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**A South in the North:
The Politics of Democracy in Okinawa, Japan**

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Abstract

Okinawa is a group of islands located in the southern fringe of Japan's territory. Historically Okinawa's location opening to Pacific Asia induced its subordination to strong nation states (i.e. Japan and the U.S.) and promoted its political economic marginalization. However, the gradual implementation of democracy after World War II provided Okinawans with opportunities for political struggles against such subordination. Political mobilization in the form of collective action and voting represented the structure of subordination in (counter-)geopolitical terms and resituated Okinawa in a new geopolitical map. Political struggles within Okinawa have often been constructed on conflicting visions of Okinawa, which tended to deepen internal political cleavages. This paper focuses on such political processes in Okinawa in the 1990s when new types of political mobilization were organized to change Okinawa's subordinate status under the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. The end of the Cold War and the pressure for free trade during the decade resulted in the creation of a new geopolitical and geo-economic vision of Okinawa. Using empirical data, it is also shown that for an 'intermediate' place such as Okinawa, how to relate with the North can be a matter of critical but constrained political choice.

Keywords: democracy, political mobilization, geopolitical vision, Okinawa

Introduction

In the current context of globalization, the concept of ‘the South’ can be defined in various ways. Before discussing the variety of the definition, let us look at the common aspects of being ‘the South.’ According to the *Dictionary of Human Geography*, Watts (2000) defined ‘the South’ as follows:

The ‘South’ corresponds to those poor, largely non-industrial, and ex-colonial states that are seen to constitute a third world (mostly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America), a term which arose in the post-war period emerging from the Non-Aligned Movement.

The concept of ‘the South’ was related to the geopolitical development of first and second worlds on one hand, and the economic polarization of the postwar world on the other. Because of these aspects of the concept, the North-South divide of the world has been not only a socio-economic but also a geographical phenomenon. Such zones of ‘the South’ can be visualized in a map as areas of problems (Figure 1). Poverty, economic backwardness, and the legacy of colonization seem to be common characteristics shared by the zones of ‘the South.’

Figure 1. North-South divide and the Brandt Line

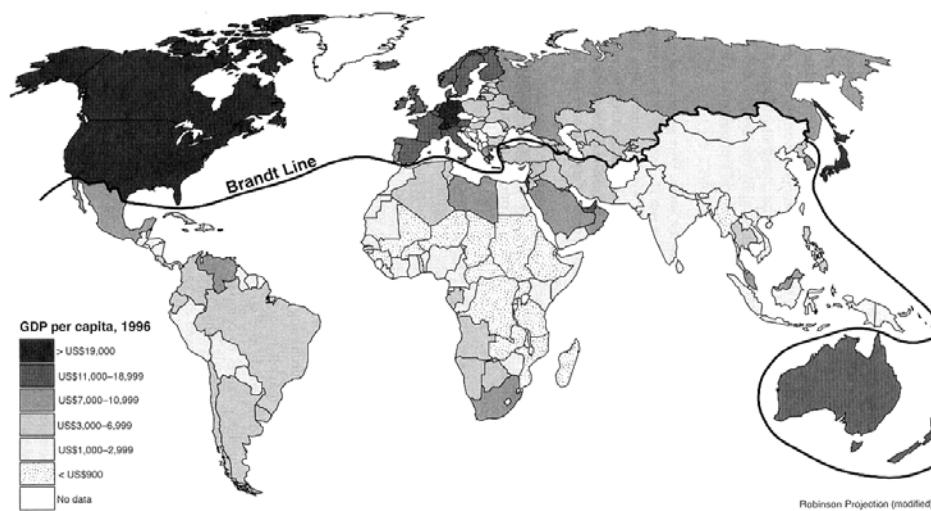


Figure 2.1
International variations in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, 1996

Source: Knox and Agnew (1998: 22).

However, in terms of recent changes in its meaning, Watts added:

While it might be argued that the collapse of many state socialisms has produced a more homogeneous capitalist core associated with capitalist regional trade blocs, the South is extremely diverse and becoming more so. On the other hand, the newly industrializing countries (the NICs) such as Taiwan and South Korea are no longer primary commodity producers and, on the other, the South has rarely had a unified political position even within the Non-Aligned Movement. The appearance of a Fourth World of extreme

poverty (the so-called famine belt), particularly in Africa, suggests a growing economic polarization within the South coeval with a deepening polarization between North and South.

As the socialist bloc was dismantled, the socio-economic differentiation of ‘the South’ became clear and, as a result, the countries and regions classified as ‘the South’ came to take various political positions. However, if we employ the concept of geographical scale (see Smith 1992), being ‘the South’ can be seen at various geographical scales— local, sub-national, national, regional, and global scales. Not only states but also sub-state regions (localities) can constitute units of ‘the South.’

If we redefine ‘the South’ as the concept suitable to various scales, it becomes necessary to explore further the process in which ‘the South’ has been formed. Such a redefinition would refer to the ‘relative’ location of ‘the South’ as opposed to the ‘absolute’ one that is usually characterized by ‘remoteness’ from the core of development. In this redefinition, however, ‘remoteness’ can be interpreted in different ways: spatially, socially, legally, emotionally, etc. A locality that provides low-processed (natural or labor) resources can be located spatially close to the core of development. Most states have localities that provide natural resources and/or labor forces to urban areas and this inter-regional relationship is reproduced. In light of the recent development of globalization, such a process is not contained within the territory of a state. Socio-economic regional differentiation at various scales can be related to a function of the world capitalist economy. Many countries and regions in ‘the South,’ particularly in Southeast and East Asia, are becoming the new destination of investment by trans-national corporations. Therefore, the (trans-)formation of ‘the South’ at various scales is concurrent with shifts in the world political economy.

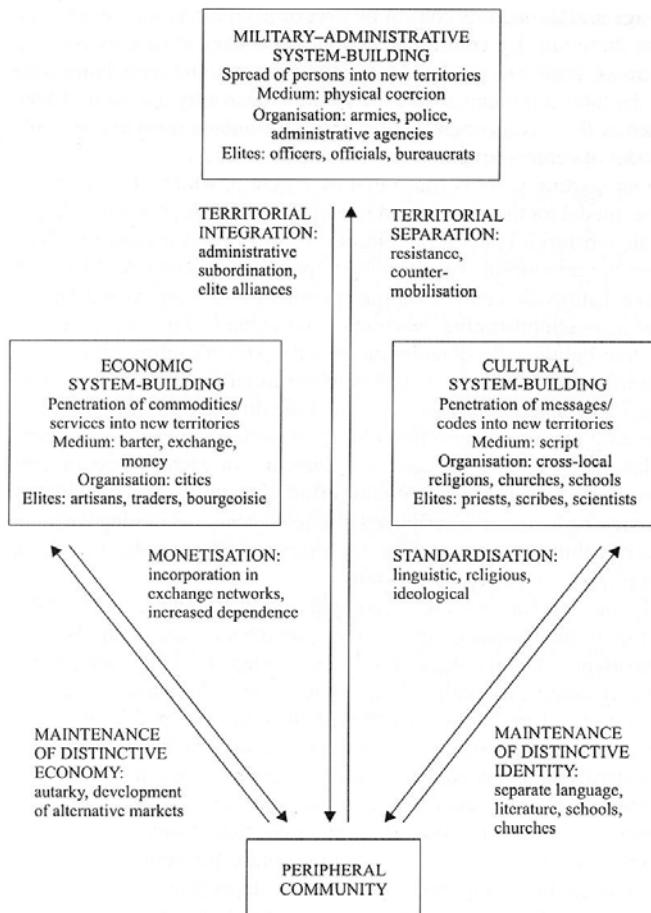
Relativity of the location of ‘the South’ is not only spatial but also temporal. As long as ‘the South’ is constructed or a process, any locality within it can be considered being in spatio-temporal transition and not being fixed. There can be always regional dynamism toward/away from the North (i.e. the core of development). Poverty and economic backwardness characterize ‘the South’ but do not explain its whole aspect. According to Watts’ definition, the legacy of colonialism is one of the important aspects. In more general terms, the projection of power towards ‘the South’ may be essential in defining it. Colonization or marginalization through it has been a political economic process in which underdeveloped, dependency, subordination, etc. is reproduced. Even after decolonization, problematic political dynamism such as long-term dictatorship, constant regime change, failed democracy, etc. characterize ‘the South.’ For example, during the Cold War, such political dynamism was brought about through the external intervention by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Thus, the (trans-)formation of ‘the South’ has reflected its power relation to ‘the North.’

Drawing on the above-mentioned discussion, this paper will focus on ‘a South in the North’ from the viewpoint of center-periphery relations (Rokkan and Urwin 1983; Flora 1999). Rokkan and Urwin (1983) propose a territorial approach of politics that rests on a center-periphery model of state-building in Europe. In their model, there are three sets of relations: military-administrative, economic, and cultural system-buildings (Figure 2). Military-administrative system-building is regarded as a process of territorial integration/separation. Peripheral communities can be conquered by centers in all or only one way. Changes in one type of relation have effects on others. Using this model, Rokkan and Urwin attempt to construct a typology of political reactions of peripheral communities to processes of subordination and incorporation. As Rokkan (extracted in Flora 1999: 6) argues, this center-periphery structure represents essential features in the territorial structure of a political system such as territorial expansion, political centralization, and population concentration.

However, these three processes of system-building do not necessarily continue either as integration or as separation, nor do they operate equally. Peripheral communities can show various

types of political reactions between integration and separation. As Agnew (1987) argues, modernization can be considered the nationalization of a state territory through these processes of system-building, and the disappearance of local characteristics can be thought to be a result of the nationalization. Thus, the occurrence of political behavior at the local level such as peripheral nationalism, regionalism, or local autonomous movements and its local variety indicate the existence of place which cannot be nationalized. Therefore, according to the nature of the center-periphery relations, peripheral communities act in a certain way (e.g. as a struggle for liberation from underdevelopment or subordination). The question is how democracy works in such a peripheral location, which is a major concern of this paper.

Figure 2. Stain Rokkan's abstract model of processes of interaction and resistance within large-scale territorial systems.



Source: Flora (1999: 118).

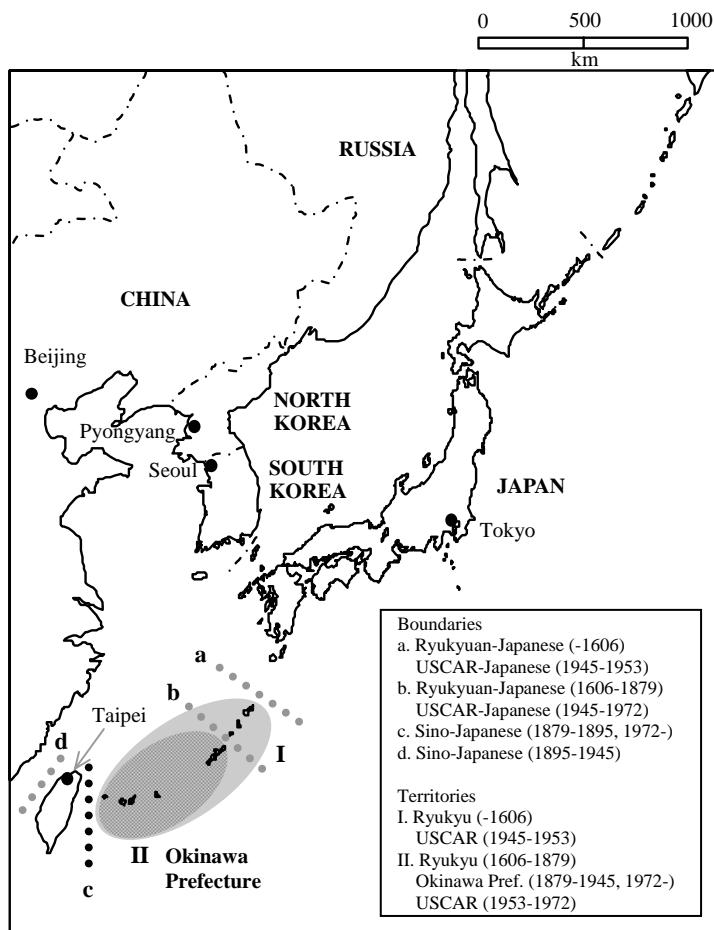
Okinawa and its location in the Asia-Pacific region

Geopolitical and geo-economic location

This paper chose Okinawa (Okinawa Prefecture in Japan) as a study site. Okinawa is the

prefecture located between the Japan Islands and Taiwan and consists of more than 100 islands with a population of 1.3 million and an area of 2,267 square kilometers (Figure 3). Okinawa has experienced four distinct historical phases, which typically represents Okinawa's marginality. Okinawa used to be an independent state called *ryukyu okoku* (the Ryukyu Kingdom), which was united in 1429 under the influence of China (the Ming dynasty). 450 years later (in 1879), the Kingdom was annexed to Japan. From 1879-1945, Okinawa was one of the prefectures in Japan and was dominated by and integrated into Japan proper. From 1945-72, Okinawa was governed by the U.S. military forces as a result of the Second World War and became a security "keystone" full of U.S. bases and installations to contain the communist block in East Asia. During this period, political mobilizations against U.S. military governance took place and were reflected in collective actions and voting behaviors. Under the U.S. military governance, Okinawan society and identity were profoundly transformed. In 1972, Okinawa reverted to Japan and again became one of its prefectures. Even after 1972, however, the concentration of U.S. military bases has not significantly changed under the Japan-U.S. security arrangements, which were established after the Second World War.

