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EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

Mapping the Forgotten Colony: The Ogasawara Islands and the Tokugawa Pivot to the Pacific

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Abstract

In 1862, Japan's Tokugawa shogunate claimed the Ogasawara Islands, a small archipelago between Honshu and Guam, as a part of Japan. In the manageable setting of the islands, the shogunate undertook a colonial experiment that revealed changing attitudes toward non-Japanese ethnicities, modern technologies, and maritime space. Through an examination of four maps, this article shows that Japanese intellectuals had been discussing plans for settler colonialism in the Pacific almost a century before Tokugawa leaders began exploring the open sea as an economic space. In the shogunate's two-tiered strategy, agriculture assimilated the land, and law subjected its earlier settlers. This approach provided a foothold for offshore whaling, which transformed the surrounding seas into a space of production. However, expanding the sphere of Tokugawa influence necessitated a redefinition of the Japanese realm. Geographical notions were reshaped to make the overseas territory a part of the Izu archipelago some 700 kilometers farther north, and the presence of Western settlers was countered with narratives of earlier possession and relocation of Japanese individuals. Officials were particularly intrigued by formerly unknown plant and animal species found on the islands. Exploring economic opportunities in the Pacific sphere, they prepared a geopolitical shift that is often associated with Japan's modern empire. This article, by contrast, locates the origins of modern Japan's "pelagic empire" well before the Meiji Reform and shows how expansionism was reconciled with earlier perceptions of geography.

Keywords: Japanese Empire, Tokugawa colonialism, *bakumatsu*, cartography, Ogasawara Islands, Bonin Islands, whaling

On January 18, 1862,¹ the Japanese steamboat *Kanrin-maru* 咸臨丸, weighed down by cannons, entered the harbor of Port Lloyd in the Ogasawara Islands some 1,000 kilometers south of Honshu (figure 1). Magistrate of Foreign Affairs Mizuno Tadanori 水野忠徳 informed the inhabitants, an eclectic group of Westerners and Pacific Islanders, that Japan had claimed the

archipelago as part of the Japanese territory. Only thirty-two years earlier, a group of whalers had for the first time settled permanently on the islands. After the magistrate had staked his claim in front of the islanders, the Japanese expedition started to map and explore the island. Captain Ono Tomogorō 小野友五郎 was sent out to draw the coastlines from the sea, while others went inland to climb the mountains. They invented new Japanese toponyms to label the land and occupied space culturally through land reclamation, carefully documented in landscape paintings. Particular attention was paid to underwater topography in order to evaluate the navigability of bays and straits.

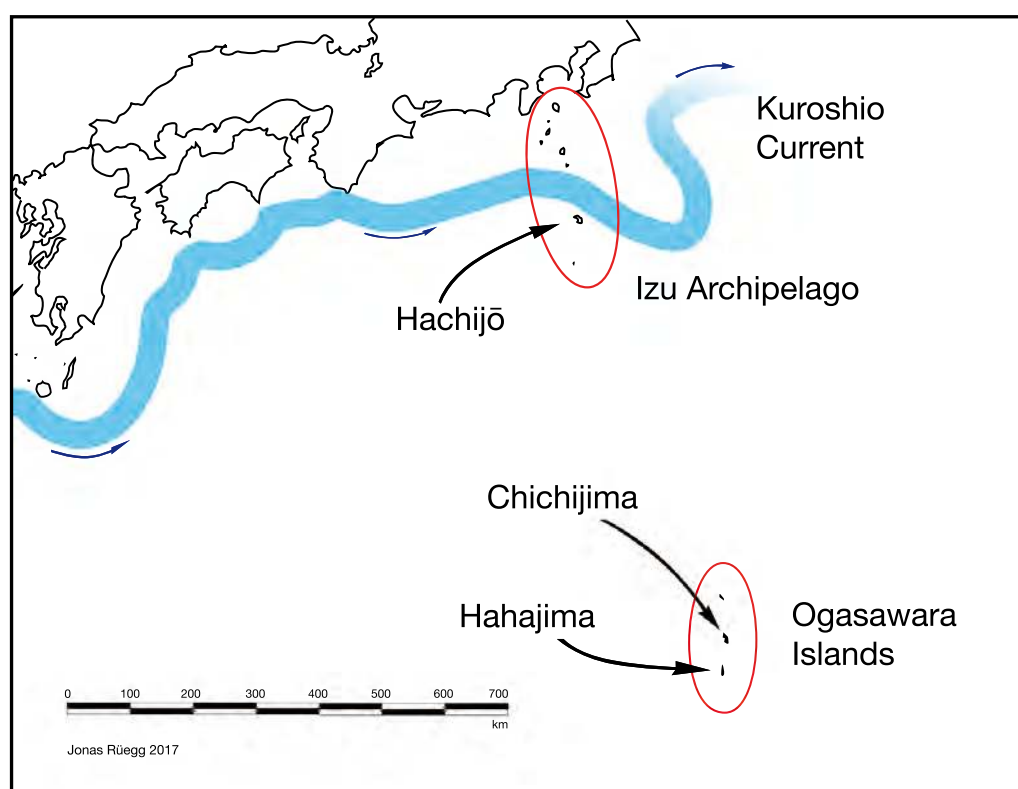


Figure 1. The Ogasawara Islands in a greater geographical context. Author's design.

For the next year and a half, the government in Edo undertook a small-scale colonial experiment that reveals changing Japanese attitudes toward foreign ethnicities, modern technology, and maritime space. Contact with whalers and earlier inhabitants introduced new

technologies and species into Japan. These remote islands thus became an important testing ground for Japan's early experiences with nineteenth-century imperialism and globalization. They represent an early window onto Japan's later imperial project, with an emphasis on the control of maritime space. Ogasawara's colonization in the 1860s, moreover, represents a bridge between the Tokugawa state's expansion into the borderlands of Ezo (modern-day Hokkaido) and the systematic colonization of Taiwan and Korea in the Meiji period. During this transition, triggered by a clash of world empires on the open sea, Japan attempted to reconcile its early modern expansion with Western notions of territorial sovereignty.

This article explores the significance of this colonial experiment for *bakumatsu* Japan's changing perceptions of geography.² Through an examination of four maps, I tell the story of changing perceptions of Ogasawara and the open sea during Japan's early modern period, leading up to the establishment of Japan's first overseas colony. This story shows that Ogasawara had been considered an option for expansion since the seventeenth century. The earliest map of Ogasawara, drawn at the end of Japan's maritime age, is the product of Japan's last daring expedition into the Pacific. Later intellectuals mapped Ogasawara from afar, thereby developing expansionist thought. Since the eighteenth century, thinkers such as Hayashi Shihei 林子平 and Satō Nobuhiro 佐藤信淵 propagated the notion of settler colonialism and viewed the southern islands as a first step toward a greater empire. I argue that the shogunate's resolute annexation of the archipelago in 1862 reflects the emergence of a new economic approach to modernizing colonialism: while maintaining an ostensible conformity with the Confucian ideal of agrarian societies, the Tokugawa shogunate encouraged whaling as a means of turning the sea into a space of production. The step to Ogasawara effected a transition from a more static definition of Japanese space to modern expansionism, just as the maps this occupation generated merged earlier methods of mapmaking with the modern features needed for long-distance control.

The incorporation of the islanders, the establishment of Japanese settlements, and the exploration of maritime resources reflect an ongoing process of redefinition concerning not only territorial boundaries, but also natural limits of development and expansion. Ethnicity and coastlines were no longer the unique criteria that demarcated Japan, but malleable political and geographical definitions that legitimized the integration of an overseas territory into the Izu

archipelago, pushing the Japanese sphere some 700 kilometers farther into the Pacific. In so doing, the Tokugawa government reconciled its earlier experiences in controlling the lands of the Ainu in modern-day Hokkaido with the mechanisms of the Western empires it faced. The control of space by law was thereby combined with the cultural transformation of territory as reflected in maps that defined the new borders of the modernizing nation-state. As long as the Japanese outnumbered the earlier settlers, the permanent presence of non-Japanese individuals was unproblematic for the Japanese project. This shift toward an internationally comprehensible model of hegemony caused new discursive conceptions of geography to emerge. The maps of the Ogasawara archipelago drawn during the *bakumatsu* colonization document this negotiation of traditional practices and modernizing techniques in a strikingly clear manner. Referring back to the maritime maps of the seventeenth century that chart shoals and other obstacles for navigation, these maps record the resurrection of sea-centric mapmaking that had fallen out of favor under the land-centric culture of the Tokugawa period. Moreover, English annotations indicate that the newly created Japanese toponyms were of limited use in the interaction with earlier settlers. Other annotations reflect the integration of local knowledge into the Japanese project. Seemingly peripheral, Ogasawara was in fact a gateway to the Pacific sphere. It served as a laboratory for political, economic, and biological globalization as Japan redefined its environment and itself in the last years of Tokugawa rule.

A watercolor painting by Miyamoto Gendō 宮本元道 records the entry of the steamboat *Kanrin-maru* into the harbor of Port Lloyd as a dramatic instance of Tokugawa gunboat diplomacy (figure 2). The painting shows a group of islanders approaching on a primitive outrigger canoe as Japanese sailors under the flag of the rising sun fire salvoes. The author of the official illustrated report on the island's occupation juxtaposes the Japanese display of impressive technology with the "island barbarians" (*tōi* 島夷; *Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki* 1863 or later, 43) living in straw huts. In reality, the eighty-one Japanese explorers had been wandering in the sea for almost two weeks until they finally found the remote archipelago in the open sea.³ The colonial experiment on Ogasawara—even if it lasted for only a year and a half—reveals how Japan, despite facing humiliation through both unequal treaties concluded with Western nations under coercion and the invasion of Tsushima, was able to enforce a territorial

claim against Western competitors on its Pacific side. Moreover, it made use of the same language of power that Western nations had just recently used to address Japan. As we shall see, not only was a visual narrative inspired by Commodore Matthew Perry's monumental report on his East Asian missions adapted in order to buttress Japan's territorial claim against foreign subjects and imperial competitors. A historical narrative and a legal basis were also constructed as the bedrock for bureaucratic control, and even fauna and flora were employed to transform the foreign territory into Japanese space. Sea-centered mapping conditioned a shift in geographical conceptions that relocated Japan along a new maritime frontier.

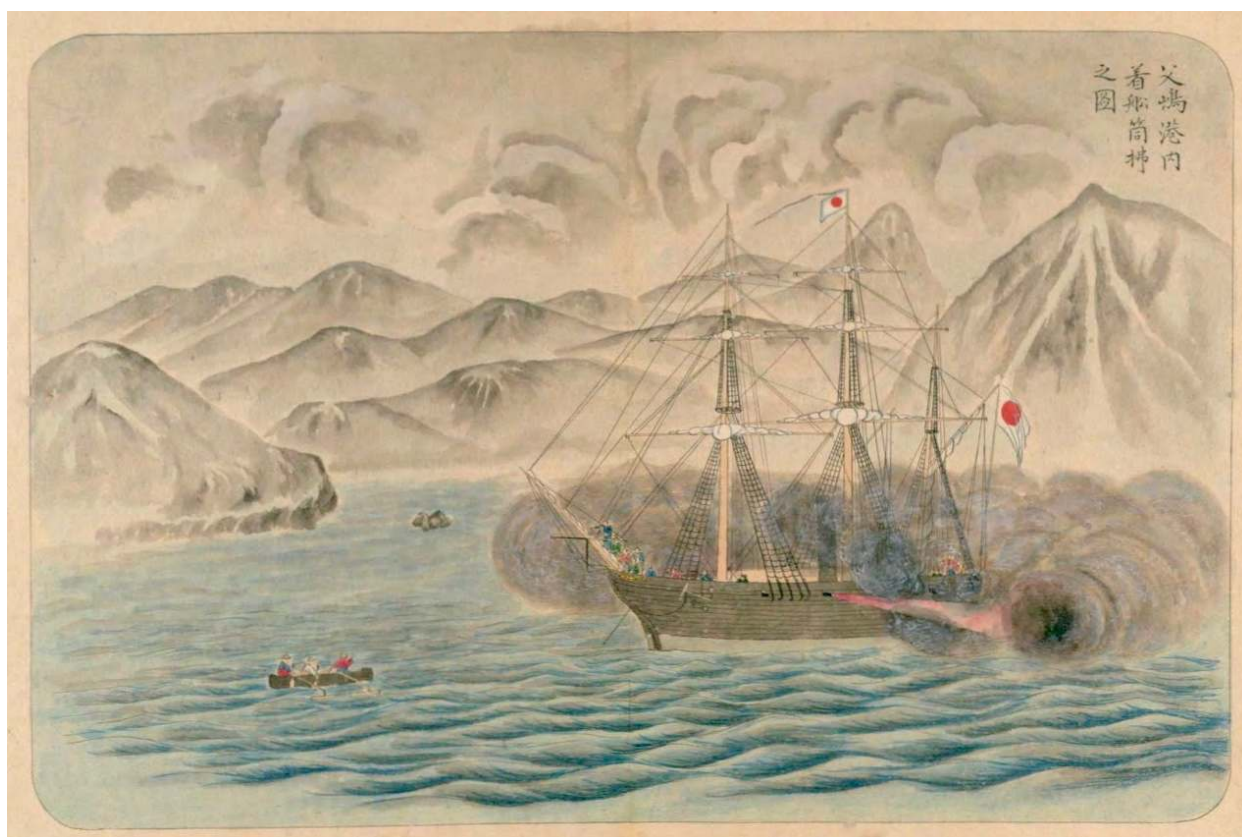


Figure 2. The Japanese steamboat *Kanrin-maru* firing salvos upon its arrival at Port Lloyd in Chichijima, January 18, 1862. Painting by Miyamoto Gendō. Source: *Ogasawara shima shinkeizu* 3:25.

