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【Research paper】

Nationalism in Okinawa: Futenma and the Future of Base Politics

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Abstract

Extant scholarship has primarily tackled the MCAS Futenma base relocation case on Okinawa from specific scientific and economic disciplines, such as International Relations (IR) and Policymaking Studies. This paper, however, provides new research into the relationship between nationalism and localism, offering an original perspective that explains the combined interactive influences affecting the key issues. These include: the constraints and opportunities of the international system, the rhetoric used by political, commercial and societal stakeholders involved in policy direction, and the societal norms that embed shifting national and local interests into the policymaking process.

Concretely, it explicates to what extent intersecting key actors disputing the Futenma relocation issue on Okinawa adhere to Japan's national norms of (US-allied) bilateralism, (anti)militarism and developmentalism – and how policy is shaped in accordance with such. The research findings offer a deeper understanding of how Japan's domestic and foreign policies stem from the development and change of intersecting nationalist and localised discourses.

The article focuses specifically on how nationalism is used as a means of articulating power in governance at local and national levels. Additional explanatory power is also provided through a refined explication of how nationalism itself undergoes processes of contestation in order to be utilized politically. Insights gained from the project provide an aid to policy creation and opposition in specific response to the pressing issues associated with construction of the new base at Henoko, as well as developing academic research beyond its established theoretical and empirical parameters.

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Introduction

This article examines the influences and impact of nationalism and localism in Okinawa. Primarily, it investigates and illustrates the salience of the former in relation to the latter. This includes not only examination of Okinawan nationalism, but also how the island's fate is framed by the nationalisms of Japan and the United States (US). The implications of these three interactive nations (albeit currently formed legally into only the two nation-states of Japan and the US) are examined through the case study of the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma (hereafter Futenma) relocation issue. The project's primary goals are to illuminate how the framing of national interests by Japanese and US state actors and agencies dictates the governance of Okinawa and to propose how Okinawan agency can be more effectively focused through policies that operationalise nationalism within the Ryukyu Islands. In this sense, the article's greatest value lies in its potential contribution towards finding a more effective way to galvanise local identity and foster a constructive form of grassroots nationalism from an Okinawan perspective. This offers a normative platform from which to implement greater power of self-governance over issues such as the relocation, or unconditional return, of Futenma.¹

The meaning and influences of nationalism and localism in Okinawa are unusually complex. For despite the idea of political independence having gained little traction or popular support in the modern era (Takamine, 2014; Meyer, 2014; Nankurugumi, 1996: 170), the former Ryukyu Kingdom, as it was, has a chequered history. It is one that combines periods of independence and acquiescence with cooperation in response to the surrounding great powers, as well as resistance to their authority. It has encompassed cultural distinction in addition to the prioritisation of economic interest. And the Ryukyu Islands sustain a powerful identity through discourses that are strikingly nationalistic in one sense. Yet, for the most part, such discourse represents not a political galvanisation of grassroots nationalism, but rather only a subnational local framing of Okinawan society. In the above sense, the Futenma relocation issue itself, in effect, embodies a three-way inter-state-sub-state dynamic between US, Japanese and Okinawan agency, in view of the fact that Okinawa is legally a local prefectural unit within the nation-state of Japan.

Hence, the socio-political dynamics of how such a situation is governed are of great interest and have various potential implications for any number of inter-state-sub-state examples within the international system, where localised national identities have unfulfilled potential to galvanise into a meaningful political force. This article

argues that Okinawa is one such case, but that the battle to prevent a new base being built to replace the existing facility at Futenma highlights both the potential and immediate impotence of Okinawan nationalism. It also underlines the relative power of American and mainland Japanese nationalisms in the policy arena – as well as explicating how they intersect to influence the process of local governance. Specifically, the synthesis of qualitative data sets analysed in this case suggests that, although the processes manifested within this three-way governance of the issues are contested and complex, the concept of nationalism is consistently central to the mainstream discourse and policy outcomes that emerge as a result of the interaction between state and sub-state agency.

Contextualizing base politics

Following official assimilation by Tokyo's Meiji rulers in 1879, and a lengthy period of discriminatory treatment (Namihira, 2014) – which arguably continues to this day (McCormack and Norimatsu, 2012: 114) – at the hands of Japanese state authorities, the Battle of Okinawa at the conclusion of World War II can be seen to have shaped modern Okinawan national identity more than any other historical event.² Within the battle itself and the wartime years that preceded it, as well as the American occupation that succeeded it, the horrific abuse and destruction suffered by the Ryukyu people at the hands of both Japanese and American military was undoubtedly a key factor in fostering a narrative of national victimhood (Saki, 1976: 11; NHK, 2006).

In the succeeding period that followed, until reversion in 1972, a combination of military accidents and incidents caused by US forces and discrimination faced by those traveling to mainland Japan did little to alleviate this essential perspective (Hook, Mason and O'Shea, 2015: 159-226). Nevertheless, moves to foster grass-roots nationalism that focused on a separate national identity were limited (Sakurazawa, 2015: 381-96). This does not mean, however, that nationalism itself was not a central component in both the governance of Okinawa throughout that time and the development of contemporary identities for the Okinawan people. For example, nationalist rhetoric from Japanese state authorities and mainstream media relating to national security, as well as a localized societal sense of both inferiority and betrayal towards the mainland remain influential in terms of how issues such as US military facilities are framed and have influenced subsequent policy formation.

In one sense, however, although the dominant contemporary discourses on issues

such as Futenma might suggest an indifference towards the historical legacies of Okinawan sovereignty that predate the Battle of Okinawa, this article argues, contrarily, that an understanding of national identity that can only credibly be described as stemming from historical nationalism is an important part of how such issues are problematized within the prefecture today. Such a claim is founded on the premise that the concept of consensual agreement, or *gōi*, from the local people is critical to the central discourse and actions of those resisting construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) (Makishi and Sakihama, 2000; Save Henoko Action, 2014). It is argued below that (the lack of) *gōi* in this context can be framed objectively in terms of a violation not just of environmental surroundings or current livelihoods, but also as part of the indirect denial of an autonomous Okinawan politico-historical identity. At present, issues such as the implementation of the proposed FRF at Henoko are predominantly framed by mainstream media and political actors as being focused upon the national interests of Japan, in spite of Okinawan opposition and resistance (Michishita, 2013). In order to counter such assumptions, this article applies an eclectic perspective to the existing understandings of the Futenma case – incorporating the combination of, and competition between, perceived Okinawan, (mainland) Japanese and American national interests on the Ryukyu Islands.

