

Hawaii Shirts, Protest and Rock 'n Roll: A Post-Cold War Examination of the Social-Cultural Role of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa

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Table of Contents

Title Page

Table of Contents 2

Introduction 3

Chapter 1: America in the World 8

Chapter 2: Bases in Okinawa 19

Chapter 3: the Social-Cultural Roles of U.S. Military
Bases in Okinawa 35

Chapter 4: the Social-Political Reaction 49

Conclusion 61

Works Cited 64

Introduction

Flying into Naha International Airport from Osaka, a mere two-hour flight away, what immediately strikes the eye is how everyone is dressed in flamboyant Hawaii shirts. However, the more time one spends wandering around Okinawa and its adjacent islands, the more one learns about the American presence in Okinawa. That local tourist information centres refer to Okinawa as Japan's Hawaii begins to explain the popular Hawaii shirts. In a twist of irony, similarly to Hawaii, Okinawa is also dotted with U.S. military bases.

It turns out that Okinawa is a U.S. military hub in the East-Asia region. Hajime, a kind rakugo storyteller (a traditional form of Japanese storytelling) who offered to be my local guide, drives me around on one of the few main roads that span the island. High, overgrown fences, intermittently interrupted by steel gates and U.S. military guards, often obstruct the view. It is easy to see what Yonetani meant when she wrote that Okinawa resembles a film-like combination of *Platoon* infused with *Dr. Strangelove* due to the bases and the military planes flying above the sub-tropic vistas.¹

The Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum exhibits Okinawa's post-war days under U.S. military occupation until the reversion to Japanese administration in 1972. The exhibition illustrates a harsh military rule, abandonment by Tokyo and the social segregation implemented by the bases. The result is a moving depiction of Okinawa as the spoils of war under the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty.

Yet, despite the museum's accounts of Okinawa's victimisation by both Japan and the United States, locals wear Hawaii shirts, an attire so immediately – and tackily – American. Even more perplexing is when Hajime offers to drive me to the Mihama American Village, an iconic landmark in Okinawa's landscape. A quaint and dreamy simulacrum of America's old west, American Village is an entertainment venue reminiscent of Disneyland.

¹ Julia Yonetani, "Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater: Futenma Relocation, the G-8 Summit, and Okinawa," *Critical Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2001): 71, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/14672710123012>.

American culture lives among Okinawa's residents despite the on-going history of U.S. military exploitation of the island and its people. This phenomenon becomes less surprising when considering the close proximity to military bases in which Okinawans live and the extended period of time over which this exposure has taken place. Historically, U.S. military bases have been intertwined with the export of American culture and the process of Americanisation during the late twentieth century. Along with the global proliferation of U.S. military bases during the Cold War period, U.S. policymakers sought to sway foreign peoples to the American way as part of the strategy to achieve global hegemony. In this way, U.S. military bases have been instrumental in spreading American values – along with security – to faraway communities that would otherwise not have come into an equal amount of contact with America, such as Okinawa.

Thesis Aim

The aim of this thesis, then, is to explore how Americanisation, the late twentieth-century global trend of spreading American values and culture, has manifested itself in Okinawa today through the U.S. military presence. There are various ways of looking at the American global network of military outposts. Scholars such as Robert Harkavy and Alexander Cooper cover base topics such as hegemony, access diplomacy and base politics. Gerson, Lutz and Enloe have observed the socio-economic impact of bases from the late 1960s onwards. What has remained only partly touched, however, has been the specific cultural impact that bases have had. According to Ogura, "the cultural function of overseas U.S. military bases has been overlooked".²

In her volume *World Connecting*, Emily Rosenberg talks about twentieth century transnational currents to explain cultural flows and transfers among people who share traditions, habits, artefacts, customs and cultural preferences.³ U.S. military bases and their GIs have been a part of this globalising current by functioning as nodes for the transference of American culture and

² Toshimaru Ogura, "Military Base Culture and Okinawan Rock 'n' Roll," *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 4, no. 3 (2003): 470, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1464937032000143823>.

³ Emily S. A. Rosenberg, *World Connecting, 1870-1945. A History of the World* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), 814-996.

values abroad. Enloe describes how foreign soldiers are able to transform local workers such as chambermaids and night-club dancers into “a major globalized job category”.⁴ Moreover, she points out that every individual is an international political actor, in terms of how “one’s own family dynamics, consumer behaviors, travel choices, relationships with others, and ways of thinking about the world actually help shape that world”.⁵ Her observation counts for soldiers and their families stationed abroad who shape the base and host communities. Furthermore, this transnational transformation is politicised, occurring within a power dynamic of economic dependency, between the occupier and the occupied, often most evident in terms of unequal gender relations.⁶ With its history of U.S. military occupation and its continued militarisation under the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, Okinawa is a case in point for Enloe’s observations.

Defining the cultural relationship between military bases and their host communities has been the social impact of these bases. Various communities hosting U.S. military bases, such as Diego Garcia, the Philippines and Okinawa, have a tumultuous history of anti-base movements and protestations against military institution and its near colonial conditions.⁷ It is within this context that cultural transfer takes place between the military community and the host community, whether in terms of American values, artefacts or cultural tastes.

U.S. military bases in Okinawa are a remnant of the Cold War. Yet, decades after the war’s end, these bases still exist in much the same capacity as part of new regional U.S. security strategies. The 1990s was a decade of political and social turmoil in Okinawa. The U.S. sought to reaffirm its alliance with Japan, which it managed in 1996 through the reaffirmation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. However, framing these negotiations from June 1995 onwards were massive protests against

⁴ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. Second Edition, Completely Revised and Updated. ed. University Of California Press, 2014, 31.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁷ Catherine Lutz, “Introduction: Bases, Empire, and Global Response”, in *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against US Military Posts*, ed. Catherine Lutz (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 1-46.

Okinawa's militarisation under the U.S.-Japan alliance marked the social-political landscape. As Tanji suggests, this period of anti-base protest is still on-going today.⁸

Scholars such as Tanji, Johnson, Sarantakes, Obermiller and Siddle have described Okinawa's military history, its anti-base movements during and in the decade after the Cold War and the U.S. military's policies of Americanisation during the occupation years. What has been left out is an examination of how the American image has come to be defined within Okinawa's post-Cold War community of protest. Therefore, this thesis will examine the social-cultural role of U.S. military bases in Okinawa with an emphasis on the post-Cold-War period from 1995 to 2017. By covering this period, the thesis is able to provide a contemporary perspective of Okinawa's situation by taking into account the 1996 reaffirmation of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, force realignment policies in the wake of 9/11 and the military stance of President Trump and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. U.S. military bases have inserted America into Okinawa's social, political and cultural landscape. The central research question of this thesis is how U.S. military bases shape the reception of the American image within Okinawa's social-political context of anti-base culture by obscuring the undesirable military aspects of the bases using American cultural appeal.

The format of the thesis divides the analysis of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa into four chapters with each chapter assessing a separate issue at stake. The first chapter will describe the global trend of Americanisation during the Cold War and the global base network up to the current day as context for the rest of the study. This will include an illustration of the U.S.'s growing role as a cultural, economic and military hegemon in East Asia. The next chapter will examine the existence of military bases in Okinawa today. Attention will be given to the current situation, the historic development, the strategic rationale and the legal status of U.S. troops abroad. The third chapter examines how cultural America exists within Okinawa's physical and social landscape. Attention is given to the role played by this cultural presence for the relationship between the military institution and Okinawa's communities. Finally, the fourth chapter will examine Okinawa's history of political

⁸ Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa* (London: Routledge, 2006), 1-10.

and social unrest because of the U.S. military institution. Combined, the chapters provide a description of the deeper social, political and cultural context of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa.

Chapter 1: America in the World

1.1. Americanisation and (Global) Cold War

When the Empire of Japan signed the Instrument of Surrender on September 2, 1945, it marked the end of the Second World War. Coming out of the war more powerful than before, the United States prepared to take on the role of a global player and leader. However, its key counterpart, the Soviet Union, also emerged as a superpower, dividing the world into two until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.⁹ Led by the United States, the fight against communism would shape global politics for the decades to come.¹⁰

Out of concern of losing the free world as trading partners and allies and out of fear for the rise of another totalitarian adversary who could conquer Europe and Asia, President “Truman and his advisers embraced the idea of containment... determined to contain the further expansion of Soviet Power and Communist influence”.¹¹ In order to pursue this containment policy, “the overriding priority was to keep the power centers of Europe and Asia outside the Soviet orbit and linked to the United States”.¹² In pursuit of this objective, Japan would be “firmly in the grasp of U.S. occupation authorities under General Douglas MacArthur”.¹³ Furthermore, West Germany, Western Europe and Japan had “to be revived economically”.¹⁴ In order to escape the Soviet influence or the possibility of internal Communist Parties taking power, these regions quickly had to “become self-supporting, capable of earning dollars to pay for their required imports”.¹⁵

⁹ Vladimir Pechatnov, "The Soviet Union and the World, 1944–1953," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 101, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521837194.006>.

¹⁰ Melvyn Leffler, "The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945–1952," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 73. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/10.1017/CHOL9780521837194.005>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 77.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

After the war, the U.S. share of global product was more than a third, because, unlike most other nations, the war had strengthened the United States.¹⁶ Especially in comparison to the depression prior to the war, ‘Americans never had it so good’.¹⁷ This placed the U.S. at an advantage in the Cold War because it demonstrated the superiority of the U.S. economic model as an example to other nations.¹⁸ Using their hegemonic position, U.S. policymakers worked to sell the American way to nations and peoples around the globe. This happened in a number of ways, ranging from economic models to cultural artefacts and Hollywood films.¹⁹

However, the combined policies of militarisation and economic and cultural export to combat communism created a juxtaposition of the American image abroad. When considering the export of Americanism during the Cold War, it is important to observe the lack of distinction between the U.S. military presence abroad and economic development and free trade as essential parts of global engagement. Foreign communities, especially those hosting U.S. military bases, had to find ways to cope with this complex American image.

Amidst the rumblings of the developing Cold War, Japan, a nation fully under the grasp of the United States, became a vital stronghold of Western capitalism in Asia. Guthrie-Shimizu writes that after the war, “it was the United States’ self-assigned mission to remold Japan into a stable democracy conforming to the Western and capitalist rules of the game”.²⁰ Furthermore, amidst “the dissolution of Japan’s colonial empire and its democratic makeover” the wider process of

¹⁶ Joseph S. Nye, “Soft Power.” *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (1990), 153. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/10.1017/CHOL9780521837194.006>.

¹⁷ Mary Nolan, "From World War to Cold War," in *The Transatlantic Century: Europe and America, 1890–2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012): 166, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/10.1017/CBO9781139016872.007>.

¹⁸ Dominique Barjot, “Americanisation: Cultural Transfers in the Economic Sphere in the Twentieth Century.” *Entreprises et Histoire*, no. 32 (April 2009): 42, http://www.cairn.info.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/resume.php?ID_ARTICLE=EH_032_0041.

¹⁹ Kenneth Osgood, review of *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War*, by Laura A. Belmonte, *The Journal of American History* 96, no. 1 (2009): 289-90, <https://academic-oup-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/jah/article/96/1/289/738588/Selling-the-American-Way-U-S-Propaganda-and-thehttps://academic.oup.com/jah/article/96/1/289/738588>.

²⁰ Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu, "Japan, the United States, and the Cold War, 1945–1960" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 244.

decolonisation was taking place in Asia during the 1950s.²¹ The U.S. sought to harness this development to its own advantage and that of Japan's, but was frustrated because "in the early Cold War years... Moscow and Beijing, armed with revolutionary ideology and propagating alternative visions of social organization, appeared to hold an advantage in the competition for the hearts and minds of recently decolonized nations in Asia and elsewhere".²² Therefore, "from 1945 to 1960, it was under this composite overhang of the global superpower rivalry and the process of decolonization that the United States and Japan had to readjust their relationship and maximize their respective interests".²³

In its potential to shape the modern world in one of two antithetical ideologies, Leffler summarised the Cold War as "a struggle for the very soul of mankind... It was a struggle for a way of life".²⁴ The Cold War had to be waged as it was a "competition between two different models of modernity" which "transcended strategic, economic, and domestic political considerations".²⁵ In this light, it was a war waged by U.S. and Soviet policymakers and leaders who "thought they represented superior ways of organizing human existence".²⁶

Around the time of the Korean War, U.S. policymakers and scholars became convinced of the importance of "imparting the American Way of Life to others because American culture seemed to be resistant to autocracies on the left or the right".²⁷ Furthermore, policymakers believed that the soul of democracy lay in America's enterprise-based culture. Therefore, the promotion of an enterprise-based culture would automatically, if indirectly, spread democratic values around the

²¹ Ibid., 245.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 245-246.

²⁴ Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 3.

²⁵ Thomas R. Maddux, review of *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*, by Melvyn P. Leffler, *American Historical Review* 113, no. 4 (October 2008): 1129-1130. *Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection*: 1129. http://www.jstor.org/stable/30223268?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

²⁶ Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*, 452.

²⁷ Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, "How Good Are We? Culture and the Cold War," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-60*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith, et al (London: Routledge, 2003), 226.

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c383dc7b-3016-45d6-922d-c40c0f407096%40sessionmgr120&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=106079&db=nlebk>

world and consequently “destroy fascism, communism, and other unsavory foreign ideologies”.²⁸

Besides promoting an enterprise-based culture, the U.S. government proceeded to create a number of culturally “proselytising organisations and programs, such as the United States Information Agency and the Fulbright exchange program, that aspired to export American culture, including literature, music, and art, abroad”.²⁹

Barjot argues that American export culture is based on more than just enterprise, describing that the American field of trade is infused with “art, politics, religion, education, sport, sex, family and childhood”.³⁰ In line with this idea, policymakers exported artefacts “typical for American culture and society” in the hope that “U.S. goals were in harmony with their hopes for freedom, progress and peace”.³¹ In the end, the technological and economic superiority of the United States made Americanisation possible, which introduced their “techniques as well as way of life”, which became viewed as necessities to escape from poverty and communism.³²

This export of Americanism happened not only in Europe in the post-war years and later decades, but across the world, including far-east Asia. In Asia, during the Cold War, American hegemony filled the void left after the removal of the pre-war Japanese colonial rule, replacing Japan as role model.³³ Due to this, America was the one to provide “the scenario for a new lifestyle through the medium of the English language, films, television, and advertising. In this sense, ‘America’ may have acted as the model of consumerist modernity for Japan, South Korea and Taiwan”.³⁴

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Jessica Gienow-Hecht, “Culture and the Cold War in Europe,” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, edited by Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 467, <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/books/cambridge-history-of-the-cold-war/culture-and-the-cold-war-in-europe/B75BE08AFB90BA9C14C67D464BE91B07>.

