

Who Should Bear the Burden of US Bases? Governor Nakaima's Plea for a "Relocation Site Outside of Okinawa Prefecture, but within Japan" アメリカで県外移設を訴える仲井真知事

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Précis:

This article provides a genealogy of the argument for kengai isetsu, or the relocation of US military bases outside of Okinawa to another part of Japan. It shows how kengai isetsu has been reduced to a politics of NIMBY, or "Not In My Back Yard" when understood through a politically conservative vs. progressive grid of intelligibility. Instead, a colonial vs. anticolonial reading informed by postcolonial studies is offered to show how kengai isetsu reveals Okinawa as the lynchpin holding together the US-Japanese security relationship. In particular, this paper problematizes the reluctance on the part of international and Japanese progressive activists and intellectuals to criticize Japan's role in maintaining US military bases in Okinawa because of the deeply entrenched desire to posit Japan as a passive victim of American power, thereby maintaining the Eurocentric position of the US as the more aggressive agent.

Keywords:

Okinawa, US-Japan Security Treaty, anti-military activism, postcolonial studies, Nakaima, Hirokazu, Ampo

Omitting the Plea

On September 19, 2011 Okinawan Governor Nakaima Hirokazu delivered a speech at George Washington University so as to preclude any illusion of harmony in the US-Japan Bilateral Meeting between President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko that followed on September 21, 2011. Gavan McCormack and Satoko Norimatsu have cogently underscored the implications of Nakaima's visit in their article "Discordant Visitors: Japanese and Okinawan Messages to the US."¹ In that meeting, Prime Minister Noda assured President Obama that "We will strive to achieve cooperation in line with the eagreement between Japan and the United States, and I will do my best to gain the understanding of the Okinawan people."²

Of course, he was referring to the return of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and construction of a new US military base in Henoko, Okinawa that has been disputed for the past fifteen years. As McCormack and Norimatsu observed, Nakaima "flatly contradicted the Prime Minister" in his speech.³ Indeed, Nakaima's language was strong as he threatened an "irreparable rift" between "the people of Okinawa and the US Forces in the prefecture" if the US and Japan carried out the "current plan to construct the

Futenma Replacement Facility in Henoko.”⁴



Gov. Nakaima at George Washington University

Nakaima’s speech is powerful evidence of Okinawan resentment towards the US military presence in Okinawa. And as McCormack and Norimatsu suggest, it also showcases how the conservative Japanese central government bullies mass non-violent resistance in the prefecture of Okinawa for which they think there “is no precedent in Japan’s modern history.”⁵ Nonetheless, I couldn’t help but notice that they omitted Nakaima’s main message in their otherwise brilliant commentary. Nakaima makes his dramatic exit with the following conclusion: “A relocation site outside of Okinawa prefecture, but within Japan, is the most logical way to speedily move forward on this issue.”⁶ Perhaps this omission was made because, if the bases are transferred

to another location “outside of the Okinawa prefecture, but within Japan,” then Nakaima’s use-value as a critic of US militarism in East Asia and the conservatism of the Japanese central government against mass protest would be diminished. In other words, it might appear that Nakaima is simply transferring the problem of US military bases elsewhere, specifically from Okinawa to the rest of Japan.

Nakaima’s conclusion is well-known as “*kengai isetsu*” (県外移設) in the Japanese language media, literally meaning “relocation of the facility outside the prefecture,” but generally understood precisely as the Governor put it in his final words: move the bases out of Okinawa to another part of Japan. I dwell on McCormack and Norimatsu’s omission here because it is symptomatic of a much wider neglect in both the English and Japanese media, first to report the existence of the specific argument, and second to grant it the space in which its theoretical implications can unfold before a transpacific community concerned with the US-Japan alliance and its effects on Okinawa and the Asia-Pacific. Below I provide a brief genealogy of the argument for *kengai isetsu*, and show how it can be a vehicle for understanding the structure of US-Japan political reason that defines the postwar era.

Genealogy of the Argument for *Kengai Isetsu*

The argument for *kengai isetsu* was proposed as early as 1989 by Seki Hironobu, a Japanese living in Okinawa who wrote extensively on Japanese discrimination against Okinawans. He wrote:

Even though it is the Japanese government that desires US military bases, there is not a single example anywhere in Japan where residential areas are enveloped by bases and civilians live adjacent to shooting ranges as there is in Okinawa...If the Japanese government desires the US-Japan Security Treaty along with the stationing of the US military, that is fine. Well

then, let's act like a civilized nation with military bases and immediately remove bases like Camp Hansen where live bullets shoot through the villages, and have them taken back to Yamato.⁷

