

1. Report by Oliver E. Kühne

Re-Mapping Okinawan Literature: (Resistance) Literature in a Neo-Imperial Context?

Since writing my MA thesis about contemporary Okinawan literature in Trier (Germany), I have had two opportunities to conduct research in Okinawa at the University of the Ryūkyūs. After receiving a formal invitation from Professor Till Weber (Professor of German language at the University of the Ryūkyūs and honorary consul of the Federal Republic of Germany), my first, longer research stay commenced in July 2012 with generous funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). This stay enabled me to carry out research at Waseda University in Tokyo afterwards for more than eight months under the guidance of Professor Katsukata-Inafuku Keiko and the Ryūkyū-Okinawa Research Group until April 2013.

While living in Okinawa, I gained access to primary and secondary sources that are unavailable in Germany. Many Okinawan monographs are not available via international book delivery services such as Amazon or Kinokuniya as they are published by small publishers in Okinawa (e.g. *bōdaa inku* (border ink) or *Nirai-sha*). This creates an enormous obstacle for my research on Okinawan literature. Even important periodicals, such as the *Shin okinawa bungaku* (New Okinawan Literature), and newspapers, like the *Ryūkyū Shinpō*, are not available in Germany.

After meeting experts like Michael Molasky, Shinjō Ikuo, and Yamazato Katsunori, fundamental questions of my project changed or had to be revised. My initial research focused on the question, “What kind of religious and spiritual influences can be found in contemporary Okinawan literature?” centering on the works of Medoruma Shun (*1960) and Matayoshi Eiki (*1947), both renowned authors of Okinawan descent. However, while researching Okinawa and Tokyo, I found out that a much more fundamental issue has not been touched, causing various misconceptions in research about Okinawan literature: While scholars in the field tend to define the term “Okinawa bungaku” (Okinawan literature) quite differently¹, everybody seems to agree on a certain canon of Okinawan literature as defined by Nakahodo Masanori and Okamoto Keitoku, both former professors of Okinawan literature at the University of the Ryūkyūs until the late 1990s. After meeting younger and ‘un-canonized’ authors, like Ōshiro Ako (*1980) and Ikegami Ei’ichi (*1970), I started to change my research layout and defined a new fundamental question: How should one define the term *Okinawa bungaku* and what caused the changes in the writing of authors with Okinawan descent in the 1990s? Can one perceive a shift away from canonized *taikō suru bungaku* (resistance literature) in the writing of young authors like Ikegami Ei’ichi and even in

¹ For example, there is not even a consensus whether writing by mainland Japanese authors (not from Okinawa prefecture) that incorporates ‘Okinawan elements’ (e.g. Okinawan locations or Okinawa typical issues) should be considered as being part of Okinawan literature, or if only authors born and raised on Okinawan should be considered authors of Okinawan literature.

the writing of the Akutagawa prize (the most prestigious annual prize for literature in Japan) laureate Matayoshi Eiki? In my research, another related, yet also unanswered question arose: How should one read this “canonized” Okinawan literature? How did this canon and its predominant writing strategies actually come into being, and could one grasp it with phrases like “regional” literature, “minority” literature, “minor” literature, or even “postcolonial” or “neo-imperial” literature?

Davinder Bhowmik, who wrote the only monograph solely focusing on Okinawan literature in the English language, tries to answer this question of whether Okinawan literature is “regional,” “minority,” or “minor” literature. After a long chronological analysis of various key works of Okinawan literature starting at the end of the 19th century and finishing with the works of Sakiyama Tami (*1954) written in the 1990s, she reaches the conclusion that Okinawan literature should be understood as “minor” literature, as defined by Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze. However, she does not take into consideration that Okinawa is a de facto internal colony of Japan², and so its literature could also be understood as a form of postcolonial literature. In support of this, scholars like Ina Hein from the University of Vienna consider Okinawan literature to be postcolonial literature. I take this endeavor up in my research, and also understand Okinawan literature as neo-imperial literature. The contemporary colonial powers of Japan and the USA have rather different goals compared to the imperial colonizers of the 19th century, such as the British Empire and Meiji Japan. In this regard, Pacific islands with US military bases, like Guam or Hawai'i, share various neo-imperial or colonial experiences, like media censorship, ethnic discrimination, territorial disruption, and so forth.

