

[Introduction]

Cultures of Resilience and Vitality in the Okinawa Islands and Beyond

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Introduction

This volume of the *Okinawan Journal of Island Studies* is the culmination of three years of a multi-disciplinary project on islands organized around the interrelated themes of resilience and vitality. Founded by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology-Japan, it was organized as a campus-wide academic research and development project (“Multidisciplinary Project on Vitality and Resilience in Small Islands”) of the Research Institute for Islands and Sustainability (RIIS) at the University of the Ryukyus. It also served the Institute’s major objective of developing a network of research on small island regions by way of paying particular attention to islanders’ spoken or unspoken voices, cultures, traditions, and connections to *island*. In the project, islanders are broadly defined as those who live on islands, who have roots on an island, or who have complex roots and routes in relation to the islands and their identifications and positionalities may be constructed through cross-oceanic interactions.

Since April 2019, over twenty faculty members from the humanities, social sciences, engineering, and medicine were brought together from different disciplines and inter-disciplines, including economics, tourism, literature, gender studies, American studies, diaspora studies, cultural anthropology, archeology, sociology, education, medicine, and archival studies. Originally, scholars were scheduled to conduct fieldwork in different island regions, such as Okinawa Island, Kume Island, Hawai‘i, Guahan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Miyako Island in close partnership with community members, stakeholders, NGOs, activist groups, writers, medical practitioners, and community organizers, in order to develop community-based island studies methods. Based on each member’s research interests, we organized five research groups to develop a common research agenda to build closer communication among them. The groups were community, disaster prevention, healthcare, military and environment, and history. Each group consisted of two to five members. They held their own meetings and study sessions, which were shared at project-wide workshops to discuss and develop our understanding of the ways in which

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the islands on which they focused, the issues that had emerged, and peoples in their studies interrelate or differ from other contexts.

However, a few months into the project, we found ourselves in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and the concomitant travel restrictions by the government and the university that followed. This meant significant modifications and adjustment to our research methods to abide by the implementation of strict guidelines that prevented us from both domestic and international travel. The situation made it extremely challenging to carry out the in-person interviews, meetings, and archival research that are central to a project to build relationships with island communities. The unexpected situation turned our focus away from conducting new research to reevaluating research materials, interviews, and data that had already been in hand concerning our themes. For instance, some members, such as So Hatano and Jun Kobayashi, separately found creative ways to work in collaboration with research partners off island to conduct research outside Okinawa Island.

In this introduction, I first trace major discussions on resilience on and off islands and the critiques that are relevant to this project to describe how our project on cultures of resilience and vitality may relate or may diverge from them. Secondly, I introduce the essays published in this volume, highlighting their contributions to cultures of resilience in thematically related sections.

On Islands, Islanders, and Engagement with Island Studies in Okinawa

Founded in 2018, the Research Institute for Islands and Sustainability (RIIS) inherited the accumulated research and achievements of its predecessor, the International Institute for Okinawan Studies (IIOS). RIIS consolidates research in the humanities and social sciences on small island regions as its objectives overlap or resonate with the mission of the University of the Ryukyus, which is an island university characterized by its geographic and geopolitical location at the intersections of the Japan mainland, Taiwan, China, the Philippines, and the Pacific Islands. This positioning is perhaps well embodied in the slogan for the seventieth anniversary of the university's establishment, "Island Wisdom, for the World, for the Future" (University of the Ryukyus Home Page). University of the Ryukyus President Mutsumi Nishida explains:

The University was established in 1950 during the US military occupation after World War II. While other national universities were established by the Japanese government, this university was established with the enthusiasm of many Okinawans and Okinawans of Japanese descent. For this reason, we have inherited the philosophy of a "land grant university," which characterizes the kind of US university that contributes to the local community. For this reason, the University of the Ryukyus has had a strong connection with the local community from its very beginning. Hence, it is our mission to return the results of our research and education to the local community. (Toyo Keizai Academic)

His idea of community-oriented research, community engagement, and social and scien-

tific application of research findings for the community reground us in the recognition that university research and researchers are part of the island community.

