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40 YEARS SINCE REVERSION

NEGOTIATING THE OKINAWAN DIFFERENCE IN JAPAN TODAY

Edited by

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Introduction: Negotiating the Okinawan Difference in Japan Today

The relationship between Okinawa and Japan is a very complex and ambivalent one. Although it is a part of the Japanese state, Okinawa is regarded as "different" in many aspects – and that by both sides: Japanese view Okinawa as being "not quite Japanese", and Okinawans tend to perceive themselves as such as well. As a matter of fact, Okinawa's history, language, beliefs, customs and manners, in short, its culture, is quite distinct from Japan's.

For the longest time, what today is known as Okinawa Prefecture had been a kingdom in its own right – the Ryukyu Kingdom. Its ruling class had maintained close ties with China, and the Ryukyuan trade network extended well into the Southeast Asian and Pacific regions. From the early 17th century on, the Satsuma Domain exerted considerable influence on the islands, but it was only in 1879 when the Kingdom was fully incorporated into the newly emerged Japanese nation-state. The ways in which the Ryukyu Kingdom was brought under Japanese control and used in the aftermath of its annexation suggest that this process might be viewed as an act of colonization, even though Okinawa had never officially been a Japanese colony. By all means, the population of the Ryukyu Kingdom, now turned into Okinawans and thus Japanese nationals, were not regarded as being equal Japanese citizens. At least two distinct historical decisions made by the Japanese government underline this fact: First, it utilised the Okinawan islands during the end of the Pacific War to keep the Allied Forces away from the Japanese main islands as long as possible. In the spring of 1945, Okinawa thus witnessed the bloodiest battle in the Pacific War. Fierce fights between Japanese and American armies took a heavy toll on both sides as well as on the civilian population, of which about one third died[1]. Second, after the Pacific War came to an end, the Japanese Government agreed upon a treaty which brought the Okinawan islands under American military occupation from 1945 to 1972, 20 years longer than the occupation lasted on the Japanese main islands. The

1 Historians estimate that the total number of dead exceeds 200,000 people, including 94,000 Okinawan civilians (Asato et al. 2010:300). The "Cornerstone of Peace" monument in Mabuni, in southern Okinawa, where the final battle was fought, consists of numerous granite blocks, on which the names of all who died during the battle of Okinawa are inscribed. As of June 2015, the total number recorded is 243,116 people, including 14,009 U.S. servicemen (Okinawa-ken 2015).

problems and burdens Okinawa has to face today – low incomes, poor career opportunities, economic problems, and, above all, the burden of the bases that Okinawa still carries and which is accompanied by frequent accidents and crimes committed by members of the U.S. military – stress the big gap between Tokyo, as the power centre, and Okinawa.

Okinawa under U.S. Military Occupation

After the end of the war, American authorities placed Okinawa under a separate military administration, but it was not before the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 when they fully realized the strategic location of Okinawa. At the Peace Conference in San Francisco in 1952, Washington made sure that Japan would regain sovereignty under the condition that the Ryukyu Islands would remain under U.S. administration. The Japanese-American Security Treaty, signed right after the Peace Treaty, sealed the justification of U.S. military presence in Okinawa. At the same time, the U.S. authorities launched efforts to "un-Japanize" Okinawa and embed Okinawan people with a new "Ryukyuan" identity. The Japanese flag was banned, the U.S. dollar introduced as currency, and right-side traffic implemented.

During the early years of occupation, the option of permanent separation from Japan seemed quite attractive to some Okinawan leaders. The authoritarian style of American governance, however, made Okinawan people want their country to belong to Japan again. As early as 1951, Okinawans expressed their strong wish to reunite with Japan by launching the Association for the Promotion of Reversion to Japan (Nihon Fukki Sokushin Kiseikai), which unsuccessfully tried to revert Okinawa's fate at the San Francisco Peace Conference. By the mid-1950s Okinawan society had almost wholly turned against American rule after USCAR (United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands) had enforced a large-scale militarization of Okinawa. The construction of new bases required appropriation of large expanses of land, a move that triggered fierce opposition from local farmers, which the occupation authorities met with bayonets and bulldozers. Controversies surrounding compensation for the appropriated land instigated mass protests on an unprecedented scale.

In the 1960s, the reversion movement gathered momentum under the leadership of Yara Chōbyō and the Okinawan Teachers Association. The Vietnam War, which was strongly opposed by many societies in the world, was stirring up anti-American sentiments in Okinawa and Japan. Okinawans were upset to see their country being used as a logistic base in a war they did not support, and were tired of paying the price for the presence of the

American military, which significantly increased during the Vietnam conflict. Above all, they wanted to participate in the wealth that their "motherland" Japan started to accumulate in the course of the Japanese economic miracle. Although Okinawa also experienced economic growth under American occupation, with a two-digit increase in the GDP in the 1960s (Ōta 2000:147), and the Americans undertook many efforts to develop local infrastructure, establish modern education (with the University of the Ryukyus as a landmark of American policy) and improve living standards, the gap between Okinawa and mainland Japan was widening rapidly. This factor played a part in strengthening the Okinawans' determination in their struggle for reversion.

The Americans gradually came to terms with the idea that sooner or later they would have to return Okinawa. Firstly, they gave up the policy of "un-Japanizing" Okinawa and opened the door to Japanese capital. In 1965, Satō Eisaku, the first Japanese prime minister to visit Okinawa since 1945, declared the reversion of Okinawa to Japan as a top priority on his political agenda. Negotiations with the U.S. were finalized in 1969 during Satō's visit to Washington. It was agreed that the reversion should be accomplished in 1972. The reversion, however, was subject to special conditions: The United States would retain military facilities and areas in Okinawa "as required in the mutual security of both countries", thereby allowing the United States to continue their "international obligations" (IOC n.d.) in securing peace in the Far East, including Japan.

The Reversion of Okinawa to Japan

15 May 1972, marks a significant date in Okinawan history: After 27 years of American military occupation, Okinawa was officially released from U.S. occupation and "returned" to Japan. The "return to the motherland" (*sokoku fukki*) was awaited by Okinawan people with many hopes and expectations. Having seen Japan's rise to an economic superpower in the 1960s, Okinawans hoped to quickly catch up with Japanese society in terms of welfare and living standards. Above all, they hoped that under Japan's sovereignty and its "pacifist" constitution, their burden of hosting U.S. military bases would be lessened. The Reversion Day, however, was also awaited with many fears and concerns, as many Okinawans still remembered the discrimination they experienced in the past at the hand of Japanese people. Fearing that the reversion would bring about a re-colonisation of Okinawa, some people questioned the justification of the "return" to Japan and raised their objections within the so-called "anti-reversion" (*hanfukki*) movement. Today, more than forty years after the reversion, it is clear that many of the dreams held by Okinawans at

that time did not come true. Although nowadays Okinawan society enjoys one of the highest living standards in the world, it is still heavily burdened with the presence of U.S. military forces. Okinawa prefecture continues to lag behind Japan proper in nearly every social and economic aspect, and the local economy continues to be excessively dependent on subsidies from the central government. Moreover, financial dependency on Japan is used by the government as leverage against Okinawan people demanding the withdrawal of military bases.

Marketing Okinawa

Following Okinawa's reversion, the Japanese government initiated a policy of levelling the gap between Okinawa and the mainland. In 1972, the Okinawa Development Agency was established and four development plans have been implemented since then. Particular effort was put into the development of the tourism industry, with hopes that it would become a major force propelling the growth of the local economy. Located in the subtropical zone, Okinawa, with its sandy beaches and emerald blue sea, began attracting tourists from Japan. The bubble time of the 1980s gave impetus to the tourism sector and Okinawa's landscape dramatically changed with the construction of resort hotels, designed to cater to thousands of tourists. Tourism has indeed become Okinawa's main economic driver, generating 10.2% of the GDP in 2010 (as compared to only 6.5% in 1972; Okinawa-ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kichi Taisaku-ka 2013:137); the year 2014 saw 7 million visitors (Okinawa-ken Kankō Seisaku-ka 2015:1) on a group of islands which is inhabited by a population of only 1,400,000. However, specialists have noted that the present model of tourism industry, with gigantic resort hotels, gives rise to serious consequences for the environment, such as excessive consumption of water, soil erosion and sea pollution.

Japan also strived to promote Okinawan culture by funding the renovation of historical sites and the construction of new museums. In 1992, after a few years of careful reconstruction, the royal castle in Shuri was opened to the public, on the national "day of culture" (on 3 November). Another historic ceremony was the opening of the memorial "Cornerstone of Peace" in Mabuni in Southern Okinawa on the "day of consolation of the spirits of the war dead" (*Irei no hi*[2]) on 23 June 1995, at the site where the fierce "Battle of Okinawa" was ended 50 years before.

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2 After tough negotiations, this commemorative day was designated a public holiday in Okinawa in 1974.

Campaigns promoting the recreational image of Okinawa successfully attracted the interest of Japanese people, leading to an “Okinawa boom” in the 1990s. Apart from tropical sea and beaches, Japanese also discovered Okinawan music and cuisine. Mass media and popular culture started celebrating the Okinawan lifestyle, and Okinawans’ alleged easygoing attitude toward time and work in particular. Statistics showing that Okinawa has the highest life expectancy in Japan strengthened Okinawa’s positive image.

Even on a more global level, “Okinawan identity” is currently being promoted. The “Uchinaanchu Taikai”, a festival organised among members of Okinawa’s diaspora (especially in South America and Hawaii), was held in 1990 for the first time and has been a regular event ever since. In 2000, nine sites on Okinawa were inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list under the title “Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu”. In the same year, the G8 summit was held in Okinawa and Kyushu, and the Japanese government issued a new 2000 yen note, depicting the Shureimon gate of Shuri castle.

The “Okinawa Problem”

Many Okinawans hoped that the reversion to Japan would mean a substantial reduction of bases in the prefecture. At the time of reversion, American bases covered 12.8% of the prefectural area, and on the main island Okinawa, one fifth of the area was occupied by military bases. The present reality is that Okinawa, which comprises 0.6% of Japanese landmass, is accommodating 73.8% of the total U.S. military bases stationed in Japan (Okinawa-ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kichi Taisaku-ka 2013:5). Compared to the situation at the time of the reversion, only 19% (28,660.8 ha) of the area used by the military was returned (Okinawa-ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kichi Taisaku-ka 2013:24). Advocates of the bases often justify the military presence with financial arguments: The military is said to contribute significantly to the local economy. At the time of the reversion, base-related revenues accounted for 15.5% of the gross prefectural income. However, that share has decreased since then, amounting to only 5.3% of the gross prefectural income in 2010 (Okinawa-ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kichi Taisaku-ka 2013:137). As of June 2011, about 47,000 Americans were stationed on Okinawa (including civil personnel and family members). Military-related accidents and crimes committed by American servicemen occur on a daily basis. Moreover, local communities have to struggle with noise pollution, environmental damage (e.g. red soil erosion) and risks caused by military training exercises. 540 accidents involving military aircraft have been recorded in the statistics since the reversion in 1972 (Okinawa-ken Chiji Kōshitsu Kichi Taisaku-ka 2013:51). These include aircraft crashes on public areas, such as the helicopter crash on the campus of Okinawa International University in 2004. U.S. service members who commit crimes are protected by the SOFA (Status of Forces Agreement), making it difficult to prosecute their crimes under Japanese law.

In September 1995, three American servicemen abducted and raped a 12-year-old girl. This incident triggered a large wave of protests against the bases. Okinawans demanded that the suspects be turned over to Japanese custody. In the following month, more than fifty thousand people protested against the presence of American military in Okinawa in the biggest anti-base demonstration since the reversion. In response, the Japanese and U.S. governments established the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in November 1995, with the aim to work out ways to reduce the burden on Okinawa caused by the U.S. military presence. In 1996, it was agreed that Futenma Airbase should be returned "within the next five to seven years, after adequate replacement facilities are completed" (MOFA 2014). Hence, the "return" of Futenma Airbase did not mean a reduction of military presence, since it was preconditioned with a relocation, more precisely, the construction of a new base. Henoko in northern Okinawa was chosen as a site for an offshore airbase with a military heliport. This decision was made, however, over the local population's heads, and the plan met with strong resistance from anti-base protesters, with sit-in demonstrations, information campaigns, etc. The sea of Henoko bay is clear and rich with coral reefs, and more importantly, it is frequented by the dugong, an endangered marine mammal. In the referendum held by citizens of Nago City (to which Henoko belongs) in 1997, local people showed that they were against the Henoko project (with about 70% opposing the construction of the new base). Yet, the then mayor, Higa Tetsuya, ignored the results and signed the construction plans, after which he immediately resigned from his post. Moreover, in contrast to what the Nago referendum results would suggest, the subsequent elections for city council, city mayor, prefectural parliament and governor showed that Okinawan society was highly divided about the Henoko problem. This became even more visible when the gubernatorial elections resulted in the support of government-backed LDP candidates (Inamine Keiichi 1998-2006, and Nakaima Hirokazu 2006-2014).

20 years after the relocation plan was initiated, the "Okinawa problem" is still an unfinished chapter. Futenma has still not been returned as promised, and the construction plan at Henoko is meeting with increasing opposition. Recent elections to the prefectural parliament, as well as for mayor of Nago City (Inamine Susumu, elected in January 2014) and governor (Onaga Takeshi, elected in November 2014) mark a new turning point in Okinawa's "tug of war" with Japan.

Inequalities and the Problem of Representation

Frictions between Okinawa and Japan not only become visible on the level of practical politics; in the 1990s, and even earlier, they have become manifest in (fictional, medial, literary) representations of Okinawa as well. This is another important platform which can be used to make problems in the relations between Okinawa and Japan visible. Representations can be a means to criticise the status quo, and, at the same time, may help shape the ways realities are perceived, "knowledge" about Okinawa is communicated and awareness of the ongoing problems may be raised. To some extent, fictional constructions of Okinawa also operate by expressing provocative alternatives – such as, e.g., experimental film director Takamine Gō, who in his works questions the necessity of Okinawa's "reversion" to Japan, instead proposing independence from Japan.

In the course of the Okinawa boom, along with the marketing of tourism as well as food and music from Okinawa, an increasing number of popular movies[3] and television series[4] featuring Okinawa as the setting have been and still continue to be produced. In these productions, Okinawa appears as an exotic location, as a southern island paradise, a place where Japanese characters – often tourists – accomplish physical or emotional "healing" (*iyashi*). Only very rarely are the above-mentioned problems in Okinawan-Japanese relations addressed in these mainstream productions.

On the other hand, voices from Okinawan artists, filmmakers and writers have become louder since the mid-1990s. Two writers from Okinawa, Matayoshi Eiki and Medoruma Shun, were awarded the prestigious Akutagawa Prize (in 1995 and 1997, respectively), and filmmaker Takamine Gō continues to represent Okinawan film at film festivals worldwide. This can be taken as evidence that cultural productions from Okinawa are being recognised not only in Okinawa itself, but are also becoming increasingly noticed on the Japanese main islands[5] and even on a more global scale as well.

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3 Such as, for example, Nakae Yūji's feature film "Nabii no koi" ("Nabbie's Love", 1999).

4 The most popular ones being the NHK morning series "Chura-san" (2001), as well as the television series "Dr. Kotō shinryōjo" ("Dr. Kotō's Clinic", 2003) and its 2006 sequel, produced by Fuji Television.

5 Okinawa used to be perceived as "*bungaku no fumō no chi*", a "literary desert", in mainland Japan (see Takeyama 2006:85). This view only began to change gradually, when Ōshiro Tatsuhiro was granted the Akutagawa Prize for his novella "Kakuteru pātii" ("The Cocktail Party") in 1967, thus becoming the first Akutagawa Prize laureate from Okinawa.

These literary and media texts tend to be very conscious about Okinawan history, the problematic current living conditions on the islands and the unequal power relations between Okinawa and Japan. They thus often raise questions concerning "Okinawan identity", one strategy being the deliberate reinforcement of "Okinawan-ness". For Kishimoto Tsukasa, director of the Okinawan horror movie "Akō kurō"[6] (2007), the realisation of a distinctly "Okinawan film" even includes the production process: In an interview, he stated that he wanted to involve as many people from Okinawa as possible (e.g. as cameramen, actors, costume designers, and other crew), and have the whole production take place in Okinawa, thereby also encouraging other local filmmakers (Kishimoto 2008).

Many literary works, films and television productions from Okinawa are searching for ways to escape the usual exotization of Okinawa and, instead, explicitly address problems which otherwise keep being ignored by the Japanese entertainment industry: Locations are often base towns (e.g. the vicinity of Kadena Air Base in Okinawa City, formerly Koza), U.S. soldiers and Okinawan children of mixed ancestry appear as characters in the stories. Thus, the topics of war, occupation and the continuing military use of the Okinawan islands are ever present. On the subject level, Okinawan literary and media productions frequently refer to topics such as the Battle of Okinawa[7], inequalities and injustice under U.S. occupation[8], and Okinawa's distinct cultural identity, emphasising local traditions (Matayoshi Eiki) and local language (Matayoshi Eiki and Sakiyama Tami, among others). Recently, this emphasis on Okinawa and its own distinct (historical, linguistic, religious, social, etc.) features and traditions sometimes goes as far as Japan and Japanese characters being "written out of the text" completely (as in, for example, the novel *Shugā za kiddo no chōdē* [Sugar the Kid's Sister] by Kitabayashi Yū, 2006). By concentrating exclusively on Okinawan matters, ignoring Japan as point of reference in the attempt to construct an "Okinawan identity", Okinawa – instead of Japan – is being put into the focus of attention. This may be interpreted as a strategy of empowerment, as an attempt to create an image of an "Okinawa in its own right", thus rejecting the idea of Okinawa's dependence on Japan.

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6 *Akō kurō* is an Okinawan term for "twilight".

7 See Ōshiro Tatsuhiro's short story "Kame no kō-baka" ("Turtleback Tombs", 1958); or, more recently, Medoruma Shun's "Suiteki" ("Droplets", 1997) and "Mabuigumi" ("Spirit Stuffing", 1999).

8 See Ōshiro Tatsuhiro in "The Cocktail Party".

It can be concluded that Okinawa continues to struggle for power and self-determination. This struggle does not only become visible in the arena of practical politics and economy, but also in the cultural zone of identity politics and the politics of representation.

Early Pioneers of Okinawan Studies

Questions concerning Okinawan identity have been addressed in academia as well. The earliest Okinawan studies date back to the end of the 19th century, when the first Japanese *minzokugakusha*, or folklorists, began exploring the cultural boundaries of the Japanese state (Hokkaido and Ryukyu). However, it was the Okinawan scholar Iha Fuyū (1876-1949), known as the "father of Okinawan studies", who first introduced Okinawan studies to a wider audience in Japan. First, Iha studied historic sources of the Ryukyu Kingdom, especially the *Omorosōshi*, a collection of ancient songs compiled in the 16th and 17th centuries. Through his research, he aimed to prove that the Ryukyuan and Japanese languages have common roots, thus contributing to the "*nichiryū-dōson-ron*", or the theory of Japanese-Ryukyuan common ancestry. Iha was both an influential scholar in the fields of linguistics and literature, history, folklore and religions as well as an important intellectual figure at a time when Okinawa was undergoing modernisation.

Iha was strongly influenced by Yanagita Kunio (1875-1962), the "father of Japanese folklore studies", whom he met during Yanagita's first visit to Okinawa in 1921. Yanagita was very impressed by the culture of *nansei shotō* (southwestern islands). He established the theory that the roots of Japanese culture, including the culture of rice cultivation, are to be found in the south, and that people had migrated northwards to the Japanese main islands. Yanagita Kunio founded the Nantō Danwakai (Southern Islands Discussion Group), which was also a meeting point for Okinawan scholars, such as the historian Higa Shunchō, who founded the Okinawa Bunka Kyōkai (Okinawan Culture Association) in 1948, together with Okinawan scholars Nakahara Zenchū and Kinjō Chōei.

Another Japanese pioneer in folklore studies was Orikuchi Shinobu (1887-1953), who visited Okinawa shortly after Yanagita. He especially focused his research on religious aspects, such as ceremonies and masked rituals, which he related to the classical form of Japanese visiting deities. Like Yanagita, Orikuchi emphasised the importance of Ryukyuan culture as encompassing the heritage of ancient Japanese culture. However, he pointed out that different influences, including other Asian cultures, are also intertwined. For many of these early (Japanese) scholars who conducted research on Okinawa, the southern islands were a kind of a "museum of ancient Japan" (Asato et al. 2010:290).[9]

Iha Fuyū's research on classical literature of the Ryukyu Kingdom was continued by Hokama Shuzen (1924-2012), an expert in Okinawan studies during the post-war time and author of many books about Okinawan language, poetry and history. Hokama's extensive study on the *Omorosōshi*, as well as his analysis of ritual songs of various Okinawan regions contributed to the understanding and positioning of Okinawan studies within the larger academic fields of linguistics and literature studies. Hokama was also the head of the first research centre focusing on Okinawa, the Hōsei Daigaku Okinawa Bunka Kenkyūjo (Hōsei University Institute of Okinawan Studies), which was founded in 1972 and established in Japan.

Contemporary Research on Okinawa[10]

Today, research on Okinawa in Japan is partly supported by and clustered in special institutions which are explicitly dedicated to Okinawa-related topics. Some of these institutions are located in Okinawa, a prominent one being the International Institute for Okinawan Studies, opened by the University of the Ryukyus in 2009. Along with the above-mentioned research center at Hōsei University, another important institution based in Tokyo is, for example, the Institute for Ryukyuan and Okinawan Studies (Ryūkyū/Okinawa kenkyūjo), which was established at Waseda University in 2006 (see Katsukata-Inafuku/Maetakenishi 2010). One of the very few educational institutions dedicated to Okinawan studies outside of Japan is the University of Hawaii' Center for Okinawan Studies, founded in 2008.

In Western countries, on the other hand, research on Okinawa continues to comprise only a small part of the larger academic field of Japanese Studies. It is basically represented by single individuals who are experts in different disciplines and who thus conduct research on Okinawan history as well as on

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9 Here, it should be mentioned that Oka Masao in his dissertation entitled *Kulturschichten in Alt-Japan* ("Cultural Layers in Ancient Japan", University of Vienna 1933) discussed Ryukyuan culture as "a small model for the cultural layers of ancient Japan" (Oka 1933:611). He thereby introduced materials on Ryukyu to a German-speaking audience.

10 Josef Kreiner, who with his thorough study on the *noro* cult on Amami Ōshima (1964) was a pioneer of Okinawan studies outside Japan, has given a detailed overview about research activities concerning Okinawa (Kreiner 2001). In another, more recent publication, the same author describes the role of Okinawan (or *nanseishotō*) studies within Japanese folklore and ethnological research (Kreiner 2012).

society, political development, language, religious beliefs, literature, media productions, etc. Contemporary Okinawan studies encompass a diversity of topics in various academic fields. This multidisciplinarity is increasingly being emphasised in publications and at conferences[11], especially since the turn of the 21st century.

The corpus of academic writings on Okinawa is so vast and diverse that it cannot possibly be presented here adequately. It should suffice here to give a very rough overview about some fields of research which are of special relevance to the present volume.

History is a vital field for the research on Okinawa. An early monograph on Okinawan history, which is still a standard work today, is George Kerr's *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (1958), published first in 1953 under the title *Ryukyu: Kingdom and Province before 1945*.[12] Premodern (Ryukyuan) history has been addressed by Higashionna Kanjun, Matsuda Mitsugu and Takara Kurayoshi extensively. Miyagi Eishō has been dealing with the history of Ryukyu as well, particularly publishing works on religious aspects and the history of women. Other studies in the history of religion have been conducted, for example, by Torigoe Kensaburō and Kubō Noritada (especially on Chinese influences on Okinawan religious customs and beliefs). Historians have also examined the Satsuma invasion and the annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom by modern Japan (e.g. Kinjō Seitoku). Taira Koji, who has been editor of *The Ryukyuanist* for the International Society for Ryukyuan Studies since 1988, as well as Oguma Eiji have dealt critically with Ryukyu's annexation and incorporation into the modern Japanese nation-state, with Oguma explicitly calling this process "colonisation" (in his extensive study *Nihonjin no kyōkai* / "The boundaries of the Japanese", 1998). The battle of Okinawa was widely discussed after reversion, and is still a major topic. One prominent scholar in this field is Ōta Masahide, who was also governor of Okinawa from 1990 to 1998. Another specialist in more recent Okinawan history worth mentioning is Arasaki Moriteru.

Within political science, one large field of interest is Okinawa's strategic value in the Pacific region, which has been investigated in studies commissioned

11 International Conferences on Okinawan Studies held in Europe, with papers covering various academic disciplines, have taken place in Bonn, Germany, in 2002 (papers were published in *Japaneseness versus Ryūkyūanism*, edited by Josef Kreiner, 2006), in Venice, Italy, in 2006, and in Vienna, Austria, in 2012. In the same year, an international conference with a broad range of contributions was held at Waseda University.

12 A new edition of Kerr's monograph was published in 2000, including an afterword written by Sakihara Mitsugu (1928-2001), who was a prominent Okinawa historian at the University of Hawaii.

frequently by the U.S. military. On the other hand, several contributions deal quite critically with U.S. foreign affairs and their effects on the prefecture (e.g. Chalmers Johnson, Gavan McCormack, Gabe Masaaki).

Anthropological research in post-war Okinawan studies has predominantly focused on village structures and cultic practices, analysing hierarchical relationships within the ritual community (e.g. Nakamatsu Yashū and Higa Masao). There is a vast corpus in ethnography, dealing with local customs and rituals in specific villages or islands, including an extensive analysis of the local terminology (e.g. Josef Kreiner and Sumiya Kazuhiko, Cornelius Ouwehand, Akamine Masanobu, Arne Røkkum), as well as the material culture (Uezu Toshio). Regarding religious aspects, the topics of shamanism and gender-related questions are a particular focus of research activities (e.g. Yamashita Kin'ichi, William Lebra, Sakurai Tokutarō, Susan Sered, to name just a few).

Some English language publications are concerned with the question of the construction of identity in Okinawa from a social anthropological and cultural studies point of view (e.g. Matthew Allen), as well as the promotion of tourism in Okinawa (e.g. Gerald Figal). In the discourse on Okinawa, the relation towards the other (Japan and the U.S.) is focused on in publications such as I*slands of Discontent: Okinawan Responses to Japanese and American Power* (edited by Laura Hein and Mark Selden, 2003) and J*apan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity* (edited by Glenn D. Hook and Richard Siddle, 2003).

Linguistics is another academic field which provides vast opportunities for insightful research activities on Okinawan-related issues. These are often concerned with the history and development of the Ryukyuan languages and their relationship to Japanese, the Japanese language assimilation policy in modern Okinawa, language education and identity, the endangerment and revitalisation of Ryukyuan languages, and, on a more formal linguistic level, the morphemes and grammar of the Okinawan languages.

Literature from Okinawa also has become an object of intense academic activities. So far, research has in part focused on the history of Okinawan literature (e.g. Kubota Jun). Nakahodo Masanori is an expert on modern (pre-1945) Okinawan literature. Okamoto Keitoku has authored a vast number of publications on contemporary Okinawan literature; the same can be stated about Shinjō Ikuo, who takes a decidedly postcolonial stance in his research. Yonaha Keiko also deals with contemporary Okinawan literature, introducing a gender studies perspective to the academic discourse. The writings of several authors from Okinawa – especially those by Ōshiro Tatsuhiro, Medoruma Shun, and Sakiyama Tami – have become subjects of quite some scholarly attention.

Michael Molasky and Steve Rabson were the first scholars from the U.S. to translate and introduce literary texts from Okinawa to the English speaking readership. Davinder Bhowmik analyzes a broad corpus of literary texts by Okinawan authors as constructions of (Okinawan) identity and expressions of resistance. Film from Okinawa has not gained as much scholarly attention as literature yet, although film studies expert Yomota Inuhiko, together with Ōmine Sawa, edited the volume *Okinawa eiga-ron* ("On Okinawan Film") in 2008. Many shorter papers on several aspects of media representations of Okinawa have been and continue to be published.

About This Volume

The year 2012 saw the 40th anniversary of Okinawa's reversion to Japan. Scholars from Europe and Japan (including Okinawa) took this anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on and discuss the current state of research on Okinawa and its relation to Japan at a conference which was generously supported by The Japan Foundation and the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies at the University of Vienna; the conference was held at the University of Vienna in November 2012. This volume presents papers given at this conference in thoroughly revised versions.

This book is organised into four sections. The first section is dedicated to history and politics. Stanisław Meyer's paper "*Ryūkyū shobun*: A Difficult Chapter in Okinawan History" examines the process of Ryukyu's annexation by Japan in the Meiji period. He discusses the objectives of the Japanese policies, through which, although containing a "touch of colonialism", Japan finally succeeded in creating a new sense of integration into the Japanese state among Okinawans. The question of identity is also a key issue in Gabriele Vogt's contribution "Setting Out to Imagine a New Community: Okinawa's Reversion to Japan". Referring to Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities", she shows how images of a new "Japan with Okinawa" were created and represented in the years before Okinawa's reversion to Japan in 1972. The next author, Beata Bochorodycz, in her chapter "Social Movements in Okinawa since 1945: Was the Reversion a Threshold in the Development of Civil Society?", argues that in most cases, the cause of social conflicts in Okinawa was linked to the presence of American military bases, whereas in mainland Japan, the issues taken up by social movements were more diverse. In addition, she discovers a notion of Okinawan independence within the social movements; however, they seem more to strengthen local identity than to develop concrete plans in order to actually realise the political independence of Okinawa.

The second section of this volume focuses on language and covers a broad range of approaches, from social linguistics to formal linguistics, taking up historical as well as contemporary issues. In his paper "Language or Dialect? The Place of the Ryukyuan Varieties in the Japonic Language Family", Patrick Heinrich discusses the situation of Ryukyuan languages as "endangered languages" and shows how labelling Ryukyuan varieties as language or dialect is tightly related to questions of power and status. Linguistically speaking, categorising the Ryukyuan varieties as languages separate from Japanese does not give rise to controversies, given the fact that at least about one third of the Ryukyuan vocabulary is distinct from the Tokyo form. The term "Ryukyuan dialect", on the other hand, clearly has an oppressive ideological character: It constructs Ryukyuan as a subordinate variant of Japanese, thus classifying it as inferior within a hierarchy; at the same time, speakers of the local varieties were stigmatised and suppressed in the past. Kawasaki Sayaka further discusses questions of power and ideology, by illustrating how the Meiji Government carefully used educational policies to spread the standard variety of Japanese, which at the beginning was perceived as a foreign language in Okinawa. In her paper "Japanese As a Foreign Language? The Introduction of the Japanese Language in Okinawan Primary Schools", she describes the Meiji government's efforts to foster the students' proficiency in Japanese (or, moreover, a newly constructed "state language"), and at the same time the harsh prohibition on using the local languages. The distinctness of Ryukyuan language varieties is highlighted in the contribution by Alfred Majewicz and Aleksandra Jarosz, by taking up the example of Miyakoan ethnolects. Their paper "Retrieving a Moribund Language: Nikolay A. Nevskiy and His Miyakoan Dictionary in Ryukyuan Lexicology and in Scholarship" gives a detailed explanation of the status quo concerning the available sources and their value. These are derived both from professional scholars who collected the data, as well as from native people (often elderly) who made efforts to systematically preserve their local ethnolects, in which they themselves were fluent. The article centres on the scholarly work of Nevskiy and gives a detailed overview of the contents of his extensive dictionary, which not only provides lexicographic information, but also offers encyclopaedic knowledge on local customs, religion, and other aspects of Okinawan culture. The authors themselves have succeeded in systematically analysing and editing Nevskiy's dictionary draft, therefore contributing to a growing knowledge and appreciation of his work.

Section three addresses questions of representations and images. In his paper "Deigo and Shureimon: The Visual Representation of Ryukyu on Ryukyuan Stamps (1948-1972) Compared to That of Okinawa on Japanese

Stamps (1972-2012) and Japanese Regional Stamps (1989-2012)”, Sepp Linhart describes the visual contents of Ryukyuan and Okinawan stamps. By doing so, he shows how an independent Ryukyuan/Okinawan identity was promoted as being different from Japan. For example, in both time periods, plants and animals were common motifs, stressing Okinawa’s marine and subtropical environment. Another more explicit form of narration, namely literature, is the topic of Ina Hein’s paper “Writing Back: Literature from Okinawa – a Postcolonial Perspective”. While in popular contemporary Japanese literature, Okinawa is used as a setting for the (mostly mainland Japanese) protagonists, where stereotypical images of a happy and slow lifestyle are confirmed, voices from Okinawa also address problems, such as the presence of military bases or conflicts within Okinawan society. Furthermore, distinct narrative strategies are used to counteract the image of Okinawa as a homogenous entity. Shiotsuki Ryoko’s article “Shamanism As a Symbol for Okinawan-ness: Identity Politics in Japanese Films and Literature Depicting Okinawa” also discusses issues of representation, this time by referring to the example of the character of the Okinawan shaman (*yuta*). While older authors such as Ōshiro Tatsuhiro describe the *yuta* as a practitioner of folk customs, therefore emphasising the ancientness of this phenomenon, younger writers tend to focus more on inner aspects, for example on the process of how a woman becomes a *yuta*. Another important point is that the motif of the *yuta* is often used (both in literary and film productions) to represent the weak and oppressed, and thus to criticise the dominant (Japanese) system.

In the fourth section of this book, Akamine Masanobu, in his paper “Development and Evolution of Ancestor Worship in Okinawa – Taking Account of the State System in Folk Culture Studies”, points out that the custom of ancestor worship, which today is considered a “typical Okinawan” feature, evolved only under the policies of the royal Ryukyuan government in the 18th century. In citing various historical records, he shows that the former function of commemorative festivals for the dead was to repel the spirits of the dead, whereas the royal government later begun to stress the pacifying and worshipping character of the *bon* festival, due to the influence of Confucian beliefs. Changes and transformations, which are initiated by authorities, are also examined by Tada Osamu in his article “From Hawaii to Okinawa: The Expansion of the Paradise Image and Tourism beyond Time and Place”. Tada shows how the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972 and the Ocean Expo in 1975 contributed to the touristic image of Okinawa, changing it from a memorial destination where the war dead are honoured into a tropical honeymoon place. Hawaii served as a model here, helping to create an image of Okinawa as a place representing “the South” in order to kindle the local tourism industry.

Last but not least, we included two (critical) messages from Okinawa, one by the scholar and essayist Asato Eiko and one by the photographer Ishikawa Mao, who both also contributed to the transdisciplinary character of the conference. Asato, herself an activist from Okinawa, reports about the current fight against the relocation of Futenma Air Base to Henoko. Ishikawa contributes a selection of her artwork, which covers a broad range of scenes taken from everyday life in Okinawa, one being a military aircraft flying over a residential area, which we selected as the cover picture for this volume.

This publication aims to highlight the disciplinary and methodological diversity, the variety of topics, and the transdisciplinary character of research on Okinawa. The contributions to this volume thus originate from diverse academic fields, work with different methodological approaches, and follow different conventions. At the same time, however, they are united by shared interests and theoretical assumptions. We tried to present a unified volume, but in some cases needed to make some concessions to this (intended) diversity, allowing for as much individuality as possible.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who contributed to the realisation of this volume: all of the authors, Megan Squire, Anne Tischlinger, Jason Powell and Barbara Holthus for proofreading, and Andreas Eder for his careful editing and layout.

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HISTORY AND POLITICS

Stanisław MEYER

"*Ryūkyū shobun*": A Difficult Chapter in Okinawan History

On 27 March, 1879, Japanese troops led by a Japanese official, Matsuda Michiyuki, entered the royal castle in Shuri, the capital of the Ryukyu Kingdom. King Shō Tai was read an imperial edict proclaiming the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture and then was asked to leave the castle and proceed to Tokyo. After a period of five hundred years, the Ryukyu Kingdom ceased to exist. This event is known in Okinawan history as "*Ryūkyū shobun*," or the "disposition of Ryukyu". It marked the beginning of a new era in Okinawan history, determining Okinawa's direction in the modernizing world within the framework of the Japanese nation state.

After 130 years of Japanese rule (including the 27-year long period of American postwar occupation), Okinawa and its society seem to be firmly integrated within Japan. The memory of the Ryukyu Kingdom is, of course, a source of some nostalgia, but has little power to propel political movements challenging Okinawa's marriage with Japan. Relations with Japan, however, have always been complex and difficult. Undoubtedly, Okinawan people retain a strong identity, enhanced by the memory of the distant past as much as by the bitter experiences of a marginalised people. Consequently, many Okinawans have a quite ambiguous stance towards the "disposition of Ryukyu," being unable to unequivocally determine the gains and losses of the integration with Japan.

For that reason, the term itself is not emotionally neutral. The verbal form of "*shobun*" (*shobun suru*) means "to execute [law]," "to deal with, to solve [a problem]," but also "to dispose, get rid of, throw away" and even "to punish". The term "*Ryūkyū shobun*" first emerged in the mid-1870s and it was not the only "*shobun*" executed by the Meiji Government of the time. In 1876, the government decided to "abolish samurai stipends" (*chitsuroku shobun*) and in 1877 it issued an ordinance concerning "how to proceed with Korean castaways" (*Chōsen kokujin hyōchaku no sai shobun kata no gi ni tsuki ukagai*). It was only after World War II, however, when "*shobun*" in reference to Okinawa gained a new meaning in the sense of "dealing with an unwanted problem" or "getting rid of an unwanted burden". Infuriated with the way Japan had treated Okinawa after the war, the Okinawans coined the expressions "the second *shobun*" and "the third *shobun*" – the former referring to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty of 1952, when Japan had ceded Okinawa to the U.S. administration, and the latter referring to the Reversion Agreement of 1969, when Tokyo had eagerly decided to maintain the status quo of the military bases in Okinawa. Owing to Ōta Masahide, "*Ryūkyū shobun*" has sneaked into English literature as the "punishment of Ryukyu" (Ōta 2000:234), with the term being embraced by Western scholars as well (McCormack/ Norimatsu 2012:16, 242).

"*Ryūkyū shobun*" is an interesting example demonstrating how a series of unfortunate events may blur the perception of the entire history. Okinawans tend to see themselves as victims – a people who have always been oppressed by their northern neighbours or, at best, unable to control their fate. They tend to portray their past in a dark light, even pre-modern history, when the Kingdom was, after all, a sovereign country. According to some narratives, Ryukyu's misery began in 1609, when the Kingdom was invaded and then "colonised" and "enslaved" by the Japanese from Satsuma. Perhaps Okinawans would view their history differently had they not been traumatised by the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 and the American postwar occupation. The unresolved problem of the U.S. military bases only enhances their sense of identity as an oppressed nation.

"*Ryūkyū shobun*" was not a single event. Rather it was the last link in a whole chain of events initiated at the beginning of the 1870s, when the Meiji Government realised the necessity of solving the problem of Ryukyu's "dual subordination" to China and Japan. Japan's most urgent task was to delimitate state borders according to the criteria of Western nation states. Ryukyu's ambiguous status did not fit the modern world. Equally important was to deal with other territories adjacent to Japan, namely Sakhalin, the Kuril Islands and Ogasawara, which were perceived by Western powers as "terra nullius" and thus threatened with annexation by a foreign country. In 1875, Japan managed to establish the border with Russia by giving up claims to Sakhalin in exchange for the Kuril Islands. In 1876, the Meiji Government incorporated Ogasawara Island, which had already been inhabited by Japanese and Western settlers. So far, Ryukyu remained the last issue.

Unlike the Kurils and Ogasawara, the Ryukyu Islands had been politically tied with Japan since pre-modern times. As a consequence of Satsuma's invasion in 1609, the Ryukyu Kingdom was incorporated into Japan's political and economic orbit and became a tributary state of Satsuma. Japan did not decide on full annexation, because that would have jeopardised Ryukyu's relations with China, and the shogunate was eager to reopen trade with China, which had been completely terminated due to Toyotomi Hideyoshi's infamous military campaign in Korea. Ryukyu thus retained its status of a sovereign country with the royal rule being traditionally legitimised by the Chinese court. Satsuma, however, reserved a right to intervene in the appointment of the highest officials in the Kingdom and appropriated a substantial share of the Sino-Ryukyuan trade.

The extent to which Satsuma could exercise its authority in Ryukyu is a subject of debate. Nowadays scholars favour the opinion that Satsuma had in fact only limited power to intervene in the internal affairs of Ryukyu (Tomiyama, 1992:262-264; Maehira 1992; Smits 1999:17-18). Besides, the Ryukyuans did their best not to test Satsuma. Both sides quickly worked out a compromise which enabled Satsuma's authority to remain barely visible in Okinawa. The *zaiban bugyō*, Satsuma's representative in Ryukyu, had little if any work to do and was living quite a boring life. The Ryukyuans were regularly paying taxes and sending tributary missions to Satsuma. Most important, the Kingdom accepted its status of dual subordination to China and Japan and was not interested in changing this status quo.

Immediately following the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese government was too busy with domestic issues to pay attention to the problem of Ryukyu. The issue briefly popped up on the agenda during the administrative reform in 1871, which replaced the old domains (called *han*) with prefectures (*ken*). The Satsuma domain ceased to exist and the government, as a temporary measure, decided to entrust Ryukyuan matters to the newly established Kagoshima prefecture. No significant changes, however, took place.

The situation changed dramatically in early 1872 when Tokyo learned about a massacre of Ryukyuan castaways in eastern Taiwan which took place in December 1871. The Japanese realised that this posed an opportunity to solve the problem of Ryukyu's ambiguous status. Tokyo promptly claimed responsibility for "Ryukyuan subjects" and demanded that China pay compensation for the incident. China refused, arguing that eastern territories of Taiwan had been lying "beyond the range of civilisation" (Kinjō 1978:39). Nominally, Taiwan was a Chinese province, but the Chinese had hardly colonised the eastern coast of the island, which was inhabited by hostile aboriginal peoples. Japan interpreted this as China withdrawing its claims to eastern Taiwan and launched preparations for a military expedition.

In the meanwhile, Tokyo sent two officials to Okinawa[1], Ijichi Sadaka and Narahara Shigeru, who informed the Ryukyuans about the political transition in Japan and summoned the royal court to dispatch a congratulatory mission for the Meiji Emperor. In the past, sending a mission to Edo to congratulate

1 In this case, "Okinawa" is used as a geographical category, being the main island of the Ryukyu Islands chain and its political centre

a new shogun had been standard procedure,[2] but this time, the Japanese unexpectedly demanded that King Shō Tai should go in person. The Ryukyuans courteously but firmly refused and sent Prince Ie and Giwan Chōho instead. The mission reached Tokyo in September 1872. To their confusion, during the audience with the Meiji Emperor they were read an edict proclaiming the abolishment of the Ryukyu Kingdom (*Ryūkyū ōkoku*) and the establishment of Ryukyu domain (*Ryūkyū han*). King Shō Tai was bestowed the title of "king of domain" (*han'ō*). Convinced that this was only a cosmetic change and that the formula of Japanese-Ryukyuan relations would remain intact, the mission returned to Okinawa.

Japan, however, took steps to prepare the ground for incorporation. The government recalled the *zaiban bugyō* from Okinawa and shifted the authority for handling Ryukyuan affairs from Kagoshima to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In November 1872, the Ryukyuans were asked to close their trading post in Kagoshima and open a diplomatic mission in Tokyo. Four months later, Ijichi Sadaka returned to Okinawa with the following demands: Japanese flags would be hoisted at Ryukyuan offices, the court would hand over documents of treaties concluded with Western powers, and Ryukyu would recognise Japan's right to approve nominations for the highest posts in the royal government (Kikuyama 1993:66). After some deliberation, the Ryukyuans yielded to the demands. From their point of view, this was not a big concession, since even the last demand seemed to conform to the traditional model of relations with Japan, as Satsuma had enjoyed a similar right in the past.

At this stage, Japan was not yet ready for the incorporation of Ryukyu. There were more pending issues to be resolved first: to begin with, the hot-headed samurai who insisted on sending a military expedition to Korea after the Koreans had refused to recognise the Meiji Emperor as a legitimate ruler of Japan.[3] Sending troops to Korea could have brought devastating results, as China would certainly intervene. The government managed to subdue the advocates of the expedition, yet at the cost of an internal split. Secondly, the government had to make sure that Western powers would not object to Japan's

2 Such missions were called *Edo nobori*. The Kingdom sent 18 missions to Edo between 1634 and 1850 (Miyagi 1983:348).

3 In the Edo period (1600-1868), Korea maintained diplomatic relations with Japan on the basis that the Korean king and the shogun were equals. After the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese suggested that the king should recognise Emperor Meiji's superiority on the grounds that the Emperor stood above the shogun. Since the Koreans were recognising the suzerainty of the Chinese Emperor, they rejected Japan's demands to reopen diplomatic relations on new terms (Saya 2011:13).

claims to the Ryukyu Archipelago. The USA, France and Holland – the three countries that had concluded treaties with the Kingdom – indeed raised no objections, but so far Japan could only symbolically manifest its suzerainty over Ryukyu.

"*Ryūkyū shobun*" started to unfold in 1874, when Japan, after two years of diplomatic preparations, decided to dispatch a military expedition to Taiwan to punish the people responsible for murdering the Ryukyuan castaways. Taken by surprise, China promptly sat at the negotiating table to discuss the terms and conditions of Japan's withdrawal from Taiwan. Chinese negotiators yielded to Japan's demands. They recognised the legitimacy of Japan's action and accepted the wording "Japanese subjects" (*Nihonkoku zokumin*) in reference to the Ryukyuans in the treaty (Kinjō 1978:56). That same year, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs transferred Ryukyuan matters to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Japan made it clear that from then onward it would consider the problem of Ryukyu to be an internal issue.

As soon as the "Taiwan Incident" was over, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Ōkubo Toshimichi, urged the Meiji government to take more decisive actions towards Ryukyu. The government established the office of "Commissioner of Ryukyu Disposition" (*Ryūkyū shobun kan*) and entrusted it to Matsuda Michiyuki. In July 1875, Matsuda arrived in Okinawa with new demands. These included: termination of tributary relations with China and closure of the Ryukyuan trading post in Fujian; introduction of a Japanese periodisation system in place of the Chinese one; establishment of a Japanese garrison in Shuri. Moreover, Matsuda urged King Shō Tai to pay a visit in Tokyo to express his gratitude for Japan's protection (Kinjō 1978:251).

This time the Ryukyuans clearly understood Japan's intentions. The court quickly dispatched a mission to Tokyo headed by Prince Shō Tokukō, who tried to persuade the Japanese to withdraw some of the demands, in particular the termination of relations with the Chinese court. The Japanese government, however, steadfastly insisted on Ryukyu cutting all ties with China. Shō Tokukō's mission failed. He returned to Okinawa and soon departed for China, where he busily engaged in petitioning Chinese officials in Fujian and Beijing for a military intervention. He was joined by Rin Seikō, Sai Taitei and some other Ryukyuan noblemen, who decided not to wait passively until Japan would effectuate the annexation of Ryukyu. The "escapees to China" (*dasshinnin*) – as they were called by the Japanese – formed quite a substantial community in Fujian. They canvassed Chinese authorities for help, but without any major success.

Matsuda's mission to Okinawa ended in a partial success. After long negotiations, the Ryukyuans agreed on the establishment of a Japanese garrison, though not in the capital. They also yielded to some other minor demands, but strongly insisted that Japan not meddle in their affairs with China. Tributary relations with China lay at the foundation of Ryukyuan statehood as well as economic prosperity of the country. The Ryukyuans could not imagine the king not receiving an investiture from the Chinese emperor.

Japan's attempts to interfere in Ryukyuan domestic affairs gave rise to a serious political crisis in Okinawa. A number of high officials, including Giwan Chōho, were dismissed. In response to Japan's demands to transfer the judiciary, Ryukyuan authorities launched a persecution campaign against the Jōdo Shinshū (True Pure Land Sect) votaries, who were closely associated with the community of Japanese merchants.[4] Over 350 people (mostly women) were arrested and subjected to interrogation, many of whom were later sentenced to prison or exiled to remote islands. This was an obvious demonstration of power. The government, however, soon had to release all convicts due to the intervention from Tokyo.

In 1877, Japan had to shelve the problem of Ryukyu due to the Satsuma Rebellion. Once the crisis was over, Japan could take decisive steps with regard to Okinawa. In November 1878, Matsuda Michiyuki rendered a plan for Ryukyu's annexation to the Ministry of Foreign affairs, which was then endorsed by Itō Hirobumi. The government ordered Ryukyuan envoys to close their post in Tokyo and return to Okinawa. In the meanwhile, Matsuda departed for his second mission to Okinawa, where he handed over orders to immediately terminate relations with China and transfer the judiciary to Japan. The Ryukyuans once again refused. Matsuda thus left for Japan, only to come back two months later with military and police reinforcement. To his great relief, the military seized the royal castle without a single shot being fired. The King was removed from the throne, and ordered to move to Nakagusuku Udun, his residence near the castle hill, and wait for further instructions concerning his departure to Tokyo. Japanese officials promptly took over Ryukyuan archives and began to organise a new administration. On 4 April, 1879, the Okinawa Prefecture was officially inaugurated.

Japan's actions against Okinawa were met by a protest from China. Chinese minister Li Hongzhang decided to seek help from former U.S. president Ulysses Grant, who just happened to be visiting China while on a tour in Asia. Knowing that Grant was scheduled to meet with the highest

4 The sect was banned in Ryukyu in the 17th century upon a direct order from Satsuma, as the sect itself was forbidden in Satsuma. In the Meiji era (1868-1912), Kagoshima lifted the ban and the sect started flourishing among Japanese merchants in Okinawa and their Ryukyuan associates. In Ryukyu, however, the ban was still in force, which the Ryukyuans used as leverage against Tokyo. For more on this subject, see Kinjō 1978:170-184.

ministers in Japan, Li asked him for mediation. Grant indeed advised Itō Hirobumi that the two countries should sit at a table and settle the problem of Ryukyu's jurisdiction by means of diplomatic measures. Japan reluctantly consented to the proposal. The Japanese informed the Chinese that they were ready to discuss some territorial concessions in exchange for receiving the most-privileged nation clause. Such a deal would allow Japan to enjoy the same rights and privileges in China as Western powers. Negotiations lasted until October 1880. The Chinese proposed a plan to partition the Ryukyus into three territories: the Amami Islands north of Okinawa Island were to be administered by Japan, Okinawa Island would remain independent, and the Miyako and Yaeyama Islands would fall to China. Japan steadfastly rejected this plan and enforced its own project, with the Amami and Okinawa islands going to Japan and Miyako and Yaeyama to China. Japanese negotiators expressed no particular interest in what China intended to do with Miyako and Yaeyama. China considered two options: either to incorporate these islands into the Chinese territory, or to resurrect Ryukyu Kingdom in a "rump form". The latter idea, however, quickly collapsed. Japan refused to hand over King Shō Tai who, after abdication, was forced to move to Tokyo. Li Hongzhang thus approached Prince Shō Tokukō to see whether he would be interested in assuming the throne, however Shō Tokukō not only refused, but also strongly protested against the plan to partition Ryukyu (Nishizato 1993:49).[5]

On 21 October, Japanese and Chinese negotiators finally reached a compromise. The final agreement was scheduled to be signed on 31 October. Chinese ministers, however, were deeply divided over the Ryukyu issue: to begin with, Li Hongzhang, after meeting Shō Tokukō, changed his mind and advised the imperial court to postpone the signing of the treaty. The Ryukyuans in Beijing intensified their efforts to prevent the Chinese from sealing the agreement. In an act of despair, Rin Seikō, an associate of Shō Tokukō, committed suicide. The Chinese began biding their time and eventually Japanese envoys left Beijing in January 1881, blaming the Chinese for breaking the agreement.

The partition of Ryukyu thus did not come to fruition. In the years that followed, Chinese and Japanese diplomats resumed talks on this issue a few times, but always without any concrete outcome. Other problems soon overshadowed the problem of Okinawa. China was losing Vietnam to France and in addition, Japan started challenging China's suzerainty in Korea. In 1884, a political crisis in Korea almost escalated to a military confrontation between Japan and China. At that time, neither country was ready for war,

5 It should be noted that Shō Tokukō was only remotely related to the royal family Shō. His surname was written with a different character.

much less prepared to fight for some small islands. By 1895, when China suffered a defeat in a war over Korea, Japan had already perceived Ryukyu as a closed issue and made sure that Okinawa was not mentioned in the Treaty of Shimonoseki (*Nisshin kōwa jōyaku*), not even with a single word.

Whilst Japanese diplomats were about to start negotiations with China over the division of Ryukyu, the establishment of the Japanese administration in Okinawa was already well under way. Ryukyu was an extensive country with a large population, so the Japanese had no choice but to rely on cooperation with local elites. Matsuda urged the Ryukyuan officials to resume their work. Many did, but several of the highest-ranking notables rejected the invitation to join the new administration as counsellors. As most of the officials in Ryukyu originated from the aristocracy, they were concerned with whether under Japanese rule they would lose their rights and privileges as well as the stipends guaranteed by their status. Many Ryukyuans decided to boycott the new administration, and a number of them escaped to China to join the Ryukyuan émigrés in their efforts to petition Chinese authorities for a military intervention. When the Japanese heard that some noblemen were organising a resistance movement and even trying to collect taxes behind the backs of the authorities, they retaliated: In August 1879, the police forces raided Nakagusuku Udun – the headquarters of Okinawan resistance – and arrested the main leaders of the opposition. In exchange for the release of those arrested, two main opposition leaders, Tomikawa Seikei and Urasoe Chōchū, agreed to join the Japanese administration. At the same time, Governor Nabeshima Naoyoshi announced that he would not make any revolutionary changes while running the province and that the previous status quo would basically stay the same. He achieved his goal: most local officials were not interested in fighting for the cause of the Ryukyuan state. As soon as they learned that all of their privileges would remain intact, they returned to their duties.

Uesugi Shigenori, the second governor of Okinawa (1881-1883), saw his mission differently. After taking the post, he toured through the whole prefecture and was unpleasantly shocked with the living conditions of the peasantry, in particular on the remote islands. He discovered that the local administration was overstaffed and that the officials abused their power and took too much in taxes from peasants. Uesugi decided to change this situation. First, he abolished the “labour tax” – a tax assessed in lieu of the labour which the *jitō* (land commissioners) were entitled to freely extract from peasants a couple of days per year. Then he proposed to reduce employment in the local administration (Nishizato 1981:17-21).

Aristocrats strongly resented Uesugi's reforms. As the atmosphere became tense, a number of prominent noblemen, including Tomikawa Seikei, escaped to China in March 1882. This news took the government aback, as Tomikawa was considered an ally. Eventually Uesugi met with the opposition, even that within his own team. One of his secretaries alerted the government in Tokyo, which in response sent an investigator to Okinawa in the person of Iwamura Michitoshi. After hearing a long litany of complaints from aristocrats, Iwamura advised the government to recall Uesugi. Consequently, in April 1883 the government replaced Uesugi with Iwamura.

Iwamura remained in office only until December 1883. He did his best to reconcile with the aristocrats by annulling all reforms introduced by his predecessor. Not only did he increase the size of stipends for former *jitō*, but he also managed to convince Tokyo to postpone the abolishment of stipends, which was scheduled for 1885, to an undefined future date.[6] In addition, he increased the financial aid for low-ranking aristocrats, who were not entitled to stipends. Regarding the situation of peasants, he advised the government to show some benevolence and increase the purchase price of sugar (sugar was a popular tender for taxes).

Iwamura set up a policy known as "kyūkan onzon," or the "preservation of old customs," the primary objective of which was to ease the opposition on the part of the aristocrats. Despite numerous conciliatory gestures from the government, a substantial number of noblemen continued to reject the Japanese authorities. In 1884, the government let the former king Shō Tai visit Okinawa, of which he used to be the ruler, for a couple of months. Upon a request from the Japanese, the king issued an address to the people, in which he called for obedience to Japan and condemned those who continued to resist. But even then, not everyone decided to be loyal to the king's will; it was the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 that finally snuffed out all hopes for the restoration of the kingdom.

In the long run, the "preservation of old customs" policy only deepened the pauperisation of Okinawan society. This policy maintained the feudal management of the country, which was the root of Okinawa's economic crisis prior to the annexation. Whilst Japan was quickly modernising, Okinawa seemed to be frozen in time. The only people who had benefited from the policy of "preservation of old customs" were Japanese expatriates, who took control over the sugar market and monopolised trade with Japan, skilfully exploiting legal differences between Okinawa and Japan proper. This is not to say, however, that the government completely abandoned Okinawa. Seeing

6 The government continued to pay stipends to aristocrats until 1909, spending a total of ¥4,111,468 (Nishizato 1981:191).

the misery of low-ranking aristocrats, the government offered various aid programs, encouraging them to migrate to the remote islands and cultivate land, but all of these ad hoc programs had little if any effect. Besides, the government invested a lot of money in public schooling. The Japanese correctly concluded that instead of wasting energy on converting conservative aristocrats, it was better to focus on educating the young generation. Japan capitalised on the fact that the Ryukyu Kingdom had not developed a public schooling system, which could become a source of alternative education and, by extension, a potential hotbed of resistance. In 1880, the Okinawa Teachers College (*Okinawa shihan gakkō*) was established, which became a cradle of Okinawan new elites. In 1881, a program of prefectural scholarships to Japan was launched. By the end of the 19th century, Japan succeeded in raising a generation of Okinawans who became the vanguard of Japanese culture and advocates of the assimilation policy. Having spent a few years in Tokyo, these Okinawans were deeply shocked to discover how badly Okinawa lagged behind the rest of the country, and they demanded changes.