Given these activities in Ogasawara, overcoming the misleading distinction between present-day borders and overseas colonies is an important step in the analysis of early Japanese colonialism.⁴ To be sure, there was no formal distinction between Ogasawara as a colony and Japan as the motherland. Such an interpretation would have worked against the shogunate's assertion that it was *reclaiming* an island that had long been a part of Japan. As an ostensible extension of the shogunal lands of eastern Japan, Ogasawara was put under the authority of Egawa Tarōzaemon 江川太郎左衛門, the shogunal representative in Shimoda. The practice of rule in Shimoda, however, was more than a simple annexation. Instead of culturally integrating the previous population, the Japanese created two distinct spaces of settlement. Most Japanese settlers resided near the administrative offices in Ōgiura and in the newly opened villages in the south of Chichijima, avoiding conflicts over agrarian space with most “foreign” inhabitants of Ōmura and Okumura villages across the bay. No taxes were yet collected from foreigners, but settler colonialism promised an expansion of taxable lands.⁵ By treating the Tokugawa's abortive colonial experiment merely as a historical oddity, most previous discussions have overlooked the historical significance of this early modern Japanese attempt to join the scramble for maritime space. Most accounts follow the established narrative that assumes the origin of Japan's Pacific expansion in the Meiji period. Jun Uchida has recently discussed an early stage of *nan'yō ron* ideology that advocated settler colonialism as a preparation for Japanese expansion around the Pacific (Uchida 2016). The present study points out that such ideas, even if not outlined as clearly as in Sugiura Shigetake's (1855–1924) works of the mid-Meiji period that Uchida discusses, had been circulating in Japan for more than a century. Even the idea of relocating outcasts to the island of Ezo to strengthen Japanese influence had already been laid out by senior councilor Tanuma Okitsugu 田沼意次 in the 1780s.⁶ Overseas settler colonialism was tested in the manageable framework of the Ogasawara Islands, suggesting that the origins of *nan'yō ron* ideology and practice need to be traced back to before the Meiji Restoration. Presumably due to the small size and population of the archipelago, as well as Japan's longstanding control over the islands, its prototypical colonial experience has so far remained confined to local histories.⁷ Even though it is overshadowed by the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate, Japanese expansion into the Pacific in fact began in 1862 with the colonization of Ogasawara.

Map 1: Portolan Charts, Dead Reckoning, and the First Japanese in Ogasawara

In order to understand the trajectory of expansionist thought during the Tokugawa period, it is helpful to look at early modern Japan's changing cartographic envisioning of the offshore islands. In the summer of 1675, Captain Shimaya Ichizaemon 嶋谷市左衛門 from Nagasaki reported to Shogun Tokugawa Ietsuna 徳川家綱 that he had confirmed the existence of a group of islands "as large as the province of Sado" three hundred Japanese miles (1,170 kilometers) south of Hachijō Island. Captain Ichizaemon compiled a collection of plants and birds, which he submitted to the shogun along with a number of maps describing the location of the archipelago he called Munin Jima 無人嶋, or "No-Man's-Land" (*Munin Jima no kakitsuke*, 1675). The shogunate had dispatched Ichizaemon, one of the most skilled navigators of his time, to examine the islands after a crew of shipwrecked sailors, who had made their way back to Japan five years earlier, first reported the discovery of Ogasawara to Japanese authorities.⁸

Apart from his gross overestimation of the island's size, Ichizaemon's report is rather sober and factual. Omitting any reference to the various mythical islands and their strange peoples in the seas southeast of Japan, as understood in the popular imagination, he described the distances between islands and their main geographical characteristics.⁹ Ichizaemon labeled the newly discovered isles and rocks with short descriptions that reflected the way they looked rather than with proper names (*Munin Jima no ezu* n.d.).¹⁰ He stated that on "No-Man's-Land," there were no inhabitants, but there were a number of trees he knew from Japan. "Furthermore," he observed, "there are many more trees, but no [others] that we know."¹¹ Rather than being intrigued by these exotic species, however, Ichizaemon seemed most interested in cultivatable land, of which he found only a small patch.

Captain Ichizaemon, who was sixty-nine, had the ability to navigate long distances out of sight from the shore, an extraordinarily rare skill at the time (*Munin Jima no kakitsuke* 1675). Before the system of licensed trade vessels (*shuinsen* 朱印船) was abolished in 1633, Ichizaemon had sailed to Siam twice under Japanese and Dutch captains, gaining critical experience in astronomical navigation (Matsuo 2014, 53). He later demonstrated his expertise by authoring a navigational textbook entitled *A Pilot's Methods* 按針之法, in which he explained the use of quadrants and magnets to determine latitude and direction (*Anjin no hō* 1670).



Figure 3. Shimaya Ichizaemon's detailed map of the Ogasawara Islands, 1675. Source: *Munin Jima no ezu* (n.d.).

On what must be an early copy of the original map submitted by the explorer, sandy beaches are colored in white and plains in yellow, with estimates of how much space could be claimed for habitation.¹² The findings were discouraging: merely 0.875 kilometers² of flat space was deemed inhabitable, obviating the need for establishing regular connections to Ogasawara (*Munin jima no ezu*, n.d.).¹³ Ichizaemon's map is a late product of the creolized culture of East Asian sailor communities in the seventeenth century. Such maps integrated European-style portolan charts with East Asian features, such as drawings of mountain silhouettes as seen from the sea (figure 3).¹⁴ Mapmaking in this style had developed around the Mediterranean since the late Middle Ages and was brought to East Asia by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Like European portolan charts, Japanese-made charts also enlarged places of particular interest, such as the islands around the harbor of Canton, while maintaining the scale of distances between harbors for navigational purposes. Typical of such sea-centric maps drawn from a ship's perspective, Ichizaemon's map also overemphasizes bays and inlets and shrinks the landmass, so that Chichijima (at the center of the map) appears as a crescent around Futami Bay. The inland, of little interest to the captain, is left blank. The sea, by contrast, is populated by shoals near the shore, and, in one instance, even the depth of the water is indicated. In order to accommodate all of the islands on one sheet, the maritime space between the two main islands was reduced, with the note that "there are approximately twenty *ri* 里 [78 kilometers] in between them." Illustrating the written report of his journey, Ichizaemon's map features rocks that line up like a string all the way from Hachijō, the southernmost of the Izu Islands familiar to most of his readers. In this way, the islands are given a vague context, even without the grid of coordinates developed in the nineteenth century. Rather than indicate distances and the precise location of the archipelago, the map was meant as an aid for orientation within the archipelago, emphasizing coastlines at the expense of interior detail. Ichizaemon submitted a separate map for navigational purposes that showed the islands in a broader context and made use of standard auxiliaries—such as loxodromes that connect navigational points oriented to stars—for maritime navigation, thus giving a clear idea of the island's location. Geographer Akioka Takejirō 秋岡武次郎 discussed this context map in 1963, when it was part of a private collection, but the map has not been locatable since then (Akioka 1963, 10).¹⁵ Together, these two maps suggest that coastline

drawings were an essential addition to context maps for local navigation. Ichizaemon's map also illustrates that the cartography of these remote islands was based on navigational maps and thus necessarily sea-centric.

Ichizaemon's expedition of 1675 was likely inspired by the belief in a mythical Isle of Gold (Kingintō 金銀島) to the southeast of Honshu. The Spanish had first sighted Ogasawara in 1543 in an attempt to sail from the Philippines to Mexico.¹⁶ Later on, the Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish dispatched expeditions into this part of the Pacific, each searching for the fabled island.¹⁷ Moreover, Engelbert Kaempfer, a German doctor who had been to Japan from 1690 to 1692, stated in his *History of Japan* that the Japanese kept the island's location a closely guarded secret from foreign adventurers (Kaempfer 1727, 69).¹⁸ Access to precious metals was indeed a major concern for the Japanese government. Most silver mines were largely exhausted by the late seventeenth century, and Japan faced trade deficits and shrinking influence in international politics (Hang 2015, 112). The shogunate had sponsored the construction of a heavy Chinese-style junk in Nagasaki just a few years before Ichizaemon's expedition. The shogunate entrusted the captain, as one of the last remaining adepts, with the last substantial expedition into the Pacific. Shortly thereafter, the navigational knowledge of Japan's maritime ages—and with it the techniques of astronomical mapmaking—would sink into oblivion under maritime prohibitions (Akioka 1963, 21–24).¹⁹ As the islands turned out to be devoid of gold, all plans for further exploration were abandoned. The Chinese junk was dismantled in 1679, and no further attempts to set sail for the islands were undertaken until 1722 (Tsuji 1995, 16; also see Yamada 1916, 72). Ichizaemon's description of “No-Man's-Land,” however, circulated widely and remained a uniquely reliable source in subsequent discourses until the *bakumatsu* period (Yamada 1916, 72).

Map 2: Drawing a Japanocentric World Order

Shogun Yoshimune's reign (1716–1745) was characterized by an emphasis on state control and famine relief, and both of these concerns relied on a sophisticated system of knowledge of regional flora and fauna throughout the realm (Marcon 2015, 115–124). Japanese leaders thus assumed a new approach in the eighteenth century that was no longer narrowly focused on the exploitation of mineral resources. Instead, they commenced a search for useful

species within Japan with an aim of improving agrarian output and increasing their degree of autarchy. Yoshimune's first challenge was to ease the immense drain of silver and gold due to the importation of medical products from China, Korea, and the Netherlands. He counteracted this problem with a successful campaign of growing ginseng and medical herbs within Japan. When the Kyōhō Famine of 1732–1735 triggered peasant riots, Yoshimune expanded his sponsorship for natural sciences and ordered an enormous inventorying project. Within only two years, the survey, which included even the smallest villages of Japan, registered 3,590 species of animals, plants, and minerals in an encyclopedia comprising 638 volumes (Marcon 2015, 141–152).²⁰

Yoshimune's project aimed to increase control over domestic politics and the economy by stabilizing the financial household, rather than expanding Japanese territory into foreign spaces. Ogasawara seems to have received renewed attention at this time as a reservoir of uncatalogued species. In 1719, the year Yoshimune acquired Niwa Shōhaku's 丹羽正伯 incomplete encyclopedia of Japanese fauna and flora, his advisor Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 wrote a booklet entitled *Report on the Southern Islands* 南島志 (Marcon 2015, 149). Hakuseki discussed the climate and economy of the Ryukyu kingdom, particularly stressing the importance of its local resources for the Japanese economy (in Imaizumi 1897, 690–713). Only a short time later, a number of reports on Ogasawara were collected in new compilations (Tsuji 1995, 18–24).²¹ For example, in 1719, sixty-year-old commoner Chōbei 長兵衛 of Nijima Island in Izu was interviewed on behalf of Edo authorities about the 1675 expedition. Chōbei was one of ten Izu islanders who had accompanied Ichizaemon's expedition and therefore knew the difficulties of sailing to Ogasawara.²² Having gathered a number of such reports, Yoshimune decided in 1722 to order an expedition from Hachijō to Ogasawara. However, Hachijō officials reported that no sailors were willing to take part in such a daunting expedition into the open sea (Tsuji 1995, 17).