Methodology and structure of the article

In the sections that follow, nationalism is defined broadly in line with Ernest Gellner's functionalist definition, which stipulates how nationalism is, "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent", and that, "nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state ... should not separate the power-holders from the rest" (Gellner, 1983: 1). This definition of nationalism is adapted to the present article precisely because such a conception of the nation state is challenged by the sub-state socio-political reality of contemporary Okinawa Prefecture. In other words, it is the extent to which Okinawan society is in fact separated from its governing power-holders in Tokyo and Washington, in terms of its structures, agency and interests (driven by societal norms), that makes a standard application of nationalism theory problematic. In that sense, this article seeks to open up new ground by explaining how, even at the local level, nationalism can have a varied and dynamic influence on socio-political actors, as a function of their varying understandings of what constitutes national interest and how that should be prioritised.

In order to facilitate effective analysis of the issues outlined above, a broad range of mixed-media data sources are accessed and analysed. These are applied using a mixed-method approach, but focusing primarily on the qualitative analysis of discourse, which explains linguistically how the concept of nationalism impacts upon the processes of social norm creation and policy implementation in Okinawa. In this case, leading political, media and societal discourses relating to Okinawan governance and the specific issues surrounding Futenma are identified and assessed. These include: national and local political bodies and institutions (including interviews with political actors, independent experts and community representatives), in addition to a range of bibliographic materials and a comparative analysis of media, Diet, governmental and other literary sources.

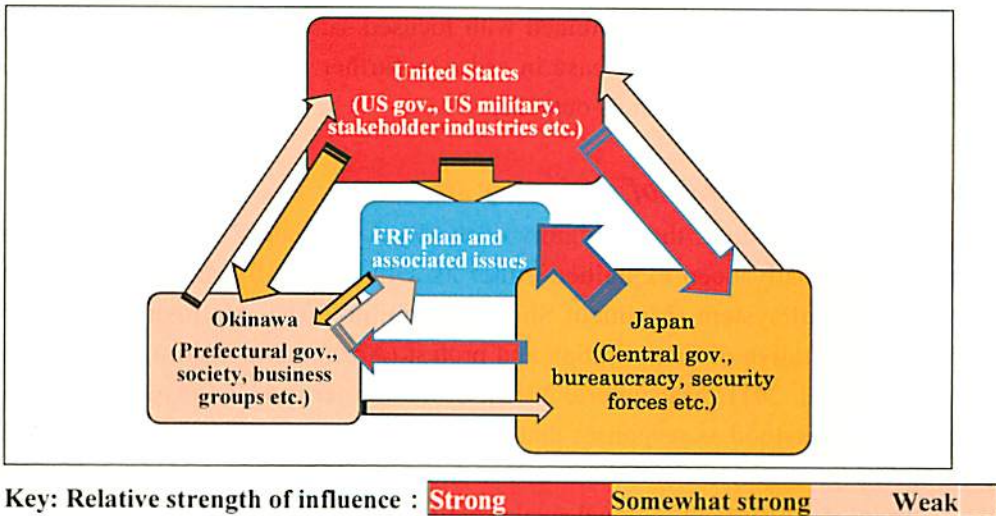
The above sources are examined chronologically via examples selected from discourse pertaining to: the 1995 rape of a 12-year old Okinawan girl by US marines; the 2004 crashing of a US military helicopter into Okinawa International University and the 2013 granting of permission for landfill at the proposed FRF site by former Prefectural Governor, Nakaima Hirokazu. Analysis of these cases equips the content with the necessary foundations to credibly explain how formal and informal political exchanges reflect and hold influence over policy direction (Hook, Mason and O’Shea, 2015: 1-18). This is combined with focused samples of coded quantitative data pertaining to the Futenma case in order to further ascertain the comparative influences of nationalism upon its outcome.

Extant understandings of a tri-party structure

In the extant literature, the ambiguity of the Ryukyu Islands’ status and national identity has mostly been explained either as a function of structural factors of the international system (Mainichi Shimbun Seijibu, 2010; Michishita, 2013) or through the narrative of victimisation and protest (Arazato and Ōshiro, 1969; Tanji, 2006; Takahashi, 2011; Matsumura, 2015). In the former case, Okinawan agency is essentially understood as responses that are shaped by the power struggles between surrounding great powers and their tactical interests. This includes being placed at the fulcrum of a historical regional rivalry between China and Japan in East Asia. It has also been portrayed as a function of strategic competition during the great wars of the 20th Century and, in the present era, as the focus point of a standoff between Japan, the US and China – a dynamic that encompasses a broader contest for power in the Asia Pacific (Hashimoto, Mochizuki and Takara, 2010).

Within this, in the postwar context, Japan’s central government have often done little more than acquiesce to the weight of US interests and pressures, or so-called *beiatsu*, especially when this has been seen to fit with an increasingly proactive national security stance (McCormack, 2007). This results, it can be claimed, in skulduggery on the part of national-level officials and politicians in terms of interpreting when prior consultation should or should not be carried out with Okinawa’s prefectural authorities and citizens. As claimed by Gabe Masaaki, in the case of secret importation of nuclear weapons into Okinawan bases by American forces, for example, “there is no doubt that Japan lied to the people” (in Jimbo and Miyadai (eds), 2010: 188).³ There has, therefore, clearly been a high degree of deception and discrimination suffered by Okinawa under the tri-partite (US-Japan-Okinawa) structure (see Figure 1.0) and limited ability to exercise localized agency in its own governance. One of the most pressing questions in light of this mistreatment is, then, why there is such a lack of separatist nationalist sentiment, as represented by the fragmented response to Futenma’s relocation, within the prefecture.

**FIGURE 1.0: Relative structural influences upon the FRF at Henoko
(United States, Japan and Okinawa)**



Debates on Okinawan independence have, however, been given a more practical voice in recent years by those seeking to achieve self-governance via a legal

institutionalist approach. For example, Matsushima Yasukatsu (2013: 32-7) has argued that Okinawa is effectively a colony of Japan (and the US) and as such can be legally decolonised via the pertaining decolonisation committees of the UN. With specific reference to the issues of self-defence and base maintenance, Matsushima advocates a complete removal of bases and the replacing of Okinawa's colonised administration with a status of pacifist neutrality – as comparable to a number of other small Pacific island states (2013: 35). Under independent governance this, it is argued, could be implemented incrementally.⁴

Yet, although controversy remains over actions by the (US-pressured) Japanese government, Okinawa Defense Agency and other bureaucratic bodies in railroading construction of new bases and the deployment of dangerous US military hardware, including Osprey helicopters, the lack of active prefecture-wide opposition and grassroots support for independence are serious impediments to attaining greater self-determination (*Ryukyu Shimpo*, 4 June 2015: 2). Indeed, there is a heavy presence from outside the Ryukyu Islands of protesters against construction of the FRF (including many of those spot interviewed on-site at Henoko for this article). Such *external* anti-base support increases overall momentum for the anti-base movement, but in one sense dilutes the focus and political credibility that could be drawn upon from a more purely nationalist support base. Put simply, diluted or diversified political action from stakeholders involved in the FRF issue on Okinawa may prevent localised identity from re-crystallising around a collective Ryukyuan nationalism. Conversely, proportionally greater localised support would have the potential to gain in potency if then attached to specific issues, including base construction, return and relocation.