During the period of "preservation of old customs," Okinawa was virtually under direct control of Tokyo. The administration of the prefecture was not even responsible for setting the budget, leaving this matter initially to the Japanese government, and later to the Diet (Nishizato 1981:83). On the other hand, the governor was in charge of all appointments to the local administration, even at a very low level. Things changed with the arrival of Governor Narahara Shigeru in July 1892. Narahara completed the land reform, gradually enlarged the autonomy of the local administration, and closed his sixteen-year rule by creating a basis for the establishment of a prefectural parliament.

The Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) was a turning point in Okinawan modern history, marking the end of Ryukyuan resistance. During the war, many young Okinawans voluntarily joined the army to fight against the Chinese, but a lot of people secretly dreamed of Japan's defeat. When news of Japan's victory reached Okinawa, it became clear that there was no hope for the restoration of the Kingdom. Conservative noblemen eventually came to terms with their defeat. They joined young Okinawans from the progressive faction in their efforts to strengthen cooperation with the Japanese administration. Okinawan society succumbed to the policy of assimilation, hoping to quickly catch up with the rest of Japan. Japan's victory over China stirred up patriotic feelings among young people. Many refugees in China decided to return to Okinawa. Only a few noblemen persistently refused to accept the new reality and fled to China. In 1900, five years after the war, around sixty refugees continued to live in Fujian, according to a report in the newspaper *Ryūkyū Shinpō* (29 July

1900). Shō Tokukō and several others died in exile. In a manner of speaking, the resistance movement among the émigrés died a natural death.

The war with China symbolically ended the period of "preservation of old customs," which was a direct consequence of the "Ryukyu disposition". After the war, the policy of modernisation was accelerated. With the completion of the land reform in 1903, Okinawa bid farewell to the last remnants of feudalism. In 1912, Okinawa was granted suffrage and by 1920, all administrative and legal differences between the prefecture and Japan proper were abolished. But the two decades of inanition left serious consequences which Okinawa continued to feel for many decades. Throughout the entire period until the Pacific War, Okinawa remained the poorest region in Japan, with an underdeveloped infrastructure. Big business avoided Okinawa, a fact which is best reflected in the low number of financial institutions. In 1923, Okinawa, with only sixteen banks, along with Korea (16) and Karafuto (3), lagged far behind Taiwan (39) and other Japan's prefectures, the majority of which had over one hundred banks (Fujimoto Biru Burōkā Ginkō chōsa 1925:1). Okinawa also had the worst health care system, with only 2.88 medical practitioners per 10,000 inhabitants, while the national average was 7.58. Out of the 14,826 pharmacists in Japan in 1926, only seven were registered in Okinawa Prefecture, putting Okinawa far behind Iwate (49) and Miyazaki (53), which were next in rank, not even to speak of Osaka (2115) and Tokyo (3650) (Naimushō Eiseikyoku 1928:209-210, 218-219). The only area where the government could declare success was public schooling, which in 1911 provided education to 95% of children of elementary school age (Ryūkyū Seifu 1967:775). This success, however, was overshadowed by the fact that the Japanese government was hardly interested in promoting middle and higher education in Okinawa. In 1924, Okinawa had only two middle schools and not even one high school (Kyōiku nenkan kankōkai 1983:ha65-67, ha194-196).

Was "*Ryūkyū shobun*" a prelude to Japan's imperial expansion? Should the policy of "preservation of old customs" be considered within the context of colonialism? These are the questions that divide scholars (see, for example, a debate between Araki Moriaki [1980] and Nishizato Kikō [1981]). It needs to be remembered that at the time of Ryukyu's annexation, Japan had not coined any ideology of colonialism – that was not to happen until the 1880s – and neither had it established any institution in Okinawa for the purpose of serving its economic exploitation. In some aspects, however, Japan's policy towards Ryukyu contained a touch of colonialism. Having embarked on negotiations with China over the division of the Ryukyu Archipelago, Japan demonstrated its attitude towards Ryukyu as if it was "terra nullius" – a no man's land inhabited by some primitive natives whose land could be freely distributed among civilized countries. In that sense, Ryukyu was about to share the fate of the Ainu lands that had been partitioned between Japan and Russia. On the other hand, Ryukyu escaped physical colonisation, unlike Hokkaido, for example. This is because Okinawa was a poor country with few natural resources to offer – apart from good conditions for sugar cane production. Perhaps Okinawan modern history would have unfolded differently if the country was rich in coal, iron, oil, timber or other resources. Maybe Japanese settlers would have rushed to Okinawa and politicians would have had to create an ideology that would legitimise the appropriation of the land of "natives," but so far there was no need to do that.

The policy of "preservation of old customs" postponed Okinawa's modernisation and ultimately widened the gap between Okinawan and Japanese societies. This policy, however, was not introduced in order to facilitate economic exploitation of the prefecture, although many Japanese merchants benefited from this state of affairs. The primary objective of this policy was to ease social tensions following the fall of the Kingdom. Besides, the Japanese administration immediately embarked on raising a new class of people who would take over the task of bringing modernity to Okinawa. By the end of the 19th century, the Japanese could proclaim success; the Okinawans positively embraced Japanese culture and identity and began advocating assimilation on their own initiative. Okinawa Prefecture was eventually integrated with the Japanese state on equal terms. Yet the two decades of negligence brought about serious consequences: Okinawa did not manage to transform its economy from monocultural agriculture (sugar cane) into more advanced forms of industry and as a result it was hit particularly hard by the economic crisis following World War I. The crisis triggered a large wave of emigration. Thousands of Okinawans moved to Fukuoka, Osaka, Tokyo and other industrial centres in Japan proper, and a great number left for South America. As the poorest districts in Japanese metropolises began to swell with Okinawan migrant workers, the situation only enhanced stereotypes about Okinawans as primitive, backward and exotic people.

In 1916, an Okinawan scholar, Iha Fuyū, published an essay in which he wrote that the "Ryukyu disposition was a kind of liberation from slavery" (Iha 1961:274). The second decade of the 20th century was the heyday of Okinawa's economic boom. The future indeed seemed to look bright, and thus it was no wonder that Iha described "*Ryūkyū shobun*" as a progressive event that put Okinawa on a path of development. "The so-called Ryukyu Kingdom has fallen, but the Ryukyuan people have entered the Japanese Empire and revived," he wrote (ibid.). Ten years later, when Okinawa was struggling with the economic collapse, Iha was less optimistic about Okinawa's future, but nonetheless he never withdrew his claims that Okinawa's integration with Japan was both inevitable and desirable. Iha's arguments, so deeply rooted in social evolutionism, have not withstood the test of time, of course: "*Ryūkyū shobun*" was neither "inevitable" nor "desirable"; Okinawa could have continued on its way as an independent modern nation state. Yet one thing has not changed since Iha's time: Okinawan people have always viewed Japan as an inspiration of modernity, a source of welfare and a guarantor of a better future – regardless of how much they were mistreated by the Japanese state. However bitterly the Okinawans may complain about Japan, however severely they may reproach the Japanese state for colonial practices in the past, and no matter how fiercely they may threaten Japan with "divorce" today – these voices only reflect their demands to be treated like full-fledged Japanese citizens.

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Gabriele VOGT

Setting Out to Imagine a New Community: Okinawa's Reversion to Japan

1. Introduction[1]

On 15 May, 1972, the borders of Japan were redefined. All territories of the Ryukyu island chain south of the 30 degree north latitude were once again[2] placed under Japanese administration. Since the end of World War II, this island chain had been under U.S. military, and later U.S. civilian administration.[3] Two decades after the main islands of Japan regained full sovereignty, Okinawa was added as a new prefecture to the Japanese state.[4] To Japanese Prime Minister (1964-1972) Satō Eisaku, the Okinawa Reversion marked the end of the postwar period. This emotional assessment reflects the national government's stance toward its territorial borders.[5] In terms of an Okinawan perspective, however, particularly from the standpoint of the progressive political camp, the postwar period did not come to an end in 1972; it may still be in existence

1 This is a translation of an article which was first published in German under the title "Die Erfindung einer Nation: Okinawas Rückgliederung an Japan" in *Modernisierungsprozesse in Japan – Von Meiji bis zur Gegenwart* (Vogt/Holdgrün 2013). The author wants to express her sincere gratitude to the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ Tokyo) for approving the reprint of this article in the English language.

2 Since the "*Ryūkyū shobun*" of 1872, the forced resignation of the final emperor of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Shō Tai (1843-1901), Okinawa had been an integral part of the Japanese territory (Kerr 2000:381-419). Prior to that, the Ryukyu Kingdom was a tributary state to both Japan and China for many centuries (Kerr 2000:60-378).

3 Already back in 1953, however, Amami Island was returned under the Japanese administration and has since been a territory of Kagoshima Prefecture (Anhalt 1991:35-37).

4 Today, Okinawa Prefecture is comprised of three island groups: Okinawa, Miyako, and Yaeyama. The prefecture's main island is Okinawa; the capital city Naha is the economic and political centre of the prefecture. Unless stated otherwise, in this paper, the term "Okinawa" is used to designate the prefecture.

5 During his visit to Okinawa in August 1965, Satō said: "As long as Okinawa will not be returned [to Japanese administration], Japan's postwar period will not end" (*Okinawa ga kaeranakereba, Nihon no sengo wa owaranai*, NHK Special 1996:38). Steve Rabson, literary scholar and Japan expert, notes that the scene of Satō's speech was carefully choreographed: Satō was seen to shed tears, while school children were waving Japanese flags in the background (Rabson 2012:181).

today. The ecological, economic and social consequences of the persistent U.S. military presence on the islands to this day have a significant impact on the everyday life of Okinawans.[6] Some of Okinawa's progressive politicians, activists and intellectuals even speak of an enduring period of war, especially when referring to the Vietnam War that saw massive aircraft movements from and to Kadena Air Base, the largest U.S. Air Force base in the Asia-Pacific region.[7] Ōta Masahide, Professor Emeritus of journalism at the University of the Ryukyus and Governor of Okinawa (1992-1998) has long been one of the leading figures in this discourse. The ultimate goal of the reversion movement, i.e. the abolishment of U.S. military bases in Okinawa (NHK Special 1996:32-37) has not been achieved, and to this day, that very fact adds fire to the fuel of Okinawan resistance and feeds the Okinawan identity struggle.

There is an enormous discrepancy between Okinawa and the Japanese main islands when it comes to burden-sharing in the defence policy. This discrepancy is also reflected in the national identity of the people. Okinawa may have become a part of the Japanese state in a political and administrative manner, but whether or not it also has become part of the Japanese nation is still a subject of contentious debate to this day, particularly in Okinawa. This paper will address the reversion period of 1972 and examine the milestones of this – as will be argued, ultimately failed – nation-building process. Taking an Okinawan perspective, the paper discusses why the reversion movement emerged in the first place. This seems surprising given the cruelties that the Japanese Imperial Army inflicted against the Okinawan civilians during the wartime period. Furthermore, what role did the reversion movement play in the nation building of "Japan with Okinawa"?[8] Which images of this new "Japan with Okinawa" community were created and represented, and why

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6 More than two thirds (68.4%) of all U.S. military units stationed in Japan are based in Okinawa, which constitutes only 0.6% of the Japanese land mass (OCK 2010:1-3). As a result of the high concentration of U.S. military units in Japan, violence against women and, due to military drills, massive environmental pollution is severe (Takazato 1999/11/10). While U.S. military bases on Okinawa's main island occupy around 20% of the land mass, the so-called "base economy" (*kichi keizai*), i.e. wages for Okinawan civilian base employees, rent revenues for Okinawan land, and profits of the service industry surrounding the bases, amounts to less than 5% of the Okinawan GDP (Ōta 1999/11/09). Around the time of the reversion, the base economy still generated 15.4% of Okinawa's GDP (Barrell and Tanaka 1997:24).

7 See also section 3.2 of this paper.

8 While during the 1950s a majority of Okinawans strove for political independence of their islands, this political wing lost its supporters during the 1960s. At the same time, the reversion movement gained momentum (Ishikawa 2001:181-182). See also section 4.1 of this paper.

were they appealing to the people? This study will take into consideration both the Okinawan people in Okinawa and the Okinawan diaspora community on the main islands. It comprises a qualitative content analysis of scholarly works on the issue, historic and recent media coverage, as well as writings by contemporary witnesses in autobiographical and literary genres.

2. Research Design

This paper is based on three theoretical models. In addition to Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities – as is also reflected in the paper's title – Sidney Tarrow's take on social movement activism and Peter Katzenstein's model of norm-building in politics provide the basis for this paper.

In *Imagined Communities*, which was first published in 1983, political scientist and Asia expert Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an "imagined political community" (Anderson 2006:6). First and foremost, a nation is a community. Beyond any differences and injustices, the members of a nation feel connected to each other based on a deep comradeship, one that – in an extreme case – one would be willing to die for. In this way, the majority and minority groups of a nation come together as a community based on emotion and solidarity. Yet, according to Anderson, a nation is also an anonymous construction and is purely imagined. Given the size of a nation, no member will ever be able to get to know all other members. The existence of these other members and their affiliation to the same nation in this sense is nothing but imagined. Moreover, shared goals and norms of action need to be constantly negotiated and renegotiated between the members of a nation. The members themselves are thus placed in an endless process of reinventing their nation (Anderson 2006:1-7).

In order to understand the nature of the emotional connection between the members of a nation or, as a matter of fact, of any political group, a review of social movement research proves helpful. Political scientist and sociologist Sidney Tarrow argues that self-definition and self-reflection are necessary steps within the process of mobilising a political community. According to Tarrow, these steps comprise the following three components: first, self-definition and self-reflection create the identity of any community; second, this identity is stabilised through a high degree of emotion; and third, through framing processes, the community experiences strengthening and stabilisation within itself, and, moreover, begins presenting itself to the outside world in a distinct manner. Repeated processes of self-definition and self-reflection lay the foundation for the growth and expansion of a community, which means that the borders of a community are continuously being challenged and renegotiated (Tarrow 2011:142-143).

The continuous renegotiation of the borders of a political community, such as those of a nation, also leads to a constant renegotiation of that community's goals and its stabilising norms. Any adjustment to the borders thus requires a redefinition of the foundation of the community. Political scientist Peter Katzenstein points out that such self-reflection can never occur in isolation; it needs to happen through communication with the outside world. This communication can be manifested in three ways: first, as a spontaneously arising social practice; or, second, as a consciously fostered political strategy which pursues certain goals; or, third, as a mechanism of conflict solution, which is subject to negotiation. Examples from the world of politics show that in most cases, multiple manifestations of communication or self-reflection occur at the same time (Katzenstein 1996:21).

Bearing in mind the hypotheses of Anderson, Tarrow and Katzenstein as outlined above, it becomes clear that nation building is a process which encompasses the nation as a whole. Not only is the population of the new territories called upon to imagine, or in fact even to reinvent the newly formed community, the population within the former borders is as well. Emotionality and solidarity create new identities, stabilize them, and serve as a point of reflection in the outside representation of the new nation – in its spontaneous and political strategic representation as well as in the representation directed toward conflict resolution.

In the context of modernisation theory, any imagination of a nation can be understood as process of differentiation, or, borrowing the words of sociologists Hans van der Loo and Willem van Reijen (1997:33), as a structural dimension of changing patterns of action and interaction.[9] In the wake of this process, societies become more complex; moreover, the demand for adjusted forms of solidarity arises (van der Loo and van Reijen 1997:130), in order to preserve the functionality of the society. The adjustment of solidarity in modern societies leads to magnification and demagnification of scales. On the one hand, modern societies become global societies; on the other hand, local and regional identities are being strengthened (van der Loo and van Reijen 1997:267). Along these lines, sociologist Stuart Hall identified globalisation as a process resulting in global identities and neighbourhood identities (Hall 1999:90) within communities; national identities, however, were on

9 Along with the differentiation of structures, van der Loo and van Reijen (1997:30-44) identify three additional schemes of modernisation: the rationalisation of culture, the individualisation of the person, and the domestication of nature.

the decline. This means that diversification amongst societal groups grows, and triggers competing identities (van der Loo and van Reijen 1997:271). Consequently, preserving solidarity within communities is among the core challenges of modern societies. In short then, what is it that binds people together at all (van der Loo and van Reijen 1997:265-266)?

To reach a consensus-based and comprehensive response to that question, it is necessary to successfully generate new political norms against the backdrop of dynamic social realities. This is an essential prerequisite for redefining solidarity in emerging modern societies, and, to use Benedict Anderson's words, for building a new nation. Studying the process of redefining solidarity within a newly formed "Japan with Okinawa" nation and the critical evaluation of this process is the aim of this paper. The following sections will address the political milestones of Okinawa's reversion under the Japanese administrative authority and the stakeholders advancing that reversion. An analysis of the images and imaginations of the new "Japan with Okinawa" nation – present among Okinawans on the island and in the mainland diaspora – will follow. The images and imaginations of the new nation as communicated by the people and public intellectuals will be a focus of the analysis. Following the bottom-up approach within social movement research, it is predicted that these images and imaginations have a stronger impact on the success or failure of nation building endeavours than day-to-day political issues can have. The reason for this lies with the power that images and imaginations have to foster or restrain the emergence of solidarity among the individual members of a nation. The final section then will tie together the evidence; the leading research questions concerning why the reversion movement occurred and what impact it had on the process of building the new "Japan with Okinawa" nation will be revisited.

3. Politics and Identity: Okinawa's 1972 Reversion to Japan

Up until today, two competing intellectual interpretations of historical encounters between Okinawa and Japan have an impact on public and political life in Okinawa. Those adhering to the perspective that Japan and the Ryukyu Islands had joint roots (*Nichi-ryū dōsō-ron*) sympathize with the U.S.-oriented policies of the nation state, represented in particular by the security and defence policies of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP), Japan's long-term ruling party. Those adhering to the perspective of Okinawa as a victim of Japan's militarism are found in the colourful alliance of Okinawa's opposition parties (Vogt 2003:111-131). At first sight, it seems ironic that supporters of the reversion movement were found in both camps. In order to elaborate on the reasons for the emergence of the reversion movement, this section describes the historical milestones of the path to reversion. Following some analytical considerations on the two dominant interpretations of Okinawan-Japanese history, the key stakeholders of the time and their political and symbolic impact on the process of nation-building will be discussed.

3.1 History of Okinawan-Japanese Encounters

Historian Takara Kurayoshi is a representative of the view of Okinawan-Japanese history which claims that the 1972 reversion is the end point of a process of gradual unification of the Ryukyus with the Japanese main islands, which started with the Satsuma invasion of 1609 (Meyer 2012:8). Takara is one of the leading contemporary intellectuals who support the *Nichi-ryū dōsō-ron*, a concept which purports that Japan and the Ryukyu Islands have common origins (Vogt 2003:171-181). This concept is commonly understood to have originated from the works of Iha Fuyū, who is often called the father of Okinawan anthropology, and who, as early as during the Meiji period (1868-1912), described Okinawa as a "living museum of Japan's ancient past" (Siddle 1998:127). To adherents of this discourse, the famous *Ryūkyū shobun* of 1872, i.e. the incorporation of the Ryukyus into Meiji-Japan, is a political and administrative corrigendum of what had already been the reality of everyday life, namely the national unity of those territories.

Opponents to this discourse characterise the Satsuma invasion and the *Ryūkyū shobun* as well as the wartime atrocities by the Japanese Imperial Army against the Okinawan civilians as aggressive acts by a military power, i.e. the Japanese state.[10] Okinawa, however, as a pacifist state, had – according to the discourse – been pushed into a victim's role. This pacifist ideology, symbolised, for example, in the philosophy of "cherishing life itself" (*nuchi du takara*) is still present in Okinawa today, and is used as a means to distinguish oneself from Japanese power politics (Ōta 1996). Among the leading figures of this discourse is the abovementioned former Okinawan Governor, Ōta

10 The Battle of Okinawa, which began on 26 March, 1945, with the landfall of U.S. troops on Kerama Island, claimed the lives of 49,000 U.S. soldiers (Coox 1997: 366-367). Historian Asato Susumu (2010: 300) estimates the number of war dead in this battle alone to exceed 200,000 people, including 94,000 Okinawan civilians. The atrocities inflicted by the Japanese Imperial Army, in particular expelling Okinawan civilians from protective natural caves, are still to this day part of Okinawa's living war memories. Historian George Kerr characterises the role of Okinawa in World War Two as follows: "Tokyo gave little thought to the civil economy on distant Okinawa and did virtually nothing to prepare it for the crisis of invasion. The Ryukyus were not Kyushu, or Shikoku, or Honshu; Okinawa retained importance only as a potential field of battle, a distant border area in which the oncoming enemy could be checked, pinned down, and ultimately destroyed." (Kerr 2000 [1958]:466).

Masahide (Vogt 2003:181-192). In 1995/96, while in office, he refused to sign land lease contracts for Okinawan soil used by U.S. military units, and in doing so, caused an international furor.[11] Asked about the reason for this decision, Ōta pointed to his respect for Okinawa's historic abstinence from weaponry, which today was reflected in the citizens' renunciation of any war and of the stationing of military units in Okinawa (Shimabukuro 1996:82; Vogt 2003:68-79). Against this background, the 1972 reversion must be understood as a new manifestation of Okinawa's role as a victim: running counter to its pacifist ideology, the bulk of the burden of the implementation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, and in particular the required stationing of U.S. military units in Japan, was to be borne by Okinawa.

3.2 Negotiations between Japan and the U.S.

On 28 April, 1960, the eighth anniversary of the enactment of the San Francisco Peace Treaty,[12] the lobby of the *Okinawa Times* – along with *Ryūkyū Shinpo*, one of Okinawa's large daily newspapers – served as arena for the formation of an Okinawan reversion movement. The Okinawan teachers' union was one of the core member groups of this movement; generally it needs to be noted, however, that the movement was nurtured from a broad variety of members, coming from virtually all politically progressive parties in Okinawa. The movement chose the name "Okinawa-ken sokoku fukki kyōgikai" ("Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country") for itself, and later became known under its abbreviation "Fukkikyō" ("reversion movement").[13] Using the term "Okinawa Prefecture" at that time was not in line with the political-administrative reality; all the more it became a symbol for the movement's main goal: to put an end to the allegedly unjust governance by U.S. military and civilian administrations (Vogt 2003:45-46).

From 1952 on, 28 April has been called the "Day of Humiliation" (*kutsujoku no hi*) in Okinawa, and – not surprisingly – it was deliberately chosen by the founding members of the Fukkikyō as the date for commencing their council (Anhalt 1991:68; Nakano/Arasaki 1996:116-118; Vogt 2003:46-

11 Under a multistep system of land leasing, a governor was required to sign the lease contracts on behalf of private land owners if they refused to sign the leases themselves. On 28 September, 1995, however, Governor Ōta announced that he would refrain from signing the lease contracts, which were to routinely expire on 31 March, 1996 (Vogt 2003:70-73).

12 The San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed by 46 nations on 8 September, 1951; it was ratified by the Japanese parliament on 18 November, 1951, and took effect on 28 April, 1952 (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:56).

13 See also section 4.1 of this paper.

47). The date is indelibly connected with the Japanese main islands regaining their sovereignty; yet, Article 3 of the Peace Treaty granted the Ryukyu Islands the status of "potential sovereignty" and put them under U.S. administration.[14] This status, which was not implemented in accordance with the common statutes of international law, vetoed any Japanese governance within the territories of the Ryukyus, although the islanders remained Japanese citizens. Political scientist Sheila Smith calls the 1952 partition of the Ryukyus a "separate peace"; she claims this is one of the reasons for the contentious relationship between Okinawa and the Japanese main islands today: "[…] that separate peace continues to haunt relations between Okinawa and Tokyo" (Smith 2001:180).

Moreover, the Peace Treaty itself and the positioning of central stakeholders with regard to the question of Okinawa's future during the negotiation phase may be the reason for the Okinawans' reluctance to self-identify as members of the Japanese nation state, which persists to this day. In his new role as a symbol of the state, the Japanese Emperor (1926-1989), posthumous Shōwa Tennō, in a letter addressed to General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Japan, on 20 September, 1947, and two days later, on 22 September, 1947 in a letter to George C. Marshall, the U.S. Secretary of State, announced his preparedness to consent to an indefinite occupation of Okinawa by the U.S. military, if the Japanese main islands were to quickly regain sovereignty (Ōe 2000:70; Ōta 1990:315). This *Tennō messēji* ("Message by the Emperor") reads as follows: "The occupation of Okinawa […] by the U.S. military may imply a long-term colonisation of 25 to 50 years or even longer. The sovereignty, however, shall remain with Japan […]" (Ōta 1990a:316).

The *Tennō messēji* was first published in the journal *Sekai* in April 1979 (Ōta 1990:314). It could not have had any immediate impact on the creation of a national identity neither in the postwar years nor in the run-up to the reversion movement. Yet it reflects how little significance the symbol of state ascribed to Okinawa's role in Japan. The swap that had been offered – Okinawa's territory versus Japan's sovereignty – reveals that the Shōwa Tennō's priority lay with

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14 "Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29° north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands) […]. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters" (https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%20136/volume-136-I-1832-English.pdf).

a nation of "sovereign Japan" rather than with a "Japan with Okinawa" nation. Japan's political elites of the postwar era condoned a long-term colonisation of Okinawa.[15] Historian Arasaki Moriteru argued that the freshly revealed *Tennō messēji* triggered the remarkable cool-down in Okinawan-Japanese relations in the 1980s (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:120-122).[16] Only recently, prominent writer Medoruma Shun called the Shōwa Tennō a coward and a shameless man who should not have been allowed to set foot on Okinawan soil (Medoruma 2012:56).

What became obvious to the citizens, politicians, and intellectuals of Okinawa is that the Emperor, the symbolic head of state in Japan, did not view Okinawa as an integral part of a new Japanese nation that was striving toward sovereignty. In the early postwar years, Okinawa was used as bait to the U.S. occupiers, and later on, i.e. after reversion under conditions that were not satisfactory to the Okinawans,[17] as a location for U.S. military bases – at a conveniently large distance from the main islands.

3.3 Okinawa Policies in the U.S.

The image of U.S. soldiers and civilian administrative units changed rapidly in the early postwar years. Ōta Masahide succinctly sums it up when he says their image changed from liberator to occupier (*kaihōsha kara senryokusha e*) (Ōta 1995:113). The U.S. Department of Defense planned on turning the islands, which had been conquered in one of the bloodiest battles of the Pacific War, into its "Keystone of the Pacific," a major hub for U.S. policies in Asia. For this purpose, Okinawan land was confiscated; people were driven off their property and forced to live in camps (Anhalt 1991:10; Bowen Francis 1999:199-200). The U.S. administrators, in particular General Douglas MacArthur, were not expecting any Japanese resistance against these measures. MacArthur is quoted as having said: "Okinawans are not Japanese"

15 See also the so-called *Ni-ichi-ketsugi* ("Two-one-resolution"), which was ratified in the Okinawan Prefectural Assembly on 1 February, 1962, with a large multi-party majority. This resolution appealed to the United Nations to execute in Okinawa its 1960 declaration to release all colonies into independence and renounce any unjust external government (Vogt 2003:47). The United Nations was called upon to put an end to the U.S. colonisation policies in Okinawa. While the resolution gained broad attention, there was no immediate political outcome. The Japanese government did not show solidarity with the resolution, and Japan's foreign minister Kosaka Zentarō is quoted as having said that Japan did not think of Okinawa as a U.S. colony (Anhalt 1991:69).

16 Also see the burning of the Japanese flag by Okinawan activist Chibana Shōichi in Yomitan in 1987, which will be elaborated upon in section 4.3 of this paper.

17 For more on the negotiations of these conditions, also see section 3.4 of this paper.

(*Okinawajin wa Nihonjin de wa nai*) (Ishikawa 2001:185).[18] To MacArthur, the imagined nation of “Japan” did not include Okinawan territory. At this point, it is impossible to verify whether this was his actual opinion or rather a chosen position based on the strategic reason of having a free hand in changing Okinawa into the United States’ “Keystone of the Pacific” without any Japanese interference.

The U.S. administrations of the 1950s and 1960s continued to demolish any potentially existing national identity with being Japanese by means of strengthening a regional Okinawan identity. Following the orders of U.S. officials, the news had to be broadcast in Ryukyuan dialect rather than in standard Japanese. Moreover, U.S. soldiers were ordered to address the Okinawans as “Ryukyuans” rather than Japanese (Johnson 1999:129; Miyagi 1995:25). Until 1959, the U.S. military placed under penalty any actions and speeches by Okinawan citizens that were aimed at achieving reversion to Japan. Only with the New Okinawa Policy (*Okinawa shin-seisaku*), as introduced by U.S. president (1961-1963) John F. Kennedy on 19 March, 1962, did a liberalization of the rigid anti-Japanese policies in Okinawa begin. However, while local politicians and activists had called for substantial reforms, such as implementing means of direct political participation, the Kennedy initiative almost exclusively dealt with improving the living conditions in Okinawa. Although the initiative fell short of living up to the expectations connected with it, it was a milestone in Okinawa policy in the U.S. For the first time, the U.S. government, in this policy paper, acknowledged the fact that Okinawa was indeed part of Japan (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:130). Thus, the prospect of Okinawa’s reversion to Japan had eventually become inevitable.

Immediately following the Kennedy initiative and two years after the formation of the Fukkikyō, reversion to Japan was still in the distant future. The U.S. had just begun its involvement in the Vietnam War, and as of 14 May, 1965, U.S. soldiers stationed in Okinawa were also put on alert. Okinawa was thus once again placed at the top of the United States’ geostrategic considerations. On 29 July, 1965, the first B-52 planes left Okinawa for Vietnam with bombs aboard (Nankano and Arasaki 1996:146). Kadena Air Base, centrally located on Okinawa main island, saw some 10,000 takeoffs and landings per month during the Vietnam War, making it one of the busiest air force bases in the world (Vogt 2003:48). Military drills by full battalions caused heavy damage

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18 In a 1948 conversation with George Kennan, a political scientist and policy advisor, MacArthur furthermore characterised Okinawan citizens as: “simple and good-natured people […] who have been ‘looked down on’ by Japanese [and] could now ‘pick up a good deal of money and live a reasonably happy existence from the American base development’” (Rabson 2012:166).

to agricultural areas, the crime rate of U.S. soldiers rose significantly, drug dealing and prostitution increased. In addition, the practice of confiscating land was revived (Anhalt 1991:81). The Okinawan parliament called for a halt of the U.S. bombing activities starting right on the day after they began. It was reasoned that these war activities not only brought the insecurities and fear of a war back to the islands, but also threatened the security of the Japanese mainland (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:146).

The fear of experiencing yet another period of war was very present in Okinawa. This worry and insecurity were understood to come at the expense of Japan's economic growth, which was only possible through close multi-level cooperation with the U.S. Ironically, however, Okinawa itself did not see much economic growth. Yet, not only was Okinawa's security, but also that of the Japanese main islands thought to be in jeopardy. This perspective can be seen as an act of solidarity with the imagined members of the same nation – be it an act of true and honest solidarity or one of political strategy directed at ensuring the solidarity of Japan's political elites with Okinawa against the former joint enemy, the U.S. At the same time, in July 1965, students at the University of the Ryukyus organised a demonstration in Koza, which aimed to symbolically link the Okinawan peace movement with the peace movement in the United States (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:147). In fact, Okinawan protesters against the Vietnam War actively sought for alliances with their Japanese and U.S. counterparts. The Fukkikyō, however, did not get involved in these activities (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:147).

3.4 Okinawa Policies in Japan

Back during Satō Eisaku's brief visit to Okinawa, in August 1965, the Fukkikyō had already positioned itself publicly as a critic of the Japanese Prime Minister. At first sight, this seems surprising, since Satō was a known supporter of reversion, as expressed in his famous quote[19] about the postwar period not ending in Japan (NHK Special 1996:38). Representatives of the Fukkikyō, however, claimed that Satō was not consistent enough in pushing for reversion. Other main points of criticism were the lack of a timeframe for reversion and Satō's willingness to proceed with the stationing of U.S. troops on Okinawa after the reversion (Vogt 2003:49). Supporters of the Fukkikyō showed their disapproval with Satō by demonstrating in front of his hotel; this prompted Satō to change his accommodations to an American military base, which was heavily joked about in Okinawa. It was said that Satō fled from the Okinawans (Anhalt 1991:80).

19 See also footnote 5 of this paper.

The Fukkikyō's disapproval took issue with the modalities of reversion. Initially, the Japanese government had suggested forms of partial reversion, such as a reversion based on geographic divisions (*bunri-henkan*) or functional aspects (*kinōbetsu-henkan*), a reversion of island groups (*sentō-bunri*)[20] or residential areas (*jūminchiiki-bunri*). The Fukkikyō and the U.S. administrations rejected all of these plans. The members of the Fukkikyō feared that any partial reversion would make a full reversion unlikely; the U.S. side declined because they expected it would require unreasonably high administrative expenses and effort (Anhalt 1991:83-84; Nakano/Arasaki 1996:153-154).

The future status of Okinawan territory with regard to Japan's anti-nuclear principles[21] was another point of contention. The members of the Fukkikyō called for a *kaku-nuki henkan*, a reversion without nuclear weapons stationed on Okinawan territory, since after reversion, all principles of the Japanese constitution had to take effect in Okinawa, too. The U.S. negotiators, however, preferred the version of *kaku-tsuki henkan*, a reversion protecting the status quo of the American nuclear policy, i.e. ongoing usage of Okinawan sea and land for the stationing of nuclear weapons as well. In a secret document dated 21 November, 1969, Satō and U.S. president (1969-1974) Richard Nixon allegedly agreed upon the U.S. pulling out its nuclear weapons from Okinawa. However, should the geostrategic situation of the region change profoundly, the U.S., after conducting deliberations with the Japanese government, would be allowed to station nuclear weapons on Okinawa again (Gabe 2001:360; Smith 2001:184). In addition, Satō and Nixon agreed to proceed with the reversion within three years' time.

After ratification of the reversion treaty by the Japanese parliament in December 1971, the Fukkikyō lead a stormy protest in Okinawa against reversion. It was the conditions of the reversion that sparked the protest. U.S. military units continued to be stationed in Okinawa; from 1972 on, an additional 6,800 soldiers of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces were scheduled to join them (Hirose 1971:411). The currency switch from the U.S. dollar to the yen, and the abolishment of import taxes, which until then had been imposed on Japanese products, threatened to worsen Okinawa's economic outlook. In those days, the term *fukki fuan* (reversion fear) was omnipresent in

20 According to this suggestion, the island groups of Miyako and Yaeyama were to undergo advance reversion (Anhalt 1991:83-84).

21 In Article 9 of its constitution, Japan rejects the right of any sovereign nation to engage in war. Moreover, in its three anti-nuclear principles, Japan pledges to refrain from producing, owning and/or storing nuclear weapons on its territory (Hasegawa 1995:218).

Okinawa. On 15 May, 1972, while Prime Minister Satō celebrated Okinawa's peaceful reversion in Tokyo, in Naha, Yara Chōbyō, the first governor to have been elected by the Okinawan people, stressed that the modalities of reversion were not satisfactory to the Okinawans.[22] On the very day of the reversion, the Fukkikyō initiated a gathering to form a resistance against the Satō cabinet (Nakano/Arasaki 1996:217; Vogt 2003:51-52). It became obvious that the political manifestation of the new "Japan with Okinawa" nation was not in line with the expectations of the Okinawan citizens, local politicians and public intellectuals.

4. Activism and Identity: The Invention of a "Japan with Okinawa" Nation

The aim of the following paragraphs is to characterize these expectations of the Okinawan citizens, local politicians and public intellectuals by addressing the leading research question of studying the essence of the images that arise when embarking on forming a "Japan with Okinawa" nation. What expectations did Okinawans and Japanese have toward the Okinawa reversion, and what happened to those expectations after the – at least partially – failed nation-building of "Japan with Okinawa"? In order to thoroughly focus on the aspect of identity formation within the newly emerging imagined political community, the voices of the members of this new nation need to be heard. It is the public figures among citizens, local politicians, and intellectuals who are of special relevance when creating and interpreting emotionality and solidarity within a new nation. Presentations of identity as a spontaneously arising social practice, as a consciously fostered political strategy, which pursues certain goals, and as a mechanism of conflict solution, which is subject to negotiation, will be addressed.

4.1 The Fukkikyō in Okinawa

While the actual reversion movement, the Fukkikyō, originated from the formation of an alliance of various political progressive groups in Okinawa in 1960, as mentioned above, there is an organization that served as a direct predecessor to the reversion movement through its identity building activities in Okinawa in the 1950s. In April 1951, members of the Socialist Mass Party (Shakai taishū-tō) and the Okinawa People's Party (Okinawa jinmin-tō) co-founded the Committee to Foster Reversion to Japan (Nihon fukki suishin kisei-kai). One of the Committee's first activities was to conduct a large-scale

22 See section 4.1 for some background on Yara Chōbyō.

survey on Okinawa's political future. All eligible voters of Okinawa were asked to cast their vote pro or con reversion to Okinawa, and 199,000 persons (i.e. 72.1 percent) voted for reversion to Japan. Already one month earlier, in March 1951, the Okinawan Youth Association (Okinawa seinen rengō-kai) had conducted a similar survey among its members. 11,906 persons participated in that survey, and 10,206 of them (i.e. 85.7 percent) voted pro reversion; another seven percent called for placing Okinawa under a United Nations' protectorate status, two percent opted for the independence of Okinawa, and the remaining four percent preferred different models (Ishikawa 2001:187-190). In 1953, the year Amami Island was returned to Japan, the Committee to Foster Reversion to Japan evolved into the Committee for Reversion of the Okinawa Islands to the Fatherland (Okinawa shotō sokoku fukki kisei-kai). For the first time, Japan was called the "fatherland"; this term was to become one of the central frames of the reversion movement. During the constitutive meeting, Yara Chōbyō, who was to become the Head of the Committee and later on the first governor of Okinawa, stressed that the "reversion to the fatherland" (*sokoku fukki*) was the greatest desire of the "prefectural citizens" (*kenmin*) (Ishikawa 2001:187). Using the term "prefectural citizens" was still ahead of its time, and yet it powerfully symbolised a clear political agenda to turn this status into reality.

Within only half a decade, the desire to see an end of the U.S. occupation and achieve independence for the islands, which was the predominant political goal in postwar Okinawa, diminished to nothing more but a minority's opinion. In 1945, under the still present impression of Japan's wartime atrocities, the saying "sacrifice stone" (*sute-ishi*) was spread widely throughout Okinawa (Ishikawa 2001:181). In the eyes of many Okinawans, the islands had fallen victim to imperial Japan's war strategies. Historian Arasaki Moriteru points out that the independence movement was the majority opinion in Okinawa in those days.[23] The independence movement had peaked when the people of Yaeyama Island announced the formation of Yaeyama Republic on 15 December, 1947. The movement was predominantly carried by youth, and had some significant backing by groups from Miyako Island; the U.S. military administration, however, quickly defeated, dissolved and banned the movement (Ishikawa 2001:182). Harsh actions like these by the occupiers, and the continuous land confiscations for military purposes triggered some broad dissatisfaction with the administration among the islanders. Moreover, in light of the looming

23 Arasaki claims that among the various opinions of how Okinawa's political future should look like, those in favour of independence were the majority ("[…] dochira ka to ieba dokuritsuron-teki hassō o motte ita") (Ishikawa 2001:182).

Korean War (1950-1952), the U.S. administration revoked previous measures for liberalisation and democratisation, such as the implementation of the Okinawa Advisory Council (Okinawa shijun iinkai), which was to guarantee the representation of the citizens' voices. In 1957, U.S. High Commander General James Moore had Senaga Kamejirō, the Mayor of Okinawa (elected in the previous year) and outspoken anti-military activist removed from office. This incident came to be known as *Senaga tsuihō* (the banishment of Senaga); it further manifested the image of the colonial style of the U.S. administration, and triggered more local protests (Rabson 2012:172). Okinawa found itself in the middle of the "island-wide struggle" (*shimagurumi tōsō*) against the occupying forces (Vogt 2003:42-45).

During the very same years, on the Japanese main islands, which had just regained full sovereignty, the economic growth was beginning its full bloom. To many Okinawans, the so-called "peace constitution" was the warrant for this development,[24] and soon the goal of a "reversion under the peace constitution" (*heiwa kenpō shimo e no fukki*) became the predominant one (Ishikawa 2001:184). According to an eyewitness, many members of the reversion movement fought in the Battle of Okinawa or were forced to serve the war purposes as teachers or local officials; they, in particular, had high hopes for the "peace constitution" and were willing to understand this constitution as Japan's disregard of its previous military ideology, despite the still missing explicit acknowledgement of its war guilt (Ishikawa 2001:184). The emotions among the activists were complex: neither the Japanese war guilt nor their own wounds were forgotten. In order to uphold the "peace constitution," these emotions were, at least to some degree, neglected. The alternatives, a continuous life under U.S. occupation seemed even less appealing to the citizens of Okinawa, and independence seemed almost impossible to achieve.

Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country (Okinawa-ken sokoku fukki kyōgikai) was founded on 28 April, 1960, by members of the Okinawa teachers' association, labour unions, youth and housewives' assemblies, local cultural groups, and reform parties. The council rapidly gained in popularity. In 1961, only one year after its foundation, the

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24 The famous Yoshida Doctrine, the leading principle of Japan's foreign policy at that time, considered economic growth to be the highest goal of the state. Defence policy, however, by means of the peace and security treaties, was left to the U.S. to deal with; moreover, greater Japanese involvement in defence policy was banned pursuant to the "peace constitution." Ever since the end of the Cold War and the – temporary – restructuring of the international world order to a unipolar system, this clear delineation between the policy fields has encountered increasing criticism from inside and outside of Japan (Edström 2004).

council mobilised 65,000 people to turn out for a demonstration that demanded quick reversion to Japan. At the same gathering in 1962, the number of participants had even risen to 75,000. People demanded peace, local self-governance, and a life under the umbrella of basic human rights. The activists believed these ideals would only be achieved if Okinawa would be returned to Japan (Ishikawa 2001:191). As political scientist Ishikawa Shōji sharply analyzes:

> The more the reversion movement talked about the 'people's state of Japan' with its peace constitution, the more it painted a picture of a 'fatherland,' which was close to being a utopia. It imagined that in Japan there would be all those things that did not exist in Okinawa (Ishikawa 2001:192).[25]

Ishikawa points to Okinawan nationalism (*Okinawa nashonarizumu*) as the central pillar of the reversion movement. The members of the Fukkikyō were outspoken against the reign of a "foreign people" (*i-minzoku*) – in this context referring to the U.S. occupiers – and they pointed out that the Okinawan identity (Okinawa-*teki aidentiti*) and the Japanese identity (Nihon-*teki aidentiti*) hardly differed (Ishikawa 2001:194). In their line of argumentation, the members of the Fukkikyō mixed ethnic and cultural identities, in order to demand reversion and point to the membership of Okinawa in this new Japanese state as the only correct and only possible way of nation building. Along those lines, a "Japan with Okinawa" nation was the logical consequence; "Japan without Okinawa," on the other hand, was simply wrong, since it ran counter to any natural conditions.

4.2 Okinawa Diaspora in Japan

Civil society stakeholders from mainland Japan called for reversion by arguing along similar lines. In particular, it was the members of the Okinawan diaspora,[26] its associations and informal networks among the political and intellectual elites of Japan, which strongly and successfully promoted reversion. Just as in Okinawa itself, the origins of the reversion movement date back to the 1950s on the Japanese main islands as well. In January 1955, reports of U.S.-administered land confiscations in Okinawa intensified the

25 "Fukki undō wa, heiwa kenpō o motsu 'minshu kokka Nihon' to iu iwaba yūtopia ni chikai 'sokoku' imēji o kaita. Okinawa ni wa nai mono ga Nihon ni subete are to hassō shita no de aru".

26 The 1903 World Fair, which was held in Osaka, triggered a migration movement from Okinawa to the Japanese main islands and the first settlements there, in particular in the Kansai region, most of which were related to trade relations (Rabson 2012:43-44).

protests in Japan. Nakasone Seishin, member of the city council of Takarazuka, and of Okinawan origin, sent formal letters to Prime Minister (1954-1955 and 1955-1956) Hatoyama Ichirō and Foreign Minister (1954-1956) Shigemitsu Mamoru, calling upon them to demand an end to land confiscations in Okinawa. The city councils of Kakogawa, Ashiya and Itami in unison passed similar appeals (Rabson 2012:170). On 1 July, 1956, Uezu Hiyashi, the Chairman of the Hyogo Association for an Appropriate Land Policy spoke to an audience of 2,000 supporters in Osaka's Nakanoshima Park:

> Forced to submit again and again, our 800,000 *comrades* in Okinawa can endure humiliation no longer. […] Their cries of long suffering echo in our hearts and move us deeply on the mainland as we join them in *solidarity*, inspired by their determination to demand justice and morality before the world. (Rabson 2012:170-171; italics added by author)

In his appeal for a just land policy in Okinawa, Uezu uses the same catchphrases that Anderson draws upon when defining a nation as being characterised by *solidarity* among the *comrades*. Uezu views a nation as a union of equal comrades bound together by emotional solidarity. The following day, 2,000 protesters again turned out in Tottori, and on 5 July, 1956, another 3,000 participants showed their solidarity with the Okinawans at an event in Kobe, where Yara Chōbyō made an appearance as a guest speaker. Once U.S. administrators switched their method of payment for the land they were using in Okinawa from lump sum payments to the more lucrative regular rent payments to the owners, the Japanese activists celebrated this as a Japanese victory over the U.S., and ironically entitled it as a "victory for democracy over the occupiers" (Rabson 2012:171).

The Kansai region and in particular Hyogo Prefecture, with its relatively large Okinawan diaspora, remained the centre of activities demanding the reversion of Okinawa. Once again, Uezu Hisashi became the leading figure in setting a new tone within the movement. In July 1969, Uezu returned from a one-month stay in Okinawa, where he had visited family. Aboard his return ship, at the Kobe port, Uezu refrained from complying with the usual immigration procedures; in particular, he refused to show his passport. He was held in contempt aboard the ship for one week, before finally being granted entry into Kobe. Toguchi Seiji, member of the Toyota city council and of Okinawan descent as well, refrained from showing his passport during immigration procedures at Haneda airport. Attending officers eventually accepted his driver's license in lieu of an identity card. In addition, a group of 17 students burned their passports aboard a ship after docking at Harumi pier in Tokyo, in order to push for immigration without requiring passports. A new protest movement was born, the Struggle Against Immigration Procedures (Nyūkoku tetsuzuki kyohi tōsō) (Rabson 2012:186-187). Literary scholar and Japan expert Steve Rabson (2012:187) reports of an interview with a former immigration officer who confirmed a change in the Japanese government's stance toward generally accepting student or metro cards as a means of identity verification. Thus, already three years ahead of reversion, the territorial boundaries between Okinawa and Japan had *de facto* fallen, and the immigration flow from Okinawa to Japan started to increase. A spontaneously arising social practice brought about a new norm within the political community of Japan. By challenging the existence of normative – and in this case also physical – boundaries, it also paved the way for a new nation.

Despite the *de facto* fall of the territorial boundaries, psychological boundaries, i.e. prejudices directed at Okinawans living in mainland Japan, have remained, some of them up to this day. This is reflected, for example, in the term "Okinawa time" (Rabson 2012:191). The term points to Okinawa's slow and laid-back rhythm of life. It implies, however, that the people practicing this lifestyle cannot abide with the "demands of modern urban life" (Rabson 2012:191), particularly when it comes to the modern business world. In other words, Okinawa was still to experience the modernisation of its daily life. In addition, the physiological differences between Okinawans and mainland Japanese were also issues broached publicly both before and after the reversion. Compared to the Japanese, the Okinawans were said to have rounder eyes, darker skin, more body hair and be of shorter stature. Author Higashi Mineo, e.g., takes issue with his personal experiences of discrimination in his autobiographical 1976 novel *Churakaagi* ("Good-lookin'").[27] The main character has just started his new job at a bookbindery in Tokyo, and meets one of his co-workers for the first time:

> Well, if it isn't a new face. Didn't you just get here yesterday?
> Yeah, where're you from?
> Fukugawa.
> Where's that?
> Just outside Asakusa.
> Oh, then you're from Tokyo.
> Damn right. Lived here since I was a kid.
> You looked so lonely, sitting all by yourself, I thought you might be from

27 The translation of the title and of the following scene is taken from Rabson (2012:191-192).

somewhere far away.
How 'bout you?
I'm from Okinawa.
Okinawa? Wow, that's really far away. And you can't come and go freely from there, can you.
No, you need a passport.
A passport? Then it's a foreign country.
I guess so. …
I thought you might be one of the native people from Ezo.
Ezo?
Yeah, from Hokkaido. 'Cause your cheekbones poke out and you've got lots of body hair. Are many people in Okinawa like that?
More on the average, I guess.

Experiences of discrimination, negative and positive – see e.g. the *obaa*-boom of the 1990s[28] – are still part of the everyday life of Okinawans today. They also directly impact Okinawa's creative arts (Hein 2012) and the political positioning of today's prefecture toward the nation state (Vogt 2003).

4.3 An Activist in Okinawa: Chibana Shōichi

The Okinawan-Japanese relations reached their low point on 26 October, 1987, when Chibana Shōichi, the owner of a small supermarket in Yomitan, a village close to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa's east coast, publicly burned the Japanese flag during the opening ceremony of the nationwide youth baseball tournament, which was attended by then Crown Prince Akihito.[29] While the burning of the flag was a single-handed expression of an anti-Japanese sentiment, it also stood in the context of protests that spanned the island in the days preceding the imperial visit to Okinawa. Along with the protests, there were numerous announcements by Yomitan citizens and Okinawan sportsmen advocating not to show respect to the Japanese flag and national anthem. Chibana explains this sentiment as follows: "To Okinawans, the Emperor is one with the Battle of Okinawa and the memories of the war."[30] In December 1986, the Yomitan village council had already agreed on neither displaying the

28 Japan expert Isabelle Prochaska calls the *obaa* "female powerhouses" ("*Powerfrauen*") (Prochaska 2012:33). The term refers to the active women of today's grandmother generation who symbolise a powerful and spirited generation of elderly people in Okinawa.

29 In her ethnographic work, literary scholar Norma Field (1993:33-104) paints a comprehensive picture of Chibana as a private person and of his role within the community of Yomitan.

30 "Okinawa ni totte, Tennō wa, Okinawa-sen oyobi sensō no kioku to ittai de aru" (Chibana 1996:30).

Japanese flag nor playing the national anthem in Yomitan (Chibana 1996:21-22). The Yomitan decision notwithstanding, the Japanese government ordered that the *Hinomaru* be displayed and the *Kimigayo* played. Yamauchi Tokushin, Mayor of Yomitan, called this a fallback to pre-war policies, to militarism and to a forced ideology serving a Tennō cult (Chibana 1996:21).

This episode of the flag burning in Yomitan reflects how deeply rooted anti-Japanese sentiments were among the citizens and local politicians of Okinawa in the 1980s, the decade following the reversion. It was in particular the *Tennō messeji*,[31] which had been published shortly before, and the ongoing lack of an acknowledgment of any war guilt in Japan – also guilty of atrocities against the Okinawan civilians – that sparked these sentiments. Another reason can be found in Japan's non-acknowledgement of the burden Okinawa continued to shoulder as a major hub for U.S. troops, thereby guaranteeing the security of all of Japan after the reversion. A somewhat broken imagination of this new nation, a sentiment of injustice, nurtured anti-Japanese activism such as Chibana's. It manifested itself in the lack of solidarity between the – as it turned out – unequal members of a nation.

4.4 An Intellectual in Japan: Ōe Kenzaburō

As early as May 1972, Ōe Kenzaburō, Japanese intellectual and 1994 Nobel Prize Laureate for Literature, had warned about the rise of emotions brought about by injustice and inequality. Then 36-year-old Ōe engaged in a conversation about Okinawa with Siegfried Schaarschmidt, translator, author and Japan expert.[32] Ōe stated that his first trip to Okinawa dated back to the mid-1960s. He and many other Japanese intellectuals had believed that demanding the reversion of Okinawa would undermine the U.S. strategy in its Asia policy, in particular the one directed at Vietnam (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2). Taking into account the central role Kadena Air Base played in the U.S. strategy, this consideration indeed seems valid. However, it also highlights one of the motives driving the members of the Beheiren (Betonamu ni heiwa o shimin rengō ("Citizen's League for Peace in Vietnam")), the Japanese peace movement during the Vietnam War, namely to strengthen their own anti-American political activism. Japan expert Simon A. Avenell stresses a similar point when he identifies the struggle of Japanese citizens to find their new role in Asia as the philosophical core of the Beheiren (Avenell 2010:106-

31 See also section 3.2 of this paper.

32 The conversation was published in the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on Saturday, 20 May, 1972, i.e. only five days after Okinawa's reversion to Japan.

147).[33] Ōe stated that he had come to understand these thoughts to be much more prevalent on the Japanese main islands than in Okinawa. Following his visit, he had begun to critically assess the reversion plans of the Japanese government. Finally, in 1971, he started co-editing a quarterly journal, with a circulation of 5,000 copies, titled *Okinawa keiken* (Okinawan Experiences). To Ōe, there were three main experiences that had shaped Okinawa (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2):

1) Okinawa, within the Far East, is historically and culturally distinct.
2) This means that another assimilation into the central state of Japan is neither in the vital interest of the islands nor of the neighbouring states, since it disregards any chance for balance.
3) If independence of Okinawa was impossible to achieve – although that would be the logical option – Japan can only help to solve the "Okinawa problem" by acknowledging its guilt as manifested in the 1875 incident[34] and the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. Japan also needs to grant to Okinawa a special prefectural status guaranteeing its cultural independence. It needs to ensure complete demilitarisation by renegotiating conditions with the U.S.

Ōe calls for a special prefectural status, including cultural independence, to be granted to Okinawa. Moreover, all U.S. military units were to retreat from the islands. Ōe calls life in Okinawa an enduring state of war ("*Dauerkriegszustand*") (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2), and Japan will need to work towards ending it immediately. Also, Japan is called upon to face its historical guilt toward Okinawa. Ōe claims: "We cannot ignore the realities of the islands. Too long we have tried to forget Okinawa. […] We need to become

33 Oda Makoto, author and social critic as well as one of the leading figures of the Beheiren, compared the Okinawans to African-Americans: "[…] both were linked by America's colonial policy and the resultant destruction of democracy" (Avenell 2010:119). Oda, however, saw the Okinawans not only as a manifestation of a wronged U.S. democracy, but also as "third-world people"; in fact, he attributed the same characterisation to the Japanese (Avenell 2010:119). According to Oda, this was a result of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Only in solidarity with each other would Japanese and Okinawans be able to fight the Security Treaty and along with it the colonial U.S. security and foreign policies (Avenell 2010:119).

34 This refers to the "Matsuda Mission". Matsuda Michiyuki, Secretary General in Japan's Ministry of the Interior, landed in Naha on 10 July, 1875, and travelled on to Shuri in order to inform King Shō Tai that he would from then on hold the rank of a so-called *chokunin* official. In fact, all members of the Ryukyu aristocracy were given new, i.e. lower, ranks, corresponding to the Japanese aristocratic ranks (Kerr 2000:371-372).

a part of the Okinawan history of the past 27 years in full consciousness" (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2). Ōe asserts a shift in perspective, a thought which culminates in his statement: "Japan is part of Okinawa" (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2).

Ōe talks about a "Okinawa with Japan" nation. In this scenario, Japan is the new part of an Okinawan nation, which Okinawa, if ready to challenge its boundaries, would grant access to. Japan will need to renegotiate its (psychological) boundaries in order to understand its manifold guilt against Okinawa, and will have to learn how to address that guilt. According to Ōe, this is a necessary process Japan needs to embark on, so as not to drift toward a next phase of Japanese militarism (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2). Okinawa, a nation that has long been walking a pacifist path, was significantly more developed as a nation than Japan.

5. Concluding Thoughts

The emergence of a reversion movement in Okinawa mainly reflects two sentiments: first, the desire to put an end to the continuous U.S. administration on the islands, which many Okinawans saw as colonial rule; and, secondly, the desire to participate in the political stability and economic wealth that was present on the main islands of Japan. Once it became clear that it would not be possible to fully realise the second goal, i.e. participation in Japan's rapid development, the reversion movement turned into an anti-reversion movement. At that point, and under those conditions, the reversion movement rejected the new "Japan with Okinawa" nation. The prominent catchword of those days was *hondo-nami*, which means "under the same conditions as on Hondo," i.e. the Japanese main islands. The term originated in the context of one of the reversion movement's most contentiously debated policy issues, namely the question of whether the U.S. military would be granted the privilege to keep stationing nuclear weapons on Okinawan soil even after the reversion (*kaku-tsuki henkan*) or whether that privilege would not be granted (*kaku-nuki henkan*). *Hondo-nami* was synonymous with *kaku-nuki henkan*, i.e. a reversion without nuclear weapons.