³⁰ Barjot, “Americanisation: Cultural Transfers in the Economic Sphere in the Twentieth Century,” 42.

³¹ Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War - A Critical Review.” *Diplomatic History* 24, no. 3 (2000): 469, <https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1111/0145-2096.00227>.

³² Barjot, “Americanisation: Cultural Transfers in the Economic Sphere in the Twentieth Century,” 46.

³³ Shunya Yoshimi and David Buist, “‘America’ as Desire and Violence: Americanization in Postwar Japan and Asia during the Cold War,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 4 no. 3 (2003): 445, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1464937032000143797>.

³⁴ Ibid.

For countries such as South Korea and Taiwan, the Cold War pre-dominantly dictated their relationship with the United States. Taiwan, when it was recolonised by the retreating Kuomintang of China (KMT) following their defeat by the Communist Party in China in 1949, “received military and economic aid from America as part of the Cold War policy of anti-communism”.³⁵ South Korea hailed America as the liberator from Japanese colonial rule. Following the Korea war, this relationship changed into a shared concern for the division with the North. In this way the “emphasis of America’s policy towards Asia shifted from democratisation and the elimination of Japanese imperialism to the construction of an anti-communist stronghold in Asia”.³⁶

Besides providing military security, South Korea also saw America as key to realising their dream for economic development and a consumer society.³⁷ Similarly in the Philippines, the U.S. embodied more than a military role. Here, impoverished young people incorporated American cultural performances into their lives, such as “amateur singing contests and beauty pageants”.³⁸ Too poor to buy American products, they instead imitated America. In the case of the Philippines, therefore, America is more significant than an economic luxury, wherein the “imitation of America becomes a means of self-transformation for these impoverished Philippine youths”.³⁹

This association of economic and social prosperity with the United States was a vital asset for Americanisation in Asia. Guthrie-Shimizu writes that through U.S. control of the Japanese economy in the post-war years, the Eisenhower administration “achieved its major Cold-War strategic objective of rebuilding the Japanese economy and integrating it into the western free world economy under U.S. tutelage”.⁴⁰ The Japanese were to showcase “a people of plenty”, serving as a “economically content, stabilizing force in a region prone to economic chaos, ideological uncertainties, and political

³⁵ Ibid., 444.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid., 445.

³⁸ Ibid., 446.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu, *Creating People of Plenty: The United States and Japan’s Economic Alternatives, 1950–1960* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2001), 15, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/303968371/abstract/AB25531451054A86PQ/1>.

instability”.⁴¹ Truman’s and Eisenhower’s policy was for Japan to represent the advantages for nations to align themselves with the U.S, which would enable Washington to sell the dream of achieving Japan’s prosperity to fledgling, ex-colonial nations.⁴²

The occupation period in Japan “refuelled the Americanisation of Japanese mass culture, a permutation of the phenomenon commonly seen during the Cold War wherever American forces were stationed”.⁴³ American-style consumerism became particularly popular among the urban middle class in terms of entertainment venues and ways of life, wherein “jazz cafés, dance halls, movie theaters, and American youth apparel and accompanying free-spirited and individualistic social mores became familiar fixtures of urban life”.⁴⁴ Furthermore, “American household amenities and lifestyles were envied and coveted as emblems of ‘modern life’”.⁴⁵ Before the militarisation of forced austerity of the 1930s, American things already fascinated Japan and “the arrival of occupation forces and their dependents ignited its postwar revival”.⁴⁶ Yoshimi writes that because of the defeat of their empire, America became a “symbol of wealth and freedom onto which Japanese people themselves pinned their hopes”.⁴⁷

1.2. U.S. Bases as Transnational Currents

In her essay *Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World*, Rosenberg explains the concept of transnational currents. These currents are the flows of ideas, cultural influences, and economic and social exchanges that especially in the twentieth century “circulated across and beyond national states and drew the world together in new ways”.⁴⁸ Among these currents, Rosenberg lists a number of transnational phenomena, including postal organizations, sports competitions, administrative and non-governmental bodies, labor and women’s movements, religious missions and scientific works.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Guthrie-Shimizu, "Japan, the United States, and the Cold War, 1945–1960," 248.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Yoshimi and Buist, “‘America’ as Desire and Violence,” 434.

⁴⁸ Rosenberg, *A World Connecting, 1870-1945*, 814-996.

The military bases that spread during and after the war incorporated a variety of these transnational phenomena.⁴⁹

U.S. military bases have functioned as nodes for U.S. cultural transnational currents spreading around the world. In this way, the global U.S. military presence has functioned as a major cultural force. When U.S. forces arrived in Japan, the Japanese were “astonished and delighted by the disciplined and extraordinarily generous behavior of the victors, who used candy bars, chewing gum, and other long-forgotten consumer goods – rather than bayonets – to win the favor of the Japanese people”.⁵⁰ During the occupation period of Japan, “consumer goods and electrical appliances displayed in PXes (post exchanges, stores operated by the US Army on its bases) fed the acquisitive fantasy of the battered and impoverished local population and established the attainment of material comfort as the legitimate goal of a peace-loving and ‘democratic’ citizenry”.⁵¹ Furthermore, “food, music, sports, and other forms of popular entertainment came under heavy American influences, due in no small part to the presence of US troops”.⁵² American families of military personnel also contributed to the American image by spreading American family values.⁵³

1.3. U.S. Military Base Proliferation

As can be seen in the case of Japan, U.S. cultural and political hegemony following the Second World War was not just the result of the proliferation of American culture, image and way of life as something to be aspired to but was engrained within a U.S. military culture that engrained itself in the host country. Lutz points out that U.S. military basing is not just a phenomenon in Europe

⁴⁹ Dario Fazzi, “Embodying the American Century: The U.S. Military Presence in Europe throughout the Cold War,” in Frank Mehring and Jorrit van den Berk (eds.), “Forging the American Century,” in *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*, forthcoming, Fall 2018.

⁵⁰ Warren I. Cohen, *East Asia at the Center: Four Thousand Years of Engagement with the World*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 371, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), EBSCOhost (accessed March 14, 2018)..

⁵¹ Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu, “Baseball as a Vehicle of Soft Power in US–Japanese Relations: A Historical Perspective,” in *Softpower Superpowers*, ed. David McConnell and Yasuyuki Watanabe (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2008), 133–36.

<http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=e048edb0-e8fd-4bf1-b0ed-a8029fee78b4%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=275534&db=nlebk>.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965* (NYU Press, 2007), 5-10.

and East-Asia, but that there has been a global proliferation of bases as a trend in the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the 21st.⁵⁴ The United States “has more military bases outside its own borders than any other country”.⁵⁵ Lutz writes that, officially, in a 2007 report by the U.S. Department of Defence, “over 190,000 troops and 115,000 civilian employees are massed in 909 military facilities in 46 countries and territories. There, the U.S. military owns or rents 795,000 acres of land, and 26,000 buildings and structures valued at \$146 billion”.⁵⁶ This sudden increase has been a trend since World War 2, with the result that “the global scale of U.S. military basing would remain primarily the twentieth-century outcome of World War II, and with it, the rise to global hegemony of the United States”⁵⁷. According to Johnson, this global network of military bases constitutes “an empire of bases with its own geography not likely to be taught in any high school geography class”.⁵⁸ Enloe, too, writes that all these bases are “one of the reasons so many people in other countries think the United States qualifies as an ‘empire’”.⁵⁹ With such staggering figures, the close proximity and reception of U.S. military bases in foreign communities is vital to studying the reception of American culture and the American image abroad.

Not all of these bases are super-structures such as Kadena Air Base on Okinawa, nor are they all located in battle zones. Consisting of “sprawling army bases, small listening posts, missile and artillery testing ranges, and berthed aircraft carriers”⁶⁰, these facilities are deployed in regions ranging from turbulent Afghanistan and Iraq to quieter corners of “Curaçao, Korea and Britain”⁶¹. Moreover, these bases represent more than a collection of barracks, arms, personnel, military staging areas, and sports facilities, such as golf and basketball courses. They are also “political claims, spoils of war, arms sales showrooms, toxic industrial sites, laboratories for cultural (mis)communication, and collections

⁵⁴ Lutz. “Introduction: Bases, Empire, and Global Response”: 1.

⁵⁵ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 135.

⁵⁶ Lutz. “Introduction: Bases, Empire, and Global Response”, 1.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Chalmers Johnson, “America’s Empire of Bases”, *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 1, no. 5 (May 23, 2003), 1, <https://apjif.org/-Chalmers-Johnson/2029/article.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 135.

⁶⁰ Lutz. “Introduction: Bases, Empire, and Global Response”, 4.

⁶¹ Ibid.

of customers for local bars, shops, and prostitution”⁶². In this respect, these bases have a significant “environmental, political and economic impact”, more often resulting in a sense of insecurity within local populations by their regional intrusiveness and meddling than the sense of security the Pentagon repeatedly argues they provide⁶³. This happens because bases are militarised to the extent that any actions executed by base personnel need to serve military priorities, “not environmental priorities, not civilian democratic priorities, and not women’s rights priorities”.⁶⁴ Due to these aggravations, Lutz writes, “global opposition to U.S. basing has been widespread and growing rapidly”⁶⁵.

1.4. The Institutionalisation of American Base Politics in Asia

As with South Korea and Taiwan, the changing policy of the United States for Japan and Okinawa was part of the changes made to their Asia policy in 1947 due to the onset of the Cold War and after the Chinese revolution.⁶⁶ This policy intended to make Japan the “leading member of the Western camp in Asia”.⁶⁷ According to Yoshikazu, “this indicated a momentous shift in the very assumptions on which the Occupation had been launched; the initial reform oriented policy in force since the end of the war would be superseded by a Cold War-oriented policy”.⁶⁸ The U.S. gave Japan an economic emphasis while the military burden of defence against China and North Korea was shifted to Okinawa, South Korea and Taiwan, resulting in the U.S. giving its “backing to Chiang Kai Shek and Syngman Rhee, whose authoritarian power enable these countries to build armed forces far out of proportion to their economic strength”.⁶⁹

This division of labour along economic and military lines was perhaps most acutely felt in the split between Okinawa and mainland Japan. Both experienced the U.S. and its bases very differently. Unlike Japan, in Okinawa, military bases would proliferate in the 1950s and 1960s in response to

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 138.

⁶⁵ Lutz. “Introduction: Bases, Empire, and Global Response”, 4.

⁶⁶ Yoshimi and Buist, “‘America’ as Desire and Violence,” 442.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Sakamoto Yoshikazu, “The International Context of the Occupation of Japan,” in *Democratizing Japan*, ed. Robert E. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 61, <https://quod-lib-umich-edu.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=acls;idno=heb01849.0001.001>.

⁶⁹ Yoshimi and Buist, “‘America’ as Desire and Violence,” 443

North Korea and the worsening situation in Indochina. Here, America's main goal was to provide "a stable environment for the construction of military bases" and not necessarily to promote economic recovery.⁷⁰ These developments led to the image of America in mainland Japanese perception being divorced from the obtrusive bases and their associated violence, in contrast to "the entirely different situation in other parts of East Asia, such as Okinawa, South Korea and Taiwan".⁷¹

According to Lee, military, political and social issues become conflated when armies are hosted by, or occupy, foreign countries.⁷² Similarly, Yoshimi stresses that American culture cannot be depoliticised and treated separately from political or military matters. This is because issues of unequal power relations and freedom are an integral part of the "ideological and political processes that operate precisely by projecting America as an object of desire".⁷³

A further politicising of American culture is the split in the base experience. Two Japanese perceptions of America took shape in the early post-war decades. One America was an object of desire and consumption, in terms of material goods, media images and cultural artefacts such as music and film. This America "gradually lost its associations with military violence".⁷⁴ The second America was "literally embodied in violence and became the object of anti-base protest".⁷⁵

1.5. Conclusion

Driven by the necessity of the Cold War, the United States spread a global network of military bases to become the military hegemon in distant regions, including East Asia. This policy accompanied a policy of Americanisation, wherein policymakers strove to make the American image and way of life appealing in the fight to sway more people to the western alignment. Besides providing regional military security, U.S. military bases functioned as nodes of Americanisation in

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Steven Hugh Lee, "Military Occupation and Empire Building in Cold War Asia: The United States and Korea," in *Cold War in East Asia: 1945-1991*, ed. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2011), 116-117.

⁷³ Yoshimi and Buist, "'America' as Desire and Violence," 443.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

these regions. U.S. GIs and their families would carry with them American values, expectations and artefacts, exposing local communities to an America they would otherwise not have experienced. In this way, the U.S. military and American culture would become indistinguishable in distant communities.

In East Asia, the United States developed policy to turn Japan into the regional economic pillar to ensure regional stability but also to provide an example of the benefits of aligning with the west. However, this was done at the expense of militarising other East Asian places, such as South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines and Okinawa. Where Japan experienced a more benevolent America, Okinawa would experience a very different, militaristic side. Here, the violence of the war would continue with bases and anti-base protests characterising the landscape. In contrast, by the late 1960s, the few remaining military facilities in mainland Japan were isolated from surrounding society, meaning that base culture and military personnel “ceased to be a part of people’s everyday lives”.⁷⁶ Although in Japan memories of U.S. military violence would disappear along with the bases, they would not in Okinawa, where especially the 1950s and 1960s were decades of “harsh military rule”.⁷⁷

Furthermore, whether visible or not, in the context of American military hegemony, the American cultural experience could not be depoliticised. As Enloe stated, military bases create militarised spaces wherein all actions and function to serve the military above all else.⁷⁸ This is arguably still the case in Okinawa, which continues, even since its reversion to Japanese administration in 1972, to function as an American colony. On this note, the next chapter will examine in detail the situation of U.S. military bases in Okinawa, what they look like now, how they came to be and the politics of the U.S.-Japan security alliance that allows them to continue to exist even after the end of the Cold War.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Christopher Aldous, "Achieving Reversion: Protest and Authority in Okinawa, 1952-70," *Modern Asian Studies* 37, no. 2 (2003): 487, <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/journals/modern-asian-studies/article/achieving-reversion-protest-and-authority-in-okinawa-195270/4197A42DB3BAC3AABD2DA1BB789A113E>.

⁷⁸ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 138.