Futenma is probably “the World’s most dangerous base” (NHK News, 21 September 2014). Yet, analyses that present a case for there being an imbalance between national politics and localised support for its return or relocation outside the prefecture, also often fail to fully appreciate the considerable impact of political apathy within Okinawa. This is partly a function of demographic change and generational handovers of power – as Okinawa’s youth are seen to be collectively apathetic. In this regard, apathy has further contributed to a decoupling of Okinawan identity from its potential agency to fuel nationalism.

Nevertheless, as explicated by the *Okinawa chiiki kagaku kenkyūjo*, Okinawan cultural identity itself remains strong. This is supported by the analysis of opinion

poll data, as seen in the continuance of, “Okinawans having the strongest sense of prefectural identity in the whole country” and being, “the only prefecture to assign a particular linguistic distinction between the prefecture and those that live within it and the rest of Japanese society” (*Okinawa chiiki kagaku kenkyūjo*, 1997: 93-4). At the same time, however, this is combined with a *culture of kindness*, or *yasashisa no bunka*, that includes, “prioritising harmony with others rather than creating a relationship of opposition” (*ibid.*, 1997: 90), as well as attempting to find an empathetic and inclusive form of responsibility for contentious issues.

In addition, materialist – mostly realist – analyses of motivations for a suppression of Okinawan nationalism, point to the territorial dispute over the Senkaku/Diaoyu (hereafter Senkaku) Islands as a key factor (Izawa, 2011). Although there is some doubt as to the extent of resources under the Islands’ seabed (Drifte, 2013: 11), in the international context of securing Japan’s national interest, the Senkaku Islands offer a further justification for fortification of the Ryukyu Islands and the relocation, rather than outright return, of bases such as Futenma. This also serves to augment the prioritisation of Japanese national security above that of Okinawan self-determination.

Such literature has also countered liberal scholars, who have attempted to circumvent this state-centric approach by promoting a more developmental role for Okinawa, as the would-be legally assigned developers of any undersea resources that do fall within the Ryukyu’s historical territorial waters. Kinjō Hiroyuki, for example, argues that, this should not be made into a political struggle for governance over the [Senkaku] Islands between Japan, China and Taiwan... ..by supplying the surrounding countries, such as Japan, China, Taiwan and Korea, with the extracted oil and gas, [Okinawans] could improve their economies and standards of living. The energy from under the Senkakus could be developed by Okinawa with support from the government, and would be a perfect chance to shift to a more independent economy (2005: 8).

The realist counter to this, though, posits that the surrounding powers would not permit Okinawan-led governance of such resources. In that sense, too, a more robust fostering of nationalism within the prefecture is needed to give greater hard-power support for liberal developmentalist theories of increased independence, moving them away from idealism and towards the formation of attainable public policies, informed by Okinawan agency.

Re-examining structure

Structurally speaking, in relation to these extant arguments, the gravity of US domestic politics and its incentives in setting the direction of base-related policies on Okinawa should be reemphasized here (Sato, 2015: 233-43). In this sense, the enduring structure of US military bases on the Ryukyu Islands can be seen to have been set in place by the circumstances under which Okinawa reverted to mainland Japan in 1972. In the midst of the Vietnam War – which extensively utilized American bases in the prefecture to launch missions into the South East Asian conflict – the spiralling costs of operations meant that the US state was eager to find a way to reduce its expenditure into the region. This included abandoning the costly responsibility of administering and investing in Okinawa’s civilian government. Japan’s booming economy took up the slack in terms of financial support for Okinawa – including the so-called sympathy budget, or *omoiyari yosan*, which sees money transferred from Tokyo to Washington in order to subsidise the expenses of US military stationed in Japan. The US government also negotiated the continuation of post-reversion base operations to be sustained, keeping them now much as they were on Okinawa prior to the islands’ legal return to Japan (Halperen, 2014; Sato, 2015: 231-2). The imbalance of this US-dominated structural set-up, therefore, exacerbates the struggle between local interests and those of Japan’s state authorities and mainland population.

The balance of this power struggle has also shifted through time. Therein, the rift between mainland political and media actors and those on Okinawa, as well as local progressive and conservative factions, can be discerned effectively in reference to the collapse of Japan’s political left. Indeed, as the few Okinawan nationalist parties that were active prior to reversion became subsumed thereafter into Japan’s national left-leaning parties, Okinawa’s nationalist voice was largely silenced. Yet, the glaring differential between Tokyo and Okinawa – as a function of structural dynamics – is illustrated by the central government’s responses to politicized issues, such as the 1995 gang rape of a primary school girl by three US Marines, largely accepted as the catalyst for agreeing Futenma’s return (DiFilippo, 2002: 36-7). For example, then Foreign Minister Kōno responded to the rape by echoing Okinawan Diet members in stating that, “I personally, honestly, feel that the base issues are causing a great deal of trouble for Okinawans ...I believe that, as both have referred specifically to this issue in their Japan-US leaders’ summit that both President Clinton and Prime Minister Murayama are conscious of these things” (Lower House, 27 March 1995).

Here, typically, the attempt to express heartfelt sympathy for Okinawans actually only reinforces the clear differentiation being made between the southernmost prefecture and all other areas of Japan. Okinawa is thereby named in place of more specific locales, such as cities or designated areas that are often specified elsewhere in precedence of an entire prefecture (*Narita, Fukushima daiichi genpatsu, Northern Territories* etc.). This difference in terminology is indicative of how Okinawa is represented from within, as well as outside, Japan as effectively embodying a distinct nation.

Concomitantly, prior to the conclusion of the Cold War, issues relating to Futenma were predominantly raised by Okinawan lawmakers in the context of fighting to have land returned to Okinawa. However, Okinawan political actors at this time mostly utilized nationalism as a form of discourse that could be framed in the shape of US interests being inappropriately prioritised over those of Japan – rather than identifying Okinawa as a distinct national unit. This type of response was also present in reaction to later incidents that incited outrage from within the prefecture, though the expression of localised sentiment witnessed a degree of intensification and indignation towards Tokyo as well as Washington. Amidst this heightened sensitivity towards, and awareness of, problems being framed as specifically Okinawan, the precursors to broader debate on potentially greater socio-political, economic and administrative autonomy for Okinawa began to be crystalized around issues connected to Futenma's relocation, starting with the rape case.