In Okinawa, however, the meaning of *hondo-nami* has expanded, and now extends to the comparability of the living standards in Okinawa and the Japanese main islands. One is inclined to conclude that Okinawa's living standards have in fact not yet reached the *hondo-nami* level. Although numerous multi-year plans to promote and develop the local economy have been implemented since the reversion, the gross domestic product of the prefecture still lags behind Japan's national average. The economic dependence of the prefecture on the central government, in Tokyo, is frequently used as a point of leverage in political negotiations (Vogt 2003:136-169), and the central government's dominance within the prefecture is often viewed as a questioning of Okinawan identity (Vogt 2003:136). Nowhere else in Japanese politics does the entanglement of the political structure of interdependence and identity politics become clearer than in the area of Japan's security policy and its implications on the living conditions in Okinawa. To this day, the island prefecture bears the main burden of Japan's security policy. All of the political initiatives, such as Prime Minister (2009-2010) Hatoyama Yukio's call for a new balance in sharing the burden of the U.S. military presence among all Japanese prefectures, have so far failed (Vogt/Wiemann 2013).

Military bases, just like nuclear power plants and airports, are so-called "public bads" (Aldrich 2008:3). This means that while their existence enhances safety and the living standard of the community at the nation level, they can only fulfil their functions by putting strains on the smaller communities where they are based (Aldrich 2008:3-4). A balanced division of "public bads" (Aldrich 2008:3) within a nation is a necessary matter of course given that the concept of solidarity is one of the core defining elements of any nation. However, in hardly any nation, on hardly any topic, is solidarity actually a matter of course. That is why an alignment of Okinawan living conditions to that of Japan's main islands is by no means a sufficient prerequisite for nation building. Four decades after reversion, this alignment of living conditions to *hondo-nami* is, however, an absolutely necessary first step. A Kumamoto-based journalist of Okinawan descent put it as follows: "I am Okinawan, not Japanese. […] Perhaps Okinawans will become Japanese when those bases are moved to the mainland" (Rabson 2012:216).

As early as 1972, during his co-editorship with Ōe Kenzaburo, Ōta Masahide, one of the most passionate advocates of the *hondo-nami* conditions, pointed to a forward-looking approach. In an exhibition catalogue, he wrote that for one century the Okinawans had wearily been looking for an "identity as Japanese," and only now had they started looking for an "identity as humans" (FAZ 1972/05/20:BuZ 2). Ōta indicated the possibility of an identity formation in Okinawa, which was set apart from Japan as a centre of reference. Discussions about the design of a new "Japan with Okinawa" nation had already been quelled. In lieu thereof, Ōta emphasised the necessity to achieve a new understanding of the differentiation of structures – one of the core elements of modernisation – that goes beyond the known structural categories, such as nations. This overcoming of old structures means true modernisation and enables us to find a new community of solidarity outside the concept of nation. This might lead the path for an Okinawan way, with or without Japan.

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Beata BOCHORODYZ

Social Movements in Okinawa since 1945: Was the Reversion a Threshold in the Development of Civil Society?

Many Japanese from mainland Japan, which includes the four islands of Honshu, Kyushu, Hokkaido and Shikoku, do not consider Okinawa to be a part of Japan proper. If they are tourists, they admire the subtropical climate, white sand beaches and turquoise colour of the sea. If they are business people, they complain about the lack of punctuality, or think of parties lasting late into the night accompanied by strong local alcohol (*awamori*), or music played on the *sanshin*, which is deemed the precursor of the Japanese *shamisen*. However, the climate and culture are not the only distinctive features of Okinawa[1]. Due to historical circumstances, we can talk about Okinawan mentality, Okinawan political culture, Okinawan economy, and also of a different pattern of development of civil society.[2] This article analyses the historical development of a civil society in Okinawa Prefecture after the end of the Pacific War, aims to identify its characteristics, and attempts to assess the impact that Okinawa's reversion to Japan had on that development. In order to understand the undergoing changes in Okinawan society, we first need to take a brief look at the history of Okinawa Prefecture, located on the Ryukyu archipelago, the southern-west part of present-day Japan.

Historical Background: The End of the Pacific War

Okinawa Prefecture is the only region in Japan that developed independently from Japan as a state organisation, namely the Ryukyu Kingdom, which existed for approximately four hundred years until the mid-19th century. Until 1609, when it was conquered by a Japanese feudal lord from Satsuma Domain (present day Kagoshima), Ryukyu was nominally a vassal state of Ming

1 Internally, Okinawa is very diverse; it consists of different groups of islands (Yaeyama, Miyako, Iriomote, etc.) with distinct linguistic and cultural differences. In this paper, "Okinawa" and "Okinawan" refer to the main island of Okinawa and the surrounding islets.

2 The term "civil society" is the subject of numerous discussions and controversies. In the following text, the concept is defined broadly to signify the sphere of activity between family and the state, in which social actors organised in associations and other organisations pursue a goal of "common good," and not one for economic profit or political power. The definition includes also economic actors such as employer associations and labour unions when they are active outside the market (Schwartz 2003:2).

and then Qing China. After a period of "double dependency" as a vassal of Imperial China and Japan, Okinawa formally became a part of Japan in 1879, although in many respects it was treated differently as a semi-colony. One of the consequences of such treatment was the establishment of a defence line on the islands during the Pacific War. It became the only full-fledged battle fought on Japanese soil between the Allied and Japanese forces. In the Battle of Okinawa, which lasted between 1 April and 23 June, 1945, approximately 100,000 Japanese soldiers and 14,000 American soldiers died, while the percentage of civilians killed reached nearly one third of the total population (Ōta 2000:7, 82; OshJ 2000:26-27). The Japanese government did not prepare any plans for evacuating the local population, except for a small number of children. Many civilians committed mass suicides, which were forced upon them by the imperial army, or they died directly at the hands of the soldiers. Even today, those facts are not widely known outside the Okinawa prefecture.[3]

As a result of the defeat, Japan became occupied by the Allied Forces. On 8 September, 1951, Japan signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty, according to which the executive, administrative and judiciary rights over the Ryukyu Islands were provisionally handed over to the Americans. The decision of the peace treaty came as a surprise to many Okinawans, who felt it was a "betrayal," and thus they declared 28 April, the day the treaty came into force, as the "Day of Shame" (literary "Day of Humiliation," *kutsujoku no hi*). But an even bigger surprise and shock came in 1979 with the disclosure of the "imperial message" (Gabe 2000:50-52), according to which Emperor Shōwa, known outside Japan as Hirohito, had secretly agreed in September 1947 on the separation of Okinawa from Japan and on long-term use of the islands for American military bases. The decision was interpreted as "another proof" of treating Okinawans as second-class citizens. As a consequence, for the next twenty-seven years, until 15 May 1972, the Ryukyu Islands were under control of the American forces, while the rest of Japan regained independence on 28 April, 1952.

During the first years of the postwar period, the Americans, busy with the recovery of the four main islands, did not pay special attention to Okinawa. The changes on the international arena at the end of the 1940s brought about the "reverse course" in American politics vis–à–vis Japan, including a shift of the U.S. orientation towards the Ryukyu Islands as well. In August 1949, the USSR conducted successful experiments with nuclear weapons; in October of

3 Periodically, a clash between Naha and Tokyo occurs concerning the question of group suicides (*shūdan jiketsu*) forced upon the Okinawan population by the imperial army during the Battle of Okinawa. The army involvement has been denied by the central government as not being documented (see e.g. *Ryūkyū Shinpō*, 2007-07-11).

the same year, Chinese communists declared the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Following July 1950, a war broke out in Korea between the communist North and the South occupied by the Allied Forces (Higa 1963:6-18).

Okinawa's geographical location, in close proximity to the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan and continental China, and also to South-East Asia, became regarded as a strategic card. The situation on the Korean Peninsula, despite the end of the war in 1953, did not bring about the final agreement. Similarly, a very unstable situation became a permanent feature of Indochina. After the First Indochina War and the withdrawal of the French troops in 1954, the next war, this time in Vietnam, broke out (November 1955), which ideologically resembled the Korean War: The communist North, supported by the People's Republic of China and the communist bloc, waged war against the anti-communist South aided by the capitalist forces, with the United States as a leader. The danger of the spread of communism all across Asia seemed real. According to the American doctrine of containment, Okinawa, together with the rest of Japan, was to become the keystone of resistance against the "red disease" in Asia. The geopolitical importance given to Okinawa in the strategic plans of Washington determined the future of the archipelago for the entire postwar period, and to some extent even longer, up to the present. In line with the strategy for combating communism, the military bases on the islands were substantially enlarged, a move which became the axis of the socio-political conflicts for decades, determining the course of the development of social movements in the prefecture as well.

The development of those movements after 1945 can be divided into three phases, of which the first two are chronological in nature, while the third one encompasses a strong ideological aspect: (a) the All-Island Struggle for Land (*Shimagurumi tōsō*), (b) the Reversion Movement (*Fukki undō*), and (c) the Struggle for Human Rights and Protection of Life (*Jinken/seimei o mamoru tatakai*) (Arasaki 1997:181). It is worth noting that in most cases, the cause of social conflicts was related to the presence of American military bases, unlike in mainland Japan, where the issues were more diverse. In Okinawa, even though the problems that the social movements fought against were the same, the political discourse and the ideological base of each movement changed depending on the situation and the zeitgeist. Moreover, one also has to take into account that in the case of Okinawa, there were no mass movements until the end of the Pacific War. *Uchinānchu*, as the Okinawans refer to themselves[4], are characterised by openness, hospitality and sociability, as expressed in the

4 The four main islands of Japan are called *hondo* ("proper" or "main islands") by the Okinawans, while the inhabitants are referred to as *Yamatunchū*.

proverb *ichariba chōdē* ("even with one meeting, we are like brothers"). It is ironic that these hospitable and "fun loving" islanders became referred to as a community of protest (Tanji 2003:168), due to the frequency and variety of social protests occurring on the islands.

Anti-Base Movement

The attitude of Okinawans toward the army and Japanese authorities just after the end of the military combat was shaped to a great extent by their experience during the Battle of Okinawa, including being treated with suspicion and brutality by the imperial army, whose majority of soldiers did not understand the Okinawan dialect, and who forced group suicides upon civilians. On the other hand, in spite of the war propaganda portraying Americans as cruel beasts (which was meant to justify the necessity of suicides), the American soldiers appeared surprisingly friendly at first. They gave food and clothing to Okinawans and even sweets to children. The American Army was thus initially perceived positively by the local population, and it was only the later authoritarian way of governance and the intensifying conflict over the enlargement of military bases that changed that amicable attitude.

All-Island Struggle for Land

The construction of military bases in Okinawa sped up after the end of the Korean War, during which Okinawa proved to be a useful base of operations for American bombers and the Marines. In January 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower (1890-1969) made a declaration in his State of the Union address, which was to affect the future of Okinawa for decades:

> American freedom is threatened so long as the world Communist conspiracy exists in its present scope, power and hostility. More closely than ever before, American freedom is interlocked with the freedom of other people. In the unity of the free world lies our best chance to reduce the Communist threat without war. [...] We shall, therefore, continue to advance the cause of freedom on foreign fronts. In the Far East, we retain our vital interest in Korea. […] We are prepared to meet any renewal of armed aggression in Korea. We shall maintain indefinitely our bases in Okinawa. (USHR 1960:9)

The declaration was followed by the construction of new bases and modernisation of the older ones. The years 1953-1958 proved to be extremely dramatic in this respect. It is worth noting at this point that the occupation army had been seizing land since the end of the Pacific War. Nevertheless, until April 28 in 1952, the day Japan regained its independence which, at the same time, was also the date on which the Ryukyus were transitioned into the trusteeship system with the U.S. as "the sole administering authority" (Art. 3, Peace Treaty)[5], the U.S. Army acted according to the Laws of War on Land. In reality, this meant arbitrary rule. During the Battle of Okinawa, many civilians left their houses, and after the defeat they were placed in detention camps, staying there until the end of 1945, although approximately 80,000 people were still detained there in March 1946. The majority of camps were located in the southern and central part of the island, near the capital of Naha, the area where most of the bases were constructed. As a consequence, upon release from the camps, the Okinawans from the central-southern regions (Naha, Chatan, Yomitan) had no place to return to (OShJ 2000:118).

Due to the Law of War on Land, the acquisition of land initially took place without any compensation for the owners. Upon the decision to sign the peace treaty with Japan, American authorities decided to pay land rents for the period between 1 July, 1950 and 28 April, 1952, although due to difficulties in identifying the owners of the land, which resulted from the destruction of pertinent documents during the battle, the rental payments were delayed. However, once the peace treaty came into force, the land owners lost any legal basis for claiming compensation for the land lease prior to that date because Japan, by signing the treaty, relinquished all claims against the United States (although the delayed payments for July 1950-April 1952 were actually remitted after Japan's independence). After April 28, 1952, the legal framework changed nevertheless, and the occupation authorities had to comply with the new Laws of Peace.

The Army Corps of Engineers determined the value of land, which became a basis for the calculation of annual rentals (a fixed rate of 6% of the land value). The estimated land value was so low that among 57,000 land owners, only about 1,000 decided to sign the lease (OShJ 2000:122). In November 1952, the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) decided to hand over the matter to the government of the Ryukyu Islands, the highest local authorities, but the problem was not resolved. At the end of 1952, the USCAR announced the rule of "implied lease" (*mokuyaku*), which was formalised in April 1953 with Ordinance No. 109, the Land Acquisition Procedure. The U.S. Army was obliged to send a written notice to land owners informing them about the plans to rent the land. The owners had 30 days

5 Article 3 of the Peace Treaty stipulated that the U.S. was to exercise control over the Nansei Shotō, a territory covering a much larger area than just Okinawa Prefecture, stating that "the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands." The Islands of Amami Ōshima were returned in 1953.

to comply with or refuse the notice. In the case of refusal, the owner was supposed to appeal to the vice governor (a member of the USCAR) within that 30-day period, although the "refusal" could only concern the amount of the lease. If the owner refused to lease the land, the USCAR announced the "Declaration of Taking". The land owner was thus given a choice between "agreement" and "conditional agreement" (refusal with regard to the amount of money). The lease was therefore actually compulsory.

A few days after the announcement of the ordinance, on April 11, 1953, military bulldozers appeared in the Mamashi village (now part of Naha city), beginning the forced expropriation of land. In September, a similar situation occurred in the village of Toguchi (Yomitan village), and in December in the village of Oroku (now part of Naha city). In the case of Oroku, local residents, who were sitting on the ground in protest, were pacified by bulldozers and armed soldiers (OShJ 2000:122). At this stage, it was still individual families, settlements and villages that objected to the appropriation of the land. Since then, the forced acquisition of land for the construction of new military facilities came to be known as the "land seizure by bayonets and bulldozers" (*jūken to burudōzā no tochi sesshū*). The U.S. forces thus acquired 45,000 acres (of which 5,000 were later returned), which accounted for nearly 20 percent of the arable land of the Okinawa main island. At the same time, 50,000 families were expelled from their houses, which deprived more than 250,000 people of shelter (Price Recommendations 1956). Deprivation of land in Okinawa, a society in which agriculture was held very important and land was regarded as "the most precious thing," as noted by the representatives of the American congressional committee, led to fierce protests by the Okinawans.

In order to protect Okinawan land and property rights, the Legislature of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (Rippōin) approved the petition to the Civil Administration in April 1954, now known as the "four principles for the protection of land" (*tochi o mamoru yon gensoku*) (Rippōin 1954). This was the response by the legislative authorities of Okinawa to the decision by the U.S. Civil Administration to grant a lump-sum compensation for the expropriated land. The four principles included: (1) opposition to a one lump-sum compensation or perpetual lease, (2) compensation demand for land, (3) compensation demand for damages resulting from the expropriation of land, and (4) opposition to new seizure of land. The Civil Administration did not respond to these demands. In despair, local officials decided to turn to Washington, where in June 1955, they submitted a protest to the U.S. House Committee on Armed Services. In order to investigate the matter, a special sub-committee chaired by Melvin Price was sent to Okinawa in October of that same year. In the meantime, the expropriation of land was continued. In March

1955, dozens of military vehicles, bulldozers and soldiers destroyed 32 houses in Isahama village (now part of Ginowan city), leaving 132 people without shelter and seizing approximately 3,000 square meters of land (Okinawa-ken Kobunshokan n.d.). Before the war, those areas were known for their abundant yields of rice. The pictures taken during that time and preserved in the Okinawa Prefectural Archives show protesters calmly sitting and standing with a banner saying “Money will be for one year, the land for eternity” (*kane wa ichinen, tochi wa ban’nen*).

The report prepared by the Price committee, known in Japan as the Price Recommendations (*Puraisu kankoku*), was announced on May 8, 1956. It deeply disappointed Okinawans, who expected justice from the democratic institution of the American Congress. Although the report postulated the need to pay decent compensation, it recommended a lump-sum payment and construction of new military installations, which contradicted the four principles. Okinawa was considered too important for the interests and security of the United States to comply with the demands of local residents from the distant islands of the Ryukyus.

The Price report became the proverbial last drop that caused the cup of bitterness to overflow. In response, the Okinawans took to the streets. Throughout the prefecture, the protests and demonstrations began, condemning the Price Subcommittee proposals and demanding observance of the four principles. From this point onward, the social movement against land acquisition became a mass protest known as the All-Island Struggle for Land (Shimagurumi tōsō, literally ‘all-island struggle’). This movement grew most rapidly between 1956 and 1958, reaching its peak in the second half of 1956, namely after the publication of the Price report. For the 64 local governments at that time, 56 unanimously approved of the decision to organise demonstrations, which were attended by a total of about 150,000 people.

It was the first organised mass action by Okinawans in their long history. In the rally held a few days later, on July 28, on the grounds of a high school in Naha, 150,000 people participated in the event, this time all gathered together in one place. Another such mass meeting on a similar scale would not take place until in the 1990s, forty years later.

The initial protests of local residents went hand in hand with the activities of the Okinawan local government. Prior to the first mass demonstration on June 14, representatives of all major autonomous institutions – including the Legislature of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, Association of Mayors and Village Headmen (Shichōsonchō Kai), Okinawa Prefecture Federation of

Owners Associations of Land Used for Military Purposes (known as Tochiren)[6], headed by Higa Shūhei, the Administrative Secretary (*gyōsei shuseki*) of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (1901-1956) – created the Joint Council of the Four (Yonsha gōdō kyōgikai), which sent a formal protest note to the U.S. Civil Administration regarding the Price report. The Council also threatened that in accordance with following the recommendations, the representatives of all local institutions would collectively resign. At the same time, a letter of protest was sent to the government of Japan. The letter emphasised that the lump-sum payments equivalent to the transfer of ownership of the Ryukuan land over to the American government *de facto* undermined Japan's sovereign right to the territory of Okinawa. In all local administrative units, Associations to Protect the Land (Tochi o mamoru kai) were established, which created a network of small organisations directly related to local authorities.

Over time however, the movement became divided between the moderates and the radicals. While the Administrative Secretary and the mayor of Naha city conducted negotiations with the Americans, the so-called progressive parties (*kakushin seitō*), such as the leftist Okinawa Teachers' Association (Okinawa kyōshokuin kai), organised mass protests under the leadership of the Council to Support Resolution of the Problem of Land for Military Use, which, in 1956, was renamed the Okinawan Land Protection Council. This council organised demonstrations in Naha in late July, which were attended by over 150,000 people under the slogan "Great Manifestation of Prefectural Citizens for the Implementation of the Four Principles" (*Yongensoku kantetsu kenmin sōkekki taikai*). At the meeting, a resolution was adopted, calling for the resignation of the Administrative Secretary, Higa Shūhei (1901-1956), and Naha mayor, Tōma Jūgō (1895-1971), for their compliant attitude toward the occupational authorities. The resolution did not affect the situation of either leader. Higa Shūhei died suddenly in October of that year, and his post was taken over by Tōma Jūgō, known for his moderate stance.

The problem of forced acquisition of land was "technically solved" in 1958. In April of that year, the head of the Civil Administration, U.S. High Commissioner (*kōtō benmukan*) Gen. James E. Moore (1902-1968), announced the abandonment of the idea of a one lump-sum payment and further consideration of the issue by the U.S. government. In November, the Civil Administration and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, in a joint communiqué, announced a "positive solution" to the problem of the land lease issue. As a result of negotiations, the Americans agreed to pay more than six times the initially proposed value of the land, and to pay the compensation

6 Okinawa ken gun'yōchi nado jinushi rengōkai (Tochiren) was created in 1953, while the official name was altered a few times.

annually, or the total sum for ten years in advance to those who would agree. The problem of the land leases for military facilities thus seemed to be solved, at least as perceived by the authorities, but as the future would show, it was only resolved temporarily. The radical forces of the All-Island Struggle for Land found a vent in the election for Naha city mayor in December 1956, which was won by a communist activist, Senaga Kamejirō (1907-2001), one of the most interesting and controversial characters in Okinawa politics of that period, who had just been released from prison at that time.

From that period on, the negotiations with the Americans on the subject of land use for military purposes focused on the amount of rent. At the end of 1958, the All-Island Struggle for Land seemed to be fading, but the seeds of the idea of the need to regain the right to land, or in other words, the question of sovereignty, were taken over by a new movement which aimed at Okinawa's reversion to Japan.

The Reversion Movement

The Reversion to the Motherland Movement (Sokoku fukki undō), also called the "Reversion Struggle" (Fukki tōsō), can be divided into two stages: the first, which was very short, lasting only between 1950 and April 1952, the date the Treaty of San Francisco went into force, and the second stage, from April 1960 to the actual reversion of Okinawa on May 15, 1972. It should be noted, however, that the movement was very diverse. It consisted of a multiplicity of groups, which for the sake of clarity can be described as "conservative and progressive camps" (*hoshuha-kakushinha*). In addition, it was not the only political and social movement formed with the aim of determining the political future of Okinawa. In other words, not all Okinawans wanted the U.S. to return Okinawa to Japan. Therefore, along with the Reversion to the Motherland Movement, there were also groups of people supporting Okinawan independence (*Okinawa dokuritsu*) and opposing the reversion (*hanfukki*) of Okinawa. The latter was marginal, upheld by a group of intellectuals, and should rather be considered a socio-philosophical movement[7]. Nevertheless, both movements – the one for independence and the movement opposing the reversion – are worth mentioning, because they constitute important elements of Okinawan identity.

The origins of the first reversion movement date back to the late 1940s-early 1950s, when the date for the meeting in San Francisco regarding the peace treaty with Japan was set. In 1951, all political parties in Okinawa defined their stance toward the political future of the Ryukyu archipelago,

7 The most famous representative of this movement is the writer and intellectual Arakawa Akira.

which included the options of independence, becoming an UN trust territory, becoming part of the U.S., or reversion to Japan. The last option was adopted by the Okinawa Archipelago Assembly[8] by a majority vote. Its most active members were local political parties of the Okinawa Social Mass Party (Okinawa shakai taishūtō), and the Okinawa People's Party (Okinawa jinmintō), respectively called Taishūtō and Jinmintō for short. These parties, along with other organisations, formed the Association for Promoting Reversion to Japan (Nihon fukki sokushin kisei kai) in April 1951, while the Okinawa Social Mass Party additionally established the Association of Young Comrades for Promoting Reversion to Japan (Nihon fukki sokushin seinen dōshi kai) in June of the same year. Members of these organisations became actively engaged in a campaign to collect signatures demanding Okinawa's reversion to Japan. As a result, 199,000 signatures were collected, which accounted for approximately 72.1% of all eligible voters in Okinawa (OShJ 2000:136, 142). The result was impressive, but when compared to results from the Amami archipelago, located north-east of Okinawa, from February 1951, which was as high as 99.8%, it became clear that public opinion in Okinawa was more polarised. In other words, close to one third of Okinawans did not actively support the reversion to Japan. The collected signatures, together with a petition, were submitted to the governor of Okinawa, the delegates of Japan (Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, 1878-1967) and the United States (special envoy John F. Dulles, later Secretary of State, 1888-1959), who attended the peace conference in San Francisco. However, the signatures and the petition had no influence on the final decision of the conference. Okinawa was separated from Japan, and the reversion movement withered for almost a decade. Nevertheless, the awareness of the need to fight for one's own rights survived, becoming a starting point for the next movement, which significantly contributed to the final decision by the U.S. and Japan governments to return Okinawa. The second stage of the reversion movement began in the 1960s.

8 In August 1950, the U.S. Military Government of the Ryukyu Islands, the predecessor of the U.S. Civil Administration, adopted the Law Concerning Organization of Guntō Governments, which divided the Ryukyu islands into four administrative units (Okinawa, Amami, Miyako, and Yaeyama), each with self-governing bodies, which in the case of Okinawa was the Government of the Okinawa Archipelago (Okinawa guntō seifu), headed by a governor. In April 1952, the Government of the Okinawa Archipelago was renamed into the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, headed by the chief executive (*gyōsei shuseki*).

Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country (Fukkikyō)

On April 28, 1960, the Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country (Okinawa-ken sokoku fukki kyōgi kai), known for short as Fukkikyō, was created, becoming the driving force of the movement.[9] The Council was formed by 17 progressive groups, while at the preparatory talks even the conservative Liberal Democratic Party participated, ultimately to withdraw, claiming that the Council represented an anti-American and pro-Soviet stance. The first congress was attended by 1,500 people, while an additional 1,500 non-member Okinawans gathered in front of the Okinawa Times Hall to express their support for the movement. Over time, the organisation grew to comprise more than fifty sub-organisations.

Every year on the anniversary of Okinawa's separation from Japan, on April 28, the Fukkikyō organised protests both on land and at sea. The demonstrations on land were accompanied by the popular song "Give Okinawa back" (*Okinawa kaese*), while the hand-painted banners called for Okinawa's return, declaring the determination of fight: "Let's unite!/We will persist! Until the realisation of the return to the motherland" (*Danketsu shiyō! Sokoku fukki jitsugen made*). Another popular slogan read: "Let's create an all-island struggle for the return to the motherland" (*Sokoku fukki no shimagurumi undō o kaishi shiyō*), which referred to the earlier movement of the All-Island Struggle for Land.

One of the well-known and deeply symbolic events arranged by the reversion movement was the protest organised at the northernmost tip of the main island of Okinawa, the Hedo Cape. On the evening of April 28, fires were lit, which were visible from the Yoron Island, formally a part of Japan. It was a signal of brotherhood with the rest of the country. During the daytime, near that same place, a meeting of fishing boats from both the islands of Okinawa and Yoron was organised at sea. Boats wrapped in banners met at the sea boundary separating Okinawa from Japan, while the members exchanged handshakes in a symbolic gesture of brotherhood and support for the Okinawan cause.

9 The Association to Support the Return to the Motherland (Sokoku fukki kisei kai) was established at the end of 1952, chaired by Yara Chōbyō (1902-1997), the last administrative secretary of the Ryukyu Government (1968-1972) and the first governor of Okinawa Prefecture (1972-1976). On January 18, 1953, the association organised a meeting which attracted 4,000 participants. This was the first mass demonstration in support of Okinawa's reversion to Japan. After Yara resigned, the organisation ceased to function.

Photographs from those meetings were published in newspapers and other publications, becoming one of the symbols of the Okinawans' fight against the American authorities. After Okinawa's reversion in 1972, a monument commemorating those events and the reversion to the "Japanese Motherland" (*Nihon sokoku*) was erected at the cape.

Official Negotiations

At the founding meeting of the Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country in 1960, a resolution was adopted to submit petitions calling for Okinawa's reversion to such institutions as the United Nations, the U.S. Congress, the government and both houses of the Japanese parliament. Under the influence of the council, the Legislative of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands unanimously adopted a resolution concerning the reversion of the administrative rights to Japan on 1 February 1962, popularly known as the Resolution of February 1st (*2-1 Ketsugi*). The resolution was also reported on the main islands of Japan, contributing to the popularisation of the reversion movement over there as well as to the formation of support groups for the Okinawan cause. In 1965, Prime Minister Satō Eisaku (1901-1975) visited the prefecture, delivering the famous statement that the war would not end for Japan as long as Okinawa is not returned to the motherland. On Satō's initiative in August 1966, the Okinawa Problem Discussion Group was established. It was significant that the group was chaired by Ōhama Nobumoto (1891-1976), a professor from Waseda University born in Okinawa Prefecture (Ishigaki Island) and a chairperson of the governmental Aid Associations for the Compatriots from the South[10]. It was an advisory body of the Prime Minister, which was intended to emphasise the personal involvement of the head of the Japanese state in the Okinawa problem. Two months prior to that, in June 1966, special working groups which were supposed to deal with the Okinawa issue were established by both the governments of Japan and the U.S. and began preparations for negotiations on the return of the archipelago.

As a result of these negotiations, in November 1967, President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908-1973) and Prime Minister Satō announced the return of the Ogasawara Islands, whereas the return of Okinawa was to be decided within three years, on terms satisfactory to both parties. The subsequent part of the message was decidedly less optimistic for the Okinawans: The heads of states

10 It was a government advisory body established in 1956, based on the Law Concerning the Association to Support the Southern Compatriots (Nanpō dōbō shien kai hō), which was commissioned to prepare proposals for resolving the territorial issues of the Ryukyus and Ogasawara Islands.

declared that American military bases in Okinawa played an important role in the defence systems of both Japan and the Far East. This was contrary to the expectations of the Okinawans, who demanded the return "without bases and on equal terms with mainland Japan" (*kichi naki, hondo nami*). From that moment on, the issue of the U.S. military bases became the dominant element in the concerns of the reversion movement.

Slogans demanding the immediate return of all the land taken by the military bases, and of opposition toward the bases and the U.S.-Japan security treaty dominated the election for the administrative secretary of Okinawa in November 1968, which was won by a candidate from the progressive camp, Yara Chōbyō. It did not, however, influence the decision of the two governments.

In November 1969, President Richard Nixon (1913-1994) and Prime Minister Satō Eisaku reached a final agreement on the return of Okinawa. Contrary to the expectations of the local population, the return to Japan, which was executed on 15 May 1972, did not bring a resolution to the issue of the U.S. military bases and the forces stationed in Okinawa. The extent of disappointment can be judged from the results of questionnaires, according to which, one year after the reversion, only 38% of the Okinawans expressed satisfaction with the reversion, while 53% were dissatisfied (Kōno 2013:94).

The Independence Movement in Okinawa

In addition to the Movement for the Return to the Motherland, there was, as was briefly mentioned earlier, a group of supporters of Okinawan independence (Kawamitsu 1987:80-105). The independence movement refers to the long history and tradition of the Ryukyu Kingdom, which had existed for approximately 450 years (1429-1879) prior to its annexation by Japan. For the independence movement, the questions of the Kingdom's formal dependency on China as a tributary state or Ryukyu's subordination under the Satsuma domain's rule from the early 17th century onwards were secondary to the fact that Ryukyu had existed as a separate state organisation. The independence slogans surface and disappear in response to socio-political changes.

In the postwar period, the Japanese Communist Party was the first organisation to address the question of Okinawa's independence. At the 5th congress in February 1946, the party adopted a congratulatory communiqué on the "occasion of the independence of the Okinawan nation" (*Okinawa minzoku no dokuritsu o iwau*). The communiqué was prepared by a group of Okinawans associated in the League of Okinawans. It is worth noting that immediately after the end of the Pacific War, the Japanese Communist Party was one of the very few which saw the American occupation as a chance for carrying out a "democratic revolution" (*minshushugi kakumei*). Another organisation that picked up the theme was a party called the Democratic Union of Okinawa, founded in June 1946 by Okinawan activists Nakasone Genwa (1895-1978) and Yamashiro Zenkō (1911-2000), who later founded the Taishūtō. Nakasone, who was linked with the Japanese leftist movement, declared the theory of Ryukyu independence (*Ryūkyū dokuritsuron*) in 1951. The statute of the League of Okinawans contained a provision about the final objective of creating an independent Republic of the Ryukyus. Similar slogans were pronounced by the Okinawa People's Party, founded by Senaga Kamejirō in July 1947, which called for the creation of a constitution of the "Ryukyu Nation" (*Ryūkyū minzoku*)[11]. Yet another example came from the National Party of the Ryukyus, founded by Ōgimi Chōtoku and Kiyuna Tsugumasa (1916-1989), among others. The party was formed in November 1958, which was just after the most intense period of the struggle for land and prior to the reactivation of the Return to the Motherland Movement. Due to its anti-American and anti-communist character, it did not gain broader public support.

The return of Okinawa in 1972 is another turning point in the discussions on the independence of Okinawa. In preparation for the return, the Ryukyu Independence Party was created in November 1970; the party's statute contained a provision on the establishment of the Republic of the Ryukyus. For the election to the House of Councillors in 1971, when the Okinawa election district was added for the first time, the party prepared its candidate, one of the party founders, Sakima Toshikatsu (*1922). Sakima was not elected, but after a long period of stagnation the party eventually revived its activities in 2005, sending its candidates into the next elections for the prefectural governor (2006) and the mayor of Naha city (2008), in both cases to no avail (Okinawa Times, 20-11-2006). In 2008, the party changed its name to Kariyushi Club[12], altering its program at the same time. Instead of the independence for Okinawa, it now postulated the introduction of the federal system (*dōshūsei*) or "one country, two systems" (*ikkoku niseido*), modelled on the case of Hong Kong. The independence slogans have never gained wider public support in Okinawa, but nevertheless, the fact of their existence and continuous reoccurrence is of great significance.

In the Okinawan social discourse, a new wave of interest in the idea of independence emerged in the early 1980s, which was about ten years after

11 In the 1940s, there were also voices calling for the independence of other islands of the Ryukyu archipelago, such as Miyako and Amami.

12 In the Okinawa dialect, *kariyushi* means "happy, auspicious".

the reversion. In 1981, the leading socio-intellectual journal *Bunka to shisō no sōgōshi: Shin Okinawa bungaku* [General Magazine of Culture and Ideas: New Okinawan Literature] published a special issue titled "Bridge to the Republic of the Ryukyus" (*Ryūkyū kyōwakoku e no kakehashi*), which included articles by the leading thinkers of the independence group. The majority of the initiators and leaders of this movement have remained active until the present: Kawamitsu Shin'ichi (*1932), chief editor of the daily newspaper *Okinawa Times* and the magazine *New Okinawa Literature*, and Arakawa Akira (*1931), associated with the movement which opposed the return of Okinawa to Japan. The issue printed also a version of a proposal of the future constitution for the Republic of the Ryukyus.

In the 1980s, there was also a shift of focus from political independence to economic autonomy, which was probably caused by the relatively difficult situation in which Okinawa was put in comparison to other prefectures. In this context, the term *jiritsu* (autonomy) gradually replaced the former term *dokuritsu* (independence) being applied to all socio-political areas.

The next wave of interest in the ideas of independence surfaced in the second half of the 1990s, which was mainly related to a series of protests against the military bases as a response to the rape of a 12-year old girl by three U.S. servicemen in August 1995. In May 1997, Arakawa Akira and Kawamitsu Shin'ichi, together with a famous Okinawan rock musician-turned-politician named Kina Shōkichi (*1948), organised a symposium entitled "A Heated Debate on the Possibility of Okinawan Independence" (*Okinawa dokuritsu no kanōsei o meguru gekironkai*), which was attended by over 1,000 participants. Presentations from that meeting were collected and published in a separate volume. In the same year, another volume was published, which became a bestseller in Okinawa. The book was titled *Okinawa dokuritsu sengen: Yamato wa kaerubeki "sokoku" de wa nakatta* (Declaration of Okinawa Independence: Yamato [Japan] was not the "motherland" we should have returned to), written by Ōyama Chōjō (1901-1999), the former mayor of Koza (now Okinawa City).

As we can see, the ideas about independence have been a recurring topic in Okinawa, gaining wider interest from time to time. Many local intellectuals, thinkers and activists belong to this movement. Although it has never gained mass support, or political power, the results of a questionnaire survey conducted by Chinese scholar Lim John Chuan-tionga (*1964), a professor at the University of the Ryukyus, show that the percentage of Okinawans in support of Okinawan independence was 20.6% in 2007, while it grew to 23.9% in 2006, and 24.9% in 2005. Opposing voices constituted 64.7%, 65.4%, and 58.7% respectively (Lim 2009:105-147). During that period, a slight decrease in the number of independence supporters can be observed, but it is difficult to draw more general conclusions due to the short period the study covers. It can thus be said that so far, it seems that promoting the independence slogans serves more to preserve and strengthen local identity than to implement any realistic political agenda.

Hansen jinushi

The presence of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa contributed to the establishment of a movement of anti-war landowners (*hansen jinushi*), i.e. the landowners who refuse to lease their land for military use, and particularly for American bases. The land has been used by the U.S. Army since the end of the Pacific War, when it was acquired by force, but the landowners have never given their consent.

In the 1950s, after the San Francisco Peace Treaty had come into effect, the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) tried to sign lease agreements to formally resolve the problem of the illegal use of land, which at the time was predominantly used for agricultural purposes, but their proposed lease rates were so low that, as mentioned above, the majority of the landowners refused to comply. As a result of the All-Island Struggle for Land, the U.S. government increased the rates. The great majority of landowners signed the lease agreements on new terms, but a group of them, for personal or ideological reasons, kept refusing. Those who complied are associated with the Tochiren or the "Land Federation," although it does not mean that all members of Tochiren support the existence of the military bases in Okinawa. On the other hand, those who refused the lease are referred to as the anti-war landowners.

The very term "anti-war landowners" (*hansen jinushi*) appeared only in the period immediately preceding the return of Okinawa to Japan, specifically on 9 November, 1971, when the Anti-War Land Owners Association, known in Japanese as Hansen jinushikai, was formed. One of the organisations that contributed to the establishment of the association was the Okinawa Prefecture Council for the Reversion to the Home Country. Consequently, the struggle to revert the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan was transformed into a fight with the government of Japan for the right to land, or in other words, for the fight against the military bases in Okinawa.

In 1971, Japan began legal preparations for Okinawa's reversion, which was to be realised in May 1972. The lease terms were to change as well: The duty to lease the land to the U.S. bases was placed on the Japanese government, which then was to provide the land to the American troops. The new leases were therefore signed between the Okinawans and the government of Japan.

Among 27,000 owners, approximately 3,000 declined, declaring disapproval of use of their land for war purposes (Arasaki 1996b:75). The war in Vietnam was still ongoing at the time, and hence they referred to "war purposes" rather than "military purposes," as is the term used at present.

The democratic constitution of 1947 guarantees and protects the right to private property (Art. 29), and hence the Tokyo government decided to establish specific regulations in order to formally resolve the issue of the land leases in Okinawa. The law applied only to Okinawa, which is a violation of another constitutional principle of equality of all citizens before the law (Art. 14). Nevertheless, the Law for the Temporary Use of Land for Public Purpose in Okinawa (Okinawa ni okeru kōyōchi tō no zantei shiyō ni kansuru hōritsu) was adopted by the Japanese Parliament on 31 December, 1971. However, in this case, the term "land for public use" (*kōyōchi*) meant simply "land for military use" (*gun'yōchi*), as Arasaki Moriteru (*1936), a well-known historian of Okinawa and anti-base activist, points out. The law was to be effective for five years, after which it was extended for a further five years. In consequence of the government policies, the number of land owners refusing to lease their land decreased to about 100 people by the eve of the expiry of the law in 1982. After the expiration of that law, the government used the old regulations, such as the Special Measures Law Concerning the Use of Land for U.S. Military Bases (Beigun yōchi tokubetsu sochi hō), which enabled continued leasing.

In response to the actions of the authorities, a new movement was initiated, in June 1982, that called for buying parcels of land from the anti-war owners. The action was intended to provide support, both mental and financial, to residing land owners, as well as to increase their numbers in order to strengthen the movement's political power against the government. The association also, as noted by Arasaki Moriteru (1996b:152), aimed to cooperate with and support those landowners who signed leases, although reluctantly and under pressure from family members as well as economic and other factors. The action began with buying small pieces of land from Hirayasu Tsuneji (*1934) that were located inside Kadena Air Base[13], one of the most important military bases of the U.S. forces in the Pacific region. Each participant contributed 10,000 yen, the equivalent of about $40 US (with the average yen exchange rate in 1982 being 255.55 JPY = 1 USD). It was a small amount of money calculated on the basis of the average salary in Okinawa at that time. This way, the movement of anti-war owners of one *tsubo* of land was born. One *tsubo* is a unit of measurement equivalent to 3.3 m^2, although it was initially

13 Kadena Air Base, covering an area of 19.95 km^2 and two runways spanning 3700 m, is located in the cities of Kadena, Okinawa and Chatan.

not meant to be exactly the size of one *tsubo*, but rather to symbolise the small dimensions of the land in question. At that time, the price of agricultural land in Okinawa was about 40,000 yen per square meter, 60,000 for residential land, and thus 10,000 yen was enough to purchase approximately one quarter of one *tsubo* at best (Arasaki 1996b:152-153).

This led to an increase in the number of anti-war land owners, who formally formed the One Tsubo Anti-War Landowners Association in December 1982, under the slogan "[Change] the military land into a place of living and production!" (*Gun'yōchi o seikatsu to seisan no ba ni!*). Initially, the association included 833 members. To the surprise of the organisers, the number of applicants declaring their willingness to purchase a parcel of land began to grow rapidly. The applicants included people who experienced the brutalities of the Battle of Okinawa. The members comprised well-known and respected citizens of Okinawa, such as a professor emeritus of the University of the Ryukyus, Nakasone Seizen (1907-1995), the former instructor in the youth formation of the Himeyuri Unit (Himeyuri gakutōtai)[14] during the war, Gushi Yae (1918-2011), a nurse in the imperial army hospital, and Toyohira Ryōken (1904-1990), president of one of the two largest daily newspapers in Okinawa, the *Okinawa Times*. Thanks to them and other activists, the movement gained immense popularity. Additional members started joining, including parliament members, representatives of local governments at all levels, academics, journalists, and entrepreneurs. Over time, the anti-war movement of the "one tsubo landowners" spread to Japan proper. The Kansai One Tsubo Association was established in Osaka, followed by other regions, with the Kanto Branch (Kantō burokku) constituting the biggest unit. By the end of 1982, their numbers grew to 2,000 members. In comparison to the total number of military land owners associated with the Tochiren, 38,000 in 2012 (Tochiren n.d.), this was only a fraction, but their actions have not only exerted influence on the government in Tokyo, but also on bilateral relations between Japan and its ally, the United States. The most spectacular example of that action was the rebellion by the prefectural governor, Ōta Masahide (*1925), who refused to sign a proxy of land lease in 1995, as a stand-in of the *hansen jinushi* (Bochorodycz 2010:83-103).

Although formally Ōta's fight ended unsuccessfully, symbolically, the subsequent dispute brought serious consequences in many respects. The Okinawan population gained "another proof" of discrimination by bearing

14 The Himeyuri Unit (literally "Lily Unit") was a name of a group of female students from Okinawa high schools mobilised by the Japanese Army that served as a nursing unit during the Battle of Okinawa; many of the students died during the battle. For the Okinawans, the Himeyuri Unit became a symbol of the victimisation of Okinawa.

a disproportionally large burden of responsibility for reasons of national security, as compared to other prefectures. In Okinawa, the discussion about the cultural and historical distinctiveness of Okinawa intensified again, followed by academic research and publications on the topic, which reinforced the perception of their difference by the Okinawans themselves. The long-term consequences are difficult to assess, but it is worth pointing out that in the dispute between the Okinawan local government and the central authorities, the decisive factor was the presence of the anti-war landowners and the fact that they refused to sign the land lease contracts. In other words, the scarce human and financial resources of the socio-political movement were transformed into extremely significant political consequences.

After the Reversion: Struggle for Human Rights and Protection of Life

The reversion of Okinawa to Japan in May 1972 did not bring substantial changes in the concentration of military bases on the islands, and henceforth many socio-political movements in Okinawa revolved around the same issue, namely the struggle against military installations. The discourse changed, however, and began to reflect broader social and political shifts occurring on the domestic and international arenas. It can thus be said that the reversion gave rise to the third stage of the development of civil society movements in Okinawa, the “Struggle for Human Rights and Protection of Life” (Jinken/seimei o mamoru tatakai). The idea of human rights and protection of life are not new, but their popularisation and penetration into popular consciousness occurred in Japan at the end of the 1980s and the 1990s.[15] The concepts cover a broad scope of meaning, and therefore the movement under these banners includes a variety of different organisations which are concerned with women’s and children’s rights, environmental protection, the improvement of living conditions, culture and art, education, sports and other issues. Noteworthy is the fact that the previously discussed movements fighting for land and property rights and against the military bases incorporated the ideas of human rights and protection of life as their objectives, thereby referring to universal laws, and not only to narrowly defined interests of specific groups. As a result, they gained popularity and support from diverse groups, even extending beyond the formal boundaries of the state. Among those groups, the peace and environmental movements are particularly active. A few examples will be discussed very briefly below.

15 One of the oldest human rights organisations is the Okinawa Human Rights Association (Okinawa jinken kyōkai), founded in 1961 still under American occupation (Okinawa Jinken Kyōkai ed., 2012).

The Peace Movement

Political and historical circumstances led to a rapid development of the peace movement in Okinawa. The origins of the movement differ significantly from those on the Japanese main islands, although the movement in the prefecture has been supported by national organisations as well, especially since the 1980s. In Okinawa, however, as it has been repeatedly pointed out, the U.S. military bases have dominated the scope of activities of most civic groups[16], including the peace movement.

One of the characteristics of Okinawan politics is the fact that the local authorities at all levels are strongly committed to promoting pacifist ideas. Actively or passively, they often support the activities of civic groups, although the latter are financially independent from the authorities. One of the symbols of Okinawan pacifism is the "Bell of Nations," or rather an inscription proclaiming Okinawa as "a bridge between countries" (*bankoku shinryō*) that is engraved on a bell from the times of King Shō Taikyū (ruled 1454-1460), which compares Okinawa to a bridge between Japan, Korea, China and other nations. Thanks to peaceful trade and exchange of goods, Okinawa contributed to the prosperity of many areas in the Asia-Pacific region. Another important topic often brought up when arguing for Okinawan pacifism is the Battle of Okinawa and the tragic experiences related to it. There are several events held during the course of the year in Okinawa which commemorate the victims and educate others about the necessity of peaceful coexistence, of preserving memories of the past and the collective history of Okinawa. There are also lectures and talks on war, meetings with people who witnessed the Battle, and even petitions sent to the central authorities, as in the case of the dispute about history textbooks, from which remarks about the group suicides of Okinawan civilians forced by members of the Imperial Army were removed.

One of the people who contributed to the popularisation of the image of Okinawa as a "bastion of peace" (*heiwa no ishiji*), in opposition to the American vision of Okinawa as a "[military] Keystone of the Pacific," was Ōta Masahide, governor of Okinawa from 1990 to 1998, who took part in the Battle of Okinawa, and then later, as a historian, conducted research on the archipelago. It was his initiative to establish the Peace Park (Heiwa kinen kōen) in 1995 on the southern part of Okinawa Island, where the final fights took place, and where a great number of civilians committed collective suicide under the pressure of the Japanese army. Stone plates engraved with the names

16 The terms "civil" and "civic" can be used interchangeably. "Civil" is primarily used in phrases like "civil society," but not in instances such as "civil groups"; here, "civic groups" is the more common term. "Civil" is more often used in opposition to "military," and "civic" in contrast to "government".

of all victims, regardless of nationality, were erected in the park. The process of identifying and adding new names has continued to the present.

One of the most active peace groups is the Okinawa Civic Liaison Association for Peace (Okinawa Heiwa Shimin Renraku Kai). As written in its statute, "peace" is defined as "coexistence of and respect for different cultures, values and systems, lack of any force (military), respect for the environment by all people in the world, and equal distribution of the scarce resources and wealth as much as possible" (Okinawa Heiwa Shimin Renraku Kai n.d.). As we can see, such broadly defined objectives can relate to practically all aspects of socio-political life. As the name suggests, the association functions as an information and contact platform for more than 33 organisations and individuals, which are its members. At the same time, the association itself is a member of other organisations with similar general principles and aims. It is, for instance, a member of the Civic Council Against the Base Relocation Within the Prefecture (Kichi no kennai isetsu ni hantai suru kenmin kaigi), which fights against the presence of the U.S. military bases.[17]

The Liaison Association functions in a system of a network of civic organisations comprised of both individual and group members. One of the main reasons that such an organisational structure was adopted was probably due to the lack of sufficient funds to run a large organisation. In addition, members are mainly recruited from the younger and older generations, while members of working age, who have the largest financial resources, are small in number. These organisations usually do not register their activities, because they oppose the policies of the authorities and thus have little chance of obtaining public financial support. Furthermore, as the activist Asato Eiko (*1948) stated, official registration disproportionately increases the amount of administrative work in relation to financial resources. As a result, most of the activities of peace groups are financed by one-time fundraising, called *kanpa*, and very few are registered as public non-profit organisations under the NPO law.[18]

The most spectacular examples of joint actions by peace groups in Okinawa are the "Peace March" (*heiwa kōshin*), organised annually since 1977 and held around 15 May, the "Human Chain" (*ningen no kusari*), and yearly international anti-war rallies on 23 June, held since 1984 on the day of the anniversary of the end of the Battle of Okinawa. In the Peace March

17 The organisation was established in 1999 by a progressive camp of the Communist Party of Japan, the Okinawa Social Mass Party, the Social Democratic Party (former Socialist Party) and other pacifist groups.

18 The NPO Law, or the Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (Tokutei hieiri katsudō sokushin hō), was established in 1998.

that took place in May 2012, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the reversion, approximately 6,000 people gathered together on the main island (Ryūkyū Shinpō, 12-14 May, 2012). In case of the "Human Chain," which is created by a group of people holding each other's hands around the military base of Futenma (11.5 km), the event was attended by 17,000 people in 2010 (Ryūkyū Shinpō, 17-05-2010). The human chain around the Kadena Airbase (17 km), organised five times so far (1987, 1990, 2000, 2007), gathered a record number of 27,000 people in June 2000, during the G8 Summit (Ryūkyū Shinpō, 21-07-2000), while in May 2007, on the 35th anniversary of Okinawa's reversion, 15,000 people participated (Ryūkyū Shinpō, 14-05-2007). As we can see, the events bring together a great number of people, and what is even more interesting is that they are co-organised or supported by local authorities, which often announce the events on official websites of local governments.[19]

The Peace March and Human Chain are formally organised by the Okinawa Peace Movement Center (Okinawa Heiwa Undō Sentā), but despite the strong leftist tendency of the member organisations of the Center, the events gather participants from various political circles. During such meetings, the issues touch on current problems of the prefecture or Japan in general, such as the opposition to the transfer of Osprey aircrafts to Okinawa, the construction of a new offshore base near Henoko and helipads in Higashi village in the northern part of the main island, demands for noise reduction around airbases, or calls for stopping the use of nuclear power after the Fukushima accident in March 2011.

The Environmental Movement

The environmental movement in the prefecture is active and internally diverse, although in terms of the total number of organisations registered as non-governmental organisations with the statutory objective of environmental protection, Okinawa ranks in the middle on the list of Japanese prefectures. As of June 2013, the number of environmental organisations reached 192, out of a total of 13,262 operating in Japan (Naikakufu n.d.). However, the statistics do not reflect the real situation, because many of the groups from this category, especially those opposing the governmental policies, are not registered.

The reasons for establishing environmental organisations in Okinawa can be divided into three main categories: environmental hazards caused by public works projects, the development of tourist resorts, and finally, the operation of military bases. These are not the only reasons, since in addition

19 See, e.g., Futenma Human Chain during the G8 Summit: http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/summit/j/ev/ev0720-1.htm [21-11-2012].

to the endogenous factors resulting from domestic activities, there are also exogenous causes, such as global warming and the actions of international institutions. The last factor, that of the military bases, is probably the most important one, while the "Save the Dugong" movement, described in greater detail in a different paper (Bochorodycz 2011:43-63), presents an interesting case of collaboration between activist groups focused on issues as diverse as environmental protection, peace, and women's and children's rights. The movement, organised in order to protect the Dugong, an endangered species threatened by the construction of a new military base near Henoko, in the northern part of the main island, broadens the social support for its goals, while helping to transform specific interests into more universal objectives.

Conclusions

With its complex history, Okinawa has developed a very strong local identity juxtaposed against the rest of Japan. No other prefecture has been defining itself so strongly in opposition to "Japan" (Yamato). The development of the civil society reflects the complexity of Okinawan history, helping to shape and reinforce the separateness and distinctiveness of that identity. The beginning of mass social movements in Okinawa relates to the presence of the U.S. military bases during and in the aftermath of the Pacific War. And what is more important, all of the consecutive major social movements have been related to the same issue of the bases, which can be defined as the characteristic feature of Okinawa as compared to mainland Japan, where a great variety of issues have motivated social forces. In that sense, the reversion of Okinawa in 1972 made no difference. In other words, it was not a threshold for the development of civil society in Okinawa. The bases still pose the biggest problem for the prefecture, stimulating the emergence of a variety of civic activities on the islands, although it has to be remembered that not all social activities, especially after the 1990s, are a result of the existence of the bases. It is impossible to make a precise prediction for the future, but one cannot but speculate on the negative consequences that the constant presence of one factor, such as the military bases, which is provoking civic activities, will have on shaping a local Okinawan identity and the prefecture's relations with the Japanese state in the future.

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Message from Okinawa I

ASATO Eiko

43 Years after Reversion – Okinawans Resisting the Imposition of Military Bases

Struggle and Pain in Henoko

The resistance of Okinawans to the Japanese government has reached a new peak. Local people are opposing the plans of the Government and the U.S. Military to construct a new military base in Henoko, Nago City. In 1996, both the Japanese and U.S. governments agreed under the auspices of SACO (the Special Action Committee on Okinawa), that the United States Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, built in the 1950s, should be closed and the territory returned to Japan. However, a precondition of this return was that a new U.S. base in Nago would be built.

There is already a military base in Henoko, Camp Schwab, which was constructed in the 1950s. The new base is to be located next to Camp Schwab. It will be an offshore, V-shaped airbase with two 1800m runways.

The land reclamation is planned for a large bay called Oura Bay, which is the habitat of many coral reefs, as well as of the dugong, an endangered marine mammal. In 2003 a civil group filed the "Okinawa Dugong Lawsuit" against the United States Department of Defense, in order to save the corals and dugongs of the bay. According to the American National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the United States must consider any impacts on cultural heritage in their actions in foreign countries. The U.S. District Court in San Francisco reopened the case after a long pause but, on February 13, 2015 the court decided to dismiss the lawsuit.

The protesters against the landfill at Oura Bay have continued their activities for more than 10 years. They have built tents at the beach and performed sit-in demonstrations. This persistent resistance has saved the sea of Oura Bay until now. However, in December 2013, Okinawan governor Nakaima yielded under pressure from the Central Government, and gave permission for the land reclamation. This "approval of landfill" (*umetate shōnin*) is a decision that lies within the authority of the prefectural governor. In order to combat its citizens' opposition to the landfill, the Government enforced the "Act on Special Measures Concerning Criminal Cases" (Keiji tokubetsuhō), according to which protesters hindering the construction of the base can be arrested. This law suppresses both freedom of expression and freedom of speech.

In reaction to this step, the opposition to the base among the citizens has intensified and their protests against the base construction continued. The gubernatorial election in 2014 was a confrontation between the then governor, the conservative Nakaima Hirokazu, and the candidate Onaga Takeshi, who was supported by the anti-landfill group “All Okinawa”. “All Okinawa” is a coalition of a faction of the conservative camp, reformist camps and the workers union. By voting for Onaga, Okinawans gave a clear statement rejecting the construction of the base, as he had explicitly stated that he would not allow the landfill.

In this way, the Okinawan population was fighting to build the future of Okinawa, and gaining experience from repeated trial and error. However, the final result of the political experiment that is “All Okinawa” remains unknown. It could be said that the reformist parties in Okinawa did not actively show their reformist character. For example, at the time of the gubernatorial election, they appear to have avoided discussions on how to deal with the problems of the Japanese Self Defense Forces, or the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.

Yet there is one point of value, in that increasing numbers of people are joining the opposition to the plans for Henoko. And these people do not belong to one specific group, but have different backgrounds, including students as well as many mothers with children. So “All Okinawa” is supported by people from many diverse interest groups.

I also want to stress that the base problem in Okinawa is not only limited to Henoko. In Takae (in Higashi Village, north from Nago), protesters are also continuing their fight against the construction of helipads. And on the remote islands, construction works continue on bases of the Japanese Self Defense Forces.

The Question of the “Return to Japan As Motherland,“ and the Way to Independence

After the war, Okinawans consistently campaigned for the abolishment of military bases. The period can be divided into two sections; the years 1945-1972, under direct U.S. administration, and the time after reversion in 1972.

The period of the American occupation can be divided further: During the first period, in the 1950s, the population opposed land acquisition, which proceeded with guns and bayonets. In the 1960s the protests were against the Vietnam War and the bases. And during the second half of the 1960s, until the early 1970s, the argument behind the demands for reversion shifted from national unification to peace and anti-militarism.

Here, I want to discuss the “return to the motherland” (*sokoku fukki*). The fight for the “return to the motherland” started at the moment when

Japan, having been defeated at the end of World War II, handed over the administration of Okinawa to the United States, as stipulated in the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Long before this, during the Meiji era, Okinawans had been incorporated into the Japanese state and forced to be educated as Japanese and to assume a Japanese identity.

The Okinawans, in the struggle to free themselves from the American occupation, were questioning where they belonged. Many chose a return to Japan, seeing Japan as their motherland. Yet not all Okinawans wanted the reversion to Japan. There were also people who felt a stronger affiliation to the United States, and still others who favoured complete independence. Hence, the idea of "anti-reversionism" was born.

Now the question is being raised again: is Japan really the "motherland"? Can Okinawans truly call Japan their motherland, given the fact that Japan once treated Okinawa like a colony? Looking at the history of Japanese rule over Okinawa, there was little space for Okinawan sovereignty. Bearing this in mind, it becomes critical to challenge the meaning of Japan as the motherland in the course of the fight for the "return to the motherland".