Chapter 2: Bases in Okinawa

2.1. Introduction

To understand how U.S. military bases have influenced Okinawa's social-political and cultural landscape, what needs to be examined first is how military bases exist in Okinawa. This chapter will first describe the size, statistics and figures of bases in Okinawa. Next, the problems concerning bases located in densely populated areas will be illustrated. Following this, the chapter will trace the historical development of bases in Okinawa within the politics of the post-Second-World War and Cold War context. Afterwards the strategic consideration concerning the continued existence of military bases in Okinawa in the post-Cold War climate will be discussed. Some attention is then given to the legalities of hosting U.S. military troops on foreign soil, as represented through Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs). Finally, this chapter will bring to light the politics concerning these military bases in more recent years, including an examination of the costs for the U.S.-Japan alliance of stationing troops in Okinawa.

2.2. The Lay of the Land

Okinawa's proximity to the Korean Peninsula, China and Taiwan makes its location extremely valuable, which is why it is often referred to as the "Keystone of the Pacific".⁷⁹ It is the largest island of the Ryukyu archipelago, located 1500 km from Tokyo, but is still only 100 km long and 15 km wide.⁸⁰ Despite its size, the island hosts around "23,000 soldiers and 21,000 of their relatives", equalling to "half of the troops stationed in Japan under the security alliance with the United States (representing one in three American soldiers stationed in Asia-Pacific)".⁸¹ As of 2006, these military individuals comprise of "13,480 marines and 7,080 airmen".⁸² These numbers show that military stationing in Okinawa is disproportionate to the rest of Japan.

⁷⁹ Céline Pajon, "Understanding the Issue of US Military Bases in Okinawa," *Asie Visions* 29, no. 4 (June 2010): 5, <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/enotes/asie-visions/understanding-issue-us-military-bases-okinawa>.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Reiji Yoshida, "Basics of the U.S. Military Presence," *The Japan Times Online* (March 25, 2008), <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2008/03/25/reference/basics-of-the-u-s-military-presence/#.WrO9OtTwa00>.

To put this discrepancy into further perspective, as of 2016, “even though Okinawa constitutes only 0.6 percent of Japan’s total landmass, it is burdened with 73.8 percent of the US military bases in Japan under the US-Japan Security Treaty”.⁸³ This entails that “about 25% of all facilities used by U.S. Forces in Japan and about half of the U.S. military personnel are located in the prefecture, which comprises less than 1% of Japan’s total land area.”⁸⁴ As of 2011, around 11% of Okinawa prefecture’s “total area is covered by bases”.⁸⁵ With this amount militarisation the “Japanese archipelago serves as the most significant forward-operating platform for the U.S. military in the region”.⁸⁶ For reference, the whole of Japan hosts “approximately 53,000 [U.S.] military personnel (39,000 onshore and 14,000 afloat in nearby waters), 43,000 dependents, and 5,000 Department of Defense civilian employees”.⁸⁷

Moreover, “on the mainland, most of the land where U.S. bases are located belongs to the Japanese government and other public entities and is provided free of charge, based on the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty”.⁸⁸ This treaty “obliges Japan to give the U.S. use of those properties to maintain peace and order in Japan and the Far East”.⁸⁹ In contrast to mainland Japan, in Okinawa “one-third of the area used by U.S. forces is privately owned, most of it having been confiscated by the U.S. military soon after the war”.⁹⁰ This means that in contrast to the mainland, in Okinawa a large number of private landowners cannot make use of their land.

As of 2016, Okinawa Prefecture “hosts 32 U.S. military facilities including one USF J-JSDF Joint Use Facility”.⁹¹ The “total area of all the U.S. facilities is 18,822.2 hectares and 31 facilities with

⁸³ Ayano Ginoza, “R&R at the Intersection of US and Japanese Dual Empire: Okinawan Women and Decolonizing Militarized Heterosexuality,” *American Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (2016): 584, <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/article/631121>.

⁸⁴ Emma Chanlett-Avery, and Ian E. Rinehart, “The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and the Futenma Base Controversy,” *Congressional Research Service* (2016): 1, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42645.pdf>.

⁸⁵ Masahiro Matsumura, “Okinawa and the Politics of an Alliance,” *Survival* 53, no. 4 (2011): 153, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/full/10.1080/00396338.2011.603567>.

⁸⁶ Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart, “The U.S. Military Presence in Okinawa and the Futenma Base Controversy,” 1.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “Base-Related Data”, *Okinawa Prefectural Government Washington D.C. Office - Official Site*, accessed March 19, 2018, <http://dc-office.org/basedata>.

18,609.2 hectares of the total area are used exclusively by the U.S. Forces”.⁹² In addition, “U.S. military bases account for 15% land areas in Okinawa Main Island which is home to over 90% of Okinawa’s population”.⁹³ Furthermore, figure one shows that most of the military bases take up significant chunks of flat – useful – lands in the central urban areas, as well as portions to the north and south.⁹⁴

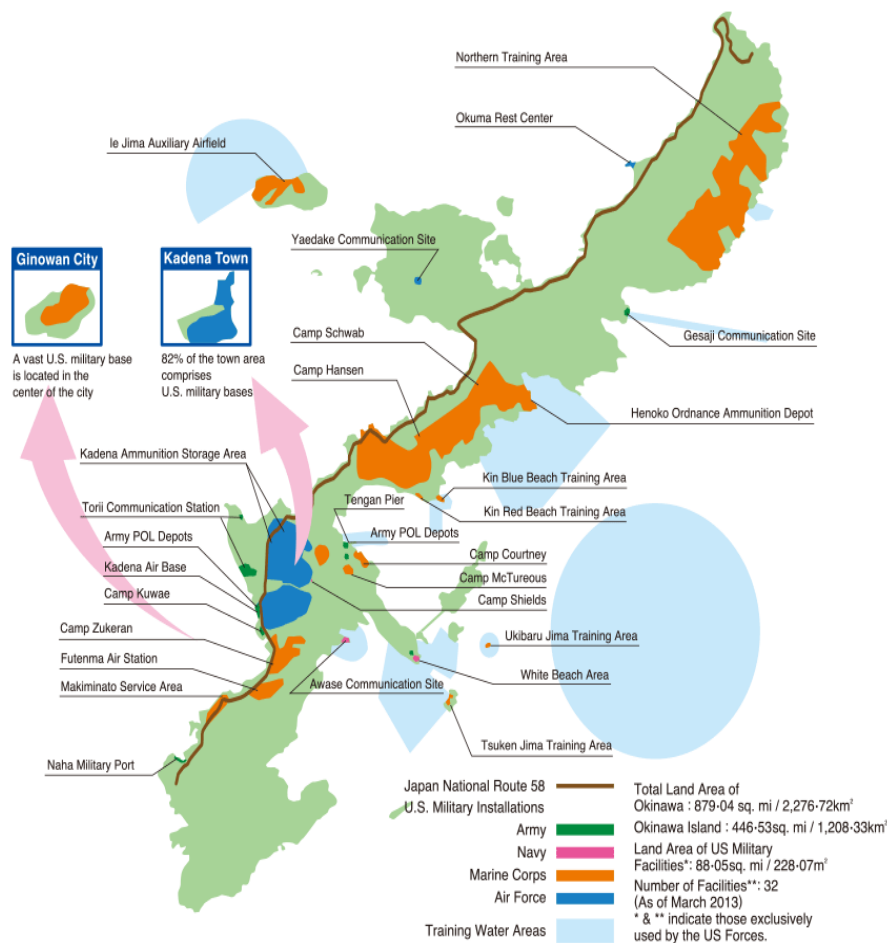


Figure 1. U.S. Military Bases on Okinawa, 2016, from Okinawa Prefectural Government Washington D.C. Office, <http://dc-office.org/basedata> (accessed March 20, 2018).

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

2.3. Bases and their Difficulties and Dangers

U.S. military bases in Okinawa are a danger to the local population and hamper urban development. Okinawa Island is home to around “91% of the prefecture’s population and approximately 80% of the Island’s population is concentrated in the southern half, where various industries are also located”.⁹⁵ Indeed, the U.S. military’s Northern Training Area takes up a large part of the north of the island, pushing urban development southwards. Furthermore, “the US military bases located in densely populated and commercialised areas greatly restrict urban functions, traffic system and land usage”.⁹⁶

American soldiers have often struggled with local regulation and infringed Japanese law. A 2011 report released by the prefectural government of Okinawa indicates that between 1972 and 2010, there has been an annual average of 41 incidents and accidents and an annual average of 150 criminal cases.⁹⁷ In addition, between 1981 and 2010, there has been an annual average of 89 traffic accidents.⁹⁸ This results in an “average of 23 incidents or accidents per month, including traffic-related”.⁹⁹ On top of this, there have been also “daily aircraft noise emissions (at times exceeding 100db!) and other adverse environmental impacts associated with US Forces training”.¹⁰⁰

Out of these bases, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma symbolises many of the obstructive dynamics characterising the American presence in Okinawa. For example, MCAS Futenma is situated in the midst of Ginowan City, “covering about 480 hectares and includes a 2,800-meter-long and 46-meter-wide runway. It occupies a fourth of the total area of Ginowan City, and it is right in the center of the city. Roads, waterworks and sewerage systems have to make a detour to avoid the air

⁹⁵ “US Military Base Issues in Okinawa,” *Reversion Affairs Division, Executive Office of the Governor, Okinawan Prefectural Government* (2011), 2, accessed March 22, 2018, <http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/chijiko/kichitai/documents/us%20military%20base%20issues%20in%20okinawa.pdf>.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

station”.¹⁰¹ As such, the base represents “a major obstacle to improving the city’s infrastructure”.¹⁰² In addition, “to avoid inconvenience to US aircraft approaching to the air station, the height of buildings is restricted near the base, and thus redevelopment, which Ginowan City wants to undertake, cannot be carried out”.¹⁰³ Finally, MCAS Futenma’s 1,188 acres of land are “leased from about 2,000 private landowners by the government of Japan”.¹⁰⁴

A 2011 report released by the prefectural government of Okinawa states that MCAS Futenma is dangerous because of its location in the “midst of a densely populated area and it does not have established clear zones, which are necessary for safety in the areas near the runway”.¹⁰⁵ A number of accidents involving U.S. military aircraft validate the government’s fears, such as the crash of the US Marine Corps CH-53D helicopter into the Okinawan International University in 2004.¹⁰⁶

2.4. Cold War Island

The U.S. military and Japanese government did not build these bases overnight; they are part of a longer history of a political and social issue concerning the strategic placement of U.S. military installations on Japanese soil since the Second World War. To understand this issue, it is important to trace the development of how Americans became a part of the Okinawan landscape.

Following the Korean War and in the context of an aggressive communist China, by 1950, Japan had proven itself an ideal regional partner for the U.S. As part of the “‘East-Asian Co-prosperity Sphere’ under an American military aegis”, the United States would transform Japan into the “centre of an anti-communist economic sphere in Asia”.¹⁰⁷ The result was the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty. With no “direct reference to Japan’s war responsibility”, the treaty was extremely lenient on the former aggressor.¹⁰⁸ However, the treaty came at a price. A concurrent bilateral security

¹⁰¹ John E. Pike, “Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.” *Globalsecurity*, accessed March 22, 2018, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/futenma.htm>.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ “US Military Base Issues in Okinawa,” *Reversion Affairs Division, Executive Office of the Governor, Okinawan Prefectural Government* (2011), 1.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Yoshimi and David Buist, “‘America’ as Desire and Violence: 422.

¹⁰⁸ Guthrie-Shimizu. “Japan, the United States, and the Cold War, 1945–1960”: 252.

agreement, the Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan, gave “the United States the continued and fundamentally unrestricted use of bases in Japan proper and total administrative control over Okinawa until ‘peace and security’ were achieved in the Far East”.¹⁰⁹ Japan had thus effectively entered a form of military bondage to the United States.¹¹⁰

Already suspecting that Tokyo had sacrificed their island to delay the invasion of Japan and thus gain better “surrender terms from the Allies”, Okinawans again felt cheated by Tokyo officials who they believed sought to ascertain Japanese independence and the quick recovery of the Japanese economy.¹¹¹ Indeed, in exchange for base rights, the United States assured Japan of their national sovereignty with few controls and leniency concerning war reparations, guaranteed access to U.S. markets to offset Japanese industrial goods and security assurances against growing communist threats in Asia.¹¹²

Through this exchange, the Americans “obtained a military presence at a lower cost in Asia, which was torn apart by the Cold War”.¹¹³ This was essential as the United States regarded the establishment of bases as pivotal to their ability to “contain the communist advance in Japan and Asia, and to control any possible resurgence of Japanese militarism”.¹¹⁴ Paul Nitze, the under Secretary of State Dean Acheson in 1950, argued in the strategic Cold War paper NSC 68 that “without superior aggregate military strength... a policy of containment – which is in effect a policy of calculated and gradual coercion – is no more than a policy of bluff”.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 253.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Chalmers Johnson, “The Okinawan Rape Incident and the End of the Cold War in East Asia,” *Japan Policy Research Institute* no. 16 (February 1996), <http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp16.html>.

¹¹² Michael Schaller, *Altered States: The United States and Japan Since the Occupation*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 26-52, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=7cb66f09-f983-42bf-9456-fd897036ad86%40sessionmgr120&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW/hvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#AN=169001&db=nlebkIbid>.

¹¹³ Pajon, “Understanding the Issue of US Military Bases in Okinawa,” 7.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Leffler, “The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945–1952,” 83-84.

The security treaty assigned the U.S. two missions, namely “to ensure the defense of Japan if attacked and to maintain security in the ‘Far East’”.¹¹⁶ Not needing to maintain its own army stimulated Japan economically while ensuring that Japan would not develop any offensive capabilities. Fear of Japan’s rearmament is explicit within the Japanese post-war constitution of 1947, which prohibits the “maintenance of armed forces and the recourse to war”.¹¹⁷ Thus, for Japan, U.S. bases represented an insurance policy for national security, while also enforcing a restriction imposed by their new constitution.¹¹⁸ For the United States, in turn, the “facilities became part of U.S. military strategy, which relies on an international network of bases...”.¹¹⁹

Between 1950 and 1953, Okinawa was a vital launching platform during the Korean War as “American bombers based in Okinawa attacked North Korean targets”.¹²⁰ Furthermore, “entire marine divisions left Okinawa for Korea during the Korean War”.¹²¹ Afterwards, the United States determined that the bases had to be extended in the event of future regional calamities. Thus, between 1953 and 1956, “the U.S. military, using armed troops and often at the point of a bayonet, removed Okinawan farmers from their homes and then bulldozed the land to make way for runways for B-52 bombers – the same airplanes that flew countless missions to Haiphong, Cambodia, and the Ho Chi Minh Trail during the Vietnam War”.¹²²

Okinawa’s military bases would indeed prove valuable during the Vietnam War. According to Schaller, “one million military transport and com-bat flights originated in the Ryukyus between 1965

¹¹⁶ Pajon, "Understanding the Issue of US Military Bases in Okinawa," 7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Pajon, "Understanding the Issue of US Military Bases in Okinawa," 8.