Such obstacles notwithstanding, fantasies about the southern islands proved strong enough to inspire private attempts at settlement. In 1728, a masterless samurai by the name Ogasawara Sadayuki 小笠原貞往 asked for permission to develop the islands he claimed as his hereditary domain, submitting a forged proof of legal inheritance. He was bold enough to claim

that Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 and, later, Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 had acknowledged his ancestor Sadayori's presence in the islands between 1593 and 1626, a claim that was rejected by the shogunate. However, Ogasawara Sadayuki soon obtained permission to sail from an Osaka official, and he set off around 1730. Unfortunately, he never returned from this trip.²³ To make matters worse, his family was stripped of its samurai status—a punishment accompanied by an official declaration that they had no legal claim over “No-Man’s-Land” (Yamada 1916, 65). While the government kept Ogasawara on its virtual map, the islands belonged to the maritime space and, under the maritime prohibitions, remained a forbidden fruit.

In 1785, Hayashi Shihei from Sendai discussed Ogasawara's importance for Japanese geopolitics. He based his work on Ichizaemon's report, marking a renewed interest in the island's resources. Shihei's work was provocative in nature. He even mocked the expectations of readers with the title he chose: *An Illustrated Glance at Three Countries* 三國通覧図説. The three countries were not India, China, and Japan, as commonly referred to in the Buddhist world view, but Japan's nearest neighbors, Ryukyu, Korea, and Ezo. Ogasawara, uninhabited at the time, represented an empty, unclaimed territory to the southeast into which the Japanese sphere of power could expand. While the Western term *terra nullius* was yet to be coined as a justification for the expropriation of indigenous peoples, Shihei's vision was explicitly oriented toward the actual practice of Western settler colonialism.²⁴ In Shihei's vision, Japan thus found itself at the center of an alternative world order, with devoted allies and space for expansion.

Drawn at a time when Japan first found itself in competition over a sphere of influence in the north, Shihei's map (figure 4) sought to define Japan's boundaries with its East Asian neighbors. The separation between Japanese territory in the south of Ezo Island and the “Country of Ezo” (Ezo koku 蝦夷国) in the north corresponded to the ethnic boundaries of the Japanese sphere. Meanwhile, the shogunate's sphere of influence had begun to expand, making Shihei's definition of “Japan” a point of contention. Since 1784, Edo had dispatched expeditions as far north as Iturup Island in order to assert its territorial claims against Russian explorers. Censors in Edo therefore did not appreciate Shihei's ethnographic delineations and prohibited the map's distribution because it was “contrary to geography” (Toby 2016). By contrast, Mamiya Rinzō's 間宮林蔵 map of Sakhalin (1808–1810) and Inō Tadataka's 伊能忠敬 survey of the whole

Japanese archipelago, tackled about fifteen years after Shihei's map, omitted ethnographic information. As historian Brett Walker puts it, Mamiya "emptied" Sakhalin of its population, and, by shifting away from an ethnic definition of space, made the islands legible and available for the distant rulers in Edo (Walker 2007, 311).

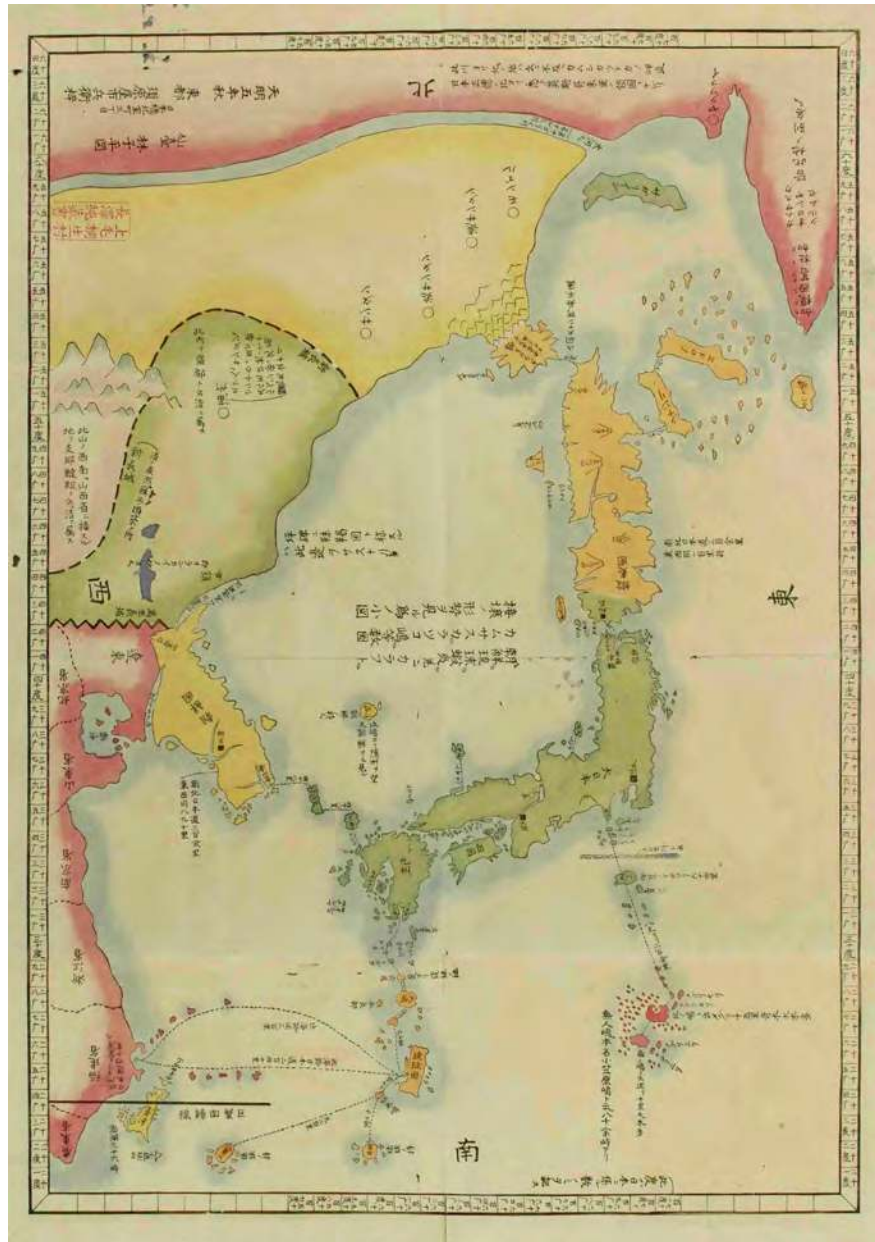


Figure 4. Hayashi Shihei's map of Japan and its neighboring countries with the Ogasawara Islands to the southeast. *Source: San koku tsūran zusetsu* (1785, vol. 2).

This expansion would not only serve national economic purposes, but would also bolster national security. One of Shihei's major concerns had been to keep Western expansion far from the Japanese heartland, and occupying Ogasawara would ensure that this outpost to the south would not fall into the wrong hands. As was common practice among Westerners, he suggested naming the islands in honor of their first explorer and making them profitable as settler colonies:

All of the ten [major] islands have bays and plains where people can live. They can grow the five grains, and since the climate is warm, exotic things can also be cultivated. Therefore, we should secretly relocate people to this island in order to let them grow trees and build villages and engage in fishery and forestry. Once we have established a productive new province, we will create a regular sailing connection and sail there three times a year to collect the products. The cost for the construction of ships will be compensated with one voyage.²⁵ (Hayashi 1785, 1:53–54)

Shihei's plan was not put into practice, since it caught the Japanese government at a delicate moment. Senior councilor Tanuma Okitsugu had unsuccessfully attempted to send an expedition to Ogasawara just a few years before (Tanaka 1997, 68–69), but in the 1790s the increasing presence of Russian vessels in the waters north of Ezo caused Japan's leaders to reinforce their policy of seclusion rather than expose themselves to international contacts out in the Pacific. A few years after Shihei's publication, senior councilor Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 proclaimed the Kansei Reform, the first in a series of censorship strikes that cowed the Japanese intellectual world. Shihei was interviewed by officials of the highest rank in 1792 and subsequently kept under arrest until his death in 1793 (Lederer 2002, 65–66). By the time Shihei was prosecuted, his book had circulated quite widely and had kindled an interest in the southern archipelago.²⁶

Map 3: Settler Colonialism in a Time of Seclusion

Despite the shogunate's seclusion policies in the 1820s, private publications document the growth of public interest in the southern islands. Satō Nobuhiro presented probably the most audacious and aggressive scenario for Japan's expansion via Ogasawara and the Mariana Islands. According to his 1823 treatise, *Secret Plan for Unification* 混同秘策, Japan should colonize the

Philippines, whose fertile soil had already attracted the Spaniards. As a first approach, however, the uninhabited islands south of Japan should be settled and controlled. Those “New Philippines,” as he called the islands, should be gradually settled by “strong soldiers” from Shikoku. “Once [the islands] are colonized,” he argued, “the thousands of miles of the South Sea’s area will become part of [our] territory [*hanto*]” (*Kondō hisaku* 1823, 110).²⁷

In the late 1830s, rumors circulated that shogunal magistrate Hagura Kandō 羽倉簡堂 had been ordered to sail to Ogasawara after a routine visit to the Izu Islands. This rumor appealed particularly to those intellectuals who had dedicated much time to the study of Western learning, such as the famous painter Watanabe Kazan 渡辺崋山. In 1837, Kazan formally applied to his home domain of Tawara for permission to join the expedition.²⁸ His request did not receive a favorable reply. Instead, he was prosecuted as part of the 1839 purge of Western studies (*bansha no goku* 蛮社の獄) and forced to renounce his interest in Ogasawara.²⁹

This did not frighten private scholar Tōjō Kindai (or Shinkō) 東條信耕, who in 1843 published a large map of the Izu archipelago that connected the Ogasawara Islands to Japan, both graphically and rhetorically (figure 5). Referring to the reports of castaways, some of whom had returned to Japan after spending several years on the islands, Kindai wrote:

Even though the soil was saline and barren like salt, there was a way to break up and reclaim some rich earth. Thus, new land could be cleared by working in [soil] dredged from mountains and creeks. If this is done properly, then [we] can allot housing to commoners, and, following this, the settlement will gradually expand its population. In the tenth year after *colonization*, the island will produce enough to pay rice and tax. Incorporating the native population [*dochaku*], this will succeed!³⁰ (*Izu shichitō zenzu* 1843)

It was probably known in Japan at that time that the islands had become home to a community of whalers, after a shipwrecked crew had spent a winter in the settlement before their return to Japan in 1840 (Hawks 1856, 199; Tanaka 1983, 239). Clearly outlining a scenario of settler colonialism in order to create an agrarian society dependent on the motherland, Kindai propagated a land-bound model of early modern colonialism.

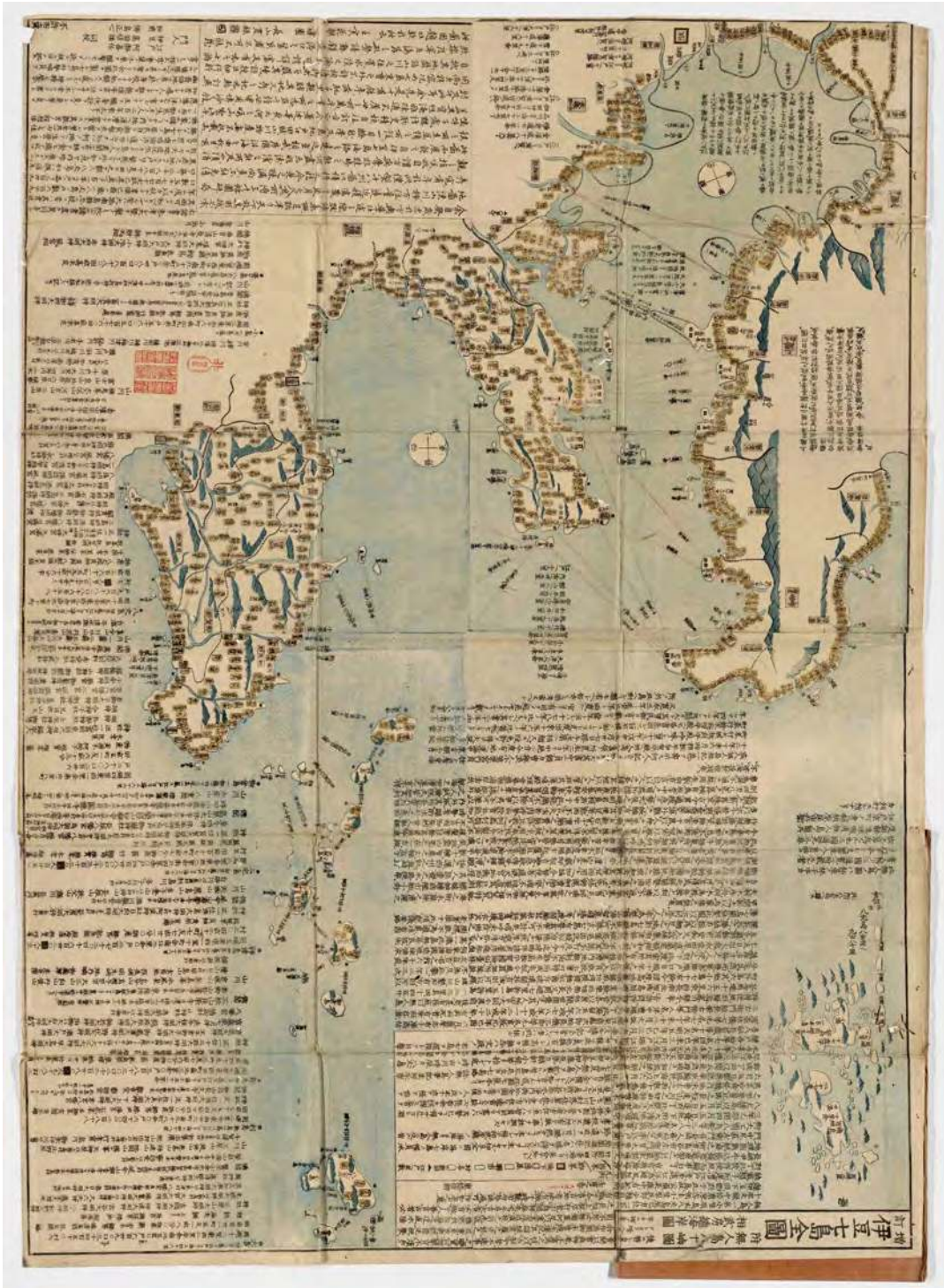


Figure 5. Tōjō Kinki's map of the Izu archipelago with the Ogasawara Islands in the southeastern corner. The text block in the center is a detailed description of Ogasawara. Source: *Izu shichitō zenzu* (1843).

