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The US-Japan alliance and the relocation of Futenma: Sites of discursive exchange in the reproduction of security alliances

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Politics and International Studies

Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Warwick
June 2016
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<td>Japan-US Security Consultative Committee</td>
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<td>ABD</td>
<td>Anti-base discourse</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABM</td>
<td>Anti-base movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>Assistant Secretary of Defense (DOD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Content analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical discourse analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Consul General (DOS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Congressional Research Service (US)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSD</td>
<td>Collective self-defence</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSIS</td>
<td>Center for Strategic &amp; International Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Discourse analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>Deputy Assistant Secretary (DOS; DOD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DefMin</td>
<td>Defense Minister (MOD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DG</td>
<td>Director-General</td>
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<tr>
<td>DI</td>
<td>Discursive institutionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOD</td>
<td>US Department of Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOS</td>
<td>US Department of State</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPJ</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental impact assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>Foreign Minister (MOFA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRF</td>
<td>Futenma Replacement Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAO</td>
<td>US General Accounting Office</td>
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<td>GIC</td>
<td>Gradual institutional change theory</td>
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<td>GOJ</td>
<td>Government of Japan</td>
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<td>GSDF</td>
<td>Japanese Ground Self-Defense Forces</td>
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<td>GUASA</td>
<td>Guam-US-Asia Security Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>HADR</td>
<td>Humanitarian and disaster relief</td>
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<td>HNS</td>
<td>Host nation support</td>
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<td>IUCN</td>
<td>International Union for Conservation of Nature</td>
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<td>JDA</td>
<td>Japanese Defense Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSP</td>
<td>Japanese Socialists Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDP</td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Party (Japan)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCAS</td>
<td>Marine Corps Air Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCIPAC</td>
<td>US Marine Corps Installations Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEF</td>
<td>US Marine Expeditionary Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOD</td>
<td>Japanese Ministry of Defense</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NI</td>
<td>New Institutionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIMBY</td>
<td>Not In My Backyard</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODB</td>
<td>Okinawa Defense Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIU</td>
<td>Okinawa International University</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPG</td>
<td>Okinawa Prefectural Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACOM</td>
<td>US Pacific Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBD</td>
<td>Pro-base discourse</td>
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<tr>
<td>PKO</td>
<td>Peacekeeping operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIMPAC</td>
<td>Rim of the Pacific Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACO</td>
<td>Special Action Committee on Okinawa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDF</td>
<td>Japanese Self-Defense Forces</td>
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<td>SecDef</td>
<td>US Secretary of Defense</td>
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<td>SecState</td>
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<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Social-interactive discourse analysis</td>
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<td>SOFA</td>
<td>Status of Forces Agreement</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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<td>Vice Minister</td>
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<td>White Paper (MOD)</td>
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<td>World War Two</td>
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Declaration

This thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university and is the sole work of the candidate.
Summary

Using the US-Japan alliance as its institutional setting and the political conflict over the relocation of Marines Air Base Futenma from Ginowan City to Nago, Okinawa as its case study, this research seeks to examine how alliances are discursively reproduced by analysing – through interviews, public speeches, and government publications – how they are publicly framed and deliberated not only by ‘elite’ actors (e.g. those in the US and Japanese governments) who seek to maintain the US-Japan alliance in its current form, but also by those within Okinawan local government and civil society who contest the alliance’s sustainability.

This research sits in contrast to the prevailing arguments in the existing literature on alliance persistence, which tend to have a top-down focus and privilege the cooperative discourses of elite actors with direct access to the inner-workings of the alliance over the lived experience of ‘everyday’ actors excluded from the central policymaking process. Furthermore, these arguments tend to ignore the possibility of internal divisions amongst these ‘elite’ and ‘everyday’ actors, representing any debates within an alliance as taking place between the central governments of the member states rather than exploring the many divergences of opinion that exist within their central political parties, military bureaucracies, civil societies, and other groups concerned.

By identifying a wide variety in the sites of discourse production both inside and outside of this institutionalised alliance, this research helps to bridge the disconnect between top-down and bottom-up analyses of alliance persistence, illustrate the processes by which discourses from seemingly irreconcilable sources may actually interact, influence, and shape each other in the realm of security policymaking, and broaden the conversation from one focused on 'persistence' to include an understanding of how an alliance is actively *reproduced* through discourse.
Introduction

What is manifest from the quote of the MOD researcher above is that a security alliance is constituted not simply by ‘states’ per se, nor even the central governments within these ‘states’ which signed the original treaty creating it. Indeed, it cannot even be limited to the specific individuals within these governments, nor to the sites at which they originally negotiated the parameters of the institution and where they continue to do so. Rather, when considering how an alliance is created and maintained, the physical effects of its policies and related assets must be taken into account. Although previous literature on alliances has taken care to separate these two facets of their existence – the ‘elite’-level negotiations from the ‘everyday’’s reaction to them – it is practically impossible to do so when their institutionalisation involves explicit reaffirmation not only from government officials, but also from the general publics (upon which, in democratic systems at least, these officials’ continued election purportedly relies).

However, given the ‘very different motivations [and] very different ideas’ of officials, ‘experts’, the public, and other actors, securing this approval is not always so straightforward a task as it has sometimes been portrayed. Rather, as a process of negotiation and argumentation, it has the potential to be convoluted, difficult, and even politically intractable to the point that the fundamental existence of the institution itself comes up for debate. This is further complicated by the idea that alliances are not simply political institutions or the products of interstate treaties, but also carriers of the collective memories, ideas, myths, narratives, and stories of those who support them—and of those who oppose their continuation.

1. Alliances in international relations

As outlined above, alliances exist not only through the treaties signed by their member states, but also in the form of the individuals and physical assets (such as arms provided by members) constituting them. Often, these treaties are not necessarily just formed on the basis of
vaguely-outlined shared interests or aims, but in order to join states’ military forces or defence policies against specific ‘threats’ to their national security. This is the case not only for many alliances of ages past, but also current ones, including the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) (created to defend against the ‘threat’ of the Soviet Union and international communism) and the United States (US)’s other bilateral and multilateral alliances (such as the US-South Korean and US-Japan alliances).

Where in the past alliances were often dissolved at war’s end or when the ‘threats’ against which they were formed had been neutralised or reduced, in the case of the US, its World War Two (WWII) and post-war era military or ‘security’ alliances have been maintained beyond anyone’s predictions of their demise. This phenomenon has been the subject of much scholarly research and debate in the field of international relations (IR) studies, where it is referred to as alliance ‘persistence’. In doing so, previous studies largely discuss the continuation of these partnerships in the context of an alliance’s ‘institutionalisation’ over a number of years or decades. According to this framework, given a high level of institutionalisation, scholars find that governments involved in these US alliances – including the US itself – face challenges (if they care to do so, which they are often portrayed as not) in terminating the original treaty or agreement.

What is often missing or underemphasised in this discussion, however, is not only a closer look at the specific groups or individuals within the member states of an alliance who are primarily responsible for sustaining it and lobbying on the policy level in favour of its continued existence, but also how an alliance has consequences for people beyond the level of government and military officials. Indeed, in even calling this phenomenon alliance ‘persistence’, scholars downplay the day-to-day process behind the continuation of an alliance—it simply is and will continue to be, even without the active efforts of those supporting it. By using this terminology, they can therefore discuss an alliance or related policies purely with regard to abstract concepts like ‘ensuring security’ or specific military ones, like ‘increasing interoperability’ of joint forces—all without ever touching on the ways in which an alliance, both as a firmly-established political institution and a set of related policies, can be felt ‘all the way down’ to the level of ‘everyday’ people.

2. A case in point: the US-Japan alliance and the relocation of Futenma

In examining how an alliance’s impacts can be felt in this way, the conflict over the relocation of US Marine Corps (USMC) Air Station Futenma (MCAS Futenma) within the US-Japan

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2 See Chapter 1, section 2.3 for more on the process of alliance ‘institutionalisation’.

3 See section 3 of this Introduction for further details.
alliance (USJA) serves as a case in point. To begin with, it is important to have a basic historical understanding of the alliance itself. Forged in the aftermath of a global conflict which left much of Japan’s largest cities in ruins and over three million of its citizens dead, this unlikely partnership between former enemies has since gone on to become a staple of international relations to the point that it is commonly referred to by officials from both governments as the ‘cornerstone’ of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. While both governments cooperate across a number of different policy fields, including economic, environmental, and technological, the oft-stated ‘pillar’ of their alliance has been and continues to be related to ensuring deterrence capabilities against perceived regional threats: namely (but not limited to) the build-up of the Chinese military and North Korea’s nuclear missile programme. They claim to ensure this deterrence primarily through the stationing of US armed forces in Japan – forces which have remained in Japan in some form or another since the end of WWII – and, more specifically, through the stationing of forces in Okinawa prefecture.

Established on former Japanese imperial bases or constructed forcibly on residential areas seized in the aftermath of the bloody Battle of Okinawa (during which around a quarter of the prefecture’s civilian population perished), nearly 75% of all US military (USM) facilities in Japan and about 25,000 personnel and their dependents are concentrated in Okinawa. As it is located roughly 400 miles south of the rest of mainland Japan and the same distance east of Taiwan, Okinawa has been called the ‘keystone of the Pacific’ for its strategic role in US foreign policy in Asia going back to WWII. In fact, US facilities in Okinawa have not only played an important role in the US’s forward presence in the region from the Korean and Vietnam wars all the way to recent conflicts in the Middle East, but have also served as a jumping-off point for humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) operations around East and Southeast Asia.

However, with around 1.4 million residents and one of the highest population densities in the world, the proximity between US bases, their personnel, and the communities surrounding them – and the attendant problems arising from this proximity, including environmental pollution, sexual crimes, traffic incidents, and military accidents – has often been a cause of tension and a safety hazard to residents. Okinawa’s former status as a trustee of the USM from 1950 until its reversion to Japan in 1972, coupled with its bitter experiences during WWII as a major battleground (its socioeconomic recovery from which was far behind the rest of the country, as it remains the poorest prefecture in Japan), has enhanced the sense among many of its residents not only that they are

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4 See Chapter 3, section 1 for further details.
geographically separated from the Japanese mainland by distance, but also that they have been (and continue to be) politically and economically marginalised in favour of ensuring a ‘national’, ‘regional’, or ‘global’ security framework from which they are excluded.

This framework, insist officials in both governments and in the USM, relies so much on the heavy presence of US forces and facilities in Okinawa that the security ‘guarantee’ provided by the USJA could not be sustained without them. On the other hand, it is undeniable that this concentration of forces has made bilateral relations between the two countries tense on account of local protests against the USM. For example, the relocation of Futenma from the densely-populated Ginowan in south-central Okinawa to the more rural Henoko village in northern Okinawa has proven to be a persistent ‘thorn in the side’ of alliance relations for nearly twenty years. Originally agreed upon in 1996 by both governments, the relocation has only partially been carried out due to protests from Okinawans and their supporters from mainland Japan and internationally. This sustained anti-relocation and wider anti-base movement (ABM) has, at times, not only worked to undermine the post-war ‘deterrence’ rationale provided by US and Japanese officials regarding Okinawan bases, but also called into question the purpose and sustainability of broader alliance policies that have gone without significant upheaval or investigation for decades.

3. Studying ‘persistence’: gaps in the debate

The case of Futenma highlights the meaningful ways in which those actors not traditionally associated with policymaking at the ‘alliance’ level can challenge those that are—not to mention challenge the latter’s arguments and present alternatives to it. However, as mentioned previously, in the debates around how alliances are formed, how related policies are decided, and why they ‘persist’, these discussions largely take place in and around the central governments of member states (with these sites being reduced down to monolithic entities such as ‘Tokyo’ or ‘Washington’). On the USJA specifically, previous studies similarly privilege these sites when discussing why and how it has been maintained since the end of WWII. They all, therefore, share a tendency to downplay the significance of sites outside of government, concluding that these kinds of security alliances – with strong support from their member states, built-in survival mechanisms, and job security for those who manage them – are highly unlikely to face significant challenges to their existence in the long term.6

However, given that the voices of the very citizens that security relationships are meant to protect can be obscured or go unheard in these debates, several important issues have been raised

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regarding the way in which alliances are currently studied. For example, can we realistically discuss the views of the ‘state’ or its representatives in isolation? Are the policies they promote truly based on ‘better’ or more ‘accurate’ knowledge purely on the basis of their access to more privileged information regarding domestic and regional security? And can these policies, which are supposed to ensure ‘national’, ‘regional’, or even ‘global’ security, be considered complete without including the lived experience of individuals and communities who are directly affected by them? These are the kinds of questions posed in studies of the ‘Okinawa base issue’ and of Futenma specifically.

In these, many academics, activists, and other sympathetic supporters of the ABM often lionize Okinawans as the ‘Davids’ confronting the US and Japanese governments’ (USG and GOJ, respectively) ‘Goliath’. Attendant to this, the latter are portrayed in this literature as either purposefully victimising Okinawans through continuing to concentrate the majority of the USM presence in Okinawa, or as not knowing or caring enough about local concerns to alleviate the base ‘burden’. In doing so, they also suggest that the alliance is perpetuated by these officials at the continued ‘sacrifice’ of the prefecture and its residents, often by drawing on historical parallels to the Battle of Okinawa and pre-reversion era of USM administration.7

What is evident, then, is that across all three literatures – alliance ‘persistence’, the USJA’s ‘persistence’, and the ‘Okinawa base problem’ – there has been a tendency to focus exclusively on one side or the other. The issue with this binary distinction is not only one of oversimplification through demonization/victimisation, but also that it leaves out actors with arguments that sit somewhere in-between (for example, central government officials in Tokyo and Washington who express empathy or solidarity with anti-base protesters). Given this paradigm, these studies largely do not capture the full range and complexity of an issue with as many layers of history, identity, and ongoing social interaction as that of US bases in Okinawa and their impact on the USJA. In addition, there is a noticeable lack of focus on the process by which alliances ‘persist’ and are challenged – the how – and too great of a focus on the why (both in explaining why they ‘persist’, and why certain policies are more successful than others). Along these lines, they often do not attempt to present a coherent theoretical or methodological framework for addressing these issues, with many studies resembling editorial pieces biased towards one side or the other without much interest in bridging the two (or more) perspectives.

4. Central research questions and argument

In order to broaden and deepen the terms of this debate, I change the focus of this thesis from one on explaining the ‘persistence’ of alliances to one that examines the process behind its active reproduction. I make this distinction because ‘persistence’ is a term which is traditionally associated with the literature on path dependence – which views institutions (such as alliances) as ‘political legacies of concrete historical struggles’ and thus ‘inertial, rule-bound and resistant to change’ – and therefore robs individual actors of their agency in challenging or changing these rules. By contrast, ‘reproduction’ – with a salient presence in works of political sociology – is linked not only to the continuation of institutional structures (rules, assets), but also identities and norms.

In choosing to use this term, I do not take this continuation to be a ‘self-activating [process]’ reliant on even such informal concepts as ‘codes of appropriateness’ or other ‘collective scripts that regulate human behavior’, but rather as one in which actors ‘can manipulate meaning to bring about disorder and breach of common identity’—and therefore suggest that ‘the reproduction of order [emphasis added] is [not] necessarily paramount in every interaction’.

This research therefore expands the number of actors whose arguments are considered to include not only ‘elites’ in the diplomatic and defence corps of an alliance (such as government officials in Tokyo and Washington), but also ‘everyday’ individuals whose ‘local knowledge’ about how national security policies affect day-to-day life – and who do not necessarily want to reproduce the existing institutional ‘order’ – can serve as an indicator of the future sustainability of a political institution such as the USJA. Throughout, I take care not only to draw distinctions between these different groups of actors, but also to highlight the areas in which their oftentimes competing discourses about ‘security’, ‘threat’, and identity intersect and engage with one another—and how these interactions have shaped political discussions and processes in this arena.

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10 Mahoney and Thelen 2010, p. 5.


12 See Chapter 2, section 2.1 for a discussion of this term.
Specifically, I ask the following central questions to pursue these aims:

1) What is the role of alliances in international relations?
   a) How do they function?

2) How do competing discourses about the current conditions and future of a security alliance interact? How do they influence one another?
   a) What is the process that determines the prevalence of certain discourses over others?
   b) How do actors (both internal and external to the alliance) effect policy changes?
   c) What is the impact of analysing the issue of alliance reproduction from a top-down versus a bottom-up approach?

These sorts of questions pose a challenge not only to the case of the USJA, but also clearly delineate the value of a research framework which analyses alliances as institutions and, therefore, as products of ongoing discursive negotiation and contestation between many different groups of actors across many different sites of interaction, from those in the ranks of the central governments of member states to the ‘everyday’. What is meant in this framework by the ‘everyday’ realm are the processes which constitute it, defined in the work of John Hobson and Leonard Seabrooke as ‘acts by those who are subordinate within a broader power relationship but, whether through negotiation, resistance or nonresistance, either incrementally or suddenly, shape, constitute and transform the political and economic environment around and beyond them’. Further to this, they identify (and this research identifies) ‘everyday’ actors who perform such actions, including: ‘a range of agents from individuals to meso-level groupings [e.g., peasants, migrant labourers, trade unions, small investors, low-income groups], and mega-scale aggregations [e.g., peripheral states and peoples]’.

In this sense, the ‘everyday’ represents not only those individuals and groups normally excluded from traditional sites of political power (such as the central government), but also lower-level, local government officials who similarly do not have access to the ‘expert’ knowledge upon which policymakers rely. Moreover, this term is fluid, not fixed: in encompassing not only different types of actors, but also acts in and of themselves, it is therefore possible to see an ‘everyday’ element, for example, within the policymaking process itself (which is, at its foundation, constituted by the personal experiences of the individual actors who contribute to it).

In the case of alliances, the number of people within government who actually deal with related policies on a day-to-day basis is even smaller—this leading to the phenomenon of alliance ‘managers’ who sustain and shape the course of their countries’ bilateral relations, sometimes over

decades, across administrations of all political stripes. Given these circumstances, it is all the more important that in this research, alliances are not framed merely as the products of interstate treaties, but as political institutions managed by specific individuals whose efforts in reproducing them do not always take into consideration or actively dismiss the everyday ‘knowledge’ of citizens or local officials—though this lack of consideration on their part does not rule out the possibility of the latter intervening anyway (e.g. the protests over Futenma delaying its relocation).

5. Theoretical framework

This thesis therefore examines how security alliances have been discursively reproduced in the post-Cold War era by those actors who support their continuation. At the same time, it illustrates how these alliances are both interpreted and challenged not only by actors who support them, but by those who oppose them (such as anti-base protesters). Given that security alliances have traditionally been discussed by scholars including Stephen Walt, Kenneth Waltz, and John Mearsheimer as ‘status quo’, elite-led, and ‘managed’ institutions – as they are considered, with their ‘security’ components, to be ‘essential’ or ‘global assets’ – they have also been, in terms of the previous debates and policy literature on the topic, set apart from the vagaries of public deliberation and negotiation in a way that other issues (such as environmental policies) have not been.

Moreover, rather than relying on an understanding of interstate relations which assumes that there is an ‘objective knowledge of the world’, that there are value-free ‘facts’ within this world, and that, therefore, only ‘empirical validation or falsification […] is the hallmark of “real” enquiry’, I answer these questions via an interpretative, post-positivist theoretical framework. Calling into question this linear relationship between cause and effect and placing greater value on qualitative analysis of the creation of social meanings and practices, this framework draws on a number of ideas from literatures which have not often been consulted or cited heavily before in this field, but which can contribute to our understanding of how security policies are formulated, their consequences for the ‘everyday’, and how the ‘everyday’ interacts with these policies. These include: deliberative public policy as developed by Fischer, Maarten Hajer and Hendrik Wagenaar, among others, which

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15 These ‘managers’ within the context of the USJA, also sometimes called ‘Japan hands’, are a group of former officials including former Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for International Security Affairs Joseph Nye, former Deputy SecState Richard Armitage, former senior adviser on Asia in the Office of the Secretary of Defense Michael Green, and former Assistant SecState for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell, all of whom are known to have a large influence on policymaking within the USJA.


helps to bridge the gap between ‘policy experts’ and ordinary citizens\textsuperscript{18}; \textit{discursive institutionalism} (DI) as developed primarily by Vivien Schmidt, who broadens the scope of previous institutional theories to include social/discursive interaction between proactive institutional actors\textsuperscript{19}, and \textit{gradual institutional change theory} (GIC) as developed by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen, which rejects the idea that institutions can only evolve as a result of exogenous shocks.\textsuperscript{20}

Specifically, the concepts drawn from these literatures for the purpose of my research are: \textit{active agency}, wherein institutional change occurs when actors decide to use the institution differently and not simply as a product of deterministic path dependence; \textit{institutions as argumentative fields}, wherein institutions act not only as structures constraining or enabling actors’ preferences, but as an arena within which actors’ discourses can be meaningfully interpreted and challenged; \textit{change and stability as inextricably linked}, wherein institutions – representing the outcome of compromises and being subject to internal disagreements and shifts in public opinion – are naturally built with the capacity for dynamic change; and \textit{discourse}, which, in my understanding of the term, constitutes the meanings upon which ideas are constructed, has a causal influence on political change, and encompasses not only texts, but also context, as this has a significant impact on what can be said meaningfully and with influence.

6. Methodological framework

I employ this framework using a \textit{discursive} approach which recognises the power of language to independently impact upon not only socio-political actions, but also individual actors’ interpretations of concepts which constitute these actions. Specifically, I analyse the data presented in the thesis using social-interactive discourse analysis (SIDA) as developed by Fischer, a method which emphasises the ‘structure, style, and [socio-]historical context’ in which discourses are (re)produced.\textsuperscript{21} Within this, special attention is paid to the ways in which actors frame or represent knowledge and situations in order to both problematize certain issues while ignoring or excluding others.\textsuperscript{22} Moreover, these ‘frames’ sit within the larger discursive device of ‘narratives’, which enables actors across various sites of exchange to present their arguments in combination with any number of familiar cultural symbols or norms that would broaden the appeal and spread of a

\textsuperscript{20} Mahoney and Thelen 2010.
\textsuperscript{21} Fischer 2003a.
discourse, and on the individual level of telling smaller, anecdotal ‘stories’. This approach, therefore, calls for an examination not only of historical and current policy texts and speeches from the central government, but a much wider variety of materials, including interviews with actors cutting across political groups and audio/visual material contributing to the discourses under study (including documentaries, anti-base posters, tourist pamphlets, and museum placards).

In order to accomplish this, I carried out fieldwork from January to September 2014 in Japan (in Tokyo and in Okinawa) and the US (in Washington, DC), during which I conducted over 80 interviews with: former and current central government officials from the US Departments of State and Defense (DOS and DOD, respectively) and the Japanese Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence (MOFA and MOD), including former Assistant Secretary of Defense (SecDef) for International Security Affairs under the Clinton administration Joseph Nye; local Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) officials including former governor Masahide Ota; USM officials, including former USMC Forces Pacific Commander Wallace Gregson; widely-cited USJA scholars such as Mike Mochizuki; and prominent activists, including Hideki Yoshikawa of the Save the Dugong Campaign. These interviews were conducted (and other data collected) at over 40 different sites, including not only government locations and military bases, but also those of historical or cultural importance within Okinawa (and which have often been raised by the ABM in their arguments against the USM presence), such as the Himeyuri Monument and Peace Museum.

Prior to collecting these materials, I identified two main discourses (the pro-USJA discourse and the anti-base discourse [ABD]) within the existing literature on this topic (see section 6.1 below); during fieldwork, I was able to identify the presence of these across three sites of exchange (diplomatic, defence, and the everyday; see section 6.2 below); and in collating the collected materials post-fieldwork, I was able to discover related narratives presented by actors within these discourses either across or ensconced within each site using four different analytical themes (historical memory and threat perception, defining and redefining security, institutional and cultural identities, and discursive intersections and divisions; see section 6.3 below).

6.1. Discourses under study

The pro-USJA discourse – which, although not always, usually overlaps with the pro-USM base discourse – has mainly been (re)produced by actors from the first two sites of exchange identified in this study (diplomatic and defence). Contained within it are a number of prevailing narratives which consistently identify the alliance as a ‘force for good’ or a ‘cornerstone’ of peace

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24 See Chapter 2, section 3 for a more detailed overview of the fieldwork programme.
and security in the region, emphasise the importance of US bases in Japan and especially in Okinawa for deterrence, are sceptical of the motives of the ABM, and express cynicism regarding the possibility of policy significantly changing for the foreseeable future. By contrast, the ABD – mainly (re)produced by actors from ‘everyday’ sites of exchange – revolves around narratives detailing the suffering of Okinawa during WWII, the discriminatory economic, military, and social policies promulgated by the US and Japanese central governments against it in the post-war era, the uniqueness of the Okinawan identity, and incredulity at the arguments of both governments regarding the ‘necessity’ of the USM presence in Okinawa.

6.2. Sites of discursive exchange

These discourses are communicated across three ‘sites of exchange’, defined by Hajer as locations which ‘have an influence on what can be said meaningfully and with influence’.25 While each site is distinct in terms of the actors or groups of actors identified within it, it is nonetheless evident, with each succeeding site discussed, that separating one layer from another is not always possible. For example, while the first site of exchange analysed in this thesis – the diplomatic (which includes the DOS and MOFA) – would seem to be fairly straightforward in its framing of the alliance in terms of the pro-alliance, pro-base discourse (henceforth PBD), it is also home to individuals and groups who work in both governments’ local offices in Okinawa. Being closer to the ‘situation’ with US bases, therefore, can confuse and muddy the communication of official narratives to local people and vice versa. This is even more the case among representatives in defence sites of exchange – including individuals not only from the central DOD and MOD, but also the US III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) in Okinawa and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) – whose work often involves them being asked to both carry out the ‘defence’ of both nations and to cooperate with and be sympathetic to the concerns of Okinawan residents to whom they live adjacent.

The impact of both of these more ‘elite’ sites of exchange are deeply felt in the last – the everyday – as it is the site at which all of the governments’ narratives are directed and upon which they are moulded. This site, however, does not merely include the obvious actors within it, such as Okinawan anti-base protesters (including fisherman, farmers, retirees, academics, and other residents) and local officials from the OPG, but also incorporates many Japanese academics/activists and proponents of the ABD outside of the prefecture. These include actors ranging from academics and activists in mainland Japan/the US to international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). By juxtaposing each site against one another in this way, this thesis seeks to break down barriers put up by not only government officials, but also previous authors, to the possibility of interaction across and within groups outside of traditionally limited security policymaking circles.

25 Hajer 2003, p. 96; see Chapter 2, section 3.2 for full discussion.
6.3. Analytical themes

I further break down each of these sites of exchange and the narratives and smaller stories (re)produced in and across them through four analytical themes based not only on observations from the ways in which these issues were analysed by previous scholars and on the salient concepts and ideas which emerged from the discourses themselves (sometimes displaying patterns in language across the sites, which is reflected in the subsections under each theme in each chapter), but also on the parameters set out by SIDA and its emphasis on bridging competing perspectives.26 I chose this structure also because the main concepts explored in each theme – whether it be historical memory, ‘security’ or identity – are ‘relevant concern[s] in all areas of the social body’ as well as ‘multi-scalar’27 in nature, and thus can be more fully explored in their individual facets when separated out in this manner.

The themes I use to discuss the discourses identified in my research are, therefore, as follows:

**Theme 1: Historical memory and threat perception.** Each chapter begins with an examination of the relevant historical background to not only the development of the USJA from the post-war period to today, but also the construction of the USM’s bases in Okinawa, and Okinawan pre-war and post-war history. Rather than simply providing a straightforward historical narrative of events, however, this theme delves into the prevailing narratives about what has been constituted as ‘threats’ to Okinawa, Japan, and the US—and how the actors themselves respond to these ‘threats’. These contrasting perceptions of threat highlight how prominently the role of historical interpretation and memory has figured into the current political conflict over Futenma, and the conceptualisation of the USJA within it.

**Theme 2: Defining and redefining security.** Following on from the first section, this theme focuses on the related notion of how ‘security’ has been and is currently defined by these groups. It emphasises the connection from the previous theme between historical and current constructions of what ‘security’ is, which underlines the idea of change and stability as being linked at various levels of discursive exchange. It also illustrates how the changing definition of ‘security’ over the course of several decades inherently makes institutions such as the USJA fields of public and private argumentation—not just limited to the purview of government officials and their chosen audiences.

**Theme 3: Institutional and cultural identities.** Building on the discussions of ‘threat’ and ‘security’ from the previous sections, this theme highlights the existence of a number of unique and overlapping identities asserted in both institutional (the GOJ, USG, military/SDF, and the alliance)

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26 See Chapter 2, section 3.5.3 for more details on this.
and cultural (Okinawan, Japanese, American) contexts among the groups under study, and how these identities have not only been actively shaped and evolved in the post-war era (partly through the shifting definitions of ‘threat’ and ‘security’), but also how they have impacted upon the conflict over the long-delayed relocation of Futenma.

**Theme 4: Discursive intersections and divisions.** At the end of each chapter, I identify and analyse the various intersections and pervasive divisions found within the discourses and their attendant narratives. Where the previous themes mainly highlight distinctions between each of the groups and highlight their individual perceptions of ‘threat’, definitions of ‘security’, and unique institutional and cultural identities, this theme reveals areas of overlap between them in terms of the narratives they have (re)produced and how they have impacted each other (and the alliance) across what otherwise seem like rigid, unmovable ideological lines.

7. Research contributions

It is thus the aim of this research, using the case study of the USG’s and GOJ’s struggle to relocate Futenma within Okinawa prefecture in the midst of bitter protest, to examine how the USJA is reproduced in spite of this tension using a more holistic approach which includes the ‘local knowledge’ of Okinawan officials and residents alongside the more ‘accepted’ governmental and ‘professional’ expertise. Divisions within both the various classes of political actors in both governments as well as in Okinawa will also be critically analysed, as it is important to uncover not only the origins of the prevailing and oppositional discourses about the alliance’s reproduction, but also how actors have historically promoted and continue to reproduce certain discourses over others. I chose this approach because it is useful in illuminating the crossovers in the discourses presented and how they have been communicated across and interpreted by the groups under study. Moreover, it shows how these groups have also communicated their ideas to audiences on an international level—and the impact that this international attention has had on the issue.

In this context, having the USJA serve as the institutional framework of this case study is helpful because, as will be discussed in the next chapter, it highlights the fact that the alliance, being an ‘institutionalised’ one with specific self-representations which have been consistently reproduced, serves as a ‘preferred framework that policy makers and the public turn to in order to understand the world’. At the same time, however – if an alliance has become ‘institutionalised’ – then its institutionalisation ‘will involve considerable struggle, bargaining, and negotiation’ over

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these representations in the discourse across various sites of exchange. Therefore, in highlighting the effects that social interaction has – even on such high-profile, ‘elite-led’ issues as national security – this approach adds complexity back to a field (alliance studies in international relations) which has, too often, fallen prey to assumptions that it should remain exclusively within the realm of officials with more ‘knowledge’ and therefore ‘better’ judgement in making decisions which can make an impact on people’s daily lives.

Furthermore, the range of materials which I have collected for this study – including open-ended interviews, policy speeches, documentary features produced by anti-base activists, WikiLeaks cables, and official policy documents from the USG and GOJ – examined through the four analytical themes identified above represents a departure from previous studies in their breadth, depth, and the complexity of views put on display. It therefore allows for the silences or missing pieces in both the prevailing and oppositional discourses on alliance policy to be investigated and brought to light, gives agency greater explanatory power in examining how institutions change, and allows us to ask how and why they have not been reproduced more widely. I therefore believe that contributing a piece of research which cuts across them makes a more significant contribution to the field of not only US-Japan studies, but also alliance studies in international relations more generally.

Lastly and most importantly, it is the aim of this research to bring security policy back into the realm of deliberative democracy by examining its more sociological, everyday aspects. Both positivist and post-positivist studies on alliance ‘persistence’ have often remained limited to the institution under analysis and thus leave themselves open to criticism of the kind outlined above.

Furthermore, in making their claims about the ‘institutionalisation’ of alliances, they do not then address who the audience is for this beyond the government and military officials and ‘security professionals’ who are assumed to hold the most sway (nor do they address, for that matter, if this audience is real or merely imagined). By contrast, an interpretative approach helps to weaken the perception that security policymaking can only be correctly understood by these political ‘elites’.

By employing a social and interactive approach in the theoretical and methodological framework, this research therefore illustrates the processes by which discourses from seemingly irreconcilable sources may actually interact, influence, and shape each other in the realm of security policymaking, and broadens the conversation from one focused on ‘persistence’ to include an understanding of how an alliance is actively reproduced—and how this reproduction is resisted.

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8. Outline of the thesis

The thesis proceeds in five chapters. Chapter 1 presents a review of previous literature, including: definitions and typologies of alliances in international relations (1.1); the ‘persistence’ of security alliances (breaking down explanatory variables behind ‘persistence’ by category: material, ideational, and hybrid) (1.2); and the literature on the USJA, including a brief historical backgrounder and a breakdown of the explanations provided by previous studies for its post-Cold War survival (along the same material, ideational, and hybrid lines as in the previous section) (1.3). This chapter therefore establishes the strengths, but also the gaps in the literatures on these subjects (as outlined above) which I set out to fill with my research.

Following on from this, Chapter 2 details a research framework for the thesis, designed to address these gaps, which consists of: a theoretical framework relying on the deliberative public policy literature, DI, and GIC (2.1); a post-positivist, interpretative approach based on these theories that emphasises the importance of concepts including active agency, institutions as argumentative fields, change and stability as inextricably linked, and discourse (2.2); and a methodological framework revolving around SIDA, the full employment of which I discuss in my outline of the fieldwork programme (2.3). This chapter also addresses the unique contributions these make to the fields of international relations and security studies.

After laying out the full background to the research and the means by which I address the central questions raised from it, the thesis proceeds in three main chapters (3, 4, and 5). The content of these is largely drawn from my fieldwork – including interviews, written observations, and print materials collected abroad – but also from primary (policy documents, speeches, Wikileaks-released diplomatic cables) and secondary (academic journals and news media) literature. Each chapter focuses on a specific site of discursive exchange, and the discursive strategies of the actors or groups of actors whom are actively reproducing the PBD or ABD within it.

Chapter 3, for example, investigates the narratives (re)produced from sites of diplomatic exchange including the DOS, MOFA, and their related offices (such as MOFA’s local office and the US Consulate in Naha, Okinawa). Largely promulgating the PBD, the narratives outlined in this chapter not only provide the basic foundations of what the ‘managerial’ sites of exchange in the USJA look like and how actors within them communicate and interact amongst themselves, but also demonstrates the challenges these actors face in framing their narratives both to each other and to other audiences (such as those within defence and everyday sites of exchange).

Chapter 4, focusing on defence sites of exchange, continues in its investigation of ‘managerial’ sites as it traces the reproduction of narratives by actors from the DOD, MOD, SDF, and USM (in particular, the USMC). However, as mentioned earlier, the proximity of many actors from
these sites to the military bases and surrounding communities further complicates their ability to communicate the pro-alliance discourse ‘successfully’—that is, without being significantly affected in the process by the arguments of outside actors. It therefore serves as a kind of ‘middle ground’ between the diplomatic and everyday sites of exchange in terms of its physical distance from both the alliance (in the central governments) and the military bases (in Okinawa) while still illustrating its own, individual characteristics related to the unique history of the USM presence in Okinawa.

Breaking away from these first two sites, Chapter 5, covering ‘everyday’ sites of exchange, includes actors ranging from Okinawan anti-base residents to sympathetic international organisations to OPG officials. While showing that these actors have consistently reproduced a strong narrative regarding the historical and current victimisation of Okinawans, this chapter also examines the diversity of discursive strategies employed by them. Whereas in Chapters 3 and 4 there is less division, for example, between actors over the specifics of the Futenma case (in that they generally agree that it should be relocated within Okinawa, and preferably to the Nago area), in Chapter 5, while there is a general consensus about the unfairness of Okinawa’s base ‘burden’ and its ill-treatment by the USG and GOJ, it is less clear if ‘everyday’ actors agree on the role that US forces play in Japan, their future presence in Okinawa, and to what extent it could be reduced (or if it should be eliminated altogether). This is in large part due to the variety of actors present in these sites of everyday exchange, but is also evidence of their interaction with the pro-alliance discourse.

Finally, the Conclusion aims to synthesise the overall findings of the thesis: first by analytical theme cutting across all three of the main fieldwork-based chapters, and then by answering the central research questions posed in this introduction. Where the findings in the first section (by theme) are focused more on those specific to the case of the USJA and Futenma, those in the second (by central questions) relate the case findings to the broader field of alliance studies in IR. Following these, the third section discusses the implications of these findings and their contributions to alliance studies broadly speaking, while also discussing the limitations of this research in this aspect. Finally, the fourth section concludes with suggestions for future research in this field.
Chapter 1. Literature review

Introduction

Security alliances are one of the oldest and most recognisable forms of interstate cooperation in international politics. Because of their prevalence into the present, they have also been the subject of countless studies not only on why and how they form and come to an end, but also on why and how some of them continue to be maintained (or, as will be argued later in this chapter, how they are actively reproduced). When discussing the latter (commonly referred to in the international relations and security studies literatures as persistence), authors usually mean to say that an alliance continues to exist even after the original threat against which it was formed has diminished or disappeared. This continued existence, moreover, is oftentimes accomplished through a ‘reinvention’ of an alliance’s purpose and objectives performed by its ‘managers’, such as the transformation of the USJA from a purely defensive alliance against Communism into a cooperative institution promoting democratic governance and human rights (see section 3 for full discussion).

In the debates on alliance ‘persistence’, there is a tendency to analyse this phenomenon as the product of top-down policymaking decided upon by actors filed under the broad monikers of ‘officials in Washington’ or, for example, ‘officials in Tokyo’ (or, vaguer yet, ‘Washington’/the US and ‘Tokyo’/Japan). These exist as part of a ‘transnational institutional network’ of ‘security professionals’, says Jef Huysmans, which is responsible for the production of a kind of ‘professional security knowledge’ that is gained as ‘a direct result of their institutional position, which empowers them to produce credible technical knowledge’. Due to this knowledge, these professionals or ‘experts’ can therefore generate a certain amount of trust within government of their judgement in determining what constitutes a ‘threat’ to national security. This emphasis on technocratic expertise often results in the exclusion of ‘local knowledge’ – or knowledge related to policy which is not accessed by ‘elite’ actors due to its nature as non-quantitative and based on lived experience –

1 An ‘institution’ being defined here as ‘the formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating procedures that structure the relationship between individuals in various units of the polity’ (Andrew P. Cortell and Susan Peterson, ‘Altered States: Explaining Domestic Institutional Change’, British Journal of Political Science, 29:1 [1999], pp. 177-203, p. 181); Elizabeth Clemens and James Cook add that institutions ‘exert patterned higher-order effects on the actions, indeed the constitution, of individuals and organizations without requiring repeated collective mobilization or authoritative intervention to achieve these regularities’ (Clemens and Cook 1999, pp. 444-445).


from the policy discussion, especially in the realm of national security. Moreover, as Luiza Bialasiewicz et al note, these individuals – and the organisation for/with whom they work – promote their views across various sites of discursive exchange:

While not paid members of the administration, they have either occupied such positions in the past or were aspiring to them in the future. They do not, therefore, directly speak for the state (a position that grants them a veneer of “objectivity”), and they navigate in the interstices between academic and “policy-oriented” research: a location that, in turn, absolves them from the rigors of a scholarly discipline, including disciplinary critique [...] While these individuals appear as impartial commentators-cum-advisers-cum-analysts, their access to policy circles is open, if not privileged. To the extent that their geographical imaginations are invoked by state power, they are also today’s consummate “intellectuals of statecraft”: those who “designate a world and ‘fill’ it with certain dramas, subjects, histories and dilemmas” (O’Tuathail & Agnew, 1992: 192).

Considering the fact, however, that an alliance is not created and maintained by the member states as a whole per se, but by specific groups and individuals within them (the ‘alliance managers’ and ‘security professionals’, for example), conflating these mischaracterises how an alliance is actually reproduced on a day-to-day basis. When the opposition is discussed – as in the case of the Democratic Party of Japan (see section 3 for details) – it is often in the context of its failure to significantly bring about any major policy changes. Even this focus on opposition parties only underlines the fact that analysis at the individual level is rarely observed in this literature. There is even less, if any, discussion of how the alliance is maintained or opposed within the USG, much less by related US organisations or industries that can be counted as stakeholders.

In addressing these issues, the following literature review is divided into three sections: 1) Alliances in international relations, an overview of definitions and typologies of security alliances; 2) The ‘persistence’ of security alliances, an overview of the conceptual debate between approaches emphasising material variables (realism/neorealism, liberalism/neoliberal institutionalism, largely positivist in nature) versus those emphasising ideational or hybrid variables (English School, constructivism, largely post-positivist) behind ‘persistence’; and 3) The US-Japan alliance, which includes an overview of the history of the alliance, the present situation, and the debate on its ‘persistence’. Lastly, the conclusion discusses this research’s larger contributions to not only the field of US-Japan studies, but also the literature on alliance ‘persistence’.

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1. Alliances in international relations

Traditionally defined by most scholars as formal or informal written agreements committing two or more sovereign states to security policy cooperation in offensive as well as defensive realms, alliances have historically been important in times of military crisis. They have also allowed states to ‘pick sides’, pool their resources and combat threats more effectively. Participation in a security alliance does not, however, signify that each member state has equal ability to exert influence over the other member states, and alliances are often differentiated by the symmetrical or asymmetrical distribution of capabilities between member states, these usually defined in vague terms (e.g. ‘power’) or in material ones (e.g. military forces). Carlo Masala describes an alliance with this sort of ‘capabilities imbalance’ as a ‘hierarchical alliance’, further separating out this category into hegemonic and imperial alliances (the former of which represents an alliance in which the more capable state leads smaller powers by consent and the latter through coercion). Alliances can additionally be distinguished by their level of institutionalisation, function, and inclusivity, among a range of other factors.

Security alliances have also been differentiated from other types of collective security arrangements in this literature, including: coalitions, defined as ‘a grouping of like-minded states that agree on the need for joint action on a specific problem at a particular time with no commitment to a durable relationship’; international society, defined as ‘a group of states (or, more generally, a group of independent political communities) which […] have established by

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8 Masala 2010, p. 383.


10 For example, certain security alliances may, over time, come to adopt political functions that go beyond a simple collective security agreement, as can be observed in the case of NATO and its creation of the Partnership for Peace, a trust-building initiative whereby non-NATO member states can participate in activities with active members ranging from civil-military relations to disaster response and environmental issues (Wallander 2000, p. 721).


12 See, for example, Bruno Tertrais’s addition of formal and informal alliances, as well as strategic partnerships (‘The Changing Nature of Military Alliances’, The Washington Quarterly, 27:2 [2004], pp. 135-147); Thomas S. Wilkins’s virtual, hedging, and bottle-capping alliances (‘Alignment’, not “alliance” – the shifting paradigm of international security cooperation: toward a conceptual taxonomy of alignment’, Review of International Studies, 38 [2012], pp. 53-76); and Campbell’s work on the US’s Cold War-era alliance typologies, including the ‘nuclear family’ of allies (e.g. Japan, South Korea) versus ‘friends and acquaintances’ (e.g. Chile) (2004, pp. 156-157). It is important to note that in the literature examined on alliances, authors have not distinguished any intrinsic properties of multilateral versus bilateral alliances.

13 Wilkins 2012, p. 63.
dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognize their common interest in maintaining these arrangements\(^\text{14}\); security complexes, defined as ‘a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another’\(^\text{15}\); and security communities, defined as ‘a particular social structure of international relations which [...] generates peaceful relations among the members’.\(^\text{16}\)

These arrangements appear to have more specific attributes (shared values and respect for rules and institutions) than the simple agreement determining the creation of a security alliance. Harald Müller separates out, for example, mature security communities from (presumably) immature ones by laying out several criteria for member states, including: ‘we-feeling/identity’; mutual trust; free movement among members; common threat definition; and ‘coordination against internal threats’\(^\text{17}\). It is also apparent from this literature that a security alliance has the potential to evolve into one of these more ‘mature’ collective arrangements over time (as has been argued in the case of NATO; see section 2 for details).

Given the historical and current prevalence of security alliances in international relations, the accompanying academic literature has subsequently sought to explain the origins\(^\text{18}\), functions, and purposes\(^\text{19}\) of these arrangements. While these studies are undoubtedly important and serve as the foreground for this research, the focus of this literature review hereafter rests largely on the equally broad field of investigation into why certain security alliances ‘persist’ after the original


\(^{15}\) Buzan 1991, p. 190.


\(^{17}\) Harald Müller, ‘A theory of decay of security communities with an application to the present state of the Atlantic Alliance’, *Institute of European Studies, 2006* (available at: http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/95n4b4sp, p. 4.

\(^{18}\) The literature on why states join security alliances is particularly broad, with approaches emphasising material explanations tending to suggest either that: a) states, driven by egoism, act in their own self-interest as a result of an anarchic international system being unable to guarantee an adequate level of security (this being associated with realism and neorealism); or that b) states ally with the intention of cooperation as a means to reduce future occurrence of military conflicts, and that this cooperation furthermore enhances the accountability of the alliance members’ actions (William C. Wohlfith, ‘Realism and security studies’ in Myriam Dunn Cavelty and Victor Mauer, eds, *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies* [Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010], pp. 9-20; David L. Rousseau and Thomas C. Walker, ‘Liberalism’ in Myriam Dunn Cavelty and Victor Mauer, eds, *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies* [Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010], pp. 21-33).

\(^{19}\) Other approaches emphasising ideational explanations behind alliance formation suggest, by contrast, that states ally as an extension of their social interaction in the international system, and their alliances therefore reflect a significant degree of congruence in the allied states’ political identities, beliefs, and values (Masala 2010, p. 385; David Mutimer, ‘Critical security studies’ in Myriam Dunn Cavelty and Victor Mauer, eds, *The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies* [Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010], pp. 45-55).
‘threat’ or purpose around which they were created has either disappeared or been fulfilled. The reasons for focusing on this question of alliance ‘persistence’ arise not only from the nature of the case study of the USJA, but also from the vigorous debate that has taken place in the literature over the ‘persistence’ of other alliances that have existed for similar lengths of time. As Jae-Jung Suh notes, the ‘persistence’ of these alliances calls into question ‘both the internal consistency of the alliance’s conceptual structure and the historical consistency of that structure over the alliance’s lifespan’, and thus necessitates a re-examination of alliance theory as a whole.

2. The ‘persistence’ of security alliances

The question of why alliances ‘persist’ is not only common in the academic literature, but also remains relevant in terms of current affairs. A brief scan of news articles, for example, reveals not only concerns over the management of long-lasting alliances (such as the one between the US and South Korea), but also public reaffirmations of their political and material value by high-ranking politicians (such as Japanese Prime Minister [PM] Shinzo Abe’s proclamation that ‘the [US-Japan] alliance [is] the pillar of Japan’s diplomacy’). This being the case, the following overview of the debate is critically important in informing us as to the procedural mechanisms, individuals, and organisations that play a role in the reproduction of security alliances into the present, and how these various elements or actors choose to promote or oppose this process.

I have separated the explanatory variables behind ‘persistence’ into the categories of material, ideational, and hybrid on account of the fact that scholars of varying theoretical backgrounds will often posit hypotheses for ‘persistence’ that do not necessarily rigidly adhere to one school of thought. Aside from NATO, due to the US’s prominent role in international relations and its large number of bilateral and multilateral alliances, the following section draws heavily on these examples as a point of comparison for the literature on the USJA in Section 3. As pictured in Table 1 below, section 2.1 discusses the material explanatory variables cited in the literature on alliance ‘persistence’, covering such concepts as hegemonic leadership, asset specificity, threat persistence, and institutional inertia; section 2.2 provides an overview of ideational explanations, including a discussion of agency, alliance identities, shared values (such as democracy), and security communities; and section 2.3 details hybrid variables behind ‘persistence’, including domestic politics, a high level of institutionalisation, credibility, and flexibility.

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Table 1: Common explanatory variables in the literature on alliance ‘persistence’

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<th>MATERIAL</th>
<th>IDEATIONAL</th>
<th>HYBRID</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hegemonic power</td>
<td>Shared values</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
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<td>Threat persistence</td>
<td>Security community</td>
<td>Domestic politics</td>
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<td>Asset specificity</td>
<td>Alliance identity</td>
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<td>Inertia</td>
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<td>Flexibility</td>
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2.1 Material variables

In the immediate post-Cold War period, given the sudden disappearance of the Soviet Union, scholars such as Kenneth Waltz predicted the demise or alteration of alliances such as NATO, since they would no longer serve their original purpose of providing greater security to member states from communist expansionism. While some alliances did collapse during this period, such as the Warsaw Pact, others, like NATO and the USJA, not only survived but continue to be maintained. While the survival and, indeed, resurgence of many alliances left some predictions moot, others like Walt have posited that the ‘persistence’ of security alliances may result from hegemonic leadership, whereby the ‘alliance leader’ – the stronger state – continues to offer inducements to weaker states in order to convince them to remain aligned. Citing the US-South Korea (ROK) alliance, Victor Cha explains that from the perspective of the ROK government, the USM presence on its territory discourages the rise of any competitor hegemon in the region and acts as ‘an embodiment of U.S. influence and commitment as a Pacific power’, thus preventing the possibility of a ‘dangerous power vacuum’ from forming. William T. Tow and Amitav Acharya, meanwhile, ascribe US efforts to enmesh itself within not only bilateral, but multilateral security arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region to Washington’s desire to ‘[sustain] American power and influence by preserving its asymmetrical system of regional security alliances [...] [without] acquiescing to power sharing arrangements with China or other regional actors’. The continued existence of alliances as the result of hegemonic leadership is thus closely linked to the perception on the part of the ‘weaker’ allied states that there remain existential threats.

22 Waltz 2000, p. 18; Masala 2010, p. 388.
to their security. In the case of US-ROK relations, this ‘threat’ has undoubtedly been North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme. In recent years, however, it has also come to encompass the ‘strategic uncertainty’ accompanying the rapid increase in China’s defence-related expenditures. For example, India’s ‘concern[s] about China’s development of naval facilities along the Indian Ocean rimland’ are cited as a factor behind its increased participation in joint exercises with US forces in the Pacific.26 Aside from China, Kei Koga argues that other ongoing ‘threats’ in the Asia-Pacific region, such as terrorism, piracy, and natural disasters also provide a continued incentive for the US to remain involved as a ‘pivotal security player in maintaining peace and stability’.27

On the other hand, as Celeste Wallander notes, alliances may ‘persist’ not only due to the existence of a hegemonic leader, but also to the continued utility of the alliance’s ‘specific assets for mounting credible defense and deterrence’ to its member states.28 She cites as an example of these assets the network of USM bases in the Asia-Pacific, which may remain an ‘effective, low-cost strategy’ for the US to retain its military predominance in the region.29 This idea of ‘asset specificity’ is also heavily cited by Suh, who comments that these assets – ranging from military equipment to doctrinal process to team configurations to infrastructure – all contribute to alliance ‘persistence’ by ‘generating an “alliance constituency” that benefits from the status quo and would suffer losses in case of an alliance termination’.30 Similarly, Mark Smith expresses his doubt that, when the UK ‘[is] asked to participate more fully in the American missile defence system […] it is difficult to imagine the answer being “No”’, citing the influence of the pro-US defence industry lobby in London.31

Others, however, suggest that security alliances can ‘persist’ for lack of any proposed alternative to the traditional paradigm—that even without an existential threat, security cooperation is likely to continue as a result of institutional inertia.32 The idea of ‘persistence’ via inertia assumes that institutions shape actors’ preferences through the very rules, commitments and standards that the actors themselves created—and thus, even when an alliance seems to have outlived its usefulness, its institutional ‘stickiness’ guarantees its ‘persistence’.33 Suh notes that

28 Wallander 2000, p. 710. 
29 Wallander 2000, p. 708. 
30 Suh 2007, p. 104. 
32 Masala 2010, p. 388. 
33 The term ‘institutional stickiness’ was coined by John Ikenberry with regards to the way in which international security institutions, such as NATO, have ‘sunk their roots ever more deeply into the political and
evidence of such inertia in democratic states can be found where there is ‘no observable bargaining or debate’ when the issue of alliance renewal comes up, as this signifies that there exists a ‘consensus among social actors, including those disadvantaged by alliance practices and specificities, that the alliance is in everybody’s interest’.  

Although these approaches have been the dominant voice in the debate over alliance ‘persistence’ thus far, they are not immune to criticism. Tim Dunne points out a conceptual ‘flaw’ in what he calls ‘strategic thinking’ in the alliance literature, noting that defining an immutable end – such as that of eventual institutional inertia – limits the debate on alliance ‘persistence’ to the means which brought that end about, and thus ‘implies a positivist view of knowledge in which “reality” is produced by a set of identifiable antecedent conditions’.  

By treating states as ‘billiard balls’ that remain essentially unchanged through social interaction with others versus ‘sticky molecules’ that bond with and take on new properties through interaction, these studies tend to ignore or underemphasise this social component and/or measure change largely as a result of external shocks.  

Moreover, these approaches pay little attention to the ‘internal dynamics of states comprising alliances’, such as how policymakers differ in their levels of threat perception and how institutional structure contributes to its continuation—and thus do not capture the full complexity of the policymaking process.

2.2 Ideational variables

By contrast, ideational, social constructivist-based explanations of alliance ‘persistence’ do not commit to determinism, emphasising instead the notion that – rather than a common threat – member states remain allied because they perceive for themselves a common destiny or otherwise demonstrate ideological solidarity whereby member states will prefer to continue an alliance built on ‘common political values and objectives’.  

Giving more explanatory power to agency, these approaches assume that states also share a perception that they continue to hold the same or similar norms and values important, but they do not take for granted that alliances must be ‘stable’ in order that they ‘persist’. As Anand Menon and Jennifer Welsh note, ‘conflict is central to the economic structures of the states that participate within the order’ (Anand Menon and Jennifer Welsh, ‘Understanding NATO’s Sustainability: The Limits of Institutionalist Theory’, *Global Governance*, 17 [2011], pp. 81-94, p. 83).

34 Suh 2007, p. 110; by ‘renewal’, I mean the process by which an alliance is formally maintained through the re-signing of the security treaty or pact by which it was originally formed between its member states.


nature and development of institutions’, and thus the role of agency in accounting for stability and change is ‘crucial’.\(^{39}\)

By this account, an alliance is not merely the aggregate sum of its member states’ material capabilities and assets, but also embodies their collective ideas and narratives used to ‘explain, deliberate or legitimize political action’.\(^{40}\) Koga argues that the US’s relationships with its allies are built partly on this basis, as ‘the United States aims not only to strengthen democratic bilateral security relations but also to expand its democratic networks between allies’.\(^{41}\) NATO’s contentious process of enlargement serves as a case in point. Through it, NATO sought to reinvent itself as a democratic security community that could serve as an important ‘symbolic marker […] through which the threat of fragmentation and the return of the past might be countered’.\(^{42}\) This argument was advanced at every opportunity by NATO officials during enlargement, since they perceived the process as ‘related to the potential for spreading democracy’ and, in turn, democracy as essentially linked to the preservation of security between East and West and the unique organisational ‘culture’ within NATO.\(^{43}\)

An alliance ‘identity’ built on the basis of these ideas and narratives may also play a part in its ‘persistence’. Cha, for example, raises the possibility that over time, this ‘identity’ based not only on ‘similarities in regime type, religion, or ethnicity’, but also on ‘a wide range of economic and social interactions, development of elite networks, and high levels of communication’, may develop.\(^{44}\) Adding to this argument is Suh, who remarks on how a security alliance can even become ‘a political practice central to state identity’:

\(^{39}\) Menon and Welsh 2011, p. 85.
\(^{41}\) Koga 2011, p. 13.
When member states closely link their own identities to their participation in a particular institution like a security alliance, this thus makes them likelier to ‘work in favor of organizational effectiveness’ and support its continuation.46 This may also be evident in the internal socialisation undertaken by NATO in the Czech Republic and Romania, which included reaching out to academics through the Partnership for Peace Consortium, to parliamentarians through NATO’s Parliamentary Assembly, and public education efforts.47

Nevertheless, these ideational arguments have also been taken to task. Walt, for example, argues that regardless of how strong the sense of community/identity might be between states, these bonds are ‘far weaker than the ties of nationalism’ and are subject to the whims of politicians who ‘still owe their careers to how well they satisfy their own electorates’.48 Relatedly, although member states might publicly state that their alliances are built upon shared values such as democracy and human rights, this may not be the case in practice. Tow and Acharya, citing New Zealand’s reluctance to participate in many USM and intelligence operations since the mid-1980s in spite of their shared cultural backgrounds, further note that ‘there is no guarantee that a period of socialisation through an alliance will necessarily lead to shared identity’.49 This point is buffeted by the accession of several Central and East European states to NATO whose own democracies were not yet consolidated, such as Albania and Romania, giving fuel to the argument that NATO’s primary objective ‘was never to maintain free-market democracies’.50

Suh also warns against the possibility that a certain identity might actually produce further insecurity by its particular attributes (the ‘identity effect’), citing the US and ROK’s contentious

45 Suh 2004, pp. 151-152.
46 Menon and Welsh 2011, p. 88.
49 Tow and Acharya 2007, p. 11.
relationship with North Korea as evidence of a ‘security dilemma [...] which began as a codification in a [mutual security] treaty or a declaration, [which] [...] deepen[s] and widen[s] both amity and enmity as an intersubjective reality’.\(^5\) In securing themselves against a North Korean ‘threat’, therefore, the US and ROK governments are simultaneously defining the former as an adversary with whom there are limited means of interaction and conflict resolution, which can lead to the creation of ‘intricate webs of abiding violence and harm – webs that are sticky and resilient, ensnaring both people’s bodies and their political imagination’.\(^5\)

### 2.3 Hybrid variables

The third category of explanations behind ‘persistence’ combines elements from approaches emphasising both material and ideational variables. Walt provides a succinct explanation of some of these possible hybrid variables: preserving credibility, whereby alliances ‘persist’ ‘if they have become symbols of credibility or resolve’;\(^5\) domestic politics, whereby alliances ‘persist’ as a result of domestic groups within member states perpetuating alliance policy for personal gain and/or out of genuine commitment; a high degree of institutionalisation, whereby the level of institutionalisation – or ‘the presence of formal organisations charged with performing specific intra-alliance tasks (such as military planning, weapons procurement and crisis management), and the development of formal or informal rules governing how alliance members reach collective decisions’ – is high enough to guarantee alliance ‘persistence’; and flexibility, wherein the alliance is preserved through the reinterpretation or reformulation of its founding principles.\(^5\)

Speaking to the first point, Smith notes that key to the UK’s ‘self-understanding’ of its role within the US-UK alliance is that for it to remain ‘a global strategic actor even in the absence of a global strategic presence’, it must rely upon its American connection.\(^5\) Likewise, the USG strives to illustrate the credibility of its commitment to its allies in the Asia-Pacific by increasing its involvement in regional institutions such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), deepening cooperation in areas of non-traditional security (such as disaster management), and maintaining its deterrent force on the Korean Peninsula—but not involved to the point that it limits the US’s autonomy and flexibility in its foreign policy options.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) Suh 2007, p. 20.


\(^5\) Walt defines ‘credibility’ here as a combination of ‘the material capabilities to deter or defeat their opponents’ and a genuine commitment to providing assistance to allies (1997, p. 160).


\(^5\) Koga 2011, p. 15.
On the impact of domestic politics, echoing Huysmans, Walt attributes NATO’s continued existence largely to the ‘elaborate transatlantic network of former NATO officials, defence intellectuals, military officers, journalists and policy analysts’ whose professional lives have been in service to the continuation and expansion of the institution.\textsuperscript{57} Ikenberry emphasises this, commenting that NATO ‘provide[s] mechanisms for “doing business” across the Atlantic’ by keeping leaders in Europe ‘engaged and connected to America’.\textsuperscript{58} Ciuta further reminds enlargement critics that the ‘essential factor’ behind the process was not that the US was hegemonically promoting it, but that ‘states which are usually ignored by great-power politics wanted to join NATO—a desire whose meaning and consequences were continuously transformed by the process of joining’\textsuperscript{59}

Speaking to the existence of a high level of institutionalisation, Suh claims that the US-ROK alliance actually ‘draws its strengths from the institutionalization of identities’, referencing, among several factors, Korean leaders repeatedly reaffirming ‘the United States’ identity as a benevolent, security-enhancing ally’, and the education of the majority of Korea’s top academics as well as key government officials in the US.\textsuperscript{60} Bialasiewicz et al note that these kinds of initiatives and efforts are evidence of institutionalisation being driven by the US with its alliances through a process of ‘incorporation’, especially during the Bush administration: ‘It is telling that Bush’s claim of “either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists” relies not on a straightforward binary [...] For although the United States may construct itself as the undisputed leader in the new global scenario, its “right” and the right of its moral-political “mission” of spreading “freedom and justice” relies on its amplification and support by allies’.\textsuperscript{61}

This suggested link between institutionalisation of identities, organisational flexibility, and alliance sustainability or ‘persistence’ is not, however, without problems. For example, while Sjursen observes that the very fact that NATO is not a democratic security community may, in fact, be linked to its future survival and ability to attract new members beyond the current alliance of democratic states, this ‘constant process of legitimation vis-à-vis both its own members and external audiences’ may in fact reveal that ‘[a]n ability to adapt in the face of changing circumstances can [...] indicate a diminished potential for effectiveness, which in turn could affect the long-term sustainability of the organization’.\textsuperscript{62} Zoltan Barany adds that NATO has ‘seemingly become a “political honor society”’ that acts as a stepping-stone to eventual EU membership, concluding that NATO’s inclusion of these

\textsuperscript{57} Walt 1997, p. 166.
\textsuperscript{60} Suh 2007, pp. 115-117.
\textsuperscript{61} Bialasiewicz et al 2007, pp. 415-416.
\textsuperscript{62} Sjursen 2004, p. 703; Menon and Welsh 2011, p. 85.
‘unqualified states’ – and its attendant lack of any enforcement mechanisms or sanctions with which to punish them – ‘presage[s] the Alliance’s likely demise as an effective military organization’.  

3. The US-Japan alliance

Although the USJA has likewise sparked much scholarly interest due to its unlikely origins in WWII and its endurance in spite of worldwide political and economic transformation, the discussion of its ‘persistence’ has largely been relegated under the purview of ‘area studies’, analysed primarily by long-time US and Japan specialists, and been problem-driven in nature. This relegation is curious given the fact that the USJA is frequently cited as a ‘cornerstone’ of not only East Asian, but also global, peace and security by officials and academics alike (see Chapter 3 for details). Divided between the general camps of historical/neoclassical realists and social constructivists, studies of this alliance thus often appear to talk past each other on completely separate issues – realists being concerned with foreign policy politicking by ‘elite’ actors and regional security dilemmas, and constructivists with domestic Japanese politics and Japan’s antimilitarist heritage – rather than engaging in a conversation.

Its exclusion from the wider debate on alliances in international relations has furthermore meant that the literature on its ‘persistence’ has been not only theoretically and methodologically inconsistent, but has also largely been driven in reaction to external crises (e.g. any number of North Korean missile crises) rather than internal processes. The problem with this focus on external events driving ‘persistence’ is – as stated in the Introduction – that it undercuts the agency of the actors involved in this process because it is assumed that they are merely reacting to structural factors. McSweeney explains:

Actors are knowledgeable and skilled performers, without necessarily being able to give an account of what they are knowledgeable and skilled about. They know how things are done, how to get along, how to manage or “do” complex tasks of sociability without [...] being able to discourse on, the extent or basis of their competence. Everyday life for individuals and bureaucracies would be impossible if it depended on conscious recovery of the cognitive patterns which we call “structure”.

Furthermore, these studies contain the same problematic tropes found in the larger debates on alliance ‘persistence’, including their overreliance on the technocratic expertise of actors in the administrative sphere of policymaking institutions. This is evidenced in the literature written by so-called ‘alliance managers’, all of whose writings proliferate despite their well-known status-quo bias

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63 Barany 2004, p. 73.
64 McSweeney 1999, p. 142.
and emphasis on top-down examinations of policy. These individuals likewise share similar backgrounds working across various sites in government (the DOD, MOD, MOFA and DOS), the military (USMC, US Navy, SDF), and often, following postings in those two sites, have experience working for the same influential NGOs or ‘think tanks’ (such as the Council on Foreign Relations, CSIS, the Tokyo Foundation, and the Canon Institute for Global Studies), and were educated at and/or later taught at many of the same universities in D.C. and Tokyo (including Georgetown, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins, Keio, and Tokyo University).