In addition to being introduced to experts in the field, I had the opportunity to meet authors such as Ōshiro Tatsuhiko (*1925) and Ōshiro Ako during this initial period of research. Moreover, I was able to become good friends with the authors Matayoshi Eiki and Ōshiro Sadatoshi (*1949) while the latter worked as a professor for the department of education at the University of the Ryūkyūs. Since Matayoshi does not use the internet, I always had to contact him via letters or through Oshiro Sadatoshi, who is very good friends with Matayoshi. I had a very interesting interview with both authors in August 2012, but since my research agenda has changed tremendously I strongly hope to get an opportunity for a second interview. The same is true for Ikegami Ei'ichi. This is not due to my personal, positive experiences with these authors, but because my PhD thesis focuses on their literary works. The most fascinating aspect in analyzing the works of these three authors (all nearly untouched in the field of scholarly research) is their diversity. While Ikegami is a well-established author of light novels, fictional history novels, and fantasy literature in mainland Japan, Matayoshi and Ōshiro Sadatoshi write prose that could be labeled *jun-bungaku* (high

² For further reading about the history of colonial powers on Okinawa, please refer to Kerr (2008 [1958]) and Kuehne (2012).

literature) for an Okinawan and mainland Japanese audience.³

I was delighted to receive a positive reply from the Toshiba International Foundation and the EAJIS (European Association for Japanese Studies), and to receive the TIFO scholarship in 2013. Thanks to this gracious funding, I was able to travel to Tokyo and Okinawa for a second, final research trip in August 2013. During this very intensive research period, I acquired various additional sources such as print copies, digital scans, and scholarly monographs. Another vital part of my research trip was meeting experts and Okinawan authors with whom I conducted interviews, such as Ikegami Ei'ichi, Ōshiro Sadatoshi, and Matayoshi Eiki.

I spent the first two weeks of my research trip in Tokyo. During this period, I met with some of the members of the Ryūkyū-Okinawa research group at Waseda University and had a very insightful talk about the new layout of my PhD research with Katsukata-Inafuku. I also visited professor Molasky (formerly of Hitotsubashi University; full professor at Waseda University since September 2013), who became (also due to this visit) the second formal adviser of my PhD thesis. I was also very fortunate to meet Ikegami Ei'ichi in Tokyo again, and had an interesting interview with him.

Besides meeting important experts and authors, the second task of my stay in Tokyo was to acquire monographs available in mainland Japan, and to copy various research reports and articles about Ikegami Ei'ichi's, Ōshiro Sadatoshi's and Matayoshi Eiki's fictional writing, as well as reports and research articles about contemporary Okinawan literature in general. Due to my intense research at the library of congress and the Waseda University library, I was able to obtain very interesting research accounts about Ikegami Ei'ichi's fantasy writing, something I thought would not exist since many experts on Okinawa appear absolutely uninterested in his work; despite it being tremendously multi-layered literature for Okinawan literature. This seemingly stems from his apparent popularity in the mainland Japanese market. For example, his fictional historical novel *Tenpesuto* (Tempest) that revolves around the last years of the Ryūkyū kingdom (published in 2008 in two volumes as hardcover books and in 2010 printed in four volumes as A6 softcover books) was not only a bestseller, but also adapted as a historical drama (*jidaigeki*) for television.