Because both the American and Japanese governments are trying to increase their military presence in Okinawa, one cannot but question the process of "reversion". 74% of American bases in Japan are located in Okinawa, a fact seen as discriminatory by Okinawans.

There are some people who consider independence for Okinawa, but in general the discussion has centred on self-reliance and self-governance. The independence faction supports the idea that Okinawa should secede from Japan and build an independent state. The self-governance faction supports the idea that Okinawa should stay within the Japanese state, but have the right to self-governance, or be recognized as a special self-governing autonomous region. Both sides still lack a clear definition of what a state is supposed to be, and the discussion up to date has yielded no solution to this problem.

Recently, the "Okinawa Independence Association" (Okinawa Dokuritsu Gakkai) has been formed, with young people actively engaged its core. They have a strong leaning towards Okinawan nationalism, and reject the idea of being Japanese.

There are many young people from Okinawa who regularly participate at the World Indigenous People Conference of the United Nations. They have a good command of international laws, and demand that Okinawa should gain the right to self-governance.

Broadly speaking, I support the discussion on independence. However, I am against the idea of building an Okinawan state. This is because I do not trust the authority of the state. There are various ethnic groups currently fighting for independence, and yet the big states still dominate the world. After the terrorist attacks on the office of the French satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris in January this year (2015), it seems that nationalism in Europe is on the rise. At times like this, it is essential that we overcome concepts like state, ethnicity and religion, and walk the path of peaceful coexistence. I believe that the International Okinawa Conference in Vienna was held in the same spirit. We also have to seriously discuss the matter of how the American military dispatches soldiers around the world, and how we can deal with this issue.

What Can We Learn From the Struggle Against Base Construction in Henoko

Again, I will return to the problem of Henoko. During the time of the gubernatorial elections, construction works at the base site were stopped. But, disregarding the fact that the newly elected governor was against the base construction in Henoko, the Ministry of Defense has restarted the construction. The sea area where the landfill is planned has been surrounded by buoys, so that protesters cannot enter that zone. In addition, boats of the Japan Coast Guard are keeping watch over the site. Still, the protesters row out in small boats and canoes, trying to stop the construction works. Twenty people from the canoe group have been arrested, and some protesters suffered fractured ribs at the hands of the guards. These violent actions are performed in the name of the Japanese state.

At present, there are 100 to 300 people gathering every day in Henoko. They continue their protest actions with sit-in demonstrations on a 24-hour rotation system. In front of the gate of Camp Schwab, the protesters have set up tents, and the area is called “tent village” (*tento mura*). The Government has repeatedly given orders to forcefully remove and destroy the tents, but each time the protesters simply set up new tents in another location. Not only Okinawans, but people from all over Japan and even young people from abroad are gathering at the tent village. Young people and students have called out for support through social media. They hold informational meetings and have started fundraising campaigns in Tokyo in order to raise financial support for the protesters in Henoko and equip them with canoes and microphones. There are also people who support the protesters with food donations; boxes with apples and snacks arrive every day. In this way, self-governance is being realized.

LANGUAGE

Patrick HEINRICH

Language or Dialect? The Place of the Ryukyuan Varieties in the Japonic Language Family

Introduction

Linguists, writes Spolsky (2009:28), have for decades chosen to subscribe to a “leave your language alone” approach, and such an attitude meant not engaging in discussions on the identification of language borders (see, e.g., Marfany 2010). With regard to the Ryukyuan languages, the “leave your language alone” approach is manifested in the work of Sanada and Uemura, for example, who write: “Whether the Ryukyuan dialects will eventually survive or not as their languages of daily communication is in the hands of the inhabitants of the islands concerned. In their attitudes and decisions, researchers from outside should not interfere” (2007:361). This position is not without problems, however, as we will see in the course of this paper. In order to illustrate the problem and its alternatives, all possibilities with respect to how the language varieties of the Ryukyus relate to those of mainland Japan (*hondo*) will be discussed. More specifically, three issues will be considered here: I will examine (1) language as a cultural category and (2) the distinction between different types of languages before (3) applying these insights to the linguistic situation of the Ryukyus. To conclude, I will discuss some of the consequences resulting from this process.

Language As a Cultural Category

Languages have structures and these structures usage reflects community patterns. Michael Halliday (1992), and many others, confirm that the different roles of language in given societies also are manifested syntactically and semantically. Given the fact that the size, structure, density, composition, etc. of hunter and gatherer societies, agricultural societies, dynastic realms, industrial societies and post-industrialised societies vary considerably, it is indeed beneficial to also distinguish between the role that language plays in such different types of societies. That the type of language we speak relates to the type of society in which it is spoken is already reflected in differing considerations of “language” between different periods of time or between different societies (see Wendel and Heinrich 2012 for a detailed discussion on this topic). This serves as a reminder that a "language" is not a concept which came into existence by itself, and this also applies to the Japanese context.

To make a long story short, a "language" is not something in the world, but rather a perspective on the world, hence the conflicting ideas about the status of languages we find across the world, including in the Ryukyus. A "language" is an emic category. Therefore the terms "*gengo*,“ "language,“ "*Sprache*,“ etc., do not refer to one universally shared idea of what a "language" is, and likewise, "Japanese,“ "English" and "German" do not share a joint (etic) basis which resulted in their identification as being a "language". Rather, these languages, like any other language, were created. And moreover, they were created in different socio-cultural and historical settings. This notwithstanding, most linguists refrain from studying how bundles of regional language varieties (i.e. "dialects") became a "language".

Emic Types of Language

A milestone towards ultimately providing for an etic basis for language identification is Heinz Kloss' (1967) work on what he termed "*Abstand* language" and "*Ausbau* language" in an English publication. *Abstand* languages are languages set apart by linguistic "distance" (or "*Abstand*" in German) from one another. *Ausbau* languages, on the other hand, are initially quite similar, but are purposefully made distinct through "development" (or "*Ausbau*" in German). *Ausbau* language might be best paraphrased as "language by development". *Ausbau* languages become recognised as a "language" in their own right as an effect of having been purposefully shaped, moulded and posited to become standardised tools of literary expression for sociopolitical ends (see below).

Kloss first includes sociopolitical considerations in order to differentiate *Abstand* languages from *Ausbau* languages, and then considers linguistic factors for the purpose of distinguishing between any two *Abstand* languages. There are thus two levels of argument involved in his methodology: sociopolitical and linguistic aspects. While the *Abstand* – *Ausbau* dichotomy has received much attention and is often referred to in sociolinguistic methodology, the relation between two *Abstand* languages has rarely been discussed. As a result, it remains largely unknown that *Abstand* language is part of yet another dichotomy, one between "*Abstand* language" and "near dialectalization". Kloss thus differentiates between three types of languages: "*Ausbausprache*,“ "*Abstandsprache*" and "near dialectalized languages". Represented graphically, his methodology therefore consists of the following double dichotomy:

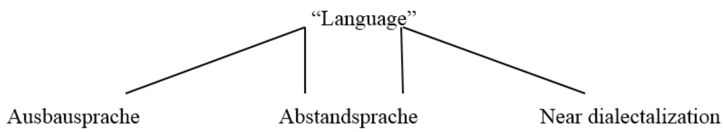

Figure 1. Types of languages according to Kloss 1967

Kloss (1967:33) himself stresses that writing is an essential prerequisite for a variety in a dialect continuum to be "upgraded" to the status of *Ausbau* language. Writing, the existence of separate orthographies, literatures, histories etc. of a language variety, lends those language varieties the characteristic of autonomy. An *Ausbau* language is therefore an autonomous standardised language variety together with all the nonstandard dialects from that part of the linguistic continuum which depend on this standardised written language variety. Well-known examples of *Ausbau* languages are Swedish, Danish and Norwegian, three North Germanic languages which all allow for mutual intelligibility. Despite their diverse historical developments, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian are of such close linguistic proximity that they would be treated as a continuum of one single language if these language varieties were not spoken in three different countries (Delsing 2007). Therefore, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian natives might be able to communicate with one another using their respective language varieties, but they read Danish, Swedish and Norwegian language newspapers and their children receive language education in Danish, Swedish and Norwegian. And it is that element, not the linguistic distance between them, that makes Danish, Swedish and Norwegian each a distinct "language".

Abstand language, on the other hand, might best be paraphrased as "language by distance". The reference to "distance" is thereby linguistic and not geographic. *Abstand* languages are constituted on the basis of linguistic grounds. In practice, however, many *Abstand* languages are not treated as a "language" in their own right, because they share the same written language with another language. This is due to the fact that written languages constitute a new and artificial language variety from which all spoken varieties diverge. Such divergence opens the door to including *Abstand* languages under the "umbrella" of the written language of a distinct *Abstand* language. If we stay with the example of the North Germanic languages, then the two remaining West Norse languages, i.e. both Icelandic and Faroese, can be regarded as being *Abstand* languages in the Danish-Norwegian-Swedish continuum. Icelandic and Faroese also differ between themselves in that they constitute

Abstand languages.[1] Both Icelandic and Faroese have distinct conventions and orthographies for writing, which further facilitates the distinction between the two.

However, the case is not always as straightforward as in the example of Icelandic and Faroese. In the case of *Abstand* languages that share the written language with another *Abstand* language which is genealogically related and part of the same dialect continuum, we are dealing with the third type of language, a near dialectilized *Abstand* language (Kloss 1967:34). Due to the prestige attached to written language, *Abstand* languages without their own writing conventions and orthographies become often conceptualised as dialects of the literary language, both by linguists and the speakers of the languages alike. A number of such near-dialectized languages, including Walloon, Picard and Poitevin, and their respective statuses vis-à-vis French were discussed at a symposium on *langues collatéral* ("collateral languages") held in Amiens, France, in 2001 (see Eloy 2004 for the proceedings). Neither Walloon, Picard or Poitevin are commonly used for written communication. Thus, while speakers of these *Abstand* languages may converse in Walloon, Picard or Poitevin amongst each other, and speakers of French will not be able to understand much of or anything of what is being discussed, these speakers read French newspapers at home and send their children to schools where French is the medium of instruction. As an effect, Wallon, Picard and Poitevin do not become recognised as language. They are, in the terminology used by Kloss, "near-dialectized".

On a more abstract level, *Ausbau* language, *Abstand* language, and near dialectized varieties hinge on two dichotomies: "autonomy versus heteronomy" and "language and continuum versus language rupture".

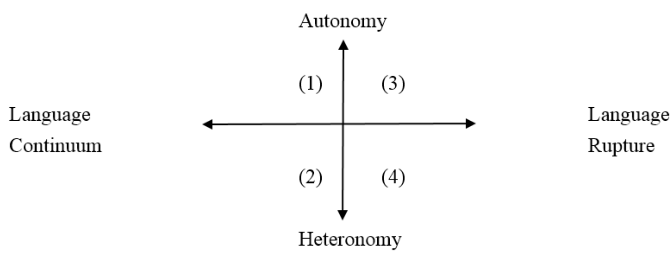

Figure 2. Autonomy and dependence in language

1 As a matter of fact, the distance between Faroese and Danish led to the well-known Faroese language conflict of the early 20th century, when the use of Danish in all domains and the development of Faroese as a modern national language was hotly debated (see Nauerby 1996).

As can be seen in Figure 2, four different constellations arise when we relate the two dichotomies to one another. There is not enough space here to discuss all four cases of this model, and thus I will limit my discussion to Case 2, into which the Ryukyuan languages fall (see Heinrich 2011 for a full discussion of this model). Case 2 is a combination of heteronomy within a linguistic continuum. In other words, it deals with language varieties which are not written. These varieties therefore do not "qualify" as *Abstand* languages to many, due to their lack of linguistic autonomy. With this in mind, let us now turn to an examination of the linguistic situation on the Ryukyu Islands.

Abstand Languages in the Japonic Language Family

Since the status and recognition of Japanese is not questioned, we can safely set Japanese aside in our further discussions and focus on other languages in Japan. The cases of languages outside the Japonic dialect continuum can also be quickly settled. Neither Japanese Sign Language (Nakamura 2006), Ogasawara Creole English (Long 2007) or Ainu (Refsing 1986) are part of the Japonic dialect continuum. Consequently, they have not been deemed to be dialects of Japanese, despite the fact that the speakers of these languages all use Japanese for writing.

Altogether, there are four different positions about how the language varieties in the Ryukyus relate to those of mainland Japan: (1) "language and dialect cannot be distinguished,“ (2) "Ryukyuan varieties are both languages and Japanese dialect at the same time,“ (3) "Ryukyuan varieties are dialects of Japanese,“ and (4) "Ryukyuan varieties constitute languages in their own rights". These four views will be discussed in more detail below.

Language and Dialect Cannot be Distinguished

Since languages do not inherently have clear-cut borders, but are rather dialect continuums (e.g. Germanic languages, Romance languages, Slavic languages, Japonic languages, etc.), some linguists have asserted that language and dialect cannot be distinguished (e.g. Mühlhäusler 1996). Languages, they argue, have most often been "made" for non-linguistic purposes such as nation building. In this context, the recent case of the former Yugoslavia may serve as a good example: In Antoine Meillet's (1918) groundbreaking book *Les langues dans l'Europe nouvelle* (["Languages in the New Europe"]), Meillet identified one language in this specific territory, namely "Serbo-Croatian". The Serbo-Croatian of Meillet's time is "Croatian,“ "Serbian" and "Bosnian" today. Descriptive linguists, who in the ideal case study all language varieties alike, irrespective whether they are termed "language" or "dialect,“ have therefore shied away from being involved in the business of "language making".

In Ryukyuan linguistics, the view that language and dialect cannot be distinguished has resulted in accepting the label of Japanese "dialect" for the Ryukyuan varieties for more than 100 years. Most usually, the categories of "language" and "dialect" have been seemingly used interchangeably in such publications. For example, despite being titled "Okinawan Language Dictionary" (*Okinawago jiten*), the editor, Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo, states on the first page of the dictionary that the "Okinawan language is a dialect of Japanese" (Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo 1963:1). In a similar vein, Ryukyuan languages are declared to be "endangered languages of Japan," but also "dialects" of the non-endangered Japanese language in the publications of the Endangered Languages of the Pacific Rim project (e.g. Sanada 2002). In a reaction to the classification by UNESCO (2009) that specifies there are six independent but endangered Ryukyuan languages, Kibe Nobuko and her associates at the National Institute of Japanese Language and Linguistics state the following on the status of endangered languages in Japan:

> In a way, if unrestrained by political and societal factors and by relying on linguistic common sense, the varieties (*kotoba*) of Hachijō and Okinawa could, just like Ainu, be called 'language'. The fact that people speak various languages within one country is something exceedingly normal in countries across the world, and it is time to get accustomed to acknowledging that such a situation exists in Japan as well. There are, however, still many people who oppose the idea of calling the varieties of Okinawa and Hachijō 'language'. Therefore, we chose to apply the traditional terminology and use 'dialect' for the varieties spoken in Amami, Okinawa Prefecture and Hachijō, and Ainu 'language' for the Ainu varieties. (Kibe et al. 2011:8)

There is a problem with this position. Language status matters in terms of language maintenance and revitalisation, because the status of either "language" or "dialect" determines the places where a language variety can be spoken and the social functions it may serve (Spolsky 2009:4). Maintaining the status of "dialect" very greatly diminishes the chance of revitalising the Ryukyuan languages. Dialects are severely restricted in that sense, and languages are much more privileged. If, indeed, the Ryukyuan languages can be seen as languages rather than dialects, it is beyond question that recognising them as "language" is a key contribution towards their maintenance.

Ryukyuan Varieties are Languages and Japanese Dialects at the Same Time

At first consideration, the idea that Ryukyuan varieties are languages and Japanese dialects at the same time appears similar to the approach just discussed above. The major difference between these two beliefs is, however, that those arguing that a variety can be language and dialect at the same time are keenly aware that such issues are often influenced by extralinguistic factors. Proponents of this view therefore take these factors into account, whereas those who believe that language and dialect cannot be distinguished do not concern themselves with extralinguistic factors at all. In other words, the viewpoint that varieties are languages and dialects at the same time accounts for the very fact that language is not merely about "language alone," but is entangled in issues related to culture, politics, identity, history, etc.

Proponents of this position claim that even seemingly "strictly linguistic issues" such as mutual unintelligibility between two neighbouring varieties as a rationale to distinguish one language from another language, are often influenced by the effects of politics, identity and history (Trudgill 2000:4). Along the lines of such an approach, John Maher (1997:121) says the following about the Ryukyuan varieties: "So is Ryukyuan a language or a dialect? It's both, of course." In Maher's view, the Ryukyuan varieties are "Japanese dialects" at present, due to the fact that they are spoken in Japan. Maher knows very well that they have been deemed to be "dialects" of Japanese in order to establish and spread the idea that the Japanese nation can be defined on the basis of language. Hence, the issue of whether a language variety constitutes a language in its own right or whether it is the dialect of another language simply depends on issues such as nation building or the purposeful drawing of boundaries to others. As a result, the distinction between "language" and "dialect" is fluid, and forever subject to change.

Linguists adhering to this view thus simply adapt to the latest language ideology brought about by the politics of identity, but they are aware and reflective with regard to how such ideas about the place and status of given language varieties have emerged. In the case of the Ryukyus, this means accepting the status of "Japanese dialects" for the Ryukyuan varieties, a standpoint espoused by "Ryukyu Disposition Superintendent" (*Ryūkyū shobun-kan*) Matsuda Michiyuki (1838-1882) as a means used by the Meiji state to gain control over the Ryukyu Kingdom (Oguma 1998:28-29). This viewpoint was consequently questioned when the Ryukyu Islands were separated from the mainland and occupied by the U.S. between 1945 and 1972, as can be evidenced in the writings of Tōjō Misao (1953:81) at that time. Note in this context that Tōjō is regarded to be the founding father of Japanese dialectology and had been influential in giving the scholarly stamp of approval to Matsuda's standpoint that the Ryukyuan varieties were dialects of Japanese before (e.g. Tōjō 1927). Ultimately, then, treating varieties as "language" and "dialect" at the same time is uncritical of any political intervention, a point that Ammon (1989) takes issue with. No scholarly discipline, he argues, should accept that laypeople define the core categories academics have to work with. In the case of linguistics, this implies that "language" and "dialect" should be defined by linguists on a linguistic basis.

The Ryukyuan Varieties are Dialects of Japanese

The view that the Ryukyuan varieties are Japanese dialects has been dominating for more than a century. The main rationale for this perspective has been that the Ryukyuan varieties share the same historical genealogy as the varieties on the Japanese mainland. That is to say that both the Ryukyuan and the mainland varieties are part of the Japonic language family (Serafim 2003). The second rationale is that the Ryukyuan and the mainland varieties are both spoken within Japan.

The notion of shared genealogy has been popularly established by the work of Basil Hall Chamberlain (1999 [[1]1895]), who concluded, however, that Ryukyuan and Japanese constitute distinct languages, just as Spanish and French do. Please note in this respect that most scholars of Japonic genealogy today (e.g. Bentley 2008, Shimabukuro 2007) follow the line of thought put forth by Chamberlain. Upon reflection, such a stance is obvious, because not taking this approach would dissolve the major category of genealogical research, namely that of "language family". Engaging in genealogical research between varieties with only one language involved is indeed a somewhat conflicting enterprise. Conversely, the fact that the relationship between Ryukyuan and mainland varieties is opaque enough to warrant genealogical research can be seen as an argument that the Ryukyuan varieties constitute languages in their own rights.

Comparative research between Ryukyuan and mainland Japanese basic vocabulary has, for example, revealed that Amami vocabulary shares 68% of the basic vocabulary with that of Tokyo. In other words, despite being distinct, 68% of the Amami and Tokyo forms are cognate, that is, developed from the same parent form. In contrast, 32% are not cognate, i.e. they have not developed from the same source. The corresponding figures for shared cognates with the Tokyo variety stand at 66% for Okinawa, 59% for Miyako, and 63% for Yaeyama (Hattori 1954). These figures reveal a linguistic distance between the Ryukyuan and the mainland Japanese varieties which is larger than the one between the Slavic or Romance languages. By rule of thumb, most linguists treat varieties as language in their own right if the percentage of unshared basic vocabulary exceeds 20% (see Renfew, McMahon and Trask 2000). Therefore, on the basis of genealogical research, labelling the Ryukyuan varieties as "languages" distinct from Japanese does not pose any problems. If the shared genealogy between mainland Japanese and Ryukyuan varieties does not necessitate calling the Ryukyuan varieties "dialects of Japanese," the sole remaining rationale for doing so is that the Ryukyuan varieties are spoken within the confines of Japan. Needless to say, that is not a linguistic argument, but a political one.

The Ryukyuan Varieties Constitute Languages in Their Own Rights

Given the situation as discussed above, international scholarship on the study of linguistic diversity within Japan has felt little obligation to define the Ryukyuan varieties as "Japanese dialects". Compilations of the world's languages therefore include "Ryukyuan languages" in their listings (e.g. Lewis 2009, Herbermann 1997, Klose 1987, Ruhlen 1987, UNESCO 2009, Voegelin 1997). Furthermore, the International Organization for Standardization has assigned three letter codes for the Ryukyuan languages, that is, it treats them on a par with other languages such as German or, indeed, Japanese. Please also note in this context that none of the Ryukyuan languages allows for mutual intelligibility with Japanese. Studies into Ryukyuan phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon also reveal differences to Japanese varieties which easily allows them to be treated as "language" (see e.g. Okinawa Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyujō 2013, Tranter 2012). This notwithstanding, the dominating part of Japanese approaches to the study of Ryukyuan varieties has termed these varieties "dialects of Japanese" (see e.g. Uemura 1963, Hokama 1971). Ultimately, therefore, such scholarship refrains from regarding "language" as an analytical category distinct from "dialect," and does so for political reasons (see above). The result is a classification in which different nodes within the linguistic continuum are labelled in the same way, namely as "dialects".

Japanese	=>	Ryukyu dialect	=>	Amami dialect	=>	Local dialects
				Okinawa dialect	=>	Local dialects
				Miyako dialect	=>	Local dialects
				Yaeyama dialect	=>	Local dialects

Figure 3. Dialectologist labelling of nodes in the Japonic continuum

Even non-linguists will easily spot that such a listing compromises analytical clarity. In order to remedy such shortcomings, Miyara (2010:191) therefore proposes the following classification:

Japonic language family => Ryukyuan branch => Amami language => Local dialects
Okinawan language => Local dialects
Miyako language => Local dialects
Yaeyaman language => Local dialects
Yonaguni language => Local dialect

Figure 4. Miyara’s labelling of nodes in the Japonic continuum

Many Ryukyuan linguists have refrained from applying terms such as “language family,“ “language branch,“ “language” and “dialect” as analytical categories as Miyara does. The reason for this is twofold. First, they adhere to the view that linguistics should not interfere with and contradict politically motivated boundaries of “language” and “dialect” (see above). Secondly, the Ryukyuan languages are also quite distinct from modernised “written languages” such as Japanese and German. The Ryukyuan languages lack what sociolinguists call a “language roof”. That is to say, languages like Japanese or German unite (“roof”) the many spoken dialects through a shared and standardised written language. This does not apply in the case of the Ryukyuan languages, which, consequently, may look less “language-like” to some. However, given the fact that only one quarter of the world’s languages are routinely or popularly written, not being united by writing can hardly serve as an argument for not accepting unwritten languages as “languages” (Harrison 2007:145). Rather, it seems more beneficial to expand the concept of “language” in a way that does more justice to unwritten languages as well. To conclude, the Ryukyuan varieties have thus been treated as “Japanese dialects” by many simply on the basis that they are spoken within the confines of the Japanese state, and that they have never been written as a part of everyday life (see Heinrich 2012a for a detailed discussion).

Language and Dialect As Social Construction

We have seen above that “language” and “dialect” are social constructs, and this is the very reason why there are conflicting viewpoints in the case of the Ryukyus. Such insight, however, does not imply that any construct is as good or as valid as another one. After all, different concepts of language and dialect depart from and reproduce very distinct language ideologies. They are entertained by scholars of different approaches to linguistics, and moreover, they have different effects on the vitality of the varieties in question and thus on the chances for maintaining and revitalising the Ryukyuan languages.

Consider how perceptions of language status and prospects for language survival are contingent with the different language ideologies which comprise the various schools of linguistic study. Table 1 below both underscores the social construction of language and dialect and also emphasises the necessity of shifting away from specific ideologies and schools of research if the Ryukyuan languages are to be maintained.

Table 1. Language and dialect as social constructs in the case of the Ryukyus

Traditions	**Ideology**	**Language / Dialect**	**Prospects for Language Survival**
Descriptive linguistics	Language detached from society	Cannot be distinguished	Poor
"Reflective" linguistics	Language detached from society	Both at the same time	Unfavourable
National linguistics	Language & power	Japanese dialects	Poor
Language diversity	Diversity as an asset	Ryukyuan languages	Possible

While there is not enough space here to discuss Table 1 in detail, attention should be paid to the last column, the prospects for survival. Languages, in the most general terms, become endangered as a consequence of no longer serving the communicative and identificational needs of their users. These two factors are, however, the result of deliberate intervention into the ecologies of endangered languages by speakers of more powerful language communities. The mechanism of language endangerment is actually very transparent. It is always the language of dominated communities that is endangered. Identities are stigmatised, language adaption is interrupted, and the development of new communicative functions is halted. There are only two pathways to escape such a situation. The social distance to the dominating community may be increased, or the dominating community may show more tolerance and solidarity towards those whose languages and cultures are endangered (Wendel and Heinrich 2012). The Ryukyuan languages are endangered today due to a campaign to stigmatise their speakers as speakers of an odd dialect that needs to be suppressed (Kondō 2006). This campaign emerged against the background of the Ordinance to Regulate the Dialect (*Hōgen torishimari-rei*) in 1907, which banned the use of Ryukyuan languages at school. It was later institutionalised by the Movement for Enforcement of the Standard Language (*Hyōjungo reikō undō*, 1931-1945), and taken up by the Movement for Return to the Homeland (*Sokoku fukki undō*) in the 1950s (see Heinrich 2004, 2013 for a detailed discussion). The Ryukyuan languages were never adapted for use in modern contexts, as they were reduced to the status of Japanese dialects, and because they have been excluded from specific domains of language use (school, media, etc.) due to their status as Japanese dialects (Heinrich 2012b:122-138). To summarise, all three developments crucially hinge on the view that the Ryukyuan varieties constitute dialects of Japanese.

Given the issues discussed above, it becomes clear that three distinct scenarios exist for the future of the Ryukyuan languages. (1) They will become extinct by the mid-century if no counter-measures are taken (see Anderson 2009), (2) they will be maintained due to greater tolerance and solidarity on the part of mainland Japanese towards the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Ryukyus, or (3) they will be maintained due to the efforts of Ryukyuans to strengthen the boundaries between them and mainland Japanese through autonomy or independence. While it is as yet unclear which direction the Ryukyuan languages are headed for, the field of Ryukyuan and Okinawan Studies will not be a neutral bystander and commentator on these developments. Scholars of Ryukyuan / Okinawan Studies have always taken sides on this issue. They have been involved in the construction of what the Ryukyu Islands are and how they relate to mainland Japan. This includes linguistic issues as well. Calling the Ryukyuan languages "dialect" or "language,“ or both "language and dialect" has vast implications for anyone engaging in this field of study of the Ryukyuan languages and most crucially for speakers of them.

To conclude, let us return to Sanada and Uemura's (2007) "leave your language alone" stance to examine the problems that arise from their approach to the study of Ryukyuan languages. On one hand, they agree that dialect is a sociopolitical category, writing that "actual distinctions between languages and dialect are, as is commonly the case, dependent upon political and social factors. This has to be fully kept in mind, particularly in the Japanese context" (Sanada/Uemura 2007:357). However, it is not made clear why linguistics has to keep in mind that the identification of languages is dependent upon political and social factors. It is also not explicitly demonstrated how the consideration of sociopolitical factors in linguistic research can lead to results which are not sociopolitical. In other words, it is unclear why linguistics has to align to the sociopolitical manipulation of language and the perspectives of those powerful enough to do so.

The problem emerging from the "leave your language alone" approach also involves the aspect that such perspectives compromise the study of sociolinguistics. For instance, the Japanese language disseminated in the Ryukyu Islands is presented as a "language standardisation" campaign and not as what it is, a campaign to suppress the local language. Sanada and Uemura claim, however, that

> Japanese has gone through homogenization by way of national language education and standard Japanese pervasion, accelerating dialect obsolescence, and standardization of language has rapidly advanced since the Second World War in Okinawa Prefecture. (Sanada/ Uemura 2007:358)

This view on the changes in the language repertoires in Okinawa then leads Sanada and Uemura to regard the interruption of natural intergenerational transmission of the Ryukyuan languages ("language shift") as,

> *a rise in patriotism and respect for their* language and culture. *Ryukyuan became used even less*, its function becoming limited to everyday communication among friends and family and as the language of songs. (Sanada/Uemura 2007:360, author's emphasis)

How, one must wonder, is it possible that Ryukyuan loyalty to *their language* increased, while *Ryukyuan* fell out of use? The contradiction of the above statement derives from the simple fact that the language ideology underlying the writing of Sanada and Uemura does not match the sociolinguistic situation they seek to describe. Japanese is replacing Ryukyuan. Their language, the Ryukyuan languages, are being pushed away by the spread of a new language, Japanese, into an ever-growing number of situations and contexts.

Contrary to what is claimed by Sanada and Uemura, language is thus not being left alone by anyone. "Leave your language alone" in the context of modern Japanese means nothing else but framing Japanese multilingualism in monolingual ideology due to dominant sociopolitical motives. Linguistics that plays a part in downgrading *Abstand* languages to the status of dialects does nothing but give an academic stamp of approval to the oppressive ideological treatment of these languages. This can hardly be a neutral approach. The "leave your language alone" stance simply abandons speakers of small languages to the fate of being overshadowed and suppressed by more powerful languages and speakers. This is a problem for speakers of more minor or dominated languages, because language choices are value choices. A linguistics approach which accepts, reproduces and lends scholarly approval to language as a sociopolitical construct in the hand of powerful language ideologues is part and parcel of the suppression and ensuing endangerment of languages that we are witnessing today. Reversing the language shift in the Ryukyus first requires a reversal in the practices of linguistic research there.

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KAWASAKI Sayaka

Japanese As a Foreign Language? The Introduction of the Japanese Language in Okinawan Primary Schools

Introduction

During the entire span of the Meiji period (1868-1912), the Japanese government perceived the establishment of a common language in all parts of the country as one of the key strategies in raising Japan's status in the eyes of the major Western powers. This position echoes the famous slogan of this period: "Rich country, strong military" (*fukoku kyōhei*). Since the incorporation of Okinawa into the Meiji state as a prefecture in 1879, the government has sought to reduce the perceived cultural gap between Okinawans and mainland Japanese through a carefully planned education policy. Language instruction was at the core of this political strategy in Okinawa. "Standard Japanese," a concept developed on the Japanese mainland at a later date, was first introduced to Okinawa in conjunction with the establishment of a teacher training school (*shihan gakkō*) in Naha in 1880.

According to Seki (1997:8), it is still widely held by Japanese scholars that the "official" language education of Japanese as a foreign language (*nihongo kyōiku*) had its birth in Japan's earliest official colony, Taiwan. In fact, however, many parallels can be drawn between Japanese language education in the Japanese colonies and the Okinawa and Hokkaidō territories acquired earlier by Japan. In Okinawa, teachers and students experienced serious communication problems to an extent that interpreters were essential to the successful conduct of language classes. For large numbers of Okinawans, the Japanese language was, at least until the early postwar period, a "foreign language, much like English is today for Japanese people" (Higa 1963:4).

This article reviews the history of the standard variety of Japanese in Okinawa. Its objective is to retrace how standard Japanese, a variety that was initially introduced to Okinawans as a foreign language, became the dominant language in Okinawa.

Language or Dialect?

Okinawa was officially not part of Japan before 1872, and Okinawans did not speak Japanese – or, to put it more precisely, they did not speak the Satsuma or Tokyo language – as their mother tongue. The difference between the Tokyo language and Ryukyuan was so great that people from Tokyo and the Ryukyu islands could not communicate with each other (Ōta 1932:103). But today, the Ryukyu languages are categorized as Japanese dialects, and many Japanese linguists share the opinion that the Ryukyu languages and Japanese belong to the same language family, and Ryukyuan is therefore to be considered a dialect of the Japanese language (Nakamoto 1983:20-21). Regarding this definition, Japanese linguist Hattori Shiro writes the following:

> The languages which are spoken by people in Okinawa are very different from the languages spoken in areas further east than Kyushu. The reason why the Ryukyuan languages are counted as a kind of Japanese dialect is, firstly, because Okinawa is located in Japan and secondly, because the people in Okinawa speak the Japanese common language. If Okinawa would be separated from the Japanese state, the situation would be very different. (Hattori 1948:19)

Still today, two different definitions of the Ryukyuan languages can be found both within and outside of academic circles: Many linguists consider Ryukyuan to be a part of the Japanese language, whereas the opposing view of many linguistic experts (e.g. Heinrich/Shimoji 2011) and international organisations like UNESCO is that the Ryukyuan languages are not Japanese dialects, but rather languages in their own right. Today, the Ryukyuan languages are only spoken perfectly on a daily basis by people older than 80 years; according to UNESCO (2009), about six Ryukyuan languages are spoken in Okinawa and all of them are in danger of extinction. In Okinawan schools today, standard Japanese is taught every day and hardly anybody asks whether or not the Japanese language was their mother tongue.

One of the best-known Okinawan linguists, Hokama Shuzen, distinguished four periods in the history of standard Japanese in Okinawa. Hokama referred to these stages as *Tōkyō no kotoba*, *futsūgo*, *hyōjungo* and *kyōtsūgo*. In his model, standard Japanese was first introduced to Okinawa as the Tokyo language (*Tōkyō no kotoba*). The long period spanning from 1897 to 1935 was referred to by Hokama as the *futsūgo* period, which could be rendered in English as the era of "normal language" (Hokama 1971:54). This term was not only used in Okinawa, but also actively utilised in linguistic and pedagogical works written by the leading linguists of the time, including Ueda Kazutoshi and Miyake Yonekichi. In public discourse, *futsūgo* was used as a synonym for *hyōjungo* ("standard language") in some instances, while it was considered to be different from *hyōjungo* in other cases. In terms of content, no clear-cut line of distinction was drawn between these two concepts. Interestingly, the government refrained from using the term *futsūgo*, instead opting for the use of other constructions containing the word *futsū* ("normal"), such as *futsū no kokugo* ("normal national language"), *futsū no gengo* (similarly translatable as "normal language"), *futsū no kotoba* ("normal expression") and *futsūbun* ("normal text") (see Murakami 2005:17). Whatever the specific choice of terms, until early after the turn of the century, these terms were used by the Japanese government more widely than the notion of *hyōjungo*. However, they failed to become established in Tokyo and were eventually replaced there by *hyōjungo*. In the meanwhile, they did find acceptance in more peripheral prefectures such as Aomori, Yamagata, Saga and Kagoshima, where their use soon became widespread. In a similar vein, Hokama wrote, with regard to the use of the concept of *futsūgo* in general discourse in Okinawa: "It is a remarkable fact that it was in Okinawa that the term *futsūgo* was used for the first time" (Hokama 1971:55).

As noted by Hokama, it was outside of the metropolitan centre of power that the term *futsūgo* evolved into an "established" concept. And the greater a territory's distance from Tokyo, the more "assiduous" the people's efforts to learn *futsūgo* from an early age. The word *futsūgo* was thus especially common in peripheral areas (see Hokama 1971:54). For the people of Okinawa, however, *futsūgo* was often perceived as a synonym of *yamatuguchi*, i.e. the "language of the Japanese,“ rather than as "normal language,“ as the literal sense of the term suggests. The Okinawans' attitude towards the Japanese language at that time is illustrated by the fact that Japanese schools at the local level were called *yamatoya* ("Japanese Houses") (see Kondō 2006:20). In Okinawa, the term *futsūgo* was used until the early years of the Shōwa period (1926-1989), primarily in reference to the Japanese standard language. Meanwhile, in Tokyo, a new concept, that of *hyōjungo*, was created as early as

1902 and became established there as the term denoting the standard variety. In public discourse in Okinawa, this new term did not take over the place held by *futsūgo* until 1937. The ensuing period from 1937 to 1955 was labelled by Hokama as *hyōjungo jidai* ("the era of *hyōjungo*") (Hokama 1971:59).

Historical Overview: The Educational System in the Ryukyus

Before being turned into Okinawa Prefecture and thus becoming a part of the Japanese state, the Ryukyu Kingdom was a vassal state of Japan, China and the Japanese domain Satsuma. Between the 15th and 16th century, the Kingdom was the central trading state in the South China Sea area, and cultivated contacts with many different countries. The Ryukyu Kingdom had especially close ties with China: For example, Chinese delegations came to every enthronement of a new king on the Ryukyu Islands (Akamine 1996:14). How close the Japanese were to Ryukyu is not really clear, but it can be assumed that China had a larger influence on the islands than Japan did. For trade reasons, Ryukyuan elites learned both Chinese and Japanese, but at the time, the biggest goal of young elite Ryukyuans was going to China to study Chinese science. The first school in the Ryukyu Kingdom was also a Chinese school, called Meirindō, which was attended by children from elite families (Asato 1983:37). They studied foreign languages like Chinese or Japanese in order to work as officials in the royal court – however, only a limited number of elite people studied Japanese (Hokama 1971:66).

Starting from the 18th century, basic educational facilities such as *muragakkō* ("village schools") were established in Shuri, Naha and Tomari, while *kōji* ("meeting places") and *hissan keikojo* ("places for the practice of arithmetic") were set up in smaller villages (see Asato 1983:46-52). Students who successfully completed *muragakkō* could attend one of three *hiragakkō* ("normal schools") in Shuri (see Kondō 2006:45). After graduation from *hiragakkō*, students had the possibility to continue their education by studying *kokugaku* (studies on their home country). As noted by Kondō, *muragakkō*, *hiragakkō* and the study of *kokugaku* were reserved for children from warrior families (*shizoku*). Schools such as the *hissan keikojo* and *kōji*, which were located in the countryside, were not only attended by children from warrior families, but also by those of lesser rank, the "*hōkōnin*" ("servants"), in order to obtain work as local officials later on (see Kondō 2006:46).

In terms of their societal status, the *hōkōnin* were *heimin* (“commoners”), but since their parents were serving as public officials, they were entitled to a school education. However, it appears that this was not the case everywhere. In the Yaeyama area, for example, where ten villages saw the establishment of *kōji* between 1700 and 1876, only children from warrior families were admitted (Murakami 2004:2). The main purpose of these schools was to train future officials of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Throughout the existence of the Ryukyu Kingdom (1429-1879), all educational facilities served as *kanri yōseijo* (“training centres for public officials”), and over a long period, the kingdom followed the tradition of not providing education to commoners (Kondō 2006:42). Therefore, in terms of education, there was a considerable gap between children from warrior families and those from other social classes in Ryukyu. The kingdom’s education system, especially with respect to the possibility of learning Chinese characters, was thus extremely discriminatory, with education remaining the exclusive domain of future civil servants for a long period of time.

All of these educational facilities which exclusively provided trained public officials in foreign languages for future roles in the trade business with China and Japan were officially closed down with the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture in March 1879. The first reason for the complete closure of these schools was the resistance against Japanese rule that the kingdom’s ruling elites showed on a number of occasions. The second reason was the socially restrictive nature of education in the Ryukyus, which only gave warrior families the right to education. During the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the ultimate goal of pupils was to travel to China as exchange students. This was no longer possible under the new Japanese rulers, since the interstate ties between Okinawa and China were officially severed, leading students to give up their learning goals and lose their motivation (see Asano 1991:130-131). Okinawa’s prefectural authority perceived the pupils’ (and their parents’) reluctant attitude towards the Japanese school system as a significant problem. In light of this situation, in June of the same year, Okinawa’s first prefectural governor, Nabejima Naoyoshi, took the decision to re-establish the former Ryukyu educational system:

> Between October and November [1879], Ryukyu‘s former educational institutions were recreated as they had been before, designed for future public

> officials and with the same educational contents such as the nine Chinese classics or Chinese poetry. (Kondō 2011:192)

The government thus deliberately built bridges between the old and new educational systems. The introduction of the new school system in Okinawa therefore began by recreating the old Ryukyu system. In December 1879, the Okinawa prefectural authority conducted a count of all elementary educational facilities and publicly announced that there were "172 elementary and two secondary schools" in Okinawa (Kondō 2011:192). In reality, however, only 14 of these elementary schools were "Japanese" schools, with the remaining 158 being former schools that had been reopened. Moreover, during the transition period from Chinese to Japanese education, the government "protected" the traditional privileges of the former warrior classes by hiring their representatives as public officials in Okinawa's prefectural administration (see Asano 1991:134). In this context, in 1884, the government even released the former Ryukyu Kingdom's deposed ruler, Shō Tai, from his house arrest in Tokyo and allowed him to return to Okinawa. Soon after his return, the former king issued a written order calling on all Okinawans to obey the Japanese state. As a result, the former warrior families gradually lost their power to resist and it appeared that Japanese policies had at last begun to take hold in Okinawa.

Japanese Language Classes and Textbooks in Okinawan Schools

Shortly after the incorporation of Okinawa into the Japanese state in 1872, the Japanese government built the first teacher training school called Kaiwa denshūjo (later: Shihan gakkō) in 1880. The Ryukyuan schools, which were built on the basis of the Chinese school system, were banned by the Japanese government, but because of many revolts against the abolition of Ryukyuan schools, the government decided to reopen them, just three months after the official prohibition (Kondō 2011:192). Consequently, during the early period of teaching Japanese in Okinawa there were two different school systems on the islands: Japanese and Chinese schools. As time passed, Japanese schools spread and Chinese schools got pushed out of Ryukyuan society. Thus, from the beginning of the 20th century, only Japanese schools existed in Okinawa.

Teaching the Japanese language began in 1880 with the teacher training school in Naha. The primary goals of this school were to educate interpreters for Japanese and the Ryukyuan languages and also to educate teachers in order to teach Japanese in Okinawan schools (Matsunaga 2008:92). The first problem the government had, right at the beginning, was to assemble students who would go to this school. Since many people did not want to attend a Japanese school, the government decided to pay quite a large amount of money to students who attended: Students were also provided with items like blankets, clothes, plates for cooking over the fire, etc. (Ōta 1932:104). By taking this approach, the Japanese government managed to recruit students for the teacher training school and get the Japanese language taught in Okinawa.

One of the biggest problems with teaching Japanese in Okinawan schools was communication: Japanese teachers and Ryukyuan students did not understand each other because of language differences. This communication barrier between the Okinawan students and their Japanese teachers was a key challenge that Okinawan schools had to face. Therefore, it seemed essential to have students learn Japanese as quickly as possible to ensure that lessons could be taught without the need to rely on interpreters. That is why the early educational system in Okinawa put special emphasis on the subject of communication (*kaiwa*).

Against this background, Japanese and Okinawan teachers jointly published a bilingual textbook called *Okinawa taiwa* (Okinawa Conversation). It is not clear who wrote this textbook; no author's name is on the book, only the organisation name "Gakumuka," which in English means "School Affairs Section". In addition to Japanese teachers who were sent from mainland Japan, two Ryukyuan teachers were also working in this section at the time. It is therefore assumed that the textbook was translated by those Ryukyuan teachers (Hattori 1959:93-94). Even though the book *Okinawa taiwa* was written and published in the teacher training school first, it was also used in primary schools. The teaching of Japanese in Okinawan primary schools began in 1880 and it was taught in the "*kaiwa*" ("conversation course") discipline. *Okinawa taiwa* was needed here as well, due to the communication problems between teachers and school children. The following recollections of a former teacher seem to illustrate the conditions under which Japanese teachers worked at that time. Nomura Nariyasu from Saga remembers:

> Just as you do with little kids, I corrected the students' pronunciation and made them remember Japanese in a radical way – by making them learn it by heart. Teachers as well as students suffered from severe communication problems: We didn't understand what the other was saying. [...] I thought that the progress was so slow du1e to the linguistic differences (between Japanese and Ryukyuan), so I started to use the *Okinawa taiwa* textbook in my lessons. The students learned the texts from this textbook by heart. (Kondō 2006:74)

The book contains texts in two different languages: The first line is written in Japanese, and the next line is the translation of the original Japanese text, written in Ryukyuan (= the Shuri language) (see Fig. 1).

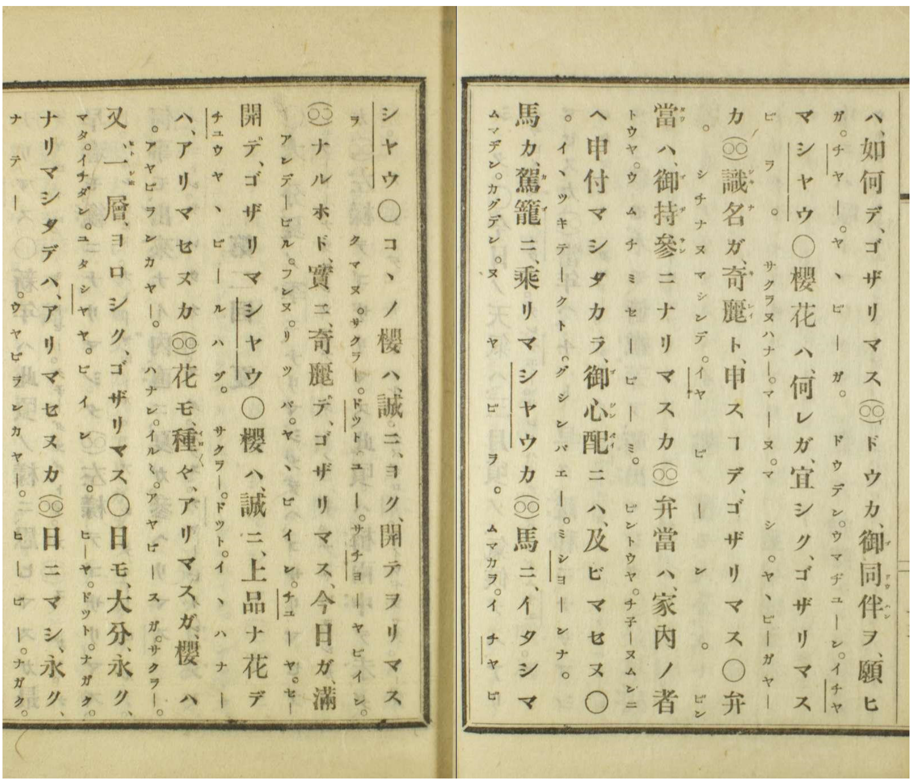

Figure 1. The bilingual textbook *Okinawa taiwa* (1880)

As the textbook shows, the Japanese lines are written in bigger characters than the ones in Ryukyuan, thus making it visually clear that Japanese was considered the main language, and not Ryukyuan. The topics of this book were almost exclusively concerned with weather, time, nature and agriculture; and all of the texts were written in polite form. The polite form was used because Japanese officials thought that the Okinawan people would not use Japanese for conversations among themselves, but rather that they would talk to Japanese officials in the Japanese language, and in view of that, Okinawans should be able to speak politely with Japanese people (Kondō 2006:72). Although the topics in *Okinawa taiwa* were aimed at adults, it was used as the main textbook for teaching the Japanese language in primary schools up until 1889.

The following table shows the main books which were used in Japanese lessons in Okinawan primary schools between 1880 and 1904:

Table 1. Japanese lessons in Okinawan primary schools

1880 - 1888	*Okinawa taiwa* ("Okinawa Conversation"; bilingual textbook)
1888 - 1897	*Kentei kyōkasho* ("Authorized Textbooks"; certified textbooks written only in Japanese)
1897 - 1904	*Okinawaken yō jinjō shōgaku dokuhon* ("Textbook for Use in Primary Schools of Okinawa Prefecture"; special textbook for Okinawa)
1904	*Kokutei kyōkasho* ("State Textbook"; first national certified textbook)

As can be seen here, the bilingual book *Okinawa taiwa* was used until around 1888. In that year, the Japanese teaching program was altered and the conversation course "*Kaiwa*," in which children had previously learned the Japanese language, was eliminated. Instead of this approach, a new course called "*Yomikaki*" ("Reading and writing") was created. This class was a Japanese language class as well, but a different book was used: The schoolchildren were confronted with textbooks certified by the Japanese government which were written only in Japanese. However, using these books was not easy for teachers, because from that time onwards, they had to teach without the Ryukyuan translation. Consequently, since it was hardly possible to teach Japanese to Okinawan children without using the Ryukyuan language, teachers began to orally translate the Japanese texts into Ryukyuan themselves, which made the Japanese lessons more difficult.

The biggest problem related to these Japanese language textbooks was that different types of the Japanese language were used. The official definition of standard Japanese by the government – which, according to the first national certified textbook, was the spoken language used by the average population of Tokyo – was not available then. If you look at period C (1897-1899) in Table 2, Japanese textbooks were rarely written in the spoken language (*kōgo*), but primarily in written language (*bungo*). In contrast to these books, the bilingual textbook *Okinawa taiwa* was written in the spoken language. Due to the introduction of new Japanese textbooks, the Japanese teachers in Okinawa were thus given an extra task, since they did not only have to translate between the Japanese and Ryukyuan languages, but also between written and spoken Japanese – which meant they had to master three types of different languages in the Japanese lessons.

Many Okinawan teachers complained about this complex situation, some of them even writing articles about their problems. For example, Takara Rintoku (1872-1919), an Okinawan teacher, described the problems students had to face when learning Standard Japanese. He called for textbooks to be written in spoken language, because students had difficulties with the written language in the textbooks and starting with literary style added further obstacles to learning Japanese. He also stated that there were "huge differences between Japanese and the Ryukyuan language,“ and thus Okinawan students had difficulties "identifying with Japan" (Takara 1896:4029 cited in Kai 2004:15).

In 1897, a new textbook for teaching Japanese was introduced to Okinawan schools: *Okinawa-ken yō jinjo shōgaku dokuhon*. This book was published by the Japanese Ministry of Education. It was exclusively intended for teaching Japanese in Okinawa, and nearly 50% of it was written in spoken Japanese.

Table 2. Percentage of spoken language in Japanese textbooks (Kai 2006:7)

	Publisher							
	Bungaku	Fukyū	Kinkōdō	Shūeidō	Tomiyama	Ministry	Okinawa	Hokkaido
A (1886-1890)	16.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	-
B (1891-1896)	8.3%	6.7%	8.5%	6.7%	-	-	-	-
C (1897-1899)	8.0%	8.7%	8.3%	8.0%	25.6%	-	47.8%	6.1%
D (1900)	12.7%	38.7%	33.1%	50.8%	33.6%	-	-	-
The first national certified book (1904)	-	-	-	-	-	78.5%	-	-

The local language of Okinawa played an important part in teaching Japanese during the Meiji era (1868-1912). But some primary sources show us that at the end of this period (around 1910), there had been attempts to not use the Ryukyuan language in Japanese lessons at Okinawa's primary schools. According to several articles published in the journal *Ryūkyū kyōiku* ([“Ryukyu education”]), many lessons in the primary school in Naha were observed by an inspection group (Onaga 1904:156-157). One article published in *Ryūkyū kyōiku* in 1904 mentions a teacher meeting that was held after a Japanese lesson was observed, during which an Okinawan teacher was asked why he used Ryukyuan words to explain Japanese sentences. This provides evidence that the use of Ryukyuan translations in Japanese lessons was disliked by the Japanese authorities. After this time, many teachers tried not to use Ryukyuan words when they explained Japanese texts in class. The banishment of the mother tongue of both teachers and students from primary schools in Okinawa had begun.

Later, use of the Ryukyuan language was prohibited not only in the Japanese lessons, but also during break times between classes. In 1906, the first dialect placard (*hōgenfuda*) was introduced and children who used the local language had to hang this placard around their neck as a punishment (Itani 2006:43). Promoting the Japanese language in Okinawa's society was not limited to school areas, and in 1930, Okinawan school children and teachers left their school premises every afternoon and started observing whether or not other people were speaking in Japanese (Kajimura/Murakami 2006:32-35). If someone was found speaking Ryukyuan on the streets, he or she would be caught and punished. This method was quite successful (Mashiko 1991:152): By around 1940, Okinawan children spoke standard Japanese not only at school, but also at home.

Conclusion

The timetable below shows how the process of teaching Japanese in Okinawan primary schools evolved:

Table 3. Changes in the language of instruction

	Textbook:	Didactical method:
1880 - 1888	Bilingual textbook	Bilingual
1888 - 1897	Certified textbooks (only in Japanese)	Bilingual
1897 - 1904	Special textbook for Okinawa	Bilingual → monolingual
1904	First national certified textbook	Monolingual

First, textbooks changed from bilingual to monolingual between 1880 and 1888. During this process, the Ryukyuan language lost its language status as a written language. Then, around the beginning of the 20th century, the Ryukyuan language had even lost its status as a medium for teaching in primary schools. After 1904, the local languages were prohibited in schools and later on, in Okinawan society as a whole as well.

This article examined the history of the standard variety of Japanese in Okinawa and sought to retrace how standard Japanese, first introduced as a foreign language, eventually became the Okinawans' primary language. It shed light on how specific practices of elementary school instruction allowed standard Japanese to assume its status as the language of everyday life. In this paper, I have focused on school textbooks, didactic methods and the numerous changes they went through during the Meiji era. Based on extensive research in scholarly works and documentary sources, the following key observations were presented: The introduction of standard Japanese to Okinawan schools preceded the creation and scientific definition of *kokugo* (the state language) in metropolitan Japan. The language was initially taught in Okinawa by means of a bilingual textbook supplemented by translation during the lessons. Primary sources often point to linguistic barriers and difficulties arising in the communication between teachers and students, making effective teaching virtually impossible without relying on the use of the local Shuri language. Therefore, during the initial phase following Okinawa's annexation in 1879, the Shuri language played a considerable auxiliary role in the Okinawans' experience in learning the Japanese standard language. Written translations, however, disappeared from textbooks after 1888, when they were replaced by new monolingual Japanese versions. As a result, teachers were obliged to verbally convey the contents in the Shuri language. Around the turn of the century, in light of Japan's victories over China and Russia, teachers eventually began to turn away from the Shuri language as a language of instruction, increasingly emphasising the importance of applying the direct or monolingual teaching method. This went hand in hand with a ban on the use of the mother tongue in Japanese language classes. This ban was subsequently extended to the classroom as a whole as well as to conversations taking place in the schoolyard outside class hours.

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Retrieving a Moribund Language: Nikolay A. Nevskiy and His Miyakoan Dictionary in Ryukyuan Lexicology and in Scholarship

Introduction: Linguistic Diversity and Language Endangerment

The first part of this paper aims at providing a multi-aspectual (primarily historical-biographical, linguistic, and lexicographical) background for the tentative description of Nikolay A. Nevskiy's Miyako language manuscript dictionary that follows in the second section of the paper. We will start by briefly introducing the Russian linguist Nevskiy and pointing out the significance of the dictionary – in both the Ryukyuan lexicography and lexicology as well as in general and material linguistics and in the linguistic heritage of the Ryukyus, Japan, and humankind.

The starting point is the 2007 "fully revised" second edition of Asher and Moseley's monumental work *Atlas of the World's Languages*, offering results of "up-to-date research, some from fieldwork in early 2006" (official description by the publisher). The fact that it was assumed necessary to print the revised version just thirteen years after the appearance of its first edition (1994) speaks volumes about how much our knowledge of the actual linguistic picture of our globe has increased within the two last decades.

Research leading to the results provided in the 2007 *Atlas* revealed some statistics that are crucial for the discussion presented in this paper, namely:

- that between 6,500 and 7,000 ethnolects with the possible status of independent languages still exist or existed until recently;
- that more than half of the world's ethnolects are endangered or seriously endangered and expected to face extinction over the next *two* to *five* (not twenty to fifty) *decades*;
- that not more than 5% of the entire possible number of languages are more or less fully described, with relatively comprehensive reference grammars, both-way dictionaries, handbooks, etc. existing (this may be hard to believe until one realizes this amounts to some 350 languages);
- that no more than 20% (i.e. 1,300-1,400) of them have any descriptions, be they partial, outdated, amateurish or unverifiable, and not many

more have been recorded in any way at all (most of the *still* existing languages are *still* known only by their glottonyms, and their very existence is barely acknowledged).

The drastic conclusion from these figures is that many languages not only face extinction, but also are likely to remain unrecorded, uninvestigated, and irreversibly doomed to oblivion. Languages are social phenomena, as such are subject to change, and must eventually die – and no one can prevent it. Therefore, no effort should be spared to record them for future generations destined to live in a world that will be much less diversified linguistically. There are two basic efficient ways of saving these irreplaceable assets of civilization:

1. immediately start recording those ethnolects that are still remembered, and record as much as possible from elderly informants about what they remember from the languages of their youth, the languages no longer passed on to younger generations (the recorded data can be analyzed and the languages in question reconstructed and described later), and
2. reconstruct unpublished data recorded when today's moribund or dead languages were still used naturally in all domains of everyday life.

Neither of these measures can prevent language death – the current linguistic situation cannot be petrified, but both of the aforementioned ways can be extremely instrumental in rescuing the knowledge about the endangered languages in question, even if unavoidably in some petrified form (for more on this, see also Krauss 1999, Vakhtin 1997).