The same can be said of many of the academics cited throughout this chapter, as their associations with research centres like the Stimson Center, the East-West Center, the National Bureau of Economic Research, and Harvard’s Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies have brought them into frequent and close contact with the ‘managers’ who not only played a large part in shaping alliance policies in the past, but continue to do so. This interaction has likewise led to the dissemination of the views of these already influential political players within academia, policymaking circles, and to the American and Japanese publics.

The following section (3.1) proceeds with a brief overview of the alliance’s history dating back to its founding, focusing specifically on developments relating to security as opposed to the economic and social aspects of US-Japanese (USJ) bilateral relations. Sections 3.2 - 3.4 then proceed with a discussion on how different authors in the academic literature have approached the question of alliance ‘persistence’ along the lines of the various categories of material, ideational, and hybrid explanations as previously outlined.

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<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>AS THEY APPEAR IN THE LITERATURE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hegemonic power (M)</td>
<td>The ‘patron-client’ relationship between the US and Japan</td>
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<td>Threat persistence (M)</td>
<td>Unstable Asia-Pacific region (China, North Korea)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset specificity (M)</td>
<td>Increasing military interoperability; ballistic missile defence system (BMD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transnational networks (I)</td>
<td>The ‘alliance managers’; inter-military-industrial links</td>
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The unique historical context within which the USJ security relationship is situated has undoubtedly contributed to its present-day trajectory. Forged in Japan’s defeat in WWII, the ties between the two countries initially arose from the American Occupation willing them into existence. This began with the signing of the 1951 Mutual Security Treaty (henceforth USJ-ST) and 1954 Mutual Defense Agreement, both of which ensured American protection of Japan. Japan, in return, allowed its territory to be used in the housing of permanent USM bases. This included the relinquishment of Okinawa prefecture in its entirety to USM trusteeship under Article 3 of the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco. US protection was sought as a result of the nature of Japan’s post-war Constitution and its famous Article 9 (stipulating that ‘land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained’), and was defended by the GOJ even after the US Occupation of mainland Japan was formally concluded in 1952. For example, during the controversial ratification of the USJ-ST in 1960, Japanese PM Nobusuke Kishi called in police forces to remove opponents both within the Diet (such as members of the Japanese Socialist Party [JSP]) and thousands of student protesters. In spite of this controversy, the GOJ served as a reliable ally to the US during the Cold War, when, for example, USM bases on mainland Japan and Okinawa served as a springboard for US forces during the Vietnam War, handling ‘about three-quarters of the 400,000 tons of goods that American forces consumed [...] each month’. This period nonetheless also contains some important periods of tension, such as US accusations of Japanese ‘free-riding’ on the security guarantee while flooding US markets with cheap automobile exports. This criticism spurred the expansion of the original 1960 Treaty between the two states in 1978 and again in 1981, these years

marking the signing of new agreements which saw the GOJ both acquire enhanced defensive weapons and ‘upgrade its maritime operations to 1,000 nautical miles from its shores’ in order to ‘provide rearguard support for regional US operations’. In the post-Cold War era, the GOJ’s failure to provide physical troops to the first Gulf War similarly prompted US derision. Unlike the incremental reforms to defence policy in the past, however, this crisis of trust in the GOJ’s commitment to the alliance resulted in several years of sweeping policy changes which allowed for the SDF to engage in peacekeeping operations (PKOs) overseas, use weapons in self-defence, and provide greater logistical support to the US during joint exercises.

Following 9/11, this trend continued as then-Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi (of the Liberal Democratic Party [LDP]), along with his successors, reaffirmed their commitment to a strong alliance with the US by stewarding the passage of anti-terrorism laws allowing Marine SDF ships to refuel their American counterparts in the Indian Ocean and allowing Ground and Air SDF troops to directly participate in reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Christopher Preble notes that Japanese officials sought to prevent the same embarrassment they felt during the first Gulf War by making explicit their support for the US in its controversial expansion of the ‘War on Terror’ into Iraq. In addition, Christopher Hughes argues that Tokyo’s support of the George W. Bush administration’s counterterrorism policies arose largely from a resurgence in political conservatism in Japan and the US. This movement used the US’s ‘unipolar moment’ as an opportunity to make Japan a ‘normal’, remilitarised state. This is evident from Japan’s participation, for example, in the US’s ballistic missile defence system and its continued lobbying for arms embargoes against China.

75 This expression was originally coined by conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer in his 1991 essay with the same name. In it, he claims that in the post-Cold War world, the ‘centre of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the United States, attended by its Western allies’; the term has also been used by authors like Hughes to describe the US’s pre-emptive military strike against Iraq (Charles Krauthammer, ‘The Unipolar Moment’, Foreign Affairs, 1 February 1991, available online at: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1991-02-01/unipolar-moment).
76 The term ‘normalisation’ and/or the related concept of Japan becoming a ‘normal’ country refers to ‘the capacity [of a country] to defend its interests and citizens wherever they are threatened’, which, as some US and Japanese officials have argued, is severely curtailed by the existence of Article 9 (Christopher W. Hughes, ‘Chapter Two: Japan’s Military Doctrine, Expenditure and Power Projection’, The Adelphi Papers, 48: 403 [2008], pp. 35-52, p. 37; see also Jamie Metzl, ‘Japan’s military normalization’, The Japan Times, 6 March 2015,
This long push for ‘normalisation’ appeared to have stalled in 2009 with the election of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), which ousted the long-reigning LDP with promises of increasing Japanese autonomy, ‘counterbalancing the US alliance with UN-centrism and Asia-focused diplomacy, and proactive pacifism’ in its platform.\(^7\) DPJ leaders, including former PM Yukio Hatoyama, were likewise ‘more explicit in indicating that the travails of the United States in Afghanistan and Iraq are manifestations of a deeper and long-term malaise in U.S. power’ than their LDP counterparts.\(^7\) The DPJ initially pushed for several changes to the alliance framework which caused consternation among some of the more senior ‘alliance managers’ in Washington, including: a revision of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA)\(^8\) with regards to military basing and holding the USG accountable for environmental damage caused by its facilities; a larger commitment to multilateral East Asian initiatives and forums; and drawing down Japanese commitments to the US’s operations in the Middle East (such as concluding the Marine SDF’s refuelling mission in the Indian Ocean).\(^8\) However, as a result of the Hatoyama administration’s failed attempts to renegotiate prior agreements with the US on the relocation of Futenma in Okinawa\(^8\) and a perceived naiveté on their part regarding China’s military intentions, the party’s promise of a more equal relationship with America was left unfulfilled.\(^8\)

On the back of public disappointment with the Hatoyama administration’s handling of Futenma, the following DPJ administrations under PMs Naoto Kan and Yoshihiko Noda strove to maintain the previous status-quo relationship with the US. As Hughes notes, in the wake of the Futenma controversy, the Kan administration agreed to provide the same level of host nation

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\(^7\) Kersten 2011, p. 18.


\(^8\) The US-Japan SOFA is one of many such agreements that the US government has with other nations in which its armed forces are stationed, the purpose of these agreements being to establish the rights of US servicemembers abroad. The SOFA has come under increasing attack in recent years, especially in Okinawa, due to its controversial extraterritoriality measures which make it difficult for Japanese courts to investigate crimes committed by US servicemembers or demand compensation for crimes committed from the USM (for more, see: Glenn D. Hook, ‘Intersecting risks and governing Okinawa: American bases and the unfinished war’, *Japan Forum* 22:1 [2010], pp. 195-217; Sakurai 2008; McCormack 2009).


\(^8\) Full discussion of the Hatoyama administration’s handling of the Futenma issue to be included in Chapter 3.

support (HNS) funds supporting the USM presence in Japan from 2011 to 2015, relaxed demands that the US abandon its ‘neither confirm nor deny’ policy on the deployment of nuclear weapons within the country, moved forward with agreements on expanded exchanges of military information, and diminished previous efforts to build an ‘East Asian Community’ as promulgated by Hatoyama (especially in the wake of the 2010 incident during which a Chinese fishing boat collided with a Japanese Coast Guard vessel in the disputed waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands).84

Furthermore, during the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, US and Japanese forces were brought closer together through Operation Tomodachi (“friend” in Japanese), a US-led assistance operation providing disaster relief to affected residents. With over 20,000 troops mobilised, Tomodachi was the largest US-led bilateral humanitarian mission ever conducted in Japan and was received in an overwhelmingly positive manner by the Japanese public, with over 82% reported to have ‘friendly feelings’ towards the US in a December 2011 poll conducted by the GOJ (the highest it had been since 1976).85

While USJ relations may have improved following Tomodachi, support for the DPJ withered even further due to the party’s handling of the post-Tohoku Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant disaster, and the LDP were re-elected as the majority party in the Diet under the leadership of PM Abe in the December 2012 elections. Since these elections, Abe has successfully spearheaded legislation in the Diet which, while not outright revising the language of Article 9 in the Constitution, ‘reinterprets’ it to allow Japanese forces to engage in collective self-defence (CSD).86 He has also supported recent revisions of the USJ Security Guidelines in 2015. These include: the creation of an Alliance Coordination Mechanism, which ‘will strengthen policy and operational coordination related to activities conducted by the [SDF] and the United States Armed Forces in all phases from peacetime to contingencies’; a Bilateral Planning Mechanism, which ‘will conduct bilateral planning in peacetime for contingencies relevant to Japan’s peace and security’, including ‘assign[ing] SDF personnel as liaisons to U.S. military units and vice-versa’; a joint increase in ‘early warning capabilities, including expanding network coverage of potential threats’; and a kind of ‘mutual

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84 The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are an uninhabited group of islands in the East China Sea at the centre of a territorial dispute between China and Japan, who both claim sovereignty over them and the potentially substantial undersea oil reserves beneath/around them (Hughes 2012, pp. 122-123; Leszek Buszynski, ‘The San Francisco System: Contemporary Meanings and Challenges’, Asian Perspective, 35 [2011], pp. 315-335, pp. 330-331).


86 What is meant by CSD is that Japanese forces may now come to the aid of the US and other allies, albeit in limited circumstances—such as in the cases of shooting down a North Korean missile fired at the US, ‘providing logistical support’ during combat operations, and minesweeping in international shipping lanes, among others (‘Japan to allow military role overseas in historic move’, BBC News, 18 September 2015, available online at: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-34287362).
defense’ whereby ‘[t]he [SDF] and the United States Armed Forces will provide mutual protection of each other’s assets, as appropriate, if engaged in activities that contribute to the defense of Japan in a cooperative manner’ (the exact definition of ‘assets’, however, is unclear).  

In addition, the Abe administration took several steps in quick succession (starting in December 2013) towards increasing the prominence of national security issues on the government’s agenda, including: the creation of the National Security Council, ‘a forum which will undertake strategic discussions under the Prime Minister on a regular basis and as necessary on various national security issues and exercising a strong political leadership’; the adoption of a National Security Strategy by the Cabinet which ‘sets the basic orientation of diplomatic and defense policies related to national security’ and is modelled around Abe’s call for Japan to have a ‘proactive contribution to peace’ (also known as ‘proactive pacifism’); and the adoption of ‘The Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology’, a new set of rules set out in accordance with the NSS in April 2014 replacing the prior ‘Three Principles on Arms Exports and Their Related Policy Guidelines’ in order to ease Japan’s aforementioned ‘proactive’ contribution to ‘securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community’.  

These policy changes, while earning the praise of the US under the Barack Obama administration and several media outlets, have not, however, been met with universal acclaim. A June 2014 Asahi Shimbun nationwide telephone survey of Japanese voters, for example, found that...

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88 The ‘Three Principles on Arms Exports and Their Related Policy Guidelines’ was the basic policy concerning Japan’s arms exports of the Japanese government since its adoption by the Diet in 1967. Under the original guidelines, arms could not be exported to (1) communist bloc countries, (2) countries subject to “arms” exports embargo under the United Nations Security Council’s resolutions, and (3) countries involved in or likely to be involved in international conflicts. This was amended in 1976 to include the clause that ‘the Government of Japan shall not promote “arms” exports, regardless of the destinations’ (MOFA, ‘Japan’s Policies on the Control of Arms Exports’, 2014a, available online at: [http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/policy/](http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/policy/).


'only 9 percent of voters feel the Abe administration has conducted sufficient debate on drastically changing Japan’s postwar security policy', with 56% opposed overall to the idea of Japan exercising the right of CSD.\textsuperscript{91} One year later in another \textit{Asahi} poll, support for the Abe Cabinet overall had dropped to 37%, and 57% of voters answered ‘No’ when asked if they agreed with a number of security bills presented to the Diet ‘which allow for the use of [CSD], and expand SDF activities abroad’.\textsuperscript{92} Along with the lack of public debate over changing policy, some other explanations for this drop in support include concerns that the Abe administration is trying to bypass the formal process of constitutional amendment entirely, that Japan will antagonise its neighbours in northeast Asia by doing so, and that bolstering defence spending may entangle Japan in future American conflicts.\textsuperscript{93}

3.2. Material variables

In spite of his oft-rocky relationship with public opinion, consistent support for the Abe administration’s security-related policy changes from the US has been cited as evidence of the alliance’s ‘persistence’: mainly, the unequal relationship between the US and Japan (sometimes referred to as a ‘patron-client’ relationship).\textsuperscript{94} Curtis Martin describes this relationship in terms of the Japanese concept of \textit{amae}, or ‘trustful dependence’, in which ‘the more powerful ally is obliged to take decisions in consideration of and on behalf of the dependent partner’s interests and rights, and to take responsibility for ensuring them’.\textsuperscript{95} Key to the nature of this relationship is not only Japan’s reliance on, for example, US weapons and technology (e.g. the BMD system), but also its acceptance of its role as a ‘junior’ partner in the alliance and of the US’s role as the ‘leader’. (This may be observed, for example, in Japan’s ‘humiliation’ by the international community for its late response to the first Gulf War, the effect of which was that the GOJ took great pains to increase its military flexibility along the lines of what the US had been pushing for decades.\textsuperscript{96})

This argument, along with the others that follow in this section, is derived at least implicitly from neorealist or neoliberal institutionalist perspectives. These tend to take place at the system

\textsuperscript{91} ‘MAJOR SECURITY SHIFT: 9% satisfied with collective self-defense debate; Cabinet support falls to 43%’, \textit{The Asahi Shimbun}, 23 June 2014b, available at: \url{http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/politics/AJ201406230028}.


\textsuperscript{94} Preble 2006; Campbell 2000, pp. 125-134.

\textsuperscript{95} Martin 2004, p. 290.

level and generally discuss the evolution of the GOJ’s foreign policymaking process, the US’s hegemonic influence on this process, and regional implications of the ‘persistence’ of the alliance in terms of ‘interests’ and material capabilities. The push for the ‘normalisation’ of Japan, for example, is seen as evidence of the US’s influence on Japan’s foreign policy options, since the US has enthusiastically backed many measures by a string of conservative LDP governments to rearm, including: the construction of the BMD system; Japanese participation in regional military exercises; and increasing Japan’s defence expenditure to ‘take account of rising defence budgets elsewhere in East Asia’.

Nick Bisley goes so far as to say that the ‘normalisation’ of Japan ‘ sends an unambiguous signal that Washington intends to be the predominant military power in East Asia and that it feels that this best serves its regional and global interests’. This is further evidenced, says Hughes, by Japan’s efforts in ‘blocking regionalism’, whereby the GOJ was ‘deliberately overproliferating regional cooperation frameworks as a means to dilute and check China’s concentration of power in any one regional forum’ rather than genuinely pursuing multilateral diplomacy outside of its relationship with the US.

Others, meanwhile, have said that, on a more basic level, the Cold War is still going in East Asia – where China looms as a significant military and economic force and North Korea’s nuclear arsenal weigh heavily in the minds of Japanese leadership – and thus the original ‘threats’ that the alliance was formed in response to remain just as relevant and dangerous as ever. This is especially the case with regards to the territorial disputes with China over ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands, as US officials like former Secretary of State (SecState) Hillary Clinton and former Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Chuck Hagel have reaffirmed that the islands are covered under the USJ-ST and thus make clear both countries’ commitment to ‘apply[ing] the brakes to what they see as China’s thrust for a hegemonic position in the region’. The heightened instability of this region due to these various conflicts has therefore, according to this perspective, pushed the US and Japan closer together, even when (as under the DPJ’s leadership) the GOJ has openly declared its desire for greater independence.

The use of essentialist language in the literature, however – such as the ‘patron-client’ relationship, among others outlined above – removes complexity from the nature of USJ relations.

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99 Hughes 2012, p. 115.
Authors using this term specifically often stress Japan’s dependence or servitude to the US ‘hegemon’ at the expense of discussing how the GOJ has, over the years, actively held onto its role as the ‘junior’ partner in the alliance in order to maintain a constant level of USM support and reduce the costs of providing for its own national defence. Again, however, this undermines the agency of the GOJ and its leadership in their well-demonstrated efforts to purposely keep Japan’s foreign policy options limited—this being easier than considering other means by which the government might extricate itself from the tight bounds of the US ‘hub and spoke’ alliance system.  

3.3. Ideational variables

Therefore, where the approaches emphasising material explanations have tended to analyse alliance ‘persistence’ at the system level and focus on the foreign and security policymaking processes as seen through the lenses of ‘managers’ with a demonstrated incentive in maintaining the alliance, those emphasising ideational ones have built on the notion of ‘persistence’ as based on common norms and values through a largely state level-examination of particular aspects of Japanese domestic politics and public opinion. Thomas Berger and Peter Katzenstein have, in the past, advocated for an understanding of the USJA as ‘[not] merely the product of a pluralistic bargaining process between interest groups concerned with maximizing their share of societal resources’, but as part and parcel of the debate over Japanese ‘national identity [...] [and] the definition of the national interest’. In this understanding, the GOJ has thus continuously sought to take on more security responsibilities over time – even if it means re-litigating the Constitution – in order to fits its ongoing reimagining of Japan’s ‘alliance identity’.

Martin characterises this divide in the debate over the ‘new’ Japanese identity as being one between ‘preservationists’ in favour of the current alliance structure and ‘revisionists’ in favour of overturning or significantly modifying it in order to give Japan a more equal role. In the former camp, Michael Green and Daniel Twining point to the repeated public promotion of the US and

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103 This term is often used to describe the system of ‘discrete, exclusive alliances with the Republic of Korea, the Republic of China, and Japan’ put in place by the US after WWII in order to leverage control (as the ‘hub’) over its allies (the ‘spokes’) (Victor D. Cha, ‘Powerplay Origins of the U.S. Alliance System in Asia’, *International Security*, 34:3 [2009/10], pp. 158-196).
104 Berger 1996.
106 Martin 2004, p. 299.
107 Green, a prominent figure in the USJA literature and a well-known ‘alliance manager’ or ‘Japan hand’ in Washington, has formerly served as a staffer in the Japanese Diet, a senior adviser on Asia in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, director of the Foreign Policy Institute, and a member of staff of the National Security Council from 2001 through 2005 as director for Asian affairs and ‘then as special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Asia, with responsibility for East Asia and South Asia’. Currently he serves as the senior vice president for Asia and Japan Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a prominent ‘centrist’ think tank in D.C. (ranked first for security and international affairs in 2013) and
Japan’s ‘shared values’ such as rule of law, democracy, and good governance by Bush, Koizumi, and later Japanese PMs during the War on Terror as evidence of this ideational renegotiation of the nature of the alliance in order to effect change in the ‘strategic landscape’ of both the Middle East and East Asia. During his first term in office from 2006-7, PM Abe reaffirmed this belief in his call for the establishment of an ‘arc of freedom and prosperity’ consisting of Japan, India, the US, and Australia which promoted a ‘more assertive and values-oriented foreign policy based on the so-called “universal” values of freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law and the market economy’. More recently, the USG and GOJ released a joint statement which explicitly references these ‘universal’ values: ‘The relationship between the United States of America and Japan is founded on mutual trust, a common vision for a rules-based international order, a shared commitment to upholding democratic values and promoting open markets, and deep cultural and people-to-people ties’.

On the other hand, this reshaping of Japanese identity – and, subsequently, the ‘alliance identity’ – has also coincided with a resurgence of Japanese nationalism. Gavan McCormack, for example, discusses Abe’s first term as a period of ‘radicalism’ in Japanese politics, interpreting his oft-repeated desire during this time for Japan to ‘set the post-war behind it’ as a rejection of ‘American-style democracy’ based on his promotion of historical revisionism on the issue of comfort women and of the creation of new ‘strategic dialogues’ in Asia excluding the Chinese. Thus,

108 Twining has been an Associate of the U.S. National Intelligence Council ‘working on a range of projects related to global strategic futures and Asian security’, a staff member of the U.S. Trade Representative, the Foreign Policy Advisor to U.S. Senator John McCain, and a Member of the U.S. Secretary of State’s Policy Planning Staff responsible for South Asia and regional issues in East Asia. Currently, he is a Senior Fellow for Asia at the German Marshall Fund of the United States and a regular columnist for such media outlets as Foreign Policy, Nikkei and The Wall Street Journal. (‘Daniel Twining’, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, available online at: http://www.gmfus.org/profiles/daniel-twining).


while promoting close USJ cooperation on these ideational terms, the GOJ has also striven to achieve greater agency through its ‘proactive pacifism’ policy by not simply ‘following the orders’ of the US, but rather actively contributing ‘to the military-strategic affairs of the international community’ in its own right.\textsuperscript{114}

On the same subject of identity, other scholars, such as Akitoshi Miyashita, have focused more on the ‘one-nation pacifism’ unique to Japanese politics. He notes that Japan’s civil tradition of antimilitarism rests upon the ‘material and structural basis [...] of the alliance with the [US]’, as Japan has relied comfortably on the US security umbrella in the post-Cold War era.\textsuperscript{115} Because of this long tradition, Berger posits that only a ‘dramatic shift from the core principles of [the alliance’s] political-military culture’ is likely to cause a significant transformation in the current alliance configuration, this ‘shift’ requiring ‘the emergence of a major new security threat’.\textsuperscript{116} Even then, says Mochizuki, there are significant hurdles to overcome in revising the post-war Constitution and in particular Article 9, as this would require not only a two-thirds parliamentary majority, but also public acquiescence and regional acceptance of a rearmed Japan.\textsuperscript{117} Given the well-documented collapse of the leftist opposition within Japan\textsuperscript{118} and the equally well-documented rise of the pro-normalisation ‘elites’ (these cutting across the preservationist/revisionist divide), however, Richard Samuels remarks that pacifism can be ‘ruled out’ as a basis for future Japanese security policy.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{113} These have included: ‘the formation of an Asia-Pacific Democratic League [...] linking the arc of four (the US, Japan, Australia, and India)’ in 2007; the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade agreement involving twelve other Pacific Rim countries; and the inaugural U.S. Pacific Command Amphibious Leaders Symposium, designed to ‘get a handle on regional considerations with respect to amphibious operations – useful for a variety of purposes including humanitarian assistance, power projection and territorial defense’, which invited representatives from over twenty countries but notably excluded China (McCormack 2012; Prashanth Parameswaran, ‘Why Is the US Excluding China from a New Military Meeting?’, \textit{The Diplomat}, 16 May 2015, available online at: http://thediplomat.com/2015/05/why-is-the-us-excluding-china-from-a-new-military-meeting/).

\textsuperscript{114} Singh 2008, pp. 315-316.


\textsuperscript{116} Berger 1996.

\textsuperscript{117} Mochizuki 2004, p. 128; Preble 2006, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{118} Throughout the Cold War, the JSP represented the biggest opposition to the LDP by advocating for complete unarmed neutrality and the abolishment of the USJ-ST (as well as the SDF). The JSP and its allies in the Diet mainly relied on a ‘strategy of litigation so as to contest the normative context in which Japan’s national security policy is formulated’, using the Constitution to argue against the SDF’s participation in military exercises. However, by the mid-1990s, the JSP’s dogmatically pacifist agenda came to be seen as ‘unrealistic’; when the party briefly came into power in an anti-LDP coalition in 1993, it was forced to compromise on these positions and publicly recognised the USJ-ST and the SDF as legitimate and necessary (Miyashita 2007, pp. 113-114; Glenn Hook, \textit{Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan} [London: Routledge, 1996], pp. 93-95; Katzenstein and Okawara 1993, p. 100; Jennifer M. Lind, ‘Pacifism or Passing the Buck? Testing Theories of Japanese Security Policy’, \textit{International Security}, 29:1 [2004], pp. 92-120, p. 114).

3.4 Hybrid variables

The push for ‘normalisation’ and the discussion around revising the Constitution in order to allow for the exercise of CSD is evidence of a belief that the GOJ’s international credibility hinges on the continued existence of the USJA, and thus it must keep its foreign policy options flexible into the immediate future. For example, several scholars posit that the GOJ’s involvement in the War on Terror arose not only from its desire for the USG to support its efforts to hold the North Korean government accountable for its abductions of Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s, but also for the USG’s backing in its bid for a UN Security Council seat. Furthermore, as stated earlier, Japan has given priority to the alliance with the US at every opportunity over other bilateral or multilateral options (such as the UN or ASEAN). This is apparent from a speech given by Koizumi in 2004 in which he commented: ‘If you consider the case of aggression carried out against Japan, will the UN protect us? Of course not. Japan cannot maintain peace and security for the nation all by itself, so we have signed the US–Japan Security Treaty’. Waltz therefore sees Japan as having ‘skillfully used the protection the [US] has afforded and adroitly adopted the means of maintaining its security to its regional environment’.

Differing slightly from both these approaches is the one taken by Glenn Hook in his 1996 monograph *Militarization and Demilitarization in Contemporary Japan*. He asserts that previous studies (and, by extension, many current ones) tend to ‘accept or even encourage the increase in the Japanese military presence in the world’ by focusing ‘exclusively on the role of the state and its agencies [...] in the formulation of policy’, and thus neglect ‘the link between the state and society, especially the way that ideas, attitudes and the political use of language help to shape state policies’. On the political use of language, he focuses on the euphemisms and metaphors employed by Japanese PMs and other politicians in security policy (which, ironically, appears to reify his own observation about the literature’s top-down focus).

He points out, for instance, that the first appearance of the word ‘alliance’ as a descriptor for the USJ security relationship was only in 1981 in a joint communiqué issued after a meeting between US President Ronald Reagan and PM Zenko Suzuki. Its appearance generated a media maelstrom, as the ‘patent military associations’ with the word forced then-Foreign Minister (FM) Sunao Sonoda

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121 Shaoul 2007, p. 234.
122 Waltz 2000, p. 35.
124 Hook 1996, p. 139.
to resign.125 During this same period, PM Yasuhiro Nakasone stirred controversy in 1983 by referring to Japan as the US’s ‘unsinkable aircraft carrier’ in an interview with The Washington Post, thus implying that ‘Japan should become a forward-attack platform against the Soviet Union’.126 Hook notes that in spite of the rebukes he received upon his return to the Diet for the metaphor, Nakasone’s ‘choice of the [US] as venue for his comment can be seen as an attempt to blunt US criticism of Japan as a “free-rider” on the alliance’s security guarantee—and this, again, with the intention of increasing the GOJ’s credibility as a reliable ally.127

Conclusion

Taking inspiration from Hook’s work, the decision to focus on language and discourse for the purposes of this research is a consequence of not only these gaps in the existing debates on alliance ‘persistence’, but is also a reflection of the thesis’ adherence to a social constructivist, interpretative framework. On the former, one salient gap – on the conceptual as well as the case study levels – is that previous analyses have largely taken place at the system and state levels of analysis and observe the alliance policymaking process purely as a top-down exercise in state power. These studies rarely, if ever, account for the policy impact of security alliances on the individual level, nor discuss the possibility of actors outside the existing alliance structure effecting change. As such, while there are countless opinions on whether or not alliances ‘persist’ as a result of material versus ideational impetuses on the part of the member states, few discuss the material and/or ideational bases for supporting the alliance’s continuation within the domestic populations of these states (nor, for that matter, within and among the specific groups and individuals whom are actually responsible for an alliance’s day-to-day maintenance).

Given these issues, it is no surprise that in response to the highly exclusive world of policymaking within the USJA (and, indeed, in most alliances of a similar nature) wherein decisions are often made without much, if any, public deliberation or input, that the role of the individual actor in shaping policy is very often ex post facto of any agreements or plans being signed by the two governments.128 The roles of individual actors, however, are critical to consider within the framework of this research, which – following Jonathan Potter – takes the ‘terms and forms by

125 Hook 1996, p. 139.
128 This was the case, for example, with the signing of the 2009 Guam Treaty between the US and Japan, which committed the USM to relocating many service members from MCAS Futemna to Guam only after the construction of a new base in northern Okinawa—this new base being fiercely opposed by residents of that area (for more, see: Asako Kageyama and Philip Seaton, ‘Marines Go Home: Anti-Base Activism in Okinawa, Japan and Korea’, The Asia-Pacific Journal, 14:1 [2010], available online at: http://japanfocus.org/-Kageyama-Asako/3335/article.html; Gavan McCormack, ‘Ampo’s Troubled 50th: Hatoyama’s Abortive Rebellion, Okinawa’s Mounting Resistance and the US-Japan Relationship [Parts 1-3]’, The Asia-Pacific Journal, 22:3 [2010], available at: www.japanfocus.org/-gavan-mccormack/3365).
which we achieve understanding of the world and ourselves [as] social artifacts, products of historically and culturally situated interchanges among people’, sees the maintenance of ‘given account[s] of the world or self’ as dependent on ‘the vicissitudes of social process’, and portrays language as ‘deriv[ing] its significance in human affairs from the way in which it functions within patterns of relationship’.129

It follows from this that the concept of discourse – defined here (following Schmidt) as a term ‘that encompasses not only the substantive content of ideas but also the interactive processes by which ideas are conveyed’ – can thus serve, in an institutional setting (such as that within an alliance130), to both reinforce and challenge existing sites of power.131 ‘Discourse’ in this sense thus not only refers to structure (‘what is said, or where and how’), but to agency as well (‘who said what to whom’).132 By incorporating both, this research is able to highlight not just how ideas are represented explicitly, but also how these ideas are generated in the first place through ongoing interaction. This focus on discursive interaction is crucial to the interpretative approach employed by this dissertation, which, rather than relying on technocratic expertise, places greater value on qualitative analysis of the creation of social meanings and practices and how these, in turn, influence politics and the policymaking process.133

Using SIDA, which examines the discourses of those in support of maintaining the alliance and those in opposition, this research thus separates itself from many of its predecessors by acknowledging not only the socio-historical context of prevailing and oppositional discourses, but also the importance of the process by which actors actively engage with and shape each other’s ideas across the traditional boundaries of ‘elites’ versus ‘non-elites’.134 In emphasising process, this research edges away from defining ‘power’ only in coercive terms as ‘the combined capability of a state’135, or only as access to social resources and/or physical control over others.136 Instead, it is more of a two-way street, ‘jointly produced’ through consent from those who govern – and those who are governed – to discourses ‘which construct subjectivity and position individual or

130 See section 2.3 for more on alliance institutionalisation.
131 Schmidt 2008, p. 305.
132 Schmidt 2008, p. 305.
134 Fischer 2003a.
institutional actors in the socio-political field’, and thus delimit to some extent the range of options which actors perceive are available to them in taking political actions.\textsuperscript{137}

Chapter 2. Theory and methods

Introduction

In examining how security alliances are ‘reproduced’ versus simply ‘persisting’, then, it is necessary to look closely into how not only the actors who support them, but also those who oppose them, deliberate their ideas and frame them in order to either reaffirm their existing positions or to make them more widely-known in the public sphere. These ideas and the ways in which they are framed are constituted by established discourses about an alliance—these not only including the well-covered ‘pro-alliance’ discourse of ‘elite’ actors, but also those of others who, while not necessarily ‘anti-alliance’ per se, nonetheless present another set of ideas and evidence that may undermine the rationale behind an alliance’s reproduction. It is important to recognise this opposition as part and parcel of the process by which an alliance ‘survives’, as an alliance – like any other institution – represents the final outcome of ‘considerable struggle, bargaining, and negotiation’.

When reading the previous literature on the USJA, it would appear that whatever conflicts or disagreements both governments have run into over the years have been settled relatively quickly. The stability of the relationship is always highlighted first and foremost in spite of any challenges it has faced, rather than in part due to these. This approach, however, underemphasises the role that conflict plays in institutional reproduction. Therefore, using the USJA as its institutional framework and the conflict over the relocation of MCAS Futenma within Okinawa as the challenge to its continuation, this research seeks to understand the process of reproduction through the discursive strategies actors employ to both maintain the USJA in its current form (the ‘pro-alliance’ and/or ‘pro-base discourse’ [PBD]) and to contest its necessity via the debate over Futenma (broadly speaking, the ‘anti-base discourse’ [ABD]).

Rather than relying solely on the technocratic expertise contained within the realm of ‘elite’ actors, this research takes a post-positivist perspective and is primarily interested in analysing the creation of social meanings and practices—and how these, in turn, influence politics and the policymaking process. The theoretical framework for this research thus highlights a number of ideas drawn from the literatures on deliberative public policy, DI, and GiC. Although these literatures are not normally associated with the study of international relations, much less security alliances, if we treat an alliance as an institution – with ‘formal rules, compliance procedures, and standard operating procedures that structure the relationship between individuals’\(^1\) – then these literatures

\(^1\) Cortell and Peterson 1999, p. 181.
each have something conceptually important to offer in discussing alliance reproduction and how reproduction is challenged (see section 2 for more details).

Following on from the concept of discourse, the methodological framework for this research centres around *social-interactive discourse analysis* (SIDA), which acknowledges not only the socio-historical context of the prevailing and oppositional discourses in this case study, but also the importance of the on-going political struggle in which actors interact and shape each other’s ideas through the medium of primary and secondary texts (including interviews, public speeches, policy documents, and other historical materials) as well as visual media (e.g. anti-base protest signs and museum placards). Fieldwork conducted abroad in various locations within the US and Japan plays an important role in illustrating, on a practical level, the proliferation of the PBD and ABD, respectively—and how they have been and are currently interpreted.

The following chapter thus proceeds in three parts: section 1 outlines in detail the theoretical framework of this research with a full discussion of the three literatures (deliberative public policy, DI, and GIC) from which the key concepts outlined above are drawn; section 2 provides an overview of these concepts as part of an overall interpretative approach; and section 3 outlines the methodological framework of this research, with particular emphasis on the benefits of SIDA vis-à-vis previous methods, how this was employed in the fieldwork programme, and how the data collected from fieldwork was analysed using the parameters set out by this same method. Finally, the chapter’s conclusion discusses the contributions of this research.

1. Theoretical framework

Where the literature review provided in Chapter 1 showcases an array of possible explanations for alliance ‘persistence’, many of these arguably subscribe to positivism, or the assumption that the world ‘comprises objects whose existence is independent of ideas and beliefs about them’, and thus it is the purpose of the analyst to merely ‘identify those self-evident things and material causes so that actors can accommodate themselves to the realm of necessity’ that they themselves have created.² Bill McSweeney likens positivism to physics in that it ‘takes the world as it finds it and works within *ceteris paribus* assumptions to construct law-like generalizations’³; Fischer adds that positivist inquiry ‘has to be empirically objective and value-free, as the laws or generalizations exist independently of social and historical context’.⁴ Going hand-in-hand with this is the belief in an anarchic international system of sovereign, rational, self-interested states with little

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³ McSweeney 1999, p. 111.
⁴ Fischer 2003b, p. 3.
to no room for trust between them, as a state ‘may be unable to recover if its trust is betrayed’. If there is any kind of ‘stability’ within this system at all, it only exists ‘to the degree that the relations of authority within it are sustained by the underlying distribution of power’ (e.g. the ‘hegemonic stability’ offered by the US).  

This view of states and the international system has, however, been taken to task by several scholars. McSweeney argues that because states are cast by realists ‘in a uniform mould as undifferentiated entities responding to the stimulus of their external environment’, they are thus pegged with specific, unchangeable identities whose actions merely reflects shifting strategies. If this is the case, he says, then ‘insecurity is an environmental constant and the condition of peace must be the eternal vigilance of military autarky’. While this has not been the case with all of the studies cited earlier – since many of the authors do situate their comments in a socio-historical context, especially those dealing with particular alliances – there is, nonetheless, a tendency towards simplification that is apparent in their emphasis on the why (specific mechanisms) as opposed to the how (ongoing processes). If not explicitly positivist, then, many of these studies are at least biased towards a more technocratic approach in which ‘[an] expert establishes some distance from reality, analyses it into component parts, devises means for resolving difficulties in the most efficient way, and then dictates the strategy or policy’. This is evident from the presence of alliance ‘managers’ in the USJ literature, many of whom-posit specific policy recommendations and ‘antidotes’ to complex problems (like the basing issue). However, as Torgerson notes, the reliance on this ‘expert knowledge’ only further serves to separate ‘policy discourse’ from a ‘public discourse’ in which ‘emotionalism and irrationality can be tolerated and discounted because they do not intrude into the rational domain of the policy analyst’.  

Furthermore, this labelling of ‘elite’ and ‘non-elite’ actors ignores a range of individuals who may fall somewhere in-between, but who can still have a significant impact on policy decisions. For example, is it likely that both an official from MOFA and one from the Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) have access to more privileged national security-related information than an Okinawan resident or member of civil society (and may thus be considered ‘elite’ in this sense), but it is also likely that the OPG official has access to a far narrower range of information than the one from MOFA (and that [s]he commands far less respect from the central government, in part due to this). Given this case, to what degree can we consider the local official an ‘elite’, or, furthermore –

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6 Wohlforth 2010, p. 16.  
8 McSweeney 1999, p. 5.  
10 Torgerson 2003, p. 121.
when considering the example of, say, a MOFA official’s position within the ministry itself – to what degree are they actually involved in high-level national security discussions, much less on a bilateral basis? (The term ‘non-elite’ is equally non-descriptive, capturing little of what separates the world of the ‘everyday’ from that of the government or military aside from access to ‘privileged’ information.)

1.1. Deliberative public policy

In not making clear such distinctions, previous studies have thus tended to ignore ‘collective action problems, the limited information and attention of agents [at the sub-state level] and the indeterminacy of outcomes’, not to mention neglect ‘the social forces behind political action’, as these studies tend to characterise ‘politics’ and ‘international relations’ as taking place ‘in a stratospheric, rarefied realm high above, abstracted from society’.11 Moreover, questions of culture and history are treated as ‘essentially symbolic sideshows’, as ‘[t]he overheated passions that are stoked by fights over history tend to be viewed as either ephemeral – with little lasting impact on political affairs – or epiphenomenal – the by-products of disputes over other, more important issues’.12

The point on ‘limited information’ relates to Buzan’s observation that ‘policy-makers are only partially informed, do not fully understand other actors or the system (or themselves), are capable of only limited rationality and are highly constrained in what they can do’.13 He continues that the information received by policymakers ‘changes and expands constantly’, and much of it, including ‘the depth of political allegiance (a perennial topic in alliances) […] [and] the stability of governments and the motives of leaders, is inherently unknowable with any accuracy’.14 Like policymakers – and also, in large part, due to their purposeful obfuscation or classification of security-related information – ‘everyday’ actors also suffer from a lack of ‘full information’ when both forming their own ideas and arguments and when making electoral decisions.15 For actors of all stripes, then, when ‘individuals lack the opportunities, incentives, and necessities to test, articulate, defend, and ultimately act on their judgements, they will also be lacking in empathy for others, poor

in information, and unlikely to have the critical skills necessary to articulate, defend, and revise their views’.  

Furthermore, policymakers socialise with like-minded individuals (including the aforementioned ‘security professionals’ and academics), all of whom are ‘organized in significant part around their own internal power structures, interests, and status claims’, and thus the information they receive, produce, and repeat will be influenced by these internal dynamics. Moreover, due to the nature of this interaction, officials and ‘experts’ ‘have an incentive to retain credibility among their peers in the transnational policy community, and ensure that they have both future work and esteem’—and part of this credibility stems from ‘mak[ing] sure they are not dismissed as extremists’ and ‘blocking access to certain tasks through “jurisdictional” battles to ensure that other professions and professionals are not permitted to work on the problem at hand’. However, notes Graham Smith, it is important to remember that for both officials and ‘everyday’ actors alike, ‘[n]o group of citizens can accurately mirror all the standpoints and views present within the wider community and there is a danger of creating false essentialisms — citizens who share similar socio-demographic characteristics do not necessarily share the same views and attitudes’.  

If many policymakers and the ‘experts’ they socialise with are so concerned with their professional credibility and retaining the appearance of pragmatism, then it is important to recognise the role of language and meaning not as ‘an ornament of social behaviour’, but as ‘internal to the very social systems we seek to research’—and that they are never a ‘fixed or closed set of rules’ but rather are ‘[a]lways based on the interpretations of both those who speak it and those who receive it’. It is upon this point that the literature on deliberative public policy as written by Fischer, Hajer, and Wagenaar, among others, is based. Although their work is directly concerned with making public policy practice more deliberative and democratic, their emphasis on bridging the gap between the oftentimes insulated, technocratic policy ‘experts’ and ‘everyday’ actors is something which can and should be applied to other fields of political study. They in particular differentiate their conceptualisation of knowledge and power from that of ‘traditional’ policy analysis, which, they say, ‘has sought to translate inherently normative political and social issues into technically defined ends to be pursued through administrative means’.  

17 Fischer 2003a.  
19 Smith 2000, p. 34.  
20 Fischer 2003a.  
21 Fischer 2003b, p. 212.
comparison, their work views social knowledge as ‘the outcome of a negotiation between those with more “expert knowledge” and the actors in the everyday world, including the experts themselves’.\(^{22}\)

Taking the example of policymakers desiring to avoid being ‘dismissed as extremists’, it is clear, from this conceptualisation of knowledge, that how political ‘extremism’ is defined by these individuals relies not just on some ‘expert’ idea of what constitutes that position, but also on their understanding of it as derived from their interaction with ‘everyday’ actors.\(^{23}\) On the other side, ‘everyday’ actors – who understand, based on their interaction with officials, that their ideas are considered too ‘extreme’ to translate into policy – sometimes frame their arguments with consideration for this perception and with an awareness of their limited access to and influence over public opinion in comparison to that of the central government.\(^{24}\)

Following on from this, the key concepts to be discussed below of active agency (2.1), institutions as argumentative fields (2.2), and discourse (2.4) were drawn in large part from this literature, as well as the methodological framework based around a social-interactive discourse analysis (3.2).

### 1.2. Discursive institutionalism

As the literature on deliberative public policy steps in to fill the gaps between ‘experts’ and the ‘everyday’, so does the second body of theory influencing this research complement this aim in its effort to bring complexity back to the question of how institutions change and/or are reproduced. Prior to the advent of DI, the first institution-centred studies were mainly of a functionalist variety—that is, institutions were regarded merely as ‘the manifestations of the functions of political life or “necessary for a democracy”’.\(^{25}\) In this sense, an institution would persist as a function of an ‘increasing returns’ process by which ‘the probability of further steps along the same path increases with each move down that path [...] because the relative benefits of the current activity compared with other possible options increase over time’.\(^{26}\)

Pierson points out, however, that this argument is flawed in that increasing returns ‘may have locked in a particular option even though it originated by accident, or the factors that gave it an original advantage may have long since passed away’, and thus it is necessary to examine the socio-historical circumstances which gave rise to the institution in the first place.\(^{27}\) In fact, the weaknesses

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22 Fischer 2003a.


24 Hobson and Seabrooke 2007; Martin 2015.


27 Pierson 2000a, p. 264.
of the functionalist argument gave rise to a plethora of ‘New Institutionalisms’ (NIs) whose principal claims were that ‘historically embedded institutional arrangements constituted a framework with which to explain comparative patterns of state-society and state-economy relations and cross-national variations in policy outcomes’, and thus institutions themselves assumed a ‘certain rigidity’ over time. Nonetheless, the NIs have also come under criticism for their ‘latent structuralism’ in that they do not always afford individual actors a ‘proper role in change or persistence’, instead ‘dooming them to keep re-enacting their past legacies’. The relatively static nature of agents in the NIs thus leaves a vacuum which DI seeks to fill by focusing on the discursive foundation of institutions. Within DI, discourse ‘is the principal means by which organizational members create a coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are’, and institutions (and, as a consequence, states themselves) are ‘product[s] of discourse both in the sense that they are consciously constructed through formal constitutions and legal systems and also in the sense that informal conventions define and become embedded in their practices’. The latter thus also serve as ‘codified systems of ideas’ which ‘shape behaviour through the frames of meaning they embody—the ideas and narratives that are used to explain, deliberate or legitimize political action’.

Institutions are not, then, simply ‘neutral structures of incentives or (worse) immutable products of culture that lead to inescapable “social traps”’ but, rather, can be considered carriers of ‘collective memories’, including ones of trust and mistrust. In creating and maintaining them, agents are able to ‘think, speak, and act outside their institutions even as they are inside them, to deliberate about institutional rules even as they use them, and to persuade one another to change those institutions or to maintain them’. What is appealing about DI theory, therefore, is not only its insight into the process by which agents may effect institutional change, but also how they maintain the status quo. Mat Hope and Ringa Raudla explain:

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28 Lowndes summarises each of the NIs mentioned above in turn: normative institutionalism ‘argues that political institutions influence actors’ behaviour by shaping their “values, norms, interests, identities and beliefs”’; rational choice institutionalism ‘denies that institutional factors “produce behaviour” or shape individuals’ preferences, which they see as endogenously determined and relatively stable (favouring utility maximization)’; historical institutionalism ‘look[s] at how choices made about the institutional design of government systems influence the future decision-making of individuals’; and feminist institutionalism ‘studies how gender norms operate within institutions and how institutional processes construct and maintain gendered power dynamics’ (2010, pp. 64-65).
30 Bell 2011, p. 885.
32 Lowndes 2010, p. 77.
33 Schmidt 2008, p. 318.
Simplified down for clarity, the discursive institutionalist model of policy change can be summarised as follows: where policy change is not in the immediate interest of actors, where cultural norms are obstructive to action, and where history has committed institutions to a particular course of action but change occurs anyway, discourse may be the causal factor which explains this change [...] From this, it follows that – theoretically at least – the inverse must also be possible: where action is in actors’ interest, where institutions are open to change, and where cultural norms are permissive to action, but there remains policy stasis, discourse may be the causal factor which explains this stasis.

While DI does emphasise actors already working within institutions, it still provides a compelling theoretical framework that complements the ideas of deliberative public policy in the latter’s focus on those disadvantaged by ‘dominant’ discourses. The key concepts to be discussed below of active agency (2.1) and discourse (2.4) were drawn in large part from DI studies.

1.3. Gradual institutional change theory

Although the framework for this research would primarily align itself with the social constructivist-based theories outlined by deliberative public policy and DI, there remains, nonetheless, something important to be gained from another: gradual institutional change theory (GIC), created by James Mahoney and Kathleen Thelen. While this theory is associated more with the NIs, GIC is a valuable third literature to draw upon for its insight into the gradual process of change. In this approach, institutions

are fraught with tensions because they inevitably raise resource considerations and invariably have distributional consequences. Any given set of rules or expectations – formal or informal – that patterns action will have unequal implications for resource allocation, and clearly many formal institutions are specifically intended to distribute resources to particular kinds of actors and not to others [emphasis added].

This complements the perspective offered by deliberative public policy as well as DI of the power relations inherent within institutional structures, as the power of one dominant group ‘may be so great that dominant actors are able to design institutions that closely correspond to their well-defined institutional preferences’. In spite of this, it is also a fact that institutional rules must be ‘applied and enforced, often by actors other than the designers’, and this therefore ‘opens up space

36 Mahoney and Thelen 2010, pp. 7-8.
37 Mahoney and Thelen 2010, p. 8.
Grinberg 65

[...] for change to occur in a rule’s implementation or enactment’. 38 This contradicts the idea that only sudden, ‘exogenous’ events can cause institutional change (see full discussion in section 2.3). 39

As may be inferred from the content of this section, the key concept of change and stability as inextricably linked (2.3) is drawn from GIC theory.

2. The interpretative approach

As outlined above, academics such as Fischer, Hajer and Wagenaar, Lene Hansen, and others have suggested an alternative, interpretative approach. It relies on a post-positivist epistemology which calls into question the notion that there is a linear relationship between cause and effect and places greater value on qualitative analysis of the creation of social meanings and practices. 40 These scholars argue that by taking the ‘monological ideal of administrative rationality’ 41 for granted, studies in the positivist tradition merely reinforce the legitimacy of existing hierarchies of power while not accounting for all the possible sources of knowledge outside of them. 42 Furthermore, as Hajer notes, policymaking is traditionally conceived of as a ‘result of politics’; however, given an increasing level of citizen activism worldwide, he posits that politics is increasingly the product of policymaking:

In many cases it is a public policy initiative that triggers people to reflect on what they really value, and that motivates them to voice their concerns or wishes and become politically active themselves. Public policy, in other words, often creates a public domain, as a space in which people of various origins deliberate on their future as well as on their mutual interrelationships and their relationship to the government.

This concept of politics as the product of policymaking can be extended to national security issues, including ones related to security alliances, and is evident in the case of anti-base protests in Okinawa (see Chapter 5).

39 Other specific models of gradual change under GIC include: displacement, whereby ‘existing rules are replaced by new ones[, sometimes abruptly] [...] and it may entail the radical shift that is often featured in leading institutional theories’; layering, whereby ‘new rules are attached to existing ones, thereby changing the ways in which the original rules structure behavior’; drift, whereby ‘rules remain formally the same but their impact changes as a result of shifts in external conditions’; and conversion, whereby ‘rules remain formally the same but are interpreted and enacted in new ways’ (Mahoney and Thelen 2010, pp. 16-18).
41 Torgerson explains that the ‘monological ideal of administrative rationality’ is a concept which rests on a neglect of complexity, a ‘systematic filtering of communication through official channels and technical vocabularies’ (simplification), and rationalism (whereby ‘conventional policy discourse projects an implicit image of itself as necessary and normal, something all right-thinking people - i.e. all but the weak minded and emotional - will take for granted’) (2003, pp. 125-128).
43 Hajer 2003, p. 88.
The interpretative approach can therefore be seen as desiring to return complexity to policy problems by giving agency to those views excluded not only from within institutions—but also from outside of them. Patsy Healey et al summarise the interpretative method as departing from these conventional approaches:

[...] we are therefore interested in the way knowledge resources and relational resources are mobilized, and how this affects the frames of reference or discourses through which meanings are arrived at and mobilized, the processes by which meanings are disseminated, and the relation between such discourses and the practices through which material actions are accomplished.

Critical to understanding this mobilization of resources is the concept of performativity. ‘Anyone who has witnessed a U.S. presidential inauguration, or “question time” in the British Parliament, or a Japanese candidate holding forth from the top of a campaign bus in downtown Tokyo understands that politics is largely about performance’, comments David Leheny. Beyond this surface ‘performance’, however, is how it is received and interpreted by an audience (including the one at whom it was directed, as well as its unintended listeners).45 This aspect of performativity is not, therefore, contained only within the individual politician or ‘everyday’ actor ‘performing’ politics, but also in the language and media they use and the meanings they construct or reproduce in practice. The same may be said of any political phrase or motto that is repeated often and usually taken as trite and hollow, but whose meaning is actually dependent upon the interpretation of whomever is speaking/receiving it and their backgrounds (see, for example, the discussion of the USJA as the ‘cornerstone’ for peace and security in East Asia in Chapter 3).

The following sections discuss four key concepts falling under the umbrella of this overall interpretative approach, including active agency (2.1), institutions as argumentative fields (2.2), change and stability as inextricably linked (2.3), and discourse (2.4).

2.1. Active agency

If actors are able to understand and interpret ideas and arguments that are ‘performed’ both for them and with their implicit cooperation, then it follows that they exercise active agency. In this understanding of agency, individuals are taken ‘as agents who interpret and perceive their situation, consisting of institutions, rooted in socio-cultural values, forming valuations (aspirations, preferences) that they act on’, not simply passive receptors of existing institutional norms or

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In this context, institutional change occurs when actors decide to use institutions differently; conversely, if there is no change, it is still the result of actors consciously deciding not to pursue alternatives to the current institutional dynamic. This sits in contrast to previous studies which emphasise a more passive agency whereby ‘individual humans can be treated as epiphenomenal—institutions both create them and determine their behavior’. A symptom of the structuralism inherent in these studies is that ‘the state’ is assigned ‘independent causal weight[, which] typically leads [analysts] to anthropomorphize it’ and thus ‘assume homogeneity within [it]’. William Roberts Clark explains:

if one maintains the assumption of a state interest, one is prohibited from speaking about the behavior of actors within the state. To explain the behavior of actors within the state, we must disaggregate the state, and look at organizations within it, the individuals who inhabit them, and the institutional framework that structures their behavior. This task cannot be completed if “institutions” and the “state” or even “state actors” are confounded.

But why is agency important, and why should it have a greater role in explaining reproduction and change than the constraining or enabling features of the institutions themselves? Referring to the previous discussion on institutions as carriers of ideas or ‘collective memories’, Stephen Bell suggests that agents ‘interpret and construct the experience of their institutional situation using subjective and inter-subjective cognitive and normative frameworks and discursive processes’ with the knowledge that the institutions are ‘inherited sets of rules and duties that need to be navigated and negotiated’. Excluding human agency from a model of institutional reproduction or change thus ‘escape[s] the task of investigating growth and security in all their complex, value-laden respects as concepts which have meaning only in relation to people and their needs’.

However, as scholars on this subject makes apparent, not all agencies are created equal. Specifically, ‘elite’ agency is separated out from ‘non-elite’ agency: the former is drawn from elite theory, which identifies ‘elites’ as ‘an emergent transnational social fraction which, by virtue of their close imbrication with the steering offices and institutions of global capital, effectively determines

51 Bell 2011, p. 891.
52 McSweeney 1999, p. 86.
the framework of options for national political actors’. Furthermore, mass political parties, populated by these same ‘elites’, ‘reproduce the same structure of elite domination and circulation internally, but can also function as a mechanism through which elites reproduce themselves, recruiting and elevating the more ambitious, able and politically active members from the wider passive society’. Nonetheless, while these ‘elites’ have easier access to controlling the ‘dominant consensus’ on any number of policy issues, their insulation from the public makes their access to ‘truly popular opinion [...] marginal or at best indirect’, even when they ‘claim to express the concerns of the population at large’.

As mentioned earlier, however, the groupings of ‘elites’ and ‘non-elites’ is problematic, especially within the parameters of this research. Furthermore, going by the logic of the literature reviewed in Chapter 1, it is only the USG and GOJ – and certain individuals within those governments – who are the primary agents whose utterances and actions have a visible impact on changing or maintaining the structure of the current alliance. Obviously, this approach underestimates the degree to which ‘everyday’ actors interpret the ‘objective’ assessments of experts within their own lived experience. Dvora Yanow comments that this ‘local knowledge’ is not accessed by policy ‘elites’ due to its nature as non-quantitative and based on lived experience.

Generally speaking, recognising the impact of this ‘local knowledge’ is crucial when we consider the fact that ‘many problems are simply too complicated, too contested and too unstable to allow for schematic, centralized regulation’. The concept of ‘social knowledge’ itself, says Fischer, is ‘a product of negotiations between those with technical expert knowledge and the participants in the everyday world’, and thus it should be acknowledged that it can take many forms, from ‘empirical analysis to expressive statements in words, sounds, and pictures’. By expanding the field of study out to include this ‘everyday’ agency and knowledge, citizens are thus able to acquire a role in the institutional process of politics beyond that of the ‘“target” of policy missiles’ and actually ‘open up the possibility of new ways of seeing and act[ing]’.

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53 Drake 2010, p. 29.
54 Drake 2010, p. 10; Teun A. van Dijk defines dominance in this sense as ‘the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups, that results in social inequality, including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality’ (1993, pp. 249-250).
56 Yanow 2003, p. 236.
58 Fischer 2003b, p. 3.
2.2. Institutions as argumentative fields

When these possibilities of ‘new ways of seeing and acting’ are opened up, then, it follows that citizens – counted among the ‘everyday’ – may choose to challenge existing institutional rules and structures. In adopting an interpretative framework, it becomes possible to see institutions not just as structures that constrain or enable actors’ preferences, but as ‘argumentative fields’ wherein actors’ discursive constructions ‘can be meaningfully stated and understood’ and their practices can help put into motion actual policy changes. Drawing on Jürgen Habermas’s theory of communicative action, Fischer argues that what is missing from the traditional models of self-interested agents working within immovable institutions is the recognition that ‘power is more than either the ability to achieve objectives through the mobilization of resources or the domination of the other participants through physical or manipulative means’—it is also the ‘positive or productive ability of communicative power to organize and coordinate action through consensual communication’. By focusing on the positive dimension of power, the process of discursive interpretation thus ‘shifts from the scientific community to the practical-world audience. In the transition, the final outcome of evaluative inquiry is determined by the giving of reasons and the assessment of practical arguments rather than scientific demonstration and verification’.

These arguments, says Thomas Risse, are used by actors ‘to persuade or convince others that they should change their views of the world, their normative beliefs, their preferences, and even their identities’, and in cases of ‘successful arguing’, the individual agent’s material bargaining power ‘becomes less relevant’ when compared to the force of their argument. The benefit of this is that there is ‘a competition of ideas and viewpoints, rather than reliance on analyses and recommendations from advisers who share the perspectives of the policymakers’, and this competition, in turn, produces better policy. To be clear, ‘arguments’ in this sense does not merely refer to linguistics or ‘sale talk’, but to ‘practical accomplishments themselves, forged in the day-to-day struggle of policymakers, planners and administrators with concrete, ambiguous, tenacious, practical problems’ (and, naturally, in the struggles of ‘everyday’ actors as well). In taking on this added element of performativity, then, arguments ‘do more than merely describe a given reality

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60 Fischer 2003a.
64 Fischer 2003a, p. 8.
and, as such, cannot be judged as false or true. Instead, these utterances realize a specific action; they do things [emphasis added].

2.3. Change and stability as inextricably linked

Just as ‘arguments’ in the interpretative approach represent the living, breathing embodiment of ideas, so do institutions represent ‘compromises and are subject to shifts in public opinion’ and ‘internal disagreements’, with continuity requiring ‘the ongoing mobilization of political support’. Thus, even during periods of apparent stasis in policy, ‘there is nothing automatic, self-perpetuating, or self-reinforcing about institutional arrangements’. Traditionally, institutionalist literatures have tended to emphasise the ‘stickiness’ of existing arrangements. This belief is generally encapsulated in the term institutionalisation, which Jens Beckert defines as ‘the process of social interaction through which actors realize that their expectations in the behaviour of others will not be disappointed’. In order not to disappoint expectations, in fact, organisations may ‘re-embed’ themselves ‘[w]hen the environmental context of institutional influence is highly uncertain and unpredictable’. During such times, policies may persist ‘primarily because of the persistence of the shared policy beliefs that undergird them’, as actors are ‘reluctant to dismiss their core beliefs’. Following from this, Pierson argues that because ‘even mistaken understandings of the political world are often self-reinforcing rather than corrective’, formal political institutions – such as security alliances – are ‘usually change-resistant’. This ‘path dependence’ of institutions is further achieved through a system of ‘nested rules’, or ‘rules at each successive level in the hierarchy [which are] increasingly costly to change’.

Given this framework of path dependence, there appear to be few opportunities for institutional change outside of exogenous events creating extraordinary circumstances in which this can occur. What the literature on path dependence and its attendant concepts neglects, however, is the ‘dissensus that may exist beneath the surface of a program, or organizational field’, since ‘the political pressure to undertake social reform combined with the market in ideas has given expertise

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67 Mahoney and Thelen 2010, pp. 8-9.
68 Mahoney and Thelen 2010, pp. 8-9.
73 Pierson 2000b, pp. 490-491.
74 These events are referred to, by various scholars, as ‘critical junctures’ or ‘punctuated equilibrium’ (Mahoney and Thelen 2010, p. 7; Cortell and Peterson 1999, p. 184; Clemens and Cook 1999, p. 447).
a greater potential influence than this assumption of institutional durability appreciates’.\textsuperscript{75} Peters, Pierre and King further note that even when policy changes appear incremental and, thus, trivial if observed on a year-to-year basis, ‘taken together they [can] amount to a significant reorientation of the program’.\textsuperscript{76} Adding to this point, Robert Lieberman states that even broad, ‘programmatic’ or ‘core’ beliefs, such as those in ‘liberty’ or ‘equality’, may be interpreted and framed in a number of different ways over time to the point that such concepts ‘might be invoked to support very different practices in different contexts by people who all the while believe themselves to be upholding a timeless and unchanging political tradition’.\textsuperscript{77}

If, then, institutions are not bound to the limitations of path dependence, how might agents go about effecting actual changes in policy? Some authors have posited that because institutional rules are not entirely coherent – in fact, ‘they are very often in conflict with each other, or are even contradictory’ – they do not necessarily provide ‘unanimous answers as to how agents should act’.\textsuperscript{78} Therefore, although institutions ‘reflect, refract, restrain and enable human behaviour’ to some extent, in the end ‘it is the behaviour of agents that reproduces or transforms institutions over time’.\textsuperscript{79} Agents may also take part in strategic learning, by which is meant that they revise their perceptions of what is feasible, possible and indeed desirable in the light of their assessments of their own ability to realise prior goals (and that of others), as they assimilate new “information” (from whatever external source), and as they reorient future strategies in the light of such “empirical” and mediated knowledge of the context as a structured terrain of opportunity and constraint.

Actors may also effect change by taking advantage of ‘windows of opportunity’ created by significant exogenous or endogenous policy events to advance their goals, though ‘[t]he type and scope of the environmental trigger determines whether and how widely a window opens and, therefore, the extent of the opportunity for change’.\textsuperscript{80}

\section*{2.4. Discourse}

At a more foundational level, it is crucial to investigate – given the fact that institutional rules and norms are as much up for interpretation as the ideas and policies they (re)produce – the discursive means by which different actors interpret and react to ideas and arguments. To reiterate, ‘discourse’ is defined in this framework, following Schmidt, as a term ‘that encompasses not only the

\textsuperscript{75} Peters, Pierre and King 2005, p. 1275; 1288.
\textsuperscript{76} Peters, Pierre and King 2005, p. 1287.
\textsuperscript{78} Beckert 1999, p. 780; Campbell 2012.
\textsuperscript{79} Bell 2011, p. 894.
\textsuperscript{81} Cortell and Peterson 1999, pp. 185-186.
substantive content of ideas but also the interactive processes by which ideas are conveyed’. 82 It is thus used here as a dynamic concept which produces subjects, objects, and the rules that govern their interactions. 83 Given this ‘complex multilayeredness of discourse and its consequent capacity to bear a wide variety of interpretations of its meaning’, says Hayden White, it is not simply the content of a discourse that is important to examine, but also the form that it takes (for example, the narrative form; see section 3.1 for details). 84 Thus, we might call the consensus that exists around the necessity of the USJA in the American and Japanese security establishments the prevailing discourse in both countries’ policymaking processes, while some Okinawans’ argument that the alliance creates more insecurity than security might be termed collectively as an ‘oppositional political discourse’. 85

It is important to note, however, that discourses ‘do not faithfully reflect reality like mirrors’—rather, they are ‘artifacts of language through which the very reality they purport to reflect is constructed’. 86 Furthermore, as mentioned previously, discourses are in part ‘contingent and historical constructions’ and are therefore ‘always vulnerable to those political forces excluded [emphasis added] in their production, as well as the dislocatory effects of events beyond their control’. 87 Discourses also ‘connote to those participating in them what is ostensibly real or unreal, what is therefore true or false, and therefore also what is good or bad’. 88 Because they have the ability to communicate these basic values, it is thus critical to identify some basic properties of discourse or elements contained within them prior to their analysis. These include: local meaning and coherence (implications, vagueness, indirectness); style (syntax, lexicon); euphemisms; genre (policy documents, media editorials, academic articles); and chains of connotation (e.g. linking ‘unemployment’ to ‘welfare state’). 89

Within discourses, many authors also point to specific frames, or ‘normative and sometimes cognitive ideas that are located in the foreground of policy debates’. 90 These are, traditionally,

82 Schmidt 2008, p. 305.
85 Hansen 2006, p. 61.
88 Goverde et al 2000, p. 4.
described as being strategically crafted by political ‘elites’ in order to ‘legitimize their policies to the public and each other’. In this sense, a frame is used to ‘[enhance] a certain interpretation or evaluation of reality’ and can even provide ‘a specific understanding of the world’. Fischer adds that as ‘an organizing principle that transforms fragmentary information into a structured and meaningful whole’, frames therefore show ‘which elements become more meaningful and consequently . . . can more easily be noticed by the audience’ through their connections to ‘familiar cultural symbols, both material and discursive’. In the interpretative framework outlined here, frames may be viewed as one of several strategies employed in an overall discursive approach.

