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The US-Japan Security Alliance and Okinawan Anti-Base Identity

Did enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan have
led to a decline of Okinawan base opposition?

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Introduction

This thesis aims to investigate whether there is a connection between improved US-Japan security relations and Okinawan base opposition in the period 2010-2014. Security relations between the United States and Japan are for a large extent shaped by the 1960 Treaty of Mutual Security and Cooperation, which permits the continuous presence of US military bases in Japan to maintain peace and safety in East Asia. Nowadays Japan still hosts approximately 50,000 US forces. About 50 percent of these forces are stationed in Okinawa, which consists of only 0.6% of Japan's territory. Furthermore, 75 percent of the US military facilities in Japan are also located in Okinawa, demonstrating the unequal US military burden between Okinawa and mainland Japan (Okinawa Prefectural Government 2011). The United States, as well as Japan, agree on the importance of stationing a large amount of US military forces in Okinawa because of the strategic location of the island for maintaining Japan's peace and safety in East Asia. However, large anti-base protests in Okinawa illustrate that a significant part of the local population opposes the security norm of the Japanese government to host US forces. Improved political ties, joint disaster relief operations and increasing external security threats have resulted in enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan in the period 2010-2014. Also, during this period Japanese favorable views on the United States were with an average of 71.6% also somewhat higher than between 2006 and 2009 (58.25%) (Pew Research Center 2015). Nevertheless, it is not clear whether US-Japan security collaboration also resulted in a better image of America among the people in Okinawa. Therefore, the main research question is: to what extent has enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan led to a decline of Okinawan base opposition?

The International Relations Theory (IRT) of constructivism is used as the main approach of this thesis to indicate changes in security norms and behavior by the United States and Japanese government as well as the local population of Okinawa. In the subsequent critical literature review, constructivism is applied to demonstrate the different views of scholars in the field of International Relations on the causes of base opposition in Okinawa and its effects on the US-Japan security alliance. Furthermore, the use of constructivism for the research of

this thesis is further elaborated in the methodological section. The methodological section also explains how case studies are used to illustrate the development of improved military cooperation between the United States and Japan, and its effects on Okinawan base opposition. This thesis uses three case studies that focus on events which significantly shaped US-Japan security relations between 2010 and 2014, namely the shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers, Operation Tomodachi, and heightened security tensions in Northeast Asia. Moreover, the section after the case studies also demonstrates the overall progress of base opposition in Okinawa and its influence on the US-Japan alliance. This thesis concludes that enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan during 2010-2014 have not led to a decrease of base opposition in Okinawa.

Critical Literature Review

There is a significant amount of literature in the field of International Relations (IR) about the various causes of US base opposition in Okinawa and its effects on the United States-Japan security alliance. From the perspective of the IRT of constructivism, the strong anti-base sentiment in Okinawa compared to mainland Japan is due to a different identity that shapes the actions and interests of the local Okinawan citizens. Constructivists underline the relevance of the identity in international relations because it demonstrates a particular set of interests and preferences, and ensures predictable patterns of behavior of actors. To understand the identity of states, as well as non-state actors, it is important to focus on their historical, social, cultural and political backgrounds (Hopf 1998, 174-176). This critical literature review thus analyzes the arguments of IR scholars that demonstrate whether the causes of anti-base protests in Okinawa are the result of different security norms than the Japanese government. Moreover, constructivism states that agents and structures are mutually constitutive, meaning that there is an interactive relationship between the behavior and interests of actors and world politics (Price and Reus-Smit 1998, 267). By taking the US-Japan military as the structure in security relations between the two states, the identity of both countries is thus formed by the alliance. But, on the other hand, the military alliance is also shaped by the security interests and actions of the United States and Japan. Therefore, the critical literature review not only illustrates how base opposition in Okinawa is formed by the US-Japan alliance, but also to what extent Okinawan anti-base protests consequently have shaped the security norms of the United States and Japan.

Okinawa's troubled history with the Japanese as well as the United States government is one of the reasons for the significant amount of US bases on the island and today's anti-base sentiment among the local population. Before Okinawa became a prefecture of Japan, the island of Okinawa as well as its surrounding islands formed an independent state, called the Ryukyu kingdom. However, in 1868 the newly instituted Japanese Meiji government annexed the Ryukyu kingdom as part of imperial Japan through military incursions. Through the so called "Ryukyu measures", the Japanese government aimed to culturally convert the citizens of the former Ryukyu kingdom by changing the education and military institutions to use the Japanese language and customs. Though the Ryukyu islands were established as the Japanese prefecture of Okinawa in 1879, discrimination against citizens of Okinawa by mainland Japanese continued in the following decades (Inoue 2007, 55-57). Not only Okinawa's cultural conversion by the Japanese government is sensitive to Okinawans, but also its wartime experience in World War II. From March to June 1945 the United States army invaded the island which resulted in the bloodiest conflict in the Pacific War. Approximately 150,000 citizens were either killed during the battle of Okinawa or forced to commit suicide by Japanese military officials. The people of Okinawa felt that they were sacrificed by the Japanese wartime government to extend its surrender. Okinawan resentment against the Japanese government still continues because Japan never officially apologized for the suffering endured by the citizens of Okinawa during the Second World War (Taylor 2007, 5).

Local antagonism in Okinawa against the United States started to increase in the 1950s and 1960s because of land confiscation measures and the construction of military bases. After World War II, Japan was occupied by the Allied Forces under the direction of the United States. When Japan gained its independence in 1952, the American control over Okinawa nevertheless continued because of its strategic location in East Asia and the intensification of the Cold War. During the 1950s the United States started to build its large scale permanent military bases and forcefully drove local farmers off the land. Arasaki Moriteru states that many Okinawans started to sympathize with the displaced farmers resulting in unfavorable views on the United States by Okinawans and protests against the presence of US military forces (2001, 103). During the 1960s public opposition increased as the building of bases by the United States continued until over 20 percent of Okinawa's total land area was covered. Because of the increasing influence of the reversion movement in Okinawa, the United States agreed to return Okinawa back to Japanese control in 1972. Nevertheless, after Okinawa's reversion the burden of hosting US forces on the island still continued, which is viewed by the

Okinawans as another betrayal of the Japanese government (Taylor 2007, 5-6). The scholars Inoue, Arasaki and Taylor illustrate Okinawa's historical development as one of the main causes of anti-base sentiment among local citizens. Okinawa's wartime experiences, as well as the land confiscation measures by the United States, are reasons why the antimilitarist norm and US base opposition in Okinawa is significantly stronger than in mainland Japan.