Using both methods, for over 30 years we have been engaged in saving endangered, moribund, and dead languages at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland (see Majewicz 1985 et seq.) – with some noteworthy results, such as a three-volume dictionary of Udeghe (Kyalundzyuga/Simonov 1998-9), "the least-documented Tungusic idiom [...] destined to disappear before its lexical resources could be recorded" (Janhunen 1999:463), which exemplifies the first method for saving languages, and the four-volume set titled *The Collected Works of Bronisław Piłsudski* (CWBP), so far with more than 4000 pages of print (Majewicz 1998, 2004, 2011, see also 2001), a prime example of the second method, the reconstructed languages, including Sakhalin Ainu, Orok, Ulchan, Nanaian, and Nivhgu.

Our sources in the second case were materials such as seemingly undecipherable field notes (in particular, see Piłsudski 1996-1999) or poorly preserved Edison wax cylinder phonograph records (see Asakura/Ifukube 1986, Asakura et al. 1985, Ifukube et al. 1989, Iwai et al. 1986, Katō/Kotani 1987, Yamagishi 1990, Majewicz/Majewicz 2004), while our methods included the most recent advancements in, for instance, stomatology (for procuring high precision epoxy resin replicas of such records) and optophonics (for using a laser beam to read the records).

1. Encountering Nevskiy and His Works

Our global search revealed the existence of tremendous amounts of linguistic data recorded both in writing or on sound recording media of various types, and which is little, if at all, known even to specialists in particular languages or groups of languages, preserved in archives, museums, libraries, learned societies, and private hands.

Nevskiy's materials, including the dictionary mentioned above, most having remained unpublished until relatively recently, belong to this category. Because of our involvement in attempts at recovering Piłsudski's records (see Majewicz 1985 et seq.), we have been profoundly interested in the data collected by Nevskiy, most particularly in his Ainu materials (1972, 1991, see also Majewicz 1985). A comparison of Nevskiy's materials published posthumously by Gromkovskaya (Nevskiy 1972) with the archives preserved in St. Petersburg revealed that not all of them had been included in the 1972 Gromkovskaya volume.

Nevskiy's Miyako data (see 1978, 1998) was our next focus of interest. This time – again – we realized that not everything had been included in the respective Gromkovskaya volume (i.e. Nevskiy 1978), as we could judge from the comparison with Nevskiy's Miyako archives file IIEOS copies at our disposal.

1.1. Discovering the Dictionary

In 2011, while reading Sawada's 2007 book on *Hakkei Roshiajin to Nihon bunka* ("White Russians and Japanese Culture"; i.e. a study in the field of historical and literary studies, not necessarily of primary academic interest to this writer), we came across some larger fragments concerning Nevskiy, among them the – essential – information about the existence of a "not-for-sale" facsimile publication of Nevskiy's manuscript dictionary[1] of Miyakoan ethnolects (*ibid*., 237).

In order to escape the radiation risk caused by the reactor meltdown in Fukushima in March 2011, Majewicz[2] made an adventurous escapade

1 A "manuscript dictionary" is a technical term implying a dictionary existing in its unique manuscript form, usually in one copy, and unpublished (unless as a "manuscript facsimile")

2 He and his wife lived about 200 km from the Fukushima daiichi nuclear power plant where multiple explosions occurred in 2011 (see Majewicz 2011).

to Japan's southernmost islands, among others with the aim to acquire the dictionary facsimile publication from Hirara City Education Committee, the publisher of the dictionary. We landed on Miyako during the May Golden Week only to learn that, due to an administration reform nullifying Hirara City and replacing it with Miyakojima City, the committee ceased to exist, together with its assets, and not a single available set of the dictionary facsimile could be traced. We managed, nevertheless, by signing a special contract, to borrow a set, with the consent of Naha, along with the permission to copy it (which, as we found, would not be so easy or successful due to the poor quality binding of the books). Upon returning to our headquarters in Saitama (also a new city), an e-mail allowing us to keep the publication "for the good of the cause"[3] was fortunately awaiting us. Precisely that set, so luckily acquired, became the basis for this first author (AJ)'s apprenticeship in the academic profession and, hopefully, for important research results.

1.2. Nikolay Nevskiy: A Researcher's Profile

Before contextually locating Nevskiy's dictionary in Ryukyuan lexicography and lexicology, it might be expedient to provide a few vital facts about Nevskiy himself.

Nikolay Aleksandrovich NEVSKIY, in Russian Николай Александрович НЕВСКИЙ, in Japanese ニコライ·ネフスキー, in Chinese: 聶歴山 [Nie Lishan] ~ 聶甫斯基 [Niefusiji], was born in the city of Yaroslavl, Russia (on the Volga River) on February 18 (i.e. March 1 on the Gregorian calendar, see Zaytsev 2012), 1892, and attended a nine-year primary school between 1900 and 1909 in Rybinsk, in the Yaroslavl region. He started studying at St. Petersburg Technological Institute (1909-1910), later switching to the Oriental Languages Faculty, Department of Chinese and Japanese at St. Petersburg Imperial University (1910-1914) where he completed his studies, submitting a graduation dissertation in Chinese philology on the poetry of the great Tang Dynasty poet Li Bo (李白, ca 701-762), including translations of fifteen poems (published 1996). Still a student, he visited Japan for about two or three months (see Alpatov 2012:327) in the summer of 1913 and, after returning, worked simultaneously in 1914 and 1915 as a lecturer at the Oriental Faculty of St. Petersburg Imperial University and at the Hermitage Museum. He was sent back to Japan again in 1915, initially to serve a two-year internship (to study *shintō*), but in the end, his stay lasted until September 1929. He arrived in Tokyo in July, soon enjoying acquaintances with eminent scholars from both Russia (such as Japanologists Nikolay Iosifovich Konrad, Otton Ottonovich [= Yulius Karl Otto] Rozenberg, and Sergei Elisséeff)

3 We would like to express our utmost gratitude to the respective authorities for this decision.

and Japan (including linguist Kindaichi Kyōsuke金田一　京助, ethnologist Yanagida Kunio 柳田国男, ethnographer Nakayama Tarō 中山太郎, folklorist Orikuchi Shinobu 折口信夫, and Orientalist Ishihama Juntarō 石浜純太郎) who helped him shape his scholarly interests in the host country. To develop those interests, he managed to visit the rural areas of Ibaraki, Gunma, and Tohoku[4]. Revolutionary chaos and uncertainty in Russia forced Nevskiy to prolong his stay in Japan, and in 1919 he worked as a teacher of Russian at Otaru College of Commerce[5] (in Hokkaido) and studied the Ainu language, folklore, religion, and culture. Between 1922 and 1929, he was associated with Ōsaka Gaikokugo Gakkō (today: School of Foreign Languages, Osaka University) and, more loosely, with Kyoto University, teaching Russian, but also lecturing on Ainu and Miyakoan.

He returned to St. Petersburg via Vladivostok and Moscow, later followed by his second wife, a Japanese woman named Mantani Iso[ko] (萬谷イソ[子][6]) and daughter Yelena, nicknamed Neli (ネリ), born in 1928. Between 1929 and 1936, he worked at Leningrad State University and at the Leningrad Oriental Language Institute, and starting in 1934, he held positions at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences and at the Hermitage Museum. Arrested as Japanese spies due to fabricated accusations, Nikolay and Iso perished in the Stalinist purge in 1937. Their daughter Yelena survived.

In 1962, Nevskiy was posthumously awarded the highly prestigious Lenin Prize for academic achievements in studies on Tangut; his death remained unannounced and later its date was even falsified: the years 1938 and 1945 have been cited as his year of death, allegedly of “natural causes” (see Alpatov 2012:335).[7]

1.3. Nevskiy’s Main Achievements

Nevskiy’s most important contributions of worldwide recognition are unquestionably in the field of Tangut studies, primarily the decipherment of

4 While in Tohoku, he pioneered by studying the local *oshirasama* household guardian deity (see Nevskiy/Oka 1971:129-249).

5 Otaru Kōtō Shōgyō Gakkō 小樽高等商業学校, now Otaru University of Commerce; Otaru Shōka Daigaku 小樽商科大学.

6 Their marriage was registered with the Japanese administration in 1922, and with the Soviet authorities in the Soviet Consulate in Kobe in 1928.

7 Basic biographical materials include Katō 1976 and 2011, Gromkovskaya/Kychanov 1978, Alpatov 2012, Alpatov et al. 1996, Kanna 2008, Baksheyev 2010 and 2012, Kabanoff 1991, 1993, 1999, Nevskaya 1996, Ikuta 2012; see Miliband 1975:380-381.

the Tangut character writing system, which led to the reconstruction of the Tangut language and his Tangut Dictionary (1960[8], see also 1936).

Other fields of Nevskiy's academic interest and research included the languages and folklore of the Ainu (1972, Japanese translation 1991), the inhabitants of the Miyako Islands (1978, Japanese translation 1998; 2005) and the Austronesian aboriginal Tsou (鄒) people of Taiwan (1935, 1981, Chinese translation 1993). In this area, the inspiration from his friend and Ainu language teacher Kindaichi and his other prominent friend Yanagida, who drew Nevskiy's attention to Japan's south, are most evident.

In Japan, Nevskiy primarily became known with his 1971 book *Tsuki to fushi* ("The Moon and Immortality"), published in the prestigious Tōyō Bunko series (vol. 185) and including some of his 1926-1928 contributions to the journal *Minzoku* (民族). Nevskiy also contributed to Japanese linguistics (Konrad's 1970 dictionary included, even though his contribution has not been acknowledged) and co-authored (together with Kolpakchi) at least two handbooks of Japanese language for university students.

1.4. Ryukyuan Lexicography: An Overview

The survey of lexicographical and lexicological assets at our disposal in the field of the study of Ryukyuan ethnolects must start with an observation that major achievements and true progress actually took place over the last five decades. Apart from antiquities, such as, e.g., Clifford 1818, Bettelheim 1851[9], Chamberlain 1895 (Japanese translation 1975), and Iha 1916, the first milestone model dictionary to be mentioned is entitled *Okinawago jiten* (["Okinawa Language Dictionary]", KKK 1964). It should be emphasised that the title glottonym is *Okinawago*, not *Okinawa hōgen* ("Okinawan dialect(s)") and that the institutions behind it are the Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo (Institute of National [i.e. Japanese] Language)[10] and the Japanese Ministry of Finance. From a lexicological perspective, the dictionary is simply superb, comparable only to (but seemingly surpassing) Handa's 1999 *Ryūkyūgo jiten* (["Ryukyu Language Dictionary"]).

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8 It was this work that was awarded the Lenin Prize for academic achievement in 1962.

9 Bernard Jean Bettelheim (1811-1870)'s 1851 English-Loochooan manuscript Dictionary, preserved in the British Library's Asia, Pacific, and Africa Collections, is probably best accessible through several extensive analyses and studies by Iha Kazumasa (伊波和正), available online (Okinawa International University Association of Foreign Languages).

10 The official English name of the institution is the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics.

Next to be mentioned here is a large-size "Dictionary of Old ~ Classic Okinawan Language" from 1995; it is arranged *gojūon*-wise and the entry words are in discrepancy with speech realisation but, after all, it is a dictionary of the written language and the Ryukyuan pronunciation is provided.

Much different from these aforementioned examples is Nakamoto's comparative atlas dictionary of all Ryukyuan ethnolects (1981), which, out of necessity, contains relatively few entry words (because it simultaneously is a linguistic atlas and every entry is in the form of a full page size map with extensive comments), but has enormously rich comparative material mapped from the entire Archipelago; of all the dictionaries mentioned here, it is often the most important one to general linguists from outside the Ryukyuan or Japanese Studies fields, who are qualified to read linguistic maps and do not know the Japanese language.

Of crucial importance are dictionaries that record individual local ethnolects, such as Nakasone's superb 1983 Nakijin dialect both-way dictionary or the equally impressive 1977-1980 (handwritten) two-volume Amami dialect dictionary by Osada, Suyama and Fujii; the latter is a classifying (i.e. thematically arranged) dictionary, but there are both-ways alphabetical indexes which significantly facilitate the use of the books.

At this point, using another example of an Amami group ethnolect dictionary, the reader's attention should be drawn to lexicons labelled *hōgenshū* (方言集, best rendered as "collections of dialecticisms"), often compilations by local enthusiasts, of varying competence and quality (usually – but not always or necessarily – inferior); Yanagida/Iwakura's 1977 *katakana* list of Kikaijima dialectal words with Japanese equivalents may only serve as a typical example of this kind of lexicon – usually much smaller in volume as compared to ordinary dictionaries with a comparable amount of entries, but unfortunately lacking indexes or any other tools to make them reasonably usable.

However, it is easy to cite examples of locally made dictionaries which represent an astonishingly high level of language and linguistic competence; worth referring to are, for example, Namihira's dictionary of a Kumejima ethnolect (2004) and a Japanese-Yonagunian dictionary from 2003, both compiled by elderly persons born on the respective islands, which deserve linguists' attention and praise for the extremely high quality results (e.g. with accentuation provided); Ikima (~Ikema) Nae, who authored the Yonaguni lexicon, was 84 in the year of its publication and her previous dictionary, *Yonaguni kotoba jiten*, was published five years earlier.

Some quality lexicological material can be found in the Tokyo Hōsei University journal *Ryūkyū no hōgen*, see, for example, the two special issues devoted to the ethnolect of Yonagunijima (Takahashi et al. 1986-1987). Such materials can almost readily serve as ordinary dictionaries. Instalments from several issues of the journal can also be compiled together to create very handy working dictionaries for research, such as, e.g., Hatoman (Kajiku 1983-92), Ōgami Miyakoan (Hokama et al. 1977) and Nishihara Miyakoan (Nakama 1988-2001).

Important Ryukyuan data have been published as part of the ELPR (Endangered Languages of the Pacific Rim) Project including, among others, Uemura's Ryukyuan Grammar in English (2003), but also an interesting "Lexical List" of the Ishigaki ethnolect (Miyagi et al. 2002) and a "Vocabulary of the Sani Dialect" from Amami Ōshima (Karimata 2003).

Deserving of interest is the dictionary of Okinawan focusing on the Naha dialect by Uchima and Nohara, a small but relatively recent (2006, 2010) volume, with *rōmaji* transcription and a Japanese-Okinawan index (see the title, the same as the KKK book mentioned above), and – we should note: above all outside of Japan – the first ever modern Okinawan-Ryukyuan dictionary (labelled *jiten* 辞典 in Japanese, in English strangely and very modestly "Wordbook" and "Short lexicon") with explanations in English – actually, any language other than Japanese – by the late Mitsugu Sakihara, published in Honolulu in 2006 as a harbinger of a future larger work definitely deserving to be classified as a "dictionary".

The breaking news in the field, however, was the appearance of great dictionaries of individual Ryukyuan ethnolects. Upon a visit to Yoron Island in 1996, a typical *hōgenshū* for Yoronjima from 1985 (Kiku) was eagerly purchased, more as a tourist attraction and a souvenir than a dictionary, which later turned out to be fantastic for students of Japanese discovering that "yes" is *ieee* while "no" is *aaaiii*, Japanese *sō desu ka* being *ieehai*. In the very same year, the publication of Yamada's 2077-page great dictionary of the Yoron ethnolect was announced in a Kagoshima newspaper, and 2003 marked the appearance in print of the 1250-page great dictionary of the ethnolect of Ishigakijima (actually, it is a box set which includes the dictionary as well as a 350-page grammar plus a Japanese index) by Miyagi Shin'yū[11], while in 2011, we celebrated the release of the even larger[12] dictionary of the ethnolect of Taketomi Island by Maeara (born on Taketomi in 1924).

11 An author born on the island of Ishigaki in 1920, who lived at a time when his native language was used in everyday life and had not been endangered or influenced by Japanese yet.

12 The volume spans over 1560 pages.

Among the few existing dictionaries and word lists of the Miyako language (apart from the *Ryūkyū no hōgen* materials mentioned above, Shimoji 1979 should probably not be overlooked here), the 2003 dictionary of the Miyako language by Yonaha, with its over 600 pages, is the closest to our idea and image of a Ryukyuan ethnolect dictionary. But while even a glance at its pages with Miyakoan recorded in *katakana* immediately reveals disadvantages of what is intended to be a dictionary of the language that has the most unusual and complicated phonemic structure of all of the Ryukyuan ethnolects, a similar glance at what Nevskiy's dictionary offers instead speaks volumes for the superior value of the latter (see section 2 below).

The preceding sections of this paper aimed to demonstrate how important and valuable unpublished records of now extinct or moribund languages are when such languages were still the basic means of communication in every aspect of everyday life in all generations and what can and should be done to reconstruct such data and make them available to the public, thus saving and preserving them for posterity. It goes beyond any doubt that the manuscript dictionary of the language of the Miyako Archipelago in southern Japan needs and deserves such treatment. The survey of the lexicological records of the Ryukyuan ethnolects also reveals the importance of this very dictionary in the entire bulk of Ryukyuan lexicography and lexicology and in Ryukyuan Studies in general. Its reconstruction, preparation for publication, and finally the publication itself will also fill in a gap with regard to Ryukyuan ethnolects in general linguistics (see also Maher/Yashiro 1995, Yushiya 1999, Karimata 2001, Karimata et al. 2002, Uemura 1992-3, 2003, Tsuhako/Uemura 2003, Jarosz 2012)[13].

2. Contents of the Dictionary

What follows are preliminary observations exemplifying, and emerging from, tentative results of research accompanying the process to reconstruct Nevskiy's Miyakoan dictionary introduced above.

13 In December 2013, the first ever "category-great" dictionary of one of Miyakoan ethnolects, namely Tomimasa's 1142-page dictionary of the language spoken on the Irabu Island, was published; while it does not diminish the importance of the Nevskiy work being examined here in any way, it is expected to significantly facilitate the work on the reconstruction of the latter.

The material referred to in Russian as *Матерьялы для изучения говора островов Мияко* (["Materials for the Study of the Speech[14] of the Miyako Islands"]), spanning over 1200 pages, has been preserved at the Institute of Oriental Documents, Russian Academy of Sciences (Институт восточных рукописей РАН) in St. Petersburg in a manuscript form which had been tentatively arranged in alphabetical order. It was not easily accessible to a wider public until Nevskiy 2005, in turn the basis for these study and reconstruction efforts. Below, certain distinctive features of the material have been listed, each followed by an example from the manuscript in question – selected, transcribed, and provided with English translation with the intention to demonstrate the superiority of Nevskiy's dictionary over Miyako ethnolect lexicographic compendia published thus far, and to signal the completion of transcription process sometime in the near future.[15]

2.1. Lexical Aspects

As Nevskiy's "Materials for the Study of the Speech of the Miyako Islands" facsimile (2005) is essentially (albeit not solely) a dictionary, it is the entry words (approximately 6,000[16]), usually accompanied by translations into standard Japanese, Russian or both, that constitute the core of its structure. The information provided in the entries can be roughly classified into four categories:[17]

a."plain" entries, i.e. an entry word plus its lexical equivalent in Russian and/or Japanese , e.g.:

(01) ***ja:nuwi***	(Ps)	屋根Крыша
	(Hirara)	"a roof"
(02) ***tunaiz***	(Ps)	称ヘル、唱ヘル。
	(Hirara)	"to chant, to call out"
(03) ***fu̥cïbiŋku***:	(Ps)	льстец
	(Hirara)	"a flatterer";

14 The Russian word *govor* as a linguistic term implies a "subdialect" level of the genetic classification of languages, but its non-technical meaning is primarily associated with "sound of voices, sounds of talking," "talk," "mode of speech, accent, pronunciation" (see any great Russian language dictionary). In using it, Nevskiy surely was far from getting involved in discussions concerning the linguistic status of what was spoken and what he recorded on Miyako; from today's perspective, the most appropriate translation would be "ethnolects" (plural).

15 The complete transcription of the material was released in a 744-page preprint form as Nevskiy 2013.

16 According to Jarosz's estimations as of August 2014, there are 5,875 entry word forms in the facsimile (duplicate entries excluded).

17 Entry words are shown here in ***bold italics***, other Miyako items in *italics*.

b. “enhanced” entries, i.e. entries accompanied by an explanation in Japanese, Russian, or both, of their meaning and/or usage rather than merely providing their Japanese or Russian equivalent, e.g.:

(04) ***fu:z*** (Ps) 降 итти (о доже, гроде и пр.)
(Hirara) “to go” (= “to fall down” [in the case of rain, hail, etc.])

(05) ***tuzmi***: (Sarah) （醫）鳥目night blindness, nyctalophia [*sic!*];
(Sarahama) (medical)
как лекарство употребляют свиную печонку
“they use pig liver as medicine”;

c. “etymologically enhanced” entries, in which a translation or explanation of the entry word is accompanied by pieces of information concerning word formation processes or etymological background, e.g.:

(06) ***jo:z-sï*** (Ps) 祝フ。祝福スル
(Hirara) “to celebrate,“ “to give one’s blessings”
[*jo:z*// (Jap) *iwai* “чествование” + *sï*// (Jap) *sɯ* делать]
[*jo:z*// (Japanese) *iwai* “celebration” + *sï*// (Japanese) *sɯ* “to do”]

(07) ***ffa-mmaga*** (Ps) 子孫 Потомок [*ffa*// (Jap) *kora* “ребёнок, дитя” +
(Hirara) “descendant”[*ffa*// (Japanese) *kora* “child” +
mmaga// (Jap) *mago* “внук”]
mmaga// (Japanese) *mago* “grandchild”]

(08) ***akaz-gama*** (Ps)(Ui) Огонёк [*akaz* “свет” + *gama* –
(Hirara)(Uechi) “a tiny light~fire” [*akaz* “light” + *gama* –
уменьшит. суффикс]
diminutive suffix]

d. entries containing items which do not require any translation *per se*, i.e. proper names such as toponyms, anthroponyms, theonyms, names of sacred places, etc.; this category also includes names of flora and fauna species characteristic of the Miyako Islands; Nevskiy often provided their systematic Latin names as well, e.g.:

(09) ***ka:mcï*** (Ps)川満（村ノ名）。只今ハ下地村ノ大字ノ一ツ。
(Hirara) “Kawamichi (village name),“ “currently one of the larger sections (*ōaza*[18]) of the Shimoji village”

18 One of the administrative units forming a *chō* or *mura* in some districts, and consisting of smaller *koaza* (Watanabe Toshirō et al. 2003: *Kenkyusha’s new Japanese-English dictionary. Fifth edition*, p. 353).

(10) ***kani*** (Ps)男子ノ名 (Sa)男女ノ名
(Hirara) "a masculine name" (Sawada) "a unisex name"

(11) ***acïmama:z utaki*** (Ps) 平良町西里ニ在ル御嶽ノ名Название храма (utaki) в слободе Nisʒatu в Psara
(Hirara) "name of a shrine (utaki) in the settlement Nishizato in Hirara"

(12) ***isugam*** (Sa) 磯神 Божество морского берега, божество улова, божество моря
(Sawada) "Isogami," "god of the seashore, of the catch (of fish), of the sea".

2.2. Phonological Aspects

Nevskiy, with his reportedly very sensitive linguistic ear (Nevskiy/Oka 1971:308-309), consistently applied a transcription based on the IPA of his time to all the Miyako expressions and their cross-linguistic cognates (see 2.3.) included in the dictionary. Given the notoriety of most of the thus far published Miyako-Ryukyuan sources for transcribing this phonetically and phonotactically complex language in the *katakana* syllabary, this particular feature should be considered as one of the most valuable characteristics of this dictionary.

Three examples of Nevskiy's transcriptions are provided below, all well-tailored to the peculiarities of Miyakoan phonetics and thus instrumental to the precise reflection of the sound of the language. Nevskiy's introduction of the discriminations described below to the notation of Miyako-Ryukyuan was pioneering, and one could easily risk the assumption that this precision has not been paralleled until today.

a. The apical vowel [ʅ] (a non-standard symbol for this sound, used e.g. in Uemura 2003:46-48) is a sound essentially limited to Miyako-Ryukyuan out of all the Japonic ethnolects[19]. Acoustically it resembles a central close vowel, while articulated in a front vowel manner, with the tip of the tongue lifted towards the alveolar rim. Consequently, it can be pronounced in multiple ways, depending on its immediate phonetic context. Nevskiy took note of all these possibilities and carefully differentiated them in his transcription:

19 Also Uemura (2003:46) claims that the Aragusuku ethnolect of the Yaeyama language shares this vowel with Miyako-Ryukyuan.

(13) when neither after a stop nor in the position of single-sound syllable nucleus or that of a syllable coda, the symbol <ï> was used:

cï	(Ps)	(Sa)	血 Кровь
	(Hirara)	(Sawada)	"blood"

(14) when after a voiceless stop, the symbol <ï> was preceded by an upper index <s>, indicating the friction occurring between the stop and the vowel:

kˢïkˢï	(Ps)	(Ta) 聞く。聽く。Слушать, слышать	
	(Hirara)	(Tarama) "to listen," "to hear"	

(15) when after a voiced stop, the symbol <ï> was preceded by an upper index <z>, again indicating the (this time voiced) friction occurring in this position:

pagᶻï (Ps) 足。脛。Нога
(Hirara) [Jap.] "leg, calf," [Rus.] "leg"

(16) when forming a single-sound syllable nucleus, or when functioning as a syllable coda, this sound takes on consonantal features and beco mes [z̩]. For this position, Nevskiy used the character <z>.

tuśśu:z (Ps)年寄。老人。Человек преклонного возраста, старик
(Hirara) "aged person, an elder".

b. When the aforementioned vowel [ɿ] under the conditions described above turns into [z̩], it becomes an allophone of the "standard" alveolar fricative /z/; its main variant [z] in Miyako-Ryukyuan appears only in the syllable onset position. Also, unlike [z̩], it does not have a long counterpart. Nevskiy discriminated between these two allophones, using the Cyrillic <з> to note the main variant. Distinct characters have also been used for the palatalized versions of both allophones, <ź> and <з́> respectively; e.g.:

(17) ***i:z̩зaksï / iz̩z̩aksï***	(Ps)西崎（地名）Название местности (Hirara) "Irizaki" "([Jap.] place name), [Rus.] place name"
(18) ***kanamaź̩ź̩am***	(Ps) головная боль (Hirara) "headache"
(19) ***з́iz̩***	(Ps)入レル (Hirara) "to insert".

c. Nevskiy took careful notice of various processes taking place during the articulation, such as devoicing, vowel and consonant lengthening, syllabisation of consonants and de-syllabisation of vowels. With the remarkable inventory of syllabic consonants in Miyako-Ryukyuan, indicating their occurrence is crucial for reconstructing the actual sound of the language. Nevertheless, it still remains an open question whether by using the IPA "syllabic" diacritic < ̩ > Nevskiy meant "syllabic" or rather "moraic"; e.g.:

(20) ***iv̩*** (Ps) 重イ Тяжолый
(Hirara) "heavy"

(21) ***juz̩*** (Ps) (Sa) (Sarah) 夕飯。晩飯 Вечерная еда, ужин
(Hirara) (Sawada) (Sarahama) "evening meal, supper".

2.3. Comparative Aspects

To claim that the dictionary contains about 6,000 Miyakoan entries would be an approximately correct figure, but at the same time also misleading. It can be estimated that at least a thousand more Miyako-Ryukyuan lexemes are hidden within the entry explanations as regional cognates of the head entry. Still, a multiplicity of this figure should be assigned to cognates from all over the Japanese Archipelago that have also been quoted by Nevskiy, resulting from his extensive search for the possible Old Japanese and Old Ryukyuan ancestors of his entry words.

a. Synchronic cognates most often included Japanese, general (or not specifically localised) Yaeyaman, and general (or not specifically localised) Okinawan expressions. On many occasions, however, Nevskiy precisely indicated the place of origin (an island, or a settlement in the case of bigger islands) of the cognate in question. For this purpose, he used an elaborate repertoire of toponymic abbreviations, be it in *kana* or Latin alphabet, such as (Ps), (Sa), (Sarah), etc., as also included in the examples above.

It is not yet certain where Nevskiy obtained his information on non-Miyako ethnolects from. Given the scarceness of sources on Ryukyuan ethnolects at that time (except, perhaps, for the language of Shuri, the former capital of the Ryukyu Kingdom), it seems much more probable that Nevskiy himself interviewed native speakers of all those regional languages, who he might have met along the shipway to the Miyakos and back or perhaps became acquainted with in mainland Japan, rather than looked up the respective words in other sources.

Apart from Ryukyuan, various dialects from mainland Japan, most frequently the Kyushu dialects, were also cited at times. For Chinese, loan references have been made on occasion, and if a word resembled to some extent an Ainu item with a related meaning, Nevskiy indicated that, too.

Most entries are accompanied by some three-four cognates, but the record entries in this respect may contain more than ten equivalents, e.g.:

(22) ***ikˢï*** (Ps) (Ui) (Ta) 行く Итти [(Rk) *ićuɯŋ* (Jap) *ikɯ* (Ya) *ikˢï*, *ikɯŋ* (ナゴ) (キカ) (イト) *ikuŋ* (ナセ) (スミ) (トク) (ヨロ) *ik'uŋ* (エラ) *ićum* (イエ) (カテ) (S) (N) *ićuŋ* (ハテ) *ŋguŋ*]
(Hirara) (Uechi) (Tarama) "to go" [(Ryukyuan= Okinawa) *ićuɯŋ* (Japanese) *ikɯ*
(Yaeyama) *ikˢï*, *ikɯŋ* (Nago) (Kikai) (Itoman) *ikuŋ* (Naze) (Sumiyō) (Tokuno) (Yoron) *ik'uŋ* (Okinoerabu) *ićum* (Ie) (Kadena) (S) (N) *ićuŋ* (Hateruma) *ŋguŋ*].

b. Diachronic cognates most often originate from the *Omorosōshi* おもろさうし, a 16th-17th century royal compilation of traditional Okinawan songs, and *Konkō kenshū* 混効験集, a 1711 dictionary of the Okinawan language. For Old Japanese, Nevskiy sometimes, much less frequently than in the previous case, quoted *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 or *Kojiki* 古事記; he would also often just note the expression without explicitly indicating its source or the period of Japanese history it came from, e.g.:

(23) ***tu:naka*** (Ps) (Kaz) 海ノ中。沖。[(Omoro XIII, 222) となか *tu:naka* (Яп. др) 斗那加 *tonaka* [Kojiki III]]
(Hirara) (Karimata) "middle of the sea," "the open sea" [(Omorosōshi fasc. XIII, poem 222) *tu:naka* (Japanese, in the past) *tonaka* (Kojiki book III)].

c. The multitude of cross-Ryukyuan cognates provided by Nevskiy allows comparisons with most of the Ryukyuan ethnolects as they existed in the 1920s. Consequently, this can help students and researchers detect some sound correspondences which have since been lost. Accordingly, (24) below indicates three Yaeyama equivalents to a single Hirara Miyako sound sequence, /kˢï/. In present day Yaeyama-Ryukyuan, all three would presumably be represented by /kï/ (even if there is any degree of friction, it is lighter than in Miyako and optional as well, see Uemura 2003:49), e.g.:

(24) (Hirara) *kˢï* -> (Yaeyama) *kˢï* "spirit, mind"
(Hirara) *kˢï*: -> (Yaeyama) *kïrï* "fog" [Yaeyama flap was reduced and instead it lengthened the final vowel in Miyako]
(Hirara) *kˢï* -> (Yaeyama) *kï* "yellow".

2.4. Descriptive Aspects

Apart from the phonetic notation described above, on the basis of which the actual phonemic and phonotactic structures of the Miyako ethnolects can be recovered, the dictionary can also serve as a source for other aspects of language description, even allowing the creation of a grammatical sketch of the recorded ethnolects. The following three kinds of such morphological and syntactic pieces of information exemplify this feature of the dictionary:

a. Grammar-related metatext inside the entry: an infrequent, but remarkably detailed source of information related to the inflectional patterns of individual words, e.g.:

(25) ***ba:*** (Com) 我。私Я
(Miyako common) "I"
baga я, мой "I," "mine"
ba:ŋ мне (Dativus-Locat.) (редко) "to me," "for me" ("rare")
ba:ja я (Subjectivus) "as for me"
banu: меня (Accusat) "me (object)"
banu:ba меня (Accusat – Subject.) "as for me (object)"
banuŋ мне (Dativus Locat) "to me," "for me"
banuŋkai мне, комне (Directivus) "towards me"

(26) ***a:z*** (Ps) (Ui)有ル（連體形）Быть (атрибутивная форма)
(Hirara) (Uechi) "to be (inanimate)" "(attributive form)"

(27) ***asama:z*** (Ps) /***ahamal*** (Sa) (Sarah)「為ル」ノ敬語。ナサル。
.Делать (to do) – почтит. глагол, соответств. японскому *nasarш*
(Hirara) / (Sawada) (Sarahama) "to do," "polite verb, an equivalent to Japanese *nasarш*";

b. Categorial (function) word entries, as well as separate entries focusing on grammatical morphemes (such as verbal suffixes, for example), once again provide valuable descriptive information. Functions of the entry morphemes were usually provided in Russian (or with their respective Latin names) and, when applicable, their standard Japanese equivalent is also shown. At times, although there is no metatext for the entry itself, its approximate meaning and usage can be inferred from the example sentences included, and even when the metatext has actually been included, the examples still allow a relatively precise definition of the usage of individual morphemes, e.g.:

(28) ***n/n:*** (Ps) ウン。Да (междометние согласия)
ṇ anći: ウン、サウダ Да, так
ṇ vva:mai ʒo: kari: umma へ、お前も健康ですか
(Hirara) "yes (affirmative interjection)"
ṇ anći: "yes," "that's right"
ṇ vva:mai ʒo:kari:umma "Yes [I am fine], are you doing fine, too?" [greeting]

(29) ***-ća*** (Sarah) Суффикс множ. ч.
banća 我等
(Sarahama) plural suffix.
banća "we"

(30) ***-ŋgi*** (Ps) . . . ラシイ。. . . サウナ ["resembling sth.," "seems like sth."]
-ŋgi-sa 如き ["likeness," attributive position]
-ŋgikaz 如くある ["is like…," finitive position]
-ŋgimunu 如きもの ["something like," substantive]
-ŋgiffa n'a:ŋ 如くはない ["is not like"];

c. Exemplificatory phrases and sentences were usually translated by Nevskiy into Japanese and/or Russian; moreover, separate components of each such expression and sentence are located in appropriate places of the dictionary, so that the exact structure of phrases and sentences undergo analysis and review, as shown again in the following examples:

(31) *vva:-mai ʒo:=kari: um=ma*
you-INC good=health be.RLS.NPST=INT
"Are you doing fine, too?"
(32) *ata:ma miśi:-fi:-sa:-ći*
a little show-BEN-do.HON-IMP
"Please kindly show [it] to me"[20].

2.5. Aspects Regarding Usage

The database of examples of Miyako-Ryukyuan everyday language usage in Nevskiy's dictionary is not only large, but also diverse in terms of its sources. Nevskiy was not only a linguist, but also an ethnographer. Hence, apart from the living language, he also recorded a significant number of Miyako oral traditions as illustrations in the entries, both demonstrated below.

20 The following abbreviations are used in examples 31-32: BEN (benefactive), HON (honorific), IMP (imperative), INC (inclusive), INT (interrogative), NPST (non-past), RLS (realis), TOP (topic).

a. Samples of everyday language included a wide range of expressions, from dialogue lines apparently delivered at some point during the interview by Nevskiy's informants up to established phrases used in conventional situations – such as (31), apparently as a response to the greeting. For example:

(33) *fun'a: icïga ksgaraja:* (Ps) 船は何時来るでせう
(Hirara) "When will the ship come?" [Note: the 何時 character compound from Nevskiy's translation should be read *itsu* "when," and not *nanji* "what hour".]

(34) *icïka agaradi* (Sarah) 又いつか上りませう
(Sarahama) "I will visit you at some other time" [conventional, when refusing to pay somebody a visit due to one's own circumstances].

b. The language of Miyakoan traditional songs (generally called *a:gu* in Miyakoan and *ayago* アヤゴ or 綾語 in Japanese), which is often remarkably phonetically and lexically distinct from the "casual" language, is represented extensively in the dictionary, and not only as quotations from the songs illustrating the usage of a given lexeme, but also as separate entry words, differentiated from the plain register entries by the abbreviation "(poet.)". This abbreviation is usually accompanied by different abbreviations indicating the region where the songs containing the given word came from, e.g.:

(35) ***jagumi-ui*** (Irav. poet) 尊キ上。天ノ事
(Irabu poetry) "Noble Master," "refers to the sky"

(36) ***kuganiba:*** (Sa. poet) 黄金葉 Золотые листья
k'u:nu jo:zza kuganiba:nu jo:z 今日の祝は黄金葉の祝 (из песни по случаю чествования родов)
(Sawada poetry) "golden leaves"
"Today's celebration is the celebration of golden leaves," "(from a song sung to celebrate a childbirth)"

c. Other than the *a:gu* songs, oral traditions in the dictionary are represented by a handful of Miyako riddles and proverbs, e.g.:

(37) (Ps) *pu:zï-ganna ananna zzaŋ* 急グ蟹ハ穴ニハ入ラヌ "Спешащий краб в нору не влезает"
(Hirara) "A hurrying crab cannot enter the hole"

(38) (Ui) batanu nakaŋ akaumaću ma:śiuz munua no:ga 腹の中に赤火を燃して居るものは何 (*rampu*/ *tu:z*/ *ćo:ćiŋ*)
(Uechi) "Who is the one that keeps a burning fire inside their belly?," "(answer: A lamp / a paper-shaded lamp / a lantern)"

2.6. Extralinguistic Aspects

Although the main goal of this overview is a description of the significance of the dictionary for Miyako-Ryukyuan language studies, it would be remiss not to discuss the richness of extralinguistic information stored within the twelve hundred pages of the dictionary – in other words, its possible contribution to general Miyakoan (and Ryukyuan) studies. A noteworthy number of entries are encyclopaedic rather than lexicographic in their nature, providing data on such fields of Miyako-related reality as the folklore (descriptions of customs), religion (rites and festivities), architecture, administration (offices, taxes, law), food and cultivation, and more. Example (39) presents one such complete entry with a typical level of both conciseness and elaborateness:

(39) ***sadaz-ani*** (Sarah) 「先立ツ姉」ノ意。出産後ノ満十日(*tu:kamti*)ノ日。母ガ赤子ヲ抱キ、親類ヲ廻リ行ク。ソノ時、産子ハ女ナレバsadaz-ani男ナレバsadaz-suʒ́aトテ、誰カノ家ノ女ノ子又ハ男ノ子（一人）ヲ連レテ行ク習慣アリ。（母ハ頭ヘmnuz（甘藷ノ握飯）ヲ載セテ出ル）。子供ガ生長シテモ一生右ノsadaz-aniヤsadaz-suʒ́aヲ近親扱ヒスル。Надесятый день родов (так называемый tu:ka-mti) роженица с ребёнком отправляется по родственникам и бероёт с собою какую-нибудь девочку, так наз. sadaz-ani (если новорожденный девочка) или мальчика – sadaz-suʒ́a (если ребёнок – мальчик) [При этой роженица кладёт себе на голову mnuz (шар из варёного картофля)] Ребёнок, выросили, всо жизнь собраняет близкие родственные отношения с этим sadaz-ani или sadaz-suʒ́a. [*sadaz* "итти вреди" + *ani* "старшая сестра"]
"(Sarahama) Meaning 'a sister who goes first'. Refers to the day ten days (*tu:kamti*) after delivery. The mother, holding her child in her arms, walks around visiting her relatives. There is a custom for the mother on this occasion to take a child from somebody else's household along with her, a girl (called *sadaz-ani*) if the newborn baby is a girl, and a boy (called *sadaz- suʒ́a*) if the newborn baby is a boy. (The mother sets out carrying the mnuz, i.e. sweet potato balls, on her head.) Even after the newborn has grown up, they treat these *sadaz-ani* or *sadaz- suʒ́a* as their relatives all lifelong. [*sadaz* 'to go first' + *ani* 'elder sister']"

3. Final Remarks

In conclusion, there is not even the slightest doubt that the publication of Nevskiy's "Miyako-Japanese-Russian Dictionary with English Equivalents" (as one might provisionally name it) – preceded by an accurate and thorough preparation which would do justice to the enormous work and diverse information that the author put into his dictionary draft – will be a milestone in Miyako and even Ryukyuan studies, as well as a significant finding in the entire field of Japanese (Japonic) studies. With the amount and complexity of information contained in virtually every one of the thousands of entries, the prospective editors are faced with a veritable challenge in terms of analyzing and arranging the contents, and supplying the contents whenever necessary with the level of data that would both match Nevskiy's extraordinary standards and reflect the present-day state of knowledge on the given subject. Whatever effort it may take, it will definitely be worth it.

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Includes, among others, the following works by Nevskiy related to Miyako: “Luna i bessmertiye” [The Moon and Immortality] 265-273, “Pochemu perestali rozhdat’sya krasavitsy” [Why Beautiful Girls Stopped Being Born] 280-281, “Obshchiye svedeniya o geograficheskom polozhenii, ofitsialnom statuse i yazyke Miyako” [General Information on the Geographical Location, Official Status, and Language of Miyako] 282-284, “Lecheniye bolezney [na Miyako]” [Illness Curing on Miyako] 285-290, “Predstavleniya o raduge kak o nebesnoy zmeye” [Representations of Rainbow as Heavenly Snake] 412-421, “Osnovniye polozheniya k dokladu ‘Fonetika Miyako v yapono-ryukyuskoy foneticheskoy sisteme’“ [Theses to a Lecture on the Phonetics of Miyako within the Japanese-Ryukyuan Phonetic System] 431-433.

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REPRESENTATIONS AND IMAGES

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Deigo and Shureimon: The Visual Representation of Ryukyu on Ryukyuan Stamps (1948-1972) Compared to That of Okinawa on Japanese Stamps (1972-2012) and Japanese Regional Stamps (1989-2012)

Introduction

The first question I would like to address concerns the medium that I selected for my research on Okinawa, namely postal stamps. Stamp collecting is regarded as a hobby practised by children or certain adults, but why should any researcher spend his time researching stamps? This has, of course, to do with the so-called "visual turn" in cultural studies that occurred about twenty years ago, which attracted more attention to visual materials that had thus far been neglected. Previously, the main objects studied were objects related to the arts, films, costumes, architecture, etc., or in other words, big objects.

Nowadays, posters, postcards, trading cards, stamps, matchbox labels, etc., which we can call "small" objects, are being researched as well. In many cases, they are objects of everyday use. As such, they can be more influential than "big" objects, and they are usually more representative of the stereotypes created in our minds than "big" objects are.

Some people will say that philately, a field which encompasses both stamp collecting and doing research on stamps, already exists. However, philatelic research is mainly concerned with printing errors, different types of stamps, the usage of stamps, differences in perforations, and many other often highly specialised research topics. Philatelic research is research as it is done by the members of the Ryukyuan Philatelic Specialist Society (RPSS), established in 1969. This society publishes its own journal, entitled *From the Dragon's Den* (FTDD); volume 32, number 2 (or number 96) of the journal, containing 64 pages, was already published in July 2012[1].

But research on stamps within the field of cultural studies is different from philatelic research. Simply expressed, it utilises stamps as one material among others. Therefore, it is concerned with the meaning of the pictures on the stamps, and analyses the contents of those pictures in terms of their ideological and propaganda usage, for their meaning as regards self-identification, etc. Recent

1 For more information on this society, please visit its website at http://www.ryukyustamps.org.

Japanese examples of this kind of research can be found in two popular books by Naitō Yōsuke, *Gaikoku kitte ni egakareta Nippon* (["Japan as Drawn on Stamps of Foreign Countries"], 2003) and *Kitte to sensō. Mō hitotsu no Shōwa senshi* (["Stamps and War. One More War History of the Shōwa Period"], 2004). In the context of this book, I am focusing on the broad question of whether Ryukyuan stamps issued until 1972 and Japanese stamps dealing with Okinawa Prefecture are different from other Japanese stamps.

Ryukyuan[2] Stamps 1948 to 1972

From the end of the Pacific War in the summer of 1945[3] until 15 May, 1972, the former Okinawa Prefecture of Japan was under U.S. administration as The Ryukyu Islands. Consequently, between July 1948[4] and April 1972, 257 Ryukyuan stamps or approximately ten stamps per year were issued with the inscription "琉球郵便 (Ryūkyū yūbin) - RYUKYUS" and with no mention of Japan at all. These 257 issues consist of 138 commemoratives, 16 New Year's greeting stamps, 72 regular stamps, 30 airmail stamps, and 1 special delivery stamp (calculated according to JSDA 2012).

These Ryukyuan stamps are the only local stamps ever issued in Japan apart from 2 Sutherland stamps issued in Yokohama in 1871, 8 stamps issued in Tosa in 1872, and 2 stamps issued in the German prisoner of war camp Bando in 1918 (Nissen 2001:455-456). Therefore, these Ryukyuan stamps have a special meaning in the philatelic history of Japan, and most collectors of Japanese stamps collect these 257 stamps of Ryukyu, too.

The inscription on these Ryukyu stamps changed several times. It started on 1 July, 1948, with 琉球郵便 (Ryūkyū yūbin, translation: Ryukyu Post) and in the denominations SEN and YEN, because initially, the same currency that had been in use before 1945 was retained in the first years of the U.S. occupation. On 21 January, 1950, the four Japanese characters for Ryūkyū yūbin were replaced by RYUKYUS in Latin letters, while the SEN and YEN currency denominations did not change. One year later, on 2 February, 1952, the Ryūkyū yūbin denomination was reintroduced, but the currency denominations were omitted. Starting on 16 September, 1958, the currency

2 For the sake of clarity, I use the expression "Ryukyu" for the period of the U.S. administration until 1972, and "Okinawa" for the Japanese prefecture after the Ryukyu Islands were returned to Japan in 1972. The term "Okinawa" in the first period is only used for the main island of the Ryukyus, Okinawa Island.

3 The Battle of Okinawa ended on 23 June, 1945, and thus the Pacific War came to an end in Okinawa almost two months earlier than in Japan, where the war ended on 15 August, 1945.

4 Until the issuance of Ryukyuan stamps, Japanese stamps continued to be used.

denominations changed to C for cent(s) and $ for dollar(s). Finally, on 20 May, 1961, the RYUKYUS denomination was added to the existing name. This was the last change until the U.S. administration ended, and people in the Okinawa Prefecture used Japanese stamps again, as they did prior to 1945.

In order to examine the special features of Ryukyuan stamps, I would like to compare the stamps issued in Ryukyu to the stamps issued in Japan during the same time period, from 1 July, 1948 to 20 April, 1972. During this period, Japan issued 808 stamps: 482 commemoratives, 97 national park stamps, 47 quasi-national park stamps, 48 New Year's greeting stamps, 102 regular stamps, and 32 airmail stamps (counted according to JSDA 2012). This is more than three times as many stamps than were issued during the same period in the Ryukyu Islands, but far less than have been issued since the 1990s in Japan. The inscriptions on Japanese stamps until 1966 simply comprised the four Chinese characters 日本郵便 (Nippon yūbin), meaning "Japan Post". From 1966 onwards, all Japanese stamps additionally had the Latin letters "NIPPON" on them in accordance with the regulations of the Universal Postal Union issued in Vienna in July 1964, which specify that every stamp has to bear the name of the member country in Latin letters. We could say that the Ryukyuan Post had internationalised itself five years earlier than the Japanese Post by already using the inscription "Ryukyus" starting back in 1961, but given the fact that the islands were under U.S. administration, it is no wonder that their Latin name was printed on the stamps earlier than it was in Japan.

Table 1. Stamps issued in Japan and in the Ryukyus, 1948 to 1972, in numbers and percentages

	Japan	%	Ryukyu	%
Commemoratives	482	60	138	54
National Park Stamps	97	12		
Quasi-national Park Stamps	47	6		
New Year's Stamps	48	6	16	6
Regular Stamps	102	13	72	28
Airmail Stamps	32	4	30	12
Special Delivery Stamp			1	0
Total	808	100	257	100

Source: Calculated by the author according to JSDA 2012

When comparing the number of different types of stamp issues (Table 1), the percentage of commemoratives was very similar. Noteworthy here is the higher percentage of regular stamps (28% vs. 13%) and airmail stamps (12% vs. 4%) issued in the Ryukyus, which can be partly explained by the currency change from yen and sen to dollars and cents in 1958, which necessitated the issue of new stamps with the new currency printed on them. Since there were far more U.S. military personnel stationed in the Ryukyus than in Japan, and since airmail stamps were only used for letters to foreign countries, those facts might also have contributed to the issuance of many more airmail stamps there, as the American soldiers used them when writing home.

Regular Stamps and Airmail Stamps

Turning from these statistical considerations to the contents of the stamps and the pictures on them, I would like to start with the regular stamps, also called the "definitives". These are the stamps most often used and the ones which were usually found on letters and postcards for a much longer period than the commemoratives were. Although the issuance of Ryukyuan stamps was limited to 24 years, during this short period not less than eight different series of definitives and five series of airmail stamps were issued, even if overprinted issues are not counted.

Ryukyu's first regular stamp series, issued 1 July, 1948, consisted of seven stamps showing four different motives: a sago palm tree, a lily, a Chinese-style ship and a farmer (JSDA Ryū nos. 1-7). This series, featuring rather apolitical themes, looks very similar to the regular stamps series from Japan, issued between 1937 and 1952, which was, as can be expected, a highly political series. One gets the impression that these stamps were planned and executed by the same people responsible for issuing the Japanese stamps between 1937 and 1945[5]. Interestingly, even after the occupation of Japan had started, Japanese regular stamps were issued with the inscription "Dainippon" ("Greater Japan"), and even after 2 September, 1945, the day when Allied Occupation of Japan started, stamps with national(istic) symbols like Mt. Fuji and the Yasukuni shrine appeared in Japan (Fig. 1).

The impression that Ryukyu's stamps are very similar to the Japanese ones changed with the second series of definitives. In contrast to the first series, which had only Japanese inscriptions, the six stamps issued in January 1950 have the name of the islands, "RYUKYUS," imprinted in Latin letters on them. The characteristics of Ryukyuan culture are much more present than on the first issue. The six stamps show a Chinese lion figure, a Ryukyuan girl, the

5 In fact this series, like almost all other Ryukyuan stamps, was printed in Tokyo.

Figure 1. Two stamps of the first series of regular stamps of the Ryukyu Islands (1948 and 1949) as compared to Japanese regular stamps issued between October 1945 and April 1946.

main entrance to the Shuri Palace, a dragon's head sculpture, two women on the beach, and shells (JSDA Ryū nos. 8-13). Since similar motifs can be found on many stamps that followed, one can state that from a thematic viewpoint, this series was the first original Ryukyuan stamp series. Since it does not have any Chinese or Japanese characters on it, it looks rather foreign or American (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Second regular series of stamps of the Ryukyu Islands issued in 1950.

The next group of definitives from 1952-53 comprise the "historical structure series". Consisting of eight different stamps showing historical buildings in the Ryukyus (JSDA Ryū nos. 16-23), this horizontal series is reminiscent of the Japanese Scenery Series from 1926 (Michel nos.175-179, etc.) or even of Chinese stamps, an impression that is reinforced by the fact that the Latin letters have once again been replaced by Chinese characters as the country name only (Fig. 3).

A fourth series of regular stamps again emphasises Ryukyuan culture: the six stamps issued between 1954 and 1956 show three dances and three pieces of handicraft (JSDA Ryū nos. 24-29). Since the dollar was adopted as new currency in 1958, replacing the yen, this series had to be replaced in 1958 by a fifth series as well. Ten stamps were issued which showed the signs for the old currency, the yen, overwritten by the sign for the new currency, the dollar, thus providing a visual impact of the currency change (JSDA Ryū nos. 30-39). As early as 1959, though, a new polychrome series of five stamps in two types, Flora and Fauna of the Ryukyus, appeared (JSDA Ryū nos. 40-44). Again it has to be said that this sixth series is very similar to the series of Japanese regular stamps issued between 1952 and 1959 (Michel nos. 585 to 592, etc.) (Fig. 4).

All regular stamps issued between 1948 and 1959 were in the format of 18.5 x 22.5 millimetres, like the Japanese definitives, but the two last series of Ryukyuan regular stamps appeared in a larger format, 22.5 x 27 millimetres, and are therefore more conspicuous than the former definitives. The seventh series shows nine different Ryukyuan dances (JSDA Ryū nos. 54-62), while the eight and last series presents nine different colourful tropical flowers of the islands (JSDA Ryū nos. 63, 64, 66-72). These series were concurrently in circulation between 1961 (1962) and 1972 for more than ten years and are therefore the most representative stamps of the Ryukyus, and they also have no parallels in Japanese stamps (Fig. 5).

Summing up Ryukyuan definitives, we can state that there was an experimental phase from 1948 to 1958, during which five different monochrome series were issued. Two of these are very reminiscent of the corresponding Japanese series, while three of them have no analogous stamps in Japan. The polychrome stamps from 1959 onwards show the wonderful colourful flora and fauna of the Ryukyu Islands, where all the inhabitants seem to be dancing. No working people can be found on the 72 Ryukyuan definitives, as is the case on definitives in many other countries. The only exception is a very rare 1-yen stamp from the first regular issue, which shows the picture of a farmer (JSDA Ryū no. 7). Thus, when looking at the regular stamps of the Ryukyu Islands, one gets the impression of a colourful paradise of leisure. This impression is enhanced by the airmail stamps, of which twenty out of the thirty stamps from the five series featured heavenly creatures[6], so that, when combining airmail and regular stamps, one could jokingly say that Ryukyuan definitives provide the viewer with the feeling that angels are taking him/her to a group of paradisiacal islands in the Pacific where he/she can enjoy a wonderful time.

6 Of the remaining ten airmail stamps, three issued in 1950 show a dove of peace flying over the Ryukyu Islands, five are overprints of regular issues, and two show airplanes flying over the Shureimon, respectively over a background made from a traditional weaving pattern.

Figure 3. Third regular series of stamps of the Ryukyu Islands issued between 1952 and 1953.

Figure 4. Sixth regular series of stamps of the Ryukyu Islands issued between 1959-61 (above) as compared to Japanese regular stamps issued between 1952 and 1959 (below).

Figure 5. Seventh and eighth regular series of stamps of the Ryukyu Islands issued between 1961 and 1971.

Commemorative Stamps

In terms of analysing Ryukyuan commemorative stamps, I will start with the great events that took place and the years that were commemorated in Japan between 1948 and 1972, and examine whether these led to the issuance of commemorative stamps in Ryukyu as well, in order to see whether there was a close relationship between the Japanese and Ryukyuan stamp issuance policies. Of course it is difficult to say which events and centennials were most important for Japan, but I think that most people would easily agree that the events in the following list were worthy of being honoured or remembered by a commemorative special stamp.

Table 2. Most important commemorative years and events in Japan from 1948 to 1972 and number of commemorative stamps and sheets issued for them in Japan and on the Ryukyu Islands

Event, Commemorative Year	Japanese Stamps	Japanese Sheets	Ryukyuan Stamps
1951 Signing of Peace Treaty with USA	3	0	0
1952 End of occupation of Japan	0	0	0
1953/54 Centennial of Perry's visit to Japan/the Ryukyus	0	0	2
1958 Centennial of the opening of Japanese ports	1	0	0
1959 Wedding of Crown Prince Akihito	4	1	0
1964 18th Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo	25	7	1
1967/8 Centennial of Meiji Restoration	2	0	0
1970 Osaka World Exposition	6	2	0
1972 11th Winter Olympic Games in Sapporo	5	1	0

Source: Compiled by the author from data provided in JSDA 2012

The signing of the Treaty of Peace with Japan on 8 September, 1951, was of course highly important for both Japan and the Ryukyus, since Article 3 in Chapter II of the Treaty defines the status of the Ryukyus as being under U.S. administration. Japan issued three stamps with two different motifs one day after the signing of the Treaty, on 9 September, 1951: two stamps with chrysanthemums and one with the Japanese flag (JSDA Ki nos. 220-222), probably as symbols of the restoration of Japanese national independence and the preservation of the Japanese monarchy, which is often referred to as the

Chrysanthemum Throne. The end of the occupation of Japan, on 28 April, 1952, was ignored by the stamp issuing authorities both in Japan and in the Ryukyus.

One year later, in 1953, the centennial of Commodore Perry's landing on the shores of Japan with his "Black Ships" took place, but the anniversary was completely ignored again by the Japanese postal authorities. In the Ryukyus, however, two stamps were issued on 26 May, 1953, to commemorate Perry's visit to the islands on his way to Japan in 1853. At that time, Ryukyu was a kingdom, but also a tributary state of China and Japan, and at the same time under control of the *daimyō* of Satsuma as well. After Perry had delivered his demands regarding the opening of Japanese ports for American ships to the *shōgun* in Edo, he came back to the Ryukyus and to Hong Kong before he went to receive the *shōgun*'s answer in 1854. The United States of America honoured Perry's efforts with a 5-cent stamp "Centennial of the Opening of Japanese Ports,“ issued on 14 July, 1953 (Michel USA no. 641). The green stamp shows a portrait of Commodore Perry and his four black ships anchoring in the Bay of Edo. One of the two Ryukyu stamps, a violet 6-yen stamp, is quite similar in design, while the other one is supposed to depict Perry's reception by the King of Ryukyu (JSDA Ryūki nos. 4 and 5) (Fig. 6).

