

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

**VERNACULAR OKINAWA: IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY IN
CONTEMPORARY LOCAL ACTIVISM**

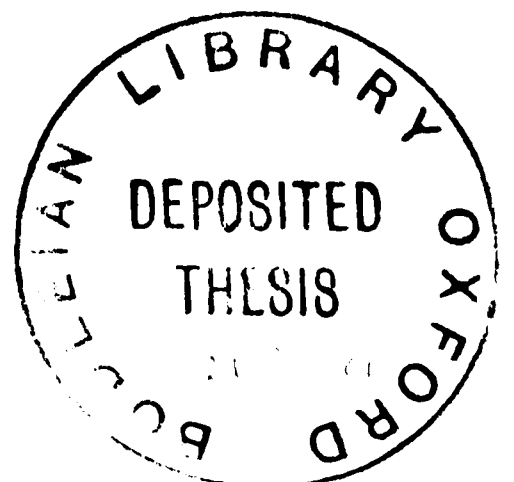
by

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父、泉水保郎と母、良子に捧ぐ

To my parents, Yasuo and Yoshiko Sensui

**VERNACULAR OKINAWA: IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY IN
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VERNACULAR OKINAWA: IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY LOCAL ACTIVISM

ABSTRACT

Demand for equal rights tends to be accompanied by assimilation of ethnic subordinates while the recognition of their separate identity is liable to justify unfair segregation. When an ethnic minority is aware of this dilemma, what identity are they to claim and what ideology do they present? By looking at contemporary local activism in Okinawa, Japan, this dissertation tries to give an empirical answer to this question. In Okinawans' historical experience, both their *sameness as* and *difference from* the Japanese turned out to be disadvantageous for the people. Local activists can support neither their Japanese identity nor Okinawan identity. As a result, although they struggled against the central power of the state, their activism can not be fully embraced within the category of multiculturalist movements. The body of this dissertation consists of a historical reconstruction of citizens' movements and a sociological analysis of activists' discourse on Okinawa-Japan relations. The ethnography focuses on a particular generation of educated local people, who form the mainstream of local activists in post-reversion Okinawa, and tries to illuminate what impact the reversion movement had on them and how it shaped their thought and actions thereafter.

Chapter 1 describes the way in which Okinawan intellectuals re-contextualise obsolete religious tradition into their environmentalist or pacifist movements. Chapter 2 addresses the moral ambiguity of modern collective identities and demonstrates, with the Japanese as an example, that moral values change depending on transient international power relations. Chapter 3 focuses on the empirical historical context, the reversion movement, in which a category of Okinawan intellectuals realised this moral ambiguity. Chapter 4 examines an expression of regional identity, the Ryukyuan Arc, by which Okinawan activists tried to overcome the principle of modern social collectivity. Chapter 5 discusses how Okinawans' perception has historically changed in regard to their position in Japanese society.

VERNACULAR OKINAWA: IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY LOCAL ACTIVISM

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

It is characteristic of modern collective identity to demand that an ethnic group be congruent with a political unit. This principle is observable not only in the extant ideology of nation-states but also implicit in a burgeoning multiculturalist rationale. A problem is that demand for equal rights tends to be accompanied by assimilation of ethnic subordinates while the recognition of their separate identity is liable to justify unfair segregation. When an ethnic minority is aware of this dilemma, what identity are they to claim and what ideology do they present? By looking at contemporary local activism in Okinawa, Japan, this dissertation tries to give an empirical answer to this question. In Okinawans' historical experience, both their *sameness as* and *difference from* the Japanese turned out to be disadvantageous to the people. The people of the Ryukyu Kingdom were marginalised on the ground that they were different from the Japanese. However, Japanisation promoted after the annexation of the kingdom deprived Okinawans of their self-respect. Yet, after the Pacific War their separate identity justified leaving Okinawa under the control of American forces. Finally, since the time when the administrative authority was transferred to the Japanese government, Okinawa's distinctive culture has been said to be threatened by the homogeneous Japanese nationhood. Due

to this complicated history, local activists clearly understand that neither their Japanese identity nor Okinawan identity is consistently supportable. Thus, although these activists struggled against the Japanese economic policy, the Japanese security policy and, therefore, the central power of the state, their activism was not a development that can be fully embraced within the category of multiculturalist movements. The body of this dissertation consists of a historical reconstruction of citizens' movements and a sociological analysis of activists' discourse on Okinawa-Japan relations. The ethnography focuses on a particular generation of educated local people, who form the mainstream of local activists in post-reversion Okinawa, and tries to illuminate what impact the reversion movement had on them and how it shaped their thought and actions thereafter.

Chapter 1 explains how the particular generation of educated local people are involved in the major public issues of contemporary Okinawa, and suggests where the contribution of this dissertation lies as an Okinawan ethnography. I begin with a description of the revival of a long obsolete community ceremony. This observation in fieldwork revealed that the community ceremony was more significant for onlookers than actual participants. The issue of these local observers is rarely addressed in the previous ethnographic studies of Okinawa, although researchers were consistently interested in religious aspects of local society. Whereas the presence of these observers has become increasingly visible, ceremonial practise as such has considerably declined. Since this decline was interpreted as the negative effect of a growing Japanese influence, the positive recognition of native religious tradition can be seen as resistance

against Japanese authority. Being also environmentalists or active pacifists, these local observers played a pivotal role in re-contextualising native religious tradition as a focus in major public issues, such as land development projects or the question of military bases.

Chapter 2 addresses the problem of the moral ambiguity inherent in modern collective identities. In the light of an increasingly assertive regional identity observed in recent Okinawa, it may be tempting to argue that a 'distinctive-Okinawa' has always existed, but that this had been submerged under the hegemonic narrative of a homogeneous Japan until recently. Such a theory, however, does not explain the reason why local activists are actually reluctant to claim complete separation. Underlying this theory is the moral judgement that appreciates 'Okinawan-Okinawa' while disapproving of 'Japanese-Okinawa'. An enhanced collective identity that serves the purpose of emancipation of an oppressed people meets with favourable acceptance, while an assertive collective identity, which propels the aggressive sentiment of a dominating people, is rejected. However, both aspects are actually based on the same principles of modern social collectivities; Tom Nairn considers the process to be 'Janus faced'. It is required for examining the phenomenon in its entirety to raise the proposition that 'Okinawan-Okinawa' is the only truth that should exist, whereas 'Japanese-Okinawa' is merely a fabrication that should be discarded. The study of Japan's minorities seems to have not yet fully overcome this problematic morality. Typified by Michael Weiner, this insufficiency has sometimes invited historical inaccuracy as to the ideology of Japanese imperialism and analytical confusion between the concepts of 'race' and

‘ethnicity’ in their application to their Japanese counterpart ‘*minzoku*’. In regard to these points, useful insights are obtained from Mark Peattie, Marius Jansen and, notably, Oguma Eiji, who founded their discussion on a corroborative examination of Japanese colonial policies. The main thesis of this chapter is that the moral value of each social collectivity purely depends on its historical context of international power relations. Once this situational relativity is exposed, it will be understood that support for ‘Okinawan-Okinawa’ is no less problematic than support for ‘Japanese-Okinawa’.

Chapter 3 focuses on a particular historical context, the reversion movement (*fukki undo*), in which a young generation of local intellectuals attained a notable understanding of social formation. In May 1972 the administrative authority of Okinawa was transferred from the American forces to the Japanese government. Towards this historical moment, various public campaigns and popular agitation developed in Okinawa. Despite consisting of multifarious strands, the reversion movement has simplistically been regarded as ‘liberation from the foreign rule and going back to homeland’, that is, as a Japanese irredentist challenge to the American occupation. In fact, the movement produced a group of young local intellectuals who conceived of an idea that contradicted the re-unification with Japan. Nevertheless, they did not intend to achieve a ‘distinctive Okinawa’ either, but aimed to reject any national identity. The development of this idea can only be explained if the multifarious strands in the reversion movement are presented as they actually were. In its beginning, the reversion movement was embedded in the struggle for Japan’s

full independence from American dominance. However, a change of relative power relations between Japan and the United States transformed American military presence in Okinawa into the foothold of the Japan-US security corporation, which safeguarded the vested interest of not only the United States but also Japan. Thus the reversion eventually became an operation by which metropolitan Japan took advantage of Okinawa. This paradoxical course of events not only revealed to anti-reversionists that it is impossible to consistently give positive judgements on their Japanese identity, but also made them infer that any social collectivity beyond face-to-face communities could not be morally supportable.

Chapter 4 examines an expression of regional identity, the Ryukyuan Arc (*Ryukyu-ko*), articulated by local activists through their involvement in neighbourhood acts. A dramatic socio-economic change following the 1972 reversion resulted in various problems for local communities, although the Okinawan issues retreated from the national political agenda and the mass media. In this period, local activists formed a network of grass roots activists scattered across the Ryukyus. Seemingly different problems were consistently interpreted as the single problem posed by the central power of the state, which tried to take advantage of Okinawa under the pretext of completing the re-unification. On countering widespread Japanese conformity, local activists carefully avoided attempting to achieve their own solidarity by creating another homogenising force. Instead of holding up an 'authentic Okinawa', they defined the locality as an aggregation of relatively autonomous communities. When this internally diverse Okinawa was embedded in discourse on 'Japonesia', the centre-periphery relationship

which conventionally valued Japan over Okinawa was completely reversed. Shimao Toshio discerned an indigenous, populist and elemental Japanese society underneath the historically recent, elitist and superficial Japanese state, and named the former 'Japonesia'. Okinawa, by maintaining its internal diversity, that is, by not constructing its authenticity, is now shown to represent this originally heterogeneous Japanese society and thereby to de-centralise the state power, which had fabricated its homogeneous outlook. The Ryukyuan Arc refers to this innovative regional identity which local activists found and tried to materialise in their neighbourhood acts.

Chapter 5 discusses Okinawans' perceptions of their relationship with the Ainu and other minority groups. In the most recent decade, Okinawan activists have remarkably developed communication with their Ainu counterparts and, through their intermediary, have extended their relations to other foreign indigenous groups. It was a revolutionary change on the part of Okinawan intellectuals that they came to possess a self-definition as one of the ethnic subordinates. Previous generations of local leaders were eager to distance themselves not only from Ainu but also Taiwanese aboriginals and Burakumin, as rejecting association with these groups amounted to securing Okinawa's otherwise ambiguous Japanese identity. Without this distance, it was considered to be impossible to protect Okinawans from the kind of negative prejudice and social discrimination displayed against these minority groups. In dramatically shifting their referential group, contemporary local activists learned strategies for ethnopolitics in an international arena. In line with the politicisation of local communities after the mid 1990s, local activists eventually constructed

an argument for an independent Okinawa. Implicit in this multiculturalist movement was, however, the assumption that an 'authentic Okinawa' and a 'distinctive Okinawa' exist. This was a deviation from their previous principles and was too unrealistic an assumption to receive wide public support in the contemporary setting.

INTRODUCTION

In his extensive review of the theory of *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (1993), Thomas Eriksen gives a concise account of what he calls the 'paradox of multiculturalism'. This is a dilemma which any attempt at a theoretically consistent social policy on ethnic minorities necessarily faces. On the one hand, the promotion of equal rights and duties tends to be accompanied by a coercive assimilation or intervention. Eriksen offers the examples of Bretons in France and British Gypsies. In the first case, for example, equal French citizenship was inseparable from standard French since French linguistic competence was one of the central criteria which defined the French. Thus Breton language had been excluded from public space until recently when a Breton revitalisation movement gained a measure of success (McDonald 1989). On the other hand, emphasis on cultural difference can be used to justify the unfair segregation of ethnic subordinates. Eriksen mentions the case of South-African apartheid and that of Australian aborigines. In the first case, for example, black Africans were not only discriminated against in their access to public resources, but were also encouraged to use their local languages so that the white elite could deny their command of English and thereby their self-management. In short, the dilemma is one between the 'right of ethnic groups to be distinctive' and their 'right to be treated as an equal within a state' (Eriksen 1993: 142-143). Eriksen rightly points out that power is the decisive variable in this choice. It may seem easy, thus, to give moral support to one side or the other in each *practical* situation; in South Africa, this practical morality eventually terminated the apartheid system and, in France, few

people find injustice at the reform which introduced Breton in public education in Brittany. However, such situational consistency is difficult to maintain when the same ethnic minority finds disadvantages both in *equality with* and *difference from* the dominant majority at the same time. Thus the dilemma, or the 'paradox of multiculturalism', cannot be dismissed as a quasi-problem to be solved in each practical case, but must also be addressed in its *theoretical* dimension.

Throughout the history of Okinawa, both a situation resembling 'apartheid' and one similar to 'Breton-type linguistic militancy' have in fact existed. Their coexistence has complicated relations between the Japanese and Okinawans.¹ There was once a kingdom in Okinawa. When this local kingdom came under exploitative Japanese control, its royal subjects were encouraged to maintain their cultural difference; they were prohibited from wearing Japanese cloths, using Japanese names and speaking Japanese.² However, at the point when the kingdom was eventually integrated into the Japanese nation-state, this dissimilation policy was completely reversed; local peculiarities were effaced in line with an energetically promoted Japanisation. Cultural standardisation was, of course, a common phenomenon, also observable elsewhere when a modern nation-state is established. As industrialisation requires a culturally homogeneous mass

¹ There are currently around 1.3 million people, Okinawans, scattered across some forty islands, the Ryukyu islands, which make up the southernmost part of the present Japanese territory. The choice of the main descriptive term, either 'Okinawa' or 'Ryukyu', is itself a subject of analysis rather than simple preference. Leaving their definitions in discussion in section 3 of chapter 4, I basically use 'Okinawa' and its cognate terms in my description while either terms appearing in direct quotations are what the writers respectively use in their original texts whether they are in Japanese, English or whatever language.

² This does not mean that these dissemination policies had the exactly same purpose as apartheid in South Africa. Prohibition of Japanisation was meant to conceal the actual Japanese control from the eyes of China, which was the authority officially approving the title of the Ryukyuan crown in exchange for receiving the kingdom's tribute and pledge.

labour force, the modern state creates this through public education (Gellner 1983). Nevertheless, the Okinawan case was unique in that the local people experienced yet another reversal of their identity, back, that is, once more to a non-Japanese people. For twenty-seven years following the Second World War, American forces occupied the islands. The American authority had a view that Okinawans were a different people from the Japanese, and expected little resistance in terms of Japanese nationalism, which would be displayed by Okinawans as well as the other Japanese. Considering Okinawans' potential Japanese citizenship, their separate identity meant that the United States could allow herself to marginalize them for the purpose of the effective military use of the islands. In 1972 Okinawa re-entered Japan, and Okinawans thereby gained equal Japanese citizenship. Thereafter, there has been an increasingly voiced opinion suggesting that the homogeneous nationhood of Japan has deprived Okinawans of their genuine characteristics and that Okinawa's regional uniqueness must be restored. In recent debates between Okinawa prefecture and the Japanese government over the issue of the American military bases, this dissenting voice has developed into a claim for the recognition of political rights as a distinctive people, which had been lost by the Japanese domination. In short, as a scholar of Okinawan descent describes it, Okinawans have a 'troubled national identity' (Taira 1997).

When an ethnic minority has become acutely aware of the 'paradox of multiculturalism', what identity are they to claim and what ideology do they present as a substitute for multiculturalism? By looking at contemporary local activists in Okinawa, this dissertation tries to give an empirical answer

to this question. The leaders of citizens' movements in post-reversion Okinawa grew up under the oppressive American administration and actively participated in the reversion movement. Since then, however, they have been struggling against an overwhelming Japanese influence. These local activists knew from experience that the moral value of a collective identity could completely change. Defined in relation to the Japanese, equality had a positive value, while separation had a negative one during the American control. However, the former transformed into negative homogeneity whereas the latter changed into positive distinctiveness in post-1972 Okinawa. In addition, these educated local people learned from history that their predecessors had also undergone a similar reversal of moral values attached to the Okinawa-Japan relationship; emphasised difference once justified Okinawans' subordinate status, but stress on the sameness eventually deprived Okinawans of their self-respect. A corollary of this is that contemporary local activism in Okinawa is not a development which can be fully embraced within the category of multiculturalist movements. Even though this local activism is evidently a provincial resistance against a Japanese nation-state, it cannot simply be understood as an ethnic reassertion against the dominant Japanese.

The body of this dissertation consists of a historical reconstruction of local citizens' movements and a sociological analysis of local activists' discourse on their own society. The main focus of the ethnography is placed on a particular generation of educated local people. I try to illuminate what impact the reversion movement had on them and how it shaped their thought and actions thereafter. While this course of

development is more or less chronologically arranged, I have deliberately avoided giving a general account of local history at the start. Similarly, geographic categories concerning Okinawa, the definition of Okinawans, a description of other minority groups, common interpretations of the Okinawa-Japan relationship are not systematically presented. Although this may run the risk of fragmenting the background knowledge, it is necessary for highlighting the ideology of local activists to incorporate such knowledge into the point in my reconstruction at which it becomes an issue for local activists themselves to discuss, redefine and reinterpret.

Drawing on the result of fieldwork in Miyako and Yomitan in the late 1990s, chapter 1 explains firstly how a particular generation of local intelligentsia involved themselves in important public issues of contemporary Okinawan society. I initially encountered grassroots activists as local observers of traditional ceremonies. However, being also environmentalists or active pacifists, they re-contextualised the popular cult of female possession in their opposition movements to land development projects or the question of military bases. Secondly, a brief review of the previous anthropological studies in Okinawa suggests where the contribution of this dissertation will lie as an Okinawan ethnography. Although the presence of local observers has become increasingly visible, the previous studies have confined themselves to an examination of religious practice and organisation in isolated communities and rarely succeeded in offering an analysis of their present social context. Lastly, through comparison with similar cases in Siberia and Korea, where shamanic traditions were reported to be manipulated in contemporary ethnic

movements, the major research question is formulated, that is, on the largely unaddressed problematic of Okinawan collective identity.

Before embarking upon discussion of the Okinawan material, it is useful to introduce theoretical issues concerning the moral ambiguity of modern collective identities in general. A collective solidarity to liberate an ethnic subordinate is welcomed, whereas ethnic oneness of a dominant group is often criticised because of its homogenising tendency and assimilation policy. However, both actions, that is, emancipation and aggression, are actually driven by the same principles which associate one ethnic group with one political authority. Therefore, moral support for one or the other action is theoretically inconsistent. One particularly influential theory of Japan's minority does not display sufficient detachment from this problematic moral judgement. Through a critical reading of this theory, it is suggested, in chapter 2, that the moral value of each social collectivity depends purely on its historical context of international power relations.

I return to the substantive discussion of the Okinawan case in chapter 3, from which a historical reconstruction of local citizens' movements continues up to chapter 5. Chapter 3 focuses on a historical context, the reversion movement, in which a category of educated young people built up a basis for a unique ideology of social formation. Historical accounts are arranged to show different rationales of different social actors so that these accounts can deconstruct the stereotypic understanding of the reversion movement as 'liberation from foreign rule and going back to the homeland'. The young local intellectuals formed one of multifarious groups or agencies. Although they raised a specific objection to the then

widespread assimilationism which was propelling the re-entry into Japan, they actually opposed the more general ideological force which blinded people to the way in which the central power of a modern social collectivity preserved its authority in an established power structure.

Chapter 4 examines a particular expression of regional identity, the Ryukyuan Arc, articulated by local activists through their involvement in neighbourhood acts against the national economic policy, national security policy and, therefore, the central power of the Japanese state. Firstly, to highlight their fresh sense of value, a comparison is made with another generation of local intellectuals who also committed themselves to an opposition movement to excessive land development in post-reversion Okinawa. Secondly, an expanded discussion on the historical background of the existing geographical categories explains why young local activists came to use the neologism 'Ryukyuan Arc'. Thirdly, in regard to this unfamiliar concept, the role of some Japanese writers is addressed and their ideology is analysed. Lastly, it is examined how the ideas proposed by these writers influenced local activists to (re-)interpret Okinawa-Japan relations in the context of cultural events or other activities up to the late 1980s.

Chapter 5 discusses Okinawans' perceptions of their relationship with Ainu and other minority groups. Recently, Okinawan activists have remarkably developed communication with their Ainu counterparts and, under this influence, have increasingly voiced their own minority identity separable from the mainstream Japanese. Through comparison with earlier understandings of Okinawans' relationship with Taiwanese aboriginals and Burakumin as well as Ainu, it is illustrated that such self-representation

was a dramatic challenge to the conventional view of Okinawans' position in Japanese society. Thereafter, the story eventually comes back to the situation in the second half of the 1990s. The knowledge enlarged by the analyses in the previous chapters enables us to explain why a progressive form of assertive ethnicity was frustrated even if local communities were highly politicised in their resistance against the Japanese government.

In conclusion, the major ideological components of contemporary Okinawan activism are summarised and the thesis concludes by considering their possible formulation.

CHAPTER 1: LOCAL OBSERVERS OF TRADITIONS

1-1: INTRODUCTION

For the ethnographer working on Okinawa, the religious aspect of local society has been a familiar topic of enquiry. The central element of native religious practice, the popular cult of female possession, however, has noticeably declined in recent years. In contrast, local observers were increasingly active to such an extent that, in some cases, they propelled religious practitioners to restore their ceremonials. These local observers also widely involved themselves in citizens' movements against land development or military bases. Embedded in these movements, seemingly dying religiosity began to assume a new significance in the contemporary social setting.

1-2: FIELDWORK

1-2-1: A REVIVAL OF COMMUNITY CEREMONIAL

On 13 October 1997 at Ikema island, Miyako, I witnessed a local ceremony, *yu-kui*, which had just been revived after its discontinuance in the mid 1970s. According to this ceremony, all married women aged between fifty-one and fifty-five should go around ten sanctuaries scattered on the island and make the deities a request (*kui*) for a good harvest (*yu*). On the day in question, I saw four women, properly dressed for religious service, wearing white robes and a coronet of vine thread, walking quietly on a path towards these sanctuaries. According to resident registration, more than forty women were entitled, or rather obligated, to join this ritual journey. But I could see only the four women. However, I also counted

fourteen other people, who were not supposed to be present at this scene: a photographer, an earthenware artist, three psychiatrists and a nurse, three television crew, four newspaper journalists and myself. While some of us were waiting for the four women to come into an open space with the expectation of catching a better picture, others followed the women, at a distance, right throughout their sacred journey.

This observation in the field brought home two points. Firstly, community ceremonies had already become peripheral social activities on the part of those people who were eligible to take part. In the 1960s, an anthropologist carried out an ethnographic study based on his long-term research in Ikema Island. His ethnography vividly pictured local women actively participating in community ceremonies (Noguchi 1972). In 1976, the regular recruitment of priestesses was interrupted by candidates who refused to take up the position. To duly conduct over thirty ceremonies in the ritual calendar, five priestesses have to be chosen from a certain generation of islanders. Selection was based on the deities' calling which was said to be informed by a special draw being taken every three years. Some candidates might have simply been too modest to regard themselves as qualified to safeguard the well being of the islanders. However, many women who had refused to become priestesses held that they had been unwilling, financially and psychologically, to do a service that was no longer rewarding for the deities, or for the community. Traditional privileges of the consumption of offerings and monetary remuneration paid by the community had lost their incentive in light of recently available labour, by which the islanders could make more profit if they were not involved in

time-consuming ceremonial activities. In addition, growing indifference on the part of male and young islanders undermined the women's confidence in giving them spiritual protection and generally reduced their ambition to take on such a responsibility. In saying that community ceremonial was 'meaningless nowadays', not a few local people attributed its decline to a change of livelihood. Most regular ceremonies are, in theory, combined with the annual cycle of millet cultivation, the main crops for tax payment in pre-modern times, which had been completely replaced by sugar cane many years ago. Ceremonies, of course, do not need such an interpretation directly connected to livelihood, but also serve the function of social integration. One annual festival, *myak-zts*, is still of vital importance to the islanders' identity. During this festival those islanders who have already left Ikema for the city area in Miyako, Okinawa, or even mainland Japan come back to the island and visit its sanctuary for worship. This function of social integration, however, was not the case with the priestesses' ceremonies.

Nevertheless, it can be noted, as the second point which was learned from the observation in the field, that community ceremonies were, in fact, a matter of considerable concern for the onlookers. The number of direct observers exceeded that of the actual practitioners. There were also a number of people who would appreciate the products of these observers, such as photographs, television documentaries, news articles, plates of earthenware, psychiatrists' essays and so on. Moreover, it came to my notice after a while that the revival had been carried out through the strong support of a group of these observers. For the preceding two years this

group had persuaded the local authority and encouraged priestess-candidates to restore community ceremonies. Almost every time when I went around to see community ceremonies in Ikema and other places, these observers came into sight. I only needed to step back from conventional field workers' view point and widen a range of observation. During the rest of my fieldwork, I repeatedly noticed the presence of other observers than myself, who, literally and metaphorically, surrounded religious practitioners and sometimes intervened in the maintenance of their practice. Thus community ceremonies can no longer be understood merely as something to be performed by the community for the benefit of its members, but these ceremonies have undeniable significance for the people who do not belong to the community. Why do these people come to observe the ceremonies in which they are not eligible to participate? After formulating this question, my original intention to investigate the popular cult of female possession faded away and was replaced by a more serious attention to its observers. In other words, the focus of research was significantly diverted away from an immediate concern with the people *on* whom I had expected to work, and toward the people *among* whom I actually worked. As a result, the bulk of ethnographic material turned out to centre around a historical reconstruction of a social network of local intellectuals. In the end, my study became concerned with an interpretation of their activities, largely omitting shamans, priestesses and their religious practice. This diversion can be justified by pointing to the fact that local intellectuals render isolated priestesses' ceremonies relevant to the wider social context and, in this connection, this seemingly dying religiosity can be a useful

starting point from which one can set off to inquiry about local responses to the major problems in contemporary Okinawa.

1-2-2: SHAMANS IN ANTI-DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGNS

Who were the people who came to look on at the priestess ceremonies of rural Okinawan communities? In this regard, citizens' campaigns against land development provided the context in which religious practitioners forged links with their observers. The American administration of Okinawa strictly controlled the local economy and restricted a radical change in land use. In 1972, when the administration was transferred to Japan, Okinawan land was liberalised to the Japanese property market and suddenly came to have real exchange value. Property developers scrambled for islands, and their excessive purchases of farmland caused serious social anxiety (e.g., Hirara Shi Shi Hensan Iin Kai 1981: 279, 443). In Miyako, the Tokyo Express Railway Company (*Tokyu*) bought a large tract of land along the scenic coastal line, with a plan for the construction of a tourist resort. Bargaining of common land was frustrated by local opponents, who suspected that Tokyu's purchase was purely speculative, or who found that higher selling prices were negotiable. Meanwhile, some opponents, mainly local shamans and priestesses, began to make an issue out of the fact that several religious sanctuaries existed on the common land (*Minami Okinawa Shinbun* 7, 8, 9 Mar. 1972). Nakasone Keizo, a local educational officer, took notice of this complaint.³ With the

³ The original ethnographic data of this dissertation were mainly collected during my two long-term research trips to Okinawa. The first stay extended from March 1992 to September 1992, during which I was employed as a part-time teacher in a private evening school, which Nakasone managed, in the city area in Hirara City. The second one lasted for a complete year starting from September 1997,

rallying cry, 'Don't sell off the land of Miyako. Protect our soil and sanctuaries', Nakasone gathered about one hundred and fifty local shamans and priestesses to a meeting (*Miyako Mainichi Shinbun* 7, 15 Feb. 1973). Similar shaman involvement in anti-development campaigns was also observed on some other islands, but the Miyakoan case was unique in that leading shamans and priestesses formed a sustained group, the Utaki Shinto Kai (Association of Miyako Shamans), under Nakasone's management.⁴

After industrialisation failed miserably in the 1970s, tourism was gradually singled out as a promising local industry. In the Second Ten Years Okinawa Development Plan, the Japanese government focused on promoting a 'uniquely Okinawan industry'. In its 1986 interim report, this focus was more concretely described as 'the construction of tourist resorts by utilising the mild oceanic climate'. This direction was reaffirmed by the concurrent Fourth National General Development Plan, which planned 'to build up a space for leisure activity by making full use of the excellent and unique nature in the Okinawa islands and to construct a zone of international tourist resorts'. Furthermore, tourist development was accelerated by the Law concerning the Construction of Comprehensive Health Resort Area (so-called Resort Law). In 1986, aiming at diverting Japanese investment from the export industry to the domestic market, the Japanese government decided to designate the special areas where tourist

during which time I stayed in an agricultural hamlet, Shinzato, in the Southern coast of Miyako Island, as one of its five hundred residents.

⁴ *Utaki* literally means a 'grove' or a 'hill' with a honorific prefix, but it usually refers to a religious sanctuary or a shrine, which, in not all, but many cases, actually exist in a grove or on a hill. These *utaki* became the focal sites of an indigenous female possession cult. To call this practise *Shinto* (Shintoism) implies the acceptance of its popular interpretation as an archaic form of Shintoism.

development would be granted tax reduction and the deregulation of land use. In 1990 Okinawa Prefecture submitted its proposal, the Resort Okinawa Master Plan, so that the whole prefectural territory could be covered by this Resort Law. Favourable investment conditions suddenly reactivated many projects on the tracts of land which had already been purchased by Japanese companies in the 1970s but had been left untouched for years (Miki 1990: 27-40).

From 1992 to 1994 Miyako island was in a turmoil caused by the construction of the La Pisara Golf Course, a large tourist resort which was planned near a natural spring used as a main water source. Fierce debate arose over this plan between the mayor of Hirara City, his cohorts in the city assembly and the local financial circle, on the one hand, and the opposition parties and citizens' groups, on the other hand. At the beginning of 1994 the water supply was cut off on an island-wide scale for more than two months due to the shortage of rain in the previous years. Although it was a sheer coincidence, this water suspension helped the opposition camp to expand their supporters. The opposition campaign rapidly gained momentum towards the mayoral election in July and succeeded in replacing the incumbent. Meanwhile, Sadoyama Anko, a local public servant, published his lengthy interview with shamans and organised a small symposium in Hirara. Along with visiting scholars of Japanese literature, shamans of the Utaki Shinto Kai were given the panellist seats from which they spoke to the general audience. When talking about recent difficulties in preserving religious tradition, the shamans pointed to current social issues. A warning was given against decay in traditional piety not only

because it led to the decline of community ceremonies, but also because it allowed tourist development to damage the natural landscape in which religious sanctuaries were embedded. A journalist, who also took one of the panellist seats, had already employed this combination of religiosity and environmentalism as the leitmotif of a long series of newspaper articles. Throughout the previous few years, Asato Eiko had widely travelled all over the Ryukyus and reported on the negative impact of the booming tourist development. Local shamans and priestesses were described as 'native ecologists', who alerted the public to disintegrating traditional communities and their increasingly deteriorated environment (Asato 1991).

In November 1994 these scholars, shamans and local activists formed the Kami to Mori wo Kangaeru Kai (Society for Considering Deity and Forest), and succeeded in assembling around two hundred people to its first annual meeting. The members were not only ordinary citizens but also knowledgeable persons from mainland Japan and local learned persons including a new city mayor. In the promoter's announcement, Tanigawa Kenichi, a folklorist who assumed the chair, mentioned the recent water suspension and the decreasing number of wild birds, and explained these as the result of the fact that land development had rapidly reduced the size of forest on the island. Although there were other local environmentalist groups that constructed their argument simply on the premise of such scientific explanation, a defining characteristic of Tanigawa's group was the additional appropriation of local religious tradition. He wrote in a newspaper article on the Society's inauguration:

Deities resided everywhere on the island, forests and coral beaches. These deities were banished from the forests, which were rapidly disappearing, and

from the coral beaches, which were enclosed by powerful capitalists. Miyako is a divine island. When deities cannot reside on the island, it will become a lifeless island without spirit (*Sankei Shinbun* 19 Nov. 1994).

From November 1994 onward, the Kami to Mori held annual meetings and other cultural events in Miyako. Sadoyama, its secretary-general, followed the state of local ceremonial practices and, when a critical level concerning their continuance was observed, directed the Kami to Mori's activities towards the empowerment of responsible religious practitioners.

1-2-3: STUDENTS OF ORAL LITERATURE

Tanigawa, Sadoyama, and many other core members of the Kami to Mori had a particular interest in native oral literature. At the beginning of the 1970s a group of specialists in Japanese literature started the systematic collection of folk tales in the Ryukyus. Scholarly interest distinguished them from the popular publications of local folk tales, which had not been concerned about representational accuracy but preferred free editions of tales for aesthetic or educational purposes. The accurate transcription of recitation required a knowledge of local language, of which, however, these Japanese academics were incompetent. Grassroots scholars and local students were widely mobilised, especially after Endo Shoji, a Japanese scholar, began to teach in Okinawa International University in 1972 (Fukuda 1979). In March 1976, when Endo took his student research team to Miyako, local grassroots scholars formed the Miyako Folk Tales Society (*Miyako Minwa no Kai*) with his assistance (*Miyako Shimpō* 24 Feb., 19 Mar. 1976). Sadoyama took the central role in its activity and continued

the recording of local narratives independently as well as occasionally with visiting academics.

A slightly different focus was observed among other Japanese specialists. Experts on the ancient literature were attracted to supposedly archaic verses still chanted in regular religious rituals in the Ryukyus. Such verses gave these philologists inspiration to speculate on the earliest form of Japanese literature (e.g., Fujii 1978). Among others, the Uyagan rite of Karimata hamlet, Miyako, fascinated these scholars. During this service commemorating the collective ancestor, priestesses chosen from the hamlet were interpreted as the manifestation of ancestral deities (*uya-gan*). In the ceremonies they made an ascetic retreat to a woody hill and recited an origin myth of the hamlet from the first person perspective. Transcriptions published by a renowned linguist rendered ritual incantations of Karimata accessible to general scholarship earlier than similar rituals of other hamlets (Hokama 1965, 1968). The esotericism of the Uyagan rite and the trance experience of the Uyagan priestesses also inspired popular interest. In the early 1970s, under the guidance of grassroots scholars such as Nakasone and Okamoto Keisho, television crews as well as popular and academic writers visited Karimata.

Despite such popular and academic fascination, the Uyagan rite had considerably declined by 1994 due to a decrease in hamlet population and the indifference of young residents. Fearing its extinction, the Kami to Mori offered support, including financial support, to priestesses. In addition, it organised a cultural event in Karimata. Kina Shokichi, a popular folk singer, gave a performance and attracted a wide young audience. This

cultural event was followed by a run of public talks on the Uyagan rite, not only in Hirara but also in Naha where 'Karimatans' actually outnumbered the home hamlet. Subsequently, the Kami to Mori held its annual meeting in Karimata in November 1995. In discussion with residents, the Kami to Mori emphasised the academic value of the Uyagan rite and suggested possible measures for its preservation. The following year, similar campaigns were made on Ikema Island. Under these conditions, the priestesses restored their annual ceremonies, as I sketched out at the beginning of this chapter. Whereas the Kami to Mori's endeavours were successful in Ikema, the Uyagan rite of Karimata was virtually extinct in 1997 due to the retirement of a veteran priestess.

Folk tales and 'archaic rites' may appear to be a reflection of a romanticist taste, but Sadoyama and Tanigawa deemed that these subjects really held a political message. The earliest form of literature which they found in the Uyagan rite was defined as predating the oldest Japanese epic which describes the emergence of the state in relation to the imperial clan. In the view of Tanigawa and others, ritual incantations of the Ryukyus decentralise the orthodox history of Japan. Similarly, Sadoyama deemed folk tales recorded in local language useful as a challenge to the hegemony of the standard Japanese language. A special note is required here concerning the fact that this protest came to appear less radical in recent years due to the promotion of the provincial culture as devised in governmental cultural policies. In the 1990s, under the auspices of local governments, competitions of vernacular speech in schools suddenly gained popularity in Miyako. Retired teachers were asked to help

Japanese-monolingual pupils to recite vernacular folk tales by rote, and were delighted with this rehabilitation of their mother tongue. Interestingly, they did not hesitate, for instance, to create Miyakoan counterparts of Japanese greeting phrases only because these ‘proper’ greetings were absent from vernacular vocabulary.⁵ Sadoyama was suspicious about these teachers, who had actually forced his generation to use standard Japanese in their school days. He demanded of contestant pupils a very strict observance of vernacular speech and thereby not only troubled them but also annoyed the teachers who gave speech lessons to them. In doing this, Sadoyama’s attitudes towards local language echoed other local persons in his generation, such as the left-wing radicals of the Okinawa Youth Union or an anti-base activist in Yomitan. The former caused a disturbance at the Diet ratifying the Japan-US agreement on Okinawa’s reversion to Japan, while the latter vandalised the Japanese flag at a public place. In the trials of these respective incidents those accused deliberately made their statements in vernacular, which the Japanese judges and prosecutors could not understand (Mashiko 1999: 207).

1-2-4: VISUAL ARTISTS IN YOMITAN

⁵ Instead of ‘good morning’, ‘good afternoon’ and so on, local people make greetings in vernacular by asking ‘Where (are you going) to?’ or ‘Where (are you coming) from?’. The episode cited was observed in the Gusukube Town Local Speech Research Group, to whose weekly meeting I attended during my stay in Miyako. This research group was started in 1995 mainly by retired teachers through the good offices of a town officer and is preparing to publish a vernacular-Japanese dictionary. Along with these retired teachers, Sadoyama plays one of the judges in vernacular speech contests, which were also started in 1995. Meanwhile, similar events began to be held in other municipalities in Miyako; Shimoji town in 1990, Tarama village in 1994 and Hirara city in 1994 (*Miyako Mainichi Shinbun* 22 Sep. 1990, 28 Mar 1994). Japanese monolingualism is said to have substantially started due to the reception of television broadcasts in 1968. Around 1976, a teacher observed in a local primary school that final graders, for whom television was available from the beginning of their childhood, practised vernacular among themselves, which was still widely used in junior-high school.

Among the fourteen observers who came to Ikema Island to see priestesses' annual ceremonies restored by the Kami to Mori, there was a photographer from Okinawa Main Island. Higa Toyomitsu was born in Yomitan village, which is known as one of the 1945 battlefields and the large American military presence continuing until today. In the 1970s Higa mostly took pictures of military bases, American soldiers and their Okinawan prostitutes. In the early 1980s, however, he began to involve himself in local historiography. Most recently, Higa and his co-workers formed the Ryukyu-ko wo Kiroku Suru Kai (Society for Recording the Ryukyuan Arc) as the organisational base of their activities. Its prospectus states that:

The Society serves a purpose of producing visual and audio records of linguistic culture (Ryukyuan dialect) under erosion, particularly focusing on testimonies of the Battle of Okinawa, traditional Ryukyuan ceremonies and the Ryukyuan landscape in which they were embedded.

Expecting educational institutes to be their main market, several audio-visual artists began to produce pieces of video work on these subjects. Through this activity, Higa became acquainted with another Okinawan photographer who were already fully-fledged in this field. Higa Yasuo was also born in a base-occupied town, Kadena, and began his career with a prize-winning photograph collection picturing military presence in Okinawa. However, a chance encounter with Tanigawa and the Uyagan rite in Karimata prompted him to turn his photographic skills towards native religious traditions.

Beyond these private connections, there are at least two points at which Higa Toyomitsu's activities in Yomitan display a striking parallel with Sadoyama's activities in Miyako. The first is an incentive given by Endo

Shoji to work on folk tales. Higa's commitment to local historiography developed through a working partnership with Murayama Tomoyo, the then curator at a local history museum. In 1976 Endo visited Yomitan with his student research team. Murayama and other stimulated local people formed a circle and began to publish a series of folk-tale collections from the museum. She aroused Higa's interest in folk tales, and her practical skills in interview and compilation were instrumental in their quality historiography. The second parallel relates to an environmental concern about tourist development and a connection with Asato Eiko. In the early 1990s, when tourist development was booming, Yomitan also underwent difficulties with regard to the construction of a tourist resort. Due to favourable legislation, this Yomitan Resort Plan increased its estimated cost by more than four times within a couple of years. The enlarged plan aroused anxiety among local farmers and fishers. Supporting these opposition residents, Higa hosted a public meeting, at which Asato gathered together anti-development activists from various places in Okinawa and chaired their discussion on environmental problems.

However, there is one factor which renders citizens' movements in Yomitan decisively different from those in Miyako. As Yomitan has suffered from noticeable military presence both in the past and at the present, pacifist anti-base campaigns have been integral to its citizens' movement. Higa organised public meetings in 1988 to mobilise sympathisers for an investigation of the hidden reality of wartime home village. In relation to his ex-schoolmate, Chibana Shoichi's discovery of 'mass suicide' in an extreme situation at the Battle of Okinawa and burning a Rising Sun flag at the 1987

National Athletic Meeting prompted by resentment at such a fanatic war-time Japanese nationalism, local activists were inspired to carry out such investigation at that time. Over the next summer, exhaustive interviews were carried out with all survivors of the war, which eventually appeared as a voluminous book, *Sobe Shi: Senso Hen* (Compendium of Sobe Hamlet: Volume on the Pacific War). Higa's energetic activities became known to other local activists and, in the mid 1990s, resulted in the institution of a problematic art project at Yomitan. As part of the Tokyo Seaside Festa 1996, the metropolis of Tokyo sponsored progressive artistic activities.⁶ With visiting American avant-garde artists, Higa and other politically-oriented local artists formed a team, the Okinawa Project, and conceived two plans: (1) to stand an art object at over 2,000 sites all over the island where American soldiers had committed violent crimes against local citizens and (2) to construct, in the exhibition hall in Tokyo, a reduced scale model of the Sobe Communication Facility, an American military base in Yomitan, which has a huge outer aerial in the shape of a cylindrical cage, and fill the model with thousands of publications related to the base problem. In July 1996, shortly after the opening of the exhibition, the second plan was disrupted by a disapproving sponsor, who wanted to avoid a too politically controversial display.⁷ After this art project team was dismantled,

⁶ This experimental exhibition was called 'atopicsite', in which, according to the chief curator's account, 'an artist produces or performs his/her work on the theme of the problems unique to a certain locality with the public space as its stage, and then the work changes its meaning by being transferred or linked to an exhibition hall.' Along with Geneva, Cologne, Sarajevo, Moscow, a Russian town and an Indonesian farm, Okinawa was selected. The person in charge of the Okinawa Project singled out Yomitan and initiated contact with Higa. Sherry Chen, the chief artist of the project team, collaborated with two other American artists and five art instructors from Ryukyu University and Okinawa Art College.

⁷ The artists persevered with the original plan, but the sponsor covered up their display on the opening day. Heated negotiation resulted in an odd compromise: the same display but with another project name, 'the Asian Project'. 'Asia' in Japanese in this context implies not Asian countries in general

Higa and other local staff continued their collaboration by setting up a new, independent project, that is, the Society for Recording the Ryukyuan Arc.

1-2-5: THE BASE PROBLEM

The Sobe Communication Facility, better known by its nickname as the 'elephant cage (*zo no ori*)', was the focus of nation-wide attention in 1996. A wave of popular agitation against American military bases had suddenly arose in the autumn of the previous year and was increasingly intensified through a series of disputes between Okinawa prefecture and the Japanese government over the issue of military land expropriation. According to the Japan-US Security Treaty, the Japanese government has to make lease contracts with local landowners. Although the overwhelming majority have agreed with these contracts in successive renewals, a small number of landowners have repeatedly refused them mainly because of their pacifist faith. Application for expropriation requires the central government to obtain the property deeds signed by the headmen of local municipalities on behalf of private landowners. Again, the majority of the headmen have usually followed this procedure, but pacifist leaders, such as the headman of Yomitan village, have stubbornly declined to sign. In such cases, the governor of Okinawa prefecture can sign these uncompleted deeds and had so far done so. When all the documents are properly prepared, a special local screening committee, as a third person institute, judges whether an expropriation act is reasonable. The committee had so far never overruled the decisions of the central government except with regard to the length of

but Southeast Asia to which Japan is not included. According to Higa, this event prompted him and other local collaborators to determine to avoid standard Japanese in their representational activities.

expropriation. In May 1995 the Japanese government initiated legal procedures for the latest renewal, in the anticipation that the Okinawan governor would sign as usual. The Japanese government also expected that a successful renewal would enable it to issue a joint security declaration with president Clinton, who was going to visit Japan in the coming November.

However, this was not the plan of the then Okinawan governor Ota Masahide. According to him, a Pentagon report, which reflected an American Democrat security policy against arms reduction in foreign territories, had prompted him to reject the renewal proposal (Ota 2000: 45). Practically, he probably had in mind the prospect of a successful protest, since he had by that time appointed his intimate associates to members of the expropriation screening committee. On 28 September governor Ota announced that he had decided to refuse the coming expropriation renewal. Mass resentment, which arose after a child rape incident by American servicemen on 4 September, added to the situation. On 21 October the Okinawa Prefectural Citizens' Indignation Rally gathered together more than 85,000 people. This swelling mass opposition destabilised Japanese security policies and eventually forced president Clinton to postpone his November visit. The Japanese Prime Minister made a legal accusation against governor Ota on the charge of violating his official order to sign the property deeds. Although Ota lost the case, he would still not perform the duty and appealed to the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the contract of a plot of land in the Sobe Communication Facility had expired in March 1996. The central government asked the expropriation screening committee for

permission to continue the military use of its premise. As this emergent request was rejected, there came to be no legal grounds for maintaining the facility on private property. This plot of land, by chance, belonged to Chibana Shoichi. He immediately filed a suit for evacuation and thereafter conducted protest rallies with a number of his sympathisers, including Higa Toyomitsu and other staff of the Okinawa Project, Kina and other local activists, Japanese left-wing activists, and other pacifist military-land owners whose lease contracts were due to expire in May 1997.⁸ In the mass-media, the same man who had been reported to be a left-wing radical due to his burning of the Rising Sun flag in 1987 was now, in 1996, broadcast as a gentle pacifist (Mashiko 1999: 257).

1-3: LITERATURE REVIEW

The popular cult of female possession and the related institution of priestesshood were for a long time the central focus of scholarly interest. Thus ethnographic studies of Okinawa already produced a body of literature on 'Ryukyuan religion'. Despite various theoretical concerns, ethnographers agreed on the assumption that religious aspects were integral to local community life. If, however, this assumption has become no longer

⁸ The latest renewal of expropriation involved four different categories of land owners. Firstly, around 150 land owners had repeatedly rejected contracts, in the twice of a five-year provisional use starting respectively with reversion to Japan on 15 May 1972 and with the same date in 1977, and in a five-year expropriation plus a ten-year expropriation decided by the expropriation screening committee in 1982 and 1987 respectively. Secondly, around 70 land owners initially signed lease contracts at the time of the 1972 reversion but refused to renew them at their expiry in 1992. The expropriation screening committee allowed the central government to make a five-year expropriation. Thirdly, Chibana's legal alienator initially rejected a lease contract but made it on 1 April 1976. This lease contract lasted for twenty years, and Chibana inherited the land at issue in-between. Lastly, intending to disturb expropriation and encourage land owners to reject contracts, around 1,000 active pacifists purchased and shared a tract of land in the middle of an existing base. This land falls in the first category. As these four categories of military land expropriation converged, the latest renewal became the largest expropriation act involving many land owners.

tenable due to the declining popularity of traditional religious practice, has that familiar topic of enquiry also become obsolete in turn?

Although some scholarly explorers, such as Tashiro Antei and Sasamori Gisuke, produced pioneering travelogues in the last century, Okinawan studies substantially developed in the 1920s.⁹ Ifa Fuyu, a native Okinawan scholar trained as a linguist, published *Ko Ryukyu* (Ancient Ryukyu) in 1911. This monumental collection of essays evoked the great interest of Yanagita Kunio, a founder of Japanese folklore studies, in Okinawan culture. Among other topics, the popular cult of female possession and its priestesshood were of major academic concern. While Ifa introduced these customs as ‘the religion of the Ryukyans (*Ryukyu no minzoku-teki shukyo*)’ (Ifa 1974a: 465), he suggested that they were comparable with ancient Shintoism. This suggestion inspired Yanagita to take a trip to Okinawa in 1921. At that time Yanagita was trying to identify the populist Japanese national culture (*jomin bunka*). Okinawan customs were interpreted as the survival of ancient Japanese counterparts, which had been lost in the historical influence of Buddhism and other foreign elements, and provided precious material for Yanagita’s scholarly speculation. For instance, Yanagita obtained useful information from Ifa’s report on ‘women’s spiritual power’, which was expressed, in the past, in Okinawan legends or in the gender division of royal authority and, in the present, in the special relationship and reference terms between brothers and sisters (Ifa 1927). Using these data, Yanagita reconstructed the pristine form of Shintoist practice, which was considered to have been led by

⁹ In his insightful review (Beillevaire 1999), Patrick Beillevaire gives a useful account of ethnographic studies of Okinawa from their beginning to the time of reversion.

female spirit mediums (*fujo*) (Yanagita 1937). He organised a discussion group in Tokyo, which gathered and produced specialists in Okinawan culture. Along with a paradigmatic case of linguistic similarity, the resemblance of native religious traditions provided these folklorists and historians with supporting evidence for their Ryukyu-Japan Common Ancestry Theory (*nichi ryu doso ron*).

Beside some notable exceptions, such as Nikolai Nevskii (Nevskii 1971, 1998, cf. also Kabanoff 1993), few foreign scholars participated in Okinawan studies in this pre-1945 period.¹⁰ However, following 1945, anthropologists and other social scientists from the United States superseded Okinawan or Japanese scholars of humanities. In the 1950s, by request of the Department of Army, the National Research Council sent researchers to the Ryukyus.¹¹ Of these early American experts, George Kerr's general Ryukyuan history (1958) and William Lebra's accurate survey of Okinawan religion (1966) are deserving of particular mention. These Okinawan studies by American scholars culminated in the symposium 'Ryukyu: Culture and Society' in the tenth Pacific Science Congress, in which Japanese anthropologists also took part (Smith (ed) 1964). The participation of American scholars had a remarkable impact on conventional Okinawan studies, which included (1) the replacement of indigenous descriptive categories by sociological analytical concepts, (2) the introduction of long-term participant observation into research method and (3) the dismissal of the Ryukyu-Japan Common Ancestry Theory.

¹⁰ Foreigners are said to have been prohibited to enter the Ryukyus for research in this period (Haring 1953: 108).

On the part of Japanese researchers, Mabuchi Toichi made this paradigm shift decisive. As an established anthropologist trained outside the tradition of Okinawan studies, Mabuchi did not concern himself with the Common Ancestry Theory.¹² Instead, he immersed himself in empirical field research under the stimulus of American anthropologists, on the one hand, and remarkably extended comparative views to South East Asia and Oceania, on the other hand.¹³ Research topics set up or refurbished on his initiative included spiritual predominance of the sister over her brother (Mabuchi 1955, 1964, 1968a, 1980a), ceremonial organisations as descent groups (Mabuchi 1965, 1976a, 1976b) and dualistic cosmological symbolism (Mabuchi 1968b, 1977, 1980b). These and other related topics were further explored by his students or other dedicated young ethnographic experts, such as Ito Mikiharu, Noguchi Takenori, Ogo Kinichi and Higa Masao, in their empirical studies, some of which appeared in influential collections of anthropological essays on Okinawan society, such as the 1962 special issue of the Japanese Journal of Ethnology (vol. 27 no. 1), the Tokyo Metropolitan University's *Society and Religion of the Ryukyus* (Committee of Ryukyuan Islands Studies 1965) and the Japanese Society of Ethnology's *Ethnographic Studies of Okinawa* (1973). Thus anthropological research came into full boom in Okinawa during the 1960s and 1970s with participation of many scholars: including, to mention only a few, Joseph Kreiner (1977), Cornelius

¹¹ Their studies first appeared in a series of publications titled Scientific Investigations of the Ryukyu Islands (SIRI). Thomas Maretzki (1962) gives an useful overview of these and other works by American scholars during the American administration.

¹² In an Okinawan studies special issue of the Japanese Journal of Ethnology (vol. 15, no. 2, 1950), other Japanese scholars, such as Ishida Eiichiro and Oto Tokihiko, also passed modest remarks expressing the discouragement of the common ancestry theory (ibid.: 1, 174).

¹³ Mabuchi mentioned that he had strong impetus when he had listened to Allan Smith's presentation at the eighth Pacific Science Congress (Mabuchi 1971: 45).