From a social point of view, Okinawan citizens also protest against the US military presence because of concerns about base related crimes and accidents. Statistics by the Okinawan Prefectural Government support the worries of Okinawans about their safety since each month there occurs an average of 23 base related incidents & accidents, including traffic accidents (2011). The rape of a 12-year-old school girl by three US servicemen in 1995 and the crash a US helicopter into Okinawa International University in 2004 are examples of incidents that had a great impact on US base opposition in Okinawa. Especially the 1995 rape incident caused in large protests in Okinawa as well as mainland Japan and eventually resulted in negotiations between Japan and the United States to relocate the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from the densely populated city of Ginowan to a less populous location. Furthermore, Okinawan citizens were also angered that the rape offenders were prosecuted by the American authorities on the basis of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the United States and Japan. Inoue Masamichi not only emphasizes the historical neglect of Okinawa's wishes by the American and Japanese governments for anti-base sentiment, but also the current ongoing violation of Okinawa's sovereignty due to the SOFA (2007, 33-35). The violations of women and children's human rights because of the US military presence have also led to large number of women's base opposition groups. Caroline Spencer argues that especially the Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence has brought local anti-base communities on the island together. As a result, Okinawan anti-base groups started to form a large base opposition movement in the beginning of the 2000s that also succeeded in increasing awareness among citizens in mainland Japan as well as other countries about the US military problems in Okinawa (Spencer 2003, 135-137). Common concerns among Okinawans about safety and human rights thus united local anti-base groups and demonstrate that social issues are a reason of the strong base opposition in Okinawa.

In addition to historical and social issues, concerns about the effects of US military bases on the environment are another reason for base opposition among Okinawan citizens. The military exercises of US forces have a direct impact on Okinawa's environment, such as noise,

air pollution, soil erosion and wildfires. And because the United States is not legally responsible for the clean-up of its training areas in Okinawa, the ecological areas near the US bases are considerably damaged by the US military activities (Taylor 2007, 6-7). Furthermore, Jonathan Taylor argues that the stationing of US forces also has an indirect impact on Okinawa's environment because of the islands economic dependence on the US base compensation payments from the Japanese government. This has resulted in large construction and public work that affected Okinawa's landscape, for instance the reclamation of large amounts of land and the damming of all the rivers on the island (Taylor 2007, 7). In particular the relocation of the Futenma base from Ginowan to the bay of Henoko caused major protests in Okinawa against the base politics of the United States and Japan. Henoko is home to various endangered birds and marine wildlife, including a population of highly threatened dugongs (Yonetani 2001, 89). Julia Yonetani argues that local opposition against the relocation of Futenma base has resulted in increasing awareness of the importance of the environment among Okinawans. Moreover, the ongoing Futenma relocation issue has even become an international symbol of the Okinawan anti-base movement (Yonetani 2001, 90). Hence, the increasing consciousness about the environment is a considerable argument for the growing anti-base sentiment in Okinawa.

The economic impact of hosting US military forces on Okinawa divides the local population between favorable and unfavorable views on the base politics of the US-Japan alliance. As mentioned by Jonathan Taylor before, the Japanese government compensates Okinawa financially for the stationing of US troops by investing in public works and making restitutions to citizens living nearby US bases. Taylor as well as Yonetani argues that the economic benefits of the US bases are frequently condemned by local citizens as well as politicians for making Okinawa a base dependent economy. For example, Ota Masahide, the governor of Okinawa prefecture in the 1990s, severely denounced the US-Japan base compensation politics and promoted the withdrawal of US military forces for a peaceful and prosperous Okinawa. The vast majority of Okinawans supported Ota's view when over 89 percent of the voters of the September 1996 referendum called for a reduction of US bases (Yonetani 2001, 74-77). The scholar Sakurada Daizo has a more circumspect view on the effects of base compensation payments on US base opposition in Okinawa and states that it poses a dilemma for the local population. On the one hand Sakurada illustrates that many Okinawans oppose the presence of US military forces because the 1996 local elections showed that a significant majority of Okinawan citizens favor the downsizing of the US bases

and redrafting the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). On the other hand, Sakurada emphasizes the economic benefits for many citizens in Okinawa of hosting US troops since Okinawa is the poorest prefecture of Japan with the highest rate of unemployment. US bases thus provide an important source of income for many local Okinawans through compensation payments and the creation of jobs (Sakurada 1998, 26).

In contrast to Jonathan Taylor and Julia Yonetani, the scholars Alexander Cooley and Kimberly Marten argue that the economic benefits of the US bases in Okinawa are favored by the majority of local citizens. The scholars highlight how many actors in Okinawa, such as local construction companies, small businesses, landowners and base workers, are economically profiting from the presence of US military forces. Moreover, locals who complain about noise or pollution caused by US military activities can also receive compensation payments from the Japanese Defense Facilities Administration Agency (DFAA) (Cooley and Marten 2006: 568, 571-576). To support their argument, Cooley and Marten refute the outcomes of the public referenda about reducing the amount of American bases. They argue that many Okinawans who are in favor of US bases refused to vote, as is shown by the high percentage of voter absenteeism. Also, during the past decade base supporting governors in Okinawa were overwhelmingly reelected (Cooley and Marten 2006: 567, 568, 573). Nevertheless, statistics of the Okinawa Prefectural Government demonstrate that the impact of revenue related to the US Forces on the prefecture's economy is decreasing. The percentage of US Forces related revenue as part of the Gross Domestic Product of Okinawa has shrunk from 15.5% in 1972 to 5.3% in 2008. In addition, the number of Japanese employees on US military facilities also declined after Okinawa's reversion from 19,980 employees in 1972 to 9,135 workers in 2010 (Okinawa Prefectural Government 2011). All in all, academics in the field of International Relations generally agree that financial compensation from the Japanese government has an important effect on the Okinawa's economy and divide the local population since not every citizen benefits from these compensation payments. Therefore, the current anti-base protests in Okinawa are likely to be less influenced by economic factors as during the past decades.

