

A History of Imagined Futures of the Ogasawara Islands

Colin Tyner

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Introduction:

After almost a decade of campaigning, the Ogasawara Islands have become one of the newest members of Japan's growing list of UNESCO World Heritage sites in June 2011.¹ Because of the high rates of species endemic to the islands and evidence of marine species evolving into terrestrial species, organizations interested in the conservation the islands' ecosystems have worked tirelessly to stave off threats to the island environment. The most persistent of these threats to the islands' biodiversity are the long standing resident populations of invasive species and the on-again-off-again proposal to have an airstrip built somewhere on the islands. UNESCO has marked both of these as dangerous to the islands' ecosystems, and its world heritage site status.

This tension between pro-conservation and pro-development social worlds dates back to the late-1960s, when former residents of the islands competed to influence the future of their development. Some rooted their vision of the development of the Ogasawara Islands in the past, assuming that the return of the islands to Japan would mean the return of land use practices that privileged industrial agriculture. Others engaged in metropolitan scientific communities saw the islands' removal from the heavy pollution of central Tokyo as an opportunity to break from the past.

¹ World Heritage Committee, "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 35th Session," (Paris: UNESCO, 19-29 June 2011). <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2011/whc11-35com-20e.pdf> (accessed December 9, 2011).

Despite being a nation-state composed islands, locating islands in the geography of the history of Japan is not easy. If found, histories about islands are often found close to large, overbearing national narratives. These narrative often work to “sacrifice” local pasts to the category of the nation, burying them under a tidal wave of historical context.² The social historian Kano Masanao even went as far as to ask if places like island of Torishima and the human and nonhuman lives that were lived there could be brought in from the historical wilderness into the mainstream of Japanese historiography.³ Is it even worth the effort of working islands into historical landscape of modern Japan? Kano seemed pessimistic that this would be possible, or even advisable.

One things that makes the situation of islands into in national narratives difficult is because they are shifty objects produced and acted on by a heterogeneous agencies. Robert MacArthur and Edward Wilson, the authors of *The Theory of Island Biogeography*, argued that islands were “intrinsically appealing study objects”;⁴ locations where one could observe and measure ecological mechanics. While I agree that islands are interesting places to think and write about, I worry that, taken too far, such statements only work to stabilize, fossilize the human and nonhuman action that goes into making islands.

² Toshio Shimao, *Yaponeshia kô: Shimao Toshio taidanshû*, Shinshôban. ed. (Fukuoka: Ashi Shobô, 1991). Philip Gabriel, *Mad Wives and Island Dreams: Shimao Toshio and the Margins of Japanese Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

³ Masanao Kano, “*Torishima*” wa haitteruka: *Rekishi ishiki no genzai to rekishigaku* (*Do we include “Torishima”? : Historical consciousness and the writing of history*) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1988), 11.

⁴ Robert H. MacArthur and Edward O. Wilson, *The Theory of Island Biogeography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

I have argued elsewhere it is wrong to approach islands as closed, bounded objects. Instead, it is more stimulating to think of islands as things that are constituted of subjects, objects, and things produced through the flows of commodities, migration, concrete, garbage, seeds, and coral polyps.⁵ And I would argue that once we look at islands this way we can stop thinking of places like the Ogasawara Islands as closed bounded objects and more like things that are dynamic systems constituted of action. They are more than sites of action where culture or the social was performed. They are complex ensembles of action that requires researchers to be attentive to the action, or the human or nonhuman work that goes into making the islands; to think of the islands ecologically, thinking of the relations that went into making the islands.⁶ By thinking of islands as being productions of flows, and accumulations of human and nonhuman migration, we can come to understand them as systems of action intimately connected with the world. The Ogasawara Islands are typical islands in that they were not only sites where humans and nonhumans resided and acted on but also as places that were

⁵ My thoughts one island have been developed through the reading of Greg Denning, "Writing, Rewriting the Beach: An Essay," *Rethinking History* 2, no. 2 (1998). ———, *Mr Bligh's bad language: passion, power, and theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Greg Dvorak, "Seeds from afar, flowers from the reef: Remembering the coral and concrete of Kwajalein Atoll" (Ph.D, Australian National University, 2007). Godfrey Baldacchino, "Islands: Objects of Representation," *Geografiska Annaler* 87B, no. 4 (2005); John R. Gillis, "Islands in the making of an Atlantic Oceania, 1400-1800," *Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges*(2003), <http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/gillis.html>; Richard Grove, *Green imperialism: colonial expansion, tropical island Edens, and the origins of environmentalism, 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Mark Jackson and Veronica della Dora, "'Dreams so big only the sea can hold them': man-made islands as anxious spaces, cultural icons, and travelling visions," *Environment and Planning* (2009). Alan Bewell, "Traveling Natures," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 29, no. 2 & 3 (2007).