Ouwehand (1985), Patrick Beillevaire (1982, 1986), Muratake Seiichi (1975), Watanabe Yoshio (1985) and Tanaka Masako (1976, 1977).¹⁴

Despite a radical change in methodology and theoretical interest, religious aspects of local society continued to be the main focus of these anthropologists. In many cases, their intensive research in individual village or island communities implicitly assumed that a hamlet was a delineated whole, and analysed the way in which it was organisationally integrated. In this perspective, 'ceremonial groups which existed as religious organisations are, at the same time, the blocks which built up a single community' (Ota 1987: 223). However, under the very nose of these anthropologists, ceremonial practice was declining as well as relatively autonomous communities being disintegrated. Torigoe Kenzaburo is said to have asserted that '*fujō* (female spirit mediums) make up the basis of all social activities in the Ryukyus' (Miyagi 1979: 10). He was perhaps confident in this assertion, based on his extensive study of local priestesshood just before the Pacific War broke out (Torigoe 1965). In the observation in the early 1960s, however, Muratake Seiichi had to say that 'it has still been important and is *even urgent at present* to investigate Okinawan religion, which has power to integrate and regulate various aspects of livelihood and social life in the Ryukyus' (Muratake 1965: 329; *italic added*). Similar remarks on the urgency of recording disappearing traditions were passed by many other ethnographers who visited Okinawa in the 1960s and the 1970s. For instance, Cornelius Ouwehand's elaborate data collection with his accurate understanding of vernacular terms

¹⁴ Limited access to overseas research at that time is said to have rendered the Ryukyus as a very popular fieldwork place for Japanese anthropologists (Yamashita 1989: 103).

produced the most informative monograph ever written on traditional religious practice in the Ryukyus (Ouwehand 1985). However, he noted that tendencies towards 'rationalisation of socio-religious system' became stronger due to the outflow of island population between 1965 and 1976 (ibid.: x). His vivid description of ceremonial activities is actually in many points historical reconstruction, and careful reading finds that they no longer existed as they were described.

Certainly, there were attempts to positively incorporate the contemporary change into ethnographic studies, still within the focus on religious aspects of local society. A series of studies of *munchu* provides a good example of this. *Munchu* is a kind of patri-lineage functioning as units of ancestor worship in Okinawa Main Island. Although such a patri-lineage had at one time assumed to be traditional, it was proved to have become common in unexpectedly recent times and was reported to be spreading out to other islands at the present time. Anthropologists, who had rather been interested in the structure of *munchu* organisation, began to focus on the socio-historical conditions of the diffusion of *munchu* and explained it in relation to the rise of social mobility and the resulting disintegration of localised communities. As descent could effectively relate the individuals who live geographically apart from each other, it came to supersede formerly dominant social ties based on economic or other relations in communal life (Tsunemi 1965; Yamaji 1967, 1968; Matsuzono 1970; Kasahara 1975; Takakuwa 1982; Oda 1987).

Shamans, or spirit mediums who work independently from priestess organisation, also came to receive more serious academic consideration than

before. As different from community priestesses, shamans relied on individualistic relationships with their clients and were therefore less affected by the recent disintegration of local communities. In some cases, these shamans even enlarged their influence; for instance, when cognatic organisation of ceremonial groups was restructured and they were transformed into patri-lineages, 'real' patrilineal ancestors were often identified by oracles through shamans' mouths. The technical term 'shaman' was introduced from the comparative study of religion and replaced the previously used ambiguous term '*fujo*'. Thereafter, shamans were clearly distinguished in description from priestesses, who do not necessarily need supernatural senses. Thus shamanic healing rituals, shamans' initiation processes and local characteristics in comparison with shamans in other societies began to be studied as an independent topic (Sakurai 1973, Yamashita 1977, Sasaki 1984, Takiguchi 1991, Ohashi 1998).¹⁵

However, there is one more domain in which a dramatic social change was connected with religious aspects. The activity of grassroots ethnographers is a no less evident and widespread phenomena in contemporary Okinawa than is the sprawl of patri-lineages or thriving shamanic counselling, but academic attention to these local observers is absent from the existing literature. Mass higher education began in the

¹⁵ I use the term 'shaman' in this thesis without discussion of its definition not because there is no cross-cultural consensus but because I no longer intend to investigate shamans as such. Lebra (1966: 74) concisely described the difference between priestesses and shamans in Okinawa; priestesses are concerned with propitiating the deities through rituals conducted on behalf of the cult groups, whereas shamans are involved in determining the causes of misfortune and directing remedial action by the use of their preternatural powers of possession and supernatural senses. However, as he rightly pointed out, both types of religious specialists were considerably overlapping in practice. Influential

1960s with the establishment of private universities on Okinawa Main Island.¹⁶ In the 1970s, based on an emerging class of local intellectuals, small groups of grassroots ethnographers proliferated and came to have influence on public education and the cultural policies of local authority came to be affected by them. In Miyako, for instance, the Miyako Society of Homeland History (*Miyako Kyodo Shi Kenkyu Kai*) was formed in 1975. Its members gave an annual series of public lectures on local history and folklore, compiled voluminous compendiums for local-governmental publication and worked for the construction of a local museum. Priestesses and their ceremonials were one of the most popular items which always appeared in these cases of self-representation. There was an unquestionable correlation between this growing cultural reflexivity and the 'disappearing local tradition' under Japanese influence. As Thomas Eriksen phrases it, 'in order to save "culture" one must first lose it' (Eriksen 1993: 129). This seemingly paradoxical process had actually already started at the beginning of Okinawan studies, since it was the time when the substantial impact of Japanisation began to appear. When Yanagita organised students of Okinawan culture, Okinawan scholars not only took an important part but also formed their own groups both in Tokyo and Naha. With organisational bases, such as Nanto Danwa Kai, Nanto Bunka Kyokai, Okinawa Dozoku Danwa Kai and, the post-1945 successor, Okinawa Bunka

statements on the academic definition of shamans are to be found in Eliade 1964 and Lewis 1989, and these definitions have already been examined by Sasaki (1984) in the Okinawan context.

¹⁶ Okinawa University, International University and Okinawa Christian Junior College were successively established by private organisations. After the 1972 reversion, the first two universities were integrated into the present Okinawa International University, but a part of Okinawa University remained independent. As opposed to these private universities, Ryukyu University was established in 1950 by the American authority with the intention of producing a pro-American local middle class. It became one of the national universities after reversion to Japan.

Kyokai, native ethnographers or historians energetically studied their own culture (Beillevaire 1999: 183-185, 188).

As native intellectuals have remarkably developed their involvement in representational activities, the distinction between researchers and their informants has blurred to a great extent in Okinawa. This is perhaps an advanced stage of the 'new conditions of ethnographic production' addressed by James Clifford. He illustrates these 'new conditions' with a parable of an ethno-historian who inquired about local customs to a Mpongwe chief in Libreville, Gabon. This chief answered his questions, which were formulated by a preliminary reading of an ethnographic compendium compiled by another ethnographer, by consulting the same compendium (Clifford 1986: 116-117). Similar episodes are far from unfamiliar to anthropologists who experience fieldwork in Okinawa. Local people have good access to the ethnographic studies of Okinawa, as the overwhelming majority of them were written in Japanese and published in the domestic book market. Unsurprisingly, local intellectuals keep a collection of ethnographic publications on their bookshelves. In fact, such a collection can occasionally be found on the bookshelves of shamans. I also met a few shamanic initiates who went around religious sanctuaries with a published ethno-historical compendium to be used as a guidebook.

It is deserving of a special note that anthropologists are far less popular than folklorists and historians in this context. The basically descriptive approach, with the extensive use of indigenous categories rather than analytical concepts, renders their works more enjoyable for non-academic readers. In addition, rather than conducting long-term

participant observation fixed in a certain community, folklorists and historians usually stay for a short time in various research sites. This research method requires local intellectuals to serve as guides and, as a result, folklorists and historians tend to have more frequent contacts with them. A corollary of this close communication is a demographic as well as informational continuum, from professional folklorists in universities through local intellectuals to shamans in rural hamlets, wherein it is often difficult to distinguish between social analysts and social actors. In the introduction of her monograph on the Breton minority movement, Maryon McDonald criticised a conventional anthropological perception on local communities for excluding intellectuals from ethnographic description:

Most metaphors of traditional anthropological expression run counter to the inclusion of intellectuals in the ethnography, whether in the guise of administrator, tourist, activists, or academic. For social anthropology, urban and educated people have not seemed sufficiently traditional and 'native', or sufficiently and authentically real, to constitute a fit object of study (McDonald 1989: 23).

Her criticism seems to sound perfectly reasonable in the present situation of anthropological research in Okinawa.

Religious aspects of local society, notably the popular cult of female possession, were the main topic of ethnographic studies, initially because it adduced evidence for the Common Ancestry Theory. Subsequently, there was a paradigm shift towards more empirical sociological analysis, but the religious aspects still provided useful information to ethnographers who discussed local social organisation. At the present time, it seems to have become less realistic to assume that religious aspects as such convey substantial information concerning contemporary Okinawan society. Components of unpopular social practice, such as priestesshood, shamanic

rituals, ceremonial organisations and so on, do not seem very useful in understanding the major local public issues. Nevertheless, there is, at least, one domain of social activities in which the religious aspect still maintains, or has come to possess, significance for local people, and therefore for anthropologists also. It is this activity of local observers and their commentary on Okinawan society that I will discuss in the rest of this dissertation. In other words, what I propose here is to write an ethnography of local 'ethnographers'.

1-4: RESEARCH QUESTION

It is generally outside ethnographic studies on Okinawa that we find academic attention drawn to the new significance of shamanic traditions in relation to growing local observers. Among others, the following three cases show a close parallel with the Okinawan case, in that indigenous shamanist traditions was combined with popular protests against state power. Firstly, in the early 1990s, Piers Vitebsky observed a 're-shamanising' process in association with an indigenous movement of the Even people, a reindeer herder group in Siberia.¹⁷ Under the former socialist regime, shamans were persecuted to the point of near extinction. However, when natives gained support from environmentalists and came to seek a higher degree of autonomy, shamanic cosmology became part of an effective counter-argument against Russian regional politics (Vitebsky 1992). Secondly, in a upper geopolitical level, the Sakha (Yakut) Republic in which the Even live, the 're-shamanising' process was also developed in line with

ethnic reassertion against the Russian state (Vitebsky 1995). The political vacuum caused by the break-up of USSR provided a favourable condition for a Sakha nationalist challenge. A body of local knowledge pivoting around the shamanic world-view was reinterpreted as an 'environmental wisdom'. Holding this ethnically exclusive intellectual heritage, Sakha activists tried to counter governmental mineral extraction projects, which aimed at local natural resources especially the only diamond deposit within Russian territory. Vitebsky wrote:

A rhetorical emphasis on Sakha ethnic wisdom fits in well with the pragmatic move towards a localisation of political authority and of control over economic resources. . . . [T]he powerful global idiom of environment is being used during a political free-for-all to legitimate vital ethnic claims (Vitebsky 1995: 191, 192).

Lastly, in Korea, shamanic tradition also became 'an icon of cultural knowledge beyond expressed purpose of sending off a dead soul' (Kendall 1998: 61). According to Laurel Kendall, the Confucian male elite used to despise mostly female Korean shamans as practitioners of superstition. However, in nostalgic reaction to rapid industrialisation and the influx of Western popular culture in the 1960s and 1970s, shamans came to be praised as the precious national culture enduring since the ancient time. In the 1980s, this revaluation went further to the point at which celebrated shamans as well as shamanic rituals were designated by the government as 'National Treasures' (Kendall 1998).¹⁸ Within this historical process,

¹⁷ 'Even' is the name of the language spoken by the people. They are called 'the Eveny' with 'y' indicating a Romanised Russian plural form. I learned this from personal communication with Dr Piers Vitebsky, at Cambridge University.

¹⁸ The main point of her discussion is to examine the unchanged marginalisation of female shamans in spite of their remarkably improved image. She points out that female shamans were silenced by male scholars or other cultural brokers who represented these shamans to the public. A similar situation was observable in Okinawa. However, a different point is that scholar members of the Kami to Mori regarded such a situation as a problem and tried to let shamans talk about themselves. For example,

representations of shamans which appeared in dissidents' campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s are particularly comparable with the Okinawan case. According to Kim Kwang-ok, these campaigns against an autocratic South Korean government were not only based on Korean nationalist sentiment, dissatisfied with the central government's amity with Japan and its subservience to the United States, but were also rooted in the populist cause to unseat the dictatorship of South Korea. Shamanism appealed to the nationalist sentiment since it is native to Korea, in opposition to popular, but apparently foreign, Christianity. The shamans were well fitted to the populist cause, since the Confucianist elite had long branded commoners' shamanist practice as superstition. Thus, students and left-wing activists could appropriate shamanic performance in their indignant rallies, election campaigns and other public events (Kim 1994).

In keeping with these other cases, it is also important in the Okinawan case that the popular cult of female possession is indigenous to Okinawa. Thus local observers disliked (Japanese) Shinto *torii* gates attached to local sanctuaries. For example, in 1973 when Nakasone Keizo gathered shamans and priestesses at an opposition meeting against tourist development, he announced that these religious practitioners did not regard *torii* gates as a suitable object to be placed within local sanctuaries (*Miyako Mainichi Shinbun* 15 Feb. 1973). One point deserving of note is that Nakasone and other local intellectuals often referred to the imposition of State Shintoism (*kokka shinto*) in the 1930s and early 1940s as the reason for their hatred of this Shinto symbol. However, many *torii* gates were

they offered the same panellist seats as academics to local shamans in their annual public discussions, though this attempt was not very successful since shamans were not talkative in such an unfamiliar

actually constructed in the post-1945 period. In this context, the local elite 'overcommunicated' (Eriksen 1993: 21) cultural differences from Japan so that they could secure the definition of the popular cult of female possession as an indigenous custom.

Another resemblance with the examples cited is that Okinawan shamans historically underwent oppression by the authorities, and that this historical fact has a significance for contemporary local activism. In the Ryukyu Kingdom, shamans were executed as sorcerers who committed murder through control of vengeful spirits (Takara 1990: 172-174). In the modern era, shamans were accused of spreading rumours and inciting people to participate in their possession cult. In fact in 1913, police made a sweeping roundup and took many of them into custody (Takara 1984: 64-65). More recently, women activists, who supported equal gender inheritance in modern law, blamed shamans for their advocacy of primogeniture. During this public campaign against shamans in the early 1980s, known as the 'Ancestor-tablet Problem (*totome mondai*)', local observers, such as ethnic activists and local psychiatrists, made public one of the few supportive comments for shamans.¹⁹ A special note is necessary here. Vitebsky regards 'politically dissident or anti-centrist' shamans as contrasted to 'non-ecstatic priests or elders who perform more sober, routine cults'

situation.

¹⁹ Most of the relevant newspaper articles and records of public discussions are accessible in the form of a book (Ryukyu Shimpō (ed) 1980). Horiba Kiyoko offers an extensive analysis of this public issue (Horiba 1990: 187-250). As for local observers' support for shamans at that time, see Kina Shokichi's comment in *Asahi Shinbun* (1 Jan. 1981) and psychiatrist Takaesu Yoshihide's essay (Takaesu 1983). Takaesu presently owned a mental hospital in Ishikawa city, Okinawa main island. The psychiatrists and nurse who appeared at the scene of the revived *yu-kui* ritual on Ikema island on 13th October 1997, with which I began this chapter, belong to this hospital. Takaesu himself also came to observe a public event given by the Kami to Mori wo Kangaeru Kai and made a favourable remark in his article in the *Encyclopaedia of Clinical Psychiatry* (Takaesu 1998).

(Vitebsky 1995: 185). Certainly, there has been much academic discussion on a similar contrast between shamans (*yuta*, *kankakarya*, *munusu*) and priestesses (*noro*, *tsukasa*) in Okinawa (cf. Sasaki 1984). Priestesses were historically incorporated into the theocratic system of the Ryukyu Kingdom and, even after royal statesmen tried to subordinate the priestesses' possession cult to Confucian rationalism, the priestesses continued to hold their position within the establishment. In contemporary Okinawa too, they are socially more approved of than shamans; for instance, when a single person plays the role of both priestess and shaman, she is usually introduced as a priestess in the public media. However, for local activists who manipulate the public images of these two types of religious practitioners, their contrastive social positions are an insignificant difference; shamans are acknowledged as anti-establishment populists while priestesses are respected as the laudable apologists of a communal faith which had previously saturated pre-modern community life. This selective focus on their favourable characteristics ignores the former's anti-social quality and the latter's footing within the establishment.

In spite of these ethnographic similarities, there is an important difference in the Okinawan case which leads to the main research question of this dissertation. In the indigenous movement of the Even, the environmentalist nationalism in the Sakha Republic, and the populist nationalism in Korea, it seems to be predetermined and unquestioned who the people are that stand against the stronger power. In other words, in each case activists seem to have an unequivocal notion as to their group identity, those all that are unfairly treated and should therefore put up

united resistance. It is a group identity which is basically ethnic. Thus South Korean dissidents not only demanded democracy but also the re-unification of the Korean peninsula. At this point the Okinawan case seems remarkably different. To sharpen the contrast, let me draw another, perhaps more typical, case in which the neglected tradition of the peripheral population was redefined by the regional elite, and their ethnic assertion based on this redefined tradition eventually led to a successful nationalist movement. In modernisation and urbanisation during nineteenth century Scandinavia, the urban middle class in what is present-day Norway began to create a national identity and, in the end, established a fully independent state. Eriksen gives an outline of what happened throughout the preceding years:

Members of the city bourgeoisie travelled to remote valleys in search of 'authentic Norwegian culture', brought elements from it back to the city and presented them as the authentic expression of Norwegianness. . . . This national symbolism was efficient in raising ethnic boundaries vis-à-vis Swedes and Danes (Eriksen 1993: 102).

Surely, it is beyond doubt that many Okinawan activists are also keen to make the journey to supposedly unspoiled traditional enclaves in pursuit of their regional identity. It is quite uncertain, however, whether these Okinawan activists consciously presented shamans, folk tales, local dialects and so on as the 'authentic expression of Okinawan-ness', or whether these activists drew ethnic boundaries vis-à-vis the Japanese in order to create a 'distinctive category of Okinawan culture'.

Concerning scepticism over the representation of an 'authentic Okinawa', it was advantageous to me that I spent most of my fieldwork in the Miyako islands, where people are said to have a sense of distance from

the mainstream Okinawans on Okinawa main island (see Map 2). For instance, at the 1973 shaman and priestess meeting, a third resolution, next to the first one not to sell Miyakoan land to the Japanese tourist companies and to the second one not to introduce a Shintoist object, *torii* gate, into local sanctuaries, was that Miyakoan shamans should properly be called by their local name, *kankakarya*, instead of its popular Okinawan counterpart, *yuta*. What I had not expected, but came to notice during the fieldwork, was that even when Okinawan activists showed an evident sign of regionalist faith the very 'region' to which they offered loyalty was left unspecified. At least, such a 'region' was *not* the unitary category of Okinawa and therefore the elements of folk culture, which were collected by local activists, were *not* intended to represent the 'authentic Okinawa'. It was similarly unexpected, but later became clear, that local activists did not thoroughly deny cultural connections with Japan. Sadoyama Anko, for instance, drew comparisons between Miyakoan folk culture and ancient Japanese materials. He differed from early modern Okinawan intellectuals only to the extent that he did not attempt this in such a determined manner as these pioneers. Similarly, Higa Toyomitsu had little interest in refuting the Ryukyu-Japan Common Ancestry Theory, even though the annoying military presence in his community evoked antipathy towards the Japanese and their government. After a fairly long conversation over the Common Ancestry Theory, I asked him the reason why he did not try to refute it. He looked away and returned a curt answer, 'Cause scholars say so'. I first thought that Sadoyama's or Higa's attitudes implied non-academics' modesty or perhaps their compromise, but eventually realised that the idea of a 'distinctive

Okinawa' which is embedded in a simplistic dichotomy between Okinawa and Japan misses the point of their local activism.

Local activists evaded the issue of an 'authentic Okinawa' and a 'distinctive Okinawa'. Why were these visions not pursued and what objective did local activism in contemporary Okinawa try to achieve instead? These are the major question to be addressed in this dissertation. In other words, why did local activists not hold up the identity of 'the Okinawans' and what identity did they alternatively claim? Why did local activism not develop into Okinawan nationalism and what ideology did it foster in its place? I try to give an answer to these questions through the historical reconstruction of local citizens' movements and a sociological examination of local activists' discourse on their own society.

It is the key to this undertaking to fully understand the implications of the fact that many local activists belong to a particular generation. At first glance, it appeared a sheer coincidence that Sadoyama (1949-) and Higa Toyomitsu (1950-) used to be in the same grade at the same year during their school days. It was quite possible that their respective co-workers turned out to be almost the same age: shaman Nema Tsuruko (1947-) and grassroots ethnographer Okuhama Sachiko (1949-) in Miyako and Chibana Shoichi (1948-) in Yomitan. However, it was striking to learn that leading local activists, such as Asato Eiko (1948-) and Kina Shokichi (1948-), who located themselves at an intersection between these grassroots activists, also belong to the same generation. This generation of local activists extends to senior left-wing leaders, such as Arakawa Akira (1931-), Gima Susumu (1931-), Kawamitsu Shinichi (1932-), Arasaki Moriteru (1936-) and

Nakasone Susumu (1941-), whose opinions will be extensively discussed in the later chapters. What distinguishes this particular segment of local people from the others? Okinawans who were born between 1930 and 1950 grew up and lived their heyday of youth during the American administration (from 1945 to 1972). The upper bounds of this generation consist of the earliest graduates of Ryukyu University, which was established in 1950 as the first local institute for higher education. The bottom of the generation mainly includes those people who committed themselves to student activism in the early 1970s. Their student activism was embedded in popular agitation concerning Okinawa's reversion to Japan. This reversion movement and the dramatic social change resulting from the 1972 reversion were also the historical context in which another category of people, such as Nakasone Keizo, Tanigawa Kenichi and Endo Shoji, started their distinctive activities.

1-5: CONCLUSION

It is a common phenomenon that popular traditions are used as a means of consolidating an ethnic identity. Thus it may seem banal that local activists in Okinawa appropriated the popular cult of female possession for their anti-development or anti-base campaigns. Underlying these environmentalist or pacifist movements was the resistance against Japanese authority. In their interpretation, disappearing local traditions are no less a negative effect of increasing Japanese influence than the excessive tourist development advanced by Japanese companies, or troublesome American military bases imposed by the Japanese government. These activists who

were trying to empower religious practitioners were certainly intending to secure local interests. However, it was quite uncertain whether this loyalty to the locality would develop into the ethnic reassertion of Okinawans. Local activists seem to have rarely had the vision of an 'authentic Okinawa' or a 'distinctive Okinawa'. The reason why such a vision was not conceived will be empirically answered in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 2: 'MORALISING PERSPECTIVE'

2-1: INTRODUCTION

A 'moralising perspective' refers to an observation influenced by conscientious value judgement. Tom Nairn points out that such observation divides social collectivities either as healthy or morbid. As a detached historical view is obstructed, it becomes impossible to understand the phenomena of collective identity in its entirety (Nairn 1977: 351). The existence of a social group cannot be censured nor defended consistently because the moral value of a collective identity depends on the context of transient inter-group relations. Furthermore, the fact that group formation inherently has both favourable and unfavourable effects on people concerned inevitably led to the failure of moral judgement. In Okinawa, where two social collectivities, Okinawans and Japanese, historically overlap, it is particularly difficult to give consistent moral support for one or the other.

In the early twentieth century, Higa Shuncho, a renowned Okinawan historian, was puzzled as to why he harboured ill feeling towards Japan's assimilation of Taiwan and Korea while he entertained antipathy against her dissimilation of Okinawa. Thinking back to the day of the Korean annexation to Japan, he wrote:

Whereas I thought this annexation unjustifiable, I was angry with the Japanese people who regarded Okinawans as a different people from themselves just as Taiwanese and Koreans were. However, I could not explain the reason why I took these contrary attitudes (Higa 1971: 216).

Today, this puzzlement, somewhat transformed, can be found within the context of Okinawa-Japan relations. Anthropologists, especially Japanese ones, working in Okinawa are all-too-familiar with a dilemma into which

they fall in conversation with local people. It is a case of double-bind in which an anthropologist will meet an unfavourable result in any answer to a question as to whether or not Okinawans are Japanese. If an anthropologist emphasises that Okinawa is *not* a part of Japan, he will possibly arouse the local people's indignation at his 'discrimination'. There are reasonable grounds for condemning the Japanese people for discrimination against Okinawans. Okinawa is unfairly burdened by the American military bases for national security. Despite this excessive contribution to the national community, Okinawa remains in the poorest prefecture in Japan. Nonetheless, if an anthropologist lays stress on his interpretation that Okinawa is a part of Japan, he will probably encounter angry local people who criticise him for ignoring the existence of an ethnic minority and disseminating the dominant ideology of a homogeneous Japan. Okinawa is rich in cultural resources for highlighting its ethnic difference from Japan, including memories of a kingdom, which had governed the islands until they were annexed to Japan, and local 'dialects', which are closely related to Japanese but unintelligible to Japanese speakers.

A moralising perspective lies at the root of this double-bind. Both *difference* and the *sameness* respectively have negative and positive aspects. On the one hand, a negative aspect of *difference* from the dominant people is that it can justify the marginalisation of certain segments of population, whereas a positive aspect refers to the fact that the difference gives grounds for the independence of these subordinate peoples. On the other hand, the *sameness* with the dominant people will not be supportable when it implies the coercive assimilation of the subordinate peoples, whereas it will win

approval when equal rights are given to them for that reason. A moralising perspective tries to single out the favourable aspects of *difference* and the *sameness* respectively and to avoid all the unfavourable aspects. However, this is logically inconsistent since it means that a group simultaneously claims to be both *different from* and *the same as* another. Furthermore, a demand for independence of a subordinate group tends to overshadow internal differences within the group and may force less powerful sub-groups to assimilate into the most powerful sub-group.

These difficulties are unavoidable as long as it is axiomatically accepted that a political organisation represents the interest of a single ethnic group. This is the principle of nationalism, which idealises a condition in which political boundaries are coterminous with cultural boundaries. Ernest Gellner defines it as 'primary a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent' (Gellner 1983: 1). Here, he means by 'national unit' ethnic collectivity (cf. Eriksen 1993: 99). The anthropologist's double-bind in Okinawa well demonstrates that a moralising perspective is unsuitable for analysing a nationalist ideology. Even when an anthropologist means by *difference* a cultural autonomy, his comment can be misinterpreted as the justification of political marginalisation. Even when he means by the *sameness* equal political opportunities, his comment can be misinterpreted as support for ethnic effacement. This dilemma, however, can be beneficial for analytical purposes. The Okinawan case forces analysts to discard a moralising perspective from the beginning and thereby enables them to have a detached view on the phenomena of collective identity.

2-2: THE JANUS FACE OF NATIONALISM

Tom Nairn argues that nationalism inherently has dual roles, which he calls the 'modern Janus'. On the one hand, nationalism, like a war for an independent Indochina, provides the vital force to free a homeland from alien oppression. On the other hand, nationalist sentiments, like Italian fascism, can serve as the force behind expanding sovereignty over foreign territories. Even if the distinction may seem clear between the above examples, an emancipatory nationalism and an aggressive nationalism are two sides of the same coin; nationalism is essentially ambiguous (Nairn 1977: 331, 348). In the first place, this ambiguity results from the fact that national territories are not permanently fixed. National borders are essentially elastic and, in fact, expand and contract over time. Moreover, even at a particular moment of history, legitimate borders differ depending on parties immediately interested. Thus, Germany, for example, diminished when it was circumscribed by the borders which had been drawn in the Versailles Treaty. In due course, however, Germany gradually expanded its territory to Saar, Rheinland, Polish Corridor, Sudeten and Austria. At the time of the annexation of Austria, it was regarded as German land by Nazi Germany and its local supporters, whereas it was definitely not German according to the Austrian National Defence Forces. Ultimately, this uncertainty is rooted in the fact that a single group of people cannot independently be defined as such. The definition of a people is always contestable and often controversial. In many cases, the actual course of events is not that a predetermined people builds its nation-state but that a

nation-state shapes its people. Such nation-states are geographically demarcated by the national borders. These borders are correlated with the relative political or military power of the state government. Power relations are transient and vary independently from the pre-existing definition of a single people.

It is desirable, from a nationalist perspective of the world, that each people has its own government and territory. However, this principle actually created the situation in which those peoples who were incidentally circumscribed within a nation-state were encouraged, or forced, to form a single kind of population in some sense or other. Two different methods, re-arrangement and re-definition, are available for this homogenisation of the population. National populations can be 'purified' by re-arranging inhabitants of the country. This idea leads to the exile or genocide of heterogeneous elements or, when they are small in number, to the silent disregard of their existence. A homogeneous nation can also be created by re-defining compatriots as such. When national territory expands to adjacent areas, it tends to be easy to enlarge the category of common descent. A focal point of descent is raised so that it can cover the inhabitants of the newly added land. In reverse process, when the contraction of territory reduces the national population, a focal point of descent is lowered or descent lines are made highly selective.

The same analysis is tenable as an explanation to the formation of smaller and larger social units: ethnic minority groups and a particular kind of empires. Joseph Rothschild addresses basically the same problem as Nairn's 'Janus face' in more general terms:

Politicised ethnicity in the modern world is problematic and ambivalent. It has served as a vehicle for aggression, oppression, and imperialism, as well as a protective vessel against these hegemonial impulses (Rothschild 1981: 256).

When regional or sectional autonomy is proposed, inhabitants of the region concerned or those belonging to a particular segment of the population are precipitated into a distinct group by consolidating their ethnicity. Such a group cannot be defined in advance, as its formation is contingent upon the underlying political objectives. Thus, there are potentially an infinite number of groups to be endorsed with the right of the self-determination of people. To avoid this difficulty, the United Nations introduced the concept of universal human rights, the full assurance of which was supposed to eliminate ethnic repression (Rothschild 1981: 177-178). A 'people' is merely operationally defined as a group who will be guaranteed an improved condition of their human rights by the entitlement of self-determination. On the other hand, when an already established and recognised nation-state incorporates proximate groups or contiguous land, it can assert, by inventing the ethnic identity of a newly united whole, that such territorial expansion is necessary to observe the principle of the self-determination of people. So-called continental imperialism, by which Hannah Arendt (1966: 223-224) indicates pan-Slavic Russia and pan-German Austria around the turn of the last century, illustrates such ideological manipulation. These empires viewed that there were 'Slavics' or 'Germans' who lived beyond their current national borders, and claimed that the borders should expand so that they could embrace these nationals. However, the underlying ideological force was the one that idealised a single people having the single country. In this sense, there was no difference between the force which

mobilised people in a drive for their colonial expansion and the force at work in liberation movements from colonial rule. To say this from colonial subjects' point of view, Rothschild writes, oppressed ethnic groups 'politicise themselves to resist, dialectically, the feared fate by harnessing the very forces that portend it' (Rothschild 1981: 256).

Ethnic minorities, nation-states and continental empires are different scales of social formation. However, all of them are the products of the same ideological force. It is therefore inappropriate to divide these social collectivities into either healthy or morbid ones. The censure of some and the defence of the others will spoil a view on the phenomena in their entirety. Continental imperialism is not sufficiently explained merely by reference to authoritarianism or demagoguery. Condemnation tends to be blind to the more spontaneous driving force for colonial expansion. Sympathy for emancipatory struggle often misses the fact that a minority movement can be internally coercive towards its members. Moral judgements are based on an implicit assumption that each group has its reasonable size irrespective of changes in the political environment. However, such an ideal size is actually contingent upon a temporary balance between the conflicting interest groups concerned.

2-3: THE MAJORITY AND MINORITIES IN JAPAN

A moralising perspective is implicit in many of the writers who addressed themselves to the issues of the majority and minorities in Japan. Firstly, the acceptable category of the Japanese is deemed as the mainstream Japanese only. The 'Japanese' more than this size, typified by

the pre-1945 empire, is therefore regarded as a historical aberration created by coercing minority groups into Japanisation. Accordingly, the distinctive identities of those minorities are acknowledged as rightful assertions, whereas other possibilities, such as the possibility of becoming the majority Japanese or remaining disparate individuals, are tended not to be fully considered. Secondly, the intention to secure the autonomous status of these minorities goes along with a condemnation of discrimination against them. It is underestimated that autonomy and discrimination result from the same recognition of difference from the dominant majority. The positive aspect and the negative aspect of this difference are separated more easily in theory than they can in practise. In parallel, assimilation is too easily separated from equal entitlement and criticised as an imposition. Lastly, in a narrow focus on the inter-ethnic relationship within Japan, Japanese nationalism always implies the morbid self-assertiveness of the dominant majority. Analyses repeatedly expose the assumptions which underpin the modern Japanese identity, but tend to become satisfied with the exposure itself. Enough attention is not paid to the fact that a nationalism can have variable moral values in accordance with a relative position which the nation takes in transient international power relations at each point in time. In other words, a moralising perspective tends to overlook the dynamics in which an emancipatory nationalism turns into an aggressive nationalism. This transformation of the majority identity, in turn, inevitably affects the self-perception of minority groups. At any of these three points, a moralising perspective leaves the minority identities unquestioned. Analyses do not challenge but reaffirm the presupposed distinction between

the majority and minority and stop short of addressing a genuinely interactive manner in which people may oscillate between majority and minority identities.

Many sociological writings on the issue of the majority and minorities in Japan seem to be based on a premise that:

The Japanese as a nation was created at the same time when a modern state was established in the archipelago in the second half of the nineteenth century. For that matter, the idea of a family state, which the central government zealously promulgated, had a critical importance.

I shall also work on this premise but refute the following four points of an argument developed from it.

(1) The idea of the family-state shaped the Japanese into a racial category (Weiner 1997b: 101, 102, 104).

(2) Because the dominant Japanese defined themselves as a single racial category, subordinate minorities were, likewise, conceived as distinctive races (Weiner 1997a: 8).

(3) Japan's aggression and colonial activities from the late nineteenth century to 1945 were carried out on the assumption of Japanese racial superiority (Weiner 1997b: 112-113).

(4) The idea of a racially homogeneous Japan survived the collapse of the Japanese colonial empire (Weiner 1997b: 97).

In advancing these four points, recent works by Michael Weiner are typical of the sociological writings on the issue; therefore, the following critique of his works indicates deficiencies to be partly found in texts by other analysts.²⁰ Weiner's theory on minority groups in Japan was first articulated in a chapter which set up the historical context of his monographic study of resident Koreans (1994: 7-37). Omitting particularities about the Korean-Japanese, the main arguments reappeared in his contribution to the journal *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (1995). These

were further revised and used in the introductory chapter of Weiner's edited *Japan's Minorities*, a collection of articles by specialists in respective minority groups (1997a). In the same year, another revised version came out as Weiner's contribution to a collection on *The Construction of Racialised Identities* in East Asia (1997b). Sources which he used in these four articles largely overlapped and the component arguments of his theory basically remained the same. A prominent feature of his theory is reference to the idea of race.

2-4: 'RACE' OR NATURALISED SOCIAL COLLECTIVITY

Although the biological concept of race was already refuted, the idea of race is still in use in popular discourse on everyday social relations. This social race is said to provide the reason for studying 'race' in contemporary sociology. Strictly speaking, however, this social race is a folk concept diffused in English-speaking communities. As Marcus Banks points out, it will have obvious limitations, therefore, to refer to the popularity of *race* (italic for the indication of an English folk concept) in justification of race studies in general. It will be problematic to appropriate *race* for the analysis of other language communities in which its cognate terms may not exist (Banks 1996: 52-53). For the same reason, the distinction between *racial* and *ethnic* will also be problematic. Of the characteristics in terms of which a group is identified, the adjective 'racial' designates physical ones whereas the adjective 'ethnic' designates cultural ones (Banton 1983: 9). This conventional view is said to mirror the everyday American usage of these

²⁰ For instance, point (1) and (4) can be found in Yoshino's work (1997: 200-201, 201).

terms. Other societies may not attach importance to this distinction nor use the separable categories (Banks 1996: 52). Even if a similar pair of categories enjoy currency, the distinction is quite possibly drawn in a different way so that their translation into 'racial' and 'ethnic' can be misleading.

Weiner seems to disregard this last point when he suggests a high degree of conflation between cultural and 'racial' categories in Japan. He introduced currently popular translations of *jinshu* as 'race' and *minzoku* as ethnic group.²¹ Then, he examined several pieces of Japanese material concerning *minzoku* and concluded that the term actually meant 'race' as well as ethnic group (Weiner 1995: 438-442; 1997b: 98-100). Thus, *minzoku* and *jinshu* came to have 'a functional equivalence as concepts which made any distinction irrelevant' (Weiner 1995: 441; 1997b: 100).

First of all, the whole argument turns historical processes upside down. Weiner presupposes that a semantic distinction was initially made and then became blurred. However, his evidence for the clear distinction is adduced from a fairly recent source, a Japanese encyclopaedia published in 1968, whereas most of the historical materials in which he found equivocal usage are older than it. Weiner relies on Yasuda Hiroshi's essay to obtain a historical outline of the concept of *minzoku*, but, if this essay is carefully read, the outline will turn out to be different from Weiner's. According to

²¹ Weiner actually translated *minzoku* as 'ethnicity'. However, elsewhere he uses it mingle with people and nation (Weiner 1997a: 2, 4) or ethnos (Weiner 1997b: 98). In these contexts, he obviously referred to concrete people, whereas ethnicity means an abstract idea, namely, a quality of, and expressed between, ethnic groups (cf. Banks 1996: 99). The source which he uses for supporting this translation in fact argues that *minzoku* is a term indicating a concept encapsulating an aspect of nation on the one hand and *ethnic group* or ethnos on the other (Yasuda 1992: 62). To the best of my knowledge, 'ethnicity' is usually transliterated as *esunishiti* or translated as *minzoku-sei*, but not as *minzoku*.

Yasuda, *minzoku* was coined at the beginning of the modern age as a term which specifically referred to the collective holder of 'Japanese-ness'. Because 'Japanese-ness' was articulated in reaction to over-Westernisation promoted by the new ruling class, *minzoku* implied populism. Because Japan could not be defined any more than a state organisation at that time, *minzoku* entailed legal nationality. Nevertheless, *minzoku* was assumed to have historical continuity because cultural traditions served as the grounds for 'Japanese-ness' (Yasuda 1992: 66-67). After *minzoku* came to generally refer to other peoples than the Japanese, the representation of ordinary people, common political affiliation and historical continuity remain as the main defining feature. However, in this general usage, there was little differentiation not only from *jinshu* but also many etymologically related terms which have by now become obsolete, such as *minshu*, *zokumin* and *shuzoku*.²² This redundant vocabulary probably reflected the situation in Europe where 'nation' and 'race' were virtually synonymous in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (cf. Miles 1993: 62). Thus it is rather natural that Japanese intellectuals, who eagerly introduced Western thought, alternatively used *minzoku* and *jinshu*. There was no distinction in Europe as well as Japan as clear as that which later appeared in the Japanese encyclopaedia.

Secondly, it is simply not true that '*minzoku* displaced *jinshu*' (Weiner 1995: 441; 1997b: 99). *Minzoku* never describes phenotypically identified categories; for instance, 'black *jinshu*' is a common term but 'black *minzoku*'

²² Perhaps, only *shuzoku* belongs to traditional vocabulary. The encyclopaedia *Kojien* gives an example found in *Konjaku Monogatari* in twelfth century. Both *shu* and *zoku* are understood as meaning 'a kind' in this context. *Min* in *minzoku*, *minshu* and *zokumin* means 'the mass' and most

never. Actually, the Japanese encyclopaedia which Weiner quotes defines *jinshu* mostly by phenotypic features. However, his succeeding discussion does not do justice to this quoted definition. He alternatively uses such terms as 'biological or genetic basis', 'physiological determinants', 'consanguinity', but they are all paraphrases of a single folk concept 'common blood'. Thus, when Weiner mentions '[t]he conflation of cultural and "racial" criteria by which *minzoku* could be identified' (Weiner 1997b: 98), he means by the 'racial' criteria not phenotypic features at all. In other words, he uses the term 'race' in two different associations: phenotype and common blood. He initially equates the first association of 'race' to *jinshu*. Then, he finds it contradictory that the second association of 'race' was included not into *jinshu* but *minzoku*. This equivocality makes him draw the misleading inference that *jinshu* and *minzoku* were equated.²³

Apart from Weiner's confusion, the discrepancy between Japanese terminology and English one suggests that there is an overlap between the concept of cultural category and the concept of supposedly biological category. This overlap consists in the naturalness of collective identities, which, for instance, a Japanese folk concept, 'common blood', implies. The most lasting significance of *race* is said to be 'a line of people of common

likely was used in order to imply the populist meaning of a nation when this untraditional concept of 'nation' had to be translated.

²³ Weiner provides only second hand source, except one, for supporting his argument discussed in this paragraph. The exception was Kada Tetsuji, who is said to have put stress on 'racial (*jinshuteki*)' aspect of a people in defining *minzoku* (Weiner 1997a: 99). However, in the original text, Kada was actually criticising this view and argued that *minzoku* should be understood as a community formed for the purpose of modern style of production (Kada 1940: 71). In addition, Weiner's direct quotation, 'We cannot consider *minzoku* without taking into account its relation to blood', was actually presented as a concessive clause and can more properly be translated as 'We do not think of *minzoku* as unrelated to blood'. The sentence was followed by Kada's view that 'However, . . . *minzoku* is a historical phenomenon which appears in a particular phase of social development' (Kada 1940: 70). This type of extremely rough reading and distortion of the original text can also be found in another place of Weiner's essays; see footnote 27.

descent, with the implication that their similarity of appearance or temperament was the result of shared ancestry' (Banton 1983: 37, 40). As long as the idea of race implies common descent, as Thomas Eriksen points out, its distinction from ethnicity is problematic because 'ethnic ideologies tend to stress common descent among their members' (Eriksen 1993: 5). Similarly, David Goldberg notes that '[l]ike race, ethnicity may be cast and managed as much in terms of inherent as deeply historical identities, either of which may be claimed as the basis of sedimented and immutable differences' (Goldberg 1993: 76). The same ambiguity also appears in the delineation between 'race' and nation:

[T]he ideologies of nationalism and racism both comprise processes of signification which portray discrete social collectivities as naturally constituted' (Miles 1993: 100).

In nationalist discourse, cultural characteristics, by which a nation is identified, are regarded as permanently fixed to its people. As they lose their acquirable quality, the distinction between cultural criteria and biological ones is dissolved. This comes as little surprise, as an English folk term *nation* originally means common birth or extended family (Goldberg 1993: 98). In many cases, 'race', ethnic group and nation have a common qualitative aspect, that is, naturalness which is produced by the idea of common descent or common birth. To cite Miles, these three types of social formation, namely 'race', ethnic group and nation, refer to 'self-reproducing social collectivities which are naturally and therefore permanently distinct' (Miles 1993: 100).

At this point, Roger Just's analysis of Greek identity is helpful because he has insight into the stratification of criteria for national

membership. In contemporary Greece, Just argues, belief about a biologically reproduced people has ontological priority over the commonly observed contents of ethnicity, such as political incorporation, geographical circumscription, historical continuity, language and so on. Greeks *define* themselves as Greek based first and foremost on 'Greek blood' or Greek descent. Location, origins and culture are all contestable and serve merely as *evidence* for membership of this preconceived group. In other words, ethnic identity is conceived of as an independent reality from these other membership criteria (Just 1989: 75-77). Although Just calls this preconceived group a race (original no inverted commas), it undoubtedly refers to the self-reproducing social collectivity rather than 'race' as a socially constructed category of people based on their physical characteristics.

Weiner claims that the idea of the family-state moulded the Japanese into a 'race'. The family-state, he argues, was 'the result of a reworking of the concept of nation and citizen in accordance with racial mythology' (Wiener 1994: 19). It was also a manifestation of 'racial' nationalism, in which 'race' determined membership in the national community. Finally, the family-state itself was a 'racialised' national culture (Weiner 1995: 433). However, the term 'race' in this context is misleading if it is simply intended to mean that the Japanese *minzoku* was defined with reference to the folk concept of 'common blood'. This is *not at all* to say that there is fundamental distinction between observable phenotypic features and imagined genotypic differences, *but* it is to say that there is ontological stratification to be recognised between skin colours as a marker for

categories and common blood as a rhetorical expression of the self-reproducing social collectivities. Weiner elsewhere passed a reasonable remark that '[t]he important distinction is not between cultural or physical characteristics, but how these criteria are regarded and acted upon' (Weiner 1995: 442). Moreover, he later replaced some of the problematic expressions quoted above by the more accurate 'myth of common ancestry' (1997a: 8; 1997b: 104) and 'the naturalisation of culture' (Weiner 1997a: 2; 1997b: 101). Nevertheless, continuing reference to the Japanese 'race' seems to hinder him in understanding the nature of the family-state.

2-5: THE IDEA OF THE FAMILY-STATE

Japan as a modern state built itself through the process of extending the organisational constitutive principles of the 'family'. This so-called family-state was theoretically accomplished in the end of the nineteenth century. A class of lower vassals overthrew the old feudal regime in the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Whereas these oligarchs resurrected the Emperor's authority, they pushed on forward with Westernisation so as to establish a modern state system. The year 1890 was a milestone in this course. Following the promulgation of the Constitution a year before, the year saw the inauguration of the Diet, which, however, demonstrated the disunity among the citizens; reconcilable interest groups were proposing various state visions (Gluck 1985: 21-26). Nothing but national integrity was urgently required for making up for the vulnerability of this emergent state to European imperialist aggrandisement (Jansen 1984: 63-64). In the same year, intending to instil patriotism in young generations of Japanese,

the government issued the Imperial Rescript on Education, which is considered to be the original expression of the idea of the family-state.²⁴

The Rescript itself, however, did not expound the idea but only implied it.²⁵ Its first articulation actually appeared in an official commentary written by Inoue Tetsujiro, in the part of which he explained the grounds for advocating loyalty to the Emperor:

The Emperor to his imperial subjects is a parent to their children. This is to say that a state is the extension of a 'family'. There is no difference between the Emperor giving orders to his imperial subjects and benevolent parents telling their children what to do (Inoue 1891: 10-11).

The 'imperial subjects (*shin-min*)' was a newly coined term by which a sense of the people of the nation was encapsulated, with the expectation that it would overshadow the existing regional or class antagonisms.²⁶ Loyalty was a familiar concept for vassals (*shin*) through their feudal relationship with regional lords, but it was an alien concept to the mass (*min*), who were simply exploited by this ruling class. When, however, both of them became a single class of commoners, filial piety was appropriated to account for the opinion that the latter should also show affection to the new supreme lord, the Emperor (Soeda 1997: 65-75). By claiming that loyalty and filial piety were merely different aspects of the identical idea, Inoue tried to unite otherwise disparate people into a single group of imperial subjects.

²⁴ Ito Mikiharu (1982), Oguma Eiji (1995; chap. 3 and 8) and Soeda Yoshiya (1997) are among the few analysts who take sufficient academic detachment from this topic and make reliable discussion based on the examination of the original texts of family-state theorists. My discussion of this section owed its initial insight to these works.

²⁵ The original text was re-printed in Soeda's book (Soeda 1997: 60) and various versions of its English translation were available in an appendix of Hirata Yuji's book (Hirata 1998: 458-499). Soeda (1997: 276) also points to widespread confusion with the Cardinal Principles of the National Polity (*Kokutai no Hongi*), which was issued in 1937 when the empire already came into uncontrollable expansionism under militarists' autocracy. The principles asserted the divinity of the Emperor and articulated the fully developed idea of the family-state. For example, Yoshino's argument of the family-state typically shows this confusion (Yoshino 1992: 91).

The Confucianist background is evident, but Inoue, who had studied in Germany, was among the progressive scholars in early modern Japan. Similarly, other family-state theorists were also equipped with Western thought, in which scientific racism gained prominence at that time. Faithful to this doctrine, they assumed that Japanese people were an inferior 'race'. Then, Japanese intellectual and physical inadequacy was substantiated in the light of their affluent knowledge about Europeans and Western civilisation. Accordingly, it was in a very peculiar way that the family-state theorists interpreted social Darwinism. Hozumi Yatsuka, for example, argued that Japan could be among the winners in the struggle for survival. Evidence that she could be the fittest to survive, however, could not be found in her people's 'racial' superiority or in her yet unrealised politico-economic dominance over East Asia. Hozumi instead adduced the evidence from Japan's sustained national polity (*kokutai*) (e.g., Hozumi 1911: 187-188). *Kokutai* referred to both the supposedly single dynasty throughout history and the Emperor's common ancestry to his subjects:

Because of sharing parents, people form a family. Because of sharing ancestors, people form a *minzoku*. Because descendants revere their common apical ancestor and obey its protective power, the family-state forms a peaceful national polity. . . . Our Emperors, in fact, have been the successive heirs to this apical ancestor of the *minzoku* (Hozumi 1911: 184).

By introducing elements of ancestor worship, Hozumi rendered the family-state primordial. He argued that this primordial group inherently had the spontaneous solidarity among its members which would be decisively advantageous to its survival in imperialist aggrandisement leading current international behaviour (e.g., Hozumi 1911: 187-188). Although he

²⁶ According to Yasuda (1992: 64), the term *shin-min* was firstly used in the Imperial Rescript on the Inauguration of the Diet (1890).

was here boasted about a certain quality of the Japanese, it was different from racial superiority. Imagined hierarchy of 'races' consists of comparative judgements, which in turn presupposes 'universally valid' criteria, that is, degrees of the attainment of Western civilisation. Contrary to this, Hozumi's estimate was extremely particularistic, since he was considering the national polity which was possessed by no other people but the Japanese. It was theoretically free from any relative evaluation.²⁷ Hozumi can be said to have expressed cultural chauvinism, but he did not assert racial superiority based on genetic determinism.

Kato Hiroyuki also worked on the premise that Japanese people could be racially inferior but that Japan had competitive power due to its unique national polity. He was actually so staunch a Darwinist that he could admit that the Japanese 'race' might become extinct by losing the competition with Westerners.²⁸ Nevertheless, solidarity among Japanese people was said to produce remarkable national strength. At the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, Kato predicted Japan's victory. In Russia, he argued, anti-imperialists and rebellious Polish people damaged patriotism. In contrast, patriotism and loyalty to the Emperor completely overlapped with each other in Japan. The basis of this overlap was said to lie in the Emperor's common descent with his subjects (Kato 1904: 80-81). In Kato's

²⁷ This distinction is owed to Yoshino's analysis though he discusses a different historical context. Examining the view of Japanese culture expressed in *nihonjinron*, he points out that the view can be understood not as genetic determinism of culture but as 'racially exclusive possession of a particular culture'. Whereas the former idea was based on the vertical sense of superiority in Western racism, the latter idea entailed a horizontal sense of difference (Yoshino 1992: 29; 1997: 206).

²⁸ Opposing a proposal to encourage intermarriage with Westerners with the intention of improving Japanese racial quality, Kato argued that intermarriage would end with replacing the race rather than its enhancement. The pure Japanese race might lose its struggle for survival, but nothing can escape from the natural law of the fittest to survive (Kato 1990[1887]: 40, 44). Weiner completely misreads Kato's opinion and introduces him as an advocator of the promotion of intermarriage with Westerners (Weiner 1997a: 7; 1997b: 103).

view, the Japanese polity was the sole survivor of the primordial theocratic patriarchies which had once existed all over the world. This old polity could have been interpreted as a primitive custom of a 'frozen' society, but it was actually asserted that the antiquity of the polity proved its capability to win the struggle for survival. Championing this national polity, Kato later severely criticised Japanese Christians for their cosmopolitanism and faith in a universal God. For Kato, the imperial patriarchy was irreplaceable, not only because it was the foundation of patriotism, which had brought about Japanese military success, but also because it was the only thing upon which Japanese people could confidently pride themselves over Europeans (Kato 1907: 44, 85-87).

Despite similarity at first glance, the family-state theorists were suspicious about conservative nativist scholars. Xenophobic nativists fanatically asserted that the Emperor had transcendental virtue and that the people of his divine country had inherent excellency. In contrast, the scientifically minded family-state theorists tried to give an account of the Emperor's ultimate power on grounds of his common ancestry with the other Japanese people. Also, they made a detached observation of not only Japan's lesser status in international power politics but also Japanese inferiority in the hierarchy of 'races' then regarded as a scientific truth. In this setting, the assumption of common ancestry was not so much about genetic homogeneity, since this would only have demarcated an inferior 'race'. Rather, common ancestry was about shared descent between the Emperor and his subjects, which was expected to assure the supposedly unique national polity. For preserving Japan's sovereignty, it was

considered to be one of the few available means to enhance internal harmony and solidarity. Consanguinity of the Japanese was well implied in the use of such expressions as 'blood community (*ketto dantai*)' or 'blood relatives (*ketsu rui*)', but stress was put on consanguineous *unity* rather than on a consanguineous *category*. The popular concept of 'family' was appropriated for defining social *relations* required for a nation-building rather than drawing the clear *contour* of a social collectivity. In other words, the family-state theory portrays people in the archipelago as a self-reproducing social collectivity which had naturally emerged, but it does not create an exclusive category with sharply defined boundaries.