External security threats are another factor shaping the security views of citizens in Okinawa. Survey results about public opinion in Okinawa between 1985 and 2001 illustrate how US bases were traditionally opposed by the majority of Okinawans. However, this majority started to decrease after the Cold War and even became slightly smaller than the amount of

Okinawans in favor of US bases, which was 45 percent in 2001 (Kagotani and Yanai 2014, 97-98). Kagotani Koji and Yanai Yuki advocate that North Korean missile experiments in the 1990s and the global war on terror after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2011 largely effected this change in Okinawan security attitudes (2014, 98-99). Kagotani and Yanai also use the outcomes of gubernatorial elections in Okinawa to illustrate that increasing external security threat perceptions in Japan encourage Okinawans to vote for a pro-base candidate. For example, the vote share of pro-base parties increased between 1994 and 2006 from 40 percent to 52 percent (2014, 111-112). However, besides external security threats, Kagotani and Yanai also notice in their research that the closer citizens live near the controversial US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma base, the lower the outcome was in support of pro-base parties. Therefore, public opinion about the support of US bases in Okinawa is rather divided and thus both pro-base and anti-base politicians and activists are able to influence the outcome of elections (2014, 111-112). Hence, the US base opposition in Okinawa is significantly larger than in mainland Japan because US base related safety concerns play a larger role in shaping the security norms of citizens in Okinawa in comparison to the people in mainland Japan.

By using constructivism as the main approach, the critical literature review so far as highlighted the reasons for citizens in Okinawa to either oppose or support the stationing of US military forces in their prefecture. From a constructivist point of view, Okinawa's troubled history with both Japan and the United States, base related social and environmental problems, economic benefits and security concerns explain why citizens in Okinawa favor or reject the current base situation. However, constructivism can not only show how base opposition in Okinawa is the result of the base policies by the United States' and Japanese governments, but is also able to demonstrate in what way actors are able to change the structure of stationing US military forces in Okinawa. There are various moments large anti-base demonstrations in Okinawa have significantly pressured the United States-Japan security alliance. The most influential anti-base demonstrations in Okinawa happened in the aftermath of the 1995 rape incident, when approximately 85,000 people protested in Okinawa against the large presence of American military forces and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). These protests also received significant coverage and support from the media and citizens of mainland Japan, which led to further debate in Japanese politics about the burden of US military bases on Okinawa. Inoue Masamichi argues that these protests contributed to the image of Okinawa as an oppressed poor region that was sacrificed by the Japanese mainland to host US bases for

Japanese and American security purposes (2007, 39-40). Inoue's argument about Okinawan identity shows how constructivism is used to demonstrate that security views of certain non-state actors are very different in comparison to the nation state.

The 1995 anti-base protests in Okinawa eventually resulted in negotiations between the United States and Japan to reduce the military burden on the Okinawan population, thus showing the interactive relationship between actors and structure. The Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō and United States President Bill Clinton agreed in 1996 to remove 8000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam and to relocate the Futenma base from densely populated Ginowan to rural Henoko (Baker & Glosserman 2013, 28-29). Nevertheless, the plan to relocate the Futenma base did not have the immediate effect of decreasing the amount of US military forces in Okinawa but instead resulted in growing base opposition in Okinawa, especially among environmental organizations. Carl Baker and Brad Glosserman argue that the Futenma base relocation remains an issue because the Japanese government and Okinawan prefectural government cannot come to an agreement due to substantial local opposition (2013, 37). Furthermore, Glenn Hook and Key-young Son also argue that when Okinawans succeed in uniting their US base protests, they create a civil alliance that is able to influence the base politics of Japan and the United States. Hook and Son illustrate how the extensive protests after the 1995 rape and the large resistance against relocation of the Futenma base are examples of effective civil society activism by the Okinawan citizens (2013, 25-27).

Not only base opposition in Okinawa, but also the Japanese government has shaped the base issue with the United States from time to time. Especially during the Koizumi administration, Japan has become more assertive in its security policy decision making. Christopher Hughes and Ellis Krauss argue that Japanese politicians are aware that Japanese citizens have become increasingly critical about the Futenma relocation issue. As a result, several Japanese politicians have condemned the aspects of the Futenma relocation agreement, such as the high costs for the relocation of US forces to Guam. Moreover, former Minister of Defense Kyuma Fumio criticized Washington in 2006 for thinking that the Okinawan government would easily accept base relocation within the prefecture (Hughes and Krauss 2007, 167-168). Richard Samuels also recognizes a more critical view of the military alliance with the United States in Japanese political thought. The pollution by the US military forces and the jurisdictional sovereignty of Americans on and around their bases in Japan, as stated in the

SOFA, is controversial among citizens in Okinawa as well as mainland Japan (Samuels 2007, 132-134). Nevertheless, contrary to Hughes and Krauss, Samuels argues that Japan's security policy is more influenced by US military interests than by US military burden on Okinawan citizens. Although the Futenma base relocation agreement continued to be an issue in United States-Japan security relations, Tokyo supported Washington's war on terrorism by its controversial decision to dispatch its Self Defense Forces (SDF) to Iraq. This was the first time Japan sent troops abroad, with the exception of several UN peacekeeping operations, and hence shows how strong Japan's commitment is to its military alliance with the United States (2007, 134).