After these two initial weeks in Tokyo, I made my way to Okinawa and stayed in Naha for another four weeks. Visiting the largest bookstore on Okinawa (the Junkudō bookstore in Naha city) for five consecutive days gave me the opportunity to order and acquire various texts on Okinawan war memory, self-perception, colonial history, Okinawan manga, and

³ The author of this report is very well aware of the fact that using taxonomies like “high and low” for the quality of literary products is rightfully disputed, but that it shall suffice here to show the differences between audiences/readers groups and relationships targeted by the authors. While young authors like Ikegami make use of popular media, and even has adaptations of his novels in anime, games and manga, Matayoshi and Ōshiro Sadatoshi do not intend to participate in the popular Media Mix market in mainland Japan. This might also be due to the shift in values - Ikegami's writing is not as esteemed by experts in the field of Okinawan literature when compared to the highly praised writing of authors like Sakiyama Tami or Medoruma Shun.

various light novels written by Okinawan authors. As mentioned above, many of those sources are not even available in Tokyo.

I also visited the libraries of the Okinawa International University and University of the Ryūkyūs, and made copies of various periodicals. The reason why I also focused on acquiring copies of Okinawa periodicals for literature, especially the first periodical of this kind after WWII called *Ryūdai bungaku* (Literature from the University of the Ryūkyūs) is so I could examine how the contemporary canon of Okinawan literature came into being. The perception of Okinawan literature as resistance literature is very much due to the anti-Japanese and anti-US American tone apparent in works such as *Ryūdai bungaku*. The transformation of themes and socio-political connotations in Okinawan postwar literature, also stressed by Bhowmik, Nakahodo Masanori and Kawamura Minato, comes from the fact that Okinawan people felt like they were being sacrificed by the imperial ruler and hegemonic power Japan, and exploited by the US government. This counter-hegemonic impetus is still vividly displayed in the writing of canonized Okinawan authors like Medoruma Shun and Ōshiro Tatsuhiko. The main canon became the *Okinawa bungaku zenshu* (Complete works of Okinawan literature; published since 1991), which was strongly influenced by people who had helped create the *Ryūdai bungaku* and the following magazine for Okinawan literature, the *Shin Okinawa bungaku*. Since this process of canonization has not been researched thoroughly, it will be mentioned in one chapter of my PhD thesis and in a research article that is still in progress.

I also had the opportunity to meet again with Shinjō Ikuo and also conducted another row of interviews with Matayoshi Eiki and Ōshiro Sadatoshi in Ōshiro's office at the University of the Ryūkyūs. Fortunately, during these interviews I had one of the most insightful accounts for all of my PhD research. After Matayoshi showed me on a map where he lived in different stages of his life, and which places he used in his novels (all in close connection to the places where he was living), Ōshiro started to talk about the negative experiences that occurred while he was working on a script for the movie *Himawari* (sunflower), first shown in 2013. He intended to create a movie about a fatal airplane crash in 1959 in which 17 primary school children were killed. After receiving his script, the movie producers actually hired a second Japanese script writer, who wrote a new version for the movie production that focused more on the contemporary dimension of memory with the framing story focused on university students in Tokyo who plan a peace concert on remembrance of the crash of the US American fighter jet in 1959. Within the next six months, I intend to publish an English translation of this interview in the research journal *Japan Focus*.

While traveling the main island by car, I acquired some photographs and pamphlets for two articles I'm still planning to write about Okinawan's images as a tourist destination between war, indigenous self-representation and self-*Okinawazation*, reflected in Okinawan theme parks like the *Ryūyū mura* (the Ryūkyū village) and the Himeyuri Peace Museum at the *Himeyuri no tō* (tower of the princess lilies).

Throughout my research, I came to the conclusion that, even if it is radical, it may be a very fruitful perspective to read Okinawan literature as not being part of “Japanese national literature”, but as a form of writing with its own independent history and narrative and topological concepts. Since the colonization of Okinawa, and after standard Japanese (*hyōjungo*) became the standard language on the Ryūkyū Islands at the end of the 19th century, topics and narrative styles in Okinawan literature developed nearly independently from the mainland Japanese context, especially after WWII. This means that one should appreciate Okinawan literature as literature written in Japanese, but as a form of independent literature in its own right.