⁶ Repeating much of the interview that I did on *Exploring Environmental History* Colin Tyner, "Podcast 36: Island Environmental Histories: the Ogasawara Islands," <http://www.eh-resources.org/podcast/ehpodcast.xml>. (Last Accessed 1 August 2012)

constituted through human and non human action through the coming together of a number social and natural worlds.⁷

These worlds converged and entangled, making the Ogasawara Islands into what people practicing feminist STS might call a “boundary object.” Boundary objects are bordering places that have been produced through the action and the implicated action of a number of different actors – which are not necessarily human. Boundary objects is a method, tool, or approach used to engage places of complex intersectionality. It is an approach that aims to look at locations, material objects, and discourses that often have long and entangled histories, which while “weakly structured,” are both firm and flexible enough to accommodate the a number of different ways of knowing and action.⁸ Boundary objects are ecologically constructed through the engagement and action of a constellation of actors.

The advantage to this approach is that it aims to work across multiple and divergent actors sitting outside of the closed networks of actors that may limited access

⁷ Social worlds is a science and technologies studies term that is employed by people associated with social world’s theory who have used it to conceptualize groups of actors, or “universes of discourse,” who share commitments to certain activities, resources, or ideologies in order to achieve common goals. Susan Leigh Star and James R. Griesemer, "Insitutional ecology, 'translations' and boundary objects: Amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's museum of vertebrate zoology," *Social Studies of Science* 19(1989).

⁸ Geoffrey C. Bowker and Suan Leigh Star, *Sorting things out: Classification and its consequences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999); Adele Clarke, *Situational analysis: grounded theory after the postmodern turn* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005); Adele E. Clarke and Theresa Montini, "The Many Faces of RU486: Tales of Situated Knowledges and Technological Contestations," *Science, Technology, and Human Values* 18, no. 1 (1993); Mara Goldman, "Constructing connectivity: Conservation corridors and conservation politics in East African rangelands," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 99, no. 2 (2009); Star and Griesemer, "Insitutional ecology, 'translations' and boundary objects: Amateurs and professionals in Berkeley's museum of vertebrate zoology."

or limited active engagement in making the sites.⁹ It is an approach encourages looking at actors active or implicated in constructing the materiality of object, even if they are not interested in maintaining its stability.¹⁰

The Nature of Work on the Ogasawara Islands:

This paper begins to work through these historical relationships by outlining groups of stakeholders who valued the nature of the past, present, and future natures of the Ogasawara Islands from their initial settlement in 1830. I work through how former whalers, farmers, fishers, feather hunters, foresters, natural and social scientists developed their attachments with the nature of the islands through their work. Beginning with the colonization of the Ogasawara Islands began in 1875, the central government of Japan, through its agents, approached the islands as an environmentally precarious place where failure to control invasive humans, nonhumans, and pathogens could have catastrophic consequences for their development and security. One of the most difficult things for central stakeholders in agricultural practices manage initially was the presence of already introduced human practices that were neither oriented to the economic development of the islands nor to

⁹ For an overview of the ensemble of approaches and scholars associated with Actor Network Theory see John Law, "Notes of the theory of the Actor-Network: Ordering, Strategy, and Heterogeneity," *Systems Practice* 5, no. 4 (1992). EMichel Callon, "Actor-network theory – the market test," in *Actor Network Theory and After*, ed. John Law and John Hassard (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); John Law, "After ANT: complexity, naming and topology," in *Actor Network Theory and After*, ed. John Law and John Hassard (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the social: an introduction to actor-network-theory*, Clarendon lectures in management studies (Oxford Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Judy Wajcman, *Technofeminism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004)., 48.

their stabilization.¹¹ Enrolling these first stakeholders to the development of the islands was a challenge as these descendants of former whalers and Pacific islanders who settled – and unsettled – the islands in 1830 often worked in ways that worked against stabilization.