3. Methodological framework

3.1. Traditional versus discursive approaches

Traditionally, the role of ideas and discourse is limited in policy analysis by rational-choice theorists. This is because they ‘try to integrate ideas and beliefs held by individuals or groups without giving up or modifying their basic contention that human beings behave rationally in the effort to achieve their self-interested ends’. Ideas and discourse in the rational-choice conceptualisation thus ‘assist agents in instrumentally following their own preferences in a complex world’ rather than having any influence on the initial creation of the interests themselves. This being the case, methodologies based on rationalism or liberalism such as content analysis (CA) also adopt the assumption that sovereign, self-interested individuals will act upon ‘perfect intentionality’, or ‘[choose] precisely what they want to say, as if what they want to say is not a social product itself recoverable in discourse’. The emphasis in CA, then, is on textual patterns in documents, identifying ‘content units’ (e.g. ‘words, themes, stories’) and their ‘clustering’—for example, focusing on several ‘keywords’ which reappear in multiple sources, such as ‘cornerstone of peace’ in reference to the USJA.

Merely identifying the repetition of textual patterns, however, is not enough to understand ‘the discursive structures that make certain kinds of representations and practices possible and – for many – plausible’. These official communications, Torgerson further says, are based in an ‘antiseptic terminology’ in which a ‘stable, objective world [...] can be codified and controlled

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93 Fischer 2003a, p. 8.
94 Fischer 2003a.
95 Fischer 2003a.
97 Laffey and Weldes 2004, p. 29.
through a neutral language’. This approach thus naturally excludes the role of emotionality during policy formulation in favour of ‘scientism’, or ‘the extra-scientific doctrine which holds that science is the sole source of legitimate knowledge’. As a result of this ‘politics of expertise’, policymakers seek out accepted purveyors of ‘legitimate knowledge’ for difficult problems, enlisting policy analysts embedded within government and bureaucracy to come up with palatable solutions. Moreover, the more basic assumption that agents are ‘self-interested utility maximisers’ also means that subjects are ‘without a history, which means that key questions pertaining to the identities of agents, as well as their agency in relation to social structures, are not addressed and analysed’.

A discursive approach of the kind promoted by Fischer and others, by contrast, sees ‘the very terrain of social and political action [as] constructed and understood in terms of the languages used to portray and talk about [a] political phenomenon’. It is impossible to understand the textual representation of ideas in text, he says, without initially recognising that ‘the distorting influences of power, ideology, manipulatory rhetoric, or authoritarian forces are basic features of political life’; thus, while actors can make independent choices and take sovereign actions, they nonetheless take place ‘in the context of ongoing stories about social and political phenomena’.

These ‘stories’, in turn, each supply ‘a different way of experiencing the world, which in turn is organized through a specific way of speaking [...] [within which is] [i]mplicit [...] an elaborate set of understandings – both stated and tacit – that tell the story of a particular social situation, including who the good guys are and who is responsible for the social disadvantages’.

### 3.2. In favour of social-interactive discourse analysis

Following an overall discursive approach, discourse analysis (DA) generally assumes discourse to be the ‘underlying logic of the social and political organization of a particular arena’, and that its discovery enables the analyst to recognise that this logic is ‘not natural, but socially constructed’—contrary to the predetermined world imagined in a technocratic approach. This is not to presume, however, that no material, objective world exists independently of social constructs. Rather, as Karin Fierke comments, the discourse analyst ‘presuppose[s] that this material

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99 Torgerson 2003, p. 121.
100 Torgerson 2003, p. 120.
103 Fischer 2003a.
104 Fischer 2003a.
105 Fischer 2003a.
world has been dramatically altered by human interaction with it’, this alteration including the new meanings or values we attach to certain material objects. Key to understanding how these meanings are created is the analysis of discursive practices, focusing on the way in which certain discourses are privileged and others excluded by policymakers in the processes of text production and interpretation. Naturally, the settings where discourses are produced or repeated also have a large impact on their acceptance. Hajer explains: ‘[t]hese “sites” of discursive exchange have an influence on what can be said meaningfully and with influence. A discussion in the back room of the local pub is not the same as a meeting at the Town Hall’. Teun A. van Dijk adds that an additional barrier to influencing the direction of a discourse is the control wielded by certain actors over ‘the occasion, time, place, setting and the presence or absence of participants in such events’. The latter concern – that ‘elite’ actors might restrict access to the discourse and thus tamp down on any opposition to them – is a prominent feature of critical discourse analysis (CDA), which emphasises the role of power relations as existing ‘prior to language’ in the sense that ‘the very constitution of society itself — its infrastructure, its stability, its mechanisms of continuity and adaptation, its culture — depends first and foremost on the supposed fact […] that some people are dominated systematically by others’. The goal of CDA is thus to expose these existing power asymmetries in language by ‘provid[ing] a detailed description, explanation, and critique of the textual strategies writers use to “naturalize” discourses, that is, to make discourses appear to be common sense, apolitical statements’.

Although the specific type of DA employed in this research - what Fischer calls social-interactive discourse analysis (SIDA) – ‘is designed to identify and bring in the neglected political voices’ and primarily expresses concerns ‘about the current state of discursive deliberation in a democracy rampant with social injustices’ (effectively situating it within CDA), it is also clear from his writings that the analyst, using this method, is meant to act as ‘an interpretive mediator operating between the available analytical frameworks of social science and competing local perspectives’. Thus, while highlighting ‘the political implications and consequences of using professional policy analysis as a method for informing and making policy decisions for the larger public’, SIDA

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109 Hajer 2003, p. 96.
110 van Dijk 1993, pp. 259-260.
111 Goverde et al 2000, p. 5.
112 Riggins 1997, p. 2; Norman Fairclough views CDA, therefore, as a ‘political and ideological struggle’ in favour of ‘dominated or oppressed groups’ and against ‘the power elites that enact, sustain, legitimate, condone or ignore social inequality and injustice’ (*Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language* [London: Longman Group Limited, 1995], p. 16).
113 Fischer 2003a.
nonetheless also seeks to reduce the distance between ‘experts’ and citizens so that their roles may be ‘redefined’ rather than attempting to demonise or victimise either group (for example: ‘the citizen can take on the role of the “popular scientist”, [while] the analyst becomes a “specialized citizen”’).\textsuperscript{114} CDA is also primarily concerned with the production, distribution, and consumption of texts, which, while important to this research, must be coupled with an examination of other types of data, including images (e.g. protest signs), videos (e.g. documentaries, news clips), and physical spaces (e.g. museums, military bases), as these can also powerfully communicate a discourse.

The inclusion of these types of multimedia thus not only expands the scope of our imagination in terms of how a discourse may be generated and performed, but also in helping us to understand how ‘everyday’ actors engage (or not) with these discourses and interpret them. SIDA addresses this point directly, as it takes actors to be ‘actively engaged in choosing and adapting thoughts, shaping and fashioning them, in an ongoing struggle for argumentative triumph over rival positions’.\textsuperscript{115} By examining the ‘structure, style, and [socio-]historical context’ in which discourses are produced, the analyst thus also gains insight into how existing configurations of power have been effectively legitimised in spite of any ideological ‘contradictions or paradoxes’ which may exist therein.\textsuperscript{116} SIDA also necessitates an investigation into the ways in which framing – or ‘a particular way of representing knowledge [...] [relying on] interpretative schemas that bound and order a chaotic situation, facilitate interpretation and provide a guide for doing and acting’ – is used by actors (both on the level of policymakers, ‘experts’, and the ‘everyday’) to problematize certain issues while taking others out of the deliberative process altogether.\textsuperscript{117}

In this context, framing is used in the service of larger narratives that ‘allow actors to draw upon various discursive categories [...] to condense large amounts of factual information intermixed with the normative assumptions and value orientations that assign meaning to them’.\textsuperscript{118} Fischer states that this is because politics often plays out as ‘a struggle for power [...] through arguments about the “best story”’.\textsuperscript{119} With a plot, protagonists and antagonists, structural coherence and symbolic ambiguity, narratives can thus serve as sophisticated devices within a discourse by which actors communicate their beliefs and values using elements that are familiar to a larger audience.\textsuperscript{120} They may also serve as a means by which actors ‘sustain an account of a self which is already in the

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\textsuperscript{114} Fischer 2003a.
\textsuperscript{115} Fischer 2003a.
\textsuperscript{116} Fischer 2003a.
\textsuperscript{117} Laws and Rein 2003, p. 173.
\textsuperscript{119} Fischer 2003a.
\end{flushleft}
public domain and can therefore make sense to others—or, to put it in simpler terms, creating and maintaining narratives are really about preserving an actor’s own identity.\textsuperscript{121}

Should a narrative acquire a certain level of public acceptance, it may even turn into a *myth*, or a hegemonic discourse that creates a ‘new objectivity’ or ‘new space of representation’ that brings coherence by ‘narrating a foundational event’.\textsuperscript{122} Within a narrative or myth, individual actors engage in storytelling in order to convey their personal experiences to an audience. While their *stories* may appear narrow and autobiographical in scope in comparison to a broader narrative that cuts across actors of various backgrounds, they still serve as ‘generative statements that bring together previously unrelated elements of reality [... which] help people to fit their bit of knowledge, experience or expertise into the larger jigsaw of a policy debate’.\textsuperscript{123}

In the practical application of SIDA to this research, it is therefore important to acknowledge that I, as the researcher, am aware that I am building my own narratives based on the ones under study and also those which I have purposely left out or excluded. While making no ‘universalistic claims about rationality’\textsuperscript{124} in this thesis, it is undeniable that under conditions of reflexivity, I am helping to shape the environment around this debate on alliance ‘persistence’ through determining which actors, settings, and textual or other materials are relevant to it—and which/whom are not.\textsuperscript{125}

Moreover, by ‘locating “policy” in the everyday world of concrete practical judgment’ on the part of individual actors, I am actively contributing to a view of reality which is ‘ambiguous, open-ended, and mutually constructed’.\textsuperscript{126} I am furthermore influenced by previous theorists in picking the case study of the USM presence in Okinawa while at the same time acknowledging that this kind of ‘social problem’ is not the ‘direct [outcome] of readily identifiable, visible objective social conditions’, but rather is ‘the [product] of activities of political or social groups making claims about putative conditions to public officials and agencies’—and therefore that the future impact or relevance of this research is likewise subject to the continued ‘recognition of the grievance’ under question.\textsuperscript{127}

3.3. SIDA in practice (1): interviewing

In acknowledging these assumptions and their impact on my research, I sought to gather data from a wide variety of sources: not only official USG and GOJ policy-related publications, press releases, and public speeches, but also academic texts analysing these, media interviews with officials and anti-base activists (and their affiliates), and audio-visual materials (including

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{121 McSweeney 1996, p. 164.}
\footnote{122 Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000, pp. 15-16; Hajer 2003, p. 105.}
\footnote{123 Hajer 2003, p. 104; Wagenaar and Cook 2003; van Dijk 1997.}
\footnote{124 Schmidt 2008, p. 321.}
\footnote{125 Hay and Wincott 1998, p. 956.}
\footnote{126 Wagenaar and Cook 2003, p. 171.}
\footnote{127 Fischer 2003a.}
\end{footnotes}
documentaries and data collected on trips to sites of interest). Primarily, however, I conducted in-person interviews in the US and Japan, as these are cited as one of the primary means by which data is collected under interpretive policy analysis as outlined by Fischer. In conducting them, he says, ‘the analyst seeks to test his or her assumptions about the boundaries of the interpretive communities, the significance of particular artefacts, and the meaning of stories that community residents share with one another’. In speaking to policymakers specifically, an interview can help ‘determine how they interpret the policy consequences of policy-relevant events’ (for example, an accident occurring near a military base involving US forces). In doing so, again, the point of conducting an interview with any actor – policymaker or not – is not to access a more ‘truthful’ account of the circumstances under study or which attitudes and beliefs are ‘correct’, but to create a space ‘for identifying and exploring participants’ interpretative practices’.

By identifying these ‘communities of meaning’, relevant discourses, and points of conflict, the analyst can thus ‘teas[e] out of everyday “sensemaking” the puzzles and tensions which have presented themselves through actions and events that contradict the analyst's knowledge and expectations at the time’. Hajer likewise recommends conducting interviews in order to ‘enable the researcher to construct the interviewee discourses and the shifts in recognition of alternative perspectives’. Practically speaking, open-ended interviews of the kind I conducted in my own research – wherein they are guided by general topics and themes, giving the interviewee the freedom to decide to what level of detail they would like to discuss their experiences and make their arguments – allow for a higher degree of control over the material collected from participants than does natural interaction or observation, though this same control may have the effect of ‘obscur[ing] just how much the participants’ “responses” are a product of various activities (some very subtle) on the part of the interviewer’.

Nevertheless, the original interviews I conducted and materials collected in both Japan and the US gave me access to firsthand sources of knowledge about how the USJA functions not only on a day-to-day basis internally, but also how these functions are felt by ‘everyday’ actors outside of the institution. These interviews also aided my understanding and interpretation of the sometimes

128 Fischer 2003a.
129 Campbell 2002, p. 32.
130 Potter 1996, p. 15.
131 Fischer 2003a; Yanow defines ‘communities of meaning’ as ‘policy-relevant groups — community residents, cognate and competing agencies and professionals, interest groups, potential clients, unheard or silent voices [...] which] may interpret the policy differently from legislators' intent (if that can even be established as a single meaning)’ (2003, p. 238).
opaque language found in public speeches and written statements from politicians and activists alike, as the more conversational style I employed in speaking with participants allowed for them to use ‘their own vocabularies and cultural repertoires of knowledge’. I did this by, as often as possible, posing questions which invited interpretative responses. Examples include: what does ‘security’ mean to you? What do you consider to be a ‘threat’ to your security, and to the country’s security? To what extent can the USJA be considered an ‘institution’?

I also asked more specific questions – including about the recent US ‘rebalance’ policy to Asia, or on the reactions of officials from both countries to the policies of the Hatoyama administration (see Appendix 3 for full list) – and with these, my aim was to put into sharper focus the processes behind decision-making for policymakers and, for activists and other ‘everyday’ actors, how they conceptualise their role within the USJA. Generally speaking, these questions fell under three broad categories related to the case study of this research: 1) the USJA; 2) Okinawa; and 3) MCAS Futenma Air Station. Individual questions under these categories were formulated based on the literature(s) reviewed in Chapter 1. Depending on each individual interviewee, his/her background, and his/her preferred style of speech, questions would not necessarily be posed in the order outlined above—or the interviewee would respond to multiple questions in a single, longer answer. The duration of each interview, therefore, ranged from 15 minutes to 3 hours.

Furthermore, where many activists and ‘experts’ employed at think tanks were comfortable having their comments ‘on the record’, many current and former government officials preferred being quoted anonymously (if at all). While it is true, as Leheny comments, that many of these officials ‘relied on relatively safe political rhetoric’ while on the record, others – especially those unrelated to government – were more frank in their assessments. Where some analysts might see little value in including quotes from an interview which repeats ‘talking points’ from government policies, however, it is this exact dynamic that is of interest to my research. This is because, as White noted, it is not just the content of a discourse that matters, but the form—and when government


\[135\] On the USJA (1), my inquiries revolved around a) the nature and evolution of the alliance; b) the design and structure of the alliance compared to other US alliances; c) USJ relations today versus yesterday; d) USJ relations today versus tomorrow; and c) the role of public deliberation in crafting the alliance. For Okinawa (2), questions were formulated based on the following points: a) the contrast between Okinawan security concerns/priorities and those of Japanese and American political-military officials; b) the ‘security’ value of the bases; c) how officials have responded to the protests both with regard to framing the alliance and with regard to the alliance itself; d) how the protest movement has responded to official statements; e) the likelihood of a given solution’s success to the base issue (i.e. more rapid reduction in military land use); and f) the role/involvement of local officials in elite talks. On Futenma (3), the points were: a) whose agenda does the relocation plan reflect?; b) environmental problems and the relocation site, possible and past; c) other alternative relocation sites and the obstacles in moving Futenma to them; d) the potential for the protests to influence policymaking; e) the relationship between citizens/activists and the political/military establishment.

officials, ‘experts’, academics, and activists alike are repeating narratives in similar styles using similar symbols and referring to the same overarching myths, it clearly shows the successes and failures in the (re)production of a discourse cutting across socioeconomic and professional backgrounds. There need not be some great ‘uncovering’, as Jonathan Potter says, of the ‘real’ motivations behind certain government policies or activist activities via the interview process; rather, its purpose is to provide further support to the idea that ‘the very act of taking part in debates around national security [can be] disruptive of what they [participants] considered to be politically possible’.\textsuperscript{137}

3.4. SIDA in practice (2): fieldwork programme

With this aim of examining the ‘disruptive’ power of interpretation, I interviewed a wide variety of individuals (over 80 in total) whom I had previously identified from the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 as having some direct experience working on alliance-related issues or on Futenma specifically. These interviews were conducted in English over the course of nine months from January to September 2014 in sites across the UK (1 week), US (3 months), and Japan (5 months total; about two and a half in Tokyo and Okinawa each). Interviewees included former and current government and military officials (e.g. former governor of Okinawa Masahide Ota, former Commander of USMC Forces Pacific Wallace Gregson, and Joseph Nye); ‘experts’ on the USJA at well-known think tanks (e.g. James Schoff at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Doug Bandow at the Cato Institute); academics specialising in this bilateral relationship or affiliated with the ABM in Okinawa (e.g. Gavan McCormack, Mike Mochizuki, and Hideki Yoshikawa); and other activists associated with the ABM (e.g. Satoko Norimatsu at the Peace Philosophy Center).

These interviews were conducted at over 40 sites, including: government locations (e.g. MOFA, MOD, OPG, Okinawa Defense Bureau [ODB], US House of Representatives); military bases (e.g. Futenma, USMC Camp Foster, the US Naval Base at Yokosuka outside Tokyo); think tanks (e.g. Canon Institute for Global Studies, the Heritage Foundation); and sites of historical or cultural importance (e.g. the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum, Himeyuri Monument and Peace Museum). At government sites, many officials I spoke with are or had been employed by the same divisions and offices, including: the Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation and International Policy Divisions of the Defense Policy Bureau (MOD); the National Institute for Defense Studies (MOD); the Status of US Forces Agreement and Japan-US Security Treaty Divisions of the North American Affairs Bureau (MOFA); the National Security Council (US); the Office of the Secretary of State (DOS); the Institute for Defense Analyses (DOD); and the US Consul-General in Okinawa (DOS). As mentioned previously, there was also a confluence in the professional and research backgrounds of the

\textsuperscript{137} Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015, p. 15.
academics and other ‘experts’ with whom I spoke; likewise, many of the activists and their affiliates had had their arguments informed by visiting the same sites of interest as the ones I had surveyed (e.g. Futenma, former battlegrounds in Okinawa, Camp Schwab) and in their interaction with other individuals and groups within the ABM (e.g. Save the Dugong Campaign Center, journalist Jon Mitchell).

Other materials (nearly all in English) collected at these sites and through internet-based research in support of this thesis generally span the period from the mid-1990s Special Action Committee on Okinawa agreement to the end of 2014, which also marked the end of my fieldwork. These include: public speeches of, statements from, or interviews with relevant current and former government officials, military officers, and civil society representatives; official government policy documents, such as Defence White Papers (WP) (Japan), Diplomatic Bluebooks (Japan), Joint Statements, Defence Reviews (US), and Diplomacy and Defence Reviews (US); articles from print and online news outlets; previously classified diplomatic cables available from Wikileaks138; local English-language tourist pamphlets in Okinawa; anti- and/or pro-base artwork, including posters hung on the fences of US bases in Okinawa and on other edifices; and text placards containing poetry or historical content from museum exhibits related to Okinawan history, WWII, the alliance, and USJA relations. Other materials produced in particular by the ABM, including documentaries publicly available on YouTube or previously broadcast on Japanese television, were also examined in order to capture the full extent of their public outreach efforts.

3.5. SIDA in practice (3): data analysis

3.5.1. Discourses

Prior to undertaking this fieldwork programme, I identified, based on previous studies, the presence of two prevailing discourses at play over the Futenma relocation issue: the pro-alliance, pro-base discourse (PBD) and the anti-base discourse (ABD). The former – which, although not always, usually overlaps with the pro-USM base discourse – has mainly been (re)produced by actors from the first two sites of exchange identified for this study (diplomatic and defence; see section 3.5.2 for more details). Contained within it are a number of narratives which consistently identify the alliance as a ‘force for good’ or a ‘cornerstone’ of peace and security in the region, emphasise the importance of US bases in Japan and especially in Okinawa for deterrence, are sceptical of the motives of the ABM, and express cynicism regarding the possibility of alliance policy significantly changing in the base arena for the foreseeable future.

138 These chiefly being cables from the US embassies in Tokyo and Naha between 2006-2011 and covering the period of the FRF ‘crisis’ during the Hatoyama administration.
By contrast, the ABD – mainly (re)produced by actors from ‘everyday’ sites of exchange – revolves around narratives detailing the suffering of Okinawa prefecture during WWII, the discriminatory policies promulgated by the US and Japanese central governments against it in the post-war era, the uniqueness of the Okinawan identity as apart from mainland Japan, and incredulity at the arguments of both governments regarding the ‘necessity’ of the US military presence in Okinawa. Although some of the individuals promulgating these narratives (as well as their counterparts in the literature on Okinawa/Futenma) also expressed scepticism at the necessity of the USJA or questioned its current purpose, for the most part they were primarily concerned with the presence of US forces in Okinawa specifically. Thus, while the arguments conveyed by each individual interviewee with whom I spoke obviously do not always fit neatly under one discourse or the other, outlining these discourses gave me a foundation upon which to identify the repeated narratives and smaller stories within them through the face-to-face interviews.

3.5.2. Sites of discursive exchange

These discourses are communicated across three sites of exchange: diplomatic (MOFA, DOS), defence (MOD, DOD, and related institutions), and the ‘everyday’ (civil society organisations, universities, and public attractions either explicitly or implicitly affiliated with the ABM). These were identified not only on the basis of the fact that each of these sites is home to actors with (more or less) distinct roles, backgrounds, and whom interact with other individuals of a similar nature within these circles, but also because each site – as Hajer points out – is not created equal in terms of what can be said ‘meaningfully and with influence’. For example, anti-base activists in Henoko, the planned relocation site for Futenma and part of the ‘everyday’ site of exchange, have less access to supposedly important security-related information available to those actors from ‘diplomatic’ or ‘defence’ sites—and thus their arguments or ‘local knowledge’ may not be taken as seriously or heard at all by the latter, much less enacted in policy.\textsuperscript{139}

The more ‘elite’ sites – ‘diplomatic’ and ‘defence’ – are also kept separate in spite of the fact that many individuals or groups within them frequently overlap or work together (e.g. Joseph Nye’s involvement in both the DOS and DOD as an adviser on their policy boards). I keep this distinction in place, however, due to the fact that diplomats and defence officials may have very different experiences of the same issue. For example, where a US Consul-General (in a ‘diplomatic’ site) will have dealt with Futenma primarily on the basis of conveying, reaffirming, and defending the central USG’s relocation policy, a USMC official (in a ‘defence’ site) may have been involved in the

formulation of the original policy itself and have much better working knowledge of the operational
details related to the existing base, its potential relocation, and of the hazards related to both.

Nonetheless, with each succeeding site discussed in this thesis, it becomes evident that
separating one layer from another is not always possible. For example, while the first site of
exchange analysed in this thesis – the diplomatic (including DOS and MOFA) – would seem to be
fairly straightforward in its framing of the alliance in terms of the PBD, it is also home to individuals
and groups who work in both governments’ local offices in Okinawa. Living in closer proximity to US
bases, therefore, can confuse and muddy the communication of the PBD to Okinawan residents
and vice versa. This is even more the case among representatives in defence sites of exchange –
including individuals not only from the DOD and MOD, but also the US III Marine Expeditionary Force
(MEF) in Okinawa and the SDF – whose work often involves them being asked to both carry out the
‘defence’ of both nations and to cooperate with and be sympathetic to the concerns of Okinawan
residents to whom they live adjacent.

Lastly, the impact of both of these more ‘elite’ sites of exchange are deeply felt in the last –
the ‘everyday’ – as it is the site at which both governments’ narratives are directed and upon which
they are moulded. This site, however, does not merely include the obvious actors within it, such as
Okinawan anti-base protesters (including fisherman, farmers, retirees, academics, and other
residents) and local officials from the OPG, but also incorporates their proponents from outside of
the prefecture. These include actors ranging from academics and activists in mainland Japan to
international non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

By juxtaposing each site against one another in this way, this thesis seeks to break down
barriers put up by not only government officials, but also by the previous literature, to the possibility
of interaction across and within groups outside of traditionally limited security policymaking circles.
Furthermore, says Jennifer Milliken,

by juxtaposing the “truth” about a situation constructed within a particular discourse
to events and issues that this “truth” fails to acknowledge or address, and also by
pairing dominant representations with contemporaneous accounts that do not use
the same definitions of what has happened and that articulate subjects and their
relationships in different ways. The point of this [...] is not to establish the “right
story” but to render ambiguous predominant interpretations of state practices and to
demonstrate the inherently political nature of official discourses.

At the same time, she continues, this method allows for ‘alternative accounts’ to be explored to the
same depth as ‘official’ ones—including how local knowledge can both ‘create conditions for

resistance to a dominating discourse’ and, intentionally or not, enable the reproduction of these same official discourses.\textsuperscript{141}

3.5.3. Analytical themes

I further employ juxtaposition across each of these sites of exchange and the narratives and smaller stories they have (re)produced about the USJA, Okinawa, and the Futenma issue through the use of four analytical themes: 1) historical memory and threat perception; 2) defining and redefining security; 3) institutional and cultural identities; and 4) discursive intersections and divisions. I chose these themes not only on my own observations from the ways in which this case was analysed in the previous literature, but also on the tasks set out by SIDA: that in order to understand the evolution of a discourse, we must: ‘examine the structure, style, and historical context of an argument to determine why some modes of argumentation serve to effectively justify specific actions in particular situations and others fail’; we should ‘investigate how a particular framing of an issue can bestow the appearance of problematic on some features of a discussion while others seem proper and fixed’; and we can ‘open and exploit […] ideological tensions and contradictions by showing how they function to hide or conceal other realities’.\textsuperscript{142}

Cutting across each of these themes are patterns in the language used by actors from all three sites of exchange; for example, where those located in diplomatic sites have called the USJA and/or the bases in Okinawa as a ‘cornerstone’ for peace and security, their defence counterparts have described it Okinawa as a military ‘keystone’ in the US’s Pacific basing structure, and ‘everyday’ actors invert this same language, referring to Okinawa either as a ‘keystone’ for peace or, on the other hand, as a ‘sacrificial stone’ passed between the GOJ and USG for their own purposes. Each of the themes outlined below thus organises the narratives identified in each chapter by actors from the three sites of exchange outlined in the previous section according to those analytic parameters, and the subsections of each of these themes in each chapter are roughly structured so that they are juxtaposed against one another across all three sites of exchange in both titles and periods of time covered.

The first theme – \textbf{historical memory and threat perception} – begins each of the three main chapters based on the fieldwork. Its purpose is not only to provide the relevant historical context for each of the three sites discussed (including the development of the USJA from the post-war period to today, the construction of the USM’s bases in Okinawa, and Okinawan pre-war and post-war history), but also, based on the different actors’ interpretations of this context, to examine the construction of the prevailing narratives about what has been constituted as ‘threats’ to Okinawa, Japan, and the US, and how actors from the three sites have responded to these ‘threats’. This

\textsuperscript{141} Milliken 1999, p. 243.
\textsuperscript{142} Fischer 2003a.
theme therefore highlights the development of ‘shared memories’ – or their ‘commingled beliefs, practices, and symbolic representations’ – in terms of how the USJA is conceptualised and how Futenma has been addressed by the parties under study both within and across the three sites of exchange.\textsuperscript{143}

Following on from the first section, the second theme – defining and redefining security – focuses on the related notion of how ‘security’ has been and is currently defined and publicly framed by these groups. As this approach views actors as active agents in institutional change, so does it concur that ‘security is what agents make of it’; though, as Huysmans notes and as this research emphasises, the focus of this theme is not on definitions of security as dependent ‘on cognitive processes of an agent resulting in a correct or incorrect perception of a threat’, but rather upon ‘the creation of a security problem as a social phenomenon’\textsuperscript{144}. This theme thus illustrates the connection between historical and current constructions of ‘security’, and therefore that the term itself – which ‘can refer to a feeling, an ontological state of being, a field of policymaking, a technical project, or a source of political legitimacy’ – is ‘a floating signifier [...] through which actors seek to create certain kinds of political possibilities’.\textsuperscript{145} This conceptualisation underlines the idea of change and stability as being linked at various levels of discursive exchange and illustrates how the unstable definition of ‘security’ over the course of several decades inherently makes institutions such as the USJA fields of public and private argumentation—not just ones limited to the purview of ‘elites’ and their chosen audiences.

Building on this discussion, the third theme of each chapter – institutional and cultural identities – highlights the existence of a number of unique and overlapping identities asserted in both institutional (the GOJ, USG, military/SDF and the alliance) and cultural (Japanese, American, and Okinawan) contexts among the groups under study, and how these identities have not only been actively shaped in the post-war era, but also how they have impacted the framing and unfolding of the Futenma conflict. The formation and reproduction of these identities relates directly to the conceptualisations of ‘threat’ and ‘security’ examined in themes 1 and 2, as

\textit{[a]ttempts to secure a notion of “who we are” invite violence when these notions are not shared by members of the community in question, when “who we are” must be forcibly instilled through disciplinary tactics, when “who we are” also depends on belligerently defining and even killing “who we are not”}.\textsuperscript{146}


\textsuperscript{144} Huysmans 2002, p. 42.

\textsuperscript{145} Martin 2015, p. 100.

\textsuperscript{146} Stern 2006, pp. 187-188.
These same attempts and the discursive processes behind them can be extended to the level of national policymaking (including alliance politics), since, in constructing ‘who we are’ and ‘who we are not’, say Huysmans and Anastassia Tsoukala, certain actors have ‘the legitimizing basis for the implementation of an increasing control apparatus that covers delinquent, deviant, and even ordinary behaviour’. In identifying this apparatus here in the form of the PBD, this theme thus elucidates how certain narratives (re)produced by central government sites maintain their prevalence ‘by discursive means rather than by direct force, mobilizing consent by inclining us towards particular identifications’—and how these same narratives are challenged or rejected.

At the end of each chapter, I identify and analyse the prevailing discursive intersections and divisions found within the two overarching discourses and their related narratives. Where the previous themes mainly highlight distinctions between each of the groups – including their perceptions of ‘threat’, definitions of ‘security’, and unique institutional and cultural identities – this theme reveals areas of overlap between them in terms of the narratives they have (re)produced and how they have impacted each other (and the alliance, as a political institution) across what otherwise seem like rigid, unmoving ideological lines. It is critical that each chapter end with this theme not only because the discursive strategies and interpretations of ‘everyday’ actors promulgating the ABD are ‘powerfully conditioned’ by the narratives presented by those in central government espousing the PBD, but also because these same ‘everyday’ actors, with their ‘insurgent’ narratives, ‘have real political effects that political leaders can ignore only at their own peril’. Berger elaborates:

Time and again, groups representing the victims of historical injustice, as well as groups who for their own reasons promote a historical narrative different from the existing official one, have been able to place their own concerns on the political agenda in ways that greatly complicate the efforts of political leaders to promote what they see as national interest.

This theme, therefore, serves the purpose of exposing the ‘ideological tensions and contradictions’ present in each discourse, and how these ‘function to hide or conceal other realities’ in order to maintain specific constructions of ‘threat’, ‘security’, and identity.

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149 Berger 2012, p. 2.

150 Berger 2012, p. 3.
Conclusion

The impact of this research thus primarily relates to its goal of broadening and deepening the ontology of security alliances at their most basic level: the discursive processes and actors constituting them, and how these, in turn, drive institutional stasis, change, and reproduction through social interaction. Furthermore, through the case study of the USJA and the conflict over Futenma, this research extends the notion that ‘everyday’ actors – such as members of Okinawan civil society organisations demanding the relocation of Futenma, as well as those protesting against its relocation to the northern city of Nago in Okinawa – have played and continue to play a significant role in explaining the policy changes that the alliance leadership in the USG and GOJ have been forced to commit to in this matter. Combined with a deeper examination of the traditional alliance ‘managers’ and the narratives they convey, this research thus allows for an understanding of institutional change that goes beyond attributing it solely to exogenous shocks – like the ongoing Futenma protests – to include the notion that these ‘exogenous shocks’ can also be ‘precipitated by factors that are endogenous to the institutional system’.

One consequence of revealing this fundamental discursive exchange between the groups under study is that this research promotes the role of the individual in the policymaking process as more productive and effective than is usually imagined by policymakers and academics alike. This emphasis draws on the influence of the DI and public policy literatures, which similarly highlight the importance of individual actors in their abilities to communicate a discourse effectively and, on the other hand, to be influenced by their interaction with other individuals from other sites of exchange. This research, then, in mobilizing the theoretical vocabularies of these literatures for the study of alliances, also benefits from their focus on identifying the basic elements of alliances rather than skipping ahead to pin down X, Y, or Z explanatory variables behind their ‘persistence’.

In summary, SIDA within a larger, interpretative approach therefore represents an innovative break from mainstream studies of security alliances following the positivist tradition for the following reasons:

**It gives agency greater explanatory power in explaining institutional change.** The institutional determinism of previous studies on security alliances afforded actors both within and external to alliances little agency in determining institutional transformation, as their preferences and actions are predetermined to be constrained by these same institutions. The interpretative approach returns agency to the actors responsible not only for the creation of these alliances, but also to those for whom the alliances were created to protect.

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It recognises the role of the social sciences in reifying or challenging prevailing discourses. By being largely uncritical of the ‘monological ideal of administrative rationality’, the positivist-leaning literature on alliance formation and ‘persistence’ appears to endorse or otherwise implicitly condone the continued knowledge dependence of government officials on a limited circle of expertise which does not include local knowledge and accepts the framing of these officials and ‘experts’ that their perspectives are more akin to ‘scientific demonstration and verification’ as opposed to ‘the giving of reasons and the assessment of practical arguments’\(^\text{152}\) which are portrayed as characteristic of ‘everyday’ actors’ discursive strategies. In contrast, the interpretative approach stresses the importance of reflexivity on the part of analysts and the need to question the wholesale acceptance of this kind of framing strategy.\(^\text{153}\)

It traces the sources of discourse production, and how certain discourses are (re)produced. As with agency, the focus on central government-based sites of institutional power and their affiliated actors by positivist studies tends to exclude other possible sites of discursive exchange from the discussion of institutional change. They also tend not to mention other possible discourses, frames, and narratives that could be produced but, for any number of reasons, are deliberately left out. The interpretative approach allows for the silences in the prevailing and oppositional discourses on alliance policy to be investigated and brought to light, and it allows the analyst to ask how these views were not accepted or reproduced more widely.

It brings security policy back into the realm of deliberative democracy. Lastly, while positivist studies often remain within the confines of the institution under analysis, the interpretative approach can help to weaken the perception that security policymaking can only be correctly understood within the realm of political ‘elites’. By using a social-interactive methodology, this research thus brings security alliances back into the deliberative democratic process and gives equal footing to prevailing and oppositional discourses in the discussion on institutional change while simultaneously studying how these discourses interact, influence and shape each other.

\(^{152}\) Fischer 2003b, p. 7.
Chapter 3. Sites of diplomatic exchange: ‘The alliance rewrites itself’

Introduction

The alliance rewrites itself – it is continually reinvigorated – and not always necessarily as a result of a change in the internal dynamics, but more as a reaction to external events.

- William Brooks, former head of the US Embassy in Tokyo

In describing the USJA as ‘continually reinvigorated’ and ‘rewriting’ itself while attributing this change to ‘external events’, Brooks strikes a curious intersection between an interpretative reading of the alliance – one which perceives its development as the product of active discursive reproduction – and a path-dependent one stressing change as the result of exogenous shocks. Similarly, other individuals at all levels of the diplomatic corps with whom I spoke (or whose testimony has been previously recorded) portray the alliance as institutionalised to the point that there are no significant threats posed to its continued existence – including the protests in Okinawa over Futenma – while at the same time often conceding that Futenma can pose a ‘threat’ through enflaming local feelings against the alliance should there be any military accidents or incidents around it. Therefore, while many actors located in diplomatic sites of exchange publicly promote a PBD which frames the future of the alliance as ‘smooth sailing’, this obfuscates the oftentimes-rocky historical and current representations of USJ relations and USM bases in Japan.

On the surface, their arguments revolve around who has the ‘best story’ about the disputed relocation of MCAS Futenma, and why their audience – in this case, largely the mainland Japanese public – should believe their narratives over that of their opponents’. Appealing to a broader audience with familiar elements like a plot, identifiable protagonists and antagonists, and strong coherence throughout¹, the PBD relates the narrative that the USJA is the ‘cornerstone’ or ‘linchpin’ of not only Japan’s foreign policy and diplomacy, but also of security in the larger Asia-Pacific region. Given this assumption, it would therefore be unthinkable, within this logic, to oppose current and past alliance-related policies, including those concerning the presence of USM forces in mainland Japan or specifically in Okinawa. In this narrative, actors including central government officials from MOFA, the DOS, and ‘experts’ affiliated with them frame ‘security’ in a largely military sense and defines the main ‘threats’ to Japan as being China, North Korea, and, more generally, ‘instability’ in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. In defining ‘security’ and ‘threats’ in this manner, the alliance and, consequently, the bases in Okinawa are therefore framed by these actors as vital and necessary

¹ Riggins 1997; McSweeney 1999; Fischer 2003a; Hall 2006.
Sometimes Japanese people want to hear [from the word] “alliance” what they will when something happens, like, for example, over the Senkaku Islands, a missile launch from North Korea, or any kind of possible instability or confrontation scenarios in Northeast Asia. That’s when they want to hear the word “alliance”. But not always, I think. During [peace time], we don’t need that word.

- a current adviser to the Japanese Diet on US-Japan relations

The reproduction of the PBD and, in turn, the alliance therefore appears to be predicated on the idea that these ‘threats’ – and the bases themselves – are not simply ‘threats’ to the identity or existence of the alliance, but exist as a ‘condition of [its] possibility’. Thus, although many of these ‘threats’ are portrayed by these actors as being ones that have existed since the Cold War period – and, indeed, that the USJA itself is still ‘stuck’ in that period – it is also apparent that they must be ‘continually reinvigorated’, since, as Campbell notes, ‘[f]or a state to end its practices of representation would be to expose its lack of prediscursive foundations; stasis would be death’. While I do not confound ‘the state’ in this research with the specific actors located in diplomatic sites of exchange, it is still a relevant point that the PBD has not simply ‘survived’ on account of some inherent ‘truth’ which these actors claim it contains, but that it has been and continues to be actively performed in order to be accepted and thus reproduced.

1. Historical memory and threat perception

Sometimes Japanese people want to hear [from the word] “alliance” what they will when something happens, like, for example, over the Senkaku Islands, a missile launch from North Korea, or any kind of possible instability or confrontation scenarios in Northeast Asia. That’s when they want to hear the word “alliance”. But not always, I think. During [peace time], we don’t need that word.

- a current adviser to the Japanese Diet on US-Japan relations

The uncertainty that has fed into current interpretations of the Futenma issue is not specific to it—in fact, as I argue, it has many historical antecedents, particularly in the ways in which USJ relations have been transformed into an ‘alliance’ and how ‘threats’, ‘security’, and Japan’s own defensive identity have been defined in light of these developments. The Abe administration’s assertion of Japan’s right to exercise CSD in July 2014, for example, has, in the words of many commentators in the US and Japanese press, seemed to bring a definitive end to the post-war
project of demilitarising the country while also shedding the GOJ of its past image as evading its security responsibilities.\(^5\) At the very least, the CSD decision – not to mention the now-frequent characterisation of the USJA as a ‘cornerstone’ for peace and security in the region, and the equally frequent calls for increased Japanese involvement in conflicts outside of the Asia-Pacific – seems far removed from the hesitation which once accompanied the very mention of the word ‘alliance’. (Considering the gradual ‘normalisation’ of Japanese defence policy since the 1970s as discussed in Chapter 1, however, the acceptance of the language and policies related to CSD and other recent developments under Abe should not necessarily come as a surprise.)

Academic observers have noted over the past decade the GOJ’s push towards becoming a ‘normal’ country without reviving images of pre-war militarism by placing emphasis on the possibility of greater Japanese contributions to international security through PKO and HADR operations.\(^6\) Nonetheless, recent legal rulings\(^7\) within Japan leading up to the CSD decision under Abe built the foundations upon which the central government has been able to pursue ‘normalisation’ and make its case to the Japanese public in favour of expanding the scope of defining what/who constitute ‘threats’ to Japan and how to respond to them. Moreover, the recent US ‘rebalance’ or ‘pivot’ strategy to Asia, involving the realignment of tens of thousands of USM forces has, in many ways, cemented not only the importance of the USJA to the USG’s regional security framework (and therefore the importance of the bases), but also raised the USG’s expectations for the GOJ to continue this process of ‘normalisation’ at an accelerated pace in support of the

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\(^7\) The Araki Report, released under Koizumi, states that Japan’s success ‘was “built upon global interdependence”, and the eruption of threats far afield had the potential to ‘have a substantial effect on these worldwide activities of Japan and its citizens’. The Yanai Report reinforced this message by arguing that ‘the diffuse, global nature of threats, and the trend towards bilateral coordinated responses to meet those threats, required a new legal framework for security policy in Japan’ (Kersten 2011, pp. 11-12).
'rebalance’—including speeding up any base relocations or returns currently underway (such as Futenma).

1.1. The evolution of the ‘alliance’ and Japan’s defensive identity

Interviews with several current and former MOFA officials in Tokyo confirm that with increasing acceptance of a ‘normal’ Japan has come an acceptance of the alliance in its traditional (military security) as well as non-traditional (HADR) purposes. According to one current MOFA official: ‘Japan is trying to become a “normal” country, right? So we don’t have to hesitate about using the word “military” too much, and we sometimes call or use the term “military alliance” these days, so I think we’ve been getting used to using [those] kind[s] of words’. However, citing such events as unexpected missile launches near the Sea of Japan by North Korea in 2005 and 2007 and the Taiwan Straits Crisis in 1996, not to mention internal crises such as the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system by the group Aum Shinrikyo in 1995, an adviser to the Diet posits that the Japanese public has gradually lost confidence in the GOJ’s ability to provide for national security, and have therefore became more comfortable with the idea of the USJ relationship being characterised as a ‘military alliance’. The first official in MOFA with whom I spoke reaffirmed this perspective, commenting on the continued pacifist stance of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP):

Their basic thought is: if we don’t have any forces and we show our goodwill by having no forces, then no one will attack us. And so ... they go down a line that we shouldn’t even have a Self-Defense Force, we shouldn’t have US forces, we should be ... without any arms. And by doing that, no one will attack us. Now ... that’s very noble, and I wish that were really true, but in reality, I think that’s probably not true—that you do have to have a force to deter people from attacking you.

The suggestion of the ‘death’ of Japan’s pacifist defensive identity, however, does not mean that the diplomatic establishment within the GOJ (and related individuals) are in agreement over the current and future defensive priorities of the two countries. ‘Japanese people are under the illusion that US forces are there only for the defence of Japan’, says Andrew Oros. Nicholas Szecenyi

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8 Anonymous, personal interview, 6 January 2014a, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan. One current adviser to the Diet whom I spoke with offered a slightly more nuanced take on the usage of ‘alliance’, explaining that the word itself in Japanese – doumei – is mainly used by lawmakers within Japan during ‘special occasions’ such as the annual 2+2 Japan-US Joint Security Consultative Committees attended by the US Secretaries of State and Defence and the Japanese Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence. The rest of the time, the preferred term is simply nichibei kankei, or ‘US-Japan relations’. The reason for this, the adviser says, is that doumei is the same term used during WWII to describe the Axis alliance between Japan, Italy and Germany — and thus ‘it has too many implications [about] the military aspects of our [US-Japan] relations’ (Anonymous, personal interview, 4 February 2014b, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan).

9 Anonymous 2014b.


11 Andrew Oros, personal interview, 4 September 2014, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA.
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concurs that ‘the US-Japan alliance is a global one outside of defence issues’. A representative for US Congressman Randy Forbes (R-VA) further adds: ‘the current norms are a hindrance to the functionality of the alliance. We want to move towards a RIMPAC [Rim of the Pacific Exercise]-style interoperability within the alliance’. 

The adviser to the Diet, however, comments that while the alliance’s functions may be expanding to include greater cooperation on weapons development and joint drills between the USM and SDF, the scope of the alliance has been narrowing over the past few years on account of tensions with neighbours in Northeast Asia. The idea of a ‘narrowing’ agenda plays into a narrative often told by US and Japanese diplomats that ‘the structure of the Cold War remains in the Asia-Pacific region’, or even that ‘it’s not the Cold War that’s still going in East Asia—it’s more like it’s still stuck in World War II’. The antagonists in this story are, thus, familiar: China and North Korea. Two former MOFA officials described the two countries as ‘threats’ or ‘potential enemies’.

In examining a number of public opinion polls taken over the last decade in Japan, the adviser’s remarks appear to be buffeted: between 2009 and 2012, for example, a Cabinet poll found that the percentage share of the public who chose the ‘situation in the Korean peninsula’ and the ‘modernization and/or maritime activities of Chinese military forces’ as ‘points of interest concerning the peace and safety of Japan’ rose from 56.8 to 64.9 and 30.4 to 46, respectively. Similar results were found in other polls, such as the 2009 Yomiuri-Gallup Japan-U.S. Joint Opinion Poll in which 64% of Japanese and 54% of American respondents identified China as a country which ‘will become a threat militarily to Japan’, with 81 and 75% saying the same of North Korea. Moreover, in a 2010 Asahi Shimbun-Harris Joint Opinion Poll, 68% of Japanese respondents answered that it is ‘more important to have a relationship with the US’ than with China.

By the same token, these polls reveal the productive ability of the diplomatic corps’ communicative power to coordinate public opinion in mainland Japan regarding defence policy.

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12 Nicholas Szechenyi, personal interview, 12 & 19 September 2014, CSIS, Washington, DC, USA
13 RIMPAC is a ‘multinational maritime exercise’ held every two years by the US Pacific Fleet in and around the Hawaiian Islands in which over 29 countries and ‘49 surface ships, 6 submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel’ participate (US Navy, ‘RIMPAC 2015’, US Navy, 2015, available online at: http://www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/2014/).
14 Randy Forbes, personal interview, 7 July 2014, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC, USA
15 Anonymous 2014b.
17 Anonymous 2014a; Anonymous, personal interview, 8 January 2014d, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.
reforms and in gaining approval for remilitarising moves in the face of these ‘threats’. The Cabinet poll, for example, found public interest in ‘SDF and Defense Issues’ increase from 64.7 to 69.8% between 2009 and 2012. Among these, those respondents characterising the USJ-ST as overall ‘helpful’ rose from 76.4 to 81.2%, and those choosing the ‘current Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements and the SDF’ as the best ‘method for preserving the safety of Japan’ rose from 77.3 to 82.3%. While these increases are more than likely due in no small part to the success of Operation Tomodachi, it is important to note that, for that last question, only 10% of respondents overall chose the ‘abolishment’ of the USJ-ST and the ‘reduction’ or ‘dissolution’ of the SDF.

1.2. The alliance as the ‘cornerstone for peace’

It is unsurprising, then, that in my interviews with US and Japanese officials, many of them regard the purpose of the USJA as an institution as still being primarily concerned with military deterrence against China and North Korea. They framed this ‘guarantee’ – being provided by US forces in Japan – as the ‘core aspect’, ‘main pillar’, and ‘main mission’ of the alliance. Bisley notes, in fact, that the forward deployment of US forces in Japan ‘is thought by many scholars and policymakers to be the key factor behind the region’s sustained stability over the past twenty years’. This message is prominent in the 17 April 1996 ‘Japan-U.S. Joint Declaration On Security - Alliance For The 21st Century’ in which Japanese PM Ryutaro Hashimoto and US President Bill Clinton agreed that the alliance ‘remains the cornerstone for achieving common security objectives’.

Some variation on this theme has also appeared in nearly every major Japanese Diplomatic Bluebook, Japan-US Security Consultative Committee (2+2) statement, and Japanese PM’s speech to the Diet since the Declaration. Whether framing the alliance as the ‘cornerstone’ or ‘foundation’ of Japan’s foreign policy, the ‘axis’, ‘pillar’, or ‘linchpin’ of Japan’s diplomacy, or urging the government to strengthen the ‘credibility’ of the alliance ‘for the peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region and in order to overcome global challenges’, the GOJ has communicated a very clear narrative about the necessity of the alliance in the post-Cold War era. Paired with the old antagonists of North Korea and China, moreover, is a coherent representation of the Asia-Pacific region’s ‘instability’ or ‘uncertainty’ as cause for the alliance’s continued existence. While at times manifesting itself more specifically into perceived ‘threats’ such as nuclear weapons or international terrorism, the instances in which ‘instability’ and ‘uncertainty’ occur by their lonesome in these documents are noteworthy

24 This language occurs consistently across all the Diplomatic Bluebooks, 2+2 agreements, and Japanese prime ministers’ general policy speeches to the Diet surveyed in this study from 1996 to 2014; see references for a full listing and links to these documents.
in the way they are usually employed in tandem with calls for the alliance to ‘evolve to reflect the changing security environment’ and for it to ‘remain alert, flexible and responsive in the face of the full range of emerging twenty-first century threats and persistent regional and global challenges’ (in other words, for it to maintain its military aspects).25

This narrative, however, is only one of several repeated by the USG and GOJ in their efforts over the years to raise public support for the alliance and ensure continued coherence in their external as well as internal messaging. Another which is commonly employed follows the governments’ emphasis on ‘shared values’ or ‘interests’ including ‘freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law’.26 These were highlighted especially during the Bush and Koizumi (and subsequent LDP) administrations in their cooperation over the War on Terror.27 Today, these shared ‘values’ or ‘interests’ remain a focal point in the discussion of the importance of the alliance by officials as well as ‘experts’ in Tokyo and Washington. Former Counsellor to President Obama and former Deputy Chief of Staff during the Clinton administration John Podesta, for example, highlighted the cooperation between the USG and GOJ during Tomodachi as ‘proof of the strength and enduring commitment of our alliance’ and remarked that ‘there is little doubt that the ties between our two countries emerged from the crisis stronger than ever—and with a renewed determination in both the U.S. and Japan to work together to meet shared goals’.28 US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for East Asia Abraham Denmark and DOD Senior Advisor for Asia Integration Daniel Kliman, in a policy brief entitled ‘Cornerstone: A Future Agenda for the U.S.-Japan Alliance’ for the Center for a New American Security29, likewise reiterate that ‘shared interests and values’ are part of the ‘fundamentals’ of the alliance.30


26 MOD 2005; MOFA 2010b.

27 Green and Twining note that the GOJ made especial efforts to promote these values even outside of the alliance in public speeches (such as Koizumi’s to the 50th anniversary of the Bandung Asia-Africa summit on 22 April 2005 in which he stated “[W]e should all play an active role … in disseminating universal values such as the rule of law, freedom, and democracy”) and in the concept of the ‘Arc of Freedom and Prosperity’ promulgated under Abe during his first tenure as PM from 2006-07, which consisted of ‘a series of speeches that emphasized Japan’s commitment to advancing democracy, human rights and rule of law from the Baltic states to Southeast Asia’ (2008, pp. 6-7).


29 This Center being co-founded by Kurt Campbell, former Assistant SecState for East Asian and Pacific Affairs under the Obama administration.

30 Denmark and Kliman 2010, p. 2.
Officials in Tokyo and Washington likewise often cited public opinion polls indicating support for the alliance as a means of illustrating the positive ability of the central governments to communicate the PBD and its attendant narratives of ‘shared values’ and the threat of ‘uncertainty’ to the public. Kevin Maher, former US Consul General (CG) for Naha, Okinawa, for example, frames public support for the alliance as ‘becoming more realistic’. Rep. Forbes’s representative puts it more bluntly: ‘the alliance is very strong and is only questioned at the foundational level by the fringe’. Regardless of sustained public support, however, Weston Konishi comments: ‘the general publics, especially in the US, are not really informed about [the alliance]’. Mochizuki further comments that officials, especially those in Japan, will continue to reproduce these narratives ‘if for no other reason than Japan lacks an attractive strategic alternative [to the alliance]’.

1.3. Alliance management and its challenges

If, as Mochizuki and others have claimed, Japan’s best chance for retaining a positive identity among its neighbours while maintaining deterrence is to continue to support the alliance with the US and take on a greater share of the defence burden towards ‘normalisation’, then it is important to investigate the physical management of the alliance and the (re)production of a pro-alliance discourse by those formerly or currently in the diplomatic corps. After all, as former CG in Naha Alfred Magleby told me, ‘alliances are all about domestic politics’. Within these domestic politics, however, the actual number of officials involved on the diplomatic side in alliance management in both countries tends to be rather low and ‘elite-led’ on the US side, or equally low but with a higher rate of bureaucratic turnover on the Japanese side.

Daniel Sneider, for example, remarks that Washington lacks a ‘genuine, proactive, positive policy toward the [Asia-Pacific] region’, pointing to the emphasis on ‘stability’ by ‘maintaining a basic

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32 Kevin Maher, personal interview, 21 July 2014, NMV Consulting, Washington DC, USA.
33 Forbes 2014.
34 Weston S. Konishi, personal interview, 11 September 2014, The Mayflower Hotel, Washington, DC, USA.
35 Mochizuki 2004, p. 129.
36 Magleby 2014.
37 When discussing these alliance ‘managers’, authors in the literature on the USJA, as well as officials and ‘experts’ with whom I spoke, are usually referring to American officials who have worked on alliance-related issues within various administrations over the years including, but not limited to: Richard Armitage, Joseph Nye, Kurt Campbell, William Brooks, Rust Deming, Kevin Maher, Wallace Gregson, and Michael Green.
balance of power’. 38 Denmark and Kliman observe that although ‘a handful of bureaucrats in Tokyo, plus a few politicians from the long-dominant Liberal Democratic Party, once served as the primary Japanese interlocutors for this vital alliance’, the ‘security challenges’ now confronting the alliance ‘require cooperation across a broader spectrum of government agencies’ 39 as well as include ‘members of all the major political parties in Japan and representatives from more than just the Defense and State Departments and their Japanese equivalents’. 40 Oros notes, however, that under the leadership of the DPJ and specifically the Hatoyama administration from 2009-10, the number of individuals involved in alliance issues ‘increased by a lot on the Japanese side’ 41, and James Schoff claims that the management structure itself ‘has become more democratised, and thus more sustainable’. 42 Nonetheless, Schoff adds that the alliance agenda, as a result of its previous, more exclusive management, ‘is catching up to years of rhetoric’.

Konishi explores this dilemma in a report entitled ‘Beyond the Linchpin: Toward a New Strategic Communications Strategy for the U.S.-Japan Alliance’. Comparing the extensive public diplomacy efforts in the Asia-Pacific primarily undertaken by the US DOS’s Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, which contain a ‘strategy heavy emphasis’, to those of Japan’s MOFA, which he frames as a ‘largely civilian-centric endeavor [...] emphasizing such activities as people-to-people diplomacy, student and cultural exchanges, and the promotion of Japanese culture abroad’, Konishi finds that the coordination of the joint messaging on the alliance has, as a consequence, been more ‘ad hoc’ than ‘sustained and consistent’, with joint statements aimed ‘more toward each other than toward any external audience—oftentimes serving to reinforce and reassure both allies of their strategic commitments to each other and/or outline steps forward on certain alliance agenda items’. 43 Former Commander of USMC Forces Pacific Wallace ‘Chip’ Gregson, however, argues that ‘no amount of reassurance is ever excessive’ 44 within the alliance, and Tow adds that ‘American influence [in the Asia Pacific] is still contingent on Washington persuading allies and rivals alike to

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39 Denmark and Kliman specifically list the following agencies in their report: the United States Agency for International Development and Japan’s International Cooperation Agency, the U.S. Treasury Department and Japan’s Ministry of Finance, and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and Japan’s Council for Science and Technology Policy (2010, p. 3).

40 Denmark and Kliman 2010, p. 3.

41 Oros 2014.


43 This may result from the fact that ‘there is no consistent linkage between the SC [strategic communications]-related agencies in Washington and their counterpart agencies in Tokyo’ (Weston S. Konishi, ‘Beyond the Linchpin: Toward a New Strategic Communications Strategy for the U.S.-Japan Alliance’, a project report to the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, March 2013).

44 Wallace Gregson, personal interview, 22 July 2014b, Washington, DC, USA.
work with the US rather than compelling them to accept the vagaries of American policy and power'.\textsuperscript{45} For this reason, says Paul Midford, the fact that there is only a ‘small cabal of people who are interested and focused on the relationship [...] adds stability to the alliance’\textsuperscript{46} and, according to Konishi, may be ‘good’ in that then, ‘alliance policy isn’t subject to the political winds’.\textsuperscript{47}

1.4. The impact of the US ‘rebalance’ to Asia on the alliance

Given this demonstrated insulation of the policymaking process from the ‘political winds’ of public opinion and the inward-looking, reassurance-based nature of institutional messaging, it is not surprising that, aside from expanding some of the functions of the alliance into the field of HADR, the view within the diplomatic corps in Tokyo and Washington overwhelmingly still favours a substantial USM presence in the name of deterrence. In fact, notes Jennifer Lind, the central GOJ has shown a trend of responding to US force reductions ‘by substantially increasing its own military power’.\textsuperscript{48} Martin adds that although ‘revisionists’ such as Abe might increase Japanese defence capabilities, ‘the “preservationist” view continues to characterize the official Japanese position. Japan’s ruling elite remains more fearful of abandonment [by the US] than entrapment, and committed in varying degrees to both the alliance and Article 9’.\textsuperscript{49}

Thus, when former SecState Hillary Clinton announced the introduction of the USG’s foreign policy ‘pivoting’ away from the Middle East towards Asia in an article entitled ‘America’s Pacific Century’ for \textit{Foreign Policy}, this was taken as another sign of reassurance within the alliance that the US would not be ‘abandoning’ its chief ally in the Asia-Pacific region. Specifically, she stated that, along with the US’s alliances with the ROK, Australia, the Philippines, and Thailand, the USJA acts as the fulcrum for our strategic turn to the Asia-Pacific. They have underwritten regional peace and security for more than half a century, shaping the environment for the region’s remarkable economic ascent. They leverage our regional presence and enhance our regional leadership at a time of evolving security challenges. As successful as these alliances have been, we can’t afford simply to sustain them—we need to \textit{update} [emphasis added] them for a changing world.


\textsuperscript{46} Paul Midford, personal interview, 16 January 2014, Tokyo, Japan.

\textsuperscript{47} Konishi 2014.

\textsuperscript{48} Lind 2004, p. 120.

\textsuperscript{49} Martin 2004, p. 299.

\textsuperscript{50} Hillary Clinton, ‘America’s Pacific Century’, \textit{Foreign Policy}, 11 October 2011, available online at: \url{http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/americas-pacific-century/}. In the effort to ‘update’ these alliances, she highlighted three ‘core principles’ including: maintaining ‘political consensus on the core objectives of our alliances’; ‘ensur[ing] that our alliances are nimble and adaptive so that they can successfully address new challenges and seize new opportunities’; and ‘guarantee[ing] that the defense capabilities and communications infrastructure of our alliances are operationally and materially capable of deterring provocation from the full spectrum of state and non-state actors’.
It is clear, from Clinton’s framing, that there is an awareness within the US central government regarding the necessity to actively reiterate justifications for these alliances’ existence beyond, arguably, a path-dependent ‘sustenance’.

This was reinforced by Obama in a speech in to the Australian Parliament a month after the publication of Clinton’s piece, during which he reassured not only Australian MPs, but also a wider, regional audience, that ‘reductions in U.S. defense spending will not – I repeat, will not – come at the expense of the Asia Pacific […] The United States is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay’. Podesta likewise identified Japan, as ‘America’s oldest ally in the region’, as being ‘central to that effort’. Among former or current alliance ‘managers’, the language of ‘pivot’ was also praised not only for reiterating reassurances internally to regional audiences about a continued US presence, but also for signalling internationally the importance of the region to US foreign and security policy. For example, Gregson notes that although the policy echoes previous joint statements issued by both governments, the term ‘pivot’ itself was beneficial to the USG in that it ‘made headlines and the parsing of the metaphor in many think tanks kept it in the public eye […] It served notice that we were a resident Pacific power, that we would remain engaged, and that we would protect our interests and those of our allies and friends’.

Nonetheless, the policy – and its related story of ‘America’s Pacific Century’ – has also come under criticism, including from officials working on the alliance, as being one of containing China (again placing China in the role of the antagonist) rather than USM realignment and reassurance. Evidence for this can be found in a 2012 report entitled ‘The U.S. Japan Alliance: Anchoring Stability in Asia’ written by two well-known ‘Japan hands’ or ‘managers’ in Washington, Armitage and Nye. In

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52 Podesta 2012.
53 Gregson 2014.
this report, they argue:

The most immediate challenge is in Japan’s own neighborhood. China’s assertive claims to most of the East China Sea and virtually all of the South China Sea and the dramatic increase in the operational tempo of the PLA and other maritime services, including repeated circumnavigation of Japan, reveal Beijing’s intention to assert greater strategic influence throughout the “First Island Chain” (Japan-Taiwan-Philippines) or what Beijing considers the “Near Sea”.

Considering, however, the historical precedent of defining China as a ‘threat’ over the past few decades, it is unsurprising that there would be more than a suggestion of this within the ‘pivot’. Nevertheless, conscious of these kinds of criticisms, the Obama administration transitioned to ‘rebalance’ in mid-2012. This ‘rebalance’, explains Richard Weitz, consists of two processes: ‘the U.S. military is rebalancing its global assets from other regions to Asia, as well as rebalancing within the Asia-Pacific region, reducing the concentration of forces from northeast Asia to a more widely distributed focus throughout the entire region’. But does the ‘pivot’ or ‘rebalance’ represent a significant change from past administrations, or has it simply been a shift in political framing? A former MOFA official tells me that ‘the pivot is more rhetorical than real—there is no change really in troop deployments in the region. The US never left the region’. Szechenyi concurs, but notes that ‘the commitment to the region is still strong. I see continuity in Asia policy as the norm, and the same goes for alliance policy’.

Still, says one current MOFA official, the policy is unlikely to be temporary ‘because the US sees the economic interest in Asia, [the] rising economic market in Southeast Asia, or [a] big market in China, so stability in Asia is the interest for the US’. Reinforcing this certainty of a continued USM presence, another former official frames the possibility of the GOJ ‘going independent in terms of protecting itself and getting rid of [the] US security treaty or alliance’ as an ‘unrealistic policy option’. More bluntly, Oros concludes: ‘I don’t see Japan as ever autonomously providing for its own defence outside of the alliance’.

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55 Armitage and Nye 2012, p. 11.
56 Weitz 2012.
57 Anonymous, personal interview, 6 February 2014l, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo, Japan.
58 Szechenyi 2014.
59 Anonymous 2014e.
60 Anonymous 2014d.
61 Oros 2014.
2. Defining and redefining security

As [far as the] local governments not accepting the military relocation of Futenma, well, that’s a local issue. They have a very narrow agenda: pollution, noises, rapes, et cetera. But in Tokyo, we focus more on national issues like China, North Korea, or security ties.