This view has also been strongly advocated by the feminist civic organization *Kamadugwa no Tsudoi* in Ginowan City since 1995.⁸ Kunimasa Mie of the group problematized Japanese activists who argue for the removal of bases from all Japanese state territory by saying they undermine Okinawan resistance: "Okinawans become incapable of saying, 'Take US military bases in Okinawa back to Yamato!' because they feel they have to defer to people working hard for the [anti-base] cause in Japan."⁹ Former Okinawa Governor Ōta Masahide (1990-1998) made this critique of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in a 1996 speech for *Shinbun Renrō*: "If the purpose of the US-Japan Security Treaty is to protect the peace of all Japanese nationals, then it is only natural that this is recognized by having the burden of the Treaty shared by the entire people."¹⁰ Finally, the argument was introduced to academic circles by the Okinawan sociologist Nomura Kōya who articulated it through postcolonial and Weberian political theory in his 2005 book *Muishiki no shokuminchishugi*, or *Unconscious Colonialism*.¹¹ There he wrote:



Every Japanese person, whether of a rightist or leftist persuasion, shares the same benefits that result from forcing US military bases onto Okinawans. Are they not guilty of a most atrocious colonial discourse when they oppose relocation of US military bases to Japan, thereby protecting their own interests? The Japanese fail to abrogate the US-Japan Security Treaty, and then concentrate US military bases in Okinawa.¹²

Initially, the argument for *kengai isetsu* was rejected by well-intentioned activists and scholars interested in problems of US militarism in East Asia. For example, when writer chinin ushii of *Kamadugwa no Tsudoi* presented her argument at an academic conference in the US, feminists from the US and Japan dedicated to eradicating all US

military bases in East Asia reduced her claim to a politics of NIMBY, or “Not In My Back Yard.”¹³ Nomura Kōya was similarly treated as an extreme Okinawan separatist¹⁴ and “enemy of alliance politics.”¹⁵

However, the political tide changed dramatically in 2009. Koizumi Junichirō’s neoliberal policies, implemented during his reign as Japan’s Prime Minister from 2001 to 2006, deepened the economic gap between the rich and poor that generated widespread social unrest. His LDP successors attempted to make amends, but after a series of mishaps, the strongly pro-American party that enjoyed a nearly continuous grip on Japanese politics since 1955 lost popular support. In this political climate, the opposing Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) won a historic majority in the Diet in September 2009. Hatoyama Yukio used the *kengai isetsu* argument, particularly in the Okinawan voting district where votes were crucial, as a way to win the historic DPJ victory in the 2009 elections and become Prime Minister.

Hatoyama’s proposition instantaneously thrust *kengai isetsu* as an intelligible political claim into public consciousness. Which governor of a Japanese prefecture, he asked, was willing to accept a US military base in place of Okinawa?¹⁶ Due to the disproportionately small number of US military bases in Japanese prefectures other than Okinawa, few Japanese politicians or citizens had directly confronted the meaning of the US-Japan Security Treaty. However, with Hatoyama effectively dropping the base problem on each governor’s doorstep, many citizens were forced to confront the reality of the Treaty from which they benefit. Are you willing to pay dues for the US-Japan Security Treaty rather than continuing to exploit Okinawa Prefecture by imposing 75% of the burden there?



Hatoyama informs Obama of the Kengai Isetsu Policy

Responses reverberating through the national media changed the geopolitical understanding of the situation overnight. Results of a survey published in the *Asahi Shimbun* noted “a conspicuous discrepancy in the consciousness between Okinawa that faces base issues every day and mainland Japan.” It continued that, “many governors avoided a clear response.” Localities with even a slight burden such as Tokyo (4.26 percent) and Kanagawa Prefecture (5.86 percent), registered an “adverse reaction” and emphasized that they “already accept bases and training facilities.”¹⁷ At the National Governor’s Conference held in May 2010, multiple constituencies declared that “national security is the country’s problem” and hence not their concern. Shizuoka Prefecture, which currently assumes 0.39 percent of the

burden stated, “We basically oppose any increased burden.” The Governor of Nara Prefecture, where there are no bases, stated, “We have no room to accept bases.” Only Governor Hashimoto Tōru from Osaka proposed to extend usage of Kansai International Airport to accommodate US military exercises in order to make up for the fact that “Osaka has been getting a free ride off [national] security.”¹⁸ However, even Hashimoto was ultimately unable to put the move into effect. Through the politics of “passing the buck,” Okinawa was asked to accept a burden that no other Japanese prefecture was prepared to tolerate.

Once Hatoyama opened this Pandora’s box, the argument that once made its adherents appear as dangerous radicals quickly jelled into mainstream majority opinion in Okinawa and became incumbent governor Nakaima’s political platform. Recall that Nakaima became governor in 2006 backed by the conservative LDP party by defeating Itokazu Keiko who firmly opposed the relocation of Futenma from Ginowan City to Henoko. Nakaima remained ambiguous about the relocation, while effectively stalling it throughout his administration. However, in the November 28, 2010 gubernatorial election seeking his second term, Nakaima made *kengai isetsu* his slogan. Like Nakaima, his opponent, former Ginowan mayor Iha Yōichi, vociferously advocated the return of Futenma, which occupies the most precious area of land in his constituency. Iha also opposed the relocation to Henoko, but argued for *kokugai isetsu* or relocation to a site “outside of Japan.” For Iha, “outside of Japan” was a vague category that encompassed the “mainland US, Guam, or Hawaii.”¹⁹ However, given that the US and Japan had already engaged in discussions to move 8,000 Marines and 9,000 dependents to Guam, most people associated “outside of Japan” with this location. This political switch hitting dazed and confused political pundits. Nakaima had commonly been coded as “conservative” and Iha as

“progressive,” yet in the 2010 gubernatorial election, Nakaima adopted what had previously been a dangerously radical argument while Iha suggested a transfer of US military bases to an even more vulnerable colony—Guam.