From their settlement until the islands' incorporation into Japan's political territory in the 1870s, these first settlers profited from the islands' place within the space of the "Japan" whaling grounds, which was one of the richest and most heavily trafficked whaling ground in the North Pacific. These first settlers brought with them land and marine use practices that had been introduced to islands throughout the Pacific. By 1842, they had established a colony that has been described "almost self-sufficient,"¹² harvesting modest amounts of maize, sweet potatoes, yams, melons, beans, onion, taro, sugarcane, coconuts, and tobacco on about 60 hectares (150 acres) of cultivated land on Peel Island (Chichijima).¹³ While the cultivation of these plants continued, albeit in more organized, coercive patterns, enrolling other practices proved to be more difficult work. The administrators of the islands had to deal with social practices that were less oriented to the land than to the open, ill-defined marine ecosystems surrounding the islands. One of the first things that the central Japanese

¹¹ For more on the early history of settlement on the Ogasawara Islands see Shun Ishihara, *Kindai Nihon to Ogasawara Shotô: idômin no shimajima to Teikoku (Modern Japan and the Ogasawara Islands: Islands of Immigrants and Empire)*, Shohan ed. (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2007). Hiroyuki Tanaka, *Bakumatsu no Ogasawara: ôbei no hokeisen de sakaeta midori no shima [The Ogasawara Islands in the Bakumatsu Period]* (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha, 1997). David Chapman, "Inventing Subjects and Sovereignty: Early History of the First Settlers of the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 24-1-09(June 15, 2009), <http://www.japanfocus.org/-David-Chapman/3169>.

¹² Midori Arima, "An ethnographic and historical study of Ogasawara/the Bonin Islands, Japan" (PhD, Stanford University, 1990).

¹³ W.S.W Ruschenberger, *Narrative of a voyage round the world, during the years 1835, 36, and 37; including a narrative of an embassy to the sultan of muscat and the kind of siam*, vol. II (London: Richard Bentley, 1838)., 300. Francis L. Hawks, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854 under the command of Commadore M.C. Perry, United States Navy* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1856)., 234.

government did when it began the material reclamation of the islands in 1875, over a decade after the failed attempt to colonize the islands between 1862 and 1863 by the Tokugawa shogunate, was to regulate land-use practices to prevent the denudation of woodlands, overgrazing, and soil erosion.¹⁴

Despite the increasing marginalization of the first settlers' land and marine use practices, which was meant to stabilize the landscape of the islands, the destruction of woodland increased with introduction of labor intensive industrial agriculture. It was the more controlled, sustained introduction of mass sugarcane cultivation, and the complex of labor and machinery that accompanied it. The plantation complex modified the land of the islands to make it agriculturally productive. From the late-1880s to the early-1920s, the Japanese central government used the structure of a plantation complex to change the demographic and ecological landscape of the Ogasawara Islands. This agricultural system, which lasted from 1883 to the colonization of the islands by the Japanese Imperial Military in the early 1930s, appealed to key stakeholders in the agricultural development of the Ogasawara Islands because it helped to bind the terrestrial ecologies of the islands into a disciplined "instrument of production."¹⁵

¹⁴ The Ministry of the Interior reestablished "Regulations for Islands" (*shima kisoku*), "Regulations for the Harbor" (*minato kisoku*), and "Duties and Tariffs for the Import and Export of Goods" (*yushutsunyūhin zeisei*), regulations that had been first put in place by the Tokugawa government in 1862. These regulations were further strengthened in April 1883, when officials from the Ministry of Finance noted that upland soil in Chichijima, the largest, most populated island in the Ogasawaras, was suffering from overgrazing and overuse. In the first decade of open settlement, new settlers, most of them from the island of Hachijōjima, managed to exhaust much of the woodlands in search of green fertilizer and building materials. In response, the government restricted the "reclamation" (*kaikon*) of ground water. They also protected up to 70% of the forested area in Chichijima, limiting foraging by settlers to the small strips of "commoner lands" (*min'yūchi*) situated near the water's edge. The boundaries worked to discourage foraging in the "restricted forests" (*seigenrin*) inland. Tanaka, *Bakumatsu no Ogasawara*. Ishinosuke Yamagata, *Ogasawarajima shi* (Tokyo: Tokyodō, 1906), 318-322. Tōkyō-fu Ogasawaratō-chō, *Ogasawara-jima no gaikyō oyobi shinrin* (Ogasawara-mura: Tōkyō-fu Ogasawaratō-chō 1914), 20; Jun Kimura, "Ogasawara no ginnemu hayashi (The Lead Tree Forests of the Ogasawara Islands)," *Ogasawara Kenkyū Nenpō* 2(1978), 19-28.

¹⁵David Harvey, *The Limits to Capital*, New ed. (London: Verso, 2006), 334-336.