2-6: RACIALISED OTHER RECONSIDERED

Weiner argues that the modern Japanese identity was constructed against the excluded 'Other', including the urban and rural poor, traditional outsider populations and new colonial ones (1997a: 9-16; 1997b: 110-117; cf. 1994: 20-31). He is right to remark that negatively valued categories of 'Other' were a structural necessity for the definition of the Japanese 'Self' as a positively valued group. However, he seems to be confused when he tries to incorporate the family-state theory into this process. Weiner argues that the family-state itself was thought of as an immutable national characteristic by being understood as reflecting inherited qualities and capacities of its people (Weiner 1997a: 8; 1997b: 104; 1994: 19). Following this assertion, Weiner adds that:

A corollary of this construction of a Japanese 'race' would be the simultaneous categorisation of other populations as members of equally distinct but subordinate 'races' (Weiner 1997a: 8).

Weiner here tries to identify the emergence of racism in Japan. In the succeeding paragraphs, he describes negative beliefs in the essentialised identities of subordinate groups. This part of his discussion can be divided into two different contexts; one is concerned with the morality of modern capitalist society in general and the other has to do with scientific racism and its support for colonialism. The former bears little reference to any particular national identity. The latter nurtured a Japanese imperialist ideology, which, however, was not the family-state theory but rather its rival ideology. Thus, contrary to Weiner's assertion, the idea of the family-state did not immediately imply racism, at least within the range of data based on which he tries to establish this implication.

Growing Japanese capitalism involved slum-dwellers, peasants, Burakumin (former outcasts), Ainu (aborigines), Taiwanese and Koreans, and caused their material deprivation.²⁹ These peoples were identified as such by physiognomic features and were thought to possess innate, unfavourable characteristics, such as immorality, unsanitariness, ruthlessness, cruelty, savagery, primitiveness, immaturity and so on. If 'Self' is defined in opposition to these negative categories of the 'Other', this 'Self' will be characterised by decency, healthiness, modesty, gentleness, civilisation, sophistication, maturity and so on. These positive attributes reflect a set of qualities which were required for a desirable person in modern civil society. 'Japanese' in this context can be understood as a mere index which referred to this intangible personality in a particular

²⁹ As for Burakumin, Ainu and Taiwanese aborigines, I will offer more precise descriptions with substantial information in Chapter 5 in which I discuss Okinawans' perception of these peoples.

historical context of East Asia.³⁰ In parallel, 'peasants', 'Ainu', 'Korean' and so on were mere indexes referring to the kind of personalities to be rectified in modern society. Both indexes were basically irrelevant to actual people. Thus, whether a Japanese or an ethnic minority, every one who was integrated into modern society came under social pressure to assume a new personality. For instance, to avoid the stigma attributed to 'Ainu', an Ainu man was forced to practise self-discipline so as to become 'Japanese', that is, to become a desirable person in modern society. To become 'Japanese', however, was also an imperative for those people who achieved their Japanese identity and had it ascribed to them from outside. Such a Japanese man fell into a situation in which he was required to continuously strive to organise his behaviour in a socially sanctioned way in fear of being branded a 'slum-dweller', 'peasant' or whatever. In other words, this prejudice against materially deprived peoples had to do with a problematic process which involved *all* the people who took part in the growing capitalist society (Tomiyama 1990: 281).

This prejudice is distinguishable from scientific racism though they may have been mingled with each other in practise. Scientific racism was pertinent to a national ideology when imperialist states used it in justification of their colonial rule, whereas the prejudice which was accompanied with modern society in general was not. Scientific racism refers to the idea of the division of mankind on the basis of genetically fixed characteristics, with a hierarchy in terms of intellectual as well as physical

³⁰ Analysis in the rest of this paragraph owes to Tomiyama Ichiro's study of Okinawan urban migrants in mainland Japan. He argues that 'Okinawan' should be understood as a category embedded in modern Japanese society rather than a group of people who have common attributes (Tomiyama 1990: 1-19, 275-282).

capacities. Although this idea was grudgingly accepted in Japan in the beginning, it met a favourable reception after the turn of the century. Industrial development and military success were regarded as evidence of innate greater capabilities of the Japanese. In parallel, material deprivation of Japan's colonies was thought of as a reflection of the innate inability of native populations. Given the contemporary international current of social Darwinism, this view rendered Japan's paternalistic intervention necessary for the survival of colonial peoples. It was considered only the possible way of modernising their economic and social institutions to cope with the struggle for survival. Colonial expansion was justified by being interpreted as a civilising mission to primitive peoples.

Weiner argues that this perspective 'affirmed a sense of national solidarity and "racial" superiority among the Japanese' (1997b: 113; 1994: 25). Here, he is trying to identify an imperialist ideology, which rivalled the idea of the family-state though Weiner seems to think that his analysis still focuses on the latter. Weiner argues that when the Japanese people came to recognise Japan as a colonising power, they felt obliged to preserve the essential and superior qualities of the Japanese 'race' (Weiner 1997b: 113; 1994: 25). By way of illustration, he equates a British imperialist, who claimed not to dilute the blood of advanced races by that of backward ones through inter-racial marriage, with Tokutomi Soho, a celebrated imperial publicist.³¹ However, quoting Tokutomi in this context is inappropriate,

³¹ Tokutomi was said to argue, in the page which Weiner quotes, that 'Japanese imperialism is not based on momentary whims. . . . It is a policy born out of necessity if we are to exist as a nation and survive as a race' (Pierson 1980: 318). The second sentence, however, does not exist in Tokutomi's original text. John Pierson indicated page 230 in Tokutomi's book printed in 1913 as a source for this translation, but the page is blank page between two articles in the copy of the book printed in the same year which I could check (Tokutomi 1913). The first sentence can actually be found in page 263 of

since he argued that ‘there will be no problematic in racial fusion, because the mainstream Japanese (*Yamato minzoku*) themselves were an already mixed race in the first place’ (Tokutomi 1974: 335).³² John Dower’s historical study, to which Weiner refers elsewhere (Weiner 1994: 20), would be more appropriate to quote at this point. Dower examines a volume of reports on colonial demographic policies which were issued by the Ministry of Health and Welfare in 1943. These reports assumed, and advocated, ‘racial’ purity of the Japanese and strongly criticised Japan’s assimilation policy. Especially, it predicted that Korean enrolment into the Imperial Army and the promotion of intermarriage with Koreans would result in serious trouble for the national community in the future (Dower 1986: 262-290). This eugenicist definition of the Japanese entailed what Weiner, mistakenly, tries to let Tokutomi say, that is, the existence of ‘inferior alien races’, whose ‘exclusion from the national community was adjudged natural and inevitable’ (Weiner 1997a: 12; 1997b: 115).

Weiner seems not to notice the historical fact that eugenicists and their sympathisers in bureaucracy had long debated with active colonial officers and militant politicians who formed the main proponents for the family-state theory (cf. Oguma 1995: 235-270). He does not clearly discriminate between these rival imperialist ideologies when he connects the

this book. There, Tokutomi argued that imperialist wars were necessary for preserving the independence of the empire. The closest expression to the second sentence appears as ‘To decide the destiny of Japanese *minzoku* at once, we were impelled to take extreme measures (*Yamato Minzoku no Unmei wo Ittetsuni Kessen ga tameni, Yamuwoezushi te Koko ni Itari shi nari*). It seems to me that the translation at issue is beyond the limit of free translation for an excerpt.

³² This does not mean at all that Tokutomi did not have a sense of Japanese superiority vis-à-vis other Asians. Actually, in the same part, he stressed that fusion should be the Japanisation of Taiwanese and Koreans not in the other direction. However, Tokutomi’s line of argument led to assimilation policies on colonies and should never be confused with eugenic arguments, which led to segregated colonial rule.

eugenicists' report with his argument that the family-state itself was conceived partly as a product of a shared genetic base (Weiner 1994: 20). He seems to suggest that the theory produced a sense of genetic distinctiveness among the Japanese people by which they marked themselves off from colonial subjects. However, as it has already been pointed out, 'family' in the idea of the family-state related not so much to a consanguineous *category* as it did to the extension of intra-family *relations*. The major point was not to create an exclusive national *boundary*, but to affirm national *solidarity*.

Apart from historical inaccuracy, this confusion is rooted in the inconsistent use of the term 'race'. In a general argument, Banton passes the remark that beliefs about common ethnicity tend to form the basis for inclusive boundaries whereas those about race tend to serve as a basis for exclusive ones. Although the same boundary can serve both exclusive and inclusive functions, as in apartheid South Africa or Nazi Germany, this is not to say that such cases always occur (Banton 1977: 147). Negative beliefs in the essentialised identities of colonial peoples certainly enabled Japanese colonisers to set them apart. This boundary of exclusion, however, does not necessarily have inclusive function, that is, the beliefs based on which Japanese people recognised each other as belonging together. On the one hand, the war-time eugenicists advocated a racist ideology in which the same beliefs had both exclusive and inclusive functions. It was similar with Nazi's idea, and these eugenicists were actually criticised as Hitler sympathisers by the proponents of the family-state theory. On the other hand, the idea of the family-state had to

do with inclusive identification of its members. The idea imbued Japanese people with a sense of common ancestry and shaped them into a naturalised social collectivity. This process did not necessarily involve the exclusion of colonial peoples. By the use of an ambiguous term 'Japanese "race"', Weiner discursively moves between the two different imperial ideologies.

2-7: DISCRIMINATION AND ASSIMILATION

Weiner regards it as a paradox that the family-state theory led both to discrimination against subjugated peoples and to their assimilation policies.

Paradoxically the same discourse of empire which reified assumed 'racial' differences between coloniser and colonised also presupposed the ultimate assimilation of the latter by the former (Weiner 1997b: 116).

The idea of the family-state actually formed a basis for assimilation policies, but it was unsuitable for the absolute distinction between the coloniser and the colonised. The category of Japanese imperial subjects (*shin-min*) was enlarged so as to embrace newly colonised peoples. Although *shin-min* was a supra-ethnic identity towards which subordinate minority populations were magnetised, it was different, for instance, from Soviet identity for Ukrainians or British identity for Welshmen. As we saw in a previous section, *shin-min* was the concept which had given the foundation for the formation of the mainstream Japanese. By re-interpreting this concept, the empire tried to define its people as the extended category of the Japanese rather than to integrate them into a newly created category. The colonised to the coloniser was not the non-members of the family-state to its members, but both of them were supposed to belong to the same familial community. Certainly, there were the apparent inequalities which were suffered by the

colonised people. The family-state theory, however, had its own rationale which justified these inequalities within the framework of the family-state instead of by excluding them from its membership.

In line with successive expansion of the empire, alien populations were redefined as Japanese imperial subjects and forced to assimilate into the Japanese community. In the early 1870s, the Japanese government started sending a mass of Japanese settlers to the Ainu habitat of Hokkaido. This northern expansion was followed by a southern expansion, that is, the full annexation of the Ryukyu islands. In 1879, when the Ryukyuan crown was abolished, the Ryukyu kingdom was completely dismantled. Taiwan was the first formal overseas colony, but the distinction between domestic and overseas was indiscernible in terms of 'Japanese' identity imposed onto newly subjugated peoples. As the result of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), the island was ceded to Japan, and its inhabitants, both descendants of Chinese migrants and Malayo-Polynesian natives, came to be registered as Japanese imperial subjects. By the victory in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), the empire acquired southern Sakhalin, the Kwantung Leased Territory on the Liaotung peninsula, and exclusive control over Korea. In 1910, the Korean peninsula was eventually annexed to the empire. Koreans came to account for the thirty percent of the total 'Japanese' population. Finally, after the First World War, the islands of German Micronesia also became Japanese territory. Although aggression and colonial rule continued to expand to settlements in Manchuria and there were wartime conquests in China, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, these areas were not considered a formal part of Japan. Therefore,

their native populations were regarded as foreigners rather than Japanese imperial subjects.

To promote assimilation, state ideologues tried to articulate shared interest among East Asians by appealing to their basic commonality. Phenotypic and cultural affinities with newly incorporated populations allowed the vain hope that they could completely merge into the Japanese community. The family-state theory was modified to serve for this assimilationism. Hozumi Yatsuka, one of the family-state theorists discussed in a previous section, defined *minzoku* as a people of common descent, which meant neither more nor less a people of consanguinity (*ketto*). However, he denied the existence of the absolute distinction between different *minzoku*, and instead emphasised that such distinction was a historically relative phenomenon:

There have been quite a few cases in which a people thinking of themselves as different [from another people] became aware of common descent in a wider view, or such a people realised shared origin [with another people] after tracing a focal ancestor one step back into the past, and then completed assimilation to make up a larger *minzoku* (Hozumi 1911: 14).

By extension, Hozumi argued, even the whole world population could someday form the one and only family-state, as all humans shared the ultimate ancestry. The fact of plural nationalities merely indicated that the 'evolution of world history' remained to reach that ideal stage. For him, there was no immutable boundary between different *minzoku*, but only a remote or proximate distance (Hozumi 1911: 3).

In harmony with this assimilationist doctrine, the Japanese *minzoku* was defined as an incontrovertibly mixed population rather than as an internally homogeneous and externally distinctive one. Imperialists' vanity

was not so much their assertion of genetically determined superiority than their self-righteous appreciation of the national polity in which imperial virtue was particularly efficient for assimilating heterogeneous elements. Kita Sadakichi, a scholarly officer in the Education Ministry, was a representative propagandist for colonial expansionism along this line. Kita argued that the ultimate criterion for a single *minzoku* was the 'consciousness of the identical *minzoku*'. After referring to cases in which hereditary physical differences between individuals could be unexpectedly great within the same *minzoku*, he said:

If, however, people belong to the same country, speak the same language, share the same life, have the same belief and come to have a consciousness of the identical *minzoku* by forgetting their respective origins, they should be regarded as the same *minzoku*. *Minzoku*, in such cases, consists of various races and [originally] different *minzoku* (Kita 1979: 53).

In his view, the Japanese *minzoku* was such mixture, into which Ainu, Taiwanese and Koreans had already melted to a large extent (Kita 1979: 75). The view that they were partly not yet assimilated explained the reason why these minority groups were still distinguishable. Kita criticised the 'pure-blood-ism' of the mainstream Japanese, as well as that of the minorities, since both of these obstructed the accomplishment of perfect fusion. Weiner seems not to properly understand Kita's applause for the multiple composition of the Japanese *minzoku*. In Weiner's interpretation of the school of thought represented by Kita:

While the physical and historical evidence of migrations to the Japanese islands was not denied, the migrations were deemed to be of such antiquity that they had long since formed a single 'race' and culture (Weiner 1997b: 104).

Because Weiner speculates that the idea of the family-state theory only implied a genetically homogeneous 'race', he thinks that state ideologues,

like Kita, would have downplayed any heterogeneous element. However, Kita was actually trying to highlight the fact that imperial subjects were historically diverse. In his theoretical framework, the more variety they showed, the greater the Japanese assimilative capability would be proved.

The same misapprehension seems to be at the root of the reason why Weiner left unanalysed one of the two social relations appropriated by the family-state theorists. In addition to a popular metaphor, the Emperor and his subjects as 'father' and his 'children', the imperial family and all the other family units in Japan were frequently described as the 'principal family (*soke*)' and its 'branch family (*bunke*)'. According to Aruga Kizaemon, the 'principal family' stands for the descent of its 'branch families' (Aruga 1959: 4-9). The metaphor expresses a particular kind of social relation, 'descent', in a particular cultural context, the Japanese 'family' system. This particularistic language is difficult to discern in the light of Weiner's racial theory.

In anthropological literature, the concept of descent has been used in the following three senses; a principle for group affiliation, genealogical ties between ancestor and offspring, and an ideology for group integration (Verdon 1980). According to Ito Mikiharu, descent in this last sense is more relevant to the Japanese 'family' system than the other two, which are to do with substantial processes of group formation (Ito 1982: 119-121, 177). The elementary social units in Japan are 'families (*ie*)'. 'Family' refers to an overlap between family and household, with the implication that it genealogically reproduces its members, but its membership is not confined to kin because it is also synchronically defined by common production and

consumption. As 'family' has continuity regardless of change in its members, it can be and actually is the primary reference of one's social identity. Descent as an ideology for group integrity maintains a system of adoption which allows genealogically unrelated persons to be received into a 'family' as the successor of its head. In such cases, an adopted person is obliged to be assimilated into the 'family' rather than remaining simply a legal heir. Similarly, this ideology can sustain the integration of a number of 'families'. Each 'family' has its apical ancestor who founded the 'family'. When several 'families' form a corporate group, the ancestor of the dominant 'family' tends to be regarded also as that of the other component 'families'. However, the latter does not necessarily trace genealogical ties back to the former, and genealogically unrelated 'families' are actually incorporated.

Thus, when the family-state theorists asserted that the ancestor of the imperial family was also that of all the Japanese people, they were not necessarily saying that individual people were the offspring of the imperial ancestor. Weiner (1995: 440) re-quotes, from Dower's work, an official tourist guide book (published in English in 1939), which introduces the Japanese:

The imperial blood may be said to run in the veins of all Japanese, who have thus become kinsmen to one another, descended from a common ancestor (Dower 1986: 222).

However, Weiner omits the excerpt which follows it:

[I]f we were to trace the genealogy of each Japanese subject, we would find that he belongs to a family which was centuries ago *either a direct or an indirect* offshoot of the Imperial Family (Dower 1986: 223; italic added).

Weiner's racial theory seems not to make sense of this 'indirect offshoot'.

Common descent of 'family' members is better understood as an idiom which

referred to a particular social relation which sustains group integrity. The empire was conceived of as the structural extension of such a 'family', into which outlying populations could be incorporated one by one.

Flowery language, such as 'impartiality and equal favour (*isshi dojin*)' or 'the unity of different peoples in the cardinal directions (*hachigen ichiu*)', promoted the communal virtue of this familial community. However, it was obvious that colonial peoples were recently incorporated and only given marginal status in the empire. In this context, Oguma Eiji points out that colonial peoples came to be metaphorically identified as 'adopted children' or 'married-in women' (Oguma 1995: 145-151, 377-394). Such new comers tend to have lower positions in a 'family' until the time when they have made a substantial contribution to its continuance (e.g., leading family finance or giving birth to sons). They are obliged to forget their original descent and are expected to make every effort to merge into the new 'family'. By analogy, new imperial subjects were only granted partial civil rights until they made a contribution to the empire (e.g., conscription) and fully absorbed the Japanese way of life. Thus, the idea of the family-state could well cope with seemingly contradictory demands; on the one hand, to design the empire as a solidly united group as if it had been a primordial social unit, and, on the other hand, to justify the inequality between metropolitan Japan and her colonies. To borrow Dower's description, '[t]he family was the archetypical "organic" entity, whose inner relationships were inequitable but in theory complementary and harmonious' (Dower 1986: 279). If properly understood, the structure of the family-state required *both* the lower status of colonial populations *and* the policy of their assimilation. Weiner finds it a paradox

that the family-state theory led to both discrimination and assimilation, but their coexistence was actually a logical necessity.

2-8: A 'RACIALLY' HOMOGENEOUS JAPAN

Defeated Japan gave up her formal colonies and discarded the family-state theory which had served as the basis for colonial expansionism. The inhabitants of this contracted Japan were almost perfectly corresponded to the category which had been defined by war-time eugenicists as the 'genetically pure Japanese'. Although this was a casual coincidence, the idea that the Japanese archipelago was always inhabited by a single 'race' suddenly came to be accepted as the established theory (Kamishima 1980: 64-65; Oguma 1995: 258-270, 346-352). Of course, inferences from this 'Japanese race' could not be the same as what the war-time eugenicists had implied by the same idea. At the time when the Allied Powers' occupation minimised Japan's national pride, there was no grounds for assertive 'racial' superiority. However, the very fact of subordination rendered nationalist sentiment morally approvable in the eyes of many Japanese people. Japanese nationalism in this historical context almost exclusively showed its emancipatory aspect. What Sakamoto Yoshikazu named 'reformist nationalism (*kakushin nashonarizumu*)' (Sakamoto 1960) received strong support from the progressive intelligentsia and the left-wing activists. For a few decades after the war, they were mainly campaigning against American dominance, especially the American forces which continued to be stationed in Japan after her 1952 re-independence. These anti-American activists campaigned for Japan's full independence on grounds of the Japanese

aboriginality in the archipelago, which was inferred from the idea of a 'racially' homogeneous Japan as this idea denied prehistoric migration from outside (Oguma 1999: 522-540).

However, economic growth throughout the 1960s and early 1970s dramatically changed Japan's position in global power relations. As Japan became economically and politically more powerful, its nationalism came to be considered aggressive rather than emancipatory. By the beginning of the 1980s, the morality of Japanese nationalism completely altered, at least in the major journalistic discourse. The idea of a 'racially' homogeneous Japan began to be challenged by those social critics who disputed the so-called 'myth of homogeneity'. They vibrantly disclosed the falsity of this myth by pointing out migrations and demographic variety in ancient times, cultural diversity in pre-modern society and the existing minority groups or new foreign immigrants in contemporary Japan (e.g., Ubukata 1979; Onuma 1986; Takita 1992). However, these works rarely questioned by whom, when and how this fiction had been fabricated, and too easily assumed that 'racial' homogeneity was always a popular belief throughout modern Japan. As Oguma Eiji (1995) convincingly demonstrates, the myth of homogeneity was in large part a product of the post-war left-wing movements and did not pertain to the pre-1945 colonial empire as much as it is assumed by these social critics.³³

The conflation of nation and 'race', which Weiner tries to elucidate (1994: 20; 1995: 40; 1997a: 2; 1997b: 97), more evidently manifested itself in the emancipatory nationalism of post-1945 Japan than in the racism of

Imperial Japan. This is the case as long as 'race' is supposed to mean a genetically defined category. War-time eugenicists vainly tried to demarcate the Japanese 'race' by comparing the frequency of certain blood types. However, contrary to the assumption of this pseudo-science, there is no such thing as 'Japanese blood' in objective reality. Unless this fact is denied, it can also be said, in a second analysis, that the conflation of nation and 'race' has always existed in Japan. In this second analysis, however, 'race' is understood as a category of assumptive common descent. The difference between 'race' in this sense and 'race' as a presumably genetically defined category lies in their relative flexibility. Pointing to the conflation of nation and 'race', Weiner seems not to have considered that this conflation itself can expand and contract. However, the notion of 'racial Japanese' is as much subject to redefinition as other ideological constructs. At least, such elasticity was quite acceptable for family-state theorists, who found the defining feature of *minzoku* in the *consciousness* of shared ancestry (Hozumi 1911: 15). Given that nation and 'race' were to be always together in the conception of *minzoku*, redefinition depends on the range of nationals, which in turn changes according to independent variables of international power relations. The naturalisation of the national collectivity may have rendered its membership *deterministic*, but this is different from saying that it *determined* the membership once and for all. Weiner seems to assume that the Japanese *minzoku* has always meant for everyone a social collectivity of the mainstream Japanese at least since it was articulated at the beginning of the modern age. This assumption is a historically ascending extension of a

³³ Although similar remarks were sporadically made (Yun 1987: 22-23; Kamishima 1982: introduction 17-18), this point was positively established by Oguma for the first time with a systematic analysis of

recently common definition of the Japanese. It is, however, an unreasonable extension.

2-9: FAILED MORALITY IN OKINAWAN HISTORY

I started this chapter with an excerpt from Higa Shuncho's essay. In the same essay, he also wrote:

It is what in fact our Ryukyu is that I really want to know. People say that Ryukyu is the first son, Taiwan is a second son and Korea is a third son. Ah, people of the other prefectures looked down on us as Ryukyuans. There must be some reason for this (Higa 1971: 216).

The modern history of Okinawa was actually the precedent for what later happened in Taiwan and Korea. The annexation of the Ryukyu kingdom started the process of its royal subjects being incorporated into the modern Japanese nation-state. To accord with the new national borderline drawn outside Okinawa (from Japan's perspective), the islanders were re-defined as, and moulded into, the Japanese. However, Okinawans were not entitled to participate in local as well as national politics for a few decades. This lack of democracy gave exceptionally strong authority to the prefectural office in comparison with the other prefectures in mainland Japan. In Okinawa, the managerial positions of the prefectural government were held by dispatched Japanese officers who were not necessarily concerned about local interests. Similarly, a small group of Japanese entrepreneurs monopolised the most profitable sector of local business and industry. In this Japanese political and economic domination, Okinawans' marginalisation was justified by their supposed incapability. Local people were considered to be unqualified to manage their own affairs in modern political and economic systems, unless

extensive data.

they fully attained a Japanese way of life. 'Ryukyuan' became a derogatory term playing the role of an index to refer to maladjusted and impotent personalities in modern society. In these respects, the Okinawan experience from the annexation to 1945 had close parallels with that of peoples in the formal Japanese colonies.

Japanese imperialism is said to have lacked a coherent colonial doctrine because domestic power-politics continued between two contrasting perspectives on subordinate populations: one that regarded them as basically Japanese and the other that regarded them as essentially alien. Contradiction is inherent in compromise policies, as they treated subordinate populations *both* as Japanese *and* non-Japanese at the same time. However, this fundamental contradiction was ignored in the national politics at the expense of these least represented people. Thus they receive the unfavourable aspects of *both* being Japanese *and* being non-Japanese, and thereby gave only benefit to the national community. Whereas subordinate populations were required to fulfil common duties with the Japanese, they were not given the equal rights (Peattie 1984: 15, 41). However, some rationale was still necessary to effectively carry out these policies. For this purpose, the idea of common ancestry was widely utilised. Cultural similarities were interpreted as evidence of the Japanese identity of colonial subjects in the remote past and, therefore, the annexation of colonial territories meant not 'conquest' but 'restoration'. The presently existing differences were regarded as merely historically produced temporal deviations and, therefore, the effort to conform to Japanese society was

expected to eventually remove these differences in the remote future (Oguma 1999: 653-654).

Okinawa was a prime case in this respect. The widely disseminated Ryukyu-Japan Common Ancestry Theory met with favourable acceptance among local people. Japanisation was considered to be a 'natural' process in which Okinawa was deemed to make up its unnatural 'historical digression'. This interpretation was reinforced by a certain progress towards equal rights. For instance, Jahana Noboru, an Okinawan journalist who had resigned from the local government, lobbied the central government and drew up a petition for national franchise. Although his campaign was suppressed by an autocratic Japanese governor of Okinawa, Okinawans managed to participate in the Diet by 1912. Common duties were a prerequisite for the suffrage; land reform had been carried out beforehand so as to introduce modern taxation. In another instance, however, equal rights and common duties were difficult to distinguish. In 1898, after the result of the Sino-Japanese War rendered Okinawans' loyalty to Japan conclusive, conscription came to be enforced in Okinawa.³⁴ Japanese local administrators and military authority were still suspicious about Okinawan soldiers and actually reluctant to enrol them into the Imperial Army. In contrast, Okinawan leaders exulted at the fact that Okinawans were recognised as full-fledged Japanese imperial subjects. In the local media, conscription was described not only as 'duty' but also as 'right'. In the Russo-Japanese War, a number of Okinawan soldiers fought bravely to the death to prove their Japanese identity. The same drive

³⁴ For instance, local children's attendance to Japanese schools remarkably increased after the war (Miyagi 1968: 199).

eventually motivated a mass of Okinawans to devote their lives in a land battle at the end of the Second World War (Ota 1976: 127-161, 393-404).

The fact that Okinawans attained equal legal status with the Japanese made them blind to the negative aspects of the *sameness*, on the one hand, and to the positive aspects of *difference*, on the other hand. While radical assimilationism was rarely called into question, any form of autonomy was inconceivable and, if a slight difference was suggested, it would be taken as a sign of discrimination and be rejected with rage. Just two years before the breakout of the Pacific War, a group of Japanese folklorists visited Okinawa and commended the local authority for its suspension of an energetic promotion of Japanese speech. Cultural persons in mainland Japan largely supported these folklorists who tried to preserve local language. However, with a native educational officer in the head, local people were indignant at this disturbance. They blasted the folklorists for emphasising regional peculiarities to their own amusement, neglecting their desperate effort to efface these peculiarities so as to gain full recognition as Japanese.³⁵ In Okinawa, the imperialist vision of the family-state perhaps came nearest to its actual materialisation. In contrast to Korea, no systematic war-time resistance was organised. Assumptive common ancestry with the Japanese was also propagated in Korea in justification of its annexation and assimilative policies on its people. It was not until 1942, however, that the Korean peninsula was officially declared to be an integral part of Japan. Korean conscription came to be enforced at

³⁵ Original articles concerned with this so-called Dialect Debate (*hogen ronso*) were reprinted by Tanigawa with his commentary essay (Tanigawa (ed) 1970a). Oguma (1999: 398-416) provides a more extended analysis of this debate.

the same time, but a national franchise was not given to these 'Peninsula Japanese' in the end.

Nevertheless, even after Okinawans had attained formal equality, they still felt an urge to conform to Japanese norms, as the promotion of standard Japanese speech demonstrated. This fact indicates that Okinawans actually still regarded themselves as not yet the same as the other Japanese. At least, Okinawans were acutely aware that the other Japanese still deemed them somewhat different from themselves. Thus, for a short time in post-1945 Japan, there was a view of Okinawans' identity which was comparable with the Koreans'. Since Japanese imperialists had defined Koreans as basically Japanese to justify the annexation, it amounted to the denial of the former colonial ambition to assert the absolute distinction between Koreans and the Japanese. Although this assertion recently came to be interpreted as a manifestation of unreasonable discrimination against Korean-Japanese, it had at one time been associated with the guilty conscience of Japanese intellectuals. Similarly, it was considered to be a morally correct decision that Japan restrained herself from claiming Okinawa. By early 1950s, however, the voice for an independent Okinawa faded away. After a land battle, American occupational fortresses in Okinawa were transformed into permanent strategic bases. The Ryukyu islands themselves remained under the militaristic administration. As local people's legal nationality was left pending, they had neither Japanese citizenship nor American civil rights. In this historical context, any evidence of Okinawans' distinctive identity appeared to justify the maintenance of the status quo.

A mass movement for reversion to Japan was defined as a nationalist challenge to American domination. It was a *Japanese* nationalism of *both* the mainland Japanese *and* Okinawans. Former local leaders, such as teachers and public officers, experienced unfavourable social status and disadvantageous economic conditions, which they would not have suffered if separation had not taken place. In the beginning, these particular interest groups launched public campaigns for re-entering Japan. However, their struggle was gradually redefined as a struggle against the American military forces and developed into popular agitation. This anti-American movement was particularly appealing to the left-wingers in mainland Japan, as they were fighting to liberate Japan from political and cultural subordination to the United States. Many Okinawan and Japanese reversionists believed that they had a moral duty to carry out this irredentist project. Significantly, being Japanese no longer meant being a member of the family-state, but it entailed being a part of a 'racially' homogeneous Japan. Okinawans were not simply required to *become* Japanese but also to *already be* Japanese. In the family-state, one could theoretically become its member by showing loyalty to the Emperor, but, in post-1945 Japan, one was decisively Japanese or not. Okinawans had to prove their membership of the Japanese community. As different from assimilation carried out in pre-1945 Okinawa, the Japanese authorities did not take coercive measures. Ethnic effacement proceeded on local initiative and gained wide public support.

By the time that Okinawa's administration was eventually transferred to Japan, the morality of reversionism became suspicious. Even after some

reduction, Okinawa excessively accommodated American forces in comparison with other parts of the Japanese territory. Fully restored Japanese capitalism came to dominate the local economy. Whereas some local people still tolerated the military presence in exchange for massive Japanese investment in local land development, others argued for the removal of military bases and proposed more moderate means for local economic promotion. It became undeniable, at least, that Okinawans could no longer wholeheartedly approve of Japanese nationalism which had led their reversion movement. The reversion movement was meant to protect the national interest, but it actually safeguarded the advantage of mainland Japan. Okinawans did not necessarily share this 'national' advantage.

In Okinawan history, a moralising perspective on collective identities successively resulted in failure. In the early modern era, claiming Japanese identity won wide approval. Okinawans' demand for equal legal rights was satisfied on the grounds that they came to fulfil the duties of Japanese imperial subjects. However, when the underlying drive to become 'Japanese' was understood as devotion to the colonial project of the empire of Japan, it brought tragic self-sacrifice at the war in its train. For a short time after the Second World War, Okinawans' Japanese identity was regarded as the product of imposed assimilation. However, as American military control was apparently different from Okinawans' autonomy, their separate social collectivity became insupportable. Then, Japanese identity met with Okinawans' approval again. This coincided with the time when Japanese nationalism itself had a positive moral value. While old imperialist Japan was condemned as a morbid social collectivity, people were

encouraged to restore nationalist sentiment to liberate democratic Japan from its subordination to the United States. Little doubt was cast on participation in this 'healthy' social collectivity. Most recently, however, a separate identity began to be demanded again. Equal Japanese citizenship came to Okinawans' hands with peremptory Japanese conformism. Emancipatory nationalism 'transmogrified' into an oppressive force for ethnic effacement. By the time of reversion, Japanese nationalism itself again started to change into aggressive nationalism, from which Okinawans tried to escape. A consistent moralising perspective is frustrated because of this remarkable historical oscillation between the two collective identities. Thus, for not a few thinking persons who have participated in or learned Okinawan history, the question of whether or not Okinawans are Japanese is difficult to answer in either the affirmative or the negative.

2-10: CONCLUSION

Advanced ethnic effacement by no means precludes Okinawans from restoring a separate identity, since a social identity is something created rather than spontaneously existing. Actually, in a series of disputes with the central government since mid 1990s, ethnic reassertion has progressed in Okinawa. It may be tempting to argue that Okinawan identity was merely submerged until recently, that is, Okinawans reconciled themselves to the Japanese identity by prioritising immediate instrumental gain in their problems. This submergence theory, however, cannot explain why an anthropologist still now faces a dilemma on answering the question as to whether Okinawans are Japanese or not.

This dilemma is probably unfamiliar to Weiner, a specialist in Korean-Japanese. For Koreans, ethnic effacement in modern history was almost always an apparently forced movement under Japanese oppression. It is not controversial to regard them as a non-Japanese people. When a claim to equal citizenship is made by resident Koreans, it is grounded on the idea of multiculturalism rather than their re-definition as Japanese. This Korean model explains little when it is applied to Okinawan history. It would guarantee Okinawans' minority identity and thereby underestimate other options which local people actually took. It would fix a morally negative value to Japanese nationalism and thereby leave its historical change unconsidered. It would not address the effect of this change on the self-perception of Okinawans. However, the fact is that the process of constructing a social identity in Okinawa is interactive to such extreme extent as Okinawans in some occasions choose the Japanese identity against which they define themselves in other occasions. Different from the Korean case, the Okinawan case shows that both Japanese and non-Japanese identities can have a positive moral value as well as a negative one depending on historical contexts. A moralising perspective on a social collectivity cannot sustain its consistency in Okinawa. Weiner was chagrined about the 'virtual absence from the literature of accounts of the Ryukyuan/Okinawan' (Weiner 1997c: 14). However, his interpretative framework seems, at least partly, responsible for the fact that his discussion on Japan's minorities rarely addressed Okinawan issues.

Of further importance is the fact that local people were also stung by this impossible moral consistency. Within a short time before and after the

reversion, the emancipatory aspect of Japanese nationalism faded away and, instead, its oppressive aspect came into the fore. Local people were well aware that the 'Janus face' was inherent in nationalism. In academia, not a few *social analysts* point out that a moralising perspective is inappropriate for understanding nationalism: for instance, Nairn in his general discussion on comparative materials (Nairn 1977: 351), Peattie and Jansen dealing with the case of Imperial Japan (Peattie 1984: 47; Jansen 1984: 61-62) and Oguma in a critique of the post-war discourse on Japanese historical identity (Oguma 1995). In Okinawa, *social actors* also attained this scholarly insight through struggles with immediate issues of everyday life. Whereas nationalism has dominated the contemporary world, emergent multiculturalism began to gain public recognition. However, Okinawans cannot wholeheartedly welcome either of these, and the local thinking elite has to ask, instead, how the world can otherwise be. This was a question which was inevitable for the people who were deeply involved in the interplay between autonomy and marginalisation on the one hand and equality and assimilation on the other hand. For these Okinawans, the question was not the subject of academic speculation but a necessity of real life. Thus local activism in post-reversion Okinawa became an unique challenge to the extant ideology of nation-states in a way that it cannot simply be embraced in the category of burgeoning multiculturalist movements.

CHAPTER 3: AN ILLUSION OF HOMELAND

3-1: INTRODUCTION

The so-called reversion movement (*fukki undo*) was a series of popular campaigns intending to transfer the administrative authority over Okinawa from the United States to Japan. Through these campaigns, a faction of reversion activists produced a particular idea, which attempted a dramatic reversal of the sense of value which had so far defined the Okinawa-Japan relationship. Conventionally, local people had long made a concerted effort to remove their cultural peculiarities, with expectation that full assimilation eventually enabled them to overcome incongruity which they felt in Japanese community. However, the faction of reversion activists opposed this assimilationism and tried to establish a positive recognition of this feeling. Interestingly, this revaluation of difference from Japan was not fuelled by separatism. One of its rallying cries, 'becoming a Japanese while remaining an Okinawan', rather envisaged an ideal society which would be free from *any* restraint of a nation-state and *fully* tolerant of differences among peoples. This idea shapes the current activities of Sadoyama Anko, Higa Toyomitsu and other educated local people of the same generation. At the time of reversion, they were local university students who made up the youngest layer of this faction of reversion activists. Social environment was forcing them to cover a sense of distance from Japan and not to allowed them to appreciate it.

The American forces retained the Ryukyus after the Pacific War and transformed them into one of their major strategic bases. Literature on the reversion movement was mostly published in the late 1960s, when the Vietnam War maximised the active American forces in Okinawa. The reversion movement was described as popular agitation against American

militarism and has largely been fixed in this picture up to the present. However, if this picture had reflected the reality, there would not have been the dissatisfaction on the part of local people, since reversion terminated virtually unconditional American military control. The dissatisfaction may be explained as coming from the size of bases which were left substantially unchanged. This explanation, however, reduces the issue into a simple complaint from a locality which unfairly shoulders the risk of national interest. This is a part of the truth, but this explanation largely misses an issue of the identity of local people, one of the most evident issue with which young educated local people came to grips in their participation in the reversion movement. The fact is that the reversion movement had a complicated nexus of actions, which cannot fit well into a simple outline, but each of which can only be understood in its relation to the other actions.

3-2: FORMER STUDENTS ACTIVISTS

From the late 1960s to the early 1970s, the reversion movement reached its climax. Local university students made up one of its mainspring. Sadoyama Anko joined in a student council of Okinawa International University. In March 1970, he graduated with a degree in Japanese literature but stayed in Okinawa for four years thereafter. Higa Toyomitsu spent these years as a student of art and craft in Ryukyu University, but also as a member of a politics-conscious group of student photographers. Both Sadoyama and Higa immersed themselves in rallies and demonstrations. Today, after twenty five years passed, communication among these former student activists may have already ground to a halt, but their common spirit seems to survive and can reunite them if necessary. In the year when I stayed in Miyako, Sadoyama and Higa struck up a

friendship. They frequently talked about common acquaintances with whom they had participated in student activism. As I came to know some of these people, it became certain that the reversion movement shaped the way of thinking which was shared by Sadoyama, Higa and other educated local people of the same generation. They have by now reached their prime age and came to have an influential voice in local society. For example, Okuhira Kazuo was among student photographers in Okinawa University, in which Chibana Shoichi chaired the student council at that time. Throughout reversion-related popular agitation, they acted in concert with Higa's group in Ryukyu University. Okuhira later went back to Miyako and joined a society of folk tale collectors which Sadoyama organised there. More recently, Okuhira stood for the election of the Hirara City Assembly in the midst of a dispute over the La Pisara Golf Course. He campaigned for the cancellation of the development plan and won the election. After a while, Chibana also became a member of the Yomitan Village Assembly.

The reversion movement was the context in which Sadoyama, Higa and other former student activists developed particular thought on society. Chibana wrote in his memoir, 'student acts in Okinawa University fostered my sensibility and perception which discern the reality of society' (Chibana 1988: 81). Throughout the post-war period, reversion was supported by the majority of local people. Only the minority stood in opposition to reversion. This minority, however, consisted of two quite different categories of people. Separatists argued that their homeland was not Japan but Okinawa. In the second half of the 1940s, various political leaders, from right to left, cried out for the 'liberation of all Okinawans' and tried to establish 'Okinawa of the Okinawans'. In September 1950, local people had the first large public election after the war, the result of which made it clear that separatism

would not gain public support. Nevertheless, under the patronage of the American authorities, some separatists formed the strong conservative establishment. They modified the original opinion and argued that reversion was premature. In the late 1960s, local government was taken over by political reformists who demanded immediate reversion, but a small number of radical separatists revived in social uncertainty about post-reversion Okinawa. They were Okinawan nationalists who campaigned for an independent Okinawa, but again failed to gain wide public support. The other category of the reversion opponents argued that the idea of homeland itself was unnecessary, whether it referred to Japan or Okinawa. This argument was presented by young journalists, teachers and union activists who had received their higher education after the Second World War. These educated young people 'did not have their ideological descent from separatists but emerged from reversionists who had at one time believed that reversion was worth to struggle for' (Tomiyaama 1971: 333).

Their opinion is known as anti-reversionism.³⁶ Kawamitsu Shinichi was among radical student activists who fought against the compulsory land expropriation by the American military forces in the 1950s (1987: 140-156). After he studied Japanese literature in Ryukyu University, he obtained a job with the local newspaper, *Okinawa Times*. From the late 1960s, he came to oppose the ongoing reversion movement under the leadership of the left-wing

³⁶ Tomiyama (1971) provides a concise account of anti-reversionism and Oguma (1999: 597-626) offers a more extended explanation. These works were useful for obtaining initial insights into this subject. Only the regrettable point is that their discussions are exclusively based on the examination of Arakawa Akira's discourse. His leadership among a group of the mainstream local activists was undeniable, but he actually lived in Yaeyama from 1964 to April 1969 when these activists took important political actions on Okinawa main island, such as the 1965 rally and demonstration against Sato's visit or the 2-4 General Strike. Arakawa also became reluctant to write political commentary after the 1972 reversion and completely withdrew himself from writing between 1987 and 1995 during which years he managed *Okinawa Times*. As a result, his involvement in local activism was sporadic in practice. In his recently published memoir, Arakawa offered his own account of anti-reversionism, in which he mentioned the two works above and gave positive comment on their understanding of his thought (Arakawa 2000: 59-149).

establishment. Arakawa Akira had a quite similar career to Kawamitsu; a student of Japanese literature in Ryukyu University, a supporter of reversion in the 1950s, a journalist of *Okinawa Times* and, finally, a severe critic of the left-wing establishment. After becoming a journalist, he came to be involved in the editorial work of local quarterly magazine *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* (the New Okinawa Literature). Arakawa transformed this literary magazine into a politically oriented journal. The term 'anti-reversionism (*han-fukki-ron*)' came from the title of its special issues published in December 1970 and March 1971. From the late 1960s onwards, *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* had various contributors who wrote about current events; Nakasone Isamu and Irei Takashi, members of the Government Employee's Union, Gima Susumu and Koki Yoshihide, school teachers, and Okamoto Keitoku and Arasaki Moriteru, professional scholars. They had different opinions as to whether they accepted reversion in the end, but all of them took a critical stance to the then popular opinion that reversion had priority over any other political demand.

The foundations of these local intellectuals were laid by a social network which developed in Ryukyu University. Arakawa, Kawamitsu and Okamoto were among its earliest students. In 1953, they launched a student literary magazine *Ryudai Bungaku* (the Ryukyu University Literature). Its members took socialist realism as their literary style and strongly criticised the American control through their works. In its March 1956 issue, Arakawa contributed a poem on American soldiers' racism. The American authorities censored it and suppressed the publication of this issue. At that time, many students participated actively in popular agitation against compulsory expropriation for military bases. Under American pressure, the university expelled six students and suspended one

other. Four of these students were the contributors to the controversial issue. Also, five of them were students of Japanese literature. In the American regime, Japanese major had an implication of resistance. The *Ryudai Bungaku* thus fostered a particular segment of the local intelligentsia who gained Japanese literary attainment and, at the same time, adopted the left-wing line in local politics. Many of them later became the contributors of *Shin Okinawa Bungaku*. Irei, Gima, Okamoto and Koki were members of *Ryudai Bungaku* and all but Koki studied Japanese literature (Oe 1970: 28; Kano 1987: 218-219).

In post-reversion Okinawa, these local intellectuals developed their power in local mass-media and became local opinion leaders. Arakawa took the editorship of *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* in the second half of the 1970s and eventually became the president of *Okinawa Times*. Kawamitsu took over Arakawa's editorship in the first half of the 1980s and also became a director of the newspaper. Around 1970 when anti-reversionism was advocated, Sadoyama, Higa and other former student activists were still in universities. This age difference made local activists multi-layered; the upper one consists of anti-reversionists, the middle one consists of publicly known activists and the lower one consists of grassroots activists who based in local communities rather than appear in the pan-Okinawan media. Thus Sadoyama and Higa's personal connections with anti-reversionists are indirect through intermediary of leading activists, such as Asato Eiko and Kina Shokichi. However, Arakawa's definition of anti-reversionism well echoes with the regionalist cause to which Sadoyama, Higa and other former student activists are faithful in the 1990s:

Anti-reversionism' took the form of the anti-thesis of the 'reversion' movement as a phenomenon which was conditioned by the circumstance at that time. However, in its essence, anti-reversionism did not criticise the

‘reversion’ movement as such but the ideology which was behind this movement. Anti-reversionism was an ideological movement which tried to maintain the uniqueness of localities (*chiiki*) and hoped to create symbiotic space which could overcome the existing framework of a state (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed)1981: 34-35).

3-3: THE 1950 ELECTION OF THE OKINAWA CIVILIAN ASSEMBLY

It was said in the mid 1960s that writing the reversion movement was tantamount to writing the post-war history of Okinawa (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 7). The reversion movement was so much the central issue of post-1945 Okinawa. However, a point which has not yet been fully considered is that, when description adopts the very term ‘reversion’, it becomes already not free from a certain political standpoint.³⁷ The Japanese educational authorities describe a series of events which happened in Okinawa from 1945 to 1972 as follows:

The American forces landed Okinawa in April 1945 and continued its occupation thereafter. Then, the American administrative rights was stipulated in the peace treaty of 1951. In 1960, the Council for Reversion was formed in resistance to this rule by a different *minzoku*. The movement achieved the realisation of the public election of the chief executive of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands in 1968, the treaty on the return of Okinawa 1971 and the eventual reversion to homeland in May 1972. Downsizing of the American military bases remained to be solved (All Japan Council for History Education (ed)1984: 202).

This excerpt is found in an encyclopaedia which is commonly used in history classes in Japanese high-schools. The main point can be paraphrased as:

The people of Okinawa, who had been placed under the military control of a different *minzoku*, Americans, made resistance and accomplished reversion to homeland, Japan.

Although such an irredentist movement is the most popular interpretation of the historical events, there have been many other interpretations which intertwined one another. In this situation, the phrase ‘reversion to

³⁷ This remark does not mean that other writers do not notice this political implication. Many writers actually use the term ‘reversion’ with inverted commas. However, few of them offer explanation why they use the inverted commas.

homeland' is obviously far from political neutrality. Actually, it was not consistently used throughout the movement but coined by certain agents in certain historical points for certain reason. We can fully understand the ideas and actions of former student activists only after distancing ourselves from this biased and stereotypic interpretation and place them in relation to multiple interpretations.

The 1950 election concluded argument between separatists and reversionists which divided political leaders for some years after the war. At the time of the election, however, the victorious reversionists offered a very different argument from that which became known as the reversionist opinion later. Arasaki Moriteru, a scholar who is most knowledgeable about citizens movements in post-1945 Okinawa, observes that the more we look the reversion movement back in the past, the less we find reference to military bases (Arasaki 1976: 318). Nakayoshi Ryoko well represented early reversionists who rarely made issue of military bases. Nakayoshi is said to have worried, already before Japan's final defeat, that an occupational body established in Okinawa might fix separation from mainland Japan. Received his entreaties, the United States Military Government in Okinawa suggested that he appeal directly to the General Head Quarter of Japanese Occupation in Tokyo (GHQ). Nakayoshi's entreaty to Douglas MacArthur, October 1946, exclusively referred to emotional attachment as the grounds that reversion was reasonable:

There is no theory and no explanation. Since Okinawans are Japanese, desire for reversion comes from natural human feeling as a child wants to go back to the house of its parents (Arasaki 1976: 50).

Nakayoshi remained in Tokyo, organised the Okinawa Islands Society for the Promotion of Reversion to Japan and continued to lobby for reversion with his sympathisers in mainland Japan until the 1960s.

Although MacArthur did not reject Nakayoshi's entreaty, he held the opposite opinion. In an interview with American journalists, June 1947, he clearly denied the view that Okinawans are Japanese.

The Okinawa Islands are natural border. I don't expect Japanese people object to the United States possessing Okinawa, since Okinawans are not the Japanese (*Zasshi Okinawa* Aug.-Sep. 1950, quoted in Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 16).

This opinion had its grounds in academic reports from military research teams. In preparation for seizure, the American forces hired anthropologists, such as George Murdock and Alfred Tozzar, to collect information about Ryukyuan society. Murdock's research team published the Civil Affairs Handbook, which illuminated disparity and contrast between Okinawans and the Japanese which had been obscured in Japanese sources. Tozzar's report included a socio-psychological analysis of Okinawan-Hawaiians, which demonstrated their hidden enmity to Japanese-Hawaiians and suggested that advantage be taken of this 'cleavage' in their native country. These reports defined Okinawans as a 'minority group' undergoing Japanese aggression and described Japanisation between the annexation of a Ryukyu kingdom and the Second World War as Japan's 'colonial policy' (Ota 1996: 417-444; Kano 1987: 28-30).

Separatists emerged from local political leaders who made contact with Murdock and other American scholar-servicemen, and also took the opinion that Okinawans formed a different group from the Japanese (Kano 1987: 71).³⁸ Nakasone Genwa was the most influential among these

³⁸ Various separatists and their political actions were well documented in the journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* (vol. 53, 1982) with several writers' original interviews with these separatists. Kawamitsu Shinichi edited this special issue and other anti-reversionists, such as Nakasone Isamu and Okamoto Keitoku, contributed articles. Though a number of critical comments were made, they generally showed sympathetic attitudes towards these separatists, who had been largely forgot by that time.

separatists. In July 1947, he rounded up prominent figures outside the local self-governing body and established the earliest political party after the war. This Okinawa Democratic Union (ODU) advocated an independent republic, which, as its manifesto at the inauguration ceremony indicates, was justified by indignation at the mainland Japanese:

Okinawa had this awfully bitter experience because of the tyranny and aggression of the Japanese government. Okinawa, which has been burnt to the ground, can only rebuild when people realise that Okinawa is the Okinawa of Okinawans (Nakasone 1982: 30).

The same rationale existed behind the separatism of Ogimi Chotoku, who organised a less influential separatist party, the Social Party. Beyond severe war damage, these separatists often referred further back to Japanese exploitation of a Ryukyu kingdom and Japanese political and economic dominance in pre-1945 Okinawa.

Until 1950, there was no means to know which option, reversion or separation, was supported by the general public. In September 1950, public election was temporarily introduced into the Civilian Associations.³⁹ In the Okinawa Civilian Association, the largest and most important among the four existing associations, separatists, such as the ODU and the Social Party, supported a pro-American governor candidate. Communists, who had already established the Okinawa People's Party, nominated their own representative. Taira Tatsuo stood for election without party support and won a great victory. In October 1950, governor Taira organised the majority of the recently elected members of the Okinawa Civilian Assembly into the Okinawa Social Mass Party (OSMP). Taira, in his memoir, explained his

³⁹ Until a united local government was established in 1952, the American forces divided the Ryukyus into four administrative units of the islands: Amami, Okinawa, Miyako and Yaeyama. Each of these islands had an Civilian Association (*min seifu*). In accordance with the 1950 public election, it was renamed 'Islands Government (*gunto seifu*)', and 'Islands Assembly (*gunto gikai*)' was established in each of the four group of islands. To avoid too much complexity, 'Civilian Association' refers to both *min seifu* and *gunto seifu* in this dissertation.

motivation for this candidature as a way of making the first step towards reversion. However, national affiliation was actually not the focus of the election. Neither official campaign pledges nor the OSMP's party lines mentioned reversion to Japan, though Taira mentioned his support for reversion in informal occasions, such as speeches in small meetings during the election campaign (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 34-35).