Figure 6. Ryukyuan stamps issued on the occasion of the "Centennial of Perry's Visit to the Ryukyu Islands" and the U.S. stamp issued on the "Centennial of the Opening of Japanese Ports".

These two stamps became the object of much controversy. While official Japan, in 1953 independent again, did not find it necessary to issue commemorative stamps for this occasion, Ryukyu did, and so, critics said, showed that the Ryukyus were under U.S. dominance. Okinawan authors Arasato Kinpuku and Ōshiro Tatsuhiro (in *Okinawa no hyakunen* Vol. I, 1969, cited in Naitō 2003:44) even went so far as to compare Perry‘s dignified facial expression on the 6-yen stamp with that of Emperor Meiji[7] or even that of Hitler. The second stamp, a purple 3-yen stamp, is said to depict the meeting between Perry and the Ryukyuan King Shō Tai 尚泰 (1843-1901), but since the king was only ten years old at the time, Perry was not permitted to see him, and instead met with the then Royal Regent Shō Daimo 尚大摸.

Despite Japan's reluctance to commemorate the early Japanese-American relations in the mid-19th century, five years later, on 10 May, 1958, it issued a 10-yen stamp to commemorate the Centenary of Opening of Ports in 1858 (JSDA Ki no. 275), namely those of Hakodate, Yokohama and Nagasaki. The Treaty of Amity and Commerce, forced upon Japan in 1858 by the American Consul Townsend Harris, is the first of the so-called "Unequal Treaties" that Japan had to sign with most Western powers in the following years, and it is an irony of history that Japan did not issue commemorative stamps for the much more harmless Treaty of Kanagawa (1854), but rather the humiliating Treaty of 1858. The Japanese stamp shows the monument for Chancellor Ii Naosuke in Yokohama, the highest official who signed the Treaty, and who was murdered by nationalist radicals in 1860 for having done so. The 1858 Treaty was ratified in 1860, when the first diplomatic Japanese delegation to the U.S. came to Washington. The centenary of the ratification was equally commemorated by Japan with a 10-yen and a 30-yen stamp as well as a memorial sheet imprinted with both ratification stamps, which showed the first Japanese ship to cross the Pacific, the Kanrinmaru, and the meeting of the delegation with President Buchanan (JSDA Ki nos. 312-314), and by the U.S. with a 4-cent stamp showing the Washington Monument and cherry blossoms (Michel USA no. 788). The Ryukyus did not issue any stamps to mark these later centenaries, while Japan, on 22 September, 2004, issued two stamps on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of U.S.-Japan Relations (JSDA Ki nos. 1937 and 1938), and again on 2 June, 2009, issued three sheets with ten stamps each, showing Hakodate, Yokohama and Nagasaki for the 150th Anniversary of the Opening of Japanese Ports (JSDA Ki nos. 2092-2094)[8].

One might expect that many Ryukyuan stamps were concerned with U.S.-Ryukyu relations, but the output of such stamps was rather limited. On 23

7 Emperor Meiji is viewed negatively on the Ryukyu Islands, because during his reign, the Kingdom of Ryukyu ceased to exist as it was transformed into the Japanese prefecture Okinawa in 1879.

8 The Japanese stamp issuance policies changed at the end of the 1980s from a country issuing only few commemorative stamps per year to a country that issues a real flood of stamps. In 1981, Japan issued 28 commemoratives, including 2 New Year's stamps, while in 2011 the corresponding number was 447 stamps, consisting of 195 commemorative stamps, 5 New Year's stamps and 247 regional stamps. This was a 16-fold increase as compared to 1981. Due to this quantitative change, the importance of issues before and after 1989 cannot really be compared.

June, 1966, 21 years after the Battle of Okinawa had ended, a commemorative stamp for the souls of the war victims was issued without any mention of the USA (JSDA Ryūki no. 64), and in 1969, a stamp was issued to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the first Ryukyuans' emigration to Hawaii (JSDA Ryūki no. 108). Finally on 17 April, 1972, a stamp appeared to mark the ratification of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement (JSDA Ryūki no. 137).

As for the other major Japanese events, the wedding of Crown Prince Akihito in 1959, the two Olympic Games in Tokyo 1964 and Sapporo 1972, the centennial of the Meiji Restoration in 1967/68, and the World Exposition in Osaka in 1970, for which 42 stamps and 11 stamp sheets were issued in Japan altogether, the Ryukyuan postal authorities and/or the Ryukyuan government ignored all of them, apart from the 1964 Summer Olympics. The Olympic Torch Relay came from Taiwan to the Ryukyus, where native runners carried it around before it went on to Japan. On the 3-cent stamp (JSDA Ryūki no. 46), the Olympic Torch, the Olympic Rings, and the Shureimon[9] are depicted, but no symbol for Japan. Therefore, it appears that the authorities did not want to issue stamps for events similar to those that were important for Japan, but rather tried to install a Ryukyuan identity on the islands, and to prevent too much of a pro-Japanese feeling. Actually, at the time before the reversion, pro-Japanese demonstrations were used by many Ryukyuan people to express their anti-American sentiments. It is understandable that under such circumstances, the Ryukyu administration did not want to issue stamps that could be interpreted as being pro-Japanese.

So what could be seen on the 138 Ryukyuan commemorative and special stamps issued in the 22-year period between 1951 and 1972? Twenty percent of all commemoratives showed animals (Table 3). There were special series featuring crabs (5 stamps, JSDA Ryūki nos. 94-98), shells (5, JSDA Ryūki nos. 78-82), tropical fish (5, JSDA Ryūki nos. 70-74), turtles (3, JSDA Ryūki nos. 57-59) and indigenous animals (3, JSDA Ryūki nos. 60-62), namely a woodpecker (Sapheopipo noguchii), a deer (Cervus nippon keramae) and a sea cow (Dugong dugon). Furthermore, there were several other animals on issues which appeared on other occasions, such as a mosquito on a 1962 stamp for the WHO campaign to eradicate malaria in the world (JSDA Ryūki no. 26). Since most New Year special stamps and a number of definitives also showed animals, the impression of a region with abundant fauna, especially, of course, abundant sea fauna, is projected on the viewer. The Ryukyuan flora is not as present on commemoratives as it is on definitives, although in the 1950s and early 1960s, several stamps were issued to promote the reforestation of the islands, which naturally depicted trees (JSDA Ryūki nos. 2, 9, 14, 20, 32).

9 For an explanation of Shureimon, see below.

Table 3. Commemorative stamps of the Ryukyu Islands, 1948-1972

Motif	Number	Percentage
Animals	27	20
Jubilees/Anniversaries	19	14
Architecture	17	12
Handicrafts	12	9
Customs	11	8
Sports	10	7
Technology	9	7
Plants	8	6
Symbols	8	6
Landscapes	6	5
Personalities	5	4
Occupations	4	3
People	1	1
Toys	1	1
Total	138	103

Source: Calculated from JSDA 2012. 103 percent is a rounding error.

The second largest category of commemorative stamps was issued on the occasion of certain anniversaries in the Ryukyus, including the 350th anniversary of the introduction of sweet potatoes in 1955 (JSDA Ryūki no. 8), the tenth and 20th anniversary of Ryukyuan postage stamps in 1958 and 1968 (JSDA Ryūki nos.12 and 88), the tenth anniversary of Ryukyu University in 1960 (JSDA Ryūki no. 16), the 40th and 50th anniversary of Naha City in 1961 and 1971 (JSDA Ryūki nos. 21 and 128), the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Ryukyuan Government in 1962 (JSDA Ryūki nos. 24 and 25), the tenth anniversary of the Ryukyu Girl Scouts in 1964 (JSDA Ryūki no. 43), and of course the tenth anniversary of the Ryukyu Boy Scouts in 1965 (JSDA Ryūki no. 51), the 15th anniversary of the Anti-TB Association in 1967 (JSDA Ryūki no. 77), the 120th anniversary of vaccination in the Ryukyus in 1968 (JSDA Ryūki no. 85), the 70th anniversary of emigration to Hawaii in 1969 (JSDA no. 108), and the 25th anniversary of nurses' training in 1971 (JSDA Ryūki no. 133).

Of these thirteen anniversaries, ten were anniversaries of events which had already taken place during the U.S. occupation of the Ryukyus, and therefore were tenth, fifteenth or twentieth anniversaries. Only three refer to earlier occasions: the introduction of the sweet potato to the Ryukyuan Kingdom in 1605 from the Fujian province in China, which soon became the most important crop on the Ryukyu Islands until the beginning of the 20th century; the first attempts to use the smallpox vaccination by Ryukyuan doctor Nakachi Kijin (仲地紀仁, 1789-1859) in 1848, who had copied the method overnight from a book borrowed from a doctor who had come to the Ryukyus with the ship Morrison in 1837; and finally the migration of the first emigrants from Ryukyu to the Hawaiian Islands in 1899/1900, 26 people who went to Hawaii as migrant labourers to work on the sugarcane fields there. Until that time, Ryukyuans were not allowed to emigrate, and in Hawaii they were treated in a discriminatory way by the Japanese emigrants already there, as if they were people from another nation. Altogether, 72,227 Ryukyuans emigrated to overseas countries before 1945, constituting 11% of all Japanese emigrants, the second largest number of people from a Japanese prefecture after Hiroshima, whose emigrants amounted to 15% of the total number of Japanese emigrants (Ishikawa N.Y.). It is remarkable that none of these events or occasions had any relation to Japan. The 13 anniversary issues were certainly meant to contribute to constructing a Ryukyuan identity, independent from that of Japan. After the reversion talks between the U.S. and Japan started in 1968, and it became clear that the Ryukyus were to become a Japanese prefecture again as it had been during the period 1879 and 1945, that goal was certainly of less importance.

The three commemoratives issued to mark the anniversaries of international organisations and declarations are less unique, and have certain correspondences in Japan. The issuance of a stamp for the 15th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights in 1963 (JSDA Ryūki no. 39) was preceded by a stamp for the tenth anniversary, in 1958, in Japan (JSDA Ki no. 287), while five years later, Japan issued a stamp to commemorate the Human Rights Year (JSDA Ki no. 525), whereas the Ryukyus did not. Although Japan had finally been admitted to the United Nations on 18 December, 1956, which it celebrated in March 1957 with the issuance of a special stamp (JSDA Ki no.265), it did not feel it necessary to issue stamps to commemorate UN anniversaries in 1955, 1960, or 1965, although in 1970 it celebrated the 25th anniversary of the founding of the United Nation with two stamps (JSDA Ki nos. 577-78). Ryukyu, on the other hand, celebrated the 20th anniversary in 1965 with a special stamp (JSDA Ryūki no. 55), and one year later, the anniversary of UNESCO as well (JSDA Ryūki no. 67), which again was preceded by a Japanese stamp for the same occasion eleven weeks earlier (JSDA KI no. 459). Ryukyu thus did not adhere to the Japanese example in its commemorative stamp issuance policies, but rather behaved like an independent state.

The third place, following animals and anniversaries, is occupied by commemorative stamps which show Ryukyuan architecture in a broad sense. These stamps range from stamps that depict new modern buildings, including the main building of Ryukyu University (JSDA Ryūki nos. 1, 65) and a sports stadium (JSDA Ryūki no. 52), to traditional buildings such as a religious shrine (JSDA Ryūki no. 8), a farmhouse (JSDA Ryūki no. 107), and a bridge (JSDA Ryūki no. 35). In November 1963, the postal authorities started to issue stamps to mark the occasion of the Cultural Treasures Protection Week on a yearly basis, with the exception of 1965, and most of the stamps issued showed an important building (JSDA Ryūki nos. 38, 50, 69, 83, 91, 107). But the building most often printed on Ryukyuan stamps, be they definitive, special or air mail stamps, is of course the Shureimon gate in Shuri Castle Park, the Gate of Politeness or Courtesy, literally the "gate (*mon*), where one pays respect (*shu*) to courtesy (*rei*)". The gate derives its name from an inscription on top of it that reads "*Shurei no kuni*," "the country where one pays respect to courtesy". It is said to be a gift from a Chinese emperor, with which he honoured the courtesy of the Ryukyuan people. Dating back to the mid-16th century, Shureimon became a Japanese national treasure in 1933. It was destroyed in the Battle of Okinawa, but then rebuilt after the war and re-opened in 1958. In 2000, the Shuri Castle area, including the Shureimon, was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Shureimon is the symbol of the Ryukyu Islands, and even found its way on Japanese paper money, where it can be seen on the 2000-yen note, which was issued on the occasion of the G8 summit held in Okinawa in 2000. The famous gate first appeared on a definitive in 1952 (JSDA Ryūki no. 18), when it was still destroyed, before a special stamp featuring it was issued in 1958, after it had been successfully restored (JSDA Ryūki no. 13). This exceptionally large stamp (48 x 32 millimetres) immediately became an object of speculation, and therefore was well known in Japan and even became famous among stamp collectors worldwide. The Shureimon was also used as a symbol of the Ryukyus on a stamp to support the WHO's battle to eradicate malaria (JSDA Ryūki no.27), the aforementioned stamp for the Olympic Torch Relay in Okinawa in 1964 (JSDA Ryūki no. 46), the Tenth Anniversary of the Ryukyuan Boy Scouts in 1965 (JSDA Ryūki no. 51) and for the 22nd Congress of Education in 1969 (JSDA Ryūki no. 101), as well as on an air mail stamp issued in 1963 (JSDA Ryūkū no. 29) (Fig. 7).

Figure 7. Ryukyuan stamps using the Shureimon as a means to identify Ryukyu.

Relatively many stamps were issued featuring motifs of handicrafts (12 stamps) and folk customs (11 stamps), mainly folk dance. If we group these stamps together under the label of "folklore," they even constitute the second largest category after "animals" (Fig. 8). Four other categories follow closely: sports (10 stamps), technology (9 stamps), plants (8 stamps) and symbols (8 stamps). Twelve percent (17 stamps) of all commemoratives belong to other categories. Most conspicuous is the small number of stamps showing beautiful landscapes, since the Ryukyu Islands are said to have so many wonderful beaches. Only in 1971 and 1972, shortly before the reversion, six stamps were issued which were very similar to the Japanese quasi-national park series.

Figure 8. Dances and folklore events on Ryukyuan commemorative stamps.

Finally, I would like to mention some trends that seem worthy to be pointed out: Firstly, there were a number of stamps that stressed the international attitude of the Ryukyu Islands. In addition to the above-mentioned stamps for the WHO's Campaign for World Malaria Eradication, those on the 15th

Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights and the 20th anniversaries of the Foundation of the United Nations and UNESCO, stamps were issued to commemorate the Okinawa Meeting of the International Junior Chamber of Commerce (JSDA Ryūki no. 37), the International Tourist Year 1967 (JSDA Ryūki no. 76), and the International Library Week in 1968 (JSDA Ryūki no. 87). These stamps give the impression of the Ryukyu Islands as an independent member of the international community of nations, although it was a region under U.S. administration (Fig. 9).

Figure 9. Ryukyuan stamps commemorating international events.

Secondly, many stamps emphasised the modernity of the Ryukyu Islands. This again seems important for creating a new, modern Ryukyuan identity. In Japan, prior to 1945, Ryukyuan labour migrants had been discriminated against for coming from certain "backward isolated islands in the south" and speaking a "strange dialect". Many stamps seem to convey the message "Look how modern the Ryukyu Islands became under the U.S. administration!". This trend started with the opening of Ryukyu University in 1950 on the remains of the Shuri Castle, the first university ever on the islands, which is honoured on the first commemorative stamp (JSDA Ryūki no. 1). In 1956, a special stamp followed for the Introduction of the Dual Telephone System (JSDA Ryūki no. 10); in 1963 one for the Completion of the Ring Road Around Okinawa Island (JSDA Ryūki no. 33) and for the opening of the Shioya Bridge (JSDA Ryūki no. 35); in 1964 for the Opening of a Microwave System between Ryukyu and Japan (JSDA Ryūki nos. 44 and 45); in 1965 for the Opening of the Onoyama Stadium Athletic Ground (JSDA Ryūki no. 52), the Completion of Kin Power Plant (JSDA Ryūki no. 53) and the Completion of the New Building of Naha City Hall (JSDA Ryūki no. 56); in 1966 for the Opening of the New National

Museum (JSDA Ryūki no. 68); in 1967 for the Opening of TV Stations in Miyako and Yaeyama (JSDA Ryūki no. 84); in 1969 for the Opening of UHF Circuit System (JSDA Ryūki no. 100), and in 1970 for the Completion of the Submarine Observatory Tower (JSDA Ryūki no. 115). These stamps indicated that the Ryukyu Islands were not only beautiful islands in terms of nature, but also an archipelago proud of owning modern technology (Fig. 10).

Figure 10. Ryukuan stamps stressing the modernity of the islands.

Thirdly, only a few commemorative stamps – six out of 138 – showed portraits of famous personalities from Ryukyuan history. For example, no special stamp was issued for Iha Fuyū (1876-1947), the founder of Okinawan Studies. This is similar to Japan, where, after the issuance of a series with 18 famous personalities from 1949 to 1952, hardly any stamps ever bore the portrait of a man or woman until 1972.

Another neglected topic is the history of the islands. Although the Battle of Okinawa was one of the fiercest and bloodiest battles in the Pacific War, during which not only were 14,000 U.S. soldiers and 77,000 Japanese soldiers killed, but also 91,000 Okinawan civilians[10], including those who committed

10 See introduction to this volume.

suicide or were forced to commit suicide by Japanese soldiers, there was no memorial stamp issued for this battle. The special stamp, issued on 23 June, 1966, was a stamp for the "Memorial Day of the War Dead," in Japanese "*irei no hi*," literally "Day to Pacify the Souls (of the War Dead)". The picture is composed of burnt war ruins in the background and white lilies in the foreground, lilies being associated with the young innocent women from the Himeyuri Student Nurse Corps, many of whom were forced to commit suicide (Fig. 11). There are also no stamps about the military presence of the U.S. in Ryukyu, and most astonishingly not even any stamps on the topic of U.S.-Ryukyuan friendship. Moreover, no stamps on Japan were issued, either. Only in late 1970, when the return of the Ryukyus to Japan was already decided, a stamp appeared to mark the Participation of Ryukyuans in the Japanese National Assembly (JSDA Ryūki no. 121), and in 1972, just before the end of the U.S. administration, a stamp was issued on the occasion of the Ratification of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement (JSDA Ryūki no. 137), both of which depict a Japanese flag, the latter one with a U.S. flag as well.

Figure 11. Ryukyuan commemorative stamp for the Memorial Day for the War Dead 1966.

Japanese Stamps Dealing with Okinawa, 1972 to 2012

After the Ryukyu Islands were returned to Japan and had become Okinawa Prefecture again, they no longer issued their own stamps, of course, but the Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications issued several stamps related to Okinawa. During the forty years between 1972 and 2012, twelve issues came out, comprising 33 stamps on Okinawa (Table 4).

The most remarkable fact is that Japan issued commemorative stamps first for the reversion of Okinawa, and later for the 10th, 20th, 25th, 30th, and 40th anniversaries of it (Fig. 12), as well as a special stamp for this event in a series concerned with the most memorable years in postwar Japanese history. Of twelve issues focused on Okinawa, seven were therefore related to the return of Okinawa, two to the 1975 Expo in Okinawa, one to the completion and opening of a telephone cable between Okinawa and Luzon, one to the Kyushu-Okinawa G8 Summit in 2000, and one issue was devoted to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu. Compared to most other prefectures, Okinawa Prefecture seems to have been treated preferentially during this time. Most of these stamps once again utilise the images very frequently depicted for visualising Okinawa: dancers, flowers, the famous bitter gourd *gōyā*, mangos, Okinawan textiles, the Shuri Castle and the Shureimon, all of which contribute to constructing an image different from that of Japan.

Of the 33 stamps, only the stamp for the cable connection with Luzon, which shows a child making a phone call, and four stamps from the 40th anniversary issue showing a modern aquarium, a monorail and a bridge connecting islands, differ from the standard depiction of Okinawa and do not use these kind of symbols.

Figure 12. Japanese commemorative stamps marking the Reversion of Okinawa, 1972, 1982, 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2012.

Table 4. Japanese commemorative and special stamps concerned with Okinawa

1972.5.15	Reversion of Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 610)
1974.3.2	Expo 75 Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 655)
1975.7.19	Expo 75 Okinawa (three stamps and one sheet, JSDA Ki nos. 704-707)
1977.8.26	Opening of Trans Okinawa-Luzon Cable (JSDA Ki no. 768)
1982.5.15	10th Anniversary of the Reversion of Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 936)
1992.5.15	20th Anniversary of the Reversion of Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 1401)
1996.4.5	Return of Okinawa (50 Postwar Memorable Years) (JSDA Ki no. 1567)
1997.11.21	25th Anniversary of the Return of Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 1654)
2000.6.21	Kyushu-Okinawa G8 Summit 2000 (JSDA Ki no. 1768)
2002.12.20	2nd World Heritage Series no. 10: Gusuku Sites of the Ryukyu Kingdom and Related Properties (Ten different stamps in one sheet, JSDA Ki no. 1800)
2002.5.15	30th Anniversary of the Return of Okinawa (JSDA Ki no. 1855)
2012.5.15	40th Anniversary of the Return of Okinawa (Ten different stamps in one sheet, JSDA Ki no. 2221)

Source: Calculated from data provided in JSDA 2012

Japanese Regional Stamps for Okinawa Prefecture

In April 1989, the then Japanese Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications began to issue a new kind of stamp, called regional stamps (*furusato kitte*). The aim of these stamps was defined by the Ministry as follows: “The Regional stamps are stamps with a strong regional character which are devoted to famous places, annual events and manners of our country in order to promote the individuality/originality of our native places” (JSDA 2012:154). In this section, I will be examining the regional stamps issued in Okinawa between 1989 and 2012 and comparing them to the Ryukyu Islands stamps from 1948 to 1972.

Due to the inflationary issuance of Japanese stamps since the end of the 1980s and especially since the end of the 1990s, it is difficult to count the number of Okinawan regional stamps. Many stamps were no longer issued as single stamps, but rather as part of a stamp sheet consisting of ten different stamps. The stamp catalogue makers reacted to this by no longer attributing a number to every single stamp issued as before, but instead assigned a number to a whole sheet of ten and sometimes even more stamps. Moreover, on some of these regional stamp sheets, stamps of different prefectures were printed together. This means that if you follow the numbers of the JSDA catalogue, you would have to count one Okinawa stamp on a stamp sheet of ten different pictures as a tenth of a stamp (= the sheet). In order to avoid this difficulty, instead of counting numbers, I counted the different designs of Okinawa regional stamps and arrived at 66 different designs. Of these 66 designs, 24 (36%) were devoted to Okinawa's fauna and flora again: ten stamps showed different fish, one a bird, nine featured flowers, two showed fruits and one a vegetable, of course the famous bitter gourd *gōyā*. About the same number, 25 (38%) stamps, had landscape, architecture and traffic as their motifs. 15 showed old historic or remarkable new buildings, three depicted gardens, two featured landscapes, and four depicted the monorail built between the airport in Naha and Shuri Castle, while one showed an old stone path. The third category of Okinawa regional stamps is folklore or customs, and comprised 17 designs (26%). Six stamps show examples of famous Okinawan dances, one the three-stringed-instrument *sanshin*, two displayed weaving patterns, one a bottle (*yushibin*) for presenting the *awamori* liquor, another one a hairstyle, and finally six stamps presented different customs such as festivals and local sports (Fig. 13).

Figure 13. Some typical Japanese regional stamps for Okinawa Prefecture.

Table 5. Comparison of Ryukyuan stamps and Okinawa regional stamps

	Ryukyu	Okinawa
Flora and fauna	73 (44%)	24 (36%)
Folklore, handicrafts	57 (34%)	17 (26%)
Scenery, architecture	37 (22%)	25 (38%)
All stamps	167 (100%)	66 (100%)

Source: Calculated by the author using data from JSDA 2012

If the stamps issued under the U.S. administration from 1948 to 1972 are compared to the newer Okinawa regional stamps issued between 1989 and 2012, we see that the importance of stamps showing plants and animals as well as folklore scenes and handicrafts is still existent, but stamps depicting the scenery of Okinawa or Okinawan architecture in the broadest sense gained more importance and form the largest category. The first regional stamp for Okinawa Prefecture, regional stamp number 3 (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 3), is another depiction of Shureimon. It can also be seen on the ten-stamp sheet Travel Scenes Series no. 3 from 2000, which is solely devoted to Okinawa as a tourist destination (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 1086/5). The sheet with five stamps, issued in 2012 to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Enforcement of the Local Autonomy Law in Okinawa, can be said to include the most (stereo) typical sights and "things Okinawan" to Japanese eyes: On a background showing beautiful beach scenery, there is a stamp with the Shureimon, one with Shuri Castle and a Kumiodori actor in front of it, one with Ryukyu textile print (*Ryūkyū bingata*), one with two dancers, and finally one with the prefectural flower named *deigo* (Erythrina Indica). This red flower was also depicted earlier in the Prefectural Flower Series no. 6 in 2010 (JSDA 2012 Chi nos. 1149 and 1154), and in the large sheet combining the Prefectural Flowers of all 47 Japanese prefectures, which was issued in 1990 (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 70).

It has to be mentioned, though, that some Okinawa regional stamps show the modern architecture on the islands, such as the Bankoku Shinryōkan, the building erected for the G8 Okinawa Summit in July 2000 (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 584), a stamp which again shows *deigo* flowers in the foreground. One of the most prominent architectural sites in Okinawa is the large Cornerstone of Peace (*Heiwa no ishiji*) in Itoman City at the southernmost tip of Okinawa Island, which was erected in 1995 – 116 black stones totalling 2200 meters in length on which the names of all of the known war dead, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, are inscribed. A regional stamp issued in June 2001 (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 705) shows the monument with two red hibiscus blossoms in the foreground (Fig. 14). A third stamp issued in 2005 represents the National

Theatre Okinawa, a theatre which was opened in 2004 especially for the purpose of preserving traditional Okinawan dance and theatre. This stamp depicts a dancer and red and white flowers in the foreground (JSDA 2012 Chi no. 876). All of the other architectural and landscape stamps are conventional stamps featuring historic buildings.

Figure 14. Modern buildings on Okinawa Prefecture regional stamps.

There is no need to describe the many stamps which introduce Okinawan fauna and flora, Okinawan dances and rituals, or Okinawan handicrafts in more detail. They are all beautiful, colourful stamps which helped to proliferate the stereotypical view Japanese people have about Okinawa as an exotic and somewhat culturally different (or distinct) island paradise.

Two other Japanese issues dealing with Okinawa are worth mentioning because they commemorate anniversaries of events which took place when Okinawa was not really part of Japan or a Japanese prefecture. In 1998, Japanese regional stamps for Okinawa commemorated the "50th anniversary of Ryukyuan stamps," showing the first (*sotetsu* palm, 1948) and the last (*yushibin awamori* bottle, in 1972) stamp designs of the Ryukyu era under the U.S. administration.

Another *furusato kitte* series from 1999, consisting of two stamps, commemorated "125 years since the introduction of the postal system in Okinawa," but at that time (1874) Okinawa did not exist. The Japanese Okinawa Prefecture was not created until 1879. Until that year, Ryukyu had the status of a Japanese feudal domain called *han*. In Japan by that time, *han* had already been abolished since 1871, but Ryukyu-han enjoyed a semi-autonomous status ruled by its king, comparable to a Japanese *daimyo*, until he was transferred to Tokyo in 1879 and put under house detention. A historically correct inscription on these stamps would have been "Introduction of the postal system in the Ryukyu domain" (Fig. 15).

Figure 15. Commemorative events in Ryukyu on Japanese stamps when Ryukyu was not formally Japanese: "50th Anniversary of Ryukyuan stamps" (1998) and "125th Anniversary of the Introduction of the Postal System in Okinawa" (1999).

Conclusion

It is difficult to draw a conclusion about the three different types of stamps I examined in this paper: the stamps issued during the U.S. occupation of the Ryukyu Islands between 1948 and 1972, the Japanese stamps which concerned Okinawa after its return to Japan between 1972 and 2012, and thirdly, the "regional stamps" for Okinawa Prefecture and other prefectures issued from 1989 onwards. The first group comprises 257 stamps, the second one 15 stamps, and the third one 66 stamps, for a total of 338 stamps. The visual impression is one of peaceful islands in the Pacific with colourful fauna and flora, especially tropical fish and colourful shells, red *deigo* and hibiscus flowers, and bitter gourds and mangos, where one meets people dancing traditional dances and wearing colourful dresses made from textiles printed in the typical Okinawan style (*bingata*). This trend to propagate the beautiful exotic Ryukyu Islands as a paradise in the Pacific began in the 1960s.

One can imagine that the main objective of these stamps was to attract Japanese and perhaps also American tourists, while a secondary goal might have been to target the many collectors of Japanese stamps, both nationally as well as internationally. In this aspect, Ryukyuan and Japanese stamps with Okinawan motifs are somewhat similar to the stamps of lesser developed countries, which tend to issue almost endless series of butterflies and the like. These stamps show only the most positive sides of Okinawa, whereas anything dangerous or controversial cannot be seen on them. It is well known that the Okinawa Islands are home to one of the most poisonous snakes, the *habu*, but snakes are not to be found on Okinawan stamps, nor do the stamps show other poisonous animals, like the brown recluse spider, the blue-ringed octopus, the box jellyfish, sea snakes, cone shells, lionfish, marine catfish, crown-of-thorn stars and stingrays, all of which are very dangerous (Fisher 2006).

The dangers of nature are not visualised on Okinawan stamps, nor do they depict the tragic Ryukyuan history or present day problems. Exceptions are only the stamps for the war dead and those depicting the war memorial. The stories of the Shimazu Clan's invasion of the Ryukyus in 1609, which made the kingdom a vassal state of Satsuma, the tributary missions to the Tokugawa bakufu during the Edo period, the dissolution of the kingdom in 1879 and the creation of Okinawa prefecture instead, and the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 are not told on stamps, neither under the U.S. administration nor under the Japanese one. Faces of famous personalities from history were put onto stamps only during the U.S. occupation, but never on Japanese stamps after 1972. Okinawan history on stamps consists merely of castles and religious buildings, which in present day Japan have, of course, been degenerated to touristic sightseeing spots.

If history is too dangerous to be addressed on stamps, contemporary problems are even more so. Stamps were issued for the Okinawa Expo 1975 and the G8 Summit in 2000, but the U.S. bases, the greatest problem in Okinawa today, are never dealt with on stamps. The bases occupy 18% of the entire territory of Okinawa Island and house more than 40% of all U.S. troops on Japanese soil, but nothing about this issue can be seen on Japanese stamps. Environmental problems stemming from the U.S. military presence in Okinawa or from the building of new facilities to ease tourism, like the construction of airports and the accompanying sea pollution and damage to coral reefs have never been made the subject of Japanese Okinawa stamps.

Of course, one can argue that the avoidance of controversial themes is common with regard to stamps around the world, but it seems that Japanese stamps in this respect are especially carefully selected. Commemorative stamps were not issued in 2012 or in one of the following years for the victims of the 3/11 earthquake/tsunami/nuclear triple disaster, nor for the many volunteers who came to help the victims. The United States issued a stamp for the heroes of 9/11, which was quantitatively a much smaller catastrophe then the triple disaster in Tohoku. It seems that by definition of Japan's political opinion leaders, catastrophes do not happen in Japan.

A future study of Ryukyuan stamps should by all means also try to determine who was involved in the decision making with respect to the events and themes to be commemorated on the stamps. Were controversial themes ever even considered to be included, or were no proposals for such stamps ever made? The interesting stamps issued by the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna on social and economic problems as well as global historic events have no parallels to Japanese stamps whatsoever[11].

The tendency to avoid anything controversial might also be responsible for the fact that the designs of all Okinawan stamps and formerly also of Ryukyuan stamps are very conservative, but this is likewise the case with almost all Japanese stamps. For the issuing authorities, stamps were probably thought to function as small tourism posters and thus to help attract people to the Pacific islands south of Japan. Another function might be an effort to console the many former inhabitants of Okinawa who had to migrate to places outside of Okinawa in order to make a living. As already mentioned, another important factor might also be their appeal to stamp collectors, who throughout the world are generally conservative minded and prefer "beautiful pictures" to "modern designs".

The stamps of the Ryukyu Islands showed some features of stamps characteristic of an independent state, such as introducing famous people from history or celebrating international events and anniversaries. Visually, several of them stressed independence from the hegemony of Japanese stamps, but on Okinawa regional stamps, this tendency can no longer be detected. These stamps, of which quite many exist – perhaps more than would be appropriate for a prefecture which is only ranked 29th in population among 47 prefectures and 44th in area – are genuinely Japanese, even though the represented flowers and fruits, dances and handicrafts are supposed to look exotic and different from the four main islands of Japan.

11 Germany, which like Japan lost in the Second World War, issued a commemorative sheet in May 1995 featuring two stamps to mark 50 years since the end of WWII, and another sheet commemorating the liberation of the prisoners in the concentration camps; in 2000, the country issued a stamp calling for "No Violence against Women," and in 1986 started issuing a series on "Women in German History," just to mention a few examples which have no parallels in Japan. Japan, too, issued three stamps for the "50th Anniversary of Peace" in August 1995, but while the German stamps have very critical designs, the Japanese authorities selected harmless drawings by children.

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Ina HEIN

Writing Back: Literature from Okinawa – a Postcolonial Perspective

Introduction

This essay examines literature from Okinawa and its meaning within the context of contemporary Japanese literature[1]. The paper will focus on the relationship between "minor" literature from a very specific Japanese region, Okinawa, and "Japanese literature" (*nihon bungaku*) in the sense of "national literature". In the following, it will be shown that literature from Okinawa tends to resist the modern Japanese canon or attempts to actively influence and modify it. At the same time, and connected with this, I will embark on the thesis that the literary output in Okinawa takes place in a postcolonial context, and that many of the content-related, linguistic and narrative specifics of works written by Okinawan authors become evident and explicable when viewed from the perspective of postcolonial literature theory.

Until the end of the 1960s, Okinawa was perceived as "*bungaku no fumō no chi*" (Takeyama 2006:85), a "literary desert," in both Japan and Okinawa itself. This opinion only started to change when Ōshiro Tatsuhiro (*1925) became the first Okinawan author to be awarded the Akutagawa Prize in 1967 for his novella *Kakuteru Pātii* ("Cocktail Party"). Since then, three more Okinawan authors have won the Akutagawa Prize: Higashi Mineo for *Okinawa no shōnen* ("Child of Okinawa," 1971), Matayoshi Eiki for *Buta no mukui* (["The Pig's Retribution"], 1995), and Medoruma Shun for *Suiteki* ("Droplets," 1997)[2].

The JLPP programme, a translation project promoted by the Japanese government with the aim of introducing authors and works representative of contemporary Japanese literature to a an international audience, includes writings by the two Okinawan Akutagawa laureates of the 1990s: Matayoshi Eiki's novel *Jinkotsu tenjikan* (["Human Relics Museum"]) was translated

1 This is a translation of an article which was first published in German under the title "*Okinawa bungaku* – Herausforderung des Konzepts einer japanischen Nationalliteratur?" (Hein 2014). The author would like to express her sincere gratitude to the editors of the German volume, Lisette Gebhardt and Evelyn Schulz, for their permission to reprint this paper in English.

2 In 2000, Medoruma was also awarded the Kawabata Yasunari Prize for *Mabuigumi* ("Spirit Stuffing").

into French[3], and Medoruma Shun's *Mabuigumi*, a collection of short stories, is also slated to be translated into French within the scope of the project; moreover, the title story is available as an English translation by Kyle Ikeda entitled "Spirit Stuffing".

In Japan, a 20-volume *Okinawa bungaku zenshū* (["Complete Edition of Literature from Okinawa"]) has been in progress since 1991[4], and an English language translation anthology of literary works from Okinawa, entitled *Southern Exposure – Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa*, was edited and published in 2000 by Michael Molasky and Steve Rabson. Furthermore, the literary analysis of authors and works from Okinawa has now helped literature from Okinawan authors establish a place within Japanese literature. However, it is far from being part of the mainstream Japanese language literary output: Except in Okinawa itself and among literary scholars in the relevant circles, authors from Okinawa and their writings are not widely known.

According to Okinawan literary scholar Shinjō Ikuo, *Okinawa bungaku* – which can be translated either as "Literature from Okinawa" or "Okinawan Literature" – continues to have an ambivalent status: While it is indeed part of Japanese literature, it is still also distinct from it. Postcolonial literature is supposed to occupy a space "that is neither inside nor outside the history of Western domination but in a tangential relation to it" (Mukherjee 2012:795). Analogous to this, it can be argued that literature from Okinawa holds a type of hybrid intermediate position as well – it is not a firmly established part of Japanese literature, but at the same time, it is not outside of or separate from it either. At any rate, Shinjō makes it very clear that, in his viewpoint, *Okinawa bungaku* is not just a "side branch" (*bōryū* 傍流) or a "regional variant" (*ichi chihō bungaku* 一地方文学) of Japanese literature and thus subordinate to it, but rather has its own history and current distinct expression (Shinjō 2003:301).[5]

This essay will expound on exactly that aspect: It is concerned with the question of how *Okinawa bungaku* can be positioned in the context of Japanese literature. First, I will discuss how the term *Okinawa bungaku* has been defined up to now, and what concepts can potentially be used to determine the relationship between the "Literature from Okinawa" and "Japanese Literature". The section that follows will then show that Okinawa can be viewed as a (concealed) colony of Japan. Finally, it will be demonstrated that many writings by Okinawan authors contain postcolonial strategies of

3 The novel was translated by Patrick Honnoré and entitled *Histoire d'un squelette*.

4 15 volumes are already available; volumes 5, 13, 15, 16 and 19 have not yet been published.

5 Text passages that were originally in Japanese and German have been translated into English for the purpose of including the citation in this essay.

resistance which, in their representations of Okinawa, are obviously directed against the Japanese canon (both the literary one and that disseminated by the media). Selected writings by Medoruma Shun will then be presented as an example of this.

Okinawa bungaku – Previous Attempts at Definitions

Previous attempts to narrow down the term *Okinawa bungaku* from a literary standpoint have led to a wide range of proposed definitions. Does *Okinawa bungaku* refer to works by Okinawan authors? Do the stories have to be set in Okinawa to be considered *Okinawa bungaku*? Neither of these criteria, however, would necessarily mean they would have to centre on Okinawa as their subject. And such a narrow focus on the ethnic origin of the authors might possibly result in an artificial dichotomisation between the Okinawans versus the Japanese from the main islands, which many Okinawan authors expressly seek to avoid. Moreover, just because a person comes from Okinawa does not mean that his or her version of Okinawa necessarily has to be "more authentic" than that of someone without Okinawan roots. Consequently, it seem questionable whether and to which extent it is even useful at all to classify and differentiate literature based solely on the origin of its authors. While Okamoto Keitoku says that *Okinawa bungaku* is "writing executed in standard Japanese by authors of Okinawan descent who, taking Okinawa as a theme, pursue the issue of identity" (Okamoto Keitoku, quoted in Bhowmik 2008:16), Yonaha Keiko, for example, takes a very broad perspective, viewing *Okinawa bungaku* as "works by persons who have lived in Okinawa for some time" and focus on Okinawa as the main topic (Yonaha 1996:205) or take place in the "Okinawa region" (Yonaha 2006:5).

These examples make it clear that each categorisation can only have a provisional nature; furthermore, it depends on the agenda or position of the person providing the definition: If the aim is to jointly analyse and compare a wide range of writings on the field of discourse on "Okinawa,“ a broad approach such as the one taken by Yonaha is certainly more expedient. If, on the other hand, the goal is to establish what makes the Okinawan experience specific, it seems completely legitimate to focus on works by authors who have an Okinawan background. In this paper, I will tentatively pursue the latter approach, and in the following, will refer to writings by authors who originate from Okinawa and live and write there – as is customary practice in the relevant field of research.

Okinawa bungaku As Minor Literature?

Just as there is no consensus on the question of what types of writings can be precisely classified as *Okinawa bungaku*, there is also no unanimity in the research literature with regard to how this literature should be positioned in the broader framework of contemporary Japanese literature. Frequently, the terms “minority literature” and “regional literature” are used (see Molasky 2003 162-164). Conversely Davinder Bhowmik (2008) and Ihab Hassan (1997) discuss whether *Okinawa bungaku* should be viewed as “minor literature” and thus refer to a concept attributed to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. According to the two French researchers, “minor literature” does not stem from “minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language. [...] in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization” (Deleuze/Guattari 1975/86:16). In addition, everything in “minor literature” is political and takes a collective value (Deleuze/Guattari 1975/86:16-17).

In fact, it is frequently pointed out that authors from Okinawa find themselves in a dilemma, since, if they want to be read, they are forced to write in Japanese, and thus in a – at least from a historical perspective – “foreign language,“ since use of the Japanese language was imposed by force in Okinawa starting in the Meiji era (1868-1912). Okinawans were therefore forbidden, especially during wartime, to speak the Okinawan language, which the Japanese people from the mainland did not understand; in the eyes of the members of the Imperial Japanese Army, individuals who violated this decree were suspected of being involved in a conspiracy to sabotage or collaborate with the enemy – an act for which they could be immediately and summarily executed[6]. The suppression of the local language continued well into the postwar period; ultimately, the negative stance toward it was internalised to such an extent that the Okinawa teachers’ association itself introduced the use of *“hōgen fuda”* (literally translated as “dialect tags”) in Okinawan schools during the late 1950s and ‘60s:

> The waves of programs to eradicate this difference in the Okinawan prewar continues into the postwar. In the late fifties and early sixties, teachers hung “dialect tags” from the necks of offending students, which could only be gotten rid of bys finding other students slipping into the tabooed sounds. The hapless student who was still tagged at the end of the day had to go home wearing the badge of humiliation. (Field 1991:72)

6 In his story *Mabuigumi*, Medoruma Shun also explicitly brings up the subject that Okinawan men branded as spies were killed by Japanese soldiers (see Medoruma 2000:32).

The original Ryukyuan language and its various dialect groups were virtually eradicated as a result of the Japanese policy of assimilation that began at the end of the 19th century. The regional variant of the "Okinawan language" used today, termed "*Uchinā-Yamato-guchi*"[7], has to be considered a reinvention; it is being increasingly used, particularly since the 1990s, when "things Okinawan" found greater acceptance in mainland Japan and accordingly led to a growing sense of local pride in Okinawa itself. However, many authors – as well as filmmakers and musicians – seem to feel that it is not authentic to use the Japanese language to describe the "Okinawan reality". For this reason, many authors from Okinawa experiment with interspersing elements from the Okinawan language into written standard Japanese, for example by adding reading notes to Japanese terms and sentences that render the Okinawan pronunciation, or, conversely, by adding Japanese translations of dialogues between Okinawan characters that are held in the regional language. Shinjō Ikuo thus considers *Okinawa bungaku* to be multilingual literature (Shinjō 2003:304), in which the usual delineation between standard Japanese and the regional Okinawan language is blurred. He therefore concludes that *Okinawa bungaku* reflects cultural differences within the Japanese nation state (Shinjō 2003:305).

The truly noticeable political nature of the writings by Okinawan authors often becomes evident in the fact that they take a critical stance towards the discourse on Okinawa in popular Japanese media productions. "I think it's a poet's duty to destroy the image of 'Okinawa' the mass media produces, and represent his own 'Okinawa'" (Medoruma Shun, quoted in Bhowmik 2008:145) – with these words, Medoruma Shun, for example, explicitly distances himself from the popular representations of Okinawa that have been disseminated and marketed by both the Japanese mainstream media and in light fiction during the "Okinawa boom" that has been observed on the Japanese main islands since the 1990s. Along with Medoruma Shun, many other Okinawan intellectuals, authors and filmmakers are experimenting with strategies of resistance that are deliberately directed *against* these formulaic images of Okinawa. They balk at "being heteronomously constructed" by confronting the exoticising and stereotypical images of Okinawa that have now become a part of Japan's cultural canon. Frequently, Okinawan authors thus address uncomfortable topics such as the Pacific War, and especially the Battle of Okinawa, or the subsequent U.S. occupation – topics that are usually ignored in the hegemonic discourse on Okinawa.

7 A mixture of the traditional Ryukyuan language, a dialect called *Uchināguchi* ("language of Okinawa") which is spoken in central and southern Okinawa, and the Japanese language (*Yamatoguchi*, the "language of Yamato").

Finally, a collective value can be attributed to many *Okinawa bungaku* works, because by making Okinawa's own history and culture their subject and by using the local language, they are making very deliberate attempts to create an "Okinawan identity" that can be delineated from a "Japanese" one. This is another element through which these writings challenge the dominant perception of Japan's cultural hegemony.

Okinawa As a (Concealed) Colony of Japan

The conversion of the Ryukyu Kingdom into the Japanese Prefecture of Okinawa at the end of the 19th century and the subsequent "Japanisation" of the Okinawan population is frequently referred to in current research as Japan's colonization of a country that had been previously considered foreign[8]; it is sometimes also called "annexation": "Ryukyu, annexed in 1879, was the first foreign country absorbed by imperial Japan. Taiwan came next, acquired in 1895, followed by Korea which was annexed in 1910" (Taira 1997:143).

Although Okinawa, unlike Taiwan or Korea, never had official status as a Japanese colony, there is actually much evidence that Japan's relationship with Okinawa has been a colonial relationship of domination – if the basic definition of colonization as a "process of territorial acquisition" and the "expansion of a society beyond its original habitat" (Osterhammel 2006:8-9) is taken as an initial approach. "Territorial acquisition" is frequently accomplished through military conquest, following a long period of contact preceding that conquest. In the case of Okinawa, it can be traced back to the Satsuma Invasion of 1609 and was completed using diplomatic means during the Meiji period, in which the Ryukyu Kingdom was officially annexed by the Japanese Empire.[9]

8 Antoni decisively states that "From a Japanese viewpoint, Ryūkyū had been perceived as a culturally different, strange, un-Japanese, and thus foreign territory until far into the Meiji period. This is, for example, evidenced by the fact that initially – until 10 July, 1875 – the newly established Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo was responsible for the administration of the new prefecture, as well as by geographical and historical writings from that period that address the archipelago in the context of foreign countries in Asia, Europe and America" (Antoni 1983-1986: 90). There is also an increasing trend towards considering Okinawa as a "colony" (*shokuminchi*) of Japan; see, e.g., Taira Kōji (1997), Uemura Hideaki (2003), Oguma Eiji (1998/2006) and Taira Katsuyasu (2011). Alan Christy (1997:142) also points out that the previous research on Japanese colonialism has not addressed the case of Okinawa, although the key criteria of colonialism are met.

9 For more detailed information on this complicated process of integrating Okinawa into the modern Japanese nation, which was also called *Ryūkyū shobun* (the "disposition of Ryukyu"), and the discursive construction of Okinawa's affiliation to Japan that accompanied it, see Yonetani 2000, Uemura 2003 and Taira 1997.

According to Osterhammel's classifications, Okinawa at the end of the 19th century represents a classic case of an "exploitation colony," as opposed to a "settlement colony". The aim of this type of colonization is not to acquire new territory for the colonizing country's own population, rather the primary purposes are "economic exploitation," the "strategic safeguarding of imperial politics," and "increase in national prestige" (Osterhammel 2006:17). While the Satsuma invasion was definitely motivated by economic interests – since it enabled the isolated Japan during the Edo period to profit from the then still flourishing trade activities of Ryukyu with China and Southeast Asia – the decision to finally and officially annex Ryukyu in the Meiji period was driven more by geopolitical considerations: Japan as a newly emerging, modern state was forced to clearly define its territorial borders during the process of becoming a nation[10], and the geographic location of Ryukyu between Japan on the one side and China and Korea on the other made it a strategically attractive bridgehead and base in the Asia-Pacific region.[11]

The colonial situation as such is an amalgam of "dominance, exploitation, and cultural conflict" (Osterhammel 2006:30). One characteristic of colonial regimes that extends beyond the purely material benefit for the colonial power, and which is also clearly evident in the case of Okinawa, is the way the dominating country handles the cultural difference found in the colony: The colonial power views its own culture as superior, and thus justifies its presence in the foreign territory. The colonies have to assimilate, and consequently, in the course of colonization, the indigenous culture, and especially its language, is subject to far-reaching and drastic changes – even up to obliteration.

Immediately after the conversion of Ryukyu into the Okinawa Prefecture, Japan did not directly pursue a staunch policy of assimilation; the period until the Sino-Japanese War of 1894/95 is also referred to as being characterised by a "do nothing approach" (see, e.g., Shinzato 2003:286). The Japanese government initially concentrated mainly on the area of language teaching[12]. The Japanese assimilation policy did not go into full force until Japan's position in the international arena was strengthened after its victory in the Sino-Japanese War. The Okinawans were then supposed to be completely

10 For more information, see the detailed explanations by Morris-Suzuki 1998.

11 From an economic perspective, Okinawa soon turned into a problem. For example, as early as in the 1890s, the Japanese called the prefecture "palm tree hell" (*sotetsu jigoku*), since the poverty and famine situation that befell the Okinawan population was so desperate that the people even boiled out the poisonous fruits of the Sosetsu palm tree in order to eat the non-toxic remains (Christy 1997:144-145).

12 The first conversation training centre for teaching monolingual Okinawan teachers how to speak fluent Japanese was established in 1880; starting in 1884, Japanese language teachers were also recruited on the main islands of Japan (Shinzato 2003:286).

re-educated as Japanese citizens; this was accomplished by the elimination of traditional customs, which the Japanese viewed as “backward,“ such as tattooing the back of women’s hands (*hajichi*) or consulting *yuta*, the female shamans of Okinawa. In addition, land and tax reforms were also enforced: The Okinawa Prefecture Land Reorganisation Law (*Okinawa-ken tochi seiri-hō*) abolished the communal land-holding system (*jiwari seido*) that had been customary until then and the differentiated tax structure used in Okinawa was replaced by a uniform property tax (Morris-Suzuki 1998:27).

Despite these assimilation measures, the people in Okinawa were not treated as equal subjects, and thus the territorial integration did not entail a political integration as well. Elections at the prefecture level were not held until 29 years after the conversion of Ryukyu; 22 years passed between the introduction of the elections to the national assembly in Japan and Okinawa (see Christy 1997:165). Finally, the various cultural practices in Okinawa that were perceived as negative by the Japanese – such as heavy alcohol consumption, going barefoot, clothing, tattoos on women, the dialects, a lack of industriousness, low level of education, etc. – were also interpreted as signs of the “backwardness” of Okinawa and at the same time were viewed as a defect of character (Christy 1997:146-147). The fact that the people of Okinawa were not perceived as Japanese, but rather as ethnically “different” and culturally foreign was particularly evident at the Fifth National Industrial Exhibition (*Dai-gokai naikoku kangyō hakurankai*) held in Osaka in 1903, at which people of various foreign ethnic groups were the subjects of exhibits for the Japanese audience, and two women from Okinawa, along with Koreans and Ainu and Taiwanese people, were “displayed” as exotic species in the “Human Pavilion” (Christy 1997:141)[13]. On the whole, it can be stated that “During the pre-war period Okinawans were regarded as members of an inferior race” (Taira 1997:142).

The Battle of Okinawa, which raged from April to June 1945, claimed more than 200,000 lives – including a quarter of the civilian population of Okinawa[14]. In the course of the battle, a countless number of Okinawans – men, women and children – were killed or forced to commit suicide by soldiers from the Imperial Japanese Army; whether it was because their loyalty was questioned and they were suspected of sabotage when they unlawfully used the Okinawan language, or because the Japanese Army wanted to take the Okinawan civilians’ food and hiding places for themselves. It is quite obvious that Okinawa was used as a “human shield for the motherland” (Antoni

13 This exhibition was critically referred to in the play “Jinruikan“ (The Human Pavilion, 1976), written by Chinen Seishin (1941-2013).

14 Approx. 140,000 civilians are assumed to have been killed; see Hein/Selden 2003:13.

2003:314) in order to keep the allied troops away from the main islands of Japan for as long as possible. The people of Okinawa clearly experienced the war from a different position than the population of the Japanese mainland did, namely from the perspective of an ethnic minority that was ultimately classified as expendable.

The unequal treatment of Okinawa also continued after the war ended. The American occupation of Okinawa lasted 20 years longer than it did in the rest of Japan. Moreover, after Okinawa's reversion (*fukki*) to Japan in 1972, the US bases and troops remained in the Prefecture, so that today, approximately 70 percent of all of the American military bases in Japan are located on about 30 percent of the land in Okinawa (i.e. a total of less than one percent of the entire area of Japan) (Taira 1997:172). Therefore, one could also say that Okinawa has been "doubly colonized" – by Japan *and* the USA. Decolonization has never taken place, although there have been sporadic calls for an independent Okinawa: Even before Okinawa was returned to Japan, some radical Okinawan intellectuals and activists demanded that Okinawa must regain is original independent status, basing their stance on the concept of cultural difference and Okinawa's past as the Ryūkyū Kingdom.[15] As the hopes of being able to be liberated from the burden of the military bases were dashed, even after 1972, some Okinawan intellectuals and local politicians continued discussing the option of regaining Okinawa's independence[16], once again putting an emphasis on the cultural difference between Okinawa and Japan.

The problems associated with the military use of the islands continue to exist: Along with the continuous noise pollution in the vicinity of the military bases, manoeuvre-related accidents, plane and helicopter crashes, and motor vehicle accidents involving American soldiers happen on a regular basis. In addition, crimes committed by members of the U.S. military, such as theft, assaults, and rape of Okinawan women have repeatedly led to massive protests among the Okinawan people. At present, Okinawa is the poorest prefecture in Japan, with the highest unemployment rate and the lowest level of educational attainment.[17] Since these after-effects of the war are still pervasive today,

15 More detailed information on this can be found, e.g., in Higa Kōbun's *Okinawa dokuritsu no keifu. Ryūkyūkoku o yume mita rokunin* ["Genealogy of [the Idea of] Okinawa Independence. Six people Who Dreamed of the Ryukyu Kingdom," 2004].

16 See, for example, *Okinawa dokuritsu sengen* ["A Declaration of Okinawan Independence," 1997]. The debate on independence was revived again for a while in the wake of the gang rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three American soldiers in 1995.

17 Wages are only 70% of the average per capita income on the Japanese main islands; at approx. 8%, the unemployment rate is about twice as high as on the mainland (see Hein/Selden 2003:6).

Shinjō Ikuo's initially quite radical sounding assertion that Okinawa is not yet in a time of "*sengo*" – i.e. a "postwar period" – is certainly understandable (Shinjō 2003:5-9).

Writing (Back) against What? Canonised Okinawa Images and Impressions

In this paper, Okinawa is thus deemed to be a "quasi-colony" of Japan. The history outlined above and the problematic living conditions in the prefecture are consistently ignored in Japanese mass media productions and popular literature set in Okinawa. But then what are the images and impressions that dominate the discourse on Okinawa? The negative image the Japanese had of Okinawa up until at least the end of the war in 1945 – that Okinawans were lazy, uneducated and backwards – has changed considerably in recent decades. Today, the "exotic differentness" is predominantly seen as a positive trait, advertised and marketed as such, and consumed. Music and food from Okinawa are "in"; since the 1990s, Okinawa has been used as the setting of a growing number of movies, literary works and, since 2000, television series as well. These popular productions generally use a certain set of positive stereotypes, including descriptions of nature: blue seas, white sand beaches and subtropical vegetation are prevalent. In addition, recurring elements from the regional everyday culture and folklore are utilised, in order to visualise the differences between Okinawa and Japan. Very frequently, a "toned down" form of the local language is used, with simple explanations included to make it more easily accessible to the Japanese audience. Okinawa is constructed as a place where spirituality and "traditions" are still alive and well, such as special forms of ancestor worship or special rituals performed by female shamans (*yuta*).

In the majority of the media productions and literary works of popular Japanese literature, Okinawa is depicted as being populated by happy, somewhat naïve Okinawan people who like to sing, dance and drink. Social and community structures, such as villages and families for example, are still intact there. Life in Okinawa seems to be carefree, peaceful, slow-paced and easygoing, and the islands are thus idealised as a veritable paradise. In short, Okinawa is represented as an "'eternally festive place' from which the people of mainland Japan seek comfort and onto which they project their nostalgia for a utopian vision of Japan's pre-modernity" (Kō 2006:157).

Okinawa bungaku As Postcolonial Literature

Based on this background, it will now be presumed in the following that literature from Okinawa is embedded in a postcolonial context. The fact that Okinawa has not been granted independence, but rather still remains a part of Japan is not relevant here, as Declan Kiberd, referring to Irish literature, notes: "postcolonial writing does not begin only when the occupier withdraws: rather it is initiated at that very moment when a native writer formulates a text committed to cultural resistance" (Kiberd 1988/1996:6). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin take a similar view in their influential book *The Empire Writes Back*: In the authors' opinion, the term "postcolonial" refers to "all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al. 1994/1989:2). Accordingly, this essay also promotes the viewpoint that the term "*post*colonial" does not refer to the situation *after the colonial regime has withdrawn*, but rather to the power structures and realities that arise for the affected culture or society *starting at the time of the colonization* – i.e. in this case, on the effects that the Japanese colonization has on Okinawa, which still persist up to today: the constant awareness of an unequal balance of power, the continuous presence of a dominant, foreign *Other*, and the impending loss of Okinawa's own culture. This should already make it evident that the "post" in "postcolonial" now no longer only refers to a temporal aspect, but also to a body of theory, namely a perspective, in order to express a critical position against colonialism and its consequences (Quayson 2012:6). Both postcolonial literature and research thus also seek to break with the colonial past: "The prefix 'post' implies change and discontinuity, the assumption of a critical distance" (Mukherjee 2012:778).