On the contrary, there are also scholars in the field of IR who state that US opposition in Okinawa does not have large effects on United States-Japan security relations. Michael Green illustrates Japan's security dependence on the US with the entrapment versus abandonment dilemma as example. This means that, on the one hand, the Japanese government worries about a growing dependence on the US for its international security. On the other hand, a stronger and more independent role for Japan in the US-Japan alliance also creates a feeling of insecurity among Japanese politicians who are concerned that the United States will abandon its military commitment to Japan. According to Green, the much demanded revision of the SOFA by Okinawans is therefore neglected by the Japanese officials who are afraid that any changes in the rights of American authorities in Japan can lead to increased tensions in US-Japan security relations (2011, 103-104). Moreover, Glenn Hook, Julie Gilson, Christopher Hughes and Hugo Dobson are also critical about the willingness of the United States to find a solution to the burden on Okinawa since the American government is able to put pressure on Japan in the alliance. They argue that *beiatsu*, the American pressure on the Japanese government, characterizes the alliance between the two countries since Japan's security policy is greatly influenced by US interests in East Asia. (Hook et Al. 2012, 126-127). The presence of US military forces in Japan has not only to maintain Japan's sovereignty, but is also used by the United States to increase its influence in the region. Therefore, even though Washington recognizes the unequal burden on Okinawa as a problem of the US-Japan alliance, Hook et Al. do not expect a rapid resolution of the Futenma issue because of America's domination in the base politics with Tokyo (Hook et Al. 2012, 149-151).

The role of actors, such as base opposition group in Okinawa and Japanese politicians, on the US-Japan alliance as well as the influence of the base policies of the United States and Japan

on the behavior those actors demonstrate the constructivist argument that actors and structure are mutually constitutive. This is in sharp contrast to the International Relations Theory (IRT) of realism which assumes that the international system is based on anarchy wherein states function as the main actors and are mainly acting out of self-interest (Donnelly 2009, 37). Because of realist focus on the military security of states, realism is traditionally used by many scholars to explain the interests of the United States and Japan to form a security alliance. Japan as the weaker military state in comparison to the United States, benefits from the alliance because the US agrees to protect Japan's national sovereignty. On the other hand, the United States has an interest in the alliance with Japan because it enables the US to station military forces in Japan and, consequently, extend its influence in East Asia. However, realism is not applicable to explain the issue of US base opposition in Okinawa. Therefore, constructivism is used in this thesis as the main theory to investigate the connection between the US-Japan alliance and Okinawan anti-base identity. The critical literature review exposed how base opposition in Okinawa led to tensions in the US-Japan security alliance, but there is not much literature on how improvements in US-Japan security relations have effected Okinawa's anti-base sentiment. The methodology section below elaborates how this thesis uses several case studies to examine if there is a relation in the US-Japan security alliance between enhanced military cooperation and the role of Okinawan base opposition.

Methodology

As the critical literature above expressed, the opinions of academics in the field of International Relations significantly differ about the strength of the anti-base movement in Okinawa and its influence on the US-Japan security relations. Though the Okinawan anti-base protests have regularly resulted in negotiations between the United States and Japan about changing the burden of US military forces on the Okinawan citizens, it has never dominated security ties between both countries. However, this changed in 2009, when the Japanese government was for the first time led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). The DPJ had considerable different security views than the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP), which had been in office almost continuously since 1955. The election promise of the new DPJ Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio to relocate the controversial Futenma base outside of the prefecture of Okinawa was severely criticized by Washington because it would breach an earlier agreement between the United States and Japan. Furthermore, under Hatoyama other forms of military cooperation among the US and Japan also changed, the Japanese

government for instance shifted its support to the US military operation in Afghanistan by stopping the deployment of SDF forces in the Indian Ocean (Hook et al. 2012, 145-146). Nevertheless, when Hatoyama resigned in 2010, the succeeding Japanese Prime Ministers did no longer oppose the initial Futenma relocation agreement and subsequently military cooperation between the United States and Japan enhanced during 2010-2014. However, although the Futenma relocation issue did not dominate US-Japan security relations anymore, anti-base opposition in Okinawa was not dissolved because the military burden on the Okinawan citizens continued. Therefore, this thesis aims to analyze to what extent enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan during the period 2010-2014 have led to a decline of Okinawan base opposition as an issue in the US-Japan security alliance.

To investigate the recent changes within the US-Japan security alliance and the role of base opposition in Okinawa, this thesis uses three case studies on security developments among United States-Japan relations during the period 2010-2014. These case studies are: shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers, Operation Tomodachi and heightened security tensions in Northeast Asia. The change in Japanese administrations has led to closer political and security ties between the United States and Japan, which is in large contrast with the preceding Hatoyama administration when US-Japan relations considerably strained. Furthermore, Operation Tomodachi was the first military operation between the United States and Japan, and has subsequently resulted in joint disaster relief exercises. Increasing security concerns in Tokyo and Washington about China and North Korea also caused both states to adopt a common security policy towards China and North Korea. Though there are also other periods when military cooperation among the United States and Japan was enhanced, such as during 2001-2005 when Koizumi Junichiro was Prime Minister of Japan, these case studies are used in this thesis to illustrate the difference in US-Japan security ties after the Hatoyama administration. Furthermore, the three case studies not only intend to show how the United States and Japan were able to improve security relations in the period 2010-2014, but also whether this has led to differences in Okinawan security norms and base opposition (Klotz 2009: 55-58). In addition, after the three case studies, this thesis also describes the overall development of anti-base opposition in Okinawa between 2010-2014 to indicate whether anti-base sentiment among Okinawan citizens has decreased.

This thesis uses the International Relations Theory (IRT) of constructivism in the following case studies because of its emphasis on the role of mutual constitution of agents and structures

as well as the importance of norms and identity in shaping international relations. The three case studies all focus on the role of Japanese and American government officials who contributed to improved military collaboration between the countries. As a constructivist approach in the critical literature review demonstrated that Okinawan citizens were able to influence the structure of US-Japan security relations, this thesis uses the case studies to indicate whether it can also be the other way around. It thus demonstrates whether improved military cooperation among the United States and Japan is also able to shape anti-base sentiment in Okinawa. In addition, constructivism not only emphasizes the emancipatory element of actors, but also serves as an alternative and critical approach to the US-Japan alliance in contrast to the IRT of realism. While realism shows how the United States and Japan benefit from the presence of US military troops in Okinawa for reasons of national safety in East Asia, realism does not distinct different security identities within one state because realism takes states as the main actors (Hopf 1998: 186-189). The issue of Okinawan base opposition is thus often overlooked or downplayed by IR scholars who apply realism to the US-Japan alliance. In contrast, IR scholars who take a constructivist approach to the US-Japan alliance reveal the practices and identities of actors, and subsequently explain how Washington's, Tokyo's and Okinawa's actions and interests are based on these identities. Hence, constructivism is applied in this thesis to show how differences in structure (US-Japan enhanced military security) can also influence identity of non-state actors (anti-base sentiment in Okinawa).