After coming back to Germany, I immediately started to transcribe the interview with Matayoshi Eiki and Ōshiro Sadatoshi. However, I’m still in the process of reviewing the monographs and research accounts I acquired in those very intense six weeks of research. Moreover, right after coming back from Japan, I got the opportunity to work as a research associate at Freie Universitaet Berlin.

I want to thank the EAJIS and Toshiba International Foundation once again for their kind support and generous funding of my research. Without financial aid, it would have been impossible for me to travel to Japan for final research that brought about very insightful results and invaluable interviews. Thank you very much.

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For further reading:

Bhowmik, Davinder (2008): *Writing Okinawa. Narrative Acts of Identity and Resistance*. London & New York, Routledge.

Kerr, George H. (2008 [1958]): *Okinawa. The History of an Island People*. North Clarendon, Tuttle Publishing, 2000.

Kuehne, Oliver (2012): Research Report. Historical Amnesia and the “Neo-Imperial Gaze” in the Okinawa Boom. In: *Contemporary Japan*, Vol. 24, 213-241.

Molasky, Michael (2000): *Southern Exposure. Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa*. Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press.

Oguma, Eiji (1998): *'Nihonjin' no kyōkai. Okinawa, ainu, taiwan, chosen, shokuminchi shihai kara fukki undo made* (The Boundaries of the Japanese. Okinawa, Ainu, Taiwan, Korea, from the Era of Colonial Oppression to Reversion Movements). Tokyo, Shinyōsha.

Okamoto, Keitoku (1996): *Gendai bungaku ni miru okinawa no jigazō. Okinawa in Contemporary Novels and Dramas*. Tokyo, Kōbunken.

Shinjō, Ikuo (2007): *Tōrai suru Okinawa. Okinawa hyōshō hihan ron* (Arriving Okinawa. A Treatise Against the Symbols of Okinawa). Tokyo, Inpakuto shuppan.

2. Report by Alessandro Bianchi

The practice of satire in early-modern Japan: political mockery in manuscripts and woodblock-printed texts.

Research topic and methodology

Satire was one of the pivotal aspects of the literary and artistic panorama in Tokugawa Japan (1603-1867) but, despite its cultural significance, this topic has not been granted much recognition in academia so far. For my PhD I aim to describe some aspects of the practice of satire in early-modern Japan by focusing on the study of political themes in various instances of popular comic fiction produced between the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. It is in fact in this period — which coincides with an era of instability, social distress, and financial crisis — that we observe the creation of a rather consistent body of literature which satirised political authorities.

My thesis mainly focuses on the production and circulation of political satire, both in manuscripts and woodblock-printed texts. The object of my investigation encompasses a wide selection of primary sources which belong to different textual typologies and publishing genres. In this fashion, my study takes into consideration not only those genres which have been traditionally associated with satire, but also other kinds of comic writings considered germane to the satiric mode. Literary works belonging to the macro-genre termed *gesaku* 戯作 (playful writings) will be the core of my analysis — that is to say, *dangibon* 談義本, *sharebon* 洒落本, *kibyōshi* 黄表紙, and the like. Furthermore, I shall expand my area of enquiry to include ephemera such as *rakusho* 落書 (graffiti) and *jitsuroku* 実録 (true records). Kabuki and jōruri plays, *ukiyo-e*, as well as Japanese and Chinese comic poetry will not be examined in my dissertation, for the satirical elements characterising these kinds of texts have been formerly studied by various scholars.⁴

The close reading of primary sources, which is the core of my thesis, has two main objectives: on the one hand, I attempt to identify political and historical particulars within popular comic prose; on the other hand, I am interpreting these data in order to understand whether they were portrayed satirically. Theory on satire developed in the West has been applied in a critical way to examine the contents and mechanisms of satire in each of the chosen texts.⁵ Thus, the analysis of primary sources makes use of a mixed approach, in the attempt to blend together the long tradition of Western literary criticism on satire with

⁴ For instance the articles by Donald Shively 'Chikamatsu's Satire on The Dog Shogun' and 'Bakufu Versus Kabuki' both published in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* or the book by Asō Isoji and Tōgorō Koike entitled *Senryū-Kyōka* 川柳・狂歌 (*Nihon koten kanshō kōza* 日本古典鑑賞講座 23).

