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<http://hdl.handle.net/11067/2498>

<https://doi.org/10.34628/nkag-yp25>

#### **Metadados**

<b>Data de Publicação</b>	2014
<b>Resumo</b>	In 2007, the Japanese government aimed to establish “a beautiful state” based on the idea of human security. The idea of human security is also set in the Japanese constitution preamble. Nevertheless, this laudable ideal of the constitution was not applicable to people who live in areas where there are US military bases, especially in Okinawa, where about 74% of the US military bases in Japan are presently concentrated. With the re-entry of war criminals into Japan’s post-WWII alliance with the ...
<b>Palavras Chave</b>	Bases militares americanas - Japão, Japão - Relações militares - Estados Unidos, Estados Unidos - Relações militares - Japão
<b>Tipo</b>	article
<b>Revisão de Pares</b>	Não
<b>Coleções</b>	[ULL-FCHS] LPIS, n. 11 (2014)

Esta página foi gerada automaticamente em 2024-04-17T03:00:03Z com informação proveniente do Repositório

**A BEAUTIFUL MASOCHISTIC ALLIANCE:  
CONFRONTING A DIFFERENT POSITION  
BETWEEN US-JAPAN SECURITY ALLIANCE  
AND HUMAN SECURITY IN JAPAN**

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**Abstract:** In 2007, the Japanese government aimed to establish “a beautiful state” based on the idea of human security. The idea of human security is also set in the Japanese constitution preamble. Nevertheless, this laudable ideal of the constitution was not applicable to people who live in areas where there are US military bases, especially in Okinawa, where about 74% of the US military bases in Japan are presently concentrated. With the re-entry of war criminals into Japan’s post-WWII alliance with the US government, deeply detrimental impacts are recognizable on its sovereignty, the integrity of progressive voices in Japanese society and its polity. Human rights have been narrowly interpreted, influenced by traditional imperatives of the majority or average Japanese, while ignoring the rights of the “atypical” citizens of Japan. Given this context, it is not clear how the Japanese government have achieved its own vision of all Japanese citizens having a secure life. This paper examines the potential of the Japanese government to build “a beautiful state” through a case study of the US military base issue in Okinawa.

**Key-words:** Fragile State; US military Bases; Okinawa; Colonialism; Human Rights.

**Resumo:** Em 2007, o governo do Japão procurou estabelecer um “belo país” com base na ideia de segurança humana. A ideia de segurança humana está também presente no preâmbulo da constituição japonesa. No entanto, este louvável ideal da constituição não foi aplicado à população que vive na área onde se encontram as bases militares americanas, especialmente em Okinawa, onde presentemente estão concentradas 74% das bases militares dos EUA no Japão. Com a re-entrada de criminosos de guerra na aliança do Japão com o governo dos EUA no período pós-II Guerra Mundial, impactos profundamente prejudiciais são reconhecíveis na sua soberania, e na integridade das vozes progressivas presentes na sociedade japonesa e na sua política. Os direitos humanos têm sido estreitamente interpretados, por influência dos imperativos tradicionais da maioria ou do comum cidadão japonês, ignorando assim os direitos dos cidadãos “atípicos” do Japão. Diante deste contexto, não é clara a forma como o governo japonês tem alcançado a sua visão de que todos os cidadãos japoneses têm direito a uma vida em segurança. Este artigo examina assim o potencial do governo japonês para construir um “belo país” através de um estudo de caso em torno da questão da base militar dos EUA em Okinawa.

**Palavras-chave:** bases militares americanas; colonialismo; direitos humanos; estado-frágil; okinawa.

The author would like to thank Roy Laifungbam for its contributions to this paper.

## Introduction

The Abe administration stated in 2007 that for Japan to achieve the goal of establishing “a beautiful country”<sup>1</sup> an economy full of vitality is indispensable as its foundation. To accomplish this policy, the government said that “as Japan has become a society with a declining population, it is essential to increase productivity and strengthen growth potential so that our people have dreams and hopes for the future, and to maintain a social security system which provides the basis for more secure lives”. The idea of human security (HS) is centered in this statement that forms one of the priorities of Japanese foreign policy.

The Japanese government is well known for working actively to expand the idea of human security internationally. They took a leadership and contributed to a United Nations resolution in 2010. Also HS became one of the priority foreign policy foundations, especially in the domain of development projects, such as official development assistance (ODA) since 1999. It became a Japanese soft power in international relations.