¹²⁰ Yuko Kawato, *Protests Against U.S. Military Base Policy in Asia: Persuasion and Its Limits* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2015), 47, <https://login.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/login?URL=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=960638&site=ehost-live>.

¹²¹ D. Kirk, *Okinawa and Jeju: Bases of Discontent*, (New York: Macmillan, 2013), 7, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/leidenuniv/detail.action?docID=1474954>.

¹²² Johnson, “The Okinawan Rape Incident and the End of the Cold War in East Asia.”

and 1973".¹²³ Furthermore, "unrestricted by the 1960 security treaty, American forces stored chemical and nuclear weapons on Okinawa".¹²⁴

2.5. Politics of Reversion to Japan

Taking office in 1964, Japanese then Prime Minister, Eisaku Sato, "made the recovery of the Ryukyus one of his major goals".¹²⁵ Although personally supporting American policy in Vietnam, Sato "could not escape the anger many residents of Okinawa felt toward American use of airfields to bomb Vietnam".¹²⁶ However, "he certainly believed that Japan's access to the American market, its best chance to recover Okinawa, and ability to trade with China hinged on remaining in Washington's good graces".¹²⁷ At this time, President Johnson thought reverting Okinawa to Japan would only happen "when conditions were right" as Okinawa was vital "for the security of the Far East".¹²⁸

Conditions changed when under the Nixon administration in 1969 "only the Joint Chiefs of Staff voiced serious opposition to reversion".¹²⁹ This was part of a drastic change in policy at the time. The Nixon Doctrine, as it came to be called, acknowledged the inability of the United States "to shoulder the costs of containment in both Europe and Asia" while pursuing détente with the Soviet Union and China.¹³⁰ In this context, "Nixon offered to return Okinawa to Japan by 1972".¹³¹ However, "United States would retain military bases in the Ryukyus 'without detriment to the security of the Far East' or interference with the ability of the United States to defend the 'countries of the Far East including Japan'".¹³²

Officially beginning on May 15, 1971, reversion entailed that "although the Japanese government received administrative control over the Okinawa islands, the United States still

¹²³ Schaller, *Altered States: The United States and Japan Since the Occupation*, 196.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 191.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 190.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹³¹ Schaller, *Altered States: The United States and Japan Since the Occupation*, 218.

¹³² *Ibid.*

stationed troops in various naval, land, and air bases".¹³³ As such, the US military bases in Okinawa continued to serve as "a linchpin for the US-Japanese military alliance" due to Japan's dependence on the U.S. military for defence against China and North Korea.¹³⁴

2.6. Post-Cold War

Despite the Cold War ending in 1989, U.S. troops were still stationed across allied Asian countries during the 1990s, including "50,000 in Japan, 45,000 in South Korea and 15,000 in the Philippines".¹³⁵ In the absence of the security threat projected by the Cold War, Okinawans criticised the "Cold War-type relationships in East Asia – particularly to the presence of 100,000 American troops – and started to end the artificial distinction between economics and security relations between the United States and its trading partners in East Asia".¹³⁶ Not just Okinawa, but also other hosts to significant numbers of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific "questioned the legitimacy of such a large American presence whose economic and social costs were substantial".¹³⁷

In spite of this rising public concern, new regional threats had been found by 1995. According to Nye, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs until December 1995, who outlined the new military policy in the Nye Report, the reality of the region demanded 100,000 troops to be stationed in Japan and South Korea until 2015 as a necessary deterrent against the "'clear and present danger' posed by North Korea" and against the military expansion of China.¹³⁸ At the time, the Nye Report was welcomed in Japan, since it kept Japan from having to fully pay "for its own security".¹³⁹

According to Yonetani, President Bill Clinton and then Prime Minister Hashimoto Ry taro officially set into motion the U.S.-Japan post-Cold War bilateral security regime on 17 April 1996. The

¹³³ Scott Zhuge, "Okinawa Occupied," *Harvard International Review* 34, no. 3 (2013): 7, <https://login.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/login?URL=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=960638&site=ehost-live>.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*n

¹³⁵ Johnson, "The Okinawan Rape Incident and the End of the Cold War in East Asia."

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ Pajon, "Understanding the Issue of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa," 8.

¹³⁸ Joseph S. Nye, "The Nye Report: Six Years Later," *International Relations of the AsiaPacific* 1, no. 1 (2001): 97, <https://doi-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/10.1093/irap/1.1.95>.

¹³⁹ Johnson, "The Okinawan Rape Incident and the End of the Cold War in East Asia."

“two leaders issued a joint declaration calling for the strengthening of military ties between the two countries and the maintenance of the U.S. military presence in Japan at roughly the present level”.¹⁴⁰ The prolonged presence of the U.S. stems from a desire for peace in the East Asia region, for the sake of which “Okinawa’s modern history was rewritten”.¹⁴¹

2.7. The Importance of SOFAs

To fully understand the relationships between American military personnel abroad and local hosting communities, it is important to stress the fact that the building and maintaining of bases in host countries is done under a set of strict agreements that stipulate the conduct of U.S. military personnel and the application of domestic jurisdiction to military personnel.¹⁴² These agreements are “commonly referred to as Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs)”.¹⁴³ In essence, SOFAs “provide the framework for legal protections and rights while U.S. personnel are present in a country for agreed upon purposes” as part of the larger security arrangement.¹⁴⁴

The main issue SOFAs address is “which country may exercise criminal jurisdiction over U.S. personnel”.¹⁴⁵ There are SOFAs in which the U.S. retains “exclusive jurisdiction over its personnel” but more often the agreement “calls for shared jurisdiction with the receiving country”.¹⁴⁶ Finally, a SOFA is designed specifically for each individual country as an “executive agreement”, and are bilateral in nature.¹⁴⁷ This means that the terms of the agreement are negotiated between the host country and the U.S. Department of State and the Department of Defence combined. The only exception is “the multilateral SOFA among the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries”

¹⁴⁰ Julia Yonetani, “Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater: Futenma Relocation, the G-8 Summit, and Okinawa.” *Critical Asian Studies* 33, no. 1 (2001): 71-72, <http://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/doi/abs/10.1080/14672710123012>.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁴² R. C. Mason, “Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?” *Library of Congress Washington DC Congressional Research Service*, (2009): 1, https://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/ccap/cc/jcchb/Files/Topical/acsa/training/CRS_RL34531.pdf.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

which was established as part of a treaty.¹⁴⁸ Germany, a host country to a significant amount of U.S. military bases, enjoys the multilateral NATO SOFA.

Unlike the NATO SOFA, “the U.S.-Japan SOFA is a comprehensive, non-reciprocal agreement”.¹⁴⁹ In other words, the SOFA applies unilaterally to Japan, meaning that “if Japanese troops were stationed in U.S. territory, the U.S.-Japan SOFA would not apportion jurisdictional authority between the two nations; rather, the Japanese military personnel would simply be subject to U.S. jurisdiction”.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, the SOFA limits the amount of jurisdictional authority that the Japanese would have “over U.S. forces stationed in Japan”.¹⁵¹ This means that U.S. military personnel suspected of a crime will remain in “the custody of the U.S. military until they are formally indicted by the host nation”.¹⁵² Furthermore, if U.S. military personnel commit a criminal act while on official duty, the “United States has primary criminal jurisdiction over that person”.¹⁵³ According to Gerson, study by the Japan Peace Committee shows the result of this agreement, revealing, “that between 2001 and 2008, the number of off-duty U.S. military personnel committed 3,829 crimes. Of these, 3,184 (83 percent), including murder, robberies, and rapes, were never prosecuted”.¹⁵⁴

2.8. Base Politics Now

Due to the concentration of bases in Okinawa and its strategic location close to regional security hotspots, most notably the South and East China seas and the Korean peninsula, the forward bases in Okinawa are crucial to the U.S.-Japan “alliance’s deterrence capacity”.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, despite the occasional tensions over the balance of military burden sharing and other sources of strain

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ Ian Roberts McConnel, “A Re-Examination of the United States-Japan Status of Forces Agreement,” *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 29 (2006): 170.
<http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/bcic29&id=171&div=&collection=>

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Joseph Gerson, “Offensive Military Bases and a Troubled Alliance in Japan,” *Peace Review* 22, no. 2 (2010): 134, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/10402651003751347>.

¹⁵⁵ H. D. P. Envall and Kerri Ng, “The Okinawa ‘Effect’ in US–Japan Alliance Politics,” *Asian Security* 11, no. 3 (2015): 226, <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/14799855.2015.1111339>.

between Japan and the U.S., there has been “little effect in moderating the alliance’s strategic objectives”.¹⁵⁶

However, Tokyo also has to appease domestic tension over the security alliance. Okinawan politics have publicly challenged the military base presence because for large segment of the Okinawan public, “the U.S. military presence lacks contractual legitimacy as a result of its historical links to occupation and military administration”.¹⁵⁷ In response to these challenges to its jurisdictional authority, Tokyo has targeted “compensation and burden payments to key segments of the Okinawan population”.¹⁵⁸ These “incentives have ensured that a slight majority acquiesce, albeit tacitly, to the U.S. basing presence and its governing U.S.-Japanese security agreements”.¹⁵⁹

Little has changed in terms of Okinawa’s strategic rationale since the 1995 Nye Report. Arguably, the U.S.-Japan alliance is now even “more committed to implementing and extending their respective grand strategies—America’s rebalance to the region and Japan’s dynamic defense and ‘proactive contribution to peace’—than they have been at any time since the end of the Cold War”.¹⁶⁰ Indicative of this commitment is the increase in the number of American military personnel in Japan from “roughly 39,000 during the 2000s... to 50,000 in 2012 in response to recent security challenges from China”.¹⁶¹ Furthermore, writing in 2016, Ginoza states that “recently, President Barack Obama and former secretary of state Hillary Clinton promoted the further American militarization of Okinawa and the wider Asia-Pacific region”.¹⁶² Moreover, besides protecting Japan as a strategic economic ally, “the U.S. military presence in the Western Pacific has become an

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹⁵⁷ Alexander Cooley, *Base Politics Democratic Change and the U.S. Military Overseas* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 159, <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=8e135593-3bc9-40c6-b147-70cd3f1e8369%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbnGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=nlebk&AN=671393>.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁶¹ Koji Kagotani and Yuki Yanai, "External Threats, US Bases, and Prudent Voters in Okinawa †," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 14, no. 1 (2014): 93. <https://academic-oup-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/irap/article/14/1/91/739395>.

¹⁶² Ginoza, "R&R at the Intersection of US and Japanese Dual Empire," 584.

integral factor in sustaining U.S. global hegemony, particularly as a result of the increasing importance of East Asia to the global economy”.¹⁶³

Over the past two decades during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, bases in Japan have indeed remained “extremely important for the U.S.”.¹⁶⁴ During these conflicts, combat aircraft, military vessels and marine corps units were dispatched from bases in Japan, including Misawa and Kadena in Okinawa, “to fight in Iraq and maintain postwar security operations there”.¹⁶⁵

2.9. Base Costs

In addition to becoming an “unsinkable aircraft carrier’ in the Pacific”, another reason for basing in Okinawa is that the maintenance of this forwarding base is “significantly cheaper because of Japanese contributions to base maintenance”.¹⁶⁶ Due to its pacifist constitution, Japan depends on the U.S. for its offensive and significant defensive capabilities. By providing security for Japan, the U.S. regards Japan’s required heavy contributions to regional troop costs as a just compensation. Nonetheless, despite this security agreement, both parties manipulate data sets to increase their own contribution figures to stationing U.S. forces while downplaying the other’s.¹⁶⁷ Unsurprisingly in this context, burden sharing, as it is referred to, has been a continuous source of tension for the U.S.-Japan alliance over the years.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the Japan Times reports that the U.S. “Defense Ministry official also said that the U.S. usually does not want to crunch the numbers, as doing so would hint at who pays the most among U.S. allies”.¹⁶⁹

The Japan Times references an “annual report titled Allied contributions to the Common Defense published by the U.S. in 2004”, according to which “Japan provided direct support of \$3.2 billion (about ¥366 billion) and indirect support worth \$1.18 billion, offsetting as much as 74.5

¹⁶³ Greg Chaffin, “Okinawa and the Changing US Japan Alliance,” *Foreign Policy in Focus* (October 5, 2010), http://fpif.org/okinawa_and_the_changing_us-japan_alliance/.

¹⁶⁴ Yoshida, “Basics of the U.S. Military Presence.”

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ Ayako Mie, “How Much Does Japan Pay to Host U.S. Forces? Depends on Who You Ask,” *The Japan Times Online*, (January 31, 2017), <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/01/31/national/much-japan-pay-host-u-s-forces-depends-ask/>.

¹⁶⁸ Envall and Kerri Ng, “The Okinawa ‘Effect’ in US–Japan Alliance Politics”: 226.

¹⁶⁹ Mie, “How Much Does Japan Pay to Host U.S. Forces? Depends on Who You Ask.”

percent of the total cost”.¹⁷⁰ These numbers are drawn from 2002 expenses and are still often used by “Japan in arguing that it’s paying its fair share”.¹⁷¹ These sums include direct financial support which “includes paying the salaries of some 25,000 non-military workers at U.S. military facilities in Japan. Japan also pays for the electricity, gas, water and sewage as well as for the cooking and heating fuels at U.S. military housing facilities”.¹⁷² Cassata notes that around \$2 billion of that sum goes to Okinawa.¹⁷³ However, in 2017, the Japan Times also disclosed that “Defense Minister Tomomi Inada recently updated the information for the first time in more than 10 years, saying Japan paid about ¥191 billion in 2015, about 86.4 percent of the total cost”.¹⁷⁴ In addition, “U.S. Forces in Japan told The Japan Times that the approximate cost of the U.S. presence in Japan is \$5.5 billion, based on the 2017 Operation and Maintenance Overview by the Office of the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense”.¹⁷⁵

According to Johnson, the Japanese government loves to call its contribution to the upkeep of American forces in Japan “*omoiyari yosan*, or ‘sympathy budget’”¹⁷⁶ For the United States, these financial contributions are the “most tangible measure of... support” by Japan to their military alliance.¹⁷⁷ Arguably, Japan’s dependence on the U.S. military it is the United States’ own fault for insisting on Japan’s pacifist post-war constitution. However, in the post-Second World War context, one of the U.S. military’s roles was to provide stability to the region by ensuring that Japan did not remilitarise. If U.S. forces are expected to restrain the military growth of Japan, the sympathy budget is a practice “tantamount to prisoners paying the salaries of their guards”.¹⁷⁸

2.10. Conclusion

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Yoshida, “Basics of the U.S. Military Presence.”