⁵ See for example, Dustin Griffin's *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* or Brian A. Connery and Kirk Combe's *Theorizing Satire: Essays in Literary Criticism*.

Japanese traditional scholarship, which is less speculative and mainly built on a textual-based analysis.

The significance of my research lies in this comparative perspective. The study of early-modern Japanese satire will in fact challenge our understanding of this literary phenomenon itself, for the mild and playful nature of Japanese satirical writings very much differs from the caustic undertone of their Western counterparts. Eventually, this will allow a discussion on satire as a phenomenon of world literature as well as a phenomenon bearing country-specific features.

Aims and results

The period of research in Tōkyō funded by the EAJS/TIFO scholarship gave me not only the opportunity to finalize my thesis, but also to survey under-researched texts and thus shed light onto unexplored aspects of my PhD topic.

The major goal of my fieldwork was to collect new materials and information concerning the body of satirical texts which I examined in my PhD thesis. This includes secondary sources, which have been recently published in Japan but are not yet available in Europe, and in particular primary sources, which are held by Japanese institutions. Despite the substantial progress in the creation of digital archives and online repositories — such as those sponsored by the Waseda University Library, National Diet library, The University of Tōkyō Library, or the National Institute of Japanese Literature, to name but a few — the accessibility of primary sources still remains a considerable problem for scholars of early-modern literature who are based in Europe. Many useful materials are available in their original format only, and libraries or archives must be accessed in person in order to make use of these resources. The six weeks I spent in Japan on behalf of the Tōshiba International Foundation allowed me to collect valuable primary sources which were essential for the completion of my PhD thesis. In addition to that, during this period of research abroad I was able to engage in enlightening conversations with several scholars and specialists in Tokugawa literature and Japanese bibliography. This was indeed a valuable opportunity to discuss many issues related to my PhD thesis as well as a precious chance to exchange ideas about my research interests.

- Archival research

1. I surveyed several primary sources in search of new or understudied instances of political satire which circulated in manuscript form, mainly *rakusho*. Differing from the vast body of *jitsuroku*, which are widely available thanks to transcriptions and critical editions, there are not many graffiti that have survived until the present day

and even less are edited in critical editions, let alone translations.⁶ The canonical reference works on Tokugawa-period graffiti is *Edo jidai rakusho ruiju* 江戸時代落書類聚, a collection of texts compiled in the Taishō era.⁷ However there are many ephemera which are yet to be transcribed and studied. For example, lengthy collections of graffiti were found in multivolume *zuihitsu* 随筆 compiled in the late-Tokugawa period, such as *Kokon momoyogusa sōsho* 古今百代草叢書 (National Diet Library) or *Tenpō zakki* 天保雜記 (National Archives, Naikaku bunkō). The analysis of these works proved useful to study the modalities of circulation of graffiti in early-modern Japan: not only as leaflets stapled on trees and doors or scattered on the ground (*otoshibumi* 落とし文), but also as pamphlets or booklets passed down by scribal transmission.

2. The days spent at the Tōkyō Central Library and Institute of Japanese Literature Library were also very productive, and there I managed to finalize my chapters on satirical writings which circulated as woodblock-printed booklets. Not only did I have the opportunity to access the vast collections of *kibyōshi* and other works of *gesaku* which are held by these two institutions but I was also able to compare different editions and reprints of the same texts. This survey was beneficial for several reasons, most importantly for the study of some handwritten marginalia and amendments imposed by censors, which provided useful hints concerning how satirical writings were read and understood in Tokugawa Japan, both by commoners and authorities.

