserved, even though I could not hope for an isolated settlement, since all villages had felt, to some degree, the effects of the deadly campaign for Okinawa in World War II.

On one of these trips, I talked with the headman of Hanashiro and with the officials in the nearby township office of Gushichan, and concluded on the basis of what I saw of the agriculture and the conditions described by these cordial and coöperative officials, that this small village would be a satisfactory selection. In the beginning, an epidemic of encephalitis confined the investigations to daytime work.

The road from Naha to Hanashiro passes through the fishing and stone-cutting villages of Minatogawa and Nagamo, in the same township. The opportunity of studying these nonagricultural activities attracted me, and I took up residence in Minatogawa in late August, 1951, making frequent trips to Hanashiro, about one and a half miles away.

As my interest and awareness increased, I became convinced that a village in the northern forested area (the Kunigami region) would provide significant comparative material. At the suggestion of certain Okinawan forestry officials, I lived in the village of Matsuda, in Ginoza township, from October to December. Later all the villages were revisited for periods of about ten days each, following a preliminary analysis of the materials already gathered. I have depended on accounts of the villagers for those portions of the year, roughly from February to July, not covered by my residence. I returned to the United States on January 25, 1952.

The information was obtained in the following manner. (1) Personal conversations in the Japanese language with residents of the villages in which I lived; these supplied direct information and were used also to check the accuracy and significance of observations and impressions. These conversations took place wherever there was an opportunity for engaging

in them: at individual homes, at parties, in the fields, the quarry, and along the forest trails, in schools, shops, rice mills, and the like. (2) Information gathered from village land records, statistics, land maps, and family registers. Later there was considerable difficulty in securing comparability in the statistics, and, for this reason, the attempt to present quantitative data was in some cases abandoned in favor of a qualitative description. (3) Discussions with the American and Okinawan personnel of the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR). (4) The published works of others, which, for the most part, were read upon my return; these sources are acknowledged in the notes.

On completing a work such as this, one realizes very forcefully that its sources lie in the kindness, coöperation, knowledge, and patience of others. It is a pleasure to acknowledge this indebtedness.

Dr. Fred Eggan of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Chicago first suggested to me the possibility of undertaking this field study. Dr. Harold J. Coolidge, Executive Secretary of the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council, under whose auspices and supervision the SIRI program was conducted, created an atmosphere in which it was possible to pursue one's work freely and independently. I am grateful to him and to his staff.

Funds were made available by the Department of the Army to the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council. I received every courtesy from the military and civilian personnel of the Department of the Army both in Tokyo and in Okinawa. Brigadier General James A. Lewis and the staff of the USCAR showed a continuing interest and it was possible to work easily in Okinawa because of their assistance.

Mr. H. E. Diffenderfer, Director of the Civil Information and Education Department, which sponsored this study, gave his full coöperation both in encouragement and in administrative and clerical assistance. I have profited from discussions with Mr. Iwao Ishino, a colleague in the SIRI program, and with Dr. William Elmendorf, now of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Washington, and Dr. Allan Smith, of the

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Department of Anthropology of Washington State College, both of whom were formerly members of the Civil Information and Education Department staff.

I also wish to thank Mr. Richard Varney, then of the Department of Food and Natural Resources, and Mr. Taminato Choyō of the Ryukyuan Forestry Agency at Nago, Okinawa, for their advice and assistance in matters relating to forestry. Mr. Taminato was most liberal with his time and showed me personally several areas in the northern forest.

Dr. Egbert H. Walker, Associate Curator, Division of Phanerogams, Smithsonian Institution, has kindly helped me in clearing up several doubtful points about Okinawan plants and trees. Mr. George H. Kerr, Hoover Institute and Library, Stanford University, has read the historical section and has generously permitted me to use and refer to his report, Ryukyu: Kingdom and Province Before 1945, made under the SIRI program. Professor Carl O. Sauer and Professor John B. Leighly, Department of Geography, University of California, Berkeley, made it possible to have the maps and final typescript prepared; their consideration greatly simplified for me the final preparation of the manuscript. I am deeply grateful to Mr. John S. Gildersleeve of the editorial department of the University of California Press; his patient and close reading of the text, his forthright criticisms, and his constructive suggestions have brought about improvements on every page of this work. Miss Ynez D. Haase, Department of Geography, Berkeley, has given freely of her time in skillfully preparing the maps which accompany the text, and Mr. Ward Barrett, also of the Department of Geography, prepared the finished typescript.

My indebtedness to the people of the villages is even greater, but here I must confine myself to a few who either through their own knowledge or through the introductions they gave to others made it possible for me gradually to build up the body of information upon which this work is based.

In Hanashiro: Nakazato Ushikichi, a farmer and member of the Gushichan township council; Shiroma Kichiji, the headman and a farmer;

Sakemoto Genichi, former headman and operator of the rice mill; Nakazato Masao and his wife; Tokumori-san, a teacher of the Gushichan Junior High School and a resident of Hanashiro; Tamaye Yukio, a schoolteacher at the same school.

In Minatogawa: Moromizato Shinji, a schoolteacher of Aragusuku; Tamashiro Kamei, headman of Minatogawa and a fisherman; Uehara Shōichi, head of the Minatogawa Fishermen's Association; Kokuba Jūshin, a farmer and the village clerk; Moriye-san, the headman of Nagamo and a farmer; Irei Tokujun, principal of the Gushichan Junior High School and a resident of Nagamo.

My grateful thanks must go also to Mayor Uza and Vice-Mayor Miji of Guschichan township, public officials of whom any people could be proud, and to Nakama Chichō of Minatogawa, Tokumoto-san, and Kokuba-san, also on the township staff.

In Matsuda: Ikehara Seiyei, a farmer, and his wife; Matsuda Kiyoshi, a young farmer; Nagamine Yoshihiro; Urasaki Kokichi, principal of the Matsuda primary school; Yoshida Yoshikatsu, a farmer; Higa Mataaki and his wife; Ōshiro Tokuye, headman, and his assistants in the village office.

I am grateful to the many other residents of these villages with whom I talked and by whom I was received hospitably. Without their patience in explaining many points, elementary to them but often difficult for me, I could not have accumulated the data that are presented here.

Since this study is based on personal investigation, an extensive bibliography is not called for; instead, works which are pertinent to the discussion have been cited in the notes. All photographs were taken by the writer.

*Clarence J. Glacken
Berkeley, California
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