In 2000, the G8 summit was held in Okinawa where one of the peace and war memorial places in Japan is located. The Japanese government projected that the reason why they convened the summit in Okinawa was that it has a painful history; and PM Keizo Obuchi accommodated a request from The Governor of Okinawa and the Okinawans<sup>2</sup>. PM Obuchi dreamt that the summit should be included in the world peace agenda for the new century<sup>3</sup>. In fact, during the summit, the Japanese government succeeded to mention HS in the general report.

Nonetheless, there is a divergence in perception between foreign policy and domestic policy in Japan, especially with reference to the situation in Okinawa where about 74% of US military bases in Japan are located since WWII. In the Diet discussion some politicians asked the government what it thought about

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<sup>1</sup> “Policy Speech by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to the 166th Session of the Diet”, Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet HP, [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/abespeech/2007/01/26speech\\_e.html](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/abespeech/2007/01/26speech_e.html) (Accessed 23 January, 2015)

<sup>2</sup> Masahiko Takamura’s speech at Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee, 19 May, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> In Upper House plenary session 25 June, 1999.

Okinawan HS. The government replied that “we understand Okinawan’s burden and we do our best to reduce it. However, the situation in Okinawa has not changed yet, and also Okinawans are still suffering from the US military base issue till now”.

In this sense, the question remains why the government has not discussed nor applied the HS policy to Okinawa where people fear the military base and remember the ugly and tragic incidents involving US military personnel incident every day? A political scientist Eiichi Hoshino pointed to three (3) factors<sup>4</sup>. First, Okinawa provides a typical case of the State as a threat to the safety of people. In the sense that democracy is not working for Okinawans<sup>5</sup> while citizens of other prefectures enjoy it. From this reality, Okinawans experience inequality and discrimination from Japanese<sup>6</sup>. There is a clue to the fallacy of the “human security” concept to describe an essentially “insecurity” condition demonstrable by a case study of the US military base issue in Okinawa. The second point raised by Hoshino is that in Okinawa, “national security” and “human security” are basically in opposition. The security policy of the Japanese government, starkly illustrated by US forces stationed as “dedicated facilities” in Okinawa have brought crimes of the US military, accidents, and noise and environmental pollution into Okinawa. With the high concentration of US forces concentrated in Okinawa, with 20% of the living area of the main island have used for the armed base, Okinawa is a typical case that the national security policy violates and sacrifices its people’s human security. Thirdly, using economic inequity, economic pressure and “insecurity”, the central government has been exerting challenges to the local government. If you look from the perspective of Okinawa, when it receives the budget for the promotion and development in order to “overcome” economic inequality and “insecurity”, the Government has been sending a message in indirect way that US military base will bring the “insecurity”.

There have been many studies done on HS in Okinawa<sup>7</sup>. These studies have mainly focused on the Japanese government’s policy such as how to develop Okinawa’s economy and address the unemployment issue which are deeply related to the US military base issue; and also how Okinawans’ peace movement wants to remove the US military bases in Okinawa. However, all these studies

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<sup>4</sup> Eiichi Hoshino, the US Military Bases Issue in Okinawa and Human Security, *Review of policy science and international relations* (15), University of the Ryukyus, pp. 23-59.

<sup>5</sup> Okinawan refers to a person who are native to Okinawa.

<sup>6</sup> Japanese people does not include Ainu people who is indigenous people in Japan and Zainichi Korean (Korean people residing in Japan with “special” status, but are not given suffrage). Also Japan implies mainland which does not include Hokkaido where Ainu people’s traditional land and Amami islands.

<sup>7</sup> Kiyoe Takada, “Issues of the Constitutional Right to Live in Okinawa” (Okinawa niokeru Seizonken Hoshou no Genjou to Kadai), Hounokagaku, *Minshushugi Kagakusha Kyoukai Houritsubukai Kikanshi ‘Nenpo’* (43), pp. 160-163, 2012, and Osamu Yakabi, “How do you think “Human Security” in post 9.11, from Okinawa?” (9.11 go no ‘Ningen no Anzenhoshou’ nitsuite Okinawa karadoukangaeruka?), *PRIME*, (17), Meijigakuin University, 2003, pp. 53-58 etc.

are unclear on why 74% of the US armed forces bases are still located in Okinawa even though the cold war has ended, and also why the government does not protect Okinawans who are citizens of Japan.