In November 1950, when the outline of the re-independence of Japan was made public, national affiliation suddenly came into public discussion, and Taira and his OSMP openly supported reversion. In January 1951, with the Okinawa Youth Conference, the OSMP's young men's section formed the Youth Association for the Promotion of Reversion to Japan. In February, the existing four political parties held meetings to discuss their national affiliation. The OSMP and the OPP supported immediate reversion, whereas the Social Party argued for the American trusteeship. The separatists of the ODU, who had completely been beaten at the polls and already been reorganised into the Republican Party, supported an independent republic. In March, the Okinawa Civilian Assembly passed a resolution for reversion for the first time. In April, with private organisations, the two reversionist parties formed the Association for Promotion of Reversion to Japan (*Nihon Fukki Sokushin Kisei Kai*). With the Youth Association, this association conducted a campaign to collect signatures for a reversion petition and, within three months, obtained signatures of the seventy-two percent of eligible voters. In August, this petition was sent to San Francisco where delegates were holding a conference on Japan's re-independence.

When governor Taira led this reversion campaign, he based his opinion on assumptive affinity with Japan, which, for example, was

mentioned in the prospectus of the Association for Promotion of Reversion:

Because of the historical, geographical, economic, cultural and ethnic relations to Japan, immediate reversion will bring about prosperity and happiness to the Okinawans (Arasaki 1976: 51).

In the sense that affinity was assumed to be above reason, this prospectus expressed the same opinion as Nakayoshi's entreaties. As the reason for supporting for reversion, their position in the former Japanese regime is often suggested; it is said to have been 'identity crisis' of the people who 'had most been assimilated into Japanese society' (Ota 1980: 17) or a reactionary idea of 'war assistants' (Nakasone 1982: 26). Certainly, Nakayoshi was the wartime mayor of Shuri City (presently a part of Naha city). However, this status alone does not make any difference from separatist Nakasone, who was the member of the prefectural assembly in the same period. Actually, known as a Christian liberalist, Nakayoshi is unlikely to have been faithful to the war-time ultra-nationalism and its fanatic worship of the Emperor. According to a journalist, who stayed in the same refugee camp as Nakayoshi, he campaigned for reversion because his personal experience had convinced him that there was no hope of living on good terms with Americans (Arasaki et. al. 1975: 101). In the 1920s, before he entered politics, Nakayoshi had had a successful career as a journalist and spent a few years in the United States. In the case of Taira, who took an important position in the Okinawa Branch of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, his reversionism may seem to have derived from a reactionary idea of Japanese nationalists. However, this position seems to have been rather reasonable and even inevitable for anyone in his official post. Taira was the first Okinawan who became a department director of the prefectural government, of which the dispatched Japanese officers dominated the board of directors. Oshiro Tatsuhiro, a renowned Okinawan novelist, interprets

Taira's support for reversion as an avoidance of nullifying his efforts to assimilate into Japanese society (Shinzato and Oshiro 1969: 268). Oguma Eiji examined various statements of the OSMP members, found their anxiety about the forfeit of acquired Japanese citizenship and reached the same conclusion as Oshiro (1999: 497-500).

Ostensibly, the reversion movement was initiated on grounds of uncontrollable emotional attachment (Nakayoshi) or extremely general affinity (Taira), but it was possibly a calculated move. When Japan was regaining its independence, the great majority of Okinawans expressed their support for reversion. It is debatable, however, whether these people felt 'emotional attachment' or recognised 'general affinity' to Japan. According to Oshiro, who experienced the signature campaign at the age of twenty-six, the large number of signatures resulted from conformity with local leaders who proposed a 'not bad plan' (Arasaki-et. al. 1975: 106). Eligible voters at that time well knew how much effort had been required for them to assimilate into Japanese society and to acquire full Japanese citizenship. If they became separated from Japan and remained under the American control, they would have nullified their achievement of Japanisation and have had to start again a long struggle for equal American legal rights.

Terminology showed an optional quality of this series of reversion campaign. The issue was described not as 'reversion to homeland' but as 'affiliation to Japan'. Newspapers, as well as separatists, labelled the topic an issue of 'affiliation (*kizoku*)'. Reversionist leaders certainly used the word 'reversion', but it did not yet gain wide currency. The word 'homeland (*sokoku*)' did rarely appear even in reversionists' discourse. The common set phrase, 'reversion to homeland', which made itself imperative, was not yet coined.

3-4: COMMUNISTS AND THE MILITARY LAND DISPUTE

3-4-1: THE OKINAWA PEOPLE'S PARTY

Early reversionists were unconcerned about American bases. One of the reasons for this was that military facilities were not yet full-scale as they are today. A change took place in the 1950s when the United States carried out massive construction. Compulsory expropriation suddenly produced general anti-American feeling, which gradually set the tone of Japanese nationalism. Communists were most severely oppressed by the American authorities and, as a result, stood on the front line of popular protest against the American domination.

In the late 1940s, the communist superiority in China shaped America's policy towards East Asia. In October 1949, the Chinese Civil War eventually produced the People's Republic of China. By the fact that Chiang Kai-shek government retreated from the continent, Japan came up in the front defence line of the capitalist camp. Demilitarisation and democratisation were suddenly interrupted and, instead, economic reconstruction and political independence were hastened for national empowerment (Ishikawa 1995: 53-54). A balanced budget was enforced by means of heavy taxation, increased public utilities charges and massive dismissal of public employees. In exchange, Japan was allowed to come back to the world market. By autumn 1949, the Department of State started preparing for a peace treaty to terminate the Allied Powers' occupation.

Since Japan's re-independence was first and foremost a matter of security against the spread of Communism, it could not come to the substantial reduction of the American forces. In September 1951, when the

San Francisco Peace Treaty was concluded, Okinawa was left in ambiguous national affiliation, of which the American forces made the best for their purposes. Article three of the treaty stipulates:

Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29 degrees north latitude [i.e. the Ryukyus] Pending the making of a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands (Nanpo Doho Engo Kai (ed) 1972: 282).

While avoiding a definite decision, the United States continued its exclusive control over the Ryukyus. Not only a part of the Allied Powers but also the Department of States criticised the Pentagon for this virtual territorial expansion. It was settled, in the latter case, by announcing that Japan would retain 'residual sovereignty' (Miyazato 1993). Based on this agreement, the United States transformed Okinawa main island and some of its dependency islets into an important strategic point. In the 1950 fiscal year, a budget was drawn for the construction of military bases in Okinawa for the first time. Provisional but actually prolonged occupation by fighting forces was changed into the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR), a military government designed for long-term occupation. It was a part of this reorganisation that public elections were introduced in the Civilian Associations and the Civilian Assemblies. However, these democratic local self-governing bodies were dissolved before the elected members' term of office came to an end. In April 1952, USCAR replaced them by the Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) and the Ryukyu Legislature. This replacement is said to be related to the fact that the September 1950 election had resulted in the reversionists' dominance in local associations and assemblies (Nakano & Arasaki 1976: 57).

Anti-Communist policy caused a turnabout in the communist

definition of Okinawans. In February 1946, the fifth convention of the Japan Communist Party adopted a well-known public message, 'Congratulations on the independence of Okinawan *minzoku*':

You Okinawans. For centuries, you were subordinated to feudal Japan. After the Meiji Restoration, you were exploited and oppressed by the Japanese imperialism. Today, in the world-wide expansion of democratic revolution, you are stepping towards the independence and liberation which you have wished for many years (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 41).

The Japan Communist Party was rebuilt, in October 1945, by Tokuda Kyuichi. He was an Okinawan political activist who had been in prison for seventeen years as a political offender. Released Japanese communists campaigned for the liberation of people who had been under oppression in Imperial Japan. In the case of Okinawa, they meant by 'liberation' its political independence, which entailed that Okinawans were defined as a minority group. The message continues:

Even if Okinawans parted from the same ancestors with the Japanese people in ancient time, Japan apparently ruled Okinawa in the modern history. This means that Okinawans are one of those *minzoku* which were oppressed as minority groups (Ibid.).

At this point, Japanese communists shared their view with the American authorities. In the late 1940s, when the potential enemy was still assumed to be reactionary Japanese imperialists, little conflict existed between them.⁴⁰ This amicable relationship, however, was totally ruined by the Korean War. Immediately after its breakout in June 1950, GHQ purged communists from public offices. At the same time, it started calling back the former professional soldiers, militarists and imperial nationalists whom it had purged at the beginning of occupation. In July, GHQ ordered Japan's rearmament. In general, communists began to interpret the United States as the 'imperialist' and 'colonialist' power. In particular, they considered

⁴⁰ For more detail of American policy on Japanese communists during occupation, see Takemae 1987.

American presence in Okinawa threatening Japan's peace and independence.

The same turnabout also took place among Okinawan 'communists'. During the American administration, there was no professed communist organisation, but the American authorities and local anti-Communists regarded the left-wingers of the Okinawa People's Party (OPP) as communists. The OPP actually took similar political stance with the Japan Communist Party and eventually became its local branch (Higa Mikio 1965: 171-177). The party program indicates that the OPP also at one time defined Okinawans as a minority group:

Our party represents the interests of the labour, the peasantry, fishermen, salaried workers, minor entrepreneurs and all the working masses, . . . fights against any right-wing reactionary power, establishes democracy in political, economic, social and cultural areas and resolves to liberate all of the Okinawa *minzoku* (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 30).

Senaga Kamejiro participated in the formation of the party and took the leadership after he became its secretary-general. Before the Second World War, he took part in labour dispute and anti-war campaigns, and was consigned to prison for three years. In September 1946, he assumed the presidency of an American patronised newspaper, *Uruma Shimpō*, whose managerial positions were also taken by the former left-wing activists who became the core members of the OPP (Ota 1978). In February 1949, the American Military Government began to keep a watch on Senaga, who had made a speech sympathetic to Communist China and North Korea (Higa Mikio 1965: 172). In August, he resigned from the press. American pressure was a possible reason, but Senaga himself announced that he would 'devote himself to organise the Ryukyu *minzoku* front and work for a stable life of our *minzoku*' in co-operation with 'the American forces as a liberation army' (Naha-shi Kikaku-bu Shi Shi Henshu Shitsu (ed) 1987:

189).

Just before the September 1950 elections, the OPP had the first evident trouble with the American authorities. From July to August, the OPP's journal attacked Matsuoka Seiho, a pro-American candidate for the governor of the Okinawa Civilian Association. As the director of its Engineer Works Department, Matsuoka could substantially control American financial aid. The OPP suspected him of unfair distribution. In September, just a week before the election, the American authorities eventually banned this OPP journal. This interference formed a source for a change in the OPP's opinion on national affiliation. On 28 January 1951, the party's central committee still stated that 'the national affiliation of Ryukyu must be determined by the will of all Ryukyuan people' (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 39). On 13 February, with a four parties' meeting on national affiliation at hand, the committee, however, decided to support reversion to Japan. On 18 March, this decision was confirmed in the party conference. In the meeting next day, the OPP argued that 'Ryukyu *minzoku* is part of Japanese *minzoku* and the happiness of Ryukyuans cannot exist in every respects without their re-unification with Japanese people' (Naha-shi Kikaku-bu Shi Shi Henshu Shitsu (ed) 1987: 415). Towards the peace treaty in September, the OPP joined Taira's OSMP in the signature campaign. The OPP chairman Senaga himself also revised his 1947 opinion:

It was Japanese capitalists, landlords and military clique class that exploited the people of Okinawa. . . . Unite ourselves with the people of Japan! This is the only way of liberating the people of Okinawa from poverty (Arasaki 1976: 82).

In this quotation, he used the word, *jinmin*, for 'people'. This word has strong associations with 'proletariats' in Marxist terminology, which were not necessarily implied by its synonym, *minzoku*. By introducing the dimension

of conflicting classes, ethnic boundaries between Okinawans and the Japanese people began to blur in his language.

The more the OPP suffered persecution, the more it became antagonistic to the American authorities. By the second half of the 1950s, it found itself as the most radical faction of the reversionists. Article 2 of the party rule, which was revised in 1956, reversed the opinion which the party had had at the time of its establishment:

The Okinawa People's Party . . . builds up the democratic common front for reversion to homeland, fights against the American occupation and closely unites with homeland compatriots who are struggling for the construction of an independent, peaceful and democratic Japan (Higa Mikio 1965: 173).

In April 1952, when USCAR established GRI, it suspended the public election of GRI chief executives so that it could appoint favourable chief executives and let them form a powerful pro-American political party. Actually, USCAR intervened in local politics in favour of this Ryukyu Democratic Party (RDP). For example, it cancelled the unfavourable results of public election in a municipality, revised election laws by its order and purged a rival OSMP candidate. Nevertheless, the RDP kept on losing by-elections. In the second general election of the Ryukyu Legislature in March 1954, two reversionist parties, the OSMP and the OPP, together still obtained more seats than the RDP. This situation made the American authorities take more radical anti-Communist measures. USCAR put Senaga on a military trial and imprisoned him. However, this victimisation rather gave Senaga fame as a fighter for democracy. In December 1956, as soon as Senaga had been released from two years of penal servitude, he was elected as the mayor of Naha city. USCAR immediately froze city assets and revised laws so as to purge this 'red mayor'. In the by-election following

Senaga's resignation, Naha citizens still elected an ex-OPP candidate.

3-4-2: LAND EXPROPRIATION

These elections were concurrent with the climax of a large dispute over military expropriation. Despite Senaga's popularity, it was not the case that the OPP widely gain public support. During the 1950s, the OPP had no more than two of the twenty-nine seats in the Ryukyu Legislature. However, when the Military Land Dispute evoked antipathy of the general public against the American military control, people were easily accepted the OPP's leadership. In January 1953, the United States initiated the Roll-back Policy. Strong measures towards communist power escalated the construction of military bases in Okinawa. After April, when USCAR issued the Order of the Land Expropriation Act, almost any kind of compulsory expropriation became possible. Not only cultivated fields but also residential areas were taken away with violence; bulldozers pushed down houses while the threat of bayonets prevented their residents resisting (Ahagon 1995). In March 1954, USCAR decided to stop lease contracts and, instead, to pay a lump-sum of money equal to the value of military land. The Ryukyu Legislature unanimously passed a counterclaim and sent a group of complainants to the House of Representatives. In October 1955, on the Legislature's request, the so-called Price Committee came to Okinawa to inspect the areas in question. In June 1956, it submitted a report, which, contrary to local people's expectation, largely approved of USCAR's virtual purchase of local properties. An opposition movement exploded; the same month saw two big opposition rallies each of which contained more than

150,000 people.

Originally, this Military Land Dispute had to do with compulsory expropriation only. The April 1954 resolution of the Ryukyu Legislature specified the points of dispute as the following four demands:

- (1) any land would not to be purchased,
- (2) land on lease would be paid for at reasonable price,
- (3) local people would be compensated for damages,
- and (4) no more land would be expropriated.

However, the dispute soon began to be described in nationalistic language, such as '*minzoku*' or 'territorial integrity'. In June 1956, the Ryukyu Legislature, GRI, the Municipal Association and land owners discussed countermeasures against the Price Recommendation and announced their resolution:

We overcome different interests of the individuals, protect land based on *minzoku* consciousness and bravely advance with a firm belief that we have justice to secure territorial rights (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 81).

Did the '*minzoku* consciousness' refer to being Okinawan or being Japanese? Did they claim 'territorial rights' of Okinawa or those of Japan? The answer was the 'Japanese' and 'Japan'. A rallying cry at that time said, 'Let's fight to the end with holding fast to the spirit and pride of the Japanese!' (Arasaki 1999: 40). On leaving for Tokyo to petition the central government to make a diplomatic effort, the chairman of the OSMP gave a public speech:

I'm going to appeal, to the eighty million compatriots of Japan, for the enthusiasm of the eight hundreds thousands residents who have stood up to protect our land, national land. I'm going to urge the Japanese government . . . to take action so that Asian brothers liberate Okinawa from the framework of Article Three of the Peace Treaty and change this unnatural position of our Okinawa into a proper one (*Sankei Jiji* 26 Jun. 1956).

In Tokyo, the petitioners focused on 'reversion to Japanese administration' as well as the four demands (*Sankei Jiji* 29 Jun. 1956).

Okinawa's trouble aroused a nationalistic reaction in mainland Japan

too, where people had long forgotten the existence of this former territory. In January 1955, the Liberal Human Rights Committee published an article in *Asahi Shinbun*, one of the three major Japanese newspapers. By request of an American clergyman on propagation in Okinawa, the International Human Rights Union had recommended the committee for a private inspection. Under the name of the 'Okinawa Problem', the Military Land Dispute suddenly came to be given a great deal of coverage in the Japanese mass-media. In June 1956, a group of petitioners from Okinawa were fervently welcomed in Tokyo by all political parties and many private organisations. In July, these parties and organisations had a non-partisan rally, which resulted in the establishment of the Liaison Conference of National Movement for the Solution of the Okinawa Problem (*Okinawa-ren*). The Liberal Democratic Party, however, withdrew within a half year. While its right-wing government adopted a passive policy on the 'Okinawa Problem', passionate reaction occurred in the left-wingers. For example, the chairman of the Japan Socialist Party made a comment that the American expropriation pertained to the 'fate of *minzoku*' (*Asahi Shinbun* 20 Jun. 1956). Similarly, the Japan Communist Party composed, in its daily party journal, the headline 'Defending National Territory to Death, Fair and Square Fight, Burning Spirit of Japanese *Minzoku*' (*Akahata* 30 Jun. 1956). Thus Okinawan issues came to be mostly on the agenda of the left-wing opposition parties for the succeeding decade (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 85, 103).

The Military Land Dispute gave rise to public antagonism toward the American authorities. Local media began to describe American presence as 'colonisation' or even 'slavery'. The phrase 'the rule by a different *minzoku*' was most likely coined by the OPP and came into currency in this situation

(Arasaki et. al. 1975: 109, 116). In contrast, Japan began to be referred to as 'homeland', especially when local leaders turned to the Japanese authorities for help. Nevertheless, the Military Land Dispute was *not* the reversion movement. In this context, Oguma points out, 'there were unexpectedly few statements which put stress on reversion' (Oguma 1999: 520). He explains that local leaders mainly aimed at stabilisation of livelihood. Reversion was regarded just as a means of achieving this aim. In Japan's side, Arasaki points out, 'demand for the return of Okinawa surprisingly rarely came into the fore despite the fact that the Okinawa Problem was a big issue' (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 104). He explains that left-wing parties regarded the Okinawa Problem as merely a part of their struggle against American military bases in the Japanese territory in general. The mid 1950s was the period when these left-wingers were themselves fighting against the expansion of the American military bases in mainland Japan. In other words, these Japanese activists regarded Okinawan activists as comrades, but, since the Military Land Dispute did not look a particularly unique problem, they did not think it to need a separate solution.

3-5: REVERSIONIST SCHOOL TEACHERS

It is widely known that local school teachers played the most active part in the reversion movement. They had their organisational foothold in the Okinawa Teachers' Association (OTA):

The Okinawa Teachers' Association was formed in 1952 by around 10,000 teachers from primary schools to the university for the purpose of the improvement of working conditions and the restoration of school buildings. Then, it took a crucial role in the reversion movement to homeland, being the central power in the Association for Reversion (est. in 1953) and the Council for Reversion (est. in 1960) (Tomiyama 1971: 327).

In the tide of the reversion movement, the OTA had more influence on local society than any political party. Yara Chyobyō, the first OTA chairman, took also the chairmanship of the Association for Reversion.⁴¹ In 1968, when an appointment system was eventually discarded, he became GRI chief executive as a result of its first, and last, public election. In 1972, when the Japanese administration came into effect, he was re-elected as governor of Okinawa Prefecture. Meanwhile, Kyan Shinei, Yara's sworn friend, took the chairmanship of the Council for Reversion. In 1970, when local people gained national franchise, Kyan was elected as a member of the Japanese Diet.

An unfavourable educational environment is said to have been the background of the teachers' commitment to the reversion movement. Yara himself explained that insufficient teaching salaries and lack of school buildings mobilised local educationists in a drive for reversion (Yara 1968: 121). At the beginning of occupation, the American Military Government attempted educational reform, which included the removal of Japanese nationalist elements, the introduction of English speech and the promotion of Okinawan history and language. However, the reform did not reach the replacement of school teachers even though many of them had been earnest Japanese nationalists. Within a few years, teachers began to import Japanese textbooks. As a result, their classes became little different from mainland Japan. The American authority severely squeezed the school budget. Teaching salaries did not reach half of the wage earned by

⁴¹ In this dissertation, 'the Association for Reversion' refers to the Okinawa Islands Association for the Realisation of Reversion to Homeland (*Okinawa Shoto Sokoku Fukki Kisei Kai*), while 'the Council for Reversion' refers to the Okinawa Prefecture Council for Reversion to Homeland (*Okinawa-ken Sokoku Fukki Kyōgi Kai*), better known as *Fukkikyo* by its abbreviation.

base-employees.⁴² War-damaged school buildings remained to be reconstructed until 1954. Teachers were also concerned about the fact that many ambitious students ended up as labours in military bases due to limited access to higher education (Yara 1968: 119, Kano 1987: 60-63, Oguma 1999: 556-558). In short, the educational environment critically deteriorated under the American administration.

However, the OTA tried to avoid taking a confrontational line with the American authorities and, instead, promoted reversion on grounds of ethnic unity with mainland Japan. At this point, the OTA was in accord with the Okinawa Social Mass Party, which held the party line saying that 'amity with Japan does not come from antipathy to the United States but from the fact that Okinawans were the Japanese' (Higa Mikio 1965: 118). Actually, teachers formed a powerful supporting body for Taira and his OSMP (cf. Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 35, 58). In Taira's Civilian Association, Yara took the directorship of the department of education. The San Francisco Peace Treaty brought the OSMP's reversion campaign to a standstill, but Yara affirmed continual promotion for reversion at the third principals' meeting. In April 1952, due to the disbandment of the Okinawa Civilian Association, Yara left office and organised the OTA. Immediately thereafter, the OTA requested the recently established Ryukyu Legislature to make a resolution to support reversion.

Since the OTA defined the reversion movement as a Japanese nationalist movement, it was required to 'prove' that Okinawans were Japanese. Facing the fact that continuing separation was moving local society away from Japanese influence, the OTA earnestly carried out

⁴² I heard many episodes about the poverty of school teachers. Farmers had their children bring sweet potatoes to school so that teachers could reduce their hunger. It was obviously embarrassing for these former local notables.

Japanese propaganda, notably, the promotion of the Rising Sun flag and standard Japanese speech. In April 1952, private individuals were permitted to hoist the Rising Sun flag on condition that it had no political implication. The OTA immediately started distributing flags to local communities through school children. According to a reversionist document, the 1953 New Year's Day saw 'many people who looked up at the Rising Sun flags, which they had not seen for a long time, and felt the blood of homeland' (Okinawa-ken Sokoku Fukki Kyogi Kai (ed) 1964: 72). Certainly, the Rising Sun flag appeared thereafter invariably at reversionist parades, rallies and demonstrations, but repulsion for the flag also existed. Gima Susumu went on a hike in his youth, to which one of his friend came with a Rising Sun flag. He describes what happened when they reached a war memorial tower:

Suddenly, someone shouted with anger from behind, 'Throw away the Rising Sun flag immediately! People were killed on the pretext of protecting it.' The voice was trembling. The very next moment, another shout came from the other side. 'It's the symbol of the reversion movement.' That was the end. Silence continued (Gima 1975: 242).

Actually, the omnipresence of this 'symbol of the reversion movement' did not necessarily entail its wholehearted support. By examining readers' column of local newspapers, Arasaki points out that attachment to the Rising Sun flag was superficial for ordinary people. In the early 1960s, some contributions complained that Rising Sun flags were indifferently thrown away after reversion demonstrations (Arasaki 1976: 271-276). By examining the OTA's internal reports, Oguma points out that loyalty to the Rising Sun flag was a part of general school discipline (Oguma 1999: 582).

In rebuilding the reversion movement, teachers reduced its political character to avoid unnecessary conflict with the American authorities. In January 1953, when Yara organised the Association for Reversion, he

refused to allow political parties to participate, but even this prudence failed to appease the American authorities. In June 1952, the OTA sent its members to the National Meeting of Japan Teachers' Unions. They appealed to Japanese teachers for help to restore war-damaged schoolhouses in Okinawa. Yara and his assistant Kyan went on a campaign tour all around mainland Japan. This fund-raising campaign was successful, but USCAR refused OTA teachers passports for going back to mainland Japan and also forbade them to receive cash in Okinawa. Contributions collected for reconstruction work was frustrated in mainland Japan. The OTA eventually received a large amount of stationary purchased with the donated money. In February 1954, USCAR sent Yara a letter saying that his 'instigation' of reversion would please communists, and thereby forced him to disband the Association for Reversion (Okinawa-ken Sokoku Fukki Toso Shi Hensan Iin Kai (ed) 1982: 38).

When the American authorities defined the OTA's reversion campaign as support for communists, it was almost inevitable that these two reversion agents should mesh with each other. In January 1958, GRI promulgated the fundamental law of education in which the OTA succeeded in stipulating that they were teaching 'Japanese' students:

As Japanese citizens, we must contribute to the world peace and human welfare by constructing a democratic and cultured state and society based on universal human principles. The realisation of this ideal basically relies on the power of education (Horitsu Jiho Henshu Bu (ed) 1968: 228; italic added).

Yara is said to have been pleased that this preamble 'for the first time stipulated that compatriots of Okinawa were Japanese citizens' (Tomiyaama 1971: 329). However, this passage was not included when the law was originally proposed to the Ryukyu Legislature. It firstly appeared in a revised draft in January 1956 in a rise of the Military Land Dispute. In

February, this revision was passed in the Ryukyu Legislature, but USCAR exercised its power of veto. In April, when the law was again brought up for discussion, the part 'as Japanese citizens' was temporarily deleted. In June, in the midst of an overheated dispute following the disappointing Price Recommendation, the passage at issue was restored. At that time, Yara was crying 'Stand up to protect land and education!' (*Okinawa Times* 16 Jun. 1956). Although the Ryukyu Legislature passed this restored bill, USCAR's veto nullified it again. In March 1957, USCAR issued an alternative. This Order of the Education Code put stress on the 'co-operative attitudes towards the government' and prohibited the 'political activities of educational workers'. The Ryukyu Legislature cried out against this code. In September, the bill was passed for the third time. In January 1958, USCAR eventually had to authorise it. It had just been five days before Senaga's successor won the problematic mayoral election of Naha city (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 124, Horitsu Jiho Henshu Bu (ed) 1968: 227-228, Nanpo Doho Engo Kai (ed) 1971: 181-184).

As school teachers had a strong influence on the linguistic life of local society, the OTA's decision on the language of the reversion movement had a significant effect. In 1960, the principals' meeting decided to recommend the use of 'homeland' or 'mainland' instead of 'Japan', and the use of 'Okinawa' in avoidance of 'Ryukyu'. These terms had freely been alternated with each other, but this decision fixed the idiomatic phrase 'Okinawa's reversion to homeland' or 'mainland'. This phrase removed an optional quality of reversion which was expressed when the terms 'Ryukyu' and 'Japan' were used instead of 'Okinawa' and 'homeland'.⁴³ The developing association with the OPP also affected the OTA's use of language. In 1953,

⁴³ As for a more detail of the different nuances of these terms, see discussion in section 3 chapter 4.

the inaugural meeting of the Association for Reversion described American control in a sentimentally nationalistic, but politically fairly restrained language:

We have a homeland, but we became a *minzoku* orphan against our will. Being under the administration of a different country is a deformity and a tragedy of *minzoku* (Tomiyama 1971: 324).

However, *A Guide to Reversion to Homeland*, which was published by the OTA in 1961, adopted the OPP's anti-American terminology, like a 'rule by a different *minzoku*', to describe the same subject:

To join the homeland would of course bring about an economic improvement, but, even if it does not, we have to revert to the homeland. History has proved what misfortunes will be brought by a rule by a different *minzoku* (Gima 1975: 94).

Reciprocally, the OPP introduced OTA's nationalistic language, like a 'tragedy of *minzoku*', into its vocabulary. At the time of the 1951 signature campaign, Senaga assumed a critical attitude to Nakayoshi who campaigned for reversion on 'the inexplicable drive of a child affected to its parent' (Senaga 1951: 22). By the end of the 1950s, however, 'A Tragedy of *Minzoku* (*Minzoku no Higeiki*)' became the title of his book (Senaga 1959).

This mutual influence was epitomised in such cases as the Rising Sun flag and a Workers' Red flag being hoisted in combination on the same flag pole (*Asahi Journal* 5 Feb. 1961). It was a natural course of events that the OTA and the left-wingers eventually united with each other. In April 1960, the Okinawa Prefecture Council for Reversion to Homeland (*Fukkikyo*) was formed by the OTA, labour unions, other private organisations and political parties. In addition to its ultimate demand, immediate and unconditional reversion, the Council for Reversion set up the following targets:

(1) the encouragement of [Japanese] *minzoku* consciousness and the

promotion of a sense of national citizenship

(2) the cancellation of the USCAR's orders and the application of Japanese law

(3) the free rights of the use of the Rising Sun flag and travel to and from mainland Japan

(4) public election of the GRI chief executive

(5) franchise in the Japanese Diet

(6) the restoration of Okinawa with the help of the Japanese government (Tomiyama 1971: 327).

The demand for Japanisation and democratisation has thus come to be united. Against all efforts at persuasion, the Okinawa Liberal Democratic Party (the renamed Ryukyu Democratic Party) did not take part in the Council. As a result of this lack of right-wing representation, the Council later developed into the basis of the Reformist Common Front, a joint organisation of left-wing politicians, such as the OPP, the OSMP and the Okinawa Socialist Party. As the reversion movement thereafter developed into a populist movement, these left-wingers dominated in local politics. Okinawa was called the 'Reign of Reformists' for a decade starting from the late 1960s.

3-6: AN ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT

In the second half of the 1960s, the historical context of the reversion movement dramatically changed. Japanese and American policies on Okinawa moved from separation to re-unification with Japan. The governmental Liberal Democratic Party in Tokyo suddenly took up a positive attitude toward reversion, which, of course, affected the policy of its Okinawan branch leading the GRI at that time. Now that these right-wingers also supported reversion, reversion as such could no longer be the objective of the left-wingers. At that time, local people were seriously troubled with increasingly activated military bases due to the outbreak of the Vietnam War. The left-wingers' reversion movement took on characteristics

of an anti-war movement. This anti-war reversion movement distanced itself from the former, apparently nationalistic, movement by labelling it as 'Rising Sun flag reversion'. The objective of the reversion movement was re-defined as reversion to a country under a pacifist constitution.

A report submitted to the Diplomatic Committee of the Senate in November 1959 initiated a change of America's policy towards Okinawa. It was suggested that Okinawa should be return to Japan in the near future, with an agreement on the maintenance of the American military bases. This outline was fleshed out in several Japan-US summits meetings. The Ikeda-Kennedy Communiqué, June 1961, announced that Japan would help the United States to promote the welfare of local people. This financial aid made a start of Japan's official intervention in Okinawa (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 157-159, 177-178). Sato Eisaku, who formed his cabinet from November 1964 to June 1972, was particularly eager to regain administrative rights over Okinawa. The first Sato-Johnson Communiqué, January 1965, announced that both countries agreed on the importance of the American bases in Okinawa for the security of the Far East. This was the first occasion in which Japan, of its own accord, approved of the positive value of the American presence in Okinawa. The second Sato-Johnson Summit, November 1967, decided that both countries should try to reach an agreement on an appropriate timing for the return of Okinawa within three years.⁴⁴ Actually, two years later, the Sato-Nixon Summit drew up the design of the 1972 return. It also decided to remove all nuclear weapons and to provide the Japanese government with the right to discuss American

⁴⁴ In Japanese source, the transfer of administrative authority over Okinawa is called '*henkan*' from mainland Japan's perspective and hence in official documents, whereas it is called '*fukki*' from Okinawa's perspective. In this dissertation, the former is translated into 'return', whereas the latter is translated into 'reversion'.

military action. This so-called 'mainland level' use of military bases, however, was agreed on condition that it would not practically reduce the existing military power. In June 1971, both governments signed the Agreement on the Return of the Administrative Rights. In November, this agreement was ratified in the Diet. In May 1972, the islands once again became Okinawa Prefecture of Japan.

After the Sato cabinet was formed, the return of Okinawa became a national policy. Within the reversion movement, the point at issue gradually turned from reversion as such to its design. A month after the 1965 Sato-Johnson Summit, the United States started direct intervention in Vietnam. Long-range bombers began to attack North Vietnam. Troops were trained in and sent from Okinawa. In July 1965, when B-52 bombers firstly took off from Okinawa, the Ryukyu Legislature strongly demanded the American authorities not to make local people involved in the war. In this situation, prime minister Sato visited Okinawa in August and made a well-known pro-reversion speech:

I well understand that, as long as Okinawa is not returned, Japan's restoration from the Second World War cannot be said to have completed (Kitaoka 1992: 453).

The OTA welcomed Sato and made most of this chance. It succeeded in obtaining his pledge to introduce national transfer payments into local elementary education. The Council for Reversion took a critical but ambivalent attitude. Rallying cry was 'to protest with indignation and to make sure of the schedule of reversion' (Nakano & Arasaki 1976: 148). 'Protest' meant complaint about the point that Sato accepted USCAR's invitation. It was well recognised that Sato's visit would affirm Japan's agreement on the extensive use of Okinawan bases for the Vietnam War. However, the Council still expected that Japanese prime-minister's visit

would make advance for reversion to Japan. It was uncertain what Sato meant by 'return'; the Council hoped that reversion would eliminate troubles caused by the war, but it seems to have been a vain hope as the Japanese government actually supported the United State in this war.

The appearance of reception indicated that a turning point came to the reversion movement. GRI ordered local schools to hoist the Rising Sun flag and mobilised school children for a flag procession to welcome Sato. In contrast, the reformist opposition parties and the left-wing activists parted with the Rising Sun flag, which they had so far promoted on their initiative. When the Council for Reversion organised a reversion rally with 50,000 participants, the Rising Sun flag was withdrawn in order to show their complaint of the Japanese government. A demonstration thereafter stormed up to Sato's inn and demanded an interview with him. Sato's escape into an American base conclusively indicated that the Japanese government allied itself with the American forces rather than local reversion activists. The Rising Sun flag, which had once been the 'symbol of the reversion movement', thereafter disappeared from reversion rallies and demonstrations.

The Council for Reversion began to target the removal of military bases and thereby to confront the Japanese government. In November 1967, in its comment on the second Sato-Johnson Communiqué, the Council announced a decision to 'qualitatively change' the reversion movement. Firstly, a simplistic ethnic re-unification movement was reconsidered as dangerous as it could favour, what the Council called, 'imperialistic nationalists' who wished a militaristically strong Japan. Secondly, it was recognised that reversion had to be explicitly linked with a military-free Okinawa. The opposition rally to the Communiqué passed the

resolution that 'it needs first to remove the military bases in order to bring reversion into realisation' (Nakano & Arasaki 1970: 86-87). Popular agitation previously did not raise the issue of the existing military bases. Even the Military Land Dispute merely aimed at the cancellation of new expropriation. This 'qualitative change' became decisive when B-52 bombers began to be regularly stationed, especially after November 1968 when one of them failed to take off, went up in a tremendous explosion and caused damage in surrounding residential areas. In March 1969, the Council for Reversion officially announced that its main objective was the removal of military bases. Following this new policy, the Council took opposition acts to the Return Agreement between Japan and the United States, despite the fact that this agreement decided to materialise 'reversion'. In May 1971, the Council called a general strike to ask for the cancellation of the Return Agreement. Around 100,000 people went on strike and staged mass demonstration. In November, targeting the blocking of the Agreement passed in the Diet, the Council carried out a larger strike and mass demonstration, which transformed into a riot in which a policeman was killed.

What alternative did the Council for Reversion then propose after it rejected the Return Agreement? GRI chief executive Yara attempted to bring a proposal into the November 1971 Diet. It shows that reversion was redefined as entering the protection of the Japanese Constitution:

The ultimate design of reversion that the prefectural citizens of Okinawa demand is, as I have repeatedly said, the kind of reversion by which the prefectural citizens can receive the full rights of Japanese citizenship under the Japanese Constitution, that is, 'unconditioned, immediate and complete return' (Arashiro 1997: 245).

The Japanese Constitution has strong pacifist and democratic characteristics, mainly because it was conditioned by an early American

occupation policy which targeted the destruction of the war-time militarists' autocracy. The Constitution was not applied to Okinawans under the American administration. Although Yara and Kyan referred to the Constitution already in the mid 1950s, it seems to have widely come into discussion among reversion activists at the 1964 annual meeting of the Council for Reversion (Horitsu Jiho Henshu Bu (ed) 1968: 25). In April 1965, when the Vietnam War began to trouble local people, the Ryukyu Legislature designated the Day of the Constitution, May 3rd, as an official holiday of Okinawa (Nakano & Arasaki 1970: 35). In January 1966, an OTA's annual meeting suggested that the Constitution was significant for leading the reversion movement. In the 1967 OTA meeting, the national consciousness was eventually redefined in terms of the Constitution:

We mean by the national consciousness, not simplistic understanding that we are the Japanese, but the determination and wish to take the pride and responsibility of being the sovereigns of the state, to claim fairly and squarely for our rights which are stipulated in the Constitution and to live a life always longing for peace (the Proceedings of the thirteenth Meeting on Teaching Method, *Okinawa Kyoiku: Kokumin Kyoiku*, quoted in Oguma 1999: 593).

Thus the mainstream of the reversion movement made a turn. It used to be 'a movement for escaping from the rule of a different *minzoku* and for being folded by the arms of homeland as mother'. However, it became 'a movement for seeking the ideal Japan under the pacifist Constitution' (Tomiyaama 1971: 324).

3-7: ANTI-REVERSIONISTS

3-7-1: A FACTION OF REVERSION ACTIVISTS

In the late 1960s, a small number of young educated people questioned whether the re-definition of the reversion movement really made a meaningful change. Gima Susumu, for example, argued that the

re-definition did not touch the fundamental problem:

With the development of the protection act of human rights, it began to be said that we were going back to 'Japan under the Constitution', rather than simplistically to 'homeland as mother', but it made no difference because both were based on an illusion of the idealised homeland (Gima 1970: 241).

Gima had an insight into the continual existence of Japanese nationalist sentiment underneath the demand for protection by the Japanese Constitution. 'Reversion to the Constitution' had actually the same weak point as 'reversion to the Rising Sun' which it tried to overcome. As far as the reversion movement aimed at the re-integration into Japan, local people had to refrain from radical confrontation with the Japanese government. Even when an unfavourable political decision for Okinawans was made, disobedience would be difficult. Thus the reversion movement cannot avoid giving initiative to the Japanese government. Arakawa Akira referred to this situation as a 'tragic cum comic scene' because an originally anti-establishment movement, in the end, voluntarily gave the establishment an opportunity to reinforce its ruling power by restoring territorial rights. In other words, the situation was that Okinawans virtually supported the central government, which did not represent their own interest (Arakawa 1970: 12).

This criticism produced disputes between realist reversion activists, who thought that Japanese administration would bring about some advantage though not the best one, and idealist activists, who rejected a compromise with the Japanese government unless the problem was solved at its fundamental level. One of the earliest cases of this dispute was observed in a discussion during the summer 1968 between Kawamitsu Shinichi and Irei Takashi:

Kawamitsu: The full application of the Constitution will only mean the perfect control by the state. Unless we discard an illusory state, an illusory

Constitution, we can't really overcome the idea of reversion to homeland.

Irei: In the present situation of Okinawa, in the situation of being surrounded by too many military bases, the Constitution, at least its articles on human rights, will be useful. I mean, let's make the state to fulfil its minimum obligation We should recognise that the Constitution will have certain concrete advantage (Yoshiwara (ed) 1968: 56).

This dispute was made at the time when the public election for the first GRI chief executive was under way. Opposition to military bases, which had been aroused by the regular stationing of B-52 bombers, became temporarily relaxed since the left-wing political parties and union workers were concentrating on the election campaign. Unorganised reversion activists were frustrated with this toning-down of the left-wing establishment and became sceptical about the prospects for their movement within the existing political framework.

The failure of the so-called '2-4 General Strike' turned this scepticism into conviction. As a result, an idealistic faction of reversionists split from the body of reversion activists under the leadership of the left-wing establishment. Reacting to the November 1968 explosion of a B-52 bomber, the left-wing politicians and union leaders drew up a plan of a general strike on the 4th of February 1969. It was targeted at the relocation of B-52 bombers by putting pressure on the American authorities. Most of the union workers were solidly in favour of this strike action. The American Bases Employees' Unions, which could directly damage the function of active bases, also confirmed their participation. The 2-4 General Strike, in short, would have been a historically important act. At the last moment, however, it was suddenly cancelled at the request of chief executive Yara. In preceding meetings, the Japanese government had put pressure on him by highlighting its concern that the strike would make the United States hesitate to forsake its control over Okinawa and thereby delay the realisation of reversion. The Japanese union authorities, such as the General

Conference of Japan Labour Unions (*Sohyo*), also persuaded Yara to cancel the strike for the reason that they could not financially support the many base-employees who were expected to be discharged for striking (Nakano & Arasaki 1970: 150). In the end, the priority was given to sooner reversion as possible. Antipathy to Yara and other reformist leaders emerged from the great confusion which followed this sudden cancellation. An idealist faction of reversion activists came to hold anti-reversionism.

At the time of the 1970 election, this internal strife led to a boycott campaign by some anti-reversionists. The 1969 Sato-Nixon Communiqué announced that local people would be allowed to participate in the Diet in which the Return Agreement was going to be ratified. By the time when the election campaign started, the left-wing establishment already openly disapproved of the Return Agreement. However, the left-wing leaders regarded this election as an important step to the acquisition of full civil rights and actively participated in the election. Arakawa explained his boycott:

Participation in the national government did no longer implies resistance, just as Japanese education and the Rising Sun flag had not implied it either. . . . Resistance to the 'return' defined by the Sato-Nixon Summit has logically to develop into the firm rejection of the national franchise, at least until the time when the Return Agreement was signed and ratified in the Diet (Arakawa 1970: 28-29).

In October 1970, Arakawa, Kawamitsu Shinichi and Nakasone Isamu requested a group of New Left activists to organise the 'Discussion on the Rejection of National Franchise'. Participants argued that, if local people sent their representatives to the Diet, this would amount to their virtual approval of the Return Agreement to which they actually objected (e.g., Nakasone 1970). At that time, however, this argument did not convince many people. Only 500 people joined this public discussion. In contrast,

the left-wing establishment had a victory at the election. The leaders of the Council for Reversion gained four of the seven Okinawan seats in the Diet. It was not until people started desperate resistance at the last moment, such as general strikes and mass demonstrations in 1971 made against reversion already well under way, that the anti-reversionists' argument could appeal to the general public (Nakano & Arasaki 1976: 211).

3-7-2: THE IDEOLOGY OF ANTI-REVERSIONISM

Although anti-reversionists had little power in real politics, their introspective thinking reached the understanding of some fundamental problems inherent in the reversion movement. Among other factors, the 2-4 General Strike is said to have crucially influenced their ideological development. Arasaki Moriteru observes:

The setback of the 2-4 General Strike was caused by reversionism and by affiliation to the mainland reformist authorities. The idea of homeland and the reversion movement came to be questioned. . . . Questions were considered to be a matter of individual minds rather than a countermeasure to the governmental policy (Arasaki 1976: 194-195).

The central question raised by anti-reversionists was clearly expressed in the catch-phrase, 'What is meant by homeland Japan for us?', which appeared in a special issue of the journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* (vol. 18) in which they gave their name, 'anti-reversionism', for the first time. The failure of the 2-4 General Strike convinced them that connection with homeland Japan could be an obstacle to the protection of local interests. In a discussion in November 1969, Arakawa and Kawamitsu affirmed that Okinawa did not and should not have a homeland:

It is the time to design our struggle by locating 'Okinawa without homeland' at the core of any idea. Needless to say, the independence of [Japanese] *minzoku* or the restoration of state sovereignty are not worth fighting at the risk of our life, because they are apparently irrelevant to the 'liberation of

people' which is our ultimate aim (Arakawa, Kawamitsu and Uchihara 1969: 224).

However, the majority of local people were surging towards reversion. Why did these people not stop seeking homeland Japan? Anti-reversionists found the answer in the individual's mind. Just after the 2-4 General Strike Gima strongly argued that 'we must cut off that Japan which exists inside ourselves and tries to connect us to Japan' (Gima 1969). He recognised that Okinawans' innate respect was the real obstacle underlying the weakness of the reversion movement.

A then popular discussion about social discrimination illuminated the way in which Okinawan individuals were tempted by the desire to be Japanese. At the end of the 1960s, demand for full Japanese citizenship, especially a demand for participation in the Diet, came to be understood as the elimination of discrimination against Okinawans. For a long time after the annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the mainland Japanese regarded Okinawans as 'a different people' and harboured negative prejudice in everyday life. Whereas separatists put stress on this Japanese discrimination, reversionists tended to avoid mentioning it. In a 1969 best-seller, *Minikui Nihon-jin* (The Cunning Japanese), Ota Masahide, a then lecturer at Ryukyu University, however, openly addressed this issue. By citing comparable cases in which the central government had dealt differently with similar problems in Okinawa and in mainland Japan, Ota presented his suspicion that, if a province of mainland Japan had been placed under the control of the American military forces, the mainland Japanese and their government would not have left the problems unconcerned as they actually did in Okinawa (Ota 1995[1969]). His accusation gave a catharsis to Okinawan readers who were frustrated with the on-going political process for Okinawa's 'return' deviating from their

vision of 'reversion'. Within five months, the book was reprinted five times. It was so influential that prime minister Sato had to make a special comment that 'there will be *no discrimination* under the Constitution after Okinawa returns to Japan' (Arasaki 1976: 352-353; italic added).

However, anti-reversionists argued that, exactly when Ota demanded that the same people should be treated equally, he accepted the ideology which produced the very kind of inequality. Ota constructed his argument for eliminating discrimination against Okinawans on the premise that Okinawans were Japanese. At the beginning of his book, Okinawans' Japanese identity was given axiomatic status without any extended discussion:

In their essence, the Japanese people who live in the mainland, of course, do not differ from those who live in Okinawa (Ota 1995 [1969]: 2).

A close cultural bond and resembling physical features may no doubt exist between these two peoples, but any objective similarity cannot predict how to demarcate people in a single category. Anti-reversionists had an insight into this irrelevance of the 'academic' definition in the context of a social problem (Kawamitsu 1987: 176, 229). Gima went even further to mention hidden discrimination against apparently non-Japanese peoples, which came into existence when the assertion of common ancestry was used in an attempt to eliminate discrimination against Okinawans (Gima 1970: 252-253). For anti-reversionists, Ota's accusation seemed 'not to attack the root of "discrimination"' since the accusation was 'just the means by which a man goes up to the position of the people who discriminate against him' (Arakawa 1981: 112-113).

This discussion brought to anti-reversionists an insight into the uselessness of assimilationism. Ota was not an assimilationist, but the

rationale which justified his accusation confirmed assimilationism.

Probably with Ota's best-seller in mind, Gima argues:

Recently, there is a strong voice which accuses homeland from the viewpoint of its victim and ask it to make atonement. . . . It is doubtful whether the attitudes in demanding atonement for discrimination is really different from attitudes in making blind efforts to assimilate into Japanese society (Ryukyu Shimpo 3 Mar. 1969).

For a subordinate population, assimilation means an attempt to eliminate marginalisation by changing its definition from 'a different people' to 'the same people' in relation to the dominant people. However, anti-reversionists discern that the very desire to obtain the superior position is actually confirming the existing unequal relationship between the dominant people and the subordinate one. Therefore, the inferior position will not change as long as such a desire is retained. Gima reasonably argues that the 'pure Japanese' does not exist anywhere except in people's mind. When what Okinawans try to attain does not exist in reality, their efforts will never come to an end. Okinawans can never accomplish assimilation into Japanese community but have to 'live the life of the quasi-Japanese forever' (Gima 1970: 251-254).

Anti-reversionists deeply contemplated this problematic combination of discrimination and assimilation. This contemplation went so deep that they were not simply satisfied with abandoning the plan to merge into the mainstream Japanese, but realised that 'pure Okinawans' do not really exist just as the 'pure Japanese' do not. Based on this understanding, anti-reversionists resolved not to take any dominant position which would necessarily require some other people to be placed in a subordinate position. In concrete terms, anti-reversionists addressed the problem of internal stratification within Okinawa. Arakawa's assignment in the Yaeyama islands is said to have made him aware of the problematic relationship

between these remote rural islands and the regional centre of Okinawa. It was essentially the same dominant-subordinate relationship which existed between Okinawa and Japan (Oguma 1999: 612).

This intra-Okinawa stratification was a far more evident fact for Kawamitsu, who was native of a rural hamlet in the Miyako islands and who had to learn Okinawan as well as Japanese. Yanagita Kunio described a language problem which was inevitable for an ambitious young man from a rural hamlet in Miyako. First, he has to learn the common speech of Hirara City in a junior high-school on the main island of Miyako. Then, he has to learn the common speech of Naha city in a high-school on the main island of Okinawa. Finally, he has to learn Japanese in Tokyo or another big city to receive university education. Quoting this passage, Kawamitsu pointed to the stigma and his own inferiority complex which was attached to his mother tongue (Kawamitsu 1999b: 186). Because of his personal experience of being at the bottom of intra-Okinawa stratification, Kawamitsu knew that, when urban elite Okinawans made a protest to Japan from an oppressed people's point of view, they tended to forget or ignore that they themselves took oppressive attitudes towards ordinary people in rural Okinawa:

The urban intelligentsia refer to 'Okinawa' when they lay the blame on mainland Japan. However, does this 'Okinawa' take the position on which the people of remote islands lay the same blame though they are silenced at the bottom of internal stratification within Okinawa? (Kawamitsu 1987: 179).

Thus, Kawamitsu was acutely aware that 'Okinawa' defined in the context of Okinawa-Japan relations merely meant 'Okinawa' for urban elite Okinawans. People may feel morally easy to approve of this 'Okinawa', since it appears as an oppressed social collectivity in relation to the oppressing Japanese one. However, in a second context, the very same 'Okinawa' cannot morally be supportable since it plays the role of an oppressor in relation to marginalised

sub-groups within Okinawa.

How then can one break up this endless chain of unequal relations? Kawamitsu suggests that the only escape is to reject any affiliation to a social collectivity by firmly refusing to conform to its norm. In practical terms, anti-reversionists proposed a reversal of the value which was attached to their sense of distance from Japan. Citing an unreasonable displeasure which Okinawans had when they were called 'Okinawans' by the mainland Japanese, Arakawa argues that Okinawans should not be ashamed of this 'emotional distance' from the Japanese but should take it for 'the precious core of autochthonous Okinawan thought' (Arakawa 1970: 20). In other words, anti-reversionists argue that Okinawans should not try to eliminate this distance, which in anyway cannot be removed, but should accept and appreciate it. Attention has to be given to the point that Arakawa was rightly looking at a sense of distance rather than visible signs of difference. If only visible signs, like vernacular speech, mattered, assimilation would have come to an end at the point where no visible Okinawan traits remained. There would have been no reason for Arakawa to be so much bothered with the Okinawa-Japan relation since he was brought up by his Japanese mother and was originally Japanese monolingual. This sense of distance is independent of any visible signs of difference. Since it was actually confused with the signs, many Okinawans had to make unreasonable efforts to eliminate Okinawan traits even after few such traits actually existed any longer. Due to the same confusion, Okinawans also had to make a vain attempt to assume a purely Japanese appearance even though there was not such a thing in reality.

Okinawan nationalism committed the same kind of confusion between the sense and actual signs of difference, and thereby could not address the

fundamental problem. Okinawan nationalism refers to the idea that the Ryukyus should be separated from Japan because Okinawans had a different culture and history. To eliminate conformity to Japan, Okinawan nationalism tries to reverse the value of visible signs rather than the value of a sense of distance. When Okinawan nationalists attributed a positive value to selected local language, traditional customs, collective historical memories, they thereby constructed a structure in which perpetual force would drive people into absorbing these selected representations. However, the same kind of force sustained the integration of the Japanese national community from which Okinawan nationalists tried to escape. In other words, Okinawan nationalism and Japanese nationalism were different in size but the same in kind. For example, the highly valued royal culture of Shuri attracts rural people and tempts them to introduce such culture into their province. Similarly, on a smaller scale, the highly valued Miyakoan language produces a drive for mastering it in the residents of its dependency islets. To terminate this differential multiplication, the value of a sense of distance, not the value of its visible signs, has to be reversed. Only when people admit that feeling distance from the dominant group has a positive value, can they fully emancipate themselves from the compelling force for assimilation.