Democratic Colonialism

Many scholars and activists concerned with Okinawa’s base problem filtered their analysis of the 2010 gubernatorial election through the usual political coding of Nakaima as a conservative and Iha as a progressive perhaps out of a lack of any alternative grid of intelligibility. For example, disappointed by Iha’s defeat, Satoko Norimatsu, Director of the Peace Philosophy Centre, argued in her online blog that, “Nakaima won the election by deceiving many Okinawans into believing that he was committed to moving the base outside of the prefecture.”²⁰ Rather, she felt that Nakaima’s true intentions were to “get the most favorable terms for Okinawa in exchange for building the Henoko base.” Norimatsu found nothing particularly progressive about Nakaima’s victory, and rather than interpreting the widespread support for Nakaima’s *kengai isetsu* platform as a legitimized sentiment amongst the Okinawan people, she concluded that they had been fooled. However, to date, Nakaima still has not agreed to build the Henoko base contrary to her prediction. Norimatsu perhaps welcomed this miscalculation as she subsequently argued (together with McCormack) that, at the time of Nakaima’s visit to the US, “Okinawa’s most senior official believed that base construction would call for rolling the tanks through Nago.”²¹

Nevertheless, *kengai isetsu* does not fit the usual political coding circulated through the US-Japanese media. This mixing of apples and oranges is reminiscent of Malcolm X’s criticism of the inclusion of civil rights in the Democratic platform during the 1964 elections. As an individual of African descent, his opposition to

the Democratic Party obviously did not entail acceptance of white supremacy. Similarly, Okinawan support of *kengai isetsu* does not necessarily entail support of US military bases. Just as Malcolm X argued in his “The Ballot or the Bullet” speech, “I’m not trying to knock out the Democrats for the Republicans,” proponents of *kengai isetsu* are not trying to defeat progressive anti-military activists who argue for the removal of bases from all of Japan’s territories in favor of US militarism.²²

Rather, both challenge progressives by suggesting the existence of “democratic colonialism.”²³ Malcolm X stated, “I’m not a Democrat. I’m not a Republican, and I don’t even consider myself an American. If you and I were Americans, there’d be no problem.” Malcolm X was suggesting that American democracy has historically been sustained through African-American oppression; to suddenly advocate “civil rights” through the democratic process as if everyone were already on equal footing would seem to erase this fundamental premise. Likewise, it is important to recall how postwar Japanese state sovereignty and the US-Japan Security Treaty were both established on foundations of Okinawan subordination to US military power on a scale far beyond anything that prevailed in other areas of the Japanese state.

First, it has been well documented that Japan was able end the Allied occupation and emerge as a sovereign nation-state by relegating Okinawa to the US as a military outpost of the Pacific.²⁴ This occurred as General Douglas MacArthur suggested on June 27, 1947 that the end to occupation of Japan—and potential anti-American agitation—was preconditioned on the continued military occupation of Okinawa. MacArthur noted that there would be “no Japanese opposition to the United States holding Okinawa since the Okinawans are not Japanese.”²⁵ Three months later in September 1947, Emperor Hirohito sent an official on a secret mission to MacArthur’s staff to say that

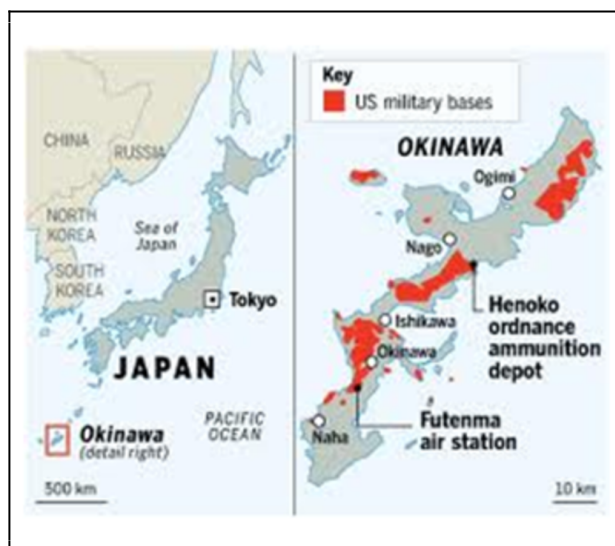
the occupation of Okinawa could continue for “twenty-five to fifty years.”²⁶ In this way, Japan regained its sovereignty under the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which was preconditioned on the establishment of the US-Japan Security Treaty and the reduced presence of US forces in Japan and, above all, with Okinawa as the centerpiece of the US armada in the Pacific. As Nomura Kōya writes, “the Japanese declared ‘Okinawans are not Japanese’ through the democratic process, and enthusiastically approved the military colonization of Okinawa by transforming it into a base island.”²⁷ Just as Malcolm X stated, “If you and I were Americans, there’d be no problem,” if Okinawans were treated as equal Japanese and not used as a footstool for the recuperation of Japanese sovereignty and establishment of the US-Japan Security that supports it, there would be no base problem. Hence, the entire discussion of bases and the US-Japan Security Treaty can only start with this fundamental premise in mind.