This attitude toward the study of islands can be further elaborated upon by the current and ongoing discussions in island studies to study “islands on their own terms,” as Godfrey Baldacchino (2006, 3) states in the inaugural issue of *Island Studies Journal*. By the study of islands on their own terms, Baldacchino emphasizes the process that “islanders are reclaiming more of this field from mainlanders, and embracing more participative methodologies while doing so” (7). Further, Baldacchino argues: “The emerging consensus is that ‘island studies’ should not necessarily be seen as a discipline, and perhaps not even as a ‘discipline-in-waiting.’ It also need not have a distinctive methodology. It is primarily an inter-, or even trans-, disciplinary focus of critical inquiry and scholarship” (9). The strength and potential that interweave different disciplines in island studies seem to be islandness “that does not determine, but contours and conditions physical and social events in distinct and distinctly relevant ways” (Baldacchino 2004, 278).

Geographically and historically located at the intersection of Asia and the Pacific Islands, Okinawa has been heavily influenced and impacted by Japan, China, and the United States. Given this history, the University of the Ryukyus, which houses faculties of the humanities and social sciences, global and regional studies, education, science, medicine, engineering, and agriculture, is a desirable place to pursue a multi- and interdisciplinary initiative on aspects of islandness.

Approaches to Resilience

The etymology of the word *resilience* can be traced back to the seventeenth-century Latin word *resilire* (Online Etymology Dictionary). The word *resilire* is a combination of *re* (again or return) and *salire* (to fly or to jump over). It is defined as the ability to rebound or jump back after being subjected to an external force, a form of elasticity or power of recovery. In Japan, it is often used in governmental projects to describe recovery after experiencing natural disasters or other high-risk events and has become a widely used and known term for use in international support of domestic administrations, local governments, and the general public.

In recent years resiliency has been used in Japan as a slogan for the political, economic, and physical recovery efforts of the people involved in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake. For example, Kyoto University and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Public Corporation (NTT) conducted several projects with the theme of resilience (Kyoto University and NTT Resilience Research Group 2009, 2012, 2016). In 2014, the Abe administration also carried out a national project called “Action Plan for National Resilience” to manage risks, to enhance production competitiveness, to create a safe lifestyle, and to produce the people to achieve those goals (Cabinet Secretariat 2014). Juergen Weichselgartner and Kelman (2015) caution that “resilience continues to be mainly externally defined by expert knowledge from academia, international organizations and gov-

ernmental agencies . . . rarely shedding light on the ‘practice of affected people at risk’” (257). Such a conceptualization of resilience, however, holds the parties and people affected accountable even though they are not directly involved in the planning or decision making. Allocating responsibility back to the affected thus places expectations for recovery on them while many such challenges are too great for small communities to overcome.

In the extensive works on islands and resilience, the essentialist association between the two has been contested (Kelman 2020; Anderson 2019; Gill 2017). Baldacchino (2020) argues that resilience is not a monopoly of islands or islanders, although it is a term often applied to islands and islanders since without some resilience, they would not survive. However, as exemplified by discourses and commentaries made through the United Nations Development Programme (UNPD) and the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) websites, while the arguments over resilience are made visible with small islands in the context of the climate change crisis, according to Baldacchino (2014), they are done so by creating “a chronic vulnerability and fragility predicated on islandness and small island scale” and “toned down later with some token recognition of agency, resilience, capacity building” (4). Criticizing the unproductive association between resilience and vulnerability as different sides of the same coin, Baldacchino reminds us that resilience constitutes only a small fraction of island life and might result in highlighting responses to vulnerability. He suggests, instead, to revisit the process and combinations of factors that contribute to small islands’ survival in the twenty-first century, for instance, what is described as “‘pseudo-development’ strategies” (3).

Thus, scholars who study islands have been critical of about the quick association between islands and resilience in emblematic ways as the term became a buzzword (Baldacchino 2020). When resilience in island studies is defined as a characteristic of islands, it is important to note that resilience arises from the preconceived preception that islands are inherently vulnerable. Resilience theorized in this framework is based on the premise that islands are always vulnerable, creating a discourse that effectively retreats from self-reliance.

The grievous association between vulnerability and resilience assigned to islands is largely attributed to national and international organizations and initiatives as well as academic circles, rather than to the islanders themselves. But I wonder if they have disclaimed the term, and is it possible for islanders to reclaim cultural articulations of resilience? Living on the islands of Okinawa and thinking as and with islanders, these discords and pitfalls of resilience created in academic analysis may force the paving of a creative direction. Certainly, despite the academic critiques, islanders, their cultures, histories, tactics, memories, artifacts, and way of life are articulated through various forms of resilience enacted in epistemological and ontological discourse. This unitary, unidirectional causality and polarized relationship between continents and islands, or vulnerability and resilience, a discussion has emerged that sees resilience as a product of life’s interactions and a relational approach to life’s dynamic possibilities. Thinking *with*

islands may shape resilience as one of the prevalent analytics of Anthropocene thinking (Pugh 2018; Pugh and Chandler 2021).