The following sources are mainly used in the case studies to investigate the US-Japan security relations and US base opposition in Okinawa. The critical literature review exposed different perspectives of authors on the role of Okinawan base opposition in the US-Japan alliance. In the case studies academic articles are used to illustrate US-Japan security developments as well. Furthermore, Japanese as well as American news articles form a significant part of the information in this case study, especially articles from *The New York Times*, *Japan Times* and the Okinawan newspaper *Ryūkyū Shimpō*. Also, public opinion polls from these newspapers on the US military presence in Japan and other security developments are used to illustrate public opinion among Japanese and Okinawan citizens. Moreover, results of elections in Japan and especially Okinawa are used to demonstrate how public opinion is expressed in voting results, and how the outcome of these elections can influence US-Japan base politics. In addition, official websites of the Japanese government, notably the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Okinawan Prefectural Government, are adopted in this

thesis for official statements about Japanese security policies. These sources are applied in the case studies to give an overview of how a certain security development has led to American and Japanese efforts to improve military cooperation. Furthermore, the sources also illustrate whether anti-base opposition in Okinawa is changing as an issue in the US-Japan alliance from an American, Japanese and Okinawan point of view.

1. Shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers

The changes in Japanese administrations between 2010 and 2014, especially from Hatoyama Yukio to Kan Naoto, had direct effects on the US-Japan alliance and Okinawa base politics. When Hatoyama entered office in September 2009, after the first national electoral victory of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), he promised to relocate the controversial Futenma base outside of Okinawa prefecture in order to reduce the burden of the local citizens. This announcement was criticized by Washington as well as the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP), the main opposition party of the DPJ, because it goes against the 2006 United States-Japan Roadmap Plan which included the relocation of US military facilities from Futenma to Henoko (Heginbotham et al. 2011: 142-143). US-Japan relations faced a second blow in November, when Prime Minister Hatoyama gave a speech at the UN General Assembly about his vision for an East Asian Community, wherein he emphasized the importance of China in the region, but did not mention any role for the United States (Matsumura 2011, 157-158). During his time in office, Hatoyama Yukio came under growing pressure from American officials and LDP opposition to demonstrate the importance of the US-Japan alliance, and to continue with the initial Futenma relocation plan. When Japanese media reported in early April 2010 that Hatoyama was considering the construction of military facilities on Tokunoshima, an island approximately 200 kilometers north of the main island of Okinawa, these plans were met with strong local resentment (Smith 2014, 11). Consequently, within the DPJ pressure on Hatoyama to make a decision on the Futenma relocation also increased. At the end of May 2010 Hatoyama finally signed the agreement to move the Futenma base to Henoko as part of a US-Japan Joint Statement, reneging on his promise to relocate the controversial base outside of Okinawa (McCormack 2010, 11-2). As a result of *beijitsu* as well as pressure within his own government, Hatoyama resigned in June 2010 and left US-Japan security relations in the most deteriorated state since the signing of the alliance in 1960.

After the resignation of Hatoyama, the subsequent Prime Ministers Kan Naoto, Noda Yoshihiko and Abe Shinzō emphasized the importance of the US-Japan alliance for Japan, and did not intend to debate the Futenma relocation issue with Washington. When Kan replaced Hatoyama as the new Japanese Prime Minister on 8 June 2010, he instantly pledged to restore the strained ties between Japan and the United States. Although Kan apologized to the local population for the burden of American bases when he visited Okinawa later in June, he assured US President Barack Obama to move the Futenma base to the north of the island as agreed in 2006 (BBC 2010). Under the Noda administration, which was installed on 2 September 2011, the optimization of the US-Japan alliance continued through plans of joint military training of the Japanese Self Defense Forces (SDF) and US forces in the Northern Marianas (US territory), and through the implementation of new guidelines for mutual weapon development projects (Brooks 2012, 132-3). Furthermore, Noda gave the highest priority to resolving the Futenma relocation issue and Osprey deployment problems in Okinawa, which maintained hurdles in US-Japan relations. In the U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee (SCC) of April 2012, both Japanese and American Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense confirmed the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) in Henoko to order to return other US facilities in Okinawa and reduce the military burden on the local population (MOFA 2012). In December 2012 the LDP came back in office and the Abe cabinet immediately sought reassurance from Washington over its security commitment to Japan because of the growing tensions between China and Japan in 2012 over the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, (Smith 2014, 19-20). Furthermore, the LDP government made progress on the Futenma base relocation issue in December 2013 when Nakaima Hirokazu, the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, reversed his policy to move the base out of Okinawa and approved landfill work for the new US base in Henoko (Kyodo 2013).

After the resignation of Hatoyama as Prime Minister of Japan, security relations between Japan and the United States significantly improved by all three succeeding Prime Ministers. From a constructivist point of view, the focus of Japan's security in 2009 was on finding a solution for the Futenma relocation issue because of Hatoyama's election promise. However, Hatoyama's promise to relocate Futenma outside of Okinawa was against the norms of the United States which emphasized Japan's earlier agreement to move Futenma base to Henoko. The contrast in security ideas between Japan and the United States resulted in frictions between the two military allies, hence showing how changes in actors can also alter the interest of states. Since Kan, Noda and Abe did not wish to destabilize relations with the

United States over the Futenma relocation issue, all three Prime Ministers emphasized the importance of the US as a security partner and promised to continue the relocate Futenma base according to the 2006 agreement. Under Kan, Noda and Abe other forms of security cooperation between the US and Japan also emerged or were improved, thus demonstrating that common agreement on the Futenma base relocation issue is an important security norm in the US-Japan alliance. Nevertheless, the shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers did not seem to have led to different security norms among the citizens of Okinawa. When Nakaima approved landfill work for the new US base in Henoko, local citizens in Okinawa continued to resist against the Futenma base relocation. The anti-base mayor of Nago City, wherein Henoko is located, was re-elected in January 2014, which created a new challenge for Tokyo to make progress on the relocation of the Futenma base (Johnston 2014). The security norms of base opposition in Okinawa were thus not changed by shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers, but the Kan, Noda and Abe administrations do demonstrate that Prime Ministers can play an important role in shaping the security norms of a state.