Second, this is not simply an historical quibble, but rather an ongoing colonial legacy manifest in the present structure of political reason²⁸ in Japan. The response to Hatoyama clearly demonstrated that Japanese people are unwilling to share any part of the burden of the US-Japan Security Treaty presently imposed on Okinawa. Yet, the vast majority of Japanese continue to support the Treaty in its present form. In an NHK survey conducted in 2010 on the fiftieth anniversary of the 1960 revision of the original US-Japan Security Treaty, 42% answered that the Treaty should be kept in place as is and 29% answered that it should be strengthened. Only 14% answered that it should be weakened, and just 7% answered that it should be abolished altogether. Of the combined 21% that answered weakened or abolished, only 27% answered that their criticism of the Treaty rested on the burden of US military bases.²⁹ In other words, only a small segment of people considered US military bases a burden to Japan. Political subjects in

Japan are completely oblivious to the consequences of their choices.

While Okinawa has been engaged in an intense struggle against the construction of a new base in Henoko, a recent Associated Press-GfK poll has found that the “Japanese have become more welcoming to the US military presence in their country over the past six years as fears spread that neighboring China and North Korea are threats to peace.”³⁰ Furthermore, it has been reported that the US military has improved its image in Japan after the March 11, 2011 earthquake. A “new and welcome face” of some 20,000 US troops that executed “Operation Tomodachi” to clean up Sendai Airport, transport supplies, and help contain the disaster at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant, generated good will amongst the Japanese people. Unfortunately, for Okinawa, this has resulted in the US military transporting radioactive waste and storing it in Futenma.³¹

Again, it bears noting that 75% of all US military bases in the Japanese state are concentrated in Okinawa, which comprises 0.6% of the national territory, and approximately 1% of the total Japanese population.



The US is a Japanese ally through which a

continuing colonialism can be carried out vis-à-vis East Asia in the postwar era while Japan is able to contain the ill effects of its alliance in Okinawa. In this respect, writer chinin ushii of *Kamadugwa no Tsudoi* argues that Okinawa is the keystone holding together US-Japan imperialism. She writes, “Japan has stuck Okinawa with the negative and humiliating part of US-Japan relations.”³² This is caused by “democracy rooted in Japanese discrimination of Okinawans” which “America collaborates with” in order to “continue imperialism in East Asia.”³³ She argues that by requesting *kengai isetsu*, which she defines as a “return” (and not relocation) of “their own” US military bases to Japan,³⁴ her intent is to “call for a dislodging of the cornerstone of US-Japan imperialism.”³⁵ Indeed, only when the Japanese bear the consequences of their democracy can Japan reach the limits of its own political reason without having Okinawa insulate it from the violence implicit in the US-Japan security relationship. In this way, chinin haunts the emergence of postwar democratic political subjects in Japan.

The Missionary Positionality in US-Japan Identity Politics and its Okinawan Other

During the reversion movement, many activists assumed that the problem of US military bases in Okinawa would be rectified once it was protected under the umbrella of Japanese sovereignty and democracy. In other words, if Okinawans had suffered the egregious extraterritoriality of US military bases on their island with no recourse to the democratic process to remove them, then recuperation of state sovereignty and the democratic process under the Japanese constitution was the solution. In this way, activists in Japan and the US supported the reversion movement framed as Japan’s “reclaiming Okinawa”³⁶ from the US. This sentiment was perhaps stronger than ever after the failure of the 1960 mass protest

against revision of the original 1951 US–Security Treaty, or *Ampo tōsō*. After its collapse, the Japanese Left threw itself into the Okinawan reversion movement with little other place to go.

There is no denying Japanese subservience to the United States throughout the postwar era. For example, Gavan McCormack has pointed out how the US compromised Japan’s state sovereignty and has emphasized the slavish docility of the LDP in particular in the course of its five decades in power.³⁷ He has further articulated Okinawa’s subservience to Japan. This three-tiered layering of power (US–Japan–Okinawa) relations is hardly the exception but another manifestation of Foucault’s articulation of the “boomerang effect”³⁸ of colonial domination. Japan not only acquiesces, but enthusiastically embraces a subservient relationship vis-à-vis the US precisely, in the case of Okinawa, because it justifies Japan’s own colonial rule. This is specifically the case in its imposition of US military bases in Okinawa while protecting the rest of Japan. If Japanese sovereignty is limited by the US, then this is an enabling limitation that at once justifies (*i.e.*, Okinawa shouldn’t complain to Japan because Japan doesn’t complain to the US) and allows Japan to benefit (Japan’s loss is offset by the Okinawan buffer) from the exploitation of Okinawa. What goes around comes around, and the colonial boomerang thrown at Okinawa comes back to the Japanese nation-state whose constituents form as passive-aggressive political subjects vis-à-vis the US whom they are reluctant to challenge for they are guilty of a similar colonial crime.