From this point of view, this paper examines how the current Japanese government proposes to achieve its vision to establish “a beautiful country” from three perspectives. Firstly, I shall examine the question of how the Okinawan territory has been subjected to foreign occupation. Secondly, how the Japanese government describes national security under the US-Japan Security Treaty, and explains HS in Okinawa. Thirdly, how Japanese citizens react to the US military issue in Okinawa, especially focusing on a radical liberals’ critical discourse of Japanese government.

The methodology of this paper is mainly based on the examination of the Japanese Diet minutes notes, defense policy, and major newspapers in Japan.

## 1. Military Colonialism in Okinawa

A military base expert Joseph Gerson points out that the aim of the US military colonialism in the Middle East and Central Asia “is to colonize time as well as space in order to guarantee U.S. military, economic, and political dominance for the century to come” (Gerson, 2009, p. 48). This view fits the situation of Okinawa during Japanese occupation and the US military occupation.

### Japanese military colonialism

The Ryukyu kingdom (now known as Okinawa) territory, northern Pacific archipelago, has been subjected to foreign occupation since 1879. The imperial army of Japan provided the first experience of military colonialism. The Empire of Japan established schools for Okinawans to assimilate and influenced Ryukyu culture, so-called Japanization. Also the administrator in Okinawa, so-called *Kenrei*, is a Japanese appointed by imperial government. After some time, the government started to colonize Korea, Taiwan and Manchu; and then Japan asserted military power in the entire far-east Asia.

The Japanese occupation in Okinawa meant that Japan can be free to use Okinawan territory. Okinawans were drafted into the imperial forces for Japanese interests. When the Asia Pacific War intensified Imperial military bases were built in Okinawa. The Kadena Air Base, which is now a US Air force base, is one of them and it was established in 1944. The main purpose of the military base was to defend “imperial land” (main land of Japan) from the US armed forces.

In 1945, the Allies landed in Okinawa and a fierce battle with the Japanese forces was fought. This was the only land battle in Japan during World War II. During the Battle of Okinawa, one out of every three Okinawan civilians died. This was not only because of the war. Okinawan civilians faced persecution

from Japanese soldiers who look at them as their enemy's spies and killed many Okinawans, as many of the elders could not speak Japanese. Also, at end of the wartime, many civilians committed suicide by Japanese military order. From this period Okinawans became victimized by Japan and the US occupation.

### US Military Colonialism

The US's purpose was not only to defeat Japan, but it was also necessary to take over the Japanese military base in Okinawa for strategic reasons. In order to achieve this aim, it began to occupy, control and expand military bases in their allies' colonies in the Pacific region, such as Newfoundland Island which was British colony, etc. (Hayashi, 2012, p. 17).

Based on this experience, the US paid particular attention to the relationship between Okinawa and Japan, which is oppressed and oppressor (Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, 1944, pp. 144-145). In 1947, United States General Douglas MacArthur also declared that there would be "no Japanese opposition to the United States holding Okinawa since the Okinawans are not Japanese" when he worked to end the war (Shimabuku, 2012, p. 132). Based on this view, the US started to consider using Okinawan territory for decades to come. Three month after the General's comment, Emperor Hirohito sent Hidenari Terasaki with an epistle on a secret mission to US Ambassador to Japan William J. Sebald. The letter said "the occupation of Okinawa to continue for twenty-five to fifty years"<sup>8</sup>.

Using this imperial understanding, the US succeeded to obtain permission to use Okinawa for their military purpose from the head of Japanese government. The deal was an advantage to Japan as it could succeed not to lose further territory. The mutually beneficial deal meant using and sacrificing Okinawa, and also enforcing the officially signed San Francisco Peace Treaty in 1951. Since then, Okinawa was under the rule of the US military for 27 years.