2. Operation Tomodachi

Operation Tomodachi was the first joint operation by the United States military in Japan and the Japanese SDF, and contributed to an improved perception among Japanese citizens about the US-Japan alliance and the presence of US troops in Japan. After the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami disaster, the Japanese Foreign Minister Matsumoto Takeaki immediately requested for the assistance of US forces in Japan. On 12 March 2011, within hours of the request, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates promised to provide humanitarian aid and started Operation ‘Tomodachi,’ which means ‘friendship’ in Japanese (Nalwa 2012, 19-20). The operation involved about 24,500 US service men, 189 aircrafts, and 24 naval ships, and became the largest military cooperation between the United States and Japan. The Japanese media generally portrayed Operation Tomodachi in a positive way and emphasized its important contribution to the Japan’s disaster relief operations, such as the use of drones to keep track of the situation of the Fukushima nuclear power plant (Sankei Shimbun 2011). Also, Japanese media highlighted the significance of Operation Tomodachi for enhancing US-Japan relations because the security treaty does not obligate the US aid to Japan in case of a natural disaster (Yomiuri Shimbun 2011). The Defense Minister Yoshimi Kitazawa stated that Operation Tomodachi has become a symbol of the deepening of the US-Japan alliance. Operation Tomodachi was not only successful because of the effective cooperation and

communication between the SDF and US forces, but also because Operation Tomodachi made the Japanese people more aware of the importance of the alliance (Shimodaira 2012). Richard Samuels also confirms the positive impact of the American disaster relief activities on the perception of Japanese citizens by using various public opinions polls. According to a Japanese government poll from December 2011 an all-time high of 82 percent of the Japanese had friendly views towards the United States. Furthermore, surveys by the Associated Press in September 2011 found out that Japanese support for US bases also increased after Operation Tomodachi by 10 points to 57 percent. In the end, Operation Tomodachi not only demonstrated the interoperability of American and Japanese military forces in a crisis situation, but also improved the public perception of Japanese citizens about the importance of the US-Japan alliance.

Although Operation Tomodachi strengthened US-Japan relations in general and created favorable Japanese views on the presence of US forces in Japan, this was not the case in Okinawa. According to Kubo Fumiaka, there is a perception gap among Japanese citizens between those who were helped by the US army and those who constantly bear the burden of the presence of US military forces. Especially in Okinawa, Operation Tomodachi was not favorably reported in the local media and some editors even described the US disaster relief activities as a strategy to increase American security influence in Japan (Kubo 2013, 31). Okinawan media for instance opposed the statement of US officials who emphasized the important role of US marines stationed in Okinawa during Operation Tomodachi. The *Ryūkyū Shimpō* questioned the strategic importance of US forces in Okinawa since it took at least three days for the US military forces from Okinawa to arrive in the affected areas in Tōhoku. Moreover, the *Okinawan Times* criticized the political use of the triple disaster by US officials who link the controversial Futenma base with Operation Tomodachi (Mizushima 2012). Mori Keisuke assumes that the negative news coverage in Okinawan media is due to the continuous presence of US forces, which reminds many locals about the troubled Okinawan history of oppression by the Japanese government and the military occupation by the United States (Mori 2012, 41). Moreover, the negative Okinawan response concerning Operation Tomodachi is also explained by Mizushima and Mori because of tensions between the Okinawans and local American authorities before the Tōhoku earthquake disaster. On 8 March 2011 Kevin K. Maher, director of the State Department's Office of Japan Affairs, gave a speech in which he stated that the Okinawan people are masters of “manipulation” and “extortion”. Maher, who was involved bilateral negotiations with Japan over the controversial

issue of relocating the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station, argued that Okinawan citizens are only pretending to create consensus on the base relocation for money and not to find a solution for the troubled Futenma base. (Mizushima 2012; Mori 2012, 42) Operation Tomodachi was thus not able to change Okinawan views on the US military presence of Japan because of the skeptical Okinawan media and the local tensions before Japan's triple disaster.

Constructivism illustrates how Operation Tomodachi enhanced military cooperation between the United States and Japan, and generated goodwill among the Japanese population, with the exception of the people in Okinawa. The Japanese and United States' governments immediately took mutual action to provide humanitarian support after the occurrence of the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami disaster. IR scholars such as Imai Kazumasa and Preeti Nalwa praise the idea that joint disaster relief cooperation can become an aspect of military collaboration in the US-Japan alliance. Imai promotes enhanced US-Japan security collaboration by arguing that both countries should encourage joint disaster prevention training and set guidelines for large disaster relief operations (Imai 2012, 68). Nalwa highlights the possibility that disaster relief cooperation, as a non-political variable in the US-Japan alliance, can further cement US-Japan relations. (Nalwa 2012, 25). The joint military response by the United States and Japan created a lot of goodwill among the Japanese regarding the US-Japan alliance and the presence of US forces in Japan. Public opinion in Japan was very favorable about a newly emerged security norm among the United States and Japan, namely the cooperation in case of a natural disaster. However, Operation Tomodachi did not convince many citizens in Okinawa about the importance of US bases in Japan. The reaction of the Okinawan media on Operation Tomodachi did not praise this new form of security cooperation between the United States and Japan, but was largely critical about the importance of the role US military forces in Okinawa as part of Operation Tomodachi. Although Operation Tomodachi directly contributed to improved US-Japan relations and Japanese views on the US-Japan alliance, constructivism demonstrates that the joint US-Japan disaster relief collaboration did not had much effect on changing anti-base sentiment in Okinawa.