Responses to the 1995 gang rape

Not only the rape of a 12-year old girl by US marines itself, but also the existing structural dynamics that were seen to have been symptomatic in it taking place – including the respective national responses to it – incited a particularly fervent reaction from within Okinawa. In line with the theoretical approach outlined at the start of this article, these sentiments of collective anger – at the violation of *gōi* – and the resulting actions of protest were manifest through a force that can be compared to nationalism. Thereafter, while the rape incident accentuated the disparity between mainland Japan and the Ryukyu Islands, it also served as a major source of political capital that pressured the Japanese central government and US authorities into initially agreeing Futenma's complete return.

In public response, however, the government's repeated referral to an emphasis on Japan-US relations in a separate context from those of Okinawan citizens is further

suggestive of an underlying understanding of Okinawa as in one sense an inherently distinct actor within the international structure – but at the same time subordinated to the national interests of Japan and the US. The US Department of State reinforced this position, which revolved around identifying the distinctive properties of Okinawa but also assigning strategies to aid its people as a seemingly *charitable* function of the US-Japan alliance. Critically, though, this did not include affording the Ryukyu Islands any extensive form of self-determination. As the Department's historical archives attest, to reduce the burden of the U.S. military presence on the people of Okinawa and thereby strengthen the alliance, the two governments established the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in 1995. (Document XIV-3) Through the SACO process, the United States reduced its military footprint on Okinawa, without sacrificing operational readiness (US Department of State, 2001). The above example illuminates how initial responses to the horrific gang rape of a young girl by US servicemen created conditions that focused attention upon Okinawa's relevance to the international structure, but at the same time intensified US and Japanese resolve to suppress the prefecture's ability to exercise any form of independent governance over related issues.

Responses to the 2004 helicopter crash

In terms of (re)confirming the triangular structural dynamic to nationalism in Okinawa, the crash landing of a US military helicopter into Okinawa International University in 2004 and the diverse responses to it additionally serve to highlight an apparent awareness of Okinawa Prefecture's separate identity from the rest of Japan. They are also suggestive of a tacit understanding of Okinawa's political significance in terms of how national interests derived from the nationalisms of the US and Japan are evidently seen to be decoupled from those of the Ryukyu Islands.

In the case of Diet statements, from across the political spectrum, leading opposition (Democratic Party of Japan) responses were as illustrative of this structural awareness as their ruling party rivals'. For example, DPJ lawmaker, Wakai Yasuhiko made distinct reference to *Okinawan* citizens in his inquisition of the circumstances of the crash, identifying them as a separate unit of consideration. Before questioning how the crash signified the salience of issues surrounding Futenma, he stated that, "I for one feel a real sense of guilt and apology towards all the people of Okinawa Prefecture" (6 September 2004). LDP and bureaucratic statements similarly referred to Okinawa in isolation. This was contextualised within the efforts being made via the SACO between Japanese and US authorities to reduce the burden of

bases. Hence, even in the case of the 2004 helicopter crash, the disparity between a specifically distinct identification of Okinawa was juxtaposed with the concept of negotiation between Japan and the US. This included official discussions of governance and security that determined the future of key US military facilities such as Futenma (MOFA, 2006a).

Contrastingly, the US state response reinforced a subtle form of comparatively indifferent American nationalism, while at the same time echoing state responses from mainland Japan in terms of specifically identifying Okinawa as a separate and victimised entity. According to the US embassy's report, an official from the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa gave an account of the CH-53 helicopter incident in which he stated that, "I would like to state up front my deepest regret over this accident and my regret for the anxiety it has caused the citizens of Okinawa" (Embassy of the United States, 2004). Having, then, first specified Okinawa as a single unit of analysis in response to US state action, he went on to portray the heroism of the American response and how combined US-Japanese actions coordinated their interests to good effect as a result.

The interpretation of responses to the crash by Okinawan representatives at successive Diet sessions was also illustrative because it stressed not only how Okinawa was isolated by both the Japanese central government and US state actors, but also spotlighted the difference in socio-political temperature, or *ondosa*, which arises from the prefecture's precarious position within this triangular structure. Former Prefectural Governor, Ota Masahide (2000), for example, in one post-crash Diet session questioned how much the ruling administration even understood the relevant context of accidents on Okinawa and specifically at Futenma.

Responses to Prefectural Governor Nakaima's 2013 granting of permission for landfill

After being elected as Okinawa Prefectural Governor, with ruling LDP-Komeito backing, in 2006, Hirokazu Nakaima initially stood by his election pledge to see Futenma returned and its operational functions moved outside of the prefecture. These demands were also included in his public statements during the 2010 gubernatorial elections. However, under pressure from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's second administration, Nakaima announced in December 2013 that he had officially given permission for landfill to permit the proposed FRF at Henoko, as outlined under the SACO of 1996 and revised Roadmap of 2006.

The central government of Japan endorsed Nakaima's actions using the rhetoric of Okinawans as unfortunate victims, on the one hand, but at the same time trumpeting the national interests of Japan, on the other. LDP spokesperson, Ishiba Shigeru, epitomized this stance by praising the governor and thanking "the efforts of so many Okinawans." Ishiba then stated that, "in terms of securing a fixed point of deterrence within this area, with regards to the peace and security of our country and the Asia Pacific region, we have a responsibility to fulfil this as the nation of Japan" (28 January 2014). Here too, the promotion of nationalism articulated through a discourse of national interest and responsibility of the people was juxtaposed with the isolated and distinct actor of Okinawa.

In contrast, the American governmental response was relatively low key, though welcoming of the decision, which effectively gave the green light to Abe's government to strengthen the US-Japan security alliance via construction of the new base at Henoko. At the same time, the US also reinforced a relationship with Okinawa resembling interstate relations. For instance, Ambassador John Roos made a high profile visit to Okinawa International University and exchanged symbolic state-level gifts with Okinawa Prefecture representatives (Embassy News, 15 May 2013).

In contrast, reaction of opposition Okinawan parliamentarians and local government actors reflected a localized rejection of Nakaima's legitimacy, as the principle actor representing Okinawa (Moss, 2014). This in itself served to underscore the extent of latent nationalist sentiments, even without necessarily demanding political secession or any specific level of devolution from Tokyo. Such illustrates, though, the potential of localist agency that could serve to empower greater autonomy for Okinawa in the governance of its own key issues.

These qualitative examples, then, of how Okinawa is identified differently as a distinct actor within the international structure of states illustrate clearly how multiple nationalisms serve to delineate the contested boundaries of governance. At the practical level, this determines to what extent local interests are included in the decision making process of designated security issues, such as the relocation of Futenma. The extent of distinction between Japanese national interests and those of Okinawa therein becomes pivotal. Okinawan nationalism has to be recognised as representing a stateless nation with unique ethnicity, common ancestral mythology, collective memory, shared multiplicity of cultural heritage and designated homelands

(Matsushima, 2012: 156-8, 2015). However, both the complexity of Okinawan identity and its contested ideology serve to dilute and complicate its ability to assert a more influential localized presence within the regional structure, which in this case is dominated by the great powers of Japan and the US.

