

Research on the Public Culture Construction of the Ryukyu Islands by the United States during the Cold War

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Abstract: Since Japan surrendered in 1945, the Ryukyu Islands have become a post-war territory. In the process of occupation, the United States chose to take over the entire Ryukyu Islands, replacing Japan's colonial status. In the process of its occupation and domination of Ryukyu, the United States, in consideration of its own strategic interests, formulated a cultural policy of "closing to the United States and leaving Japan, strengthening the subjectivity of Ryukyu". In the specific implementation process, it adopted various cultural measures such as establishing University of the Ryukyus, setting up the American cultural center, promoting English, and strengthening the friendly relationship between the US military and the people of Ryukyu. In this context, it has positive significance for the social and cultural development of the Ryukyu region and for the cultural diplomacy construction of the United States' global strategy during the Cold War.

1. Introduction

At present, most of the research on the United States' occupation of Ryukyu during the Cold War period is described in terms of military actions, control power, and various political activities, while there is relatively little discussion on cultural policy. Yoshitaka Ohuchi, from the Okinawa Institute of the University of Justice and Economics, has conducted research on the cultural policy of the United States' occupation of Ryukyu and the English education of the United States in Ryukyu. In the American academic community, due to the ten year long cooperation and assistance from Michigan State University in the United States to University of the Ryukyus, there are abundant original data resources about this period in Michigan State University in the United States. During this period, the United States also adopted a series of cultural policies towards the occupied territory of Ryukyu. On August 1, 1953, the American International Exchange Office was established. The National Security Council of the United States entrusted the American International Exchange Office with the following mission: to adopt policies conducive to the popularization of American culture among local residents in Ryukyu under the rule of the American civilian government. In order to implement the policies of the United States Department of International Exchange, the United States deepened its cultural construction of Ryukyu in the context of the Cold War and established relevant departments and institutions to manage the public culture of occupied Ryukyu^[1].

2. Setting up a public cultural management department

2.1 Cultural Information Department's Management of Mass Media

The Ministry of Culture and Information manages local newspapers, magazines, and multimedia. The main task of this department is to manage the public media in Ryukyu, issue orders from the United States High Commissioner and Civil Affairs Officer, and produce promotional and reporting materials. When necessary, it is necessary to plan activities that showcase the achievements of the United States' policy towards Ryukyu and organize Ryukyu friendly performances. In terms of publicity, he is mainly responsible for printing and distributing materials issued by the American civil government, such as instructions issued by the High Affairs Officer. In order to facilitate public dissemination and local residents' understanding of the intentions of the US military, promotional materials should be produced and distributed in Japanese and English bilingual printing. In addition, the department needs to observe and record the movements of local newspapers and other media in Ryukyu every day. For example, if it is found that local media reports in Ryukyu include reports on US military related accidents and critical articles, they will be recorded in relevant reports^[2].

In terms of publication distribution, the main task of the department is to release official cultural promotional materials from the United States. Periodically publish weekly news newspapers, printing the two monthly magazines of American Civil Administration official propaganda, Today's Ryukyu and Shouli Light. The magazine "Shouli Guang" was founded in 1959 and is mainly aimed at the general public. It is printed and distributed in two languages: English and Japanese. From the article "To Readers" published in March 1964 in "The Light of Rites", we can understand its main content.

2.2 Investigation and analysis of public culture

In order to grasp the public opinion of the local people, the survey and analysis section conducted six surveys in Ryukyu in 1951, 1957, 1958, 1965, 1967, and 1969. The main content was to investigate the culture that Ryukyu people most like, starting from the books they read, the radio programs and movies they are interested in, and analyze the points of interest in public culture. For example, the official survey report of the United States in 1951 was titled "Survey of Ryukyu People's Acceptance of Radio", "Audiovisual Habits of Ryukyu People" in 1957, "Current Status of Mass Media" in 1958, and "Views of Ryukyu People on Ryukyu's" Return to Japan "in 1967. The respondents involved 1200 people born in Okinawa Island, 250 in Miyako-jima and 200 in Yaeyama Islands. The investigation report plans activities for the American government to understand the public cultural undertakings in Ryukyu^[3].

The Cultural Information Department, the Investigation and Analysis Department, and the Cultural Business Department of the Cultural Propaganda Department of the Civil Government of the United States complement each other. During the Cold War, the Civil Information Education Bureau basically implemented the guiding spirit of cultural education in the occupied areas, and played a role in promoting American culture and values. But unlike other post-war occupied areas in the United States, the United States has significantly increased its supervision of public culture in Ryukyu, emphasizing the cultivation of pro American thinking and promoting American culture among the general public in Ryukyu.