- a current researcher at the National Institute for Defense Studies

If, according to the story of the official in the previous section, it is ‘unrealistic’ to expect that the fundamentals of the alliance will be subject to any major changes in the immediate future (especially given the continued ‘threats’ posed by China and North Korea, among others), then how does the institution manage the current USM presence and the framing of its security value within Japan? More specifically, as a majority (up to 75%, according to some figures) of USM installations and major bases are located in one prefecture – Okinawa, the poorest in the country and documented to have a rocky relationship with the mainland over the base issue (see Chapter 5 for details) – how have these ‘alliance managers’ framed the USM’s purpose and utility both historically (especially from the mid-1990s) and currently (with regards to the Futenma relocation issue) in their effort to reproduce the narrative of the alliance as the ‘cornerstone for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region’?

The challenge these ‘managers’ face in this regard appears to be significant even when looking only at the present situation. As mentioned previously, the majority of USM installations in Japan are located in Okinawa prefecture and take up about 10% of its total land area.\textsuperscript{62} The scale and size of the USM presence in the prefecture, along with its proximity to residential areas, has unfortunately led to a number of criminal incidents and accidents, environmental and noise pollution, and other issues. ‘There’s a sense of frustration that these bases have been an obstacle for Okinawa to develop further economically, [and] that it is continuing to be occupied’, says one former MOFA official. ‘And when incidents or accidents happen, no matter how small the issue, it signifies this whole issue of US occupation, or [the] GOJ treating Okinawans unfairly’.\textsuperscript{63} Another former MOFA official adds: ‘I spent three years in the North American [Affairs] Bureau and three years in DC—and I never enjoyed working on this issue. Once you have one accident or incident, you get a series of them, and Futenma is a symbol of that’.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{62} This as opposed to 0.02% on the mainland. While this difference is fairly stark on its own, it is also important to note, says Hook, the fact that Okinawa constitutes only 0.6% of Japanese territory overall (Sakurai 2008; Hook 2010, p. 196).
\textsuperscript{63} Anonymous 2014a.
\textsuperscript{64} Anonymous 2014b.
What the official is referring to is the prolonged political battle over the relocation of MCAS Futenma – the case study under examination in this thesis – from its current location within the densely-populated city of Ginowan in south central Okinawa (see Figure 1 below) to the more rural, less populated village of Henoko in Nago City to the north. Futenma currently serves as a ‘transportation hub, taking the marines to war zones, as well as a practice hub for fighter scrambles and training in take-off and landing’ but which also generates significant noise pollution and carries with it the risk of aircraft accidents from training flights which circle directly overhead Ginowan’s hospitals, schools, and residential areas. The abduction and gang-rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three US servicemen in September 1995 was the catalyst for its relocation, as it led to the creation of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in November of that same year. Under SACO, the USG and GOJ agreed to return 21% of the land from eleven USM installations back to the prefecture.

Figure 1: Futenma’s proximity to the surrounding Ginowan City as seen from Kakazu Heights Park

Futenma was included on this list of installations to be returned within ‘five to seven years’ on the condition that ‘a sea-based [replacement] facility (SBF) was established off the Henoko peninsula near the Marine Corps Camp Schwab training complex on the northeastern coast of the main island of Okinawa’. A 1997 referendum in Nago, however, resulted in a majority of residents voting against the relocation plan, and in spite of numerous revisions to the layout of the Futenma

65 Hook 2010, p. 204.
Replacement Facility (FRF) in the succeeding years – including moving it further inshore and away from coral reefs in Henoko’s Oura Bay, creating a V-shaped dual runway for take-offs and landings\textsuperscript{68}, and de-linking the FRF’s construction from existing plans to relocate over 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam\textsuperscript{69} – the relocation has remained a controversial and sometimes politically intractable issue for alliance officials, and has challenged the PBD and the ‘accepted’ meanings of what ‘security’ is, and to whom it applies.

2.1. The bases in Okinawa: a strategically important ‘burden’

The stagnant pace of the relocation has, first and foremost, resulted in a tense relationship between the prefectural and central governments. Anni Baker notes that ‘the activists blamed the Japanese government rather than the Americans for the problem because the Japanese government had come up with the [relocation] plan in the first place’.\textsuperscript{70} Government officials whom I interviewed often expressed an awareness of this issue. ‘We spent lots of time consulting with the local people to end up at the V-shaped runway planned in Henoko’, recounts Maher\textsuperscript{71}; another former MOFA official concurs that ‘we were paying attention to the number of residents around the FRF, and obviously we wanted to reduce the number of affected houses, as much as possible’.\textsuperscript{72} ‘The Okinawan government and the Japanese government have a common view that we want to try to minimise the burden on local residents of Okinawa’, continues a former MOFA official. ‘So moving it out of Futenma is lessening the burden of the people of Ginowan around Futenma. If that is moved to north Okinawa, we want to minimize the impact that’s going to have on the people of north Okinawa’.\textsuperscript{73}

These officials’ narrative about their efforts to minimise the ‘impact’ or ‘burden’ of the bases on local communities in the prefecture plays into the symbolism of the bases – as an extension of the USM presence – as being at the ‘heart’ or ‘foundation’ of the alliance. A current adviser to the

\textsuperscript{68} The U.S.-Japan Security Consultative Committee formed an ‘Expert Study Group’ in 2010 to evaluate the benefits of a V-shaped versus an I-shaped runway at the FRF and concluded that the V-shape was preferable because it ‘would enable takeoffs and landings mostly over water, so aircraft won’t have to fly directly over nearby communities. That would reduce noise impact and wouldn’t restrict local development’ (Gidget Fuentes, ‘Runway design debated for new Japan airbase’, \textit{Marine Corps Times}, 12 September 2010, available online at: http://archive.marinecorpstimes.com/article/20100912/NEWS/9120305/Runway-design-debated-new-Japan-airbase).


\textsuperscript{71} Maher 2014.

\textsuperscript{72} Anonymous 2014d.

\textsuperscript{73} Anonymous 2014a.
Diet justifies this framing:

Because ... that [the bases] is one of the most important pillars of Japan-US security-related negotiation, and how to ... make the most of US Marine Corps is actually one of the most crucial functions of this alliance, because [...] we really wanted to use them for any kind of crisis scenario. So without the settlement of the Futenma issue, this foundation of [the] US Marine Corps will be very unstable, so ... we have to make progress.

The same adviser continues:

Some US officials worked in the government fifteen or eighteen years ago, but many people are new to the government. But in [the] Japanese system, if you are an alliance manager, you have to work for the alliance for ten years, twenty years, thirty years—that is our system. I mean, even career diplomats, if you are a security specialist [...] you work for the alliance issue many times [during] your career. So they know the problem very well [and] they always tend to very highly regard Okinawa and the relocation issue.

A former official notes that it is, indeed, one of MOFA’s responsibilities that the base issue ‘doesn’t go on its own, that it is very much the heart of the whole US-Japan alliance. And to put that into that context is something that we placed a huge importance on’. This is confirmed in the frequent mentions of Okinawa and the GOJ’s commitment to ‘minimising the impact’ of US bases on the prefecture in the annual Diplomatic Bluebooks and PM speeches to the Diet since the SACO was formed in 1995, usually in tandem with a vow to support the ‘economic revival’ or ‘promotion’ of Okinawa as a special trade and tourism zone. Particularly in the speeches of PMs past and present, they make sure to emphasise that they ‘recogniz[e] the vital importance of taking a sincere approach to coping with this issue’, will ‘devote’ their ‘utmost efforts’ to the base issue, or, as is the case in

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74 Anonymous 2014b.
75 Anonymous 2014a.

more recent years, will make ‘every effort’ on the USM’s realignment’s ‘steady progress’ by ‘listening to the voices from the heart of local communities including Okinawa’.79

In claiming that they are ‘sincerely’ aware of the problems stemming from US bases in local Okinawan communities – but at the same time that these bases are at the ‘heart’ of the alliance and its reproduction – these officials touch upon a significant challenge to the PBD. If the USM presence poses so many issues, then how do these officials maintain that it is still so critical to the future of the alliance, particularly in Okinawa? Brooks argues that although the alliance itself may be ‘amorphous’, the US presence in Okinawa ‘remains the same due to its continued strategic importance’.80 Former US Ambassador to Papua New Guinea Richard Teare confirmed this belief in a 1998 interview that Okinawa ‘represents the base position in case all hell breaks loose on the Korean


80 William Brooks, personal interview, 27 August 2014, Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Affairs, Washington, DC, USA.
Peninsula’. Former CG in Naha Aloysius O’Neill adds that several bases in Okinawa, including Futenma, form part of the ‘UN Command Rear’ which is linked to ROK contingency planning and the UN Command there, ‘so you had this factor as well, the concern about the availability of the bases in Okinawa for a Korean contingency. In fact, there’s a 6,000 acre ammunition storage area adjacent to the 5,000 acre Kadena Air Base [in Okinawa], where a huge amount of ammunition for a Korean contingency was stored’.

In fact, as far back as 1965 – several years before Okinawa was ‘reverted’ from its post-war USM administration back to the central GOJ in Tokyo – this ‘strategic importance’ of Okinawa was emphasised in a speech by then-PM Eisaku Sato to the prefecture, the first by a post-war PM.

According to The Yomiuri Shimbun:

The U.S. government told the Japanese government on Aug. 17, 1965, that it strongly hoped Sato would state in his speech that he recognized Okinawa’s importance in the defense of Japan [...] [Furthermore,] John Emmerson, U.S. minister-counselor in Japan, said if changes were not made in the planned speech, it would be ‘disparaging’ to the U.S. administration of Okinawa. After arrangements by the two governments, the speech was revised to include a statement that Okinawa plays an extremely important role for the peace and stability of the Far East. [...] The documents also showed that U.S. High Commissioner in the Ryukyu Islands Lt. Gen. Albert Watson [...] said during a meeting with Sato on Aug. 19, 1965, that administrative rights over Okinawa would be returned to Japan when there was no longer a threat to the freedom of Asian countries, including Japan.

While historical circumstances may have changed in the meantime, this discursive strategy of linking the USM presence in Okinawa to the ‘freedom of Asian countries’ or the ‘peace and stability’ of Japan and the region has not. ‘The best guarantee of U.S. extended deterrence over Japan remains the presence of U.S. troops’, Armitage and Nye wrote in their 2012 report; a former MOFA official agrees, saying that ‘the core issue is security. And ... that will not change’.

Evidence for this perspective abounds in the recent Diplomatic Bluebooks, 2+2 statements, and PMs’ speeches as well. In instances where the documents emphasise the necessity of US forces in Okinawa prior to acknowledging the bases as a ‘burden’, the realignment plan and relocation of Futenma are highlighted as essential in ‘maintaining the deterrent of the USFJ [US Forces Japan]’ or in ‘maintaining the capabilities and readiness of U.S. forces in Japan’. In instances where the
documents discuss the base ‘burden’ first, they usually still frame the realignment and relocation plans as ‘important issues for ensuring smooth implementation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements’ or as ‘important to the stable presence of U.S. forces in Japan’. 87 

2.2. Hatoyama and the alliance ‘crisis’

In linking the ‘strategic importance’ of Okinawa (even with its ‘burdensome’ aspect) to the ‘big picture’ of ensuring ‘security’ and ‘prosperity’ in the Asia-Pacific, these officials have thus created a chain of connotation in which it is impossible to question the presence of US forces in Japan – and especially those in Okinawa – lest the integrity and future of the alliance, as well as the economic and human security of the entire region itself is undermined. Given this strategy, it is unsurprising that the ascent of the DPJ into office in 2009 on the back of a manifesto which outlined such desired goals as revising the SOFA, ‘re-examining the realignment of the US military forces in Japan and the role of US military bases in Japan’, and counterbalancing the USJA with an enhanced focus on the UN and diplomacy with other Asian nations resulted in consternation and criticism from alliance managers within the USG and Japanese central bureaucracy. 88 

Even before the beginning of the 2009 election campaign, ‘managers’ like Kurt Campbell warned in private meetings (such as one which took place in July 2009 between him, then the East Asia-Pacific Assistant SecState, and DPJ Secretary General Katsuya Okada), that support in the United States for a strong Alliance is bipartisan, and that the DPJ must take the steps necessary to ensure that it is not perceived as being anti-American. Such a perception would send the wrong message to China and North Korea, raise doubts about the bilateral relationship among our two peoples and would probably undermine popular support for the DPJ. 


These warnings were issued following a similarly hard line delivered by Clinton after she signed the 2009 Guam Treaty with then-FM Hirofumi Nakasone: ‘I think that a responsible nation follows the agreements that have been entered into, and the agreement that I signed today with FM Nakasone is one between our two nations, regardless of who’s in power [emphasis added]’. This sentiment of was also echoed by Japanese officials prior to the DPJ’s election. For example, DPJ Policy Affairs Chief Kiyoshi Sugawa reassured, in a 27 July 2009 meeting with then-Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the US Embassy in Tokyo James Zumwalt: ‘because the party has been in opposition, it has not been privy to much of the detailed information related to strategic planning behind relocation. Regardless, the U.S. and Japan should proceed “step by step” to resolving differences over Futenma’. Once the campaign kicked off, however, the fairly vague promises in the manifesto about ‘re-examining’ the realignment of US forces turned into a full-fledged promise by future PM Hatoyama to ‘[reopen] negotiations with the US over the base agreement and [move] Futenma completely off Okinawa’. This promise – and the subsequent reiteration of this goal once actually taking office in September 2009 – led to the ‘fast serious crisis in the alliance’ and ‘a kind of mistrust between Japanese and US leaders’. Although the DPJ actually saw this policy change, according to Hughes, as ‘an effort to strengthen the long-term durability and fundamental basis of the U.S.-Japan alliance by seeking to remove once and for all the nagging thorn of Futenma in the side of the bilateral relationship’, officials in both Tokyo and Washington’s diplomatic corps did not necessarily share the same view.

US SecDef Robert Gates’s October 2009 meeting with Japanese FM Katsuya Okada on the Futenma issue, for example, was interpreted by the Japanese media as a ‘scolding’ session for considering any other option for the relocation but Okinawa; successive visits by President Obama and Hillary Clinton echoed Gates’s message that ‘the move should take place as planned and without negotiation’. This is not to say, however, that US officials alone were unhappy with the about-face on Futenma. In December 2009, for example, Hatoyama’s own FM Mitoji Yabunaka told then-Ambassador John Roos in a private meeting that ‘it would be beneficial for the U.S. to go through the basic fundamentals of security issues with the Prime Minister’ and ‘that it was important to

90 McCormack 2009.
92 Krauss 2013, p. 182.
93 Forbes 2014; Anonymous 2014e.
94 Hughes 2012, p. 120.
impress upon Hatoyama that strong U.S.-Japan relations did not have an indefinite “shelf life” and that the Hatoyama administration could not simply set the alliance aside in favor of domestic politics without consequences. The alliance needs continued care and nurturing’.\textsuperscript{96}

In the same month, a bilateral working group that had been created to resolve this issue following Obama’s visit was suspended, thus ’marking the end of any attempts by the United States to outwardly entertain discussion or renegotiation’.\textsuperscript{97} ‘Hatoyama toppled over the chabudai [a short table used in Japanese homes]’ comments a former MOFA official (notably using, here, an image from everyday Japanese life in order to make his analogy), continuing: ‘I thought the issue [of Futenma] was dead in January 2010, since you can’t put dirty dishes back on the table—you can’t put back everything exactly the same way as it was before’.\textsuperscript{98} Nye added in a January 2010 New York Times editorial ‘An Alliance Larger Than One Issue’ that the Futenma plan had been ‘thrown into jeopardy […] The new prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, leads a government that is inexperienced, divided and still in the thrall of campaign promises to move the base off the island or out of Japan completely’.\textsuperscript{99}

Frustration with this ‘inexperience’ or lack of clarity surrounding Hatoyama’s Futenma policy and how it could be carried out also extended to officials within the central GOJ. For example, three MOFA officials, including Permanent Mission to the UN Political Counsellor Yutaka Arima, Japan-U.S. SOFA Division Principal Deputy Director Takashi Ariyoshi, and Japan-U.S. SOFA Division Deputy Director Ryo Fukahori, all characterised in the leaked cable as ‘experienced “Alliance hands”’ – reportedly expressed their ‘displeasure’ with the ‘politicization’ of the FRF to Roos in December 2009, complained that the issue ‘had essentially tied both governments’ hands’, and that ‘even the most senior government bureaucrats had been essentially cut out of the decision-making process and were unable to coordinate with the USG on public messaging to counter inaccurate depictions of both governments’ positions and discussions’.\textsuperscript{100}

‘There seemed to be a tendency to regard the possibilities in an extremely binary manner’, says Mochizuki. ‘One view was that the DPJ basically was not much different from the LDP so it would be business as usual. The other view was that the DPJ would be very, very different. But in the final analysis, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that the DPJ-led government would support the


\textsuperscript{97} O’Shea 2014, p. 448.

\textsuperscript{98} Anonymous 2014l.


U.S.-Japan alliance without substantial changes in policy’. Thus, even when the DPJ proved to have different policy priorities from its predecessors, officials in the Obama administration tended to be dismissive of them. Take, for example, a ‘scenesetter’ briefing for Obama’s November 2009 visit to Japan, in which Roos writes that Japanese voters had elected the DPJ due to its promise of ‘fundamental “change” in the way Japan is governed, including giving more authority to elected leaders as opposed to the bureaucracy’—with the placing of ‘change’ in quotation marks, and thus questioning its authenticity. Such views were reconfirmed not only by LDP contacts, but also by those within the DPJ, like Diet Affairs Committee Chairman Kenji Yamaoka. In an 8 December meeting with DCM Zumwalt, he advised that ‘the best way to break through the current stalemate is for Washington to understand the current political situation in Japan and to tell Japan what it would like to do [emphasis added] in search of mutually acceptable “next best way”’.

This misunderstanding resulted not only in criticism from US officials and media outlets (who described the former PM as, by turns, ‘the biggest loser [among world leaders]’, ‘loopy’, and ‘hapless’) but also from those at home. The visits by Gates, Obama, and Clinton, says Raul O’Shea, were ‘well covered’ by the domestic press in Japan, and they began to ‘mirror’ their US counterparts in their coverage of Hatoyama’s handling of the Futenma issue. For example, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* ‘described Hatoyama’s “intention” to “separate Japan from the US” as “extremely dangerous”’ in a 2010 editorial, while the *Asahi Shimbun* also ‘described the DPJ government as [...] “ill-equipped” to adequately deal with foreign affairs’. In January 2010, prominent Japanese security analyst and then-informal adviser to Hatoyama Yukio Okamoto furthermore confided to the DCM that going forward with the established FRF plan ‘would require political courage’ and ‘questioned whether Hatoyama would be able show this kind of leadership in “ramming home” the FRF plan, as he is “too nice,” and “wants to be liked”’. A current MOFA official adds that until Hatoyama and the DPJ promised to relocate Futenma out of Okinawa prefecture, Okinawans ‘couldn’t speak out because,

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105 O’Shea 2014, pp. 451-452.
you know, they didn’t think that was feasible. But when the Prime Minister said [it was], they thought it could be an option. Then, of course, they preferred that option’.\textsuperscript{107}

What is evident from these negative characterisations of Hatoyama is that in spite of the acknowledged, growing challenge that ‘insurgent’ narratives can pose to those of the central governments (here in the form of the Futenma protests), acceptable forms of authoritative ‘knowledge’ within the latter is still limited in scope to individual actors’ respective career statuses and ‘expertise’ gained by working with/on bureaucratic committees related to the alliance.\textsuperscript{108} It is this view of ‘knowledge’ that led former ‘managers’ like Nye, for example, to characterise the Hatoyama government as ‘inexperienced’ due to its being ‘in the thrall of campaign promises’ to the Japanese public (rather than in the ‘thrall’ of, say, previous USJ agreements on the FRF project). Moreover, the suggestion that Hatoyama was playing on public opinion in Okinawa to raise political support for his administration, and that there would otherwise have been no significant challenge from local communities to the FRF’s implementation, is indicative of two salient narratives within diplomatic sites of exchange: 1) that the DPJ did not provide a ‘feasible’ solution to the Futenma issue, as it involved relocating the base outside of the prefecture (a well-established non-starter) and thus never had a serious argument to present to the alliance ‘managers’ (let alone to the Japanese and American publics); and 2) that there is a lack of political will in Okinawa to attempt to effect policy changes without some kind of encouragement or direct guidance from central government officials (who are, in employing this strategy, not truly sympathising with Okinawans, but merely trying to win votes from them).

The latter’s reproduction seemed to be affirmed in May 2010, when Hatoyama announced that his administration had been unable to find an alternative relocation site aside from Henoko. He explained: ‘in terms of the role of the Marine Corps in the totality of all US forces in Okinawa, the more I learned, the more I have come to realize their interoperability. I have come to believe that it was the [only] way to maintain deterrence’.\textsuperscript{109} He resigned only a month later as a result of not only the Futenma issue, but also due to financial scandals that had occurred involving himself and other top officials in his administration. In the aftermath of this, US media outlets such as \textit{The Wall Street Journal} were quick to praise US diplomacy throughout the dispute, noting that ‘US officials considered the “past few months a process of educating Japan’s new leaders about the importance of the alliance”’.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{107}Anonymous 2014e.
\textsuperscript{108}Hansen 2006, p. 8.
\textsuperscript{110}O’Shea 2014, p. 454.
This language of ‘educating’ the party leadership or, as Yamaoka put it, ‘telling Japan what [the US] would like it to do’ appears in several cables. Okamoto, for example, ‘described himself as a blunt-speaking “tutor” to DPJ leaders on issues like the need for a U.S. Marine Corps presence in Japan, the strategic value of Okinawa, and the threat posed by a rising China’\(^{111}\), and Yabunaka remarked that ‘efforts to educate’ groups including ‘television commentators and politicians’ who ‘did not have as strong a grasp of security issues’ would be ‘worthwhile’.\(^{112}\) Considering that these officials or ‘experts’ had drawn up numerous agreements with their US counterparts over the years on the Futenma issue, it is perhaps unsurprising that they were reticent to support Hatoyama in his efforts to find an alternative relocation site.\(^{113}\)

The DPJ, however, also evidently played a role in alienating the bureaucracy from the outset, as it ‘came to power promising that political leaders rather than elite bureaucrats would take charge […] [without creating] a systematic process to mobilize bureaucratic expertise and to present the political leadership with coherent policy alternatives’.\(^{114}\) In pursuing a discursive strategy which frames Hatoyama and the DPJ as ‘naïve’ and ‘inexperienced’\(^{115}\), then, these officials reconfirm the inherent preferableness of the status quo policy on Futenma and the USM presence in Okinawa (as opposed to any unstable or experimental alternatives) and, thus, maintaining the status quo with regards to the alliance as a whole.

2.3. Futenma as a ‘ticking clock’

Nonetheless, as one of the major causes behind the collapse of the Hatoyama administration in June 2010, it stands to reason that Futenma might not merely be a ‘nagging thorn in the side’\(^{116}\) of the alliance and its continued reproduction. A current MOFA official acknowledges this, commenting that ‘whenever the prime ministers and the president of the US met each other, we had to talk about that issue, […] so in that sense that’s a very big issue for the whole Japan-US alliance’.\(^{117}\) Nevertheless, other officials and ‘experts’ with insights into alliance management continue to call Futenma a ‘headache’, ‘pain in the neck’, and a ‘roadblock’, among other descriptors.\(^{118}\) They particularly emphasise the manner in which the focus on Futenma, a ‘second-

\(^{111}\) Roos 2010a.

\(^{112}\) Roos 2009h.


\(^{114}\) Curtis 2011, p. 2.

\(^{115}\) Krauss 2013, pp. 193-194.


\(^{117}\) Anonymous 2014e.

\(^{118}\) Anonymous 2014b; Denmark and Kliman 2010, p. 2; Anonymous 2014l.
order issue’, has taken attention away from ‘advancing the alliance on other fronts’ such as ‘the preparation for future denial of [Chinese] capabilities’, reducing the overall USM presence in Okinawa outside of just Ginowan, and ‘our [the US’s] long-term strategy for East Asia’. Sheila Smith plays up this sense of urgency, arguing that ‘the alliance cannot afford another decade-and-a-half stalemate over relocating one base’. A current official in MOFA agrees, calling the process ‘long overdue’:

And there is the clock, you know, ticking, and of course, there is a procedure going on, an environmental impact assessment, and so forth. So there’s a kind of arrival of a moment of truth. And we just don’t want to keep on postponing.

This analogy suggests not only that progress must be made on the relocation plan as it currently stands without renegotiation of the kind attempted under Hatoyama, but also that, in the years since the original SACO agreement was concluded, an unacceptable level of inertia has developed around the issue. ‘Everybody knows that this has been a very difficult, protracted problem, and I think there’s a fatigue about this, and a sense of: “let’s just get this done and get it out of the way”’, comments Midford. ‘I think there’s a sense that if we reopen it, if we start from square one, we’ve wasted all this time and effort’. Schoff adds that ‘Japanese government officials’ fear of saying anything has been delaying progress on this, and [from the US’s perspective], sometimes you have to show leadership—you have to rip off the band-aid quickly and get it over with’. In this framing, the status quo is not, therefore, enacting the current relocation plan, but rather the political ‘stalemate’ which has not allowed this to happen. Hope and Raudla expand on this problem of policymaking:

In the same way that discourses can be formulated to drive progress on a policy issue, their very formulation can also be obstructive to action. In the same way that “interests” compete and cause gridlock, so can the discourse that informs and constructs them. In the same way that cultural norms can entrench a particular understanding and approach to a policy issue, so can the discourse of the status-quo provide a default which there must be a concerted effort by policy-makers to move away from.

Thus behind this ‘ticking clock’ are the narratives that 1) the USG and GOJ have ‘exhausted’ all other options outside of Henoko, and therefore 2) any further delays to the relocation will only

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119 Nye 2010.
120 Denmark and Kliman 2010, p. 2; Anonymous 2014b; Nye 2010.
122 Anonymous 2014d.
123 Paul Midford, personal interview, 16 January 2014, Tokyo, Japan.
124 Schoff 2014.
125 Hope and Raudla 2012, p. 403.
continue to endanger the current residents of Ginowan. On the first point, two US officials in discussions with the OPG, Christopher Johnstone, Pentagon director for Northeast Asia, and Marc Knapper, director of the Office of Japanese Affairs at the DOS, reiterated that ‘the relocation plan remains the only feasible solution that has been identified to date’. One former MOFA official I spoke with recounts how, in late 2009, although Osaka Governor Toru Hashimoto offered to host Futenma at Kansai International Airport, this plan was not pursued:

It sounded good on paper [...] but immediately, you knew that wouldn’t work, because Osaka is close to the Korean Peninsula, but it’s much further away from the Taiwanese Straits [...] If they’re [the bases] not close to the hotspots, then what’s the whole reason for having them there? [...] And our role [within MOFA] is really to try to [...] ensure that the US forces are in an effective location. So that’s not going to be Osaka. That’s going to have to be in Okinawa. But we also want to ensure that it’s in a place in which the least amount of people are going to be affected. So that’s why it’s Henoko—Henoko is in the middle of nowhere.

Along the same vein, other officials rely on the asset specificity argument, framing base facilities in Okinawa as ‘sunk costs’ or otherwise structurally impossible to move. A current MOFA official argues, for example, that ‘the relocation facility needs to be in Okinawa, because [...] in Futenma there is a helicopter squadron and those squadrons cannot be so separate from other components. So in that sense, I don’t think there is any other prefecture that can be the site for relocation’. O’Neill concurs, adding: ‘when you have Marine infantry you’ve got to have Marine helicopters because the helicopters move the infantry in Marine Corps doctrine. You couldn’t, for example, keep the infantry in Okinawa and move the helicopters to Hawaii or to the mainland of Japan. That would be one of the virtues of moving the helicopters to Camp Schwab where they would be co-located’. ‘I guess it’s [Henoko] not my personal preference’, one former MOFA official acknowledges. The official echoes Knapper, continuing: ‘it’s more of an examination of what’s feasible [emphasis added]. At the end of the day, the FRF needs to provide deterrence or rapid response capability. And if they can’t do the job, you know, it doesn’t make any sense’.

2.4. Abe and Nakaima

Current PM Abe, cognisant of the numerous delays to the FRF and the expectations from the USG regarding its ‘progress’, has made a concerted effort in ‘resolving’ it since the re-election of the LDP to office in December 2012. In a 2014 address to the Diet, he makes clear his commitment:

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126 ‘Futenma relocation plan unfeasible, Okinawa official tells U.S.’, The Mainichi Shimbun, 11 January 2013a, available online at: [http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130112p2g00m0dm053000c.html](http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130112p2g00m0dm053000c.html).  
128 Anonymous 2014e.  
130 Anonymous 2014d.
Grinberg 115

In the past, the people of Okinawa were at the mercy of politics that was no more than unsubstantiated words. The reality of Futenma Air Station, which is surrounded by schools and residences and lies right in the heart of a built-up area, did not shift even a single millimeter during those three years and three months. Such irresponsible politics must not be repeated [emphasis added]. The Abe Cabinet will be engaged in reducing the burden not through words but through bona fide actions.

Abe echoes his American and Japanese predecessors in framing previous administrations (and, in particular, the DPJ and Hatoyama) as having ‘politicised’ Futenma or otherwise caused ‘irresponsible’ delays to its relocation, and thus reproduces the narrative that it must be moved as a matter of ‘responsibility’ for local and national security (which are ‘above’ politics)—and that there are no alternatives to doing so.

Prior to this address, he had concluded negotiations with former Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima in December 2013 which ended in an agreement to begin landfill work in preparation for constructing the FRF (according to the inshore relocation plan agreed upon some years earlier). In exchange, the Abe administration ‘pledged to secure a budget of the ¥300 billion level annually up until fiscal 2021’ for Okinawa to promote the prefectural economy (about $2.5 million), the early return and halt of operations of Futenma within five years, the accelerated return of Camp Kinser in Urasoe, the addition of new articles to the existing SOFA on environmental issues, and the deployment of about twelve Osprey helicopters (see Figure 2 below) – aircrafts which had been highly controversial during their first deployment to Okinawa in late 2012 – outside of the prefecture.132

131 Abe 2014a.
132 MOD, ‘Okinawa Governor Nakaima’s Request to Prime Minister Abe (excerpt)’, 17 December 2013h. This agreement was preceded by several precipitating moves by the Abe administration, including: discussions between LDP Secretary General Shigeru Ishiba and local LDP lawmakers in Okinawa, previously opposed to the relocation, which resulted in the lawmakers reversing their position and pressing Nakaima to accept it; senior US officials ‘conveying’ to the Abe administration that ‘Washington is worried the stalemate might persist if Nakaima attaches conditions in approving the work’; and the central USG and GOJ agreeing to ‘launch talks to forge a new accord on protecting the environment and allowing on-site inspections of U.S. military bases […] [that] would create “uniform procedures” for Japanese officials to access U.S. military facilities and areas in the case of an “environmental incident,” or a spill, and to conduct environmental surveys before land used by the U.S. military is returned to Japanese control’ (‘Okinawa lawmakers agree on backing U.S. base relocation’, The Mainichi Shimbun, 25 November 2013b, available online at: http://www.mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20131125p2g00m0dm062000c.html; ‘U.S. seeks Okinawa’s unconditional OK for base replacement landfill’, The Mainichi Shimbun, 16 December 2013c, available online at: http://www.mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20131216p2g00m0dm027000c.html; DOD, ‘U.S., Japan to Negotiate Environmental Stewardship Pact’, 25 December 2013b, available online at: http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=121400).
Figure 2: A grounded Osprey helicopter inside Futenma

The 2+2 agreement issued in October of the same year also reiterates that the FRF constitutes an ‘essential element’ of the realignment of US forces, naming the relocation of Futenma specifically to the Camp Schwab/Henoko area as ‘the only [emphasis added] solution that addresses operational, political, financial, and strategic concerns and avoids the continued use of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma’ in its current location. Some of these concerns, says the same document, include: ‘North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs and humanitarian concerns; coercive and destabilizing behaviors in the maritime domain; disruptive activities in space and cyberspace; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and man-made and natural disasters’. In the face of these ‘diverse challenges amid the dramatically changing international situation’ and in a security environment that ‘has become more and more severe’, says the same year’s Diplomatic Bluebook, the alliance (and, by extension, the prompt relocation of Futenma) ‘is becoming even more important’. By framing the regional security situation in such dire terms, these texts thus reproduce an impression of limited foreign policy options available to the USJA in addressing them, especially with regards to basing policy.

This narrative – along with the one portraying ‘progress’ on Futenma as breaking the ‘stalemate’ – influenced the language used in news coverage of the 2013 agreement concluded between Abe and Nakaima. The Yomiuri Shimbun’s editorial following the deal, titled ‘Nakaima’s approval on Henoko to reinforce Japan-U.S. alliance’, called it an ‘important advance’ and pronounced that ‘[r]esolving this difficult issue without nullifying the past laborious efforts will have the highly significant effect of making the bilateral alliance stronger and more sustainable at a time when Japan’s security environment has been worsening’. It further ‘praised’ Nakaima’s decision ‘as a

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134 MOFA 2013.
practical choice, giving top priority to steady reduction of the burden’. The Japan Times, while cautioning that ‘Tokyo needs to take concrete actions to ease Okinawa’s burden in meaningful ways [...] [as this] will be crucial in sustaining Japan’s security alliance with the United States and in maintaining a trustful relationship between Tokyo and Okinawa’, nonetheless called the agreement a ‘political breakthrough for Tokyo’ and titled the article ‘Progress on Futenma relocation’. BBC News likewise referred to the agreement as a ‘breakthrough’ after ‘years of deadlock’, and a New York Times editorial the following month entitled ‘Another Step Forward on Okinawa’, while warning that the USG and GOJ ‘must make a more compelling case to Okinawans for why the American presence is still needed’, still called Nakaima’s issuance of the landfill permit a ‘significant breakthrough’ and stated that ‘America’s continued military presence in Japan is important to regional stability, a point driven home by North Korea’s warmongering and the increasing face-offs between China and its Asian neighbors, including Japan, over disputed islands in the South China and East China Seas’.

Given Nakaima’s background as the previously preferred candidate of the USG and GOJ in local Okinawan politics going back several years due to his bureaucratic background, the fact that he was the local official to strike the deal with Abe in the end is not entirely unexpected. Nonetheless, the language of ‘breakthrough’ and ‘progress’ is also used frequently by the officials I interviewed. ‘I would say it’s a breakthrough that they’ve [the GOJ and USG] been able to gain the agreement of the Okinawan government to this’, says one former MOFA official. ‘I think . . . that was a landmark decision for the governor to make. It’s huge progress’. ‘I have strong respect for him’, one current MOFA official says. ‘I think that was a very, very difficult decision, but he was very brave politician’. A former MOFA official concurs: ‘I think Governor Nakaima is taking his own – in my

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135 ‘Nakaima’s approval on Henoko to reinforce Japan-U.S. alliance’, The Yomiuri Shimbun, 28 December 2013d.
140 Anonymous 2014a.
141 Anonymous 2014e.
personal viewpoint – courageous political kind of acceptance of what Prime Minister Abe has proposed and is trying to do’. 142

On Abe, however, there is less talk about ‘courage’ and more about practicality. ‘One reason [Abe pursued this policy] might be that he really wanted to see the development of US-Japan relationship as the most important pillar of his foreign and security strategy’, a current adviser to the Diet posits. ‘I don’t think he had any personal connection to or convictions about Okinawan issues, so maybe he regard[ed] – or he and his advisers – regarded this issue as crucial for the US-Japan alliance to make a difference from the DPJ’. 143

3. Institutional and cultural identities

They [Okinawans] don’t want to be mainland Japanese, and they can’t be. They need an enemy to maintain their identity.

- a former MOFA official

In clear contrast to the positive or even laudatory language used to describe the actions taken by Nakaima, Abe, and other officials towards ‘resolving’ the Futenma relocation issue is that which is used to describe those of protesters and/or their actions in Okinawa. Whether using such terms as ‘radical’ or ‘leftist’, the purpose of such language is not only to identify and separate these actors from those within the diplomatic (and defensive) sites of exchange by their intention and strategy, but also to question the value and seriousness of their arguments based on this identification. While these actors portray their self-identification as being within the ‘accepted’ circles of governmental expertise and knowledge, what they fail to see is that their status as a MOFA or DOS official is not merely a ‘neutral label’, but rather brings with it ‘a range of emotive, practical and moral connotations imputed to individuals assigned to that category’ and ‘produce [their] expectations of what [they] can achieve and of how [they] will be treated’.

This is especially true in the context of an institution like the USJA, where, regardless of political ideology or party affiliation, these actors display a commitment to its reproduction which increasingly binds them together to share a specific social identity. Furthermore, in order for this identity to survive, the reproduction of its constitutive narratives ‘cannot be given by just anybody, but only by those others that the self recognizes and respects as being kindred to itself’. 146

142 Anonymous 2014d.
143 Anonymous 2014b.
144 Drake 2010, p. 55.
145 Drake 2010, p. 20.
‘Individuals adjust their interactions in order to reduce conflict and maximize exposure to actors more similar to themselves’, says Hanspeter Kriesi. ‘Based on their value orientations, individuals selectively choose their information channels, which reinforce their value orientations and the links between these orientations and political choices on a diverse set of issues’.147

Through their interactions with like-minded individuals within their communities, officials go on to form ‘programmatic beliefs’—such as, for example, that the alliance acts as the ‘cornerstone’ for peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region—which sit at the origin of policy ideas ‘because they define the problems to be solved by such policies; the issues to be considered; the goals to be achieved; the norms, methods, and instruments to be applied; and the ideals that frame the more immediate policy ideas proposed to solve any given problem’.148 Insulated from public opinion to a large degree, ‘administration, or bureaucracy, creates its own analytical framework for addressing the issues with which it is confronted, producing its own imperatives and dynamics’.149

Nonetheless, it falls within the work of many diplomatic actors to convey such narratives outside of their accepted circles, and to ensure that there is a sufficient level of public acceptance of them for certain policies to be carried out. In the process, however, they are confronted by the arguments and interpretations of these same ‘outsiders’ whose socioeconomic backgrounds and sources of ‘knowledge’ about ‘security’ may be unfamiliar to them. While this confrontation can, on the one hand, be beneficial in terms of informing diplomatic actors on certain aspects of history or public feeling of which they may not have been aware, on the other it may have the effect of re-entrenching their own core beliefs and stories about why they are ‘correct’—and thus reproduce identities which keep them distinct from others with ‘incorrect’ interpretations.

3.1. Division of official responsibilities over the bases

In discovering how these identities are shaped and reproduced, it is important to understand, first of all, the nature of diplomatic work generally speaking and specifically with regards to the style and form of communications between central government officials, Okinawan residents, and OPG officials. For example, former Vice President and US Ambassador to Japan (1993-

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149 Drake 2010, p. 77.
96) Walter Mondale broke down his responsibilities in the following manner:

Everything you do every day is part of this public. You go out and give speeches. You travel around the country. You meet with their leaders. You meet with various groups from Japan. You write articles for the newspaper. You hold news conferences. You go over and see the prime minister or the cabinet secretary or this person or that person. The idea is to create a public presence and the development of public issues in a way that strengthens the [US-Japan] relationship.

Officials from MOFA with whom I spoke, while perhaps not taking on such public roles as Mondale, were and/or are still involved in ensuring smooth communication between the USG and GOJ, the USM in Okinawa, and local Okinawan officials. ‘Our role at the Foreign Ministry was to help in the communication [...] to really ensure that [it] was thorough, that both sides understood what was happening, and to try to make sure [the relocation] would go ahead as planned’, says one former official. The official adds that they accompanied the FM on trips to Okinawa during their tenure:

Apart from going to the US, China, and the capitals, Washington, Beijing, going to Okinawa is also a very important priority for the Foreign Minister. So we would go with the Foreign Minister to see the Okinawan Governor, the Nago City mayor—which is actually unheard of in other parts of Japan. You would not have the Foreign Minister go and see the mayor of a prefecture or a small city in a prefecture, but because of the political importance of this, both the Foreign Minister and the Defense Minister would go and see these people.

Another former official details their role at MOFA in terms of a first stage, second stage, and third stage of negotiations over the Futenma relocation (none of which, it should be noted, explicitly discuss a role for public deliberation):

First, you know, we need to share strategic objectives between the United States and Japan, and then the second stage is a more of a kind of conceptual foundation of our roles and missions. And then, based on those first and second stages, we have arrived at the actual realignment of US forces. Of course, you know, it is very important to share objectives and to share common recognition about roles and missions.

The task of communicating with local officials or the public in Okinawa is largely left to MOFA’s liaison office in Naha, the prefectural capital. The role of this office, says a current official, is, in the event of an incident or accident related to the USM bases, to ‘control the damage as best as possible, so in the process of the work, [it] always communicates with them [the USM] on how to present the information to the public’. With the office in Okinawa, it therefore becomes less

150 Anonymous 2014a.
151 Anonymous 2014d.
152 Anonymous 2014c.
urgent, according to these officials, to actually visit the prefecture and speak with their counterparts on the ground. A current Diet adviser remarks, for instance, that ‘Tokyo planners’ need not visit often, since ‘we have, you know, the first contacting agencies in Okinawa already’.154

According to these officials, however, the head of the liaison office – the ‘Ambassador in charge of Okinawan Affairs’, effectively the Japanese counterpart to the US CG in Okinawa – does not have as much influence on the central government during such incidents or accidents as the local populace might think. Set up in the aftermath of the 1995 rape, the ambassador is essentially the spokesperson for MOFA in Okinawa and the go-between for the central government and local media. The position, though, has not come without its share of controversy. ‘It goes back to the issue of: why do you have a Japanese ambassador in Okinawa? Are you treating us as foreigners?’, says a former MOFA official, continuing:

Which is not true, and what we try to explain is we have that ambassador because it is such an important issue. We need someone with ambassador rank to be able to talk to the top of USFJ, of the […] Marine Corps in Okinawa […] but we need someone who’s able to do that and who’s able to talk with the Governor of Okinawa and the [central] government as well.

A current official argues further:

maybe some people might have too [many] expectations when they hear the title “ambassador” […] [because] some [anti-base] protesters often said the ambassador is not a representative of the prefecture, so the ambassador can’t send [a very] strong message to Tokyo. But they don’t really understand the difference between the Okinawan ambassador and our ambassador between Tokyo and Washington. The role is very different.

If there is distance between Tokyo and Okinawa in the form of the liaison office, then an even greater one might exist between Tokyo and Washington in the general management of the base issue. ‘Futenma is over in DC; it’s not a problem compared to stuff like ISIS’ says Oros.157 A former MOFA official agrees:

There are so many things the US government doesn’t know; Futenma is one of them. They only pay attention when the budget is involved. The attitude of the US Congress is that Futenma is a done deal, so Japan just has to do it. Futenma is not a political problem on the Hill. It’s mainly dealt with by the [Senate] Armed Services Committee [SASC] in the US—it’s too detailed an issue for many people.

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154 Anonymous 2014b.
156 Anonymous 2014c.
157 Oros 2014.
158 Anonymous 2014l.
While not all diplomatic actors would agree with this assessment, they nonetheless frame the specific tasks related to carrying out the FRF project as the responsibility of the GOJ. A current MOFA official, for example, argues that the USG is ‘supportive’, but characterises the landfill permit request issued by the central government and the subsequent December 2013 negotiations as a ‘domestic procedure’, so ‘that’s what Japan has to do. The US was watching carefully, but, basically, they were expecting Japan to do what we should do [emphasis added]’ (echoing earlier comments that Japanese leaders must be ‘educated’ about the ‘importance of the alliance’).\textsuperscript{159}

Campbell said as much in a September 2009 meeting with then-DPJ Deputy PM Naoto Kan in which he ‘advised that while the DPJ worked to bring about such historic changes, it keep in mind some lessons from the recent past. One such lesson was to not only take bold actions, but also take responsibility for those actions’.\textsuperscript{160} Another current MOFA official, while concurring that ‘Washington understands the political importance [of Futenma]’, distinguishes ‘Washington’ from ‘people in Yokota’ – referring to the headquarters of the USFJ at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo – in that the latter ‘[don’t] really understand the situation in Okinawa’.\textsuperscript{161} Still, the official continues, this discrepancy is ‘natural’, since the USFJ command at Yokota ‘is, you know, try to defend something—the operation should be their first priority’.

### 3.2. Okinawa as separate from mainland Japan

While the USFJ leadership at Yokota might not identify as strongly with Okinawan issues – or the Futenma issue – as local representatives from MOFA, this does not mean that the latter are able to fully appreciate not only the physical distance between Tokyo, Washington, and Okinawa, but also the distance between the ways in which the actors from each of these three sites self-identify.

\textsuperscript{159} Anonymous 2014e.
\textsuperscript{161} Anonymous 2014c.
Arriving in Okinawa prior to the 1995 rape, O’Neill observed that

the prejudice [...] toward Okinawa was quite strong [...] largely the mainlander view of Okinawa was just similar to what you mentioned: They’re not exactly Japanese; they speak funny, and they have weird customs and all that. In their dialect, the Okinawans call the mainland Japanese Yamatunchu or Yamato people and themselves Uchinanchu. A lot of prejudices continued to linger particularly among the older generation of mainlanders. That awful crime [the 1995 rape] did generate a certain amount of sympathy and a recognition that there did have to be adjustments in the base situation. Part of the equation was the NIMBY syndrome, the “not in my backyard” syndrome: “We’re so glad those bases are down in Okinawa because that’s what Okinawans are for. We don’t want Marines and airmen wandering around our neighborhoods and making noise nearby”.

Even in instances (like O’Neill’s) where officials express a more advanced awareness of the deep differences in identification, there are still others who frame the distance between Okinawans and mainland Japanese as not necessarily a product of historical discrimination against the prefecture, but as a manifestation of burgeoning Okinawan nationalism. ‘There’s this underlying theme – we call it the lava, the maguma [magma] of the Okinawan people – that there’s always something underneath that is boiling’, says a former MOFA official.163 ‘The base issue is predominantly the Okinawa issue’, continues another former MOFA official. ‘It is related to Okinawan nationalism, which is against the US and also against the central [Japanese] government’.164 This nationalism within the prefecture, however, argues the first former MOFA official, might pose a problem to the future of the FRF project, since ‘people who are working for the national government down in Okinawa are local people’.165 The official continues: ‘these were people who were born and bred in Okinawa, hired by the central government, but actually still working in Okinawa [...] It’s not easy for them to be seen as sort of enforcing central rule in Okinawa’.

However, not all officials who have worked in this area express this kind of awareness. In an interview with Toshikazu Yamaguchi, formerly the minister in charge of Okinawan issues, Yamaguchi ‘admitted he had “never heard of” Okinawan independence, and though it might warrant “study,” the government has no intention of ever calling a referendum’.166 Thus, while some of the officials I interviewed displayed an awareness or a degree of understanding regarding this independence movement, it is clear that others – including Yamaguchi, purportedly the ‘minister in charge of

164 Anonymous 2014l.
Okinawan issues’ – do not. This illustrates Buzan’s point, again, that policymakers ‘are only partially informed, do not fully understand other actors or the system (or themselves), are capable of only limited rationality and are highly constrained in what they can do’.

3.3. The ‘victim’ identity of Okinawans

Although officials such as Yamaguchi profess ignorance in some (admittedly important) areas of Japanese-Okinawan relations, there is still a general appreciation or acknowledgment of the divide in historical understanding between the prefecture and the mainland. Magleby refers to this divide using the term *Ryukyu shobun*, loosely translated as ‘Ryukyu disposal’

A current MOFA official argues that the Battle of Okinawa during WWII – the only major battle to take place on Japanese soil, and one during which a third of the prefecture’s 475,000 residents were either killed or committed suicide (sometimes forcibly) – has resulted in Okinawans having a ‘pacifist attitude’:

> some people treat very seriously the [...] crimes caused by the US [service] members, even if there are so [many] more crimes caused by Okinawan people, they tend to specifically see the number of cases caused by US [service] members. I think it’s mainly because they [the bases] take up so much land here, and also the historical background.

Magleby also observes ‘lingering resentment’ over how the 1995 rape and the August 2004 crash of a US CH-53 military helicopter into the library of Okinawa International University (OIU) were handled, the university in the latter of these incidents being located nearby to Futenma.

Regardless of these legitimate causes for concern with the USM presence, however, actors across diplomatic sites often frame protests as being driven by an inherent Okinawan sense of ‘victimhood’ or non-Japanese-ness. A current MOFA official argues that even though the USG and GOJ have worked on improving communications with the public over these types of incidents and accidents, ‘creating regulations or frameworks doesn’t solve the problem, right? So what we can do is just to encourage the US side to obey the rules, but even if we say that to the local community,

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168 *Ryukyu* being the name not only of the independent kingdom which once ruled over Okinawa prior to its incorporation into the Japanese state in 1872, but also referring to the chain of islands southwest of mainland Japan including Okinawa, Ōsumi, Tokara, Amami, Yonaguni, and Sakishima.
169 Magleby 2014.
170 Anonymous 2014c.
171 See Chapters 4 and 5 for further details related to this incident.
172 Magleby 2014.
they are not satisfied’. A former MOFA official expands:

Okinawa has enough reasons not to trust the central government or the Americans; it is understandable why they don’t. We didn’t treat them well, and neither did the Americans. They were victimised, and now victimisation is part of their identity. The relationship [with the US] could be slightly better, but then the Japanese would become their enemy […] A reduction in the number and area of US facilities could help – it would represent goodwill on the part of the US government – but it wouldn’t change the pacifist tendencies of Okinawans. They are “professional victims”.

Acting as ‘professional victims’ (or some variation on this), say some officials, plays into what they argue is a cynical bid on the part of the OPG for subsidies from the central government.

Remarks a current adviser to the Diet:

I don’t think communication can resolve a lot, because what Okinawa really wants to see, now, is not communication. The main factor is the subsidy from the central government to Okinawa. [After the December 2013 agreement], the Okinawan government [will] receive huge mon[ies] each year from the central government, so Nakaima decided to accept the relocation plan.

As the poorest prefecture in Japan, Okinawa has historically relied on subsidies following its reversion in 1972 as compensation for hosting a bulk of USM bases, with some towns like Kin, Ginowan, and Kadena – located close to major base facilities (Camp Hansen, Futenma, and Kadena Air Base, respectively) – sometimes collecting as much as 20% of their revenue from the bases and related industries. ‘The political pendulum swung back and forth depending on a lot of things, in no small part depending on what various Okinawan administrations were able to get out of the central government in terms of largesse because Tokyo spent a huge amount of money on Okinawa in big infrastructure projects and on noise abatement measures’, comments O’Neill.

In fact, the central government ‘gives subsidies to cover 90 percent to 95 percent of the costs for public works in Okinawa, while that ratio is usually around 50 percent for other prefectures’. Nago, the city within which the FRF is set to be constructed, received significant municipal grants following the local referendum in 1997, with the total share of central governmental subsidies ‘reaching almost 30% in 2001, endangering the municipality’s financial self-sufficiency and threatening the quality of public services should central government subsidies be withdrawn’. Following the agreement between Nakaima and Abe, these subsidies are set to

\[172\] Anonymous 2014e.
\[174\] Anonymous 2014l.
\[175\] Anonymous 2014b.
\[178\] Yoshida 2010.
\[179\] Tanji 2009.
expand even further. The Japan Times reported a new subsidy programme ‘aimed at winning greater cooperation from base-hosting prefectural governments in efforts to reduce the burden on Okinawa’. The Yomiuri Shimbun, moreover, observed that the programme was being announced ahead of the November 2014 gubernatorial race in Okinawa, suggesting that it was created in an effort to support and maintain then-Governor Nakaima’s position against any potential anti-relocation contenders.

3.4. Suspicion towards the anti-base movement

Knowledge of the reliance of these communities on central government subsidies has created some suspicion and doubt among officials in terms of not only the motives of the ABM, but also of how much it truly represents the views of the Okinawan population as a whole towards the USM and the alliance. Former CG in Naha Thomas Reich for example, in a 2006 cable, explains the confusion faced by USG and GOJ officials in defining who constitutes the ‘local’ in Okinawa:

Nonetheless, the definition of who is "local" has become a hot topic, with those favoring Futenma relocation to Henoko satisfied to limit "local" to only Nago citizens, or even only ward residents near Henoko, while opponents insist all Okinawans are equal stakeholders in the issue. In early March, [then-Nago Mayor Yoshikazu] Shimabukuro helped the GOJ by publicly commenting that the "local communities who have a right to pass judgment on FRF" was limited to just three of Nago's 55 wards, or about 5 percent of the Nago area population. Inamine told reporters on March 26 that "local" meant all Okinawans, not just Nago/Henoko residents. The same day on TV Asahi's "Sunday Project" (equivalent to "Meet the Press") Diet member Mikio Shimoji echoed the Governor's position, but was contradicted by former JDA Director General Shigeru Ishiba, who asserted that "local" means Nago residents only. The Okinawan media, of course, insist that all Okinawans need to pass judgment on the FRF plan and on March 30 both papers highlighted a planned rally by Nago's neighboring town of Ginoza as evidence of an expansion in "local concern." The papers gave prominent space to the rally against the shallow water project set for April 4 and the Higashi Village Chief statement that "More than just the fact that the flight route will pass over us, we want to make the 'appeal' that we also should be considered citizens of communities surrounding Henoko and, as such, should be consulted on the matter."

A current MOFA official expresses similar views about the protesters, claiming that ‘Naha people, [on a] daily basis, they don’t think about the base issue’.

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183 Anonymous 2014c.
because the bases are a national security issue’, says Maher. ‘Some opponents are too ideological, and not practical; there’s no solution to be had with them’. 184

In framing the arguments of these protesters as ‘ideologically’ opposed to the US presence (as opposed to seeing its ‘logical’ necessity to national security), it thus follows that little can be done to appease their stated aims (especially, if going by the comments of Reich and others, when it is purportedly difficult to identify the ‘they’ whose demands should be addressed). A current adviser to the Diet, for instance, agrees with Maher: ‘I don’t deny the protests. But what worries me so much is that they [don’t] know US planning [well], so they should have a better strategy of negotiating [with the central government] [...] But local activists are still mostly biased in their ideologies’. 185 Yamaoka, in his discussion with Roos, likewise remarked that for Okinawans, ‘“[i]t’s all about opposing for its own sake”’. 186

Another current MOFA official distinguishes between the ‘public’ and ‘private’ opinions of Okinawan activists and officials, airing the oft-repeated complaint that local news media in the prefecture (specifically, the two newspapers the Ryukyu Shimpo and the Okinawa Times) is also too ‘ideological’ and unfair in its representation of central government policies:

So one person can [...] say this on the newspaper, and in private it’s a totally different thing [...] And they can drink, be very friendly, and this person can maybe have a brother or sisters working for the base—or for an organisation with the base. So it’s really hard for us, not originally from Okinawa, to understand the dynamics of Okinawan society, I think. I think that causes a kind of gap between Tokyo and Okinawa.

This claim is not without basis: former Editor-in-Chief of the Shimpo, Takeshi Kakazu, previously remarked that ‘“[t]he ideal for Okinawa is to become a military-free island”’ and defended the editorial position of the paper as reflecting the sentiments of Okinawan residents. 188 However, the same current official, along with others, notes that these newspapers have ‘a lot of impact’ in the prefecture and are influential in Tokyo. Former State Minister for Okinawa Seiji Maehara advised Campbell in an October 2009 meeting, for example, that ‘[t]he fact that Prime Minister Hatoyama’s campaign pledge to favor out-of-Okinawa options for the FRF merited special editions of all local

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184 Maher 2014.
185 Anonymous 2014b.
186 Roos 2009f.
187 Anonymous 2014c.
Okinawan newspapers should show the U.S. Government the depth of local feelings about realignment.\(^{189}\)

Outside of the activists and news media, officials in the central government also expressed to me how difficult it is to work with some local Okinawan officials, especially in terms of the FRF. Referring to the election of anti-base mayor Susumu Inamine in Nago in January 2014, Maher says ‘Inamine is legally irrelevant, but he can deny landfill truck permits’.\(^{190}\) Addressing attempts by Inamine to delay the landfill process, a current adviser to the Diet argues that ‘his actual behaviour [causes] a lot of problems because the bureaucratic process shouldn’t be intervened [in] by the political whims of the mayor’.\(^{191}\) Like the protesters, then, these actors characterise the role of local Okinawan officials in base-related policymaking as either ‘irrelevant’ or their actions as being based on ‘political whims’ rather than on an objective ‘reality’ and whatever more specific, ‘scientific’ evidence is required by the central governments in making their assessments of suitable relocation sites. This framing is best summarised in a comment by the Diet adviser, who concludes:

In the past, before Hatoyama, as you know, the local mayor [in Nago made] a very concrete request for the [FRF] plan, like, one hundred metres this way, right? That should be listened to carefully because that could be, you know, interwoven into the negotiation process. But if the protesters say, “we have to protect the dugong” and [the runway] shouldn’t make any V shape, what is the meaning of this? And so you need some other specific protesters’ explanation? Opinions, right? But the government doesn’t need to listen [to those] because they know the real meaning of the relocation plan and they know the [US] posture review doesn’t mean all [of the] Marine Corps could [leave] this country. So the local protesters told you [they could use] the US strategy for their own sake. They try to […] say, oh, “all US Marine Corps can go out”. That is not the plan at the alliance level, but they always protest that way. So this is something that the central government cannot listen to carefully, because they know that shouldn’t be the right interpretation of the plan.

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4. Discursive intersections and divisions

There is so much distance between Okinawa and Tokyo. So it’s very difficult for Tokyo people to really understand the situation in Okinawa.

- a current MOFA official

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\(^{190}\) Maher 2014.

\(^{191}\) Anonymous 2014b.

\(^{192}\) The dugong, a highly endangered marine mammal related to the manatee, also acts as a symbol of the anti-relocation movement in Nago as they have been spotted in Japan off the coast of northern Okinawa. For more details on the use of the dugong by the ABM, see Chapter 5, section 3.
If the situation is framed in such a way that the GOJ and USG ‘cannot listen very carefully’ to anti-base protesters because it is ‘very difficult’ for ‘Tokyo people’ (and, following on from this, ‘Washington people’) to ‘really understand the situation in Okinawa’, then it is unsurprising that officials and ‘experts’ within them often take greater interest in actively reassuring one another than the public about the health of the alliance (and regarding the public, therefore, as existing outside of the institutional context and irrelevant to its reproduction). As insulated as this site of exchange may appear, however, it is clear that the actions of ‘everyday’ actors in Okinawa over the Futenma conflict have affected the development of the PBD in terms of the specific language actors use (e.g. acknowledging the USM bases as a ‘burden’ on local people), the ways in which they attempt to relate to other sites of exchange (e.g. recognising the impact of USM facilities on Okinawan development), and the means by which they communicate the PBD (e.g. MOFA creating a special minister for Okinawan affairs). Politically speaking, this has opened up new ways of interpreting the impact of Futenma on the future of the alliance itself, as greater awareness of local feelings about the dangers posed by living near USM bases has led to the aforementioned, contradictory position which many of these actors now take: that the alliance’s future existence is without doubt, but that this same existence is threatened by the possibility of Futenma’s physical and political volatility.

4.1. Intersection: understanding the base ‘burden’

Although the preceding sections of this chapter detail narratives of difference and distance between officials in Tokyo, Washington, and Okinawa, there are still others that serve as intersection points between the PBD and the ABD. The first of these acknowledges the bases as a ‘burden’ on prefectural residents, describes an earnest interest in minimising the impact of this ‘burden’, and details means by which officials in the central governments can support the local economy to be less reliant on base-related revenues. Teare, for example, claims that the disapproval of the US presence ‘did not have so much to do with troop behavior [...] as with our continued heavy presence on Okinawa. Our use of land, our exercising, artillery fire over traveled highways, even marines jogging along the road as part of their training’. A former MOFA official continues: ‘It’s the “Not In My Backyard” syndrome of people, same as nuclear power [...] [T]here’s an argument from the people of Okinawa who say “well, having the US bases here, doesn’t that actually make us a target?”’.

Officials are also wary, given their understanding of these tensions and the central government’s role in maintaining the USM presence, of how the possible ramifications that any major accident or incident, especially involving Futenma, might be felt not only within the prefecture, but also within the alliance. ‘We have to go with the original plan or we will lose

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everything’, says a former MOFA official. ‘Statistically, another major accident at Futenma is bound to happen, whether next year or ten years from now—and when it does, it might shut down Futenma and there would be no replacement facility for it’.  

Schoff also acknowledges that ‘a big, big accident could be a game-changer, especially if it involves US military negligence’. In fact, in a meeting between Roos, former SDP President Mizuho Fukushima and then-Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation Senior Vice Minister (VM) Kiyomi Tsujimoto in December 2009, Tsujimoto cautioned: ‘the FRF will be the "Achilles heel" of the Alliance and while the base may ultimately get built, it will be like "lighting a fire" of opposition to all of the other bases in Okinawa’. 

In the face of these local challenges to the PBD, the central government in Tokyo has recently taken very public steps towards not simply alleviating the ‘burden’ through expanding its subsidy programme, but also by increasing its investment into alternative industries. The 2012 and 2013 Diplomatic Bluebooks both detail the creation of multiple-entry visas for Chinese tourists visiting Okinawa, of which there were over 25,000 in 2013 (out of nearly 300,000 total from across northeast and Southeast Asia). ‘We as a whole of Japan are now trying to increase the [number of] travellers from all over the world, and if Okinawa can be a kind of window, especially for Southeast Asia and other Asian areas’, says one current MOFA official, ‘that can be good for Okinawa’s economy’. In his first talks with Nakaima after being elected PM, Abe similarly expressed that ‘[i]nvestment in Okinawa is an investment in the future’ and called Okinawan development ‘a matter of interest for the whole country’. Still, says one current Diet adviser, more should be done to aid those residents in the prefecture outside of the construction and tourism industries: ‘if you are just a farmer, you don’t have any reason to accept [the subsidy]. That will not affect your income’.

Just as officials acknowledge the language of ‘burden’ with regards to the day-to-day living situation alongside military bases, they recognise that the historical differences in identities between Okinawa and the mainland are sometimes significantly felt. ‘Before coming to Okinawa, I thought Okinawa is, of course, part of Japan, so Okinawan people [are], how to say—their minds [are] fully

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195 Anonymous 2014l.
196 Schoff 2014.
199 Anonymous 2014e.
200 ‘Abe keen to support Okinawa’s development in 1st talks with governor’, The Mainichi Shimbun, 9 January 2013e, available online at: http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20130109p2g00m0dm024000c.html.
201 Anonymous 2014b.
Japanese’, says one current MOFA official. ‘But after coming here, I understand that the history and the culture [are] very different from the mainland, so their way of thinking is sometimes very different [as well]’. A former official concurs, remarking that this is because

there is a feeling that, the fact that the only place in mainland Japan that was subject to ground warfare during WWII is Okinawa. So, we know about the Hiroshimas, the Nagasakis, the bombings of the big cities in Tokyo—these are all bombs flying from above. The only place where there was ground warfare in mainland Japan was Okinawa. And 100,000 people died. So there’s a sense among the Okinawan people, especially the elderly, that the Japanese central government and the military [were] treating them as second-class, therefore they allowed ground warfare to happen, and they allowed so many civilians to die.

It is not only war memory, however, that separates the Okinawan experience from that of mainland Japanese residents. Then-MOFA DG Chikao Kawai, for example, remarked to former US Navy (USN) Secretary Donald Winter in September 2006 that ‘progress’ on the FRF project ‘was more problematic […] given the prevailing sentiment among most residents of Okinawa that they had been sacrificed for the benefit of Japan’s four main islands “for centuries”’. The former official further observes that following the handover of Okinawa to USM administration after WWII, ‘there’s a sense [of:] […] Why was Okinawa not allowed back into Japan when the rest of Japan had enjoyed independence and was growing […] as well? Why had it allowed Okinawa to become part of US control for so long?’ O’Neill adds: ‘We euphemistically referred to “U.S. administration” but, in fact, the senior U.S. official in Okinawa during that period was an Army lieutenant general, called the high commissioner for the Ryukyu Islands. A State Department officer was his political advisor […] but there was no doubt that the Army was in charge.’

4.2. Intersection: alternatives to the Futenma relocation

While there appears to therefore be a relatively high degree of cognisance regarding the complications surrounding the FRF and bases directly as a result of historical experience and the actions taken by previous Japanese and American administrations, the coherence in these actors’ narrative regarding the ‘necessity’ of relocating Futenma within Okinawa has also been strong. Nonetheless, alternatives to Henoko and Camp Schwab have been presented over the years.