After 1952, these two states have started to live off the back of Okinawa. During the military occupation after WWII, the US government invested resources in Okinawa for infrastructure development and the stabilization of economy. Behind the policy, there was an ambition to use Okinawa territory with no interference from other governments even though Japan had residual sovereignty of Okinawa (Kokuba, 1962, p.111). Also Okinawa needed to import many goods from Japan, which became more than 70% of its economy. It meant a substantial foreign currency inflow to Tokyo from Okinawa (Kokuba, p. 119 table6 and p. 126). This was just the beginning of Japan-US occupation for Okinawan. After 1972, when Okinawa reverted to Japan, these two countries put Okinawa into a more difficult situation.

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<sup>8</sup> The letter dated 20 September, 1947, "General Headquarters Supreme Commander for Allied Powers Diplomatic Section", Okinawa prefectural archive HP, <http://www.archives.pref.okinawa.jp/collection/2008/03/post-21.html> (Accessed 4 October, 2014).

Okinawans wanted to “return” to Japan. The reason was that it had a peace constitution and also the U.S. - Japan Status of Force Agreement (SOFA). Okinawan leaders thought at that time that if Okinawa is under the structure of Japan, Okinawans could exercise their self-determination. However, the experience of Japanese government became a deep disappointment to Okinawan expectations. When a crime is committed by US forces personnel in Okinawa, the Japanese government is obliged to formally object to the US government, and to bring the matter to a Japanese court. But instead, Japan did not, and also made excuses to the victims due to article 17.3 (c) of SOFA<sup>9</sup>, etc. Also since 1996, when the plan for the relocation of the Futenma Air station<sup>10</sup> became public, the two governments tried to locate it inside Okinawa without any discussion with the Okinawans.

### Reigning Two Empires in Okinawa

Against this situation, Chalmers Johnson, a political scientist, identified a “permanent collusion of the United States and Japan against Okinawa” (Johnson, 2000, p. 57). A sociologist, Annmaria Shimabuku responded to Johnson’s view by pointing out that these two states practiced racism against the Okinawans. Shimabuku adds, “[I]t is not merely Japanese colonialism, but a colonialism that incorporates the joint interests of the United States and Japan...Okinawa is not simply the crossroads of a double colonialism, where the colonialism of one state is simply layered on top of the colonialism of another, while both maintain their independence” (Shimabuku, p.135). When Japan exercised its colonialism, the idea came from western powers, which is white power. Japan exercises it, and the US too. From Shimabuku’s perspective, I believe that both states still practice their imperialism. Of course, these states are not an empire officially; however, the US has built its military network all over the world, ostensibly for reasons of their role as “world police”. Japan also still exploits other countries economically. This is not only the government behavior, but also the expression of past imperialism consciousness among the citizens of both countries. Otherwise, colonialism cannot come into effect in Okinawa.

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<sup>9</sup> The Article 17.3. In cases where the right to exercise jurisdiction is concurrent the following rules shall apply: (c) If the State having the primary right decides not to exercise jurisdiction, it shall notify the authorities of the other State as soon as practicable. The authorities of the State having the primary right shall give sympathetic consideration to a request from the authorities of the other State for a waiver of its right in cases where that other State considers such waiver to be of particular importance.

<sup>10</sup> The military base locates in the middle of a residence area in Ginowan city, and it was translocated from mainland Japan in the 1950s.



## 2. How does Japan plan to achieve in establishing “a beautiful state”?

As the present Abe administration aims to establish “a beautiful country, Japan”, this paper seeks to examine whether Japanese government has the potential to make an independent foreign policy. It is one of indicators for the Japanese to be proud of their own government and to enjoy a secure life. Democratic Peace theory tells us that an alliance between democratic states has shared similar values, and there are fewer conflicts than one between democratic non-democratic states. This brings us also to a need to see whether Japan has shared similar values with the US. To analyze these points, I look at discourses of the Japanese government as a “Client state” or “Dependent state” of the US, along with criticisms of the Japanese government by Japanese radical liberals.

### Inequitable alliance with the US

The discourse of “Client state” or “Dependent state” was first used in 1950 when the Japanese government started negotiations for the San Francisco Peace Treaty<sup>11</sup>. Most of the political leaders of Japan did not want to be under the rule of the US due to the defeat in WWII. This slogan was continuously used at that time in objections to old US-Japan Security Arrangements (so-called Ampo, entered into effect in 1951), and the U.S. and Japan Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement (entered into effect in 1954)<sup>12</sup>. Not only the politicians, but there were also mass protests against these military alliances with the US. It was just after WWII ended, and there were fresh memories of the defeat among Japanese citizens. They did not want to repeat war again. Hence, they fought against establishing foreign military bases such as the US military. However, at that time, most of former rulers who were Class A war criminals in Japan came back to government positions. They tended to follow the US policy due to this and the government signed Ampo in 1951.