- Meetings and Conferences

1. At the beginning of my fieldwork, I arranged a meeting with Professor Kojima Yasunori, whose recent research interests concern parody in early-modern Japan. This meaningful discussion had a very positive impact on my PhD thesis, for I could share my views on the relation between parody and satire in Tokugawa-period literature, with particular regard to the widespread consensus that both the parodic act and the practice of satire are 'committed' literary forms.
2. During my regular meetings with Prof Sasaki Takahiro I had the opportunity to discuss extensively the various aspects of Japanese bibliography, especially the relationship between text and images in early-modern printed texts. Moreover, I attended several conferences organized by the participants of the EIRI Project (Keiō University), in which scholars discussed similar topics from a comparative (Europe-Asia) perspective. Together with Professor Sasaki I also worked on various issues

⁶ See the multivolume collection *Kinsei jitsuroku zensho* 近世実録全書 (vols. 1-20) or the recent scholarship by Kikuchi Yōsuke.

⁷ Other important studies on Japanese graffiti are Rinoie Masafumi's *Rakugakishi* らくがき史 and Kida Jun'ichirō's *Nihonjin no fūshi seishin* 日本人の風刺精神.

broadly related to my research topic, including the role of illustrations in satirical prose texts produced in early-modern Japan.

3. By the end of my stay I was invited by Professor Tsuda Mayumi (Keiō University) to the monthly *Kusazōshi Kenkyūkai* at Musashino University. In this meeting I had the chance to make acquaintance with several scholars and students who work on various aspects of Tokugawa-period comic literature, both prose and poetry. This meeting was very beneficial to my research, for I was able to broaden my views on early-modern Japanese popular literature and culture, while learning about very up-to-date scholarship.

Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to the Tōshiba International Foundation for its invaluable contribution and support during my research activities in Tōkyō. In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to Ms Ōbayashi Masae, TIFO senior program officer, and Mr Shirai Makoto, TIFO president, who warmly welcomed me at the Tōshiba headquarters upon my arrival. Furthermore, I would like to extend my thanks to the European Association of Japanese Studies, which backed my candidacy to the TIFO scholarship, and especially to Ms Ronja Meising who provided thorough guidance and support before and after my arrival in Japan. A special word of thanks goes to Professor Sasaki Takahiro (Shidō bunko, Keiō University), whose genuine interest in my research and continued support have made my fieldwork an even more rewarding experience. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Tsuda Mayumi (Keiō University), Kojima Yasunori (ICU) and Gotō Tomoko (ICU) who kindly shared their knowledge with me and engaged in meaningful discussions as well as in thought-provoking conversations.

Alessandro Bianchi
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3. Report by Miriam Grinberg

The US-Japan alliance and the relocation of Futenma: Sites of discursive exchange in the reproduction of security alliances

From my office in the Faculty of Law and Letters at the University of the Ryukyus in Nishihara, an area of southern-central Okinawa prefecture, I can often hear the sound of US military planes taking off from and returning to Futenma Air Base in Ginowan, just a few minutes away by bus from campus. The noise can be incredibly distracting depending on the frequency of the exercises conducted on a day to day basis, but I find that—whenever I look up to observe the planes flying fairly close overhead—I am the only person doing so. Everyone else in the local area has, by contrast, become accustomed to the disruption in the sixty-plus years that have passed since Futenma was originally built.

It is in this manner that I have acquired some first-hand experience of how something as large and abstract-sounding as the ‘US-Japan security alliance’ has an impact on everyday life here in Okinawa, and specifically on the people who live close to Futenma, the base which sits at the center of my research’s case study. Built in the aftermath of the Second World War by the US military, the land Futenma currently takes up what was once home to three separate villages — Ginowan, Kamiyama, and Aragusuku — but in the post-war period, as locals returning from Okinawan internment camps have continually constructed their homes and businesses around the base, it now sits precariously close to the densely-populated Ginowan, a city of about 95,000 residents (Augustine 2008; McCormack and Norimatsu 2012). This proximity has led to a notable number of unfortunate incidents and accidents between the US Marines and the local populations, two of which have gained particular notoriety: the 1995 rape of a 12-year-old Okinawan schoolgirl by three Marines, and the 2004 crash of a Marine Corps CH-53D transport helicopter into the side of an administrative building on the campus of Okinawa International University. The first of these incidents spurred the formation of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa in 1996 and its subsequent final report, which recommended the closure of Futenma and the return of its land to the prefecture. Nonetheless, this return was predicated on the relocation of Futenma’s capabilities to another site within Okinawa, and within a year of the report’s publication, US Marine Corps Camp Schwab, located on Oura Bay in the rural and less populated Henoko, a village in Nago to the north, was chosen.