3. Establishing a university to cultivate professional talents who serve the beauty industry

To meet the strategic needs of the United States in the Ryukyu Islands, it is necessary to train relevant talents to serve the occupation and rule of the United States in University of the Ryukyus,

and to build a bridgehead against the socialist camp. With the assistance of the United States Department of the Army, the University of the Ryukyus was established in 1950. (1)At the beginning of the construction, the United States Department of the Army set three principles or directions for the Ryukyu University:., University of the Ryukyus should promote the popularization of American values such as liberalism, democracy, capitalism and equal rights between men and women, as well as nurture the pro American feelings of Ryukyu people; (1) The San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan has clearly defined the principle that the Ryukyu Islands are under the rule of the United States. It is necessary to emphasize the independence of Ryukyuan culture culture which is different from Japan's "native" culture, curb the "native reversion" trend of Ryukyu, and protect its unique traditional culture and art; (1)In order to improve the efficiency of the United States administration in Ryukyu and promote the development of the Ryukyu economy, the training of administrative officials, technical personnel and educational practitioners who can assist the United States in ruling Ryukyu should be implemented.

These three construction directions reflect the cultural Cold War policy of the United States in the international environment at that time, the "local" separation policy between Ryukyu and Japan, and the comprehensive construction policy of US military bases. Before the establishment of University of the Ryukyus, the policy makers of the US military government and the administrators of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands had a dispute about how to name the first university in the Ryukyu Islands^[4]. At that time, there were two plans for the name: "University of the Ryukyus" and "Okinawa University". At that time, someone put forward the idea of naming it "Okinawa University", thinking that "Ryukyu" was the national name given to Ryukyu by China during the tribute period in history, and Okinawa was the inherent name of the island. From the perspective of the United States Department of the Army, the establishment of University of the Ryukyus is not only to provide educational resources for Okinawa itself, but also to make contributions to a wider area such as Amami Ōshima and Ryukyu Islands south of 30° north latitude. It can be seen that the United States initially expected University of the Ryukyus at the strategic level.

Under the guidance of the US military government, University of the Ryukyus was founded on May 22, 1950. At the beginning of its establishment, University of the Ryukyus had six academic departments, namely, the English Department, the Education Department, the Social Science Department, the Science Department, the Agriculture Department and the Applied Technology Department. At the same time, it was equipped with the Affairs Department, the Records Department, the Management Department and the affiliated library.

For the management and operation of University of the Ryukyus, with the assistance of the Education in the United States Convocation, the United States Department of the Army enlisted University of the Ryukyus's partner institutions in the United States mainland, and finally determined the Michigan State University to assist University of the Ryukyus in its construction. This was called the "Michigan Mission" at that time, which can be seen the strategic significance behind it. From 1951 to 1968, Michigan State University, as a partner institution of University of the Ryukyus, sent a number of teaching staff to University of the Ryukyus and assisted in teaching and scientific research. After the end of studying in the United States, 20% of them returned to Ryukyu for business; 18% returned to University of the Ryukyus to teach; 15% of the international students work in the US civilian government or the US military base; 5% of the overseas students work in the Government of the Ryukyu Islands; The remaining international students stay in the United States or travel to Japan.

4. Create a cultural club to promote American culture and values

The public cultural construction of the United States in Ryukyu is not only limited to the

Intelligentsia, but also promotes American culture and values to the ordinary citizens of Ryukyu by establishing cultural halls. Since 1950, the United States Bureau of Non-governmental Information Education has set up public cultural centers in the areas occupied by the United States, set up libraries in the areas occupied by Japan and Germany, and provided English literature and general publications for citizens to read. Similar to the libraries set up by the Bureau of Non-governmental Information Education in the areas occupied by Japan and Germany, the United States government has created the Ryukyu American Cultural Guild in Ryukyu^[5].

4.1 The Creation of American Cultural Clubs

Similar to the libraries set up by the non-governmental information education bureaus in the Japanese and German occupied areas, the American civil government established the Ryukyu American Cultural Guild in Ryukyu. From 1951 to 1952, Ryukyu American Cultural Guild Hall was set up in five cities, namely Nago City, Ishikawa City, Naha City, Miyako-jima (Pingliang City) and Yaeyama Islands (Shiyuan City). As a cultural propaganda center in the United States, each guild hall has an open-shelf library with over 10000 volumes, a large auditorium, classrooms, and a cinema that can accommodate 200-300 people. The opening time of the Ryukyu Club is from 9am to 10pm, and it is free for all Ryukyu residents. In addition, magazines such as "The Light of Etiquette" and "Today's Ryukyu" issued by the American People's Government in Ryukyu can be read for free in the museum.