In this way, efforts to underscore Japan’s compromised position vis-à-vis the US have obscured the larger colonial equation that includes Okinawa. As a result, it is no surprise that Okinawa’s problems have remained tenaciously intact after its reversion to Japanese administration in 1972 as the proportion of US military bases in Japan

decreased by approximately one-third compared to only a few percent in Okinawa, thus widening the disparity with Japan even more.³⁹ This is why it is more important than ever to analyze the role Okinawa plays in the relationship between the US and Japan instead of remaining fixated on the *a priori* concept of national sovereignty. As the underside of the reversion movement has shown, Okinawa still remains in a colonial-like relationship to both the US and Japan irrespective of the deprivation or recuperation of state sovereignty. At the same time, the issue of US military bases in Okinawa today continues to follow a tenaciously entrenched framework of the US (as aggressor) vs. Japan (as victim) mapped onto a conservative vs. progressive politics. The argument for *kengai isetsu* stands precisely at this theoretical lacuna in US–Japan–Okinawan relations.

Activists and scholars have criticized Japan’s assumption of a missionary positionality⁴⁰ vis-à-vis the US that is either passively accepting or tragically victimized as a way to obscure the larger dynamics of the US–Japan relationship that leaves Okinawa to deal with its unpleasant consequences. Now that postcolonial Japanese studies and interest in other minorities in Japan such as the Ainu and *zainchi* Koreans have started to take root in English language literature as well, critiques of the Euro-centric desire to project its own role as dominator vis-à-vis a submissive Japan have also started to surface. For example, as Leo Ching writes of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan, “It is as if the very thought of a non-Western, nonwhite perpetrator of an equally reprehensible colonial violence is unfathomable in the Eurocentric consciousness.”⁴¹ Ching is clearly troubled by the inability of postcolonial Japanese studies to register in the English language context because of the reluctance to recognize the sophistication and potency of Japanese colonialism compared to its European counterparts.

This is why political scientist C. Douglas Lummis's postcolonial analysis of *kengai isetsu* is particularly illuminating. In response to Norimatsu's blog post discussed above, he attempted to extend her analysis of Nakaima's gubernatorial election results centered on *kengai isetsu*. As he explained, "you can't catch the significance of this only within a war-antiwar or left-right framework; you have to see it in a colonial-anticolonial framework."⁴² The importance of Lummis's statement⁴³ speaks volumes given his corpus of academic and activist work in Japan as an exceedingly self-reflexive "American" activist-intellectual critical of US militarism throughout his career as a teacher and writer.

Lummis's "war-antiwar or left-right" discourse changed significantly to a "colonial-anticolonial" one after he moved to Okinawa in 2000. He states that his "world view changed" due to the "feeling that [he was] living in a different country."⁴⁴ He attributes this change in "world view" to the fact that while debates over the US-Japan Security Treaty or US bases in Japan have a certain abstract character, their real lived consequences are powerfully experienced in Okinawa. Lummis came into contact with the argument for moving bases out of Okinawa to another location in Japan after taking up residence in Okinawa, and given his prior career as an ex-Marine turned anti-war pacifist who relentlessly criticized American militarism in Japan, he found himself in an awkward position. In a roundtable discussion with Okinawan sociologist Nomura Kōya and Japanese novelist Ikezawa Natsuki, he states:

When discussions close in on the relationship between Japan and Okinawa, I am not really in a position to make a statement. The idea that since US military bases are forced onto [Okinawa], they should be equally distributed throughout Japan, or the so-called mainland, can be stated by an Okinawan. I am from California. Of course, I want all bases to be

eliminated.⁴⁵

At that time, Lummis appears to have been reluctant to argue that bases should be relocated out of Okinawa to Japan because of the feeling that he would be overstepping his positionality as an "American."

However, today Lummis is anything but shy in presenting *kengai isetsu* in his political writings and speeches. For example, he has recently spoken of the contradiction in Japanese peace activists (among whom he had long enjoyed popularity) who boast that the Article 9 "no war" clause in Japan's Peace Constitution is a "world treasure" in no small part because they are able to take it for granted that it comes with the protection of the US-Japan Security Treaty including the US nuclear umbrella. In response to this all too common mentality, Lummis postulated that "Yamato wants the US-Japan Security Treaty and wants bases; so it isn't illogical that the bases be placed in Yamato." Accordingly, when he lectured in Niigata and proposed that, "Futenma be relocated to Niigata airport because it is in debt," he found himself surrounded by an angry audience.⁴⁶

While Lummis became the target of anger among peace activists in Japan who may question the audacity of an ex-Marine proposing the construction of a US military base in their localities, he in effect refuses to assume a missionary positionality in US-Japan relations where he is expected to perform the role of a repentant aggressor. If "America collaborates with" Japan in forcing US military bases onto Okinawa through the democratic process to "continue imperialism in East Asia" as chinin argued above, then Lummis refuses this collaboration. Indeed, it may seem conscientious for "Americans" to pay heed to their positionality vis-à-vis Japan admired for embracing defeat in the postwar era, but from the perspective of Okinawans *left* in the wake of a continuing colonialism, these identity

politics are anything but *right*.