The process intensive industrial agriculture began with the introduction of hundreds of laborers between the late 1880s and the early 1920s. Industrial agriculture directed and organized migration to the Ogasawara Islands, which hitherto had been quite modest. With only 531 people living on the islands in 1885, the Ogasawara Islands as settler colony can only be classified as a demographic failure. Things began to change with the introduction of industrialized sugar farming in that year. Within a decade (1895), the civilian population had leaped up to 4,018 people. Five years later (1900), the population had risen to 5,550. At the time of the global sugar collapse, which began in 1921, the population began to stabilize at around 5,500 people.¹⁶ Most of the people who came to the islands from the early 1890s to the mid-1920s were enlisted to work in industrial agriculture. Workers were brought in to the islands through a system of consignment. Initially, laborers were brought in from the island of Hachijōjima and poorer agricultural areas in Japan such as Tokushima and Shizuoka prefectures.¹⁷ This system of agriculture transformed substantially the demographic and landscape of the islands, transforming the most of the island of Hahajima into an enormous plantation complex, which exhausted both the forests and the soil of nitrogen, changing the microclimate of the islands.

The stakeholders that actively tried to intervene, or ameliorate, this rapid rate of environmental change to the islands were foresters working for the Tokyo Metropolitan

¹⁶ Ishihara, *Kindai Nihon to Ogasawara Shotō*, 268; Kazuyuki Dangi, "Ogasawara shotō iminshi (The Immigration History of the Ogasawara Islands)," in *Kai to rettōbunka, Kuroshio no michi (The Sea and Archipelagic Culture, The Koroshio Road)*, ed. Yoshihiko Amino, et al. (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1991), 256; Shinkōsha, ed. *Nihon chiri fuzoku taikei (A Compendium of the Customs and Geography of Japan)*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shinkōsha, 1931), 272.

¹⁷ Arima, "An ethnographic and historical study of Ogasawara Islands.", 48.

Forestry Service, who wrote on the consequences of altering the ecological and social landscapes of the islands. By 1890, they worried that harvestable growth on the islands was



decreasing. In 1893, farmers reported that sugarcane fields on the island of Hahajima yielded less sugarcane than in the past. By 1897, the fields were described as being barren. Each year, hillsides collapsed and washed away, making large-scale farming impossible on the island.¹⁸

The rapid denuding of the island's forests set in motion further ecological changes to the islands. Faced with a critical shortage of fuel, and with ecological collapse, the Tokyo Forestry Bureau (*Tōkyō Eirin-kyoku*) began what could be called the first ecological restoration project on the islands. They concentrated on the introduction of plants that could be used for further agricultural development. The system employed for these introductions at the beginning of the twentieth century was more sophisticated than that used by the Ministry of the Interior in the initial stages of settlement. It was developed by forestry officers as a varied system of management to maximize the potential of the islands' landscape. Okinawan pine (*Pinus luchuensis*) was brought in

¹⁸ Tokyo Eirin-kyoku, "Ogasawara-Jima Kokuyûrin Shokubutsu Gaikan," ed. Tōkyō Eirin-kyoku (Tokyo: Tokyo-tō, 1929). 53, 136; Tōkyō-fu, *Ogasawarajima Sōran (The General Conditions of the Ogasawara Islands)* (Tokyo: Tōkyōfu, 1929)., 154-155.

from Okinawa for construction purposes; rosewood (*Dalbergia latifolia*) was introduced from Southeast Asia for its high commercial value; and crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) from the Korean peninsula and ironwood (*Eusideroxylon zwageri*) from Borneo were brought in for the building of bridges.¹⁹ Through agricultural science and controlled botanical transfers, managerial classes were able to repair some of the damage done to a number of the keystone species of flora through the introduction of surrogate species of plants that were meant to replenish the forest cover on the island landscapes.

These surrogates acted in ways that the foresters failed to anticipate. One of the things that the foresters commented on the most was the appearance of “invasiveness,” or what foresters and Ministry of the Interior officials marked down as resistance to “naturalization” (*kika*). Introduced species of plants marked as invasive were threatening because they placed similar demands on the growing space of the islands. The concern was that their action could displace their more nitrogen-poor competition. In 1930, *Aspects of Life on Ogasawara Islands (Ogasawara shotō seibutsu)*, published by the Japanese Biogeography Association (*Nihon seibutsu chiri gakkai*), stated that “on the Ogasawara Islands, there are more kinds of plants that flourish on their own than the kinds of plant life that are purposely grown on the islands” and that “there is a need to differentiate between plants that re naturalized [*kika shokubutsu*] and those that are contaminative [*konkō*]”.²⁰

Forestry officials were able to keep the lead tree in check, for the most part, by confining it to 837 locations within Chichijima.²¹ Another flourishing tree species introduced purposefully through the front door, but from an intercolonial route, was

¹⁹ Ogasawaratô-chô, *Ogasawara-jima no gaikyô oyobi shinrin.*, 178.