To accomplish this reversal, it is necessary to create a social environment wherein one is not self-disparaged at one's sense of distance. Anti-reversionists argued that, if it was unavoidable that Okinawa would eventually be incorporated into Japanese society, Okinawa's participation should transform Japan into such an environment. Already around 1968, Kawamitsu conceived the idea that 'unless some change takes place in the Japanese state, affiliation to Japan will not cause any change in Okinawa.

It will not help Okinawa to liberate itself from its troublesome position' (Kawamitsu 1987: 246). Referring to a sense of distance as the 'uniquely Okinawan perception of Japan', Arakawa also pointed to the possibility that Okinawa would transform Japan:

Rather than we feel ashamed of the perception as a negative aspect and cut ourselves off from it, should not we regard it as a positive factor by which we de-centralise Japan or the mainland and reduce its state power? Should not we change our identity, by developing the perception into an ideology, from 'victims' of the state power to its 'assailant' (*Okinawa Times* 14 Jul. 1970).

He went further to say, elsewhere, that 'the historical and geographical condition of Okinawa possessed far more potential power than any other prefecture' to carry out this transformation of Japan (Arakawa 1970: 23). To the extent that Okinawans were incongruous in Japanese community, so their participation was valuable for the construction of a de-centralised Japan. This incongruity, that is, the feeling of being Okinawans, therefore should not be eliminated. Gima expressed the same idea as his hope that he wanted to become a Japanese while he still remained an Okinawan:

I will reject Japan if it doesn't accept one becoming a Japanese while still remaining an Okinawan. I don't want to be such a Japanese. . . . It is not that the people of Okinawa go back to Japan because they are the Japanese, but that we chose to be the Japanese. If so, we should be allowed to propose what kind of the Japanese we wanted to become (Gima 1970: 252-254).

In short, he wanted to be the people of Japan which would appreciate internal diversity. Although he still referred to the 'Japanese', it was regarded as optional and changeable on Okinawans' initiative. This 'Japanese' has almost nothing to do with Japan as a pre-existing state in reality. A few years after the reversion of Okinawa, Arakawa defined anti-reversionism as 'an ideological movement which tried to construct symbiotic space in which different localities could fully express their

uniqueness without a framework of nation-states' (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 34-35). The inhabitants of this symbiotic space were what Gima meant by the 'Japanese'.

3-8: CONCLUSION

People supported reversion for various reasons and competed not only over the definition of the reversion movement but also over the definition of Japan, the United States and Okinawa. Although the reversion movement is presently described as an irredentist movement in which Okinawans escaped from the rule by a different *minzoku*, America, and went back to homeland, Japan, the key terms, 'a different *minzoku*' and 'homeland' originally came into use by a particular reversion activists in a particular situation. The first stage of the reversion movement had optional quality. In a signature campaign, the majority of local people chose to affiliate to Japan among other options of national affiliation. When communists suffered American oppression, they suddenly took radical line against the American authorities and defined American presence in Okinawa as the rule by a different *minzoku*. The compulsory expropriation for military bases spread this antipathy. School teachers took a modest line to the United States and rather put stress on the ethnic unity with the Japanese. Since they conclusively defined Japan as homeland to go back, the reversion movement lost optional quality and reversion became itself the end rather than a means for the end. Due to the integration of these two reversion agents, the reversion movement thereafter developed as a left-wing nationalist movement. However, at the peak of the Vietnam War, the right-wing Japanese government suddenly took an active part in the political

process for the return of Okinawa. The left-wingers were confused but eventually discerned that the central government appropriated their movement for reinforcing the national security system. They tried to secure local interest by redefining the movement as an anti-war movement. Yet, this redefinition did not satisfy young activists who were convinced that Okinawa could not claim its rights within the framework of national politics. They began to conceive anarchistic idea of 'anti-reversionism'.

Anti-reversionists severely criticised the left-wing establishment especially for its nationalist principles. They argued that Okinawans' liberation movement was appropriated for the extension of the state power just because the reversion movement was built up on the premise of Japanese nationalism. It was significant that anti-reversionists were at one time earnest reversionists, or, at least, radical anti-American activists. A miserable end of the reversion movement made them recognised that a nationalism, to which they had at one time shown great commitment, continued to yet another nationalism, which they had to firmly reject. In other words, anti-reversionists were acutely aware that a collective social identity was impossible to receive morally consistent support through time. Although this anti-reversionism offered a deep analysis of the way in which a national community achieved its integration while systematically took advantage of marginal population, it was too idealistic to affect immediate political ends. However, anti-reversionists have been developing their voice in local society since then and younger generation influenced by them begun to find concrete forms in which anti-reversionism may be materialised.

CHAPTER 4: THE RYUKYUAN ARC

4-1: INTRODUCTION

The Ryukyuan Arc (*Ryukyu-ko*) is an expression by which local activists define their home islands in an inventive way. In post-reversion Okinawa, many former student activists went back home and came to grip with emergent problems in their respective communities. These local activists formed a network of citizens' movements, the Neighbourhood Act of the Ryukyuan Arc, in which they developed a unique guiding principle from anti-reversionism. Separate problems were consistently interpreted as different appearances of a single problem that was posed by the Japanese state power, which tried to take advantage of Okinawa. However, the rejection of *any* central power and the *full* respect for peripheries prevented local activists from aiming for an independent Okinawa. Avoiding developing into a secession movement, their struggles against the Japanese state were deliberately confined to be a protest movement. Independence, even if it were possible, would not eliminate problematic centre-periphery relations, but would, instead, reproduce them at another level. At this point, local activism found a dilemma. If local activism establishes solidarity against Japan, it will be likely to create the regional centre. Then, this centre will alienate peripheral members within the region. On the other hand, if local activism attempts to put much value upon different voices of peripheries, it will suffer from fragmentation. Then, resistance to Japan will be attenuated. Local activists, however, discovered a third choice, which, ironically, located grounds for cohesion in the very fact that local society is internally disparate. A protest movement against Japan was thereby

redefined as struggles against her ideological uniformity, which threatened essential internal diversity of Okinawa.

4-2: THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ACT OF THE RYUKYUAN ARC

4-2-1: RECONSTRUCTED LOCAL ACTIVISM

In 1974, Sadoyama Anko eventually came back to Miyako. In a newspaper interview, he describes himself at that time as 'daunted and at a loss what to do' after the unfruitful student activism at the time of the reversion movement (*Ryukyu Shimpo* 24 Dec. 1995). It did not take long, however, to find a new activity into which he could immerse himself. In February 1976, when the Miyako Folk Tales Society was formed, Sadoyama joined it as a bureau chief and practically took over its leadership. With other members, he energetically called on old islanders and recorded their recitation onto volumes of audio tapes. After 1978, their transcriptions began to be brought out as private publications or part of ethno-historical compendiums published by municipalities. On occasions when Sadoyama walked around the island for interviews, he also took a number of pictures of its scenes under dramatic transformation. After reversion, more and more people left Miyako for the major cities in Okinawa main island and the Japanese mainland. According to the figures of national census, Miyako experienced the sharpest decrease of population in the period between 1965 and 1970. The population further continued to decrease over the next five years. Since 1975, when local population reached its all time low, the number of residents has remained fairly stable up to the present. Other remote islands also showed this pattern of demographic change. In other

words, the decade in which reversion took place was the period when rural communities in Okinawa suddenly became desolated. Sadoyama's photographs at that time mainly pictured traditional Okinawan wooden houses roofed with red tiles, which were left empty and fell into dilapidation or were going to be replaced by modern concrete buildings. These red-roofed houses had the same significance as folk tales, since both of them embodied the intangible character of the locality. They gave definite expression to the anxiety over an overwhelming Japanese influence, which would eventually bring this distinctive local quality to disappear.

Sadoyama was among a small number of young people who had studied in large cities but returned home to settle down. Such young Miyakoans were, according to Sadoyama, 'starving for cultural activities' which they had enjoyed in their student life. A proliferation of small groups appeared, many with overlapping membership, and local youths amused themselves with literary creation, photography, painting, drama, folk song, puppet theatre and so on. In September 1979, Sadoyama called these small local circles together at a cultural festival, the Yunaure Festival. Active participants were later to become local leaders. Toma Mariko, who later took part in an environmentalist campaign against the La Pisara Golf Course, presented her report, at the festival, on emergent sea water pollution by drained synthetic detergent. Kugai Katsumori, later a member of the Hirara City Committee for the Protection of Cultural Assets, gave a lecture on a particular species of migrant hawk whose local population had suddenly begun to decrease. Shimoji Kazuhiro, a member of the Miyako Homeland History Research Group, gave a lecture on the outline of

archaeological findings in Miyako. Sadoyama's group told folk tales illustrated with picture cards. In exhibition rooms, people displayed photographs, cartoons, handicrafts, earthenware and traditional textile. In the main hall, people showed films, performed folk songs and conducted a panel discussion on prospects for local tourism (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 110-114). These young 'returnees' formed the first conspicuous generation of local civic society on the island which could still largely be characterised as a peasant community.

The organisers of the Yunaure Festival were determined to be independent from the local authority. In contrast to this attitude towards the elder generation of their own island, their communication extended horizontally to the youth leaders of other islands. All over the Ryukyus, similar phenomena were observed. Former student activists who had come home formed conspicuous generation groups and gave distinctive voice to various local issues arising from socio-economic change after the 1972 common reversion. These emergent local activists laid their organisational base in a network, the Neighbourhood Act of the Ryukyuan Arc (*Ryukyu-ko no Jumin Undo*). Separate local activists were co-ordinated to mould a distinctive public opinion. The underlying ideological principle was a kind of regionalism (*chiiki-shugi*), which touched the heart of anti-reversionism. It was defined as:

an ideology which tries to convert a sense of value, which prioritises the centre over provinces, by reassessing the uniqueness and self-reliance of different localities (*chiiki*)' (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 205).

In this sense, the Neighbourhood Act can be seen as an attempt to carry out anti-reversionism in practice. Actually, it became the main channel

through which anti-reversionism was handed down to younger leading activists, such as Asato Eiko, Kina Shokichi and Takara Ben and, through their intermediary, to grassroots activists. For instance, through the network of the Neighbourhood Act, Kina was invited to Miyako to perform in the Yunaure Festival. His recent hit song achieved great success in the popular music market in Tokyo, for the first time for a song written in the Okinawan language. The local young audience appreciated not only his performance but also his achievement, which had given them self-confidence as Okinawans. Kina had already involved himself in an opposition act to the construction of an oil refining factory in Okinawa main island, which anti-reversionists targeted as their first activism in post-reversion Okinawa. Thereafter, Kina came to show a strong commitment to local activism. He energetically went around the islands to perform at such occasions as cultural festivals and protest meetings, without taking commercial viability into account (Fujisaki 1994: 94).

Arasaki Moriteru, a sociologist at Okinawa University, was the ideological leader of the Neighbourhood Act. He was born and grew up in a resident Okinawan family in Tokyo. Despite his wish to participate in the reversion movement, Arasaki could not obtain permission to move into Okinawa due to the anti-Communist censorship. During the American administration, he remained in Tokyo and concurrently wrote about the on-going reversion movement (Nakano & Arasaki 1965, 1970). This work made him one of the most knowledgeable scholars about contemporary Okinawan history. Nevertheless, he did not take academic detachment from Okinawan issues, but wilfully joined local activism. Okinawa

University, the first private local university, had a powerful student union, which seized control of university management, with sympathetic teachers, in the late 1960s. At the time of reversion, the Ministry of Education ordered the university to be integrated into Okinawa International University, but the student union and the teachers provided stubborn resistance. In mainland Japan, Arasaki took the lead in supporting this resistance campaign. In March 1974, he eventually moved to Okinawa to teach at Okinawa University, which had managed to continue by means of a large reform.⁴⁵

Immediately after his teaching appointment, Arasaki involved himself in various citizens' movements. Firstly, he mobilised anti-reversionists in an opposition act to the construction of Central Terminal Stations for petroleum deposit (CTS). In 1967, four American oil companies launched investments in Okinawa. The Kin Bay, which is surrounded by Yokatsu Peninsula, Henza island and Miyagi island, was singled out as the most suitable location for constructing an oil-industrial area. In 1970, the Gulf Oil Company built up its CTS on Henza island. The island came to be connected to Yokatsu peninsula and thereby Okinawa main island by a road constructed on reclaimed coral reef. However, this road produced stagnant sea water, which caused serious damage to fishing grounds. In addition, accidents happened repeatedly at the refining facilities, the oil leaking from which made the situation worse. Nevertheless, in May 1972, the Mitsubishi

⁴⁵ The self-management by students and teachers is mentioned in a memoir of Chibana Shoichi, who was the chairman of the student union at that time (Chibana 1988: 81-86). Also, Arasaki himself explains the details of this series of events (Arasaki 1992a: 61-64; 1992b: 137-159). In Miyako, some of the staff of the Yunaure Festival joined resistance to the integration of the universities. The entrance examination had been announced not to be authorised by the Ministry of Education.

Development Company was given permission to reclaim land from the coral reef extending between Henza island and Miyagi island for the construction of a much larger CTS. This plan spilt the local communities. Henza and Miyagi islanders could make profit on the sale of their properties and would have the benefit of improved transport by trans-islands roads to Okinawa main island. In contrast to these detached islets, the residents of Yokatsu peninsula could find few merits. Disputes between local people developed into breakages, arson attacks and brutal violence. In September 1973, opposition residents were organised into the Kin Bay Protection Act. In September 1974, this Act eventually instituted a lawsuit with fishermen of Yokatsu peninsula as official plaintiffs. On this occasion, Arasaki invited anti-reversionists, such as Arakawa Akira, Kawamitsu Shinichi, Gima Susumu, Irei Takashi and Okamoto Keitoku, to issue a statement of support for the Kin Bay Protection Act. As the Kin Bay Protection Act spontaneously emerged from small groups of local residents, it lacked powerful organisational support and tended to be isolated from the general public. Arasaki and the anti-reversionists made the most of their power in the local press and turned public attention to the CTS problem. Growing opposition at one time moved the prefectural government to the cancellation of the project, but governor Yara Chyobyō eventually overcame the opposition voice in exchange for his own retirement and gave the developer his final permission. Yara was said to have been concerned about the compensation for the developer's loss and the possibility that distrust in the prefectural

However, they opened evening school for local high school students and sent them to the examination so that new students would be enrolled as a *fait accompli*.

government would refrain Japanese companies from their investment in Okinawa in the future.⁴⁶

Arasaki also took over the substantial leadership of the anti-base movement from the left-wing establishment. The day of reversion saw a large rally organised by the Council for Reversion, though it had ironically been the main driving force of the reversion movement. Its constituent reformist parties, labour unions and other left-wing organisations were frustrated by the fact that reversion did not reduce the size of military bases in Okinawa as much as in mainland Japan. However, not everyone was dissatisfied. The same day also witnessed the start of new lease contracts for American military bases, which had been agreed by ninety percent of the 30,000 land owners. The new lessee, the Japanese government, offered more than a six times increase in rent, which amounted to greater profit than what land owners could otherwise make on their land. To urgently expropriate the land belonging to the remaining ten percent of the military-land owners, the government enacted a temporary measure. The Council for Reversion endorsed these so-called 'anti-war land owners (*hansen-jinushi*)' and refuted the constitutionality of this measure. However, a solid joint struggle of the left-wing establishment was no longer easy. Local labour unions and political parties were affiliated to their mainland counterparts. These Okinawan branches could not fully unite with each other to secure common local interests, since they followed the decision of the respective headquarters in Tokyo, which might have mutually

⁴⁶ For further details of this CTS problem, see CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 26-60, Arasaki 1992a: 30-33, 1992b: 192-195, Uozumi 1995: 38-64. A memoir of Asato Seishin, the leader of the Kin Bay Protection Act (Asato 1981), and Arasaki's lengthy interview with him (Arasaki 1982) are also informative.

incompatible policies. Taking advantage of this weak constitution of the opposition, the Japanese government successfully reduced the number of 'anti-war land owners'. By early 1980s, they fell to around one hundred. Facing this crisis of the anti-base movement, Arasaki launched a new campaign; he subdivided a tract of land already used as a base and offered these small plots for sale, thereby creating many 'anti-war land owners'. Since these new land owners were mostly determined anti-base activists, the Japanese government had no hope to make lease contracts at all. The number of these so-called 'anti-war patch land owners (*hito-tsubo hansen-jinushi*)' increased from an initial 833 in 1982 to around three thousand in the mid 1990s.⁴⁷

Arasaki understood the CTS and American bases, at bottom, as a single problem caused by the central power of the state, which took advantage of a periphery. Metropolitan Japan unfairly treated Okinawa, ostensibly to safeguard the national interest, but actually for its own benefit. Okinawa was easily persuaded, sometimes being in full knowledge of the situation, because it tried to surmount underdevelopment despite any other potential inconvenience. Reversion made it clear that Japan, as well as the United States, imposed military bases on Okinawa. Local society had to shoulder an unevenly heavy share of the burden of the national security interest. Similarly, local society had to take the risk of water pollution by the CTS for the benefit of the oil consuming industries in mainland Japan (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 14). By understanding these

⁴⁷ Since the tract of land at issue exists in the middle of the main landing strip of the Kadena Air Base, the Japanese government cannot abandon it either and has to take the procedure of expropriation of the land belonging to the most stubborn opponents. Arasaki himself describes in detail these anti-base

problems in this particular way, Arasaki could consistently explain many other problems of post-reversion Okinawa. Sharing this single explanatory framework, originally separate activists struggling with their own various problems were gradually encompassed by Arasaki's movement.

In January 1976 Arasaki started organising an annual exchange meeting of the Neighbourhood Act and called together local activists from all over the Ryukyus. Their newsletters (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981) show a wide range of activities addressing seemingly disparate problems. For instance, activists in Tarama island, Yonaguni island and Amami Oshima island were fighting against other cases of the CTS construction. Although the Oil Crisis ruined a vision of an industrial area, plans for the construction of the CTS survived by being redefined as the creation of job opportunities in order to stop depopulation in these remote islands. Similarly, activists from Tokunoshima island were fighting against the construction of a factory for the disposal of radio active waste. To reject these risky projects, an alternative was required so as to counter the excessive outflow of the working age population. So-called 'island-revitalisation (*shima-okoshi*)' refers to various ways of fashioning attractive islands without depending on external resources. It means the introduction of urban entertainment such as literary creation and art performance. It also means the reassessment of local traditions such as the promotion of handicrafts and the study of local history. The Miyako youth's activities fell into this category. Tourism also had great potential for scenic rural islands, but local activists strongly resisted large scale tourist

campaigns in post-reversion Okinawa (Arasaki 1992b: 181-184; 1992c: 68-82; 123-137; 1997c: 139-146).

development by Japanese companies. In Ishigaki island, when educated young islanders came back home, they saw that Japanese tourist companies had already purchased a large part of the island. These young islanders sent their representatives to the city assembly and designated tourist development sites as exclusive farming areas. Many Japanese companies eventually had to sell off their land, which became unprofitable for them to own, to these young islanders, who decided to return to agricultural pursuits.

4-2-2: THE GENERATION GAP

Local activists of the Neighbourhood Act of the Ryukyuan Arc belonged to a fairly clear generation, aged between the mid twenties and early forties at the time of its formation. Their distinctive voice among local opinion is easy to recognise in comparison with another age groups who, at first glance, took a similar attitude towards the CTS, military bases and other major problems of post-reversion Okinawa. Political unification did not immediately mean that Okinawa accomplished its integration into Japan. The economic gap was thought of as the most serious remaining disparity. Despite a long dispute over the issue of military bases, local reformists and conservatives displayed a consensus on promoting industrialisation. Reformists continued to demand the removal of the American forces and to object to the Japan-US Security Treaty. These reformists supported new manufacturing plants, because they regarded them as a means of countering mass unemployment which had been, and would continued to be, produced by the streamlining of American bases. Conservatives approved of the

national security policy and tolerated the American military presence. However, they were even more eager about industrial development since they represented the interests of local financial circles. Thus the several years following the reversion saw a rush of construction work, which was expected to bring the Okinawan economy closer to the rest of Japan. This land development aroused two broad challenges. Senior cultural figures launched a campaign against excessive development. Young activists of the Neighbourhood Act also started an agitation against it. These two challenges, however, were clearly distinguishable in terms of the ideological basis on which they constructed their respective opposition movements.

Based on local consensus, the central government devised the Okinawa Promotion and Development Plan (*Okinawa Shinko Kaihatsu Keikaku*). It set up as its main target narrowing the 'gap' between Okinawa and mainland Japan, as defined in terms of average earning differentials. Per capita income was expected to rise from 60 percent to 80 percent of the Japanese level within ten years. This calculation was based on the assumption that newly built manufacturing plants could enlarge the secondary industry by 1.6 times making it responsible for 30 percent of the Gross Prefectural Product. In the pre-reversion period, the local economy had little productivity and local products had little competitive power in free markets. American bases were the major source of income. Local people bought cheap consumer goods imported without custom duties. Although there were a limited number of small manufacturers, they produced domestically consumed goods only and were much protected by heavy tariffs. Thus, Okinawa largely lacked the foundations for industrialisation. In

order to accumulate social capital, the central government made massive investments. In particular, so-called Reversion Memorial Projects, such as the 1973 Special National Athletic Meeting and the 1975 Ocean Exposition, provided an opportunity to improve roads, ports and other public facilities. Nevertheless, the Development Plan failed to achieve its main objectives. Virtually no new manufacturing plants were built. Facing an economic recession after the Oil Crisis (Oct. 1973), Japanese companies hesitated to make new investments. Worse still for Okinawa, Japanese investment had already begun to be channelled more into foreign markets, which had become more favourable after the Dollar Shock (Aug. 1971) had suddenly increased the value of the yen. Per capita income increased, in the end, up to 70 percent of the national average, but this increase resulted mostly from a construction boom, which relied on transfer payments from the central government and was therefore not sustainable.⁴⁸

Because industrialism was supported by both reformists and conservatives, its opposition could only be pursued outside of the existing political institutions. In July 1973, a group of local senior intellectuals formed the Ten Person's Committee for the Protection of Okinawan Culture and Nature (*Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai*) in order 'to complain about excessive development which is destroying Okinawan culture and polluting Okinawan nature and to mould a wide public opinion against it' (*Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai* (ed) 1976: 7). Its members included teachers, academics, public officers, a journalist, and a woman activist, but most of them had already retired from

⁴⁸ Further details of the analysis of economy of post-reversion Okinawa, see Takatsuki 1992.

active office. All but one of the members were local seniors, born around the beginning of the century, whose age and education afforded them the status of advisers to prefectural offices of cultural affairs.

It was characteristic of the Ten Person's Committee that they equated 'culture' with cultural assets (*bunka-zai*) and 'nature' with natural monuments (*tennen kinen-butsu*). Around the time of the Committee's formation, a pre-historical shell mound was threatened by a possible destruction for construction work related to the Ocean Exposition. The Committee not only argued for preservation on grounds of its archaeological value but also connected their argument with the deterioration of a coral reef nearby (Toyohira and Ikehara 1974). This opposition movement seems to have successfully moulded an intended public opinion. In the second half of the 1970s, there was a proliferation of nature protection groups (*mamoru kai*) concerned with wild birds, rare plants or rare animals, and the popularisation of leisure-time research on local histories (*kyodo-shi kenkyu*) all over Okinawa.⁴⁹ The Committee also lobbied local municipalities to set up legal grounds for nature protection acts and the preservation of historical remnants. From the late 1970s onwards, more and more local municipalities have legislated for the protection of cultural assets and natural monuments (*bunk-zai hogo jorei*) and set up inquiry commissions for their protection (*bunka-zai hogo shingi iin kai*). In many cases, members of these commissions compiled the 'homeland compendium (*kyodo-shi*)' of each community as a part of a local governmental publication.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ For these local nature protection groups, see Higa Yasufumi 1988: 215-220. For the background of local historiography by local people, see Araki 1996.

⁵⁰ The Ten Persons' Committee repeatedly pointed to the fact that only 10 municipalities within the prefecture had cultural protection laws and, in August 1973, strongly deplored the deficient legal

Although very much against the national policy of land development, the Ten Persons' Committee was nevertheless amicable in regard of national integration. It understood Okinawan culture as 'distinctive traditional culture', but, at the same time, also as 'one of the provincial cultures which the Japanese *minzoku* created' (Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai (ed) 1976: 245). It appreciated that Okinawan nature was 'full of rare species', but this rarity value depended on the fact that they had 'no parallels in mainland Japan' (Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai (ed) 1976: 222, 282). These views indicated that the Ten Persons' Committee took it for granted that Okinawa existed within the predetermined framework of Japan. Despite the Committee's rallying cry, 'Okinawa must maintain its distinctive identity', its campaign was ideologically 'tamed' in relation to the central power of the state. In a round-table talk, one of the members said:

It's only by pride or love of homeland that the Japanese citizens (*kokumin*) can associate themselves to the state (*kokka*) and can have patriotism. . . . When people lose the homeland, they will become stateless people. Okinawa has to take care of its culture and nature to prove its identity (Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai (ed) 1976: 289).

However peculiar Okinawa was, championing the Okinawan cause was understood as encouraging loyalty to a Japanese nation-state. This member showed no doubt that local cultural properties and natural objects would prove Okinawa's Japanese identity. Since the Ten Persons' Committee's campaign was thus politically uncontroversial, it earned general,

measures (Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai (ed) 1976: 270). For instance, among 5 municipalities within Miyako, only Tarama village had its cultural protection law (legislated in 1970) at that time. Within four years in the mid 1970s, however, all the other municipalities enacted the law respectively; respectively, Hirara city (1974), Ueno village (1976), Shimoji town (1976) and Gusukube town (1978). All of them published local histories with contribution from members of local inquiry commissions.

although moderate, approval from local society. Despite the fact that many members of the Ten Persons' Committee supported reformist parties in electoral politics, their opinions appealed to the political conservatives. For instance, the conservative prefectural government in the 1980s established the Okinawa Art College, a centre for training traditional arts and crafts, and restored Shuri Castle, the symbol of the Ryukyu Kingdom.⁵¹ The idea underlying such cases of promotion of regional culture had the same quality as the Ten Persons' Committee's campaign. Both of them, in short, were not threatening national integration and, hence, the central power of the state.

Another characteristic of the Ten Persons' Committee was their scale of artistic value, which was accorded in terms of the political power which an artefact represented, rather than in terms of its intrinsic aesthetic worth. The implicit employment of this scale was evident when the Committee warned that rapid industrialisation and its destruction of cultural assets would transform 'prefectural citizens' into 'aborigines (*senjumin* or *genjumin*)' (e.g., *Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai* (ed) 1976: 315, 332). Fear of becoming 'miserable aborigines who will be exterminated by modern civilisation' (*Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai* (ed) 1976: 315) continued from the time of the American administration. At that time, local intellectuals often meant by 'aborigines' the Kanaka of Hawaii, who, just like themselves, were dispossessed from their ancestral islands and forced to accommodate the American forces. Ignorance and

⁵¹ Okinawa Art College (established in April 1986) was planned and opened on then governor Nishime Junji's initiative. On the other hand, the restoration of Shuri Castle was accomplished in November 1992, after reformist Ota Masahide had taken over his governorship. However, the restoration plan was started around 1984 when Nishime was still in the post.

racism led to a distorted view that the Kanaka were so inferior that they could not develop a self-government. If political autonomy is the index of civilisation and enlightenment, then marginal status will provide indisputable evidence of inferiority. In terms of artistic valuation, the idea developed that as powerful a people is politically, so much its artefacts are admirable. Local intellectuals defined themselves as a people who had once had a kingdom with its own admirable royal culture. By this definition, they were asserting that they did not therefore deserve to be marginalised. Thus, the Committee highly praised the arts of Shuri Court, which were regarded as evidence of Okinawans' superiority and as a guarantee of their satisfactory political status. In contrast, the Committee did not appreciate vernacular cultures of the remote islands very much, as they might justify an unfavourable interpretation of Okinawans' social status.

In comparison with the Ten Persons' Committee, the Neighbourhood Act had a clearer orientation to real life. For instance, when the Ten Persons' Committee made an on-site inspection of a CTS under construction, they mostly grieved and resented the destruction of beautiful scenery in which local traditions were embedded (Okinawa no Bunka to Shizen wo Mamoru Junin Iin Kai (ed) 1976: 354-358). In contrast, the Neighbourhood Act took a practical measure to meet the situation; it sued the developer and the prefectural government on a charge of the violation of fishing rights and environmental pollution.

Another comparable point was that the Neighbourhood Act took a highly politicised stance to the problem of land development. Its young activists consciously re-contextualised the problem as an ideological

resistance to the central power of the state. For example, the Ocean Exposition was regarded as an unwelcome event not simply because its related constructions would damage the natural and social environment, but also because the crown prince of Japan, as a special guest, was going to visit Okinawa. Although the royal family had already lost its sovereignty, it was still an obvious symbol of the Japanese state in the eyes of local activists. In comparison, the Ten Persons' Committee's campaign completely lacked such a link to the Emperor system. Moreover, the opposition to the Emperor system was inseparable from the Neighbourhood Act's protest against the Japan Self-Defence Forces (JSDF). In accordance with reversion, Japan took responsibility for the regional defence of Okinawa and took over a part of the American bases for stationing the JSDF. These 'Japanese military forces' reminded local people of the Imperial Army, which had plunged them into devastation twenty-seven years before. The JSDF problem affected the quality of recollection on the wartime experience. Attitudes of revenge for the Battle of Okinawa had long been sublimated in general pacifism. After the JSDF gave rise to a controversy, however, the wartime experience was more often interpreted specifically in relation to Japanese militarism. In wartime memoirs written in this period, the Imperial Army began to be criticised for its harsh treatment of local people. The fact that the Emperor used to be the supreme commander of this Imperial Army enabled local activists to reasonably link their opposition to his son's visit with a protest against the stationing of the new Japanese forces.

Lastly, young activists did not share the scale of artistic value with which the Ten Persons' Committee assessed local culture. Their scale, if they had one, was rather the opposite; the less political power certain people had, the more their 'culture' was admirable. This principle was a natural outcome of the anti-reversionism which had argued for a reversal of the existing value order between the centre and peripheries. Thus, neither Shuri Castle nor the royal arts were very popular among young local activists. Instead, they looked towards ordinary people in villages on rural remote islands and appreciated their folk tales, local dialects, folk music, practical crafts, shamanic tradition and so on. In a recent interview, Asato Eiko said:

Restored Shuri Castle and a popular television drama of royal history are useless for me. . . .I have no intention to deny the cultural value of the castle and many artefacts kept in its interior, but, for instance, its stone wall seems to show up badly in comparison with 'genuine' stonewalls, which are casually observed in a corner of a rural hamlet or along a path on a small island (Murakami 1998: 168-160).

The Ten Person's Committee carried out their opposition movement to excessive land development, based on what may be called a 'conventional social conscience'. The comparison with these senior cultural persons illuminates that young activists of the Neighbourhood Act tried to build up and enunciate a fresh morality while challenging the same problem. This new morality served as a basis for local activism in Okinawa throughout the subsequent decades.

4-3: GEOPOLITICAL CATEGORIES

4-3-1: AMAMI AND OKINAWA

The Ryukyuan Arc is the key concept to understanding how local activists defined the locality in their movement. The Ryukyuan Arc (*Ryukyu-ko*) is originally a technical term in geomorphology which refers to a string of islands stretching between Kyushu and Taiwan.⁵² At present, the non-academic use of the term 'Ryukyuan Arc' is confined to the context of local activism, in which, however, it is an all-too-familiar term. Thus I often observed odd conversations in which Higa Toyomitsu persisted in talking about the 'Ryukyuan Arc' without noticing that he was thereby confusing those with whom he spoke, mostly an old Miyakoan farmer. For Higa, who named his organisation of artists the 'Society for Recording the Ryukyuan Arc', the term was far from unfamiliar. Sadoyama Anko used this term on only a couple of occasions, perhaps because the geographical range of his activities was limited to the Miyako islands. His local co-worker, Okuhama Sachiko, however, titled her recent book *Inori to Kurashi: Ryukyu-ko, Miyako Shoto no Saishi Sekai* (Life and Prayer: the World of Religious Rituals in the Miyako Islands, the Ryukyuan Arc) (Okuhama 1997). It seems fashionable among local activists to include the term 'Ryukyuan Arc' in the title of their publication as Asato Eiko's *Ryukyu-ko no Seishin Sekai* (The Spiritual World of the Ryukyuan Arc) (Asato 1999) and Takara Ben's *Ryukyu-ko no Hasshin* (Messages from the Ryukyuan Arc) (Takara Ben 1996) would illustrate. In an earlier case, Gima Susumu edited and issued the monthly magazine,

Ryukyu-ko, in the early 1970s (Gima 1979). Most likely, this popularity was brought about by the journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku*, in which anti-reversionists have frequently used this term since the late 1960s.

On answering my question, Higa said that he understood the Ryukyuan Arc as referring to the area which used to be under the control of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Arasaki Moriteru defines it, more specifically, as ‘the area of Ryukyuan culture, which was tantamount to the territory of the Ryukyu Kingdom before it was conquered by Satsuma’ (Arasaki 1996b: 102-103). In the fourteenth century, local warlords competing for hegemony began to form sustainable political organisations. What is known today as the Ryukyu Kingdom developed from a clan which had established its headquarters at Shuri Castle. It achieved the unification of Okinawa island (1429), suppressed the Amami islands (1466), and subjugated the Miyako islands and the Yaeyama islands (1500). Already in 1372, this Shuri Court assumed a tributary relationship with the Ming Empire. Due to the Empire’s restriction on Chinese maritime trade, nominal tributary exchange between Shuri Court and Chinese emperors became practically intermediate trade connecting China with East- and Southeast Asia to which Chinese traders lost their access. The Shuri Court sold Chinese goods to other countries in exchange for respective local products while it supplied these collected foreign products in the Chinese market or paid them as a tribute to Chinese emperors. Trade routes were expanded not only to Japan and Korea but also to many Chinese settlements in Southeast Asia. From the fifteenth century to the mid sixteenth century, the Ryukyu Kingdom was

⁵² Strictly speaking, the geomorphologic Ryukyuan Arc includes Kyushu and Taiwan and excludes the Senkaku Islands and the Daito Islands, which are currently within the territory of Okinawa prefecture

a flourishing commercial centre. In cultural terms, the Shuri Court introduced advanced technology and fine arts from China, but, at the same time, its political integration also developed vernacular customs into sophisticated royal culture. For instance, native traditions of shamanistic practice were institutionalised in the form of a hierarchical priestesshood which reinforced the religious authority of the royal family. Priestesses' ritual songs and their ballads were transcribed in a series of collections of verses, *Omoro Soshi* (the Book of Songs), which indicated an achievement of native poetic imagery and came to be recognised as the beginning of Ryukyuan literature.

When this Ryukyu Kingdom became a referential framework for defining a geographical category, it is noteworthy that the so demarcated area includes the Amami islands. Eight islands, which have ten percent of the total population of the Ryukyus, lie in a row on the sea stretching northward from Okinawa Main Island towards the Japanese mainland. In 1266, the Shuri Court received the first tribute from Amami Oshima Island, the largest among them, after which other islands similarly assumed a tributary relationship. These eight islands were politically independent from each other, but they were superintended by a single royal office and regarded as comprising a single category. From local point of view, it is still debatable today whether this category, *Amami* or *Oshima*, is also a group, which has the internal sense of unity.

Thereafter, the Amami islands, however, underwent different history from the rest of the Ryukyus. At the beginning of the seventeenth century,

(see Map 1 and 2).

a new political authority, the Tokugawa shogunate, concluded the Warring State Period in the Japanese mainland and incorporated Satsuma, the southernmost Japanese fiefdom, into its feudal regime. In 1609, Satsuma invaded the Ryukyu Kingdom, annexed Amami and placed the rest of the Ryukyus under its exploitative rule. Nominally, the kingdom continued to exist; its royal institution and tributary relationship with China were not abolished. Practically, however, Satsuma transformed the kingdom into an agricultural colony and, through its control, the kingdom became connected to the Japanese political hierarchy. In the beginning of the modern era of Japan, when the Satsuma feudatory was transformed into Kagoshima prefecture, Amami remained as its part and thereby as separate from Okinawa prefecture, which had replaced the Ryukyu Kingdom. After 1945, the American military control placed the islands of both Amami area and Okinawa prefecture under its single administration and thereby temporarily restored territorial boundaries to their position at the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom. However, because the United States located few armaments on the islands of Amami, it transferred their administration to Japan in 1953, much earlier than the islands of Okinawa prefecture. Amami again became a part of Kagoshima prefecture.

Despite this historical difference in administrative affiliation, linguists, folklorists and anthropologists often presupposed the existence of an 'Okinawa Cultural Area' which encompasses the whole Ryukyu archipelago including the eight islands of Amami (e.g., Hirayama 1968: 7-11, Hokama 1971b: 111, Watanabe 1985: 329). One question that their studies have neglected to ask is whether this category assumes significance for local

social life. It is actually said that both Amamians and Okinawans will be reluctant to include Amami into a single category with Okinawa (Tsuha 1996: 455). It is highly debatable, with respect to Amami, that the social identity of local people is congruous with the boundaries which were suggested by the idea of the 'Okinawa Cultural Area'. Although the administrative division was initially external to local communities and, in a sense, imposed upon them, this externality was forgotten in time and social identity was shaped according to the new administrative criteria. Thus, an Okinawan friend asserted that:

Amami is not with us, though it has similar folk music and the like. Look at school teachers. Over there (i.e., in Amami), teachers are sent from Kagoshima.

Local activists were far more aware of this discrepancy between cultural similarity and social identity than were academics. While Arasaki supposes that Amami and Okinawa form 'a community of an unique culture', he still questions whether it produces strong social ties between them:

Amami and Okinawa potentially have natural affinity and association with each other, but some catalyst is required for their realisation and development (CTS Soshi Toso wo Hirogeru Kai (ed) 1981: 13).

He suggested taking the view that Amami and Okinawa are in the same boat in that both have to protect themselves against the central power of the Japanese state. Both Amami and Okinawa shared the misfortune of military rule in the past, and both are being compelled to accept the risky oil industry in the present. Most likely, the inclusion of Amami became practically necessary by the fact that the anti-CTS activists of Amami formed one of the component groups of the Neighbourhood Act at its beginning stage. Arasaki faced the need of constructing an innovative social identity.

Even though the geographical range of this social identity would, after all, be coterminous with the 'Okinawa Cultural Area', it was new and difficult for local people to put Amami and Okinawa into a single category.

4-3-2: OKINAWA AND UCHINA

On the attempt to define the locality as a united category which is *acceptable for local people*, existing geopolitical categories, such as *Okinawa*, *Uchina* and *Ryukyu*, were so much overloaded with historical implications that they could not be modified or redefined to label this new category. *Okinawa*, the most common at present, probably derives from the name of an inlet of the largest island of the Ryukyus. This inlet was used by an ancient imperial court on the Japanese mainland as a transit base for sailing to China in the eighth century (*Okinawa Dai Hyakka Jiten*). By a synecdoche, the island itself was called *Okinawa* Island. Even after Satsuma seized the control of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the Japanese documents still followed Chinese geographical terminology, and *Okinawa* appeared only alternatively with its Chinese counterpart, *Ryukyu*. There was also an ambiguity whether *Okinawa* as well as *Ryukyu*, by extension, included the other islands. However, after the Ryukyu kingdom was annexed to Japan as Okinawa prefecture, *Okinawa* was authorised as the name of all the islands. This association with Okinawa prefecture makes the term *Okinawa* inapt for incorporating Amami.

Okinawa also did not fit in well with local activism in that it alludes to pro-Japanese attitudes. The lack of care about this implication at once caused a serious slip of the pen. In March 1926, Hirotsu Kazuhiro, a

renowned Japanese novelist, published a controversial novel, *Samayoheru Ryukyu-jin* (A Wandering Ryukyuan). This novel depicts, from its author's point of view, an eccentric Okinawan hawker in Tokyo, who peddled from one literary figure to another and eventually swindled the author himself. The description was free of contempt and generally showed the author's compassion towards Okinawans in poverty which had transformed an urban migrant into a swindler. However, the Okinawa Youth Association immediately complained that this novel might aggravate Japanese prejudice against Okinawans. Complaint was also directed at Hirotsu's use of the term *Ryukyu-jin* (Ryukyuan), which was still commonly used by the general public in mainland Japan but was regarded as derogatory by '*Ryukyu-jin*' themselves. The term *Ryukyu-jin* was attached to the history of social discrimination during the Satsuma's exploitation and to continuing Japanese prejudice against '*Ryukyu-jin*' as 'an inferior *minzoku* or an uncultivated race' (Higa, Shimota & Shinzato 1963: 22, 20). To minimise a sense of social cleavage, the Youth Association referred to their fellows as '*Okinawa-ken-min* (citizens of Okinawa prefecture)' and to the other Japanese people as '*Ta-fuken-jin* (citizens of the other prefectures)'. This terminology has been most favoured by Japanese conformists since then.⁵³ Hirotsu promptly apologised, decided to print no more copies and took the novel off the record of his works. Some forty years later, however, the novel

⁵³ To the best of my knowledge, educated local people tend to use this terminology, whereas old farmers usually call mainland Japan simply 'Japan (*Nihon*)' or 'the mainland (*hondo*)'. The latter is also normally used in the Japanese mass-media. There is also another popular term, 'Japan proper (*naichi*)', and its correlate, 'people of Japan proper (*naichi-ya*)'. The latter, I was taught, has a nuance of detestation against the Japanese. Hokama Shuzen notes that his father disliked this term because of its implication that Okinawa was a colony (Hokama 1971a: 277). However, Okinawa was officially defined as part of 'Japan proper' since it had already been encompassed by the Japanese territory before 1887 when the Constitution of the Japanese Empire was enacted (Oe 1992).

became accessible again. After difficult negotiations with Hirotsu's heirs, the journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* (vol. 17, 1970) republished the novel with the intention of facing up to the dark side of Okinawa-Japan relation. It was a precaution against tendency to romanticise Japan which was rife in Okinawa in the midst of the reversion movement.⁵⁴

In very recent times, *Uchina* and *Uchina-n-chu*, Okinawa and Okinawans in local accent, have come into wide use. Their popularity echoes the revival of native place names in former European colonies for the reason of their political correctness. Thus, *Uchina* is certainly more suitable for local activism than *Okinawa*, but it too cannot include Amami. *Uchina* is inseparable from the 'creation of a new folk category which encompasses the whole territory of Okinawa prefecture' (Tsuha 1996: 454). The 1990s saw the emergence of what may be called 'pan-Okinawan culture', such as the dragon boat race (*hari*) and drum dance for ancestors (*eisa*). The former was originally took place in only a small number of fishery hamlets and the latter was traditionally performed only in the middle part of Okinawa main island. However, the prefectural government began to take the initiative in promoting these local traditions and encouraging their development into the tradition of the prefecture as a whole.⁵⁵ Furthermore, in August 1990, the prefectural government sponsored the 'Meeting of Uchina-n-chu in the World'. In the first half of this century, Okinawa prefecture sent out many

⁵⁴ The novel, the complaint, Hirotsu's reply and the process of persuasion are all contained in this edition. Recently, the novel was also reprinted as a book (Hirotsu & Nakahodo 1994).

⁵⁵ In Miyako, for instance, the dragon boat race used to be a special event which was conducted merely by a few fishery hamlets, but was introduced to the other farming area in the early 1990s. Nowadays, it is one of the most popular public events in many communities that have actually few professional fishermen. As for Okinawan drum dance, I observed pupils practising it in a school ground in the Ueno Primary School in the late 1990s. The teacher instructor told me that drum dance was introduced to Miyako in the early 1990s under the guidance of the prefectural government.

migrants to the Pacific islands and the two American continents. Due to its scanty farm land and the lack of appropriate agricultural policies, Okinawa surpassed other prefectures in the ratio of foreign migrants to prefectural citizens. The Meeting of Uchina-n-chu invited the descendants of those migrants and gave them an opportunity for social exchange with people of their parents' or grandparents' homeland. Thus, a civic community, which used to be defined in terms of an administrative unit, is now changing its quality and transforming itself into an ethnic community, which has a shared culture and reproduces itself through generations (cf. Tsuha 1996: 454). Amami is completely left behind in this emergence of an ethnic community, the *Uchina-n-chu*.

4-3-3: RYUKYU AND PERIPHERAL ISLANDS⁵⁶

Ryukyu can be a third option. It was a Chinese name which originally referred to both the Ryukyu archipelago and Taiwan. It became an official name of the former when the Ryukyu Kingdom gained recognition by the Chinese empire, but it was replaced by *Okinawa* when the kingdom was annexed to Japan. After 1945, under the American control, *Ryukyu* was again authorised and revived in the name of American-initiated institutes such as the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, the University of Ryukyu, the Bank of Ryukyu, the Ryukyu-America Culture Centres and so on. Many reports touched upon the incongruity felt by local people when they faced this revival (e.g., Higaonnna 1957: 22-23, see also Beillevaire

⁵⁶ I obtained the first incentive to write this section from a conversation with Dr Richard Siddle, at Sheffield University. After his lecture at Nissan Institute, Oxford, in the spring of 1999, I asked him what the major difference between the situation of Ainu and that of Okinawans. He promptly replied,

1999 note 5). Reversionists, in fact, persisted in using *Okinawa* despite the fact that there was not such a political entity during the American administration. In contrast, Okinawan nationalists preferred *Ryukyu*. *Ryukyu* may seem to be most suitable for local activism because it connotes an anti-Japanese stance and has less obvious difficulty in covering Amami. However, while its direct link with the Ryukyu Kingdom implied that the user took distance from Japan, a particular dimension of this kingdom actually made *Ryukyu* incompatible with the populist orientation of the Neighbourhood Act. In this dimension, the Ryukyu Kingdom is understood as the control of the regional central power, Shuri Court, over social peripheries, rural communities and remote islands.

Since the segmentary form of categorisation is widely observed everywhere in the world, there may seem nothing special about the fact that the Ryukyus looks like a seamless unity in relation to the outsiders while it actually consists of conflicting groups within. However, it is an empirical question to ask as to which level of segment assume vital importance for local social life. In the case of the Ryukyus, the primary axis of social life seems to be island groups. In customary terminology, the largest geographical categories do not go beyond these island groups; from the north-east to the south-west, Amami, 'Okinawa'⁵⁷, Miyako and Yaeyama. More than eighty percent of the 1.4 million people of the Ryukyus live on Okinawa Main Island. Because of an ever increasing influx of people from the other islands, its middle part and the prefectural capital, Naha, are

with referring to Miyakoan discontent, that there is no such integrated group as 'Okinawans' in the way that Ainu can be said to exist.

⁵⁷ Here, 'Okinawa' in inverted commas indicates Okinawa main island and its dependency islets, distinguished from the usage of the term referring to the islands of Okinawa prefecture.

densely populated and share nearly sixty percent of that total population. Fifty-five thousand people inhabit Miyako and one hundred and thirty-five thousands people inhabit Amami. In these two island groups, native population constitute the overwhelming majority. In contrast, Yaeyama has received many settlers in its modern history. People came from Miyako and 'Okinawa' to reclaim mountainous islands, to be apprenticed in fishery bases or to be employed in the pineapple industry. Its forty-eight thousand inhabitants consist largely of these domestic migrants and their descendants. This demographic constitution is expressed, in jest, as the 'Yaeyaman United States (*Yaeyama Gasshukoku*)'. Amami, Okinawa, Miyako and Yaeyama each has its regional centre of politics and economics; Naze, Naha, Hirara and Ishigaki. The boundary of social network is in many respects drawn on the boundary of each island group.⁵⁸

In historical terms, stress on the level of the whole Ryukyus tended to reaffirm the hegemonic power of the Shuri Court. Subjugated island groups may have resented at being represented by the Ryukyu Kingdom since it remains within the realm of possibility that they understood royal rule as foreign domination. In the late fourteenth century, a number of mutually independent warlords appeared in Miyako and Yaeyama, and some of them came to pay a tribute to the Shuri Court. Miyako spontaneously had a united political power over its island group through coalition of two leading warlords. From this united base, it conquered Yaeyama with the support of the Shuri Court at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Miyako and Yaeyama thereafter came under the influence of the Shuri Court, but direct

⁵⁸ The figures are based on a survey conducted by the prefectural government in 1998 (*Okinawa Times* 30 Nov. 1998).

royal rule started a century later, when Satsuma levied taxation on them and tax collectors began to be dispatched from 'Okinawa'. From the Miyakoans' point of view, 'Okinawan' kings and royal officers were no less their rulers than Satsuma. In a certain situation, therefore, the distance between Miyako and 'Okinawa' can be greater than the distance between the Ryukyus and Japan. In the final years of the kingdom, unjust intermediary exploitation by 'Okinawan' royal officials became so prevalent in Miyako that it endangered the survival of the islanders. Under these circumstances, Namihira Keikyo, a native local officer, secretly wrote a complaint to Satsuma and appealed for direct Japanese rule over Miyako. In this appeal, Namihira claimed that:

Miyako originally had its independence from Okinawa. Despite its being a dependency of the Ryukyu Kingdom, Miyakoan language is rather closer to Japanese and Miyakoans have ancestry more common to Japanese people. All islanders thus hope to belong to Japan (Kiyomura 1976: 229-230).

This confidential appeal leaked out and he was executed for treason against the kingdom. This violation of the hierarchy of segmentary categorisation clearly shows that the island groups had primary importance in the social identity of Miyako islanders and that the upper category, the whole Ryukyu archipelago, had relatively small significance. It may be undeniable that Namihira's assertion on linguistic proximity, common ancestry and a local public opinion was a case of hyperbolic for the purpose of gaining Japanese recognition. However, even in the 1990s, there were social conditions in which Miyakoan newspaper accepted a contribution which appealed for the

construction of a monument in commemoration of this heroic local officer at the site of his execution.⁵⁹

The mainstream Okinawans' historical predominance in the Ryukyus lingers on their contemptuous attitudes towards people from remote islands, especially Miyakoans. For instance, in Yomitan, March 1998, Higa Toyomitsu showed his film work on provincial folk tales narrated by native speakers. As soon as an old Miyakoan woman appeared on screen, some fifty people of the audience, mostly mainstream Okinawans, began to make fun of her incomprehensible language or, according to one of the audience, the 'mumbling of a barbarian'. In other cases, another old Miyakoan woman heard that Miyako islanders were said to be the 'descendants of a dog', and a Miyakoan student in Naha wondered whether he had been discriminated against when a grocery shop owner had turned down his application for a part-time job immediately after identifying his home-island. Internal disunity continues to exist even when 'Okinawa' and Miyako are expected to unite with each other in relation to Japan. The 1996 Prefectural Referendum on the Issue of Downsizing Military Bases received a considerable public attention. Despite prominent coverage in local as well as Japanese media, Miyakoan voters showed low turnout. It seems to derive from the little sense of unity they felt with 'Okinawa'; many times, I heard, Miyakoans say, 'The base issue had nothing to do with us, we don't have bases'. From the Miyakoans' point of view, a general Okinawan issue

⁵⁹ The contribution was made by a member of Hirara City Assembly to *Miyako Shimpō* (18 and 19 May 1997). Further details of Namihira's incident, see Kiyomura 1976: 229-131 and Kamiesu 1971. Even today, ordinary Miyakoans sometimes assert, at least in front of their Japanese friend, that their local language is more similar to Japanese than 'Okinawan' which is unintelligible for them, or that their ancestors came from Japan without mentioning 'Okinawans'. This can be understood as a case of what Eric Hobsbawm calls the 'Shetland effect' (Hobsbawm 1977).

is often merely a specific issue of Okinawa Main Island to which they are largely indifferent.⁶⁰

How then is it justifiable to put all the islands into a single category? Tsuha Takashi points to the fact that the islands share a common focal point in the term by which they call mainland Japan:

If we directly find demarcation between oneself and others in We-consciousness, the islands will be divided into pieces. However, if we find demarcation in opposition to a folk concept, *yamato*, and look at it through this medium, the islands will form a continuum as the habitat of people who are not included in *yamato* (Tsuha 1996: 458).