In this special issue, we conceptualize resilience as a part of our island cultures that is mobilized by islanders' epistemologies, ontologies, relationalities with diasporic communities, and literary imaginaries as island vitalities. In other words, vitalities connote social and cultural knowledge and resources created and passed on in island communities. Through this conceptualization, the project is designed to work with the islanders, their written and spoken work, actions, and responses to think about how islanders create cultures of resilience utilizing their epistemology and ontology as crucial resources. In doing so, this special issue highlights the intersections, potentials, or traps of thinking about cultures of resilience with islands and islanders.

Thinking with Feminisms

With the discussions and critiques of islands and resilience associations in mind, I now return to the conceptualization of the project. As the leader of the project, the focus on resilience and vitality was developed from my own research interests in militarization of Asia Pacific regions and international feminist movements against US militarism. In other words, it has an aspect of feminist resistance and resilience in the islands. Thus, the beginning of the project was conceptualized through feminist methodologies and theories that address social inequalities and hierarchies that perpetuate gender issues in intersecting manners with race, sex, sexuality, class, and nations. Marina Karides (2017) points out that critical analysis of those issues is largely neglected.

Islands are often and have often been gendered as female or feminine. We see this in literature, mass media, and tourism referring to islands' smallness, and weakness or even exoticism or as a place of male exploration and colonialism (Camacho 2011; DeLoughrey 2007; Ginoza 2019). These stereotypes serve to reinforce political agendas of the colonizer, patriarchal dichotomy, and hegemonic heteronormative masculinity. Women's movements, even early on, demanded equality to men through, for instance, equal rights to vote, job opportunities, access to education, shared housework, childrearing, and elderly care, rejecting the social construction of women's innate vulnerability or weakness to men. On many occasions, the claim to equality developed into the voice of a group, a community, a region, or even a global movement. The idea of the island resilience and vitality project originates in my education, my work as a scholar activist, and my engagement in feminist writing. Feminist scholars have shown worldwide that women are not naturally weak, not inferior as represented in the widely and socially constructed ideology practiced and perpetuated through systems of capitalism and colonialism that permeate many aspects of our daily lives. That is to say, such essentialism is not a self-articulation of women's agency in their own terms but is often a stereotype and ideological construct. Paralleling the critiques introduced above about the essentialist association of vulnerability as an island characteristic, the assignment of weakness to

women has been reinforced and perpetuated by all manner of institutions, including governments, academia, laws, popular culture, militarism, tourism, and colonialism (Teiwa 1994; Collins 2004; Smith 2005; Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 2019).

In this volume, resilience is understood in multiple and multilayered ways as each contributor draws from their own disciplinary or inter-disciplinary background. In each article, the researchers who are members of the project elucidate the conditions of the communities formed in the process of mobilizing their resources and vitality. The factors that trigger resilience are assumed to be the language, culture, knowledge, history, cultural heritage, and understanding of the environment that the community has consciously or unconsciously formed, which are largely expressed as vitality. Resilience is the process by which the vitality of interlocking and non-interlocking communities is linked or (re) resourced when disturbances occur. The resilience invoked in this process may take the form of expression, narratives, tours, resistance, actions or movements based on a sense of self and community. For example, there are local communities made up of local administrative units; geographical and kinship groups; ideological communities made up of social movements and religious organizations; economic communities made up of economic coalitions, organizations, and capital networks; or online communities mediated through the web. Therefore, cultures of resilience can be seen in a variety of ways, depending on the type of community. We hope to contribute to the ways of furthering island studies by working with islands to identify epistemologies and ontologies that enable and constitute cultures of resilience.

The volume is divided into five thematically related parts: Island Communities, Overcoming the Past, Health and Life, Military and Environment, and Disaster Prevention. Below I introduce essays in each section highlighting their major discussions, analyses, and critiques in relation to cultures of resilience.