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Recommended citation: Annmaria Shimabuku, 'Who Should Bear the Burden of US Bases? Governor Nakaima's Plea for a "Relocation Site Outside of Okinawa Prefecture, but within Japan" アメリカで県外移設を訴える仲井真知事,' The Asia-Pacific Journal Vol 9, Issue 45 No 1, November 7, 2011.

Notes

¹ Gavan McCormack and Satoko Norimatsu, "Discordant Visitors: Japanese and Okinawan Messages to the US," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* Vol 9, Issue 40 No 1, October 3, 2011.

² "Obama hosts Noda, 'advises action on base'," *Japan Times*, 23 September 2011, quoted in McCormack and Norimatsu, 2011.

³ McCormack and Norimatsu, 2011.

⁴ Nakaima Hirokazu, 'Okinawa Governor Nakaima: An Irreparable Rift in Okinawa/Japan/US Relations Would Result From Forceful Construction of Henoko Base 仲井真知事: 辺野古基地の強行は沖縄・日米関係に修復不能の亀裂を残す,' *The Asia-Pacific Journal* Vol 9, Issue 39 No 2, September 26, 2011.

⁵ McCormack and Norimatsu, 2011.

⁶ Nakaima, 2011.

⁷ Seki Hironobu, *Koza no ongakuka* [Musicians of Koza] (Osaka: Kaifūsha, 1989): 272-273 quoted in Nomura Kōya, *Muishiki no shokuminchishugi: Nihonjin no Beigunkichi to Okinawajin* [Unconscious Colonialism: The Japanese People's US Military Bases and the Okinawans] (Tokyo: Ochanomizu Shobō, 2005): 19.

⁸ The group's name is an Okinawan colloquial rendering for women coming together (tsudo), Kamadu being an old Okinawan female name.

⁹ Kunimasa Mie, "Yamato no anata e" ["To You, the Japanese"], *Keeshi Kaji* No 44 (September, 2004): 55.

¹⁰ Ōta Masahide *Okinawa heiwa no ishiji* [Okinawa, the Cornerstone of Peace] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996): 41.

¹¹ Nomura, 2005. My translation of Nomura's first chapter entitled "*Shokuminchishugi wa owaranai: Nihonjin toiu shokuminsha*" "Unconscious Colonialism: A Case Study of the Japanese Colonizer" of

Unconscious Colonialism is forthcoming in *CR: The New Centennial Review* Vol 12 No 1.

¹² Nomura, 2005: 20.

¹³ chinin ushii, “*Sutanfōdo shinpo hōkoku: Josei dōshi ga te o tsunagu tameniwa*” [“Stanford Symposium: In Order for Women to Join Hands”], *Okinawa taimusu*, 4 June 2006.

¹⁴ Asato Eiko, “*Hihan toshite no taiwa: Nomura Kōya Muishiki no shokuminchishugi ni tsuite*” [“Dialogue as Critique: Nomura Kōya’s *Unconscious Colonialism*”], *Keeshi Kaji* No 48 (September, 2005): 64-69.

¹⁵ Nomura, 2005: 19.

¹⁶ Here is one example of Hatoyama’s formulation: “How can I ask all of my governors to help with Okinawa’s excessive burden? Is it possible to move part of the Futenma [military] exercises to another prefecture? I would be thankful if everyone would address the security of Japan as a significant problem concerning the people of the nation (*kokumin*) and say, ‘It’s possible to receive it here!’” (Hatoyama, Yukio, “*Futenma mondai zenkoku chijikai: Shushō to shusseki chiji no omona yaritori*” [“The Futenma Issue and the National Governor’s Conference: Main Correspondence between the Prime Minister and Attending Governors”], *Asahi Shimbun*, 27 May 2010.

¹⁷ “*Kichi futan dōjō to keika to*” [“Assuming the Burden of Bases: Empathy and Alarm”], *Asahi Shimbun*. 12 February, 2010.

¹⁸ “*Kichi wa kuni no mondai’ ga taisei: Kinki no chiji*” [“For the Majority, ‘Bases are the Country’s Problem’: Governors in the Kinki Region”], *Sankei Shimbun*, 28 May, 2010.

¹⁹ “*Ihashi, kensei dakkan e ketsui: Shutsuba o seisiki hyōmei*” [“Mr. Iha, A Resolution to Recapture the Prefectural Government: The Official Announcement of His Candidacy”], *Okinawa Taimusu* 3, October, 2010. (Accessed October 25, 2011).

²⁰ Satoko Norimatsu, “On the day after the Okinawa election 沖縄知事選の後に,” *Peace Philosophy Center*, 29 November 2010. (Accessed October 17, 2011).