202 Anonymous 2014c.
206 In fact, as far back as 1970, then-US Under-SecState Alexis Johnson testified before the Senate: “Our facilities and bases in Japan, as well as Okinawa, are not so much related to the defense of Japan and Okinawa as they are to our ability to support our commitments elsewhere” (C.T. Sandars, America’s Overseas Garrisons: The Leasehold Empire [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000], p. 169).
Teare, for example, commented in 1998:

> Suppose that Korea is one day unified or at least that North Korea no longer represents a threat to the South and other neighbors, then what? And then you can imagine various scenarios but most of them would involve a very substantial reduction [in US forces]. Such a reduction would then be possible in our presence on Okinawa and elsewhere in Japan.

Maher, speaking to the same question, adds that ‘American politicians would close overseas bases before closing ones in their own districts’,

> thus revealing, in the chance that the US government were to find itself in domestic financial straits, a window of opportunity for overseas bases – including the ones in Japan – to be closed as a money-saving measure. Further to this, on the relocation of Futenma specifically, former US Senator Carl Levin, a long-time member of the SASC, ‘denounced the relocation plan as “unrealistic, unworkable and unaffordable”’ in 2011.

On the argument that the FRF must remain within Okinawa for ‘deterrence’ value, Hatoyama, in an interview with the *Ryukyu Shimpo* in February 2011, expressed scepticism:

> When Tokunoshima Island (in Kagoshima Prefecture) refused to host an alternative facility, we had no choice but to move it to Henoko, so I had to come up with a rationale to justify it. I didn’t think the presence of Marines in Okinawa would work directly as deterrence against war, but without the Marines, the US military would not be able to function fully in terms of interoperability, and that would affect deterrence. As for the deterrent effect of the Marines themselves, you all think they are not a deterrent, and that is also my understanding. If you say it was a pretext, then it was a pretext. But I thought I could still use the word ‘deterrence’ in a broader sense.

While not agreeing with Hatoyama’s view exactly, Brooks expresses his belief that ‘the Marines don’t like the relocation; they’d rather keep Futenma open forever, since it’s actually more irritating for them to move north’. A current adviser to the Diet also comments on the difficulty of implementing the relocation project within any of the timelines agreed upon by the two governments: ‘I don’t know what the government will do the next, but if they wanted to keep their word to governor of Okinawa, Governor Nakaima, the construction years are very limited, right? Five years? How [are they going to] make the new facility within that [time]? Actually, this is really very difficult’.

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208 Maher 2014.
210 Norimatsu 2011.
211 Brooks 2014.
212 Anonymous 2014b.
4.3. Division: perceptions of history and current threats

In spite of these salient points of intersection, there are just as many important dividing points at which the PBD, ABD, and their attendant narratives appear to be at an impasse. One of these is how history is perceived and, say some officials, manipulated by Okinawans. ‘In terms of the history of war and colonization, that was a long time ago in Okinawa, so it’s not part of the current historical issues for Japan’, argues a former MOFA official, continuing: ‘post-World War II pacifists, the baby boomers, in Japan will never change their minds—they have an instinctive hatred towards any enhancement to the US-Japan Security Treaty and to Japan’s right to collective self-defense’. O’Neill further contends that ‘it was the existence of these bases that put Okinawa on the map in terms of the central government in Tokyo. Had the bases not been there, I think Okinawa would have got a lot less attention because of the lingering prejudice toward Okinawans’. Nonetheless, says Konishi, it is likely in his view that Japanese officials merely pay ‘lip service’ or give ‘the token “burden” speech’, but don’t actually care much for the base issue. Yabunaka seems to confirm this when he ‘concurred fully with the Ambassador’s assessment that the DPJ’s election-period rhetoric ought not to be taken at face value, but that continuity in Japan’s foreign policy and continued close cooperation between the United States and Japan remain critical’; he later also recommended that ‘any policy change based on political needs ought to be symbolic and not have significant impact on substantive issues’. The Diet adviser agrees: ‘I don’t think that policymakers in the government listen very carefully to what protesters say. Of course, if you make interviews with officials in MOFA, they say, “we closely watch [the developments in Okinawa]”. But I don’t think they have [any] reason to listen carefully’. Given that these same officials had previously framed actors promoting the ABD as ‘protesting for protest’s sake’, that they have an ‘instinctive hatred’ towards the alliance, and that their arguments represent mere ‘sentiment’ or ‘opinions’ to the extreme, it thus follows that they would claim that central government officials pretend to listen, but in practice do what is best for the alliance’s continuity. Against this background, actors from diplomatic sites likewise view with suspicion Okinawa’s historical closeness (as a former tributary state under the Ryukyu Kingdom) with China. ‘Okinawan people [have] a tendency to request a diplomatic solution with China and North Korea’, says one current MOFA official. ‘I would say their concern is very limited, I think, […] to the main Okinawan islands. Most of them are interested only in this island. Not Miyagoshima, not

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213 Anonymous 2014b.
215 Konishi 2014.
217 Anonymous 2014b.
Another current official adds: ‘you know, we cannot imagine sometimes [that] we will face a war [because] Japan has been in a very secure and calm position for more than sixty years, [...] so I don’t think people in Okinawa feel the threat of China or North Korea firsthand’. 

This distance in ‘feeling the threat’ is also apparent in the level of importance assigned to the ‘Okinawa issue’ and the attached ‘Futenma issue’ in comparison to other, ‘first-order’ security matters. For example, in an interview with Mochizuki conducted by the US Asia Pacific Council, he was asked if the ‘preoccupation’ with the Futenma relocation ‘is distracting us from addressing other important issues?’ Maher likewise remarks that ‘the idea that Okinawa is an “obstacle” to the continued existence of the alliance is an exaggerated one’, saying that even during the Hatoyama years, USJ relations remained ‘robust’.

4.4. Division: the bases as a necessary burden

What Maher and others suggest is that no matter the outcome of the FRF dispute – or even the ongoing challenges posed to the alliance as a whole by the ‘Okinawa issue’ – there remains enough support for the alliance to maintain it without significantly altering the USM presence. Officials and ‘experts’ inside the diplomatic corps in Washington and Tokyo have consistently linked the prosperity and security of the Asia-Pacific region to the alliance, and thus view the bases through this lens as a critical element of the alliance’s fundamental purpose—namely, military deterrence. In doing so, however, their narratives – while sometimes containing within them a certain degree of understanding or sympathy towards Okinawan residents regarding the bases as a ‘burden’ – nevertheless tend to emphasise the necessity of the bases for national and regional security and exclude, in large part, the actual ‘political subject of (in)security’ (and/or suggest that these ‘subjects’ – Okinawan residents – do not understand or ‘see’ the ‘real threats’ to their safety and security).

For example, one current official told me: ‘from my standpoint, I am working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so I need to think about Japan’s security, but if I were just working at the Naha

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218 Miyagoshima, Ishigaki, and Yonaguni are three islands within Okinawa prefecture located in closer proximity to Taiwan, China, and the disputed Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea. They are therefore cited with some frequency as examples of locations in Okinawa within which residents are ‘much more interested in the security issue’ and have ‘more concerns about the rise of China’ (Anonymous 2014c; Anonymous 2014d).

219 Anonymous 2014e.

220 This Council is an organisation formed with the support of the US State Department, comprising of ‘American corporations and citizens who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the U.S. relationship with Asian and Pacific nations’, and which acts as ‘a vehicle through which the knowledge and experience of its members inform and enhance US engagement with the region’ (‘United States Asia Pacific Council [USAPC] Overview’, East West Center, 2015, available online at: http://www.eastwestcenter.org/ewc-in-washington/us-asia-pacific-council).

221 Mochizuki 2010.

222 Maher 2014.

223 Vaughan-Williams and Stevens 2015, p. 4.
office or working at a restaurant or something, I wouldn’t have to care about [national] security, right?’ 224 Even in 1970, finds Baker, a U.S. News and World Report saying that the US would pull out of Okinawa and Japan and relocate its forces to Guam or the Mariana Islands was met with immediate backlash from Japanese media: ‘[t]he story would “create perturbation among [U.S.] allies,” said one Japanese newspaper. A commentator in another national paper said that “it is obvious that an American withdrawal will create a big power vacuum in the defense setup in Southeast Asia and the Far East”’. 225 More recently, Nye commented that the USG and GOJ ‘will miss a major opportunity if they let the base controversy lead to bitter feelings or the further reduction of American forces in Japan’, whom he called ‘[t]he best guarantee of security in a region where China remains a long-term challenge and a nuclear North Korea’. 226

‘Perhaps one day Okinawans will see the strategic importance of the US military forces’, says Szechenyi. ‘It is an unfair burden on Okinawa, but this must be considered against the need for deterrence in the region’. 227 ‘The Japanese government wanted to come out where we did [on the Futenma relocation]’, recounts Mondale of the FRF negotiation process. ‘There was never any question. In the privacy of my discussions with their leaders [...] they didn’t want to kick us out of Okinawa. They wanted to get this thing back to some kind of stability’. 228 Former Cabinet Secretary Yoshito Sengoku more candidly told a Tokyo press conference in 2010 that Okinawans would have to ‘grin and bear’ the FRF; that December, when then-PM Kan visited the prefecture, he ‘expressed his “unbearable shame as a Japanese” at the way the prefecture had been treated, only to go on to say that relocation of the Futenma base to Henoko “may not be the best choice for the people of Okinawa but in practical terms it is the better choice”’. 229 One current MOFA official counters this idea slightly, commenting: ‘I think maybe we should discuss it more, but we rarely talk about [the] kind of benefits [of the bases] for local people’. 230 Even if the government did invest more effort into explaining these ‘benefits’, there is scepticism that it would make much of an impact in Okinawa—this assumption based, again, on the notion that local residents are not interested in the ‘objective’ operational considerations for maintaining the USM presence. For example, Oros remarks: ‘The US Marine Corps and Japanese government don’t clearly articulate reasons why the Marines should be

224 Anonymous 2014e.
226 Nye 2010.
227 Szechenyi 2014.
228 Mondale 2004, p. 19.
230 Anonymous 2014e.
in Okinawa. They don’t really explain the military technology aspect of it, but, even if they did—would Okinawans really care? No’.  

In terms of what these officials think Okinawans do care about, their predictions about the future of the USM presence in the prefecture is consistent with the previous discussion of the perception gap in terms of ‘threats’ to the region. ‘I’m not sure it [US force level in Japan] can be diminishing’, says a current MOFA official. ‘It can’t be zero’. A former official, echoing Nye and others, reiterates the ‘deterrence’ argument behind the importance of the USM presence, and why the Okinawans must continue to ‘grin and bear it’:

We [Japan] don’t have our own offensive capability. We have a lot of areas of instability around Japan, hence we need the US forces to provide the deterrence so that those areas of instability do not really become actual hotspots. So long as that is the case, it makes most sense to have the bases in the area that is closest to those hotspots and ... unfortunately for the Okinawan people, Okinawa is located there.

Framing the relocation, therefore, as something that is out of their hands or ability to change given the way they have constructed the ‘security’ narrative in terms of an ‘unstable’ Asia-Pacific, these officials afford little agency to Okinawans in the policymaking process. For example, one former MOFA official says that although the central government has ‘been keenly aware of the concerns of the local residents [or] [...] civil organizations’ and was ‘paying attention to, you know, those voices [that were] expressed [...] at the end of the day those [base] shapes and structures and sizes, they need to be negotiated between the two governments’. A current official adds to this:

Of course local communities have complained about the USFJ’s activities, like plane noises, and that kind of thing—I understand their opinions and their concerns, but as a government, what we have to ensure is Japan’s security. From that standpoint, you know, US forces always need to conduct day-to-day training. That creates noises, of course, but they, you know, the US Department of Defense and US government try to mitigate that kind of impact, but that’s, you know, that’s not gonna be zero. So what we always keep in mind is to secure the security, and ... to maintain and develop the Japan-US alliance.

In remarking that the base presence cannot be reduced to ‘zero’, this official (and the other former MOFA official cited earlier) simplify the demands of the ABM, which is constituted by a variety of groups with a variety of strategies and arguments, down to what appears to be an unfeasible position – full withdrawal of all US forces from Okinawa (if not Japan) – and thus justifies their belief that these demands can and should be dismissed outright.

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231 Oros 2014.
233 Anonymous 2014d.
234 Anonymous 2014e.
Similarly, in the case of the FRF, officials frame protesters of the current relocation plan as also adhering to this ‘extreme’ position and, therefore, do not have to be considered seriously. For example, a current official says that ‘they [protesters] can delay the process, but I [don’t] think they [can] stop the process. So it can complicate the issue, but our main policy is not changed’. 235 ‘What the protesters request is not a change, just [the] abolishment of the plan, right? So no compromise could be made between [them and the central government’], a current adviser to the Diet adds. 236 A former MOFA official agrees: ‘when it comes to security issues, there is something that we cannot compromise. So ... of course, it’s a difficult choice, but at the end of the day we have to come up with the most ideal package without compromising the deterrence and the major objectives of the alliance’. 237 On a more fundamental level which goes beyond the language of ‘security’ or ‘securing the security’ (at which point the word itself appears to truly be an empty signifier), the Diet adviser concludes that Futenma’s relocation to Henoko is ‘the most important [issue] to central government officials because ‘all agreements should be satisfied. If not, we will be scolded by the United States’.

Conclusion

The ‘major objectives of the alliance’ – while on the one hand denoting those stated throughout this chapter by officials and ‘experts’ to include the alliance’s ability to provide deterrence, disaster relief efforts, and assist in PKOs – may, on the other, be considered part of the ‘collective memories’ of the USJA as an institution, with these memories driving the reproduction of the various narratives subsumed under the PBD from one administration to the next. Arguing in favour of limiting the number of sites of discursive exchange in the policymaking process to those located within the central governments of the US and Japan, they thus frame the base issue as one that cannot fundamentally be altered or interfered with by local Okinawan residents and officials. Furthermore, by labelling the arguments of these actors as ‘opinions’ or ‘complaints’, they likewise reinforce the core belief that the base issue, like the alliance more generally, is one that can only be negotiated and handled properly in specific, ‘objective’ sites (Tokyo and Washington) lest it be manipulated for purely ‘political’ or ‘ideological’ purposes in others (Okinawa).

The coherence of this discourse is nonetheless indicative of these same officials’ ‘limited information’ in (re)producing it, as the linguistic devices used within its narratives – whether using vague terms like ‘instability’ to describe the security situation in the Asia-Pacific and provide a rationale for the USM presence in Japan, or link through heavy implication Okinawan protesters with Chinese agitation – have not changed significantly in content or form in decades. Even if these
officials and ‘experts’ do not express serious concerns about the sustainability and continued reproduction of the alliance as an institution, however, this does not mean that their argument towards this aim is free from contradictions—nor that other issues outside of the bases and Futenma are not complicating this picture of a stable future.

‘Given the potentially volatile security situation in East Asia and Japanese doubts concerning the U.S. commitment to Asian security, Japan may come to feel compelled to provide for its own defense’, wrote Berger in 1993. While circumstances have changed since Berger made these observations, serious concerns have been raised by Japanese officials in recent years about the assuredness of US commitments to the region, especially over the disputed Senkaku Islands with China. Furthermore, the rise of a more vocal, nationalist right wing in Japan, while not necessarily posing an immediate challenge to the alliance, may nonetheless prove difficult to resolve in the long term. Krauss further warns that the lack of ‘institutionalized, authoritative, coordinating organizations and mechanisms to handle relationships across and between [the US and Japanese] governments and between them and the public’ during the Hatoyama administration does not bode well in dealing with any potential future crises that the alliance might face.

Like Konishi’s observations about the lack of a coherent public diplomacy strategy of the alliance ‘risk[ing] the necessity of the alliance being questioned at a more fundamental level’, Krauss comments that ‘to a surprising extent the [Japanese] government still seems to rely on informal and ad hoc measures, relationships, and organizations to coordinate, communicate, and persuade other actors involved in the crisis. This of course is then subject to the individual personalities, self-interests, and capabilities of the individuals involved’. In the case of the USJA, while the ‘individual personalities’ cited in this chapter claim to be interested in ‘making progress’ on Futenma in order to move onto ‘first-order’ issues, the discursive strategies they have employed in promoting this policy have, in fact, done very little in accomplishing it. Especially with regards to the tendency of Japanese officials to ‘pass the buck’ on Futenma from one administration to the next – and the tendency of US officials, in turn, to claim that relocations are ‘domestic’ Japanese procedures and they cannot, therefore, be held responsible for their lack of ‘progress’ – it is apparent that a lack of ‘decisive’ political action has been one factor behind policy stasis. It is not the only one, however.

In addition, says O’Shea, by reproducing a narrative in which ‘the possibility of a Japan without the United States [is] unthinkable’, US and Japanese officials have thus linked together the USM presence with the survival of the alliance. A third factor, however, remains outside of this

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239 Krauss 2013, p. 194.
240 O’Shea 2014, pp. 441-442.
‘elite’ realm, as it involves the same ‘everyday’ actors who are so often dismissed by officials from diplomatic sites—but whose discursive strategies and physical activities have also created policy stasis on Futenma. On this point, Nye warned in 2010:

Sometimes Japanese officials quietly welcome *gaiatsu*, or foreign pressure, to help resolve their own bureaucratic deadlocks. But that is not the case here: if the United States undercuts the new Japanese government and creates resentment among the Japanese public, then a victory on Futenma could prove Pyrrhic.

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241 Nye 2010.
Chapter 4. Sites of defence exchange: ‘If Okinawa wasn’t there, we’d have to build it’

Introduction

You know, someone once said: “if Okinawa wasn’t there, we’d have to build it”. Because it is very, very important for Korean contingencies, for Taiwanese contingencies, and even for contingencies in Southeast Asia. As the Marines on Oki will tell you, with its location, even with helicopters [...] they can self-deploy from Okinawa, they can hop from island to island and get all the way down to the Philippines. You can’t do that from mainland [Japan].

- Bruce Klingner, former CIA Division Chief for Korea

Although Nye spoke of the possibility of a ‘Pyrrhic’ victory on the FRF in 2010, the gravity of this warning, especially following the resignation of Hatoyama and the end of the ‘crisis’ in bilateral relations, appears to have lessened significantly. The Abe administration’s firm recommitment to the previous policy on the relocation, while not allaying all fears related to continued delays of its implementation, has nonetheless re-entrenched – as is evident from the previous chapter – the strength of the PBD across both diplomatic and defensive sites of exchange. Across the latter, while similar narratives are echoed to those in diplomatic sites – including that the USM serves as a ‘deterrent’ force for ‘peace and security’ in the region, that Henoko remains the ‘only’ relocation option for the FRF, and that defence officials are interested in ‘national’ security, not just ‘local’ security – there is an added dimension of operational specificity due to the heightened presence of military officials in these circles (see Klingner’s quote above). These actors also bring with them a greater awareness of the historical role of the USM in Okinawa and its impact on the prefecture’s socioeconomic development since WWII—and this awareness helps broaden and deepen the sociohistorical context within which the PBD was created and has evolved to its current state.

Examining the narratives of actors in sites of exchange including the MOD, SDF, DOD, and the USM (in particular US Pacific Command [PACOM] and the USMC), this chapter therefore fills out further the PBD as established in Chapter 3 in order to determine not only how it has been successfully reproduced in government policies, but also how its proponents have influenced the ABD (and been influenced in return). As previously mentioned, many of the discursive strategies used by these actors reflect those of their colleagues in diplomatic sites: for example, the use of vague terminology – including ‘security’, ‘strategic importance’, and ‘uncertainty’ – and, like diplomatic actors, those in defence sites also tend to dismiss or ignore that these terms can carry a variety of meanings outside of their ‘accepted’ definitions. In many cases, however, the views expressed by defensive actors forego some of the more euphemistic language found amongst officials in the diplomatic corps (e.g. the bases as a ‘burden’ on the local populations in Okinawa) in
favour of establishing even blunter and graver chains of connotation between the USM presence in Okinawa/Japan, the strength of the USJA, and regional, if not global, peace.

They choose this strategy not only as a means by which to re-entrench and increase popular acceptance of the PBD, but also as a way of publicly discrediting or undermining the narratives presented by proponents of the ABD both in Okinawa and further afield. At the same time, just as with the diplomatic corps, there is a determined discursive effort on the part of both individual members and groups within these organisations and institutions to separate the FRF debate from the other, more important ‘business’ of the alliance, as well as repeated declarations to the effect that Futenma is a local issue, not a national one (and certainly not a bilateral security issue).

Again, however, due in large part to the historical proximity which defence officials, especially those from the military, have with US base facilities in Japan and in Okinawa, it follows that their professional socialisation and strategies will differ from those at diplomatic sites. Given their heightened awareness of the problems on the ground resulting from these facilities, they are therefore more familiar with the past and current grievances of the local populations on a person-to-person basis. The result of this more regular, physical contact with the issue has been, as is discussed in sections 3 and 4, efforts to improve civil-military relations over the years, especially since the 1995 rape. While these efforts have been met with varying success and the financial stability and institutional survival of the USM in Okinawa (and the alliance more broadly) often override concerns about improving relations, they still provide an important juxtaposition point against which the clear picture of institutional stability and continuity presented in favour of the PBD by actors in diplomatic sites can be challenged and questioned by their colleagues within defence sites.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that this chapter cites a number of speeches from the online, publicly-accessible archives of the DOD on US relations with Japan and the Okinawa base issue—although the availability and ‘accessibility’ of these materials is questionable. I argue this because, while this content is, indeed, available online for public consumption, this does not mean that it is widely known of, cited, or discussed in any depth in the previous literature on the USJA. While this is, in part, due to oversight by other analysts, it is also, I argue, because this genre of texts is representative of the insularity of the national security policymaking process (including alliance-related policies), as many of them were given at invitation-only events or tailored to suit specific audiences who are assumed to already know and understand their context, who the speakers are, and why they are expressing the views that they do.

When reading these same transcripts many years later – as a member of the ‘unintended’ audience – the implied or stated connections between the USJA, USM presence, Okinawan bases, Futenma, and regional ‘peace’ and ‘security’ do not necessarily come across as tidy ‘daisy chains’ of
meaning that are understood by everyone. In fact, in stringing together all of these disparate concepts, locations, and actors, the narratives presented across this chapter actually serve, at times, to confuse the discursive interactions between themselves and others—and, in turn, muddies the range of possibilities for interpretation by actors in diplomatic and ‘everyday’ sites of exchange.

1. Historical memory and threat perception

Veterans know Okinawa as ‘The Rock’.

- Wallace “Chip” Gregson, former Commander of USMC Forces Pacific

Known as the ‘Typhoon of Steel’, the Battle of Okinawa is often singled out amongst others from WWII as being not only the site of land-based combat between American and Japanese forces closest to mainland Japan, but also for its particularly brutal toll on civilians. Starting on 1 April 1945 and ending on 22 June of that year, the battle involved over 170,000 US troops, 77,000 Japanese forces, 22,000 local militia, and hundreds of thousands of Okinawan civilians mobilised to fight and treat the wounded.¹ In many cases documented during the battle, these same civilians were forced to commit mass suicide rather than surrender to American forces, were killed by retreating imperial Japanese forces, or died of starvation and diseases such as malaria.² Former US SecDef William Perry recalled in several speeches his own experience of the devastation he witnessed following the battle as a young soldier: ‘Not a building was intact where this last great battle with the Pacific was fought. The southern half of the island was stripped bare of vegetation and livestock; 160,000 combatants and civilians had been killed, and many of the survivors were still living in caves’.³

The USM’s victory over imperial Japanese forces in Okinawa constituted a breach of Japan’s innermost defences. Once taken, US forces quickly set about establishing bases there – both on existing Japanese facilities and by building new ones – in order to prepare for a full-out assault on the mainland. Okinawa’s inhabitants, meanwhile, were confined to concentration camps in the northern part of the main island.⁴ While this assault never took place, the bases remained following the unconditional surrender of the GOJ on 15 August 1945—and so did a sizeable portion of US

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forces, which formally occupied the prefecture under the USM Government of the Ryukyu Islands and, later, the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) until the reversion of Okinawa to mainland Japan in 1972.

Although this battle is deeply embedded in the ABD (more on this in Chapter 5), it has also haunted the institutional memory of the USMC, whose 1st, 2nd, and 6th divisions constituted a significant portion of the amphibious assault on the island. Robert Eldridge, former deputy assistant chief of staff of government and external affairs for the USMC in Okinawa, explains that this is because ‘there were emotional attachments to the island following the great losses of American soldiers in taking Okinawa [...] and thus the military strongly resisted its being returned to Japan’.  

The III MEF, currently based in Okinawa, still boasts a force of nearly 19,000 Marines and sailors at full strength, and this substantial presence underscores the success that the PBD has had on policy in the post-war period—not only in maintaining existing facilities, but also in reproducing the stories and broader narratives about the necessity of the US presence which has enabled it to become, over time, a ‘symbol of sustained U.S. commitment’ to Japan and the region.

In discussing the historical development of this symbol from the post-WWII period into the present, section 1 thus makes clear how the role of the USM in Okinawa — and, following on from this, their role in Japan and the role of the USJA itself — has been framed in such a way by its proponents in defence sites that its importance in the post-war era remains both paramount and, for the most part, indisputable. By using the symbolic value of the USMC in this manner and connecting this value to all US forces in Japan (and to the alliance), these actors demonstrate how the emotive power of discourse — playing here on historical memory — can help perpetuate a set of policies which have not been seriously evaluated in decades and whose efficacy might otherwise be more widely questioned. Beyond policy, however, what also becomes clear in this section is the power of a specific narrative to reach into the mundane ‘everyday’ — and, in writing itself into the fabric of people’s lives, it becomes more easily reproducible.

1.1. The US military in Okinawa

How the USFJ came to acquire this potent symbolism both within the US defence establishment as well as in Tokyo is not as clear-cut a narrative as it may at first appear. Kimie Hara cites a State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee document dated 24 June 1946 which specifically recommends that Okinawa not be placed under a USM trusteeship after the war, as that would be

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‘contrary to its [the US’s] policy of opposing territorial expansion whether for itself or for other countries’ and ‘would in all probability require a considerable financial outlay by the [US] for the support and development of the islands and would involve the United States in the thankless task of governing three-quarters of a million people of totally alien culture and outlook’.8

However, as regional tensions arose in the immediate post-war period involving Japan’s neighbours, pressure for the US to keep control over the prefecture mounted, lead in part by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) Douglas MacArthur. A 1947 memorandum by him reads:

> Control over this group must be vested in the United States as absolutely essential to the defense of our Western Pacific Frontier. It is not indigenous to Japan ethnologically, does not contribute to Japan’s economic welfare, nor do the Japanese people expect to be permitted to retain it. It is basically strategic, and in my opinion, failure to secure it for control by the United States might prove militarily disastrous … 9

By this time, the quickly-established USM Government of Okinawa had set about not only providing provisions to the impoverished and, in many cases, displaced civilian population, but also maintaining the military facilities and their surrounding lands seized in the heat of the battle and its aftermath. As mentioned by Gregson at the start of this section, Okinawa became known as ‘the Rock’ by veterans for its near-total destruction during the war—but also as ‘the Junk Yard’, a dumping ground for used-up military hardware.10

MacArthur’s views and his influence on then-diplomat George Kennan (known for his advocacy of the US’s ‘containment’ policy), combined with the measures taken by USCAR to retain the USM presence by building sturdier facilities, helped ensure that Okinawa ‘would be regarded as distinct from the Japanese home islands when the Occupation finally came to an end’.11

Furthermore, the widely-read Civil Affairs Handbook published by the USM government played a hand in influencing American opinion within Okinawa, particularly with regard to historical racial discrimination by mainland Japanese against Ryukyu islanders which contained ‘potential seeds of

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10 Toriyama and Buist 2003, p. 402.
11 In fact, simply in order to withstand the tremendous typhoons which regularly hit the prefecture and make their facilities more cost-effective, US Army (USAR) officials recommended making the bases ‘sturdier’—a suggestion which was taken up more enthusiastically with the breakout of the Korean War in 1950 (L. Eve Armentrout Ma, ‘The Explosive Nature of Okinawa’s “Land Issue” or "Base Issue," 1945-1977: A Dilemma of United States Military Policy’, The Journal of American-East Asian Relations, 1 [1992], 435-463, pp. 440-442). Chizuru Saeki furthermore quotes a New York Times article from the era as calling Okinawa the ‘Pearl Harbor’ of the USAF in terms of its importance as a strategic bomber base (2012, p. 23).
dissension out of which political capital might be made’. This distinction passed into law under Article 3 of the Treaty of San Francisco, signed between the GOJ and the Allied Powers on 8 September 1951, which formally placed Okinawa under US trusteeship.

Following the official transfer of administration from the central government in Tokyo to USCAR, land acquisition for the purposes of expanding military facilities – sometimes taken using force or threat of force – continued, oftentimes without properly compensating local landowners. GOJ involvement during this period was minimal save for its repeated declarations in joint communiques and statements from a succession of post-war PMs of ‘the strong desire of the Japanese people for the return of administrative control over the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands to Japan’ and the attendant responses from American presidents to ‘make further efforts to enhance the welfare and well-being of the inhabitants of the Ryukyus’—with the caveat that Okinawan reversion was conditional on ‘the day when the security interests of the free world in the Far East will permit the realization of this desire’. The executives in both governments, however, concurred with the narrative conveyed by USM officials such as MacArthur as to the ‘vital role’ played by the bases in Okinawa ‘in assuring the security of Japan and other free nations in the Far East’. Punctuating this, a secret agreement was signed between Japanese FM Aiichiro Fujiyama and MacArthur on 6 January 1960 which stated that ‘solely in the exceptional case of an emergency in Korea [...] the USA could use bases without prior consultation in a state of emergency’.

Nevertheless, the pro-reversion demonstrations which greeted President Dwight Eisenhower’s 1960 visit to Okinawa helped spur a loosening of the USM administration’s control over the islands, and his successor, John F. Kennedy, declared the prefecture in 1962 to be an ‘integral’ part of Japan, allowing the GOJ to contribute financial aid to it.\(^\text{19}\) However, the heavy use of the bases from the mid- to late 1960s during the Vietnam War only enflamed the pro-reversion movement on the island and the anti-war movement throughout Japan. Although reluctant to hand back administration to Tokyo due to the importance of Okinawa as a base for B-52 aircrafts, then-President Lyndon Johnson gave his promise – which was fulfilled by his successor, Richard Nixon, in 1971 – that it would be done.\(^\text{20}\) By then, however, the utility of Okinawan bases for contingencies in East and Southeast Asia had become so well-broadcast that the DOD began referring to the prefecture as the ‘Keystone of the Pacific’ — a slogan so widely used that it was engraved on USM license plates in Okinawa (an example of a security narrative reaching into the ‘everyday’).\(^\text{21}\)

The 1971 Okinawa Reversion Agreement not only changed the nature of daily life in the prefecture (such as converting currency from US dollars back to yen and changing the driving side of the road from right to left), but also placed Okinawa back under the USJ-ST, meaning that the US could no longer store nuclear weapons on the islands nor lease or own land therein.\(^\text{22}\) At the same time, a significant portion of land used by USM forces was returned back to the prefecture – nearly 21% – though it took many more years to settle the claims of local landowners who had not been compensated for their losses.\(^\text{23}\) Furthermore, note Atsushi Toriyama and David Buist, the agreement – which was made on the ‘absolute condition’ that US facilities would be, for the most part, kept intact and maintained – served to actually strengthen the USMC presence ‘in order to accommodate the forces then being withdrawn from Vietnam’, and thus ‘[r]eturning administrative control to Japan became a necessity precisely in order to retain the functionality of the bases’.\(^\text{24}\)

1.2. US bases as the ‘keystone’ of the Pacific

It is evident from the preceding historical account, then, that it has not only been through the actions of defence officials within the USG, but also those within the central GOJ, that the physical presence of the bases and their ‘functionality’ has been retained. The narrative they have

\(^{19}\) Ma 1992, p. 454.
\(^{20}\) Hara 2007, p. 181.
\(^{22}\) Ma 1992, p. 458.
\(^{24}\) Toriyama and Buist 2003, p. 415.
relayed upon to do so, which stresses the ‘essential’ nature of Okinawa to the defence of Japan and the region, gathered strength to the point that, following reversion, when the DOD considered withdrawing the USMC from Okinawa, the GOJ intervened in order to stop this from ever happening. As former *Okinawa Times* editor Tomohiro Yara reports, during a July 1973 meeting of the Japan-US Security Treaty Consultative Group Committee, Kubo Takaya, head of Japan’s Defence Agency (later the MOD), argued: ‘Given the need for a mobile force in Asia, the US Marines should be retained’. In response, Thomas P. Shoesmith, chief minister at the US Embassy, reported back to Washington that his Japanese counterparts understood the USMC presence in Okinawa as ‘[the] most tangible evidence of US willingness to respond promptly to a direct threat against Japan’.  

This intervention is not necessarily surprising, however, when placed in the context of the central GOJ’s prior ‘secret agreements’ with the US following reversion. Included among these was an ‘Agreed Minute to the Joint Communiqué’ signed by Nixon and PM Eisaku Sato in 1969 which allowed for the US, ‘in time of great emergency’, the right to ‘require the re-entry of nuclear weapons and transit rights in Okinawa with prior consultation with the Government of Japan. The United States Government would anticipate a favorable response [emphasis added]’. Although this pact was concluded privately, publicly US presidents continued to frame the US as a ‘Pacific nation [which] maintains a strong interest in the Asian-Pacific region, and will continue to play an active and constructive role there’; that the government’s intention was to ‘maintain an adequate level of deterrent forces in the region’; and that ‘in coming years the United States will maintain and improve the quality of its present military capabilities in East Asia’. Japanese leaders echoed these

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27 Kitaoka 2010, pp. 20-21. This language, it should be noted here, sounds strikingly similar to that in the Diet adviser’s comment at the end of Chapter 3 that the GOJ would be ‘scolded’ by the USG if agreements were not ‘satisfied’—and, given the tenor of the minute above, this comment does not appear to be unfounded.


30 ‘Joint Communique, Productive Partnership for the 1980’s (Visit of Prime Minister Ohira of Japan)’, “The World and Japan” Database Project, Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations, Institute of
Grinberg remarks, one example of this being PM Noboru Takeshita’s comments, following discussions with US President Reagan, that ‘Japan has also continued to increase its HNS [host nation support] for U.S. forces in Japan, whose stationing is an indispensable [emphasis added] part of the Japan-U.S. security system’. This characterisation of the USM presence as ‘indispensable’ or ‘essential’ for peace and stability in the region predates the language of ‘cornerstone’ by at least ten to fifteen years (though its meaning is more or less the same), appearing in joint statements between the two governments as early as 1960 and continuing into the present.

In the wake of the 1995 rape incident in Okinawa, however, official US reports on basing in the prefecture did not recommend significant reductions in force presence. In fact, they used the same framing and language employed in the arguments of presidents, PMs, and leading military officials since the end of WWII in favour of a continued presence. A 1998 US General Accounting Office (GAO) report entitled ‘Overseas Presence: Issues Involved in Reducing the Impact of the U.S. Military Presence on Okinawa’, for example, frames the US presence as not only a critical part of PACOM’s regional forward presence to ‘promote international security relationships in the region, and deter aggression and prevent conflict through a crisis response capability’, but also as providing ‘a visible political commitment by the United States to peace and stability in the region’, the withdrawal of which, it says, ‘could be interpreted by countries in the region as a weakening of the U.S. commitment to peace and stability in Asia-Pacific and could undercut the deterrent value of the forward deployment’. Former US SecDef William Cohen stressed in the same year the importance of sustaining US forward deployment in Asia along similar lines, employing analogy in his argument:


32 See, for example, the 1960 and 1977 Joint Communiques and the 1965, 1972, and 1975 Joint Statements in the Bibliography.

There’s that wonderful little novelette that I read years ago, “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” [...] a story about a seagull that keeps trying to go faster and faster and he comes from the heights and he speeds down to earth and gets completely out of control until a mythical seagull shows up and [...] says, “Jonathan, you really don’t understand. Perfect speed is not a matter of going faster and faster. Perfect speed is being there” [emphasis added]. Of course, this mythical seagull was talking in transcendental terms, but I’ve always used that notion of being there as a metaphor for our forces. There is no substitute for being there. Perfect speed is our being forward deployed in Asia Pacific. [...] So forward deployed, shaping people's opinions -- not only our friends' about our reliability and our resources, but also shaping people’s opinions who are our adversaries, that they really don’t want to challenge us in any given situation.

Cohen’s remarks followed on the heels of the 1995 East Asia Strategic Report (also known as the ‘Nye Report’ after its primary author) and the revision of the USJ Defense Guidelines (USJ-DG) in 1997, both of which reaffirmed the centrality of a ‘credible’ US overseas presence to future US strategy in East Asia, ‘a region of growing importance for U.S. security and prosperity’.35 Nye put it more bluntly in a 1995 speech following the publication of this report: ‘Security is like oxygen: You do not tend to notice it until you begin to lose it. The American security presence has helped provide this “oxygen” for East Asian development’.36 Building on this analogy of the US presence as ‘oxygen’ for the region, President Bill Clinton, in a joint press conference with PM Ryutaro Hashimoto in 1996, stated that ‘everyone knows we have no ulterior motive. That is, we seek no advantage; we see to dominate no country; we seek to control no country; we seek to do nothing in any improper way with our military power. We are only here [...] to serve as a source of security and stability to others throughout this region’.37 Hashimoto agreed: ‘We welcome [the] presence [of US forces], and we believe that it is serving the stability of Asia and the Pacific’.

1.3. Managing a constant level of threat

While these quotes are illustrative of, as Gregson put it, ‘no amount of reassurance [being] ever excessive’, mutual reassurance of the US ‘security umbrella’ over the course of decades – using, in many cases, the same exact language and framing over and over again – gives the appearance of

limited policy options where there could be many. For example, officials and ‘experts’ in both countries’ support for the policy of maintaining the US presence is bound up in the old implication that a reduction of forces in Japan is tantamount to a display of political weakness in the region—a region which, according to a 2013 report issued by the Guam-US-Asia Security Alliance (GUASA), ‘cannot help’ but remind both officials and civilians alike of the proverb: ‘the more things change, the more they stay the same’

This framing of East Asia being ‘stuck’ in the past in terms of its security circumstances thus gives the impression of path dependence.

Likewise, any person reading through US and Japanese strategic documents and speeches dating back from the post-war era could take away the same message. In these, the security situation of the region has consistently been described in such terms as ‘unstable and troubled’;

the ‘most militarized in the world’;

politically volatile and turbulent; a ‘tinderbox’; and ‘plagued’ by ‘long-standing issues of territorial rights and reunification’ dating back to the Cold War era.

The Nye Report went so far as to say that ‘[w]e do not need to manufacture new threats to justify the alliance […] On the contrary, if the alliance did not already exist, we would have to create it now’.

This excerpt from the Report is clearly echoed in Klingner’s comment from the opening of this chapter – that ‘if Okinawa wasn’t there, we’d have to build it’ – and again reinforces the core belief not only in the inherent ‘volatility’ of the region, but also that the USM presence is the only force capable of bringing ‘stability’ to it.

This same, well-worn caveat against removing US forces from Okinawa was voiced in many of my interviews. A former staffer in the US Senate tells me, for example, that ‘the South Koreans will think twice if we start to pull out of Okinawa’;

former commanding general of the Japan Ground SDF (JGSDF) Research and Development Command Noboru Yamaguchi similarly says that

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38 GUASA, ‘U.S. Forward Deployed Forces and Asian Security: A Strategic View’, Final Report of a Roundtable Discussion at Tumon Bay, Guam, 5-6 September 2013, p. 4. This roundtable was attended by speakers including Wallace Gregson and former Senior Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) at the National Defense University Patrick Cronin.


45 Anonymous, personal interview, 25 July 2014k, Washington, DC, USA.
‘nobody wants to see less US commitment to the region’, citing the spectre of North Korean nuclear missile tests and China’s military build-up. 46 Yara likewise comments that many Chinese officials still believe in the ‘bottle cap’ function of the USJA and thus would rather preserve the current USM presence in Okinawa. 47 Former US SecDef Gates went further than this, warning in his 2011 remarks at Keio University that without the USJ-ST in place and the assurance of the US forward presence in the region, ‘North Korea’s military provocations could be even more outrageous – or worse’, ‘China might behave more assertively towards its neighbors’, HADR missions would be difficult to carry out in a timely manner, it would be ‘more difficult and costly to conduct robust joint exercises’, and ‘there would be less information sharing and coordination, and we would know less about regional threats and the military capabilities of our potential adversaries’. 48

Admiral Samuel J. Locklear, former commander of PACOM, listed among these threats in his testimony to the US House Armed Services Committee in 2013: climate change; ‘transnational non-state threats’ (e.g. drug trafficking, piracy); challenges to freedom of action in shared domains, including cyberspace; energy competition; instability on the Korean peninsula; the rise of China; and the lack of a NATO-like security framework for the region. 50 In place of this framework, says Locklear, is a ‘patch-work quilt’ of security relations founded on the forward presence of USM forces in the region. 51 As is evident from his list, this ‘quilt’ covers a range of threats which are not exclusive to the Asia-Pacific, but which have nonetheless been described in similar terms as contributing to a larger ‘dynamic and uncertain security environment’ worldwide. 52 While this is especially pronounced in documents dating from the immediate post-9/11 era with their frequent references

46 Noboru Yamaguchi, personal interview, 19 February 2014, The Tokyo Foundation, Tokyo, Japan.
48 Tomohiro Yara, personal interview, 16 April 2014, Naha, Okinawa.

Yes, we don’t have this huge enemy on the other side of the world, an ogre that forces us to spend higher and higher amounts of our tax dollars on military forces. But in its place is a new old risk for our country, one that I believe you in this audience appreciate better than most. The new risk is complacency [emphasis added]. So there has been this cycle throughout this century, a cycle of enormous and costly exertion followed by a false sense of relief. A delusion that we had done our part and that it was time to rest, to collect the dividends for our efforts. Well, this time around, we have to -- we must -- resist the dangerous embrace of complacency.

Along this vein, in a cable released by Wikileaks from 18 November 2009, then-US ambassador to Japan John Roos recorded LDP Headquarters Director-General (DG) Hitoshi Motojuku as saying during a closed meeting: ‘the LDP needs to "educate" the Japanese electorate about [...] the new international environment of crises, terrorism, and ethnic wars in which Japan must exist’\footnote{J.M. Boorda, ‘The Enemy Is Complacency’, Prepared remarks ADM J.M. Boorda, chief of naval operations, the Armed Forces Day luncheon hosted by Military Veterans Education Foundation, Columbus, Ohio, 19 May 1995, available online at: http://www.defense.gov/Speeches/Speech.aspx?SpeechID=910.} In making this comment, Motojuku – like other defence officials in both governments – appears to seek only acceptance from the public of the ‘new international environment of crises’ so defined, whether real or imagined, in order so that his desired policies may be implemented and reproduced without scrutiny.

1.4. The rebalance to Asia: enhancing a ‘credible’ US force presence

As this narrative of the politically symbolic and strategically critical USM presence in Asia has been continuously reproduced throughout the post-war period – with little public pushback to it from domestic American and Japanese audiences – this is not to say that it has not gone without some tweaking along the way with regards to its physical size and geographic spread. The current realignment of forces serves as a case in point, though it does not represent the first time since the end of the Cold War that such policies have been carried out. The 2004 Global Posture Review under the Bush administration, for instance, recommended that in order for US forces to be able to
exercise greater flexibility and project their power ‘rapidly and at long ranges’, their numbers should generally be reduced ‘in host nations where those forces [are concentrated around] large, urban populations’, including in Okinawa. Similarly, the current realignment or ‘rebalance’ of forces, said Gates, is geared towards making the US defence posture in Asia ‘one that is more geographically distributed, operationally resilient, and politically sustainable’.  

Speaking to the last of these three aims, Locklear has stated that the rebalance is about ‘collaboration, not containment’, and former DASD for Plans (including, under her purview, America’s global defence posture policy) Janine Davidson, in 2013 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, likewise emphasised in her remarks that ‘[w]hile U.S. military planners must continue to plan for worst-case contingencies, these plans represent only a part of a larger strategy that integrates “partners” – not “host-nations” – and works in a measured, cooperative fashion to promote sustained peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific’. In a later speech, Locklear again emphasised the non-military aspects of the plan, stating that ‘the U.S. rebalance is not about establishing U.S. bases anywhere else in this theatre [...] Our objective is to build on the relationships that we have created in peaceful, relatively peaceful Asia-Pacific [and] indo Pacific [in] the last 60 years’.  

The military component of the rebalance plan, however, is not insignificant. ‘Looking purely at resources and level of effort, by 2020 the US Navy will have 60% of its fleet in the Pacific’, remarked James F. Amos, former Commandant of the USMC. The US Quadrennial Defense Review in 2014 likewise states that the US ‘will maintain a robust footprint in Northeast Asia while enhancing our presence in Oceania, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean’. These enhancements


include not only the increased naval fleet in the Pacific\textsuperscript{62} and the relocation of units currently stationed in Okinawa to Guam and Australia\textsuperscript{63}, but also the move of additional US Air Force (USAF) intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets. A 2012 DOD strategy document, in making its case for the rebalance plan, explains:

Third, we are determined to maintain a ready and capable force, even as we reduce our overall capacity. We will resist the temptation to sacrifice readiness in order to retain force structure, and will in fact rebuild readiness in areas that, by necessity, were deemphasized over the past decade. An ill-prepared force will be vulnerable to corrosion in its morale, recruitment, and retention [...] Conclusion: The United States faces profound challenges that require strong, agile, and capable military forces whose actions are harmonized with other elements of U.S. national power. Our global responsibilities are significant; we cannot afford to fail.

What is evident in this strategy document, as well as in the quotes cited by other defence officials, is a curious mix of operational specifics related to the realignment and peppering of, again, euphemistic or vague language (e.g. ‘we cannot afford to fail’, though what constitutes ‘failure’ is left unexplained)—the meaning of which is assumed to be understood by all, rather than open to interpretation. Nonetheless, the military component of the realignment, combined with the rhetorical reassurances of the USG and military officials of their continued, ‘credible’ commitment to the region, has attracted the most interest from defence officials within Japan—this interest being, oftentimes, sceptical of the strategy. ‘It’s a very delicate balancing act by the White House: trying to have more engagement in these regions and trying to redress underbalancing in these regions’, one MOD researcher tells me.\textsuperscript{65} Another MOD researcher sees the rebalance not as a proactive measure on the part of the US (as it has oft been framed by American officials), but as rather a ‘reaction to the fact that the Asia-Pacific region is becoming more important for the United States [...] So as a result of that, the United States needs to respond to that in order to safeguard its own interests’.\textsuperscript{66}

\textsuperscript{62} Including ‘[littoral combat ships] rotated through Singapore, a greater number of destroyers and amphibious ships home-ported in the Pacific, and the deployment of surface vessels such as Joint High Speed Vessels to the region’ (DOD 2014, p. 36).

\textsuperscript{63} Up to 8,000 Marines were originally to be sent to Guam by the early 2020s, though this number has been revised recently down to 4,000; the Australian contingent, meanwhile, ‘will grow with the goal of establishing a rotational presence of a 2,500 strong Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) over the coming years’ (DOD 2014, p. 36). See also: Erik Slavin, ‘Officials update Okinawa, Guam realignment plans’, \textit{Stars and Stripes}, 3 October 2013, available online at: http://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/officials-update-okinawa-guam-realignment-plans-1.244813.


\textsuperscript{65} Anonymous, personal interview, 12 February 2014, Ministry of Defense, Japan.

\textsuperscript{66} Anonymous, personal interview, 10 January 2014, Ministry of Defense, Japan.
2. Defining and redefining security

Bases are seen as the ‘necessary evil’.

- a current official at the Japanese MOD

While US allies may be reassured by the narratives and policies constituting the rebalance strategy, the same cannot be said within Okinawa itself. Although the construction of the FRF in Henoko was de-linked from the broader relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam in April 2012, the ongoing conflict over the FRF has caused some officials speaking on the subject of the rebalance to be more circumspect in their framing of the issue. ‘I think what we’re doing in -- with the Okinawa, Guam and Korea situation is making sure that people in that region know we’re not withdrawing from Northeast Asia’, said former US Senator James Webb (D-VA), ‘[but] we need to put it in a smarter way, so that the people in Okinawa can accommodate our presence, and we can reduce some of these tensions’.67 Japanese defence policy documents similarly stress, like their diplomatic counterparts, reducing the ‘excessive burden that U.S. military bases and facilities place on local communities’68 and note that ‘special consideration must be paid to minimize the burdens on Okinawa’.69 The February 2014 issue of the MOD’s publication Japan Defense Focus, to this point, states that the MOD ‘will exert itself to the utmost to realize mitigating the impacts as much as possible so that the people of Okinawa can actually feel it’.70

These statements, just like the ones cited in Chapter 3, always carry the attendant clause that burdens must be minimised while also ‘ensuring operational capability, including training capability, throughout the process’71, ‘keeping in mind the current international situation and the security perspective’72, and allowing the Marines to ‘become more politically sustainable on the island’.73 Combined, these two conditions for a ‘successful’ relocation effort constitute the primary components of the larger Okinawa basing strategy which has, in large part, defined the nature of the alliance’s narrative around ‘security’ and how it should be defined within the USG and GOJ for nearly

70 MOD, Japan Defense Focus, 49 (February 2014b), available online at: http://www.mod.go.jp/e/pdf/pdf/id_no49.pdf, p. 4.
two decades. Against this background is the increasingly prominent role of Japan within the alliance in providing for its own defence—a development which has not just been encouraged by the USG, but urged since the 1980s. As US forces have become involved in multiple global conflicts, pressure on the GOJ has intensified to engage in a ‘defence transformation’ which would involve increased defence spending, increased SDF contributions to PKOs and multilateral combat missions around the world, and increasing HNS for US forces.

What these policies mean for the USM presence in Okinawa has been made clear: given the proximity of the prefecture to regional ‘hotspots’ and important sea lanes in comparison to other major US bases in Hawaii, Guam, and the continental US, it will continue to be framed as a critical component of the alliance’s security strategy. At the same time, the emphasis on the ‘political sustainability’ of the USM presence (and of the realignment broadly speaking) illustrates a desire not just to improve civil-military relations for their own sake, but to maintain the USM presence in some form or another for the foreseeable future—thus excluding the possibility of removing them altogether from the range of available policy options. In doing so, actors in defensive sites thus display an unwillingness to negotiate the fundamental narratives underpinning the PBD and the way they define its constitutive, core beliefs.

2.1. Quality of life versus operational necessity

This dichotomous narrative around ‘security’—divided between ensuring a stable quality of life for local populations living near military bases, and ensuring a stable Asia-Pacific region for everyone else—appears to be inherently contradictory. Can central and local governments truly ensure ‘security’ at all sites when military bases pose a potential danger in and of themselves (either as targets of foreign militaries, or as the source of accidents and pollution)? This question has been at the heart of the Okinawan case for decades, but especially since the 1995 rape. In the aftermath, President Clinton himself apologised to the GOJ, the USG eased part of its extraterritorial criminal jurisdiction rules and gave ‘sympathetic consideration to any request for the transfer of custody prior to indictment of the accused which may be made by Japan in specific cases of heinous crimes of murder and rape’. Moreover, the SACO agreement, with its promise to close Futenma, was concluded. In spite of this, the civil activist group Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence has previously stated that ‘there were 4784 serious crimes committed by US service personnel that

were reported in Okinawa between 1972 and 1995, though only around 700 arrests of US servicemembers have been made. One researcher at the MOD acknowledges that the 1995 incident ‘caused people to seriously question the US-Japan Security Treaty and demand it be revised or removed for the first time in many years’.

As part of this ‘serious questioning’ of the Treaty, residents and civil society groups began to more actively pursue litigation against other problems stemming from the bases, such as environmental and noise pollution. These problems are characterised by a current MOD official as ‘more important’ to Okinawans than the alliance’s efforts in HADR-related missions in the region, and the earlier-cited 1998 GAO report likewise comments that civilians in Okinawa have ‘objected to artillery live-fire exercises conducted in the Central Training Area’ and the subsequent ‘destruction of vegetation on nearby mountains in the artillery range’s impact area’. Government officials in both countries are especially aware of the environmental degradation caused by military facilities and have made various pledges over the years to alleviate this issue, including the pursuance of a ‘Green Alliance’ approach which seeks to invest in a ‘green’ Okinawa to improve energy efficiency of US bases and review the current division of responsibilities, particularly over post-land return clean-up efforts.

Another quality-of-life issue which has become a major sticking point in Okinawa is military-related accidents, such as the one in August 2004 when a USMC CH-53D Sea Stallion helicopter on a routine training flight from Futenma crashed into the side of an administrative building of OIU while attempting to make an emergency landing. Although there were no injuries to local students or residents, the campus was damaged from the crash and ensuing fire—the first ‘of a Marine-piloted helicopter off-base into the local community’. The incident also contributed to protests on the island against the introduction of Ospreys to Futenma in 2012, the aircrafts being previously documented as having been involved in a number of malfunctions.

77 Hyun Lee and Christine Ahn, ‘Of Bases and Budgets’, Foreign Policy in Focus, 6 October 2011, available online at: http://fpif.org/of_bases_and_budgets/.
79 Schuster et al 1998, p. 18; the Central Training Area is housed within USMC Camp Hansen in Kin Town, Okinawa, and includes several live firing ranges.
Nevertheless, the operational ‘necessity’ of keeping the bases in Okinawa has, for the most part, overridden these more daily security concerns from residents. In the aftermath of the 1995 rape, for example, Perry remarked:

In a sense, the tragic incident in Okinawa served as a wake-up call for both the United States and Japan. It cast in sharp relief issues that had been lurking in the background for security relations for years, and it caused a lot of soul searching in both countries. America looked inside its heart and saw that there was no reason why we couldn’t change the way we did business in Okinawa. Japan looked inside its heart and saw more clearly the strategic basis for continuing the alliance [emphasis added].

This conclusion drawn by Perry in the aftermath is not unique, and has been made by many US and Japanese officials alike: that while ‘the way of doing business in Okinawa’ should be changed, the importance of the alliance itself – and thus a continued USM presence in Okinawa in one form or another – remains unquestionable. Klingner adds:

In a way, every agreement has been driven solely by reaction to local constituent concern because really, all this series of unilateral compromises by the US have degraded US and alliance capabilities purely to respond to the Okinawans. So, you know, moving an airbase from one end of the island to the other was driven by the [1995] rape case. The rape and helicopters don’t interlink [emphasis added]. I mean, it was a public agreement to respond to public protests over an unrelated issue.

He further goes on to say that the USMC ‘are the only rapidly deployable US ground force between Hawaii and India, Diego Garcia. So they are the 9/11 force for the US’; similarly, says US defence analyst David Axe, ‘the Pentagon has spent billions of dollars in the past decade modernizing forces and facilities on the island’, including ‘extensive new storage bunkers for bombs, missiles and spare parts’, and ‘Global Hawk long-range spy drones and F-22 Raptor stealth fighters’ at the USAF’s base in Kadena which ‘could also clear the way for air strikes on ground targets in China or North Korea’. Outside of its strategic value, the 1998 GAO report notes the prefecture’s ‘well-established military infrastructure that is provided to the United States rent-free and that supports the III Marine Expeditionary Force (and other U.S. forces)’, including ‘warehouses holding war reserve supplies […] [and] port facilities capable of handling military sealift ships and amphibious ships are available at the Army’s Naha Military Port and the Navy’s White Beach’. The presence of this ‘well-established military infrastructure’ and the sunk costs of ‘billions of dollars’ thus, in this narrative of ‘security’, clearly takes precedence in alliance policymaking.

83 Perry 1996.
84 Bruce Klingner, personal interview, 14 July 2014, Heritage Foundation, Washington, DC, USA.
85 David Axe, ‘Why Allies Need US Base’, The Diplomat, 28 June 2010, available online at: http://thediplomat.com/2010/06/why-allies-need-okinawa-base/. Kadena, one of the largest air bases in the world, is also home to the USAF’s 18th Wing, the largest of their combat wings.
2.2. Increasing Japan’s defence burden

Despite the insistence by officials on keeping the bases where they are and framing this within a larger concern for both regional peace and operational convenience, this is not to say that other arguments do not exist. ‘The current basing structure is not ideally located for any regional contingency whether it be peacekeeping, disaster relief, or war’, says the 2013 GUASA report. ‘All the bases [...] are within range of Chinese conventional missiles [...] The time of large permanent facilities located on foreign soil is a thing of the past. Smaller footprints are the order of the day’.87

Yamaguchi agrees, adding that although, for example, the USM’s facilities at Naha Airport in Okinawa were fully occupied during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, they are ‘practically empty’ otherwise—this being in stark contrast to the congestion outside in the prefecture. ‘Only 30 to 40 thousand US troops live in Okinawa’, he comments, ‘but they take up so much space’.88

If, then, ‘smaller footprints are the order of the day’, asked Senator Webb in 2012, ‘[h]ow [do we] resolve the impasse in a fashion that is positive, rather than in a way that looks as if we are losing our critical presence in that part of the world?’89 One possible resolution that has been proposed for a number of years—and is already being implemented in a number of different ways—is increasing Japan’s defence ‘responsibilities’ on the whole. ‘Japan has the opportunity – and an obligation [emphasis added] – to take on a role that reflects its political, economic, and military capacity’, said Gates in a 2007 speech, ‘[a]nd that is why we hope – and expect [emphasis added] – Japan will choose to accept more global security responsibilities in the years ahead’.90 Former Deputy Chief of Mission at the US Embassy in Tokyo James Zumwalt similarly advised, in a 2009 scenesetter for US Under SecDef Michelle Flournoy prior to her visit to Tokyo: ‘In addition to encouraging greater defense spending, enhanced information security, and broader legal authority to the [SDF], we are encouraging Japan to focus on deepening operational capabilities in ways that will enhance our Alliance’s deterrent value, including long-range lift, [BMD], sustainment, and maritime operations’.91

Where the framing of this shift towards a more ‘equal’ partnership in terms of defence policies and spending by US officials has tended to use words like ‘responsibility’, ‘obligation’, and ‘expectation’, it is curious to note that their Japanese counterparts – while echoing some of this

87 GUASA 2013, p. 9.
88 Yamaguchi 2014.
terminology – intermingle it with the familiar language of ‘burden’. ‘[I]t is also important to explain to the Japanese public that it is the time for Japan to reduce its dependence on the United States and try to assume a greater defense burden’, Yamaoka explained to Roos in their December 2009 meeting\(^92\); likewise, former DPJ leader Ichiro Ozawa told a Congressional delegation comprising Senators John McCain (R-AZ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) on a visit to Tokyo in April 2009 that ‘the DPJ, once in power, will be a more reliable partner to the United States than the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in terms of sharing the burden on dealing with worldwide problems’.\(^93\)

The distinction here is important: where ‘obligation’ and ‘responsibility’ both imply a sense of moral duty or even legally-bound commitment, ‘burden’ in and of itself is simply defined as ‘a load’.\(^94\) Where the framing of the bases as a ‘burden’ on Okinawans abides by this definition when coupled with the consequences of living close to them, the characterisation of Japan’s ‘normalisation’ in terms of ‘burden’-sharing, however, seems to strike a tone expressing discomfort with the ‘load’ of providing for its own defence.

Indeed, once the DPJ took office, the USG’s interpretation of this language became more closely linked with the party’s attempts to improve relations with China and the ROK rather than its desire to maintain good alliance relations. ‘Abe is smarter than Hatoyama about the alliance by committing more strongly to the US’, says Mochizuki.\(^95\) Klingner agrees, remarking that ‘from a US viewpoint, if we look at Japan’s defence reforms under Abe, they’re very encouraging. He’s reversed the defence spending decline’.\(^96\) An MOD researcher, however, comments that Japan’s spending increase in defence is only a ‘tiny’ one\(^97\), and that ‘in domestic terms, it’s a very big issue, but no other country discusses this sort of issue, because the fact that a sovereign nation has a CSD right as well as an individual self-defence right—that’s just a natural thing’.\(^98\) Another MOD researcher points out that the SDF still lack any offensive capabilities ‘to dissuade or deter the adventures of, or the provocations of, wrongdoers’, and therefore ‘the US military presence will [continue to] compensate for our lack of capability. And, I should say, lack of political will [emphasis added]’\(^99\).

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\(^{92}\) Roos 2009f.
\(^{95}\) Mike Mochizuki, personal interview, September 2014, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA.
\(^{96}\) Klingner 2014.
\(^{97}\) For fiscal year 2015, 4.98 trillion yen (US$42 billion) was earmarked for the defence budget, the ‘biggest ever’ and a 2 per cent increase from last year ’and marks the third straight increase after more than a decade of cuts’ (Justin McCurry, ‘Japan reveals record defence budget as tensions with China grow’, The Guardian, 14 January 2015, available online at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/14/japan-reveals-record-defence-budget-as-tensions-with-china-grow).
\(^{98}\) Anonymous 2014f.
\(^{99}\) Anonymous 2014j.
2.3. Henoko as the ‘best’ and ‘only’ option

For lack of an advanced enough level of ‘defence transformation’ to pursue a more significant reduction in US forces – not to mention an apparent ‘lack of political will’ (echoing Okamoto’s comment about Hatoyama’s lack of ‘political courage’) – the USG and GOJ have often found themselves, in the case of the FRF, at a complete standstill. ‘Futenma is often said to be "a thorn (or bone) stuck in your throat for the US-Japan alliance’, says Yamaguchi. ‘The status quo at Futenma is preferable for some US Marines, but it’s not politically sustainable’. Given that ‘political sustainability’ is one of the three main features of the US’s rebalance strategy and a key element of its discursive strategy in arguing for a continued USM presence in Asia, the FRF dispute’s ‘thorny’ qualities have led to it being placed high on the agenda of every Japanese administration since 1995 (and especially after Hatoyama’s promise to relocate it outside of Okinawa). In 2007, Japanese Defense Minister (DefMin) Yuriko Koike, for example, placed ‘implementing base realignment’ as the top of her three priorities on her agenda. Later DefMin Toshimi Kitazawa also stated that ‘the relocation and return of Futenma Air Station should be achieved as soon as possible’. Abe’s decision to more aggressively pursue the negotiations which would eventually lead to the December 2013 deal with Governor Nakaima were therefore, says an MOD researcher, ‘based on not only the strategic value of Futenma, but, more importantly, its symbolic value’.