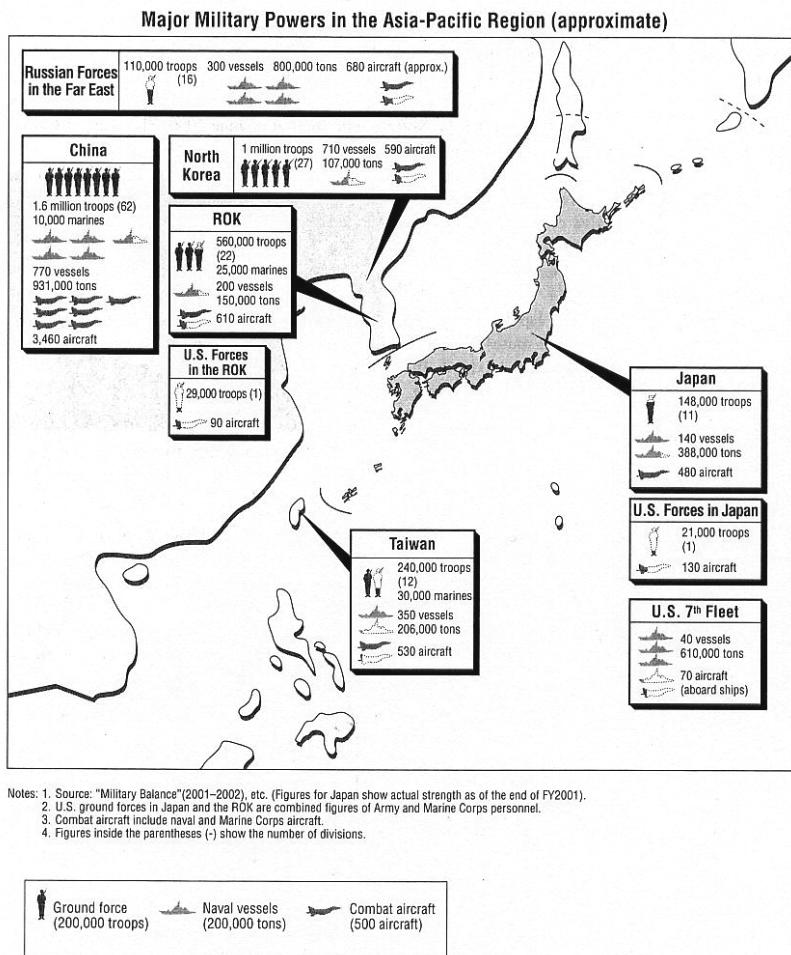
Figure 3. The location of Okinawa since the 17th century.



Thus, Okinawa as a peripheral locality has been affected by the central states and the

inter-state system in the Asia-Pacific region. According to political economic differentiation in the region (i.e. colonization and the Cold War), the geopolitical and geo-economic location of Okinawa has been changing over time. This has conditioned political, economic, and social dynamism within Okinawa. Since its annexation to Japan, Okinawa has faced a dual frontier. The political aspect of the frontier concerns Okinawa's location 'advantage' for military security such as one during the Cold War. Both the U.S. and Japanese governments have repeatedly emphasized the geo-strategic or security value of Okinawa for U.S.' forward deployment in order to counter potential threats. This geopolitical context is typically represented by a security map such as Figure 4. The other aspect is economic in that Okinawa has suffered from economic backwardness due to its remoteness from the center of Japan as represented by the location of the Brandt Line.

Figure 4. The post-Cold War military balance in Northeast Asia.



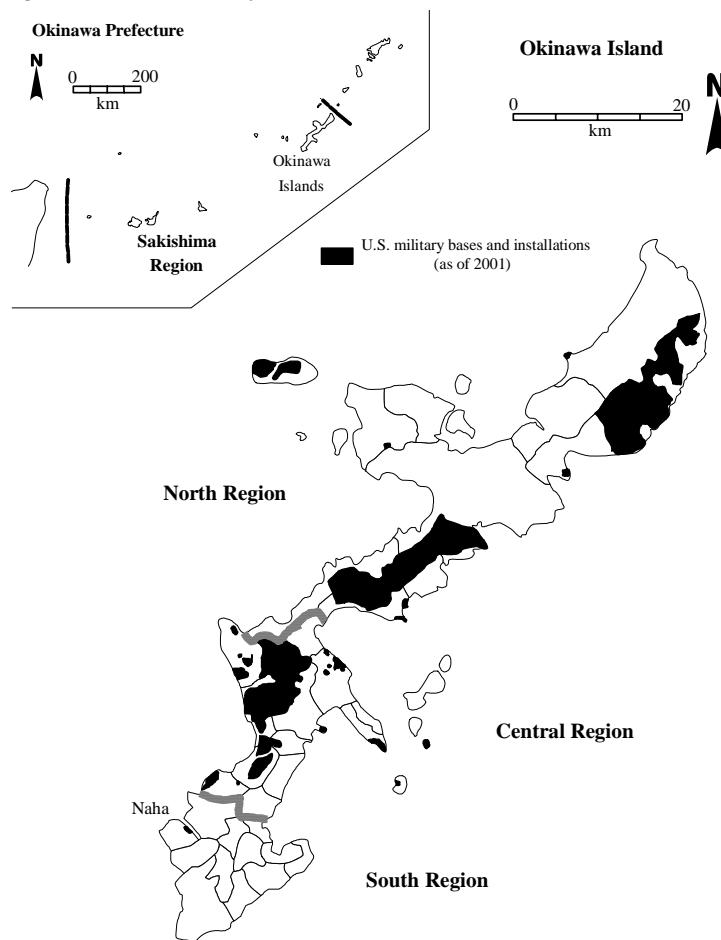
Defense Agency of Japan (2002: 38).

What distinguishes Okinawa from the rest of Japan as well as the world is the concentration of U.S. military bases. More than 30 military bases and installations are currently located in Okinawa. 75% of the area for U.S. military bases in Japan exists in Okinawa. Their concentration is

particularly eminent in Okinawa Island (Figure 5). Approximately 20% of the area of the island has been occupied by the bases. This situation is not at all a recent phenomenon but has continued for more than 50 years since the end of the Second World War. The Cold War and the Japan-U.S. security arrangements have maintained the status of Okinawa. The fact that an underdeveloped island prefecture has been forced to accept vast foreign military bases has become a cause of continuing social movements. In spite of these external political controls, Okinawans have maintained their distinct ethnic identity in language (dialect), social custom, and culture. In sum, militarization, economic marginalization, and socio-cultural integration into Japan have been the major stimuli of continuing political mobilization against Japan as well as the U.S. military bases in Okinawa.

For Japan, however, Okinawa is indispensable because Japan highly depends for its territorial security on the U.S. military forces stationed in Okinawa. Playing the role of a mediator between Okinawa and the U.S., Japan has attempted to promote Okinawa's development and compensate Okinawa's security burden by providing a large amount of developmental subsidies for Okinawa (Nakano and Arasaki 1976; Arasaki 1996). Thus, the existence of U.S. military bases, U.S.' and Japan's policies toward Okinawa, and Okinawan political mobilization have developed a complex political nexus and produced the 'political space' of Okinawa as a spatial manifestation of those processes.

Figure 5. U.S. military bases and installations in Okinawa, 2001.



Shifting boundaries

Due to its unique location between regional powers, Okinawa experienced external invasion and dominance. As a result of this dynamism, the frequent shift of boundaries had significant impacts on Okinawan society (see Figure 3). In 1429, Okinawa Island was united and the Ryukyu Kingdom was built under the influence of China (the Ming dynasty). After the unification, the Kingdom became prosperous by promoting transit trade with neighboring countries and regions such as China, Japan, Korea, Luzon (the Philippines), Siam (Thailand), Malacca (Malaysia), and Java (Indonesia). Okinawa was able to enjoy its location advantage in East Asia. This ‘golden’ age, however, did not last long. In the 16th century, China allowed Chinese merchants to travel abroad, and Portuguese ships began to mediate trade between Japan and China (Arashiro 1997: 79). The emergence of these new traders from powerful countries lowered the status of the Ryukyu Kingdom after the middle of the 16th century. When the Tokugawa shogunate was founded in 1603, the shogunate became interested in the restoration of trade with China. The feudal domain of Satsuma (currently Kagoshima Prefecture) was also attracted to Okinawa’s location advantage in inter-regional trade since the domain of Satsuma suffered from financial difficulties. The feudal lord of the domain of Satsuma, Iehisa Shimazu, sent 3,000 troops to Okinawa and put it under his control in 1606. This invasion was later named and remembered as the incident of Shimazu’s invasion.

However, even after the invasion, the regime of the Ryukyu Kingdom was maintained, and its political economic relationship with China was continued. In this sense, the Kingdom belonged to two strong powers at the same time: the Tokugawa shogunate and the Ming dynasty. Under this dual belonging, the culture of the Kingdom prospered, but it was basically situated as a different state within the Japanese regime. Unlike China’s tributary system, the domain of Satsuma imposed heavy tribute tax and trade regulation on the Kingdom (Hokama 1986: 76-81, Miyagi 1968: 92-98). This brought about financial crises of the Kingdom and led to the impoverishment of Ryukyuans. The decline of the Ryukyu Kingdom continued until its location advantage was reevaluated in the 19th century.

Okinawa as well as Japan faced the expansion of Euro-American colonialism into East Asia. In 1816 two British ships stopped at Okinawa and their crews stayed in Naha. In 1844 a French battle ship came to Okinawa in order to establish a trade relationship with the Ryukyu Kingdom. The U.S. fleet led by Admiral Perry also visited Okinawa and demanded that it be opened for free trade. Since the Ryukyu Kingdom was under the strict control of the domain of Satsuma, it did not accept the requests of foreign visitors. However, the fact that these western powers attempted to negotiate with the Ryukyu Kingdom rather than Tokugawa Japan meant that they recognized the relative independence of the Kingdom from Japan. Although the frequent visits of western powers to Okinawa affected and reshaped Satsuma’s policy toward the Kingdom, it was not until the Meiji era that renewed international relations in Asia began to greatly influence Okinawa (Miyagi 1968: 140-147).

With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the new government replaced the Tokugawa shogunate. The Meiji government forcibly wiped out the Tokugawa’s feudal system and reconstructed Japan as a modern nation-state. In order to cope with the expansion of western colonialism and secure its sphere of influence, the Meiji government needed to include Okinawa in the territory of Japan. This meant that Okinawa would constitute the southern frontier of the Japanese nation-state (Oguma 1998: 18-23). Aware of the intention of the Meiji government, the Ryukyu Kingdom did not agree to its annexation to Japan, and China (the Qing dynasty) also objected to the request. The belonging of Okinawa was not yet settled between the Ryukyu Kingdom, Japan, and China at that time.

As the Meiji government promoted swift modernization (westernization) in which the

industrialization and militarization of Japan were prioritized, it began to directly control Okinawa by placing the domain of Ryukyu (*ryukyu han*) over the Ryukyu Kingdom. Japan appointed the king of the Ryukyu Kingdom the governor of the domain in 1872. Seven years later, the Meiji government sent troops and police forces to Naha and requested the king to vacate the Shuri Castle, which had been the seat of the Ryukyu Kingdom for hundreds of years. Upon the ‘surrender’ of the king, the Meiji government declared that Okinawa Prefecture replaced the domain of Ryukyu. Okinawa was finally incorporated into the Japanese nation-state. This incident in 1879 has been called “the Deposition of Ryukyu” (*ryukyu shobun*). Although many Ryukyuans were opposed to this forcible incorporation, Japan’s victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 contributed to the settlement of the question of Okinawa’s belonging. After the War, Okinawa was internationally recognized as part of Japan.

As a result of the Sino-Japanese War, Taiwan was annexed to Japan. However, the colonization of Taiwan situated Okinawa in an ambivalent position between Japan proper and the newly colonized territory (Oguma 1998: 628-634). This meant that Okinawa was treated neither as Japan’s prefecture nor as Japan’s colony. In this sense, Okinawa became a kind of ‘internal colony’ (Hechter 1999). This ambivalent position brought about the following socio-economic ‘contradictions.’ First, the Meiji government adopted a policy to preserve Okinawa’s traditions and customs such as the institutions of land, tax, and local administration. Although the Meiji government believed that such a policy would facilitate the governance of Okinawa, the policy also contributed to the delay of Okinawa’s modernization and to the increase of socio-economic disparities between Okinawa and Japan proper. It was in 1912 that the same legal and social institutions as in Japan proper were applied to Okinawa, which was 33 years after Okinawa had been incorporated into Japan.

Second, the delay of Okinawa’s modernization and the incorporation of Okinawa into Japan were accompanied by the rapid development of Japan’s capitalism. Okinawa was marginalized and transformed into the place that provided the labor force for the area outside of it. Because of the severe economic recession and poverty in the 1910s and 20s, many Okinawans migrated to the industrial areas in Japan proper and to the agricultural regions in North and South America.

Third, the existence of such discrimination against Okinawa affected Okinawans’ perception of their culture and identity. In the process of Japanization as modernization, becoming Japanese or looking, speaking, and behaving like Japanese were considered a way of modernizing Okinawans. This sentiment, shared by Okinawan elites, drove Okinawans into the self-denial of their cultural distinctiveness and ethnic traits such as language.

Finally, the means of assimilation of Okinawa into Japan such as these led to the tragedy of the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. During the Second World War, Okinawans attempted to become loyal to the Japanese Emperor and his state as a result of the above-mentioned discrimination and assimilation. Such adversity stimulated Okinawan’s loyalty and nationalism. As the war situation grew more serious for Japan, the location of Okinawa became critical for Japan in terms of the defense of its territory. For the U.S., the occupation of Okinawa would be decisive for the attack on Japan proper. This situation made the ground war in Okinawa Island (*okinawa sen*, the Battle of Okinawa) the most tragic. The U.S. fleets began the bombardment called “*tetsu no bofu*” (the typhoon of steel) from warships near Okinawa Island. During this battle, more than 200,000 people including approximately 100,000 civilians were killed. With the expense of such tragic deaths, the Battle of Okinawa ended with the U.S.’ victory on June 23. Okinawa was occupied by and put under the control of the U.S. military forces, which finally lasted for 27 years until it was reunited into Japan in 1972.

The above-mentioned history of Okinawa clearly illustrates that Okinawa has been located between the zone of development and that of underdevelopment, or ‘the North’ and ‘the South.’

Okinawa has constituted a space of ambivalence in which inconsistent political processes or behaviors tend to appear. Relationship to ‘the North’ or developed states has often become a contested political issue for Okinawans.