Identifying agency

Within this structure mass-media offers a useful gage of relative agency. And as noted in at the state-level, media reactions to key events in the US, mainland Japan and Okinawa also showed clear disparities (Yamada, 2014: 47-50). These were further suggestive of how mainstream public discourse – and political approaches – varied in each of the three locales. This included the framing of issues such as those pertaining to Futenma in a form that has caused severe socio-political divisions along nationalist (including Okinawa as a sub-national actor) lines. In this sense, leading newspaper coverage can be seen as reflective of the distinct nationalisms present in the US, Japanese mainland and the Ryukyu Islands. Specifically, it highlights the contrasting levels of political interest, public attention and direction of policy initiatives, as well as their uneven potential for realisation, depending upon the actual power of the primary decision makers involved.

Media reaction to the 1995 rape case

Japanese national newspapers and civil society groups were outspoken on this issue that ran to the heart of controversies over US stationing of military forces on Japan, and the disproportionate burden borne by a localised minority in Okinawa. News sources traditionally opposed to over-reliance upon the US-Japan Security Treaty, such as the *Asahi Shimbun*, seized upon this as an opportunity to criticise Japanese state actors in an attempt to shift policies away from acquiescence towards the US. Critically, however, the intensified framing of the US, Japan and Okinawa as separate entities was once again present across sectors (*Asahi Shimbun*, 18 October 1995).

Conversely, US nationwide news responses to the rape case, despite alluding to the heinous nature of the crime and the disproportionate burden suffered by Okinawans, remained largely devoid of any direct criticism of the American military presence on the islands in itself. In addition, in some cases attempts were made to qualify Okinawan objections towards US deployments on the grounds that not all those on the Ryukyu Islands want the bases removed and the behaviour of American soldiers has improved (New York Times, 8 October 1995).

In this regard, local media analyses of the 1995 gang-rape were actually surprisingly cautious. For example, in its aftermath, the *Ryukyu Shimpō*'s political editors reacted to initial plans for relocation of bases such as Futenma in stark contrast to its current outspoken criticisms of US and Japanese plans for the FRF at Henoko. In response to then incoming Prefectural Governor, Inamine Keiichi's, decision to "change course on base administration..." and, "in contrast to former Governor, Ota['s], focus on a cooperative relationship with the national government" (*Ryukyu Shimpō*, 17 December 1998), for example, no direct criticism was made of Inamine's move towards acceptance of relocating the base to Henoko. The *Ryukyu Shimpō*'s coverage of the time largely limited critique to questioning the structural relationship between Japan and the US, and their disregard for local understanding and *gōi*.

Media reaction to the 2004 helicopter crash

As evinced by the examples discussed above, the 2004 crash landing of a CH-53D US military transport helicopter into Okinawa International University served as a major catalyst in galvanising opposition to the running of Futenma at its current location in Ginowan City (Yoshida, 2010: 1). One important aspect of this was public and administrative outrage expressed via the media. Partly as a result of reactions articulated through news coverage, the proposals for the FRF were, eventually, formalised through the US-Japan Roadmap for (military force) Realignment Implementation, agreed two years later (Rice, Rumsfeld, Asō and Nukaga, 2006). Nevertheless, these plans included sacrificing not only the human security of Okinawans who would be put at risk as a function of the new base at Henoko possibly being targeted from overseas (Hoshino, 2009: 95-6), but also the local environment, by construction of a landfill facility that will undoubtedly damage the coral reef and fragile ecosystems upon which it is being built (Okinawa Daigaku Chiiki Kenkyujo, 2012; Sakurai, 2009: 161-2).

In this sense, both Okinawa's leading local papers exercised their agency in attempting to sway the public behind the combination of an anti-base position and a rejection of the FRF. However, while local newspaper coverage does have a societal impact, the perspectives of the *Okinawa Times* and *Ryukyu Shimpō* are well-known and nationally framed as stereotypically anti-base (Sakurai, Y., 2013). This creates a contested influence, in as much as contrasting nationally distributed quality newspapers are also widely read within the prefecture. The inconsistency between national and local news sources thereby dilutes

localism and conflates how Japan's national interests and those of Okinawa are understood.

While the nationally distributed *Asahi Shimbun*, for instance, clearly takes a supportive role of Okinawa's position, it does not make clear to what extent the interests of Okinawans over such issues should be entrusted to local agency and local government, as opposed to governance by centralized authorities in Tokyo. Less liberal national news sources have tended, including in the case of the 2004 helicopter crash, to offer minimal recognition to separate Okinawan agency in this regard. Rather, local resistance and political action counter to American military interests is expressed from an overarching Japanese perspective. This often also assumes the subordination of Okinawan agency to the mainland and can be seen as indicative of a growing centralized Japanese nationalism.⁵

Contrastingly, and ironically, the more distant perspective of independent American quality news media offers in one sense a more balanced perspective, which though often lacking empathy with Okinawa, identifies the prefecture's independent agency.⁶ In fact, reports from some US newspapers even allude to the link between the issue of base operation and relocation, and the increased sense of regionalism felt within Okinawa. Limited attention is paid to issues on Okinawa by US sources, however, and references that are made primarily explain US interests, strategy and the circumstances of American personnel (Hateruma, 2015). For example, following the 2004 helicopter crash, the *Washington Post* (6 October 2004) and *L.A. Times* (13 September 2004) both carried short pieces that alluded to local opposition, but failed to elaborate on Okinawa's current regional circumstances in detail. This broader indifference towards the Ryukyu Islands in fact, however, explicitly negated the agency of Okinawans as a distinct nation to a lesser extent than the bulk of mainland Japanese news sources did.

Media reaction to Prefectural Governor Nakaima's 2013 approval of landfill

As with responses to the other key incidents covered above, the stark contrast between how local media actors in Okinawa and those of mainland Japan exercised politically motivated agency through discourse was evident across sources here. For instance, the *Asahi Shimbun* maintained its highly sympathetic view of Okinawa, but, in contrast to Okinawan papers, framed the issue as clearly being primarily a matter for American and Japanese central authorities to deal with (*Asahi Shimbun*, 28 December 2013).

