

## Introducing Social Studies in Okinawa while under U.S. Military Occupation

MAMI HAGIWARA

This paper clarifies part of the educational situation in Okinawa during the U.S. military occupation from 1945 to 1949 by analyzing the process of introducing social studies in Okinawa. In the first section, I discuss the background of the introduction of social studies in Okinawa. The postwar education in Okinawa began when a school reopened in April 1945. Following this, editing of mimeograph machine-printed textbooks began in August. Then, a teacher training school (Okinawa Education School) was established in January 1946.

In April 1946, Okinawa used the 8-4 educational system. This system did not contain the subject of social studies. Instead, it included subjects such as history, geography, and civics in what was called JINBUN-KA. During the early occupation in Okinawa, education regarding militarism and nationalism and the use of Japanese-style educational materials were prohibited. Instead, the curriculum emphasized “The WAY of Okinawa,” which was an attempt to structure a “new” Okinawa in deference to the Okinawan identity.

By the end of November 1947, in the Okinawa civil administration prefecture, the U.S. Military Government conveyed that they were ready to import Japanese textbooks used under the 6-3-3 educational system as a substitute for mimeograph machine-printed textbooks. Due to the changes in the educational system in Okinawa from the 8-4 system to the 6-3-3 system to conform to Japanese textbooks, the subject of social studies was introduced in April 1948.

In the second section, I discuss how civics, history, and geography in JINBUN-KA were the prehistory of social studies in Okinawa. In Chapter 5, I clarify the inflow of “the United States Education mission report” and how it affected civics, history, and geography. I collected as many historical materials on education content from the relevant time and location as possible. In Chapters 6 through 8, I clarify the characteristics of civics, history, geography in JINBUN-KA by analyzing the curriculum, mimeograph machine-printed textbooks, teaching materials, and notebooks made by a teacher to teach history and geography in JINBUN-KA.

These subjects conformed to the anti-Okinawan occupation education policy as a general rule. However, every subject was different. Civics had an association with prewar SHUSHIN-kA and KOMIN-kA in both elementary and high school. In high school, there were few subjects about “the Way of Okinawa,” and not much was made of it.

The history of Okinawa, mainly during the Ryukyu kingdom period, was explained and the teaching materials native to Okinawa based on the peculiar history of Okinawa were described. Geography was highly associated with the prewar syllabus and geography textbook. Two of the mimeograph machine-printed geography textbooks closely resembled Japanese provisional textbooks after the war. With “The way of Okinawa,” handling the subject matter

of Okinawa differed depending on the medium. Unlike a textbook, the teaching materials, which the regional education department published, were partly treated as ultra-nationalistic teaching materials. The notebooks made by the teacher linked the history of Okinawa with Japan and described plans for Okinawa to remain connected to Japan.

In the third section, I discuss the time from April 1948 to March 1949, before and after the introduction of social studies in Okinawa, respectively. There are three reasons why it took one year to introduce social studies. First, social studies textbooks were not delivered to the school until September 1948. Second, teachers in Okinawa and the Okinawa education department needed time to understand the subject. Third, Okinawa was not using mainland Japanese textbooks.

To enforce social studies, the education department in Okinawa published “SYAKAIKA NI TSUITE,” a guideline for teaching social studies, in September 1948. The education department in Okinawa decided to edit the side reader “OKINAWA REKISHI” to include the history of Okinawa in the framework of social studies. In conclusion, the specificity of social studies in Okinawa was the use of the history of Okinawa, namely “The Way of Okinawa,” in the social studies framework.