²⁰ Kimura, "Ogasawara no ginnemu hayashi (The Lead Tree Forests of the Ogasawara Islands).", 20.

²¹ Eirin-kyoku, "Ogasawara-Jima Kokuyûrin Shokubutsu Gaikan.", 28

one that currently resides on Japan's "most-wanted" list of noxious invasive species.²² Bishopwood (*Bischofia javanica*), a tree endemic to Southeast Asia, was cultivated within Dutch East Indies plantation complexes for fuelwood production. Its cultivation in the islands of Chichijima and Hahajima was limited to five plantation areas across the islands, but it was dispersed quickly by wind and by birds that consumed its seeds.²³ What the found was that seeds were difficult to legislate because they worked through energies and logics that humans could neither understand nor direct.

The Militarization of the Ogasawara Islands:

The resiliency of the agricultural systems built on the Ogasawara Islands was later dismembered by the Japanese Imperial military, which was appropriating human labor and nonhuman resources by the early-1930s. The Japanese Imperial Army and Navy became the most dominant stakeholders in the development of islands until the mid-1940s. The militarization of the Ogasawara Islands began modestly with the Japanese Imperial Navy's construction



²² Nihon seitai gakkai, ed. *Gairaishu Handobukku (A Handbook on Invasive Species)* (Tokyo: Chijin Shokan, 2002), 362-363.

²³ Nobuyuki Tanaka et al., "Eradication of the Invasive Tree Species *Bischofia javanica* and Restoration of Native Forests on the Ogasawara Islands " in *Restoring the Oceanic Island Ecosystem*, ed. Isamu Okochi and Kazuto Kawakami (London: Springer, 2010), 162.

of a communication center on the island of Chichijima in 1914 and a base in 1916.²⁴

Farmers were still able to continue their work, but by July 1927, with the coordination of village leadership, the forest bureau, the fortification command bureau (*yōsai shireibu*), the naval communication station, the military police (*kenpei bunchūjo*), the police, the post office, the regional judiciary, the local militia, and primary schools, the fortification and appropriation of labor to fit the Ogasawara Islands within national defense plans had moved into high gear.

The Japanese Imperial Army, in particular, had huge caloric demands, and it had an insatiable appetite for labor. By 1940, the islands were hosting a civilian population of 7,361 and a military population of over 20,000 soldiers. Able-bodied men and women who made their homes on the islands were enlisted to perform backbreaking work for the military. The military began by directing people to dredge Futami Harbor in Chichijima to allow warships to anchor and to help to dig out hundreds of tunnels for defensive and supply purposes.²⁵ In 1939, the Imperial Navy constructed an airstrip, a navy defense base, and an air base on the islands.²⁶ Without farmers to work the fields, the agricultural system began to unravel, and the soldiers began to ravage and deplete the landscape of its supply of calories and nutrients.

The military appropriation of the islands was completed in 1944, when the army attaché in consultation with the chief administrator of the Ogasawara Islands (*Ogasawara shichochō*) and the police chief decided to evacuate most—but not all—of the islanders back to the main island of Honshu to conserve (both human and nonhuman)

²⁴ Arima, "An ethnographic and historical study of Ogasawara Islands.", 51.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 53.

resources needed for the defense of the Ogasawara Islands.²⁷ In February, 1944, the remaining civilians of the islands, many of whom were suffering from outbreaks of eruptive typhus and tuberculosis, were forcibly evacuated from the islands.²⁸ Many of the residents would not return home until June 1968.

From October 1944 until June 1968, the Ogasawara Islands were under the administrative control of the U.S. Navy as a Pacific Trust Territory. Each family of the 137 descendants of the first settlers of 1830, who were allowed to return to the islands because they were not considered a “security threat,” was provided with a 60-square-meter house, education, and medicine. The work that they did was either support for the military or fishing. Other than hauling freight around for the military, the islanders worked as divers, carpenters, or construction crews for the building of roads.

How did the environment of the Ogasawara Islands fair under U.S. Military custody? One scholar of the islands aptly summed up the effects of the U.S. Naval administration of the Ogasawara Islands on the environment by quipping to me, “They couldn’t have cared less about the environment.”²⁹ When I asked a person who grew up on the islands during the American interlude how the environment fared under the U.S. Navy, he joked that other than using the goats for target practice, throwing grenades in abandoned tunnels, and storing nukes in the tunnels with copper doors, the land was something that the military took for granted.³⁰ Taken as a whole, the U.S. military’s attitude toward the environment on the Ogasawara Islands can be

²⁷ Ogasawara Kyôkai, *Ogasawara Shotô gaishi: Nich-Bei kôshô o chûshin to shite (History of the Ogasawara Islands: Focusing on negotiations between the U.S. and Japanese Governments)* (Tokyo: Ogasawara Kyôkai, 1967), 27.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 24-26

²⁹ Personal correspondence with Gavan McCormack in Mitaka, Tokyo, October 2005.