Island Communities

Part I of the volume includes works that consider various forms of communities that are shaped, imagined, and storied through cultures of resilience in the process of migrations and nonlinear experiences of colonialism. In “Early Human Cultural and Communal Diversity in the Ryukyu Islands,” Kaishi Yamagiwa analyzes language communities in the Ryukyu Islands by evaluating archeological data. He demonstrates that language and cultural variations in the Ryukyu Islands chain were caused by migrations in the earlier stages of human habitation 6,000–4,000 years ago. Drawing from contemporary linguistic analyses, Yamagiwa shows that despite the political unification of the island regions by the Ryukyu Kingdom in the fifteenth century, the diversity of human behavior and culture between islands or districts persisted. The findings indicate that characteristics of island geography and environment shaped language communities to be fragmented yet resilient to external influences.

In “Remembering the Battle of Okinawa and Reshaping Community War Narratives:

The Commemoration of *Irei no Hi* in the Okinawan Diaspora in Hawai‘i,” Kinuko Mae-hara Yamazato looks at the Okinawan community in Hawai‘i and the ways in which their efforts to commemorate the Battle of Okinawa serve as sites of (re)enacting and learning a collective Okinawan identity. Yamazato uses a life history approach to unpack the process of storytelling and life-story writing in the grassroots Okinawa diasporic community that the Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii (OGSH) established in 1994. OGSH archives and has built its database of over 50,000 Okinawans who emigrated worldwide in the early 1900s, and it holds monthly storytelling sessions and collects and publishes its members’ life stories, essays, diaries, and poems. According to Yamazato, women’s narratives in particular provide counternarratives to the hegemonic and often male-centered immigrant narratives of persistence, success, and upward mobility. Thus, Yamazato demonstrates how the act of writing their genealogies becomes a site for resistance, creating a resource for future community resilience.

In “Okinawan Islands Epistemologies in the Women’s Unai Festival of 1985,” I examine the diversity of island epistemologies in the women’s movement in Okinawa through the Unai Festival held in 1985. Redefining Okinawa as plural, I argue that the contemporary women’s movement, through the Unai Festival, makes visible the diversity of Okinawan women by redefining the traditionally established women’s role of Unai, sisters and goddesses that protect their male siblings. I demonstrate that the committee members’ positioning generated internal critiques of a monolithic women’s role in society to diversify its meaning. Making visible a women’s network that expands to every island of Okinawa and in relationship with other feminists worldwide, the essay argues that the festival mobilized agencies that envision feminist epistemologies.

In a comparative literary study of Liglav A-Wu from Taiwan and Tami Sakiyama from Okinawa, Ikue Kina offers an important account of reclaiming women’s place in each author’s indigenous community in her essay “Indigenous Women’s Storytelling in Resistance and Resilience: The Stories of Liglav A-Wu and Tami Sakiyama.” Kina argues that both authors’ act of narrating women’s stories in Taiwan and Okinawa underscores the responsibility for sustaining and restoring communal memories where their relationship to place is epistemologically reasserted. In this respect, memory of place and storytelling sustain the islands’ communal resilience to the marginalization of women.

In their co-authored study “Cultural Heritage and Its Authenticity: Specialization of Local Pasts through Making Models in Jinguashi Mine, Taiwan,” a mine that operated until the mid-twentieth century during the Japanese colonial period, So Hatano and Hui-ju Lin examine the local community’s effort at memorializing the abandoned mine as a cultural heritage site, the Taipei Prefectural Gold Museum. They pay particular attention, though, to the process whereby younger generations carried out the creation of an accompanying exhibition site, the Jinguashi Culture Hall, where they reconstructed a model of the area architecture of the past from the oral histories of their parents and old photos as a form of cultural resilience. The authors demonstrate that the mobilization of the memories must be considered a multi-generational “historical practice” instead of historical

research that pursues accuracy of the “facts.” The past actualized in an architectural model in this manner, they argue, reveals an ideological effort of resistance and a resilience against the erasure of their past.

Overcoming the Past

This section presents three interrelated essays on the Battle of Okinawa, which took place in 1945, a violent event that scarred the collective memory of Okinawans and in which one-fourth of all Okinawans were killed. The section title reflects the name of the research group led by Atsushi Toriyama, whose own contribution is included here. Their essays investigate the implications and the potentials of facing and interpreting events of the battle as a form of relief, accountability, and reconsideration of difficult memories that may diversify the narratives of the battle.

