

Tokyo
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Graduate School of Global Studies Research Grant Application 2020 Report.

Research Theme

This research will look into the processes undertaken by indigenous and/or minority groups in post violent context to rebuilt their community through their traditional crafts. It will analyze how these later become part of a national identity discourse, taking into account the role the official cultural policies that exist within nations for the protection of intangible cultural property. The case studies will be Okinawans - Japan and Wayúu people – Colombia

Research grant expenses and accomplishments.

Thanks to the research grant, I was able to travel to Okinawa and engage in field research for five days. During these days, I managed to conduct two interviews with bingata craftworkers. With the support of an interpreter, I was able to get many insights into how they understand their work in relation to Okinawan and Japanese identity. I was also able to visit museums and memorials in which the story of Okinawa is narrated through an “official lens”. These are some of the most important, and visible places, in which the official discourses, through which Japan presents Okinawan history and heritage, are legitimated. Furthermore, the memorials and sites of the Ryukyu heritage provided an insight into all the influences that existed in the island before the Japanese annexation, and how these coexist with the official discourses mentioned before.

Without the research grant, I would not have been able to conduct these interviews since my Japanese is still limited. I would not have been able to visit these museums and sites either. These visits will allow me to compare how the official history of the relationships between Okinawa and Japan varies (or not) on the mainland and the islands.

I used the grant for my round trip tickets from Tokyo to Okinawa, five nights in a hotel in Naha, food, and transportation, an interpreter for the interviews, entrances to museums, important sites, and memorials, and a later literal translation of one of the crucial parts of the interview with Toma Chinen.

On the other hand, the grant gave me Access to books that I wouldn't be able to afford otherwise. Many of the relevant papers and publications for my Project are not available for free and have elevated prices. With the research grant, I purchased key books and papers for my research, not only about Okinawa, but also about the Wayúu people in Colombia, and of general theories that can support and nourish my research.

I purchased five physical books and seven digital books for kindle in English and Spanish for this research.

For a detailed list of all the expenses, please refer to the excel file included in this package of documents.