Accordingly, the graphic style of his map expressed little in the way of maritime ambition. While maps may not be representative of the actual knowledge sailors gained through experience and apprenticeship, but rather of the knowledge accessible to remote readers, Edo-period maps are often cited to prove Tokugawa Japan's disinterest in the sea. In spite of its propagating expansion, Kindai's map graphically represents what historian Marcia Yonemoto calls a "topocentric map of the sea" (Yonemoto 1999, 174). While the aim of the map is to depict sea routes to the seven major islands of Izu, the focus is actually on the landmass. Indeed, Japanese traders in the Edo period sailed by coastal navigation. Accordingly, the coast was their main point of reference. Following chorographic customs, the cartographer filled the map's empty maritime space with texts describing the depicted lands. Yonemoto (1999, 175–176) argues that this technique "not only reflected, but also assuaged ocean fears."

Kindai's bold publication came at the peak of the Tempō reform of 1841–1843, an economic and political reform that dealt a sweeping blow to the publishing industry. Kindai found himself in violation of strict prohibitions against the publication of coastal maps, motivated by security considerations. Moreover, the publication of his map was viewed as an act of political agitation, and, in 1848, he began a sentence that banished him from Edo for eighteen years (*Kokushi daijiten*.)

In this way, Ogasawara wove its way through various discussions of oceanic space and territoriality in Tokugawa Japan and abroad. As a part of the empirical realm, the archipelago gradually became disentangled from the mythological space that the Pacific had represented for premodern Japan. A repository of natural resources at Ichizaemon's time, the islands came to be seen as an empty space for settler colonialism in the late eighteenth century. The expansionist Satō Nobuhiro further developed this idea with his emphasis on the control of uninhabited islands as preparation for a greater empire. Given the approach of Russian explorers from the north, however, Japan had embarked on a policy of strengthened seclusion rather than exposing itself more directly to the process of globalization that had already begun on the open sea. Ogasawara thus remained uninhabited until Pacific whaling brought the West to Japan's doorstep.

It was not long before Ogasawara became a local foothold for Westerners in the rich whaling grounds known as "Japan Ground" at the time. The industrial revolution occurring on

the other side of the globe created a voracious demand for whale oil, which lured increasing numbers of Western whaling vessels to Japan's coastal waters. From the 1820s onward, many of these ships stopped at Ogasawara for fresh water or protection from storms. A group of whalers who had become familiar with the archipelago requested permission from the British consul-general in Hawai'i to found a settlement. Together, some thirty men and women from Europe, America, Hawai'i, and the Pacific Islands moved to Ogasawara and founded its first permanent settlement in 1830 (Chapman 2016a, 24–28).

Map 4: Converging Empires and Modernizing Views of Maritime Territory

When Commodore Perry sailed to Uraga in 1853, he first paid a visit to the inhabitants of Ogasawara. He decided to purchase a patch of land near the harbor for fifty dollars from the American-born Nathaniel Savory, who had become the head of the village founded in 1830 (*Title Deed of Property*, in Cholmondeley 1915, 93–95).³¹ Given its location so close to the direct route between Shanghai and Hawaii or San Francisco, Perry forged plans to develop the archipelago into a maritime base for steamers to restock water and coal (Tanaka 1983, 241; Hawks 1856, 199).

In his report published in 1856, Perry stressed the islands' strategic significance in the strongest terms. An avid military strategist, he urged his government to occupy the islands as a maritime base for trans-Pacific traffic. The base, he argued, would enable substantial settler colonialism and strengthen the American presence in that part of the Pacific. Concerning the business the settlers had been running on the island for over two decades, Perry wrote:

Savory... carries on a trade in sweet potatoes of his own raising and a rum of his own distillation from sugar cane, with the whaling ships which frequent the place; and he had prosecuted his business with such success as to accumulate, at one time, several thousands of dollars.... The plains on the bay only have been cultivated as yet, but there is every reason to believe that the others are equally fertile, and might be made to yield sufficiently to support a large population. (Hawks 1856, 200, 209)

The U.S. government ignored Perry's call for the founding of an American colony, presumably to avoid a diplomatic crisis with Britain. Britain had claimed the islands in 1827,

though it left behind only a copper plate to support this claim (Tanaka 1983, 237). The harbor that Perry envisioned when he examined the green bay of Port Lloyd in Ogasawara was therefore never built.

The shogunate, in the meantime, became increasingly interested in the modern exploitation of the Pacific. Western whaling had already caused the Japanese catch to drop significantly in the 1850s. This necessitated the introduction of modern offshore whaling techniques to sustain earlier levels of exploitation (Arch 2013, 44). The shift was tackled as early as 1857, when the shogunate sponsored research on whaling in Hakodate, with the well-known world traveler and interpreter “John” Nakahama Manjirō 中浜万次郎 functioning as a consultant. Manjirō, originally a fisherman from Tosa Province, had been shipwrecked on the uninhabited island of Torishima in 1841 and was rescued by the American whaling ship *John Howland*, on which he subsequently worked for two years. Later, he attended a school in Fairhaven, Massachusetts (Nakahama 2005, 24, 29–31, 35). After his return to Japan in 1851, he was employed by the shogunate as a translator and taught English to some of the most influential people of his time.³² Having known Ogasawara from his years as a whaler, Manjirō urged the authorities to explore the waters near the islands located within the so-called Japan Ground. Accordingly, he was sent out to explore the archipelago’s waters in 1858, but the lack of accurate maps thwarted his search in the vast sea (Fujii 1985, 68–75).

It became clear that two tools were necessary for reaching Ogasawara: a steamboat that could navigate the seasonal currents, and a map indicating the island’s exact position. The steamboat *Kanrin-maru*, delivered from the Netherlands in 1857, was representative of Tokugawa modernization in many ways. In 1860, the steamboat fulfilled its first major mission, carrying the Japanese Embassy to the United States across the Pacific to ratify the 1858 Treaty of Amity and Commerce (*Nihon daihyakka zensho*). The embassy was presented with a volume of Perry’s report cited above, which also featured a map representing the islands in a grid of coordinates, which were the key to making Ogasawara accessible for the planners in Edo (Hawks 1856, 196b).

Sociologist and philosopher of science Bruno Latour studies scientific modernity by pointing at the relevance of universal legibility in carriers of knowledge. Modern maps are

essential tools for colonial expansion in that they pin down knowledge of topography, population, and natural resources, making these legible as “immutable mobiles” that allow the “center of calculation” to exert long-distance rule (Latour 1986, 21).³³ In 1861, the shogunate informed all foreign embassies of its claim over the islands, and later in that same year, an expedition entitled “Examination of the islands in Izu Province and cultivation of the island Ogasawara” 伊豆国附島々備向取調且小笠原島開拓 set sail for the archipelago (Tanaka 1983, 244). This name disguised the enterprise as a domestic affair by using the formerly unofficial place name “Ogasawara,” but nothing could obscure the fact that this was a highly sensitive diplomatic issue. Since the official U.S. stance was that the British had no right to the islands, Townsend Harris, U.S. consul general to Japan, issued a letter to Nathaniel Savory, recommending that he collaborate with the Japanese magistrate (Tanaka 1983, 244). Subsequently, foreign affairs magistrate Mizuno Tadanori set sail for Ogasawara in person, accompanied by translator Nakahama Manjirō and navy pioneer Ono Tomogorō, both high-ranking consultants on shogunal policy.³⁴

Annexation or Colonization? Narratives of Legal Possession

While Ezo saw the gradual evolution of early modern expansion after the island was first put under Edo’s direct control in 1799 (Walker 1999, 121), Ogasawara is the place where earlier experiments to integrate foreign territory into the Tokugawa Empire solidified in a colonial program built upon a new definition of space. Hegemonic claims were now justified historically and substantiated in the enforcement of shogunal law. Earlier inhabitants were spatially separated, but at the same time incorporated into the administration. The transformation of Ogasawara into a Japanese colony entailed the introduction of Japanese-style agriculture and the relocation of Japanese subjects to outnumber the existing population. As suggested previously, this recalls earlier “neo-Confucian” models practiced on the northern periphery of the Tokugawa state. The term *kaitaku* 開拓, used to describe colonizing activities at the time, had formerly been used in the context of domestic land improvement projects. The word *shokuminchi* 植民地, used to mean “colony” in the modern period, was introduced to the Japanese language through Shizuki Tadao’s 志筑忠雄 1801 translation of Engelbert Kaempfer’s *History of Japan* in the context of describing Western expansionism. Only in the Meiji period did the term start to be

used in the Japanese context (*Nihon kokugo daijiten* 2007). Given the former use of *kaitaku* in the expansionist visions of Hayashi Shihei, Satō Nobuhiro, or Tōjō Kindai, as well as the modernizing practice of land occupation in Ogasawara, the etymological distinction between these two terms for analytical purposes can be misleading.

The new narrative of legal possession was needed to counter competing claims such as those made by the British, and thus had to be phrased in an internationally intelligible narrative. The name Ogasawara, which the shogunate first used in stating its claims toward foreign powers in 1861, thus replaced the formerly used toponym Munin Jima, or “No-Man’s-Land,” which had well captured official Tokugawa’s disinterest in the Pacific since the seventeenth century. The new name was derived from the Ogasawara family’s claim of ownership described above, but it by no means undermined the fact that the colonization was an appropriation of territory by the Tokugawa family. Put under the authority of Egawa Tarōzaemon, the shogunal representative in Shimoda, the islands became part of the shogun-owned lands of eastern Japan. Interestingly, the expansion of Tokugawa lands was carried out under the *hinomaru* flag, which had been used as a common emblem for Japanese ships since 1854 (*Nihon daihyakka zensho* 1994) (see figure 2). The Tokugawa thus built upon the claim that Ogasawara had long been a part of Japan, and that the expedition was an act of *reclaiming* the islands in the name of their earlier owners.

Mizuno, the magistrate of foreign affairs, was doubtlessly aware that Sadayori’s story was a myth that had been officially repudiated by the shogunate in the 1730s. This widely known story was nonetheless the best material available to substantiate a territorial claim. One day after his arrival in Chichijima, Mizuno went ashore to meet village headman Nathaniel Savory. Asked whether he knew of the British claim on the island, Mizuno stated: “Three hundred years ago, [we] built buildings here... This continued for two hundred years, but then we interrupted [the project] in the year of the rooster [1753?]” (*Minamijima kōkai nikki*, cited in Tanaka 1983, 245).³⁵ Mizuno proceeded unwaveringly to distribute gifts to his new subjects. Even though Ogasawara Sadayori’s colonization in the sixteenth century was the stuff of legend, Mizuno’s manipulation of the story for his political purpose is quite blatant.