In the 50s, many of Japanese scholars were against the establishment of US military bases in Japan. An influential legal scholar, Kisaburo Yokota argued that the foreign military occupation in Japan is against Article 9 of the Japanese constitution. However, in response to the Supreme Court judgment of the Sunagawa incident, which took a position that the stationing of US forces in Japan is not a violation of the Japanese constitution, he retracted his original claim and showed a one hundred eighty degrees different opinion. Before this judgment, Yokota met John B. Howard, US Secretary of State, at the office of the Foreign Minister in Meguro on 16 November 1950. Howard told Yokota that establishing the US military bases in Japan upheld the constitutionality of Japanese law. Howard’s interpretation was that according to the constitution it

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<sup>11</sup> The House of Councilors, plenary assembly in the Diet, 28 November, 1950.

<sup>12</sup> By this agreement, Japan established Self Defense Forces in 1950.

was Japan that has to withdraw its own armed forces; the constitution does not apply to foreign military (Suenami, 2012, pp. 47-81). Since Yokota changed his opinion, the government used the theory of constitutionality to explain in the Diet and to own citizens. In 1960, Prime Minister Nomusuke Kishi who was also Class A war criminal railroaded to sign the new US-Japan Security Arrangement. These developments had three impacts to Japan, 1) it reinforced Japanese dependence to US foreign policy for its national security; 2) it brought the decline of liberals' social impact since that time; and 3) the loss of parliamentary politics which is an important instrument for democratic states.

A similar situation developed in 1970 when Japan needed to review the alliance and Prime Minister Eisaku Sato again railroaded to sign the agreement. Since then, the agreement gets automatic extension every year. This became the liberals' defeat for their movement. And most Japanese have lost interest in political matters. Instead of this the Japanese have become interested in improving their standard of living due to Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda made new policy "Income-doubling plan" of 1960.

#### Impacts of the Japanese foreign policy in Okinawa

As I mentioned, the Okinawans were not consulted, by both the Japanese and US governments, regarding the "relocation" of the Futenma airbase. In 1999, Governor Okinawa Keiichi Inamine, who was elected in 1998, accepted the plan towards achieving 15-year limit. However, the U.S. Department of Defense mentioned that the expiration date for use the new base in Henoko is 40 years operational life with a 200 year fatigue life in "Operation Requirements and Concepts of Operations for MCAS Futenma Relocation, Okinawa, Japan" (29 September, 1997). This would mean that the Japanese government knew of the US plan at least 2 years before from the Governor's statement. A politician, Toshihisa Matsuzaki, questioned the government in the Special Committee on Okinawa and Northern Problems on 10 November, 1999. "It is the responsibility for the government to explain its thoughts about the "relocation" issue to people in Okinawa, shouldn't you?" Minister of State Yohei Kouno replied to Matsuzaki's question that the government would put together all information to make a comprehensive own opinion known. This is clearly lacking of an informed consent, and also it seems the government thinks there is no place for Okinawans to make a decision regarding their own territory. This clearly means that Okinawa is still in under Japanese colonialism, and Okinawans have not become Japanese citizens yet.

From this trend of government thinking, Japan does not seem to share same values with the US while following the US foreign policy. It would be difficult for Japan to achieve to make a "beautiful country".

### 3. Japanese behavior against the US military base issue in Okinawa

Kent E. Calder, a political scientist, has this opinion that affects the foreign policy of the US that when the military bases are scattered in the host nation country, people do not have much contact with the base. If the people have less contact with it, there is less anti-military movement, especially in Japan (Calder, 2007, pp. 85-86 and pp. 119-125). To answer Calder's analysis, this section examines Japanese people's behavior regarding the US military bases in Okinawa.

The September 11 attacks showed Japanese discrimination against Okinawans.