¹⁷³ Donna Cassata, “Report: US Footing Greater Bill for Overseas Bases,” *CNS News*, (April 17, 2013), <https://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/report-us-footing-greater-bill-overseas-bases>.

¹⁷⁴ Mie, “How Much Does Japan Pay to Host U.S. Forces? Depends on Who You Ask.”

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Chalmers Johnson, “The Okinawan Rape Incident and the End of the Cold War in East Asia.”

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Shunji Taoka, “Is This Base Really Necessary?” *Japan Policy Research Institute: Critique VII*, no. 2 (February 2000), http://www.jpri.org/publications/critiques/critique_VII_2.html.

Perhaps the reality of the situation is best described by Mallaby who explains that, in any case, the United States has no good alternative to Okinawa in terms of stationing troops.¹⁷⁹ With forces in South Korea rendered immobile due to the constant threat from the North, Okinawa has “only grown in importance since the loss of bases in the Philippines”.¹⁸⁰ Although there is a “7,000-strong force in Guam”, that “island’s governor has recently shown signs of copying Okinawa’s basebaiting politics”.¹⁸¹ This makes the stationing of additional U.S. troops there an unfavourable alternative as the same problems would arise. However, plans to further disperse troops within the region under the pressure of Japanese domestic politics remains challenging.¹⁸²

During the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan in 2005, the biggest challenge to the U.S.-Japan alliance was finding “ways to alleviate the negative impact of bases on local communities, particularly in Okinawa”.¹⁸³ The resulting plan was to withdraw 8,000 Marines (and their relatives), “half of the authorized full complement of 16,000 U.S. Marines in Okinawa—the greatest source of G.I. crimes”, from Okinawa to Guam.¹⁸⁴ This would be arranged “on the condition of the actual transfer of the dangerous Futenma base to another site also located in Okinawa”.¹⁸⁵ However, the enormous costs – an estimated ten billion U.S. dollars – of transferring troops and facilities from Okinawa to Guam combined with Guam increasingly resisting having to host U.S. troops in recent years, made the transfer problematic.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, the other issue of relocating MCAS Futenma within Okinawa is still at political stalemate.

On the Japanese mainland itself, similar local resentment has caused U.S. troop numbers to dwindle.¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, although Singapore and Thailand respectively host 150 and 100 U.S.

¹⁷⁹ Sebastian Mallaby, “Off Base,” *New Republic* 215, no. 26 (December 1996): 17, <https://login.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/login?URL=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=9612107749&site=ehost-live>.

¹⁸⁰ Kagotani and Yanai, “External Threats, US Bases, and Prudent Voters in Okinawa †,” 93.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Pajon, “Understanding the Issue of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa,” 11.

¹⁸⁴ Gerson, “Offensive Military Bases and a Troubled Alliance in Japan”: 131.

¹⁸⁵ Pajon, “Understanding the Issue of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa,” 11.

¹⁸⁶ Justin McCurry, “Japan to pay 60% of costs of moving US troops to Guam”, *The Guardian* (April 25, 2006), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2006/apr/25/usa.japan>.

¹⁸⁷ Mallaby, “Off Base,” *New Republic*, 17.

military personnel, “no other Asian country is willing to play host to large numbers of American troops”.¹⁸⁸ Australia has offered basing rights, but the distance is too great and it is unwilling to cough up “the vast sums in host-nation support that Japanese taxpayers contribute to America's armed forces”.¹⁸⁹

In this context, the U.S., if it continues to want to police East Asia, is forced to retain its military troops in Okinawa. Although Japan's financial contribution has made this situation favourable, Japan's increasing domestic pressure, both from within Okinawa and mainland Japan, indicates that the situation may be untenable in the long term. Indeed, it is local resistance to U.S. military bases that has proven problematic to the U.S., as indicated by its expulsion from the Philippines in the 1990s. U.S. bases have come to represent an air of imperial dominance and exploitation abroad, arousing the ire of nationalist sentiments in local communities. In Okinawa, what has especially frustrated residents is the extraterritoriality offered to U.S. military personnel by the U.S.-Japan SOFA, allowing criminal offences to go unpunished.

Besides the social strife that military bases have instigated, U.S. military bases have also created a different kind of legacy in Okinawa. In a way, military bases represent little Americas. Local residents, living in such close proximity to U.S. military personnel and their families, must have been directly exposed to American culture over an extended period. What follows in the next chapter is an examination of what cultural legacy American military bases have left within Okinawa

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

Chapter 3: the Social-Cultural Roles of U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa

3.1. Introduction

As U.S. bases proliferated throughout East Asia during the Cold War, often in relative seclusion from the host community, military personnel and their families had to be housed and catered to in an American fashion. According to Gillem, U.S. military bases have in the process come to represent American Town abroad, similarly to how there are Chinatowns, Koreatowns and Japantowns in North America. Replicating low-density suburbs, these America Towns are meant to give their expat residents “a slice of the American Dream”.¹⁹⁰ By providing a real-world glimpse of American life, military bases and their soldiers and families have acted as significant agents for the establishment of American culture in Okinawa in spite of the undesirability of U.S. base structures on the island. What makes the U.S. military presence in Okinawa complex is the “recognition of the popular acceptance and allure of American culture” while not “overlook[ing] the underlying tension and conflicts that erupted” in this society.¹⁹¹

This chapter will examine how the U.S. military in Okinawa creates ‘Little Americas’ within and outside of the bases and how the local community responds to the long-term exposure to American culture and way of life. American culture emanating from the military bases has manifested itself in Okinawa in various ways, often at first appearing to be a natural product of the cross-cultural contact zone that bases provide. However, a second glance reveals an undertone of U.S. military dominance and exploitation of Okinawa and its people by using American culture. Central to this chapter are questions of how American bases have changed Okinawa’s physical and social-cultural landscape and how Okinawans are able to console America’s military face with the cultural one.

¹⁹⁰ Mark L. Gillem, *American Town: Building the Outposts of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), xv.

¹⁹¹ Seungsook Moon, "Introduction to “Culture around the Bases: A Forum on the U.S. Military Presence in Northeast Asia,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2016): 34, <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/journals/journal-of-asian-studies/article/introduction-to-culture-around-the-bases-a-forum-on-the-us-military-presence-in-northeast-asia/758BE0410B8ABDDFD903A86392821397>.

3.2. Creating Little Americas and their Role Within the Host Community

Various social and military roles determined that U.S. bases needed to resemble America. By housing and catering to U.S. military personnel and their families in American-styled secluded compounds, U.S. military bases have been referred to – sometimes derogatorily – as little Americas. These private worlds contain their own housing, schools, hospitals, chapels, shopping, PXs, Commissaries and recreation facilities such as golf courses, cinemas and bowling alleys. The designs for these facilities are modelled on their suburban counterparts so that its residents could feel at home anywhere in the world. During the Cold War, U.S. commanders believed that the semblance of home was beneficial to well-being of the soldiers because it was easier to cope with being stationed far away. Furthermore, by creating secluded base communities, wherein the military is ever-present, “‘Little Americas’ served as a valuable support for the military system itself, encouraging family members to identify with and socialize within the military community”.¹⁹²

Safe, sanitised and homogenous, base communities created environments which made life comfortable and familiar for military personnel and their families who moved around frequently. Moreover, as facsimiles of American suburbs, base communities were more perfect than the real thing. These facilities left little reason for the residents to leave the bases at all. Therefore, the drawback of base communities was that it increased the likelihood that its members would be “exposed to foreign cultures only in small and superficial ways, such as tourism, eating in restaurants, and occasional shopping in local stores”.¹⁹³

In this way, U.S. military bases transported distinctly American settings to the far reaches of the world, including Okinawa. By representing America within foreign communities, bases did more than just provide military security. According to Nye, fundamental to American hegemony during and after the Cold War is the display of hard power and soft power. Displaying hard power – the military – to foreign communities is not enough to gain their support for the American way. A degree of soft

¹⁹² Anni Baker, *American Soldiers Overseas: The Global Military Presence* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 47-56, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.access.authkb.kb.nl/lib/kb/detail.action?docID=491624#>.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 58.

power is needed to make America appealing, for example with friendly neighbour policies and the promotion of American culture through cultural interchange.¹⁹⁴ By resembling a larger than life America, military bases have the ability to display the appeal of the American way of life.

In this context, the families of U.S. soldiers living in these caricature American towns during the Cold War played cultural and social roles as unofficial ambassadors expressing positive American values.¹⁹⁵ Although bases were exclusive, they remained permeable enough to allow for interaction with the host community. Intercultural events and unofficial interactions between military families and local residents played a significant role in representing America in a community that would otherwise see very little of America besides its military. Even small efforts such as greeting the local shop owner in Japanese were important in extending American goodwill and in making bases seem more approachable.¹⁹⁶

Alvah explains that the social role played by American wives was an important contribution to the spread of American values to Okinawa's households. Military wives offered employment to Okinawan women outside of the sex and catering industry by taking them on as maids or workers in charity shops run by American women. By allowing Okinawan women and children into their homes, military wives had the chance to teach locals about what they believed to be the superior values of the American household, such as equal gender relations at home and the luxury of U.S. household appliances. These appliances, such as washing machines and flushing toilets, were a marvel in Okinawa, providing evidence of the superiority of the American way. Military wives also organised social events to promote cultural exchange, such as an international club, where locals and Americans were able to meet in non-work settings. Although American women learned to respect Okinawan traditions, they still sought to influence Okinawan society in fundamental ways, such as equal gender relations, conversion to Christianity and the rejection of communism.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 6-7. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/lib/leidenuniv/detail.action?docID=903654>.

¹⁹⁵ Baker, *American Soldiers Overseas: The Global Military Presence*, 58.

¹⁹⁶ Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 8.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 168-196.

Not only, then, does the resemblance of military bases to American towns provide a consistent and stable environment reminiscent of home for soldiers and their families, it also advocates for the American way of life within their host communities. By being able to display the appeal of American values, these little Americas are able to share a more attractive image of America than the violent military.

3.3. The Landscape: Consuming American Space and Culture

However, portraying U.S. military bases as secluded and therefore perhaps as discrete is a misconception. Military bases stand out in Okinawa's physical, social and cultural landscape. Even after the end of the Cold War, military bases continue to dominate Okinawa's landscape, especially the prime, flat areas near the island's centre. Although the prefectural government may have, if left to its own devices, allocated the space for dense urbanisation – after all, Okinawa struggles with overpopulation and Naha is tight-knit in typically Japanese fashion – the concrete military bases present a stark contrast to the island's sub-tropical environment. Adding insult to injury, the low-density layout of the bases makes nonchalant use of Okinawa's prized land. Furthermore, the military bases not only represent the embodiment of U.S. military imperialism over Okinawa, but in being made to look like America, they also represent America's cultural imperialism over Okinawa's landscape.¹⁹⁸

Based on Gillem's written descriptions of the sprawling U.S. bases published in 2007, Okinawa has much to feel angry about in terms of the U.S. military continuing to take up valuable living space. Historically, the sheer amount of land used by the Americans has been a main source of discontent among Okinawa's population. Through the over-consumption of valuable living space, the 11,018-acre Kadena Air Base, the largest base on Okinawa, becomes an extension of "the arrogant

¹⁹⁸ Ayano Ginoza, "The American Village in Okinawa: Redefining Security in a "Militourist" Landscape," *The Journal of Social Science* 60 (2007): 137, <https://ci.nii.ac.jp/els/contents110007001166.pdf?id=ART0008914709>.

attitude of America's imperial might sprawled across the verdant landscape of the beautiful tropical island".¹⁹⁹

Despite that American soldiers are no longer wealthier than locals, space is a privilege out of reach for most Okinawans. In contrast, according to Ames, "even the lowest-ranking military members living on base with family members in single-family dwellings have an American-style yard".²⁰⁰ When asked whether U.S. military housing costs were excessive, "a Japanese Defense Agency official beckoned criticism when he explained that Americans need yards because they love to barbeque".²⁰¹ It becomes clear then that much Okinawan frustration over the U.S. military bases "is related to a perceived inability to control their own space".²⁰²

The U.S. military's practice of using American simulacra to sway Okinawa in its favour while dominating the natural landscape continued past the end of the Cold War. A combination of using American simulacra to show the appeal of American living while also embracing America's consumer culture is Mihama American Village. Based on Seaport Park in San Diego, the American Village was built in 1992 on the central part of Okinawa island near Chatan Town, of which fifty-four percent is used as a military facility. At nightfall, the brightly illuminated Coca Cola Ferris wheel "symbolises and romanticises American modernisation" in a stark neon contrast against Okinawa's subtropical landscape and ocean.²⁰³ A result of Okinawa's U.S. militarisation and a celebration of American popular culture, "this miniaturized simulacrum of *America* has been incorporated into Okinawan landscape to be enjoyed by the younger generation of Okinawans, tourists from mainland Japan, and U.S. GIs from nearby bases".²⁰⁴ With its numerous restaurants, bars, attractions and sunset views, all

¹⁹⁹ Gillem, *American Town: Building the Outposts of Empire*, xiii.

²⁰⁰ Chris Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa," *Journal of Asian Studies* 75, no. 1 (2016): 45, <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/journals/journal-of-asian-studies/article/amerikamun-consuming-america-and-ambivalence-toward-the-us-presence-in-postwar-okinawa/DE998734339FD51A55DAE130CF32DB23>.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 46.

²⁰³ Ginoza, "The American Village in Okinawa: Redefining Security in a "Militourist" Landscape": 139.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

reminiscent of America's old west, American Village is a source of entertainment for families during the day and an opportunity for U.S. soldiers to meet local women during weekend nights.

Gillem writes that American community centres are traditionally characterised by consumer culture.²⁰⁵ Likewise, the main purpose of the American Village is to consume Americanesque products in attractive settings. Therefore, the American Village is essentially a promotion of American consumer culture in Okinawa. Indeed, with its Ferris wheel and American-styled buildings, American Village's theme is, similarly to the military bases, based "on an idealised *America*".²⁰⁶ Here, also, the atmosphere is intended to provide visitors their own little slice of the American dream. Furthermore, Okinawa's landscape serves as a background for what is quintessentially American, resulting in Okinawa's cultural subordination to America. In a way this is a reiteration of American perceptions during the occupation period, wherein American Village represents the modern and cultured United States and the landscape represents uncivilised Okinawa. By imposing the Americana upon Okinawa's landscape, Okinawa "becomes the backdrop for cultural imperialism".²⁰⁷

Located on land returned to Chatan Town's administration by the U.S. military, the annual 8.3 million visitors to American Village are a tribute of the success of urban redevelopment after reclaiming former base land.²⁰⁸ However, Tokyo paid much of the costs for American Village and similar developments through government subsidies "as a way to compensate Okinawan communities hosting U.S. garrisons for their 'burden', or, depending on one's perspective, as a way to purchase support and silence from critics amid high unemployment".²⁰⁹ Furthermore, the carefree promotion of American culture for both Okinawans and Americans alike disguises the fact that American Village serves as an entertainment area for U.S. soldiers pouring in on the weekends from

²⁰⁵ Gillem, *American Town: Building the Outposts of Empire*, 80.