³⁰ Interview conducted by Colin Tyner in Chichijima, Tokyo, November 2009.

characterized as indifference or neglect. Of course, a lot can result from doing nothing, and much can be imagined by those whose access is thwarted.

Re-membering the Ogasawara Islands:

The imagining of the Ogasawara Islands' possible futures began in early 1967. In February 1967, the Science Council of Japan met to discuss the past and imagine the possible future the Ogasawara Islands, which was going to be returned to Japanese sovereignty and administrative after being administered by the U.S. Navy as a "Pacific Trust Territory" for nearly twenty-three years since the conclusion of the Asia Pacific War (1931-1945). The scientists in attendance outlined possibilities for the future development how people developed the space of the islands as national frontier. Some participants suggested that the islands could return to being as site of industrial agriculture. While none suggested that giant African snails could be raised on the islands, there were members that suggested that the islands could be used to raise winter crops, harvest green sea turtle, and farm American alligators. This vision was echoed by the Ogasawara Kyôkai (The Ogasawara Association), which pushed for the return to land use practices that dominated the islands landscape before the eventual militarization of the islands in the late-1930s and 1940s.³¹ Others suggested, the status quo of maintaining the islands as a military outpost. While opinions on the possible futures of the islands differed, they could all agree that the islands were "a place of many possibilities."³²

Most of the these "possibilities," or imagined futures, appear orderly in survey reports, leaflets, booklets, and survey reports. Occasionally, however, I have come

³¹ Unknown, *Ogasawara shotô no nôgyô keiei (The Agricultural Management of the Ogasawara Islands)* (Unknown, 1968). Ogasawara Kyôkai, *Senzen no Ogasawarajima nôgyô chikusangyô (Agriculture and Livestock in the Ogasawara Islands before the War)* (Tokyo: Ogasawara Kyôkai, 1969).

³² Nihon Gakujutsu Kaigi, *Ogasawara Guntô no shizen hogo (Conservation of the Nature of the Ogasawara Islands)* (Tokyo: Nihon Gakujutsu Kaigi, 1968). 6.

across surveys where the message is not so clear. They speak with different voices and with different interests. While they are difficult to read, and glean order from, I appreciate these surveys as objects that reveal the complex social terrain that show traces of the complexity of historical practice on the Ogasawara Islands. One of the most interesting – and occasionally frustrating – surveys was produced just in May of 1968, one month before full sovereignty and administrative control of the Ogasawara Islands was handed from the U.S. Navy to the Tokyo Metropolitan government. While some participants associated with the survey – particularly social and natural scientist participants – described the survey as not productive, I prefer to think of it as a method, an instrument, that reveals both the heterogeneous character of the kind of people who did work in the islands, and the heterogeneity of the place where that work was performed.³³

The survey, which lasted from 5 - 10 May 1968, revealed how complicated the future of economic development on the Ogasawara Islands would become. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, active and implicated in the survey were a wide array of participants. While all surveys are made up of complex groups of people with mixes of skills and personalities, their success or failure depends on their ability to function as an instrument that enables the collection and processing of information.³⁴ Ideally, a survey should be composed of people who are working towards the same goal. They

³³ Yasutarô Katô and Katsuhiko Hamanaka, *Izu Shichitô to Ogasawara - Tôkyô no umi no kokuritsu kôen (The Izu Islands and the Ogasawara Islands - The Marine National Parks of Tokyo)*, Tokyo Kôen Bunko (Tokyo: Tokyoto Kôen Kyôkai, 1995).

³⁴ Robert E. Kohler, *All creatures: Naturalists, collectors, and biodiversity, 1850-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006). ———, *Landscapes and labscapes: Exploring the lab-field border in biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002). Richard Sorrenson, "The Ship as a Scientific Instrument in the Eighteenth Century," *Osiris, 2nd Series* 11, Science in the Field(1996).

are reliant on a certain amount of professional and institutional homogeneity.³⁵ Access is restricted to those who are qualified who are capable of remaining modest in their observations.³⁶

Access to the May 1968 was open. People clamored to participate. The survey was large and composed of a diverse group of stakeholders active and implicated in the economic development of the Ogasawara Islands before the beginning of the Pacific War (1941-1945). It was attended by seventy-four elected officials, secretarial staff, business owners, fishers, farmers, natural and social scientists, and members of the mainstream press. Most of the participants seemed to be interested in land and marine use rights, and how past military uses may have affected their ability to make a living off of the islands. There were detailed notes written on issues of hygiene, medical facilities, existing sanitation systems, and on the issue of cleaning up waste material left over from the U.S. Navy's occupation and use of the islands.³⁷ Much of the future planning was left open.