3. Heightened tensions in Northeast Asia

The escalation of territorial conflicts between Japan and the People's Republic of China, and the continuous missile and nuclear threat from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

(North Korea) were the main regional security challenges for the US-Japan alliance during the period 2010-2014. The Senkaku/Daiyou islands, a group of islands in the East China Sea southwest of Okinawa, is claimed by Japan as well as China. The Senkaku/Diaoyu island dispute significantly strained Sino-Japanese relations in September 2010, when a Chinese boat captain was arrested by Japan after a collision with a Japanese Coast Guard patrol boat near the disputed islands. Again in September 2012 Sino-Japanese tensions increased when the Japanese government purchased several of the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands from a private Japanese family in order to prevent Tokyo's rightwing governor Ishihara Shintarō from buying these islands. Both times the Chinese government condemned the Japanese actions, leading to anti-Japanese protests in China and the implementation of several economic boycotts to Japan (Wan 2010; Perlez 2012). North Korean provocative actions furthermore destabilized security in Northeast Asia and brought the United States and Japan also closer together. Pyongyang's successful long-range missile launch in December 2012 and nuclear test in February 2013 were criticized by both Japan and the United States. North Korea's missile development concern Tokyo and Washington because Japan's densely populated cities and US troops in the Japanese archipelago that might now be in the range of Pyongyang's nuclear missiles (Revere 2013, 189-192).

The increased security tensions in Northeast Asia did not lead to friction between Japan and the United States, but consequently resulted in enhanced military collaboration among the two countries. Though the United States officially remains neutral about the sovereignty claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands by China and Japan, after the September 2010 boat collision incident, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton confirmed that the Senkaku Islands were part of the 1972 Okinawa Reversion Treaty. The US has thus acknowledged that it has the obligation to also defend this part of Japan regardless of Beijing's disapproval (Manyin 2013, 5). Furthermore, during the US-Japan Joint Security Consultative Committee (SCC) in June 2011, China was for the first time mentioned in bilateral security negotiations. Japan and the US stated to encourage China to take a responsible and constructive role in promoting stability in the region, whereas both states take a hard line towards North Korea with the goal of complete denuclearization (Grønning 2014). North Korea's continues provocations and nuclear threat during 2010-2014 moved US-Japan cooperation forward to accept a common security approach to Pyongyang. This is in contrast to the 2000s, when the Japanese policy on North Korea was largely shaped by the abduction of Japanese citizens by North Korea during the Cold War, while the United States focused more on international sanctions to pressure

Pyongyang because of concerns about North Korea's nuclear program. In 2008, Japanese officials even felt betrayed when the Bush administration actively sought a bilateral solution for North Korea without taking Japanese interests into consideration (Flake 2010, 97-103). From a realist point of view, Japan and the United States increased military cooperation during 2010-2014 to hedge against the growing influence of China and continuous security threat from North Korea. On the other hand, constructivism illustrates how China and North Korea are interpreted by Japan as well as the United States as heightened security threats in East Asia and, as a result, both Japan and the US agreed to enhance military cooperation because of common security interests in East Asia.

Though Japan's increasing tensions with China, and to a lesser extent with North Korea, advocate the strategic importance of US troops in Okinawa, this did not change US base opposition among Okinawans in the same period (2010-2014). The presence of the American bases in Okinawa is in the strategic interests of Japan as well as the United States because of its vicinity to the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu islands (Mulgan 2010). Therefore, scholars such as Gordon Flake and Evens Revere assume that the conflicts with China and North Korea enable Tokyo to obtain more local support for the stationing of US troops in Okinawa (Flake 2010, 94; Revere 2013, 191). Based on the research of Okinawan voting behavior during the 1972-2006 gubernatorial elections by Kagotani and Yanai, many Okinawans are indeed inclined to vote for a pro-base candidate during periods of increased external threat perceptions in Japan (Kagotani and Yanai 2014, 111-112). Though 85% of the Okinawans admitted to feel insecure about the recent military advance by China in the East China Sea, a majority of 65% favors a diplomatic solution for the Sino-Japanese tensions instead of a buildup of Japan's defense capability (20%) (Ryūkyū Shimpō 2012). This is also illustrated both the Okinawan gubernatorial elections of November 2010 and November 2014, wherein anti-base candidates won the elections with a large majority. Okinawan voting behavior in the period 2010-2014 is thus to a larger extent shaped by opposition of US bases than by the development of foreign security threats (Yamaguchi 2010; Fitfield 2014). The outcome of the local elections in Okinawa eventually led to more friction between local Okinawan officials and the national governments of Japan and the United States instead of generating more local support for the stationing of US military forces. In contrast to realism, constructivism is able to expose how changes in public opinion can shape the international policy of states. The critical literature review has shown that security threats in the past influenced Okinawan voting behavior in the favor of pro-base candidates.

The development of base opposition in Okinawa 2010-2014

Though Japan and the United States enhanced security cooperation in the years 2010-2014, anti-base resistance continued in Okinawa and is visible in public opinion polls, voting behavior, protests against base policies, and attitudes of local governmental officials. In May 2012, 40 years after the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, research on public opinion in Okinawa shows that many locals are against the current base policies of Tokyo and Washington. Approximately 90% of the Okinawans are against the relocation of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to Henoko. Most of them are in favor of moving the base outside of Japan (39%) or outside of the prefecture (29%). In comparison, more than 60% of the citizens in the main islands of Japan call for the relocation of the base outside Okinawa or Japan, but still 68% of the Japanese oppose relocation of the U.S. bases in Okinawa to their own regions. At the same time, 70% of people in Okinawa see the current distribution of US forces in Japan as unfair, whereas no more than 30% of people on the main islands of Japan see things that way (Ryūkyū Shimpō 2012). Not only public opinion polls, but also voting behavior in Okinawa illustrates that anti-base sentiment in the prefecture is much stronger than in mainland Japan. In the gubernatorial elections of November 2014, the anti-base candidate Onaga Takeshi won around 51% of the votes and defeated Nakaima Hirokazu, the former Okinawan governor backed by the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, who received only about 39% (Fitfield 2014). Moreover, even though the LDP remained the largest party in Japan after the December 2014 general elections, opposition candidates won all the four seats of Okinawa (Webb 2015). Both election outcomes reflect the frustration of Okinawan voters about the Japanese and American base policies, and confirmed Potter's statement that it is political suicide to take a pro-base position in Okinawa (Potter 2013, 169).