²⁰⁶ Ginoza, "The American Village in Okinawa: Redefining Security in a "Militourist" Landscape": 136.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 137.

²⁰⁸ Takashi Yamazaki, "The Politics of Urban Redevelopment Around U.S. Military Bases: Mihama American Village and Koza Music Town in Okinawa, Japan" (presentation, The 6th Academic Forum in Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, March 6, 2008) 3-4, <http://urp.fib.ugm.ac.id/images/download/yamazakipaper.pdf>.

²⁰⁹ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 47.

nearby bases. As such, the returned land continues to serve the military. Indeed, it is ironic that “its main concept is ‘America’ even though the political consciousness of the Town people has been against the bases”.²¹⁰

By representing a pleasant America, American Village obscures the reality of the U.S. military history in Okinawa, such as the Battle of Okinawa in 1945 and the harsh U.S. military governance until 1972.²¹¹ Especially for the younger generations of Okinawans, building an entertainment area where they may experience idealised American culture and meet U.S. soldiers under relaxed circumstances serves to normalise the American presence in Okinawa.²¹² Therefore, American Village not only represents U.S. cultural imperialism, but also disguises U.S. military imperialism by serving the military’s need for an entertainment centre for their soldiers while also promoting a positive, cultural America in Okinawa.

On the other hand, according to Ames, American Village may, similarly to Disneyland Tokyo, represent a form of reverse orientalism. If American Village is a triumph of American cultural imperialism, then every McDonalds becomes a cultural victory, rendering American Village an insignificant example of or contribution to the phenomenon. Instead, the Americana of the American Village is appropriated by Okinawa but in the process is reduced to merely being another brand consumed in a Japanese cultural context.²¹³ This is in keeping with a similar greater trend noted by Beck, who argues that the assimilation of American baseball and bowling into Japanese culture “was possible because it could be contained within the existing cultural structures of group-oriented and rule-based behaviour”.²¹⁴ On the whole, (American) “consumption in Japan affirmed individualism within the limits of group-based choice, as is evident from the Japanese tendency to prepackage and

²¹⁰ Yamazaki, “The Politics of Urban Redevelopment Around U.S. Military Bases: Mihama American Village and Koza Music Town in Okinawa, Japan,” 4.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ginoza, “The American Village in Okinawa: Redefining Security in a “Militourist” Landscape”: 139.

²¹³ Ames, “Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa”: 56.

²¹⁴ Ulrich Beck, Natan Sznaider, and Rainer Winter, “Global America? the Cultural Consequences of Globalization,” *Studies in Social and Political Thought*, 8 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 119, <http://web.b.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2048/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzI0MjQxMI9fQU41?sid=a96dd971-6342-4a94-a02f-a78542fc35dd@sessionmgr103&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1>.

standardize many products, for example the ubiquitous convenience store and vending machine".²¹⁵ Japanese culture was already designed in such way so as to easily accommodate American consumerism. Similarly, then, commodifying American culture through American Village suited Okinawa. After all, despite being a popular entertainment venue for U.S. soldiers, it is nevertheless an Okinawan project created on base land returned to the local government. In this way, American Village is an Americanised space under Okinawa's control. Seeing that the root of Okinawa's frustrations is exactly the lack of control it has over significant swathes of Americanised land due to the military bases, appropriating America through American Village allows Okinawa to, at least symbolically, exercise some control over America.²¹⁶

3.4. U.S. Military Base Products: Appropriating Food

Consuming America in Okinawa has also literally taken place through the consumption of American food products distributed through U.S. GIs and U.S. military bases. After the battle for Okinawa, Okinawans depended on the food rations handed out to them by U.S. soldiers. These rations, consisting of powdered milk and eggs, butter, corn, tinned meat and ice cream, were Okinawans' first taste of American culinary culture.²¹⁷ Although American products, whether as food or music, have historically been received as tokens of modernity by Okinawans, the social-political context of these products remains an important element in understanding their reception and continued existence in Okinawan society.

Due to the economic disparity between U.S. soldiers and locals during the occupation period, American products became status symbols within Okinawa's community, symbolising prosperity through American lifestyles. Okinawans with base-access privileges, such as maids, cooks or laborers, were highly regarded by their families when they brought home high-status American goods, such as

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 58.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 41-42.

candy, jam and cake. Despite that the value of these goods was based on economic inequality and base privileges, they were appreciated as tokens of a benevolent America.²¹⁸

Over the years during and since the occupation, “Okinawans fully incorporated American food items like Spam, canned tuna, and Campbell’s soups into their routine diet and innovated hybrid products like taco rice”.²¹⁹ As military bases limited Okinawa’s capability to produce home-grown produce, the incorporation of American foodstuffs as a staple of Okinawan diet was a necessity. However, when the economic well-being of most Okinawans increased, and supermarkets selling American products opened off-base, certain products, such as canned pork luncheon meat, became – and remain – an indispensable ingredient in the Okinawan diet.²²⁰ Okinawa has also appropriated more general American eating habits. In Naha, people spend more on hamburgers, bacon and processed meats, while spending less on salad and sushi than people do in other prefectural capitals.²²¹

Similarly to the on-base American-styled homes, Okinawans regarded American products as luxurious and modern. Even canned goods such as spam were markers of modernity, offering “‘better living through chemistry’, as the merger of science and commerce in the United States promised at the time”.²²² However, “while Okinawans have viewed American goods—including food items and Hollywood films—positively and have associated them with high social status and glamour, they have viewed negatively the U.S. military as an institution”.²²³ According to Ames, there is a clear distinction between perceptions of *Amerikamun*, a term reserved for describing good associations with America, and *Amerikaa*, which refers to the negative aspects, such as the noise from jet fighters

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Moon, "Introduction to “Culture around the Bases: A Forum on the U.S. Military Presence in Northeast Asia”": 35.

²²⁰ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 44.

²²¹ Joseph Gerson, "US foreign military bases and military colonialism: Personal and analytical perspectives," in *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against US Military Posts*, ed. Catherine Lutz (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 50.

²²² Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 43.

²²³ Moon, "Introduction to “Culture around the Bases: A Forum on the U.S. Military Presence in Northeast Asia”": 35.

and U.S. military bases. Within these notions there is a clear intent to separate and retain the good influences of U.S. culture from the bad aspects of the military bases.²²⁴

3.5. U.S. Military Base Products: Appropriating Music

A significant cultural product in Okinawa left over from the U.S. military occupation is Okinawan rock 'n roll. U.S. military bases have had a strong influence on popular music in post-war Japan and Okinawa. Entering Okinawa via the bases, post-war western popular music became a part of Okinawan culture due to Okinawa's long-term exposure to the bases. Although during the 1950s the many bars and clubs in the entertainment areas catering to U.S. soldiers primarily played jazz, in the 1960s and 1970s rock 'n roll became popular. As popular American (and British) music became increasingly rock focused, so did the bars in Okinawa. Okinawan bands learned to cover popular rock songs for the GIs, but soon also made original songs in the same style. In this way, Okinawan rock bands became a popular commodity in the entertainment districts.²²⁵

This cultural appropriation of American music by local Okinawan bands is at first glance a natural process of cultural interchange due to the long-time and heavy exposure to American preferences for evening entertainment. This is because occupation itself is a form of "cross-cultural contact".²²⁶ By listening, playing and recording their adaptation of western music, Okinawan rock bands were participating "in a globalized modernity, even if this was mediated by the unequal relations and contexts of American military control in Okinawa".²²⁷ In this sense, western music represented a modernity which Okinawan musicians sought to imitate and be a part of. However, as Roberson points out, this participation was inseparable from the authoritative position of the U.S.

²²⁴ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 52.

²²⁵ Ogura, "Military Base Culture and Okinawan Rock 'n' Roll": 466.

²²⁶ Etsujiro Miyagi, "America Bunka to Sengo Okinawa." *Sengo Okinawa to America: Ibunka Sesshoku*, no 50, edited by Teruya Yoshihiko and Yamazato Katsunori (Naha: Okinawa Times Sha, 1995), 27, quoted in James E. Roberson, "'Doin' Our Thing": Identity and Colonial Modernity in Okinawan Rock Music," *Popular Music and Society* 34, no. 5 (2011): 613, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/03007766.2010.537218>.

²²⁷ James E. Roberson, "'Doin' Our Thing": Identity and Colonial Modernity in Okinawan Rock Music," *Popular Music and Society* 34, no. 5 (2011): 614, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/03007766.2010.537218>.

military. To highlight this military context, according to Ogura, popular western music was “totally a by-product of the US bases, as were the sexual and other entertainment service sectors in towns near bases”.²²⁸ Evening venues targeted rock ‘n roll solely at U.S. soldiers and the genre was not regarded as popular among Okinawa’s general public. As such, the “distinction of ‘their culture’ and ‘our culture’ seemed clear”.²²⁹

However, to say that these musicians only adopted western music to serve the U.S. military is to deny them participation in the “contemporaneous global youth culture of the time”.²³⁰ As Enloe argues, by catering to foreign soldiers, local entertainers become part of a globalising trend.²³¹ In this way, despite solely catering to U.S. GIs during the occupation, these bands were a part of the global popularity of post-war western music.

Nonetheless, Okinawan rock was born out of the entertainment industry’s economic dependency on U.S. military bases during the occupation period. Entertainment towns located near bases, such as Koza, depended on military-base-related business for as much as eighty percent of their income. These entertainment districts attracted people from all over the islands looking for work, including many band members to-be. The music and sex industry went hand in hand in these clubs.²³² Therefore, the cultural appropriation of western music did little to better the social situation of Okinawans living near the entertainment areas. Furthermore, the need of bars to maintain their A-rating (military approved) signs to keep US GIs as clientele barred rock bands from voicing resistance against the oppression by the military administration. Given these circumstances, Okinawan rock ‘n roll bands did not have the politically engaged, anti-war character that many of its western contemporaries had.²³³

²²⁸ Ogura, "Military Base Culture and Okinawan Rock ‘n’ Roll": 467.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Roberson, "'Doin' Our Thing": Identity and Colonial Modernity in Okinawan Rock Music": 614.

²³¹ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 31.

²³² Roberson, "'Doin' Our Thing": Identity and Colonial Modernity in Okinawan Rock Music": 596-608.

²³³ Ogura, "Military Base Culture and Okinawan Rock ‘n’ Roll": 467.

Even when Okinawan rock bands were popularised across Japan by radio stations and music labels in Tokyo just after the reversion, the recorded rock music was disassociated from the tumultuous social-political background from which it originated. Japanese audiences assumed that Okinawa's rock music must be authentic because they played before real American audiences. What remained was the appealing image of rowdy American soldiers being worked up by Okinawans in true rock 'n roll fashion. Therefore, in the process, "Okinawan rock, cleansed of all its background and political social origin, became a medium for American popular culture".²³⁴ Okinawan rock 'n roll, although a form of cultural interchange, did little else than serve the U.S. military in its entertainment needs.

During the 1980s, the first annual rock festival, named Peaceful Love Rock Festival, was held in Koza (now Okinawa City). This festival continues today, with the 35th edition scheduled for July 2018, and sees several of Okinawa's older rock legends returning to the stage.²³⁵ Although sponsored by local governments and radio stations, many local volunteers help, including U.S. military personnel. As an event which is enjoyed by both parties, local governments use the festival as a cultural resource to promote a non-military interest in U.S. bases for locals, soldiers and tourists. However, according to Ogura, the promotion of peace has a history of ambiguity in Okinawan policies. It may mean peaceful coexistence with military bases, but at other times it means the abolition of military bases. This ambiguity has the effect of concealing real political issues, both historically and currently.²³⁶ In this context, the peace promoted by the rock festival is characterised by acquiescence to the continued presence of military bases. For local Okinawans organising or only enjoying the festival, the cooperation with U.S. soldiers serves to normalise the presence of military bases. Especially considering that the music played by Okinawa's rock bands was never particularly

²³⁴ Ibid., 468.

²³⁵ "Festival Information," Peaceful Love Rock Festival, accessed June 1, 2018. <http://peaceful-love-rock.com/info.html>.

²³⁶ Ogura, "Military Base Culture and Okinawan Rock 'n' Roll": 469.

politically engaged, the festival cloaks the harsh social-political history from which Okinawan rock 'n roll stems.

3.6. Conclusion

The building of so-called little Americas in Okinawa has a history stemming from the post-war period until today. Okinawa's landscape has been appropriated to suit American needs, both in terms of space and style. In the process, ideas linking America with modernity have been instilled into the islands. Military bases have imported American cultural products into Okinawa, which has regarded these products as tokens of modernity and the American lifestyle, especially during the occupation period.

However, areas of cross-cultural contact were often also the result of social and economic inequalities caused by U.S. military policies. The adoption of American food products, mainly canned rations, was a necessity the post-war period as Okinawa struggled to feed itself, in part due to military bases occupying significant swathes of agricultural land. Okinawa's rock 'n roll legacy, still living today, was born out of the economic dependency on providing entertainment for U.S. GIs. Even Mihama American Village, constructed on returned base land, continues to indirectly serve U.S. military needs, such as providing entertainment venues for young marines based nearby.

However, a closer scrutiny of the American Village reveals that perhaps there is a greater deal of cultural agency on Okinawa's part. The village's Americanness may have been appropriated by Okinawa to such a degree that it has been reduced to being merely another brand to be consumed. In this light, the American Village is no longer a triumph of American cultural imperialism, but an example of how a host community selects cultural products to suit its own needs, in this case for an amusing fantasy escape similar to Disneyland.

There seems to be a trend in Okinawa to decontextualize the history of the American military presence on Okinawa by embracing and celebrating American cultural artefacts. Removing the social-political context of the continued existence of U.S. military bases normalises the military presence in

Okinawa, especially for the younger generation. This process endangers the vision of an Okinawa without bases and thus also the possibility for renewed anti-base movements.