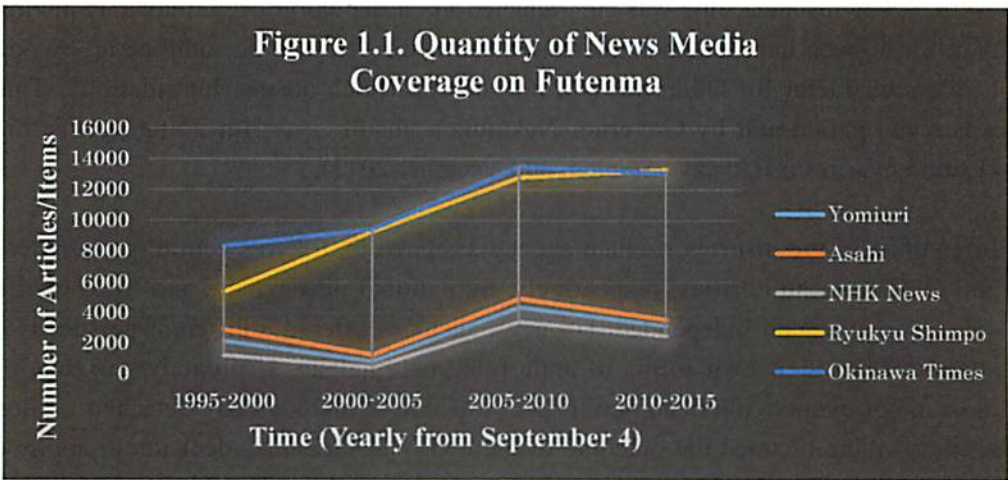
Okinawa's two leading newspapers' reactions to Governor Nakaima's official signing of approval to allow landfill for the construction of the FRF were staunch, combative and critical. This action by the prefectural governor was seen as a renege of his election campaign pledge to have the relocation made outside of the prefecture, and as a betrayal of the overwhelming wishes of the Okinawan people. Therein, local newspapers drew upon an increasing sense of ethnic identity (Yoshikawa, 2014) that could be described as (Ryukyu) nationalism (Matsushima, 2012) in order to insight opposition from within the islands. In one of the *Ryukyu Shimpo's* final editorials of 2013, for instance, this was first enacted via a depiction of Okinawa as having once again been humiliated, suggesting that, "if the year can be summed up by one Chinese character for Okinawa, is it not the one which means 'humiliation'? This was made paramount by Governor Nakaima's 'insult'... ...[i]n going against his election manifesto" (*Ryukyu Shimpo*, 30 December 2013).

In contrast to the disproportionate agency assigned to Tokyo's central government and Okinawan authorities, respectively, by national newspapers and local media sources, once again independent US news agencies offered a different perspective, suggestive of their own forms of underlying nationalism. Ultimately, the tone of most major quality American newspapers was one of ideologically detached US-led agency having dictated the outcome of the FRF via Nakaima's decision to approve the landfill at Henoko. Nevertheless, local agency and the independent resistance of Okinawa as a separate entity was for the most part clearly stated once again, and in some regards recurrently given greater recognition than throughout the better part of Japanese press coverage (New York Times, 27 December 2013; Washington Post, 27 December 2013).

Quantitative assessment of media influences

In combination with the qualitative examples elaborated upon above, a brief statistical analysis of the weighting of news media sources responding to base-related issues is also indicative of the degree of nationalist sentiment that is active within a locale during a designated period of time (Demertzis, Papathanassopoulos and Armenakis, 1999: 31-6), i.e. Okinawa. The contrast between different media organizations, particularly those from mainland Japan and Okinawa, also suggests that the framing of national interests – though differently defined by each – is critical in so far as contested *national* causes are promoted as being pivotal to the issues surrounding Futenma's proposed relocation. As seen from Figure 1.1.,

below, the quantity of coverage assigned to Futenma by local newspapers has risen exponentially in the period since the gang rape of 1995 and the subsequent incidents, analysed qualitatively above. This contrasts with the changes in volume of coverage on the same topic from the leading national news media sources, which have witnessed steady but comparatively modest increases. The aggrandized interest from local news organisations can therefore be understood to have arisen as it became more central to the current mainstream of public discourse and socio-political sentiment within Okinawa.



Combined agency of political and market interests

Superseding media influence, large sections of the market and political administration of Okinawa are heavily influenced by bureaucratic agencies, directed as offshoots of central government. In this sense, the weight of agency held by bodies such as the Cabinet Office’s Okinawa General Bureau, Okinawa Defense Bureau and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Okinawa Office is also substantial and each can be seen as severely limited in terms of meaningful input from localised Okinawan authorities and actors (Okubo, 2009: 29-30).⁷ Furthermore, particularly under the LDP’s reinvigorated administration, led by PM Abe, these bureaucratic bodies, politicians from central government and large corporations, including base-construction companies, have reinforced the traditional post-War Japanese iron triangle (Stockwin, 2008; Colignon and Usui, 2001) in their governance of the prefecture and key issues such as Futenma’s relocation.

The power of government-run agencies therefore severely restricts the ability of local authorities, political actors and market enterprises to harness ideologically based movements. This means that those stemming from grassroots nationalism cannot transfer their political will into a restructuring of how the prefecture is governed. The salience of this for issues such as the construction of the FRF should therefore be clear. For example, the iron triangle – in the form of public-private collusion – is perhaps most commonly associated with the construction (concrete and gravel) industry in Okinawa, which is central to reclaiming land for new base construction. In addition, the recent employment of private security firm, Alsok, used in combination with the police to prevent protestors from impeding the initiation of boring surveys and construction at Henoko, further serves as a graphic illustration of the extending power of combined state and market-based forces across a wide range of sectors, including national security (Fuse, 2014).

Identifying the power of norms

The pervasive influences of ascribed national interest can also be seen in the construction and perpetuation of social norms, which are multi-fold, outside and within Okinawan society. From the Okinawan side they include historical norms of socioeconomic exchange and inclusivity. And these can in effect be linked to national identities of the pre-modern Ryukyu Kingdom and, more temporally, the entrenched norm of antimilitarism in specific response to Okinawa's wartime horrors of the 20th Century, as well as the ongoing military occupation – as represented by the proposed FRF and other US bases.

Such norms have more recently come into intensified cross-interaction with the globalized trends associated with market capitalist neoliberalism in the present era. One critical factor, in part as a function of neoliberalism's social proliferation, has been the impact of its resulting atomised consumerist culture. For example, this has led to the prioritising of socioeconomic norms stemming from commercialised individualism, which have resulted from the global implementation of neoliberal reforms (Beck and Grande, 2010; Harvey, 2005), and has contributed to the spread of political apathy among Okinawa's youth population.⁸ This trend can be contrasted with historical norms to illustrate a critical shift.

Japanese norms and the governance of Futenma

In the eras that preceded World War II, the Ryukyu Islands were subjected to the brutal expansionism of Japanese nationalism first-hand, having been forcibly

subdued by Meiji Era colonisation in the late 19th Century and militarism in the early 20th Century. These subjugations of the Ryukyus witnessed the extensive rejection and suppression of Ryukyuan identity by Japan's central authorities. Thereafter, in the wake of defeat at the end of World War II and socio-political restructuring initiated under US rule, the Japanese state has predominantly attempted to incorporate Okinawan issues, including those relating to US bases, within a state-centric worldview that is directed primarily by the norms of (US aligned) bilateralism and economic developmentalism (Hook et al, 2011). These have largely endured throughout the postwar era, up to the present.