After the establishment of the Ryukyu Cultural Association, four goals were established: (1) Enhancing the independence and autonomy of the Ryukyu people; (2) Explain the policies and activities of the United States and the American civilian government, and arouse local residents' yearning and admiration for Americans and American culture; (3) Thoroughly confront the ideology of communism; (4) Publicize the mission and policy effectiveness of the US military and the US civilian government.

From the perspective of the above goals, in order to further popularize American culture, in the 1950s, the Five Cultural Clubs began to set up mobile libraries with English books loaded on cars, regularly touring various places to provide cultural services to local residents. In addition, the Ryukyu Cultural Association aims to attract the participation of the Ryukyu people. He also introduced the guild hall in the American civil government magazine "Courtesy Light": The Cultural Clubhouse is designed to enhance mutual understanding between Ryukyu and the United States. Each Cultural Clubhouse is open to the public. If residents have difficulty traveling, the tour buses of the Cultural Clubhouse will be responsible for transportation. The library of each Cultural Clubhouse has purchased reference books from various industries. For the convenience of the public, some English works are also provided with Japanese translations. In addition, for those who need to borrow Chinese and English books from the US military base library, they can Apply to the local cultural club.

4.2 Setting up English classrooms throughout the country

In addition to setting up cultural centers, promoting cultural and artistic activities, and establishing libraries, the United States has also opened a large number of English classrooms in Ryukyu. Due to the special strategic position of the Ryukyu Islands, the popularization of English has been given priority by the American government. In order to promote English among Ryukyu residents as much as possible, the American people's government has taken three measures, namely, opening English workshops, awarding English learning, and setting up English centers.

The American People's Government announced that in order to promote the foreign exchange and development of Ryukyu society, Ryukyu towns and villages have opened three or six months of

English workshops. The Culture and Education Bureau of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands implements the administrative instructions of the American people's government and issues a notice to the residents of Ryukyu, "The Essentials of English Culture in Cities, Towns and Villages", pointing out that "now we are under the civil administration of the US military, in order to improve the cultural quality of Ryukyu people in the future, we should actively absorb American culture. As a backward nation, we should learn from the best nations in the world". According to the instructions of the announcement, the Culture and Education Bureau of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands will organize English workshops in five regions of Naha, Ishikawa, Minghu, Miyako and Bachongshan, which can be attended by the public free of charge at any time.

On May 13, 1963, in order to further popularize English education, the American government we have started planning to establish an English center, which will meet the talent needs of the education industry, government, and other professional fields. Fink, who was then the Director of Education of the Nationalist government of the United States, wrote in today's Ryukyu, a propaganda magazine of the American National Government, "(1) English is the common language in the world today and an important means of communication between countries around the world; (2) young people need to learn English in industrial technology, science, medicine and other fields of work; (3) In order to convey the instructions of the High Affairs Officer to the people of Ryukyu and improve their understanding, it is very necessary to learn and promote English". The English Center, established on May 31, 1963, is dedicated to improving the English learning ability of Ryukyu people. Its headquarters is located in Naha, Okinawa Island, and it also has branches in Miyako-jima Island and Bachongshan Island. On August 6, 1963, in order to strengthen talent education, the American People's Government issued No. 19 directive, officially starting the construction of the English Center in Chidamachi, Shouli, near University of the Ryukyus. The English Center formulated the following eight working guidelines: (1) Carrying out research related to English education; (2) Establish in-service English teacher training sessions; (3) Assist in conducting research on English education; (4) Collect relevant materials on English education; (5) Publish the central journal "English Education"; (6) Establish adult vocational English workshops; (7) Provide radio English lectures; (8) Establish an English training course for international students studying in the United States. In terms of English center settings, there are seven English training classrooms, including three classrooms in the civil service office in Xiharacho, two in the Ryukyu regional exchange center, one in Kadena Air Base, and one in Naha Air Force Base. In addition, adult English teaching and English libraries targeting the general public have also been established. The library provides English professional journals and magazines. In addition, there are also three to five hours of oral dialogue training every week. This series of measures has had a significant impact on the cultural life of Ryukyu residents^[6].

5. Effectively alleviating conflicts between the United States and the people of Ryukyu

In order to strengthen the emotional bond between Americans and Ryukyu people, ease the contradiction between the American troops stationed in Ryukyu and ordinary people, and promote the implementation of American policies and the stability of Ryukyu society, the Department of Cultural Affairs of the American People's Government has carried out a series of social activities to enhance exchanges between the two sides, such as concerts, English classrooms, special exhibitions, lectures, cartoon screenings, children and youth programs, and the promotion of library services. In 1957, cultural exchange activities began around women, students, and professional groups. Every week, high school students aged 12-18 participate in club activities organized by the Ryumi Center in Naha, Minami, Ishikawa, Miyako, and Hachiyama. The members of the "Shimen Club" are all English majors from University of the Ryukyus. The students of this club go to the US military base

every week to exchange English and carry out some volunteer services.