US military administration and the delayed progress of democracy

US' fear of communism and incomplete democratization

The fact that Okinawa was subordinate to Japan helped the U.S. easily occupy it. Due to the Okinawans’ negative feeling toward the oppressive Japanese governance, the U.S. military forces could act as a savior for Okinawans. For a short period of time after the Second World War, Okinawans were willing to accept Americans (Kokuba 1962: 217; Miyazato 1966: 9). It was the beginning of the Cold War in 1946 that changed the meaning of the U.S. occupation of Okinawa. The strategic significance of Okinawa for the capitalist bloc was enhanced after the Second World War, particularly when the 1949 Chinese Revolution took place. Such an expansion of the communist bloc in East Asia urged the U.S. and Japanese governments to create new Japan-U.S. security arrangements in relation to the occupation of Okinawa (Miyazato 1966: 24-26; Tanaka 1997: 34-69).

As seen in the pre-modern era, the geopolitical location of Okinawa between powerful states has kept Okinawa in a subordinate position. When international relations became tense in East Asia, Okinawan society was significantly influenced by the tension as seen, for example, in the anti-communist campaign. Such structural constraints on Okinawa became stronger and affected the dynamism of Okinawan society in the late 1940s. As a result of the beginning of the Cold War, the U.S. military forces remained in Okinawa and retained the administrative rights over Okinawa until 1972.

Such exclusive occupation of Okinawa by the U.S. did not necessarily observe international law at that time¹ and had the potential to become a cause of international disputes over the legitimacy of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa. The development of the Cold War made it urgent for the U.S. to legitimize its continuing (semi-permanent) presence in the islands. For the postwar Japanese government (e.g. the Yoshida Cabinet), the smooth rehabilitation of Japan was a top priority after its disarmament (Tanaka 1997: 52-53). In order to cope with its socio-economic restoration and security threats from the communist bloc, Japan could take advantage of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa as well as in Japan. When the U.S. postwar occupation of Japan ended in 1952, the U.S. incorporated Japan into the capitalist bloc. With Japan and South Korea, the U.S. constructed the Cold War front in East Asia against the Soviet Union, China, and North Korea.

The Peace Treaty with Japan of 1951 was a product of such international tensions. The Soviet Union and China did not sign the Peace Treaty because it granted the U.S. an exclusive right to decide how to utilize Okinawa. In addition, the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty of 1951 provided that the U.S. had the right to use military bases in Japan. Along with Okinawa, the Security Treaty obliged Japan to support the forward deployment of the U.S. military forces. Okinawa, on the other hand, was not under the Japanese administration at that time. The concentration of U.S. bases in

¹ Until the Peace Treaty with Japan was concluded in 1951, there were few legal grounds on which the U.S. could keep exercising exclusive administrative rights over Okinawa. By Article 3 of the Treaty, Japan was to agree to any measures concerning Okinawa that the U.S. would propose to the UN. The implication of Article 3 was that Japan as a sovereign state offered its own administrative rights over Okinawa to the U.S. In other words, the article assumed that Japan still retained “residual sovereignty” over Okinawa. Due to this interpretation of residual sovereignty, the U.S. was able to exercise exclusive administrative rights over Okinawa under the ‘permission’ of the sovereign state of Japan. See Miyazato (1999: 29-33).

Okinawa was not maintained by the Security Treaty. The Peace Treaty guaranteed that the U.S. could freely utilize Okinawa for its military purposes. However, the U.S. military presence in Okinawa also sustained the Japan-U.S. security arrangements because it compromised Japan's light armament and constituted part of the deterrence for Japan.

Japan's disarmament was first requested by the allied forces including the U.S., and the denial of belligerent rights was provided by the Japanese Constitution whose draft was also written by the U.S. occupation force. In light of postwar socio-political sentiments in Japan, the drastic rearmament of Japan was not a realistic option to counter the threats of communism and nuclear war. These circumstances necessitated the stationing of U.S. military forces in and near Japan as a deterrence. After all, in the face of the development of the Cold War, the maintenance and expansion of U.S. bases in Okinawa were an efficient way to meet the demands of the U.S. and Japanese governments. Thus, the conclusion of the two treaties in 1951 determined the 'fate' of postwar Okinawa.

Although Okinawa was completely under foreign rule with the U.S. occupation, they accepted it at first. The U.S. military forces promoted the rehabilitation of Okinawan society. The U.S. government considered the prompt restoration of Okinawan society a way to stabilize their occupation of Okinawa (Miyazato 1966: 26-30). One of the policies newly applied to Okinawa was democratization. The U.S. governing body first believed that a democratic system would help to make Okinawan society friendly to the U.S. occupation (Miyazato 1966: 30-32). The U.S. military forces implemented many democratic institutions such as autonomous archipelago (*gunto*) governments, free elections, and political parties including leftist ones.

However, as the Cold War developed and as the role of Okinawa in such a context was clearly defined, the U.S. Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) was established in 1950. USCAR was very cautious of excessive democratization so as not to spread anti-U.S. sentiment and communism within Okinawa. In order to transform Okinawa into an anti-communist fortress under the Cold War, the careful control of Okinawan society became necessary. Even though the socio-economic recovery of Okinawa was important for the U.S. occupation, its priority was the reconstruction of Okinawa for military purposes. The military priority of the U.S. administration inevitably distorted the 'normal' development of Okinawa and created a fragile economic structure dependent on external income sources (Makino 1996: 25-36).

Such distortion was reflected in USCAR's policies. In the first elections for the archipelago governors and assemblymen in September 1950, the majority of the elected candidates supported Okinawa's reversion to Japan. As a result, USCAR established a provisional central government whose chief executive was appointed by USCAR in 1951, and in 1952 the provisional government became a new semi-autonomous central government (the Government of the Ryukyu Island, GRI). Accordingly, the archipelago governments were abolished and the public election system for the chief executive of the new government was not implemented (until 1968). USCAR had the authority to appoint the chief executive of the GRI and the president of the GRI court and to amend the laws enacted by the GRI Legislature. It was also able to issue and amend its own ordinances applied to Okinawans without the consent of the GRI. In addition to this, as the Cold War developed, USCAR's repression against leftist parties, particularly the Okinawa People's Party, began in the early 1950s. Until Okinawa's reversion to Japan in 1972, USCAR reigned over Okinawan society. It was authoritarian in its nature.

In parallel with the reconstruction of the governing system in Okinawa, the physical transformation of Okinawa Island proceeded after the war. As a result of the Battle of Okinawa, the U.S. troops occupied the bases of the Japanese military forces. The development of the Cold War enhanced the use value of the occupied bases and the land of Okinawa Island for building new bases (Figure 6). U.S. military officials often called Okinawa "keystone of the Pacific" (Yoshida

2001: 61), which meant that Okinawa occupied a geopolitically important location in the West Pacific. Within an approximately 1,500 km radius from Okinawa Island, Tokyo, Pyongyang, Seoul, Beijing, Taipei, and Manila are located (Figure 3). Although the U.S. occupation of Okinawa was a result of the Second World War, the geo-strategic importance of Okinawa that emerged during the Cold War predetermined the long-term stationing of the U.S. military forces. This also means that structural constraints on Okinawa were strengthened and fixed as long as the Cold War continued.

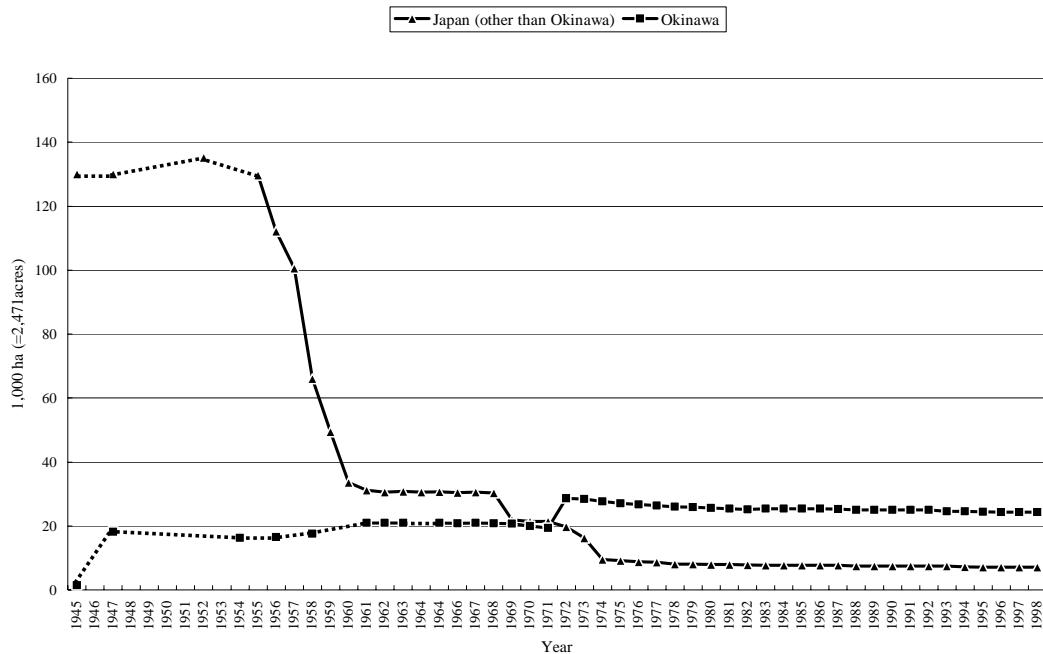
Figure 6. U.S. military bases and installations in Okinawa, 1964.



Source: Yoshida (2001: xxx).

As shown in Figure 7, the area of U.S. bases in Japan proper significantly declined in the late 1950s, which indicates the end of the postwar U.S. occupation of Japan. On the other hand, that in Okinawa gradually increased from the mid 1950s. Thus, the withdrawal of the U.S. military forces from Japan proper was related to the increase of (the area of) the U.S. bases in Okinawa. Figure 7 clearly shows that the role of Okinawa was being ‘fixed’ in the 1960s. It also indicates that upon the reversion the function of Okinawa was ‘purified’ as an anti-communist fortress for the Cold War. Since then, Okinawa has carried a much heavier burden than Japan proper for the U.S. military presence in East Asia. The ratio of such a burden (the area of U.S. bases) between Okinawa and Japan proper has been 4 to 1 (75% to 25%). This has often been regarded as spatial inequality or territorial injustice by Okinawan protesters. U.S. bases currently occupy approximately 20% of the area of Okinawa Island. For the central region of the island, the figure goes up to 25% (Figure 5). The occupation of the land of Okinawa by U.S. bases has also accounted for physical constraints or obstacles to Okinawan socio-economic life.

Figure 7. The area of the U.S. military bases and installations, 1945-1998.



Sources: Okinawa taimusu sha (1959-72, 1997: 17), Okinawa ken (2000), and Ryukyu seifu (various years).

In order to build new military bases, the U.S. military forces carried out forcible land seizure without the prior consent of Okinawan landowners, the reasonable compensation for the seizure, or the legal background for such forcible measures. Since the confiscation of land created landless farmers, the U.S. governing body attempted to absorb such a labor force into the job markets created from the newly built bases.² The U.S. bases also provided various job opportunities for Okinawans. Okinawans engaged in the provision of commercial goods, agricultural products, and various kinds of services for U.S. bases, servicemen, and their families.

The U.S. government also provided financial resources for the socio-economic recovery of postwar Okinawa (i.e. GARIOA and EROA).³ The U.S. government recognized that it was very important to promote the socio-economic recovery of Okinawa in order to stabilize the U.S. governance for a longer period of time. As long as the U.S. governing body gave priority to the militarization of Okinawa, Okinawa's socio-economic development tended to be delayed. In order to counterbalance this delay, the U.S. governing body needed to create a regional economy dependent on external income sources such as military bases and governmental subsidies. In

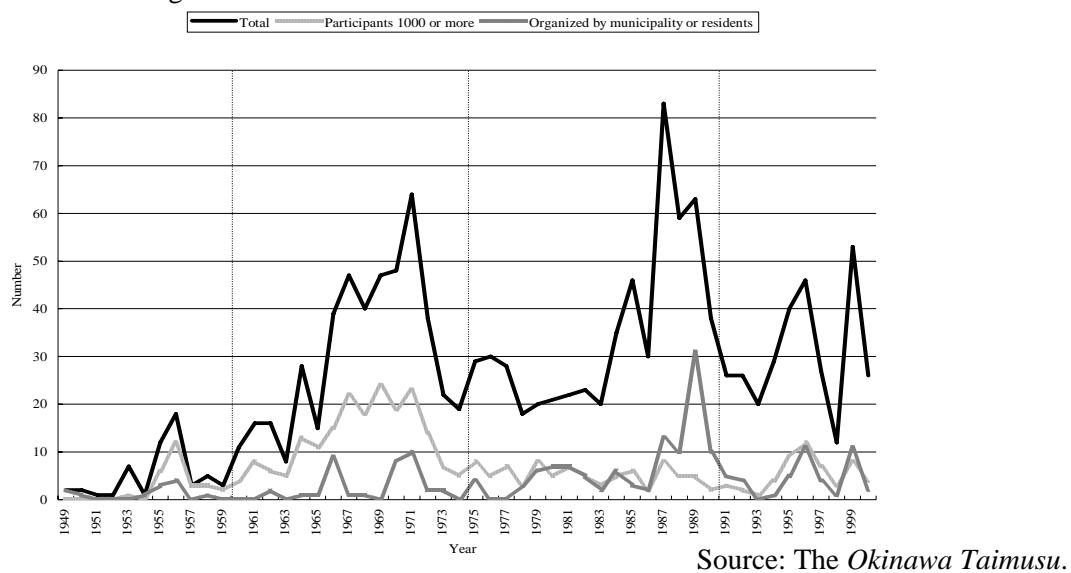
² USCAR also encouraged migration to other islands and foreign countries.