In “‘Overcoming the Past’ Concerning the War Experiences on Kumejima,” Atsushi Toriyama traces the murders by the Japanese Army on Kume Island in August 1945 of twenty-one residents who were suspected of espionage. By “overcoming the past,” Toriyama refers to an effort of pursuing the truth and accountability for the residents described in memoirs and testimonies, including “The War on Kumejima” in which Toshi Uezu, the author herself, is implicated. Toriyama’s research highlights how the unresolved past is incorporated into the island’s memory and passed on through peace tour guides to unpack and rethink the atrocities of war with the next generations. Such an effort by islanders necessitates endurance through self-critiques instead of relying on the memory of victimhood and perpetrators of violence.

Coinciding in period and place, Sejong Oh discusses the massacre of a Korean family that lived on Kume Island in “Historical Salvation and Human Recovery: The Massacre of Koreans on Kumejima.” While the massacre was ordered by Tadashi Kayama, the commander of the Japanese military at the time, the involvement of the residents of the island, although known, had been hidden from the public until 1970, when an Okinawan, Junichi Tomimura, publicly recounted the event and built a monument to remember the incident. Oh argues that the recognition helps “to restore the damaged human dignity of the massacred people.” He further demonstrates that from the visualization of the historical event emerges a form of resilience that “has the potential to extend the history of ‘us’ beyond national borders,” and in so doing, islanders themselves “dismantle not only the conventional narratives of history but also the systems of governance that allow events to be repeated.”

Syota Tanno’s essay “A Descriptive Review of Research on Peace Education Concerning Okinawa” discusses present-day institutional engagement with the history of the Battle of Okinawa through school-organized peace tours on Okinawa Island. Tanno locates Okinawa, because of its history, as an important site for peace education for Japan since Okinawa is a major destination for school trips from outside the prefecture. Reviewing published research findings and analyses on the matter that classify peace education

into three categories by their contents—human resources, material resources, and hybrid resources—Tanno argues that preparing sufficient material resources is necessary to address issues related to qualitative differences within the human resources. By human resources, Tanno refers to the oral history narratives by the survivors of war as well as the narratives of tour guides who retell the accounts of the survivors. His conclusion presents a contemporary tendency for peace education that utilizes material resources such as photographs, historical documents, battle sites, and wartime relics to teach about the war in addition to narratives of war experiences by both survivors, whose numbers are decreasing, and by peace guides, to whom the narratives have been handed down. Tanno argues that combinations of the narratives and material resources about the war have become crucial in enacting resilience in the memory of the war through peace education.

Health and Life

In this section, two timely analyses of how local epistemologies and local applied knowledge serve as important variables for resilience against outbreaks of infectious diseases: swine fever in the hog industry of Okinawa and the COVID-19 outbreak in the Philippines, respectively.

In “Dealing with Precarity in the Hog Industry and Resilience on Okinawa Island: A Case Study of the 2020 Classical Swine Fever,” Asami Nago investigates the outbreak of classical swine fever (CSF), a contagious viral disease in swine, in the central region of Okinawa Island between December 2019 and March 2020. The outbreak resulted in the slaughtering of 9,043 pigs at seven pig farms in a little over a week. Nago brings to light two major challenges of quarantines for livestock disease in small island regions and how small-scale farmers were economically strained yet complied with strict guidelines set by the Japan Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. Nago investigates aspects of resilience in farmers rebuilding their traditional relationship between Okinawans and pigs after the outbreak and emphasizes how the CSF outbreak demonstrated the sociocultural as well as economic aspects of the hog industry in Okinawa.

In the co-authored essay “Resilience of Community in the Early Phase of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines,” Crystal Amiel Estrada, Ernesto R. Gregorio Jr., and Jun Kobayashi examine the recent impact of COVID-19, which affected not only the health-care sector but also several other sectors, including education, welfare, and the economy in the South Asian Pacific Island region. With a focus on the Philippines, the authors identify measures, responses and recommended strategies for controlling the pandemic on the islands. Applying the label “resilience” to measures taken by government organizations and voluntary responses by private organizations and residents, resilience is analyzed by focusing on its processes, capacities for, and outcomes of successful adaptation despite challenges or threats to governmental organizations, private organizations, and local residents. They assert that faith-based resiliency and *bayanihan* spirit, an ancient Filipino custom of mutual help and concern, played a crucial role in sustaining islanders’ health.

Military and Environment

In addition to pandemic related issues, military bases in island regions pose immanent questions about human security and safety. Not only are islands places with sustained legacies of colonialism, but their relative distance from “the mainlands” physically disguise problems generated by the bases that have impacted the lives of many islanders. Resistance against militarized sexual violence is one of the important works of feminist decolonization in Okinawa.