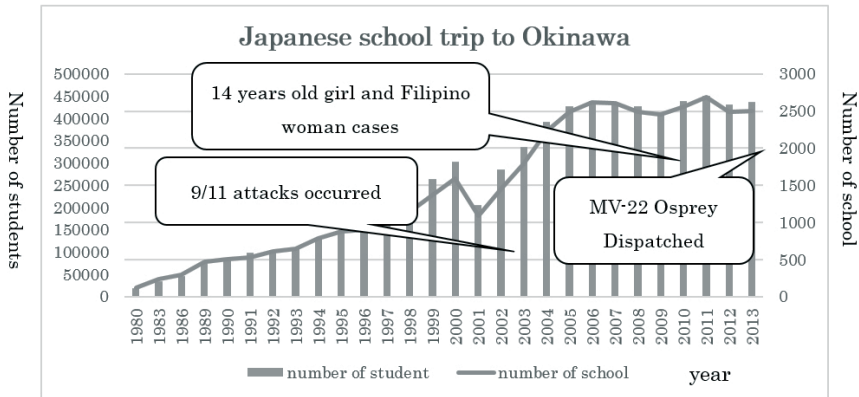
Okinawa's biggest industry is the Tertiary sector of industry, which accounted for more than 80% of the gross Okinawa Prefecture's product for the last decade (Okinawa Prefecture Kikakubu, 2014, p. 8). Because of this industrial structure, tourism is one of the biggest incomes for the Okinawa Prefecture's economy.

In 2001, when September 11 attacks occurred in the US, it affected Okinawa tourism including school trips (Naikaku Seisakutoukatukan, 2001). Figure 3-1 shows a transitive graph of Japanese school trips to Okinawa from 1980 to 2013. It can be seen that in the year of 2001, after the 9/11 attacks, the number of school trips declined. By 27 September, 2001, 2 weeks after the 9/11, 54 schools had cancelled trips, which amount to 9,200 students and teachers, and also 6,000 people had cancelled planned trips to come to Okinawa (Orihara, 2009). It caused a deep damage to Okinawan local economy. When incidents such as the Gulf War of 1990, the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990, and multinational forces launched an attack against Iraq in 1991, which were likely to relate to the US military bases, tourists refrained from visiting Okinawa. (Naikaku Seisakutoukatukan, 2001)

The Japanese school trips trend can be seen in 2008 and 2012. In the year of 2008, on 10<sup>th</sup> February, when there was an unsuccessful attempt by US military personnel to sexually assault a 14-year-old girl and on 18<sup>th</sup> February, when a Filipino woman was raped by US military personnel (Ryukyushimpo, 13 and 22 February, 2008). These cases became big scandals in Japan, and the Japanese government needed to promptly respond to prevent such crimes. Because of these incidents, again, the number of school trips to Okinawa declined. Also in 2012, the Japanese government had agreed to the arrangement of 12 MV-22 Osprey to be stationed in the base.

From this point of view, Japanese citizens can decide freely whether they want to go to Okinawa or not. On the other hand, Okinawans cannot choose, decide or change their life.

Figure 3-1: Statistic of Japanese school trip to Okinawa.



Reference: Okinawaken Bunka Kanko Suportsbu Kankouseisakuka (Okinawa Prefecture, Division of Cultural and Tourism, Sports, Tourism policy section), Statistics for School trips to Okinawa, 2013

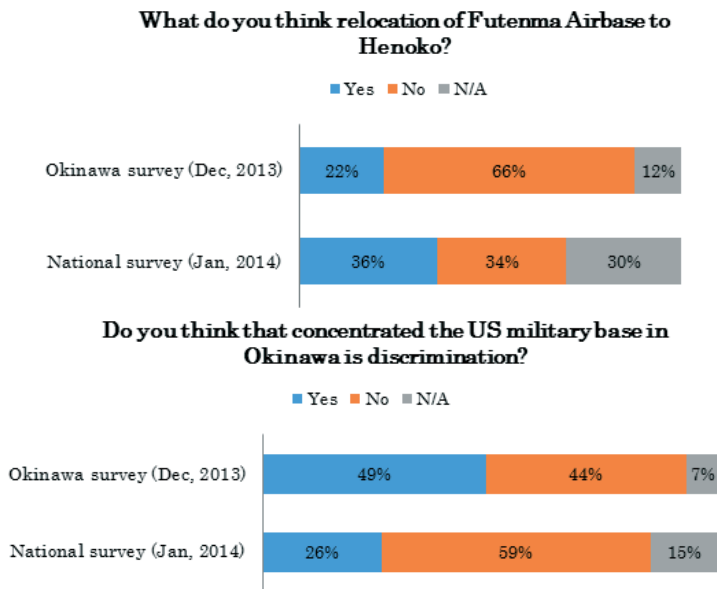
There is another indicator to understand Japanese behavior. The figure 3-2 shows that difference between Okinawa and Japan consciousness involved in the Futenma base relocation. From this survey in Okinawa, on the relocation of Futenma Air Station to Henoko, 22% were in favor and 66% opposed it. On the other hand, as a result of a national survey, 36% were in favor while 34% opposed, which is quite a different answer from the Okinawa survey. The opinion against the Henoko relocation of Japanese has become a figure of about half of Okinawa. Additionally, in the survey of “Do you think that concentrating the US military base in Okinawa is discrimination?”, only 44% of Okinawans felt it was not. In the national survey, about 70% did not feel it is discrimination.