Yamato is associated with the name of a basin in which the ancient imperial court was established, and refers to mainstream Japanese (*Yamato minzoku*). By calling mainland Japan *yamato*, the people of the Ryukyus define themselves *not* as bearing the dominant Japanese culture. However, Tsuha rightly points out, the continuity of anti-*yamato* consciousness is not necessarily recognised by local people themselves (Tsuha 1996: 457-458). Although this anti-*yamato* consciousness is shared by the inhabitants of the whole Ryukyus, it usually remains potential that they unite themselves on the basis of this shared consciousness. Okinawan nationalism employs the memory of the Ryukyu Kingdom to fulfil this potentiality and tries to consolidate a sense of unity. However, Okinawan nationalism cannot thereby avoid concealing the hegemony of the Shuri Court in the past and the predominance of the mainstream Okinawans in the present. The

⁶⁰ 59 percent of eligible voters went to the polls. 89 percent of these actual voters balloted for downsizing of military bases. In Miyako, Hirara city shows 52 percent voting rate, which is the lowest among the ten cities of Okinawa (average 58 percent). Gusukube town (40 percent), Shimoji town (47 percent), Ueno village (32 percent), Tarama village (45 percent) show remarkably low rate. Only Irabu town (68 percent) shows higher rate than the prefectural average (59 percent). I heard from a local newspaper journalist that, because the town mayor of Irabu island needed the prefectural government's support for his lobby activity for the construction of a bridge to Miyako island, he systematically mobilised town citizens for voting.

Neighbourhood Act also expects anti-*yamato* consciousness to provide cohesion in diverse communities, but tries to avoid creating too strong a solidarity so that it does not harm the autonomous status of individual communities. Existing geopolitical categories, *Okinawa*, *Uchina* and *Ryukyu*, were too much loaded with historical implications to express this rather innovative quality of the locality, that is, non-centralised island communities associated by anti-*yamato* consciousness. Arasaki and his fellow activists thus welcomed a neologism, the Ryukyuan Arc, which made up for this deficiency of customary language.

4-4: DISCOURSE ON JAPONESIA

4-4-1: JAPONESIA WRITERS

What then is the Ryukyuan Arc? To answer this question, it is necessary to understand the so-called 'Discourse on Japonesia' in which the concept of the Ryukyuan Arc plays an integral part. The late 1960s and the early 1970s saw a boom of Okinawa-related publications in Japan. Many writers, journalists and artists suddenly started to write not only about the reversion at hand but also about various aspects of local culture.⁶¹ Most of these essays were intended for readers in mainland Japan, but there were some writers who encouraged local people to wrestle with the confusion of the reversion movement in its final stage. Kawamitsu Shinichi recognised three writers as highly influential in shaping anti-reversionism:

In the late 1960s, we felt a sense of inadequacy at living an inferior culture of a fringe area, we felt resentment at the [Japanese] mainland which had betrayed our yearning for an ideal motherland, and we were busily moving about harbouring a collective psycho-pathological complex or political illness,

⁶¹ A list of sociological publications concerning Okinawa and a brief analysis of its booms, see Mashiko 1995.

that is, reversionism. In this situation, we were very much encouraged by Mr. Shimao's discourse on 'Japonesia', Mr. Yoshimoto's 'Reason of an Insubordinate People (*I-zoku no Ronri*)' and Mr. Tanigawa's series of essays on Okinawa (Kawamitsu 1987: 20).

These three Japanese writers, Shimao Toshio, Yoshimoto Takaaki and Tanigawa Kenichi, not only inspired anti-reversionists through innovative ideas but also individually developed personal communication with them.

A fortuitous event in his private life connected Shimao Toshio, a celebrated novelist, with the Ryukyus.⁶² After studying Central Asian history, Shimao became a naval petty officer and eventually went to the final front of the Pacific War. On the day when Japan was defeated, he was standing at a base of suicide-attack torpedo boats on a remote island of Amami. After the war he returned to Japan, but his wife, whom he had met on the island, began to suffer from mental illness and his family went back to her home island Amami for recuperation. As the chief librarian of the Amami Branch of the Kagoshima Prefectural Library, he stayed there for two decades starting in November 1955, during which he wrote about local life, in addition to creating artistic literary works. A few trips to Okinawa under the American administration enabled him to widen the topic of essays to its islands, to become a popular contributor in Okinawan newspapers and to be acquainted with local cultured persons. He established close friendships with, among others, anti-reversionists, such as Arakawa Akira, Kawamitsu Shinichi and Okamoto Ketoku and, as an adviser, Shimao involved himself in their journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku* in the 1970s.

⁶² In writing about Shimao, Philip Gabriel's recent analyses of his life and works (including literary novels) was useful. I am indebted to Dr Roger Goodman, at Oxford University, not only drawing my attention to these analyses but also for suggesting me the significance of Shimao's discourse on Japonesia for my study of Okinawan activists.

The word which Shimao coined, Japonesia (*Yaponesia*), is a compound of 'Japan' and 'nesia' meaning islands, as in Micronesia, Polynesia, Melanesia or Indonesia. It refers to an innovative geopolitical perception of the Japanese archipelago, which dawned upon him one day in early 1960s when he gazed at a map:

It is true that the Japanese islands are part of the [Eurasian] Continent and are only a little bit apart from it. However, it cannot be denied, on the other side, that they evidently belong to a group of islands which scatter over the large South Pacific and form a noticeable shape among these islands (Shimao 1983a: 192).

Beneath the dominant narratives on Japan, seen as a neighbour state of China and defined in terms of cultural influence from continental Asia, Shimao discovers 'another Japan', a Pacific island country, which rather shows affinity with other Oceanic islands. By regarding this Pacific aspect as fundamental, he sets up a view point from which Amami is no longer marginalised as a fringe area, but highly regarded as an area which best preserves this essential Japan. After his first trip to 'Okinawa', Miyako and Yaeyama, November 1964, Shimao was convinced that the same view could generally be applied to the whole Ryukyus:

I can now confirm my image of the Southern Islands which I expected but was not yet sure. That is, it is possible to categorise those islands, which scatter between Kagoshima and Taiwan, into a single group, to observe it as the 'Ryukyuan Arc' and to have a fresh view of Japanese culture by investigating these islands in this particular way (Shimao 1983b: 45-46).

In the Ryukyuan Arc, he observed, the Pacific characteristics were so much more prominent as the Ryukyuan Arc was not subject to the influence of continental Asia.

However, in the late 1960s, Shimao admitted, on many occasions, that he could no longer write about the Ryukyus as easily as before.

According his self-analysis, he was wondering whether he should describe the Ryukyus as part of Japan or as separable from it. At that time, Japanese influence already became rife in Okinawa, which was going to re-enter Japan within several years. Emphasis on the Japanese identity of the Ryukyuan Arc was liable to facilitate assimilationism and support the resulting uniformity, of which Shimao had strongly criticised mainland Japan since the 1950s. He repented of having said too loudly that the Ryukyuan Arc had the features of Japan, and determined instead to delve into the uniqueness of the Ryukyuan Arc (Shimao 1983b: 114). It is noteworthy that, in this search for local uniqueness, Shimao clearly distinguishes between the characteristics of the Ryukyuan Arc and those of Okinawa. The Ryukyuan Arc refers to an area in which local communities are similar with one another but each community still retains its respective peculiarity. Shimao's Okinawa, on the other hand, means the geographically same area but understood as represented by the Shuri Court of the Ryukyu Kingdom (Shimao 1983b: 103-104). This sensitivity to internal variety and stratification came from his experience in Amami, where he had met with strong disapproval from local people when he said in a public talk that Amami belonged to *Ryukyu*. A neologism of the Ryukyuan Arc was the last resort in attempting to capture diversity within the unity of the Ryukyus after he had employed several other terms such as *Okinawa* in quotation marks, *Minami* (the South), *Ryukyu* or *Nanto* (the Southern Islands).⁶³

⁶³ He mentioned this Amamians' disagreement in many places (e.g., Shimao, Arakawa, Kawamitsu and Okamoto 1987: 113). Alternative terms changed from '*Okinawa*' (1954), through *Minami* (1958), *Ryukyu* (1961) and *Nanto* (1962) to *Ryukyu-ko* (see respectively Shimao 1983: 11, 86, 192, 205).

This careful thinking prevented Shimao from viewing Japan as a homogeneous entity too. The confirmation of the internal diversity of the Ryukyuan Arc led him to notice that mainland Japan also consists of respectively unique provinces. He began to mention Ainu and the Northeast (*Tohoku*). As one of the 'Northeasterners (*Tohoku-jin*)', who also have a sense of distance to the mainstream Japanese, he tried to define a common problem underlying both the Ryukyus and the Northeast (e.g., Shimao 1983b: 112-115). This focus deepened his insight into Japanese society. Previously, Shimao had assumed that mainland Japan was in fact uniform, and its criticism had been the driving force behind his essays on the Ryukyus. However, when he began to perceive internal diversity within mainland Japan, its uniformity became conceived in terms of the power which covered this actual diversity and created an illusion of unity. In concrete terms, it was the power exercised by a small number of people who had politically or culturally dominated the Japanese archipelago. Shimao realised that the so-called history of Japan was merely the record of these political elite's activities, and that the history unfairly silenced the majority of the inhabitants of the archipelago who actually lived the equally legitimate histories of their own (e.g., 1983b: 167-168, 210, 234-236). In short, after late 1960s, Shimao began to address an ideological problem of the central power of the state which marginalised its peripheral regions.

At this point, Tanigawa Kenichi contributed a great deal to the refinement of Shimao's idea and its wider dissemination. Arakawa Akira acknowledged that, while Shimao proposed 'Japonesia' which he had intuitively perceived in a literary man's manner, Tanigawa ideologically

developed it into an articulated concept (Arakawa 1970: 42, 43). Until the end of the 1960s, Shimao's essays on Japonesia were mainly published in the minor media, mostly local newspaper or local governments' publications. Even his monumental essay, *Yaponesia no Nekko* (The Root of Japonesia) (1961), in which the term 'Japonesia' had been used for the first time, firstly appeared in a tiny bulletin monthly issued by the editorial of a collection of the world literature. Tanigawa introduced Shimao's essays to a wider Japanese readership, even to the extent that Shimao himself was surprised at the wide currency of his coinage 'Japonesia' (Shimao (ed) 1977: 233). Tanigawa started visiting Okinawa as late as February 1969, but he published some thirty popular essays within the next couple of years either side of the 1972 reversion. At the same time, as the talented editor of an authoritative magazine, Tanigawa had already established a certain influence in publishing circles. He started editing many collections of essays on Okinawan culture and society, among which *Okinawa no Shiso* (Okinawa's Thoughts) (1970b) mainly contained contributions from anti-reversionists, such as Arakawa, Kawamitsu and Okamoto. Tanigawa realised the significance of these young activists as early as their anti-reversionism had just began to take its shape.

Tanigawa's unique approach to Okinawa led him to pay prompt attention to the challenge of anti-reversionists against a conventional sense of value which sustained problematic relationship between the centre and peripheries. From the beginning of his work on the Ryukyus, Tanigawa focused on remote islands. He started his field trip with data collection about poll-tax which the Shuri Court levied on the people of Miyako and

Yaeyama. This pre-modern style taxation continued even in Okinawa prefecture until 1903 when Miyakoan farmers succeeded in sending a petitioner to the Japanese Diet. Tanigawa's interview with its survivors draw a picture of people who suffered from excessively heavy taxes and eventually came up against local government. Before his work (Tanigawa 1970a, 1970b) this poll-tax system had attracted little neither academic nor journalistic interest. Tanigawa found the reason for this ignorance in mainstream Okinawans' attitudes towards Miyako and Yaeyama:

Whereas these people of Okinawa Main Island loudly criticise mainland Japan for its discrimination against themselves, they, without hesitation, discriminate against the Front Islands (*Saki-shima*) consisting of Miyako and Yaeyama, and treat them as if they were Okinawa's colonies (Tanigawa 1981: 335).

Just as Shimao became aware of the plurality of the Ryukyus by his experience in another periphery, Amami, Tanigawa had a similar opportunity to realise the lack of unity in his research on Miyako and its people who were 'said to be a different *minzoku* and looked down upon by the mainstream Okinawans' (Tanigawa 1981: 342).

In comparison with Shimao, Tanigawa more directly addressed the issue of the central power of the state. He metaphorically defined Japonesia as a place where multiple historical 'strands' coexisted in their natural state. In contrast, Japan was forcibly created by twisting these strands into a single 'thread' (Tanigawa 1996: 64, 70). In concrete terms, Japonesia and Japan are distinguishable from each other with respect to social classes and temporal order. Tanigawa understands Japonesia as inhabited by 'ordinary people whose concerns do not go beyond their own life', and argues that

their multi-lineal history began and will last independently of a Japanese state:

Japonesia has existed since the prehistoric era in which the society of the Japanese archipelago had no state system or power holder, it was not yet called Japan and it was divided into hundreds of countries (Tanigawa 1981: 340).

In this view, Japan amounts to a disturbing uniformity which the ruling class deceptively created by coalescing heterogeneous histories of independent provinces into a history of the homogeneous state (1996: 68, 70).

Yoshimoto Takaaki, a critic known as an ideological leader of Japanese New Left activists, developed discourse on Japonesia particularly on grounds of his opposition to the Emperor system of Japan. In the late 1960s when he started discussing Okinawan issues, he received guidance from his old friend, Shimao, with whom he had formed a group of progressive writers in the early 1950s (Yoshimoto 1975: 251-256). When Yoshimoto learned Shimao's idea of Japonesia, that is, another Japan existing underneath of the Japanese state, he drew analogy with the two early cultures discovered in the Japanese archipelago. He understands that Japonesia corresponds to Jomon culture while the Japanese state originates from Yayoi culture. Jomon (BC 8,000-BC 300) designates a Neolithic culture of hunters and gatherers, which was famous for a unique straw-rope pattern of wares. This distinctive Jomon pottery has been excavated all over the archipelago including the Kurils and the Ryukyus. Yayoi (BC 300-AD 300), on the other hand, designates a culture of agrarians, which is usually identified by rice-cultivation, the use of metal artefacts and quality pottery. Their spread is observed only in the central part of the Japanese

mainland and there is evidence that Yayoi culture diffused from Korea or continental China. The Japanese imperial family was likely to have emerged from the leaders of the Yayoi people and developed its rule into an ancient state. Based on this assumption, Yoshimoto argues that the Emperors have to be regarded as strangers by the majority of Japanese people and the history of the imperial state has to be understood as concerned with merely a small part of the society of the Japanese archipelago. In other words, he tries to decentralise state power which has come to represent the space and time of the whole archipelago. The Ryukyus have mostly been ignored by this state power, but, if it turns out that they preserve an 'old stratum' or 'remnants of old customs' before the introduction of Yayoi culture, that is, the characteristics of Jomon culture, the Ryukyus will be understood as actually representing the geographically, historically and demographically major part of the society of the Japanese archipelago (Yoshimoto 1978: 201).⁶⁴

4-4-2: AN APPROPRIATION OF FOLKLORE STUDIES

There are certain features which are shared by Shimao, Tanigawa and Yoshimoto. Firstly, the driving force behind their works was less scholarly interest than practical concern about the status of Okinawa within Japan. In other words, these Japonesia writers wanted less to deepen the understanding of Japanese or Okinawan history and folklore than to construct an ideology which can redefine Okinawa-Japan relation so as to

⁶⁴ Although Yoshimoto continuously looked for the potential ideological power of Okinawa into which he had had a insight in the late 1960s, his first visit to Okinawa was as late as December 1989. In addition to research activities, he gave a public lecture and had exchange with local intellectuals (Takara 1996: 82).

eliminate the marginalisation of Okinawa. Thus Shimao clearly denies his intention to explore 'anything about blood relationship' and 'cultural exchanges between Oceania and Japan' (Shimao 1983b: 117) even if he called attention to the ignored Pacific characteristics of Japan. For the same reason, even when the three writers handled more familiar material, their discussion tended to be speculative or even dogmatic. For instance, all of these writers wrote much about popular tradition of female possession cult (e.g., Shimao 1983a: 385-399; Tanigawa 1971a, 1971b; Yoshimoto 1968, 1972). Tanigawa's works, which culminates in his *Nanto Bungaku Hassei Ron* (A Theory of the Origin of the Southern Islands Literature) (1991), are based on the assumption that epics recited by spiritually possessed local women show what Japanese literature looked like at its emergence in the remote past. Japanese literature is usually thought of as beginning with *Kojiki* (AD 712) and *Nihon Shoki* (AD 720), the oldest documents into which the ancient imperial court transcribed myths and orally transmitted histories. Tanigawa, however, argues that these myths and legends tell about a much later state of affairs, since the original versions must have been modified to justify the sovereignty of the Emperors. Yoshimoto (1968, 1972) also put forward a similar interpretation but with a slightly different focus. He focuses on a particular principle of social organisation, the spiritual predominance of the sisters over their brothers, which structures local communities when female possession cult takes institutionalised forms. A myth of an early generation of the imperial family told of a spiritually superior sister controlling her king brother. Yoshimoto interprets this as indicating a particular type of social organisation which used to be pervasive

in the Japanese archipelago before the imperial court gained its hegemony over the islands. He supports this interpretation by referring to the fact that the Ryukyu Kingdom accorded the king's 'sister' the highest religious post and that women have the spiritual authority over men in contemporary Okinawan communities. In short, in their highly hypothetical social evolutionist framework, Tanigawa and Yoshimoto presumed that Okinawan customs date back to the further past than the beginning of imperial history.

Because of their indifference to systematic data collection and analysis, the three writers seem to stand close to the pioneers of Okinawan studies, such as Yanagita Kunio and Origuchi Shinobu, who speculated on the essential Japan and attempted to reconstruct unwritten ancient Japanese society from Okinawan material. However, they less *follow* the works of those celebrated folklorists than *appropriate* them. Those pioneers discovered, in language spoken in the Ryukyus, certain phonemes, words and styles which had been transcribed in old Japanese documents but were no longer in use in contemporary Japan. Then, generalising from these linguistic similarities, they fixed the master interpretative framework, 'Ryukyu as the mirror of ancient Japan'.⁶⁵ Special attention should be paid to these folklorists' presupposition that the history of the Japanese state is tantamount to the history of the Japanese archipelago.⁶⁶ Quite different from the folklorists who worked within the boundary of this single history of Japan, Japanesia writers argue that the state history does not stand for the society of the Japanese archipelago, which has many different but equally

⁶⁵ This well-known phrase was formulated by Edmund Simon, a human geographer, in the 1910s, originally as 'Riukiu, ein Spiegel feur Alt-Japan'. He is said to have meant by this the Ryukyus preserved not ancient but just pre-modern Japanese way of life (Kreiner 1977: 187, 193).

⁶⁶ Joseph Kreiner (1974) offers a criticism of Japanese folklore studies in this respect.

legitimate histories. They assume that the essential Japan is heterogeneous assembly of disparate communities, and argue that the hegemonic imperial court has spoiled the 'natural' state of being. By the use of Okinawan material, both folklorists and Japonesia writers speculate on Japanese society preceding the stage which was described in the available oldest historical documents. Nevertheless, whereas the folklorists reconstruct such essential Japan and regard it as *continuing* to the state history, Japonesia writers do the same but regard it as *opposing* to the state history.

Recent criticism of Japanese folklore studies neglected this difference between Japonesia writers and folklorists in the definition of the essential Japan. In his influential article, *Nanto Ideology no Hasei* (The Emergence of the Southern Islands Ideology), firstly published in 1990, Murai Osamu argues that folklorists developed the Common Ancestry Theory between Okinawa and Japan so that Japan could 'justify her conquest and rule over Okinawa'. The Southern Island (*Nanto*) has occasionally been used in the Japanese literary tradition to vaguely refer to the Ryukyus and was adapted to label this geographical area in the 1920s when Okinawan studies were established in humanities in Japanese academia. Folklorists particularly preferred this term, to *Ryukyu* or *Okinawa*, since it seemed to them to have politically neutral value and to indicate that their works were exclusively concerned with cultural affairs (Kano 1993: 210-211). However, Murai argues that, while folklorists concentrated on discovering languages, customs and social organisations comparable with ancient Japan, they ignored modern history, in which Japan forced Okinawa into submission. Folklorists also neglected to explore the actually existing difference, in terms

of which Japan's annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom could have been defined not as re-unification but as aggression. In short, although folklorists regarded their studies as unpolitical, they actually functioned as an ideology which concealed Japan's political domination over Okinawa.⁶⁷

Admittedly, Shimao, Tanigawa and Yoshimoto also use *Nanto*, as an alternative to the Ryukyuan Arc, especially when they are talking about local culture. However, contrary to Murai's indiscriminate criticism, their *Nanto* does not support the uniqueness of Japan. Japonesia writers discuss *Nanto* as the window to the society of the Japanese archipelago which is potentially open to the Pacific islands but has been forcibly integrated into a Japanese nation-state. Murai also misreads Japonesia writers when he criticises their *Nanto* as concealing contemporary 'colonial relations' which was reflected in the controversial 1972 reversion, in the military bases imposed by the Japanese government and in excessive tourist development promoted by the Japanese companies. The fact was the flat opposite. Discourse on Japonesia attracted attention in the reversion movement and gained popularity in the opposition movement against military bases and tourist development. To some extent, Murai's hasty criticism may be the consequence of his disinterest in actual local society (Shinjo 1993: 125). However, it seems to come much more from his ignorance of the fact that Japonesia writers *appropriated* the Common Ancestry Theory rather than postulated, supported or conceded it. It also comes from his inflexible, somewhat Okinawan nationalistic view, which regards the Ryukyus as a

⁶⁷ In a recent special issue on Okinawan studies of the Japanese Journal of Ethnology, Murai's work is regarded as an Okinawan case of Orientalism critique (*Minzokugaku Kenkyu* vol. 61 no. 3, 1996). Although it was certainly a case of Orientalist thought, his exclusive reference to Edward Said seems inappropriate since Said's 'Orientalism' rather has to do with the construction of Otherness.

predetermined independent entity, as shown by his unhesitating use of 'conquest', 'colonialism' and 'aggression' to describe Okinawa-Japan relations.

Lastly, it has to be made explicit that political escapism was not involved in the fact that Japonesia writers distanced themselves from policy-making and electoral politics. At first glance, their lack of immediate concern with conventional politics may seem to have derived from the special taste of the literati or, as Murai (1995: 14-15) points out, from the habitual force of established academic discipline of folklore. However, Japonesia writers were actually *positively* arguing that it was useless to debate national policies without taking local culture into account. In Yoshimoto's view, any programmatic political end is irrelevant to the essential problem. Reversion, or even the unlikely complete removal of military bases, would not change the present status of Okinawa, a poor and shabby administrative unit left ignored in a fringe area of Japan. A gleam of hope will come only if Okinawa positively values its position in Japan and thereby overthrows the historical grounds for the Japanese state (Yoshimoto 1978: 201-202). Tanigawa also argues for the positive valuation of being a periphery. He does not thereby romanticise rural life but recognises peripheral people as those most knowledgeable about the deceptive unity of the nation-state or any other modern social collectivity. Tanigawa argues that people in a periphery instinctively know, even though they do not articulate it, how the central power fabricates its importance through the interplay of the majority's discrimination and prejudice, on the one hand, and the minority's assimilationism and inferiority complex, on the other hand. To explore this

visible range, which he calls the 'view from a periphery' in opposition to the blind 'view from the centre', Tanigawa pushed himself further and further to remote islands (Tanigawa 1981: 350-351).

4-5: THE RYUKYUAN ARC IN PRACTICE

4-5-1: REINTERPRETATIONS OF THE ANNEXATION

Throughout the 1980s, local politics was led by the conservative camp, which took a conciliatory attitude towards the Japanese government. Japanese conformity pervaded Okinawan society. In December 1978, a Liberal Democrat candidate, Nishime Junji, won a gubernatorial election. In the preceding years, the reformist prefectural government had been in an obvious predicament. For instance, on the CTS trial, governor Yara Chyobyō had to defend himself against the people who had elected him to that position. Asato Seishin, who initiated the Kin Bay Protection Act, had at once become a reformist candidate for local politician with the intention of supporting Yara. Reformist organisations fell into a contradiction. Local trade unions supported the Kin Bay Protection Act on the one hand, but they also remained to be organised favourable voters for the reformist government on the other hand. Due to these inconsistencies, the so-called 'Reign of Reformist Parties' eventually collapsed. The lost reformist camp, however, was disentangled from utilitarian politics and could take a cool view of Okinawa-Japan relations. Meanwhile, as young local activists aged, they gradually increased their social influence, and became evident in the reformist camp in this decade of rehabilitation. At the same time, their activities began to take more often the form of symposia, publication and

cultural festivals than strikes, rallies and demonstrations. The keynote was that their home islands must counter the central power of the state, which was trying to complete unification, but without simplistic recourse to the unification of the islands themselves. In other words, they were searching for a vision to construct, or restore, the Ryukyuan Arc in practical terms, which had been suggested by Japanesia writers only in ideological terms.

The start of the conservative prefectural government coincided with the hundredth anniversary of the 'Management of Ryukyu (*Ryukyu Shobun*)', by which the Ryukyu Kingdom had been abolished and annexed to Japan. Historians' discussions on the Management had long employed a simple framework at bottom; if the people of the Ryukyus are essentially Japanese, the Management will be interpreted as restoration, or, if they are a separate population, it will be interpreted as Japan's aggression. This framework basically presupposes that there is such a fixed population as the Japanese. Thus Higa Shuncho was puzzled as to why he had harboured ill feeling towards Japan's assimilation of Taiwan and Korea while he had entertained antipathy against Japan's dissimilation of Ryukyu. Obviously, this puzzlement was caused by the simple fact that he regarded the Japanese as a fixed people which included the population of Ryukyu but excluded Taiwanese and Koreans. For a half century ending with the Second World War, restoration was the dominant interpretation. Ifa Fuyu asserted that the Management was liberation from Satsuma's 'slavery' (Ifa 1974a: 493). Satsuma was criticised, not only because its exploitation had left Ryukyuans in a backward civilisation, but also because its dissimilation policies, such as the prohibition of wearing Japanese cloths, had fabricated the image of

the non-Japanese 'Ryukyans'. Thus, in post-Management Okinawa, civilisation was easily equated with Japanisation. This equation produced odd phenomena; for example, whereas Japanese mainlanders were encouraged to discard Japanese cloths on the pretext of promoting modernisation, Okinawans were urged to wear them for the same purpose. In these circumstances, Ifa made every effort to dispel the falsified image of a non-Japanese people.

Many careful readers, however, point to Ifa's hidden utilitarianism.⁶⁸ In the 1920s, his study began to put noticeable stress on lost Japanese culture remaining in the Ryukyus. Accordingly, *Ryukyu* faded from his usage to be replaced by *Nanto*, which implied that Okinawa was less autonomous. This was at a time when Okinawa was in a critical economic depression and desperately wanted Japan's financial aid (Kano 1993: 212-228). Similar utilitarianism took place again in much recent history. Reversionists asserted Japanese identity for gaining Japan's help to get rid of the American control. Thus they can explain why reversionists interpreted the Management as ethnic unification (*minzoku toitsu*). The justice of accompanied military threat came into question, but the annexation itself was thought of as an inevitable course of history which, sooner or later, would have naturally happened. At that time, reversionists

⁶⁸ For interpretations of Ifa's thought, see Kaneshiro and Takara 1972, Hokama 1972, Kano 1993, Arakawa 1981: 110-124, Oguma 1999: 280-319. They point to ambivalence which his works displayed until the 1920s economic depression; whether he supported assimilation into Japan by constructing the Common Ancestry Theory or he asserted independent Ryukyu *minzoku*, his coinage, by highly praising the glorious Ryukyu Kingdom. While the other studies understand this ambivalence as an expedient and assume the existence of his psychological conflict therein, Oguma's recent analysis shows that certain consistency existed behind this ambivalence between assimilation and separation.

regarded the lack of sense of ethnic solidarity as the main obstacle of the reversion movement.

It is noteworthy that reversionists not simply criticised that the mainlanders were indifferent with Okinawa, but also placed the reversion movement in the context of more general critique that Japanese society had lost nationalism and fell into egoistic fragmentation (Higa, Shimota & Shinzato 1963: 12, 14). Whereas the former top-down nationalism (*kokka-shugi* or *cho-kokka-shugi*), propagated by the state authorities, was condemned as vicious, the bottom-up nationalism (*minzoku-shugi* or *kokumin-shugi*), arising from within the people themselves, was encouraged in the Japanese press and academia during the 1950s and 1960s (Oguma 1999: 530). As long as reversionists expected this 'rightful ethnic solidarity' (Nakano & Arasaki 1965: 11) or 'spontaneous nationalism' (Nanpo Doho Engo Kai (ed) 1972: 179) to 'recapture' Okinawa from the American control, they could not thoroughly disapprove of the Management. Shinzato Keiji, a leading Okinawan historian of this period, went as far as to say that 'it is no less a non-sense than to think of an "independent Manchuria" to argue that the Ryukyu Kingdom is an independent country' (*Nihon Dokusho Shinbun* 24 Jun. 1963). In the view of this reversionist historian, an independent Ryukyu kingdom is as fallacious as a puppet state which was established by the Japanese militarists in Northeast China in the 1930s.

At the end of the 1960s, when it became sure that reversion would not necessarily be advantageous for Okinawa, there was a resurgence of Okinawan nationalism, which unequivocally interpreted the Management as

Japan's aggression. Where this particular interpretation is concerned, anti-reversionists also took the same interpretation. Arakawa Akira wrote:

If people approve of the aggressive annexation of Ryukyu on the ground that the common ancestry made this ethnic unification historically inevitable, they may possibly support another invasion into Korea in the future, in justification of the common ancestry theory, which is based on the close relationship between Korea and Japan in ancient time (Arakawa 1981: 123).

Arakawa argues that the Common Ancestry Theory is only 'a sophistry of Japanese imperialists' (ibid.). Beyond this historical reinterpretation, anti-reversionists raised the issue of forcible assimilation, notably the imposition of standard Japanese, which produced the general disregard of local tradition. This complaint also appealed to a part of reversion supporters who approved of the administrative transference only for the reason that it would at least secure local people's legal rights. A remaining problem was how these activists could consistently complain not only about assimilation but also dissimilation. In addition to Satsuma's prohibitions, many cases of exceptional treatment, such as delayed modern reforms, the only land battle within Japan proper and the separated American administration, long provoked the indignation of the local people who claimed to be Japanese. At the very least, it was required, for the consistent criticism of both assimilation and dissimilation together, to leave the simple dichotomy, restoration or aggression, as to interpretation of the Management of Ryukyu.

On 27th March 1979, the hundredth anniversary of the Management of Ryukyu, Arasaki, Arakawa and other local activists organised a symposium to reconsider this historical event. Discussants clearly pointed out that the Management was one of the consistent cases in which Okinawa

was taken advantage of for the benefit of Japan's national interest. Taira Osamu, a theology professor at Okinawa Christian Junior College, argued that Okinawa had always been sacrificed by the national policies during the one hundred years since the Management. Taira mentioned a popular headline 'the Reversion Agreement is a third Management of Ryukyu' next to a second one, the 1951 Peace Treaty, which had placed Okinawa under the American control. Integration (i.e., reversion) and separation (i.e., the American control), Taira argues, are two sides of the same coin. Thus it was no longer a matter for him whether an issue was made of assimilation or dissimilation. Similarly, Kanashiro Masaatsu, a historian at Ryukyu University, illustrated, by a historical event which had happened just after the Management of Ryukyu, that the Management of Ryukyu was actually not so much to do with ethnic unification as with the safeguard of national interest. In 1880, when Qing China complained about Japan's annexation of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the Japanese government offered Miyako and Yaeyama to cede to China. Just six years before this agreement, however, Japan had attacked Taiwan in revenge for native Taiwanese's massacre of shipwrecked Miyako islanders, or, according to official description, 'Japanese citizens'. In other words, the inhabitants of the Ryukyus were altered their identity depending on the convenience of the central government. In the first case, the Japanese government aimed at its favourable deal in a commerce treaty, and, in the second case, it intended to release the frustration of unemployed former feudal warriors. Thus, in Kanashiro's interpretation of the Management of Ryukyu too, it no longer

has primary importance whether Okinawans are a separable people or an essentially Japanese population (*Okinawa Times* 27, 28 Mar. 1979).

4-5-2: VISIONS OF A RYUKYU REPUBLIC

Local activists' new series of actions were started. Following the March 1978 conference, the next major attempt of local activism took the form of publication. In June 1981, Kawamitsu Shinichi edited a special issue of the journal *Shin Okinawa Bungaku*, 'A Bridge to a Ryukyu Republic (*Ryukyu Kyowa-koku he no Kakehashi*)' (vol. 48). The main attraction was two pieces of constitution draft which were drawn up by anti-reversionists. The major draft was named the 'Constitution of a Ryukyu Republican Society (*Ryukyu kyowa shakai kenpo*)', deliberately avoiding a more common term 'Ryukyu Republic (*Ryukyu kyowa-koku*)', in order to emphasise that these anti-reversionists were not arguing for another state:

We, the people of the Ryukyu Republican Society, based on historical reflection and earnest wish, eliminate the root of all evils which have been created by the centralised system of power since the beginning of human history and hereby sonorously declare that we abandon any state (*kokka*) (Article 1 of Chapter 1) (Kawamitsu 1987: 109).

This fundamental idea was not simply an idealists' castle in the air, but it resulted from the local people's concrete experience of a devastating battle and the dissatisfactory reversion movement:

People who want a state will end with being fettered by the state. Centralised and enlarged state power produces exploitation, oppression, inequality, poverty, unease and, in the end, wars. . . . We continued our unarmed resistance [to the American military authority], and longed for 'the Japanese Constitution' which renounced wars and military forces, and hoped for solidarity with the Japanese citizens, who all had reflection on the Second World War in common with us and therefore respectfully observed this constitution. The result was that we were coldly deceived (the Preamble) (Kawamitsu 1987: 108-109).

Anti-reversionists surely took a step forward by this constitution draft. Previously, they had defined Okinawa as something that was *not* Japan or should *not* be integrated into Japan. This negative self-definition transformed into a positive articulation of the quality of the locality and a vision of the ideal future of local society. However, these amateur political scientists could not yet present legally sound procedures.

Scholar contributors to the special issue provided some useful ideas. Taira Koji, a Miyako-born political scientist at Illinois University, suggested that the discussion should be extended to the whole Japan. According to him, Japan can and should transform itself into a federation. Okinawa would be better embedded in such a de-centralised political system and could even take the initiative for this reform. His plan largely consisted of concrete, though not necessarily realistic, administrative procedures, but it well echoed the idea of 'Japonesia' which Shimao Toshio had pictured in cultural terms. Nakano Yoshio also contributed an essay, in which he criticised his own previous support for reversion and presented the history of Ireland, in which he had academic expertise, as a consultative case to think about an alternative. Similarly, on other occasions, professional scholars enlarged the range of local activists' knowledge to comparable problems in other parts of the world, such as Nakamura Takeo's Sicily and Sardinia in Italy and Nishino Terutaro's ex-colony islands in the Pacific (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 19-38, 39-51). Actual communication emerged from inspired activists, such as Takara Ben's Friendship Association between Ryukyu and Ireland, and Asato Seishin's personal exchange with activists in the Republic of Palau.

The symposium 'Challenge for a Self-Reliant Okinawa (*Okinawa Jiritsu he no Chosen*)', November 1981, followed this publication and was attended by many of its contributors.⁶⁹ In addition, there was noticeable participation of the left-wing establishment, such as leaders of trade unions and members of reformist political parties. In common with local activists, they were dissatisfied with post-reversion Okinawa, which they defined as an 'domestic colony' of Japan. As opposed to local activists, however, these former leading reversionists understood that not reversion itself but political and economic measures at the time of reversion have led to another case of the Management of Ryukyu, that is, Okinawa's unfavourable conditions resulting from its integration into Japan (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 88-89). Thus the left-wing establishment argued for the 'Special Prefecture of Okinawa', which could have more autonomous finance and stronger power of decision-making than the existing prefectures of Japan. Local activists strongly disapproved of this 'Special Prefecture' even though their 'Ryukyu Republic' looked a similar proposal. Decisive difference was that local activists made an issue of a sense of value, what they called 'culture', as to what kind of social form was preferable. The left-wing establishment was criticised for building up their scheme with no doubt on conventional morality which approved of a 'Japanese-Okinawa'. According to local activists, union leaders still maintained reversionism, which had given the top priority to ethnic reunification and eventually led Okinawa to the present

⁶⁹ This was the title of the report (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982) of this symposium, which was actually billed as 'A Decade after the Reversion, Vision for a Self-Reliant Okinawa'. Similar events had already been held in 1978 as the symposium 'For Economic Self-reliance of Okinawa' (Harada & Yashita (eds) 1979) and in 1979 as the symposium 'Visions of Self-Reliant Okinawan Economy' (Higa & Harada (eds) 1980). While the former was attended by the almost same speakers as in the 1981 symposium, the latter gathered economists only.

high degree of dependency on Japan. In contrast, local activists realised, through critical consideration of the reversion movement, that a self-reliant Okinawa was incompatible with such morality which approved of a system of nation-states. Thus their challenge started with the self-definition as 'traitors (*hikokumin*)', who distanced themselves away from the state and national interest. Although the 'traitors' empirically meant the traitors of Japan, local activists in this context envisaged a stateless society by getting rid of the general framework which defined modern social collectivities (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 196, 203, 204).

When local activists tried to picture stateless society, village communities caught their attention. In the preceding years, Kawamitsu (1976/77) had already spotlighted life style in local hamlets in order to design the socio-economic system best suited for Okinawa. According to him, village communities embody knowledge of life deriving from local climate and other natural conditions. The fact that these communities have continued to exist far longer than any other system proves their maximum utility for Okinawa. A general socialist model, which he had supported since the time of his student radicalism against American authority, retreated into the historical background. Nakasone Isamu (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 162-166) also expects village communities to form the socio-economic foundation of a Ryukyu republic. He found it the most essential problem of post-reversion Okinawa that rapid commercialisation was destroying a pre-modern form of land ownership, that is, commons, on which the village community based its praiseworthy mutualism. Asato Eiko (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 208) warns Nakasone not to refer to village

communities in an abstract idea of mutualism. She instead focuses concrete cases of 'minimum and the most primitive systems of mutual aid', such as 'co-operative stores (*kyodo baiten*)' and 'gathering houses (*aza kominkan*)' (Asato 1999: 82-93). In terms of cultural facilities and the supply of commercial goods, rural hamlets were largely ignored by both the pre-war Japanese government and the subsequent American administration. This lack of external resources, however, gave a chance to rural hamlets to develop grassroots autonomy. The reason that Asato appreciates traditional morals and advocates their rehabilitation is that they at once in fact produced self-reliant communities on local initiatives. She argues that a self-reliant Okinawa can only be achieved by extending these concrete units of self-sufficient life style.

4-5-3: URUMA FESTIVAL AND NATIONAL ATHLETIC MEETING

Cultural festival was another form in which local activists made their challenge against pervasive Japanese conformity. In November 1980, Kina Shokichi organised the 'Uruma Festival; the Revitalisation of Villages, Islands and Uruma (*Uruma Matsuri: Mura Okoshi, Shima Okoshi, Uruma Okoshi*)'. This festival of local youth, who were critical to Tokyo-oriented culture, also gathered cultural persons, politicians and shamans. Cultural festivals were one of the few effective forms of popular agitation at a time when political apathy was pervasive after the disappointment of the reversion movement. Moreover, the mainstream political activists, such as public servants and school teachers, could no longer receive mass support because the Japanese administration unevenly benefited them and elevated

them to the upper social stratum with which the majority of local citizens did not necessarily share their interests. In this cultural festival, local activists' fascination for village communities found an appropriate name. *Uruma* was a poetic word meaning the Ryukyus, which was sporadically used in Japanese classics after the seventeenth century (*Okinawa Dai Hyakka Jiten*). However, Kina redefined it as local society before a Ryukyu kingdom emerged, that is, the time when 'Chinese influence did not yet come and instead Okinawan spirit fully bloomed' (Fujisaki 1994: 133). *Uruma* is a synonym of the Ryukyuan Arc except that the former perhaps originates from a local term whereas the latter is appropriated from a scientific term, and that the former clearly denies a Ryukyu kingdom whereas the latter does not refer to it though its denial is fairly implied. *Uruma* is a 'natural' state of the Ryukyus, in which village communities are loosely associated to one another without any central power. *Uruma* is the original Ryukyus of the remote past and the ideal Ryukyus for the future.

In September 1987, Kina organised the Uruma Festival again but on a much larger scale. This second Uruma Festival had particularly strong political implications since Kina, Asato and many other organisers defined their festival as a counter-event to the concurrent Okinawa Kaiho National Athletic Meeting and embedded it in their opposition movement. The 1973 Special National Athletic Meeting, along with the 1975 Ocean Exposition, had caused great controversy over land development, the Japan Self-Defence Forces and the Emperor system. However, in the late 1980s, land development was in relatively moderate progress and the stationing of the JSDF was somehow normalised. Thus the opposition movement focused on

the Emperor system, especially on emperor Hirohito, who was going to be the first emperor visiting Okinawa. Meanwhile, there was new discovery of some historical facts concerning his personal responsibility for Okinawans' fate. In February 1945, a month before the Battle of Okinawa, when the Japanese war leaders suggested immediate surrender, Hirohito ordered the continuation of fighting for the reason that one more counterattack was necessary for preventing the coming surrender agreement from becoming too unfavourable for Japan. In 1947, two years after the final defeat, he sent to MacArthur a private message saying that it was profitable for Japan that the United States occupied Okinawa for fifty or more years. For two years starting in April 1987, Arakawa and Kawamitsu organised a series of public lectures on the Emperor system and disseminated these discoveries in public.⁷⁰

There was another aspect in which the 1987 Athletic Meeting provoked local activists to organise an opposition movement. In the mid- to late 1980s, prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro effected many reforms of national policies, intending to reassert the distinctive identity of Japan. Under the banner of 'the total clearance of the post-war political accounts', he revised the existing systems and policies which had largely been shaped by the American guidelines during occupation. One of his educational reforms was targeted at popularising the Rising Sun flag and the Reign of Our Lord anthem. In September 1985, the Ministry of Education published its survey in the use of these national symbols in school ceremonies, and sent out a notice of recommendation to every prefectural board of education.

⁷⁰ Details of emperor Hirohito's personal responsibility for the Battle of Okinawa and the American occupation, see Arasaki 1992d: 16-22. Part of the two years series of lecture were published as

Reacting to the survey result which had shown Okinawa's outstandingly low rate of use, the Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education gave an order or an advice to local schools. Some teachers and students strongly resisted it, but the Prefectural Board of Education resorted to various forms of pressure, including penalties against opposition teachers, and achieved a dramatic increase in use.⁷¹ In this process, Okinawa prefecture took the initiative rather than it being forced by the Japanese government. It was already in July 1984 just after the Athletic Meeting was decided to be held in Okinawa that the Prefectural Board of Education started requesting local school masters to promote the Rising Sun flag. Similarly, upon commenting the 1987 Athletic Meeting, governor Nishime said that he was determined to close up the post-war period of Okinawa with the successful reception of the Emperor. Thus the National Athletic Meeting, the flag and anthem, and the Emperor were together regarded as national symbols of Japan which were going to enter Okinawa in the late 1980s. The degree of their acceptance would indicate how much Okinawa lost its quality of an exceptional region of Japan. This quality was, however, what local activists were struggling to preserve.

Arasaki and Kawamitsu (eds) 1988.

⁷¹ Denise Cripps (1996) offers a useful discussion on this governmental promotion of the Rising Sun flag and Reign of Our Lord anthem in a nation wide context. However, as far as Okinawa is concerned, she committed a few mistakes. Firstly, she writes that 'the workers red flag and not the Hinomaru was much in evidence' when the Council for Reversion formed (p.87), but the Council actually had its inaugural meeting in front of a huge Rising Sun flag. Secondly, she writes that the conservatives controlled the prefectural government at the time of the 1975 Ocean Exposition (p.88), but the Reformist Common Front was in power from 1969 to 1978. Lastly, she writes that the Department of Education put pressure on Okinawa prefecture (p.89), but she did not give any supporting evidence. Befu Harumi, to whom Cripps refers at this point, does not unequivocally distinguish the course of events and his interpretation of them (Befu 1992: 36). The kind of 'pressure' was not what Cripps and Befu imply there, as the existing evidence shows Okinawa's initiative in the promotion of the Rising Sun flag (cf. Arasaki 1992c: 61-66).

A well-known incident illustrates how opposition to increasing Japanese conformity emerged from local activists in the context of the opposition movement to the National Athletic Meeting. Chibana Shoichi was known for burning the Rising Sun flag raised in the Yomitan Stadium at the opening ceremony of the softball competition. After returning home from student activism in the reversion movement, he actively participated in village revitalisation and anti-base acts under the distinctive village headman.⁷² At the Battle of Okinawa, Yomitan was the landing point of the American forces, which have subsequently occupied its major part up to the present. In a refuge cave, Chibichiri-gama, surrounded by American soldiers, eighty-two villagers killed one another in lieu of a dishonourable surrender or in fear of captive atrocities. This 'collective suicide' was not made public until the mid 1980s when Chibana, as a local assistant of a Japanese writer, interviewed hitherto silent survivors. Yomitan village accepted the National Athletic Meeting, with the expectation that a new stadium at the corner of a manoeuvres field would initiate the return of the complete field. However, the village disagreed about the use of the Rising Sun flag and the Reign of Our Lord anthem (*Kimigayo* and *Hinomaru*), which had been associated with the war which had caused so many troubles to villagers. On 22nd November 1987, three days before the opening ceremony, the chair of the Japan Softball Association suddenly put pressure on the village office and succeeded in drawing a compromise concerning the flag. Two days later, the opposition movement to the Emperor's visit culminated in a rally at Chibichiri-gama. Opposition activists regarded this cave as

⁷² His life, the incident and the trial were described by himself in Chibana 1988 as well as documented by Norma Field (1991).

representing many other cases of 'collective suicide', some of which have caused hot dispute as to whether the Imperial Army had orchestrated them. Chibana's action was undertaken in this extremely tense atmosphere.

The incident was widely broadcast and its trial received much public attention. The main point of dispute was the definition of the Rising Sun flag; the prosecutor's indictment defined it as the national flag but Chibana rebutted that no legal authorisation existed about the Japanese national flag. The right-wing radicals not only threatened Chibana in front of court but also began to attack Yomitan village. They assaulted Chibana and set fire to his shop, caused bomb scares in the village and destroyed a monumental sculpture at Chibichiri-gama which had been built through the villagers' contribution. During their vandalism, these fanatic right-wing nationalists repeatedly abused Chibana as a 'traitor (*hikokumin*)'. It was an irony that it was exactly a 'traitor' that Chibana and other local activists earnestly wanted to be. In a preface of his book, Chibana wrote:

I wish as many as possible readers of this book to understand my heart of a traitor and to become traitors too (Chibana 1988: 3).

Already in 1970, Arakawa titled his monumental essay on anti-reversionism *Hikokumin no Shiso to Ronri* (Ideology and Reason of Traitors) (Arakawa 1970). The self-definition as 'traitors' was also reaffirmed in the 1981 symposium for a self-reliant Okinawa (Arasaki et. al. (eds) 1982: 204). History tells local activists that Okinawa will be sacrificed for national interest whenever it shows loyalty to Japan. 'Traitors' was the identity which anti-reversionists discovered as an outcome of difficult attempts to overcome assimilationism of the reversion movement. 'Traitors' was the

underlying principle on which local activists organised their struggles for self-reliance in post-reversion Okinawa.

Historical reflection enabled local activists to affirm the view that the central power of the state constantly took advantage of peripheral population. Local activists envisaged a state-less society, in which every locality could fully develop for its own sake. Beyond simple demand for regional autonomy, they attempted to overthrow a sense of value which sustained the existing system of nation-states. Local activists basically tried to disregard the influence of state power, as Asato Eiko noted, on organising the second Uruma Festival, that she did not simply *oppose* but actually *ignored* the National Athletic Meeting (*Okinawa Times* 17 Sep. 1987). When state power nevertheless forced local activists to obey itself, they put up radical resistance, as Chibana's incident demonstrated. Many local activists would not mind if they were called 'traitors' because of their disloyalty to the state, since the Ryukyuan Arc which they wish to bring into realisation is the name of a habitat of such 'traitors'.

4-6: CONCLUSION

After the popular agitation for reversion was broken up, local activists groped for a new form of association, which would widely link the islands with one another, but avoid creating a centre which would be liable to marginalize the peripheries. In other words, local activists looked for a particular kind of unity of the Ryukyus which would not disturb the autonomous status of each community. Both young local activists and senior local intellectuals were commonly driven by the regionalist cause to

protect post-reversion Okinawa from Japanese land development. However, young activists displayed a fresh morality in their opposition movement. Their practical orientation, politicised view of Okinawa-Japan relations, and rejection of cultural authority led local activists to an innovative perception of the locality. Unexpectedly, before their challenge was made, there had been no social identity which satisfactorily covered the whole Ryukyus. Existing geopolitical categories were too external to produce an internal group-ness, or were deficient because of their overloaded historical implications. The discourse on Japonesia, or the idea of an essentially diverse Japan, greatly helped local activists. When such diversity is assumed to exist underneath a forcibly unified Japanese state, the conventional sense of value is dramatically reversed and an ignored fringe area comes to assume undeniable value. The Ryukyus historically had only tenuous connections with the centres of the Japanese state. This position enabled the Ryukyus to preserve its original plurality which appeared in contemporary times as its internal cultural diversity. The Ryukyus, by the very fact that it is a frontier from the metropolitan Japanese perspective, can now represent the newly envisioned Japan in its essence. The Ryukyuan Arc is the concept which defines the Ryukyus in terms of this precious internal diversity.

Takara Ben (1996: 91) refers to the following two points as what the people of the Ryukyuan Arc fully realised through their downtrodden historical experience; (1) even when a state goes to ruin, ordinary people continue to live on from day to day regardless, and (2) the national boundary is nothing more than that drawn for the convenience of state powers. In

short, local people, he argues, know that a state is not one of the necessities of life. This recognition, however, remains rather ephemeral unless it is repeatedly brought to mind. Through a series of campaigns, local activists successively reaffirmed their distance from the Japanese state. This not simply meant that their introspection had discovered out and articulated such a distance, but that their social practice of this introspection itself is the very distance. Therefore, in a sense, exactly when local activists envisaged the Ryukyuan Arc, they essentially started living in the Ryukyuan Arc.

CHAPTER 5: THE SOUTH APPROACHING THE NORTH

5-1: INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, it may not seem the subject of moral controversy to define Okinawans as one of the ethnic minorities in Japan, resembling the Ainu with regard to their indigenoussness and their marginal status in Japanese society. Ainu activism in the late 1980s attracted much public attention. It heralded the popular criticism of the idea of a homogeneous Japan and promoted the fashionable argument for a multi-ethnic Japan. This prevalent discourse in the contemporary Japanese press can be understood as embedded in the world-wide trend of ethnic minority activism, which was gaining momentum towards the inauguration of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous People (Dec. 1992). Okinawans may appear to be another domestic group following the pioneering Ainu activists to ride on this global trend and claiming a distinct right on grounds of their separate identity. In fact, acting in concert with their Ainu counterparts, Okinawan activists likewise strove towards the destruction of a homogeneous national identity. Their celebration of difference brought about solidarity with other marginalised peoples, both in Japan and in other nations, who had at one time been silenced by the hegemonic majority, but who had begun to struggle for the right to autonomous existence.

However, the Okinawans' relationship to the mainstream Japanese has been remarkably different from that of the Ainu's. The majority of Okinawans historically aspired to define themselves as part of the mainstream Japanese and therefore avoid being associated with the Ainu.

For the same reason, these Okinawans also refused to accept links with other minority populations, such as Taiwanese aboriginals and Burakumin. Although Okinawan activists' assertion of a separate identity seems to be receiving an increasingly favourable reception in the broader social context, they represented, and perhaps still represent, local minority opinion.

In the light of these local conditions, Okinawan activists had long fostered a unique ideology of resistance before they initiated communication with Ainu and other minority groups. This communication gave an opportunity to Okinawan activists to learn how to manage the idea of multiculturalism. However, this idea was not in accordance with the previous principles of their movement. Certainly, their highly particularistic language, notably 'Japonesia', indistinguishably included some elements of the globally employed concept of multiculturalism. However, when 'Japonesia' was replaced by 'multiculturalism', the former's suitability for the locality was lost. The latest popular commotion, which began with a dispute between Okinawa prefecture and the Japanese government over the issue of American military presence, revealed that multiculturalism had a severely limited applicability to the Okinawan problem. Being aware of this limit, local activists already started groping for a new language, one that is more suitable for the locality and as powerful as multiculturalism in the world-wide political arena.⁷³

⁷³ Richard Siddle, a specialist in Ainu, whose work on Ainu activism made a contribution to Japanese social studies, recently offered a historical outline of Okinawa until 1945 focusing on colonial aspects of the Okinawa-Japan relationship. In this article, he sporadically passed remarks on contrastive as well as comparative points between Ainu and Okinawans (Siddle 1998). Hanazaki Kohei, another specialist in Ainu, gives a brief sketch of the history of Ainu and Okinawa and mentioned Okinawan activism (1996).