²¹ McCormack and Norimatsu, 2011.

²² Malcolm X, *Malcolm X Speaks: The Last Speeches*, ed. Bruce Perry (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1989): 40.

²³ See Nomura Kōya’s discussion of democratic colonialism as it pertains to Okinawa in Nomura, 2005: 25-30. Nomura correctly points out that “Neither has the Japanese government nor have the Japanese people ever officially termed Okinawa a colony,” unlike Taiwan or Korea during the colonial period. “Hence,” he continues, “it is commonly thought that if Okinawa is not officially a colony, colonialism does not exist.” In this way, the Meiji government justified the annexation of the Ryūkyū Kingdom as an “ethnic unification” (*minzoku tōitsu*) and deliberately avoided the term colonialism. In the postwar era, it became more important than ever to avoid the term colony given the crumbling empires of Europe and Japan and the non-aggrandizement clauses of the 1941 Atlantic Charter and 1943 Cairo Declaration. For this reason, the US found it difficult to occupy Okinawa indefinitely as a country purportedly spreading democracy throughout the world in the Cold War era. However, as the core meaning of postcolonial studies suggests, this does not entail the end of colonialism, but merely its reconfiguration. By the end of the Vietnam War, it became clear to

the US that Japan was a solid ally and could continue to concentrate US military bases in Okinawa even under Japanese democracy. In this way, the continued colonial domination of Okinawa shifted from a discourse of “ethnic unification” to a discourse of democratic unity within the Japanese state. However, Nomura argues, “Democracy is not in a conflictual relationship with colonialism.” For him, “the militarization of Okinawa was not only essential collateral for the disarmament of Japan, but also for the bestowal of a “Peace Constitution” and democracy onto the Japanese people.”

²⁴ For example, see Steve Rabson, “Okinawan Perspectives on Japan’s Imperial Institution,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, February 16, 2008 and Gavan McCormack, “Ampo’s Troubled 50th: Hatoyama’s Abortive Rebellion, Okinawa’s Mounting Resistance and the US-Japan Relationship (Part 1),” *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 22-3-10, May 31, 2010.

²⁵ “M’Arthur expects peace pact within a year and 18 months; Says Okinawa must Go to US,” *Nippon Times*, 29 June 1947: 1-2.

²⁶ Gabe Masaaki, *Okinawa henkan to wa nandatta noka: Nichibei sengo kōshō-shi no naka de* [What Was the Return of Okinawa All About? Through the History of Postwar US-Japan Negotiations] (Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppan Kyōkai, 2005): 51. For the text of the “Emperor’s Message,” ([accessed](#) October 30, 2011).

²⁷ Nomura, 2005: 29.

²⁸ I use the word “reason” here in the Kantian sense. For Kant, the exercise of reason through the practice of critique was integral to the Enlightenment project. I have argued elsewhere that *kengai isetsu* is a practice of

critique that opens up possibilities for the maturity of Japanese democracy that are not predicated on the colonization of Okinawa. In other words, one important reason why political reason in Japan has not been able to reach maturity is because the consequences of the US-Japan Security Treaty are shifted to Okinawa, thereby preventing the emergence of the conditions for an earnest critique of the Treaty that defines postwar Japanese democracy. See my translator’s afterword to Nomura Kōya, “*Shokuminchishugi wa owaranai: Nihonjin toiu shokuminsha*” [“Undying Colonialism: A Case Study of the Japanese Colonizer”] forthcoming in *CR: The New Centennial Review* Vol 12 No 1.

²⁹ Sekitani Michiō, “Nichibei anpō no ima: Anzen hoshō ni kansuru denwa chōsa kara,” *Hōsō Kenkyū to Chōsa*, March 2011. ([Accessed](#) October 17, 2011). A more recent Associated Press-GfK poll has found that the “Japanese have become more welcoming to the US military presence in their country over the past six years as fears spread that neighboring China and North Korea are threats to peace.” “[AP-GfK Poll: Japanese support for US bases grows](#),” *Huffington Post*, 5 September 2011.

³⁰ “[AP-GfK Poll: Japanese support for US bases grows](#),” *Huffington Post*, 5 September 2011. ([Accessed](#) November 1, 2011).

³¹ “US military brings radioactive waste into MCAS Futenma,” *Ryukyu Shimpo*, 11 August, 2011. ([Accessed](#) November 1, 2011).

³² chinin ushii, “*Amerika de Zaioki Beigun kichi no Nihon “Hondō” ohikitoriron o kataru*” [“Delivering the Argument in America for “Mainland” Japan’s Repossession of US Military Bases in Okinawa”], *Shokuminsha e: Posutokoroniarizumu to iu chōhatsu* [To the Colonizer: A Postcolonial Provocation], ed.

Nomura Kōya, (Kyoto: Shōraisha, 2007): 501.

³³ Ibid., 502.

³⁴ Ibid., 495.

³⁵ Ibid., 502.

³⁶ Nomura, 2005: 44.