Since then, however, little progress has been made on the relocation and return of Futenma — this largely as a result of the widespread and sustained opposition to the condition that it be relocated *within* Okinawa to Henoko, whose Oura Bay is home to endangered species like the dugong (a relative of the manatee) which might be threatened by the earth and sediment landfill needed to construct the planned Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) (Spencer 2003; Hook 2010). The closest the US and Japanese governments have come to moving the relocation forward was the recent deal struck between the Shinzo Abe administration and Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima in December 2013, which stipulates

that the central government will provide the Okinawan economy with about ¥300 billion yen per year until 2021, move some training operations of the controversial MV-22 Osprey helicopters outside of the prefecture, and renegotiate some aspects of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between Japan and the US pertaining to environmental issues in return for an approval permit issued by the Governor to begin the offshore landfill work for the FRF (Yoshida 2013).

The deal has caused a further rift to blow up between supporters of the Governor's decision — namely, the central government in Tokyo, the US government, and local contractors and other businesses in Okinawa with an interest in the base construction proceeding — and opponents, which, according to a poll taken by the *Asahi Shimbun* before the decision was made, number up to 64 per cent of Okinawa voters who wanted Nakaima to reject the central government's application (*Asahi Shimbun* 2013). The decision also attracted international attention in the form of a letter of protest signed by many prominent activists and intellectuals, including Noam Chomsky, Oliver Stone, Mairead Maguire, and John W. Dower (*Ryukyu Shimpo* 2014).

Although Futenma may seem, at first, like little more than a local battle between pro-and anti-base forces with the occasional intervention of the central governments in Tokyo and Washington, the complex and fascinating background of this issue allows us to see that symbolically—as well as *actually*—it has become more than just a 'thorn' in the US-Japan alliance's side in the nearly twenty years since the original SACO report was published. The struggle to resolve the problem is indicative of the fact that, although security alliances are often taken for granted by government officials and ordinary citizens alike as unequivocally strong and bound to continue for the foreseeable future, there is always an underlying potential for something as seemingly insignificant as a conflict over a base site to cause a tangible impact on the tenor and health of interstate relations.

It is for this reason that Futenma became the focal point of my dissertation research on how security alliances persist after the original threat against which they were formed has diminished or disappeared altogether—and how they continue to *reproduce* themselves in the face of sometimes intense opposition, as in the cases of Ginowan and Henoko. The prevailing arguments in the literature on persistence, however, tend to have a top-down focus, privileging the discourses of elite 'insider' actors with direct access to the inner-workings of an alliance's management over the contributions of lived experience to the policymaking process from 'outsiders' like local government officials and civil society. Furthermore, these arguments tend to ignore the possibility of internal divisions *amongst* these 'insiders', representing the debates within an alliance as taking place between the central governments of the member states rather than exploring the many divergences of opinion that exist within their governments, on the local level, in their militaries, and even within civil society itself.

My research is thus seeking to understand the variables behind persistence by examining how alliances are publicly framed and deliberated—not only by 'insiders' who would seek to maintain the US-Japan alliance in its current form, but also by those 'outsiders' who contest the prevailing 'common sense' about the necessity of the alliance and, by extension, the

necessity of the US military presence, specifically in Okinawa. In order to accomplish this, I have therefore been conducting fieldwork in Japan since mid-January with the generous funds granted to me by the Toshiba International Foundation (TIFO), the European Association of Japanese Studies (EAJS), and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS): first, in Tokyo at Waseda University's Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies from January to mid-March under the supervision of Prof. Chikako Ueki, and then in Okinawa at Ryukyus from March until the end of April under the supervision of Prof. Eiichi Hoshino.