³ GARIOA (Government and Relief in Occupied Areas Fund) was first applied to Okinawa to relieve its food shortage in 1947. As the U.S. decided to retain Okinawa for a long time, GARIOA was increased and changed the nature of the U.S. fund to an economic one, which later contributed to the recovery of the Okinawa economy (Ryukyu shimpō sha 1998: 120). EROA (Economic Rehabilitation in Occupied Areas Fund) was added to GARIOA in 1949 and increased the proportion of economic aids in the U.S. support for Okinawa. Behind this change was a shift in the U.S. foreign policies toward East Asia (Nagumo 1996: 12-13).

addition, construction companies in Japan proper received an order to build new bases from U.S. bases at that time.⁴ Okinawa also became a place where Japanese companies obtained foreign currency. It is, therefore, true that the U.S. military forces attempted to balance the forcible transformation of Okinawa with its swift recovery of Okinawa, but this resulted in Okinawa's dependence on U.S. bases and external financial resources. Such dependence on external resources also predetermined Okinawa's post-reversion economy (Makino 1996: 25-36). The center-periphery relations were thus created between Okinawa and the U.S. bases and later between Okinawa and Japan proper.

However, the relationship between Okinawa and the U.S. bases was not necessarily harmonious. The forcible land seizure in the mid 1950s began to pose a threat to the U.S. military governance of Okinawa. Since the U.S. military forces carried out the forcible land seizure without careful consideration of Okinawans' right to life, those who lost their land without reasonable compensation opposed such a policy. Okinawan protest actions began with local resistance against the forcible land seizure. They first took place in Ie Island and Isahama and later developed into the prefecture-wide movement in the mid 1950s when the U.S.' land policy was applied to the whole prefecture. The GRI began to negotiate with USCAR about the appropriate compensation for seized land and requested a reconsideration of permanent leasehold and further confiscation of private land. However, USCAR and the U.S. government did not change their policy of the construction of bases due to the development of the Cold War. This attitude led to a series of large-scale mass protests against the U.S.' land policy in 1956 (Figure 8). The mass protests reportedly attracted 450,000 participants altogether out of 750,000 residents in the prefecture. They were called "the struggle wrapping the island" (*shimagurumi toso*).

Figure 8. Number of collective actions from 1949-2000.



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu*.

This land struggle first began as one demanding appropriate compensation for seized land and the protection of Okinawans' right to life, and later became a protest against foreign rule and a

⁴ As the construction of military bases increased from 1949 on, companies from Japan proper and the U.S. also engaged in the construction works (Miyazato 1966: 49).

movement for Okinawa's reversion to Japan. In other words, the struggle to protect individual rights changed into one to protect collective rights for oppressed Okinawans and further transformed itself into a nationalistic reversion movement. As Yamazaki (2003) shows, during the struggle in 1956, the frame of "protect our land" was shifted to that of "defend our territory," and Okinawan protesters redefined Okinawans as Japanese. They strongly demanded that the U.S. and Japanese governments make a nation coincide with a state territory. Such identification of Okinawa (Okinawans) with Japan (Japanese) indicates that collective identity formation played an important role in political mobilization. The rhetorical shift of land (*tochi*) to territory (*ryodo*) also shows how the concept of territory mediated between individualistic legal issues and a collective national question. Prior to the land struggle, the nationalistic reversion movement occurred in 1951 when the Peace Conference with Japan was held in San Francisco. Okinawans expected Okinawa to be reunified into Japan at the same time that Japan restored its sovereignty. However, the Conference resulted in the internationally recognized separation of Okinawa from Japan and the continuation of a foreign rule over it. After the Conference, Okinawa's reversion to Japan had been an earnest desire among Okinawans. This underlying desire tended to appear when Okinawans protested oppressive aspects of the U.S. military governance. The land struggle in 1956 was one such example. The demand for appropriate compensation for seized land gradually turned into a desire for reversion. The U.S. military governance of Okinawa continued to create strong resistance such as this among Okinawans.

Construction of the conservative-reformist cleavage

Control over protest

The development of the land struggle in the 1950s not only strengthened Okinawan solidarity but also revealed the internal cleavage among Okinawans. Nakano and Arasaki (1976) point out that the 1956 mass protest promoted the formation of social movement organizations (SMOs) such as labor unions,⁵ which means that the social groups that countered the U.S. military administration began to be created. However, the groups did not necessarily represent the interests of Okinawans as a whole. The postwar socio-economic relationships between Okinawa and the U.S. also created pro-U.S. social groups in Okinawa.⁶

USCAR directly 'repressed' the 1956 mass protest using the "off limits" policy. Responding to the radicalization of mass protest, USCAR announced that it designated the central part of Okinawa Island as an "off limits" area to military personnel in case conflicts between them and Okinawans took place (*Okinawa Taimusu* 8/7/56 in Nakano 1969: 204). However, the fear of conflicts was not the true reason for this policy. U.S. bases were concentrated in the central part of Okinawa Island. Entertainment and amusement businesses in that area depended on U.S. military personnel. To designate the central part as an "off limits" area meant to prohibit them from entering the area and to do significant damage to these businesses. As Yamazaki (2003) argues, this policy brought about conflicts of interests over U.S. bases among Okinawans and succeeded in weakening the impact of the protest. In order to maintain the U.S. military presence in Okinawa, USCAR resorted to such a non-democratic measure. However, the above-mentioned case of repression was

⁵ While there were only five approved labor unions with about 600 members in May 1956, there were about 50 unions with 10,000 members at the end of 1958 (Nakano and Arasaki 1976: 108).

⁶ For example, the U.S. government sent more than 1,000 Okinawans to the U.S. for higher education before the reversion. On this scholarship project, 28, 262, and 155 of them received Doctoral, Master's, and Bachelor's degrees in the U.S., respectively. These Okinawans constituted political and economic elites in Okinawa. Not all of them were pro-U.S., but the U.S. government seems to have expected them to take over the leadership in Okinawan society (Miyagi 2000).

very rare in the postwar history of Okinawa. Rather, more indirect or ‘democratic’ measures seem to have been employed to control or mitigate the impact of protest against the U.S. military presence.

Party politics

The formation and consolidation of political parties after the Second World War reflected a political dynamism and translated the internal political cleavages in Okinawan society. Rather than direct confrontation between Okinawans and USCAR, the internal political competitions among Okinawans contributed to the maintenance or perpetuation of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa. Let us first look at the formation of political parties under the U.S. military administration. After the Second World War, the following parties were created in each group of islands (Higa 1965: 111; Okinawa ken kyoiku iinkai 1994: 129).

The Amami Islands (Japanese name, month/year of foundation)

Amami Oshima Social Democratic Party (*Amami oshima shakai minshu to*, 8/50)

The Okinawa Islands

Okinawa Social Party (*Okinawa shakai to*, 9/47)

Ryukyu Social Party (*Ryukyu shakai to*, 10/47)

Okinawa Democratic Alliance (*Okinawa minshu domei*, 6/47)

Okinawa People’s Party (*Okinawa Jinmin to*, 7/47)

The Miyako Islands

Miyako Democratic Party (*Miyako minshu to*, 5/46)

Miyako Social Party (*Miyako shakai to*, 10/47)

Miyako Liberal Party (*Miyako jiyu to*, 9/49)

The Yaeyama Islands

Yaeyama Democratic Party (*Yaeyama minshu to*, 1/48)

Yaeyama People’s Party (*Yaeyama jinmin to*, 2/48)

Yaeyama Labor Party (*Yaeyama rodo to*, 1/46)

Since the U.S. occupation force did not regulate the formation of political parties, the basis of party politics was established in the early stage of the occupation. As the names of the parties indicate, these parties did not necessarily represent the interests of “Ryukyu” as a whole. The reorganization or consolidation of these parties was promoted through the archipelago government elections in 1950 and the creation of an Okinawan central government in 1951.

While the Okinawa People’s Party (OPP) began its activity in 1947, the formation of a social democratic party was delayed until 1950. The creation of the Social Democratic Party (*Shakai minshu to*) was first planned in August 1950, but it was finally realized as the establishment of the Okinawa Social Mass Party (OSMP) in October 1950 (*Okinawa Taimusu* 8/20/50: 2, 10/10/50: 2). As mentioned above, the governors of the gunto governments were elected in the public election in September 1950. In the case of the Okinawa Islands, Governor Tatsuo Taira joined the OSMP in October 1950. Thus, the OSMP first became the government party of the Okinawa Archipelago Government. On the other hand, the Republican Party was also formed from the Okinawa Democratic Alliance in the same month. The Republican Party was a pro-U.S. and anti-communist party and did not support the reversion to Japan. As a result, the Okinawa Archipelago Government was to be based on the two-party system (*Okinawa Taimusu* 10/27/50: 1).

However, USCAR decided to abolish the archipelago governments, which accelerated the reorganization of Okinawan parties so that they could become “all-Ryukyu (*zenryu teki*)” parties for the planned new central government. At the end of 1951, the following parties existed as the ones

that represented “Ryukyu.”

Republican Party (*Kyowa to*, 10/50)

Okinawa Social Mass Party (*Okinawa shakai taishu to*, 10/50)

Ryukyu People’s Party (*Ryukyu jinmin to*, 12/51)⁷

The Republican Party aimed at the independence of “Ryukyu” under the U.S. trusteeship, but it lost public support due to its party platform and faced the crisis of dissolution. The other two parties supported the reversion to Japan (*Okinawa Taimusu* 3/19/51: 2, 4/24/51: 2). Particularly, the Ryukyu People’s Party (RPP) supported party platforms similar to the Japan Communist Party, which induced USCAR’s sanctions to the party (Senaga 1991; Monna 1996).

Since the Republican Party was finally resolved in February 1952, there was no party that countered the existing two reformist parties in the first GRI Legislature in March 1952. The result was as follows (Okinawa sengo senkyoshi henshu iinkai 1984):

Party	Seats	%
OSMP	14	45.2
OPP	1	3.2
Other	1	3.2
Independent	15	48.4
Total	31	100.0

The victory of the OSMP was clear, but it did not occupy more than 50% of the seats. This indicates that the existing parties did not fully represent the interests of Okinawan voters and that a new party could be created from the independent legislature members (*Okinawa Taimusu* 3/4/52: 2).

After the first GRI Legislature election, the GRI Office was established with no self-confessed pro-U.S. party. However, the conflict between the appointed chief executive Shuhei Higa and the OSMP became clear in a short time. Although Higa was a member of the OSMP, he expressed his objection to the OSMP’s platform aiming at state socialism (*Okinawa Taimusu* 3/30/52: 2). Higa’s attitude reflected an underlying cleavage among the OSMP members between social democratic and capitalist ideologies (*Okinawa Taimusu* 4/12/52: 2). Higa decided to leave the party and create a new conservative party. As a result, the Ryukyu Democratic Party (RDP) was formed from two parties⁸ and some OSMP members in August 1952. Since Higa remained the appointed chief executive, the RDP became a conservative government party.

With some members leaving for the RDP, the OSMP strengthened its characteristic as one of the reformist parties along with the RPP that later became the OPP. As mentioned above, the RDP was not very active in the land struggle and the reversion movement. Therefore, the establishment of the RDP in 1952 can be regarded as a manifestation of the conservative-reformist cleavage in Okinawan party politics, which was represented by the rivalry between the conservative government party that cooperated with the U.S. administration and the reformist parties that aimed at the prompt reversion.

How the cleavage appeared after the first GRI Legislature election is shown in Table 1. As the change of ARV shows,⁹ there was a regular swing of votes between the conservative and reformist parties until 1965. The introduction of the small constituency system in 1954 seems to have

⁷ The temporary name of the Okinawa People’s Party (OPP).

⁸ The Public Welfare Club (*Minsei kurabu*, 4/52) and the Miyako Reform Party (*Miyako kakushin to*, 2/51).

⁹ ARV is the absolute rate (%) of votes obtained by each party.

contributed to distinguishing the swing, although the chief executives of the GRI were always appointed from the conservative party. Therefore, in Okinawa's political structure, the reformist parties attempted to create political dynamism while the conservative party maintained the status quo under the U.S. administration.

Table 1. Conservative-reformist cleavage (ARV) in the GRI Legislature elections.

Year						%		
	Reformist OPP	Minren*	OSP	OSMP	Conservative** RDP, OLDP, ODP	Neutral***	Reformist	Conservative
1954	5.67			36.02	31.66		41.69	31.66
1956	4.70			23.05	38.93		27.75	38.93
1958		21.51		18.15	21.56	10.25	39.65	21.56
1960	10.01		2.20	25.96	40.07		35.97	40.07
1962	10.25		2.00	23.50	34.91		35.74	34.91
1965	10.09		2.98	21.75	36.62		34.82	36.62
1968	9.35		4.58	19.58	36.86		33.51	36.86
Average							35.59	34.37

Notes: * "Minren" was an anti-U.S. alliance of reformist politicians (the OPP and part of the OSMP).

** "Conservative" represents one of the RDP, the OLDP (Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party), and the ODP (Okinawa Democratic Party).

*** "Neutrral" includes formerly conservative politicians.

In addition, the split of reformist votes into the OPP, OSP, and OSMP became eminent in the 1960s, indicating that the competition between the reformist parties was increasing. On the other hand, the conservative government party also maintained internal conflicts and kept changing its name. Conservative votes, however, became more predominant over time, meaning that voters' preference to conservatism was becoming stronger.

Although stepwise regression analysis was conducted to the results of GRI Legislature elections, it was not able to obtain statistically significant results. Each election district for the GRL Legislature did not have both conservative and reformist candidates and sometimes had only one candidate. If such districts are excluded from quantitative analysis, the analysis does not necessarily have significant results due to the small number of observations. Moreover, the existence of many non-voting districts makes it difficult to generalize the geographical pattern of voting.¹⁰ For these reasons, further quantitative analysis is not conducted for the election results in the 1950s. However, as mentioned above, through the land struggle and its development into the reversion movement, the conservative-reformist cleavage was gradually constructed and became a basic element of Okinawan politics in the 1950s. The cleavage thus constructed conditioned the course of politics in the following periods.

Geopolitical representation of Okinawa in political competitions

Political tensions in the late 1960s

The island-wide land struggle in the mid 1950s quickly came to an end after USCAR abandoned the policy of the permanent leasehold of land and raised the land rent to a substantial degree. Okinawan's grievances against the U.S. military governance, however, did not disappear. The second wave of mass protest appeared in the 1960s, especially after 1965 (Figure 8). The

¹⁰ The only significant result was obtained for the conservative votes in the 1958 election. Its adjusted R^2 was 0.327, but the number of observations (municipalities) decreased from 69 to 29.

reasons why there was a wave in this period of time are manifold.