Not only public opinion polls, but also demonstrations and protests against the base politics of Tokyo and Washington demonstrate the base opposition among the people in Okinawa. Over 100,000 citizens participated in a rally against MV-22 Osprey deployment in Okinawa, which was organized by over 150 different organizations. The major turnout was the result several Osprey crashes in Japan in the same year, which significantly increased the safety concerns about the aircraft in Okinawa (Ryūkyū Shimpō 2012). In April 2013 over 10,000 citizens in Okinawa protested against the Japanese government during the 61st anniversary of the restoration of Japanese sovereignty, after the San Francisco Peace Treaty took effect in 1952.

The celebration of Japanese sovereignty is controversial among Okinawans because the United States' occupation of Okinawa lasted until 1972. The participants not only demonstrated against the commemoration ceremony held by the Japanese government, but also aimed to make a statement against the Abe cabinet for ignoring the wishes of the Okinawan people to reduce the US military footprint in the prefecture (Ryūkyū Shinpō 2013). Moreover, approximately 18,000 people in Okinawa also opposed the move of Futenma base to Henoko in a sit-in protest that marked 150 days in December 2014 (Ryūkyū Shinpō 2014). The strong activism against the base politics of Tokyo and Washington that occurred in Okinawa in 1995 is also demonstrated in the period 2010-2014. As anti-base movements in Okinawa are progressively working together, their protest campaigns have also become more organized and effective. In addition, because the Okinawan base opposition protest is receiving increasingly Japanese and international media coverage, policy makers in Washington and Tokyo are more pressured to revise their current base politics regarding Okinawa (Cooley 2014)

Many local government officials in Okinawa share the concerns of the citizens about US-Japan base politics and base opposition is therefore also evident in their actions. After several local protests against the use of MV-22 Osprey aircrafts by the US military in Okinawa, the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly unanimously passed a resolution in July 2011 to demand the withdrawal of the plan to use Osprey aircrafts at the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma (Ryūkyū Shinpō 2011). Furthermore, in October 2012 Okinawan Governor Nakaima Hirokazu visited Washington DC and argued that moving the Futenma base outside of Okinawa will encourage an early resolution of the base relocation issue (Ryūkyū Shinpō 2012). On the other hand, there are also officials in Okinawa who promote the construction of US bases. For example, local officials of the Henoko community have worked together with the American and Japanese authorities since the 1960s to encourage the building of US military bases, including the Futenma replacement facilities. This was of course in exchange for rental payments and other monetary compensations in order to stimulate the economy of the rural Henoko region (Williams 2013, 977-8). Nevertheless, the current mayor of Nago, Inamine Susumu, opposes the construction of base facilities in Henoko and his re-election in January 2014 illustrates the local support for his anti-base policy (Johnston 2014). All in all, the strong base opposition in Okinawa, as demonstrated by public opinion polls, local protests and anti-base attitudes of politicians, continued from 2010 to 2014 to serve as a destabilizing factor in the US-Japan alliance. Since Okinawa is administered by local officials who are able

to take positions that are in contrast to national policy or general public opinion, a local agreement about the base situation in Okinawa is necessary to solve the issue of base opposition in the US-Japan alliance (Potter 2013, 172).

Conclusion

Between 2010-2014 US-Japan military collaboration was significantly enhanced because of increased efforts of both American and Japanese government officials. After the resignation of Hatoyama, the US-Japan relations were significantly strained because of the Futenma base relocation issue. However, the shifts in Japanese Prime Ministers, Operation Tomodachi and heightened security tensions in East Asia brought the United States and Japan closer together as security partners. Hatoyama's successors Kan, Noda and Abe, all three emphasized the importance of the US-Japan alliance for Japan's foreign policy and did not attempt to discuss the Futenma base relocation issue with Washington. Operation Tomodachi demonstrated successful military interoperability between both allies and showed the Japanese citizens a positive side of the US military presence in Japan. Furthermore, the United States and Japan took a mutual security policy towards China and North Korea due to common concerns about the maintenance of peace and safety in the region. The International Relations Theory (IRT) of constructivism assumes that actors and structure are mutually constitutive. This thesis argues that there is an interactive relationship between the government officials and the US-Japan alliance, since the actions of both Washington and Tokyo were able to improve bilateral relations and strengthen military collaboration.

Though US-Japan security relations considerably improved during 2010-2014, US base opposition in Okinawa continued to be a destabilizing factor in the alliance. The three case studies illustrated that base opposition in Okinawa continued even though the American and Japanese governments were able to enhance military cooperation. The shift in Japanese Prime Ministers did not change the Okinawan resistance against the relocation of the Futenma base. Furthermore, although Operation Tomodachi significantly improved favorable views among Japanese citizens about the US-Japan alliance, Okinawan media severely criticized the political use of the joint disaster relief operation by the United States. And even though a large majority of the Okinawan citizens are concerned about the military developments of China in the region, most Okinawans favor a diplomatic solution instead of a military buildup. As the section about the development of base opposition in Okinawa illustrated, the anti-base

movement in the prefecture is becoming increasingly better organized and influential, as their case is largely exploited by the Japanese and international media. Moreover, local politicians in Okinawa are also increasingly protesting against US-Japan base policies. US base opposition in Okinawa shows thus not only disapproval about the Futenma relocation and use of Osprey aircraft, but also demonstrates the growing distrust among Okinawans towards Tokyo and Washington.

This thesis used constructivism to expose the differences in security norms between citizens and mainland Japan and the prefecture of Okinawa about the US military presence in Japan. Constructivism shows how identity plays an important role in shaping ideas, norms and actions of actors, and in this case exposes the reasons why anti-base sentiment in Okinawa is severely different compared to the citizens in mainland Japan. In addition, constructivism has also demonstrated that base opposition in Okinawa was able to shape the base politics of the United States and Japan. However, in contrast, enhanced security cooperation between the US and Japan did not affect the anti-base movement in Okinawa. Therefore, this thesis concludes that Okinawan base opposition is hardly affected by general security developments between the US and Japan, but continues to develop as long as Okinawa's local identity is shaped by the base politics of Washington and Tokyo.

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