At this point, it should be noted that "(post)colonial" is not the only register along which (post)colonial history can be examined; it is only one of many approaches (see Mukherjee 2012:778). Furthermore, authors – or even entire bodies of literature – cannot *per se* be classified as postcolonial. For example, an author can address (post)colonial situations in some of his or her writings, but does not necessarily have to do the same in all of his or her works (for more on this subject, also see Khair 2006:262). Accordingly, the entire body of Okinawan literature does not inevitably have to be categorised as postcolonial – i.e. characteristics of postcolonial writing or postcolonial critique/criticism do not invariably have to be present in all works from all authors.

A key objective of postcolonial literature – and research as well – is to counteract cultural assimilation by trying to make the oppressed and extinguished voices heard *from the perspective of the colonial subjects*.

The quest for a voice of one's own – or a whole ensemble of voices – is a central motivation of postcolonial writing. This pursuit of possibilities for self-expression or self-empowerment, for agency, and for taking part in the discourse on one's own self is also expressed in the writings of Okinawan authors.

The narrative style used in postcolonial works always has to be viewed in the context of the colonial canon: Usually, the internal perspective of the latter focuses on a white, dominant entity, which in turn is the target of the reader's empathy. The colonial subjects, in contrast, are depicted as marginalized; they are viewed from the outside, are stereotyped "and presented as an object of colonial observation, ridicule, suspicion or fear" (Fludernik 2012:905). In postcolonial literature, this perspective is reversed:

> The decision to provide a colonial subject's own perspective and to do so in the most empathetic manner, previously deployed only for white characters, marks a key moment in the shift from colonial to postcolonial writing since it implicitly valorizes the colonized, asserting that the native has now become a respectable subject of literary treatment. (Fludernik 2012:905)

When applied to the postcolonially motivated writings by Okinawan authors, this means they take a critical approach to dealing with the Japanese literary canon in which Okinawa is largely ignored. While popular contemporary Japanese literature occasionally uses Okinawa as a "stage," the protagonists are still Japanese characters (who, for example, travel to Okinawa where they meet Okinawan characters, or who meet Okinawan characters in other places). In most cases, an internal perspective is not presented for any Okinawan characters that appear. Okinawa is relegated to stereotypes that have now been firmly established – stereotypes that, since the 1990s, no longer necessarily have to be negatively connoted, but which inevitably indicate a sort of "temporal lag"[18] as compared to the hypermodern, and thus corrupt Japan. One example is Yoshimoto Banana's collection of short stories titled *Nankurunai* (["What Will Be, Will Be], 2004). A typical pattern that becomes evident here as well is that Okinawa serves as an (interchangeable) setting which is actually used to address other topics; in most cases, the quest for and experience of "healing" (*iyashi*) of a Japanese character. Okinawa is therefore exploited for the purpose of addressing Japanese issues. In contrast, writings by Okinawan authors usually focus on Okinawan characters as figures that readers can identify with; their internal perspective is presented to the reading

18 The term "temporal lag" is used by Iwabuchi Kōichi, who applies it to Japan's self-construction to distinguish itself from other Asian countries. See Iwabuchi 2003:22.

audience. In these works, the Okinawan sociocultural context, the Okinawans' own issues, concerns, sensitivities and history are the topics and subjects of reflection. Therefore, Okinawa is truly the main topic of these writings – and not just used as mere backdrop against which Japan is constructed or for contributing to the growth of Japanese characters.

Consequently, an empowerment strategy can thus be to reverse the customary position of colonizer and colonized, so that the colonized subjects are the focal point and the colonizers are either marginalized or even completely eliminated from the plot (Fludernik 2012:907-908). In fact, such inclinations are also found in the literature of Okinawan authors. There are many works – including those by Akutagawa Prize laureate Matayoshi Eiki as well as younger authors who are not yet established or known outside the region, such as tefutefu p.[19] – in which Japan and/or Japanese figures do not play any role at all or are essentially "written out of the story" entirely. When Japanese characters do appear, they often only serve as disruptive factors. Because Okinawa is not contrasted with Japan in such works, as is otherwise almost always the case, the usual dichotomisation as the structure and thus the external reference point for determining one‘s own "identity" is eliminated. Okinawa is no longer constructed in relation to Japan, but is rather given a separate, independent status.

Instead of putting an external focus on Japan, many authors from Okinawa take an internal perspective, concentrating on their own society. For example, the presence of the American military bases in Okinawa may be a topic; however, the differences and conflicts within the Okinawan population itself are also addressed. Finally, while Okinawa is predominantly constructed as a homogenous entity from the external perspective of Japanese authors, writers from Okinawa often deal with the differences between the various regions or island groups, thereby also examining the relationship between the centre (now represented by Naha) and the periphery (the smaller islands located farther away) within Okinawa.[20]

Moreover, writing in itself can also be an important emancipatory act for postcolonial subjects, as it is "an activity that traditionally confers cultural and political authority" (Fludernik 2012:912). Writing from a different position, i.e. from the perspective of the essentially marginalized colonized subjects, moves the marginalized people into the forefront, leading to a gradual shift in the balance of power. The marginalized people assert a voice, claim

19 For example, Matayoshi Eiki's novel *Kahō wa umi kara* ("Fortunes by the Sea," 1998) and tefu tefu p.'s short story *Tatakai, tatakau, hae* (["Fight, Fighting, Fly"], 2000); for more detailed information, see Hein 2010.

20 For example, this can be observed in the works of Sakiyama Tami.

agency for themselves and strive to emerge from under the shadow of the former colonizers and enter into a struggle for the power of representation. In postcolonial theory, it is precisely this action that the term “writing back” refers to – although this also includes reinterpretations of works which are part of the colonial canon.

Typical postcolonial narrative styles manifest themselves not only in the narrative point of view, the choice of protagonists and the focus of the content, there are also certain narrative strategies that are frequently used in the postcolonial context. One of these is using the local language and local expressions and idioms, with authors taking various approaches with regard to whether and to what extent these text passages are made accessible and understandable to an outside audience. In some cases, for example, vocabulary lists are added at the end of the text, while in other cases, local words, expressions and idioms or even entire sentences are interspersed throughout the writing without any explanation, thereby “throwing the reader into the deep end,“ so to speak. Some authors even decide to use their own traditional language so pervasively that at the same time, they refrain from being noticed by an outside audience (Fludernik 2012:918).

What using the language of the (former) colonizers ultimately implies is a topic of contentious debate: Does it position the colonized subjects on an eye-to-eye level with the former colonizers, or rather obliterate their traditional roots? Fludernik, at least, believes that utilising the language of the colonizer can be empowering (Fludernik 2012:917). In her opinion, using a hybrid form of the colonizer’s language is an act of independence and creativity: “a strong statement is made about confident national assurance in one’s own native use of the colonizer’s language as an innovative and independent resource” (Fludernik 2012:919).

It is therefore only logical that many Okinawan authors experiment with the local language in their writings. Perhaps Sakiyama Tami (*1954) can be considered as the author who is the most radical in terms of incorporating elements of local Okinawan language or its dialects into her writings:

> She also seems aware that her project will, undoubtedly, limit her readership. Nevertheless, Sakiyama soldiers on in an effort to destroy the kind of smooth Japanese writing whereby dialect is used simply to supplement a central language. (Bhowmik 2008:158)

Elsewhere in the same source, the term “guerrilla warfare” is even used to describe Sakiyama’s strategy (Bhowmik 2008:166), since her works – different from Matayoshi Eiki, who writes for a broad, not just Okinawan audience, and whose texts thus contain explanatory passages for his Japanese readers – do not contain any reading notes, clarifications or translations (see Bhowmik 2008:172). And in contrast to Medoruma Shun, Sakiyama Tami does not restrict her use of the local language to dialogues between her characters; she also frequently incorporates the Okinawan language into the descriptive passages as well.

It is not only the indigenous, "lost" language that appears both in postcolonial writings and in the literature of many Okinawan authors; there are also references to the respective (often) verbal narrative traditions, cultural idiosyncrasies and "local colour expressions" (Fludernik 2012:918). In an Okinawan context, this particularly applies to Matayoshi Eiki. In his writings, he uses dialect, the flora and fauna of Okinawa, regional customs and traditions, myths and religious beliefs as well as many elements of Okinawan folklore in order to create 'Okinanwan-ness'. He thus takes recourse to the same elements that can also be found in movies, TV series and literary works produced in Japan, where they are used to exoticize Okinawa. In Matayoshi's writings, however, these elements appear to be stripped of their peculiarity due to their natural everyday existence; they are no longer an exotic fetish here. Instead of romanticizing Okinawa, "Okinawan traditions" are therefore also used to create a certain ambivalence, and sometimes an ironic distance as well.

Frequently, postcolonial literature also experiments with space and time. There are distinct disruptions in the narrative pace, which is determined by the ratio of narrating time to narrated time. In some cases, the point in time and narrating time remain completely indeterminate, and often time is not linear, but cyclical (Fludernik 2012:919-920). Very similar techniques are also used for the setting, thereby expressing an independent understanding of time and space that is antithetical to the hegemonic perception (Fludernik 2012:920). In any case, it is noteworthy that in recent writings by Okinawan authors, the setting often remains indeterminate. They avoid referring to concrete locations (e.g. the names of cities and islands) and the typical descriptions of an idealised, subtropical Okinawan landscape that are prevalent in other works, even if, for example, allusions to the regional flora and fauna still imply that Okinawa (or, in Sakiyama's case, an abstract location that is only called "island" or *shima*) is the apparent setting. This may indicate attempts to escape the common stereotyping of Okinawa as a subtropical island paradise.

Often, experiments with multiple temporal dimensions can be found in postcolonial literary texts, in order to link or merge the past and present, for example. In Medoruma's works *Suiteki* and *Mabuigumi*, the dead, or their ghosts, act as a link between the past and present for the living, as a bridge to their own, buried memories. The incidents of the past have a direct impact on the events of the Okinawan present, or are closely intertwined with them.

Furthermore, authors of postcolonial writings often use certain narrative techniques, including the juxtaposition of several different perspectives, the use of unreliable narrators, nesting, such as stories within the story (Fludernik 2012:912), meta-fictional elements or montage (Fludernik 2012:913). In many cases, these serve to illustrate the fragmentation of postcolonial identities as well as the internal differences, disruptions and contradictions in postcolonial societies. Many of these stylistic devices are found in works by authors from Okinawa. For example, the writings of Medoruma Shun not only reveal *one* (new) perspective on Okinawa, but rather an entire plurality of many different perspectives. This technique helps to dispel the stereotypes of Okinawa that are prevalent in other works and counteract the hegemonic, monolithic image of Okinawa with a more nuanced, but at the same time also more complex image.

Finally, it has been stated that there is a simultaneity of the individual and collective dimension in postcolonial literature – similar to the definition used for the concept of minor literature:

> The interest of postcolonial literature is partly collective and partly individual. On the one hand, […] collective action, communal values, traditions of memory and native custom and ceremony are foregrounded […]. On the other hand, postcolonial literature also focuses on individual experience, trying to elicit sympathy for the other, using the success of one person as a model for others. (Fludernik 2012:933)

This can also be applied to the works of Sakiyama Tami, for example, which portray – often in a rather abstract way – the inner worlds and "soulscapes" of her protagonists and their (futile) search for identity, but at the same time have a "politico-ethical dimension" as well, as Bhowmik (2008:159) states, because:

> …Sakiyama invents a collectivity through the process of becoming. The sounds that fill her pages are the voice of the minor people, whose collective enunciation finds expression only in and through the writer. In short, it is through linguistic experimentation that Sakiyama crosses the divide from the narrow world of the individual to the cacophonous sphere of the collective… (Bhowmik 2008:178)

Writing Back: The Example of Medoruma Shun

In the following, the author Medoruma Shun will be used as a specific example of how postcolonial "writing back" against the exoticising images of Okinawa that dominate the Japanese canon can be put into practice. Although Medoruma, who was born in 1960 in Nakijin, a village in the north of the Okinawa main island, is part of the generation of Okinawans that was born after the Battle of Okinawa took place, an examination of the war is a fundamental topic of his works. The author became known outside the region in 1997, when he was awarded the Akutagawa Prize for his story *Suiteki*. In 2000, he received the Kawabata Yasunari Award for *Mabuigumi*. In both works, inexplicable events suddenly disrupt the lives of the main characters – in one an elderly man, and in the other, an elderly woman – which force them to deal with the memories of the war and feelings of guilt they had repressed up until then. With this approach, Medoruma therefore takes a critical stance towards the widespread discourse on Okinawa as a victim – very much like Ōshiro Tatsuhiro does by addressing the participation of Okinawans in the Pacific War.

In Medoruma's stories, the Battle of Okinawa and the American occupation that followed it are a constant presence both in the characters' memories and in the reality of their lives – for example, the stories mention various American consumer goods from the war and occupation that are used by the Okinawan characters. And those who died in the war – in the form of ghosts from the past as well as quite tangibly in the here and now of the story – have a direct impact on the Okinawan present. In *Suiteki*, this is evidenced, for example,

> in the image of a gourd melon used to describe how large Tokushō's foot has swollen, and in the effect of the water dripping from his toe, which, when poured into the garden, causes massive growth of the plants there. Here, Medoruma is referring to the fact that in the years immediately following the war, vegetables grew to an abnormally large size because the Okinawan soil was fertilised by the corpses of the many who had died. (Hein 2012:63; also see Takahashi 2003:382)

Medoruma thus retreats from the discussion of Okinawa as "*iyashi no shima*" – a "healing" island paradise. Sakiyama Tami's works take a similar approach; she likewise paints a bleak, pessimistic view of the Okinawan islands:

> Rather than portray an island where one merges with the landscape, drawing from it vitality and strength sapped by the drudgery of life in the much larger main islands – Okinawa included – Sakiyama depicts an island whose economy is ravaged, and community destroyed. (Bhowmik 2008:161)[21]

21 In addition, it is said that Sakiyama focuses on the "darker aspects of island life" (Bhowmik 2008:161) in her writings. Among other things, this is reflected in settings that are in decay, fractured communities which, in Sakiyama's writings, are no longer intact, and by the fact that her works are generally characterised by dark or night time landscapes (Bhowmik 2008:162).

Medoruma's protagonists are not the naïve, happy, singing and dancing island inhabitants that are frequently depicted in other works: They have experienced trauma and are often lonely outsiders isolated from their village community. They find that Okinawa has completely changed after the war, have lost their home and homeland (and in some cases the right to set foot on certain areas of Okinawan land, e.g. if military bases have been built on it), are alienated and uprooted. In his short story *Burajiru ojii no sake* (["*Ojii's* Sake from Brazil, 1999"]), Medoruma once again avoids the "typical" set of figures by centring on the *ojii* (grandpa) – who usually does not play a role at all or only remains on the fringes of the story – instead of the *'Okinawa no obā'* (Okinawan grandma) that is commonly found in other stories. The *ojii* in this story is representative of the many emigrants who were forced to move to Brazil (or other South and Central American countries) out of sheer poverty and hardship. Worried about his relatives, the *ojii* returns to Okinawa five years after the war has ended, only to discover that all of them have died in the war, and realises "that the village where he was born and raised has become a world on the other side of the barbed wire fences of an American military base" (Medoruma 1999/2000b:83). At sunset, "the many bright beams of light coming from the US base intersected; they reached all the way down to the shoreline. *Ojii* knew then he could never call this place his home again" (Medoruma 1999/2000b:84).

Postcolonial literature first and foremost strives to make a multiplicity of lost and suppressed voices heard (Bowers 2004:97). In fact, a plurality can also be seen in the works of Medoruma Shun: His characters fight, lie to, cheat and distrust each other, thereby embodying different aspects of Okinawa, which may well be in conflict with each other.

In *Suiteki*, for example, Seiyū notices that the water dripping from the toe of the unconscious, bedridden Tokushō (the protagonist) has a growth-enhancing effect on plants. He then begins to exploit the condition of the ailing Tokushō and sells the magic water in the village as a rejuvenating and potency enhancing remedy. In the end, when the protagonist's condition returns to normal, the effect of the water reverses, and the angry villagers beat up the supplier who had intended to get rich at their expense. Tokushō, in turn, who is repeatedly asked to talk about his experiences during the Battle of Okinawa, first at schools, but later for the local media as well, starts to greatly embellish his stories about the war; he reserves his personal "truth" for himself or represses it completely until he is essentially haunted by the ghosts of the past and – at least temporarily – has to face his own past and sense of guilt.

In Medoruma Shun's story *Mabuigumi*, the disunity of the villagers is depicted with particular clarity: Here, the protagonist, Uta, is called to the home of Kōtarō, the son of her friend Omito, who was killed in the Battle of Okinawa. His *mabui* ("spirit")[22] has left his body, which makes Kōtarō so weak that a giant hermit crab settles in his mouth. Uta tries to perform a ceremony called *mabuigumi* in order to make the spirit return to his body. In this narrative, the village is represented by the heads of various associations that are made privy to the incident. First, they meet together in the village hall and disagree about what to do: Shinzato, the District Magistrate, wants to keep the matter a secret, because he is worried that rumours might hinder the progress of a Japanese hotel construction project (Medoruma 1999/2000a:21). The chairman of the youth association, however, thinks that the strange incident involving Kōtarō could even be marketed to the media, an idea which is sternly reprimanded by Uta (1999/2000a:22). After a few arguments, they decide not to go public with the matter for the time being, in order to give Uta time to try the *mabuigumi* ritual. For Uta herself, the whole situation is uncomfortable; she is disgusted that the assembled men seem to be mainly interested in the food and alcoholic beverages, which are in the meanwhile being served by the chairwoman of the women's association, (1999/2000a:20); she feels that the men's behaviour is irreverent. A second meeting takes place a few days later in Kōtarō's house; by now all of them are exhausted from taking shifts to keep watch over Kōtarō around the clock. Moreover, distrust has set in between the parties, since in the meantime, rumours about Kōtarō's condition were leaked to the outside despite the earlier decision to keep the matter secret. The chairman of the men's association suggests taking Kōtarō to the hospital (1999/2000a:26). While Uta now begins to doubt herself and wonders if Kōtarō might possibly actually be better off in the hospital, the chairman of the elders association is committed to giving Uta one more day for the *mabuigumi* (1999/2000a:28).

Finally, in *Burajiru ojii no sake*, the figure of the lonely, isolated elderly person makes it clear that not all people are integrated into the village community; i.e. others are scorned and excluded in Okinawa as well. Medoruma thus contradicts the widely held stereotype that all people in Okinawa are friends forever from the first time they meet, as it is expressed in the well-known phrase *ichariba chōdē*. In this way, he avoids typecasting the islands and their inhabitants with characteristics that are branded as being "Okinawan" and thus avoids making them readable in *one single* authoritative way; instead, he tends not to resolve disruptions and contradictions in his writings.

Ghostly apparitions and specific types of ancestor worship are frequent motifs in literary (and also cinematic) constructs of Okinawa. In his fictional

22 According to Okinawan belief, a *mabui* – the "spirit (of a living person)" (Uchima/Nohara 2006: 255) – leaves the body of a person if he or she is in a state of shock or emotionally weakened.

works, Medoruma refers to these topoi as well; however, these Okinawan "traditions" no longer work in his writings. For example, the people do not really believe in the *yuta*, the female shamans, anymore, and ultimately, their rituals no longer have an effect. In *Mabuigumi*, for instance, the protagonist Uta does not succeed in making the young man's spirit return to his body, despite all of her efforts; in the end, the man dies.

Medoruma's writings are invariably interspersed with descriptions of the landscape and/or subtropical flora and fauna – for example, he mentions papayas (Medoruma 1999/2000b:62), mangroves (Medoruma 1999/2000b:59) and pineapples (Medoruma 1999/2000b:55), as well as tropical fish (Medoruma 1999/2000b:63) and the poisonous *habu* (Medoruma 1999/2000b:56), a snake native to Okinawa. At the same time, however, he brings up the destruction of nature: In *Burajiru ojii no sake*, the sewage from a factory and excrement from a pig farm turn a river into a foul-smelling, toxic sludge; fishing only yields sick and deformed fish (Medoruma 1999/2000b:55).

Furthermore, Medoruma's literature also contains concrete political statements with which he, for instance, criticizes the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972. In *Burajiru ojii no sake*, which takes place when Okinawa is still under U.S. occupation, a group of primary school students compares the American money that is familiar to them with the "foreign" Japanese banknotes and coins a schoolmate has brought. The Japanese money seems shabby to them. In particular, they sneer at the 1 yen coin, because it is so "flimsy and light, like a cheap plastic toy" (Medoruma 1999:51), and they also do not like the face of the "grumpy-looking old man with the big mole" on the 1000 yen note – this presumably refers to Itō Hirobumi, Japan's first prime minister in the Meiji period (Medoruma 1999:50). The narrator draws the following conclusion: "If the reversion of Okinawa to Japan would mean that from now on, this [Japanese] money would have to be used every day, that could not be a good thing" (Medoruma 1999:51).

However, Medoruma is even more drastic in his essays, in which he expresses blatant criticism of the Japanese emperor. To mark the 15-year anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa, the National Sports Festival was held in Okinawa in 1987; Emperor Hirohito planned to visit the event, but had to cancel after he was diagnosed with cancer, from which he ultimately died. In his essay "Okinawa-sen to kichi no mondai o kangaeru" (["Considerations On the Battle of Okinawa and the Problem of American Military Bases]", 2005), Medoruma writes the following:

> When I heard the news that he [the Tennō] had to cancel his visit due to health reasons, it seemed to me as if the anger and resentment of those

> killed at the Battle of Okinawa had put a curse on the Shōwa Tennō. To protect his own position in the name of "maintaining the state structure," he had prolonged the war and sacrificed Okinawa. He also sent the "*Tennō messēji*"[…] to MacArthur and thus sold out Okinawa to America. It is not just that he showed no remorse in this matter – he never stopped covering up his own responsibility and guilt for the war. Such a cowardly, shameless man must never be allowed to set foot on Okinawan soil. And so those who died in the Battle of Okinawa, who knew that the livinsg Okinawans would not be able to stop the visit by the Tennō, quickly beckoned him to the afterworld: "We will not let this one set foot on Okinawan soil." I simply could not help imagining this. (Medoruma 2005/2012:64)

Ultimately, it is not only important *what* is (not) said about Okinawa, but also *how* it is said. Medoruma's texts appear recalcitrant – and resistant – both on the content and linguistic level. In the dialogues, he uses the regional language of Okinawa, but, in contrast to the works of some other authors and popular Okinawan films as well, he does not make them easily accessible to a Japanese audience by adding translations or explanations.

Many authors from Okinawa deviate from the established, stereotypical narrative patterns and experiment with representing Okinawa from multiple perspectives. When evoking *Okinawan-ness*, Medoruma Shun, as well as authors such as Sakiyama Tami and some younger, even less well-known writers from Okinawa, often use a writing style that can be identified as "magical realism".[23] In magical realism, past and present, fantasy and reality, the world of the dead and the living converge together. The magical and the reality do not contradict each other; instead, the supernatural is accepted as natural and a normal part of everyday life.

Interestingly, the magical-realist writing style evolved from a specific Latin American literary form that originated in the 1960s into a technique universal to postcolonial literature (Siskind 2012:834). Today, it is considered to be a special literary language that Homi Bhabha has called "the narrative form most capable of expressing the cultural particularity of the postcolonial periphery" (Bhabha 1990, cited in Siskind 2012:833). The motivation behind this is to tell the history anew, from the perspective of the colonized subjects (Siskind 2012: 839) and express their own local experiences (Siskind 2012:859). Writing in the characteristic magical realist style can therefore be seen as an emancipatory cultural – and political – act that the authors undertake in an attempt to break free from the dominant literary discourse (see Siskind 2012:848). Research also corroborates that this writing style has a subversive nature because it questions the definitions and notions of reality and truth in

23 For more detailed information, see Hein 2012.

the established systems (Bowers 2004:4) and because the reference to myths and the supernatural can be viewed as a post-colonial critique of the western principle of "reason" (Fludernik 2012:927).

Conclusion

In their writings, many Okinawan authors experiment with various approaches to giving a voice to their "Okinawan" identity – in terms of both the linguistic style and form as well as the topics that are dealt with and the narrative mode. If the concept of Japanese "national literature" is based on the premise of a uniform cultural identity, language and history, it is exactly here where the (political, historical, cultural, linguistic) conflicts, tensions and fractures within the nation-state of Japan become evident.

According to postcolonial theory, one could argue that the literary output of Okinawan authors takes place in a contact zone in which the colonizer and colonized come together, the "third space," which Homi Bhabha views as a free, non-hierarchically structured, creative space where representations can be renegotiated (Bhabha 1990:211) and from which "the suppressed can speak" (Bronfen/Marius 1997:13). In the third space, other, oppositional positions are voiced and heard, disputing and questioning the authority of the hegemonic discourse.

Postcolonial literature deliberately tackles the literary canon that has long excluded the voice of the colonized subjects; these responses to the canon "signify a historical becoming, the third person of a dialogue becoming first and second person" (Mukherjee 2012:774). Taking Mukherjee's outline of different postcolonial approaches to dealing with the "Western canon" as a basis and applying it to the "case of Okinawa," it can be said that a large share of the literature from Okinawa are reactions to canonized Japanese language works known in Japan – not only literary texts, but films and television productions as well – and counterpose them with a different image of Okinawa from an Okinawan perspective. At the same time, they take up – and rewrite – literary genres that dominate the Japanese media production. However, it is important to note that postcolonial writing is not only reactive and antagonistic – i.e. directed against the prevailing canon – but in turn can form its own canon (see Mukherjee 2012: 775, 777).

What distinguishes the relationship between colonizers and colonized from the relationship between "self" and a strictly separate "other" – at least this is one of the premises of postcolonial theory – is the fact that not only does the colonizer intervene in and thus change the culture of the colonized subjects, but that conversely, in the contact zone arising from the colonization process, the identity of the colonizer is also influenced, resulting in a process of hybridization. However, it is still uncertain whether and to what extent the Okinawan self-representations actually have an impact on the Japanese cultural canon in terms of content, and whether they are able to effect changes – and if so, which changes – with respect to the Japanese self-image.

An effect that postcolonial literature inevitably creates is that the literature of the former colonizer is enriched by it (Fludernik 2012: 932). This is also certainly the case with literature by Okinawan authors: In Japan, their works are considered to be part of the Japanese literature, honored with inclusion in a "*zenshū*" and awarded (even national) prizes. By their very existence, they have therefore shaped and changed the literary landscape of Japan since the Meiji period.

At the same time, however, it is also apparent that the literature by Okinawan authors is predominantly studied by scholars who come from Okinawa themselves. In this way, they play an active part in raising awareness of Okinawan literature and the multiplicity of voices expressed in it – albeit at the scientific discourse level, and not at an ordinary, everyday one.

Currently, all facts still indicate that there is a hegemonic discourse of Okinawa as an exotic "other Japan," which is dominated by the Japanese mass media, while critical Okinawan self-representations are disseminated in non-mainstream media, such as experimental films and literary works by Okinawan authors who are *not* nationally known, and thus do *not* reach a larger Japanese audience.

The example of Medoruma Shun, however, who, as the winner of the Akutagawa Prize and other national awards, has become nationally known and whose fictional works have been published by established Japanese publishers such as Asahi Shinbunsha, could point to a new direction: This is an author who takes a very critical approach to addressing the relationship between Japan and Okinawa, but at the same time has successfully become part of the Japanese literary establishment – even if he avoids public appearances associated with this. Consequently, he can contribute to the prevailing discourse on Okinawa that is taking place in Japan, in order to potentially change it from the inside out. Therefore, this could at least indicate the beginning of a cultural hybridization in the postcolonial relationship between Okinawa and Japan.

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SHIOTSUKI Ryoko

Shamanism As a Symbol for Okinawan-ness: Identity Politics in Japanese Films and Literature Depicting Okinawa

The aim of this paper is to examine how shamanism has been used to represent Okinawan culture by analysing recent films and literature depicting Okinawa. The results show that *yuta*, as shamans are called in Okinawa, as well as shamanism have been chosen to represent the 'essence' of Okinawa. This tendency can be observed after the 1980s; prior to that time, the *noro*, or village priestess, who was formally appointed by the ruling dynasty, had served that function. However, since the 1990s, *yuta* have begun to gain attention as a representation of Okinawan culture. One reason for this shift could be due to the changes in the Okinawan lifestyle: Village communities have been disappearing, which has today contributed to the gradual decrease in the power of the *noro*. Nowadays, traditional festivals and rituals led by *noro* are of little importance to many villagers. On the other hand, *yuta* are still important in Okinawan society because they pray for the community and provide advice to individuals, and thus fulfil a role similar to that of a counsellor. As the *yuta* are not locally oriented like the *noro*, but rather have the capability to translocate, the culture of shamanism still remains alive in Okinawa. Another reason that *yuta* are the preferred representatives of Okinawan ethnic identity may be that shamanism is associated with traits which function as an 'anti-authoritarian' and 'anti-institutional' mechanism. From a historical perspective, rulers have oppressed shamanism in different periods, because shamans talk and behave freely and sometimes disobey rules. Therefore, they often unintentionally became opponents of the rulers. It has also been pointed out that the function of this 'anti-authoritarian' and 'anti-institutional' mechanism is closely related to the recent revival of shamanism or revival of religions all over the world, including in Okinawa.

In recent years, an increasing number of films and literary works depicting Okinawa have dealt with *yuta* and shamanistic culture as a representation[1] of an 'essence of Okinawa' and as 'typical of Okinawa.' For example, in films

1 In this article, I define representation as an icon or a symbol which stands for a certain culture.

featuring Okinawa, such as *Paradaisu byū* ([“Paradise View”]) directed by Takamine Gō (1985), and *Nabii no koi* ([“Nabbie’s Love”] directed by Nakae Yūji (1991), a *yuta* who practices divination using rice appears as one of the main characters and plays an important role in the plot. Examples of literary works describing Okinawa include *Buta no mukui* ([“The Pig‘s Retribution”], written by Matayoshi Eiki (1996). In this novel, a young person who has a keen interest in *yuta* performs a shamanistic ritual of building an *utaki* (sacred place) for his father on his home island. In *Mabuigumi* (“Spirit Stuffing”, 1999), written by Medoruma Shun, a female *kaminchu* (“priestess”) tries to stuff a spirit back into a person whose spirit has been lost. In *Bagājimanupanasu: Waga shima no hanashi* (“Bagājimanupanasu[2]: The Story of My Island”, 1998), written by Ikegami Eiichi, the main character is a young female *yuta*. The author vividly describes the process by which a female *yuta* candidate comes to be a *yuta*.

Yuta are thus revaluated as representations of the spiritual world of Okinawa or of Okinawan ethnic identity. This trend cannot only be found in films and literary works, but also in guidebooks about Okinawa and magazines and newspapers, as well as in TV programs introducing Okinawan culture to a Japanese audience. The following three points can be considered as the background to this development:

(1) The number of *kaminchu* who are in charge of village rituals is decreasing as the village community collapses; however, more and more *yuta* are personally providing consultations and performing divinations[3].

(2) People have redefined the role of the *yuta* to include counsellor, akin to those in the fields of psychiatry and psychology[4].

(3) Especially after the 1990s, the idea that Okinawa is a ‘paradise island’, offering a spiritual world and ‘healing’ to its visitors from the Japanese main islands, and that Okinawa still sustains prayer and harmony with nature through shamanism, while mainland Japan has presumably lost these qualities, was disseminated by the influence of the New Age movement[5].

2 *Bagājimanupanasu* is Okinawan for “*waga shima no hanashi*”.

3 The results of a census of shamans conducted by Lebra in 1961 showed that one in every 600 people was a shaman (Lebra 1966:80). Currently, it is assumed that the number is increasing (Shiotsuki 1992; Ishigaki 1983).

4 For example, Ōhashi Hideshi appreciates the *yuta*’s religious system by calling *yuta* “a counselor of the field” (Ōhashi 1998: v).

5 See Shiotsuki 1999a for the relationship between *yuta* and the New Age movement.

The spread of such ideas is related to the history of Okinawa as a kingdom formerly independent of Japan (*Yamato*), and to the perception of Okinawan culture(s) as being different from that of Yamato-Japan.

Furthermore, the revival of shamanism can be regarded as a part of a religious revival that took place as an anti-modern and anti-Western European movement in the 1990s. This religious revival phenomenon started in Russia, Mongolia, and Eastern Europe after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and continues to be observed throughout the world today, including in the Buddhist countries of Thailand and Sri Lanka as well as in Islamic nations[6]. Originally, religion and politics were closely related; consequently, the present religious revival movement cannot be disconnected from politics. For instance, the differences among ethnic groups are often emphasised, and religion is frequently used strategically as a symbol for the reconstruction of the nation or ethnic groups. As with other religions, it may be said that shamanism, a religion in a broad sense, is in the new spotlight as a representation of ethnic identity. The aim of the identity politics arising from shamanism as representing a certain culture as a whole is to establish a position of superiority by advocating the uniqueness of the respective culture and the history, and amplifying 'our' voice as the weak in the world system[7].

Regarding the issue of 'cultural representation,' with the post-colonial expansion as the background, Orientalistic views of the 'Other', filled with the prejudice of outsiders, have been actively criticised. It is thus sometimes regretted that researchers excessively emphasise aspects of shamanism when talking about Okinawa[8]. Conversely, however, there are also cases of 'cultural insiders' trying to take advantage of the *yuta* as a representation of ethnic identity by using the so-called 'insider's view'. This may be what De Certeau called the "tactics of the weak"[9].

Based on the above considerations, the purpose of this study is to examine some of the reasons why, in recent years, Okinawan people have come to choose and use shamanism, including the figure of the *yuta*, to represent Okinawan culture, thereby using both for the sake of identity politics. In this

6 There is a wide variety of research on religious revival, such as, for example, on immigrants and the revival of Islam (Naitō 1996) and the revival of Irish and Catholic churches in the context of the Celtic revival trend (Mori 2001).

7 See Shiotsuki 1999b.

8 For example, see Narisada's 1999 study about representations of Okinawan females, and Manabe's article (2000) on representations of Korean *fūzoku* (i.e. shamanism).

9 De Certeau 1999 [1987]: 25-27.

study, views about shamanism will be investigated, especially as they appear in literature and films about Okinawa or which are set in Okinawa.

Views about *Yuta* in Okinawan Films

For the purpose of this article, I define "Okinawan film" as films that describe the culture and social conditions of Okinawa. One example of a relatively recently produced film about Okinawa which shows a *yuta* is the movie *Nabii no koi* (["Nabbie's Love"], directed by Nakae Yūji (1999). This is a new tendency that has not been observed before, and could be indicative of the growing importance of *yuta* as a representation of Okinawa.

The directors who, in their films, describe *yuta* in their daily life or use *yuta* as a key device for the development of the story tend to come from Okinawa or have at least lived in Okinawa for a while. One could thus argue that these directors describe the *yuta* from an 'insider's perspective'. In addition, the topics of the films in which *yuta* tend to appear centre around a mythical world, as the theme of the incarnation of a pig, the appearances of gods, or the frequent topos of a lost spirit clearly show.

From a larger sample of Okinawan films, I carefully selected the ones depicting Okinawan shamanism; these are shown in Table 1. These films portray religious professionals such as *yuta* and *noro*, gods and spirits, and present spiritual and cosmic views. After taking a closer look at these movies, the following shifts in the content of Okinawan films describing shamanism became evident:

(1) From *noro* to *yuta*
(2) From a narrowly defined political message to a political message using spiritual and mythical worlds
(3) Filming in remote Okinawan islands instead of using the main island as the film location
(4) Emphasising *Yamatu-guchi* (Japanese) over *Uchinaaguchi* (Okinawa dialect; including *Uchinaa Yamatu-guchi*, a mixture of Japanese and Okinawa dialect)

Regarding the first point, the *kaminchu* – including the *noro* – who was in charge of village rituals, was featured prominently as a character in films produced between the 1960s and 1970s; here, they exemplified the 'essence of Okinawa' (which includes the mystic aspects of Orientalism). The film entitled *Kamigami no fukaki yokubō* (["The Profound Desire of the Gods"], directed by Imamura Shōhei and released in 1968, describes a village on a remote island which becomes confronted with modernization and touristic development. Members of a family traditionally performing the village rituals are made responsible for the ill luck that befell the village. They subsequently suffer from being marginalized, ignored, or even prosecuted by the villagers[10]. It is important to note that the communal aspects of the shaman's activities are still foregrounded here. However, since the 1980s, in the films directed by Takamine Gō, and later those directed by Makiya Tsutomu and Nakae Yūji, it is the *yuta* who appears in the films rather than the *noro*. *Yuta* played the role of shamans who perform divinations with respect to personal matters, such as the date of a wedding. Especially since the 1990s, due to the influence of the movement emphasising the spiritual world, it became possible for *yuta* to appear as characters in films. In order to stage a *yuta* in a film about Okinawa, however, the film directors had to be familiar with the Okinawan culture in the first place; it is thus no coincidence that these films were made by directors who either come from Okinawa or have lived in Okinawa.

With respect to the second point, in many cases, narrowly defined and direct political messages, such as those related to problems about the U.S. bases in Okinawa, the destruction of nature and unfavourable social influences caused by the developers from mainland Japan were incorporated into films set in Okinawa between the 1960s and the 1980s. However, in the late 1990s, spiritual and mythical worlds started to be featured as the main theme in the films, instead of the narrowly defined political topics dealt with before. Therefore, different dimensions of political messages, such as the uniqueness of Okinawa, anti-modernist, and anti-mainland Japan positions were conveyed, rather than simply stating that Okinawa had a wonderful worldview.

Regarding the third point, there are many reasons for moving the shooting locations from the main island of Okinawa to the more remote islands. Physically, air transport has become more convenient. Moreover, if filmed on a remote island, the problem of the U.S. military bases, which is a fundamental issue on the main island of Okinawa, need not be mentioned. Furthermore, if a remote island is used as the location, the Okinawan worldview could be staged more easily, since the islands have abundant space and picturesque scenery.

Concerning the fourth point, the changes in the language used in the movie scripts may partially be attributed to the origins of the respective directors. Some directors from mainland Japan also use *Uchinaaguchi* (Okinawa dialect) for reasons of realism, mainly because they recognise the close relationship

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10 Yomota Inuhiko criticised the film by saying that it was full of "ideological preconceptions (what Said may refer to as Orientalism) and descriptions unrelated to the reality of Okinawa continued to be presented in every respect," and "it ended up spreading the unfortunate stereotype of Okinawa, that the islands are isolated from civilization and still being controlled by mythological thoughts" (Yomota 2001: 52-53, author's own translation).

between ethnic identity and the use of language. They also use *Uchinaaguchi*[11] as a means of expressing the 'uniqueness' of Okinawa. In particular, director Takamine Gō uses *Uchinaaguchi* exclusively in his films and even makes actors from the Japanese main islands speak their lines in *Uchinaaguchi*; therefore, his films are subtitled with standard Japanese[12].

As a next step, I selected and marked (by circling a number) films in which *yuta* and equivalent characters appear (see Table 1). After examining their images, the following characteristics became evident:

(1) In many cases, shamans in remote islands are shown wearing white clothes.
(2) There are many scenes showing *yuta* using rice in their divinations.
(3) Many scenes show *yuta* in their daily lives (emphasising the secular aspects of *yuta* without beautifying it, depicting the *yuta* as a motherly figure).
(4) *Yuta* (or characters similar to *yuta*) and shamanism represent the spiritual and mythical world of Okinawa.

With regard to the first characteristic, in many films the leading characters move to a small and remote island by boat and the story develops in that microcosm. In these films, *yuta* characters frequently appear. In these cases, their outward appearance differs quite a lot from that of the *yuta* on the main island of Okinawa: While the ficticious *yuta* are mostly young women who wear flashy jewellery and white clothes, actual *yuta* rather tend to be middle-aged or elder women who do not distinguish themselves by gaudy apparel or any special kind of clothing[13]. These *yuta* characters were thus apparently not modelled after actual shamans.

In terms of the second characteristic, divination using rice is called *kumizan*, which is one of the divination methods shamans such as the *yuta* in Okinawa use. The reason why many films include scenes of *kumizan* could be that it is regarded as the 'traditional' *yuta*'s method of divination. However, other scenes describing cartomancy and zoomancy could be observed in the films as well.

Turning to the third characteristic, the scriptwriters or directors of the films were either from Okinawa or had lived in Okinawa. Therefore, the

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11 For example, see Katō 2001 for an analysis of language use and literature in Okinawa.

12 Takamine was born on the island of Ishigaki, a peripheral island of Okinawa Prefecture. He seems to be able to pay delicate attention to the differences between the Okinawan languages (Yomota 2001: 57).

13 However, *yuta* from Miyako and Amami wear white clothes when conducting certain rituals and ceremonies.

yuta or *yuta*-like characters are described from an 'an insider's perspective'. In cases in which film directors from Japan's mainland describe *yuta* from 'an outsider's perspective,' *yuta* are frequently displayed as young beautiful females; however, in fact, an overwhelming majority of *yuta* are middle-aged, and perceived as 'mother-like'. This is supported by the fact that married women with children, busy with household matters in their 30s, enter the state of *kami dāri* (i.e. possession) and exercise the *nubii no negai* ("wish to postpone") or postpone becoming a *yuta* until a later time.

People on the Japanese main islands tend to regard Okinawa as an exotic Oriental place; accordingly, they beautify and mystify the *yuta*, whereas descriptions of the *yuta* from an 'insider's view,' in some cases, overemphasise their worldly aspects. These descriptions include the *yuta* wearing many large rings on their fingers and being fond of money. Generally, *yuta* are not described as completely materialistic, but often depicted as having both worldly and saintly traits.

Regarding the fourth point, in recent years, films set in Okinawa feature spiritual, shamanistic and mythical worlds as dominant themes; therefore, the frequency of films in which the *yuta* appear as mediators between this and an alien world is increasing. For example, *yuta* often appear in stories about lost souls, characters being bewitched to eat soil, characters being spirited off, or characters who have lost their voice and are searching for the cause. This is clear evidence that the shamanistic world has come to be valued.

The View of *Yuta* in Okinawan Literature

For this section, literary works that describe the world of shamans, such as the *yuta*, were selected for a closer examination from a larger pool of recent Okinawan literary works (see Table 2). 'Okinawan literature' is defined here as literature set in Okinawa and which describes the culture and social circumstances of Okinawa[14].

As can be seen in Table 2, the appearance of *yuta* characters and their descriptions in Okinawan literature are largely consistent with what was observed in the films. The most important characteristics can be summarised as follows:

(1) Starting in the 1980s, prior to the appearance of *yuta* characters in Okinawan literature, female priestesses such as *noro* and *kaminchu* appeared frequently.

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14 Although it has been argued that it is not necessary to identify a certain group of literary works among postcolonial literature as 'Okinawan literature,' literary works describing the culture and societies in Okinawa are called "Okinawan literature" in this study.

(2) The gist of the stories shifted from a narrowly defined political message to a broadly defined political message in the 1980s and 1990s[15]. Examples of narrowly defined political messages would include the problematic issue of Okinawa being ruled by America, the problem of the U.S. military bases in Okinawa, and a critique of developments attributed to the influx of capital from mainland Japan. In contrast, political messages defined in a broader sense use spiritual and mythical motifs that are deemed to be the 'essence of Okinawa'. Examples of this include the topic of healing and the process by which a *yuta* candidate becomes a full-fledged *yuta*. The emphasis put on the depiction of cultural and religious elements deemed specifically Okinawan (such as a high degree of spirituality) by Okinawan writers may be interpreted as an act of self-assertion. Thus, it is a political act, by which the own culture, otherwise deemed inferior, is being valorized – which certainly is not only the case with regards to Okinawan literature but applies to the literary self-representation of other minorities as well.
(3) In many cases, the stories in which *yuta* appear are set in a remote island instead of the main island of Okinawa.
(4) *Uchinaaguchi* (Okinawa dialect), including *Uchinaa Yamatu-guchi* (e.g. Sakiyama Tami), is emphasised in the literary texts.
(5) Writers who come from Okinawa describe the *yuta* as fitting into daily life; they depict her as a motherly figure, above middle age, and as an earthly person. On the other hand, writers from the Japanese main islands tend to create *yuta* characters as young beautiful females.

Detailed descriptions from (1) to (5) are not provided here, as they would overlap with the descriptions of the films presented in the previous section; however, the following aspects should be pointed out: Many writers who have described *yuta* were of Okinawan origin, and they depicted *yuta* characters from an 'insider's perspective'. In addition, whereas earlier generation (e.g. Ōshiro Tatsuhiro) and mid-career (e.g. Medoruma Shun) writers described the system of *kaminchu* and village traditions, were interested in the oppression of the *yuta* and related the *yuta* to social issues such as the problem of the U.S. bases, younger authors (e.g. Ikegami Eiichi) are interested in the experiences of possession and in the process by which a *yuta* candidate becomes a proper *yuta*. Consequently, it is clear that the interests vary across the different generations

15 According to Yonaha Keiko, "in the 1980s and 1990s, images closely connected to Okinawa, such as 'the war' and 'the U.S. military bases', started to fade and life in Okinawa has become homogenised with mainland Japan. In this situation, conversely, the 'indigenous' aspect of Okinawa started to be reexamined" (Yonaha 1996:219).

of writers. Furthermore, both mid-career and younger writers show a common strong interest in *mabui* (“spirits”). These differences in interests can be observed in films as well. At present, young writers often feature *yuta* and the shamanistic world as the main topic, which seems to indicate that spirituality in Okinawa is sought from the dimensions of shamanism and animism.

Generational Comparisons of Authors of Okinawan Literature – Ōshiro Tatsuhiro’s View of *Yuta*

In this section, Ōshiro Tatsuhiro’s[16] views of *yuta* is analyzed, as he is regarded as a senior representative writer of Okinawan literature. Nakahodo Masanori, a researcher of Okinawan literature, discussed the relationship between Ōshiro and *yuta* as follows:

> Talking about *yuta*, I immediately think about the works of Ōshiro Tatsuhiro. His most recent feature length work, *Hi no hate kara* ([“From the End of A Day”]) followed by *Kagayakeru / kōya* ([“Shiny Wilderness”]) and *Koi o uru ie* ([“A House Selling Love”]), which added the note *Sensō to bunka no daisanbusaku to suru* (“making it a triptych of war and culture”), feature *yuta* in their stories. There is a large number of literary works in which Ōshiro describes *yuta*. It is evident from Ōshiro’s collection of short stories, such as *Gushō kara no koe* ([“Voice From the Next World”]), that the topic of the *yuta* is to be considered Ōshiro’s exclusive territory. (The Okinawa Times, morning edition, March 18, 1998)

Ōshiro expressed his views on *yuta* in his essays, which were compiled under the title *Hāfu taimu Okinawa* ([“Half Time Okinawa”], 1994). Considering his comments, Ōshiro seems to have ambivalent feelings toward *yuta*; however, he appears to see future possibilities for Okinawa in them. He also thinks that the current state of the *yuta* should not remain as it is, but that *yuta*-related beliefs and rites need to be advanced, systematised, and universalised. Ōshiro refers here to social evolution theory and its hierarchisation of different types of religions; folk religions in this view are deemed to be ‘primitive’ and ‘backward’. However, it is not clear why the perspective of social evolution theory, in which Buddhism and Christianity are superior to folk religions, and the idea that *yuta* were ‘ancient,’ should be correct. By saying that the *yuta* have an “ancient brain” (“*kodaiteki na zunō*”) and that, “when she cannot handle modern life and its functions, […] she escapes into the world of ancient gods” (Ōshiro 1994:217), it becomes evident from the expressions

16 Ōshiro Tatsuhiro was born in Yagi, Nakagusuku-son in Okinawa in 1925. In 1967, he was awarded the 57th Akutagawa Prize for his novella *Kakuteru pātii* ([“The Cocktail Party”]).

"cannot follow" and "escape" that Ōshiro's comments resonate with negative connotations. More positive perspectives can be taken if it is assumed that the *yuta* has superior intuitions and sharp senses. Although Ōshiro does not seem to view the *yuta* as a modern person, the *yuta* has been surviving sturdily by constantly meeting the requirements of all periods. Therefore, it cannot be said that the *yuta* is a remnant of an 'ancient' existence. Furthermore, it can be assumed that everyone, not only the *yuta*, has the potential to experience altered states of consciousness. Therefore, the *yuta* may not be the only ones with "ancient brains."

Thus, Ōshiro's writings can be seen as expressing an admiration of the *yuta*'s 'ancientness' on the one hand and a sense of its backwardness on the other. Although there are many problems with *yuta*[17], he focuses on those *yuta* who were socially despised[18] and sees some possibilities and importance in them. Provided that the beliefs and rites centering around *yuta* will be refined and systematized, Ōshiro believes that people could be relieved from pain and grief by oracles using supernatural powers. Thus, the *yuta* may heal the members of their communities and at the same time save the institution of the *yuta* itself. Consequently, Ōshiro can be regarded as a pioneer who, at an early stage, recognised the *yuta* as a topos representing Okinawan culture.

Mid-career and Younger Writers' View of the *Yuta*

As previously discussed, Ōshiro Tatsuhiro focused on the *yuta* who lived in line with folk customs, and mainly described the relationship between *yuta* and society. However, new generation writers of Okinawan literature, such as Ikegami Eiichi[19], rather tend to focus on the process through which

17 Some *yuta* charge high fees for their fortune-telling services or for conducting rituals; and even if a *yuta*'s services are not especially expensive, there are many clients who have spent their whole savings by frequently visiting a *yuta*. Other *yuta* still adhere to a system of gender discrimination, especially denying women the right to inherit property and powerful positions in the household.

18 *Yuta* have always been oppressed by state politics and have been looked down upon by people of high status; at the same time, as they have cared for the problems and grievances of the people, they have been relied upon.

19 Ikegami Eiichi was born in Naha City in Okinawa in 1970. He was awarded the 6th Japan Fantasy Novel Award for *Bagājimanupanasu: wagashima no hanashi* (["Bagājimanupanasu: A Story of My Island"]). Ikegami published *Tempesuto* (["Tempest"]), a novel in two volumes, in 2008. Later, the novel was serialised and broadcast by the NHK satellite broadcasting service between July 17 and September 18, 2011, on the "NHK BS Premium" television channel as a *jidaigeki* ("historical play"). It was also performed on stage.

a *yuta* candidate becomes a proper *yuta*, and the meaning of that process, by inquiring about the *yuta*'s somesthesis and other internal (emotional and psychic) aspects. These may lead a future *yuta* from refusal to acceptance of what she feels is happening to her. According to Nakahodo Masanori,

> The characteristic of Ōshiro's literary works on *yuta* is that the *yuta* irresistibly places herself in a radical political and social position, instead of focusing on the process through which a person becomes *yuta*, or the special power of clairvoyance demonstrated by the *yuta* […]. In the so-called '*yuta* novels' by Ōshiro, he stresses that the problem of Okinawa is a cultural problem, and if I may borrow his expression, it can be said that the *yuta* problem is a political problem. He describes *yuta* by connecting them to the political and social problems of the time. (The Okinawa Times, morning edition, March 19, 1998)

Certainly, the *yuta* Ōshiro described was either half Japanese and half American, or a person who could otherwise not avoid dealing with the U.S. bases and the problem of development. Consequently, in many cases, Ōshiro described *yuta* in relation to a narrowly-defined political nature.

On the other hand, when Ikegami Eiichi used a *yuta* as main character in *Bagājimanupanasu: wagashima no hanashi*, he described the process by which a *yuta* candidate becomes a *yuta* as her own, personal experience. According to Nakahodo's critique, the difference between the two writers is that Ōshiro viewed *yuta* as a cultural phenomenon, whereas Ikegami views *yuta* as "*nikutai sono mono*" ("physical body as such"). Therefore, Ikegami describes "… how she becomes a *yuta* instead of how she exists as a *yuta*" (The Okinawa Times, morning edition, March 20, 1998).

Then, how did the generation of writers between Ōshiro Tatsuhiro and Ikegami Eiichi describe *yuta* characters in their literary texts? Medoruma Shun and Matayoshi Eiki, for example, try to take an objective view on *yuta*. They do not make any judgements about whether the *yuta* is good or bad, ancient or modern, successful or not in helping people. There is one example of people visiting a *yuta* to receive a divine revelation to solve their problems. The *yuta* gives them a commonsense divine revelation that reflects the Okinawan worldview by, for instance, saying that the problem occurred due to a lack of memorial services for the ancestors. The objectiveness of the descriptions in the texts by these two authors can also be deduced from the fact that the *yuta*'s divine revelation could fall short.

In summarising the differences in the descriptions of *yuta* among various generations of writers, it is clear that the older and mid-career generations of writers relate to the *yuta* from the perspective of social and political problems, or describe the *yuta* as a common sight in Okinawa. However, the younger generation of writers focuses more on the *yuta*'s physical and spiritual aspects by describing the process through which a *yuta* candidate becomes a proper *yuta*.

Discussion

As seen from the discussion above, in addition to topics related to the U.S. (e.g. the Battle of Okinawa, the subsequent U.S. occupation, and current problems caused by the presence of the U.S. military bases) and the development issues attributed to mainland Japan, an increasing number of recent films and literature about Okinawa describe shamans, including the *yuta*, as the essence of Okinawa or as determining the tone of Okinawa. When the spiritual world of Okinawa was described in the 1980s, the central figures representing the spiritual sphere were *kaminchu*, such as the *noro*. However, since the late 1990s, the *yuta* has been attracting more attention, even though she had been oppressed by being labelled as anti-social and as being opposed to the policymakers throughout the early and late modern period of Japanese history. This shift was ascribed to the influence of the American New Age culture, and it may be strongly related to the "spiritual" and "healing" fad which has been observed in Japan since the 1990s[20].

Next, considering shamanism such as that performed by the *yuta* from a historical perspective, many *yuta* had been oppressed by policymakers and by the predominant religion[21]. The reason for this could be that the charisma and anti-authoritarianism of shamanism threatened the power of those in authority. However, shamanism does not only reject such authority, but also incorporates it; namely, shamanism has been surviving by using syncretism or "politics for living" as a tactic. Consequently, as W. P. Lebra has pointed out, "while religion in Okinawa as a whole has been weakened and destroyed, *yuta* persistently exists" (Lebra 1966:84-85). The *yuta* thus represents identity politics for the Okinawan people. At the same time, she is a figure that plays an active role by constantly changing form, and thus not becoming a relic of the

20 Saitō regarded these revival movements of shamanism as "neo-shamanistic movements." He introduced a New Age journal, *Fili*, that featured "shamanism" as a topic several times (Saitō 2001: 25-26). It should be noted that interviews with *yuta* were included in these articles.

21 Even before the Meiji government abolished shamanistic practice in Okinawa, the *yuta* tradition had been the object of suppression by the Ryukyuan ruling class.

past. Unlike the *noro*, who was locally-oriented, the *yuta* is able to translocate; therefore, along with the ongoing globalisation of today's society, the *yuta* started to talk about the position of the Okinawan people, both in relation to the villages and islands they were born into and live in, as well as in relation to Japan and the world (see Shiotsuki, 1999a). For example, on the occasion of the summit held in Okinawa in 2000 (from 21-23 July), a *yuta* built a *yashiro* (i.e. a place to worship) to pray that Okinawa would become a holy land and to ask her god to bring peace to the world. The strength that shamanism has may be one of the reasons why shamanism has been chosen as a representation of Okinawan ethnic identity by so many filmmakers and writers.

Moreover, shamanism can facilitate the reconstruction of ethnic identity as a symbol of an ethnic group because it can play the role of an anti-authority or anti-institution mechanism, working against traditional authority figures (e.g. policymakers). For example, the restoration of the right to practice shamanism was implemented in countries such as Mongolia, the former Soviet Union, and in the broader region of Latin America, during the surge of nationalism that criticised the existing authorities and ruling systems. Shamanism thus plays a prominent role in facilitating the reconstruction of ethnic identity, even outside of Okinawa. Shamanism comprises an aspect of the weak; it has the potential to resist the traditional system of authority (or the so-called "strong," such as the nation and policymakers: see Shiotsuki, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2012). Therefore, shamanism is used as a tactic to reconstruct an identity for the weak, such as ethnic minorities.

Some Okinawan film directors and literary writers very deliberately seem to express resistance to 'the system' by using the shaman as a prominent figure. Others do not consciously raise the topic of shamanism as an anti-authoritarian and anti-institutional mechanism. However, in constructing 'Okinawan-ness', they tend to utilise the topics of the *yuta* and the shamanistic world. It should be carefully noted that this phenomenon had not been observed in the past. Contemporary authors and filmmakers may have chosen shamanism as a means of reconstructing the 'traditions' of Okinawa and expressing 'Okinawan identity'.