First, organizations such as the Okinawa Teachers' Association and the Zengunro (*Zen okinawa gunrodosha kumiai*, the All-Okinawa Military Workers Union) developed the ability to organize large-scale mass protests. In particular, the establishment of Fukkikyo (*Okinawa ken sokoku fukki kyogikai*, the Okinawa Prefecture Reversion Council), which consisted of these and other organizations, contributed to the increase of large-scale mass protests. The development of social movement organizations in the 1960s promoted the development of the conservative-reformist cleavage in Okinawan politics. This cleavage was a product of the U.S. control over Okinawan society through aids and sanctions. Okinawan social sub-groups benefiting from the U.S. governance were gradually formed as opposed to anti-U.S. ones (Nakano and Arasaki 1976: 95-96). The former were connected to conservative parties while the latter to reformist parties.

Second, U.S. bases in Okinawa provided many soldiers and equipments for the Vietnam War. Okinawan protesters were also influenced by anti-Vietnam movements in the world and organized many protest actions against U.S. bases. Such anti-U.S. or anti-war sentiments led to more radicalized reversion movements. Unlike those in the 1950s, the reversion movements in the 1960s did not have a strong tone of nationalism. Rather, it emphasized that Okinawa must 'return' to the Japanese Constitution, meaning that the democratic and pacifist Constitution must be applied to Okinawa. Such a reinterpretation of reversion was called "anti-war or complete reversion" (*hansen/kanzen fukki*). Under the U.S. military administration, an ideology countering militarism, colonialism, and the Japan-U.S. security arrangements sustaining them needed to be constructed.

Third, as the reversion movement was radicalized, Okinawa was divided into two. One was the above-mentioned radicalized movement for which reversion without removing U.S. bases from Okinawa was unacceptable. The other was the camp that accepted U.S. bases and the Japan-U.S. security arrangements after the reversion. The position of the latter was called "the reversion under the security arrangements" (*ampo fukki*) by the former. Therefore, such a development of the reversion movement in the 1960s was also a manifestation of the conservative-reformist cleavage in Okinawan politics. The assessment over the direction of the reversion often became an issue in elections in Okinawa and stimulated political competition over the GRI Legislature. A kind of two-party system called "the '68 system" was formed through such competition.¹¹

Potato or war? conflicting geopolitical visions of Okinawa

As the reversion to Japan became realistic, contradictions in the U.S. military administration over Okinawa were revealed at every corner of society. This led to the reawakening of Okinawans as political 'subjects.' The reawakening was reflected in the increase not only of collective action but also of reformist votes in the three major elections (for Chief Executive, the GRI Legislature, and Mayor of Naha) in 1968, which gave rise to the reformist chief executive, Chobyo Yara, who was elected through the first popular vote. Okinawan voters chose the candidate who opposed the security policies of the U.S. and Japanese governments. In this peak of political mobilization, collective action against the U.S. military presence was clearly connected to voting for reformist candidates.

Among such elections, the chief executive election in 1968 was the most heated elections in postwar Okinawa. It was the very first public election for Okinawans' own representative of the GRI. The election's voter turnout was as high as 89.11%. In this election, the future direction of Okinawa was questioned in relation to the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. Employing a large

¹¹ The '68 system actually consisted of one conservative party and more than one reformist party, reflecting the conservative-reformist cleavage in Japan's National Diet after 1955.

constituency system, it directly translated the cleavage structure within Okinawa. Due to the construction of the Reformist Joint Council (*kakushin-kyoto-kaigi*) countering the Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party (OLDP), the election campaigns (for the three major elections) represented the dichotomous, conflicting political visions of Okinawa. While the Japanese and U.S. governments began to negotiate about Okinawa's reversion to Japan, how Okinawa reverted to Japan in relation to the existence of the U.S. bases became the central issue of political debates in Okinawa and divided Okinawan society into two.

Two candidates ran for the chief executive election: Chobyo Yara and Junji Nishime. Yara was a joint candidate for the reformist, opposition parties. He served as President of the Okinawa Teachers and Staff Association and committed himself to the land struggle and the reversion movement in the 1950s and 60s. Nishime was a conservative candidate of the OLDP who led the GRI. He was President of the OLDP and had served as Mayor of Naha since 1962. These two candidates represented the cleavage structure of Okinawan society and the contested issues for the election were presented to the voters very clearly.

The conservative-reformist cleavage incorporated in the campaign appeared in the frames that oversimplified, and therefore constructed, reality over Okinawa. Contested issues for the three major elections were summarized as "potato or war (*imo to senso*)."¹⁰ The "potato" frame stood for the poverty in which people had to live on potatoes and was used by the conservative camp to criticize the reformist policies that emphasized a prompt reversion without effective measures for economic development. The "war" frame represented a life threatened with the possibility of war and was employed by the reformist camp to blame the conservative policies sustaining the U.S. military presence in Okinawa. The *Okinawa Taimusu* (10/14/68: 3) explained that these frames were used as demagogues and that they distorted actual contested issues.

The conservative and reformist campaigns for the chief executive election summarized such issues in different ways. Yara and Nishime realized that the contested issues in the three major elections concerned the reversion and the relationship between the treatment of U.S. bases and the economic life of Okinawans. While Yara insisted on the immediate reversion and removal of bases, Nishime emphasized the realization of the reversion in five years based on the negotiation between Japan and the U.S. Nishime, however, emphasized "*hondo tono ittaika*" or the integration of Okinawa into Japan proper, which actually meant to narrow socio-economic gaps between Okinawa and Japan proper before the reversion. This idea was not necessarily proposed by Nishime or the OLDP whose president was Nishime, but by the LDP in Japan proper. Although Yara strongly objected to the remaining of bases from a pacifist point of view, Nishime believed that the acceptance of bases was inevitable for some years to come. Nishime believed that U.S. bases were still important income sources for Okinawans and that under the cooperation of the U.S. and Japanese governments, Okinawa would be able to develop socio-economically. Yara argued that after the removal of the U.S. bases, the Japanese government was basically responsible for the rehabilitation and development of Okinawa (*Okinawa Taimusu* 10/19/68: 3, 11/3/68: 3).

This election was important for Okinawans in that it would determine the course of Okinawa for the coming years, but it questioned the significance of Okinawa for the security of the Far East. The LDP-led Japanese government was concerned about how U.S. bases could be maintained in Okinawa for the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. Nishime, who accepted the U.S. military presence in Okinawa seemingly for economic reasons, represented the position of the LDP and the Japanese government that supported the Japan-U.S. security arrangements. Yara was backed up by the Reformist Joint Council and supported by reformist parties in Japan. They opposed and attempted to challenge the security arrangements. Therefore, the chief executive election became 'a war by proxy' for parties in Japan over the military security of Japan.

Although the frame of "potato or war" oversimplified the contested political issues and did not

necessarily constitute any geopolitical discourses, the argument over the socio-economic merit and demerit of the continuing U.S. military presence tended to conceal the geopolitical reality or structure that Okinawa was facing. As shown in the visions and pledges of the candidates, economic realism (fear of poverty) was put against political idealism (anti-war pacifism or fear of war). In order for the Japanese government as well as the U.S. counterpart to maintain the security status-quo, it became necessary to control the rise of political idealism by emphasizing Okinawa's economic weakness and backwardness and by making the public aware of Okinawa's economic dependence on U.S. bases.

Regression analysis of the elections

As a result of the 1968 chief executive election, Okinawan voters elected Yara as their chief executive. Yara's absolute rate of the votes obtained (ARV) amounted to 45.92% as opposed to 40.02% for Nishime. According to the result of stepwise regression analysis (Table 2), employees in the manufacture industry supported Yara. Although the industry's composition rate in all the industries was 9.63%, this sub-group became a social base of reformist votes in this period. It can be inferred from this that labor unions in the industry mobilized votes for the reformist candidates. In addition, Table 2 shows that voters in the central region (represented by CENTRAL) and urban areas (represented by COMM) tended to support reformist candidates while those in rural areas (represented by negative COMM) and in the municipalities with a high proportion of the construction industry (represented by CONST) tended to do the opposite. Therefore, the conservative-reformist cleavages in Okinawa were constructed in complex relation to the vocational and geographical features of Okinawan society. As mentioned above, this cleavage structure was formed according to the dependence of voters on the economies from the U.S. bases and state subsidies.

With regards to the other elections held in the late 1960s and early 1970s (for the full results, see Yamazaki 2004a), whether they were prefecture or national elections, similar results repeatedly appear. Although adjusted R^2 is not necessarily high for each result (less than 0.35), it is possible to use it for a descriptive purpose. Unlike the GRI Legislature elections that were highly influenced by local communal contexts (Higa 1965: 226-229), the elections for the chief executive, governor, or national assemblymen reflected more 'politicized' or generalized preferences of voters. During this period, conservative and reformist parties competed actively with each other, and the gubernatorial and national elections became another channel in which Okinawans' protest against the U.S. military presence was expressed as the mobilization of reformist votes.

As the U.S. military governance ended, political conflicts over the U.S. military presence and the future of Okinawa were internalized within Okinawa, which was brought about partially by the application of the 'fully' democratic institutions implemented in Japan to Okinawa. Since then, the gubernatorial elections have represented such internalized conflicts. As Figure 9 shows, the conservative-reformist cleavage in Okinawan politics have appeared as swings of votes. With a similar interval, each camp has occupied the Prefecture Office. Although these swings can be regarded as results of the 'democratic' choice by Okinawan voters, the U.S. military presence has been maintained due to the swings. Radicalization of Okinawans against the U.S. and Japanese governments has been thus moderated. As long as the maintenance of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa is approved by Okinawans themselves through 'democratic' channels, it can be legitimated. Therefore, this type of control over a marginal locality and population is more subtle and effective than authoritative repressions or sanctions. Democracy is not only a means of liberation from oppression but also a tactic to maintain oppression so as not to let the oppressed feel so.

Table 2. Gubernatorial elections in which the incumbent governor (camp) was replaced.

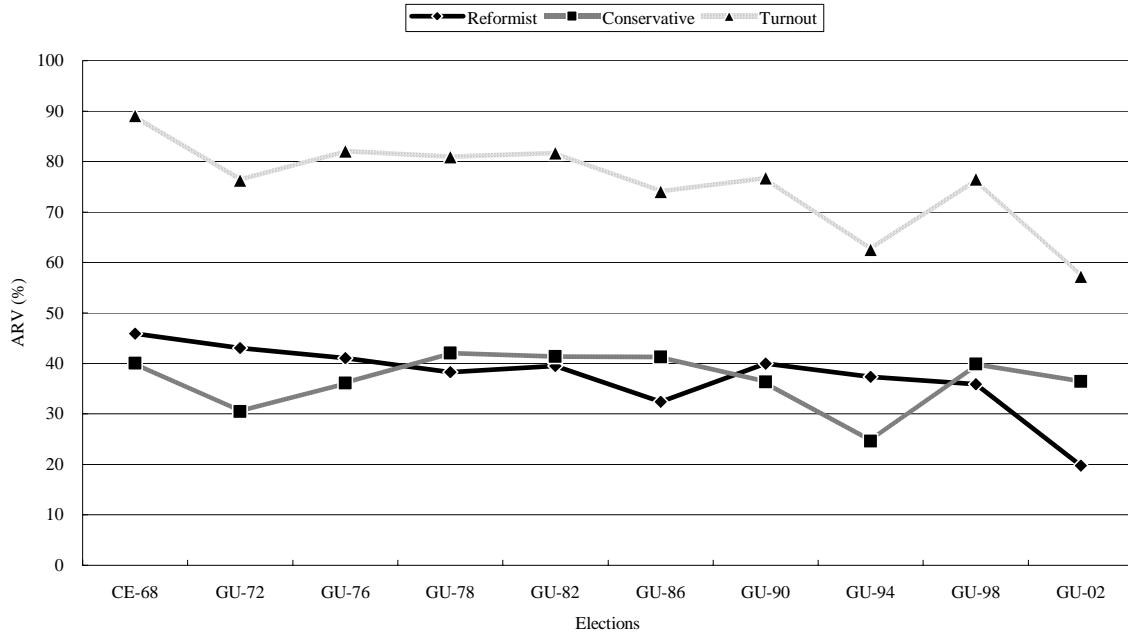
Year	1968		1978		1990		1998	
Dependent var.	Con.	69 obs.	Con.	53 obs.	Con.	53 obs.	Con.	53 obs.
Independent var.	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value
USBASE								
INCOME								
CONST								
MANU	-0.842	-3.460	-1.028	-2.850			-2.166	-2.785
COMM			-0.464	-3.099	-0.691	-3.729	-1.527	-2.072
STSUB								
DVEX					0.288	2.026		
NORTH							19.308	4.104
CENTRAL	-11.599	-4.181					18.421	2.933
CAPITAL	-8.136	-2.206					26.514	2.301
SOUTH							24.850	3.873
SAKISHIMA							12.113	2.752
Cons.	54.673	21.400	60.476	20.933	44.325	6.308	22.586	2.504
Adjusted R-squared		0.291		0.334		0.407		0.279
Year	1968		1978		1990		1998	
Dependent var.	Ref.	69 obs.	Ref.	53 obs.	Ref.	53 obs.	Ref.	53 obs.
Independent var.	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value	Coef.	t-value
USBASE								
INCOME								
CONST								
MANU	0.754	2.996	1.328	3.462	1.145	2.636	2.451	2.907
COMM								
STSUB								
DVEX					-0.248	-2.125		
NORTH							-11.715	-2.649
CENTRAL	13.621	4.604	7.722	2.590	8.031	2.738	-10.382	-2.550
CAPITAL	9.391	2.410						
SOUTH	9.141	2.701					-16.998	-3.313
SAKISHIMA							-9.941	-2.190
Cons.	30.447	11.299	26.008	9.616	48.613	7.700	46.719	7.948
Adjusted R-squared		0.309		0.290		0.322		0.227

Notes: The 1968 election was for the Chief Executive. Con. = conservative votes (ARV%), Ref. =reformist votes (ARV%), obs.= the number of municipalities. Using stepwise regression analysis, only the coefficients with p<0.05 are shown.