Ogasawara had been a *de facto* stateless space before 1862, and its first settlers were drawn to it by commercial opportunities without a state-led colonizing project. Though

authorized by the British consul in Hawai‘i, the settlement was underwritten by the settlers’ private funds (Chapman 2016a, 23–24).³⁶ By the time of Perry’s visit in 1853, the islanders were no longer unwilling to identify as part of greater overseas empires. In the drawings Hachijō official Kikuchi Sakujirō 菊池作次郎, a member of the 1862 expedition, made in his diary, an American flag is waving over Savory’s house since Perry had appointed him village head on behalf of the United States (*Ogasawara shima go-takkai*, in Tanaka 1983, 57). More than the ethnic background of Savory and his white fellows, it was the lack of military protection that may have facilitated the swift reconfiguration of local identity and changing empires. When pirates plundered the island in the fall of 1849, stealing Savory’s property and abducting his wife, the islanders were completely unprotected under the Union Jack (Cholmondeley 1915, 26–28). But American gunboats did not take up a presence in Ogasawara after Perry’s visit either, which made the Japanese appear to be the only possible guarantor for law and order. Of course, the thirty-odd farmers and fishers had no choice but to collaborate with the Japanese intruders, but the security they offered may have inspired at least Savory to comply.

Hydrography of Japan’s Sixth Open Harbor

The expedition’s first task was cataloguing and mapping the new territory. In his diary, Kikuchi Sakujirō describes his hardship during the onerous and sometimes dangerous exploration of Chichijima (*Ogasawara shima go-takkai*, in Tanaka 1983, 73–78). Mizuno, who was known for his difficult temperament, sent him out to climb mountains and map the inland, with the comment that it would be an honor to die on such an important mission (*Ogasawara shima go-takkai*, in Tanaka 1983, 73). Meanwhile, Captain Ono Tomogorō and his assistant Tsukamoto Akitake (or Kanpo) 塚本桓甫 mapped the archipelago from the sea. The map they produced was a pioneering project that incorporated earlier styles of land-borne mapmaking with the cutting-edge techniques of hydrography of the day (figure 6).

Sailing around Chichijima and its neighboring islands, Tomogorō and his team recorded the coastlines with high precision. Wherever their ship went, they measured the depth, leaving traces on the map like imprints in the snow. The Japanese had first engaged in such hydrographic projects after the treaty ports opened in 1860. After repeated requests, shogunal authorities had allowed the British to conduct measurements in Japanese bays, but only under supervision of

Japanese officials. Water depths had been measured in Japan since the 1840s, but Futami Bay in Chichijima may have been the first underwater landscape mapped with such precision by an exclusively Japanese team.³⁷ A fine line marks the border of navigability by delineating waters of less than four *hiro* (7.2 meters) in depth. By making sure they could claim safe navigation for the bays, the new authorities prepared for a considerable volume of domestic and international traffic to come.

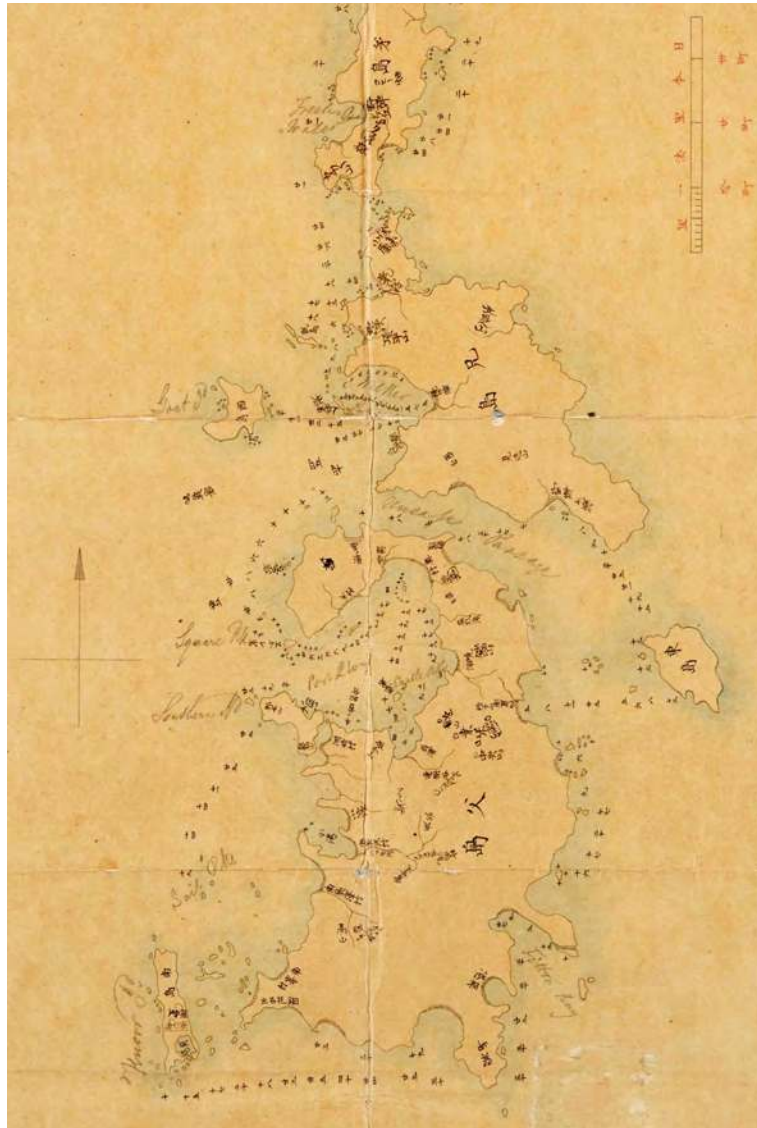


Figure 6. Ono Tomogorō's untitled map of Chichijima, Anijima, and the surrounding waters, 1862. Toponyms in Japanese, with English annotations. *Source: Ono Tomogoro's Map.*

The official report, *Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki* 小笠原島風土略記, that island magistrate Obana Sakunosuke 小花作之助 submitted to the shogunate after the Japanese retreated from Ogasawara in 1863 documents the interaction of foreign sailors and islanders with the Japanese administration in this forgotten open port of Japan:

Each captain reported to the office and expressed his delight about Japan cultivating this island. Until now, they brought along some of their products and were helped out with things they lacked on their ships. If there also were prostitutes, this island would certainly flourish. In spite of the number of whaling and trade vessels in the nearby seas, they only land in our harbor to fill up wood and water. For other purposes they do not land here. If we had enough to supply whatever other products they lack, they would probably all stop by. We understand that many whaling vessels travel for a year or a year and a half without landing on shore.³⁸ (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki* 1863 or later, 114–116)

According to Obana's records, twelve American and Hawaiian whaling vessels, as well as one Russian transporter, traded on Chichijima between the second month of 1862 and the fifth month of 1863.³⁹ Only the British, who had claimed Ogasawara in 1827, seem to have boycotted the Japanese colony.

With Japan's integration into global markets, exploiting the limited resource of whale oil meant learning from globally active competitors. Relying on such formal interaction with foreign captains, Obana compiled a list of whale species that the foreigners had caught in the vicinity of the archipelago and enumerated the market price of each species' oil per barrel in dollars. The oil of killer whales was traded for sixteen dollars per barrel, a light whale's oil for twenty, and the precious sperm whale oil for up to forty-five dollars per barrel (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki* 1863 or later, 109–110). The fact that Obana could relate only three of the nine species listed in English to a Japanese name suggests that some of the species the Westerners caught offshore were not yet familiar to the Japanese. This systematic collection of knowledge shows that Ogasawara was more than a mere expansion of Japan's periphery. It was an outpost for collecting technological, geographical, and biological knowledge crucial to the Tokugawa project of colonizing the sea.

Even before the first settlers were brought over from Hachijō, preparations were made for a whaling campaign (Yamada 1916, 85; Tokyo Prefecture 1930, 15; Fujii 1985, 81–83). In the same summer, Egawa Tarōzaemon, the shogunal official responsible for the Izu archipelago, and world traveler Nakahama Manjirō bought an American whaling ship in Yokohama (Igawa 1973, 160; Tanaka 1983, 249; *Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki* 1863 or later, 55). Once the colonization was under way, Manjirō sailed to Ogasawara several times on the Japanese-built schooner *Ichiban-maru* 一番丸, which he equipped with a harpoon gun and five harpoons bought from the islanders. He hired three locals for his whaling enterprise. Near Anejima, they caught two whales and harvested ninety-six barrels of oil. While the shift from traditional to modern whaling techniques did not take off on a large scale until the 1870s, Manjirō's expeditions show that experimental attempts to modernize whaling were initiated as early as 1858, when he first explored the “Japan Ground” in the name of the shogunate.

Manjirō relied on the islanders to introduce him to the most up-to-date whaling techniques using explosive harpoons (Fujii 1985, 82–83). The so-called bomb lance technique with which he experimented had only recently been adopted by British and American whalers. Manjirō, whose training as a whaler in the 1840s had already become outdated, bought a harpoon and munition in Chichijima and hired a number of islanders as instructors in this new technique (Fujii 1985, 68, 82).

Japan had a considerable domestic demand for whale products even before the mechanical industrialization of the Meiji period. In contrast to the West, Japan did not experience a whaling boom in the early nineteenth century, and it was not until the 1930s that Japan claimed a major share in the world's whaling catch (Tsutsui 2013, 298).⁴⁰ In premodern Japan, whale products were mainly used in agriculture. Whalebones were ground and deposited upon the fields as a fertilizer, and whale oil was burned in the fields as a pesticide (Arch 2013, 42; Walker 2010, 47–52). The hunt was limited to a distance of 16 to 20 kilometers from the coast and involved coordination of several hundred people distributed over thirty to forty boats (Yamashita 2004, 159–169). Western whaling techniques, in contrast, facilitated exploitation of the open seas and incurred lower labor costs. Large-scale whaling vessels equipped with a harpoon allowed a much smaller crew to extract oil from a greater number of whales on

expeditions that lasted several months or, in some cases, even several years. The whale's greasy meat was boiled on board the whaling vessel and only the final product, the whale oil, was stored until landing. Waste materials were dumped into the sea to make space for the next kill. If perishable products had been the decisive factor, then the open sea would have remained economically unattractive until the invention of the heat pump. The industrial approach of harvesting only the oil, however, turned the sea into a productive place.

Ethnic Space, Administrative Subjection, and Nonhuman Agents

Not only whale species, but also parts of the archipelago's flora and fauna, struck the explorers as foreign and exotic. The Ogasawara archipelago, often referred to as "the Galapagos of East Asia," is home to a great number of endemic species, of which many are endangered or have become extinct under the influence of species introduced since 1830 (Sugiura 2016). Already in 1862, both endemic and introduced species attracted Japanese attention. Tomogorō's map marks a site all the way up Minami Fukurozawa Valley where an explorer had made an exciting discovery. Obana reported:

There is a species called *worenji* [orange]. As one climbs up the valley from a place called Minami Fukurozawa, there are seven or eight trees on the hill. Furthermore, there are several of them in Miyazaki. They are ripe between the ninth and the eleventh month [October–December]. They look like mandarins, and they taste much better than *kunenbo* [a Japanese species of citrus fruit].⁴¹
(*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki*, 1863 or later, 40–41)

Furthermore, Obana records the discovery of bananas, yams, taro, pineapples, and many other plants the settlers had brought to the islands. The Japanese were less interested in some other species they found. Nevertheless, they felt the need to regulate the general use of natural resources, even if merely for the sake of demarcating their territory. On the occasion of their second meeting on shore, Mizuno asked Savory whether the island was home to any cows or deer. Savory replied: "There are no cows or deer, but goats. However, those goats have not been here forever, I [Savory] have brought them over from my country and set them free." Then he made clear that those goats were his property (*Ogasawara shima go-takkai* 1862, 61).⁴² Mizuno stated that "even if [you] released those goats, they are feeding on grass and trees on Japanese

land, and are thus not to be considered *free* [jiyū]” (*Ogasawara shima go-takkai* 1862, 61).⁴³ Eventually, the two men agreed that the inhabitants would be allowed to hunt the goats if they asked the local magistrate for permission.

Having demonstrated his authority, Mizuno had his men unload a ready-made memorial stele for the ill-fated Japanese sailors who had died on these remote islands in the past. This stele was erected above Savory’s house, a center of gravity for political issues of all kinds in the archipelago. It was there that the Japanese officials opened their first administrative headquarters (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki*, 1863 or later, 18–19). As they began to cultivate land, they relocated their offices across the bay to Ōgiura, where there remained plains to clear beyond those found near the two major settlements. Ōgiura’s location oversees both the bay’s entrance and the two “foreign” settlements, and was thus well situated as a center of control (figure 7). In the early phase, the Japanese colony on Chichijima was focused on occupying as much new land as possible. Within only a year and a half, the thirty-eight settlers had expanded the agrarian space on Chichijima by 37.5 percent, to approximately 9.6 hectares (Tokyo Prefecture 1930, 15). In some instances, land was bought from previous owners, such as in the case of an old hut near Kominato Bay, but, for the main part, the Japanese cut down forests on narrow plains along the creeks in the southern half of Chichijima (figure 8).