The ‘strategic’ value of Futenma, says the 2006 Japanese WP, derives primarily from its three current functions: ‘1) transporting troops of ground units of the Marine Corps using helicopters and others, 2) operating the KC-130 aerial refueling plane and 3) base function that accommodates airplanes in the event of an emergency’. Specifically, this first function must be kept within the prefecture, argues the document, because ‘ground units and helicopter units in Okinawa should be always operated in cooperation with each other in regular exercises and drills for their expeditious deployment’. Given the political volatility surrounding the planned relocation of Futenma to Henoko, several alternatives were considered, including consolidating the air station with Kadena, moving it to the smaller island of Iejima or to Guam, or moving the facility to

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100 Yamaguchi 2014.
103 Anonymous 2014i.
somewhere in mainland Japan—though this latter option has generally been met with resistance from local governments unwilling to accept the US presence in their prefectures.¹⁰⁵

‘Everyone says, you know, let’s find a better location [for the FRF]’, says Klingner. Echoing Brooks (in Chapter 3, section 4.2), he adds: ‘when people ask, “why isn’t there a Plan B?” This is the Plan B. Plan A is staying at Futenma. It’s a better base. Plan B is moving it to Henoko’.¹⁰⁶ USN Admiral and former PACOM Commander Timothy Keating similarly commented, in a meeting with then-DefMin Fumio Kyuma, that ‘any reconsideration of the plan for the relocation of Futenma MCAS would not solve any problems and instead simply delay the project [...] [T]he agreement [...] was based on common strategic objectives and addressed both short and long term concerns. It is important [...] to hold on to what we have achieved’.¹⁰⁷ Likewise, later DefMin Yoshimasa Hayashi, in a 2008 meeting with Roos, framed the existing relocation plan’s opponents – in this case, Okinawan officials – as ‘children’: ‘Children all learn the grammatical pattern “doing this will depend on doing that [...] they (Okinawan leaders) need to understand the necessity of implementing all parts of the [relocation] package”’.¹⁰⁸

In characterising local officials as simply ‘Okinawan leaders’ or even ‘children’, Hayashi not only clearly sets them apart from the ‘manager’ tier (of which he and Roos are a part), but also assumes a lower base of knowledge and, therefore, agency with regards to the policymaking process. Moreover, in excluding or dismissing these actors and any broader arguments they may pose in favour of altering the FRF plan, let alone decreasing or removing the USM presence in Okinawa, these officials have instead found themselves entangled in disagreements amongst themselves about smaller details within the existing, ‘institutionalised’ plan. For example, in a 2007 meeting between Maher and Kyuma in Naha, the two ‘spent quite a while studying the map of the FRF and going over each of those problems. For example, moving towards the ocean runs into the islands, moving to the left increases environmental impact on the sea grass, moving to the right puts it into deeper water and makes construction much more difficult’.¹⁰⁹ LDP DG Motojuku dismissed such considerations in 2009, echoing Hayashi’s remark that the FRF is ‘a decision which is in Japan’s national interest and needs to be implemented as is, even if the general population disagrees’.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Yamaguchi 2014; Anonymous 2014j.
¹⁰⁶ Klingner 2014.
¹¹⁰ Roos 2009e.
If, then, Futenma’s strategic value is tied to its political institutionalisation, then the ‘symbolic’ value is tied to the political animus that has built up around it over the course of its long-delayed relocation, and the risk that this animus poses to the future of the alliance. Hatoyama’s resignation appears, in this context, to have been driven in part by the widespread perception that ‘the base relocation had become symbolic [...] of his leadership’, according to a 2010 briefing written by US defence analyst Matt Gertken.\(^{111}\) Beyond the political survivability of a single prime minister or even his party, however, is Futenma as a symbol of potential harm. ‘Futenma is really dangerous’, remarks Yamaguchi, continuing: ‘if it’s not moved, there is an increased likelihood of another bad accident and not only the bases in Okinawa, but also the alliance, would be threatened’.\(^{112}\)

Mochizuki agrees that such an accident ‘would be an absolute disaster for the alliance’\(^{113}\), especially, adding an MOD researcher, because the GOJ ‘has [done] various work on [the relocation] [...] but in terms of the reality, nothing has changed’.\(^{114}\) Webb, after visiting the prefecture, observed that Futenma ‘is the most emotional issue on Okinawa’ but added that changing the FRF plan would be difficult ‘unless they have something concrete to move toward. And you know the old first rule of wing walking: You don’t let go of what you have until you’ve got a firm grasp on where you’re going’.\(^{115}\) Webb’s colleague who worked with him on the Futenma issue, however – former Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) – remarked in a 2011 interview that the relocation facility planned in Henoko, in his opinion, is:

unworkable, just simply too expensive. And we ought to be honest with each other. So this is for some reason difficult politically, and I’m not sure I understand why, either in Washington [...] or in Japan; I don’t know why it’s difficult politically to say, you know, we’ve got a plan. We agreed on a plan. Hey, it’s not working; let’s change the plan. But there’s a sensitivity. Who goes first? This is an ally. [...] So I consider this -- number one, we should deal with it frankly, together, not unilaterally, and be honest about the impossibility and impracticability -- if that’s a word -- of our current plan.

2.4. An ever-expanding partnership

While the FRF remains a politically ‘difficult’ issue over which the USG and GOJ have recently been in conflict, their approach to the alliance as a whole – specifically, its future functions and purpose – has been more united. ‘I believe the alliance is a lot stronger than one airstrip’, the former

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\(^{111}\) Matt Gertken, ‘Re: CAT 3 FOR EDIT - JAPAN - Base to stay on Okinawa - 100524’, Wikileaks, The Global Intelligence Files Email-ID:1258003. 24 May 2010b. Available online at: https://wikileaks.org/gifiles/docs/12/1258003_re-cat-3-for-edit-japan-base-to-stay-on-okinawa-100524-.html.\(^{112}\)

Senate staffer tells me\textsuperscript{117}; likewise, in a 2006 interview, Nye remarked that ‘since 1996 the U.S.-Japan relationship really has been stronger than the personalities of individual leaders [...] If former Vice President Al Gore had been elected president in 2000 or Senator John Kerry in 2004 [...] I do not think those developments would have altered the trajectory of bilateral relations very much’.\textsuperscript{118} The US is a ‘natural partner’, argues one MOD researcher. ‘We kept on saying that our cultures are so different and our histories are so different, languages are so different, the regions are so different, but my point is: I don’t care. I don’t care. What’s best about our relationship is that we are business-oriented’.\textsuperscript{119}

This framing of the alliance’s ‘business-oriented’ nature and its need to move past the FRF in order to focus on ‘first-order’ issues – echoing Perry’s remarks in 1996 about the US changing the way it does ‘business’ in Okinawa – is common among actors in defence sites. It is especially visible in the cables released by Wikileaks: for example, in a scenesetter written by Roos for President Obama’s November 2010 state visit to Japan, he wrote:

In order to keep the focus of your visit firmly on the positive accomplishments of the alliance and highlight our plans for even closer cooperation in the future, we are working with the Japanese government to announce during your visit the establishment of a bilateral interagency team to resolve outstanding issues on an expeditious basis related to the Japanese Government’s review of the Futenma replacement facility and other key alliance issues. [...] By putting contentious subjects into a separate channel, we hope to keep them off the agenda for your visit and remove them as a focus of media attention [emphasis added]. This approach would enable you to speak in more positive, future-oriented terms about the Alliance, to include the possibility of new initiatives to mark the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in 2010.

This was echoed by Yamaoka in his 2009 meeting with Roos in which he said that it is ‘critical to discuss the future direction of the alliance and make the FRF/Henoko issue as but one of many issues in the alliance’.\textsuperscript{121} Then-MOD Parliamentary VM Akihisa Nagashima later also commented to former CG in Okinawa Raymond Greene: ‘we need to just get this FRF discussion over with and turn our attention to more positive-sum issues in the Alliance’.\textsuperscript{122}

Usually, what is included in this focus on the ‘positive-sum issues’ in the alliance has been the ‘shared values’ of the Japanese and American governments, including democracy, individual

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Anonymous 2014k.
\item Anonymous 2014j.
\item Roos 2009d.
\item Roos 2009f.
\end{enumerate}
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liberty, rule of law, a market economy, and promoting international peace and cooperation.\textsuperscript{123} ‘I think it is important to remember those basic truths, indeed the wide, deep and rich array of values and interests that bind our two countries together – especially since news headlines about our alliance are often dominated by difficult issues [emphasis added] such as HNS, the Futenma relocation, and funding for Guam’, said Gates in 2011.\textsuperscript{124} Following this, a current MOD researcher tells me that the alliance ‘is also a community of values, an alliance of values, and so even without North Korea or even without China, I’m quite confident that this alliance continues because it is not just a military alliance, it is a community of values’.\textsuperscript{125}

Beyond this ‘community of values’, however, is also the tangible expansion of the alliance’s purposes since the end of the Cold War. Operation Tomodachi, for instance, ‘showcased the U.S. military’s “helpfulness,” legitimized its presence, and softened its image’ in mainland Japan—the evidence for this being that less than three weeks after the operation began, ‘Japan promised to increase its Host Nation Support from three to five years and to pay 188 million yen annually for U.S. military facilities in the country’.\textsuperscript{126} Ogawa, moreover, has suggested turning some US bases in Okinawa, including Kadena and Futenma, into ‘major bases of U.S. peacekeeping operations, and establish peacekeeping training centers and posts for a U.N. standby force similar to that of the Nordic countries’.\textsuperscript{127} USMC General James Amos, speaking to this point, praised US efforts following the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, crediting their success in large part due to their forward deployment in the region (or, to quote Cohen: ‘perfect speed is being there’). ‘Even before this storm hit land’, he said, ‘Marines and Sailors on Okinawa and mainland Japan were preparing to respond – because they were already there... forward deployed’.\textsuperscript{128}

Beyond what cooperation already exists, however, many officials have recommended that more coordination on a greater variety of issues between not only the two governments, but also the USM and the SDF, would be better still for the future of the alliance. Paul Lushenko, a US Army (USAR) intelligence officer, comments that ‘it is only a matter of time until a “normalizing” Japan receives more tactically-oriented intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms such as Predator drones to facilitate a common operating picture across its [SDF] and USARPAC [USAR


\textsuperscript{124} Gates 2011a.

\textsuperscript{125} Anonymous 2014f.


\textsuperscript{128} Amos 2014.
Pacific] units stationed in Alaska, Hawai’i, and Korea’. Gregson, meanwhile, points to the 2013 ‘Dawn Blitz’ joint training exercise in southern California which, in his words, ‘showed the power of bilateral training and the potential of [SDF] operations that are integrated across the very different air, land and sea environments […] It was a great evolution for the alliance’. Nonetheless, a current MOD researcher warns that this ‘evolution’ may be more limited than it seems: ‘Its [the alliance’s] purpose has expanded beyond the defense of Japan—now it is more concerned also with regional and global security. In Okinawa, however, there is no consensus on the role of the US-Japan alliance, and that is part of the problem’.

3. Institutional and cultural identities

Futenma shouldn’t be a political problem in the US, because it’s a local problem in Japan.

- Noboru Yamaguchi

The implication made by officials quoted in the preceding section that getting the FRF discussion ‘over with’ would enable the governments to ‘speak in more positive, future-oriented terms about the Alliance’ and focus on continuing to expand its repertoire of functions — and that Futenma is, therefore, just an ‘obstacle’ to be ‘overcome’ — would seem to contradict its prominent place in policy discussions between them for nearly twenty years. Moreover, simply saying that it should not be a ‘first-order’ issue or that it ‘shouldn’t be a political problem’ does not ‘resolve’ the ‘problem’ as such. Indeed, the physical and discursive distance between actors in defence sites from those of the ‘everyday’ on not only the importance of Futenma, but also on the role of the alliance and what ‘security’ even means and to whom it applies, makes reconciliation between their policy stances difficult. This distance also colours the narratives from the defence establishment about the differences in respective actors’ institutional and cultural identities, and efforts to bridge the gap between them—or, conversely, the lack of such efforts, and the implications of this.

What this section seeks to highlight, however, is not just these points of difference among the parties involved, but also those within the alliance itself. By doing so, it illustrates the panoply of interpretations which exist even among a ‘transnational institutional network’ of ‘security professionals’ who are often lumped together and portrayed as uniform in their ideas, beliefs, and rhetoric. For example, in his historical research on how previous CGs in Okinawa have dealt with the ‘Okinawa problem’ in the 1950s, Eldridge finds that the military ‘disregarded’ many of the

131 Anonymous 2014i.
observations made by the CGs – ranging from those warning that local residents ‘were protesting the fact that they were being asked to move to make room for the second half of an 18-hole golf course’ to those which cautioned that ‘military government cannot be a substitute for civil government over an extended period in times of peace’. Such differences have travelled across time to also encompass disagreements over the FRF specifically, as has been illustrated in Chapter 3 and also in Levin’s comments from section 2.3.

What is especially apparent from the disagreements over the best approach to tackling the debate over the bases is a difficulty in reconciling competing stories about whom, exactly, is receiving benefits from them. Defence officials argue in favour of the ‘strategic’ value of Okinawa and how the bases there are critical in the protection of Japan as well as the Asia-Pacific region. This is not to say, however, that some of these same officials, politicians, and ‘experts’ are not also the ones who have made the most strident cases in favour of the opposite argument: that the bases are not there for the defence of Japan and Okinawa, but rather to maintain the US’s foothold in the region; that maintaining the current force presence structure only deepens existing tensions and resentments between the USM and Okinawan residents; and that the current FRF plan is not the ‘best’ or ‘only’ option, but rather, in Yamaguchi’s words, the ‘most executable’—and thus is not immune to criticism.

3.1. Relationships and rivalries in (and around) Okinawa

In discussing how the FRF’s relocation site came to be Henoko, USM inter-service rivalries are often one source of blame cited by actors in defence sites. These rivalries are said to have made difficult such alternative plans as the merger of the FRF with Kadena (given that the two are operated by the USMC and USAF, respectively). However, in the case of the merger option, as Nagashima told Greene in 2009, it is not just these ‘turf battles’ between the different services that have made pursuing alternatives difficult, but also ‘Okinawan leaders, some of whom assailed him personally over his past support for collocating USAF and USMC aircraft at Kadena Air Base’.

This paints a broader picture of the stakes involved in the base issue, not to mention the variety of actors involved therein, than is sometimes acknowledged—especially by members of the defence corps themselves. ‘[DefMin Fukushiro] Nukaga responded that the GOJ and he himself will take responsibility for resolving the issue’, reported Roos in a 2006 cable from the embassy in Tokyo. ‘The FRF is not a bilateral issue, but a domestic one, he said. Of course realignment is a bilateral

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133 Yamaguchi 2014.
134 Webb 2012.
135 Greene 2009. Nagashima went on to explain that ‘no one around Kadena wants those aircraft [from Futenma]’, a comment which was later echoed by Kadena Mayor Atsusane Miyagi, who said that ‘moving Futenma to Kadena isn’t burden reduction, it is just burden reallocation’.
matter, but FRF to Camp Schwab must be resolved domestically [...] Nukaga added that there is no intent to make the U.S. the villain to Okinawa.

Okamoto also frames the standstill over the FRF as ‘Japan’s failure’, claiming that ‘as long as that situation remains unresolved, the region will not enjoy long-term stability’.

This insistence on keeping Futenma a ‘domestic’ or even a ‘local’ prefectural issue again begs the question: how can a USM base – obviously the product of a bilateral treaty between the two countries – be separated from the US? Even if simply going by Okamoto’s assessment of Futenma as ‘Japan’s failure’, his conclusion that the ‘standstill’ over its relocation could potentially lead to a worsening of regional relations, which would undoubtedly affect the US as a ‘Pacific nation [which] maintains a strong interest in the Asian-Pacific region, and will continue to play an active and constructive role there’, implies that it is not just a ‘Japanese’ problem. Given Okinawa’s historic importance as ‘absolutely essential to the defense of our [the US’s] Western Pacific Frontier’ and its current role in the US’s ‘rebalance’ to Asia, placing the ‘burden’ of ‘responsibility’ of the relocation’s implementation solely on the GOJ likewise appears inconsistent.

It is this contradiction which has led to its being the subject of sometimes fierce debate between actors in the central GOJ over how to best implement the relocation plan. For example, former US Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer, recounting an 8 March 2007 dinner hosted by independent Okinawan Diet Member Mikio Shimoji, reported that MOD Administrative VM Takemasa Moriya had ‘lashed out’ at DefMin Kyuma and accused him of ‘under-the-table financial dealings with local business interests’ as being the motivation behind him having ‘secretly promised Gov. Nakaima that he could deliver a bilateral agreement to move the FRF’s "V-shape" runway off-shore and is unwilling to back out of this commitment regardless of pressure from Washington or his own government’.

In his final comments on this cable, Schieffer expresses surprise at the exchange, saying: ‘It is remarkable how freely Moriya shared his contempt for Kyuma [...] Moriya’s casual remark that "Kyuma never tells me anything" suggests that rumors of a breakdown in communications between the Defense Minister and his deputy are on the mark’.


Alongside these internecine battles among Japanese defence officials are similarly tense discussions between US and Japanese officials. In 2008, for instance, MOD DG Nobushige Takamizawa argued ‘in an unusually heated outburst’ at US ASD for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs James Shinn that ‘U.S. government pressure to speed up on-land construction at the FRF threatens to undermine Tokyo’s efforts to secure cooperation from Okinawa’. Specifically, he warned: ‘We may win some battles but will lose the war’, stressing that ‘[w]hile Japan would welcome specific ideas from the U.S. side, general expressions of concern about Japan’s execution strategy are counter-productive’.140 Webb, speaking to the general logistics of the plan itself, called the proposed FRF at Henoko a ‘monstrosity’, endorsing the Kadena merger but also calling for a reduction in the size of the USAF at Kadena itself: ‘You can disperse them to, potentially, other bases in Japan and also to Anderson USAF Base, Guam, which is not even 50 percent utilized right now’.141 Kiyoshi Sugawa, former special researcher at the Office of the PM, also argues that if no replacement facility is built, ‘large numbers of Marines cannot remain on Okinawa. And the reality is no other area of mainland Japan is prepared to house such a presence and the Okinawa public refuses to accept any other site for the FRF in the prefecture’.142 Finally, Ogawa recounts an encounter between himself and Maher after he suggested to Hatoyama the possibility of relocating Futenma to Camp Hansen:

Having listened to my explanation, Prime Minister Hatoyama authorized me in December 2009 to discuss the Futenma relocation issue with U.S. officials alongside Director General [of the International Department Yukihisa] Fujita. When I argued to the Americans that the land for an expedient helicopter base could be cleared in two days, Kevin Maher exclaimed “Dekinai!” (“Impossible!” in Japanese). I replied in a loud voice, “You may be an excellent diplomat, but you are not a military expert. I am. In wartime, helicopter bases are targets for attack. If a military formation cannot relocate a helicopter base in two days, then it will lose the war.” Subsequently, Mr. Maher has no longer raised this issue with me.

Although many of these discussions took place behind the ‘closed doors’ of the US embassy in Tokyo or the general consulate in Naha and have only been revealed in recent years due to Wikileaks, they exemplify the fact that personal rivalries – a variable that is little-discussed in the literature on

141 Sciutto 2011a.
alliance ‘persistence’ – can and do have an impact, and this impact extends beyond ‘constraints’ that are imposed by institutional rules and norms on the negotiating and policymaking processes.

3.2. The defence of all or the defence of some

What has complicated this already complex debate over not only the specifics of the FRF, but also over whom bears responsibility for its implementation, is a more fundamental disagreement over how to convey the purpose of the USM presence in Okinawa. ‘You have to frame what’s going on in Okinawa against the context of what Tokyo believes to be in their best interest nationally around the region and around the world’, the Senate staffer tells me; looking at previous internal discussions between officials in Tokyo, these duelling narratives about security are apparent. Moriya, meeting with Schieffer in 2006, stated: ‘We have a good plan for Futenma, and more importantly, it represents a promise made by the government of Japan to the government of the United States [...] [we will] work with the Environment Ministry to secure permission for survey work at Camp Schwab if the next Okinawa Governor refused to sign required permits’. Takamizawa expressed a similar willingness to go over the prefectural authority or democratic will in Okinawa if need be, telling Schieffer in 2008 that although the GOJ has a ‘desire to be seen by the Okinawan people as listening to their concerns’, he still asked ‘for the U.S. to "remain tough" on statements regarding realignment’.

In my interviews with current and former defence officials, however, another narrative emerged: that of many Okinawans actually being more ‘realistic’ about certain ‘threats’ to national security than their mainland Japanese counterparts. ‘When the North Korean missile flew over the Okinawan islands [in December 2012], and Okinawan people even insisted that for missile defence, like the PAC-3 – they [the GOJ] [should] pay for the third system to be located [in Okinawa] and it should protect Okinawan people’, says one MOD researcher. ‘So in these past two or three years, Okinawan people’s perceptions vis-a-vis missile defence or so-called “extended deterrence” has

144 Anonymous 2014k.
146 Thomas Schieffer, ‘Ministry of Defense DG Takamizawa on Force Realignment’, Wikileaks, Wikileaks cable:08TOKYO363. 12 February 2008a. Available online at: https://www.wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08TOKYO363_a.html. This desire to be ‘seen’ as ‘listening to their concerns’ is also evident in joint statements and official strategy documents. For example, PM Hashimoto stated that ‘both governments are making sincere efforts to reduce the burden on the Okinawan people, by paying the utmost consideration to the Okinawan people’ in his 1996 joint press conference with Clinton, while the MOD has said that it will ‘exert itself to the utmost to realize mitigating the impacts [of Futenma] as much as possible so that the people of Okinawa can actually feel it [emphasis added]’ (MOFA 1996e; MOD 2014b, p. 4). These impact mitigation measures include, according to the document, ‘the relocation of the KC-130 squadron from MCAS Futenma to MCAS Iwakuni as well as implementation of the MV-22 Osprey training outside of Okinawa Prefecture’. 147 Noboru Yamaguchi, for example, told me that they are ‘more realistic about China’ (2014).
changed dramatically’. Within this narrative, actors in defence sites distinguished between so-called ‘realistic’ and ‘idealistic’ Okinawan residents depending on the degree to which their conceptualisations of ‘threat’ and ‘security’ align with those of their own. For example, another researcher comments:

... in one sense, you can say that their [Okinawans’] security awareness is very real and substantial. Because ... the Senkakus, actually, are part of Okinawa. And the fact that the Chinese fishing boats and Chinese law enforcement agencies’ vessels come into various islands of Okinawa—that’s a huge concern for Okinawa fishermen because, for obvious reasons, they don’t want to see Chinese competitors in their own waters [...] So that’s why in the remote islands of Okinawa, some people are very, very, very supportive of more rigorous, assertive responses from the Japanese Coast Guard in dealing with those Chinese vessels, government and private vessels. So ... in that sense, yes, some Okinawans are very much aware of security problems [...] But ... that is somewhat detached from broader strategic interests, as you can imagine.

In its attempt to extend this kind of ‘security awareness’ across the prefecture, the MOD has relied on the efforts of its local branch, the Okinawa Defense Bureau (ODB), located in Kadena. The main roles of the bureau have historically been: to ‘tacitly’ maintain support for a stable USM presence through coordination with local leaders in Okinawa; to negotiate with the USG, US armed forces, and anti-base Diet members; to interact with mass and local media; and to handle vaguely-described ‘leftist opposition movements’. It has been responsible for addressing complaints from residents about noise pollution, with one MOD official telling me that the bureau, for example, ‘measures the noise and gives out subsidies for soundproofing windows and air conditioning’ upon request. The ODB also looks after the paperwork for distributing rent to local landowners on behalf of the GOJ, oversees base relocations, closures, and land returns, though as one MOD researcher tells it: ‘they are not policymakers, they are just implementing government policy’.

However, even in carrying out orders from the top-down, says another MOD researcher, gaps remain in record-keeping: ‘many years ago, the two governments agreed to close that Naha Pier and move it somewhere else. But nothing has been done [...] And when I went there, I asked the

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148 Anonymous 2014j. The PAC-3 is an upgrade to the MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missile system used by the US primarily as part of its anti-ballistic missile system. It has also been sold on to Japan and is used by their Air Self Defense Forces.

149 Anonymous 2014f. Nobuhiro Kubo, however, reports public opinion on one of these ‘remote’ islands, Yonaguni – where a new military radar station is being built – as divided over this development, with those in favour of the station ‘looking forward to hosting [it] [...] because of the economic boost it will bring’, and those opposed concerned that it may ‘become a target should Japan end up in a fight’ (‘Japan expands army footprint for first time in 40 years, risks angering China’, Reuters, 19 April 2014, available online at: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-military-yonaguni-idUSBREA3I05X20140419).


151 Kimura 2013, p. 5.


153 Anonymous 2014f.
MOD office [...] how often does the US military use this port? And they didn’t have any idea. That shows something’.

3.3. Civil-military relations: mistrust and miscommunication

Given this sometimes incoherent messaging between the USG and GOJ, the USM, the ODB in Kadena, and Okinawan residents, it is not surprising that scepticism of the purpose of US forces in Okinawa is high in the prefecture. Remarks Yara: ‘The USMC doesn’t do enough to advertise its HADR role in Okinawa—people don’t know about it’.154 ‘They [the USMC] are not forces for the protection of Okinawa only, but also for deployment or redeployment’, an MOD researcher agrees.155 Klingner adds that bases such as Futenma are ‘critical to defending the Peninsula. We can’t defend Korea without Japan’.156 The Senate staffer echoes Klingner’s comments in a blunter fashion: ‘first of all, let’s be clear here, you know, the forces on Okinawa are not for the defence of Japan. They’re not. I mean, they’re for the forward protection of US national interests in that region’.157

Long-time US correspondent for Weekly Toyo Keizai Peter Ennis, however, remarks that even these arguments contain numerous fallacies:

The Marines are not on Okinawa to defend Japan. The chances of a land invasion of Japan are less than remote. Even a Chinese move on the Senkaku islands could effectively be met by Japan’s Coast Guard and the Maritime Self Defense and Air Self Defense forces (not to mention the Ground Self Defense Forces). Similarly, the Marines are not on Okinawa to defend South Korea. The Republic of Korea’s ground forces are larger in number than the entire US Army and US Marine Corps combined worldwide, and they are capable of defeating North Korea, with backup of course from the combined air and naval forces of the US and the ROK itself.

Criticisms like these are part of a larger problem of mistrust and miscommunication in civil-military relations dating back to the beginning of the USM’s occupation of the prefecture. The many controversies connected to the US’s extraterritorial jurisdiction over its forces, for example, has led to a situation in which the Japanese perception of, specifically, the custody arrangement is that ‘servicemen in Okinawa know that if after committing a rape, a robbery, or an assault, they can make it back to the base before the [Japanese] police catch them, they will be free until indicted even though there is a Japanese arrest warrant out for their capture’.159

Similarly, responsibility over environmental clean-up of land returned from former base sites has been a subject of contention. The 1998 GAO report cites the case of the land which had formerly

154 Yara 2014.
155 Anonymous 2014j.
156 Klingner 2014.
157 Anonymous 2014k.
159 Flynn 2012, p. 22.
been Onna Communications Site, on which the ODB found such toxic substances as mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls and could not return the land to its owners for reuse.\textsuperscript{160} Citing a similar situation in the US which ended up costing the government over $53 million to clean up, the report warned that if ‘an environmental baseline survey is conducted and contamination [onsite] is found, cleanup could prove expensive’.\textsuperscript{161}

It is problems like these, says Gregson, which explain why ‘SACO didn’t fully succeed’.\textsuperscript{162} He expands on this comment, listing three main reasons for this outcome: ‘One: mainland Japan didn’t really care. Two: once the agreement was signed, the US thought the heavy lifting was over. And three: neither side took local politics into account’. Yamaguchi agrees, adding: ‘the deeper problem is Honshu people’s unwillingness to accept responsibility for the bases’.\textsuperscript{163} One MOD researcher further critiques the management of base-related protests: ‘over the past thirty, forty, fifty years, the Japanese government’s solution was to pay subsidies to curb protest. It is not the perfect solution, but it is the best available solution to help win the hearts and minds of local Okinawans. But in the case of Futenma, we haven’t done that at a very good level’.\textsuperscript{164} Even over smaller, everyday issues, a palpable division exists, says an MOD official: ‘Under SOFA, US residents don’t pay local taxes, so local residents complain about the USM not sorting their garbage collection, dog waste, and their general manners. They feel that through SOFA, the USM is unfairly privileged’.\textsuperscript{165}

A more specific instance in which this miscommunication is particularly evident is the 2004 OIU helicopter crash. The USM’s decision not to grant access to local law enforcement to the crash site immediately following the incident was perceived by many Okinawan residents as ‘an infringement on Japan’s sovereignty’; this was not aided when, after Okinawa Prefecture Assembly member Masaharu Kina asked a group of Marines what ‘authority’ they had over the site, they replied: ‘because it is dangerous’.\textsuperscript{166} The public affairs effort following this case was also lacking, says Eldridge, as press releases ‘lacked detail, regularity, and timeliness’, few were released in the month after it occurred (only six from USMC Japan’s Consolidated Public Affairs Office and four from the USFJ), and ‘little attention or energy’ was put into providing the full details of the incident online, especially by ‘the respective organizations and agencies of the U.S. military and government, and that of the Japanese government such as the DFAA and MOFA’.\textsuperscript{167

\textsuperscript{160} Schuster et al 1998, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{162} Gregson 2014.
\textsuperscript{163} Yamaguchi 2014.
\textsuperscript{164} Anonymous 2014j.
\textsuperscript{165} Anonymous 2014h.
\textsuperscript{166} Eldridge 2008-09, pp. 140-141.
\textsuperscript{167} Eldridge 2008-09, p. 140.
In his comments following the crash to local newspaper the Ryukyu Shimpo, Yoichi Iha, then-mayor of Ginowan (where the crash took place), also helped to frame the story around it as a stand-off between the USM and prefectural authorities: ‘The purpose of the U.S. military investigation is different [from that of the Japanese side]. For them, the most important thing is to preserve the helicopter’s body, and has nothing to do with the damage to residents and structures’. 168 Following his comments and subsequent meetings with MOFA, the Japanese Defense Agency (precursor to the MOD), and the US Embassy, as many as 31 of 52 local communities around base sites in Okinawa ‘passed resolutions calling for the re-examination of SACO and/or the decision to relocate the functions of Futenma to Henoko, as well as calls for Futenma’s early return or outright closure’. 169

3.4. Civil-military relations: bridging the gap

It is impossible to cover, given the constraints of this research, every grievance and major incident that has cropped up in civil-military relations on Okinawa. Nonetheless, the pattern of long-term mistrust over the handling of these cases – along with a failure to clearly convey arguments and beliefs on all sides involved, but especially on the part of the central USG and GOJ – is evident. ‘We should have more communication’, asserts one MOD researcher, ‘but the issue is: how?’ 170 Christopher Gibson and Don Snider have suggested that improvements in civil-military relations occur ‘over weeks, months, and years of working together with a repetitive array of security issues, generated from annual planning cycles as well as from random but recurring crisis situations’, and that working together, these informal and/or formal communications might eventually turn into ‘issue networks’ both inside and outside the government, facilitating ‘the necessary exchange and critique of ideas requisite to consensus decisions’. 171

In the case of Okinawa, says Sasha Davis, such communications are critical: ‘The DOD’s aspiration for a globe-spanning network of forward bases from which they can enjoy operational unilateralism is impossible to attain without amiable towns and villages’. 172 The way in which the GOJ has thus far tried to keep Okinawa ‘amiable’ has been, as previously mentioned, to offer economic incentives. Base-related income has been a significant contributor in the form of household incomes of base workers, rents to landowners, and subsidies to local officials. 173 Gregson, however, calls this subsidy system ‘perverse’ and blames it, in part, for the continuing low level of

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169 Eldridge 2009, pp. 18-19.
170 Anonymous 2014j.
172 Davis 2011, p. 223.
173 Richardson 2013.
educational achievement in Okinawa compared to other prefectures in mainland Japan. There are currently two choices in Okinawa: work in the tourist or construction industries’, he says. ‘The third option, of course, is to work on the bases. However, when I was in Okinawa, each on-base position got nearly 400 local applicants’. However, this income as a percentage of the total Okinawan economy has shrunk since reversion, and local governments have invested more in health services and ecological industries. ‘Okinawa has a lot of potential’, Yamaguchi observes. ‘It’s the only prefecture, until recently, with a growing population. I hope they can work with Taiwanese companies and give Okinawa a foothold in businesses on mainland China’. Gregson agrees, expressing his view that ‘the key to resolving the issues is connecting to local ideas about education, the environment, and the professional workplace’; among these, he suggests improving English language education, connecting an Okinawa liquefied natural gas hub with North America, building up the prefecture’s medical tourism industry, and starting a public-private partnership to create more international schools.

Apart from these more ‘business-oriented’ prospects for increased cooperation, official documents from the US and Japan have also stressed the importance of good community relations between US service members and Okinawan residents. ‘U.S. forces and their spouses in Japan […] sponsor cultural and social events, contribute to environmental clean-up activities, maintain local parks, provide assistance to charitable institutions and contribute in a variety of other ways to improving their communities’, says the 1998 US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region. It further calls cooperation between not only base commanders and officials, but also ‘between every soldier, sailor, airman and Marine, and every local citizen’, as ‘a critical element of U.S. overseas presence’. The USMC Installations Pacific (MCIPAC)’s official guidebook, ‘A Force in Readiness’, further expounds on this point: ‘Marines, sailors, and their families are not only

175 Gregson 2014.
178 Yamaguchi 2014.
179 Gregson 2014.
deployed here to Japan—they live, work, and raise their children here as part of the community’. The guidebook lists, among MCIPAC’s numerous efforts to reach out to their communities: hosting Japanese students for internships; promoting information-sharing with other prefectures ‘in order to strengthen mutual cooperation with each other’s capabilities in [HADR]’; and regularly hosting visitors who are ‘interested in learning about the U.S.-Japan relationship, the bilateral alliance, and the role of the Marine Corps’.  

Cohen credited these community relations and outreach projects for the high level of public support in Japan for the alliance with the US—a consequence which has not gone unnoticed in later reports. The 2009 Japanese WP, for example, also emphasises that ‘[e]xchange events between USFJ personnel (military and civilian personnel and their dependents) and local residents contribute to deepening mutual understanding’, while the 2013 Paper claims that ‘[f]or USFJ facilities and areas to fully exert their capabilities, it is vital to gain the cooperation and understanding of the local communities’. In order to ‘fully exert their capabilities’, in fact, the two governments have, over the years, agreed to several alleviating actions, including relocating artillery training and carrier landing practice and establishing ‘quiet hours’ for US air operations.

Nevertheless, gaps remain in what is hoped for in civil-military relations, and in what can be realistically achieved in the near term. One MOD researcher says, to this effect:

The ideal design is to have capacity-building of local companies of contractors and [increased] networking [with] smaller businesses. But as to the credible and trustworthy big project of having an air runway which is not on land but over the sea, it is a very high-tech one. And can local Okinawan industry make one? No. Definitely not. […] That means the central government or even a foreign company will do that. That means local industry will receive very little profit through this business.

Similarly, calls to increase the dual use rate of USM facilities—such as those in Kadena—are ‘not on the agenda’, the researcher remarks. Still, Gregson asserts, ‘the US has a moral obligation and a responsibility to Okinawa—stockpiling military weapons and the bases are not enough for the basis of a prefectural economy. The bases as they are currently constructed are not sustainable; they must

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182 USMC 2015, p. 10.
183 USMC 2015, p. 10.
186 MOD 2013i, p. 136.
188 Anonymous 2014j.
be changed to reflect the mature partnership between the US and Japan. We have to be more integrated’.189

4. Discursive intersections and divisions

Military base issues cannot be separated from the past—“the past” meaning the Battle of Okinawa.

- A researcher currently working for the Japanese MOD

If the US (and, by extension, the Japanese) government has a ‘moral obligation and a responsibility to Okinawa’, it would thus seem natural for officials, both political and military, to reach out to Okinawans not only on a person-to-person level, but also to acquire for themselves a deeper, fuller understanding of the historical context in which the base issue sits. Indeed, in some ways, the USM and local MOD bureau – being closer to the ‘Okinawa issue’ than those crafting the policies to ‘resolve’ it in Tokyo and Washington – have displayed a higher cultural and historical sensitivity to the concerns of residents. In the years since the reversion of the prefecture, in fact, increased coordination between not only the USG and GOJ over base policy, but also between them, prefectural officials, and US armed forces has led to this sensitivity becoming more widespread even among the top echelons of government. ‘Okinawa is a region which has nurtured a unique culture and a region of which Japan should be proud’, said former PM Kan in a speech to the Diet in 2010. ‘On 23 June, the Memorial Ceremony to Commemorate the Fallen on the Sixty-fifth Anniversary of the End of the Battle of Okinawa will be held. I intend to begin my work for the future of Okinawa by taking part in this ceremony and recalling the tragedy that struck Okinawa’.190

This heightened awareness and sensitivity does not mean, however, that the perspectives of anti-base residents and protesters are accepted as legitimate. On the one hand, there remains a deep cynicism towards the motivations of and arguments supported by these individuals and groups, with accusations from the defence establishment including that the ABM is funded by external actors (e.g. the Chinese), that it is purely concerned with acquiring more economic subsidies from the central government in Tokyo for the prefecture, and/or that the protests over Futenma are only the beginnings of a larger movement yet to come that would demand the removal of all US forces from the prefecture. On the other hand, sometimes the divide keeping apart these individuals and institutions from seeing eye-to-eye – or even from seeing each other’s arguments as valid – is due to a combination of concern for the financial stability of, specifically, the USMC and

189 Gregson 2014.
190 Kan 2010a.
other services, and a determinedness to continue the narrative that the USM’s presence in Okinawa is a prerequisite for the alliance’s survival and reproduction.

In discussing these intersections and divides, then, this section not only highlights the impact that ‘everyday’, ‘insurgent’ narratives about history, identity, and ‘security’ have had on those actors in defence sites, but also the extent to which the latter have absorbed the PBD into their own, personal interpretations of these concepts and their practical application—even when it is demonstrated to be inherently problematic.

4.1. Intersection: understanding Okinawan history and identity

Although Okinawa’s battle-scarred past is, by now, common knowledge among officials who have worked on base-related issues, it is not necessarily as well-known by domestic Japanese and American audiences—nor is it linked to other contentious issues related to WWII and the post-war period, such as Japanese relations with China and the ROK. When I asked Yamaguchi why this is, he replied: ‘Honshu people just don’t know that it’s part of the history issue like China and Korea, but Okinawans are very proud of their history’.\textsuperscript{191} Gregson goes further, saying that Okinawans ‘have never felt fully enfranchised in the nation of Japan’\textsuperscript{192}; an MOD official likewise tells me that ‘the base issue is closely connected to the intense realisation of Okinawan identity, which is becoming stronger and stronger [...] There is a word: sabetsu – segregation – that expresses a perception of negative discrimination which separates the Okinawan identity from the Japanese one’.\textsuperscript{193}

This distinct pride and historical memory, says one MOD researcher, is not simply the result of Okinawans maintaining a separate identity from mainland Japanese, but also because of their wartime experience. ‘Okinawa is the only battlefield in Japan and in the Pacific War which recorded a huge loss of life of local people. So that became a symbol of legacy of the non-commitment of the Imperial Army and Navy of the defence of Okinawa’.\textsuperscript{194} Furthermore, the researcher says, the legacy of the American Occupation has left its mark with regards to relations between Okinawans, the USM, and the central GOJ:

\textsuperscript{191} Yamaguchi 2014.
\textsuperscript{192} Gregson 2014.
\textsuperscript{193} Anonymous 2014g.
\textsuperscript{194} Anonymous 2014j.
Within this framing of the disproportionate ‘burden’ on Okinawa, its historical suffering, and the general appearance of ‘unfairness’ with regards to the USM presence in Japan at large, Kiyomi Tsujimoto, in her 2009 meeting with Ambassador Roos, remarked that considering the ‘environmental, social, and historical factors’ at play in Okinawa, ‘the previous [LDP] government’s approach to [the] FRF […] did not convey to the United States how difficult the current plan would be to implement’. Several Japanese WPs also acknowledge, if in ambiguous terms, a ‘lack of progress’ in land returns due to these ‘historical developments and issues’, with a larger number of US facilities remaining in Okinawa in comparison to other prefectures in the post-war period.

4.2. Intersection: improving people-to-people contact

Although an appreciation for Okinawan history and the identity issue is an important baseline for developing mutual respect among the actors involved, increasing contact between people on an individual basis may prove to be more essential—though towards different purposes, depending on who is asked. ‘[A] fundamental truth of our partnership [is that] the ultimate success of the alliance rests on the support of the people’, said Cohen in 2000. Rumsfeld echoed these comments in 2005, stating that the DOD would prefer to locate US forces ‘[w]here they are wanted, welcomed, and needed’. Janine Davidson added in 2013 that ‘where ally countries host our military forces, we must remain conscious of the fact that these are not our territories [emphasis added]’. Flynn points to past examples of domestic protests leading to the loss of US bases abroad when preventative, ‘burden-reducing’ measures were not implemented, including American bases in France in the 1960s, Spanish bases in the 1970s, and, more recently, the US Naval base in Subic Bay in the Philippines in 1992; in the case of Japan, however, he notes that the USM has taken extra
precautions. ‘These include temporary curfews and restrictions of servicemembers to base, bans on alcohol consumption, and increased educational efforts in the areas of violence prevention and sexual assault’, he notes, adding: ‘military officials [also] routinely make public apologies for crimes and provide symbolic monetary payments to victims’.200

These measures alone, however, are not enough to quell anti-base and anti-military feelings among residents. ‘There aren’t many US officials and service members who are able to build long-lasting relationships with the local people on account of short-term, rotational assignments’, says Magleby. He suggests, like Gregson, improving what short-term contact exists by increasing, for example, the number of soldiers and civilians participating in English language educational activities.201 At the level of government officials in Tokyo and Washington, meanwhile, an MOD researcher points out that a recent issue has been ‘declining contact between parliamentarians’ on account of the US Congress increasingly turning its attention towards China. ‘It’s very important because both in Japan and United States, the Congress and the Diet play a very big role, a maybe increasing role, in foreign policy and security issues on top of trade and other areas where traditionally, the Congress and the Diet have a big role [...] and that is exactly why exchanges [among parliamentarians] are becoming more important’. The researcher continues: ‘But the reality is almost the opposite—that the occasions for exchanges are declining, so that’s, I think, a very big problem’.202

4.3. Division: cynicism towards the anti-base movement

It is not just a lack of contact between parliamentarians and officials in both governments, however, that is to blame for the tense atmosphere around not only Futenma, but basing policies generally speaking. Rather, the limited number of actors whose arguments and interpretations around these policies are considered ‘legitimate’ and allowed into public and private debates on them is an important contributing factor. It is in large part due to this that the same narratives and frames are recycled and the PBD is reproduced; even when there are fractures or changes to them over the course of decades, the core belief in the necessity of the USM presence for regional stability largely remains in place.

In maintaining this belief, therefore, there is an array of arguments and assertions which these actors have put forward in order to either invalidate or justify ignoring those of their purported opponents. ‘There are so many pressure groups in this situation’, says one MOD researcher. ‘For example, the tochiren, Ginowan-based landlords who make money from renting their land to the US military forces and who would lose business if Futenma were relocated to

200 Flynn 2012, pp. 4-5.
201 Magleby 2014.
202 Anonymous 2014f.
Henoko’.\textsuperscript{203} The former Senate staffer agrees, remarking that after being briefed on the FRF plan by former Deputy Under SecDef for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs Richard Lawless in 2005, the staffer’s first reaction was that the relocation served as a ‘land grab’ for Okinawan officials: ‘You know, we’re giving up some incredibly valuable land in the south part of Okinawa, we’re moving ourselves to the jungles up north, and the Okinawan people are gonna make a ton of money off this’. The staffer elaborates:

So from my concern, this is not about the healthy alliance. This is about, you know, Okinawans putting pressure on Tokyo, on the central government, and saying, “hey, we’re tired of being the stepchild here, how about allowing us to grow economically by helping us move American forces out of Camp Foster, and Kinser, and some other locations where there’s pretty damn valuable property down there?” [...] So from my perspective, the Okinawan governor [Nakaima]—yeah, he could talk all about, you know, the rights of indigenous peoples, the fact that “we feel oppressed”, [but the] bottom line is it’s all economic for him. He’s got contractors who wanted that work—we’re talking $12, $15 billion dollars to do construction on Okinawa, so he’s getting fed by contractors who, you know, wanted the work. He just had to put on a brave face and sign the landfill permit. And he did it because he got a second runway at Naha [Airport] and $6 billion in the Okinawan economy.

The scepticism of these officials has led not only to the fomentation of a narrative in which protesters, officials, and residents in Okinawa are driven by specific ‘incentives’, but that, this being the case, these actors’ arguments can therefore be dismissed in favour of more ‘strategically important’ objectives (see Hayashi and Motojuku’s comments earlier in the chapter, for example). ‘National security policy cannot be made in towns and villages’, remarked Lt. Gen. Keith J. Stalder, then-commander of USMC in the Pacific after the election of Susumu Inamine, an anti-military base

\textsuperscript{203} Anonymous 2014i.\textsuperscript{204} Anonymous 2014k.\textsuperscript{205} Klingner 2014.
mayor, in Nago in 2010. Takamizawa similarly warned Roos and Kurt Campbell, in a 2009 meeting not to be too flexible on environmental issues lest they ‘invite local demands for the U.S. side to permit greater access to bases and to shoulder mitigation costs for environmental damage’. In 2007, DefMin Koike likewise told Maher that, regardless of the results of an environmental impact assessment (EIA) which was being carried out for the FRF at the time: ‘there will be a different administration by 2009, so it doesn’t matter what we’ve promised him [Governor Nakaima].’ That same year, MOFA North American Affairs Bureau DG Shinichi Nishimiya, in a meeting with Lt Gen John F. Goodman, Commander of USMC Pacific, suggested that, of two ‘key areas’ to focus on in the ongoing FRF discussions, ‘management of information, especially regarding Guam, is critical. Guam is increasingly attracting the attention of Okinawa media and politicians, who may use a visit to Guam to convey unhelpful messages [emphasis added] to the public’.

Beyond specific environmental or legal concessions which Okinawan actors might derive from the USG and GOJ, officials have also asserted that the protests are driven by a more basic anti-military impetus. For example, Roos reported Yamaoka as having said, in a 2009 meeting: ‘As for the Nago mayoral election, regardless of the outcome, the government must stick to its plan to implement the realignment agreement. If Okinawa’s will is respected, "nothing will ever happen." The issue of Okinawa politics, therefore, is not a big deal as long as the government’s decision is made before the gubernatorial race’. Okamoto agreed: ‘These [Okinawa] reformists would prefer the status quo at U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma as a way to maintain the political pressure necessary to rid Okinawa completely of any U.S. military presence, which is the reformists’ long-term goal’.

Following on from these, Klingner frames this situation, as fundamentally resulting from a ‘big difference’ in the ‘local’ versus ‘strategic’ views (or ‘military’ versus ‘constituent’ concerns). ‘When Okinawa sort of tried to put the US in between Okinawa and Tokyo as a negotiator, we’ve [the US] said: “look, this is a Japanese issue. We have signed an agreement with Japan. You’re part of

\[206\] Davis 2011, p. 223.
\[210\] Roos 2009f.
\[211\] Roos 2010a.
Japan; you have to deal with your national government. We don’t negotiate with a local neighbourhood association [emphasis added].” He expands on this analogy:

I think of it in terms of a neighbourhood. In a neighbourhood, there’s a fire station. The neighbours don’t like it: it’s noisy, the fire trucks come rushing out quickly, they have their sirens on [...] occasionally the fire department runs over a curb and, you know, causes damage to a flower bed or whatever. So the local neighbourhood, they got together and said: “okay, we have voted and we want the fire station out”. And from their viewpoint, that’s all they care about [...] Now, the [mayor] would say: “I’m sorry, we have a need for fire stations. Every neighbourhood doesn’t want it, but we need to deploy them at certain areas to respond to fires [...] the neighbourhood doesn’t have authority over the city. And as the mayor, I have to take into account more than just the interest of any one neighbourhood or any one district. I have to think of the safety of the city. Therefore, I’m sorry, we’re gonna keep the fire department” [...] And then you go through things where the fire department won’t use their sirens after ten at night and try to drive slowly [...] but for the neighbourhood, they can’t understand why it’s still there. For the mayor, it’s: “I have to look at bigger issues, and I’m sorry, but the neighbourhood is not the authority that trumps all. It is a subordinate district to the legal authority, which is the city”. So, you know, similarly, Okinawa is not a country. It is a subordinate prefecture to the national government, and the US has signed an agreement with the sovereign nation of Japan, not the sovereign nation of Okinawa.

What this analogising of Okinawa to a ‘neighbourhood’ and the bases to a ‘fire station’ implies, then, is that – like the residents of the neighbourhood – Okinawans who are anti-base are also not seeing the ‘bigger picture’ in terms of the importance of the USM presence to not only their own safety, but also national security. In denying them this ability to ‘see’ or ‘know’ what is in their best interest, Klingner and others thus undermine residents’ and local officials’ agency in terms of the negotiating and policymaking processes.

4.4. Division: financial stability and institutional survival

Where these officials have not been shy about discussing their theories behind the attitudes and funding sources of the anti-base resistance in Okinawa, there is more reticence in addressing the future financial stability of USM forces abroad and, specifically, the USMC, as a significant factor behind their argument in favour of maintaining a military presence in Okinawa. ‘The military here needs proponents back in the USG because it is always on the hunt—it always needs more funds’, remarks Yara. An MOD researcher posits that this ‘hunt’ may be motivated by the US’s recent defence budget cuts under sequestration, under which domestic bases have been targeted for

212 Klingner 2014.
‘Of course they don’t want to see their bases closed in their own constituencies. So how to keep foreign bases can never be a very popular topic for US politicians’.  

One reason why it has not been a ‘popular topic’ among US officials are the often understated costs of maintaining overseas basing. The Pentagon officially spends as much as $170 billion per year on these facilities, though, as Joseph Gerson notes, outside estimates ‘run as high as a trillion dollars. The Pentagon concedes that it cannot account for hundreds of billions of dollars’.  

Partly in order to address this spending, the bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform was created by the Obama administration and charged with ‘identifying policies to improve the fiscal situation in the medium term and to achieve fiscal sustainability over the long run’. Among its recommendations was reducing military personnel and bases across Europe and Asia by one-third, thus potentially saving up to $80 billion in the long term.  

Given that the costs of the realignment to Guam and the construction of the FRF alone, for example, are estimated at around $26 billion or more, Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) proposed cancelling it altogether. He was joined by Senators Levin, Webb, and John McCain (R-AZ) in 2011, all of whom – expressing that the FRF and base expansion in Guam were ‘unrealistic’ and ‘simply unaffordable in today’s increasingly constrained fiscal environment’ – likewise suggested scrapping the plan. More candidly, US ASD for Acquisition Katrina McFarland was reported to have said at a conference in March 2014: ‘Right now the pivot [to the Asia Pacific] is being looked at again, because candidly it can’t happen [owing to budget pressures]’.  

It is unlikely, however, that such arguments will prevail, says former US national security analyst Michael O’Hanlon, since the GOJ ‘foots much of the bill for operations and base needs’ through its HNS. This financial contribution in Okinawa, for example, ‘arguably saves the United

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213 The sequestration, referring to automatic spending cuts to US government spending in specific fields beginning in 2013, including defence, has spurred on another round of base realignments and closures (BRAC) by the Congress. Current US Senator Lindsey Graham is reported as stating: ‘At the end of the day, as much as we all love our bases, we’re going to have to address this problem [...] If we want to insist on sequestration, we’d better to be willing to go back home and tell people [that] every base that’s open today is not going to survive’ (Sydney J. Freedberg, Jr., ‘Give Us Sequester? Bases Will Get Cut: McHugh, Graham’, Breaking Defense, 11 March 2015, available online at: http://breakingdefense.com/2015/03/give-us-sequester-bases-will-get-cut-mchugh-graham/).

214 Anonymous 2014f.


217 Lee and Ahn 2011.

218 Sugawa 2013.

219 Lee and Ahn 2011.

220 Kato 2014, p. 3.

221 O’Hanlon 2001, pp. 4-5.
States several billion dollars a year, since the alternative to Kadena might well be a larger Navy aircraft carrier fleet expanded by three or four carrier battle groups'. Nye likewise points to HNS to say that the US need not withdraw its overseas forces because Japan and the ROK ‘want an insurance policy in a region faced with a rising China and a volatile North Korea’. Finally, USMC Commandant Amos also frames the USM presence in these terms, remarking of the USMC that ‘[f]or [less than] 8% of the entire DOD budget, America gets a 24-7 crisis response capability’. Futenma’s ‘symbolic’ value is likewise tied to this financial value, particularly for the USMC. ‘Outside of the United States there is only one other airbase in the world (also in Japan), which is exclusively under Marine command and they are reluctant to give this privilege up’, comments Paul Richardson, and John Feffer similarly posits that although Kadena provides enough air power for the entire prefecture and surrounding regions, the FRF remains in play because ‘the [armed] services are always reluctant to give up anything for fear that they will lose even more when the inevitable belt-tightening begins’. This is also generally the case, says Davis, with the USM’s approach to maintaining or expanding its overseas bases in the places where they are already located:

[...] the military is looking for base sites with pre-arranged permissions to train and deploy without negotiation. The problem is that other governments are becoming more reluctant to do this. Why would an allied government want to host a forward base that, by the Pentagon’s own admission, is no longer about defending the country in which it is placed, but is instead a site for training exercises (that raise the ire of people living adjacent to it) and a site for the projection of force (that the allied government is not going to be consulted about)? For instance, as popular protest forced the US to agree to reductions in their military presence in Okinawa the US approached Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Australia to host new bases and all four declined.

Given that the influence of military commanders over their civilian counterparts in Washington has been increasing over a number of decades due to declining military experience among members of Congress and in the presidency, say Gibson and Snider, it is unlikely that overseas basing policy will change considerably even in the face of budget cuts. ‘When the 6-12

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223 Joseph S. Nye, ‘The Right Way to Trim’, The New York Times, 4 August 2011, available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/05/opinion/the-right-way-to-trim-military-spending.html?_r=28. The analogy of the USM presence as ‘house insurance’ goes back, says Hook, to the 1980s, when PM Nakasone used it to argue in favour of further ‘normalisation’: ‘With this metaphor the principle of keeping military expenditure below 1 per cent of GNP, which as we have seen earlier was supported by a majority at the mass level, could be challenged on the basis of a homely argument: supporters of the symbolic 1 per cent ceiling failed to recognize that, by moving 11 up in the world, Japan had incurred an obligation to pay adequately for security in the new neighbourhood’ (Hook 1996, pp. 145-146).
224 Amos 2014.
225 Richardson 2013.
227 Davis 2011, pp. 220-221.
months that a key [civilian] position [in the DOD, such as at the undersecretary and ASD level,] often goes empty are added to the normal 3-4 month transition period for the new appointee, it is not surprising that military influence increases dramatically at the beginning of a new presidential administration’, they comment—and thus, this process helps to ensure continuity in security policy cutting across administrations of different party backgrounds.  

**Conclusion**

In discussing the closure or return of bases as being solely in the realm of possibility only in the case of the USG being in severe financial straits, actors in defence sites underrate or dismiss the agency of actors in other sites (especially ‘everyday’ ones) and their arguments as ineffectual compared to the potential dangers posed by sudden ‘exogenous shocks’ in the form of attacks from, for example, China or North Korea. However, what is also clear from the preceding sections is that this perspective also undermines their own agency. To this effect, John Christopher Barry writes: ‘one avoids ever considering the enemy as a political subject with which one day one will make peace. There is no recognition of a collective subject with which one interacts, just a group of individuals, “evildoers”, who should be eliminated’. In this way, there is a demonstrated tendency among Japanese and US officials and ‘experts’ to characterise the ‘threats’ to both countries’ national security – whether they be China, North Korea, ‘uncertainty’, natural disasters, etc. – as a kind of ‘collective subject’ with whom peace or resolution is unlikely or impossible.

The USG and GOJ’s continued reproduction of narratives which explicitly or implicitly call these countries antagonists, prop up the USM as natural protagonists and a ‘force for good’, and express a deep cynicism towards those who might argue for more nuanced takes on these black-and-white roles has had a similar effect on alliance policy and how this policy is justified and framed to the public (see, for example, Klingner’s analogising of a base to a fire house). In doing so, however, the overall discourse becomes incoherent: on the one hand, the region is portrayed as being ‘still stuck in the Cold War’ and intrinsically unstable, and on the other, the USM is hailed as the only actor with the power to bring or maintain stability to/within it. Furthermore, in predicting continuity in these aspects, these actors discursively (re)create a self-fulfilling prophecy which gives both the public and themselves the impression that there is no way out but the alliance—and that there is thus little which anyone can do to effect change, including from within.

This is most evident in the quotes taken from DOD officials’ speeches, which, although available online, were often given in exclusive environments (e.g. the Japan Press Club, international

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defence conferences) where members of the general public were not in attendance. The audiences of these speeches, therefore, are individuals and groups who already sit within the confines of the alliance institution and its associated organisations, or others who have access to them through knowing these ‘insiders’ (including international press and former/current government officials).

Take, for example, Cohen’s 1998 speech at the Foreign Policy Association, in which he cited one of the benefits of the USM’s forward deployment in Asia as being the ability to ‘shap[e] people’s opinions – not only our friends’ about our reliability and our resources, but also shaping people’s opinions who are our adversaries, that they really don’t want to challenge us in any given situation’ — and thus openly discussing how the public can be influenced to accept the PBD in a detached, scientific manner in a ‘publicly available’ speech.

What is also problematic, however, is the way in which the alliance’s role as a security ‘guarantor’ for the region and the relevance of the USM presence have been presented in these texts. The employment of analogies to simplify these complex concepts gives, on the one hand, a degree of understanding to their audiences which the American and Japanese publics, being excluded from or unaware of these, may not. Therefore, while officials may stress that documents related to the FRF, the rebalance, and Okinawan bases are easily accessible and that this fact undermines the arguments forwarded by base opponents about the ‘secrecy’ of USJ negotiations, the exclusive nature of these speeches, meetings, and consultations weakens institutional efforts towards achieving not only greater transparency on this issue, but also fostering a more cooperative environment on the ground between the USM, the OPG, and Okinawan residents (which might lead to a speedier resolution of, for example, the Futenma relocation). They also tend to, as seen in this chapter, breed dismissiveness or even contempt for interpretations which differ from their own.

For example, writing in 2011 in a private email chain with other colleagues released by Wikileaks on the FRF, Jose Mora, a defence analyst at the global intelligence company and DOD contractor STRATFOR, commented: ‘I figure that the Americans figured that the Japanese wouldn’t come to an agreement any time soon on what to do. There’s ongoing debate on whether to move the base to Henoko, to Guam, to not move it, to do environmental impact studies... It’s all moving at the speed of democracy...’

The framing of the issue as being one that has to be resolved between the ‘Americans’ and the ‘Japanese’ thus reveals not only a kind of cynicism towards the ability of ‘democracy’ or the public will to effect change, but also a tendency to exclude the latter from the discussion altogether—a strategy which may, on the surface, make intergovernmental negotiations

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easier to manage, but which does not (and cannot) realistically navigate the complex and difficult sociohistorical terrain surrounding Futenma, Okinawa, and the alliance.
Chapter 5. Sites of everyday exchange: ‘The war was just yesterday in Okinawa’

Introduction

The war was just yesterday in Okinawa.

- Alfred Magleby, former US Consul General in Naha

What makes navigation of this terrain especially difficult is the distance between actors in diplomatic and defence sites from those in ‘everyday’ sites of exchange in terms of actually ‘feeling’ the physical, cultural, and political impacts of living next to bases. Thus, where for the former the FRF has largely been a ‘thorn in the side’ of alliance progress or symbolic of the lack of political will in Tokyo and Washington, the issue of Futenma has been tied more to Okinawan historical memory and individuals’ experience of social development (or the lack thereof) for the latter—or, as Magleby put it, their memory of WWII being ‘just yesterday’. There is also something to be said for the long-time military presence on the island having legitimised to a certain extent the PBD among many of its residents (see section 3 for details). Given these dynamics, it is unsurprising that the PBD has thus far been remarkably consistent across a number of actors – including those within the diplomatic corps, defence corps, and ‘expert’ circles – where its counterpart, the anti-base discourse (ABD), has been more fluid since the USM first came to Okinawa.

This is in part due to the fact that the opposition to the USM’s presence includes within it individuals from a much greater variety of professional and ideological backgrounds than those in the preceding chapters. From fishermen to university academics¹ to businessmen – and from conservatives to pacifists – this opposition, which I will broadly call an anti-base movement (ABM) for the purpose of this chapter, has existed in one form or another dating back to the Battle of Okinawa. From its beginnings as a movement to regain lands taken by force by the GOJ and USM during the war, to its shift towards anti-colonial language as the prefecture sought reincorporation into the Japanese state, to its current manifestation in the post-Cold War period as a mixture of environmentalist, pacifist, feminist groups, and others, the ABM – and, as a result, the ABD more generally – serves as a prime example of the ‘everyday’ in action. Moreover, its membership has expanded beyond the confines of the prefecture to include not only residents living near bases, but

¹ Academics (especially Japanese ones) have historically played a prominent role not only in documenting the history of Okinawa and the anti-base movement, but also within the movement itself as activists. In the latter role, their involvement includes founding anti-base groups (e.g. the Save the Dugong Campaign), being active members therein, or providing moral, media, and/or physical support to these groups. For more examples of their involvement, read about their roles in the pro-reversion movement in section 3.1.2, and for more details on this subject, please consult footnote 5 below.
also other individuals, mainland Japanese civil society groups, and international NGOs sympathetic to the ABM’s cause.

The involvement of ‘everyday’ actors has been described as a ‘new style of political involvement in which people combine individual lifestyle choices and an at best latent interest in “party politics” with the capacity for very sharp and focused but at the same time discontinuous political activity’ and is characterised by a social framework in which actors – often citizens, but never simply ‘passive receptors of politics’ – are empowered to create their own definitions of issues without relying on the same ‘expert’ advice or knowledge that is drawn upon by policymakers. This is evident within the ABD in Okinawa, as residents and local officials alike cite their personal experiences (or ‘lived knowledge’) when explaining their involvement in the larger ABM versus the traditional regional security concerns cited by diplomatic and defence officials in the preceding chapters—and this difference is key in terms of broadening and deepening the sociohistorical context upon which the USJA is predicated and continues to exist.

These personal experiences were reflected in nearly every article or book I encountered during the course of this research, most of which gave some kind of overview of the Futenma issue, or the base problem in general. In these, authors never failed to mention the following historical details: that Okinawa prefecture was once the independent Ryukyu Kingdom until its formal and forcible incorporation into the Japanese state in 1879; that prior to this incorporation, the kingdom was known for being a regional hub of trade, and its people characterised as having had a ‘gentle’ and/or ‘peaceful’ disposition; that the prefecture was then used by the GOJ as a sute-ishi, or ‘sacrificial stone’, in the final months of WWII as a means of keeping the USM from staging an even more devastating attack on mainland Japan; and that Okinawa has continued to be ‘sacrificed’ time

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2 Hajer 2003, p. 98.
3 Simpson and Mayr 2010, p. 42.
4 Drake 2010, p. 163.
5 Many of the articles in this chapter come from the open-source journal The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, with many of its contributors either implicitly or explicitly in support of the ABD; it has thus served not only as an important resource for this chapter, but also as a significant example of academic-activists’ involvement in the Okinawan ABM and their role in reproducing and evolving the discourse both in Japan and internationally.
6 See, for example: McCormack, Norimatsu and Selden 2011; Feifer 2000; Souillac 2009.
and time again since the Battle—first as a USM colony in the post-war period where bases could be established and maintained without troubling mainlanders, and presently as a post-colonial territory whose residents are on the one hand Japanese citizens, but on the other are not treated as such politically-speaking.⁹

A sense of history thus permeates and, in many cases, sustains the ABD in Okinawa and among its supporters both in mainland Japan and internationally. Furthermore, there is a driving narrative within the ABD of Okinawa’s ‘peaceful’ disposition (both historically and currently) and its pacifist-leaning local politics, within which the term ‘peace’ itself is defined and employed against the presence of USM forces – which obviously differs significantly from central government officials, whose conceptualisation of ‘peace’ is tied to this presence – though the incorporation of selective historical details into the ABD has sometimes been treated as mere artifice to gain economic benefits by actors in Tokyo and Washington. It is also clear, however, when reading this same literature, that it is almost impossible to separate this selective historical, pacifist narrative which constitutes the ABD from its accompanying narratives, including: redefining ‘security’ to address local issues such as noise pollution, crime, and environmental contamination; identifying Okinawans as separate from the mainland not only culturally, but also politically; and doubting both the political will of the Japanese state to defy the status quo course of base policy as well as its promises to ease the ‘burden’ of the bases.

What these three narratives share is a penchant for characterising Okinawans as victims of USJ collusion over the base issue, and although this framing holds appeal on a local level, it has served as a barrier for the ABM (and, consequently, the ABD) to achieve its stated aims beyond the continued delay of the Futenma relocation. It has also been an obstacle in terms of the negotiations between the GOJ, USG, and OPG not only on Futenma, but on broader basing policy, as Okinawans’ unique historical experience – and their interpretation of that experience – is both difficult to convey to outside actors and to employ on the level of policymaking (where the end-goal is technical efficiency of institutions in the short-term, and consideration of socio-historical factors is limited as a result¹⁰). However, says Kurayoshi Takara, former professor at University of the Ryukyus and current

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¹⁰Fischer 2003b, p. 223.
Vice Governor of Okinawa prefecture, it is impossible to discuss the bases in isolation from the alliance, in large part due to these differences in interpretation. He explains:

The “Okinawa base problem” is often seen as having two dimensions. On one hand, the “Okinawa base problem” is a Japanese domestic problem regarding how to think about the realities of national security; on the other hand, it is a problem of international politics concerning the structure of the U.S.-Japan alliance and the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. From the perspective of Okinawa's residents, however, there is in fact one more dimension to the above problem [...] “Why does Okinawa continue to bear an excessive burden of hosting the majority of U.S. bases in Japan, and why does Okinawa continue to be treated like this?” To put it simply, the “Okinawa base problem” is an issue that deeply affects the identity of Okinawa’s residents. Consequently, if one only contemplates how this issue relates to the U.S.-Japan alliance and Japan's national security without paying attention to the perspective of the Okinawan people, one cannot comprehend the true nature of this problem.