In 2009, Prime Minister Hatoyama declared “Relocation” of Futenma to mainland of Japan. None of Japanese accept his policy even but they voted for him anyway. For Okinawans, the results of the election were anticipated to indicate whether the Japanese people were ready to share the Okinawans’ burden. However, it failed to do so, and in the end he decided to relocate the base inside Okinawa without any consultations. Since then, the gap between Okinawans and Japanese regarding the military base issue has increased.

Also in 2012, when US-Japan dispatched Ospreys in Okinawa, the Governor of Okinawa participated in a meeting of the Association of Kyushu City Mayors and asked them to take the Ospreys to their place to reduce Okinawa’s burden. But they did not.

In a 2013 opinion survey, most of the Okinawans wanted the base relocated outside of Okinawa. The Nago mayor said no to the relocation, but the Japanese government did not listen to the voice of the Okinawans.

Figure 3-2: Difference of Japan and Okinawa consciousness regarding the Futenma airbase relocation



Reference: Asahi newspaper, 'Henoko, the pros and cons is dimidiante. The difference between Okinawa and Japan' 28 January, 2014

The question is “how is this difference in opinion between Okinawans and the Japanese to be interpreted?” Before attempting to answer this question I am going to first look at Japanese radical liberals who fought against both governments with supporting the Okinawan behavior against the “relocation” issue.

#### Fabricated “solidarity”

Since 2001, the US military bases in Okinawa were identified as crucial in protecting Japan from neighbor countries, such as China and North Korea, and terrorism. It was perceived that these two countries continuously “invaded” the territory of Japan. Japan has not experienced terrorism, which is different from the US. But there is a perceived possibility due to the US armed bases located in the country. In the Japanese defense whitepaper “Defense of Japan” is mentioned that to reduce the US military base presence on Japanese soil is perhaps the best preventive step to avoid such incidents; however, Japanese white papers cater to the perceived threat and to counter it the government think it is necessary to have the US Marine Corps, especially in Okinawa since 2002.

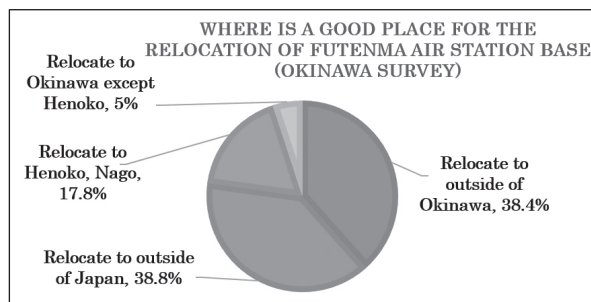
In spite of the situation, in 2009, Prime Minister Hatoyama's one of election manifesto was "Relocation" of Futenma outside of Okinawa. Most of Japanese voted for him, which meant they agreed with his pledge. However, he soon faced a difficult situation because none of governors had ever agreed with it. Also liberals called for the US military base to be moved outside of Japan. Before that time, the US and Japan governments had already decided to shift some of facilities to Hawai'i and Guam. The "relocation" was kind of in a last stage of the plan. The Prime Minister had sought alternative ways and one of them was to scout a possible site in mainland Japan.