The funding allotted by these three organizations has enabled me to travel easily between Tokyo and Okinawa to carry out the primary original contribution of my research to the existing studies in this field: namely, a collection of nearly thirty interviews (and counting) with current and former US and Japanese government officials, military officials, academics, and activists to gain their insights not only into the current nature of the US-Japan alliance and how its purpose and functions have evolved since its origin in the post-war era, but also into the issue of US military bases in Japan and, specifically, the ongoing conflict over the relocation of Futenma. These interviews have illuminated the deeper context behind the sometimes opaque language found in political speeches, statements, and policy documents, and have given me a better understanding of the motivations behind the particular discourses promoted by the parties both 'inside' and 'outside' the alliance and how these discourses have changed over the years (for example, the evolution of the central government in Tokyo's language with regards to acknowledging the 'burden' of the bases in Okinawa and making a conscious effort to be more conciliatory in its dialogue with the prefectural government, arguably evidenced by the December 2013 deal).

Some specific interviewees for this project have included (or will include in the near future):

- Yoichi Iha, former Mayor of Ginowan (2003-10)
- Masahide Ota, former Governor of Okinawa prefecture (1990-98)
- Takashi Inoguchi, Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo
- Tomonori Yoshizaki, Director of the Security Studies Department at the National Institute for Defense Studies
- Noboru Yamaguchi, former Commanding General of the Japan Ground Self Defense Forces (JGSDF) Ground Research and Development Command
- Satoko Norimatsu, Director of the Peace Philosophy Centre
- Gavan McCormack, Professor Emeritus at Australian National University
- Alfred Magleby, US Consul General in Naha, Okinawa
- Michael Penn, Editor and Founder of Shingetsu News Agency

In addition, I have conducted numerous interviews with officials and experts from the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Canon Institute for Global Studies, the Japan Institute of International Affairs, the Tokyo Foundation, the *Ryukyu Shimpo*, the Okinawa Peace Assistance Centre, and the US Marines Pacific Command. The interviews have likewise enabled me to visit several locations of interest to my study, including (so far):

- Futenma Air Base, where I observed the proceedings of a Fence Clean event during which local residents in Ginowan removed protest paraphernalia from Gate 3 of the base in conjunction with US service members, as well as talked with several members of the local Okinawa Osprey Fan Club;
- Yokosuka Naval Base, where I was given a tour of the US Navy's facilities and was able to ask questions in order to compare and contrast the situation in Yokosuka to the one in Okinawa and get a feel for the relationship between locals and the US military;
- US Marines Camp Foster, also located in Ginowan;
- Okinawa International University, where I was shown the 2004 crash site by Prof. Peter Simpson;
- And several other historical sites of critical importance in understanding the situation in Okinawa, including the Okinawa Peace Museum, Himeyuri Monument, and Iejima.

The interviews I have arranged and held so far—along with the materials I have been able to access at such locations as the National Diet Library in Tokyo, the university libraries of Waseda and Ryukyus, and the Okinawa Prefectural Archives in Arakawa—represent the first part of my fieldwork to be completed in 2014 for my overall PhD project. The second part, which will be carried out in Washington, DC from the end of June until the end of September, will likewise involve archival work at such locations as the Library of Congress and the National Archives as well as interviews with government officials, researchers, military officials, academics, and organizations involved in outreach on the US side with the base issue. Persons of interest for my study include such individuals as former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt M. Campbell, Professor Joseph Nye, former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and Professors Peter J. Katzenstein and Andrew Yeo, among others. I have already been accepted as a Visiting PhD Student to American University's School of International Studies under Prof. Amitav Acharya for the duration of my work there, but depending on where some of the relevant interviewees or archives are located, I will likely be travelling outside of the East Coast as well.

Thanks again to all of my interviewees and other contacts made during this trip who so generously offered their time and energy to speak with me, and special thanks to TIFO, EAJS, JSPS, Waseda, and Ryudai for making this research not only possible, but also exceptionally productive and fun.

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