If, as Takara says, the ‘true nature’ of the ‘Okinawa base problem’ cannot be understood ‘without paying attention to the perspective of the Okinawan people’, then the salient point made in this chapter is that ‘everyday’ interpretations of history, ‘threat’, and ‘security’ can colour the course and outcome of national security policy in unexpectedly significant ways—including, say, by delaying the construction of a ‘key’ military facility. This chapter thus highlights these interpretations and narratives constitutive of the ABD and explores their interplay (or lack thereof) with those of actors from the previous two sites discussed.

1. Historical memory and threat perception


- Masahide Ota, former governor of Okinawa prefecture (1990-98)

Prior to its subsuming into the Japanese state and the devastation wrought during WWII, Okinawa, as the Ryukyu Kingdom, is often characterised as having been called – among several descriptions – the 'Venice of the East', a 'fairy island', and the 'Land of Constant Courtesy' by Asian and Western travelers and world leaders alike. Authors stress the former period of independence as a sort of ‘golden age’ for the island wherein the Kingdom negotiated treaties with its neighbours, impressed international visitors with its ‘gentle’ and ‘enlightened’ residents, and acted as a bridge between Asian nations. This language has become so common, in fact, that when visiting the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum in Mabuni, the first placard which greets visitors in one of the first exhibit rooms, ‘2F: Zone for Remembering History’, contains a poem which reads:

11 Takara 2013, p. 3.
12 Buruma 1985, p. 53; Feifer 2000, pp. 33-34.
13 McCormack, Norimatsu and Selden 2011; Gerson 2014.
This foundational myth of the ‘peaceful’ Ryukyu Kingdom is usually presented in stark contrast to the incorporation of the Ryukyus into Japan during the nineteenth century, as scholars have described the process as one of ‘forced transformation’ (specifically in reference to the cultural assimilation of Okinawans through the Japanese language and education system), and ‘part of a wider and deeper history of racist domination in Japan [in which] […] [there is] systematic delegitimation not only of Ryukyuan but of any other self-proclaimed minority identity’.15

This myth acts as a larger historical frame through which the audience(s) of these scholars, the ABM, and the OPG are encouraged to view (and interpret) not only the circumstances surrounding the Battle of Okinawa, but also post-war developments involving the USM presence and Okinawa’s treatment by the central GOJ (up to and including the current Futenma issue), as products of long-term discrimination against and victimisation of Okinawans. In fact, according to a June 2015 opinion poll carried out by the Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Television Broadcasting, when respondents were asked ‘how the experiences of the war should be handed down to the next generation’, 22.8% answered that they wanted the local and national governments ‘to promote peace-related projects’.16

This is not to say, however, that the ABD’s focus on these aspects of Okinawa’s historical relationship to the central GOJ and USG is without merit; indeed, as I illustrate in the succeeding sections, the Battle of Okinawa’s real, bloody impact on the prefecture’s population should not be underestimated, nor can the separation of the prefecture from the Japanese mainland in the post-war period be dismissed as not having had a significant cultural and political impact which can still be felt there today. In the same poll cited earlier, ‘94.8 percent of respondents said they wanted the experiences of the war handed down to next generation by word of mouth, and 75.4 percent said they want this to happen more often than it does now’. Given the overwhelming body of data showing the impact of the war and the depth of public feeling in favour of preserving its memory, I

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will in no way seek to invalidate or judge the interpretation of these events within the ABD, but rather to present its origination, development, and my take on how its ‘insurgent narratives’ currently impacts upon USJ relations—for better or worse.

1.1. Battleground Okinawa

As previously stated, it is impossible to make an accurate representation of the ABD and its constitutive narratives and stories without discussing the impact of the Battle of Okinawa and immediate post-war events on Okinawans. As the Ryukyu Shimpo puts it in the foreword of their book *Descent Into Hell: Civilian Memories of the Battle of Okinawa*, a collection of interviews with survivors of the battle: ‘It is important for English speaking readers who read *Descent into Hell* to understand that the origin of all current affairs is to be found in past history [...] Today’s situation can be traced back firstly to the Battle of Okinawa and then to subsequent agreements between the governments of Japan and the United States’.17 At the same time, however, people’s experiences of the battle were so brutal that many Okinawans found it difficult to speak about them at all in the post-war period. ‘In no household do they talk of the war’, said Shoko Ahagon, an early leader in the movement against land confiscation in Iejima18 by US forces in the 1950s. ‘It was so painful that merely recalling it is enough to make you lose consciousness’.19

What caused Ahagon to describe the battle in such stark terms were the bleak conditions on the battlefield before it, during it, and in its aftermath. Prior to the battle, over 100,000 Okinawan civilians ‘had been called up either drafted into the military or in service as the youth corps, nurses or laborers’.20 During the battle, Japanese soldiers routinely executed civilians for being ‘spies’ for the USM, forced civilians to commit mass suicides rather than surrender to the US, and members of the Japanese military and civilians alike were killed indiscriminately by hand grenades and flamethrowers while hiding from bombardment in caves.21 After the battle was over, rape of civilian women in Okinawa ‘was common, including in broad daylight, as Americans [soldiers] conducted “girl hunts” through the rows of tents’.22

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17 Ryukyu Shimpo et al 2014.
18 Iejima (or Ie Island) is a small island located off the coast of the Motobu Peninsula on Okinawa Island (the main island in the Ryukyu chain) and was the site of a four-day battle in April 1945 during which an estimated 4,706 Japanese died, most of them civilians. Today, it is the site of a US Marines training facility. (See for more details: Stephen Mansfield, ‘War and peace on Okinawa’s Iejima Island’, *The Japan Times*, 6 June 2015, available online at: [http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2015/06/06/travel/war-peace-okinawas-iejima-island/#.VfbchhFViko](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/life/2015/06/06/travel/war-peace-okinawas-iejima-island/#.VfbchhFViko)).
20 Ryukyu Shimpo et al 2014.
22 Ryukyu Shimpo et al 2014.
Previously agricultural in character, the economy and, to a large extent, the society of the prefecture was thus literally destroyed—first by the appropriation by the Japanese military of its arable land, and then by the battle. At the same time that the USM charged itself with the ‘reconstitution’ of ‘a society as well as developing an institutional framework that could meet the basic needs of the populace for food, clothing, and shelter’ 23, however, recently declassified USM documents reveal that it was also planning, from as early as late 1945, to use the entire main island ‘as a permanent site for its bases’. 24 What this entailed, when the USG decided to develop military bases on the island in the late 1940s, was what is commonly-called the ‘bulldozers and bayonets’ campaign of forcible land acquisition. 25 During this campaign, although landowners were paid for the confiscated land by the USM, these purchases in some cases ‘reportedly involved deception or outright coercion, using bulldozers and bayonets to evict unwilling residents’. 26 Sometimes, however, land was taken without the residents ever being present to give consent at all, as in the case of Ahagon. ‘Unbeknownst to the farmers of Iejima, while we were away 63% of the island had been confiscated by the U.S. military for their use’, he said. ‘With this accomplished, now the U.S. military wanted to pay the farmers consolation money [in Japanese the ironic expression is namidakin: “tear money”] and use the rest of the land they had confiscated as a training area’. 27

It was in this way that many post-war towns and cities in Okinawa re-emerged in such close proximity to US bases built after the battle: returning to their previous places of residence and finding them destroyed or built over, many Okinawans became reliant on the bases for low-wage work, food, and shelter. 28 For instance, Ginowan, now home to Futenma, had once been

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25 This campaign beginning after the USM put Ordinance No. 109 into place, which ‘stipulated procedures for compulsory acquisition of land to be used by the US military’ (A Guide to Battle Sites and Military Bases in Okinawa City 2012, p. 37).
27 Ahagon and Lummis 2010.
Where Takara describes this process and the bases themselves as ‘a “foreign substance” forcibly thrust upon the land of Okinawa’\(^{30}\), however, McCormack, coordinator of the pro-ABM *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*, frames this process as an arrangement between the USG and GOJ: ‘It was [Hirohito’s] suggestion, in a September 1947 letter to General MacArthur, that Okinawa be leased to the US on a “twenty-five, or fifty-year, or even longer basis” to facilitate US opposition to communism, that helped crystallize the US decision to opt for a separate peace with Japan and to retain Okinawa as its military colony’.\(^{31}\) Given this ‘lease’, the USM developed the island as a kind of ‘rampart’, in the words of a 1952 report on the prefecture from *The New York Times*:

> Okinawa, living down its G. I. reputation as an “outpost for the outcast”, is now a collection – almost a magical transplanting – of whole American communities, with several more still building, Some of these are already complete, even to schools, department stores, theatres and suburban housing developments boasting winding roads, flagstone walks and “picket” fences made of bamboo […] In its native meaning, the name given to the Ryukyus is “Floating Rope”, a title that neatly spells out the fluid use of them either as a defensive barrier or as a strangulating weapon. (Some of the other names given by the Japanese many years ago to Okinawa sites, and retained by American military authorities, still have perfect meanings; Futenma Airfield, for example, is best translated as the “airfield of the War God”.)

By 1954, in fact, Futenma’s runway had been extended from 2,400 to 2,700 metres, Nike missiles had been deployed onsite for air defence, and fighter-interceptor squadrons were being hosted there to supplement the larger Kadena Air Base.\(^{33}\) In the same year, the 3\(^{rd}\) Marine Division was relocated from mainland Japan to Okinawa in part to ‘dampen local resentment about the U.S. military staying on even after Japan regained its independence and thereby keep in check the Japanese tendency at the time toward neutralism in the Cold War’—but also because ‘the financial

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30 Takara 2013, p. 4.
31 McCormack 2010.
33 Mochizuki 2013, p. 34.
cost of maintaining a Marine presence in Okinawa would be much less compared to the main Japanese islands’.  

### 1.2. Okinawa as a ‘keystone for peace’

Throughout this period of Okinawa’s redevelopment into a ‘rampart’, ‘military colony’, or ‘supercarrier’, among various characterisations, Okinawans themselves had ‘no political authority or legal redress for crimes committed by service members’, and little for reclaiming any land taken under duress. It is this lack of formal channels for redress, posits Andrew Yeo, which ‘may lead local residents to take action through informal modes of contentious politics’ (such as an ABM) that emphasise, at various times, ‘frames of injustice evoking environmental or safety concerns’, or, alternatively, ‘sovereignty claims and protest against their own government for selling out to the United States’. In the case of Okinawa, the ABM arose from an initial division in the population over the latter framing strategy: where some residents received large payments for the use of their land and thus abided the development of the prefecture under US administration, others – who would later be referred to in local politics as ‘reformists’ – remained firmly opposed to the USM presence.

The efforts of these ‘reformists’ resulted in the ‘first wave’ of the ABM in Okinawa, known as the shimagurumi toso (whole island) campaign, in the 1950s. Reacting to the post-war campaign of land expropriation, landowners and other local residents ‘placed themselves in passive resistance in front of the trucks and bulldozers’, opposed lump-sum payments for land, demanded compensation for damages to said land, and illegally entered USM bases in protest. This coincided with the first large-scale reversion movement in the prefecture – the slogan of which was ‘We want to return to the country of the Peace Constitution’ – and this combined opposition was enough to spur some initial reforms by USCAR, including the replacement of lump-sum with annual payments to Okinawan landowners. It was also during this period that the ABM’s predominant strategy of protest in Okinawa was first developed by Ahagon and others: a mixture of peaceful physical resistance and using the public sphere as a site of discursive legitimacy. For example, Ahagon remarked: ‘When they [the Americans] came to the island and spoke wildly about how they would kill us with poison gas or shoot us down with guns, we went directly to the newspaper office and had

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34 Mochizuki 2013, p. 35.
37 Hashimoto 2013, p. 15.
40 Baker 2004, p. 133.
their words published, making the devil’s behavior public and bringing shame down on the US military’.41

The use of shame or antagonistic language alone, however, was not enough to remove or even significantly reduce the USM presence in Okinawa—a presence which was significantly ramped up with the start of the Cold War and, in particular, the Vietnam War. Naha Port, in the prefecture’s capitol, ‘processed 75% of all supplies for the conflict - including fuel, food and ammunition’, while Kadena Air Base served as the USM’s ‘key transport hub’.42 At the same time, the prefecture’s economy – heavily dependent upon the bases – suffered in comparison to that of mainland Japan’s.43 Combined with a widespread discomfort among many residents that stationing US bases made them ‘accomplices’ in the activities of the USM in southeast Asia44, this situation culminated in the ‘second wave’ of the ABM in Okinawa: the pro-reversion movement. In response to decades of being politically and legally separated from the mainland, the movement ‘insisted on educating Okinawans to be Japanese […] The cultural fear of being swept away by American values to end up as a second-rate Hawaii made many intellectuals idealise Japan as a country of peace’ (harkening back to the 1950s reversion slogan of returning to the ‘country of the Peace Constitution’).45

This movement, however, was not greeted with much enthusiasm by the USM. Doug Lummis, former professor at Tsuda College and also a former Marine, told me that ‘anti-base protesters were, as far as we know, part of the “fifth column” in the Japanese Communist Party. They weren’t local protests, but part of the international communist protests’.46 According to Steve Rabson, professor at Brown University and formerly stationed at the 137th USAR Ordnance Company (previously adjacent to Camp Schwab in Henoko), the Army likewise made clear its opposition:

41 Ahagon and Lummis 2010.
43 Mitchell 2015.
45 Buruma 1985, p. 54. It is interesting to note, furthermore, how this movement – in ‘insisting’ on ‘educating Okinawans to be Japanese’ – is echoed in the later comment by former DefMin Hayashi in Chapter 3 likening Okinawan officials to ‘children’ who must be taught to ‘understand the necessity of implementing all parts of the [relocation] package’. In both cases, the agency of actors within the ‘everyday’ realm is undermined by the implication that they do not hold ‘correct’ beliefs or interpretations of ‘reality’.
46 Doug Lummis, personal interview, 10 April 2014, Grand Castle Hotel, Shuri, Okinawa, Japan.
[They] told us: “don’t associate with these people. They’re Communists. Don’t get caught in a protest, don’t get involved with them”. They [the protesters] would come up to the base and they’d hand out fliers, bilingual fliers in Japanese and English. That’s how I learned about the reversion movement in Okinawa and became very interested in it, because it reminded me a lot of the civil rights movement in the United States. People picketing, sit-ins, marches and rallies and, you know, protest songs, and, you know, chants—it was all going on [...] And I learned that people in Okinawa, of course, they want to become part of Japan again, because they think that’s a very peaceful country, they’d be under a peace constitution, the bases would be reduced—which didn’t happen, but that’s what they believed because that’s what the Japanese government was saying.

Tensions boiled in the prefecture during this period to the point that on the night of 20 December, 1970, anti-American riots broke out in Koza (now Okinawa City) during which USM cars were set on fire, rioters tore down the fence surrounding Kadena, and the offices of Stars and Stripes newspaper were ‘razed’. Nonetheless, in 1972, Okinawa was officially ‘returned’ to Japanese administration by the Nixon administration (see further details in section 3.3).

1.3. After reversion: the ‘third wave’

After reversion, about one-thirtieth of the bases were transferred to SDF use. This ‘resulted in stationing about 6,000 military personnel to defend the U.S. military bases and take part in joint operations’ and, the overall proportion of bases decreased by one-third on mainland Japan versus only ‘a few percent’ in Okinawa. Nuclear weapons continued to be stored on the island, furthermore, in direct contradiction of PM Sato’s promise that post-reversion Okinawa would exist under the same conditions as mainland Japan’s ‘Three Non-Nuclear Principles’ (non-production, non-possession, and non-introduction).

Disappointed by the conditions of the reversion, authors either involved in or sympathetic to the ABM, when discussing the aftermath, have characterised the following years (into the present) as Okinawa living under US ‘postcolonial rule’, on ‘occupied territory’, and that rather than providing more modes of redress to Okinawans, reversion actually ‘served to narrow the focus of

47 Steve Rabson, personal interview, 6 August 2014, University of Mary Washington, Fredericksburg, Virginia, USA.
49 Sakurai 2012.
52 A 1973 poll by the Asahi Shimbun, held on the first anniversary of the reversion, found that 63% of Okinawans felt ‘disappointed’ about the results of the prefecture’s incorporation into Japan (Hashimoto 2013, p. 16).
activists’ claims, channeling the greater part of their energies into particular campaigns to end specific practices (e.g., bombing exercises that project ordnance across public roadways) or seek justice for specific acts (e.g., rape). What is evident in the use of such terms as ‘postcolonial’ or ‘occupation’ is a discursive strategy which aims to connect the present state of Okinawa to not only its recent past (WWII and the subsequent USM administration), but also its historical antecedent (the incorporation of the Ryukyu Kingdom into the Japanese state).

‘Narrowed’ focus or not, anti-base activities continued in the ensuing years prior to the 1995 rape (which began the ‘third wave’ of the ABM), exemplifying the intervention or ‘insurgence’ of the ‘everyday’ into the world of alliance politics and basing policies—even if not immediately obvious.

Taku Suzuki discusses in detail, for example, how the practice of ‘peace guiding’ at Okinawa’s battle sites and peace memorials/museums for schoolchildren from mainland Japan began in the 1970s as a way ‘to reexamine the history of the Battle of Okinawa from the viewpoint of the Okinawan masses rather than of military commanders and government officials’. This effort continued into the late 1980s, when Okinawan educators, journalists, and scholars organized an 8-month seminar series called “Training Course for Guiding Battle Ruins and Military Bases” that included lectures by historians and activists and field trips to the battle ruins and US military bases. The goal of the course was to educate the public about various related subjects in the hope of helping “as many people in Okinawa become storytellers [kataribe] of peace as possible”.

In other words, these individuals’ goal was to create and promulgate a specific narrative about the Battle of Okinawa’s after-effects which would be relatable, accessible, and easily translatable to future generations. Furthermore, the struggle over land ownership rights also continued through the ‘one-tsubo’ movement in the 1980s, in which anti-base protesters – under the slogan ‘Military land back to us for use for our production and daily lives!’ – joined the anti-base landowners of earlier years by purchasing ‘small lots of base land from the original owners, be[coming] their joint owners, and refus[ing] to renew lease contracts on their small patches of land’.

In another demonstration of protest against the perceived militarisation of the prefecture, Okinawa City passed City Ordinance No. 18 on 1 April 1993, Article 1 of which reads:

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56 Tsubo being a Japanese area unit equal to 3.3 square metres.

Echoing the framing of the ‘whole island’ campaign in the 1950s and the pro-reversion movement in the 1960s, the ordinance thus reproduces the ‘peace’ narrative within the ABD by emphasising the destructive impact of WWII, taking the Japanese ‘peace’ Constitution as its example, and establishing the foundation of local government upon human rights-related principles.

In contrast to these, the 1995 rape created an unfortunate – but important – window of opportunity for the ABM to assert the ABD and present it as a viable and desirable alternative to the PBD on an international platform. Where before, for example, the argument for kengai isetsu – or moving the base facilities outside of Okinawa prefecture59 – had not been able to gain widespread support in the years following reversion, it quickly picked up steam after the rape. The reason for this, claims Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom President Kozue Akibayashi, was that the incident caused Okinawans to realise that ‘hosting U.S. military bases is actually the source of their insecurity of their lives’.60

This argument was echoed first by the massive ‘Okinawa Prefectural People’s Rally’ on 21 October 1995 (and attended by representatives of all the major political parties in Okinawa)61, and later by a referendum – the first prefectural referendum in Japanese history, in fact – on the removal of bases (in which over 90% of those who voted favoured the ‘consolidation and reduction’ of the bases, though only 60% of eligible voters in Okinawa turned out).62 Although the results of this referendum were non-binding, it was significant in that it posed, for the first time, a challenge ‘to the

59 Shimabuku 2012, p. 139.
61 The rally, held ‘symbolically’ near Futenma, was ‘sponsored by eighteen key Okinawan labor and citizens’ organizations and attended by dozens of peace and women’s groups, as well as economic and lawyers’ associations’ and had over 80,000 people in attendance (Robert Eldridge, ‘Referendums on the U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa: Local Concerns Versus National Interests’ in Ofer Feldman, ed, Political Psychology in Japan: Behind the Nails that Sometimes Stick Out [and Get Hammered Down] [Commack, NY: Nova Science Publishers Inc., 1999], pp. 149-169, pp. 153-154).
62 Eldridge speculates that voter turnout was low for the following three reasons: ‘(1) the Okinawa referendum was the first prefectural referendum ever in Japan so there was little knowledge of “what” a referendum was and “how” to go about it; (2) the question on which the residents were voting was unclear and vague; (3) opponents to the referendum itself were building due to the potential political and economic impact of the removal of bases’ (1999, p. 160).
central government’s authority in a policy area that is politically and constitutionally recognized as being within its administrative jurisdiction, namely national defense and bilateral treaty/agreement obligations’.\(^{63}\) Furthermore, the review of the USJ-DG, originally scheduled for 1995, was delayed by a year in response.\(^{64}\)

1.4. ‘Instability’ and alliance continuity

Nevertheless, scepticism abounds regarding any ‘progress’ that was achieved in terms of returning or removing base lands in the years following the rape and SACO agreement. The G-8 Summit in Okinawa in 2000 and its accompanying influx of public funds into the prefecture, for example, has been presented by some as ‘compensation in advance’ from the GOJ to Nago City (near where the summit was hosted) so that it ‘could not refuse to accept a new base removed from the other part [Ginowan] of Okinawa’\(^{65}\) and as an attempt ‘to redefine the social and economic purpose of the bases and their role in the maintenance of national security’.\(^{66}\) The result of such interpretations was that, at the time of the summit, over 25,000 Okinawans participated in a human chain surrounding Kadena to demand the withdrawal of US forces from the prefecture. The organiser of the action, Seishu Sakaihara, explained its motivation in terms of historical memory and the ABD’s anti-militarisation ethos: “Fifty-five years ago Okinawa was the only place in Japan to suffer a land battle [...] If we permit the bases to stay we are allowing war”\(^{67}\).

Efforts by the USG and GOJ to convey that the security alliance is based on a set of ‘shared values’ since the end of the Cold War is viewed with equal incredulity. ‘You can have a “partnership”, you can have “friendship”, you can have lots of agreements,’ Doug Bandow, former special assistant to President Reagan told me, continuing:

I mean, there are lots of things you can imagine trying to cooperate on in terms of humanitarian [work], whether it be natural disasters, or development, or refugees. It just strikes me that virtually none of it has to do with military assets. I mean, it’s not the Marines, it’s not aircrafts, it’s just not. So a Japanese-US alliance, if it makes sense on military grounds—it needs to be focused on the military. You can’t justify military stuff by [saying], “oh, look at all these other great things we can do”. Most of us don’t object to these great, good things, but it strikes me they have nothing to do with this stuff, which is really what’s important. That’s what you go to war over, that’s how people get killed.

\(^{63}\) Eldridge 1999, p. 155.
\(^{64}\) Arasaki 2001, p. 106.
\(^{66}\) Souillac 2009, p. 10.
\(^{68}\) Doug Bandow, personal interview, 16 July 2014, Cato Institute, Washington, DC, USA.
What, then, do proponents of the ABD posit are the actual reasons for the US’s continued presence not only in Okinawa, but in Japan? In order to introduce their argument, the following anecdote from Morton Halperin, former US DASD (and involved in the reversion negotiations) from a pre-reversion visit to Okinawa is helpful:

“My impression of Okinawa was that it was ‘empty’ because residents were concentrated in small areas. The rest was all bases. I asked a high ranking Navy officer, ‘Why do we have bases in Okinawa?’ He answered, looking very serious, ‘You misunderstand. The military doesn’t have bases in Okinawa. The island itself is the base.’ It was no exaggeration; the military really did think of the whole island as a base. The military intended to maintain Okinawa until there were no more disputes in Asia – that is, they planned to keep the bases forever [...] The US put bases on the mainland, too; but they were aware that it was Japanese territory. If they had an awareness that Okinawa was not a base but Japanese territory, they would have been able to ask themselves what sort of structure the base should have. But they are still not thinking about this seriously”.

Along the same vein, scholars and activists with whom I spoke on this issue – that of the structure of the alliance being one in which Okinawa itself ‘is the base’ – argue that the situation in which Okinawa, the US, and Japan now find themselves did not happen by accident. Rather, they claim, it is reflective of the US’s desire to maintain hegemony in the Asia-Pacific, and of Japan’s to have a more prominent international role by accommodating this hegemony (or ‘bandwagoning’, to borrow a term from the alliance literature). ‘After the Cold War, who are the adversaries?’ asks Masaaki Gabe. ‘Now, maintaining the alliance is the goal of the alliance. And they’ll find something else to fight against when US-Sino relations improve’. Satoko Norimatsu, a peace activist who supports the ABM in Okinawa, likewise told me that she sees the base presence in the prefecture as enabling the US to ‘stay and hold onto its influence [in the region] without a direct or concrete military threat even after the Cold War’. Echoing the government documents cited in previous chapters, Chalmers Johnson furthermore discusses the replacement of the communist threat in the post-Cold War era with ‘instability’, commenting: ‘[t]his new, exceedingly vague doctrine indirectly acknowledges that

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71 Masaaki Gabe, personal interview, 28 April 2014, University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa, Japan.

72 Norimatsu was, for example, a co-organiser of a 2014 Change.org petition demanding the cancellation of the reclamation permission given by Nakaima to Abe (see section 3.3 for more details).

73 Satoko Norimatsu, personal interview, 27 March 2014, Richmond Hotels Naha Kumochi, Okinawa, Japan.
the purpose of American forces in Japan is neither to defend nor to contain Japan but simply by their presence to prevent the assumed dangers of their absence’. 74

In the 2010 anti-base documentary **Standing Army**, many prominent American scholars, including Johnson, expound on this belief. Noam Chomsky, for instance, frames the continued presence of USM bases around the world in the post-Cold War era as the US’s means of maintaining its ‘empire’ overseas; Gore Vidal agrees, remarking that ‘[w]hat a worldwide network of bases means is that you have at your fingertips, if you are the emperor of the West, the means for perpetual war’. 75 In addition, argues Catherine Lutz, bases – including those in Okinawa – are a part of the larger US ‘military-industrial complex’ which dictates that there be a ‘carry-on imperative’ based on accumulating profits for defence industries. 76 Gerson extends this argument to his interpretation of the Obama administration’s ‘pivot’ to Asia as the US ‘ensuring its dominance through the 21st century’. 77

On the Japanese side, the reason for the reproduction of current base policy is framed as less purposeful and more as ‘going along’ with the US’s demands. ‘Japanese politicians don’t question the [alliance] framework’, remarks Yara. ‘It’s like a religion: believers are happy because they have no information’. 78 Michael Penn, president of Shingetsu News Agency, similarly argues that most Japanese administrations have been ‘willing participants’ in the reproduction of the pro-alliance discourse to the point that the US no longer has to ‘make threats’ (as during the Gulf War) that the GOJ share the ‘burden’ of defence—because ‘at this point it’s sort of like asking them to do what they really wanna do anyway’. 79

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76 Lutz specifically points to Kadena Air Base as an example of this ‘imperative’, commenting: ‘When you see how much money’s at stake in the operations that go on every day, it’s phenomenal. The number of flights that take off from Kadena USAF Base every single day—just that one base, in that one country, on one day, will have involved thousands of gallons of jet fuel, repair and maintenance and parts for that aircraft.’ (Effendemfilm 2010).
78 Yara 2014.
79 Michael Penn, personal interview, 4 February 2014, Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan, Tokyo, Japan.
2. Defining and redefining security

There is a fear in the Japanese right wing of Okinawans bandwagoning with China against mainland Japan. But China and North Korea are not really a threat to Okinawans compared to their everyday security.

- Kiichi Fujiwara, professor of international politics at the University of Tokyo

Whether arguing that the reproduction of the alliance occurs through passive acceptance—the result of the ‘carry-on imperative’ in Japanese domestic politics and US foreign policy—or that it is actively performed in an effort to maintain US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific, proponents of the ABD are clearly making the point that the aims and understanding of policymakers and officials in Tokyo and Washington are far removed from local concerns in Okinawa. As Fujiwara put it, this geographical, historical, and cultural separation has contributed to the ABD’s narrative that the definition of ‘security’ in Okinawa is not focused on the traditional ‘threats’ to regional stability, but instead emphasises such areas as the environment and general quality of life. In the case of Okinawa, both governments rely heavily upon the stability of the prefecture to continue the alliance’s daily security operations—and thus these ‘non-traditional’ threats to residents is an area on which they have increasingly focused. ‘I mean, growing up in Okinawa, base issues, whether you’re for bases or against them, it’s part of your life’, Hideki Yoshikawa, an anthropologist at Meio University and an anti-base activist specialising in environmental issues, told me. Suzuyo Takazato, co-director of the anti-base group Okinawa Women Act Against Military Violence, similarly ‘characterizes the situation [in Okinawa] as “life surrounded by the U.S. military bases”’.

‘The everydayness of the effects of the bases normalizes their physical, psychological, and ecological toll as much as it normalizes the presence of the bases themselves’, says Kelly Dietz. ‘The fact is, no Okinawan younger than 65 years old knows or remembers Okinawa without the massive US military presence and odd jumble of American cultural influences’. This is evident in some of the English-language tourist information pamphlets I gathered from Okinawa. For example, Okinawa City’s tourist information map acknowledges the influence of the US presence on the area:

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80 Hideki Yoshikawa, personal interview, 25 April 2014, University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa, Japan.
82 Dietz 2010, pp. 151-152.
It has flourished as the town next door to a U.S. military base, and even now, 36% of the region lies within the U.S. military base [Kadena]. Signs written in English line the street leading to the gate, and the foreign nationals lend a distinctive atmosphere to the area. The culture of the city is a stir-fry of Ryukyu culture passed down from our ancestors and foreign influences, particularly American. This style has spread to entertainment too, influencing Okinawan songs. Jazz, folk, and a wide range of music and entertainment, contribute to creating the new genre, Okinawan Rock.

The general *Okinawa Travel Guide* issued by the OPG’s Convention and Visitors’ Bureau likewise describes Okinawa City as having an ‘exotic air in the streets’ on account of its proximity to Kadena Air Base, and calls the central part of Okinawa, also close to many bases, an ‘Americanized town’.84

![Figure 3: Examples of American influence found in Okinawa](image)

The other side of this ‘Americanisation’, however, has been less cultural ‘stir-fry’ and more confrontation between US service members and the local population. ‘[A]lthough the U.S. military in Okinawa contributes to Japan’s national security’, writes Hironobu Nakabayashi, an OPG research fellow, ‘it endangers the safety of citizens of the region, or say “the Human Security,” through some of its military activities, and crimes or problematic behavior by military personnel’.85 In placing the constitutive elements of this ‘human security’ at the foundation of their narrative about ‘security’ – namely integrating a focus on improving quality of life and following international human rights principles – proponents of the ABD thus shift the referent object of ‘security’ from ‘the state’ to individuals. By doing so, they also question the “naturalness” of the territorial state (read: Japan,

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83 *Okinawa City Tourist Information Map: The Koza Map* (Okinawa, Japan: Okinawa City Tourism Association, Culture and Tourism Division, 2014).


and Okinawa’s place within it), its ability to provide for individual security, and expand the definition of ‘threats’ to include those which do not necessarily threaten their ‘human being’, but which nonetheless may have negative effects on their everyday lives.  

The level of disaffection with the central government’s ability to deliver on its promises to address ‘everyday’ security concerns related to environmental pollution, noise pollution, sexual assault, crime, military accidents, etc. – and the perception that between Tokyo and Naha, there is no ‘middle ground’ on which the two parties can meet and take each other’s arguments and ideas seriously – has therefore resulted in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction and institutional stagnation (in the case of Futenma) that inspires little confidence for reconciliation between government/military actors and those in the ABM/local government.

2.1. Everyday security in Okinawa

In the case of Okinawa, writes Nakaima in a 2013 OPG publication, ‘there are three major issues that we are facing [...] concerning the US bases. [The] first issue is regarding the land area [...] The second issue concerns the various challenges that stem from the bases [...] The third issue is regarding the Status of Forces Agreement, or the SOFA’. Concerning the first issue – land area – what he is referring to is not only the well-publicised and oft-repeated fact that Okinawa, constituting only 0.6% of Japanese territory, hosts around 75% of all USM facilities in Japan—but also that these bases take up around 10% of the land area in a prefecture with a population density of about 2,806 people per square mile. Compared to the proportion of land occupied by US forces in other prefectures on mainland Japan, says Kunitoshi Sakurai, former president of Okinawa University, environmental scientist, and a member of the Okinawa Environmental Network, Okinawa bears a much more significant ‘burden’: ‘The second largest area of the US military facilities is in Aomori prefecture (24 sq. km; 7.69% of the prefectural land), third, Kanagawa (18 sq. km; 5.91%), and fourth, Tokyo (13 sq. km; 4.28%). None of these comes anywhere close to Okinawa’.

This combination of high concentration of military facilities with high population density (and with a growing population) has thus been a cause of tension—as the bases, according to the local government, ‘present major obstacles in the economic growth of Okinawa’:

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87 Nakaima 2013, p. 53.
89 Johnson 2000, p. 37.
90 The Okinawa Environmental Network, founded by Okinawa University professor Jun Ui, is a coalition of environmental NGOs in the prefecture.
91 Sakurai 2008.
92 In fact, Okinawa is one of the only prefectures in Japan that is increasing in population (Mike Mochizuki and Michael O’Hanlon, ‘Okinawa and the Future of U.S. Marines in the Pacific’ in Rebalance to Asia, Refocus on
Naturally, the close proximity between US service members and residents in this situation has also led to other ‘various challenges’, as Nakaima put it—a notable one being military accidents like the 2004 helicopter crash into OIU. However, there were many other prominent accidents prior to this. In June 1959, for example, an F-100 fighter jet plane crashed into Miyamori Elementary School in Uruma, killing eleven students and six neighbourhood residents and injuring another 210 people, 156 of whom were also students. This incident, in addition to two others during the 1960s in which young girls were killed by a military trailer and crane, respectively, has led to a situation in which schools located close to US bases routinely hold emergency drills to ‘prepare students and teachers for the possibility of U.S. military aircraft crashing into their schools’. The OPG, furthermore, has stated that these incidents – and the possibility of future ones – have made base communities ‘live with the constant anxiety’.

In addition, crimes committed by US service members – including theft, assault, and rape – are also frequently raised as a point of contention. The local government estimated an average of 23 incidents or accidents involving US service members every month in 2012, and, cumulatively speaking, over 5,500 crimes have been reported since reversion. While the estimated percentage of crimes committed per year by US service members (who constitute 3% of the islands’ population) is relatively low in relation to the general population at 1.3 - 1.5, the residual psychological effect they leave, say actors supporting and/or involved in the ABM, is markedly different than those

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95 Mitchell 2015; Akibayashi 2010, p. 22.
98 Cooley 2014, pp. 3-4.
99 Cooley 2014, pp. 3-4.
committed by Okinawans. ‘Okinawan people do not think that the US is here to protect Okinawan people’, Yoichi Iha, the former mayor of Ginowan, remarks. ‘Rather, they think the US military is dangerous to the lives of Okinawans’.100

Similarly, in a documentary featuring the Okinawan case – 2010 Okinawa – activists are highlighted for joining the ABM on account of their experiences with sexual assault. For instance, activist Hirotoshi Iha recounts:

I’ve never been able to accept any soldiers to be stationed here. One of the reasons goes back to 1954 or ’55 when I was in 8th or 9th grade. I had a 5-year-old relative named Yumiko Nagayama. An American soldier kidnapped her in a Jeep in broad daylight. He took her to a field in Kadena and stripped her naked. Then he raped her, murdered her, and discarded her body. A 5th grade boy named Yamashiro witnessed the soldier kidnapping her. He was taken to Kadena base. In a lineup, he was able to identify the soldier. His body fluid matched what was found on her body. They arrested the soldier but they never told us what happened to him. Nothing. 101

During the Vietnam War, moreover, thousands of women in Okinawa were employed as prostitutes around the bases; while the number of assaults has seen a marked decrease since reversion102. Kensei Yoshida argues that ‘given the nature of sexual violence, in which victims often remain silent, this could be just the tip of the iceberg’.103

Even without serious accidents or crimes, argue activists, the everyday nuisances caused by the bases from noise pollution by low-flying aircraft also pose a threat to ‘human security’ (see Figure 4 below). OIU, close to Futenma, recorded noise levels ‘in excess of 100 decibels’.104 Sakurai notes that the low frequency noise associated with helicopters ‘interferes with sleep and causes other health complications [...] that can cause physical and psychological effects’ on nearby towns and villages.105 By December 2010, a lawsuit over this problem filed by residents living near Kadena

100 Yoichi Iha, personal interview, 9 April 2014, Ginowan, Okinawa, Japan.
102 According to statistics released by the Okinawa Prefectural Police, only one rape incident involving a US service member was reported in 2014, and the number of violent crimes only four (Matthew M. Burke and Chiyomi Sumida, ‘Number of SOFA personnel accused of crimes on Okinawa drops’, Stars and Stripes, 3 March 2015, available online at: http://www.stripes.com/news/pacific/number-of-sofa-personnel-accused-of-crimes-on-okinawa-drops.132412).
104 Gong 2012.
105 Kunitoshi Sakurai, ‘Japan’s Illegal Environmental Impact Assessment of the Henoko Base,’ trans. John Junkerman, The Asia Pacific Journal, 10:9:5 (2012), available online at: www.japanfocus.org/-John-Junkerman/3701/article.html. These effects can include, according to Hokkaido University professor Toshihito Matsui, increased rates of heart attacks and strokes among residents living near bases like Kadena. Furthermore, a 2004 study by Kozo Hiramatsu et al found that aircraft noise measurements from Vietnam War-era Okinawa indicated that ‘noise exposure around Kadena Air Base was hazardous to hearing and is likely to have caused hearing loss to people living in its vicinity’ (‘Deaths from Kadena Air Base aircraft noise estimated at 4 people annually’, The Ryukyu Shimpo, 19 February 2016a, available online at:
Grinberg 210

had gathered over 20,000 plaintiffs.\textsuperscript{106} Similarly, environmental pollution from bases has not only objectively been a health and safety problem for Okinawans, but has also provided the ABM with one of its strongest framing devices in engaging non-Okinawans on the issue (see section 3.4 for more details). From forest fires caused by live firing exercises\textsuperscript{107}, to hazardous chemicals such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury stored on military sites contaminating groundwater\textsuperscript{108}, to recent evidence pointing to the widespread use of Agent Orange in the prefecture during the Vietnam War\textsuperscript{109}, decades of pollution have made many in the ABM question whether or not returned base land will even be usable—and whether the GOJ will take any responsibility for making it so if it is not.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure4.jpg}
\caption{Aircraft from Futenma are shown as flying close overhead of an elementary school in Ginowan (left) and affecting schoolchildren (right) in the 2010 anti-base documentary Standing Army\textsuperscript{110}}
\end{figure}

This concern touches on the third point raised by Nakaima: the SOFA. As mentioned in earlier chapters, the SOFA has not only protected US service members from being prosecuted in Japanese courts for crimes committed in Okinawa, but has also posed an obstacle to local police conducting investigations on-base—and, to that point, kept other officials from the Ministry of Environment or local municipalities from entering bases to conduct any studies when allegations of environmental pollution arise. The ODB, rather than the USG, for example, ‘provides compensation for any damage caused by accidents or incidents within [their] administrative area due to illegal actions by the USF and its members etc. (soldiers, civilian employees)’.\textsuperscript{111} Likewise, the USM is not

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item McCormack, Norimatsu and Selden 2011.
  \item Sakurai 2012.
  \item Gwyn Kirk, ‘Gender and U.S. Bases in Asia-Pacific’, Foreign Policy in Focus, 14 March 2008, available online at: \url{http://fpif.org/gender_and_us_bases_in_asia-pacific/}.
  \item Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting 2012.
  \item Effendemfilm 2010.
  \item Yoshida 2008.
\end{itemize}
obligated ‘to return the land in its original condition when the bases are closed and returned to Japan’.  

This legal separation, argues Kaori Sunagawa, a professor at OIU and expert in environmental law, has the effect of elevating ‘traditional’ security concerns for the USG especially, as it is not directly faced with the clean-up of their own facilities:

If we talk about national security, it should include environmental. We have the right to live in peace and a quiet place, we have a right to live sustainably. When the government narrows the definition, they can make a line between what’s good for national security and what’s bad for national security. From the citizens’ side, at Henoko, people have the right to access the ocean, to enjoy the ocean, to pass natural resources on to the next generation. Because after World War Two, the Okinawan people relied on natural resources […] many people went to the ocean to collect clams and seaweed, sold this stuff at market, gained money, and raised [their] kids [on it]. Based on this kind of experience, natural resources are quite important for people’s security.

In making this argument, Sunagawa illustrates not only on how this legal separation reinforces the distance between how ‘security’ and ‘threat’ are defined within the PBD versus the ABD, but also relies on the historical narrative related to ‘everyday’ people’s suffering in the post-war era. By doing so, she ties the oft-used discursive strategy of connecting residents’ experiences of WWII and the post-war era to the present with the more recent narrative which re-imagines the meaning of ‘security’ to include an environmental element—the latter of which, as will be discussed shortly, has proven to be successful in raising domestic and international awareness of the ‘Okinawa base issue’.

2.2. National and local security concerns

It thus follows that where the ill-effects of environmental contamination, violent crime, and noise pollution are cited in the ABD’s redefinition of what constitutes a ‘threat’ to security, other, more ‘traditional’ causes of insecurity – such as China’s military buildup – are often underemphasized or questioned outright by members and supporters of the ABM in Okinawa. ‘A lot of Okinawans say, “look: for centuries we traded with Japan, we traded with China”’, says Penn. ‘“You know, we didn’t have any Chinese invasions. And we’re not really worried about the Chinese invasion”’.  

Penn and others have cited these historical links between the Ryukyu Kingdom as

112 Yoshida 2008.
113 Kaori Sunagawa, personal interview, 25 April 2014, Okinawa International University, Ginowan, Okinawa, Japan.
114 Penn 2014.
115 Rabson 2014. See also: ‘Interactions with China Today’ in Rebalance to Asia, Refocus on Okinawa: Okinawa’s Role in an Evolving US-Japan Alliance (Okinawa, Japan: Okinawa Prefecture Executive Officer of the Governor, Regional Security Policy Division Research Section, 2013), p. 87; Kurayoshi Takara, ‘The Senkaku Islands Problem as Seen Through Okinawan History’ in Rebalance to Asia, Refocus on Okinawa: Okinawa’s Role
well as current Chinese tourism in Okinawa as a contributor to this apparent lack of concern as compared to policymakers in Tokyo.

However, said Nakaima at a symposium in Washington, DC at which numerous USJ ‘experts’ and officials were in attendance, ‘China is a different country, because we’re Japanese. We have absolutely no intention of becoming part of China’. Likewise, a 2013 poll conducted by the OPG showed not only that nearly 90% of Okinawans surveyed ‘have a somewhat unfavorable impression of China’, but also that ‘the current relationship between Okinawa and China does not appear to be particularly deep or strong, which shows that historical and cultural attributes currently do not have much leverage’. These results also undermine the arguments made by central government officials or ‘experts’ claiming that China’s influence is particularly strong on the ABM in Okinawa, or that Okinawans, on account of Chinese tourism, are inherently more pro-Chinese than other Japanese citizens.

On the other hand, notes Akio Takahara, in response to a question asking respondents whether they felt closer to China or the US, ‘more Okinawans than the respondents of the nationwide survey answered that they do not feel close to either’—and this, he comments, ‘reflects the problems that Okinawa faces with respect to U.S. military bases’. This lack of ‘closeness’ extends into the connotations made within the ABD regarding the nature of the GOJ and USG’s relationship. Activists and scholars have said, for example, that officials in the GOJ have been ‘brainwashed’ into following the US and reproducing the alliance in the post-war period; that Japanese politicians ‘are so accustomed to the presence of US military bases and forces that it’s like the air they breathe’ (calling back to the ‘oxygen’ analogy); or that these same officials and politicians suffer from ‘Ameriphobia’ which is ‘rooted in the devastation of the atomic bombs

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117 Akio Takahara, ‘Comments Regarding the Survey Results on Okinawan’s Impression of China’ in Rebalance to Asia, Refocus on Okinawa: Okinawa’s Role in an Evolving US-Japan Alliance (Okinawa, Japan: Okinawa Prefecture Executive Officer of the Governor, Regional Security Policy Division Research Section, 2013), pp. 111-143.

118 Eldridge, for example, implies in a 2015 Washington Times article that current Okinawa governor Takeshi Onaga ‘has been groomed for a long time by Chinese leaders’ (Robert Eldridge, ‘The other side to the Okinawa story’, The Washington Times, 31 May 2015, available online at: http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/31/robert-eldridge-the-other-side-to-the-okinawa-stor/).

119 Takahara 2013, p. 90.

120 Norimatsu 2014.

121 Iha 2014.
dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki’ and continues to influence their decision to remain ‘subservient’ to US foreign policy.\textsuperscript{122}

By contrast, Wesley Sasaki-Uemura posits that the current Abe administration (and previous LDP-led governments) has used this purported ‘pressure’ from the US to its own advantage by blaming the USG ‘for pushing it to the right when it wanted those changes all along’ (e.g. remilitarisation).\textsuperscript{123} In doing so, he echoes Penn’s comments that Japanese administrations have been ‘willing participants’ in the ‘deepening’ of the alliance, and thus insinuates that the reproduction of the alliance – as well as the continually fraught situation in Okinawa – is an intended, not coerced, product of Japanese policymaking. This pressure is viewed cynically even by US officials like Nye, who remarked (to quote him a second time) that ‘[s]ometimes Japanese officials quietly welcome gaiatsu, or foreign pressure, to help resolve their own bureaucratic deadlocks’.\textsuperscript{124}

2.3. Futenma: from referendums to sit-ins

The suggestion that Japanese and American policymakers purposely or passively support the status quo in alliance and basing policy for whatever reason – whether it be maintaining American military hegemony or Japanese conservatives attempting to move the country to the right via remilitarisation – has also been present throughout the FRF conflict, though anger in Okinawa has largely been directed towards the central government in Tokyo over a perceived (and, on many occasions, actual) lack of consultation with local stakeholders. Initially, however, this did not seem to be the case. In the wake of the 1995 rape, for instance, the SACO negotiations appeared to be a concrete effort by the USG and GOJ towards resolving the issues surrounding Futenma (which Ota had told them at the time was the ‘biggest priority’ in terms of relocating or returning base areas\textsuperscript{125}).

The resulting agreement between the two to relocate Futenma to Henoko, however, ‘did not satisfy the Okinawans, nor did it their Governor, Ota Masahide, who wanted US bases on the island reduced, not just shifted around’.\textsuperscript{126} This was complicated, says Krauss, by the fact that at the same time, landowner leases for US bases were due to be renewed (which Ota explicitly opposed) and ‘northern Okinawan contractors who wanted any construction to be done only by themselves […] exerted pressure on the Okinawan government to only come to an agreement if this were

\textsuperscript{122} Takahashi 2012; Bandow 2014.
\textsuperscript{123} Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, personal interview, 26 August 2014, Skype, Washington, DC, USA. Sasaki-Uemura, however, was not alone or unique in this view, as similar arguments were made in my interviews with Iha, Bandow, Penn, and Norimatsu.
\textsuperscript{124} Nye 2010.
\textsuperscript{125} Masahide Ota, personal interview, 24 April 2014, Naha, Okinawa, Japan.
\textsuperscript{126} Krauss 2013, p. 181.
included’. A local referendum in Nago in 1997 followed this, though only a slim majority (52.9%) of eligible voters rejected the FRF plan. Nago City Assembly member (and instrumental in organising the 1997 Nago plebiscite against the relocation of Futenma to Henoko) Yasuhiro Miyagi and Miyume Tanji explain that this more evenly-divided result was due to many voters associating the construction of a new facility with badly-needed ‘economic rejuvenation’ in the area (see section 3.3 for details). Ota, furthermore, was defeated in his re-election campaign the next year by the pro-relocation, LDP-backed Keiichi Inamine, who was heavily supported both politically and financially by the central government.

In-between the referendum in 1997 and the sit-in campaign started by Henoko protesters in the early 2000s, however, the initial SACO plans underwent several changes. First, Inamine, appealing to the aforementioned local construction firms and long-term economy of northern Okinawa, suggested that the offshore FRF option be converted into a civilian-military airport and ‘called for a 15-year limit on the use of this facility by the U.S. military’. Then, in 2000, the Naha District Court dismissed a lawsuit filed by Nago residents against the city for ‘disregarding’ the results of the 1997 referendum, as those results were non-binding. After further negotiations, in 2002, the USG and GOJ settled on a facility ‘that incorporated much of Governor Inamine’s thinking: a civilian-military joint use airport built on reclaimed land on the reef some distance from the shore so as to reduce flight noise over residential areas’.

However, this is not to say that the referendum(s) achieved nothing. ‘All in all, the movement for the Referendum against the relocation of the base to Henoko achieved two things’, argues Genevieve Souillac:

First, it “brought the history of Okinawa’s social movements to a new height by forming … a broader public sphere of discussion about the US military” within Japan. Second, it transformed Okinawa’s political and social self-representation from that of “a poor, oppressed people” to “that of confident, affluent ‘citizens’ of diverse backgrounds awakened to globally disseminated ideas about ecology, women’s issues, and peace”.

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127 Krauss 2013, p. 181.
129 Krauss 2013, p. 182.
Sunagawa, who explained that her involvement in the ABM began after 1995, concurs that activists – including herself – learned how to effectively present their case on a global stage as a result of these events:

After the rape case, Japanese people started to become interested in the Okinawa issue, and my mentor, Professor Ue, became a kind of organiser of the environmental conference in Okinawa. It was held in 1997, and then after this conference, Professor Ue sent me as a delegate to the ASEAN +5 Summit in New York. I was the only person to participate [from Okinawa], but Professor Ue told me: “you shouldn’t be scared to present this problem at this international conference. That’s the starting point”.

Partly as a consequence of this strategic learning process, when the ODB began to undertake construction work on the FRF in 2004 (according to the revised 2002 plan), its efforts were significantly curtailed by the activities of local protesters and, later, outside activists through physical obstruction (including sit-ins onshore, scaffolding erected offshore around survey sites, and divers; see Figure 5 below). These protests caused the official plans to once again be revised, and in 2006, the USG and GOJ agreed to the V-shaped facility which remains their preferred option today.

McCormack frames this process, however, as one that, with each succeeding revision, has increased the FRF in size. He argues that it has

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134 Sunagawa 2014.
Later surveys by the ODB, having become familiar with the activists’ strategies, took greater care to ensure that they would not be hampered by protests: in 2007, by increasing the number of Coast Guard vessels around the offshore construction sites and sending survey divers at night to assess the areas; in 2008, by prosecuting fifteen protesters staging a sit-in in Takae village — the site of construction for six helipads — for ‘obstructing traffic’; and in 2011, according to reports, by hovering military helicopters close to the sit-in protesters’ tent in Takae, thus ‘blowing it down and damaging its contents’. 138

Further complicating the activities of the ABM was the signing of the Guam Treaty in 2009 by the Aso administration, which committed the GOJ not only to the Henoko plan, but also to paying $6 billion in relocation-related expenses — a commitment, say journalist and filmmaker Asako Kageyama (who co-produced the anti-base documentary Marines Go Home!) and Philip Seaton, that the US ‘interpret[ed] as binding Hatoyama’ when the DPJ took office the following year. 139 However, the stance which Hatoyama initially took — that of supporting relocation outside of Okinawa — not only unnerved alliance ‘managers’, but also, by many accounts, re-energised the ABM. ‘Hatoyama’s proposition instantaneously thrust kengai isetsu as an intelligible political claim into public consciousness’, claims Annmaria Shimabuku. Furthermore, in his successive efforts to persuade other prefectures to accept more bases so as to lift their ‘burden’ from Okinawa, she argues that ‘many citizens were forced to confront the reality of the [USJ-ST] from which they benefit’. 140

When, following intense negotiations with US officials, the Hatoyama administration returned to the original plan as agreed upon in 2009, proponents of the ABD framed this as resulting not only from Hatoyama’s lack of political ‘courage’, but also due to bureaucrats in Japan and US officials not supporting his proposals in the first place. ‘He was betrayed by his own defence agency officials, and by people in the embassy in Washington mainly’, argues Rabson. ‘And pressure, of

137 McCormack 2009.
138 Kikuno and Norimatsu 2010; McCormack, Norimatsu and Selden 2011.
139 Kageyama and Seaton 2010. See, for example, Clinton’s comments in Chapter 3, section 2.2 – following the signing of the treaty – that ‘a responsible nation follows the agreements that have been entered into, and the agreement that I signed today with FM Nakasone is one between our two nations, regardless of who’s in power’ (McCormack 2009).
course, coming from the United States. That’s where they lack courage: they can’t say “no”.

Bandow agrees: ‘The US clearly preferred the status quo. It certainly didn’t want a serious challenge [...] And I think, frankly, from that standpoint, Washington felt threatened, and they played the alliance card’.

Given the quotes from diplomatic cables and official documents in previous chapters of officials playing the ‘alliance card’ – such as the private complaints of several ‘Alliance hands’ to the US Embassy in Tokyo that ‘even the most senior government bureaucrats had been essentially cut out of the decision-making process’ – this interpretation is not without merit. It was, furthermore, reinforced when, in a 2011 interview with the Okinawa Times, Ryukyu Shimpo, and Kyodo News Agency, Hatoyama admitted that the reason he had given for his agreement to the original plan – that of Futenma’s deterrence value for regional security – was given merely as a ‘pretext’.

2.4. Futenma: a status quo problem?

The reactions to this admission by Hatoyama in Okinawa ranged from appalled (Nago Mayor Susumu Inamine remarked ‘it is unforgiveable that a prime minister of a country makes such an utterance so lightly’) to accusatory (with the Ryukyu Shimpo running an editorial calling Hatoyama ‘an amateur prime minister with no sense of politics’) to, most prominently among his critics, cynical.

“Hatoyama honestly disclosed that he could not reverse the bureaucrats’ way of thinking, and made clear that “deterrence” had no meaning”, says Mie Kunimasa, leader of a women’s anti-base group in Ginowan. This argument – that the concept of ‘deterrence’ itself is nothing but an empty signifier – is a common one among anti-base activists. ‘When you see how much money’s at stake in the operations that go on every day, it’s phenomenal’, observes Lutz, framing this money in the US basing structure in Okinawa as what actually keeps the USM there (as opposed to ‘deterrence’). She continues:

The number of flights that take off from Kadena Air Force Base every single day—just that one base, in that one country, on one day, will have involved thousands of gallons of jet fuel, repair and maintenance and parts for that aircraft. The rationale for these bases is that they’re continually practicing and training and using the equipment, and running the personnel through their paces, and feeding them, and so on, and that is an incredibly expensive operation.

141 Rabson 2014.
142 Bandow 2014.
143 Norimatsu 2011.
144 Norimatsu 2011.
145 Norimatsu 2011.
146 Effendemfilm 2010.
Moreover, adds filmmaker John Junkerman, it is not just the institutionalised, operational value of the Okinawan bases which keeps them where they are, but also the fact that the Japanese government pays for their associated expenses:

The other thing about—that makes Okinawa appealing to the Americans is that the Japanese government covers nearly 100 percent of the costs of maintaining those bases in Japan—pays for the utilities, it pays all of the workers who live on the—who work on those bases, it pays for the cooks who cook the food, it pays for the golf courses and the swimming pools, maintains everything. So the U.S. burden to have those bases there is very, very slim. There’s hardly any financial burden whatsoever. So, they get a free ride. It’s the best situation for U.S. bases in any country in the entire world.

Iha argues that the governments’ framing of the Marines as a deterrent force for Japan’s national security also does not add up, if only because ‘every year, for about half the year, Marines are absent from Okinawa because they go to Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, Guam, and Korea in order to engage in bilateral security practices with each of these countries’. This is backed up by testimony from previous chapters, such as the Senate staffer’s comment that ‘the forces on Okinawa are not for the defence of Japan […] they’re for the forward protection of US national interests in that region’, or the 1998 GAO report framing the US forward presence as ‘a visible political commitment by the United States to peace and stability in the region’—not just in Japan.

On the need for the continued concentration of US forces in Okinawa following this ‘deterrence’ argument, activists and scholars also disagree with the central governments’ claims. ‘It violates strategic logic to put all the bases in Okinawa. Kyushu is closer to Beijing and North Korea, so it would make more strategic sense for the bases to be there’, says Lummis. ‘As the U.S. Marine redeployment plans to Guam and elsewhere suggest, maintaining a large garrison of Marines on Okinawa is not as essential’, continues Mochizuki. ‘Under the new vision of Marine deployments, Marine units can maintain a continuous presence in the Asia-Pacific through rotational deployments from bases in Guam, Hawaii, and even California as well as Okinawa’. Akikazu Hashimoto adds: ‘Unless the United States pulls back to a location out of the range of the Chinese military (e.g., Darwin, Australia), U.S. military forces will be vulnerable to China’s anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM), submarines, and other new weapon systems’.

148 Iha 2014.
149 Lummis 2014.
151 Hashimoto 2013, p. 27.
‘So the question is: why does the Japanese government still want to build this base in Henoko?’ Iha asks. ‘We believe it is Japan’s intention to ignore what Okinawa wishes, which is a violation of our human rights and individual property. So we believe that this situation happening today is caused by the indulgence or ignorance of the Japanese government, and the US seems to be a co-player in this’.\footnote{Iha 2014.} As intimated earlier with regards to the alliance and the base situation in Okinawa overall, there is a strong narrative within the ABD which frames the Futenma issue as having been protracted on account of the USG’s and GOJ’s preference for the status quo. ‘Regarding the possibility of a change of government, if the question is how will Okinawa’s security issues and relations with the U.S. military change, it doesn’t really seem to change’, said Nakaima in 2013. Yonamine concurs, adding that ‘the US military’s pattern of extending bases in accordance simply with their perceived military and strategic value, without any understanding of local circumstances, history and culture, is precisely what is happening in Okinawa’\footnote{Yonamine 2011.} Meanwhile, Hashimoto criticises ‘Japanese commentators’ in the media and in the political sphere for being unable to go ‘beyond thinking about the Futenma issue like a real estate transaction, fretting over whether the FRF should be within or outside Okinawa Prefecture or whether it should be Base A or Base B’.\footnote{Hashimoto 2013, p. 22.} Nakaima’s 2013 deal with Abe is similarly seen through this frame as a continuation of the central government’s ‘status quo’ relationship with the OPG in the sense that local officials can still be ‘bribed’ or ‘economically bullied’ into accepting Tokyo’s demands.\footnote{Mochizuki 2014.} For instance, other LDP members in the prefecture – prior to reversing their positions in favour of the FRF in 2013 – had reportedly expressed their willingness to do so ‘once public passions showed signs of cooling’.\footnote{Martin Fackler, ‘Amid Image of Ire Toward U.S. Bases, Okinawans’ True Views Vary’, \textit{The New York Times}, 14 February 2012, available online at: \url{www.nytimes.com/2012/02/15/world/asia/okinawan-views-on-us-military-presence-are-nuanced.html}.} The resulting public outcry in Okinawa over Nakaima’s reversal – up to and including the replacement of Nakaima with the anti-base Takeshi Onaga as governor in 2014 – led a recent US Congressional Research Service (CRS) report to concede: ‘Ultimately, the unwillingness of Tokyo and Washington to close Futenma without a replacement facility has fostered the perception that the two governments are discriminating against Okinawans’\footnote{Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 7.}.

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\begin{itemize}
\item\footnote{Iha 2014.} \item\footnote{Yonamine 2011.} \item\footnote{Hashimoto 2013, p. 22.} \item\footnote{Mochizuki 2014.} \item\footnote{Martin Fackler, ‘Amid Image of Ire Toward U.S. Bases, Okinawans’ True Views Vary’, \textit{The New York Times}, 14 February 2012, available online at: \url{www.nytimes.com/2012/02/15/world/asia/okinawan-views-on-us-military-presence-are-nuanced.html}.} \item\footnote{Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 7.} \end{itemize}
3. Institutional and cultural identities

There’s no fact-finding and no solution to this issue [the FRF] because of the way the different parties view the security situation here. For the Marines, it’s about survival. For the Japanese government, it’s a religion. And for Okinawans, it’s about life.

- Tomohiro Yara, former editor of the Okinawa Times

It is not enough to say that there is merely a ‘perception’ of discrimination against Okinawans, however, when discussing the identity-based narrative underlying the ABD. Rather, upon close reading of the literature and in my own interviews with supporters/members of the ABM, it is clear that political and cultural discrimination against Okinawans, particularly by the Japanese central government, is taken as self-evident. This includes not only the historical victimisation of Okinawa on the basis of ethnicity, language, and physical distance from mainland Japan, but also current economic and political marginalisation—the bases being presented as a prime example of this. ‘There is little attention or sympathy for Okinawa from mainland Japan’, remarks Fujiwara. ‘And legally, the local government doesn’t have much say in foreign policy’. 158

In much the same way, there are doubts that the USG has much ‘sympathy’ – or knowledge – about the ‘Okinawa problem’, and that, if anything, efforts to improve relations between the USM and local people only serves to normalise the presence of US forces. ‘Militarisation’, in this sense, is not only a ‘material’ process which includes ‘the gradual encroachment of the military institution into the civilian arena’ (such as the dependence of local economies on base-related revenues), but also an ‘ideological’ one in which ‘such developments are acceptable to the populace, and become seen as “common-sense” solutions to civil problems’. 159 ‘Legitimation of US military presence is therefore not simply a state-driven process’, writes Dietz. ‘It is also simultaneously socially experienced and reproduced by Okinawans themselves, borne of a desire to make life livable and shaped by living alongside the bases all one’s life’. 160 This legitimation, speculates Baker, may help explain the low voter turnout in the 1996 referendum in areas located near the bases, ‘where large numbers of people depended on the military for their jobs’. 161

There is, therefore, a notable resistance within the ABD to reproducing this legitimation, and this resistance is articulated by a variety of actors – ranging from anti-USJ-ST to women’s to environmental groups – through several discursive strategies. These include, but are not limited, to:

- stressing that Okinawans have ‘first-hand’ experience of ground warfare that distinguishes them from mainland Japanese residents (in that it both better enables them to understand the

158 Kiichi Fujiwara, personal interview, 19 February 2014, Tokyo University, Tokyo, Japan.
consequences of remilitarisation as well as justifies their pacifism/continued opposition to the USM presence); emphasising the elite-led nature of alliance policymaking and the subsequent exclusion of Okinawan officials and local voices from base negotiations and investigations related to USM incidents and accidents; connecting the central government’s granting of base-related subsidies to the OPG (and contribution of funds towards pro-base candidates during municipal and prefectural elections) to the notion that it does so out of a lack of respect for local democratic will; and suggesting, as discussed earlier, that there is a deliberate effort on the part of the USG and GOJ to obfuscate their specific policies with regards to the base issue.

Each of these strategies are designed in order to set up a unified political agenda not only for the ABM (which, as will be discussed in section 3.4, is often divided in its aims and methods), but also for the prefecture and its sympathisers both in mainland Japan and internationally. Furthermore, the stories they tell contribute to the creation of the larger narrative in which Okinawa is imagined as a ‘keystone for peace’ instead of an ‘armada’—conditional on the reduction or removal of US forces from the prefecture.

3.1. Mainland versus Okinawa

In the same CRS report which acknowledges the impact that the ‘perception’ of discrimination against Okinawans has had on the base issue, its two authors also remark that ‘the controversy over bases is seen by many as largely a mainland Japan versus Okinawa issue’. They, along with others, have framed the relationship between the mainland and Okinawa as being contentious due not only to the historical and political factors discussed earlier, but also on account of Okinawans being ‘ethnically distinct’ from Japanese. This is evident, to a certain extent, in the Ryukyu Shimpo poll cited earlier. For example, 87% of those surveyed agreed with the statement that ‘the right to self-determination for Okinawan people should be expanded’, and 54.2% responded that the central government has ‘not [given] sufficient consideration’ to Okinawa’s ‘regional development and foreign policies during the past 70 years’. In making this distinction within the ABD, Okinawans are thus framed as not only physically separated from mainland Japanese by geographic distance, but also symbolically separated in the sense that their experiences – as ethnically and culturally unique from the rest of Japan – cannot ever be fully comprehended by mainlanders. ‘Maybe it’s useful to visit Okinawa’, one MOFA official tells me, ‘but sometimes, if they [Tokyo policymakers] only visit Okinawa once, they rather misunderstand it’.