Conclusion

At present, the culture of shamanism, including the *yuta*, is being revaluated as a representation of the spiritual world of Okinawa. Similarly, *eisa* (a kind of Okinawan folk dance), the *sanshin* (an Okinawan three-string musical instrument), and Shuri Castle (the symbol of the former Ryukyu Kingdom) have also been revaluated as depictions of a specific ‘Okinawan identity’. The movement of revaluating shamanism, Okinawan music, *Uchinaaguchi* (Okinawa dialect), the specific history of Okinawa, and mythological stories and Okinawan traditions, using them to represent Okinawan culture as such, is taking place in the context of a worldwide revival and re-appreciation of various ‘traditional cultures’, generating an awareness of ethnicity and pride in local ‘traditions’. The “Hawaiian Renaissance” as discussed by Yamanaka Hayato (Yamanaka, 1992), and the current religious revival movement observed in Mongolia and other areas are only a few similar examples. The following factors facilitated the abovementioned movement in Okinawa: Shuri Castle and some Gusuku (castle ruins) sites in Okinawa were registered as UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2000, and a picture of Shureimon, the gate at Shuri Castle was printed on one side of the newly issued 2000-yen bill. It should be noted, however, that in the case of Okinawa, this movement tends to simplify the various local traditions which can be observed all over the Ryukyuan archipelago by lumping them together into just one single category of ‘Okinawan culture’, instead of accepting the diversity of the various Ryukyu cultures, including those of Yaeyama and Miyako.

As seen above, in recent years, an increasing number of films and literary texts describing Okinawa feature the theme of shamanistic culture, including the figure of the *yuta*, which, in turn, is used as a representation of ‘Okinawanness’. It has also been mentioned that such revaluations of local shamanistic cultures as representations of specific ethnic identities are closely related to a worldwide revival of shamanism and the global phenomenon of religious revival. This is because shamanism has the potential to function as an anti-authoritarian and anti-institutional mechanism, and is thus used by various minority groups as a means of resistance against oppression.

This article focused on the *yuta* as a cultural representation as can be observed in Okinawan films and literature. However, needless to say, there is an enormous amount of Okinawan films and literature. Consequently, relatively few examples were discussed here. Future research would need to analyse more films and literary works in greater detail. Moreover, depictions of shamanism should be examined in other areas of arts and mass media, such as theatrical performances, music, paintings, and newspapers. In addition, in recent years, several TV dramas featuring Okinawan settings were broadcast by the NHK national television network[22]. The Ryukyu Broadcasting Corporation also aired a program about a Ryukyuan local hero, *Ryūjin Mabuyā*[23]. Accordingly, it would also be necessary to analyse the influence of TV productions and examine the question of how Okinawan spiritual 'traditions' are treated here in greater detail. Based on such case studies, future research would need to compare these relatively new representations of *yuta* in the mass media with the results that research on Okinawan films and literature has yielded so far, especially taking into account possible differences in using the *yuta* as a symbol of 'Okinawan identity', depending on whether she is depicted from an insider's (Okinawan) or an outsider's (e.g. Japanese) perspective. Moreover, the present revival of shamanism in Okinawa should be further investigated.

22 Just a few examples include: *Ryūkyū no kaze* (["Wind of Ryukyu"]) (from 10 January to 13 June, 1993), *Churasan* (["Chura-san"]) (from 2 April to 29 September, 2001; followed by several other seasons), and *Tenpesuto* (["Tempest"]) (from 17 July to 18 September, 2011).

23 Ryūjin Mabuyā is the name of a legendary Okinawan hero. The series was broadcast from 4 October to 27 December, 2008; other seasons followed. The story was adapted for several movies as well.

Table 1. Main films describing shamanism in Okinawa

No.	Title	Director	Director's Birthplace	Year of Release	Description of Yuta	Other Information or Central Themes
1	Kamigami no fukaki yokubō ["The Profound Desire of the Gods"]	Imamura Shōhei	Mainland Japan	1968	No	Noro ("female priestesses") vs. development; Kojiki ["A Record of Ancient Matters"]; *Yamatu-guchi* ("the Japanese language").
2	Dōberuman deka ["Doberman Cop"]	Fukasaku Kinji	Mainland Japan	1977	No	Noro's ("priestess'") divine revelation; *Uchinaa Yamatu-guchi*; ("Okinawan-Japanese language mixture").
3	Okinawan chirudai ["Okinawan Chirudai"]	Takamine Gō	Okinawa	1978	?	Criticism of the development; myths; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect").
4*	Paradaisu byū ["Paradise View"]	Takamine Gō	Okinawa	1985	Yes	Mabui otoshi ("dropped spirit"); setting before Okinawa's reversion to Japanese administration; myths; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect").
5	Untamagirū ["Untamagirū"]	Takamine Gō	Okinawa	1989	No	Filmed in Bise in the mainland and on Sesoko Island; Amerika-Yu ("Under the rule of USA"); myths; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect").
6	Umi sora sango no iitsutae ["Legend of the Sea, Sky, and Coral"]	Shiina Makoto	Mainland Japan	1991	No	Filmed in Shiraho, Ishigaki Island; village rituals; conservation of nature; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect") used in part.

7*	Painappuru tsuāzu ["Pineapple Tours"]	Makiya Tsutomu, Nakae Yūji, Tōma Hayashi	Okinawa, Mainland Japan, Okinawa	1992	Yes No No	All three parts of the omnibus were filmed on Izena Island; all three directors graduated from the University of the Ryukyus; criticism of the development of resort facilities; unexploded bombs; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect") used in part.
8*	Paipatirōma ["Paipatirōma"]	Nakae Yūji	Mainland Japan	1994	Yes	Filmed on Ishigaki Island, Taketomi Island, Lanyui Island ("Orchid island") in Taiwan; myths; *Uchinaaguchi* ("Okinawa dialect") used in part.
9	Hisai ["Secret Ceremony"]	Shinjō Taku (Author of the original book version: Ishihara Shintarō)	Okinawa	1998	?	Filmed in Yaeyama; villager's religious ceremonies vs. resort development by mainland Japan; the main character is played by an actor from the mainland.
10	Buta no mukui ["The Pig's Retribution"]	Sai Yōichi (Author of the original book version: Matayoshi Eiki)	Korean in Japan	1999	No	Filmed on Kudaka Island, in Urasoe City and Ishikawa City; *mabui otoshi* ("dropped spirit"); building an *utaki* ("sacred place"); *Uchinaa Yamatu-guchi*, (Okinawan-Japanese language mixture).

11*	Nabii no koi [“Nabbie’s Love”]	Nakae Yūji	Mainland Japan	1999	Yes	Filmed in Aguni Island; Okinawan and Irish music; *Uchinaaguchi* (“Okinawa dialect”) used in part.

Table 2. Literary works describing shamanism in Okinawa

No.	Title	Author	Birthplace	Year of Publication	Other Information
1	Kami dāri no sato [“Home for the State of Being Possessed”]	Tamaki Ippei	Okinawa	1985	Insanity is the theme; k*ami dāri* (“state of being”) possessed and *yuta* are described in relation to modern medicine.
2	Norotachi no tasogare [“Twilight of Priestesses”]	Maeda Chōei	Amami	1987	The theme is the oppression of *noro* by Amami and Satsuma; *yuta* mentioned.
3	Kaminchu [“Priestesses”]	Mori Reiko	Mainland Japan	1989	Okinawa main island and remote islands; *Kaminchu* (“priestess”) is the heroine; *yuta* mentioned.
4*	Gushō kara no koe [“Voice From the Next World”]	Ōshiro Tatsuhiro	Okinawa	1992	A semi-*yuta* creates a worship place (e.g. Ajibaka); unexploded bombs; cheating man and *yuta*; oppression of *yuta*.
5	Kurikaeshigaeshi [“Over and Over”]	Sakiyama Tami	Okinawa	1994	A man comes to a remote island and tries to reveal the mysteries of the island; rituals conducted by a female character; equivalent to *noro*.
6	Buta no mukui [“The Pig’s Retribution”]	Matayoshi Eiki	Okinawa	1996	Young man who is interested in *yuta*; *mabui otoshi* (“dropped spirit”); building an *utaki* (“sacred place”) on a remote island.

7*	Okinawan bukku rebyū ["Okinawan Book Review"]	Medoruma Shun	Okinawa	1997	Parody; *yuta* and the imperial system; sober thoughts on the oppression of *yuta* and a fad.
8	Kajimayā ["Kajimayā"]	Ikegami Eiichi	Okinawa	1997	Remote island; *mabui otoshi* ("dropped spirit") is the main theme.
9*	Bagājimanupanasu: Wagashima no hanashi ["Bagājimanupanasu: A Story of My Island]	Ikegami Eiichi	Okinawa	1998	Remote island; story of a girl who comes to understand the meaning of prayer through her process of becoming a priestess.
10	Koi o uru ie ["A House Selling Love"]	Ōshiro Tatsuhiro	Okinawa	1998	A family history of female priestesses; greed and conflict over the income from land leased to the American military.
11	Mabuigumi ["Spirit Stuffing"]	Medoruma Shun	Okinawa	1999	*Kaminchu*'s ("priestess") failure to perform a spirit stuffing; memories of the war; a person who is possessed.
12	Yuta ga aishita tantei ["The Detective Whom a Yuta Loved"]	Uchida Yasuo	Mainland Japan	1999	Not about social problems; civic life is the background of the story; a young beautiful *yuta* is the heroine.
13	Fukkatsu, hebi onna ["Resurrection, Snake Woman"]	Ikegami Eiichi	Okinawa	1999	*Mabui* ("spirit") is the theme; *yuta* also appears in the story.
14	Mizu no seisō (["Panopy of Water"]	Ōshiro Tatsuhiro	Okinawa	2000	Miyako Island; Tsukasanma (*kaminchu*, ("priestess")); energy of life and death; vicissitudes.
15	Rekiosu ["Lequios"]	Ikegami Eiichi	Okinawa	2000	Ameku in Naha City (island where a military base is located); psychic powers of the *noro* and *yuta*.

* Numbers with (*) indicate that the main theme of the respective film or literary text centres around the character of the *yuta*. A large number of works include brief descriptions of *yuta* as side characters; therefore, they are not listed in the tables here.

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Message from Okinawa II

ISHIKAWA Mao

Photos Taken in Okinawa「メイドイン沖縄の写真」

I was invited to the Okinawa Conference at the University of Vienna in November 2011, which was also attended by several Okinawan scholars and researchers. In high spirits, I thought it would be a good opportunity to introduce my photos of Okinawa to an audience abroad and, specifically, to confront the Austrians with them.

Vienna was fresh with an autumn breeze but not as cold as I had expected. The history of the University of Vienna goes back centuries and, indeed, the stately buildings had style, just as I had imagined Europe.

It was apparently the first time that a conference on Okinawa had been held there. Professors and students from various Japanese as well as European universities participated. I was impressed by the expertise of all presenters as they showed more knowledge of Okinawan history and of the language than some native Okinawans themselves.

As a photographer, I selected pictures which I felt aptly expressed “This is Okinawa!”, and showed slides of the photos. As usual, I gave an openly structured talk but am not sure whether I met the expectations of my audience. What I wanted to express, not without pride, is that my style is to capture people’s inner thoughts.

I was impressed by the passion with which the people at European universities do their research on Okinawa and wish to express my gratitude to them. I am willing to offer cooperation for occasions like this in the future. Thank you very much for inviting me.

July 15, 2015

Ishikawa Mao (photographer)

A U.S. military aircraft, flying smoothly over a residential area, is heading towards Futenma airbase (July 2009, Ginowan City).

FENCES, OKINAWA

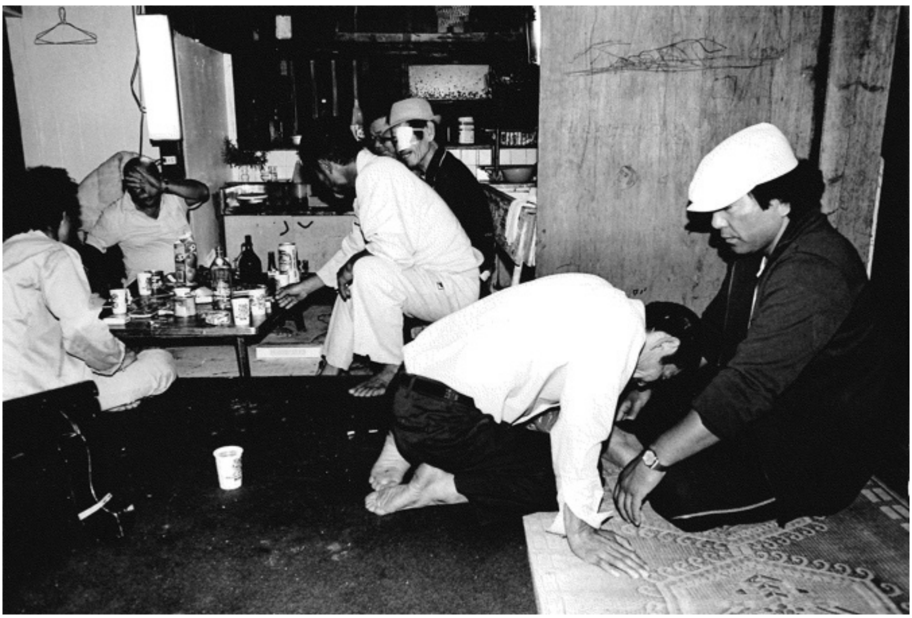
A Filipina dancer is picked up by a G.I. (1988-1989, Kin Town).

フィリピン人ダンサー Firipinjin dansā [Philippine Dancer]

Actors from an Okinawan theatre troupe. The leader's 6 year-old granddaughter is also performing (1978, Yonabaru Town).

沖縄芝居：仲田幸子一行物語
Okinawa shibai. Nakada Sachiko ikkō monogatari [Okinawan Theatre. The Story about Nakada Sachiko's Troupe]

While some men are having a drinking party, another man is offering an apology (1983-1986, Naha City).



港町エレジー Minato machi erejii [Seaport Elegy]

CHANGES AND TRANSFORMATIONS

AKAMINE Masanobu

Development and Evolution of Ancestor Worship in Okinawa: Taking Account of the State System in Folk Culture Studies

Does Ancestor Worship Constitute the Native Beliefs of Okinawa?

This paper examines rituals for ancestors in Okinawa. However, since similar customs of ancestral ceremonies exist in mainland Japan, I will first briefly outline the concept of ancestral rituals there.

There is a vast number of studies which discuss the topic of Japanese ancestral ceremonies, but Yanagita Kunio's "About our Ancestors" (*Senzo no hanashi*, 1990) is considered to be a work which deals with Japanese ancestor worship in a profound, systematic way. According to Yanagita, the concept of an ancestor who becomes a deity after a certain time and is thought to protect the offspring as an ancestral spirit is a native Japanese belief. The ancestor, who protects the descendants as a deity and who is welcomed at the family's house during *obon* and new year, as well as the deity of the field and of the mountain, and the clan deity (*ujigami*), who is worshipped in the shrine, are all said to originate from the concept of ancestral deities. Yanagita concluded that the concept of ancestral spirits was the core of the Japanese belief system. In this paper, I will discuss Okinawan ancestral rites, while taking into account Yanagita's concept of ancestor worship in mainland Japan.

Okinawan families, like families in mainland Japan, may be characterised as a unit of society that performs ancestor rituals. With the exception of a newly created family branch, families in Okinawa usually possess a *butsudan*, or a family altar, that commemorates deceased family members as ancestors (this is symbolically represented by the memorial tablets). Living family members provide tea, liquor and cooked food for the altar, and regularly offer prayers while burning incense.

In Okinawa, it is also common to see enormous, stone-built tombs. Rituals are performed in front of these tombs, the resting place for the remains of the dead, at certain times of the year. One such occasion is *seimei-sai*, when people visit their ancestral tombs and present food offerings to the spirits of their ancestors. Once these offerings have been symbolically presented to the tomb, they are shared by the living in the space created in front of the tomb. This scene of *seimei-sai*, of family members dining together in front of the tomb, has been effectively used to promote an image of Okinawa as a society in which ancestor worship is faithfully observed.

In this paper, I will examine these rituals for ancestors performed in Okinawa. Before I introduce specific issues, however, I would like to draw attention to the commentary on “ancestor worship” contained in the 1983 version of *Okinawa daihyakka jiten* (Encyclopedia of Okinawa):

> The folk societies of Amami and Okinawa are sometimes described as ancestor-oriented societies, and indeed, ancestor worship, or the observance of rituals for ancestors, forms the core of native beliefs in these places. […] The belief concerning the dead who are worshipped as ancestors is twofold; one is that the dead […] after the final anniversary of their deaths, extinguish their personality and become deified spirits; the other is that there are ancestral spirits which have not yet attained this stage. […] The ancestral spirits of a family, after the observance of this ritual [the final anniversary of death], will be merged with the spirits of the other members of the same clan (*munchū*), including that of the progenitor. The spirits of the clan will then be unified with the other spirits in their village community (*shima*) symbolized by the *kami* enshrined in an *utaki*. As they thus merge, they are thought to preserve the order and unity of the *shima.* (Katō 1983:627[1])

This explanation about ancestor worship is given from a synchronic point of view. However, it is, of course, important to be aware that this approach completely lacks a historical perspective on the subject. Although studies on ancestor worship in Okinawa have thus far produced many results, especially in folklore studies and anthropology, there have been few attempts to situate ancestor worship in its historical context and to engage in discussions about the implications of the historical context. The conventional approach is expressed, for instance, in the view quoted above that: “ancestor worship, or the observance of rituals for ancestors, forms the core of native beliefs in [Okinawa]” (Ibid.).

Taking this into account, this paper focuses on rituals for ancestors performed at the household level in Okinawa — those performed for memorial tablets, those for the tombs and those for the *bon* festival — and examines the development and spread of these rituals and how they were influenced by the religious policies of the government of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

1 Text passages that were originally in Japanese have been translated into English for the purpose of including the citation in this essay.

The Development and Diffusion of Rituals for Memorial Tablets

With regard to the development and diffusion of rituals for memorial tablets in Okinawa, I would like to refer to a study by Heshiki Yoshiharu (Heshiki 1995:186-200). According to Heshiki, the rituals for memorial tablets took root in Okinawa under the influence of the Buddhist monks who came from mainland Japan after the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the royal families as well as some influential noble class families began to establish family temples, in which they preserved the family's memorial tablets and performed ancestor rites. Heshiki further suggests that the practice of rituals for memorial tablets was first adopted among the officials of the royal government and then gradually permeated down to the commoners. He also points out that this can be corroborated by the following historical materials:

In the section concerning the year 1781 in the *Kyūyō*, there is an account about Ikei Island (an island located off the central coast of the main island of Okinawa). One day, an official dispatched to the island gathered the locals and preached that it was not virtuous to refrain from commemorating one's ancestors on the anniversary of their death or during seasonal festivals. He then distributed memorial tablets that he had brought for each household. As a result, rituals for ancestors (including the *bon* festival) began to be performed in people's homes. In this story, the official is said to have used the word "courtesy" (礼), a Confucian term, in his speech. From this, it is obvious that the official was under the influence of the policies of the royal government, which deemed Confucianism to be the basis of political order in society. It also became apparent that the official was later complimented by the government for his contribution to propagating ancestral customs on the island (Kyūyō Kenkyūkai 1974:392).

Heshiki's study also shows that the rarity of observing rituals for ancestors was not something peculiar to Ikei at that time, and the situation was more or less the same in most other regions of Okinawa. In the Miyako Islands, for instance, few farmers possessed memorial tablets and performed rituals for ancestors in 1768; the royal government therefore specifically sent out a notice directing that this situation be improved. Similarly, in the early eighteenth century, households in Yaeyama did not generally possess memorial tablets and thus rituals were not performed for them. However, this changed when the local officials promoted the possession of memorial tablets among families and the rituals began to spread. The development of rituals in Yaeyama indeed follows the same pattern it did in Ikei, as described above.

There is a question of whether the rituals for ancestors were ever performed in people's homes before the spread of memorial tablets. Sakai Usaku points out the case in which two fans made of *kuba* leaves (holy plants) were placed in the *kamidana* (household altar) of an old established family. He hints at the possibility that *kuba* fans may have once been used as objects to represent ancestors before families started possessing memorial tablets, although he withholds his opinion on this (Sakai 1987:530-533).

What is significant about this is the fact that, in recent years as well, there were some households which performed rituals for ancestors even though they did not possess any memorial tablets and merely placed incense burners on their altars. From a historical source (*Yoseyama uwēkata Miyako-jima kimochō*; Policy Guidelines for Miyako Island by Oyakata Yoseyama), it is also evident that, in 1768, people in Miyako Islands performed rituals for their ancestors during annual memorial services and seasonal festivals, although they did not have any memorial tablets (Okinawa-ken Okinawa Shiryō Henshūjo 1981:108).

Another record shows that in Kudaka Island (an island off the southern coast of the main island of Okinawa), the local people did not have memorial tablets, or even an altar on which items such as these and incense burners are placed, until well into modern times. However, the people in Kudaka did have incense burners, which they used when performing rituals for ancestors. These were usually put aside in a place like a box so that they would not stand in the way of people's daily activities. On occasions such as the *bon* festival or annual memorial services, when the ancestor rituals were observed, the incense burner was placed at the entrance (on the veranda) to the room called *niban-za*, a "second room" used for the burning of incense. Offerings were also placed in front of the incense burner, and people offered prayers towards the outside of the house.

The example of Kudaka Island, as well as that of Miyako, shows that there was some evidence of the observance of rituals in people's homes even before the spread of memorial tablets. However, it would be a separate issue to determine to what extent this finding can be generalised. As has been suggested, after a certain period in early modern times (*kinsei*), the royal government encouraged the observance of rituals for ancestors among its subjects. It is therefore essential to consider the possibility that the spread of rituals was influenced by the religious policies of the royal government. Furthermore, with regard to the example of Kudaka Island, it was suggested that the local people arranged the offerings on the veranda and prayed towards the outside of the house during the ritual. This behaviour may possibly be understood as a way to express the wish that the spirits of the ancestors remain outside, not inside, the house. The example of Kudaka is a very interesting case that offers us insight into some common beliefs about ancestral spirits in the past.

The Development of Rituals for Tombs

First, let us consider some examples of rituals in front of tombs on Kudaka Island. In Kudaka, the afterworld, or a cemetery, is called *gusho* (*goshō* in Buddhist terminology). Until recent years, "open-air burials" were common; instead of being buried in a stone tomb, the deceased were laid in a place such as a space under a rock (it was thus not cremation or internment; the corpse was left exposed to air on the ground). The coffin that contained the body was left weather-beaten under a rock, but the remains were cleansed in the year of the Tiger, which occurs every twelve years. After being cleansed, the remains were placed in an urn called *zushigame* and placed back under the rock again. At times, the bones were simply left in a pile without being put in an urn.

In Kudaka Island, it is considered a taboo to enter a *gusho* area as part of everyday life. Iha Fuyu, who visited Kudaka in 1923, described the *gusho* as follows:

> Except for a funeral, or for cleansing the bones, people of the island never enter this area. If they ever enter the *gusho*, they would need to have themselves purified and spend the night outside for three days; only then would they dare enter their house again. In the hot midsummer, the vicinity of the *gusho* is filled with such strong odours that hardly anyone approaches it. (Iha 1974:26)

With regard to the cleansed bones, Iha also remarks that "after being washed thoroughly, [they] are thrown into a communal cave" (Ibid.), suggesting that the bones may have been treated roughly at times.

As Iha points out, unlike the main island of Okinawa, there is no custom of visiting the family tomb in Kudaka for the ritual performed on the sixteenth of January or *seimei-sai*, and on those days, the rituals only take place at home at the family altar. Nowadays, people in Kudaka do visit their family tombs on the occasion of *tanabata* (the seventh of July) and clean the tombs in preparation for the *bon* festival. However, this is a relatively new custom introduced after the end of Second World War; in the old days, the native people refrained from entering the *gusho* on principle, except for a funeral or to cleanse the bones. Even for the annual memorial services, events at which the spirits of ancestors are welcomed from the tombs into their old homes, it is unlikely that living family members will go to the actual tomb and meet the spirits; they only approach the vicinity of the tomb and worship from a distance. It was once said that the people in Kudaka would not touch the food that had been offered at the tomb, which seems to accurately express the islanders' attitude towards the tomb.

At the beginning of this paper, I referred to the pleasant exchange between ancestors and descendants that takes place at *seimei-sai* as they share food in front of the tomb. The situation in Kudaka, however, presents a totally different picture. The question is how to interpret this difference, but, as will be argued below, the form of the rituals at the tomb observed in Kudaka is likely to pre-date those found on the main island of Okinawa.

For example, there is an account about Minna Island in the Miyako region in 1776 titled *Shirakawauji kafu* (Shirakawa House Lineage). In Minna, the deceased used to be buried in many different places on the island, and no rituals were performed for those burial sites. However, at one point, a local person came to build a communal tomb and told others to put the remains, which used to be buried in many different places, in the tomb. He also emphasised the importance of seasonal rituals, and improved the local "customs" by advising that the rituals be observed with due respect. It is said that as the human remains were collected in one place, more land became available for use as farmland. The man who made these suggestions was later rewarded by the government of the Kingdom (Hirarashi Shishi Hensan Iinkai 1981:190). That this example of Minna is in no way a special case is suggested by the following instance of Tonaki Island (an island off the southern coast of the main island of Okinawa):

Material found in Tonaki recounts an episode on the island in 1756 (see Uezu 1983). According to these documents, there were no tombs in Tonaki in ancient times, and the dead were laid to rest in caves. However, a man named Haebaru was the first to build a tomb (*kamekōbaka* or "turtleback tomb") and others followed suit. It is said that Haebaru later requested a reward from the royal government for his "achievement" of being the first to build a tomb on the island. This story suggests that before Haebaru came to build a tomb, caves were common sites where the remains of the deceased were left. Today, there are still many tombs, or structures encircling a gap in the rocks, in outlying, not easily accessible mountain areas of Tonaki. Thus the "caves" mentioned in the above source presumably referred to those places. Although it is not possible to conclude from the material whether any rituals for ancestral spirits were performed in those "caves," the fact that it mentions that there were "no tombs from ancient times" seems to indicate that the caves were not likely to have been places at which rituals were performed. It should also be noted that these "caves" were commonly located in hard-to-reach, remote areas, away from the village communities. Furthermore, as in the case of Minna, the construction of tombs as sites for the observance of rituals was later commended by the royal government.

With regard to the development of tombs as objects of worship among the noble class, the study by Toguchi Masakiyo (1971) is of relevance. Toguchi refers to descriptions such as “cemeteries not known” or “burials not known” used in relation to older generations in the family records. He points out that, in the case of the *shizoku* (noble class) in Kume Village (whose inhabitants were the descendants of settlers from China), it was only after the invasion by the Satsuma clan (1609) that the whereabouts of their burial sites came to be known. Toguchi argues that

> the fact that they did not know where their ancestors were buried might mean that annual rituals did not take place in these areas and there were no gatherings among the descendants, who were responsible for the observance of these rituals. (Toguchi 1971:466)

From these considerations, it seems reasonable to assume that the rituals at the tombs, which are now commonly observed in Okinawa, initially evolved under the influence of the policies of the royal government. Although the example of Kudaka Island, where the locals employ every means to avoid the necessity of rituals at the tombs, might appear peculiar, it still seems to be a good illustration of the situation in Okinawa before the spread of the royal government’s policies within society. Sakai Usaku states that the old burial forms in the Ryukyu Islands included the “laying of a deceased person’s body” and the “use of natural caves as tombs” (Sakai 1987:499). I agree with Sakai when he suggests that in the underlying background of these practices, there were “some very vivid conceptions about the souls of the dead; there were attempts to place the dead as far away from the boundary of the community as possible, or to push them into a cave” (Ibid.).

The Development and Spread of the *Bon* Festival

The *bon* festival, celebrated with much enthusiasm from the thirteenth to fifteenth of July on the lunar calendar, constitutes one of the bases of ancestor worship in present-day Okinawa. Nowadays, the common perception about the *bon* events is that the spirits of ancestors are the guardians of the household, who kindly watch over their descendants, and that they are welcomed back to their family homes and treated with feasts until they finally depart again for the afterlife at the close of the events. The question I want to examine in this section is whether the events always took this form from ancient times on. Let us first consider some of the cases below.

Case 1

Leturdu, a French missionary who stayed in Ryukyu from 1846 to 1848, left a record about the *bon* festival that he witnessed during his stay:

> On the last evening [of the festival] […] the family walks in procession from the altar to accompany the souls back to the door: […] 'For fear that one of the souls, too fond of good living, might succumb to its desire to stay, everyone grasps a stick and starts hitting out in every place to chase away any poor soul which might have such a desire'. […] [Leturdu] teased Okinawans a lot, asking them where that affection for their ancestors of which they were so proud had gone. They answered with laughter: "we have been taught so to believe and to act". (Beillevaire 1996:171)

Case 2

On Kudaka Island, until around 1960, there was an event called *harigayūhā*, which was held after the departure of the ancestral spirits from people's homes. The priestesses, such as *noro*, were principally in charge, but almost all adult women on the island took part in this ritual. The *noro* carried a sword in their hands, while others held a plant called *amamidāku* in both hands. At two locations on the outskirts of the village, the women would enthusiastically wave the swords and plants while chanting a phrase that meant "the evil spirits cannot beat us."

Case 3

In the villages of Chinen and Tamagusuku, as well as in the town of Sashiki, all located in the southern region of the main island of Okinawa, an event called *nūbarē* takes place a day after the *bon* festival. In Chinen, the word refers to a variety of performing arts or types of stage entertainment that are hosted in various parts of the village on the sixteenth of July after the close of the *bon* period. It is held to entertain the spirits who have no descendants, but who arrived for the *bon* festival, and is similar to *segaki*, a Buddhist service for the repose of the hungry dead souls. The spirits are eventually driven out (*barē*) to sea through waterways (*nū*) (Chinenson Kyōiku Iinkai 1985:19-20).

Case 4

On Hateruma Island in the Yaeyama region, an event called *itashikibara* is held on the sixteenth of July, a day after the *bon* festival. During the event, elderly people wander around the village while performing *ninbuchā*, or religious dances, and at times, the *shishimai* dance is performed accompanied by the sounds of gongs and flutes. It is said to be an event to drive away the evil spirits, *mazamunu*, that still remain in the community (Ueno 1999:192-193).

It should be noted that there is an element of exorcism in all of these events that take place after the period of *bon*. The logical question to consider next might be what exactly it is that is being exorcised. Higa Yasuo argues that the objects of exorcism during *harigayūhā* in Kudaka are the souls of the dead that are not those of the ancestors who are invited to each home; they are therefore evil spirits, unwelcome intruders into the community (Higa 1993:336). Ueno Kazuo, who examined the cases on Hateruma, also suggests:

> The main purpose of *itashikibara* can be understood to be the removal of the ancestral spirits other than those of the legitimate ancestors who are worshipped at home; that is, evil spirits that remain in the village even after the *bon* rites, or the souls of the forebears who have left no relatives behind. (Ueno 1996:193)

Ueno thus supposes that *mazamunu* are the souls of the dead who are distinguished from those of legitimate ancestors. The authors of the report on *nūbarē* in Chinen Village seem to share a similar point of view in that they regard the event as a kind of rite to pacify the dead souls who do not have any descendants.

First, let us reconsider the case of Kudaka Island in greater detail. Although a resident on the island once provided me with an explanation similar to Higa's, it is also necessary to consider the following facts. In Kudaka, it is customary to finish the performance of *unkē* (the rite of receiving the ancestors' spirits) and *ūkui* (the rite of seeing off the spirits) before dusk, as is likewise the case with the annual memorial service for the dead. Explaining this, an elderly man on the island stated: "People from the afterlife (*gushōnchu*) are scary beings (*uturusamun*), so no hospitality (*utuimuchi*) is offered at night". It might be thought that, if the spirits are considered to be such scary beings, they should not be welcomed in the first place. However, this contradiction is exactly the point that should not be overlooked. It suggests that it is not easy to draw a clear line between the spirits, which are by nature evil, and those of legitimate ancestors visiting the village during the *bon* festival. This appears to be reflected in Case 1, in which the family members found it difficult to explain their behaviour to the missionary.

Concerning the ritual of *itashikibara* in Miyara Village on Ishigaki Island in the Yaeyamas, Ishigaki Hirotaka reports as follows:

> People in Miyara were always told that on the day after seeing off their ancestors' spirits, they had to keep their own spirits up, because they spent three long days with the souls of the dead; otherwise they would be worn down (*shomaki*) and dragged to the afterlife (*gushō*) by them. Hence, the villagers played gongs and drums, told each other to get together in one

> place. As a measure to prevent them from falling into *shomaki*, they were not allowed to have a doze or a nap, or to go out on their own (to the sea or mountains). (Ishigaki 1981:9)

The case of *itashikibara* suggests that the subjects being exorcised after the *bon* festival are not limited only to the souls of the dead who do not have any relatives. Taking these cases into account, I shall now examine the development of the *bon* festival in Okinawa and how it changed in later periods. In the Old Ryukyu era, the *bon* festivals were traditionally conducted at temples. From this, one can assume that the custom became common in Okinawa as Buddhism was introduced to the islands from mainland Japan (Heshiki 1995:187). It is apparent from the example of Ie Island (an island off the northern coast of the main island of Okinawa) that in the earliest days, the purpose of the *bon* festival was similar to that of *segaki*, a Buddhist rite for the repose of the hungry dead souls.

According to *Ryūkyūkoku yuraiki* ("Records of the Origins of the Ryukyu Kingdom," 1713), compiled by the royal government, people on Ie Island held a *segaki* (施餓鬼) rite in Maetakamori every twelfth of July, reportedly beginning in 1614. It is said that the rite (today's *bon* festival) was initially held for the purpose of the "eradication of troublesome illnesses and suffering," since in those days, an epidemic was spreading which was thought to have been caused by the spirits of the dead. Hence, the monks at the temple, which already existed on the island, were asked to perform a rite (Hokama/Hateruma 1997:416-417). The *bon* festival on Ie Island did not start as a ritual to welcome the spirits of one's dear ancestors; rather, it literally started as a *segaki* rite.

It is evident from the following account of the *bon* festival in *Iesonshi* (The History of Ie Village) (1980) that the *bon* festival on the island, which initially began as a *segaki*, eventually turned into an event to worship the ancestors:

> The fifteenth of July is called *ūkui* (seeing off the ancestral spirits) and this is the day most enthusiastically observed during the period. For three days during the festival, the spirits of the ancestors and living humans are together under one roof, but when the night of the fifteenth comes, they start residing in separate worlds again. The *ūkui* gathering, in fact, conveys an atmosphere of a cheerful farewell party. It is also customary for branch family members to gather at the head family house with some food offerings for this final event of the festival. Traditionally, *ūkui* is not performed until later in the *bon* period because of people's desire to keep the ancestors' spirits for as long as possible. (Iesonshi Henshū Iinkai 1980:446-447)

Iesonshi also highlights an account of the rite of *segaki* in *Ryūkyūkoku yuraiki* (cited above). The authors' commentary on this ritual is instructive:

> *Segaki* was originally intended as a memorial service for those who perished without leaving any relatives to mourn their death. Thus it is baffling that it is said to have started to prevent the spread of plagues. Did anyone think that the departed souls that left no descendants to honour them and were suffering from hunger would bring plagues? These spirits were thought to disturb the spirits of the ancestors during the *bon* festival, so they were given offerings earlier. The place named Segakimō (施餓鬼毛) lies in the east of the Junior High School. In the beginning of modern times, the practice was abandoned for a while, but resumed in the early Taishō period. It was not meant to be an exorcism of diseases; people would compete by throwing offerings. It was rather like a service for feeding hungry dead souls. (Ibid., 431)

"Segakimō" here must mean Maetakamori (前高森), mentioned in *Ryūkyūkoku yuraiki*. This account indicates that the *segaki* ritual, an event held as part of the *bon* festival, had been performed until recent years, albeit with a break for a certain period. Here, the candid opinion voiced by the authors of *Iesonshi* offers an insight: As they regard the *bon* festival as a kind of ancestor worship ritual, they find the story in *Ryūkyūkoku yuraiki*, according to which the *bon* festival was originally started as a *segaki* rite to prevent the spread of disease, to be rather incomprehensible.

In the case of Ie Island, it is not clear when, or in what context, the *bon* festival changed from being primarily a ritual for the pacification of dead souls into one for the veneration for one's ancestors. However, I suspect that a similar development may have occurred in the central region of the Ryukyu Kingdom in the early eighteenth century (Akamine 2010). The explanation for this development would be too broad a topic to discuss fully here, but in short, it appears that a form of ancestor worship, which first became common among the royal family and among the officials who belonged to the royal government, later spread to other parts of the Kingdom, and came to be established as the *bon* festival, as is now commonly observed throughout Okinawa.

As a basis of this argument, the material cited earlier that described the situation in Ikei Island in 1781 once again proves useful. According to this source, the possession of memorial tablets spread among the local people under the guidance of the provincial officials, who were following the wishes of the royal government; thus, it was after 1781 that the first *bon* festival took place on the island. Concerning the Yaeyama Islands as well, there is material that demonstrates that the practice of the *bon* festival spread in the islands after 1768 under the instructions of rural officials (Noda 1940:35).

From these two examples, it is possible to assume that in rural areas, the *bon* festival came to develop in the second half of the eighteenth century. Taking this into account, the following points about the evolution and spread of the *bon* festival can be summarised: In the earliest phase of its development, the *bon* festival was intended to be a rite of *segaki*, or a rite for the repose of the poor dead souls, as can be seen from the case of Ie Island. This began to change, however, after a certain period in early modern times (*kinsei* 近世), as the royal government began to adopt Confucian beliefs. The main purpose of the festival evolved from the pacification of the spirits to the worship of one's ancestors, as is widely practiced today. The changed nature of the *bon* festival gradually diffused from the centre of the Kingdom to rural areas through the efforts of some provincial officials, who were backed by the royal government's policy to promote ancestor worship. While the kind of *bon* festival that can be seen today in some regions, such as on Kudaka Island, may appear to deviate from the usual pattern of ancestor worship in Okinawa, it should be seen as the result of local beliefs about dead souls (or ancestors' souls), which had existed long before the present-day culture of ancestor worship took root under the influence of the royal government's policies.

Conclusion

It should be clear from the above discussions that it is hardly acceptable to claim, without any consideration of the religious policies of the Ryukyu Kingdom, that "ancestor worship forms the core of native beliefs" in Okinawa. Furthermore, this essay also aimed to demonstrate that Yanagita Kunio's concept of ancestor worship, which was outlined at the beginning of this paper, does not fit to the Okinawan model of ancestor worship.

As a final remark, I would also like to emphasize the following point: The perspective adopted in this paper, which is that the state system or state policies exerted influence on the formation and changes of folk culture, is not restricted to the issue of rituals for ancestors. Based on my observations of village rituals on Kudaka Island, I have argued that the nature of the rituals on the island, including that of *izaihō*, cannot be properly understood unless you take into account the fact that Kudaka was *the* holy place chosen by the state during the Ryukyu Kingdom period, and that the king himself, as well as Kikoe Ōkimi, the highest-ranking priestess in the kingdom, paid occasional visits to the island (Akamine 1998, 2004, 2009). I believe that studies in Okinawan folk culture would be broadened and more productive if there was further research and discussion on the issue of the influence that the state system and its policies had on the development of folk culture in society.

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From Hawaii to Okinawa: The Expansion of the Paradise Image and Tourism beyond Time and Place

Introduction

In order to understand the paradise image and tourism in Okinawa since its reversion to Japan in 1972, it is useful to examine the lines of development that lead from Hawaii and Miyazaki to Okinawa, rather than to focus on Okinawa alone. In that some other militarised places became tourist sites as well, it is easy to point out the similarity among Hawaii, Guam and Okinawa, and Hawaii's leading role as the model for the development of tropical beach resorts in the Pacific. However, for Okinawa it was also a crucial turning point that the "honeymoon boom" in Miyazaki Prefecture (the southern Kyushu area, often also referred to as "*nangoku*" 南国, or "southern country") shifted to Okinawa, newly the southernmost part of Japan, as an effect of the reversion and the Ocean Expo of 1975. The event turned the focus of Okinawa's mainstream tourism from a war memorial destination to a tropical one. In short, we have to consider Okinawa's drastic change in terms of the influences from and the relationship with both domestic areas and foreign countries.

Through my research, part of which will be presented in this paper, my aim is to develop a more global approach to the study of Okinawa, an approach going beyond that of area studies, which would consider Okinawa in isolation from other areas.

The Birth of the Image of Hawaii As "Paradise of the Pacific"

First, I would like to take a look at the process which led to the image of Hawaii as the "Paradise of the Pacific". After Captain Cook's discovery in 1778, Hawaii had been deeply involved in the modernisation project of the West. In the 19th century, some of the missionaries who had come to propagate Christianity established sugar plantations and built the foundation of capitalism in Hawaii. After a coup d‘état by Caucasians in 1893, Hawaii was annexed by the U.S. The local large companies called the “Big Five,“ which had accumulated wealth in the sugar industry, directed their attention to tourism as a way of promoting local industry following the annexation, thereby starting the development of tourism in Waikiki.

Dance and music were performed by the indigenous people at tropical banquets called *lū‘aus*. Hula dances emphasised women’s bare skin and their swinging waists to satisfy the curiosity of the mainland tourists. Many aspects of the traditional culture of the indigenous peoples, such as hula and surfing, had been banned as savage and immoral in the 19th century, but in the next century, were turned into commercial spectacle for the purpose of tourism.

In the 1930s, the relationship between the U.S. and Japan deteriorated. The military bases in Hawaii gained greater importance, and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, its military function was even more strongly reinforced. Barbed wire entanglements were put up on Waikiki Beach. Hawaii became a strategic foothold against Japan, but at the same time, it also became an ocean resort for soldiers (similar to Okinawa during the Vietnam War). Paradoxically, the Pacific War helped spread Hawaii’s tropical image. Militarisation and tourism were deeply linked, and the Hawaiian economy boomed from both sides. Due to developments such as measures to counter the recession after the war, Hawaii’s advance to the 50th state of the U.S. in 1959, and the introduction of commercial jumbo jet flights in the 1970s, Hawaii tourism has progressively increased.

Hawaii, for Japanese people, turned from a destination for labour in the prewar age to a tourist site in postwar times. But even back in the 1920s and ‘30s, Hawaiian music had been popular in Japan, which contributed to the construction of an image of Hawaii as a beautiful and bright paradise. In 1948, after the war – just seven years after the attack on Pearl Harbor – Oka Haruo’s song “The Admirable Route to Hawaii” (“*Akogare no Hawaii kōro*”) was a great hit and even served as the basis for a movie. In 1964, the deregulation of overseas travel allowed Japanese citizens to travel freely to Hawaii, and various Hawaii campaigns were carried out by both Japanese and Hawaiian travel agents. After commercial jumbo jet flights started in 1970, Japanese tourism to Hawaii rapidly increased.

Hawaii As a Model for the Development of Tourism in Okinawa

Next, I would like to show how Hawaii tourism became an important model for Okinawa tourism. For 27 years after the war, Okinawa was occupied by the U.S. military. In the 1960s, that is, even before Okinawa's reversion to Japan, a first, but small boom in tourism to Okinawa occurred. Tourism during this period mainly focused on honouring the war dead and shopping for foreign goods. Seemingly different on the surface, both forms of tourism derived from colonial factors particular to Okinawa: Okinawa was the site of the bloodiest battle fought in the Pacific war, which made it an important destination for Japanese tourists who wanted to commemorate their relatives who had lost their lives; at the same time, being a dollar economy area under the U.S. military rule made Okinawa attractive for Japanese tourists eager to buy foreign goods such as watches and jewellery at cheap prices.

However, at a round table talk entitled "Vision for the development of the tourism industry" in 1969 (Okinawaken Seisansei Honbu 1969:12-20), Okinawan local tourism agents were worried that this boom might turn out to be only a "spontaneous" and temporary phenomenon, and they argued for a more positive and conscious development of tourism. In the discussion, many foreign examples were referred to, such as Hawaii, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Guam and Puerto Rico. These were considered to be models for tourism to Okinawa, and, at the same time, they were its rivals, because they were similar to and prior to the development in Okinawa.

Furthermore, in the context of the particular problems of Okinawa tourism, there were many references to Hawaii: The need for a representative dance like the hula in Hawaii was expressed; establishing beaches was seen as a means to draw many Japanese tourists to Okinawa – analogous to Hawaii in the U.S.; and in order to promote Okinawan local industry, the idea was raised to create an Okinawan aloha shirt. It is clear to see that the local tourism agents regarded Hawaii as a practical model and wanted to elevate Okinawa to the status of "Hawaii in Japan".

Yamashiro Shinko, a professor at the University of the Ryukyus, presented his thoughts on the development of Okinawa's tourism by tracing the corresponding process in Hawaii (Okinawaken Seisansei Honbu 1969:22-29). Hawaii is a state in the U.S., but geographically, it is remarkably different from that of the mainland. This factor enabled Hawaii to develop as a tourist site which was *inside the U.S., but also very unique*. In the same way, Yamashiro stated that, even after reversion and inclusion into Japanese economy, Okinawa should aim at becoming a tourist site which would be *inside Japan, but also very unique*.

Both Hawaii and Okinawa have something in common in the sense that they are situated within their respective national contexts, but at the same time, are open to Asia and the Pacific in a global context. Hawaii and Okinawa are local places where the national and the global intersect. Yamashiro's idea was to conceptualise Okinawa tourism both in terms of its relationship with mainland Japan and its position within Asia and the Pacific. From this idea, the strategy to construct a "tropical" image for Okinawa emerged. It corresponded with the concept of the Okinawa block as "the uniquely tropical zone in Japan," as designated by the government in 1972 in the "New National Comprehensive Development Plan" (*Shin zenkoku sōgō kaihatsu keikaku*).[1]

The "Tropical Tourism Base Plan" (*Anettai kankō kichi keikaku*), which was part of the "Okinawa Tourism Development 5-Year Plan" (*Okinawa kankō kaihatsu 5 kanen keikaku*) of 1969, aimed to "turn Okinawa into a Far Eastern Hawaii" (Okinawaken Seisansei Honbu 1969:30-31). The adjective "tropical" (*anettai*) not only indicated Okinawa's geographic and climatic situation, but included the intention to transfer Hawaii's image onto Okinawa and create a Hawaii-type of space there. This idea of Okinawa as being "tropical = Hawaii in Japan" became clearly visible during the Ocean Expo of 1975, which presented and propagated a new image of Okinawa as being a southern, tropical tourist destination surrounded by a beautiful blue sea.

The Honeymoon Goes "South" – Miyazaki

However, the influence Hawaii exerted as a model for the "tropical" image of Okinawa was not the only factor which contributed to the development of Okinawa as a tropical, island paradise tourist destination. There used to be quite an old tradition of casting certain locations within Japan as the "South" ("*nangoku*") – this imagined line stretches from Izu, Nanki, and Tosa, to southern Kyushu and from there, in particular, to Miyazaki (see Fig. 1).

1 The New National Comprehensive Development Plan was formulated by the Japanese Government in 1969. It divided the national land into seven blocks and planned their respective development. After the reversion in 1972, the Okinawa block was added into the plan.

Figure 1. The South, *nangoku* in Japan

Miyazaki Prefecture has a rich and much older history as a tourist destination than Okinawa. Iwakiri Shōtarō, who came to be known as "the father of Miyazaki tourism" (see Fig. 2), started to work on the development of tourism in Miyazaki prior to the war in the Pacific. The Exposition of Homeland Hyuga Industry (*Sokoku Hyūga sangyō hakurankai*) in 1933 and the designation of Kirishima as National Park in 1934 were important milestones in that development. In 1940, under the rising nationalism centred on the emperor system, Japan celebrated the 2600-year anniversary of the legendary Jimmu Tenno's accession to the imperial throne. Miyazaki, as the cradle of Jimmu Tenno's alleged descent from heaven, and Nara, the location of his enthronement, thus suddenly rose to fame as the two most sacred sites in the nation. To commemorate this foundational event, a "Pillar of Heaven and Earth" (*Ametsuchi no motohashira*) was erected near Miyazaki Shrine.


Figure 2. Statue of Iwakiri Shotaro

After the war, during which Miyazaki sustained massive destruction as well, the reconstruction of its tourism business also proceeded at fast pace. In 1950, the Nichinan coastline was selected as a site among the list of "One Hundred New Japan Tourist Sites" drawn up by the Mainichi Newspaper. Only four years later, as many as 440,000 people visited the "Southern Miyazaki Tourism Industry Exposition" (*Nangoku Miyazaki sangyō kankō hakurankai*).

And in 1955, the Nichinan coastline was designated as a quasi-national park. At that time, Iwakiri introduced the term "Road Park," i.e. the road as such was to be the park, through which one would drive and enjoy the ever changing vistas. This new notion was well ahead of the development of a motorised, mobile society.

In order to sell the Nichinan coastline as a tourist destination, Miyazaki City and the Tourism Board produced a travel promotion film entitled "The Nichinan Coast" (*Nichinan kaigan*), which won the award for best travel film at the Japan Travel Film Competition and was subsequently screened nationwide. The establishment of a boot camp for professional baseball players and the frequent use of Miyazaki as a location in films strengthened its appeal as a tourist destination. But what ultimately established its thriving popularity were the honeymoon trips taken by two imperial couples in 1960 and 1962. The itineraries of their journeys – one called "the Shimazu line," the other "the Prince Line" – became customary routes for honeymoons in Miyazaki. Then, starting in 1965, NHK broadcasted its one-year-long morning TV drama series "Tamayura" ("Fleeting Moment"), scripted by Kawabata Yasunari – some of the most memorable scenes of this travelogue were set in Miyazaki, thereby giving another boost to the flourishing "Miyazaki honeymoon boom".

The main tourist seasons in the "southern country" of Miyazaki were spring and autumn, whereas the hot summer – usually one of the main holiday periods – was regarded as off-season. To promote Miyazaki's appeal as a summer destination, Miyazaki City's Tourism Board began to utilise Hawaii's image. To this end, the local bus company Miyazaki Traffic (Miyazaki kōtsū), of which Iwakiri was the founder and president, joined forces with ANA and JTB to develop a "southern summer" travel concept under the slogan "Let's fly the aloha way" ("*Aloha de tobō*"). The idea was to offer tourists a Hawaii-like experience in Miyazaki, Japan's own "South". For these popular trips, tourists clad in aloha shirts were presented with "sunhats" upon their arrival at Miyazaki Airport. For the tourism campaign "Playing in the Sun" ("*Taiyō to asobō*"), which also aimed at promoting a positive image of Miyazaki as "a hot summer southern destination," a so-called "swimsuit bus" (*Mizugi basu*) was offered, which the tourists could take to go from the hotel to the beach wearing only their swimwear, if they so wished.

However, starting around 1973, clouds began to overshadow the blue skies of the southern country of Miyazaki, as the honeymoon boom started to fade.

Together with the impact of the oil shock, the reversion of Okinawa can be regarded as the reason for the decrease in Miyazaki's fortune as a honeymoon/ tourist destination. With the Ocean Expo in 1975, Okinawa's status as the "tropics in Japan's far South" was firmly established and the honeymoon boom shifted further south to Okinawa. During the 1980s, the main destinations for honeymooners then became Hawaii and Guam, that is, honeymoon tourism went abroad, and Miyazaki lost its status as a sought-after destination.

"Ocean" and "Tropical" Road Park Going South

Due to the Battle of Okinawa and the American Occupation, the economic development of Okinawa Prefecture lagged behind that of other prefectures in Japan. The cooperation offered to Okinawa by Miyazaki, as the model of "south tourism," was therefore important. After Okinawa's reversion to Japan in 1972, the three prefectures of Miyazaki, Kagoshima and Okinawa set up a "Joint Sunshine Route Committee" to collaborate on public relations campaigns and attract tourists to the region. The Miyazaki Tourism Board continued this collaboration for about 10 years, even though it risked losing visitors in the competition with the "southern country" located further south.

Iwakiri Shōtarō, who had a close connection to the Tancha Travel agency in Okinawa, offered his know-how in running the business of amusement parks and even helped by sending staff from his own company to Okinawa. On the request of Taketomijima, Iwakiri visited the island; asked for his advice on the development of tourism, he is quoted to have said "It's best just as it is" (*Kono mama ga ichiban*) (Miyazaki-shi Kankō Kyōkai 1997:58). His comment has been practically utilised for Taketomi tourism.

The design of the National Road No. 58 in Okinawa, which was built as a motorway to connect Naha with the site of the Ocean Expo, corresponded exactly with Iwakiri's concept of a "road park". Hibiscus, palm trees and other plants associated with the "tropics" were planted alongside the highway, and in combination with the sea along this western coast, the road itself, as an "ocean" and "tropics" road park, became a device for displaying "Okinawa-ness". This change in scenery facilitated its coexistence with the vast U.S. military bases. Within Okinawa's dual reality, composed of military facilities and beach resorts, the Ocean Expo and Route No. 58 pushed Okinawa's image as tropical tourist site to the forefront.

Figure 3. “Moving Frame“ along route 58

In terms of Iwakiri’s concept of the “road park,“ it was not just specific, individual famous spots that were turned into tourism sites. Rather, the “road park” connected those spots in a line, so that, “they stretch into an expanse, and it is just like driving through a park” (Iwakiri 1975:14). His vision to combine a road and the scenery into a park was first introduced and realised along the Nichinan coastline in Miyazaki Prefecture. And it was exactly this concept that was implemented in the construction of Route No. 58 in Okinawa. Tour participants, who stayed in Naha hotels owned and run by mainland companies, would get on a tour bus to enjoy a panoramic view of the road park and a taste of “Okinawa, the southern country” from the inside of their bus, while travelling the 85 kilometres to the Ocean Expo. Consequently, mainland chain hotels, Route 58, and the Ocean Expo Site constituted the self-contained sequence of one thematic space.

Iwakiri emphasised that some sort of framing was required to enhance the dynamic vision of watching the scenery while driving, and thus a line of trees along the road would provide a kind of “moving frame”. In essence, the moving frame created by the line of trees would support the rolling vistas of the picturesque sea and sky scenery (see Fig. 3). As it turned out, Iwakiri was spot on with his suggestion of transforming the view of Okinawa’s seaside into an aesthetic vision by using a line of trees. In October 1975, while the Ocean Expo was under way, Iwakiri was invited to give a talk to entrepreneurs based in Okinawa. In his speech, he marvelled at the beauty of Route 58 that had been constructed so quickly, and suggested that “even more tourists could be attracted to Okinawa, if you would build a splendid road park stretching along the whole coastal region from Nago to Onna Village, and connect it with the Ocean Expo Park” (Iwakiri 1975:9). At that time, Route 58 was still developing, but he already envisioned the completion of a road park linked to the Ocean Expo Park, if further efforts were made.

Where are "the Tropics" and "the South" Located? Ubiquity vs. Uniqueness

So far, I have briefly sketched out the lines of influence that exist between Hawaii and Okinawa, and Miyazaki and Okinawa with regard to the development of tourism and the creation of an image of a "paradise in the South". I will now turn to the question of what those "tropics" and that "South" are, and where they are located. To this end, it is once again useful to draw on Iwakiri's ideas and the chronology of his undertaking to develop tourism in Miyazaki.

Iwakiri began developing the image of the "flair of the South" when his attention was drawn to the delicate Fan Palm (*birō*) that is native to the picturesque Aoshima Island located in Miyazaki. To create an image of "southern country," however, the Phoenix Palm was the obvious choice, as it can grow pretty much anywhere; and so Iwakiri quickly arranged for Phoenix Palms to be planted in all regions and coined the public relations slogan "The Phoenix Miyazaki" (see Fig. 4). The appearance of this most useful item in terms of constructing an image of "the South" meant, however, that the creation of the image of "the South" was not restricted to southern Kyushu, but could be achieved anywhere. Well aware of such potential competition, Iwakiri swiftly came up with the abovementioned PR phrase "the Phoenix Miyazaki".

Figure 4. - Phoenix along Nichinan coastline

When Pegii Hayama's song "Leaving Behind Tosa, My Southern Home Town" (*Nangoku Tosa o ato ni shite*) became a big hit in 1959, some worried that "the South" (*nangoku*) had been taken from Miyazaki. Not Iwakiri, though. On the contrary, he suggested, the song popularised the notion of "the South" all throughout Japan, so he went on to promote Miyazaki as "the original South," thus implanting the specific location of Miyazaki as that image. By that time, the Phoenix Palm began to spread throughout Japan and could be seen, for example, in front of train stations. Yet Iwakiri figured that "the more the Phoenix Palm spreads throughout Japan, the more widely known the place famous for Phoenix Palms will become" (Iwakiri 1975:11). He believed that planting the Phoenix Palm everywhere in Japan would actually function as a kind of advertisement, promoting the association of the palm tree with southern Miyazaki.

This might also provide a hint in terms of answering the question of what "the tropics" or "the South" supposedly are, and where they are located. For even though the image of "the tropics" and of "the South" certainly utilises features specific to the geographical setting, as we have seen in the cases of Hawaii, Miyazaki and Okinawa, a great deal of this has been artificially constructed and can thus potentially be transplanted to any another location and lead to competition. In other words, an "atmosphere" (of "the tropics," "the South") can be generated anywhere by planting Phoenix Palms. On the one hand, this shows the potential ubiquity of the image of "the tropics" and of "the South". But on the other, the heightened awareness of this ubiquity can conversely also be used to differentiate the "original place" or "real" location of "the South," and thus to emphasise the uniqueness of that specific location.

In the change that Okinawa underwent since the reversion, we can see how the image of "the tropics" and of "the South" – which spread globally beyond the confines of time and space – flowed from Hawaii and Miyazaki to Okinawa. This enables us to discern the dialectical processes between the global ubiquity of the "paradise" image and the connotation of uniqueness it can assume in a specific local context.

By approaching the study of Okinawa from the perspective of global cross-border interrelatedness, I hope that my research will contribute to deepening our understanding of the migration of the "paradise" image in a way different from, albeit akin to, the thriving research on migration and migrants.[2]

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