Mizuno refrained from collecting taxes from the foreigners, thereby administratively separating “foreign” and Japanese spaces. In this way, the two communities—earlier settlers and the Japanese newcomers—could exist in parallel for a while, with little cause for conflict. Moreover, Mizuno explored the suitability of Japan’s new strategy for the control of a multiethnic population. When an unknown thief stole and ate some of Savory’s ducks, Mizuno wanted to compensate Savory for his loss in the name of the Japanese government. When Savory was unwilling to accept the money at first, Mizuno said: “Since you are permanently living on this island, you are just like the people of Japan. The people are like a child and the government is like a parent.... You should accept this as a gift from parent to child, without any hesitation” (*Minamijima kōkai nikki*, in Tanaka 1983, 247).⁴⁴



Figure 7. Landscape painting of Ōgiura village by Miyamoto Gendō, 1862–1863. *Ogasawara shima zue furoku ikkan* (1862–1863, 8).



Figure 8. Map of newly opened areas in Kita Fukurozawa Valley, Chichijima. *Source: Ogasawara shima zue furoku ikkan* (1862–1863, 39).

At the same time, the Japanese engineered the environment according to their needs. The preliminary plan Mizuno had forged before his trip envisaged a settlement based on the cultivation of rice and various types of grain and beans (*gokoku* 五穀).⁴⁵ Oranges, peaches, and plums were added to this plan after Mizuno's visit. Cedar, pine, bamboo, and cypress were to be grown for construction materials (Chapman 2016a, 63). As a matter of fact, two separate waves of what Alfred W. Crosby has called "ecological imperialism" reached Ogasawara (Crosby 1986). The two biological spheres created by Westerners and Japanese clashed on the archipelago. It is not clear how many of these species were actually brought to the islands during the first brief attempt at colonization. Whatever the case, Obana's records document that the Japanese took an active interest in the species they found on their explorations and fantasized about their use in Japan proper. Instead of a neo-Japan, the island had become a middle ground of biological globalization. By the Meiji period, it incorporated both Japanese species and the cosmopolitan ecosystems created in Pacific island colonies.

Land-Borne Mapping: Occupation through Toponyms

While Tomogorō was mapping the archipelago from the sea, the aforementioned Miyamoto Gendō was dispatched into the mountains of Chichijima to map the territory by land. He created two volumes of landscape paintings and descriptions that served as maps of the island's interior. He labeled places formerly named in English with Japanese toponyms the explorers must have invented on the spot. While some of the new names the Japanese used were descriptive of geographical characteristics—such as Meshimoriyama 飯盛山 for a mountain shaped like an overfilled rice bowl—others referenced more specific tropes of Japanese culture and geography. A pair of twin rocks in the middle of Futami Bay, which have now become part of a pier, must have reminded the explorers of the famous Meoto 夫婦 rocks near Futami Okitama shrine in Ise, thereby inspiring the new name for the bay (figure 9).

Tomogorō's sea-centric map, which Gendō carefully reproduced at the beginning of his volume of landscape vistas, merged smoothly with Gendō's own records of land-bound geography. Like Ichizaemon's map from almost two hundred years earlier, Gendō's adaptation of Tomogorō's map depicts mountain silhouettes as seen from the sea, but the interior that the

painter had so carefully explored is still left blank. At the same time, his paintings were instructive as maps in and of themselves: often depicting the landscape from an aerial viewpoint, they bend space to depict distant places in relation to one another, even if those places could in fact not be seen like that from any point on the ground (figure 9). Above the centers of Japanese land reclamation, a bird's-eye view documents the development of agricultural expansion with mountain silhouettes forming the margins of the maps (figure 8). The progression Gendō depicted claims that the Japanese pushed back the wilderness farther up into the valley, sometimes taking over fields abandoned by the islanders.



Figure 9. The *Kanrin-maru* anchoring between the Futami rocks and a place said to be the patch of land Commodore Perry purchased in 1853. Source: *Ogasawara shima sōzu* (1862–63, 1:32).



Figure 10. Miyamoto Gendō's adaptation of Tomogorō's map, 1862. *Source: Ogasawara shima zue furoku ikkan* (1862–1863, 4).

Once more, Tomogorō and Gendō integrated earlier styles of Japanese mapmaking with international standards of cartography. Both the silhouettes of coastal mountains and the map's emphasis on coastlines call to mind Inō Tadataka's famous map of Japan, compiled in the early nineteenth century. The ship's route guides the reader across the map like a traveler along the highways that were so central for a reader's orientation on Tokugawa-period maps. At the same time, Tomogorō's map of Chichijima marks a shift from the land-centered maps familiar to historians of Tokugawa Japan back to the sea-centric maps of earlier times. Surprisingly, coordinates long known in Japan are absent from his map. Tomogorō, who had navigated the *Kanrin-maru* across the Pacific on its mission to America in 1860, was known for his skillful use

of the lunar distance method of determining longitude (Fujii 1985, 2–5). While this technique was helpful in determining a ship's approximate position, lunar distance calculations were by no means precise enough to measure exact coordinates on a mapmaking expedition. Thanks to the context map in Perry's travel account, this lack of coordinates was not a problem. Rather, Tomogorō compiled a detailed map that facilitated dead reckoning within the archipelago. Just like Ichizaemon's dead-reckoning map of 1675, Tomogorō's sea-centric map emphasized bays, inlets, and other anchorages, thereby shrinking the island's interior. Just like a portolan chart, the map by and large respects approximate angles between different points along the shore (figures 6 and 10).

Replacing the Toponyms of a Creole Space

Tomogorō's map was subsequently used to facilitate communication between Japanese authorities and their local employees. Since the Japanese toponyms were phonetically unrelated to the earlier place names, instead describing the physical characteristics of each place, the former English names were added in cursive handwriting. The Japanese hired islanders for different administrative tasks. Obana's report submitted to the authorities in Edo after the Japanese retreat in 1863 documents that an islander named Thomas Webb⁴⁶ was entrusted with piloting foreign ships into the harbor, for which purpose he was given a Japanese national flag:

While I was stationed on this island, we sent out a pilot whenever a whaling vessel or other ships of different countries appeared outside the harbor, in order to inform them of the hidden reef and their anchoring place. Since Mr. Webb lived in Kiyosaki village, from where one can easily see the harbor entrance, [I] handed him our national flag (*kokki*). I ordered him to go and guide the arriving vessels as soon as they were sighted.⁴⁷ (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki*, 1863 or later, 57–58).

Even though they lived in separate spaces, the interaction with islanders was of great importance to the Japanese. Proficient in foreign languages, the islanders fulfilled an indispensable role in the interaction with the global community of sailors whose movements connected Ogasawara to geographically distant colonial societies of the Anglophone world (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki*, 1863 or later, 113–114).

Climate and Transitional Geography: Settler Colonialism à la Tokugawa

For foreign affairs magistrate Mizuno, the “Japanization” of Ogasawara seemed to necessitate both an ethnic and a biological transformation, now that Japanese control over people and goods became defined through their permanent presence within Japanese space. Geographical proximity was taken as a guarantee of relative climatic compatibility that would allow a smooth expansion from domestic into foreign territory. In fact, Mizuno’s greatest concern during the preparations was that climatic circumstances could jeopardize Ogasawara’s occupation. To reduce this risk, he chose to transplant people from the nearest location within Japan to Ogasawara. At a preparatory meeting, he stated:

If we convince children and dependents of Hachijō to move to Ogasawara, there will certainly be individuals who volunteer. This would be [favorable, since] those people, in contrast to the peasants of the mainland, only rarely eat grain as their main nutrient. I have heard they live in abject deprivation. We shall put together and provide a set each of materials that can be assembled into simple dwellings; [furthermore] construction tools, agricultural and fishing tools, as well as seeds and foodstuff for about one year shall be sent over.⁴⁸ (Yamada 1916, 81–82)

The island of Hachijō, which had been part of the shogunal lands and stood under Edo’s control, lies to the south of the Kuroshio current in its usual pattern (see figure 1).⁴⁹ Due to this current, which cuts it off from the remaining Izu archipelago, Hachijō was contacted only once a year.⁵⁰ Boats steering from Hachijō to Edo usually crossed the current northward in the fifth or sixth month of the Japanese calendar, when its surge was weak and the wind blew from the south. They returned with northwesterly winds in the tenth or eleventh month when the current was still weak. During the winter, the current is stronger and the winds force ships onto a southeasterly course. Indeed, it was during the winter months that most ships driven off course from western Japan reached Hachijō and Ogasawara (Igawa 1973, 207).⁵¹

Surrounded by rough and dangerous seas, Hachijō is a volcanic island with limited water resources and some arable soil in its southern mountains and its center. Since sufficient quantities of rice cannot be grown here, the island was subject to a special form of taxation. Unlike in most of Japan, yearly duties were submitted in the form of dyed silk cloth (Igawa 1973,

167–168). Due to its harsh climate, Hachijō was regularly plagued by famines. By way of relief, the shogunate created programs that relocated Hachijō islanders to Honshu to mitigate the demographic pressure. The best-known instance thereof occurred under the supervision of senior councilor Tanuma Okitsugu (in office 1772–1786), when a vast area of wetlands in the northeastern Kantō Plain was drained to provide new agricultural land. Tanuma also envisioned colonizing Ogasawara, presumably with the intent of relocating Hachijō islanders (Tanaka 1997, 68).

Mizuno thus continued an early modern practice of using the population of Hachijō as a workforce that would readily move to new territories in search of a better life. He was aware that Ogasawara’s soil would not yield much at first and proposed that people from the most similar place within Japan, in geographical and climatological terms, be sent to settle in Ogasawara. In the natural philosophy of the Tokugawa period, climate was seen as an important factor that shaped the “nature” of a local population. This geo-deterministic line of thought, which culminated in the twentieth century with Watsuji Tetsurō’s *Climate and Culture* (1961 [1935]), had been a common assumption in most *fudoki* 風土記 introductions to the customs and climate of different regions of Japan. Probably under the same considerations, Satō Nobuhiro had suggested that settlers for the islands “straight south from Japan” should be recruited in Kōchi and its surroundings on the Pacific coast (*Kondō hisaku* 1823, 106–110). In the spring after Mizuno’s expedition, even before the transfer of settlers, the shogunal steamboat *Chōyō-maru* 朝陽丸 set course for Ogasawara, delivering agricultural tools and a stock of rice and grain seeds (Tokyo Prefecture 1930, 15). In the eighth month, eleven married couples and eight minors whose marriages had been arranged in advance were relocated from Hachijō. They were joined by eight craftsmen to assist with land improvement activities (Tanaka 1983, 249–250). The presence of thirty-eight Japanese individuals outnumbered the thirty inhabitants of the archipelago, thereby extending Japan’s ethnic boundaries deep into the Pacific.

Despite the relatively quick occupation of the archipelago through bureaucracy and agriculture, the colonial experiment on Ogasawara was not fated to last for long. Given increasing foreign pressure on the Tokugawa shogunate, the project was aborted in its second year. After a British merchant was murdered for not having bowed to a daimyo in the so-called

Namamugi Incident in 1862 (Gomi et al. 2010, 318), Japan's international political predicament worsened dramatically. In August 1863, the British attacked Kagoshima from the sea, having misunderstood the murder as internal agitation against the shogunate's opening policy (Mōri 1992, 344–345). At that moment it was not difficult to imagine that the British, who had claimed Ogasawara as early as 1827, could attack the island as a subsequent power play against Japan. In this context the shogunate could no longer guarantee the safety of its subjects and risked another military humiliation. Accordingly, it ordered the repatriation of all Japanese settlers and abandoned Ogasawara on the twenty-second day of the fifth month of 1863. The land and supplies the settlers had developed during their short stay were divided among the non-Japanese islanders with the understanding that this retreat was only temporary (Tanaka 1983, 250).