As a result of this, nationalist Okinawan norms have continued to be assimilated into those of Japan as a whole, as seen tangibly in the promotion of commercial interests through the national designation of Special Economic Zones on the islands (JETRO, 2014), nationally framed geopolitical security concerns (Senkaku/Diaoyu dispute etc.) and the active promotion of regional identity, such as depicted in Okinawan popular and traditional culture (MOFA, 2011). All of these initiatives have allowed the Japanese state and, more broadly, Japan's mainland population as a whole to successfully incorporate most aspects of Okinawan nationalism into a wider national framing, which now promotes cultural diversity as well as endorsing ethnic uniformity.

The impact of nationally-embedded norms emanating from the US and Japan, which influence Okinawa's governance, also remains immense. The outcome, in terms of ideologically underpinned policies that dictate the critical state of military bases on the islands, is a complex set of socio-political and socio-economic interests manifest within the prefecture that have complicated multiple issues as a result. These cut across individual, social and party lines, as well as those of the market. This myriad of often conflicting normative ideals and interests also, therefore, dilutes the galvanising of one single form of Okinawan nationalism as, for example, mercantilism competes with anti-militarism.

Amid this, one of the most pivotal factors on Okinawa itself is the differentiation between cultural nationalism (based on a shared sense of cultural identity) and political nationalism that promotes greater self-determination in governance. As one American social scientist specialising in Japanese Studies argued, "...how the Okinawans feel about their island as a psychological study based on cultural nationalism might be interesting, but not political nationalism. They are so easy

to buy-off, or at least anyone with any power in Okinawa is!” (DIJ SSSG, 2014). The rather crude connotations of this statement illustrate the nature of a number of competing norms that exist in Okinawa. These act overall as a hindrance in operationalizing a more uniformly directed form of localised political agency – such as that driven by grassroots nationalism.

Passive (less actively articulated) norms also play an instrumental role in shaping the direction and intensity of nationalism as a force within the prefecture and its ability to penetrate the policy sphere. Once again, political apathy is a critical aspect of this, as illustrated by the year-on-year decline in election turnouts within Okinawa (Nakamoto, 2014: 173; *Okinawa Times*, 15 December 2014). In this regard, generational and demographic changes are central factors in intensifying the problem of undermined local governance and weakening nationalism as a normative democratic force (Sato, 2015). Younger generations of Okinawans not only suffer from political apathy but also knowledge-deficit and indifference with regards to issues that might serve to galvanise nationalistic sentiments within Okinawa. The case of ill-informed and under-educated (particularly on local historical issues) university students across the prefecture, for instance, is illustrative of how knowledge that pertains to Okinawan concerns has not been preserved or effectively promoted in recent decades (Sato, 2014; on-site author interviews with students from multiple Okinawan universities, 2014).

The instrumentalization of *active* (more explicitly articulated) norms, conversely, can be equally misdirected, as politicians, business leaders and bureaucrats are incentivised by lucrative contracts (*Ryukyu Shimpo*, 24 October 1996; Nagatachō Ibun, 2010), promotions or votes (Moriya, 2010). In respect to this kind of instrumentalism, this article has spotlighted Nakaima Hirokazu’s reneged promise to resist the relocation of Futenma within the prefecture. Conversely, successive Governor, Onaga Takeshi, based his 2014 gubernatorial election campaign on the platform of a united identity bridging ideological divides, or “all Okinawa”, against the in-prefecture relocation of Futenma, which in previous years he had refused to officially resist or reject as a possible policy option (*Yaeyama Nippo*, 3 November 2014). In other words, despite his anti-base rhetoric, Onaga can be seen to have instrumentalised the norm of anti-base sentiment and movements against Futenma’s relocation to Henoko as a means to galvanise local support by way of acquired votes. In that sense, he has successfully decoupled his own political motives from the rhetoric he espouses, but the resulting policies become largely circumstantial.

Norms and policy implementation in Okinawa

A combination of US-led norms that promote the sustained projection of geo-strategic regional power, combined with an increasingly nationalistic Japanese central government, have been central in enforcing construction of the new base at Henoko. This trend has been manifest in concrete policies formulated by the US Department of State and Department of Defense. For example, following revision of the US-Japan Guidelines in 2015, enhanced military interoperability has been realised, based on the ideals of “seamless, robust, flexible and effective bilateral responses” (Russel, 2014) taken in cooperation with Japan. The technical details of this are outlined in the pertaining mid-term report commissioned by the two governments (US Department of Defense, 2013: 3-4), but needless to say this effectively endorses the proposed FRF at Henoko and the Marines that are set to be deployed there – undergirded by new guidelines which cement the politics of aligned nationalism in terms of power projections from Washington and Tokyo. In other words, US-sourced norms of neorealism, dressed in the discourse and framing of bilateralism with Japan and regional security, inform a policy of continued interventionism in, increased military focus upon, and rebalancing – or so called “pivot” – towards Asia (Manyin et al., 2012: 1). These leave Okinawa’s local governance in a highly vulnerable position when viewed primarily by the American state as a function of adherence to these norms.

Japan’s MOFA, on the other hand, have also consistently exhibited severe discrepancies between a discourse that panders to norms of local prioritisation (e.g. reduction of the disproportionate military burden placed on Okinawa) and bilateralism, but appears mostly only to enact policies based on the latter. These are similarly implemented predominantly in the name of protecting national security and regional stability, in cooperation with the US. For instance, in the US-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation of 2006, Joint Statement of the US-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) of 2010 and Japan-US Foreign Ministers Meeting (Summary) of 2014, bilateral cooperation was placed high on the agenda, and in each case complimented by justification for policy implementations such as the FRF being built at Henoko, on the grounds that this will reduce the burden on Okinawa (MOFA 2006, 2010, 2014).

In spite of this, a number of concrete policies promised in the Roadmap which would actually have put this narrative of burden reduction into practise, such as the

partial or complete return of six US bases (MOFA, 2006), including Futenma, have not been implemented. Rather, the Japanese government has been seen, in the form of joint military exercises, integration of security systems, and sharing of equipment and information – not to mention the increased fortification of outlying islands – to have implemented policies based on US-led bilateralism, largely in disregard of Okinawa’s actual burden.

This discrepancy between norms seemingly supporting Japanese nationalism and those, espoused but largely un-enacted, to prioritize human security in the locality of Okinawa, present a key area of contestation to be addressed by those opposing Futenma’s relocation to Henoko. If this structural normative dynamic is not countered and effectively publicised from within the prefecture, as being an ongoing misrepresentation of political discourse versus actual policy, then Tokyo’s bureaucracy and executive will surely ram-through construction of the landfill and claim that proper consultation and incorporation of local sentiments have been carried out – and that *gōi* had been received.