5-2: AINU GUESTS IN MIYAKO

In November 1998, the Kami to Mori wo Kangaeru Kai (Society for Considering Deities and Forest) held its fifth anniversary meeting in Miyako. A group of special guests came from the opposite end of the country: Ogawa Ryukichi, ex-director of the Utari Kyokai (the Hokkaido Ainu Association), his wife Ogawa Sanae, the president of the Society for the Transmission of Ainu Culture, and other four Ainu persons. Ono Yugo, a professor of environmental science at Hokkaido University, also joined this trip. Sponsorship from local municipalities, the press, and television rendered this 1998 annual meeting larger than its four predecessors. Ogawa Ryukichi and Ono gave talks on recent issues concerning Ainu. Meanwhile, Sadoyama Anko played a video which he produced on Miyakoan religious rites. A panel discussion was conducted under the theme of 'Considering the Deities and Nature of the North and the South'. The panel consisted of the three visitors from Hokkaido, Nema Tsuruko and another local shaman, two fishermen of Ikema Island, an Ikema-born poet Iraha Morio, folklorist Yamashita Kinichi and librarian Ishigaki Hirotaka. The first day ended with Ainu dance and music. On the second day, participants were given a group tour. Beside popular tourist sites, they visited sanctuaries of Karimata and Ikema. In the Oharuzu shrine, priestesses, who had restored annual ceremonies with the support of the Kami to Mori two years before, offered a special prayer. Then, on the beach nearby, Ogawa Ryukichi offered a return prayer in the Ainu style. Tanigawa Kenichi describes this ceremony in his report to a Japanese newspaper:

On the beautiful beach of coral reef in Ikema Island, the Ainu people, who wore traditional formal dress of *atsushi* print, stood three *ianu* (curved sticks

of wood), which represented the sea deity, the water deity and the forest deity, on the white-sandy beach, and conducted *kamui-nomi* (prayer for deities). In the centre of this ceremonial site, which was several meters away from the sea shore, a bonfire was burning. It stood for the fire goddess, which Ainu people worship. The woman who fed the bonfire with wood was a Miyakoan *kankakarya* (woman diviner). While Mr. Ogawa was praying, the priestesses in white cloths who conducted a ceremony in the Oharuzu shrine shed tears. His voice of prayer was mixed with the sound of waves (*Asahi Shinbun* 22 Dec. 1998).

This communication between the southern and the northern extremities of Japan was brought into being through the good arrangement of Tanigawa, who had connections in Hokkaido through his research on place names. There has been considerable interest in place names among Japanese folklorists since Yanagita Kunio's 1936 seminal essay (Yanagita 1962 [1936]). The rationalisation of official geographic categories in the late 1970s caused concern over the disappearance of original place names. Tanigawa organised a protection act and later developed it into the Japan Institute for the Study of Place Names. Its annual meetings were instigated by professional and grassroots scholars. A proliferation of small groups began to appear in various localities under Tanigawa's influence. The Kami to Mori was a development from one of these groups. A comparable development took place in Yaeyama. Ishigaki Hirotaka, the chief librarian of the Ishigaki City Library, played a leading role in the formation of the Yaeyama Place Name Research Group. In February 1999, Ishigaki and his working partner Ota Shizuo, the chief of the Section of Cultural Affairs in Ishigaki City Office, further developed this into the Yaeyama no Kami to Shizen wo Kangaeru Kai (Society for Considering Deities and Nature of Yaeyama). Similar to its Miyakoan counterpart, local priestesses and native intellectuals discussed together schemes for the conservation of religious

sanctuaries and the revitalisation of their annual ceremonies (*Ryukyu Shimpo* 2 Mar. 1999). Folkloristic nostalgia and antipathy towards industrial development were evident, but there was another dimension of significance in the interest in original place names. In the northern part of Japan, especially in Hokkaido, place names are of Ainu origin. Although they were transformed into Japanese names in the modern age, they make sense only with recourse to the original Ainu language. In the mid 1980s, riding on the wave of Ainu cultural revitalisation, some Hokkaido residents came to support the restoration of original Ainu place names. In April 1998, Ono Yugo, as a Japanese sympathiser of Ainu activism, started a grassroots movement for promoting the duplicate indication of place names, both in Ainu and Japanese. Tanigawa struck up an acquaintance with Ono at a gathering of a local place name research group in Hokkaido.

In the 1998 symposium of the Kami to Mori, speakers tried to render the meeting between Miyakoans and Ainu as more than an outcome of the fortuitous meeting between Tanigawa and Ono. A stereotypic remark was repeatedly passed to the effect that Miyakoans and Ainu were relatively unspoiled by human-centred civilisation and that they both shared respect for deities and nature. In some ways, this was a banal image which can generally be observed in the contemporary resurgence of traditional cultures which had been marginalised by capitalist economy. However, the Miyako-Ainu case was special in that some speakers tried to establish the actual common identity of the two peoples. In his keynote address, Tanigawa said:

According to a scholar, in the Jomon period, 4,000 [sic] years ago, the Old Mongoloid population separated between the north and the south [of Japan].

They were the Ainu in the north and the people of Miyako and Yaeyama in the south.

He was probably referring to the Sunda Shelf hypothesis. Christy Turner proposes the hypothesis that the Sunda Shelf in Indonesia used to be a dry land in the Ice Age and provided the major habitat of the original Mongoloid population (Turner 1989). According to Baba Hisao, the Okinawans and the Ainu are direct descendants of Old Mongoloid, who migrated from the Sunda Shelf along the Chinese coast. The Japanese mainlanders are a mixed breed of Old Mongoloid and New Mongoloid. New Mongoloid refers to those people who migrated into interior China and were geographically isolated during the Ice Age. To adapt to the extremely cold environment of the Ice Age Chinese Continent, these people experienced micro-evolution and were physically differentiated from Old Mongoloid. New Mongoloid entered into the Japanese mainland through the Korean peninsula (Baba 1993, see also Pearson 1996: 104). In addition to this physical-anthropological theory, Tanigawa mentioned a case of common vocabulary:

Place names can be another example. In Ainu language, rivers are called *nai*. There is a place which is called *so-nai* in Iriomote Island and in Yonaguni Island [in Yaeyama]. There is also *hi-nai* in Miyako. Thus, also in these islands, rivers are called *nai*. Miyanaga Masamori, a linguist of Yaeyaman background, suggested that this word might have Ainu origin.

Shaman Nema Tsuruko and poet Iraha Morio illustrated this conjectural identicalness by citing other cases of resemblance. Nema pointed to a similarity in the notion of deities. The Ainu is said to have a deity of the original fire, *kamui-fuchi*. This deity is supposed to act as an intermediary to other deities when people offer prayers. In Miyako, a deity of fire,

pi-nu-kam, is widely worshipped.⁷⁴ This deity also takes an intermediary role to other deities. Moreover, Nema added her observation in Hokkaido where she had visited in 1988.

Don't the Ainu and the Miyakoans have a connection to each other through a deity of fire? . . . Especially, I can't deny an impression that the people of Ikema Island and the Ainu belong to a single group. . . . Eleven years ago, I actually visited the Ainu land, with Mr. Kina Shokichi and others. At that time, Ainu people made a ceremony at a river side. Their facial appearance was the same [as the people of Ikema]. I had an impression, 'Oh, there are a lot of old men of Ikema.' I can't analyse it, but, as a shaman, I had an intuition of the common origin.

Iraha highlighted the point that both Ainu and Miyakoans regarded certain species of fish and birds as deities: salmon and owls for the Ainu, and bonitos and eagles for the Miyakoans.

The Ainu guests, however, had a different view regarding this conjectural identicalness. Ogawa Ryukichi carefully distanced himself from a naive assertion of phenotypic similarity:

Twenty years have passed since I heard for the first time 'the people of Miyako Island look quite similar with the Ainu, you can't tell one from the other.' . . . This remark seems to refer to facial features and body shapes. But, what is really common is the experience of colonial subjugation by the Japanese, *yamato*, that is, discrimination and domination which was rooted in the history of the nation building.

For local people who gathered at the symposium, the central issue seems to have been the positive recognition of their vernacular culture. The Ainu connection was deemed as one of the historical common identities. In contrast, Ogawa Ryukichi was well aware that ethnic identity had to do with politics, and regarded positive recognition of Ainu tradition alone as unsatisfactory. Commenting on the Measures for the Promotion of Ainu Culture (so-called *Ainu Shimpō*) recently implemented, Ogawa said:

⁷⁴ A deity of fire, or a deity of the hearth, usually represented by a incense burner placed in the kitchen, received wide worship not only Miyako but across the Ryukyus.

The expression, 'the promotion of culture', inserted here and there in the new law. Some people regard this as the restored Ainu ethnic pride. But, for us, there is a problem prior to culture, that is, life!

He meant here the lack of sufficient social welfare for elder Ainu who were not entitled to a pension package due to discriminative employment in their youth rooted in the widespread Japanese negative prejudice against Ainu. Such political awareness enabled Ainu activists to pay sympathetic heed to other marginalised minority groups. Ogawa Sanae told in her speech:

Thanks to *Okinawa no Kokoro*, which I had read before this trip, and also to *Hashi no Nai Kawa*, I noticed the existence of many people who live in Japan, speak the same language and share the same economic system but who have undergone hard times just like us.

Hashi no Nai Kawa (River without Bridge) is a series of novels written by Sumii Sue based on the life of Burakumin. *Okinawa no Kokoro* (the Okinawan Mind) is a memoir which Ota Masahide wrote focusing on his narrow survival in the Battle of Okinawa.

5-3: THE BACKGROUND OF AINU ACTIVISM

Both Okinawans and Ainu regard themselves as not belonging to the dominant group of Japan. This self-recognition is indicated by the existence of vernacular terms which refer to the other Japanese citizens than themselves. Okinawans call the mainland Japanese *naicha* or *yamatu-n-chu*. Ainu call the Japanese *wajin*, *sisamu* or, pejoratively, *samo*.⁷⁵ However, Okinawans and Ainu stand at different points on the graded scale to which they politicise their ethnicity; Ainu seem to be generally more progressive than Okinawans in the matter of ethnopolitics.

⁷⁵ As for literal meanings of these Okinawan terms, see footnote in section 3 of chapter 4. *Wajin* literally is identical with *Yamatu-n-chu* but comes from a different pronunciation of the same Chinese

This can be explained by reference to difference in their respective historical relations to the mainstream Japanese.

What is today known as Ainu tradition took its shape by the thirteenth century. Around 40,000 people spread in the Ezochi (Hokkaido), the Kurile islands and the Southern Sakhalin, and lived by hunting, fishing and gathering. They were also engaged in regular trade with agricultural people in the Japanese mainland. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a warlord clan occupied the southernmost part of the Ezochi and monopolised this Ainu-Japanese trade. Since the clan developed into a feudatory, Matsumae-*han*, of the Tokugawa regime, Ainu in the Ezochi came under nominal Japanese control. In response to Russian threat around the end of the eighteenth century, Ezochi was transferred to the direct control of the Tokugawa shogunate, and the Japanisation of Ainu was attempted.⁷⁶

In 1869, the newly established Meiji government took direct control over Ezochi, which it renamed Hokkaido. The fact that Ainu was a mostly dispersed population in a vast territory enabled the Japanese to carry out *colonising* rather than *colonial* activities.⁷⁷ The mass migration of Japanese settlers quickly rendered Ainu an extreme minority in Hokkaido; just four years after systematic colonisation had started, the number of Japanese people was 151,786 whereas the number of Ainu was 18,644 (De Vos &

character. *Sisamu* and *samo* mean 'neighbours', but the latter is with an accent (Hattori 1964: 50, see also Miyajima 1996: 14).

⁷⁶ The transfer to the direct control was made twice, in 1799 and 1855. The Matsumae indirect control was restored in-between because the Russian threat was temporarily weakened. Japanisation is said to have meant to prevent Ainu rebellion assisted with Russian support (Siddle 1997: 22; Oguma 1999: 52). The Japanese sovereignty of the Ezochi was stipulated in the Russo-Japanese Amity Treaty of 1854.

⁷⁷ *Colonising* activities refers to sending people from the metropolitan country to colonies, whereas *colonial* activities mean the domination and control over native people. Both were compatible and combined in practice, but, in the former kind of colonies, the *colonising* Westerners became the

Wetherall 1983: 12) and, by 1899, the former sharply increased to 833,000 whereas the latter slowly decreased to 17,000 (Emori 1987: 126). In this process, Hokkaido was regarded as virgin soil even though Ainu livelihood actually depended on it in a traditional production system; the economic development of Hokkaido amounted to Ainu dispossession (Siddle 1997: 23). The marginalisation of Ainu was also conditioned by their insignificance in terms of national security against Russia. After mass Japanese settlers had inhabited Hokkaido, there was no need to take a conciliation measure in regard of the small Ainu population (Oguma 1999: 55-58). In 1898 the Japanese government, however, issued the Protection Act of the Former Aborigines, by which Ainu could be granted plots of land for farming. Richard Siddle interprets this as a humanitarian movement for preventing the physical extermination of Ainu (Siddle 1997: 23). Oguma Eiji interprets the act rather as a countermeasure to the influential European missionary workers who were engaged in Ainu welfare (Oguma 1999: 66-69).

In this historical context, Ainu were widely believed to be a 'dying primitive race' and this popular belief was prolonged up to the 1960s on the basis of anthropological and archaeological authorisation. A Dutch doctor, Philip Siebold, pioneered investigation into the different populations in Japan. Subsequently, the demographic history of the archipelago was earnestly addressed by hired European scholars, such as Edward Morse and John Milne, and also Japanese students of anthropology, such as Koganei Yoshikiyo, Tsuboi Shogoro and Torii Ryuzo. With respect to Ainu, the

majority, like north America and Australia, whereas in the latter type the *colonised* native people remained the majority, like India and Africa (cf. Peattie 1984: 81).

important topics were their aboriginality, their difference from the Japanese and their relation to the remnants of stone age culture.

The pre-1945 academia tended to agree that, firstly, Ainu were the descendants of the people known as the Ezo. Historical documents described the Ezo as inhabiting much of the Japanese mainland. Emperors repeatedly fought wars to conquer the Ezo into submission over several centuries and eventually pushed them out to the north. The Ezo identity of Ainu means that the Ainu were regarded as the aboriginal population of the Japanese archipelago. Secondly, while Ainu were considered to be of a distinctive ancestry, it was assumed that Ainu had partly merged into the present-day Japanese. In the first decade of the twentieth century, Kindaichi Kyosuke carried out academic research on Ainu oral literature and discovered that Ainu language was an ‘incorporating language’ (Hanihara & Umehara 1993: 175-196). Kindaichi’s discovery implied that the Ainu were considerably distant from the Japanese, who spoke an ‘agglutinative language’.⁷⁸ However, this distance did *not* deny any Ainu-Japanese connection. For instance, Koganei also argued that Ainu were an ‘isolated race’ who did not share ancestry with any other population in the world, but he had no doubt about their blend with the contemporary Japanese (Koganei 1928). The anthropological theory of the Japanese, which he and others established at that time, was that aboriginal Ainu and Malayo-Polynesians were absorbed into a stem population descended from the Korean peninsula (Oguma 1995: 73-75). Thirdly, archaeological findings of a Neolithic culture (Jomon Culture) were attributed to the Ainu ancestors. Although Morse

⁷⁸ ‘Incorporating language’ can be observed among Arctic Inuits and North American natives, whereas ‘agglutinative language’ includes, for example, Finnish, Turkish and Korean.

and Tsuboi suggested hypotheses of a pre-Ainu inhabitant of the archipelago, the majority opinion identified Jomon people as the Ezo and therefore as Ainu, and attributed a more recent rice-cultivation culture (Yayoi Culture) to the stem group of the Japanese (e.g., Torii 1975: 557, 566).

Within a decade after the Second World War, a new academic view refuted the previous theory of the demographic constitution in Japan. The Ainu's theoretical position was also altered in accordance with this redefinition of the Japanese. In 1948, Hasebe Kotondo, the leading physical anthropologist at Tokyo University, proposed the existence of a Japanese Palaeolithic people (*Akashi Genjin*) from whom the contemporary Japanese descended (Hasebe 1949). In other words, he argued that the Japanese were the first and only human population who inhabited the archipelago. Different archaeological cultures were explained as results of internal developments rather than population replacement. This idea met with a favourable reception by the then influential Marxist historians and had replaced the old established theory by the mid 1950s (Oguma 1995: 352). Since the Ainu identity of the Ezo cum Jomon people was thus denied, Ainu lost their aboriginal status. On the other hand, their distinct descent was continued to be taken for granted. Among various speculations, the theory that Ainu were Caucasian found lasting support. Its strongest defender, Kodama Sakuzaemon, was at that time still influential in academia (Hanihara & Umehara 1993: 127-129). From this perspective, Ainu were considered to be an extremely small population who had come to Hokkaido through a mysterious course of pre-historical events and were now disappearing there. Viewed in this way, they were completely alienated by

the hegemonic idea of a 'racially' pure Japan. It was not until the late 1960s that the Caucasian theory was refuted by Hanihara Kazuo and other young physical anthropologists. With advanced methods, they substantiated the argument that Ainu were Mongoloid similar to the Japanese (Hanihara & Umehara 1993: 129-139). Hanihara explained that both Ainu and the Japanese developed from Jomon people but in different directions of evolution (e.g., Hanihara 1996: 199-200).

Thus, in scholarly opinion until the late 1960s, and in popular conceptions until much later, a distinct 'racial' identity was ascribed to Ainu. This idea of 'racial' difference made it difficult for the Ainu to claim to be of Japanese identity in order to escape oppressive social status. Intermarriage with Japanese settlers was one of the few possible ways of improving their position (Siddle 1996: 157). Since the difference was supposed to be physical, intermarriage was seen as effacing Ainu physical traits rather than as a form of acculturation. Ainu language, their distinctive material culture and traditional livelihood had at any rate already disappeared from the daily life of most Ainu people, although this in no way meant that such traditions were impossible to revive. Another way to ascend social stratification was to raise living standards by receiving special welfare-benefits from the state authorities (Siddle 1996: 159-160). In 1961 the Ainu leadership managed to extract a large new welfare package, the Project for the Improvement of Facilities in Areas with Unsatisfactory Environments. In the same year, the Ainu Kyokai, a sustained Ainu organisation established in 1930, was

renamed into the Utari Kyokai avoiding the pejorative term 'Ainu'.⁷⁹ Nonetheless, this Utari Kyokai association remained powerless in regard of the Japanese authorities and did not attract many Ainu people. Beyond this practical problem, this type of movement had also theoretical problem since state dependency led to the institutionalisation of Ainu inferiority. Demands for special measures for empowerment were made on the premise that Ainu had to change themselves in order to eliminate the existing problems, not the majority Japanese. This premise was liable to accept that Ainu were responsible for the existing problems. There was, however, a third alternative, that is, the direct confrontation with the majority Japanese, which, however, the Ainu did not follow until recently. Organised minority activism emerged in Japan in the 1920s under the influence of growing left-wing activism. Koreans and Burakumin, who made up the cheap labour force in urban enclaves in the major cities, developed campaigns against ethnic discrimination, as well as participating in labour disputes together with other Japanese workers. These minority activists directly confronted the prejudice and unfair treatment by the majority Japanese (Weiner 1994: 72-78; Neary 1997: 57-59). However, most Ainu lived in dispersed rural settlements in Hokkaido and could not yet integrate their common interest in a political movement. Some pioneers formed the earliest pan-Ainu forum, but their activities were mostly directed at assisting local government in enacting social welfare programmes (Siddle 1996: 121, 134).

⁷⁹ 'Ainu' has a similar sound as 'Oh, a dog' in Japanese and used as an insult, though it means 'humans' in Ainu language. 'Utari' means 'we', 'relatives' or 'people of the same hamlet' (Siddle 1996: 157-158; Hattori 1964: 38, 308).

It was out of a rise of social activism in late 1960s Japan that a new generation of Ainu activists emerged. At that time, Japanese left-wing radicals frequently committed terrorist activities under the name of Ainu liberation. Although Ainu were actually not involved in these incidents, the 'Ainu Problem' attracted public concern and increasingly enhanced the political awareness of Ainu activists. In the early 1970s, Yuki Shoji, a young official of the Utari Kyokai, organised the Ainu Liberation League. It was modelled on its Burakumin counterpart, the Buraku Liberation League, and Yuki initiated actual communication with Burakumin activists. The major tactic was radical confrontation towards the majority society; not only the mass-media but also the academia were severely denounced as creating offensive or discriminatory stereotypes of Ainu. Ogawa Ryukichi, an Ainu guest at the 1998 symposium of the Kami to Mori in Miyako, was a left-wing Ainu leader of the regional capital city of Hokkaido, Sapporo, and actively participated in this new Ainu movement. Urban Ainu had so far been outside of the Utari Kyokai, which was led by politically conservative wealthy farmers and businessmen, but the young, urbanised left-wingers gradually came into the fore. Through their connection to the reformist opposition parties, the Utari Kyokai increased the power of negotiation with the Japanese authorities. In 1973, it succeeded in drawing out another welfare package, the Hokkaido Utari Welfare Counter-measures (Siddle 1996: 165-170).

However, this new Ainu movement did not stop at representing themselves as a 'disadvantaged social group in need of state welfare', but went further to define themselves as a "nation" desirous of decolonization'

(Siddle 1996: 171). Then burgeoning world-wide activism of indigenous peoples inspired Ainu to advance in this direction. In the late 1970s, Ainu activists made contact with indigenous peoples in the Arctic, Canada and the United States, and began to attend the World Conference of Indigenous People. Traditional ceremonies, art and crafts were revived, or invented, for the celebration of Ainu ethnicity. The history of Hokkaido was rewritten to acknowledge Ainu presence, which had so far been ignored in its official version. Within a decade, Ainu emerged as an evident ethnopolitical power. In the late 1980s, Ainu representatives attended the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations and joined the discussion on the revision of the International Labour Organisation's Convention 107 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations. In 1992, the chairman of the Utari Kyokai had the honour of giving a speech to the United Nations General Assembly at the inauguration ceremony for the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. This recognition by international bodies put pressure on the Japanese government to recognise Ainu as a domestic ethnic minority group upon whom the government was obliged to devolve its authority of decision-making (Siddle 1996: 174-177, 185-186). A successful result of this ethnopolitics was the enactment of the Measures for the Promotion of Ainu Culture in 1997. This brought about increased national grants, and assistance for cultural revitalisation and economic self-reliance, even though some Ainu activists were dissatisfied with the fact that it failed to stipulate native title to land (Ogawa 1998).

Aiming at the immediate improvement of their living environment, the conservative Ainu leadership took corporatist attitudes towards the

Japanese authorities for some years. Repeated special welfare measures, however, did not address the fundamental problem. Ainu activists realised that welfare dependency would not eliminate their marginal status. When Burakumin demonstrated that direct confrontation with the mainstream society could be an effective means for their empowerment, these Ainu activists did not hesitate to ally themselves with their Burakumin counterparts. In more recent years, when the world-wide current of 'indigenous' movements reached Japan, Ainu activists became among the first to respond to it and to define their liberation struggle in terms of the new language of ethnopolitics. While 'racialised' identity meant an irredeemable difference from the Japanese, the resultant irreconcilability enabled Ainu to abandon Japanese conformity and to facilitate the politicisation of their own ethnicity earlier than might otherwise have been the case.

5-4: THE BACKGROUND OF ASSIMILATIONISM IN OKINAWA

Despite a shared marginal position in Japanese society, Okinawans were in stark contrast to the Ainu in terms of the strategy for their empowerment. In comparison with Ainu, Okinawans were a far larger population, numbering over 350,000 at the time of annexation (Ryukyu Seifu 1967: appendix 65). Also, the population had already established a united political organisation before Okinawa came under Japanese influence, and sustained its nominal independence until the eventual annexation to Japan. In 1872, the Ryukyu Kingdom was transformed into a new feudatory with the former king as its lord. There was no longer any other

feudatory in Japan at that time because the existing feudatories had already been replaced by modern prefectures the year before. In other words, Okinawa had been a kingdom when Japan had consisted of feudatories, but Okinawa became a feudatory when the other parts of Japan were divided into prefectures. This aberrant reform sustained the pre-existing unequal relationship between Ryukyu and Japan. The feudatory was defined as a dependency of Kagoshima prefecture, which succeeded the Satsuma feudatory which had so far ruled the kingdom. Nevertheless, this Ryukyu feudatory was replaced seven years later by Okinawa prefecture, which had equal status and the same system as Kagoshima and other prefectures. According to Oguma, the central government did not regard Okinawans as Japanese, but found it too risky to leave Okinawa in an ambiguous Japanese territory. Given that Japan's military power was not yet developed, to define Okinawa as Japan proper was one of the few security measures against Qing China's threat. In contrast to Hokkaido, Okinawa was already densely populated and had no space for Japanese settlers on its small islands. Therefore, in order to define Okinawa as part of Japan proper, it was necessary to remake native Okinawans into the Japanese (Oguma 1999: 27, 55).

Academic discussion was largely in harmony with this new political definition of Okinawans. Certainly, there was at one time an opinion holding that Ainu and Okinawans had their descent in common and were thereby distinguishable from the Japanese. Philip von Siebold is said to have suggested this (Asato & Doi 1999: 27), and Erwin Bealz wrote an article on this theory (Kimura 1976: 75). However, it was soon replaced by Basil

Chamberlain's linguistic theory of Ryukyu-Japan common ancestry. At the time when Kindaichi Kyosuke was substantiating that Ainu was a completely different language from Japanese, his colleague at Tokyo University, Ifa Fuyu, was establishing Chamberlain's theory with considerable supporting material. Of special note was the fact that this common ancestry theory did *not* deny Ainu presence in the Ryukyus. At the beginning of the twentieth century Torii Ryuzo excavated in Okinawa, with Ifa's assistance, and concluded that there had existed a Neolithic population of indigenous Ainu (Torii 1905a). Ifa accepted Torii's interpretation, mainly because it implied that Okinawans had the identical 'racial' constitution as the mainland Japanese, that is, Okinawans derived from a mix of the proto-Japanese with Ainu just as did the contemporary Japanese (Ifa 1974a: 41-43; cf. Oguma 1999: 295). Okinawans' Japanese identity continued to be credited in post-1945 physical anthropology. In the 1950 special issue of the Japanese Journal of Ethnology, Suda Akiyoshi made an extensive review of research on this topic and concluded that Okinawans were within the range of Japanese variations. Commonly recognised similarity of physical features with Ainu, such as hairiness, axillary odour and softer cerumen, were reconsidered as the characteristics of the Japanese in comparison with other East Asians, or undervalued as not occurring frequently enough to prove special Ainu connection (Suda 1950). It deserves mention here that veteran Okinawan specialists who contributed to this special issue were very much concerned with the current political issue. At that time, Japan was expected to regain her independence before long. It was still uncertain but quite likely to happen that Okinawa would be separated from mainland

Japan and remain under the American control. This possibility actually became a reality at the San Francisco Peace Treaty the following year (cf. Kawashima 1999: 173-174).

Relevant to the discussion of the Okinawa-Ainu connection was the issue of how to understand the Malayo-Polynesian influence on Okinawa. In Yaeyama, the southern-most islands, Torii found remnants of earthenware which had belonged to a definitely different culture from the Neolithic culture found on the Okinawa main island. While Torii regarded the latter as the same as the Japanese Neolithic, that is, Jomon-cum-Ainu culture, he suggested that the former was an extension of Malayo-Polynesian culture from Taiwan. At the same time, Torii argued that the bearers of this suggested Malayo-Polynesian culture were the direct ancestors of the contemporary inhabitants of the southern-most islands (Torii 1905b: 172). According to Oguma, Torii's evidence for a Malayo-Polynesian presence was not problematic for Ifa in claiming Okinawans' Japanese identity, just as Ainu presence was not, since both Malayo-Polynesians and Ainu were widely believed to have merged into the contemporary Japanese (Oguma 1999: 295). However, an inference from Torii's argument was that the present-day Yaeyama islanders, though regarded as Okinawans and, hence, Japanese, could in fact be purely Malayo-Polynesians. As Tomiyama Ichiro points out, Ifa had to re-interpret Torii's evidence to argue that indigenous Malayo-Polynesians were conquered by and assimilated into 'Ryukyans' coming down from Japan in the north (Tomiyama 1998: 172). Meanwhile, Torii published a revised article which argued that the remnants of earthenware at issue were actually of a Yayoi type and were possibly brought

by the Japanese people who came down to the southern-most islands (Torii 1975: 255).⁸⁰

To substantiate a southward migration from Japan was of critical importance to Okinawan intellectuals who claimed to be 'proper Japanese'. Mountain dweller groups of Taiwanese aboriginals, who were the geographically closest Malayo-Polynesians, were commonly called 'seiban (barbarians)'. The false belief that they were cannibals prevailed not only among the general public but also in learned journals, perhaps due to the reputation for head-hunting which had been conducted by some groups until the recent past. Even though the opposite direction of migration, from China through Taiwan and the Ryukyus to the Japanese mainland, could also prove the Ryukyu-Japan common ancestry, Okinawan intellectuals considered this theory of northward migration as an insufficient means for distancing themselves from the then highly disparaged Taiwanese aboriginals (cf. Tanigawa 1971c: 290; Kizaki 1981: 23). For instance, Ifa was not only the most active scholar in developing and promulgating the common ancestry theory, but also staunchly advocated the southward migration, from the beginning to the end of his academic life. In his earliest essay, *Okinawa-jin no Sosen ni tsuite* (On the Ancestry of Okinawans) (1906), he criticised a then popular Japanese historian who had propagated the idea that the Japanese came from their original habitat in southern China via the Ryukyus (Kume 1905). Ifa's concluding work, *Nihon Bunka no Nanzen* (Southward Penetration of Japanese Culture) (1939), made a stark contrast

⁸⁰ Torii's revised theory could after all not be substantiated. The Malayo-Polynesian influence became almost the established view, though debate still continues as to the extent of this influence upon local society (Pearson 1996: 97). The revised version of Torii's article was published in 1924 and later reprinted in his 1975.

to Yanagita Kunio's *Kaijo no Michi* (Path over the Sea) (1961) entering Japan from the south, along which the original Japanese were supposed to have travelled to the Japanese archipelago. These scholars otherwise had mutual academic affinity as well as close friendship (Beillevaire 1999: 182).

This debate which was influenced by Okinawans' political aspirations reappeared in post-1945 academia. In 1954, a Japanese archaeologist, Kanaseki Takeo, excavated Hateruma, the southernmost island of the Ryukyus, and discovered strong evidence for a prehistoric Taiwanese connection (*Asahi Shinbun (Kansai)* 14 Apr. 1954). He located this discovery in a theory that the tide of Malayo-Polynesian culture had reached the stone-age Japanese archipelago (Kanaseki 1971[1955]). In other words, Kanaseki was trying to establish that not particularly Okinawa but the whole Japan had received a Malayo-Polynesian influence. Nevertheless, an Okinawan linguist, Miyanaga Masamori, fiercely refuted Kanaseki's interpretation by saying that it implied that 'Ryukyu *minzoku* is the same people as barbarians in Taiwan' (Miyanaga 1971[1954]: 19). Beside reasonable disagreement between archaeological and linguistic approaches, Kanaseki's complaint was that:

It is shameful that even those [local] people who are recognised as scholars lose their temper when slight doubt is cast on the theory of southward migration of Ryukyuans (Kanaseki 1971[1955]: 103).

This academic detachment was impossible to accept for Okinawan intellectuals, who were struggling against forcible land expropriation by American forces at that time. At the beginning of the same year, Okinawans also heard a statement by president Eisenhower saying that the United States would indefinitely maintain its bases in Okinawa. Any

suspicion that Okinawans might be different from the mainland Japanese was regarded as possible support for the status quo, that is, Okinawa's separation from mainland Japan and its dispossession of land by the American forces. Miyanaga concluded:

We cannot be dismissive of the present state of international affairs. Ryukyu is being frightened like a sparrow under the gaze of an eagle. We cannot deny the possibility that even a false idea will eventually be used as an excuse. We should use prudence not to carelessly publish a conjecture which does not take this reality into consideration (Miyanaga 1971[1954]: 29).

Defined as basically Japanese, Okinawans found assimilation as the most effective strategy for escaping marginalisation. Difference was regarded as cultural, so assimilation was intended to make up for their 'cultural backwardness' or to 'correct' regional peculiarities. In this historical context, there was no room for an association with those minority peoples who were regarded as irredeemably different from the Japanese. Such an association, if established, would be thought of as decisively damaging Okinawans' emancipation. What is known as the Scandal of the Museum of Mankind illustrates that Okinawans showed strong resistance to any equation with Ainu and Taiwanese aboriginals.

From March to July 1903, the Fifth Domestic Industrial Exposition Fair was held in Osaka. Around 4,350,000 visitors were recorded as attending. Hoping to attract a share of the visitors, a Japanese merchant constructed a show tent near the main entrance.⁸¹ This show, which was

⁸¹ Weiner describes this enterprise as the Exposition's 'centrepiece' designed by a professional anthropologist (Weiner 1997c: 11). *Okinawa Dai Hyakka Jiten*, however, describes it as a private business independent from the Exposition. Maehira Fusaaki (1994) offers a detailed account of this scandal. The show tent was actually constructed outside the Exposition site and was seen dubious by the police authority. My description, including quotations from newspapers, relies on Maehira's essay.

named the 'Academic Museum of Mankind (*Gakujutsu Jinrui Kan*)', was supposed to 'gather the people of the other races who are close to the mainland [Japan] and to show visitors their customs, furniture and everyday life in practice' (*Osaka Asahi Shinbun* 1 Mar. 1903). Two Okinawan women were in the show with Hokkaido Ainu, Taiwanese aboriginals, Koreans, Chinese, Javanese, Balgalies from India and other 'Indians'.⁸² The beginning of the twentieth century was the time when Imperial Japan began to implement colonial expansion. As self-awareness of Japan's role as a colonial power emerged, ordinary Japanese citizens came to harbour Orientalist curiosity about colonial peoples (Maehira 1994: 25).

However, the 'museum' constructed by the foresighted merchant met with complaints from at least three agencies. On demand of the Chinese legation, Chinese shows were cancelled before the opening day. This was followed by a similar move by resident Koreans. In April, an Okinawan visitor noticed the shameful treatment of his country's women and contributed a report to an Okinawan newspaper. This report scandalised the Okinawan public, and the editorial immediately condemned the exhibition:

Peculiar customs of the other prefectures were not displayed, but those of our prefecture were chosen with *seiban* in Taiwan and Ainu in Hokkaido. This fact indicated that we were equated with *seiban* and Ainu. Nothing can be more insulting to us than this treatment (*Ryukyu Shimpō* 11 Apr. 1903).

As a result of the ensuing opposition campaign, the Okinawan shows were broken off two weeks later. Maehira Fusaaki points out that this scandal not only exposed social discrimination and the violation of human rights,

⁸² It is not clear why the newspaper article mentioned a particular group in India, the 'Balgalies', separately from other Indian peoples.

but also threw light on the complicated mentality of Okinawans (Maehira 1994: 23). Here Maehira refers to the Okinawans' urge to be recognised as 'proper Japanese'. The editorial continued:

Since the establishment of the prefecture, we have changed unsophisticated or strange-looking local customs. We have been struggling to return to the national standard. . . . While we conform to the Japanese standard, the people of the other prefectures often make little of us and tend not to see us as equal. . . . A sense of disunity between the people of the other prefectures and our prefectural citizens was only caused by their unfairly lower estimation of us than we really are (ibid.).

In other words, this editorial writer argued (1) that Okinawans are basically Japanese, (2) that they already effaced their regional peculiarities and (3) that the Japanese people, therefore, must regard Okinawans as equal. For the editorial writer, equation with Ainu and Taiwanese aboriginals implied that Okinawans were denied their Japanese identity. Such a perspective on Okinawans was never acceptable, as this amounted to the alienation of Okinawans which would accorded them as an unfavourable status in Japanese society as Ainu and Taiwanese aboriginals.

5-5: BURAKUMIN, REVERSIONISTS AND ANTI-REVERSIONISTS

In order to justify their claim of equal citizenship, Okinawans thought they needed to avoid any association with minority populations. This principle again took a concrete form in the latest stage of the reversion movement, when reversionists demanded inclusion within the Japanese Constitution on grounds of their Japanese identity. Reversionists firmly rejected an association with Burakumin. In 1970, the Osaka Prefecture Board of Education decided to introduce a school textbook, *Ningen* (humans), for equality and human rights education. Osaka was the industrial centre

of western Japan and, historically, had a high rate of minority populations: Burakumin, Koreans and Okinawans. One of the chapters, 'Okinawa and Discrimination', was planned to address problems in Okinawa under the American administration. However, residential Okinawans immediately raised an objection. In October 1970, responding to their appeal, Yara Chyobyō, the then chief executive of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands, made a request for the withdrawal of the chapter. In January 1971, Okinawan members of the Diet contacted the superintendent of education from Osaka and urged him not to permit the use of the textbook until the chapter was deleted. According to these complainants, Okinawan problems must be distinguished from those of Burakumin or Koreans, because the former constituted a case of institutional discrimination resulting from Japan's defeat at the Pacific War, whereas the latter was essentially a case of marginalisation founded on psychological disparity. However, this complaint was not reasonable, since the textbook also included other topics than obviously minority issues, such as the ravages of atomic bombs and the exploited women factory workers in the early modern era. The complaint was actually targeted at distancing Okinawans from Burakumin, who took the initiative in the edition and introduction of this textbook (Okamoto 1971, Arasaki 1976: 350-358).

Burakumin refers to the people who live, or have their origin, in former outcast communities (*Buraku*). A recent governmental survey reported about 1.2 million Burakumin at 4442 localised communities, but a private survey estimated a larger number, around 3 million at over 6000 communities. Burakumin are, in any way, the largest minority group in

contemporary Japan. Under the feudal regime, outcast people were engaged in ritually polluted occupations, such as slaughtering animals and executing criminals, and therefore subjected to social segregation. The Liberation Edict of 1871 abolished this formal foundation for segregation, but discriminatory practise continued in terms of marriage and employment. Unfavourable socio-economic conditions limited upward mobility and pushed many former outcasts into slummy urban ghettos. Material deprivation in turn became a new rationalisation for discrimination against these ghetto-dwellers, who were deemed to be essentially unhygienic, uneducated and poor (De Vos 1971: 5-6; Neary 1997: 55-56).

Former outcast communities dispersed widely. Initially, Burakumin leaders respectively tried to uplift their people by means of self-improvement and the mobilisation of sympathetic government officials. At the beginning of the century, these independent efforts were connected with each other by the Fraternal Conciliation Society. However, on the basis of this network a more militant Burakumin activism developed after a while. In 1922, the Levellers Society was launched under the influence of labour and tenant movements which grew up during the rapid spread of socialist ideology after the Russian Revolution. The Levellers did not accept the dominant interpretation that the Buraku problem was rooted in their own inadequacy, but rather argued that its solution amounted to a change in the majority's attitudes towards Burakumin. An effective tactic employed towards this restoration of self-respect was 'denunciation (*kyudan*)'. The Levellers Society demanded those offenders who committed discriminatory incidents against Burakumin to apologise publicly (Totten & Wagatsuma 1966: 38-48;

De Vos 1971: 14). Radical democratisation after 1945 was expected to remove the structural foundation of social stratification, but the series of democratic reforms did not so much empower Burakumin as they did tenant farmers and wage labourers. Burakumin political militancy was restored after its war-time suspension and developed remarkably, especially after it successfully denounced some improprieties and scandals involving discrimination against Burakumin in the 1950s. In 1955, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL) was inaugurated and started to assert highly organised aggressive pressure on the administrative authorities. In the 1960s, the BLL succeeded in persuading the central government to devise the Special Measures for Integration Projects, including generous grants for Burakumin households, improved public facilities in Burakumin ghettos and obligatory 'equality education' in schools. The projects initially took the form of a ten-year plan (enacted from 1969 to 1978) but were successively renewed thereafter on the BLL's request (Wagatsuma 1966: 72-85; Neary 1997: 60-65).

Communists have been involved in Burakumin activism since the time of the Levellers Society. In the early 1970s, however, the BLL had an irresolvable internal dispute between its mainstream members and its communist faction. Since communists defined the Burakumin struggle as a part of the general working-class movement, they regarded the self-assertion of Burakumin's distinctive social collectivity as counter-productive separatism (*Akahata* 26, 27 May 1975). Underlying this dispute was the fact that the BLL exclusively controlled a large sum of money supplied by the government for the Burakumin integration projects. For instance,

commenting on the BLL chairman who had said that 'the ideal is to be liberated while continuing to be Burakumin', a communist theorist of the Buraku Problem argued:

'Burakumin' still exist only because Buraku discrimination remains to be eradicated, and there will be not such thing as 'Burakumin' if liberation is brought into realisation. . . . It is simply Buraku separatism to continue to be 'Burakumin' even after they are 'liberated'. It is nothing but manoeuvres to maintain the privileged BLL's vested interest (Minegishi 1994: 128-129).

The break-up became decisive after incidents in which the BLL's denunciation of union teachers' improprieties developed into violent assaults. Communist-oriented members left the BLL and formed their own organisation (Yoshino & Murakoshi 1977: 89-93; Neary 1997: 66-69). In contrast to the BLL, which raises the general issue of social discrimination through addressing the Burakumin problem, this National Federation of Buraku Liberation Movement regards discrimination against Burakumin as a specific problem of a still extant feudal class system and campaigns for the eventual dissolution of this historical remnant. The BLL recently put more and more stress on the issue of human rights violation, which enables it to develop a network of multifarious groups.⁸³ By contrast, the Federationist diagnosis leads to a different remedy for Burakumin, for whom 'liberation' means their total disappearance, from, for example, Ainu, who were admitted a right to a separate identity (Minegishi 1994: 6). Thus, despite encouraging solidarity among all the exploited peoples, Federation communists actually made it difficult for Burakumin to unite with other oppressed minority groups.

⁸³ In 1972, the BLL incorporated Ainu activists into its United Front against Discrimination. In 1988, the BLL instituted an organisation, the International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR), which recently obtained consultative status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (Neary 1997: 75-76).

The argument of the Okinawan reversionists was similar to that of the Buraku Federationists in that complete fusion into the majority society was regarded as the ultimate solution of the existing problem. Both of them thought of the underlying cause of their separation as a historically specific and socially particular case of inequality within the category of the Japanese. A minority identity was not appreciated because it would weaken the grounds for claiming equality. In *Minikui Nihonjin* (the Cunning Japanese), a best-seller around the time when the textbook *Ningen* troubled Okinawans, Ota Masahide argued:

The problem consists in the fact that only Okinawa, or the prefectural citizens, has been discriminated against from the citizens of the other prefectures in the mainland *with respect to legal systems* (Ota 1995[1969]: 13; emphasis original).

Although Ota referred to the 'prefectural citizens', Okinawa prefecture did not officially exist at the time when he wrote this passage. The same book also discussed the 1903 scandal of the Museum of Mankind. However, it did not mention Okinawans' problematic perception of Ainu and Taiwanese aboriginals, but only complained about Japanese discrimination and prejudice against Okinawans, or, at best, criticised Japanese society for its tendency to underrate human rights (Ota 1995[1969]: 24-25). These points epitomised the reversionist interpretation of Okinawa-Japan relations. Ota had been asked and, at one time had accepted, to rewrite a part of *Minikui Nihonjin* so that it could constitute the chapter of the textbook *Ningen*. However, he eventually turned down this request in consideration of Okinawans' objection. Then, the editor of the textbook created a letter in the name of a student who had apparently visited Okinawa. After reporting the base-related problems, this fictional student raised a question:

The two cases of discrimination [i.e., Burakumin and Okinawans] were different in their historical and social backgrounds, but how much distance exists between them in our mind? (quoted in Arasaki 1976: 357).

This BLL editor had an insight into the general relationship between the dominant majority and subordinate minorities, and understood that both Okinawan and Burakumin problems should be addressed at this fundamental level.

In Okinawa, only a minority shared this understanding. Anti-reversionists were among the few Okinawans who equated their position in Japanese society with that of the Burakumin. Among others, Nakasone Isamu and Gima Susumu bore the scandal of the textbook *Ningen* in mind when they criticised the reversion movement at its final stage. According to Nakasone, inferior social categories, such as 'Okinawans' and 'Burakumin', were created by the ruling class in order to conceal the dominant-subordinate relationship and thereby to ensure that the hierarchical society was kept in good working order (Nakasone 1981: 72). Gima went one step further to point out that 'the existence of inferior Others was necessary for the Self to articulate, preserve and make Others believe in one's own superiority' (Gima 1979: 59). This insight into the underlying principle governing the conservation of power structures made it easy to reveal how unreasonable prejudice against Okinawans and Burakumin was. Gima argues that the grammatical subject, 'Burakumin', always conjures up a certain category of grammatical predicates which imply immoral behaviour or ill personality. Without considering the historical background of their deprivation, people explained Burakumin's situation as a result of their inherent characteristics (Gima 1979: 59). Similarly, Nakasone argues,

negative values, such as anger, poverty, unhygienicness and so on, are always attributed to 'Okinawans'. Okinawans are judged on their very being 'Okinawans', rather than on any empirical facts (Nakasone 1981: 71-72).

This clear understanding of the essence of social inequality convinced Nakasone and Gima that unity with the dominant majority could not be their realistic objective. Gima makes a comment on an Okinawan woman activist who resented the Japanese ascription of laziness. When she denied Okinawans' laziness, he argues, she thereby accepted the dominant ideology since she was claiming nothing more than that Okinawans were actually as hard-working as the Japanese. Questions were not raised as to whether the Japanese were in fact hard-workers, whether some people could be diligent while some others were essentially lazy, and whether 'laziness' was really blameworthy enough to justify inequality. Resentment may encourage Okinawans' self-discipline and may even enable them to feel a sense of unity with the dominant majority. However, this unity is merely an illusion, because the basis of discrimination, that is, an ideology in favour of the establishment power, is accepted at the onset (Gima 1979: 38). In this view, assimilationism is a vain attempt to 'approve of oneself through the denial of one's real existence' (Nakasone 1981: 41). A corollary of this discarded assimilationism was the rejection of the Common Ancestry Theory, though not its refutation. Gima explains his abandonment of this theory for claiming Okinawans' Japanese identity:

I used to emphasise Yanagita's theory [i.e. the Common Ancestry Theory] when I try to correct a misunderstanding about the identity of Okinawans. However, I began to ask whether such an approach to Okinawa stood on the

same boat as the idea that, if a man is not a Japanese, he deserves to be discriminated against (Gima 1970: 252-253).

Is it necessary for eliminating inequality, he asks, that Okinawans are 'racially' Japanese? How then can Koreans and Ainu be emancipated from discrimination? Is it sufficient for solving the existing problem that Okinawans are proved to be definitely Japanese? Why then do Burakumin exist all over the country? These questions led him to recognition that the Okinawan problem would not be really settled unless the problems of resident Koreans, Burakumin and Ainu were settled altogether. With other anti-reversionists, Gima argued that Okinawa should not re-enter pre-existing Japan, but that Okinawa's participation should help to construct an ideal new Japan. The minority groups were regarded as those with whom Okinawans would carry out this creative enterprise (Gima 1970: 254, 252).⁸⁴

5-6: EMERGENT FRATERNITY BETWEEN OKINAWANS AND AINU

Anti-reversionists professed the view that the definition of Okinawans should not be oriented to the mainstream Japanese. This view was thereafter fostered by local activists who had affiliated themselves to the Neighbourhood Act of the Ryukyuan Arc, and found a form of its materialisation in their communication with Ainu.⁸⁵ Arasaki Moriteru said in his recollection:

⁸⁴ It deserves to be added here that resident Okinawans in Osaka came to have a different view by the 1990s. In 1995, a history museum of the Burakumin movement developed into the Osaka Museum of Human Rights. In a standing display, 'the North and the South of the Archipelago', Okinawan collections have been placed next to Ainu's'. No complaint has so far been reported (Nakama 1997).

⁸⁵ The Neighbourhood Act of Ryukyuan Arc was dismantled in 1990 and reorganised into the New Okinawa Forum (*Shin Okinawa Forum*). The main reason was said to be a change of social environment surrounding citizens' movement. The latter currently issued its quarterly magazine,

When we thought that the real development of Okinawa was to fully expand its historical and cultural characteristics, we expected that Japan had more of such social groups, or regions, of unique history and culture. Ainu was one of the social groups which we came to know in this way (Arasaki 1992[1989]: 118).

Okinawan activists were in fact inspired by Ainu more than any other domestic minority group. Whereas their early interest in Burakumin and resident Koreans remained undeveloped, their categorical identification with Ainu became evident in the mid 1980s. This happened quite suddenly. For instance, in the 1981 Symposium for a Self-Reliant Okinawa, Taira Koji reported on an emergent Ainu campaign for their indigenous land title to the Northern Territories, and mentioned that some Ainu activists were interested in Okinawans' activism. However, virtually no response was heard from Okinawan participants. Nevertheless, by 1987, Okinawa-Ainu communication was so developed that Okinawan organisers invited a group of Ainu to the Uruma Festival, and they, in turn, made a trip to Hokkaido on the counter-invitation of the Utari Kyokai the following year. Through this exchange, Okinawan activists solidified the view that, just like Ainu, Okinawans were also one of the indigenous peoples to be decolonised from Japanese domination.

The incentive for Okinawans was the splendid success of Ainu ethnopolitics. In the early 1980s, the Utari Kyokai was preparing the Draft Legislation for the Ainu Minzoku, founded on 'indigenous rights' which Ainu activists had learned of through overseas communication. This burgeoning concept enabled the Utari Kyokai to reconcile emergent self-assertive Ainu-ness, which had grown among Ainu cultural revival initiated in the

Keshi Kaji, to which the ex-members of the Neighbourhood Act keep on contributing their articles. More detail of this reorganisation, see Arasaki 1992d: 166-176.

previous decade, with continuing welfare benefits, which had been so far tended to entail conciliatory attitudes towards the Japanese authorities (Siddle 1997: 40-44). At that time, however, no ethnic minority was officially recognised in Japan; the existence of such minorities was unequivocally denied in the 1980 first report to the United Nations Human Rights Committee from the Japanese government, which asserted that Ainu had already been completely assimilated. A second report was going to be submitted in October 1986, but it was actually delayed in light of the Prime Minister's improprieties and was subsequently completely revised due to Ainu activists' prompt counteractions. In September 1986, prime minister Nakasone Yasuhiro's offensive words about Blacks and Hispanics in the United States scandalised the American Congress. His excuse that he had intended to comment upon the demographic homogeneity of Japan, in turn, met with criticism from Ainu activists. In the Diet, Nakasone made the further excuse that he had meant by 'the Japanese' a mixed and united population and said, perhaps in jest, that his own hairiness indicated his partial Ainu descent. This reference to stereotyped physical features of Ainu further aggravated the situation.⁸⁶ In November, Ainu activists sent a complaint to the UN Human Rights Centre and, in July 1987, the Ainu representatives participated in its Working Group for Indigenous Peoples. In the delayed second report, eventually submitted in December 1987, the Japanese government had to admit that Ainu had a distinctive language, culture and religion (Uemura 1999: 86-87).

⁸⁶ For Nakasone's actual improprieties, see Arasaki 1993: 191 and Oguma 1995: 399.