More than a decade later, in late 1875, the Japanese steamboat *Meiji-maru* 明治丸 entered Port Lloyd in the Ogasawara archipelago. Among the passengers was Obana Sakunosuke, who had served as the local magistrate during the first colonization a decade before. The Meiji colonization began with a plan strikingly similar to that attempted under the Tokugawa. The Meiji government granted the inhabitants the right to remain on the island under the condition that they sign the new law, read to them in English during a short ceremony (Cholmondeley 1915, 164–170). Since the population had more than doubled in the meantime and counted seventy individuals, the government encouraged Japanese individuals to settle on Ogasawara by granting the construction of houses and land improvement, even as trade with foreigners remained mostly in the hands of English-speaking islanders. By 1882, the Meiji government had forced all foreign inhabitants to accept Japanese nationality and become imperial subjects. However, this did not end the systematic discrimination of inhabitants of foreign descent. The policy was introduced within the first year of the Japanese return as a precaution to avoid conflicts with the extraterritoriality clause stipulated in the treaties of amity and commerce concluded after 1858 (Ishihara 2007b, 61–64).⁵²

In 1880, Obana had a new stele erected to celebrate the Japanese expansion to Ogasawara. The stele, which still stands near Sadayori's shrine in Ōgiura, expressed Obana's desire for even greater expansion. Before its inauguration, Obana took a chisel and edited the epitaph shipped from Tokyo (figure 11) to read:

In principle, the territory of our country is surrounded by maritime waters in all directions. To the southeast of Izu, from the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth degree of northern latitude to the thirty-fifth or thirty-sixth degree, islands are spread out like stars, and also this island is part thereof. The mountain range of Kai and Izu [provinces] winds down in wavelike movements ~~and ends here~~ [sic]. This is thus our southern gate. If we did not station officials to protect it, then the population could not [peacefully attend to] their occupations. Alas, may people peacefully [pursue] their professions and improve their skills. May they not reject the new government's great kindness of opening up the periphery!"⁵³ (*Kaitaku Ogasawara shima no hi* 1880)

The circumstances of this adaptation were recorded in an entry of June 1880 in the official chronicle *Ogasawara Yōroku* 小笠原要録:

The aforementioned [stele] was brought to the island in June 1880, and we succeeded in erecting it in October. The characters “and ends here” went against Sakunosuke's taste. He deleted the parts that greatly distort the geographic reality on the map of the southern sea [the Pacific] and other parts, and set up the stele on a hill some twenty *ken* (36m) from the office at Ōgiura.⁵⁴ (*Ogasawara shima yōroku* 1879–1880, 407)

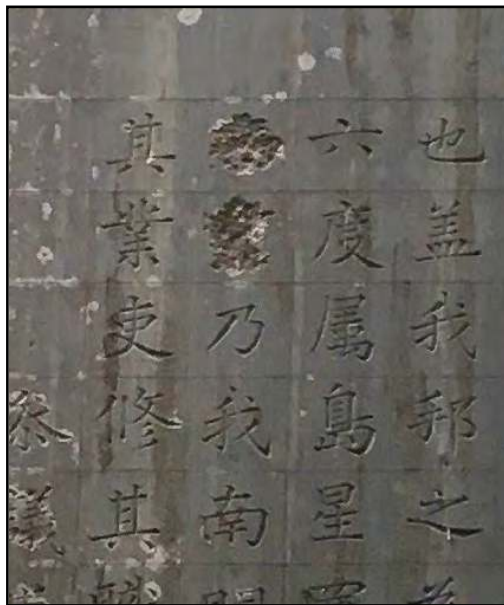


Figure 11. The memorial stele in Ogiura, Chichijima, with the edits ordered by Obana Sakunosuke. Source: *Kaitaku Ogasawara shima no hi* (1880).

The description of the maritime space propagated by Sakunosuke effectively codified a shift in geographical concepts that occurred with Japan's move to Ogasawara. The mountain range of Izu was no longer bounded by the landmass of Honshu, with the sea as its limit, but continued as an underwater ridge 1,000 kilometers to Ogasawara and ever farther southward. As mountains of the Izu range, the islands in the Pacific became geographically connected to the motherland, and with them the surrounding maritime space. This claim of hegemony over an expanded periphery was therefore justified "by nature." Accordingly, the logic of geographical continuity assimilated the modern colonization of Ogasawara to Japan's earlier expansion into neighboring territories, and, with Obana's edits, prepared future expansions still deeper into the Pacific.

The Tokugawa Origins of the Pelagic Empire

Substantiating hegemonic claims through cartographic occupation became relevant when formerly blurred boundaries solidified in de facto control. The boundaries of Japan had been in a state of flux since the late eighteenth century, when Russian explorers approached the Tokugawa state from the north.⁵⁵ As Japan was faced with empires of significant military strength, definitions of ethnicity, nationality, and identity began to shift, and administrative control became more centralized. In contrast with earlier contacts with ethnically different subjects, the claim of hegemony over Ogasawara turned foreign individuals into Japanese subjects by incorporating them into administrative control over the archipelago. In this way, earlier forms of Tokugawa expansion became compatible with those Western models of empire that clashed over Ogasawara. Moreover, access to the open sea through Ogasawara opened new dimensions of maritime production. Interaction with foreign whalers in the harbor of Chichijima, as well as active exploration of offshore whaling, catered to the Tokugawa government's growing thirst for knowledge about maritime production and world markets.

The colonization of the Ogasawara archipelago was the culmination of a neo-Confucian government's attempt to reconcile the process of gradual expansion into Ezo that had occurred over two centuries with modern ideas of hegemony necessitated by the confrontation with global empires. Unlike in earlier centuries, it was no longer ethnically constructed boundaries that vaguely defined the margins of Japan, but political jurisdiction that formalized the affiliation of

peripheral territories. A historical narrative of legal possession was constructed from the myth that the Ogasawara family had developed and inhabited the archipelago in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, regardless of the fact that the shogunate had already dispelled this story as an invention in the eighteenth century (Tsuji 1995, 17).⁵⁶ Moreover, the sudden expansion into the Ogasawara archipelago reflects a change in the geographical orientation of the shogunate's strategies. While seizing Ogasawara may at first glance appear as a simple occupation of land, the Tokugawa shogunate in fact had a grander, more ambitious aim of occupying maritime space and transforming the blue desert into a productive place.

Hayashi Shihei's and Satō Nobuhiro's expansionist fantasies show that the desire to control overseas colonies in order to extract resources was not a new idea per se, but governmental action to seize territories overseas gained momentum only after the commercial opening toward the West. In contrast to the gradually increasing Japanese presence in the northern borderlands, Ogasawara was not occupied exclusively for defensive security considerations, but as a foothold in the still-foreign sphere of whalers and steamboats. By the 1860s, the Tokugawa state's interest in Ogasawara was no longer limited to the tiny surface of the archipelago, but involved thousands of square kilometers of newly valuable maritime space. Integrating the archipelago into a national economic project was also a way for Japan to position itself proactively vis-à-vis Western imperialism. Owing to its manageable size and Japan's historically justifiable territorial claim on it, Ogasawara was the optimal setting for a first experiment with modern-style colonialism. It would thereby serve not only to define hegemonic space according to modern standards, but also to subsume ethnically foreign individuals into a new definition of Japan's new borders, thereby opening the door for future expansions into hitherto unclaimed foreign space.

Obana's reconciliation of a modern expansionist trend with earlier Japanese practices of domestic colonialism followed the path adopted by Mizuno when he transplanted the population of an adjacent periphery to the newly occupied territory. Nevertheless, the setting of an overseas colony was a challenge of a very different nature from what the Japanese had known from domestic land improvement and the gradually developing frontier in Ezo. For the first time, Japanese officials had to conquer a territory populated by a diverse population whose leaders

identified as Westerners. Paradoxically, the whole mission was formally disguised as an internal affair, even though the shogunate, dispatching no lesser official than the magistrate of foreign affairs, used it to make a clear statement to the address of potential imperial competitors.

The Tokugawa pivot to the sea that is reflected in the story our four maps tell was the product of a greater shift in geopolitical strategy and laid the foundation of Japan's later pelagic empire. Ogasawara must be seen in the context of a larger expansionist trend of the Tokugawa state and eventually facilitated Japan's bold advance into the ranks of modern empires. The maps of Ogasawara described here reveal a fluctuating interest in maritime space over the Tokugawa period and changing perceptions of Pacific islands depending on the political climate. At the close of Japan's maritime age in the seventeenth century, the mapping of greater East Asia relied on astronomical methods. Under the maritime prohibitions that were in effect during most of the Tokugawa period, such maps ceased to be produced. While maps of Japan proper incorporated certain features of modern cartography, mapmaking remained essentially concerned with landmasses until the early 1860s. In comparison with Tōjō Kindai's "typical" land-centric map, the return to sea-centric cartography in the *bakumatsu* years reflects Japan's strategic entry into the Pacific. Modernizing naval technology enabled this shift that left its traces in hydrographic maps, which in turn were not immediately reconcilable with land-bound practices of mapmaking.

Even though the colonial experiment in Ogasawara was aborted after only a year and a half, in the summer of 1863, ruling the archipelago proved an instructive first experience of modern-style colonialism for Japan. It was an attempt to secure Japan "a place in the sun" while modern empires closed in on its maritime frontier. The construction of a historical narrative of legal claims and the cultural occupation of space through knowledge displayed in maps laid the foundation for more far-reaching claims that extended Japanese power over a vast maritime space. In this way, the Tokugawa initiated a pivot to the sea, half a decade prior to the Meiji Restoration. When former island magistrate Obana Sakunosuke returned to Ogasawara in 1875 to reclaim the archipelago on the orders of the new Meiji government, Japan's advance into the Pacific was essentially the continuation of an interrupted Tokugawa project.

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Notes

- 1 In this article, I have translated Japanese years into the Gregorian calendar, keeping the months as they are in the original. Generally, the end of the eleventh and twelfth months of the Japanese calendar correspond to the first month and a half of the next year in the Gregorian calendar (cf. Uchida M. 1975).
- 2 The term *bakumatsu*, meaning “end of the Tokugawa *bakufu*,” commonly refers to the last three decades of Tokugawa rule in Japan (c. 1840–1867).
- 3 Thirty-one of these men were officials; fifty more were crew members of the *Kanrin-maru*. See the complete list of names in *Ogasawara shima go-takkai ni tsuki go-yō shiyō todome* (1862; hereafter *Ogasawara shima go-takkai*), cited in Tanaka (1983, 38–41).
- 4 Sociologist Ishihara Shun has argued that Ogasawara, which was returned to Japan in 1968 after twenty-three years of U.S. occupation, remained a colony throughout the prewar period: following a strategic pattern tested in Ezo, the Meiji government “Japanized” the archipelago by funding immigration and land improvement. By 1882, dwellers of all descents were given Japanese nationality to avoid conflicts with extraterritoriality. Nevertheless, imperial legislation continued to discriminate against “naturalized” islanders (*kikajin*), finally by prohibiting international trade, the main business for English-speaking islanders in the archipelago (Ishihara 2007b, esp. 63).
- 5 In early modern Japan, taxes were usually levied from village communities and paid in rice. For regions that were unable to grow rice for climatic reasons, marine products (in Hokkaidō) or silk cloth (in Hachijō) could be substituted for rice (Howell 1995, 58, 95, 101).
- 6 Danzaemon, the chief of the outcasts, had approved of the relocation of 70,000 individuals for this purpose (Hall 1950, 125).
- 7 The most authoritative histories of Ogasawara to date are Ishihara Shun’s studies of the archipelago’s social and economic history with an emphasis on the prewar period (2007a, 2007b, 2013), Tanaka Hiroyuki’s local history of the archipelago (1997), and David Chapman’s carefully traced histories of the English-speaking minority residing in the archipelago (2016a; 2016b). However, Ogasawara has not found the place it deserves in greater narratives of *bakumatsu* political history yet. As the focus remains on the Japanese authorities’ interaction with Westerners in and around the treaty ports, the significance of this peripheral setting in Japan’s project of commercial and political opening generally goes unnoticed. See, for example, Michael Auslin’s *Negotiating with Imperialism* (2004) and Hiroshi Mitani’s *Escape from Impasse* (2006).
- 8 The record of this shipwreck is edited as *Ashū sen Munin Jima hyōryūki* in Ishii (1900, 27–33) and Yamada (1916, 66–71). According to both Matsuo (2014, 60) and Tanaka (1983, 235), there is no record of any earlier Japanese that returned from Ogasawara.
- 9 Most notable among those imagined Pacific Islands are the *Island of Eastern Barbarians*, the *Isle of Gold*, or—just about where Ogasawara lay—the island of *Rasetsu*, where “there are women and if men go there, they never come back 羅刹国 有女人男行則不