In order to strengthen military civilian relations, in February 1961, a "Ryukyu American Community Exchange Activity" was launched across the Ryukyu Islands, including all branches of the United States Air Force, Navy, Army, and Marine Corps. At the same time, the "Ryukyu American Joint Committee" was established to maintain military civilian relations. The committee is composed of five Ryukyu people and five American soldiers, and has branches in five regions of Ryukyu. The Commission is under the leadership of the High Commissioner of the United States Civil Government. In addition, the "Ryukyu American Joint Committee" in various regions is also responsible for communication and cooperation between the local government and the US military.

The Department of Cultural Affairs of the American People's Government has carried out the following social activities to enhance the exchanges between American troops stationed in Ryukyu and ordinary people.

Firstly, music and drama plans. Under the preparation of the US military and the Ryukyu American Cultural Guild, a symphony choir was established in Naha in 1961. This symphony orchestra was established to provide high-level symphonic performances to the Ryukyu people. Secondly, library activities. In order to promote American books in the Ryukyu community, the American People's Government set up the "Book Week" activity in 1952 to cultivate the public's reading habits. In July 1962, more than 50 Ryukyu and American librarians participated in the 10th anniversary of Ryukyu Book Week in the library of the Cultural Center. This event selected three Ryukyu librarians to travel to Tokyo, Japan for a three-month learning activity. Thirdly, animation screening activities. In order to meet the cultural needs of the Ryukyu people, the Cultural Center began to carry out film and animation screening activities in various parts of Ryukyu. The themes of movies and animations are also mainly based on American culture, and at that time, the world-renowned Disney animations were popular among local youth and children in Ryukyu. Fourthly, youth clubs. In order to enrich the life of young people, the American people's government set up a reading club, a music appreciation club, an art group and a drama group in the cultural hall. The most active one among them is the Naha Youth Club. Youth clubs often organize football matches and sightseeing at American schools in US military bases. Square dance, Ryukyu traditional dance competition, Karate competition, outdoor barbecue, picnic and other activities are also held. Fifth, adult social activities. In order to strengthen the connection between American soldiers and Ryukyu society and improve the quality of life of young women, the Cultural Center has courses such as Home economics, Cuisine and Flower Planting. We also hold a Ryukyu American family exchange event, where local women in Ryukyu and the families of American soldiers at the US military base visit each other's families to learn about home economics and cuisine. Young soldiers in US military bases will invite local youth to participate in baseball, basketball, and swimming competitions, deepening the friendship and exchange between the US military and the local people. The public cultural activities between the US military and the public have deepened the local people's understanding of the US military, creating a relatively stable social environment for the construction of military bases in the United States during the Cold War. Although opposition to base construction still exists, the public cultural construction of the US military has played a certain role in easing military civilian relations.

6. Conclusion

Since the 1950s, the United States has carried out a "cultural cold war" worldwide to fight against the Soviet Union and other socialist bloc countries. However, unlike the cultural policies of Germany and Japan in the occupied areas, the United States' public cultural construction in Ryukyu is characterized by large investment, long duration, strong implementation and obvious results. In a

specific historical period, the United States established University of the Ryukyus, set up cultural halls. The promotion of American culture and the development of military and civilian friendship activities have stabilized the dominance of the United States in Ryukyu Islands. The Ryukyu Islands have completed the transition from the "bridgehead to prevent the revival of Japanese militarism" of the United States to the "base to prevent the spread of communism in the Asia Pacific region, which is of great significance for strengthening the United States' rule over Ryukyu.

During the twenty-seven years of American rule over Ryukyu, did the cultural policies adopted by the United States during its occupation of Ryukyu have had a certain impact on the value system of the Ryukyu people. In addition, under the influence of the anti-American base movement of Ryukyu people, the American civilian government did not take such coercive measures as restrictions and dispersal, but took the form of relatively friendly Ryukyu US exchange activities. The US military base held the friendship between the US military and Ryukyu people, and the Ryukyu US cultural hall held a variety of cultural activities to cultivate the "pro American sentiment" of Ryukyu people and form democratic values. It can be seen from this that in terms of public cultural construction, the dual policy of high intensity management and flexible cultural activities in the United States has achieved significant results. Democratic values are still reflected in today's Okinawa society, and the struggle adopted by Okinawa in the anti-American base movement and its influence can be seen in the shadow of American style democracy and freedom values.

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