However, the appreciation of cultural aspects of America does not necessarily cancel out the perception of a military America. There are distinctions in how Okinawans experience America. According to Ames, an Okinawa City official who runs the History Street Museum that portrays postwar lifestyles in the base town, noted that “what is good is good and what is bad is bad. There has never been a boycott of Amerikamun in Okinawa since it is viewed as something good”.²³⁷ Furthermore, “it is the military as an institution that is unwelcome by the majority of Okinawans, who generally are hospitable to individual members of the U.S. military communities”.²³⁸ In this light, perhaps the appreciation of American cultural products is a sign of Okinawa trying to make the best out of the situation. By trying to live in harmony with military bases, Okinawa’s peace has an inherent contradiction. With no alternatives, Okinawa celebrates the hum of American-inspired electric guitars on stage while lamenting the roar U.S. Air Force-stamped jet engines overhead.

²³⁷ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 50.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

Chapter 4: the Social-Political Reaction

4.1. Introducing the Three Island-Wide Waves of Anti-Base Protest

Living in such close proximity to the U.S. military bases for decades under what essentially continues to be a military occupation even after reversion to Japan has led to the existence of a protest community in Okinawa. The continuous underlying tension between Okinawa's general population, the U.S. military and even Tokyo has led to bitter outbursts and social conflict. These periods of conflict have defined Okinawa's social landscape and its relation to the military bases. This is hardly surprising given how Okinawa has endured the abuse of civil rights, marginalisation, military accidents, land confiscations and (sexual) abuse against the local population.

The protest community within Okinawa against the marginalisation of Okinawa by policies implemented by the U.S. military and Tokyo throughout the post-war period has often been misrepresented as a homogenous body. However, the most forceful appearance of a "unified, coherent, even if not continuous, 'movement'" may be discerned in the form of three waves of "'Okinawan Struggle' in the post-WWII period".²³⁹ The first wave refers to the series of protests activities against draconian U.S. land policy in the 1950s. The second wave occurred at the end of the 1960s, with a series of mass protests against the US military administration, mainly demanding reversion to Japanese administration. Following a rape case in September 1995 came a period of mass protests constituting the "third wave of the Okinawa struggle".²⁴⁰ These exceptional periods are also referred to as the "island-wide struggles" wherein the population "collectively expressed widely shared demands".²⁴¹ Unifying into a comprehensive body briefly enhanced the protestors' ability to secure their demands from the U.S. and Japan as state powers.²⁴²

This chapter will focus on the third wave of the anti-base protest movement which took place in the 1990s, after the reversion of the island to Japan, and has arguably still not been resolved

²³⁹ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 5.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, 5-6.

today. What makes the third wave post-Cold War in nature is how the anti-base movement criticised the military alliance between the U.S. and Japan in the absence of the Cold War strategic argument. The third wave made effective use of a wide range of issues, such as women's rights and environmentalism, to bring to international attention how Washington and Tokyo exploited Okinawa. In this way, the third wave protested against the Cold War conditions maintained in Okinawa by the U.S.-Japan alliance. Central to this chapter will be questions concerning what caused this protest movement to take place, who its participants were, the outcome and the key issues still at stake. Most importantly, this chapter attempts to bring to light how Okinawa's community of protest has continued to define Okinawa's relationship with the U.S. military since the end of the Cold War.

4.2. Base Movements Post-Reversion: Fanning the Flames of the Third Wave

The notorious rape case in Okinawa in 1995 sparked off a renewed collective wave of anti-base protest after a three-decade-long lull since the movement for reversion to Japan. On September 4, a 12-year-old schoolgirl on her way home from shopping was abducted, raped and beaten by three American soldiers. Soldiers sexually abusing women and girls was not an uncommon occurrence. Between 1988 and 1999, "Navy and Marine Corps bases in Japan have had the highest number (169) of courts-martial for sexual assaults of all U.S. military bases worldwide".²⁴³ However, this particular incident gained widespread attention due in part to the remarks made shortly afterwards by the then commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, Admiral Richard C. Macke. He suggested that "it would have been cheaper for the rapists to pay for a prostitute than to rent the car they drove to abduct the girl".²⁴⁴ Within Okinawa's and even Japan's public eye the crime and the military's indifference epitomised the U.S. military's continued exploitation of Okinawa's population. The incident stood out for its "powerful symbolic capacity: Okinawa as sacrificed schoolgirl/daughter" for the U.S.-Japan

²⁴³ Chalmers Johnson, "The 1995 Rape Incident and the Rekindling of Okinawan Protest Against the American Bases," in *Okinawa: Cold War Island*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Cardiff: Japan Policy Research Institute, 1999), 114.

²⁴⁴ John Mitchell, "U.S. Marine Corps Sexual Violence on Okinawa," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 16, no. 4 (February 2018): 2, <https://apjif.org/-Jon-Mitchell/5112/article.pdf>.

alliance.²⁴⁵ The military's remarks revealed the reality of Okinawa's situation wherein the U.S. is able to continue to abuse the local population even decades after the reversion to Japan.

Outraged over the continuous military abuses, 85,000 citizens participated in the Okinawa Citizens' Mass Rally in Ginowan Marine Park on 21 October 1995. Parents, teachers and students raised their voices "in the largest, most broad based and longest lasting citizen protest in postwar Okinawan history".²⁴⁶ Furthermore, the protest led "to a prefecture-wide plebiscite, Japan's first such vote, in which a majority of voters called for the reduction and ultimate removal of foreign troops from Japanese soil".²⁴⁷ The size of the locals' opposition to the U.S. military presence "resulted in a temporary crisis for the US-Japan security alliance".²⁴⁸

Okinawans as well as mainland Japanese generally held the view that the end of the Cold War had stripped the security alliance of its meaning and therefore also of the necessity to militarise Okinawa. Indeed, the 1990s was a period of alliance reaffirmation for the U.S. and Japan. New and reviewed U.S. security policies, such as those proposed within the Nye Report – 100,000 U.S. troops within the region – to counter North Korea and a rising China, were taking shape. As the linchpin within East Asia's security, the U.S. sought to renew Japan's commitment as security partner. It is within this period of reaffirmations that "public outrage over the rape in Okinawa reverberated throughout Japan".²⁴⁹ Public opinion polls showed that support for the alliance and U.S. bases in Japan had dropped. Moreover, the bilateral summit between President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in November was postponed. However, the reactions to the rape had relatively little impact on the larger framework of the alliance, as can be seen from the U.S.-Japan

²⁴⁵ Linda Isako Angst, "The Sacrifice of a Schoolgirl: the 1995 Rape Case, Discourses of Power, and Women's Lives in Okinawa," *Critical Asian Studies* 33, no. 2 (2001): 243. <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/14672710122284>.

²⁴⁶ Carolyn Bowen Francis, "Women and Military Violence," in *Okinawa: Cold War Island*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Cardiff: Japan Policy Research Institute, 1999), 189.

²⁴⁷ Chalmers Jonson, "The Heliport, Nago, and the End of the Ota Era," in *Okinawa: Cold War Island*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Cardiff: Japan Policy Research Institute, 1999), 217.

²⁴⁸ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 150.

²⁴⁹ Andrew Yeo, "Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests," *Cambridge Studies in Contentious Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 73, <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/books/activists-alliances-and-anti-us-base-protests/usjapan-alliance-and-antibase-movements-in-okinawa-19951996/A109E3112F2935BA897BFB12A14397D4>.

Joint Declaration on Security forged on April 16, 1996 which reaffirmed the importance of the alliance. Nevertheless, “friction between Tokyo and Washington generated by the rape incident required both governments to address Okinawan base issues”.²⁵⁰

In this way, the late 1990s was a period of social and political upheaval in Okinawa. The end of the Cold War, combined with the need to reaffirm old alliances, formed the perfect grounds for Okinawans to voice their frustration over the continued military exploitation of their islands – symbolised by the 1995 rape case – for an alliance they felt had expired. Disillusioned with Japan’s constitution, the third wave encompassed a wide sense of discontentment with the military establishment and Tokyo’s perceived complicit-ness. The Cold War had ended, yet its residents felt that Okinawa still existed in a state of war.

4.3. Women Lead the Way

The centrality of the U.S. military’s abuse of local women within the third wave of protests gave rise to “the activist Okinawan women’s movement” which seized the political opportunity to bring the issue of U.S. military violence against women to national and international attention.²⁵¹ According to Enloe, not just the U.S. military in Okinawa, but all foreign militaries stationed abroad for the long-term can only function when relying on the sex industry surrounding the bases, with all the domestic violence and sexual harassment that follows such conditions.²⁵² The problem for Okinawan women during the post-war period was that while many were forced to provide for their families through prostitution to U.S. soldiers, they were also stigmatised by their society for doing so. Even after the economic and social change that reversion may have brought, “discrimination and contempt against women – considered to be ‘sexual breakwaters’ between the US soldiers and ‘normal’ society – had not changed”.²⁵³ Furthermore, what creates a high threshold for women to report sexual abuse is that “in Okinawan culture it is unbearably difficult and humiliating for an adult

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Francis, “Women and Military Violence,” 189.

²⁵² Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 134-177.

²⁵³ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 152.

woman to bring a charge of rape, something that the Marine Corps has often relied on in covering up its record".²⁵⁴ After the occupation period ended, the average number of sexual assaults by U.S military personnel even rose due to soldiers being economically less well-off than their occupation-period counterparts.²⁵⁵

The most prominent group of women was the Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence (OWAAMV). Formed in 1995, the OWAAMV is a "a women's peace, human rights and demilitarisation advocacy movement", actively challenging "the authenticity of the 'mutual security' that was to be assured by the presence of U.S. military bases".²⁵⁶ The group repeatedly quoted Hillary Clinton, then honorary chairwoman of the U.S. delegation to the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, said that "'women's rights are human rights' and that military rape is a war crime".²⁵⁷ Throughout the late 1990s, the OWAAMV actively participated in anti-base protests, such as opposing the new offshore heliport to replace air base Futenma, even travelling to the U.S. on a number of occasions to gain recognition within various peace, environmentalist and women's rights groups in America.²⁵⁸

Okinawan women took it upon themselves, through organisation such as the OWAAMV, to break their history of silence and instead gain national and international support to bring their situation to light. A source of embarrassment for the U.S. was that the OWAAMV used Clinton's own words at the U.N. women's forum as their main argument. In this way, the OWAAMV was very effective in engaging the United States directly and, more importantly, publicly.

4.4. The Role of Governor Ōta Masahide

Then prefectural governor of Okinawa, Ōta Masahide, played an important role in supporting the anti-base movement, symbolising a political change in Okinawa from quietly compliant to one

²⁵⁴ Johnson, "The 1995 Rape Incident and the Rekindling of Okinawan Protest," 115.

²⁵⁵ Kozue Akibayashi and Suzuyo Takazato, "Okinawa: Women's Struggle for Demilitarization", in *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against US Military Posts*, ed. Catherine Lutz (London: Pluto Press, 2009): 257-258

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 258.

²⁵⁷ Johnson, "The 1995 Rape Incident and the Rekindling of Okinawan Protest," 115.

²⁵⁸ Francis, "Women and Military Violence," 193-195.

openly resisting Tokyo and the United States. Ōta visited Tokyo and demanded that the Japanese government revise the 1960 Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and to correct the disproportionate military presence on Okinawa in comparison to the mainland. In particular, “the focus was on the section giving “U.S. authorities the right to refuse Japanese investigators’ requests to hand over suspects when they are attached to the military”.²⁵⁹ This clause “symbolized the power imbalance between the US military and local residents” because it allowed the U.S. to transfer suspects back to the U.S.²⁶⁰

More significantly, on 28 September 1995, Ōta became the first governor to refuse to sign the land-lease contract on behalf of the landowners who had refused to consent to the compulsory use of their properties (about 35,200 square meters) by the U.S. military. These leases were set to expire in 1996 and 1997. Ōta’s refusal to sign precipitated a political crisis for the Japanese government. However, Tokyo used the Fukuoka High Court to force Ōta’s hand on March 25, 1996. Furthermore, the Japanese government dispelled with the need for the prefectural governor’s signature in the future. By depriving Okinawan owners of their property rights, the revision is “a violation of article 95 of the Japanese Constitution (‘A special law, applicable to one local public entity, cannot be enacted by the Diet without the consent of the majority of voters of the local public entity concerned, obtained in accordance with law’).²⁶¹ Although disappointed, 74.5 percent of Okinawa supported Ōta’s refusal and even more agreed that the SOFA should be revised.²⁶²

In the end, Ōta’s role was more symbolic than effectual. Tokyo simply removed the need for the signature of Okinawa’s governor for the land-lease contracts. Furthermore, larger demands, such as the revision of the SOFA with regards to the legal status of U.S. military personnel in Okinawa, were unmet by the U.S. and Tokyo.²⁶³ Nonetheless, Tokyo had to go to considerable legal – and arguably illegal – lengths to avert an alliance crisis. Furthermore, public support for Ōta’s refusal and

²⁵⁹ Johnson, “The 1995 Rape Incident and the Rekindling of Okinawan Protest,” 118.

²⁶⁰ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 155.

²⁶¹ Johnson, “The 1995 Rape Incident and the Rekindling of Okinawan Protest,” 113.

²⁶² Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 158.

²⁶³ Yeo, “Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests,” 69.

the mass rallies of October 21 were “powerful reminders of the level of Okinawans’ antipathy against the U.S. military’s crimes and accidents, which had been barely contained by the Japanese government’s generous financial compensation”.²⁶⁴

4.5. The SACO Report and Relocating Futenma

What Ōta’s actions and the mass protests did manage was to clearly signal to Tokyo and the U.S. that the situation in Okinawa had reached a boiling point. The U.S. and Japan set up the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO), comprised of U.S. and Japanese officials, to prevent a destabilisation of their security treaty by addressing Okinawa’s grievances. However, according to Johnson, despite the objective to “reduce the impact of U.S. military operations and training on the people of Okinawa,” SACO was merely a means to contain and deflect the anti-base movement “while pretending to be responsive to it”.²⁶⁵ The SACO report “recommended the return of twenty-one percent of U.S. military base land, including MCAS Futenma, as well as the implementation of several operational and noise abatement measures”.²⁶⁶

The relocation issue of Marine Corps Air Base Futenma would become a long-term contentious issue. Located in the middle of the crowded residential districts of Ginowan City where 85,000 people lived, Futenma epitomised “the unwanted US military presence”.²⁶⁷ Besides the unavoidable environmental pollution, between 1972 and 1999, up to fifty aircraft crashes around Futenma were recorded and the noise of daily fly-overs disrupted the classes of the fifteen schools located nearby. However, instead of simply closing the air base, SACO suggested that “Futenma be replaced by either a floating or an anchored, sea-borne airfield located slightly off-shore in northern Okinawa island”.²⁶⁸ Echoing Johnson’s observation, this made the deal suspect of being “nothing more than an effort to replace the outdated and inconveniently located Futenma Airbase”.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁴ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 156.