A unified understanding of Okinawan nationalism and its tributary norms is key in this regard, in so far as it creates one voice for the prefecture, as a stateless nation. However, it is in fact the pluralism and factional nature of norms pervading Okinawan politics and society that brings into question the credibility of Okinawan nationalism as a meaningful construct at all in the present era. At one demonstration held in front of the Prefectural Government building in Naha, for example, on-site interviews could be conducted simultaneously with those from as diverse interest groups as: extremist Christians, new leftists, local government candidates, pensioners’ groups and women’s groups (on-site interviews, *kenchō hōi daikōdō*, 9 October 2014). In this sense, any form of nationalism in Okinawa that might hope to counter a particular issue, such as the FRF, faces the longer-term challenge of unifying a disparate set of actors who lack a clearly directed normative voice around which to focus policies for the benefit of all Okinawans.

Conclusion: Empowering nationalism on Okinawa

In essence, a combination of state-embedded, market-based media and societal forms of nationalism manifest within the US, Japanese mainland and Okinawa have interacted to substantially affect how the attempted relocation of the Futenma base from Ginowan to Henoko has been delayed and executed. The findings of this paper suggest that these interactive forms of nationalism will continue to exert considerable

influence over the processes involved. Within this, the nationally espoused Japanese social and economic norms of antimilitarism and developmentalism have served only as a highly limited break on policies oriented to American military base construction and maintenance on Okinawa.

US policy in this sphere stems itself, in precedence, from nationalist norms of realist-based geopolitical power acquisition and the retention of hegemonic control over the Asia Pacific region, predicated on a firm security alliance with Japan. Tokyo, too, utilizes this alliance, as made particularly evident under the current Abe administration, in order to promote a more proactively nationalist security agenda. Hence, ultimately, American foreign policy interests and Japanese central government-led governance over sites within Okinawa have remained largely aligned throughout the postwar and post-Cold War eras. This has meant that opposition to base construction, as of the proposed FRF at Henoko, has been in need of a better coordinated Okinawan nationalism (or at least activism) in order to more effectively counter the portrayed national security interests overseen by the US and Japan.

It is evident from the broad range of qualitative samples gathered here from across sectors in Okinawa that such activism, at both prefectural and societal levels, has been limited. Nationalism has, therefore, failed to galvanise into a coherent form of localised political power on Okinawa. This has been shown to be the result of weakness and acquiescence in political leadership – as in the cases of former Governor, Nakaima – as well as a convergence of interests between local and national political, bureaucratic and market actors that essentially approve the continuation of the status quo, and hence the approval of existing plans, such as for the new base to be constructed at Henoko. In response to this, the inability of local political, social and commercial media actors opposed to the plans to affect greater change can be seen to be exacerbated by internal divisions and political apathy – particularly among poorly informed younger generations of Okinawans.

In order to overcome these combined problems of structural rigidity and weakness of agency on Okinawa, at least three factors will have to change, or be shifted in a favourable direction, if greater self-determination is to be realised. Firstly, the currently elected Diet members and prefectural governor must work effectively together under the banner of “all Okinawa”, or an equivalent ideological consensus, in order to maximise all possible avenues of political opposition to both central government and US military directives that run counter to the majority of Okinawan

sentiment and public opinion.⁹ Secondly, the Okinawan population must be better educated on the history and evolution of the Ryukyu Islands' governance. This is likely to require a more specific focus on national identity within formal education, in addition to the expansion of initiatives that promote the preservation of Okinawa's cultural heritage and pristine marine environment. Finally, key market actors (for example, in construction and tourism industries), other than those already endorsing greater self-governance in the media, need to be engaged and persuaded that the most profitable and affluent future for this potential-rich locale lies in an increased sense of Okinawan-brand national identity, greater economic and political independence, and a reduction in the number and scale of US bases. If all of these conditions are met, then the empowering of Okinawan nationalism may be realised – rising dragon-like from the ashes of the former Ryukyu Kingdom.

[Notes]

¹ The terms 'relocation' and 'replacement' are highly controversial in this context because, in effect, what is being planned off-shore of Henoko is a new base designed to incorporate and operationalize a number of the US military's new military technologies. The size and location are also based approximately on the 1966 design for an additional facility that was never realised (McCormack and Norimatsu, 2012: 106). This article uses the term 'Futenma Replacement Facility' (FRF) intermittently with 'new base' due to its widespread and generally accepted usage within, and in reference to, Okinawa.

² In contrast to this work, a substantial body of scholarship deals with Okinawa's postwar history of nationalism purely from the perspectives of independence-movements per se and/or post-colonialism. For discussion, see works by, amongst others, Takara Ben, Arasaki Moriteru, and Arakawa Akira.

³ The authors also highlight how this has allowed the *return* of the Futenma site to be transformed into a relocation (within the prefecture) – illustrated by the tenuous links between Futenma and the designated relocation site at Henoko (2010: 7-13).

⁴ Matsushima's proposals for an institutionalised route to Okinawan independence could be preceded, posits Taira Chōsei (2013: 37-41), by the implementation of a new form of localised government on Okinawa that would assign it a status as a special region within Japan's so-called *todōfuken* system, for example as the semi-autonomous unit of "Okinawa-shū."

⁵ More traditionally conservative news media sources, such as the *Yomiuri Shimbun* responded to the crash primarily as an issue of US-Japan relations. In this sense, while mention of then Prefectural Governor, Inamine Keiichi's, demands was made, little reference was made to the abrogation of Okinawan agency per se, or to the prefecture as representing anything other than a standard regional unit within the political body of Japan (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, 26 August 2004).

⁶ This is in contrast to US security strategy and its policymaking process with regards to Okinawa, which has seen the Islands dealt with almost entirely as function of American geo-military and economic interests, with Henoko being trumpeted publically as a comparatively (to Futenma's current location in Ginowan City) safe option as far as human security goes (Kawana and Saitō, 2015).

⁷ The Cabinet Office Okinawa General Bureau is responsible for a huge number of activities relating to infrastructure and construction which involve the appropriation of public funds to commercial companies in order for projects to be undertaken (Okinawa General Bureau, 2014). Reform, abolition of, or greater local control over, these bureaus therefore offers the potential for increased agency over land usage, including base construction and relocation.

⁸ The focus on individual patterns of consumption, self-image and localised social networks replaces an interest in broader societal and political issues.

⁹ Despite common rejection of the proposals for the construction of a new base at Henoko, the division of party interests between the prefecture's political representatives is seen as a potential challenge in this regard. Prefectural Governor, Onaga Takeshi, hails from the LDP, with Akamine Seiken (Japanese Communist Party), Teruya Kantoku (Social Democratic Party), Tamaki Denny (People's Life Party) and Nakasato Toshinobu (independent) making up the four proportionally represented Okinawan parliamentary Diet seats.

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