In Kozue Akibayashi’s contribution, “Documenting the History of Sexual Violence by the US Military in Okinawa: Feminist Theorization of ‘the Island Military Bases,’” she examines the process and objectives of cataloguing sexual violence perpetuated by US military servicemen stationed in Okinawa against local residents. Through interviews with members of the Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence, a group that has compiled lists and keeps track of such events, and through her own involvement in the process as a translator for English versions, Akibayashi reveals that the catalogue is not a simple accumulation of data but that it emerges as a critique of the “intersectional oppressions of sexism and racism on the militarized and colonized island of Okinawa.”

In “Resilience of the Community against Environmental Pollution: The Knowledge Production Process of Local Activism on PFAS,” Keisuke Mori examines the process of local communities’ knowledge production about a toxic substance called per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) as a form of community resilience against leaks of PFAS from US military bases in Okinawa. The analysis is important because the disclosure of information about the leaks is made difficult since it is related to the military security administration. Nevertheless, Mori asserts that the persistence of activists’ demands for the information resulted in the disclosure of the information through the US Freedom of Information Act and interviews with the local governments.

In “Resilience in the Report *Environmental Assessment, General Management Plan: War in the Pacific National Park, Guam*,” Daisuke Ikegami analyses Guam’s Pacific War memories in the report published by the US Department of the Interior’s National Park Service in 1983. Ikegami demonstrates the ways in which the construction of war memorials, as well as the construction of US military bases, tactically supported for militarization of the island environment. Identifying Chamorros’ efforts to reinterpret the war narratives of the memorial sites as a form of resilience, Ikegami argues that such acts enable the islanders to redefine the term *environment* as not limited to only natural resources of the land and sea but also includes historical structures, sites, and cultural and economic conditions.

Disaster Prevention

Two articles included in the section Disaster Prevention focus on typhoons and earth-

quakes. They study these natural disasters in the contexts of evaluations of and protective measures in island regions. In “Perspectives on the Resilience of Okinawan Housing against Typhoons,” Juan Jose Castro shows the resilience of housing structures in Okinawa against frequent typhoons, which have caused extensive damage to homes and to other infrastructure of the islands since prehistoric times. Applying the keyword resilience specifically to housing structures that withstand typhoons, he identifies weaknesses in construction. Castro proposes more sustainable housing structures to enhance typhoon resistance measures, particularly in the Okinawa Islands.

In “DInSAR Technique and Laser Scanning Technology and Their Utilizations in Rock Engineering and Natural Disaster Management and Prevention,” Takashi Ito, Ömer Aydan, and Naohiko Tokashiki examine several islands in Okinawa utilizing DInSAR (differential synthetic-aperture radar interferometry) technology to evaluate deformation of ground triggered by crustal movements and subsidence caused by groundwater extraction, mining, and tunnelling. In doing so, their research develops techniques to quantify collapses triggered by earthquakes and other natural disasters, which are then applied to actual past events to evaluate deformation response and to predict and prevent future catastrophes through aerial photogrammetry and in-situ monitoring.

Conclusion

Contributors to this volume have examined living in island regions from multiple perspectives, through different time periods, and at different scales of community. Even among researchers who incorporated the term resilience, they may do so with difficulty and challenges. Some scholars more explicitly than others apply a framework of resilience when applying their disciplinary methodologies and theoretical approaches to demonstrate how islanders articulate cultures of resilience. Identifying resources that enact their various forms of resilience may include literature, experience of disasters, reproduction through memories of a colonial mine, life stories of the Battle of Okinawa in the diaspora community in Hawai‘i, recording sexual violence, or reinterpretations of the environment as a form of decolonization, for example.

The papers included here facilitate an understanding of island connections and collaborations through the works of island scholars on and off Okinawa Island, where the University of the Ryukyus is located. Despite different time zones, languages, and disciplines, the project forged occasions to learn, discuss, and constructively critique in cross-disciplinary spaces.

Completing the three-year project in a collection of multidisciplinary papers has helped clearly reinforce the notion that producing knowledge is a communal process and social practice. On behalf of the members of the project, I express our deep appreciation to the community members of the contributors, whose experiences, work, creativity, imagination, and scholarship helped us to present our research findings in this volume and provided us a way to carry on our missions inside and outside of the university. More col-

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