- 帰,” according to one early modern map (Tokyo National Museum 2003, 83). The 180 ethnicities described in the large encyclopedia *Wakan sanzai zue* 和漢三才図会 of 1712 include imagined as well as real peoples: the Dutch and Spanish are described along with the inhabitants of the island of women, the island of immortals, and a people called *senkyō* that carry each other around by sticking a pole through a hole in their chests (Shimada, Takeshima, and Higuchi 1986 (3), 331–322, 335, 402).
- 10 In *Munin Jima no ezū*, Chichijima was labeled as “Large Island” (*Ōshima* 大島), in contrast to “Small Island” (*Kojima* 小島 [Minamijima]) and “Island on the Open Sea” (*Okishima* 沖嶋 [Hahajima]). The islands Torishima, Nishijima, and Sumisu Shima, which Ichizaemon observed on his way south, are rendered as “Round Island” (Maru Shima 丸嶋), “Straw Island” (Kaya Shima かや嶋), and “Rock Island” (Iwa Shima 岩嶋) (*Munin Jima no kakitsuke* 1675).
- 11 “此外之木共大分御座候得共見知りたる木無御座候” (*Munin Jima no kakitsuke*, 21).
- 12 Interestingly, in many of the bays the black coastline meanders between the areas labeled “plain” (平地) or “white sand” (白砂) and the mountains rising behind them. This may indicate that the bays were filled with soil that was, perhaps, not considered dry or stable enough for construction yet (*Munin Jima no ezū*, n.d.).
- 13 A total of 73.5 square *chō* (丁) of flat land is indicated around five bays.
- 14 Historian Peter Shapinsky discusses one of the most famous examples of Japanese-made portolan charts of greater East Asia, the Kadoya chart of c. 1630 (Shapinsky 2016, 16–19).
- 15 Unfortunately, the current whereabouts of this privately owned map are not known, but a low-quality reproduction can be found in Akioka (1967, 107, 109–112).
- 16 Bernhard Welsch’s 2004 study confirms that Bernardo de la Torre discovered Hahajima on October 2, 1543. Tanaka (1983, 236) is not reluctant to mention that this discovery did not include a landing, making the landing of Japanese castaways in 1670 the first actual exploration.
- 17 On the Isle of Gold, see Kobata (1943). This island can also be found on many early modern Japanese maps of the Pacific.
- 18 Like Bunesima, the place name Bonin—widely used in Western languages for Ogasawara—is derived from the premodern Japanese name Munin Jima (No-Man’s-Land).
- 19 The ship was commanded to explore the coast of northeastern Japan in 1671, before the shogunate appointed it to a regular route between Kyushu, Osaka, and Edo to transport tax rice. The shogunate was so satisfied with the ship’s performance that it ordered a second specimen 43 meters in length and 10 meters in breadth (Matsuo 2014, 64–68).
- 20 This encyclopedia was never published in print, but kept exclusively at the shogunal library. In 1745, it was expanded to 693 volumes (Marcon 2015, 147).
- 21 Tsuji (1995) lists three texts about Ogasawara that circulated after 1675.
- 22 This text has come down to the present as a nineteenth-century handwritten copy with the remark that, after its compilation in 1719, it was sought by the authorities in Niishima again in 1793 and delivered to Edo in 1800 (in Urakawa 2010, 108–109). This suggests

- that official interest in Ogasawara flared up during the Kansei era (1789–1800), probably in reaction to Hayashi Shihei’s works *Illustrated Glance at Three Countries* and *Discourse on the Defense of a Maritime Country* (Lederer 2002).
- 23 Ogasawara Sadayuki’s story is summarized in the central text block on Tōjō Kindai’s 1843 map, *Izu shichitō zenzu*. (In some other sources, Sadayuki’s name is rendered as Sadatō 貞徳.)
- 24 The legal term *terra nullius* describing an unclaimed territory, inhabited or not, was coined in the late nineteenth century in an attempt to justify earlier colonial dispossession of indigenous peoples by means of the Roman legal concept *res nullius*. Andrew Fitzmaurice (2007, 6) points out that the “doctrine of dispossession” had been practiced long before the term was established. The term came about when the dispossession of indigenous populations required a concept of cultural hierarchy to justify an earlier practice.
- 25 “都テ此十嶋は湊アリ, 平地アリ, 人居住スベシ. 五穀植ベシ, 且暖気ノ辺地ナル故, 珍異ノ物ヲ産スル也. 是ニ因テ竊ニ工夫スレバ此嶋へ人ヲ蒔テ樹芸ヲ為, 村落ヲ建立シテ山海ノ業ヲ起シ一州ノ産物国ヲ仕立テ後, 此嶋渡海ノ常船ヲ造テ歳三渡海シテ産物ヲ収ムベシ. 船ヲ造ル費ハ一渡海ニテ償フベシ” (*San koku tsūran zusetsu*, 1:53–54).
- 26 Toby (2016, 24–27) counts twice as many copies than the original run, manuscripted after censors destroyed the printing blocks. At least one copy made its way to Europe, where it became the first Japanese book to be published in Western translation in 1832 (see Klapproth 1832).
- 27 “開拓セバ数年ノ間ニ南洋数千里ノ地悉ク版図ニ入ルベシ.”
- 28 See Watanabe’s letter to the Tawara domain asking for a leave to sail to Ogasawara in Ozawa and Haga (1999, 128–131).
- 29 Tanaka Hiroyuki argues that Kazan, having had a lifelong fascination with everything foreign, was most interested in meeting Westerners in Ogasawara (see Tanaka 2011, 236–245).
- 30 “雖似鹵斥礮壤開招有法則可以經埋山川墾治有方則可以分宅民庶而後聚落漸殖戸口自殖十年之後足以入貢收稅土著可得而成矣.” The original text uses the character 殖 (*shoku*), meaning “to increase, expand,” which can be used interchangeably with 植 (also *shoku*), as in the modern word for “colony” 植民地 (*shokuminchi*). Since the text clearly outlines a scenario of settler colonialism, the use of the English translation “colonization” seems most appropriate.
- 31 The contract between Matthew C. Perry and Nathaniel Savory is part of *Matthew Calbraith Perry Additional Correspondence, 1799–1945* at the Harvard University Library.
- 32 See “Nakahama Manjirō 中浜万次郎” in *Kokushi Daijiten* (1979–1997).
- 33 Latour (1986) argues that mobility, immutability, presentability, readability, and combinability are the essence of modern carriers of knowledge: they make information

- intelligible to anybody adept at the language of science and thereby enable a transfer of knowledge within a greater community.
- 34 A list of all participants of this first mission can be found in Tokyo Prefecture (1930). Mizuno Tadanori had been one of the senior diplomats in the negotiation of the Ansei Treaties, belonging to the more conservative faction that tried to keep the interaction with foreigners to a minimum. He served as foreign affairs magistrate throughout his mission to Ogasawara (Auslin 2004, 21, 39–40).
- 35 “此方にては三百年前建物等致し(...)二百年程相続け居り候得共、酉年以来中絶致し候。”
- 36 Chapman also concludes that the 1830 settlement was “more a product of opportunism and ambition by adventurous individuals rather than grand imperial designs of colonization planned by leaders in Britain” (2016a, 23–24).
- 37 Suzuki Junko discusses a map of Ise Bay compiled between 1862 and 1865, a prestigious project in which the Japanese proved their ability to conduct hydrographic mapping for the first time without foreigners being involved. Earlier maps of the newly opened treaty ports had been made by or in collaboration with Westerners. Ise Bay, being a holy place, had to be mapped without granting access to foreigners (Suzuki 2016, 129–132).
- 38 “右船長いづれも御役所へ来り日本にて此嶋開拓せしを歎び、向來諸品を持渡り、船中の欠乏品を助けられ、或は遊女などにてもあらば此嶋さかんなるべし。此近海鯨漁船航海数多なれとも薪水にさし支る船のみ入港せしにて、其他は立寄らされとも諸欠乏品を補ふに足りるは悉く入港すべしといへり。鯨漁船は一ケ年或ひ一ケ年半程も地方上陸せぬもの少なからぬよし語れり。”
- 39 This corresponds to March 1862–July 1863 in the Gregorian calendar.
- 40 While whale oil was needed as a machine lubricant and lamp oil starting in the early phase of industrialization, by the twentieth century, it was mainly used for margarine and soap production.
- 41 “フレンジといふ一種の菓物あり。南袋津といふ所の谷を逆上り行ば山腹に七八株其外宮崎に数株あり。秋九月より十一月の間に熟す形ち橙子の如くにして、味ひ九年母より遙に勝れり。”
- 42 “牛・しかハ無之候得共、やき[山羊]と申四ツ足ハ御座候得共、是も当島二元方有之候ニハ無之、私し (sic) 本国方右島へ罷越し候節、相はなし置候間、やきの儀は私し之物ニ有之趣申之。”
- 43 “右やぎ其方共相はなし置候とも、日本土地にて其地の艸木を喰ひそだち候間、自由ニハ不相成旨申聞候。”
- 44 “其方共、当島に永住相願ひ候上は、則ち日本の国民同様に候間(...)国民は子の如く、政府はすなわち親の如くにて、親より子へ与へ候筋合ひに付き、いささかも斟酌に及ばず。”
- 45 *Gokoku* 五穀 (“five grains”) is a general term for grains, as the specific five species the term refers to changed over time and varied regionally. In the late Edo period, the term

- generally referred to rice, wheat, soy beans, and two types of millet (*Kokushi Daijiten* 1979–1997).
- 46 Webb was an American settler who came to Ogasawara in 1847 and was appointed councilman by Perry in 1853. As the owner of a Bible, he acted as the spiritual authority on the island and was regularly entrusted with holding funerals and memorial services (Cholmondeley 1915, 32, 99, 122).
- 47 “予此寫に在寫中、各国の鯨漁船其他の船、港外に見ゆれば直ちに水先案内を出して、右の暗礁と碇泊の所とを告知せしむ。ウヘブ儀、冽崎村に住し、港外を望むに便なれば、此者にも我国旗を渡し置、入港船を見掛次第、案内に出べき旨を兼て命じ置たり。右案内料軍艦は十五トルラル、鯨漁船其外商船は五トルラルづつ取立たり。是は以前より島民の極め置たるにて、新たに此料を極めたるにあらず。” The flag given to Mr. Webb was explicitly a *national* flag, most likely of the same sort as the *hinomaru* flag that waves on the mast of the *Kanrin-maru* in figure 2 (*Ogasawara shima fūdo ryakki*, 1863 or later, 57–58).
- 48 “八丈島人の子弟厄介等小笠原島へ移住申論し候はば、願候もの共可有之。左候得は内地の農民と違ひ、平生夫食に穀物相用ひ候は稀にて、素質を極め候趣に相聞候。(…) 簡便の建家為切組持超候建具、耕作、漁獵の具家具の一通充、凡一ケ年分付夫食の品々種物等に至るまで渡遣似積(sic)を以て(…)。”
- 49 For most of the time, the Kuroshio current passes north of the island of Hachijō and only seldom does it pass between Hachijō and Ogasawara. According to the Japanese Hydrographic and Oceanic Department, the Kuroshio has an average width of 40 nautical miles (74 km) (see Kaijō Hoanchō 2016).
- 50 Sailing between Hachijō and Edo was a dangerous task, and often there were delays or even shipwrecks. Nevertheless, the number of ships sailing back and forth each year increased from one to three over the Edo period. Since the 1780s, four, and later six, private vessels engaged in trade between Hachijō and the outer world (Igawa 1973, 201–203).
- 51 A list of 183 recorded shipwrecks in Igawa (1973, 214) shows that the seasonal winds and currents caused most castaway landings to occur between the tenth and the second month of the Japanese calendar (December–April).
- 52 On the process of naturalization, see Chapman (2016b).
- 53 “蓋我國[邦]之為地、海水四環。伊豆東南北緯二十五六度至三十五六度属島星羅而本島居其一。甲斐、伊豆之山脈蜿蜒起伏至於此而盡 [sic]。乃我南門也。不置官司以鎮焉則居民不能[安]其業。嗚呼、民安其業使修其識。庶幾不違新政拓疆之盛旨也歟。” (Epitaph version in square brackets.)
- 54 “右十三年六月該島江持渡同年十月建設成功ス、文中爾尽ノ二字作助之意ニアラス、又南海ノ図其外実地ニ抛ルニ大ニ悖ル所アルヲ磨刪ス、父島扇浦官庁ノ南二拾間程ノ岡上ニ建。” I am grateful to Tanaka Hiroyuki for pointing out this reference.
- 55 Brett L. Walker (2007) argues that Mamiya Rinzō’s exploration of Sakhalin in 1808 was an “anticipation of empire” that stood in the global imperial context of early modern science that developed also in Japan.

- 56 This story had circulated widely, as it was referred to in private publications and notes on Ogasawara.

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