For each independent variable, the census data collected in the closest year were chosen. INCOME: per-capita income (1982-99). USBASE: % of the land occupied by U.S. military bases (1956-1999). CONST: % of the employees in the construction industry (1961-2000). MANU: % of the employees in the manufacture industry (1961-2000). COMM: % of the employees in the commercial industries (1961-2000). FDEP: % of external revenue sources (1955-65). STSUS: % of state subsidies in the municipal revenue (1970-2000). DVEX: % of developmental expenditure in the municipal expenditure (1955-2000). CAPITAL: dummy variable for Naha. NORTH: dummy variable for the north region of Okinawa Island. CENTRAL: dummy variable for the central region of Okinawa Island. SOUTH: dummy variable for the south region of Okinawa Island. SAKISHIMA: dummy variable for the Sakishima Islands.

Sources: Ryukyu seufu (various years), Okinawa ken (various years), Okinawa sengo senkyoshi henshu iinkai (1984, 1996), and the *Okinawa Taimusu*.

Figure 9. Conservative-reformist swings in the chief executive and gubernatorial elections, 1968-2002.



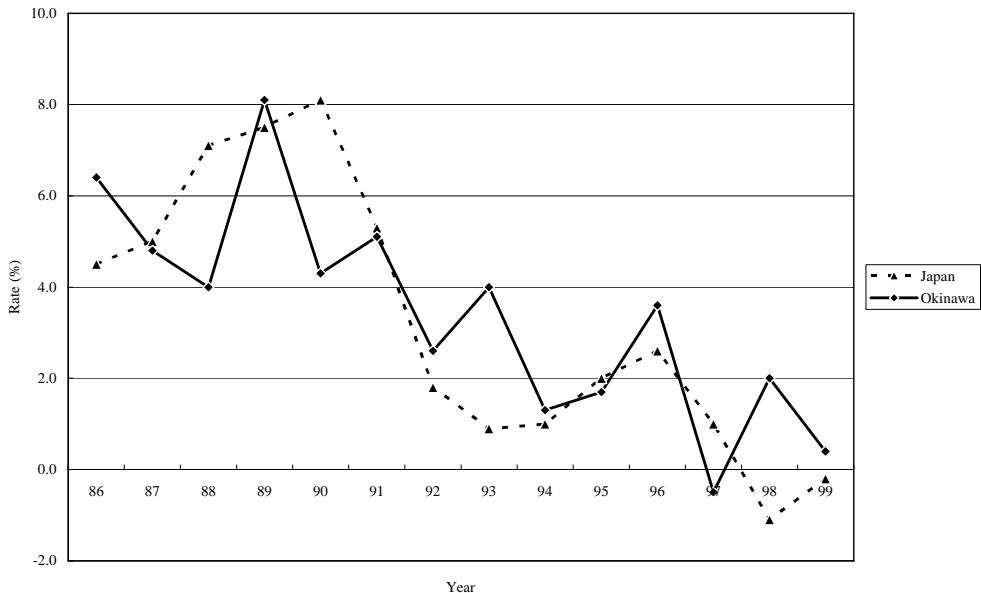
Prefecture politics in the 1990s¹²

In the 1970s and 1980s, economic recovery and development to reduce the gap between Okinawa and Japan proper were prioritized in the agendas of the Okinawa Prefecture government. Such policies were successful in increasing the prefecture's products and population. The conservative prefecture government from 1978-1990 was able to promote material gains (*Okinawa Taimusu* 11/24/90: 3) and Okinawans became more satisfied with the result of the reversion.¹³ Although protest actions against U.S. military bases continued during these decades, they were fragmented and attracted fewer participants for each collective action event compared to the previous decades of the U.S. military control (Figure 8). The era of Okinawa's economic recovery led by a strong Japanese economy seems to have completed its role when the Japanese economy reached its peak in 1990 (Figure 10). Furthermore, the end of the Cold War about the same time provided an opportunity for Okinawans to rethink the political status of their own islands. This shift of Okinawan political preference was reflected in the result of the 1990 gubernatorial election, in which a new reformist governor defeated the conservative incumbent.

¹² Most of the arguments in the following sections are based on Yamazaki (2004b).

¹³ According to the public opinion survey in 1989, 84.7% of the Okinawan respondents showed satisfaction with the reversion (Naikaku soridaijin kanbo kohoshitsu 1989: 41).

Figure 10. Economic growth rates.



Sources: Okinawa ken tokei ka (1999) and Toukeikyoku (2000).

The period between 1990 and 1998 was one of the most important historical epochs in Okinawa since two significant contextual changes happened. First, the end of the Cold War increased the expectation that Okinawa's long-term military burden would finally end in the near future in conjunction with the withdrawal of the nuclear threats of the former Soviet Union. It was also expected that the demise of the Soviet Union would promote the democratization of East Asia. Second, the end of the Cold War shifted policy priorities from military security to economic prosperity in the world. Anticipation rose in Okinawa based on the belief that riding on globalization would create a new stage of economic prosperity. For example, the Bogor Declaration of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference (APEC, of which Japan is a member) in 1994 requested that developed member states liberalize trade and investment by 2010. In this new context, globalization was viewed as an alternative for Okinawa to overcome excessive dependence on Japan's national economy and public finance and establish a local self-supportive economy.

In addition to these contextual changes, there were also local factors that promoted the orientation towards globalization. First, U.S. servicemen raped a twelve-year-old Okinawan girl in 1995, which drastically increased Okinawan grievances and led to a series of mass protests against the U.S. military presence in the second half of the 1990s. These political mobilizations underpinned a new stage of reformist politics seeking pacifism in Okinawa. Second, Masahide Ota was elected as Governor in November 1990. He was the third reformist governor in post-reversion Okinawa. In his second term from 1994-1998, he actively attempted to promote anti-war, pacifist policies by taking advantage of the political upheaval after the rape in 1995. In addition, the prefecture government led by Ota attempted to frame unique policies linking globalization to Okinawa's economic self-supportiveness.

In order to understand the nature of the interaction between Okinawa and Japan and the internal dynamism of Okinawan society in the 1990s, we must examine the political processes

during the terms of Governor Masahide Ota from 1990-1998. Ota had been Professor in Journalism at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa and was well-known for his leftist opinions. His predecessor, Junji Nishime, by contrast was renowned as a conservative governor from 1978-1990. Successive governors in Okinawa have been replaced at similar intervals according to the political circumstances of the times.¹⁴

Seemingly tired of “the logic of development based on public works” promoted by the conservative governor (*Okinawa Taimusu* 11/24/90: 3), Okinawan voters expected the new reformist governor Ota to change the course of prefecture politics (*Okinawa Taimusu* 11/19/90: 1). The years around 1990 were the peak of recent economic prosperity in Okinawa as well as in Japan. For the previous two decades, the growth rates of the GDP and the Gross Prefecture Products (GPP) were the highest while the unemployment rates of Japan and Okinawa were the lowest (Figures 10 and 11). Okinawan voters relieved of the worry of economic underdevelopment expressed their political preference for the more pacifist, anti-war politics that Ota pledged to embody.

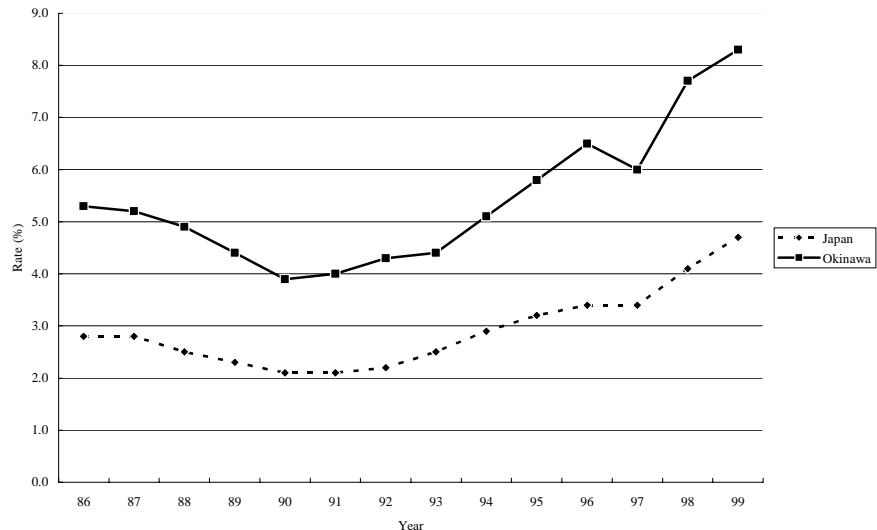
Following the end of the Cold War, Ota’s first term from 1990-1994 had few political issues, resulting in his election victory by a huge margin in 1994. Voters’ interest in prefecture politics was shown in the second lowest voter turnout (62.54%) in the gubernatorial elections since 1972 (*Okinawa Taimusu* 11/21/94: 1). Ota’s second term, however, was dramatically different from his first term after the rape of the twelve-year old in 1995. This incident drastically changed the course of the prefecture politics.

A series of large-scale political rallies followed this incident (Figure 8). It reverberated with a significant impact on the Japan-U.S. security relations. The political rally on October 21, 1995 attracted approximately 85,000 participants in Okinawa Island and 3,000 in the Sakishima Islands (*Okinawa Taimusu* 10/22/95: 1). As well as denouncing the crime, these rallies blamed the Japanese and U.S. governments for their continuing unfair treatment of Okinawa, and requested that both governments revise the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)¹⁵ and reduce U.S. military bases (*Okinawa Taimusu* 10/22/95: 1-3). Unable to ignore the explosion of Okinawan grievances, the Japanese and U.S. governments began to revise the SOFA and to develop a plan to return (the land used for) U.S. military bases to Okinawa.

¹⁴ The terms (years) of successive governors (or a Chief Executive) are 8 (Yara, reformist 1968-76), 2 (Taira, reformist 1976-78), 12 (Nishime, conservative 1978-1990), 8 (Ota, reformist 1990-98), and 7 (Inamine, conservative 1998 to present). See Figure 9.

¹⁵ SOFA was concluded in 1960 to determine the status of the U.S. military force stationed in Japan. What SOFA provides is Japan’s obligation to offer facilities and areas to the U.S. military force, U.S.’ authority to control its military installations, and the jurisdiction over U.S. military servicemen. The jurisdiction over the U.S. servicemen who commit a serious crime has been a focal point of protest actions in Okinawa. From Okinawa’s point of view, SOFA unfairly protects the status of the U.S. military force and servicemen.

Figure 11. Unemployment rates.



Sources: Okinawa ken (various years) and Tokeikyoku (2000).

A second development was that Ota promoted a series of pacifist policies in 1996 by building on the anti-base protests. He first refused to sign the land lease contracts for U.S. military bases instead of the Okinawan landowners refusing to sign the contracts.¹⁶ The Japanese government sued Ota for the refusal, and this lawsuit was finally brought to the Supreme Court that decided against Ota in August 1996. Responding to the signatures collected from prefecture residents, Ota carried out a prefecture referendum in September 1996 asking whether the SOFA should be revised and whether U.S. military bases on the islands should be reduced. Although the result of the referendum was non-binding, the revision of SOFA and the reduction of bases won easily.¹⁷ The growing collective movement supported Ota and protested against the Japanese and U.S. governments.

Finally, this tense political environment motivated Ota to outline a grand design for Okinawa in January 1996, which was embodied in the Action Program for the Reduction of U.S. Military Bases (the Action Program) and the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept. These policies stimulated debates over Okinawa's subordinate situation and internal political economic structure in conjunction with the increasing pressure of globalization in the form of economic liberalization.

Okinawa's Grand Design

The Okinawa Prefecture government led by Governor Ota published the Action Program and the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept in January 1996. These policies were framed after the Japanese and U.S. governments formed the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in November 1995 to develop a plan to consolidate and return eleven U.S. military bases and installations. Departing from SACO's plan, the prefecture government drafted the Action Program for the phased removal of all the U.S. military bases by 2015 since piecemeal return of the bases

¹⁶ According to the law, in order to allow the U.S. military force to use the land of Japanese citizens, the Japanese government leases the land and offers it to the U.S. military force. If Japanese landowners refuse to rent their land, the Japanese government has legal power to force them to do so. In this coercive process, the head of the pertinent local government must sign the land lease contracts instead of the landowners. Since Ota refused to sign as the head of Okinawa Prefecture, the Japanese government sued him for violating the law.

¹⁷ The results were as follows: approval votes amounted to 88.0%; objection votes 8.24%; and voter turnout 59.5%.

according to the convenience of the U.S. military forces would prevent the prefecture and municipal governments from devising a long-term, consistent development plan. The implementation of the Action Program, therefore, was considered a necessary premise for the further development of Okinawa as well as the restoration of peaceful life for Okinawans.

The Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept was a concrete, if unrealistic, measure for the development in parallel with the reduction and removal of U.S. military bases by the Action Program. As the title of the policy implies, the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept was an attempt to develop and locate Okinawa in the context of globalization in the Asia-Pacific region following the model of Hong Kong. The implementation of the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept required the use of the large acreages returned from the U.S. military bases according to the Action Program. Since the removal of the bases would result in a loss of job opportunities and income sources for many Okinawans,¹⁸ it was evident that new efforts were needed to create new industries to counterbalance the loss. Thus, these two policies complemented each other to constitute “Okinawa’s grand design for the 21st century” (Okinawa Prefecture Government 1997: Preface).

The Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept was embodied in the New Industrial Promotion Policy for Cosmopolitan City Formation in November 1997 by extending a free trade zone (FTZ). Even though the term “globalization” appears only twice in the text of the Policy, the idea of economic and cultural globalization in the Asia-Pacific region was set against the militarization of the islands. As the original English text states:

The Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept is Okinawa's grand design for the 21st century and its goal is the promotion of regional characteristics which will contribute to the self-supportive economic development of Okinawa, and continuous development of the Asia-Pacific Region, as well as assisting in maintaining peace.