³⁵ Good lab work relies on a certain amount of professional and institutional homogeneity. Access is restricted to those who are qualified and have legitimate business in the lab. The screening of who is fit to bear witness to a scientific effect is determined by profession, skills, and – one could argue – gender. Lab work works – and travels – well because people think that they know what they are getting. The rules of procedure and evidence is set, and we know that only qualified people. (We know them by their white coats and badges). We can trust the work that we have not seen done because we know that the person is trustworthy and the place that they are doing the work is stable. Place shouldn't matter; where the person doing the observing comes from shouldn't matter; emotions and memories shouldn't matter.

³⁶ Steven Shapin, "Placing the View from Nowhere: Historical and Sociological Problem in the Location of Science," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series* 23, no. 1 (1998).

³⁷ Tokyo-to Ogasawara Chôsadán, ed. *Tôkyô-to Ogasawara Chôsadán Genchi hôkokusho (Field Report of the Tokyo Metropolitan Survey of the Ogasawara Islands)* (Tokyo: Tôkyô-to Ogasawara Chôsadán, 1968). For a narrative on how the survey applied to the islands of Chichijima see Shunsuke Ôshiro and Kenichi Ikeda, "Ogasawara Chichijima shakai no kôzôjô no mondaiten: yobi chôsa hôkoku (The Issue of Formation of the Society in Chichi Jima, Ogasawara Islands: Preliminary Survey Information)," *Ogasawara Kenkyû Nenpô* 2(1978).

Very few comments were left in the marginalia. It is likely because the participants were afforded very little time to offer their input on the possible future development of the Ogasawara Islands. The presence of the military and the effects of militarization were very present on the islands, and it seems to have had some of effect on what was written down. The U.S. Navy dictated the shape of the survey and the direction of the participants' movement. I am not suggesting that there was an coercion. In fact, the participants spent much of their time attending meetings, welcome parties, and barbecues hosted by the military administrators of the islands. The participants remained busy until the end of their stay on the islands. Including the travel time, the participants had very little time to do any fieldwork on the Ogasawara Islands. They had only two days in field on the island of Chichijima, eleven hours on the island of Hahajima, and only six hours on Iwo Jima (*Iôtô*).³⁸

The U.S. Navy's militarization of the Ogasawara Islands shaped the ways in which people experienced the islands in other ways as well. Though this was not intentional. The militarization of the landscape of the islands partially led to the re-imagining of the islands. It shaped the natural environment of the islands in unexpected ways. Militarization, despite being thought as a processes that is shrouded, is process that happens out in the open. As Chris Pearson et al have argued, militarization, in general, is an outdoor activity that takes, "...place outdoors, in fields, forests, grasslands, deserts, and other environments."³⁹ It is deployed actively and affects various landscape features, including topography, vegetation and climate.⁴⁰

³⁸ Chôsadan, *Tôkyô-to Ogasawara Chôsadan Genchi hôkokusho (Field Report of the Tokyo Metropolitan Survey of the Ogasawara Islands)*.

³⁹ Chris Pearson, Peter Coates, and Tim Cole, "Introduction: Beneath the Camouflage: Revealing Militarized Landscapes," in *Militarized Landscapes: From Gettysburg to Salisbury Plain*, ed. Chris Pearson, Peter Coates, and Tim Cole (London: Continuum, 2010), 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

Many of the participants of the survey of the islands were struck by how the islands were changed by militarization. They encountered a landscape markedly different, and alien, from the one that some of them remembered from their trips as students in the prewar period. Opinions on these changes were mixed. Some people with memories of the prewar landscape of the islands, felt that the twenty three years of the Navy's presence on the island had worked to Americanize the islands. In a magazine published by Tokyo Shinbun, which sent reporters on the May 1968 survey, described how the landscape had become foreign. It complained that handsome Alexandrian laurels (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) that had been cultivated along Futami Harbor in the 1910s to provide a windbreak had been cut down and replaced with a large grassy field and picnic tables.⁴¹ Remembering the same survey, Yamazaki Satoshi, a geographer from Tokyo Metropolitan University, wrote that, "... walking under the thick leaves of the trees gave you the feeling that you were in a completely different country [*mattaku chigatta ikoku*] from Tokyo." He continued: "In place of the forest where Ōmura used to be was a large field, and