³⁷ McCormack 2010. Here, McCormack's discussion of Japan as a "client state" of the US is helpful. McCormack departs from John Dower's *Embracing Defeat* in which, according to McCormack, Dower asserts that, "Japanese actors were seizing the initiative and gradually substituting Japanese for American priorities, and that primary subjectivity of the occupation process was therefore Japanese, rather than American." Instead, McCormack argues that, "although Japan did indeed 'embrace defeat,' accepting the sacrifice of much of its autonomy in return for US protection and incorporation in the US zone of influence, the US retained significant, perhaps decisive, control over it throughout these 60 years and more." Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace*, (New York: Verso, 2007): 5. While I agree that Dower's thesis exaggerates the zeal with which the Japanese "embraced" US occupation at the expense of ignoring the larger power dynamics between the US and Japan, I differ from both in that I hesitate to use concepts such as national "subjectivity," "autonomy," or "sovereignty" as assumed starting points of analysis. I recognize the validity of these concepts in a post-Westphalian system of international law, but my contention is that Okinawa's position cannot be adequately articulated by legal discourse. Instead, I have benefitted from Ann Stoler's extension of Foucault's discussion of biopower to postcolonial studies, which shows

how national subjectivity is generated through multi-layered *relationships* between subjects dispersed throughout the circuits of empire such as the mixed-blood, colonial elite, poor whites, and the bourgeoisie. I prefer this theoretical framework because it underscores the integral role Okinawa serves in the three-tiered US-Japan-Okinawa relationship in respect to the constitution of Japanese state sovereignty as discussed below. See Ann Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, (Durham: Duke, 1995).

³⁸ Foucault specifically refers to the internal colonialism of England that was achieved through the boomerang effect of colonizing the Americas. In other words, in order for England to justify its colonization of the Americas, it was also compelled to justify the legacy of the 11th century Norman Conquest—a form of internal colonialism—as the historically legitimate line of power. He writes: "It should never be forgotten that while colonization, with its techniques and its political and juridical weapons, obviously transported European models to other continents, it also had a considerable boomerang effect on the mechanisms of power in the West, and on the apparatuses, institutions, and techniques of power. A whole series of colonial models was brought back to the West, and the result was that the West could practice something resembling colonization, or an internal colonialism, on itself." Michel Foucault, *"Society Must Be Defended": Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-1976*, trans. David Macey. (New York: Picador, 2003): 103. First, Foucault underscores how national identity, subjectivity, and sovereignty does not exist *a priori* to the event of colonial domination, after which it is simply imposed upon an uncivilized people. Likewise Japanese national identity, subjectivity and sovereignty did not magically emerge in a vacuum, but was forged through its colonial relationships with the Ainu,

Okinawans, Taiwanese, and Koreans from the very founding of the Meiji state. To start an analysis with the premise that “Japanese sovereignty” has been violated by the US is to elide this historical relationship. Second, Foucault is embraced by postcolonial studies because his analysis shows how a colonial relationship can be left stubbornly intact even though superficial political structures have changed such as through the continued neocolonial exploitation of former colonies even after they achieved independence as a sovereign state. In the sense that Okinawa has long functioned as the underside of Japanese national subjectivity and state sovereignty, it has historically existed in a colonial relationship with Japan irrespective of whether it was ever formally called a “colony” or continues to exist under the umbrella of Japanese state sovereignty. _

³⁹ Arasaki Moriteru, *Okinawa gendai shi* [Modern Okinawan History] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1996): 26-27.

⁴⁰ Naoki Sakai has articulated the concept of missionary positionality as follows: “one’s sense of mission immediately justifies the demand that the others ought to implement that mission; where the awareness of discontinuity between different social statuses disappears; and where one’s sense of mission is supposed to be communicated to and embraced by others in some phantastic communion.” He is referring here to imperial nationalism amongst colonial subjects who actively assume a

position of self-sacrifice (*i.e.*, dying for the nation) in order to achieve communion with the nation-state to the point where they become blinded to the Other and collaborate in the Other’s annihilation. This of course occurred with the mobilization of colonial subjects of the Japanese Empire into the total war regime to fight in China and later in Southeast Asia. The three-tiered structure of the missionary positionality resonates with the boomerang effect of colonial domination and formation of national subjectivity. See Naoki Sakai “Subject and Substratum: On Japanese Imperial Nationalism” *Cultural Studies*, 14(3/4) 2000: 516. Here, I use the concept of missionary positionality to clarify Japan’s passive stance vis-à-vis the US in which its compromised position becomes the justification for blindness towards the Okinawan Other. John Dower’s use of the sexualized metaphor “embracing defeat” seems to unwittingly capture this sentiment. It is no surprise that his study neglects contemplating the effects of this embrace on postcolonial minorities in Japan such as Okinawans and *zainichi* Koreans.

⁴¹ Leo Ching, *Becoming “Japanese”: Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001): 30.

⁴² C. Douglas Lummis, “[Dialogue with Douglas Lummis on Okinawa Election](#) 沖縄知事選について、ダグラス・ラミスさんとの会話,” *Peace Philosophy Center*, 3 December 2010. (