During this dispute, some Okinawans appealed to the government to take back the base to Japan. An Okinawan writer, Ushii Chinen asked Japanese radical liberals "why do you come to Okinawa to protest against the base issue? Why do you not do it in your hometown?" She got response from an audience that "we understand your situation; however, it is difficult for us to do a demonstration in Japan. Japan is hopeless" (*Asahi Shinbun*, 24 August, 2010). This is a typical radical liberal response. They seem to be unaware that they are depending on Okinawa to protect their peace and security (*Asahi Shinbun*, 24 August, 2010).

There is another example of this somewhat schizophrenic thinking. On 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013, at the international conference of Constitution Article 9 in Osaka, a peace activist, Satoko Norimatsu, suggested that, "Japan has to take back the base from Okinawa". An audience questioned her "why are the Okinawans trying to impose on others the United States military base, which themselves find so repugnant?" This person ignores the reality that of the Japanese sacrifice of the Okinawan, and slip into victim mentality unintentionally; meanwhile the Japanese radical liberals continue colonizing Okinawa (Nomura, 2005).

If the liberals want to make a true relationship with Okinawans, they should launch an anti-military base movement in Japan, not in Okinawa. Otherwise, the movement does not gain popularity or get more people involved to reduce the Okinawan's burden. Perhaps, too, if the "relocation" place came to be in the mainland of Japan, which is one of the Okinawan's opinion (see the figure 3-3), the US military presence will be transformed as the Japanese succeeded in moving it out in 1960s and 1970s.

Figure 3-3: People in Okinawa's opinion regarding relocation of Futenma Air Station Base



Reference: Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting Corporation, 3 Dec, 2013

From Japanese and radical liberals' views, they are in favor of putting the US military bases in Okinawa and to solve the issue in Okinawa, not in elsewhere in Japan. In the Research Commission on the Constitution, which is one of the Diet member's committee, in 29 November 2001, Political scientist Kimhide Mushakouji, explaining Japanese traditional rights, said that human rights in Japan are interpreted as "to guarantee the safety of life and rights of the average Japanese, in this context the Japanese human rights ignore the unusual Japanese rights". He said, "All Japanese are grateful that there is Buraku discrimination (who are lowest class in the 'caste system' in Japan); you can have the peace of mind that we are not in the lowest class in the society. Such is the thing, but the Buraku discrimination I think is a worthy system in order to put together the Japanese nation; and one under-current of this kind of discrimination is that and the ordinary Japanese feels at peace, comfortable that we are the middle class. Such an ideological foundation is the fact in Japan, and I think one of the big problems too". From his point of view, the US military issue in Okinawa is a structure similar of the Buraku issue. The Japanese, by placing the dangerous US military base in Okinawa are guaranteeing their own safety.

This traditional Japanese thought is perhaps, possibly a useful tool for both governments. This thinking helps both governments to always identify the US military base issue as an Okinawan/local issue; an argument that both governments used from the beginning. By this argument, the governments can seize the opportunity to confine it in Okinawa.

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper examined to what extent the current Japanese government could achieve its vision to establish "a beautiful country". To answer this question, I looked at the military colonization history of Okinawa, the Japanese government's thinking trend on the national security policy, and took a case of the discourse among Japanese liberals and their behavior that works in opposition to their stated stand to reduce the Okinawan burden. From this case, the image of military presence is frightening or dangerous to both the Japanese and Okinawan. The Japanese government keeps saying that it understands the suffering of the Okinawan due to the military base presence. However, it has neither the will nor the potential to share this burden with the rest of Japan, nor does it make any sincere attempt to explain the "relocation" plan so disadvantageous to the Okinawan.

This government trend began to build in 1950 when former rulers of the war period returned to government positions. Since then, the government, including intellectuals in Japan, has acquiesced to the US government's grand strategic idea. There was a chance to change the government in 1960s; however, the liberals



did not have enough strength or arguments to counter the conservative's policy. These developments brought about three effects on Japan. 1) It reinforced Japan's dependency on the US foreign policy for its national security, 2) it brought about the declining impact of the liberals on Japanese society, and 3) parliamentary politics, an important instrument for democratic states and polity, disappeared.

Also, the Japanese behavior becoming entrenched regarding the US military base in Okinawa, based on their traditional interpretation of human rights - "sacrifice 'atypical' Japanese for the safety of the majority" - will ultimately bring about the loss of their human rights in the future. Finally, such a political trajectory will lead to an increasingly fragile state rather than a "beautiful country".

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