⁴¹ Tokyo Shinbun, *Kaette kita Ogasawara – Chichijima, Hahajima – Â Iôtô (The Ogasawara Islands have Come Home: Chichijima, Hahajima, Ah Iwojima)* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shinbun Kaisha, 1968), 86

around houses bloomed tropical followers like hibiscus, bougainvillea, and buttercups, making it really feel like we had come to the tropics.”⁴²

For other participants, militarization acted in less orderly ways. U.S. Navy’s twenty-three year stewardship, along with absence of industrial agriculture on the Ogasawara Islands, provided spaces for some of the key nonhuman agents for environmental change on the islands to flourish. Some of the longest residents of the Ogasawara Islands worked outside of the logics and energies managed by human beings. The fact that reestablishment of human communities had been limited to the island of Chichijima meant that most of the Ogasawara Islands went through a flourishing process of regrowth that the natural scientists working in the islands through the 1970s and 1980s called “jungle-ification” (*janguruka*).⁴³ Hahajima went through this change in spectacular fashion covering the former settlement in thick foliage.

Militarization is a process is something that is not produced evenly over landscapes. Nor is it a process that, necessarily, always goes according to plan. Militarized landscapes away from war zones are rarely as restrictive as imagined, and that often the social and material presence of the military are actively rubbed out through what appears to be restorative ecological process akin to “rewilding”.⁴⁴ In fact,

⁴² Satoshi Yamazaki, "Henkan 15 nengo no Ogasawara no shokubutsu (Flora of the Ogasawara Islands 15 years after its return)," *Ogasawara Kenkyû Nenpô* 8(1984), 5-6.

⁴³ Shimbun, *Kaette kita Ogasawara.*, 86

⁴⁴ Jeffery Sasha Davis, "Military natures: Militarism and the Environment " *GeoJournal* 69, no. 3 (2001). ———, "Scales of Eden: Conservation and Pristine Devastation on Bikini atoll," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 2 (2007). Rewilding is conversation biological concept that suggests that large-scale intervention may restore the “wild” qualities of landscape through the reintroduction of surrogate keystone animal or plant species to an island reserve. These islands can be oceanic, continental, or habit islands. For an outline on the principles of rewilding see Michael E. Soulé and Reed Noss, "Rewilding and biodiversity: Complementary Goals for Continental Conservation," *Wild Earth* 8(1998). For a discussion on rewilding and its place in the history of ecological restoration practices see Marcus Hall, ed. *Restoration and history: The search for a usable past* (London: Routledge, 2010).

some participants suggested that Hahajima's reversion to an "uninhabited island state" (*mujintōka sareta jōtai*) provided an opportunity for "a new start" for the metropolitan government's management of the islands.⁴⁵ In 1977 Kazaki Yukio, the first chair of the Ogasawara Islands Research Group, explained that, because of their "unique position," the Ogasawara Islands represented to scientific researchers an example of a "pristine" and "unpolluted environment."⁴⁶

Although Japanese stakeholders in the environmental management of the Ogasawara Islands lost their access to the islands for twenty-three years, the wild, jungle-like conditions they found on their return were neither accidental nor purely "natural." The sociologist Nigel Clark has suggested that the capacity of some plants to work outside human control suggests that human may initiate growth in nonhuman species but that "...no legislation can regulate the dissemination of seeds."⁴⁷ The possibility of imagining the islands as a green zone apart from the "industrial belt" of metropolitan Tokyo enabled a formally industrialized landscape that had been dismantled and opened up by militarization. What seemed to be spontaneous regrowth stems more from nearly a century of industrialization than its removal, and understanding the future of the conservation of the islands requires managers to think carefully about the political, social, economic, and ecological entanglements that produced them.

⁴⁵ *Shimbun, Kaette kita Ogasawara.*, 88.

⁴⁶ Hideo Kazaki, "Ogasawara no kako to teigen – senzen to henkan chokugo no hōmōn no omoide yori (Recollections and Suggestions on the Ogasawara Islands: From my memories of my visits to the island prewar and post-return)" *Ogasawara Kenkyū Nenpō* 5(1981)., 3-8.

⁴⁷ Nigel Clark, "The Demon-Seed: Bioinvasion as the Unsettling of Environmental Cosmopolitanism" *Theory Culture Society* 19, no. 1-2 (2002)., 101.

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