The vanguard of the Okinawa-Ainu fraternity consisted of young activists such as Kina Shokichi, Takara Ben and Asato Eiko. In September 1981, Kina went to Hokkaido and gave a musical performance, which was the first concrete link between Okinawan activists and Ainu. Since this beginning, folk songs and traditional dance have been part of Okinawa-Ainu cultural exchanges, with regard to which Kina's profession, a popular folk singer, has been advantageous in attracting a greater audience. In this visit to Hokkaido, Kina observed the Shakushain Festival, which is a commemorative celebration for a historical Ainu leader in a rebellion against the Japanese. Ainu activists had recently won back this festival from the local tourist association and transformed it into a less commercial celebration of their ethnicity (Siddle 1996: 162, 173-174). Similarly, Kina's folk songs were no longer simply an entertainment but also became a cultural manifestation of Okinawan-ness. In the Winter of 1986, on preparation for a second Uruma Festival, Kina went back to Hokkaido to visit Yamamoto Tasuke, an Ainu elder whose cultural expertise greatly helped young Ainu activists to revive or invent traditional ceremonies and performances in the 1970s (cf. Siddle 1996: 174). From this second Uruma Festival onward, shamans' services became an important item in the many festivals which were organised under Kina's leadership. Yamamoto is said to have told Kina about a personal experience in Tokyo where he was mistaken for an Okinawan (Fujisaki 1994: 164).⁸⁷ By a shared similar experience in mainland Japan Takara and Chikap Mieko, an Ainu

⁸⁷ There are certain stereotypic features which are common to both Okinawans and Ainu and tend to be recognised especially in comparison with the mainstream Japanese. In the case that appears in the next sentence, Takara was mistaken by his university friends for an Ainu when he came to mainland Japan to study, and Chikap was mistaken for an Okinawan by her Okinawan flat mate.

embroidery artist, made friends with each other when they met in the First Conference of Discriminated Minorities in Kyoto in 1984. In June 1987, when Okinawa hosted its third conference, Takara took Chikap to a mass anti-base demonstration. Later, they came to jointly organise public events as well as to mutually support their respective activities. At the time of the 1987 conference, a readers' column of a local newspaper still asked the rhetorical question, 'Are, we Okinawans, one of the discriminated minority groups?', but this was perhaps the last occasion in which such a conservative voice was heard in public (Takara & Chikap 1996: 238-253).

Ainu guests at the second Uruma Festival of September 1987 became a significant feature in its definition as a counter-event to the National Athletic Meeting. On Kina's invitation, Chikap took a group of Ainu to Okinawa, who, in addition to dance and music, offered *kamui-nomi* (Ainu prayer for deities) on the beach. Shamans of the Utaki Shinto Kai (Association of Miyakoan Shamans) were called up from Miyako and joined this prayer in their own style. This was the predecessor of what happened in Ikema Island, in 1998, eleven years later, which I sketched at the beginning of this chapter. In 1988, the Ainu guests staged a return meeting. The Utari Kyokai contributed an Ainu pavilion to the World Food Festival, which was opened in Sapporo from July to September. It invited not only Okinawan activists but also the chairman of the Okinawa Social Mass Party, shaman Nema Tsuruko accompanied by Nakasone Keizo and other shamans. These Okinawan shamans joined in prayer with Ainu in *ashiri-chep-nomi*, a ceremony to welcome the new salmons of the year, which had recently been

restored by the Ainu movement for cultural revival. Asato Eiko reports on this ceremony:

A deep impression, which our South-North exchange brought about, was similar to the pleasure which a sibling would have when he or she met another who had long been separated (Asato 1999: 236).

She regards Okinawans and Ainu as siblings. In fact, shaman Nema's common ancestry theory between Miyakoans and Ainu, which she maintained in the 1998 symposium of the Kami to Mori, was based on her observation of this occasion. This joint ceremony was followed by mutual performance of music and dance, which already became customary items of the Okinawa-Ainu exchange. In addition, Okinawan activists and the leaders of the Utari Kyokai had a public discussion, in which the former spoke in favour of the current struggle for a special legislation for Ainu empowerment. They argued that minority peoples needed special treatment beyond the existing legal system since they were underrepresented in national politics and were structurally more liable to human rights violation. When the Okinawan speakers pointed this out, they were not only sympathetic to Ainu but also well aware that the same theoretical framework was applicable to their own problems (Asato 1999: 242-243).

This public discussion was billed as 'Japonesia: the North and the South of the Horizon'. The Okinawa-Ainu exchange was understood as a materialisation of the idea of an originally diverse Japan, which Shimao Toshio envisaged in the 1960s. However, such particularistic language, with which Okinawan activists were familiar since the time of the reversion movement, thereafter retreated into the historical background. It was soon replaced by the more powerful language of minority activism, especially, the

new language of the world-wide movement of indigenous peoples. The 1988 *ashiri-chep-nomi* (new salmon ceremony) was observed by Burakumin from mainland Japan, Navaho from the United States and Peta from the Philippines as well as Okinawan guests. Asato's report from Sapporo quoted above continued:

Moreover, on this occasion, it became clear that this communication between Japan's minorities would extend to minorities in the world. There was growing expectation and wish that this communication would go beyond the boundaries of nation-states and become a new trend of life (ibid.).

At that time, a movement of indigenous peoples was gathering momentum. In June 1989, the International Labour Organisation eventually revised its Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; former assimilationist orientation was replaced by support for the self-control over native institutions, life-styles and economic development, on the one hand, and the encouragement of distinctive identities, languages and religions, on the other hand. December 1992 saw the inauguration of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous People, which was followed by the UN International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Kina, Takara and Asato neatly allied with Ainu activists during this period and committed themselves to symposiums, public discussions and festive meetings. The upshot was the Nirai Kanai Festival held in Okinawa in August 1993, in which Kina succeeded in inviting to a public discussion activists from Kutenai, Hopi and Chipewa (the United States), Abenaki (Canada), Ami (Taiwan), Maori (New Zealand) and Tibetans (China) as well as Ainu and local Okinawans.

From the late 1980s onward, Okinawan activists remarkably widened their perspective on issues outside Japan and extended their activities to the

international field. Arasaki approached a growing popular movement for an independent Taiwan (Arasaki 1992: 89-97; 124-129). Takara travelled through the minority-inhabited areas in the Philippines while he studied in a graduate school in Manila. He also played a pivotal role in the formation of the Friendship Association between Ryukyu and Ireland (Takara 1996: 189-191, 222-223, 156-167). Asato went to Peking to attend the third Asia-Pacific Conference for Peace, Disarmament and Coexistence and then to Korea to join the adoption of the 1998 declaration issued by the Asian Human Rights Committee. She developed personal communication on these occasions into the International Women's Network Meetings, which linked women activists in those localities where the American bases caused social problem (Asato 1999: 254-262, 263-270, 274-277). Meanwhile, Kina was nominated as a singer in a honourable annual music program of the Japan Broadcast Company (NHK), and was later delegated to perform in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. Through his organisation of public discussions, he forged links with influential native American activists, such as Thomas Banyacya and Dennis Banks. These connections enabled him to form a citizens' caravan to the United States for a petition to the UN Headquarters and to visit the self-governing area of the Iroquois League (cf. Asato 1999: 278-286). A significant feature observable in these activities was that local activists represented themselves as 'Okinawans' separable from the Japanese. For instance, at the Peking international conference mentioned above, Asato appreciated a name list on which she was registered as 'Okinawan', distinguished from the other 'Japanese' participants (Asato 1999: 257-258). It was in 1979 that Takara expressed his wish to 'vertically

soar from the Ryukyuan Arc into the world' (Takara 1996: 109). This desire for direct foreign communication without the intermediary of Japan, or Tokyo, became a reality in the 1990s.

5-7: DISCUSSION ON AN INDEPENDENT OKINAWA

In the mid 1990s, when the Okinawan governor confronted the Japanese government over the issue of land lease for the American military bases, discussion concerning an independent Okinawa suddenly became popular. Local activists, who had already become less hesitant in claiming a separate identity, instigated much of this discussion. In December 1995 the Prime Minister brought an action into the court against governor Ota Masahide, who made protest against the military use of local properties and repudiated official duties concerning their expropriation. Asato Eiko and Arakawa Akira asked Takara Ben and Arasaki Moriteru to organise together the Citizens' Forum for a Self-Reliant Okinawa (*Okinawa no Jiritsu wo kangaeru Shimin Forum*). Taking care of extant psychic resistance to the term '*dokuritsu* (independence)', they chose the less radical term '*jiritsu* (self-reliance)'. Between 100 to 150 people gathered (*Okinawa Times, Ryukyu Shimpō* 25 Dec. 1995). In April 1997 the anti-Japanese atmosphere further heated up. The Japanese Diet quickly passed an amendment to land expropriation law. It frustrated ongoing resistance put up by Okinawan land owners and the local government according to the old expropriation law. Governor Ota had already made a partial compromise for fear of the amendment, but this precautionary step turned out to be ineffective. His indignant comment, 'How does Japan regard Okinawa for

herself?', was widely broadcast and was treated as the representative voice of Okinawa. Kina Shokichi invited Arakawa, Takara and Kawamitsu Shinichi to hold the Public Discussion on the Possibility of an Independent Okinawa (*Okinawa Dokuritsu no Kanosei wo Kangaeru Kokai Toron*), in which over 1,000 people participated (*Okinawa Dokuritsu no Kanosei wo meguru Gekiron Kai Jikko Iin Kai* 1997). For the first time since anti-reversionists had attracted interest in the press in Tokyo in the early 1970s, Okinawan activists received massive publicity nation-wide. On this occasion, many of them were self-assertive about representing themselves as 'Okinawans' or 'Ryukyans'.⁸⁸

Can it be deemed as the advance of local activism that the idea of an independent Okinawa gained in popularity? It appeared to be an expeditious development, but the direction of progress deviated from what local activists originally tried to attain. Originally, they carefully distanced themselves from Okinawan nationalism even when they constructed arguments against the Japanese authorities. However, when Okinawa and Japan were defined as rival agents conflicting over incompatible interests, Okinawan ethnicity was increasingly affirmed and thereby overshadowed the original intention. For instance, until the late 1980s, Takara took unequivocally critical attitudes towards Okinawan nationalism. He showed little interest in the court culture of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Self-definition as 'Ryukyans' was carefully avoided because it implied a vision of a state centralised in Okinawa main island, or, at least, an internally homogeneous

⁸⁸ Discussion on an independent Okinawa appeared in popular magazines in Japan, such as *Shukan Kinyobi* (8 Aug.), *Newsweek Japan* (21 May), *SPA!* (18 Jun.) and *Sekai* (Aug.). Critical argument from conservative ideologues also appeared around the same time in Japanese magazines, such as *Shokun* (May) and *This is Yomiuri* (Jun.).

social collectivity. Influenced by Japanese writers, Takara proposed the idea of 'Ryukyu-nesians', who appreciated vernacular cultures of remote islands and thereby highly praised diversity within the Ryukyuan Arc (Takara 1981, 1996: 35-37). However, stimulating communication with Ainu activists inclined him to have more positive attitudes towards the concept of 'Ryukyuan'. In a talk with Chikap Mieko in 1995, Takara deplored the fact that modern Okinawan intellectuals initially defined themselves as '*Ryukyu minzoku* (the Ryukyuan people)' but gradually came to prefer '*Okinawa Ken Min* (population in Okinawa prefecture)' (Takara 1996: 245). In more recent times, Takara led the procedure for designating the castles and religious sanctuaries of the Ryukyu Kingdom as a part of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage (*Okinawa Times* 14 Jul. 1999). His distance from Okinawan nationalism became obscured.

At this height of its intensity, discussion on independence faced internal criticism by a practically-oriented activist. The main proponents of independence, such as Takara, Arakawa, Kawamitsu and Kina, had a taste for poetry or music. In comparison with them, Arasaki was a sober activist, who was more concerned with organising citizens' movements in terms of litigation or indignant meetings in the field. In his view, the currently popular discussion on an idealistic vision was likely to allow citizens' will to fight against the authorities evaporate into an unproductively emotional complaint, since it inexpediently transcended concrete matters in real life (*Okinawa Times*, 30 May; *Shukan Kinyobi* 20 June). Actually, the discussion could not find a substantial solution to the immediate problem, that is, the removal of individual bases, but rather tended to reaffirm an

idealistic vision of a Ryukyu republic. Already in the early 1980s, a warning was given to the fact that grassroots activists showed low attendance to a public discussion on a self-reliant Okinawa or a Ryukyu republic (Arasaki et. al. 1982: 211). Similarly, voices of practically-oriented activists were hardly heard both at the 1995 citizens' forum and the 1997 public discussion. Undoubtedly, self-reliance was a matter of concern for those activists who were based in actual local communities and were struggling with tangible problems. However, the category 'Okinawa' did not receive wholehearted sympathy from these activists.

It was obvious in the eyes of Arasaki that a single social collectivity did not reflect the realities of the islands. His remark made in a public discussion clearly illustrated his view of Okinawans' identity. In 1994, along with Ainu activists and Japanese scholars, Arasaki took one of the panellist seats. Discussants criticised the assumption of a homogeneous Japan and proposed promoting multiculturalism to construct an openly multi-ethnic Japan. At one point, an anthropologist asked whether 'Ryukyu' could be regarded as a complete *minzoku* to constitute such a multi-ethnic Japan, while he asserted that Ainu was one without question. Arasaki replied that the majority Okinawans preferred becoming Japanese whereas the minority called themselves 'Ryukyu *minzoku*', but added that these two choices could also coexist in a single personality. Furthermore, to illustrate internal regional diversity, Arasaki mentioned that local language differs from island to island and that a good few Miyakoans and Yaeyamans would resist being called 'the Okinawans'. Then, he asked, 'Have we really to choose one or the other?', 'Why is it necessary to divide people into

different *minzoku*?' and 'Why can we not accept such ambiguity and heterogeneity as they are?' (Gendai Sekai to Bunka no Kai (ed.) 1994: 169-170). In asking these rhetorical questions, Arasaki thoroughly denied monolithic categories. Even multiculturalism had to be rejected, if this idea presupposed that each cultural group unequivocally had its separate identity.

Arasaki's unexpected internal criticism caused disputes among local activists; Takara, Kawamitsu and Arakawa respectively published polemics (Takara 1997, Kawamitsu 1997, Arakawa 1997a, 1997b, 2000: 229-238). These opponents labelled Arasaki's activities as 'emotional complaints', which had no substantial power to change the situation. Oddly enough, this was the very point on which Arasaki had criticised them. For instance, Arakawa observes that the anti-base campaigns have been conducted on the grounds that their presence violates the Japanese Constitution. As far as this ground goes, the campaigners will have to accept the Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa, and their campaign will be nothing more than entreaty to the state authorities. As the reversion movement already provided a painful lesson, such entreaty for relief is vain because the same state authorities produced and maintains the military presence to their own advantage. Thus, Arakawa argues, Okinawan activism should never dismiss the rivalry between Okinawa and Japan (Arakawa 1997a: 220-222). Oddly enough, again, Arasaki also talked about a painful lesson of the reversion movement, saying that reversionists had mistaken a means for the end. Affiliation to Japan was just a means of emancipation from American military control, but the self-purposive reversion, that is, to prioritise the

re-entry into Japan over any other condition, presented a situation wherein the American bases continued to exist in Okinawa even after Okinawans gained Japanese citizenship. Similarly, discussion on independence, Arasaki warns, is liable to mistake a means, secession of Okinawa, for the end, self-reliance of local communities (Arasaki 1997: 231).

This Arasaki-Arakawa debate seems to have been at cross-purposes. An excerpt from their dialogue shows that they were in agreement at bottom:

Arasaki: Self-reliance means, first of all, an expanded *right of self-determination*. . . . Independence may happen at some point of the process for empowerment, but this independence will not take the form of a new state. The concept of independence and that of national borders will change, or have to be changed, by sustained effort in empirical movements.

Arakawa: Independence does not mean to separate from the state of Japan and to construct a Ryukyu republic. It will be meaningless to construct such a small state, mini-Japan, which is basically the same as the existing states all over the world. . . . Discussion on independence expresses our demand for the *right of self-determination*. It is based on desire for a symbiotic society, which overcomes the disadvantages of the predominant social form of state and the concept of national borders (Arasaki et. al. 1997: 26, italic added).

Both Arasaki and Arakawa were seeking a right of self-determination. Disagreement was only rooted in the disparity between a realist, who did not hesitate to rely on the Japanese Constitution in order to deal with immediate problems, and an idealist, who gave priority to the fundamental challenge to the Japanese state system.

It can never be denied that Arasaki's networking of grassroots activists and their sustained unobtrusive struggles enabled popular agitation to suddenly expand in the autumn of 1995. If three dozen military-land owners had not obstinately refused lease contracts, there could have been no opportunity for the Okinawan governor, as their proxy, to take legal action against the central government. Such 'anti-war land owners' were

able to survive with the support of Arasaki's network. The Neighbourhood Act of the Ryukyuan Arc produced public opinion which not only opposed national security policy but also national development plans. Massive finances supplied by the central government for local economy largely pacified rage at the unfair burden of military bases. However, in a series of events following the 1995 popular agitation, this line of citizens' movement found itself reaching the limitations. In August 1996, the Okinawan governor lost a case in the Supreme Court. The main point at issue was the question as to what should be regarded as 'public interest'. In the central government's view, it was the due implementation of the Japan-US Security Treaty. Okinawa prefecture countered that 'public interest' should be considered to include the welfare of the local population. The Supreme Court authorised the central government's interpretation; it judged that the concentration of the American military bases in Okinawa could not be said to contravene the Constitution. The revised land-expropriation law made it impossible for a local screening committee to overrule the decision of the central government. This revision was passed in the Diet by an overwhelming majority. As then governor Ota puts it, Okinawans faced a dead-end in a 'structure in which the minority is always sacrificed to the majority under the name of democracy' (Ota 2000: 155-156).

Is it a better choice, then, to claim a distinct right of self-determination on the basis of a separate social collectivity from the Japanese? Progressive action in this direction was recently undertaken by the Shimin Gaiko Centre, a Tokyo based Non-Governmental Organisation, which had successfully supported an Ainu lobby in the United Nations. On

the historical legal grounds that the Ryukyu Kingdom had independently signed treaties with European countries, the Centre claimed that Japan had no justification for her sovereignty over Okinawa. The base-related troubles were interpreted as among the cases of the violation of human rights from which indigenous peoples were liable to suffer all over the world. This interpretation actually found closely resembled cases in Guam, Hawaii, the British Chagos and so on, where the American bases were imposed on the habitat of politically powerless peoples. With this rationale, the Centre has appealed on behalf of Okinawa to the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations since 1995 (Uemura 1999).⁸⁹ Similarly, Ainu-inspired local activists, particularly Takara and Kina, also popularised the self-representation as one of the indigenous peoples. Although their cultural activities were less practically-oriented, than the Centre's international legal actions, they were more widely known and perhaps influential in local society. Whether these attempts within the framework of indigenous people's movements attain fruitful results depends on how much sense of unity they can create among Okinawans. In the case of Ainu, young left-wing activists succeeded in mobilising elder conservative leaders into political manipulation of Ainu cultural identity. In doing this, they also succeeded in overcoming class, generation or regional divisions and uniting otherwise disparate and sometimes incompatible interests into common Ainu interest (Siddle 1997: 41). Have Okinawans consolidated the common bonds of their ethnic identity so that it can be ready to serve for sustaining a united front?

⁸⁹ On the activity of the Shimin Gaiko Centre, I owe much information to my university colleague Ms. Onaka Chika, who is also a member of this NGO.

Certainly, for a few years following the 1995 popular agitation, the majority of Okinawans appeared to have a consensus on the policy of tenacious resistance. The 1996 prefectural referendum showed the majority vote for the reduction of the size of the existing military forces. Riding on growing public criticism of national security policy, Okinawa prefecture proposed a twenty-year programme for the *complete removal* of military bases. The top priority was given to the removal of the Futenma Air Station, a US Marine base existing in the middle of the city area extending to the central part of Okinawa island. In response to this suddenly arising protest, the Japanese and American authorities had already formed the Special Action Committee on Facilities and Areas in Okinawa (SACO), which framed its own scheme for the *reductive consolidation* of military bases. SACO agreed to close the Futenma Air Station, but only on condition that the existing forces were relocated somewhere in Okinawa. In January 1997, a substitute base was eventually decided to be constructed on the beach in Nago City, which is in the rural, northern part of the island. Heated opposition arose from local residents, but the city mayor and his supporters were in favour of the construction. The year 1997 ended with a city referendum, in which the majority voted against the new base, leading to the resignation of the mayor.⁹⁰

However, while the relocation plan was thus frustrated, a big change was under way. In February 1998, three scholars at Ryukyu University published a controversial book, *Okinawa no Jiko Kensho* (Okinawa's

⁹⁰ The mayor stood on the horns of a dilemma between articulated local public opinion, on the one hand, and his vision and pressure from the central government, on the other hand. He eventually announced official permission for the plan, but also his resignation at the same time. An article which

Self-Examination) (Maeshiro et. al. 1998). They argued that passionate complaint had certainly given rise to wide public discussion on the base-related problem but was unable to propose a realistic solution. They meant by 'realistic' the acceptance of American military presence. Actually, the tide of events turned in this 'realistic' direction. Unexpectedly, the Marine-base opposition citizens lost a Nago mayoral election in the same month. It was followed by an Okinawa gubernatorial election, in which the incumbent Ota was defeated by a LDP candidate who had pledged to resign himself to accepting a new Marine base on certain conditions. The central government provided a favourable wind for them. What surprised many people was that the Japanese government singled out Nago City as the main venue to host the G8 Summit 2000. The government also promised to provide an additional 100 billion yen grant to be spent for the development of the northern area of the island within the coming ten years. By the end of the year 1999, both Okinawa prefecture and Nago City announced that they would basically accept a new Marine base.

Beyond the simple fact that level-headed local corporatists yielded to the favourable conditions offered by the central government, there was also dissent with a popular view that all Okinawans must irreconcilably put up resistance to the central government for the sake of the unitary category of Okinawa. Takara Kurayoshi, one of the authors of *Okinawa no Jiko Kensho*, censured his opponents:

It is a commonplace that Okinawans fall into a foible when they discuss Okinawan issues. They tend to assume that the prefectural citizens form a homogeneous social group, which has common opinion and feelings. They tend to make arguments based on such a 'common mind', excessively using

gives an account to this process was reported by Inoue Masamichi, who stayed in Nago city during this period for anthropological fieldwork (Inoue 1998).

the term '*Uchina-n-chu* (‘the Okinawans’ in local language)’ (Maeshiro et. al. 1998: 85).

This censure was levelled at the then governor Ota and at local journalists. As his appellant statement at the Supreme Court epitomised, governor Ota essentialised the Okinawans as a ‘peace-loving people’ by referring to popular, but unfounded, episodes in history; to take a famous example, ‘the Ryukyu Kingdom kept no weapon by virtue of its people’s courtesy’.⁹¹ His favourite catchword, the ‘Okinawan mind’, not only flooded the mass-media but was also used in a Prime Minister’s speech, ‘we are ashamed that we have not made every effort to understand the “Okinawan mind”’. Where the base issues were concerned, the local press showed favour to governor Ota and thereby neglected different opinions actually existing among local people. The authors of the book *Okinawa no Jiko Kensho* gave so biased local newspaper a reproach, ‘the bulletin of the prefectural government’ (Maeshiro et. al. 1998: 14). In short, the book exposed the fact that monolithic unity, like the 1995 popular agitation, could only temporarily exist in Okinawa.

In addition to this lack of internal solidarity, the Okinawa-Japan dichotomy had already become less effective in protest against the central government. Especially, it increasingly lost a disturbing effect on the national integration to put stress on Okinawa’s separate history and cultural distance from Japan. In alliance with Ainu activists, Okinawan activists refuted the idea of a homogeneous Japan. However, when such refutation was reduced to a demand for the higher recognition of local culture, it could

⁹¹ An English version of Summary of the Appellant’s Statement (10 July 1996), which used to be presented in Okinawa prefecture’s internet homepage, read that ‘The Ryukyu Kingdom was known to foreign countries as an “island of courtesy”, and a land without weapons. King Sho Shin ruled from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries and prohibited the ownership of weapons’. However, this

easily be appropriated by the central power of the state for national integration. For instance, Shuri Castle was restored in 1992. This headquarters of the Ryukyu Kingdom was reconstructed by the *Japanese* government as one of the *national* parks on the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Okinawa's *reversion to homeland*. Using this castle, a series of television dramas were made based on the history of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Historical stories so far unfamiliar to the Japanese audience were broadcast in a popular programme on the nation-wide network.

Arasaki made a severe comment on the 'Okinawa boom' of this year:

Nowadays, heterogeneity is treasured as far as it does not look political. Okinawan language, Okinawan dance, Okinawan verse and Shuri Castle can all be said to be such treasured heterogeneity. This may be the pleasant tide of our times, but, when the Emperor composes Okinawan verses, the treasured heterogeneity will turn into effective means of national integration (Arasaki 1993: 149-150).

On every visit to Okinawa, the present Emperor demonstrated that he had acquired uniquely Okinawan cultural accomplishments. A comparable case was a new type of bank note, which the Japanese government suddenly decided to issue in October 1999. What surprised many people was that the image of the main gate to Shuri Castle was going to be printed on its front. Arakawa gave a warning, saying that the wide currency of this new banknote would make it completely acceptable in the eyes of both Okinawans and the Japanese that Okinawa is part of Japan (Arakawa 2000: 18-58). Okinawan activists may be able to reject Japanese symbols, which they regard as irrelevant to Okinawa, but they cannot prevent the Japanese authorities appropriating Okinawan symbols, even though the activists regard these symbols as irrelevant to Japan.

prohibition was intended to enable the royal court to monopolise arm forces, not by virtue of people's

5-8: DIRECTION OF THE POST-SUMMIT MOVEMENT

Local activists were critical of the G8 Summit and were suspicious of the Japanese government's intention to hold it in such a remote province as Okinawa. However, it was virtually impossible to call for a large resistance act in the atmosphere of its positive acceptance by the general public. Instead, local activists tried to attach a different meaning to this inevitable event. The Summit was supposed to be an occasion on which the leaders of powerful capitalist nations discussed how they could stabilise global politics and maintain economic order. However, local activists attempted to 'transform the Summit into an opportunity to widely purvey the people's message' (Arasaki 2000: 17) by making the best of the extensive coverage in the foreign as well as national mass-media. For instance, it was widely recognised that American military presence in Okinawa was necessary for protecting the vested interest of Japan and the United States in East Asia. On his visit, president Clinton was expected to give a public speech to reaffirm this view. On the same occasion, local activists, however, tried to draw public attention to the less known aspect of the military presence, that is, local people's trouble, and to cause world-wide concern about the Okinawan base problem. In short, their plan was to 'invert the meaning of the Summit' (Muto 2000: 34).

Within a few months prior to the Summit, various citizens' groups held a number of public events with widely overlapping participants. There were a few Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) which were external to

courtesy.

Okinawa: for instance, Jubilee 2000 appealing for debt relief for poor countries and the TOES advocating an alternative world-wide economic system. Many other groups were local or those which had already involved in Okinawa. Aiming at this special occasion, they rearranged their regular activities with enlarged participation of new groups and personages. Kina produced the fourth Nirai Kanai Festival with guest indigenous activists from the Iroquois League. The Okinawa Women's Act against Military Bases organised a conference with women activists from Korea, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and the United States. Activists from these countries also gave speeches on the base-related environmental deterioration in a forum which was set up by a local environmentalist network. The Shimin Gaiko Centre held a public seminar on an international legal instrument for the protection of human rights and discussed steps to a lobby in the United Nations. With NGO activists from Bangkok and Tokyo, Arasaki and Asato played an active role in the Okinawa International Forum on People's Security. In opposition to the conventional concept of security which was based on the balance of military forces, the forum redefined 'security' as one that could be achieved by complete demilitarisation. More traditional anti-base groups, such as labour unions and reformist political parties, organised rallies and demonstrations. The climax was a mass peace-appeal-action, in which over twenty-five thousand people besieged the Kadena Air Base, creating a human chain along its perimeter.⁹²

⁹² *Okinawa Times* offered a special series of articles reporting each of these events; the TOES (15 June), the Shimin Gaiko Centre (22 June), the Women's Summit (29 June), the Forum on People's Security (6 July), the Environment NGO Forum (20 July). Bimonthly Magazine *Impaction* (vol. 119) carries articles written by many of the representatives of these activist groups.

Characteristic of these latest activities was the abundant reference to 'human rights'. Certainly, at the time of the reversion movement, 'human rights' was already one of the key terms around which arguments against military bases were constructed. However, at that time, 'human rights' principally meant a right which would have been protected if separation from Japan had not taken place. In more recent times, the violation of human rights came to be associated with a situation in which Okinawans have the status of an ethnic minority in Japanese society. The latest use of the concept of human rights was separable from this minority identity as well as having nothing to do with Japanese citizenship. A case illuminating this latest use is that of women's activism, which claimed that military forces were *theoretically* incompatible with the security of women and children. Amano Keiichi analyses the principle which the Okinawa Women's Act against Military Bases holds:

The Women's Act's perspective is largely characterised as pacifism based on a sustained effort to condemn the existence of military forces as such. It is pacifism emerging from real life and attacking military bases at the fundamental level. It is little liable to be appropriated for an agitation for nationalism, neither Japanese nationalism nor Okinawan nationalism (Amano 1997: 117).

This language reconstructed a local anti-base movement on the premise of 'international justice'. Since this particularistic problem was thus rendered universal, local activists envisaged global allies. The future movement in this direction was heralded by the fact that some activists suggested inviting the United Nations to set up its branch office in Okinawa, such as an Asia-Pacific office of the Human Rights High-Commissioner, an international

centre for human security and an international centre for indigenous peoples.⁹³

Around 1970, young local activists began to establish their distinctive thinking on society. It started with questioning the then overwhelming trend towards assimilation into Japanese community and eventually developed into its firm rejection. Thenceforth, local activists deployed various struggles for effecting a situation in which 'Okinawans can live with comfort and self-respect' (Arasaki 1997: 231). What was common to different activists was the intention to resist Japanese standards, especially one to resist their own temptation for Japanese conformism. This resistance brought about some fruitful results but left some problems unresolved. It is said, on the one hand, that the sense of inferiority, or the feelings of being discriminated against (*sabetsu-kan*), disappeared and was replaced by self-confidence. On the other hand, however, structural discrimination (*kozo-sabetsu*), or an unequal power relation based on Okinawa's economic and political dependence on Japan, remained the same (Kawamitsu 1997: 154). In opposing land development, the rejection of Japanese conformity was effective to some extent. Although the development of Okinawa was largely framed by national economic policy, the state authority *indirectly* acted upon local society through private developers. There was room for negotiation with such developers within the existing legal system. After the autumn of 1995, however, the conditions were different. When national security policy became the prominent issue, the state

⁹³ The first plan was proposed by the Shimin Gaiko Centre (*Okinawa Times* 22 June 2000). The second plan was proposed in the International Women's Summit (*Okinawa Times* 29 June 2000). The third was proposed by Kina with American Indian activist Denis Banks (*Ryukyu Shimpō* 24 January 1998).

authority *directly* exercised its power. While struggles within the framework of national politics were frustrated under the pretext of obeying the principles of democracy, discussion on independence was interrupted by the lack of a single social collectivity of Okinawa. Thus local activists were not able to offer effective resistance.

Local activists have recently transferred the moral grounds for claiming a military-free Okinawa to 'international human rights'. This concept may be useful since it seems less unfit for the present condition of the islands than the concept of indigenous people. It also seems likely that 'international human rights' will become the more powerful language of politics in the future. Nevertheless, as long as Okinawa is burdened with the military bases in exchange for economic development, it will continue to be a significant task for local activists to invoke public opinion to abandon material ambition. In addition, as long as material ambition takes the concrete form of demand for Japanese standards of living, the rejection of Japanese conformity will continue to be indispensable for successful local activism in Okinawa.

5-9: CONCLUSION

Local activists took a remarkably different view on Okinawa-Japan relations from that of other local people, especially, the Okinawan establishment, which historically had a strong Japanese orientation. Ainu activism had a decisive impact on Okinawan activists in their pursuit of a separate identity. Their challenge to the Japanese authorities came to be defined as a movement for the restoration of a lost right of a people under

Japanese dominance. This inspiration found its most progressive materialisation in discussion on an independent Okinawa in the second half of the 1990s. However, when this new movement reached its peak, it exposed inherent disadvantages. A single social collectivity was well implied by the definition of Okinawans as a people, that is, 'Okinawa *minzoku*' or 'Ryukyu *minzoku*', but the expected solidarity went too far ahead of the realities of local society at present.

However, this setback gave local activists a chance to reflect upon the idea of multiculturalism. Some activists became acutely aware that its seemingly decentralising effects could actually enhance the power of the central authorities. In his recent book, Arakawa pointed out:

A new form of 'assimilationism' does not try to uniformise the unique history and culture of different regions, which are going to be 'integrated' into the nation-states, as its old form used to do. The new form positively accepts such uniqueness and tries to maintain the framework of 'integration' by effect of this acceptance. This is the principle for 'integration' based on 'multiculturalism' (Arakawa 2000: 263).

The only flaw of this keen insight is that the old form of assimilationism was perhaps not very different from the new one. Shuri Castle had already been designated by the Japanese government as one of the national treasures before it was ruined in the Second World War. In 1923, the local authority was going to pull it down for urban renewal, but a visiting Japanese scholar intervened and made a successful appeal for its preservation.

Certainly, the central authorities of the state fabricated the idea of a homogeneous Japan and thereby sustained national integration. However, this does not mean that they instituted vigorous action against regional peculiarities in order to cause uniformalising effects. Such vigorous action was rarely taken unless the support for regional peculiarities encouraged

people to disturb state control. Uniformalising effects had actually much more to do with the mind of marginalised people who admire the dominant culture. Fundamental to this admiration was their implicit worship for the central authority. As long as this worship lasts, it will not make much difference whether marginal people relegate their own culture below the dominant one or appreciate the former as no less valuable than the latter. When previously ignored provincial culture wins national recognition, it may seem to be a successful challenge to the dominant culture. However, it actually reaffirms the fact that the central authorities monopolise the power of recognition. If it still is necessary for local activism in Okinawa to foster an ethics of cultural diversity, the ethics will be developed in a way that it cannot be encapsulated in multiculturalism. Their laudable challenge affirmed that the power of recognition could only be won back when vernacular culture stands of its own accord.

CONCLUSION

Through participation in the reversion movement and commitment to citizens' movement in post-reversion Okinawa, a particular generation of educated local people moulded their unique ideology. The significant impact of this involvement can be summarised in the following three points.

Firstly, young activists' disappointment with the left-wing establishment led to suspicion about its assimilationist rationale. As Gima Susumu questioned at that time, demanding equal Japanese citizenship on grounds of the Common Ancestry Theory would coincide with discrimination against other ethnic minorities. He discerned that an assimilationist movement could not challenge, or, worse, actually reaffirmed, the basic structure which produced discrimination. This suspicion developed into the fundamental question about the assumption that cultural identity correlates with collective political rights. This correlation not only appears in assimilationist attempts to gain equality but also in social discrimination against a culturally different people. This correlation also appears in the idea of multiculturalism, as discrimination is not necessarily negative but can also be in favour of a marginal group. Therefore, local activism stood at a careful distance from multiculturalism, though this distance has sometimes been diminished as Takara Ben's recent celebration of Shuri Castle and the 'Ryukyu *minzoku*' displayed.

Secondly, the fact that local activists had originally been reversionists gave them an insight into the changeability of moral value attached to their Japanese identity. As Thomas Eriksen points out, '[n]ationalism in itself belongs neither on the left nor on the right of the political spectrum' (Eriksen 1993: 107). At least until the mid 1960s, when the reversion movement was defined as a populist resistance against 'tyrannical American colonisers',

it attracted young activists of left-wing persuasion. However, for the very reason that the reversion movement was based on nationalism, it allowed the right-wing Japanese government to appropriate this people's movement without logical inconsistency. Kawamitsu Shinichi warned, in 1969 when reversion was already under way, the reversion movement inherently had the 'most dangerous nationalism' which would be materialised unless Okinawans determined to 'abandon the slogan of reversion altogether' (Kawamitsu 1999a: 232).

Thirdly, this insight into the changeable moral value of a collective identity made local activists realise that their minority identity was no safer than the Japanese one. Although a minority's separate identity may seem to deserve respect when it is being effaced by the dominant majority, it can not maintain this positive value in a different social context. As long as a single social collectivity implies a homogeneous entity, it will disturb the internal diversity of Okinawa and deceptively cover social stratification at the cost of silent, less powerful sub-groups. As the citizens' movement in post-reversion Okinawa laid its foundation in grassroots movements among disparate island communities, local activists clearly discerned the falsity of a single collective identity of Okinawans. It was also advantageous to them that some leading activists, such as Kawamitsu and Okamoto Keitoku, were native in Miyako. These activists coming from a periphery of the province were sensitive to 'discrimination within those being discriminated against' (Okamoto 1970: 184).

A clear understanding of these three points arouses suspicion about the assumption that every one has and must have the only one group affiliation which defines their ultimate identity. Arasaki Moriteru's comment in a public discussion well epitomised the activists' challenge to

the necessity of a single social collectivity. Answering a question as to whether Okinawans could be said to be one of the discrete groups which would constitute an ideal multi-ethnic Japan, Arasaki asked back whether one need to be either Okinawan or Japanese and why one was not allowed to remain just an islander of a certain island instead of being categorised as Okinawans.

Okinawan activists also offered a profound account of the ideological power which integrated otherwise disparate people into a united social collectivity. As Gima pointed out, to accuse the Japanese of their negative prejudice against Okinawans, like 'lazy Okinawans', did not necessarily challenge the Japanese authority. If an Okinawan complained that Okinawans were actually as hard-working as the Japanese, he would rather reaffirm this established authority. Arakawa Akira's notable insight into a recent 'multiculturalist policy' revealed that a similar process was underlying an apparently different case as well. When Okinawans were pleased that Shuri Castle was printed on a new bank note, this higher recognition of a regional cultural symbol did not so much challenge the dominant Japanese culture as reaffirm the power of recognition monopolised by the Japanese authority. Thus both Gima and Arakawa did not explain simplistically that the integrated social collectivity resulted from a vigorous imposition, but that it was produced by elaborated ideological manipulation which made people more or less voluntarily accept the central authority.

How then could local activists resist such shrewd rhetoric of the central authority? They sometimes defined themselves as 'traitors', who not only refused to show loyalty to a group but also avoided any commitment to it. 'Traitor', of course, means, first of all, traitor of the Japanese nation-state. When the 1987 National Athletic Meeting was held in

Okinawa, Asato Eiko said that she did not simply *oppose* but *ignored* it. Although ignoring may seem a passive resistance in practice, it can actually imply much stronger attitudes of rejection towards her national identity than can opposition, since the latter would entail her involvement in the national community. Secondly, 'traitor' might also relate to an independent political body of Okinawa, as long as such a polity entails regional authority, like a Ryukyu kingdom, which invokes its power for group integration. In this context, Kawamitsu advocated that, if Okinawan activists properly understood the essence of the problem with which they were wrestling, they must determine to reject any possibility of seizing power and turning themselves into an authority (Kawamitsu 1999a: 243).

This somewhat anarchistic attitude, however, did not reduce local activists into cosmopolitan individuals versed in universal values rather than regional interests. At first glance, local activists may seem to express their civic morality and taste, as an educated class of people may do elsewhere. However, such subjects as 'folklore', the 'environment' and 'anti-war ideas' do not precisely capture the quality of their activities. Local activists are not very ambitious in exploring folklore studies. They are environmentalists, but global environmental concern is not their primary motivation. Base-related incidents occasionally fuel their indignation at the violation of human rights, but it is not a simple pacifist creed which sustains their anti-base campaigns. The driving force, rather, pertains to specific localities. Local activists show affection for oral tradition that is disappearing from individual local communities. They express an urge to protect specific coral beaches from tourist development. They are irritated by their inability to remove individual military bases. *Chiiki-shugi* is the banner of these local activists. While its translation into 'regionalism' can

grasp the fact that local activists have compassion for Okinawa, it does not signify the point that local activists understand Okinawa in its particular quality. *Chiiki* means a locality, as in the uniqueness of *chiiki* or problems of *chiiki*.⁹⁴ Local activists frequently use this term without grammatical modifier to specify which locality they are talking about. In such usage, the term does not refer to any concrete locality, nor is it used as a grammatical component of general statements. Such special usage has to do with the intention to secure the autonomous status of individual communities. This elusive term has advantages over 'Okinawa', 'Ryukyu' or other discrete geographical cum social categories, since they are difficult to avoid pinning down what Okinawa, Ryukyu or whatever else is and thereby silencing individual communities embraced into such categories.

It seems helpful in figuring out this *chiiki-shugi* to introduce the concept of 'patriotism' as distinguished from 'nationalism'. In 1945 George Orwell wrote:

By 'patriotism' I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people. . . . Nationalism, on the other hand, is inseparable from the desire for power. The abiding purpose of every nationalist is to secure more power and more prestige' (Orwell 1968: 362).⁹⁵

In his *For Love of Country* (1995), Maurizio Viroli offers an expanded discussion on Orwell's conceptual distinction. According to him, while nationalists 'reinforce the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic oneness and homogeneity of a people' so as to fight against cultural contamination, racial impurity and socio-political disunion, patriots 'have no obligation to impose cultural, or ethnic, or religious homogeneity' in order to offer resistance

⁹⁴ It can be substituted for a more traditional term, *sima* (island or hamlet), as *sma* people or the lifestyle of *sma*.

⁹⁵ Yakabi Osamu already uses Orwell's concept of patriotism to discuss on Chibana Shoichi's behaviour (Yakabi 1999: 113).

against despotism, discrimination and oppression. Viroli put stress on a political institution, a republic, which, he believes, can sustain the common liberty of a people. He rightly points out, however, that a purely political republic cannot generate any attachment, since the commonality based on shared universal values would be too distant and too general. It also deserves a special note that Viroli makes a remark on the fact that, while nationalists have 'a wide range of rhetorical tools to use, patriots of compassion have no language of their own'. Therefore, patriotism is difficult to 'make its own voice sound different from, and yet as powerful as, nationalistic exhortations to love of country' (Viroli 1995: 1, 9, 13-14, 164, 17).⁹⁶

Okinawan activists' elusive use of the term *chiiki* and their preference for the innovative geographic category 'the Ryukyuan Arc' can be understood as local attempts to express their intangible love for Okinawa, or Okinawan patriotism. If, as Viroli points out, patriotism is linguistically indiscernible from nationalism, it will not be useless, in concluding this dissertation, to propose one more possible verbal form of Okinawan patriotism and to add it to the laudable attempts of Okinawan activists. Their local activism manifests ethnic differences from the Japanese but does not thereby create a discrete social collectivity. Okinawans are not regarded as one of the many ethnic collectivities in the world which exist in parallel with the Japanese. Rather, local activism highlights a dichotomy between 'vernacular' and

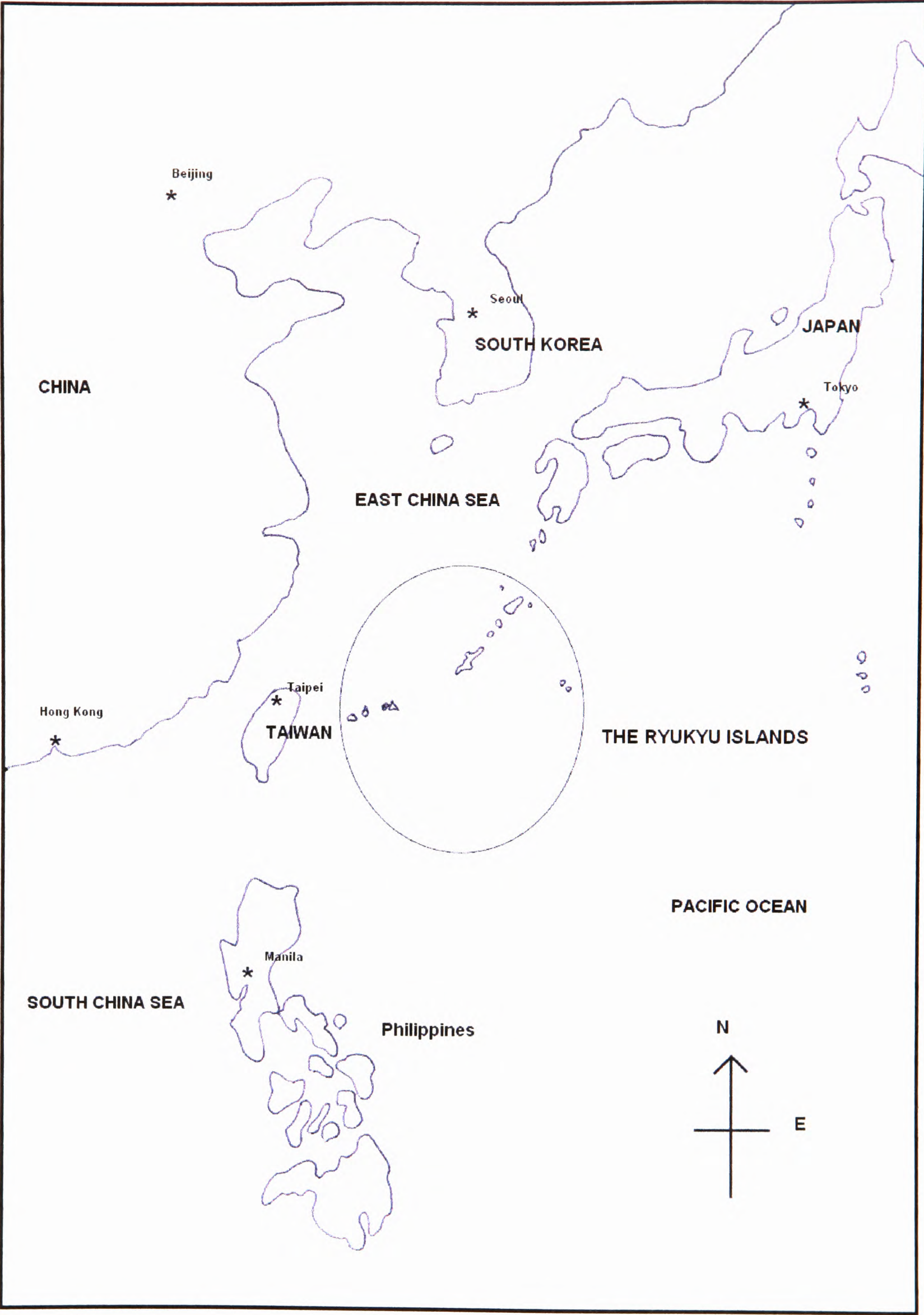
⁹⁶ In practice, nationalism and patriotism are difficult to avoid being confused. For this reason, Michael Billing is sceptical about the advocacy of patriotism. Criticising those scholars who regard nationalism as insupportable hatred towards the out-group while patriotism as the harmless love for in-group, he writes that 'the distinction would be convincing if there were clear, an ambiguous criteria, beyond an ideological requirement to distinguish 'us' from 'them' (Billing 1995: 55). I agree with him on the danger of highly moralised argument of patriotism advocates, but still find their theoretical distinction useful for analytical purposes.

‘standard’.⁹⁷ Sadoyama Anko and Higa Toyomitsu are keen to record languages of local communities in too much precise details. This impractical accuracy, however, is necessary for articulating the quality of being vernacular. As the nature of a not standardised speech, what is usually understood as Okinawan (Ryukyuan) language is actually internally diverse to a great extent. Two islanders coming from neighbour islands are said to be impossible to communicate if they speak in respective mother tongues. The assumption of a single Okinawan language can be oppressive for such internal cultural diversity of local society. In this context, Okinawan vernacular can be seen as the lack of authority which enforces linguistic uniformity. By extension, being ‘vernacular’ implies the lack of authority to produce any kind of standardisation.

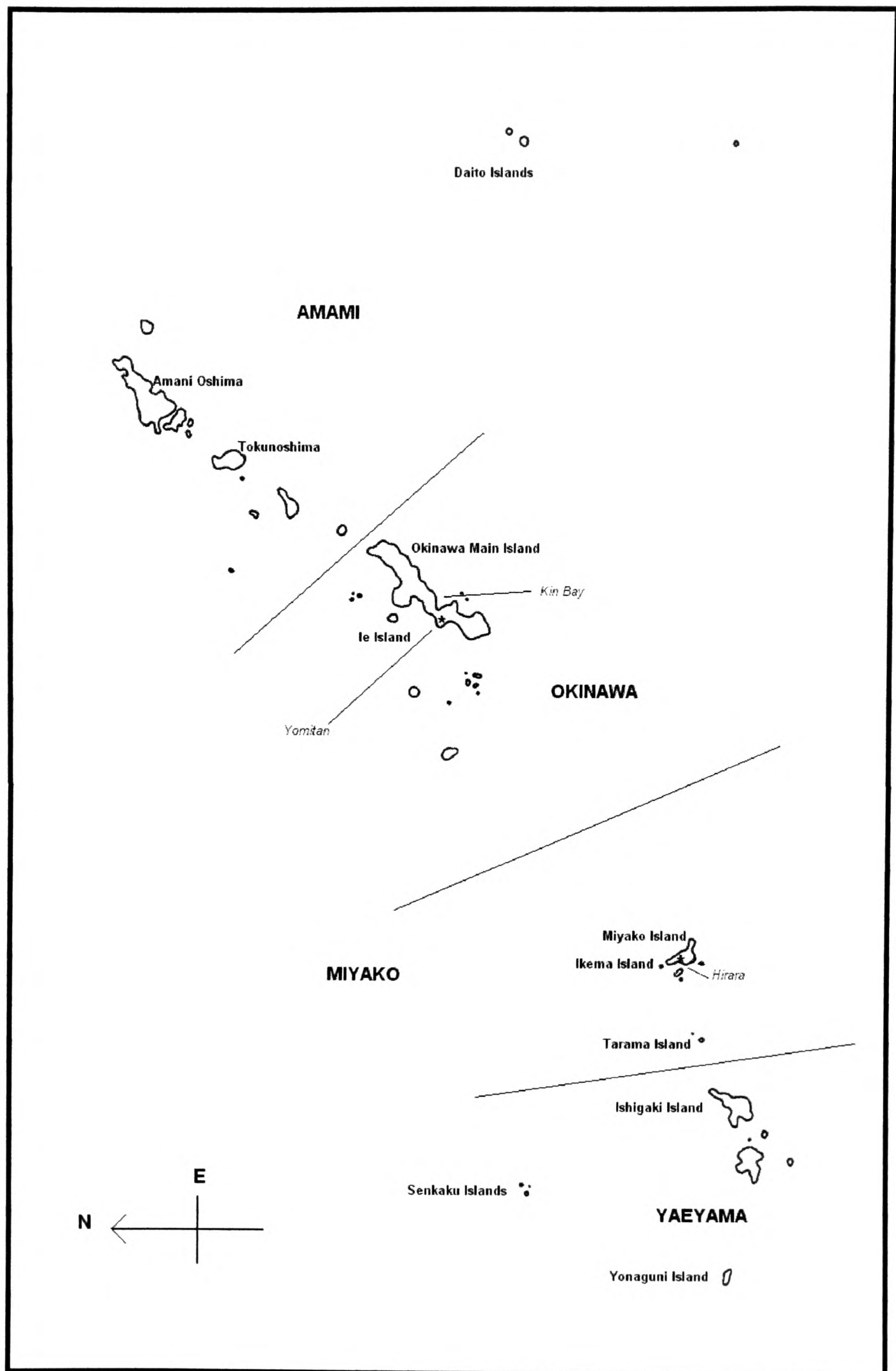
It is true that faith in being ‘vernacular’ appears firstly as the rejection of a dominant sense of value which favours the Japanese standard. Land development arouses anger not only because it spoils the natural environment but also because Japanese standard construction effaces peculiarly local landscapes. The presence of military bases are irritating not only because it increases the risk of accidents, crimes or enemy attacks, but also because it has been tolerated in exchange for a Japanese standard of living. However, this antipathy to standardisation goes further to the extent that local activists restrain themselves from setting an Okinawan standard. Being ‘vernacular’ becomes genuine when force for uniformisation is completely eliminated. Sadoyama and Higa may travel to the provinces in

⁹⁷ The concept of ‘vernacular language’ can be used in a totally different way in the study of nationalism. ‘Vernacular language’ in the context of the formation of European nation-states means French, German, Italian, English and so on, which superseded Latin due to a growth of print industry and disunited its users’ trans-European class solidarity, that is, the aristocracy or the clergy (Anderson 1991). In Okinawa, ‘vernacular language’ in this sense was modern Japanese, which replaced Japanised written Chinese and Shuri dialect used by royal officers of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

search of the peasant authenticity of local culture but do not present it as typically Okinawan folk culture. They reify culture of a rural hamlet without intending it to represent more than that hamlet itself. Nevertheless, within a conceptual framework which dichotomises 'vernacular' and 'standard', the very fact of its individuality, rather than its typicality, renders the culture of a rural hamlet at the same time an expression of 'Okinawan-ness'. Here, 'Okinawan-ness' does not belong to the same logical class as 'Japanese-ness'; what runs counter to *standard* Japanese is not standard Okinawan but Okinawan *vernacular*.



Map 1: The North-West Pacific Region showing the Ryukyu Islands and the surrounding countries.



Map 2: The Ryukyu Islands and their division into 4 Island groups, namely Amami, Okinawa, Miyako and Yaeyama.

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