The concept also aims to transform a military-based island into a peaceful island, and to positively promote various policies based on three basic principles: peaceful exchange, technological cooperation, and economic/cultural exchanges.

Above all, it proposes to implement decisive measures based on a thorough review of the rigid economy of Okinawa today and its progress toward *globalization* inside and outside the territory to achieve the goal of “creating and promoting new industries suitable for the 21st century.” (*Ibid*, emphasis added)

The Policy based on the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept has three general orientations: the advancement of the FTZ, the integration and enhancement of the information and communication industry, and the formation of a hub for international tourism and destination industry. Among the three policy directions, the advancement of the FTZ was the core strategy to promote Okinawa's economic self-supportiveness and competitiveness in the Asia-Pacific region by encouraging Japanese and foreign direct investments and opening Okinawa to the world-economy. Thus it was most closely related to the idea of globalization. As the text states:

Okinawa's problems in relation to the promotion of industry include the limited availability of land due to the existence of vast U.S. military bases, delayed improvement

¹⁸ Base-related economy in Okinawa consists of base-related employment (8,400 workers in 1999), construction, rent, national subsidies, and other economic impacts. The ratio of base-related consumption, employment, and rent in the Gross Prefecture Expenditure is estimated as 5.2% in 1997 (Okinawa ken 2000: 45).

of locations for industrial development as a direct result of having been excluded from various post-war industrial promotion policies, and comparatively high transportation costs because of its geographical distance from other parts of Japan and being a prefecture of many relatively small islands.

The industrial promotion of Okinawa has been relatively slow due to the above factors, and relatively weak economical structure that depends largely on mainland Japan still remains. Okinawa is in economically critical condition since Okinawa's per capita income remains the lowest in Japan and the unemployment rate is two times as high as the national average.

Other economic factors include the reduction of public investment and a decrease in base-related income which is a result of the consolidation and reduction of U.S. military bases in Okinawa. Thus, it is feared that further economic sluggishness and decreased job opportunities will worsen.

On the other hand, Japan's present economic condition, including an industrial migration to foreign regions and rapidly growing neighboring countries in Asia, should be taken into consideration for meeting the needs and adapting to changes of the times, such as advanced internationalization and information technology so that Okinawa's self-supportive development will be realized.

Thus, it is necessary to develop new industrial promotion policies which utilize Okinawa's regional characteristics and resources in a positive way. Improvements designated to attract domestic as well as foreign industries need to be expanded by introducing a free trade zone with tax incentives, focusing on deregulation, and constructing an infrastructure which includes an international airport, harbors, and information and communication facilities. (Okinawa Prefecture Government 1997: Chapter I, emphasis added)

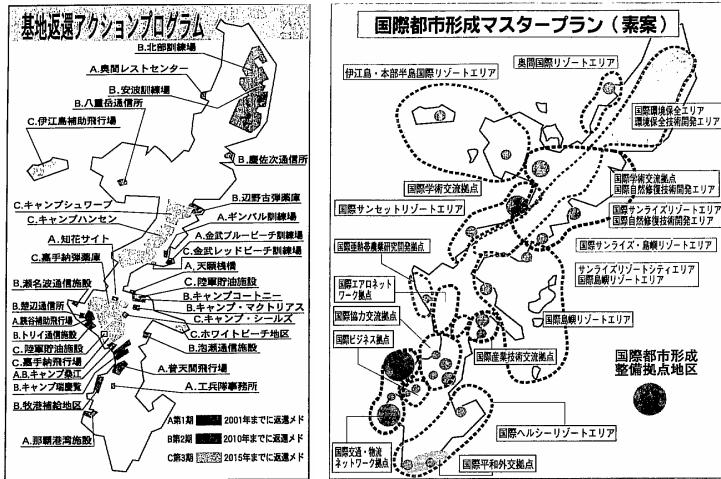
From the contents of the Policy as well as the Action Program, it seems clear that the prefecture government was attempting to 'liberate' Okinawa from the U.S. military bases and from Japan's national economy and public finance at the same time. The prefecture government sought to weaken the long-time yoke of the Japanese nation-state and to promote the economic autonomy of Okinawa.

Mapping Okinawa in the context of globalization

In Okinawa's Grand Design, the territory of Okinawa was represented in a particular way. The inner space of Okinawa tended to be described as a space of opportunities for new development following the elimination of the U.S. bases. Unlike the years during the Cold War, the outer space of Okinawa tended to be described as connected to Okinawa through economic and informational networks. According to the CD-ROM version of the *Okinawa Taimusu*, there were 54 articles in 1996 that included in their headlines the term "kokusai toshi keisei" (Cosmopolitan City Formation), four of which had maps of Okinawa. They were drawn by the newspaper according to the official documents related to the plans. Figure 12 was attached to the article to visually explain Okinawa's Grand Design. One of the maps (left) shows the distribution of U.S. bases that were to be removed by 2015. The other (right) illustrates the image of the Cosmopolitan City Formation following the elimination of the U.S. bases. It shows that Okinawa's inner space would be filled with resort and redevelopment areas and that cosmopolitan cities (darker circles) would be formed in the southern region of Okinawa Island. These two maps contrast the current location of the U.S. bases with the future development of Okinawa's inner space and indicate how Okinawa would be

transformed in the future.

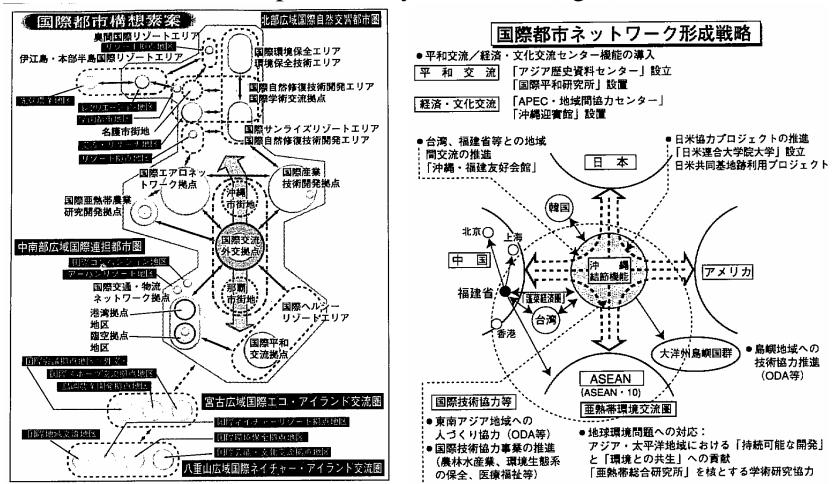
Figure 12. Visual representation of the internal space of Okinawa (Okinawa's Grand Design).



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu* (1/30/96: 3).

Figure 13 was attached to the article on the draft of the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept in June 1996. While the map on the left shows a similar vision of redevelopment areas and cosmopolitan cities, the other map describes the outer space of Okinawa in which Okinawa was connected to Japan, China (Northeast Asia), ASEAN, Pacific islands, and the U.S. through various exchange projects. Okinawa was resituated in the Asia-Pacific region in face of an era of globalization. What was emphasized in the Concept is the construction of economic and cultural networks beyond the territory of Okinawa. Although the contents of these networks were quite abstract in the article, the image of deterritorializing Okinawa came to the fore in the media.

Figure 13. Draft for the Cosmopolitan City Formation (left) and Strategy for the Formation of the Cosmopolitan City Networks (right).



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu* (6/1/96: 3).

In December 1996, the Ministry of Postage announced the Project of Okinawa Multimedia Special Zone that would attempt to reconstruct Okinawa as the cosmopolitan city that would become an information and communication hub in the Asia-Pacific region. Although this was a national project promoted for Okinawa by the Ministry, the *Okinawa Taimusu* (1/30/96: 3) suggested that the project could become the first step for the Cosmopolitan City Formation. The visual representation of the project (Figure 14) expressed in a map both the technological transformation of Okinawa's inner space and the expansion of information/communication networks beyond it.

Figure 14. Okinawa connected to the Asia-Pacific region
(Okinawa Multimedia Special Zone Concept).



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu* (12/9/96: 3)

The last article related to Cosmopolitan City Formation concerns public intellectuals' discussion about Okinawa's future (Figure 15). With the headline reading "From 'the misfortune of geography' to 'the advantage of geography.' How we draw the future of Okinawa?" this article argued that by changing the perspective towards Okinawa in a map, the misfortune of its location during the Cold War could be converted to an advantageous one in the post-Cold War era. There were four comments in the article, each of which estimated the location advantage of Okinawa as follows:

Let's build the place for international trade aiming at self-sufficient economy after the bases are removed. (Kei Kakazu, university professor)

Geographic conditions carrying potentials. (Seiji Tsutsumi, corporate president)

Construct international tourist destinations by making use of Okinawa's culture. (Hiroshi Takeuchi, think-tank director)

Become an economic center in the East China Sea. (Ken'ichi Omae, business consultant)

All the comments highly evaluated the geographic location of Okinawa in the Asia-Pacific region. In an era of globalization and the borderless world, Okinawa was expected to become a node of economic and cultural networks spreading in the region. This article also showed the map in which Okinawa was located at the center to indicate that Okinawa would be able to build connections with neighboring regions and cities. Unlike Figure 4 that suggests surviving geopolitical tensions in the region, this map attempted to describe Okinawa's potentials for self-supportiveness and prosperity through free trade and communication in the deterritorializing world. In sum, responding to the publication of Okinawa's Grand Design, the media such as the *Okinawa Times* visualized and mapped Okinawa's new location in the Asia-Pacific region.

Figure 15. Media representation of discursive 'space' over Okinawa's future.



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu* (4/15/96: 28)

The nature of such visual representations of Okinawa can be contrasted with that of a national developmental plan. Figure 16 illustrates Okinawa's location in the 5th Comprehensive National Development Plan (Grand Design for the 21st Century¹⁹) by the Japanese government in 1998. The Plan designated the region including Okinawa as a "base for peaceful exchanges on the Pacific Ocean (pacific crossroad)" and partially employed the prefecture's Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept. According to the Plan, the territory of Japan would be divided into four Axial National

¹⁹ Its subtitle is "Promotion of Regional Independence and Creation of Beautiful National Land."

Zones in which regionally-tailored development projects would be carried out. Okinawa was located in the New Pacific Ocean Coastal National Axial Zone (*taiheiyo-shin-kokudo-jiku*) where exchanges with the rapidly-developing Asia-Pacific region would be further promoted. Due to its nature as a national plan, the visual representation of Okinawa by the *Okinawa Taimusu* was quite marginal and de-centered and did not clearly illustrate how Okinawa could be connected to its outer space. Rather, the map shows that the territory of Okinawa was included, or reterritorialized, into “the national land (*kokudo*).” With regards to Okinawa’s Grand Design or the Cosmopolitan City Formation, the *Okinawa Taimusu* visually represented the deterritorialization of Okinawa that was implied in these plans, as opposed to the territorial framework of the National Development Plan.

Figure 16. Okinawa’s location in the National Development Plan
(Grand Design for the 21st Century).



Source: The *Okinawa Taimusu* (3/26/98: evening version 1).

The watering down of Okinawa’s Grand Design

In order to implement Okinawa’s Grand Design, the prefecture government began to examine possible measures to improve its political economy. One of the most widely-debated measures was the establishment of the prefecture-wide FTZ probably because the economic liberalization of Okinawa contained the symbolic meaning of the complete transformation of the territoriality of the islands by the prefecture itself in the face of globalization.

In order to implement the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept, the prefecture government established the Committee of Industrial and Economic Promotion and Deregulation Study led by a well-known economist, Naoki Tanaka (hereafter the Tanaka Committee). Following the rape in 1995 and the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept of 1996, the Tanaka Committee examined

desirable options for Okinawa in the face of globalization and published a final report in July 1997 (*Okinawa Taimusu* 7/25/97: 13).

The report recommended that the prefecture government employ a “decisive” measure for industrial promotion such as “two systems within one state” (the Hong Kong model) and proposed the introduction of the prefecture-wide FTZ in 2001 to attract foreign direct investment. Following the Bogor Declaration of the APEC, which expected developed member countries to liberalize trade and investment by 2010, the Tanaka Committee emphasized that the establishment of the prefecture-wide FTZ would become a model that could be extended to Japan proper. The report also stated that the people of Okinawa Prefecture needed to end the reversion programs²⁰ by themselves and tackle “the creation of new Okinawa” based on the principles of self-determination and self-responsibility. Although what the Tanaka Committee recommended was straightforward liberalization, it sparked heated debates. While the tourist industry and ambitious smaller businesses welcomed the prefecture-wide FTZ, the manufacture, agricultural, and food processing industries expressed serious concern about the damage liberalization might cause (*Okinawa Taimusu* 7/31/97: 11, 8/1/97: 9, 8/2/97: 11, 8/5/97: 9, 8/6/97: 11, 8/7/97: 13). These industries feared that the cutthroat competition Japanese and foreign corporations would bring into Okinawa might destroy their businesses.

Based on the Tanaka Committee Report, the prefecture government began to devise its own plan for the FTZ. The draft for the plan was published in September 1997 (*Okinawa Taimusu* 9/2/97: 3). Compared to the Report, the draft had a more protectionist nuance and demanded further preferential treatment of Okinawa from the Japanese government, indicating the increased pressure of concession. After issuing the draft, the prefecture government published the plan titled “the Development of the Industrial Promotion Policies for Cosmopolitan City Formation” (*Okinawa Taimusu* 10/28/97: 2-3). This plan accepted the public objections to the introduction of the prefecture-wide FTZ in 2001 and stated that it was appropriate to attempt the phased expansion of sub-prefecture free trade districts while introducing the prefecture-wide FTZ in 2005. With regard to the favorable treatment of taxation, the plan listed the reduction of the corporate tax as well as the investment tax and the exemption of the local tax. The prefecture government accepted the objections from the businesses protected by existing special measures and demanded the continuing favorable treatment of Okinawa from the Japanese government.