²⁶⁵ Jonson, “The Heliport, Nago, and the End of the Ota Era,” 217.

²⁶⁶ Yeo, “Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests,” 69.

²⁶⁷ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 162.

²⁶⁸ Jonson, “The Heliport, Nago, and the End of the Ota Era,” 218.

²⁶⁹ Yonetani, “Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater”: 72.

SACO chose Henoko, the seacoast suburb of Nago, an impoverished town already host to the 3,000 U.S. Marines of Camp Schwab Marine base, which had become notorious for its noise, accidents and environmental damage during the Vietnam War.²⁷⁰ Various factions, such as labour unions, political parties and environmental groups, divided over the project's potential economic gain and social and environmental harm, opposed each other over the construction of a new heliport. In 1997, a referendum settled the issue in favour of the opposition. Nevertheless, under state pressure, "Nago Mayor Higa officially approved the heliport construction in Henoko on the condition that the state provide special assistance for the local economy, and then resigned".²⁷¹

Nonetheless, the Nago referendum, combined with the outcome of the Okinawa Prefecture-wide plebiscite on September 8, 1996, "made it harder for Tokyo to ignore the will of local voters".²⁷² Since the Nago referendum, due external and internal pressures within the prefectural and central governments, the heliport issue has still not been resolved.²⁷³ Therefore, the anti-base movement's success in changing the status quo remained limited despite the opposition at Henoko and the concessions made by the SACO report. Futenma is at a stalemate but there are no real plans of wholly removing the air base from Okinawa. Furthermore, although relocating Futenma would be a success for Ginowan City, as governor Ōta remarked, "shuffling bases within Okinawa merely 'shifted our own misery onto others'".²⁷⁴

4.6. Anti-Base Movement Now: Stalemate, Futenma and Environmentalism

Friction between Tokyo and Okinawa has continued during the last two decades as indecision concerning the relocation of MCA Futenma persists. During the G-8 Summit hosted in Okinawa in 2008, in which Bill Clinton became the first U.S. president to visit the island in over forty years, Tokyo left little room for public deviation from the government line concerning the bases. Okinawa's Anti-

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Ibid., 173.

²⁷² Jonson, "The Heliport, Nago, and the End of the Ota Era," 220.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Yeo, "Activists, Alliances, and Anti-U.S. Base Protests," 69.

War Landowners Association had already been ostracized from public events.²⁷⁵ Furthermore, “secret service officials recorded on camera the faces of local demonstrators conducting a harmless peace walk from Nago to Busena”.²⁷⁶ Nevertheless, “a diverse mix of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), peace groups, intellectuals, environmentalists, and women politicians began to raise their voices, denouncing dominant global forces and national powers”.²⁷⁷ On the eve of the summit, “27,000 people joined hands around the seventeen-kilometer perimeter of Kadena U.S. Airforce Base”, symbolising “the peace movement and of the determination of Okinawans to struggle against the bases in the face of pressure”.²⁷⁸

A distinct element of the third wave is environmentalism which has been a major contribution to the opposition of relocating MCA Futenma due to its ability to attract support both nationally and internationally from various environmental organisations and lobbies. The discovery in the 1990s that a proposed relocation site, an offshore coral reef, is home to the dugong, a world-heritage species, transformed the heliport issue from “a single-issue nimby campaign to a Japan-wide campaign”.²⁷⁹ Since then, as Tanji puts it, “the environmentalist and anti-base movements come in one package”.²⁸⁰

In 2008, a U.S. federal court in San Francisco even ruled that the “U.S. Defense Department’s plans to construct a new U.S. offshore Marine airbase in Okinawa violated the National Historic Preservation Act by not protecting a Japanese ‘national monument,’ the endangered Okinawa dugong”.²⁸¹ However, “the court case alone will not be able to stop the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility in Henoko”.²⁸² Similarly, in Japan, laws “make it virtually impossible to actually

²⁷⁵ Yonetani, “Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater”: 80-81.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 72.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

²⁷⁹ Caroline Spencer, “Meeting of the Dugongs and the Cooking Pots: Anti-military Base Citizens’ Groups on Okinawa,” *Japanese Studies* 23, no. 2 (2003): 130, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/1037139032000129676>.

²⁸⁰ Miyume Tanji, “Okinawa Screaming,” *Free Library* (August, 1), <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/OKINAWA+SCREAMING.-a077808220>.

²⁸¹ Miyume Tanji, “U.S. Court Rules in the ‘Okinawa Dugong’ Case,” *Critical Asian Studies* 40, no. 3 (2008): 475, <https://www.tandfonline-com.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/doi/abs/10.1080/14672710802274094>.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 482.

stop a project on environmental grounds".²⁸³ What the case does mean is that a U.S. military project in Okinawa must now meet the same legal standards that apply in the United States instead of the previous use of double standards. For example, that MCA Futenma operates from within Ginowan City would never satisfy "its home country's safety standards".²⁸⁴ Though not ideal, this ruling makes fighting "a war of attrition" possible.²⁸⁵

However, in spite of the protests and the environmental activists, what is hampering real change is that the United States continues to argue that the Marine Corps facility at Futenma is "necessary for several missions – to counter a rising China, to deal with a contingency on the Korean peninsula, to protect sea lanes in the region, and to help mount humanitarian missions".²⁸⁶ In recent years, however, members of both the Japanese government and U.S. congress have questioned whether a "relatively small force of Marines is critically necessary for these missions".²⁸⁷ Nevertheless, although having come to a gridlock in terms of the bilateral realignment of military forces since 2006, the United States believes that the "positioning of the III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, which reinforces U.S. commitment to Japanese security, is a costly signal to regional challengers of the U.S. commitment to extended deterrence".²⁸⁸

In any case, "nothing is built yet, and Futenma Air Base has not moved after almost a decade since its relocation was announced".²⁸⁹ In the process, today Futenma symbolises the U.S. military institution in Okinawa. Aggravating the situation further is that the current Japanese administration under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is unlikely to withdraw its support for the military bases in Okinawa regardless of the local political and civil opposition. This is because Abe "has frequently cited the security concerns of an unpredictable North Korea and increasingly aggressive China as justification

²⁸³ Yonetani, "Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater": 89-90.

²⁸⁴ Miyume Tanji, "U.S. Court Rules in the 'Okinawa Dugong' Case": 482.

²⁸⁵ Yonetani, "Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater": 90.

²⁸⁶ Chaffin, "Okinawa and the Changing U.S.-Japan Alliance."

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ Chaffin, "Okinawa and the Changing US Japan Alliance."

²⁸⁹ Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*, 175.

for what many have argued is a policy of re-militarisation".²⁹⁰ In line with this trend, the New York Times reports that Abe recently announced plans to revise Article 9, which calls "for the complete renunciation of war", of Japan's pacifist constitution by 2020.²⁹¹ To be able to benefit from this clause was one of the leading reasons Okinawans sought reversion to Japan in 1972.

Furthermore, Trump favours Japan's possible constitutional reforms, having criticised Japan's military dependency on the U.S.²⁹² It remains unclear, however, what an increase in Japan's military independence would mean for Okinawa's bases. It seems however that today's anti-base base movement has to face a mainland government actively pursuing the militarisation of Japan while an indifferent United States looks on.

Recent protest actions have proved that Okinawa's protest community is still active today. Tokyo announced in 2014 that it would move forward with its base construction plans despite that forty-one municipal governors and members of parliament submitted a petition to Tokyo in 2013 to block the transfer of the US airbase to Henoko Bay. In response, several thousand Okinawans openly protested by swarming Henoko Bay with kayaks or by marching on the U.S. Marine Corps Camp Schwab. Furthermore, in 2014, Takeshi Onaga was elected as governor, who, unlike his more sympathetic predecessor, campaigned on a strict opposition to bases.²⁹³

4.7. Conclusion

U.S. military bases have been – and continue to be – a great source of social and political unrest in Okinawa. A community of protest exists in Okinawa, straining the relationship between Okinawa and the U.S. military. The 1990s was a period of social and political upheaval in Okinawa as residents Okinawa's public saw no reason for the continued existence of the U.S.-Japan alliance at

²⁹⁰ Michael Caster, "Anti-US Base Activists Detained as Okinawan Resistance Continues," *Green Left Weekly*, no. 1130 (2017): 16, <https://search-informit-com-au.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/fullText;dn=708125883922230;res=IELHSS>.

²⁹¹ Rich Motoko, "Shinzo Abe Announces Plan to Revise Japan's Pacifist Constitution", *New York Times*, May 3, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/03/world/asia/japan-constitution-shinzo-abe-military.html>.

²⁹² Adam Taylor, "American like their Relationship with Japan. Why? China" *Washington Post*, April 18, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2018/04/18/americans-like-their-relationship-with-japan-why-china/?utm_term=.152c10e37f8c.

²⁹³ Caster, "Anti-US Base Activists Detained as Okinawan Resistance Continues," : 16.

their expense. An interesting social dynamic to the third wave of protest is how women and environmentalism were able to engage U.S. military policies by accumulating national and international support.

In terms of local politics, the third anti-base movement marked a departure from previous responses. Ōta Masahide's open defiance of Tokyo – and by extent the U.S. military – temporarily created a major crisis for U.S.-Japan relations, causing Tokyo to go to great legal and arguably illegal lengths to resolve the issue. Ōta's resistance reverberated through the anti-base movement, indicating a new-found unity between top-level Okinawan politicians and local voters. Traditionally, top-level Okinawan politicians acquiesced to Tokyo's requests.

However, the anti-base movement's success in changing the status quo was limited. The SACO report did not provide any major concessions, besides the replacement of MCA Futenma. Although this would be a victory for Ginowan City, in reality it only shifts the load onto other communities. Furthermore, no changes were made to the U.S.-Japan SOFA regarding the legal status of U.S military personnel.

Replacing or removing MCA Futenma remains a political stalemate. Despite considering various force re-alignment strategies in east Asia, whether through political indecision or an unwillingness, the U.S. has not decided on any course of action. In recent years, major anti-base protests have flared up, reminding local, national and U.S. leaders that Okinawa and its surrounding islands continue to resent the U.S. military institution. However, under a Japanese administration actively pursuing the re-militarisation of Japan and a United States that is blatantly unsympathetic to its own protestors and non-violent activists, it seems unlikely that these islands of discontent will feel at peace any time soon.

Conclusion

Bases are, and to the younger generation of Okinawans always have been, a part of Okinawa's physical, social and cultural landscape. Moving from one military strategy to another, the political and strategic rhetoric of the U.S.-Japan alliance has consistently found – perhaps justifiably so – new rationales to maintain the U.S. military bases in Okinawa. Decades after reversion to Japan, Okinawa still exists as a U.S. military colony in all but name. Within the social-political context of Okinawa's anti-base culture, however, the U.S. military influences how Okinawa receives America by using American cultural appeal.

In the context of American military hegemony, the American cultural experience cannot be depoliticised. American culture in Okinawa is an offshoot from the harsh military rule during the occupation years, though even after reversion to Japan little has significantly changed in terms of base presence. As Enloe states, military bases create militarised spaces wherein all actions function to serve the military above all else.²⁹⁴ Both directly and indirectly, American culture, imported by military bases, functions to serve the military institution.

By building little Americas, military bases have appropriated Okinawa's landscape to suit American needs, both in terms of space and style. In the process, ideas linking America with modernity have been instilled into the islands. Military bases have imported American cultural products into Okinawa, which regards these products as tokens of modernity and the American lifestyle, especially during the occupation period. Furthermore, that the local government built the Mihama American Village on former military base land reveals an inclination in Okinawa to decontextualize the history of the American military presence in Okinawa by embracing and celebrating American cultural artefacts. Removing the social-political context of the continued existence of U.S. military bases normalises the military presence in Okinawa, especially for the younger generation, by concealing how bases are an anomaly within Okinawa's landscape. This

²⁹⁴ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, 138.

process endangers the vision of an Okinawa without bases and thus also the possibility for renewed anti-base movements.

However, appreciation of a cultural America does not necessarily cancel out the perception of a military America. As Ames indicated, Okinawans distinguish between what they consider a welcome cultural America and the undesirable U.S. military institution.²⁹⁵ Historically, American cultural products were a means for Okinawa to achieve and participate in a global modernity in the wake of Japanese imperialism. Today, American culture may stay out of a nostalgic desire for America. U.S. military bases on the other hand, have never been welcome.

U.S. military bases remain to be a great source of social and political unrest in Okinawa. The long string of military accidents, the persistent (sexual) abuse of the local population, environmental damage and a cultural adversity to militarism has made Okinawa oppose the U.S. military presence. Furthermore, although the financial contribution Japan makes to the hosting of U.S. troops in Okinawa has been advantageous, the increasing domestic pressure from both within Okinawa and mainland Japan, indicates that the situation may be untenable in the long term. For the moment, however, the U.S.-Japan alliance sees few other options than to maintain the bases if it continues its regional security strategies.

In light of Abe's pursuit of the remilitarisation of Japan and Trump's criticism of Japan's military dependency, the question is if it would matter whether Japanese soldiers filled these bases. Frustration over the U.S.-Japan SOFA, however, is just a symptom of a larger disagreement with Okinawa's militarisation. Whoever mans the battlements, Okinawa's main concern is that it feels that it has been made to live in a perpetual state of war while mainland Japan enjoys a sense of peace.

In the current state of affairs, peace in Okinawa is relative. This is because, as Masahide Ōta, the prefectural governor of Okinawa from 1990 to 1998, pointed out is, there is a "contradiction between Japan's Peace constitution and the post-war role imposed on Okinawa as the U.S. military's

²⁹⁵ Ames, "Amerikamun: Consuming America and Ambivalence toward the U.S. Presence in Postwar Okinawa": 50.

keystone of the Pacific".²⁹⁶ Existing as if in a state of war, peace is a lack of anti-base protests, political tumult and at best an absence of the military's abuse of Okinawa's inhabitants. Although Okinawa is fond of American culture in various ways, the undesirability of the U.S. military institution remains because it prevents peace from truly reaching the Ryukyu Islands. It is in this context that plenty of Okinawans wear vibrant Hawaii shirts, host the annual Peaceful Love Rock festival along with American volunteers and spend leisure time at the Mihama American Village. This embrace of American culture is an acceptance that, for better or worse, America is a significant part of Okinawa's social-cultural landscape and history. Via email Hajime expresses that "although people in Okinawa have been longing for peace since the bases were constructed, the troubles will not persist. I do not feel that the politics will remain so unreasonable".

²⁹⁶ Yonetani, "Playing Base Politics in a Global Strategic Theater": 72.

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