The prefecture government finally completed its plan for the FTZ in “the New Industrial Promotion Policy for Cosmopolitan City Formation” (Okinawa Prefecture Government 1997). This policy basically followed the above-mentioned plan, stating that the introduction of the prefecture-wide FTZ would be suspended until 2005 and the favorable treatment of taxation as well as other measures would be adopted to promote foreign direct investment. In this stage, the internal pressures from various Okinawan industries succeeded in attenuating the contents of the “decisive” Tanaka Committee Report so as to minimize the impact of liberalization on the weaker industries.

As the prefecture plans were presented, the intentions of the Japanese government, especially the LDP and the Ministry of Finance, were often reported in Okinawa. The Okinawa Small Committee of the LDP Tax Commission in Tokyo decided to refuse the idea of the prefecture-wide FTZ (*Okinawa Taimusu* 11/18/97: 3). The LDP held a protectionist stance toward Okinawa that was in line with its local party position in Okinawa.²¹ Another obstacle for Okinawa was the Ministry of

²⁰ “The reversion programs” refer to post-reversion developmental measures for Okinawa to fill the socio-economic disparities between Okinawa and Japan proper.

²¹ Parties in Okinawa first expressed mixed feelings toward the proposal of the prefecture-wide FTZ (*Okinawa Taimusu* 7/25/97: 3). Among the governmental parties, only the Komei Party overtly supported the proposal while the JCP objected to it because it might weaken smaller businesses and the primary industry. On the other hand, the LDP and the New Frontier Party showed a positive understanding of the proposal. Even though the prefecture government was a reformist

Finance. The Tanaka Committee Report attempted to avoid measures creating problematic “two systems within one state” such as the reduction of the corporate tax and visa exemption because of their effectiveness and/or constitutionality (*Okinawa Taimusu* 7/27/97: 1). Since these kinds of measures might violate the integrity of the state, it was predicted that the Ministries of Finance and Justice would refuse the measures. In spite of the Committee’s consideration, the final prefecture plan listed the reduction of the corporate tax and the exemption of the local tax in order to attract foreign direct investment. The Ministry of Finance was already negative about the inclusion of favorable tax systems in the prefecture’s draft when it was published in September 1997 (*Okinawa Taimusu* 9/3/97: 2).

The response of the Japanese government to the final prefecture plan was revealed in the speech given by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto at the ceremony for the 25-year anniversary of Okinawa’s reversion (Shusho kantei 1997). Although Hashimoto promised that the Japanese government would help to promote Okinawa’s self-supportiveness with a new economic promotion plan, he mentioned neither the prefecture-wide FTZ nor the reduction of the corporate tax. Instead, he proposed the establishment of a regionally limited FTZ and taxation measures for investment.²² In sum, the Japanese government acted in order to protect local Okinawan businesses and the integrity of the state, indicating that the debated developmental plan for Okinawa resulted in the amalgamation of liberalization and protectionism. One of the cores of Okinawa’s Grand Design was thus watered down by both internal and external pressures (Hook 2003).

Okinawan resistance and political economic processes

The other core of Okinawa’s Grand Design was the Action Program. Following the rape in 1995, Rengo Okinawa (the Okinawa Prefecture Branch of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation) initiated a signature-collection campaign in January 1996. This campaign was for the enactment of a prefecture ordinance to carry out a non-binding prefecture referendum, which would question the necessity of U.S. bases in Okinawa (*Okinawa Taimusu* 1/23/96: 23). After the successful campaign, the ordinance was enacted in June and the referendum was to be carried out in September 1996, about a year before the Cosmopolitan City Formation Concept was embodied. When the prefecture referendum was carried out, the prefecture government had not yet presented any concrete plan to counterbalance the economic losses the removal of the U.S. bases would bring about. For this reason, military landowners and base employees objected to or expressed concerns about the referendum. The prefecture LDP opposed for the same reason. Furthermore, the Japanese government regarded the Program as a denial of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty (Okinawa taimusu sha 1996: 79). The result of the referendum showed that more than half (53.04%) of the voters approved the revision of SOFA and the reduction of U.S. bases.

Meanwhile, the Japanese and the U.S. governments agreed on the phased reduction and removal of U.S. bases in 1996 but this gave rise to new problems. The most surprising response from both governments was the complete return of the Futenma Air Station, but its removal became a highly controversial issue since its removal to Japan proper was strongly refused by the possible host municipalities. As a result, the Air Station needed to be removed to some place within Okinawa. The Japanese government mostly neglected the intentions of the Action Program. Okinawans ridiculed this situation by calling it “*tarai mawashi*” of bases, indicating irresponsibly

one, centrist or conservative parties first supported such a neo-liberal policy as the FTZ. However, as the FTZ was publicly debated, the LDP as well as the JCP and OSMP (one of the governmental parties) began to show overt objections to the prefecture-wide FTZ, and other parties remained cautious about the proposal (*Okinawa Taimusu* 9/26/97: 2).

²² The final version of the Japanese government’s plan in 2000 did not mention any tax system (Shusho kantei 2000b).

passing around the bases within Okinawa (*Okinawa Taimusu* 12/22/96: 1).

Many protest actions over the removal of U.S. bases, especially the Futenma Air Station, took place from 1996-1997.²³ In particular, Nago City was chosen as a candidate recipient of the removed (i.e. newly built) base and became a center of protest. The removal of existing U.S. bases to the north region illustrated another ambivalent aspect of Okinawa. As the economy of Okinawa improved after the reversion, socio-economic disparities between the north region and the rest of Okinawa became larger.²⁴ For the north region, these disparities needed to be narrowed. Therefore, the removal of bases to that region meant not only transferring the source of problems but also providing a new opportunity for economic promotion. Local economies in Okinawa, affected by the decline of Japan's economy, needed such promotion measures.

Nago City carried out a municipal referendum in December 1997. The issue was whether the city should accept a new offshore base substituting the Futenma Air Station. Although 52.8% of the votes were cast against the new base, the mayor of the city announced the acceptance of the new base for the reduction of U.S. bases and the further development of the city in exchange for his resignation (*Okinawa Taimusu* 12/26/97: 1). In the mayor's election of February 1998, the candidate supporting the new base was elected in spite of Governor Ota's objection to the intra-prefecture removal. The Japanese government welcomed the result because U.S. bases could be maintained in Okinawa. In November 1997, the Japanese government already included the plan for the promotion of the north region in the Okinawa Promotion 21st Century Plan.

U.S. bases have been resources for political and economic deals between Okinawa and the Japanese government. The existence of U.S. bases in Okinawa and the provision of state subsidies for Okinawa's development have been inseparably interwoven. As long as the bases were used for such deals, building a new link between bases and globalization was not necessarily an easy task. While many Okinawans have accumulated strong grievances against U.S. bases and the Japanese government, Okinawan political choice has often been constrained so that they have finally accepted the U.S. military presence. Due to Okinawa's dependent economy, economic considerations have driven the vote choices at critical moments, both overall and at the local levels. This is why Okinawans have been swinging between resistance against and integration into the state (Arakawa 2000; Idaka 2001).

In the highly tense relationship between Okinawa and the Japanese government from 1995-1998, Governor Ota sometimes made concessions to Tokyo in order not to lose financial resources for Okinawa. An attitude such as this, however, induced criticism from Okinawan protesters for being inconsistent and weakened their solidarity. Being concerned about long-term economic stagnancy, business circles as well as the prefecture LDP decided to select Keiichi Inamine as their candidate for the 1998 gubernatorial election. Ota also decided to run for his third term.

The issues for the gubernatorial election were quite clear. In their campaigns, Ota emphasized the implementation of the Action Program and the prefecture-wide FTZ while Inamine pledged to restore the relationship between Okinawa and the Japanese government and to overcome economic stagnancy using state promotion measures for Okinawa. Inamine's side tactically used the strategy that ascribed the economic stagnancy to the failure of Ota's policies. As seen in Figures 10 and 11, economic stagnancy was not necessarily brought about by Ota's local policies but by the overall

²³ According to the *Okinawa Taimusu* published during the period, 18 rallies took place, most of which were in the north region such as Nago City.

²⁴ According to Okinawa ken's *Okinawa ken tokei nenkan*, per capita annual income by region in 1995 is as follows: Naha 2.34, south 1.90, central 2.06, north 1.77, Sakishima 1.84, and isolated islands 2.06 million yen. The figure of the north region is the lowest.

downturn of the Japanese economy. However, by calling the stagnancy “*kensei fukyo*,” meaning the recession caused by the prefecture politics, Inamine’s side implied that Ota overemphasized anti-base and pacifist ideology and neglected effective economic promotion measures. This negative campaign succeeded in (falsely) transforming the national problem into a local one. Structural constraints Okinawa had been experiencing, such as dependence and subordination in the center-periphery relations, were effectively hidden from the voters. The result was Ota’s prefecture-wide defeat and suggested that the majority of Okinawans worried about the decline of Okinawa’s economy that was dependent on external resources and refused Ota’s policies. The multiple regression analysis indicates that Ota lost in most of the sub-prefecture regions (Table 2). Responding to this result, the Japanese government promptly resumed state economic promotion measures for Okinawa. Municipalities such as Urasoe, Kin, and Nago began to offer their land for the new U.S. military bases removed from other parts of Okinawa. The rewards for accepting the bases were developmental subsidies from the Japanese government. As economic realism began to prevail, the reformist era came to an end.²⁵

Conclusion

As detailed above, globalization was a key concept from 1996-1997 for the reformist Okinawa Prefecture government. It represented a new space in which Okinawa could be located for new prosperity and self-supportiveness as opposed to the constraining territory and national rules of Japan on which Okinawa had been dependent. Okinawa’s Grand Design and related policies depicted a new geopolitical and geo-economic context for Okinawa in the post-Cold War era. However, Okinawa’s dependence on Japan through economic and financial flows was so profound that the political economic cleavages there finally hindered its ‘liberation’ from state economic and financial control. In this center-periphery relation, political issues over the removal of U.S. bases were transformed into economic ones, and political decision-making tended to be an outcome of the ‘rational’ choice based on relatively short-term economic calculation.

Unlike discourses against globalization such as seen in the Chiapas rebellion, Mexico, those for globalization in Okinawa constituted alternatives to such an instrumental rationality. Although the problematic of globalization was sometimes presented in the political economic arguments this paper examined, the framing ‘Okinawa more open to the world’ or ‘Okinawa situated in the international trade network’ were represented as ideals substituting for the closeness and fixity of the nation-state. The prefecture-wide FTZ embodied such an idealistic geopolitical vision and, for this very reason, induced a great deal of realistic opposition from the sectors protected by the Japanese government.

Part of the Okinawan population continued to need the protection of the nation-state and, therefore, significant cleavages remained among the local people. The results of the elections and referenda mentioned above basically followed such cleavages. As long as the cleavages are reproduced through the center-periphery relations between Okinawa and Japan, a new consensus over the self-supportiveness of Okinawa will be difficult to construct. Since the concept of economic globalization failed to construct such a consensus, ‘riding on’ globalization was denied as a way to ‘liberate’ Okinawa. However, it is noteworthy for a locality to make an attempt to detour

²⁵ The result of the 2002 gubernatorial election showed a further decline of the reformist camp. The reformist parties failed to support a single candidate the first time in post-reversion Okinawa. The election whose result was easily predicted lowered voter turnout to 57.22%, which was about 20 points lower than the previous election and the lowest in the gubernatorial elections. Inamine was reelected by the biggest margin (about 210,000 votes) in the gubernatorial elections (*Ryukyu Shimpo* 11/18/02).

around the structural constraints of the nation-state by opening directly to the world-economy. The case of Okinawa shows that the concept of economic globalization can become a way to mobilize, if not liberate, a locality against the pressure of the nation-state. Whether the practical potential of globalization for localities can be beyond a mere ideological strategy remains to be seen.

The examination of the political dynamism of postwar Okinawa from the viewpoint of the center-periphery relations tells us how locality acts against the state in relation to the global political economy. Okinawa makes a case of such a locality but can be different from other localities. In order to clarify the significance of this paper in a global context, let us compare Okinawa to Chiapas in Mexico. In its rebellion in the late 1990s, Chiapas as a locality in Mexico opposed the state wishing to be in the North (NAFTA) in the context of globalization. For Chiapas, opening Mexico to the globalizing world meant its further marginalization and alienation. Not only the problematization of globalism but also Mexico's democratization for locality and local population were the objectives of the protest. In this sense, the politics of democracy employed in the Chiapas rebellion had a bottom-up aspect and, therefore, attracted global sympathy.

To the contrary, Okinawa's protest in the late 1990s was the case where a locality wishing to be globalized (more connected to the globalizing Asia-Pacific region) protested against the state in the North. As mentioned in the previous sections, behind this protest was Okinawans' impatience with the continuing oppression from and dependence on the state. Several democratic measures such as referenda as well as the formation of Okinawa's Grand Design were employed in this process. The wave of protest, however, came to an end under the declining local economy. The conservative-reformist cleavage, which was constructed during the U.S. military governance to semi-perpetuate its presence, prevented the radicalization of local protest. From the case of Okinawa, it can be said that democracy as an institution has an ambivalent meaning; democracy as a legitimate means of revealing political preference (i.e. the politics of democracy from the bottom) and as a means of control over or mitigation of popular sentiments (i.e. the politics of democracy from the top). For a peripheral locality such as Okinawa or Chiapas, the implementation of democratic institutions may become a means of changing its oppressed situation, but the center-periphery relations in which the locality is firmly situated may convert such institutions into a new means of control or more subtle domination. In the process of conversing (watering down) democracy, as shown in Okinawa, there can be intense conflicts over the geopolitical and/or geo-economic visions of the locality. Not only the institutional nature of democracy but also the feasibility of such visions can become a key to determine the fate of the locality and its people. Therefore, political struggle over any locality may be constructed not only on abstract institutions but also on realistic or idealistic geographical (re)imaginings of the locality. In other words, the politics of democracy in a peripheral locality can be a form of struggle over the geopolitical visions of the locality.

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