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162 Shimabuku 2011.
163 Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 10.
164 Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 5.
165 Ryukyu Shimpo 2015.
166 Anonymous 2014c.
Why this official – and others with whom I spoke – make such comments is largely due to their own, personal interactions with proponents of the ABD. In these interactions (including my own with activists, officials, and scholars), it became clear that many Okinawans believe their first-hand (or their families’) experiences of war are not only unique from those of mainland Japanese residents, but also provides a logical reason for their pacifism and adherence to the ABD. Furthermore, they believe that it makes their argument against the USM presence more impactful and powerful than the central governments’. ‘I would argue that among the various Japanese groups who experienced the war, only Okinawans have preserved war memories up to today as social and collective memories of a whole community’, argues Moriteru Arasaki. ‘The Okinawan war experience in this sense may be closer to that of the neighbouring Asian countries’.167

Framing the post-war experience as the redevelopment of the mainland at the expense of continued Okinawan suffering and sacrifice, George Feifer adds: ‘And while the supreme commander’s Tokyo headquarters dubbed the emperor “the first gentleman of Japan” and entertained members of the imperial household, starving, scavenging Okinawans lived in miserable poverty, many in areas ravaged by malaria, all in deep shock after the killing of roughly a third of their number’.168 Journalist and producer of the 2012 Defoliated Island documentary Jon Mitchell also suggests that the Vietnam War’s effects were far more destructive in Okinawa than on the mainland. ‘Due to Okinawa’s gray-zone status, base workers tasked with hazardous tasks were not safeguarded by American or Japanese labour regulations’, he writes. ‘These employees handled toxic chemicals without special training, protective equipment or warnings of the dangers. As a result, hundreds fell ill from exposure to substances including insecticides, hexavalent chromium and asbestos’.169

Proponents of the ABD thus frame part of the disconnect between mainlanders and Okinawans on the base issue not only to a lack of historical knowledge on the part of everyday Japanese citizens, but also to a lack of empathy. Remarks Hashimoto: ‘Most mainland Japanese were oblivious to the fact that the peace and security of their daily lives was owed to the large number of U.S. military bases in Okinawa’.170 ‘Mainland people don’t realise it’s their tax dollars being spent to build a new base in Henoko’, says Ota; Yoshikawa agrees, adding:

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168 Feifer 2000, p. 35.
169 Mitchell 2015.
170 Hashimoto 2013, p.16.
I’m also an active member of the Save the Dugong Campaign Center with its main offices in Tokyo and Osaka. And the members there are really the ones working hard to convey these contradictions about, you know, “Article 9 and the bases are concentrated here in Okinawa, and we don’t wanna have a base in the mainland”. And they were having a hard time convincing many [mainland] Japanese of that.

‘It’s quite difficult for Okinawan people to raise their voices, because most Japanese don’t know the issue and aren’t much interested in learning about the issue’, continues Sunagawa. ‘So this [anti-base/environmental] programme and its concerns are not shared with people on the mainland, but we can share the same concerns with [people in] Korea and the Philippines, and even with people in the United States’.\textsuperscript{172}

Proponents of the ABD thus paint the USG and GOJ in an antagonistic light, in their interpretations, for actively reproducing this divide through their policies. “’The US and Japanese governments have deliberately and by stages shifted the major burden of the US bases to Okinawa in order to make it a non-issue in national politics, and in public consciousness’”, claims Ichiyo Muto.\textsuperscript{173} Continues Akira Arakawa, former editor-in-chief of the Okinawa Times: ‘[T]he Japanese people as a whole have no will to share in Okinawa’s pain, and it [the Japanese state] continues to cultivate its own economic prosperity in the shadow of it all’.\textsuperscript{174} Other prefectural governments are included in this criticism as well for failing to take ‘responsibility’ for hosting bases:

At the National Governor’s Conference held in May 2010, multiple constituencies declared that “national security is the country’s problem” and hence not their concern. Shizuoka Prefecture, which currently assumes 0.39 percent of the burden stated, “We basically oppose any increased burden.” The Governor of Nara Prefecture, where there are no bases, stated, “We have no room to accept bases.”

### 3.2. Of bases and buck-passing

Addressing this reluctance of other prefectures to host bases, Narushige Michishita, a former official and researcher for the MOD, explains:

If you put yourself in the position of mayors and governors of different prefectures and cities, it would be very hard for them to accept a deal to bring the bases and U.S. forces into their areas. Many municipalities in Japan are suffering from economic difficulties and aging problems, and while it might be a good idea economically for those municipalities to accept U.S. bases, if that results in accidents and incidents, who takes responsibility?

\textsuperscript{171} Ota 2014; Yoshikawa 2014.
\textsuperscript{172} Sunagawa 2014.
\textsuperscript{173} Cockburn 2012, p. 165.
\textsuperscript{175} Shimabuku 2011.
This question – who takes responsibility? – is one that has been raised frequently by various actors throughout this research, with US officials claiming that implementation of base-related policies is primarily the responsibility of the Japanese central government, and Japanese officials, by turn, both accepting this role and, at the same time, passing off responsibility for the actualisation of alliance policies at the local level to its prefectural officials in Okinawa.

These local officials, in turn, have struggled to balance the demands from Tokyo and Washington for speedier implementation and concerns from Okinawan residents—all while having little say in the policymaking process. ‘In the past, security policies have been considered as policies that should be promoted under the initiative of the nation as a whole’, says Nakabayashi. ‘Municipalities, society and individuals have been incorporated into policies developed by the nation, and have been requested to cooperate with them, but were never expected to acquire or expand on an individual outlook on security policy [emphasis added]’. Dietz remarks that the reason for this, in the case of the USJA, is due to the framework provided by the SOFA and USJ-ST: ‘The treaty codifies the terms in which basing matters are problematized, which in turn locates decision-making power and “solutions” at the national and international levels’. This appears to be the case given testimony from previous chapters, such as one former MOFA official’s comment that ‘at the end of the day those [base] shapes and structures and sizes, they need to be negotiated between the two governments’.

When it comes to the question of how to ‘deal’ with the ‘Okinawa base problem’, however, finding ‘solutions’ has not always been so easy when limited to these sites. In the case of Futenma, US and Japanese officials with whom I spoke repeatedly made the argument that if anti-base activists did not approve of the two governments’ relocation plan, they should suggest a viable alternative. Sunagawa, however, disagrees with this notion. ‘I think this is their [the governments’] problem. Because [Okinawan] people don’t need to be specialists, right?’ she asks. ‘So I think it’s important that they express their concerns so that policymakers and bureaucrats have to interpret them’.

Even when they express their concerns, however, members of the ABM complain that they are not always treated seriously or given satisfactory answers by these ‘policymakers and bureaucrats’, especially with regards to the EIAs conducted for the FRF. ‘Japanese government avoid to go through the proper channels, and has forced through environment research without hearing

177 Nakabayashi 2013, p. 145.
178 Dietz 2010, p. 189.
179 See, for example, the Diet adviser’s comment in Chapter 3, section 3.4 that ‘the government doesn’t need to listen [to those] because they know the real meaning of the relocation plan and they know the [US] posture review doesn’t mean all [of the] Marine Corps could [leave] this country’,
180 Sunagawa 2014.
opinion and comment from citizen and experts’, reads an English-language pamphlet published by the sit-in protesters at Henoko.\textsuperscript{181} Sakurai further cites the founding chairman of the Japan Society for Impact Assessment, Shimazu Yasuo, who called the 2010 Henoko EIA the ‘worst EIA in history’.\textsuperscript{182}

It earned this ignominious title, say Sakurai and others\textsuperscript{183}, due to its initial exclusion of the deployment of Ospreys from the scoping and preliminary assessment phase, lack of recovery plans and habitat protection for endangered species in the neighbouring Yanbaru forest, and lack of data about how the USM would address possible issues including noise pollution, oil spills, and chemical contamination of groundwater.

Yoshikawa, whose involvement with the Save the Dugong Campaign has involved many interactions with local and central government officials on the Henoko issue, describes his personal experience relating to the EIA:

Last year, December 2013, Governor Nakaima gave permission for land reclamation, right? And he said, “okay, there won’t be any impact on the environment when the base is built”. That was his comment. And he’s made that comment based upon [the findings of the] Department of Civil Engineering and Construction. [...] So I went there [to the Department] and asked: “okay, you guys approved this land reclamation. I want to know the names of the experts. Who knows about the dugongs? Who knows about alien species? Who knows about corals?” And they said, “oh, we didn’t ask the experts”. So we know experts who are forthcoming—they are the ones who are opposing [the construction of the FRF]. But apparently we have some “experts” [laughs] who are not forthcoming but are saying there will be no impacts. But in this particular section, when I asked them: “who are the experts?” And they said, “we didn’t consult any experts. We decided. We judged it”. And I asked them if they studied alien species, and they kept their mouths shut. One guy said he studied chemistry. [laughs] That helps. So again … it’s just mind-boggling, this issue of experts.

It is not just a lack of ‘experts’ in environmental science and law, as Yoshikawa puts it, that makes the relationship between the ABM and local officials difficult—it is also a demonstrated incoherence in the communications between different levels of government. In a 2008 cable, for example, Maher reports that in response to a request from USM engineers about ‘what impact delays in environmental procedures would have on the land-based construction’ of the FRF,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{181} What legacy do you want to leave to your children? (Okinawa, Japan: Henoko Sit-In Protest, 2013).
\item \textsuperscript{184} Yoshikawa 2014.
\end{itemize}
Japanese officials from Tokyo initially insisted there would be no delay, as the EIS applies only to landfill, but Okinawa Defense Bureau (ODB) participants said they expected the prefecture would “be sensitive” to construction. They admitted that they had not yet discussed with the Okinawa Prefectural Government (OPG) any construction that was unrelated to the EIS. Japanese participants insisted that work, including demolition scheduled to begin in April, must be kept under wraps due to “local sensitivities.”

3.3. Forms of historical and current victimisation of Okinawa

This lack of transparency is often highlighted in the ABD as just one example among many political manifestations of discrimination against Okinawa going back decades. Nearly every major historical development from the post-war period to the present has an accompanying interpretation as it having victimised or in some way threatened the safety and security of Okinawan people to the benefit of the US and Japanese central governments (and mainland Japanese residents). Therefore, the alliance itself is portrayed within the discourse as having been reproduced while undermining Okinawan popular will and the GOJ’s and USG’s stated commitment to the ‘shared value’ of respecting democracy. In expressing this view, actors associated with the ABM thus often characterise Okinawa’s position as a ‘sacrifice’ for the sake of national or regional security as conceived by the two governments. This language appears in the literature (and in my interviews) in reference to everything from the prefecture’s role in the Battle of Okinawa (as a ‘sacrificial stone’), to its handover to USM administration in the post-war period, to the continued stationing of US forces in the prefecture after reversion.

The first of these – Okinawa as the sute-ishi – arises from the widely-held belief that the prefecture was purposely used by the GOJ ‘to wound and exhaust the US army forces and prolong their stay in Okinawa as long as possible, so the mainland forces had time to prepare for an attack’. In addition to the prefecture’s land and resources, its people were likewise ‘sacrificed’: ‘Rather than putting efforts into evacuation or the creation of a safe zone for civilians, the Okinawan people were used as a source of labor to build shelters, tunnels and other emplacements, to supplement combat units and to tend to wounded soldiers’. When the prefecture was then placed under US administration after the war, its role, says Hashimoto, graduated from ‘sacrificial stone’ to ‘military cornerstone’, all while gaining little political influence or importance in the process. In

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188 Hashimoto 2013, p. 29.
highlighting this pattern in the language across the various sites of exchange\(^{189}\), Hashimoto’s remark also exemplifies a larger discursive strategy of the ABM which aims to show the callousness of central government officials in their referring to Okinawa as a ‘stone’ or ‘rock’—and thus feeding into the idea that the prefecture is merely a piece of real estate to be traded between nation-states. ‘Hence, the price of “peace” in Japan after the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty was paid by exporting the violence of the U.S. military from Japan to Okinawa’, says Shimabuku\(^{190}\), with Kurayoshi Takara adding: ‘Compared with the change that occurred before the war, the U.S. occupation completely transformed Okinawa’s landscape so that Okinawa bore little resemblance to its prewar self’.\(^{191}\) For example, Allen Nelson, Vietnam War veteran and pacifist activist, described his experience of Okinawan ‘culture’ during the war as one that was not so different from being back home in the US:

When I came here in 1966 to go to Vietnam, I don’t even remember Okinawan people. I don’t remember seeing them. They were the shadows walking around. What I do remember is the women, I remember the drinking, I remember the fighting. That’s what I remember. But in terms of, like, Okinawan culture? I didn’t eat their food; I ate cheeseburgers at the base, you know? I didn’t drink their alcohol; I drank Budweiser, you know, at the base. So this whole idea of “Americanism” stays within that base, it stays within the militarism of ourselves.\(^{192}\)

The pro-reversion movement, argues Sasaki-Uemura, was therefore driven by Okinawans’ becoming ‘tired of feeling like a US possession, and of US soldiers having been asked to maintain law and order because Japan had no military’.\(^{193}\) The resulting ‘return’ of the prefecture to the Japanese state, however, is hardly framed as a victory. In addition to the reversion being conditional on the continued stationing of US forces in Okinawa, the GOJ ‘secretly absorbed substantial costs of the reversion of Okinawa from US to Japanese rule in 1972, including $4 million to restore farmland requisitioned for bases’\(^{194}\) and defraying expenses related to removing American nuclear weapons from the prefecture.\(^{195}\) The language of ‘reversion’ itself, argues Arakawa, is problematic:

\(^{189}\) ‘Cornerstone’ in Chapter 3, ‘keystone’ in 4, and ‘sacrificial stone’ in this chapter.
\(^{190}\) Shimabuku 2012, p. 132.
\(^{191}\) Takara 2013, p. 7.
\(^{192}\) Effendemfilm 2010.
\(^{193}\) Sasaki-Uemura 2014.
\(^{195}\) McCormack 2010; Rabson 2013.
Since the original meaning of the word *fukki* [reversion] is, according to the *Kōjien*, “to restore to an originary place, location, or condition, ‘to one’s native country’”, the transfer of administrative control over what was originally an independent Ryūkyū Kingdom—a region annexed in the shadow of threatened military force in 1879 (the Disposition of the Ryūkyūs) and under Japanese control for only a few decades before Japan’s defeat in 1945—was nothing but an arbitrary act carried out to suit the purposes of the United States and Japan in 1972; thus, it cannot properly be called a “reversion” in the correct sense of the term. It is therefore not difficult to appreciate why so many harbor senses of hostility and discomfort toward this term.

The central government’s HNS payments to the USG, which started a few years after Okinawa’s reversion in 1978, are interpreted in a similar light as ‘a peculiar form of “reverse rental” (by landlord to tenant) that came to be known as “*omoiyari*” (sympathy) payment in Japanese’.

This follows the characterization of the USG’s and GOJ’s view of Okinawa as a throwaway ‘stone’, reinforced, proponents say, by the fact that the GOJ provides more HNS to US bases stationed on its territory than do any other governments for bases on theirs—about $2 billion a year under the 2011-15 agreement. Between 1978 and 2010, in fact, total HNS from the government for USFJ operations totalled $30 billion.

Activists and scholars frame Okinawa’s transformation into a ‘concrete island’ and its dependence on subsidies as the mirror image of the central government’s HNS in its benefits to mainland Japan. ‘The subsidy-oriented economy following 1972 prioritized short-term projects, especially construction of public buildings and infrastructure facilities, with Japanese companies the main beneficiaries’, writes Tanji, pointing out that even with these funds, ‘Okinawa remained Japan’s poorest prefecture in terms of income, unemployment, and other socio-economic standards’.

‘Unlike before reversion, hotels are largely owned by mainland companies, as are supermarkets, department stores, life-assurance companies, and so forth’, Ian Buruma reported in 1985. The central government’s funding of these ‘short-term’ construction projects, moreover, stood at around 90 to 95% of total costs in Okinawa versus around 50% in other prefectures in 2010. Therefore, in responding to the argument made by the USG and GOJ that the construction of the FRF would be an economic boon to the prefecture, Johnson quotes former PM Morihito Hosokawa:

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196 Arakawa 2013.
197 McCormack 2010.
199 Shimoji 2010.
200 Tanji 2009.
201 Buruma 1985, p. 54.
“It was after U.S. forces withdrew from Indochina and Thailand in the 1970s that economic growth in Southeast Asia gained momentum and economic relations with the United States began to expand. The economy of the Philippines took off after the U.S. forces left there in the 1990s. These experiences show that there is little or no relation between foreign military presence and economic growth”.

In the same way that proponents of this discourse tie the role of money to buying the cooperation of local people through subsidies, so do they connect it to the buying of political support from prefectural officials and businesses. For example, when Ota refused to renew leases for private lands on which US bases were located in the wake of the 1995 rape, the Japanese central government ‘pushed through a new law permanently transferring the renewal of Okinawans’ land leases to the Office of the Prime Minister’; later, when Ota likewise rejected Henoko as the relocation site for the FRF following the Saco negotiations, ‘the central government abruptly cut off all communications with the Okinawan government and postponed payment on the economic stimulus package it had promised Okinawa’s northern region. Only after Okinawans elected as governor a Tokyo-backed Okinawan businessman who was more amenable to the new base [Inamine] was the economic package reinstated’.

Within the narrative of victimization, these attempts to ‘purchase’ the understanding of the Okinawan people and their officials are explicitly linked to a fundamental misunderstanding of – or even disrespect for – Okinawa and its historical and present circumstances. ‘I began developing the impression that no one associated with the US military really cared about my colleagues’ or my students’ wellbeing’, says Peter Simpson, a professor at OIU and co-founding member of the Futenma-Henoko Action Network. In explaining how he developed this impression, he cited to me an incident in which III MEF Commanding General Earl B Hailston, in 2001, sent out an email to thirteen Marine officers calling Okinawan officials ‘all a bunch of nuts and wimps’ following an incident ‘where a Marine was arrested for lifting up the dress of an Okinawan schoolgirl’.

Moreover, at the time of the 2004 helicopter crash in Ginowan, then-PM Koizumi ‘was spending a two-week vacation in an upscale Tokyo hotel room watching the summer Olympics and

205 The Futenma-Henoko Action Network, according to its website, is an international network founded by ‘teachers, students and others working in the educational field’ for the purposes of ‘closing Futenma Air Station, a US base perilously located in the middle of Ginowan City, Okinawa (pop. 91,363) and preventing the destruction of Okinawa’s cherished Henoko Bay to make way for a new US military air base’. It originally emerged, the description continues, in response to the 2004 OIU helicopter crash and the JDA’s construction of the offshore drilling platforms in the same year (‘About Us’, Futenma-Henoko Action Network, available online at: http://www.fhan.org/aboutus.html).
refused even to meet with Governor Inamine until he returned to work nor did he ever visit the crash site in Ginowan’.\(^{207}\) Using the narrative of the divide between the mainland and Okinawa, Johnson remarks: ‘Many commentators observed that had the crash occurred on the campus of Keio University in Tokyo – the Princeton of Japan – vacation or no, he would have been there in a flash’. More recently, in 2011, ODB DG Satoshi Tanaka was dismissed from his post when, after being asked in an unofficial meeting with reporters why the central government was delaying the release of an EIA report on the FRF, he allegedly replied: “‘Would you say, ‘I will rape you,’ before you rape someone?’”\(^{208}\)

By the same token, any notion of ‘everyday’ security as conceptualised by Okinawans is said to be dismissed out of hand as reactionary ‘Not In My Backyard’ (NIMBY)-ism rather than a serious, alternative interpretation that could and should be integrated into the national concept of ‘security’. One example of this, writes Yoshikawa, is the ongoing lawsuit by several Okinawan and international environmental groups (among other plaintiffs) against the DOD over the danger from the FRF’s construction to the endangered dugong. Although in 2008 the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California San Francisco Division ruled that the dugong is protected under the US’s National Historical Preservation Act, in 2014 the DOD unexpectedly [...] notified the Court and the plaintiffs that it had completed the “take into account” process [...] [and] concluded that the FRF would have no significant adverse impact on the dugong. This conclusion apparently enabled the Japanese government to start the construction phase of the Henoko plan. Prior to this notice, according to a press conference held by the plaintiffs in Japan on August 2014, the plaintiffs were not informed that the DoD was engaging in the “take into account” process. The DoD has not made public the related documents, or its translations and analysis of the Japanese EIA documents.

The cause of this refusal to ‘take into account’ alternatives to the Henoko plan, however – as has been argued by these actors – is less due to ‘strategic’ considerations and more to political hard-headedness. For instance, the CRS report admits that, in relation to the possibility of USM involvement in a Japan-China conflict over the Senkakus: ‘The potential role of U.S. Marines in defending and/or retaking uninhabited islands from a hypothetical invasion force is unclear’.\(^{210}\) OIU professor Manabu Sato argues that not only is such a ‘hypothetical invasion’ ‘improbable’ due to the depth of US-Chinese economic interdependence, but that even the suggestion of Marine

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\(^{207}\) Johnson 2006, p. 198.
\(^{210}\) Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 4.
involvement in such a conflict is made out of the service’s ‘self-preservation’ instinct. ‘Obama has declared that the United States will no longer engage in large-scale ground combat, and the Marine Corps, along with the Army, will be targeted for large reductions’, he says. ‘The Marine Corps, the superfluous ground combat force, wants to hang onto Okinawa, its vested interest, by all means and induce the Japanese government to expend more money for them. This is why they are flying the Ospreys all over Japan, pretending to be preparing for war in the Senkakus’. 211

Given all of this testimony that is contrary to that which has been given by USG and GOJ officials and ‘experts’ in explaining their support for the FRF plan, the policy continuity between administrations in both countries has been interpreted in this narrative as further evidence of ingrained discrimination against Okinawa. For example, notes O’Shea: ‘Given that the United States clearly refused to countenance the proposed relocation of Futenma, it is interesting to note that the Obama administration publicly agreed to “discuss” and even to “review” the issue—on the private understanding that the discussions would not change the outcome beyond the question of where to put the electricity lines’. 212 The 2013 deal between Abe and Nakaima is included as another example of this, as it is framed as yet another Okinawan official caving to ‘unprecedented pressure and inducements’ from Tokyo and Washington. 213 A 2014 Change.org petition to cancel the reclamation permission given by Nakaima, for instance, reads: ‘We the undersigned oppose the deal made at the end of 2013 between PM Abe and Governor of Okinawa Hirokazu Nakaima to deepen and extend the military colonization of Okinawa at the expense of the people and the environment [...] Governor Nakaima’s reclamation approval does not reflect the popular will of the people of Okinawa’. 214

The language of ‘betrayal’ often pops up in reference to this deal: American University professor Peter Kuznick and co-organiser of the petition, for instance, remarked in a Russia Today interview that Nakaima ‘betrayed his electoral pledge to the people of Okinawa’. 215 Lummis, in his article entitled ‘The Great Betrayal’, also writes that it is ‘an event that will be researched and debated for years by people who want to understand the mechanics of colonial domination’. 216 It thus follows that when Nago mayor Inamine was asked during an interview if he believed Onaga would prove a more ‘honest’ politician than his predecessor in the governor’s office, he framed

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212 O’Shea 2014, p. 449.


support for him (both the public’s and his own) as dependent upon this factor: ‘So if you ask will Mr. Onaga tone down his opposition, you have to realize that he has put everything on the line. I have faith that Mr. Onaga will not betray our expectations’.  

3.4. The anti-base movement: a plurality of voices

While it may appear that the proponents of the ABD are fairly unified in their discursive strategies – whether through using the symbolic language of ‘sacrifice’ and ‘betrayal’, placing the Japanese state in the role of historical and current antagonist in a sustained and discriminatory campaign against Okinawa for its own benefit, or denying the validity of the USG’s and GOJ’s arguments because they are formed without the inclusion of ‘lived knowledge’ – in fact, the actors and groups within the ABM who have contributed to the development and reproduction of this discourse vary widely. The plurality of voices has led some officials to express their doubts about the strength and efficacy of the ABM. ‘We are always wondering how many people are actually against the US bases and how many people at least privately approve the presence of the US bases’, one MOFA official tells me. ‘We still cannot understand, you know, the nature of these two groups’.  

Sunagawa, addressing this criticism, admits: ‘In Okinawa, we have a problem, but we don’t have a strategy for how to solve it’. Likewise, Yoshikawa speaks to the difficulty of recruiting new members not only to the environmental cause, but to the ABM in general, on account of challenges including: language barriers to interpreting scientific and legal documents; limited internet-based international outreach compared to other anti-base groups worldwide; reluctance on the part of sympathetic mainland Japanese scholars whose research, often funded by the GOJ, ‘cannot say much against, I think, the government’; difficulty in appealing to younger generations; and a tendency to become ‘consumed’ by the movement’s unique circumstances and strategies.  

The lack of any one strategy can possibly be explained by the split in end goals among the different strains of the ABM today. ‘Fourteen years ago when I first came to Okinawa, the ABM here was more focused on total base abolishment’, Lummis observes. ‘Now it’s no longer just an anti-base movement—it’s an anti-colonial movement. The [Okinawan] independence movement is also stronger now’. On the specific divisions in the movement, he identifies three: one, local

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217 Shingetsu News Agency, ‘An Interview with Nago Mayor Susumu Inamine’, 15 November 2014a, online video clip, YouTube. Available online at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaI4rL0sOHE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaI4rL0sOHE).
218 Anonymous 2014c.
219 Sunagawa 2014.
220 Yoshikawa 2014.
221 Lummis 2014. One of the prominent founding academics in the circle supporting independence (the Association of Comprehensive Studies for Independence of the Lew Chewans) he mentions is Masaki Tomochi, an associate professor of economics at OIU. In an interview with Eleni Psaltis of ABC News Radio Australia, Tomochi explains his motivation for creating the group: ‘Because we have had too much of military bases for a long time, and Okinawan people are thinking that we don’t want to be sacrificed by Japan and the US
government officials who oppose the bases (‘but only with regards to Henoko and the Futenma relocation’); two, the ‘traditional’ peace or anti-USJ-ST movement against all bases, including SDF bases (also known as kokugai isetzu, or ‘moving all bases outside of Japan’); and three, a number of women’s groups222 who favour the relocation of Futenma to mainland Japan, but do not believe it is ‘realistic’ to abolish the USJ-ST.223 In addition to these ‘women’s groups’, there are also environment-centred organisations224 and other, smaller groups consisting of peace guides225, student activists both in Okinawa and mainland Japan226, and concerned citizens’ groups.227

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222 Arising primarily in the wake of the 1995 rape incident and the Fourth Beijing International Women’s NGO Forum (in which 21 Okinawan women participated), the women’s ABM in Okinawa has specifically focused on the impact of militarisation on women’s lives, supported the revision of SOFA and Japanese law towards greater protection for victims of military and sexual violence, and providing trauma support for said victims. Prominent groups include, but are not limited to: Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence; Kamadugawa no Tsudoi, a Ginowan-based group; the Cooking Pots Gathering, also in Ginowan; and the Dugongs on the northwest coast (for more details on these, see: Akibayashi 2010; Cockburn 2012; Kirk 2008; Shimabuku 2011; Caroline Spencer, ‘Meeting of the Dugongs and the Cooking Pots: Anti-military Base Citizens’ Groups on Okinawa’, Japanese Studies 23:2 [2003], pp. 125-140.)

223 Lummis 2014.

224 Specifically, environmental groups that formed in the wake of the SACO negotiations in 1996 are concerned not only with preserving the environment and wildlife (including dugongs, coral reefs, and other unique species of fish and seals) in or around Oura Bay in Henoko, but also in the nearby Yanbaru forest. These groups include: Nago City, Kushi District’s Futami Ten Ward Committee (Juku no kai), which has employed the dugong as an organising symbol; the aforementioned Save the Dugong Campaign Center, which has previously successfully campaigned at international conferences, such as the International World Conservation Union, to adopt recommendations urging the US and Japanese governments to consider the threat the FRF may pose to the dugongs’ survival; the Conference Opposing Heliport Construction, whose volunteers keep watch over coral reef areas; No Helipad Takae, a Takae-based group protesting the construction of helipads in Yanbaru forest (which it argues would threaten the endangered Yanbaru Kuina [Okinawa rail] and Noguchi Gera [Okinawan woodpecker]); and a number of prominent individual activists, including Takuma Higashionna of Dugong Network Okinawa and Natsume Taira, both of whom have been featured in documentaries on the subject of the Henoko sit-in protest (for more details on these groups and individuals, see: Cockburn 2012, Development with Destruction. BBC World Earth Report. BBC, 2005; Spencer 2003; Jonathan Soble, ‘Dugong take on defence department’, Financial Times, 28 May 2010, available online at: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e443c5fe-6a7c-11df-b282-00144feab49a.html; Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting 2006; Voice of Takae [English] [Okinawa, Japan: No Helipad Takae, 2013], available online at: http://nohelipadtakae.org/files/VOT-english2013Oct.pdf).

225 Trained by the Okinawa Peace Network, these peace guides, says Suzuki, ‘facilitate the two processes essential for experiential education and social movement participation: community-building and consciousness-raising’; furthermore, she argues, tourism to Okinawa itself ‘is an arena of struggle over not only the interpretation of the past war but also the vision of the future peace’, and ‘an act of antiwar pacifism against the authoritarian government’ (2012, pp. 18-19).

226 I encountered a few of these groups during my time on fieldwork in Tokyo and Okinawa, including Waseda University’s Anti-War Action group and the Research Group of Okinawa Relations Issues at University of the Ryukyus. During my time there, they held numerous demonstrations and talks on campus, often distributing fliers with titles that included: “‘Urgent Lecture”: Okinawa • Question about the construction of new US base in Henoko and Japan National Militarisation!’; “Approval” consensus of Prime Minister Abe and Mayor
Figure 6: Examples of protesters’ use of symbolic spaces, including the site of the 2004 OKIU crash (left) and on the gates of Camp Schwab in Henoko (right)

On a larger scale, the Okinawa Citizens Peace Network, with 33 ‘affiliated organisations and individual members’, likewise plays host to activists across a full spectrum of issues from anti-militarism to human rights to world peace—a confluence of interests which is called *kakushin kyotou* in Japanese, or ‘co-struggle among progressive forces’.\(^228\) Thus, while there are some basic disagreements between these various groups about whether to move the bases out of Okinawa only, out of Japan entirely, or to go even further and demand the abolishment of the USJ-ST, they have developed a ‘keener sense of civic life in Okinawa’\(^229\) through their activities. They have likewise joined, to some extent, a transnational ABM which ‘offer[s] Okinawan NGOs a broader international platform to voice their concerns, but also provide a forum for activists to exchange ideas about media strategies and campaign tactics’ with their counterparts internationally (such as in the ROK and Guam).\(^230\)

The tactics which these groups and activists have employed – including everything from sit-ins to petitions to lawsuits to human barricades – have generally adhered to common principles of nonviolent protest, with ‘social legitimacy’ provided by the presence of elderly residents in the

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Nakaima is the signal gun for strengthening US bases in Okinawa and Japan!; and ‘Stop US new military base construction in Henoko, Okinawa! Against expanding Osprey drills in Japan!’.

\(^227\) These have included: No Fly Zone and its ‘sister’ organisation, the Futenma-Henoko Action Network, formed by students and staff from OIU following the 2004 helicopter crash; the Association to Protect Life, made up of residents from Toyohara and Henoko and the first citizen protest group in Henoko; and the Committee to Oppose the Heliport Construction and Demand the Democratisation of Nago City Government (for more details see: Spencer 2003; Peter Simpson, *Whither the English language press in Okinawa?* [Okinawa, Japan: Okinawa International University, 2007]).

\(^228\) Cockburn notes that this expression ‘was coined in the late 1960s when the Okinawan branches of the progressive parties and their labour unions formed a *Kakushin Kyotou Kaigi* (the Conference for Co-struggle of Progressives) in the movement to end the American occupation’ (2012, pp. 163-164).

\(^229\) Souillac 2009, p. 5.

\(^230\) Cooley 2014, p. 4.
What to do with base land when it is reduced or returned to the prefecture, however, can be an equally tricky question—especially when the quality of those lands is suspect. The documentary *Defoliated Island: Agent Orange, Okinawa and The Vietnam War*, for example, showcases one instance in 2002 during which 187 barrels of an ‘unidentified substance’ were dug up in Chatan on returned base land; the USM ‘insisted the barrels did not belong to them, so the Japanese government initially postponed making a decision on how to proceed. Therefore, the Chatan municipal government itself had to cover the cost of collecting the barrels’.  

Figure 7: Elderly residents protesting the relocation are heavily featured in anti-base documentaries, such as in 2006’s *Umi ni suwaru: Henoko 600 nicho no tatakai* (Sit-in on the sea: The 600 days’ anti-base struggle in Okinawa, Henoko).  

In the case of Chatan, the land was developed into the Mihama American Village, a large commercial shopping and entertainment complex. This type of development, however, is sometimes framed as problematic in and of itself. Linda Isako Angst, for example, argues that redevelopment plans for these returned lands often do not incorporate within them a concerted enough effort to protect small business owners, as ‘[m]uch of the development that has already occurred in Okinawa is by large, well-known Japanese corporations’. Cynthia Enloe also warns that tourism, while ‘being touted as an alternative to the one-commodity dependency inherited from colonial rule’, can in fact lead to the undermining of Okinawan self-governance: ‘many government officials have used the expansion of tourism to secure the political loyalty of local elites. For instance, certain hotel licenses may win a politician more strategic allies today than a mere civil-service appointment’.  

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232 Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting 2012.  
233 Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting 2006.  
‘It’s really about the basic identity—what kind of Okinawa do we want to create?’ Penn concludes. ‘Is it going to be like the shopping centre with all of the, you know, neon lights, or do we wanna make a giant park, or do we want industry there—what are we trying to do? And this is an internal Okinawan debate which is gonna go on for a long time’.236

4. Discursive intersections and divisions

Cancellation is a big blow to the pride of both the US and Japanese governments. It’s a defeat against the people’s will, the people’s resistance. They won’t want that to happen. They don’t want such a precedent, right?

- Satoko Norimatsu, peace activist

This question posed by Penn – ‘what kind of Okinawa do we want to create?’ – lies at the crux of the ABM, regardless of its internal divisions over strategy and end goals. All parties promulgating the ABD agree at the very least, for example, that the USM presence should be reduced significantly. Even this aim, however, conflicts with current government policy, which still predominantly locates the USM presence in Okinawa prefecture. ‘[M]oving the Futenma base, although the centerpiece of recent Japanese-American promises to diminish the harassment of civilians, is largely a sop’, writes Feifer. ‘Kadena Air Base, which is mere miles away […] is three times larger’.237 Sato, however, disagrees, remarking (along the lines of Sunagawa’s opening comment) that ‘if the [FRF] is built and if the land it currently occupies is returned, then the Marine Corps doesn’t need to be here. The land of the Marines represents the majority of facilities in Okinawa, and its presence will be majorly reduced. That’s why it’s at the centre of the [ABM]’s strategy’.238 Okinawan House of Councillors representative, well-known anti-base activist, and pacifist Shokichi Kina adds to this framing of the symbolic importance of Futenma’s return: “‘The Futenma issue is a real test for Japan. It’s just one base, but could be a giant leap for us’”.239

This is not to say, though, that there are no points of agreement between the ABM, the USG, and the GOJ. As has been demonstrated in earlier chapters, the language of the bases as a ‘burden’ on Okinawa is now commonplace even within the PBD, and there have been many suggestions made and steps taken by both governments to reduce this ‘burden’. These include: improving person-to-person interactions between US forces and Okinawans in base communities; compensating victims of military crimes or accidents more promptly and with greater transparency in the legal process;

236 Penn 2014.
238 Manabu Sato, personal interview, 23 April 2014, Okinawa International University, Ginowan, Okinawa, Japan.
and helping develop Okinawa’s native industries through greater financial investment. Moreover, in recent years, the USG and GOJ have discussed the possibility of including more provisions in the SOFA to protect the local environment (see section 4.2 for details)—a development which is not likely to have occurred without sustained efforts by environmental groups in Okinawa.

There are, nonetheless, deep and lasting divisions between the ABD and PBD that go beyond simply the question of whether or not US forces should be concentrated in Okinawa (or there at all), and these have kept the two sides apart on the Futenma issue for nearly twenty years. The ABM’s framing of post-war Okinawan history and the antagonising roles played by the USG and GOJ represents one of these divisions, as does the development of a separate Okinawan identity from that of mainland Japan which encompasses within it a unique culture, language, and societal ethos. This ethos—known as nuchi du takara, or ‘life is precious’—serves as a fundamental moral principle around which the ABM has organised itself in Okinawa, and provides the impetus for its heavy environmental activism (the phrase itself, being in the local Ryukyuan dialect, reaffirming the story of Okinawans’ uniqueness and the ABM’s determination to preserve this in all its aspects). At the same time that it has been a unifying tool for activists, however, it has also reproduced a clear separation between them, mainland Japanese citizens, and the USG and GOJ—and this has sometimes reinforced and deepened mistrust towards those groups.

4.1. Intersection: communicating about history

While activists may argue over the importance of Futenma relative to the larger goal of removing all bases from Okinawa (or from Japan itself), it would be difficult to dismiss the political impact that the ABD has had with relation to this issue. ‘It’s not a choice between law and order and national security, they’re both important’, comments Patrick Cronin. ‘The real problem we have on Futenma is so important because we have to have politically sustainable bases’. The need to have ‘politically sustainable’ bases is one that has been articulated repeatedly with the most recent ‘pivot’ to Asia, although, as was discussed in earlier chapters, it has largely been used as a euphemistic device meaning only an improvement in civil-military and inter-state relations, as opposed to a reduction in force presence size and scope.

Nonetheless, there have been tangible improvements. The 2002 Defense Policy Review Initiative launched by the USG and GOJ, for example, initiated an Aviation Training Relocation programme which ‘reduces noise pollution for local residents by having U.S. aircraft conduct training in Guam, away from crowded base areas’ and the USM ‘has increased access for local fisherman to the ocean training area known as “Hotel/Hotel” off the eastern coast of Okinawa’. The military has

also imposed curfews in Okinawa, with a recent one requiring service members to remain on-base between 1 and 5 a.m. and off-base drinking likewise restricted from midnight and 5 a.m. Moreover, before individual servicemen are allowed off-base and granted these ‘liberties’, they must ‘undergo sexual assault response and Japanese cultural training’.

Kurayoshi Takara has also urged, both prior to and in his current position as Okinawa’s vice governor, that the Okinawan people and OPG should have a vision for Okinawa in regional and international affairs which goes beyond the ‘victimisation’ narrative. ‘Okinawa needs to develop its own vision for the future of Japan’s security rather than constantly criticizing the government regarding military bases’, he argues, continuing: ‘Based on this vision, Okinawa should state which bases located on the islands are excessively and unnecessarily burdensome, and it should negotiate to eliminate them’. He expanded on his critique of the ‘victim’ language in an interview with the *Asahi Shimbun*: ‘once you talk like that, discussion and dialogue will stop. Those accused of discrimination will shut up and there will be an emotional gap’. Bandow adds that the historical narrative raised in the ABD – using terms like the ‘Typhoon of Steel’, or comparing Okinawa to a ‘sacrificial stone’ – ‘just doesn’t resonate’ with Tokyo policymakers, let alone USG officials.

Considering the financial difficulties facing even the implementation of the current relocation plan, however, making this narrative ‘resonate’ may not be as effective a strategy as is simply discussing (cheaper) alternatives. In 2011, for instance, then-US representatives Barney Frank (D-MA) and Ron Paul (R-TX) formed the Sustainable Defense Task Force and, with military experts, ‘closely scrutinized military spending and concluded that it was possible to cut 1 trillion dollars in spending over the next 10 years by reducing US Forces stationed in Europe and Asia’. Frank went on to publicly comment on MSNBC: “Most people, I think, that I talk to, thought the Marines left Okinawa when John Wayne died [...] It’s unclear to me what they’re doing there”. Ron Paul, discussing the FRF and ‘rebalance’ in an online interview, put the matter in even more succinct terms: ‘How in the world would the average American taxpayer get any benefit from pursuing this

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245 Bandow 2014.

246 Yonamine 2011.

and insisting we change these bases around? Instead of the very simple solution: just bring the troops home’. 248

4.2. Intersection: taking responsibility for the environment?

If there has been some degree of resonance between the USG, GOJ, and Okinawa outside of a basic understanding of the historical or financial ‘burden’ of the bases, it has been on the issue of the environment. This is evident in the success of the dugong lawsuit in the US court system and of Okinawan environmental groups’ lobbying efforts at international organisations such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)249, but also, to some extent, at the policy level. In 2014, the USG and GOJ agreed on a new environmental accord to supplement the existing SOFA – called the ‘Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship Relating to the U.S. Armed Forces in Japan’ – which ‘will address the establishment and maintenance of procedures for Japanese authorities to have appropriate access to U.S. facilities and areas in two cases—when an environmental or spill incident occurs and when field surveys are needed, including cultural assets surveys, for the return of land to Japanese control.’250 USG officials have also privately expressed their willingness to work with the GOJ on this issue over the years. For example, Campbell and Deputy Assistant SecDef Michael Schiffer, in an October 2009 meeting with Parliamentary VM Akihisa Nagashima and a team of MOD and MOFA officials on the history of the FRF negotiations, said that ‘the U.S. Government, like the Japanese government, cared about environmental stewardship and energy efficiency’, and ‘offered to take back to the U.S. Government the Japanese recommendation to work together on environmental issues, an area in which "much good could be achieved"’.251

Activists and researchers have nonetheless suggested further reforms to environment-related policies, including: modifying Japan’s EIA law ‘to require disclosure according to the information access law so that the EIA law covers secret plans and proposals, clarify that each EIA must address how the proposal complies with or exceeds standards (e.g. noise standards), and how it may reduce local community access to protected cultural properties (e.g. natural monuments)’; revising the SOFA further to require the USM to provide land use data ‘a minimum of five years and

251 Roos 2009b.
ideally ten years prior to return’; and ‘[f]or the Environment Subcommittee of the US-Japan Joint Committee to make clear what land use-related records are held by which US military units and in what form’.252

As the law(s) currently stands, however, there are many doubts as to the central government’s ability to ensure even basic environmental protection standards with regards to not only the FRF, but also the eventual return of Futenma to Ginowan. Weston A. Watts Jr., a colleague of Sunagawa, comments: ‘a lot of times they’ll redevelop parts of the base, and some parts of the base they cannot return to civilian use for a long time because of unexploded ordnance or something like that. Or the contamination is too much—it’s too expensive to deal with, so some places on a base may be blocked off’.253 ‘They [central government officials] will say that environmental issues are very important, but do you wanna save the dugongs, or do you wanna save the nation? That’s the idea’, Yoshikawa remarks.254 This inflexibility in terms of how ‘security’ is defined at diplomatic and defence sites at the expense of environmental factors is evident in a December 2009 meeting between Schiffer and Japanese officials from the FRF Working Group, during which he told them: ‘Japan must first commit to implementing the realignment roadmap before the United States would be willing to discuss any details on an environmental agreement’.255

4.3. Division: the ‘heart’ of Okinawa

It is clear, then, that even in the few areas where actors on either side of the base issue can be reconciled, deep doubts and resistance remain and are actively reproduced. The consequence of this is that in the areas where there are already disagreements or differences in interpretation, any ‘middle ground’ is difficult to find. This is because, says Iha, ‘at the very core, the government of Japan keeps saying that this Henoko proposal is to reduce the burden of Okinawa. They keep saying that. But to Okinawans, any new base does not mean reducing the burden at all’.256 This disconnect between activists and the governments on the actual meaning of ‘reducing the burden’ arises not only from the well-honed narrative by the former of a unique, pacifist ‘heart’ of Okinawa which rejects the presence of bases, but also from the way in which the bases are framed as a tool for

253 Weston A. Watts, Jr., personal interview, 25 April 2014, Okinawa International University, Ginowan, Okinawa, Japan.
254 Yoshikawa 2014. Jonathan Soble, reporting for the Financial Times on the dugong case, cites an anonymous US lawyer as concurring that the lawsuit’s impact is uncertain: ‘“The law isn’t intended to stop any project that affects a historic property. Most projects eventually go ahead after some kind of adjustment”’ (2010).
256 Iha 2014.
violence in the ABD. On the first point, the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum’s ‘Basic Concept’ from 1975 explains:

Under the most desperate and unimaginable circumstances, Okinawans directly experienced the absurdity of war and atrocities it inevitably brings about. This war experience is at the very core of what is popularly called the “Okinawan Heart,” a resilient, yet strong attitude to life that Okinawan people developed as they struggled against the pressures of many years of U.S. military control. The “Okinawan Heart” is a human response that respects personal dignity above all else, rejects any acts related to war, and truly cherishes culture, which is a supreme expression of humanity.

Employing this concept in explaining her opposition to Futenma’s relocation to Henoko or even to other Japanese prefectures, activist Taeko Oshiro remarks: ‘Because we know the human cost of it, we cannot agree to relocate the base outside of Okinawa in, say, Osaka. We can never agree to it. This is the “Heart of Okinawa”’. Another prominent activist, Natsume Taira, commented in a 2005 BBC World Report documentary on the FRF, Development with Destruction: ‘The post World War 2 history of Okinawa has seen the US use this island as a front base to attack from, during the Korean war, the Vietnam war, the Gulf was, the Afghani war and now the Iraqi war. We have been forced to be an aggressor in these wars. If this base is built, the environment will be destroyed and we will become more of an aggressor to the world. I do not wish to stand on the side of the killers’. Zenyu Shimabuku, an ex-landowner in Okinawa whose land was confiscated by the USM in the post-war period, echoes Taira and others: ‘In war people die, that’s obvious. I feel a great pain in my heart because our lands are being used to kill people. If a cook asks you for a knife, there’s nothing wrong in lending it to him. But if he asks you for a knife to murder someone, lending it to him would make you a murderer’.

The ‘heart of Okinawa’ is closely tied to another native expression: nuchi du takara, or ‘life is precious’. This phrase is mentioned repeatedly not only by actors involved in the ABM, but also in official prefectural documents, museum displays, and news media—thus appealing to as wide an audience both inside and outside of Japan as is possible with the carefully-curated framing of Okinawans as ‘model’ peace-loving people deserving of international support. One prominent example is the Change.org petition, which, with 13,549 signatures (many of which come from prominent international peace and anti-militarist activists and scholars such as Noam Chomsky, Michael Moore, Oliver Stone, and Enloe), reads in part:

258 2010 Okinawa 2010.
259 BBC 2005.
260 Effendemfilm 2010.
261 Gerson 2014.
Not unlike the 20th century U.S. Civil Rights struggle, Okinawans have non-violently pressed for the end to their military colonization. They tried to stop live-fire military drills that threatened their lives by entering the exercise zone in protest; they formed human chains around military bases to express their opposition; and about a hundred thousand people, one tenth of the population have turned out periodically for massive demonstrations. Octogenarians initiated the campaign to prevent the construction of the Henoko base with a sit-in that has been continuing for years.

This kind of statement has, no doubt, been influenced by the language used by the OPG over the years in important tourism sites around the main island. One of these, again, is the Prefectural Memorial Museum, the ‘Epilogue’ exhibition room of which contains the following poem:

\begin{quote}
\begin{lstlisting}
Whenever we look at the truth of the Battle of Okinawa we think there is nothing as brutal, nothing as dishonorable as war. In the face of this traumatic experience no one will be able to speak out for on idealize war. To be sure it is human beings who start wars. But more than that isn't it we human beings who must also prevent wars? Since the end of the war, we have abhorred all wars, long yearning to create a peaceful island. in our unwavering devotion to this principle, we have paid a heavy price.
\end{lstlisting}
\end{quote}

In addition, the official English language tourist pamphlet advertising the Okinawa Peace Hall, located on the grounds of the Memorial Park, describes the impetus behind its construction:

\begin{quote}
With the Okinawan people's intense wish of “No more war”, the Okinawa Peace Hall was opened on Oct. 1, 1978. The Hall stands on the Hill of Mabuni where history bears testimony to the futility of war and the value of peace. The Hall has a regular polygonal roof with septilateral pyramid, which expresses seven seas and the shape of hands joined in prayers. Transcending race, nationality, ideology and religion, the Hall has been sending peace messages all over the world.
\end{quote}

The Himeyuri Peace Museum, another popular tourist site which was built on the remains of an all-girls high school whose students served as nurses for the Japanese Imperial Army during the Battle (and many of whom died during it), similarly urges visitors in its official pamphlet to consider the horrors of war and reaffirms the historical Okinawan peace narrative:

\begin{quote}
\begin{lstlisting}
\end{lstlisting}
\end{quote}

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\begin{enumerate}
\item<sup>262</sup> ‘Cancel the plan to build a new U.S. military base in Henoko, Okinawa, and return Futenma to the people of Okinawa immediately’ 2014.
\item<sup>263</sup> Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum 2014.
\item<sup>264</sup> The Okinawa Peace Hall (Okinawa, Japan: The Okinawa Foundation, 2014).
\end{enumerate}
About 40 years have passed since the Battle of Okinawa, and yet the indescribable tragedy we experienced and witnessed on the battlefield still haunts our memory. We will never forget the horror of the pre-World War II militaristic education, which drove us to the battlefield with no skepticism but rather with a willingness to serve. We strongly feel that we must continue to tell our stories of a war filled with insanity and brutality now that the post-war generations, who have no idea what war is, have formed the majority of our population and that the peace-threatening signs in both domestic and international politics cannot be ignored.

This anti-militarist frame is also used in the OPG’s official informational booklet *US Military Base Issues in Okinawa* under the bullet point ‘Our Vision’, which reads: ‘Establish the prefecture as a hub of exchange by taking advantage of our geographical location, to bridge people, goods, and information between mainland Japan and other Asian nations. It is our desire to actively promote international contributions and do our part for peace and advancement of the Asia-Pacific region’. Okinawans could accomplish this vision, suggests Takara, by hosting a regular ‘Okinawa Forum on History Issues’ with other Asian countries (including the ROK and China) and by promoting peaceful resolution of regional problems, such as the complicated relationship between China and Taiwan. Daqing Yang agrees: ‘Okinawans have offered a new way of commemorating all who died in the war regardless of nationality, thus transcending the use of memory to bolster national identity. Arguably, there is no better place to hold historical dialogue to overcome nationalism and make peace than Okinawa’.

What Yang is referring to is the ‘Cornerstone of Peace’, a monument sitting at the centre of the Prefectural Museum and Peace Memorial Park, which ‘was erected to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War and the Battle of Okinawa to convey the "spirit of peace" which has developed through Okinawa's history and culture to the people of Japan and throughout the world’, according to the OPG’s website (see Figure 8 below). Installed by Ota during his

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governorship, this ‘cornerstone of peace’ – again inverting the meaning of the word ‘cornerstone’ from its usage by alliance ‘managers’ – is surrounded by a memorial site inscribed with ‘names of all those who lost their lives in the Battle of Okinawa, regardless of their nationality or military or civilian status [...] as a prayer for world peace’. ‘The purpose or ‘concept’ of the monument, continues the website, is thus three-fold: 1) to ‘Remember Those Los[t] in the War, Pray for Peace’; 2) to ‘Pass on the Lessons of War’; and 3) as ‘A Place for Meditation and Learning’. The collection of all these names, remarks Julia Yonetani, was not an insignificant feat, for it marked the first time a large-scale investigation of the war dead had been carried out on the island. This was in line with Ota's perception of the "Okinawan heart," which in desiring peace challenged the Imperial Japanese Army, the United States military presence in Okinawa, and the notion of "national security" as in any way providing protection for the people.

In this way, the monument not only reproduces the narrative of the unique ‘heart of Okinawa’ which disinclines it from involvement in military activities, but also reaffirms the focus within the ABD on individuals as the referent object of security.

4.4. Division: self-determination and deep mistrust

In order to achieve this status as a kind of independent peace broker in Asia, however, many proponents of the ABD argue that Okinawa must have a greater degree of self-determination. Arakawa, in fact, calls this ‘the fundamental premise that must undergird any thoughtful consideration of issues pertaining to the future of Okinawa’.

However, there is little interest in outright independence from Japan; for instance, the 2015 Ryukyu Shimpo poll found that only 8.4%

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271 Arakawa 2013.
of respondents answered in favour of this option for ‘Okinawa’s future’. Instead, the basis for greater self-determination, say activists as well as prefectural officials, lies in economic independence. ‘Okinawa’s present economy is not as dependent on base-related revenue as before’, an official prefectural document states. ‘The return of bases located in the central and southern regions of Okinawa Island has resulted in positive economic effects of approximately 10 - 200 times in comparison to pre-return, and has had great impacts on the prefecture’s economy and employment’.273

Having an independent base of revenue apart from central government subsidies and the USM presence, however, might not be enough. ‘It’s the [John] Foster Dulles perspective274: Okinawan sovereignty undermines the state’, Simpson says. ‘The US and Japanese governments can’t be seen as giving in, which is one reason which explains the Futenma deadlock’.275 An elderly Ginowan resident quoted by Dietz, Yoshio Nakashima, also expresses resignation about the possibility of the US forces leaving at all. “Will the bases go? No, I don’t think so. People protest and protest. I myself protested for years, for a very long time, but I realized I could spend the rest of my life protesting and the bases would probably still be here”.

Moreover, even if both governments did make more concessions in terms of base land to the prefecture, there is still the possibility that US forces may simply be replaced by the SDF—a suggestion that provoked mixed reactions from my interviewees. ‘The US has been there for 70 years, and Okinawans want to be free from the US military occupation’, says Norimatsu. ‘So now I think there is a sense that, oh, maybe the Japanese military will be a little better than the US military’.277 OIU professor Tetsumi Takara disagrees, arguing that the SDF would be no better because they are ‘an extension of central government power in Okinawa. The US government doesn’t have that kind of power by comparison’.278 Ota concurs, adding that the SDF ‘are supposed to protect US military bases, so if people were protesting, something terrible might happen reminiscent of the Battle of Okinawa with Japanese troops killing Okinawans’.279

272 Ryukyu Shimpo 2015.
274 Simpson is referring, here, to Dulles’s 1951 speech at the San Francisco Peace Conference in which he outlined the terms of the US-Japan peace treaty, Article 3 of which states that Japan would ‘retain residual sovereignty, while making it possible for these islands to be brought into the United Nations trusteeship system, with the United States as administering authority’ (‘John Foster Dulles’s Speech at the San Francisco Peace Conference’, ‘The World and Japan’ Database Project, Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations, Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo, 5 September 1951, available online at: http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPUS/19510905.S1E.html).
275 Simpson 2014.
276 Dietz 2010, p. 192.
277 Norimatsu 2014.
278 Tetsumi Takara, personal interview, 14 April 2014, University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa, Japan.
279 Ota 2014.
On the other hand, many activists, former policymakers, and scholars question how far the USG and GOJ are willing to push Okinawans on the base issue, particularly on Futenma. “I don’t think the Henoko plan will happen because the people of Okinawa are already unified in saying ‘no,’ and it won’t be easy for the LDP to implement it no matter how hard it tries”’, Hatoyama remarked in a 2013 interview.280 Nakaima also previously argued that ‘[i]f the current plan to construct the FRF in Henoko were to be carried out against the will of the local citizens, possibilities of an irreparable rift cannot be denied in the relationship between the people of Okinawa and the U.S. Forces in the prefecture’.281

This ‘irreparable rift’, as Nakaima put it, arises from the perception of the FRF’s construction constituting a denial of Okinawa’s popular will—and, more broadly, Japanese democracy itself. Watts and Sunagawa, for example, argue that ‘[f]orcing Okinawa to accept a proposal that has broadly unacceptable impacts undermines the purpose of the FRF agreement, as well as Japan’s democratic legal system’.282 Richard Samuels, quoted by Yonamine, similarly remarks: “Germany sometimes says no, and France always does; this does not end the alliance. This is an honest and healthy relationship. The US always demands and Japan always says ‘yes’. The US should realise that Japan has lost its sense of self-governance”’.283 Nonetheless, note Mochizuki and O’Hanlon, ‘Japanese localities cannot be easily overridden by higher authorities even on matters of national security’, with the 2014 CRS report likewise stating that ‘[t]he ability and will of the Okinawan Prefectural Police to thwart determined anti-base protesters and enable smooth construction could be severely tested’.284

Within Okinawa, the discursive space created through the ABD has allowed for local policymakers, business leaders, and residents of many political and ideological stripes to unite under what is now called the ‘All-Okinawa’ movement. ‘I have become a candidate in this gubernatorial election with the people’s All-Okinawa power behind me’, said current Okinawan governor Onaga during a campaign rally in November 2014. ‘I want to smash down the high US-Japan wall that surrounds the policy on military bases’.285 Onaga, the former mayor of Naha, was even endorsed by the JCP despite having previously been one of the city’s more well-known conservative council members. Explaining their support, lawmaker Seiken Akamine stated: ‘We are the Communist Party

280 Ito 2013.
281 Nakaima 2013, p. 55.
283 Yonamine 2011.
284 Mochizuki and O’Hanlon 2013, p. 8; Chanlett-Avery and Rinehart 2014, p. 3.
and Mr. Onaga is from the LDP. We have different views of the US-Japan security treaty. But we both firmly oppose construction of the Henoko base. So on that point we can work together.’

In terms of the performativity of the discourse in its impact on actual government policy, scholars and activists with whom I spoke presented an optimistic assessment. ‘What are the protesters achieving? They’re lowering morale’, argues Lummis. ‘I think the most important thing is that the Nago mayor and the Nago people continue to say “no”., adds Sunagawa. ‘The mayor of Nago has received a lot of messages from people from all over the world, so it’s quite important for the local community to show their opposition. This is the starting point, and then we need to do whatever we can do’. Rabson echoes her, suggesting that those sympathetic to the ABM should ‘question the military presence in Okinawa. And to support the people who are opposing it’. On the question of how ‘successful’ the ABD and the struggle over the FRF has been up to this point, Sasaki-Uemura refers back to the anti-USJ-ST (Anpo in Japanese) struggle of the 1960s, arguing that ‘activists are more comfortable with unintended consequences than the Japanese government’:

> The anti-Anpo protests in the 1960s were not really about Anpo—they were about how the Japanese state treats its citizens and about who it was trying to exclude from the policymaking process. For example, even though the Anpo protests were considered a ‘failure’ and the effects were not on the alleged target, did they change society? Did they change the people involved in the protests? Did they change the way the Japanese government handles protests against it? The answer is yes to all of these, and all the protests that happened after those wouldn’t have been possible without it.

Conclusion

What is clear from this wide-ranging and ongoing discussion on the ‘Okinawa base problem’, as well as from my interviews with prominent scholars and activists who have contributed to this discussion, is that the ‘success’ of a discourse – in this case, its ability to create new or expand existing sites of exchange wherein it can be meaningfully interpreted as an impactful ‘argument’ rather than an anecdotal ‘opinion’ or purely emotional ‘sentiment’ – relies upon its active

286 Shingetsu News Agency 2014b.
287 Lummis 2014.
288 Sunagawa 2014.
289 Rabson 2014.
290 Sasaki-Uemura 2014.
291 As discussed in Chapter 2, what separates ‘argument’ from ‘opinion’ or ‘sentiment’ is the widespread perception of the former’s legitimacy—this ‘legitimacy’ being based on the notion that the speaker of said argument can ‘claim authoritative knowledge or moral authority (or both) [and] should be more able to convince a skeptical public audience than actors who are suspected of promoting “private” interests’ (Risse 2000, p. 22). With regards to government officials who claim this knowledge and authority, furthermore, Hansen notes that making arguments within discourses about ‘security’ ‘bestows a particular legitimacy on those handing the policies in question’, as ‘[s]ecurity questions allow governments and political leaders to “break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by”’ (2006, p. 35).
reproduction by actors who support its internal narratives and who intend, by this reproduction, to ensure that its effects are felt in the public and policy spheres. While these effects may not be felt immediately or perceived as having been ‘successful’ by central government actors, without this kind of verbal or written commitment, the narratives and smaller stories of the ABD, for example, would not be translated nor transmitted to as wide of an audience as they have been in recent decades, nor would these voices of the everyday have been heard as clearly as they are now.

From fishermen in Nago to landowners in Ginowan, these communicators of the ABD have helped to reveal to an international audience a much richer public sphere and civil society not only in Okinawa, but also in Japan, than was previously thought to exist. Therefore, it is not surprising to see so many academics who study Japan-US-Okinawa relations declare themselves explicitly in favour of the ABM and faithfully adhere to its main principles (nuchi du takara) and foundational myths (the Ryukyu Kingdom as a ‘bridge’ in Asia; Okinawa as the ‘sacrificial stone’) while either framing the USG and GOJ as acting in bad faith or, at the very least, creating the impression that they think so little of Okinawans to the point that the current Futenma stalemate exists as a result of pure status quo-ism.

This ‘faithfulness’ to these principles and myths, however, is not without consequence. In doing so, proponents of the ABD ignore, underplay, cynically evaluate, or dismiss outright those Okinawans who are pro-relocation, pro-base, or apathetic in much the same way as actors in diplomatic and defence sites have done to the ABM over the years. When they are mentioned (if at all), they are usually framed as having ties to or being a part of the local business community which would profit from the construction of the FRF, or of otherwise being financially incentivised by the central government in Tokyo to accept it, as in the case of Nakaima. Given this framing, the arguments posed by these businesspeople and local officials in favour of the relocation – such as former mayor of Nago Yoshikazu Shimabukuro’s belief that relocating Futenma to Henoko would ‘eliminate the sense of stagnation prevailing in Nago’ as well as help in the development of the city292 – are regarded as evidence of compromised principles, and thus dismissed.

In focusing (when they do) on pro-base individuals with more ‘influence’ on the policymaking process, they also exclude (and therefore silence) those who share their views on the level of the ‘everyday’. These include the Okinawan residents I met who gather on a regular basis, in collaboration with USMC servicemembers, to do a ‘fence cleaning’ of Futenma which involves taking down banners, ribbons, and tape put up by anti-base activists over the course of a week (see Figure 9 below).

Local landowners outside of those in the one-tsubo movement have also not necessarily been opposed to the continued USM presence, as Maher wrote in 2008:

We spoke with the presidents of the Federation of Okinawa Prefecture Military Land Owners’ Associations, Chatan Town Military Land Owners’ Association (hosting 40.1% of Camp Foster), Kitanakagusuku Village Military Land Owners’ Association (hosting 32.8% of Camp Foster, including Awase Golf Course), Ginowan City Military Land Owners’ Association (hosting 24.4%), and Okinawa City Military Land Owners’ Association (hosting 2.7%). These associations represent the private owners of land on which Camp Foster is located, and who accept rent from the national government [...] The associations’ leaders unanimously agreed that, for now, the majority of Camp Foster’s landlords want to continue receiving rents from the Japanese government, and do not want their land returned to them. The original land owners are elderly, and some receive a large enough income stream from their rent to live on. They have no interest in stopping that stream.

Where these voices have been mentioned, they are characterised as having been ‘militarised’ in the way Enloe and others have described to the extent that they can no longer ‘see’ the issue ‘correctly’, or that, in the case of younger generations of Okinawans who either support or are apathetic to the USM presence, they ‘are proud and comfortable of being Japanese, and it makes them “susceptible to conservative arguments”’.294 Employing these kinds of generalisations recalls similar strategies used by actors in diplomatic and defence sites in their characterisations of anti-base Okinawans as being too ‘ideological’ or uninformed to have legitimate arguments about the FRF, bases, and the alliance. In using these types of strategies, actors from all sites of exchange covered – from the diplomatic to the ‘everyday’ – attempt to undermine the agency of someone else (and the validity of that someone else’s knowledge base) in order to ensure that their own arguments are more ‘successful’ and, therefore, ‘better’.

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293 Kevin Maher, ‘Some Interest In, But No Local Demand For, Expanded Return Of Foster’, Wikileaks, Wikileaks cable:08NAHA8_a, 10 January 2008b. Available online at: https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NAHA8_a.html.

Moreover, while ABD proponents have, on the one hand, explored in great detail the plurality of actors in Okinawa who have and continue to work against the USM presence, question the continued reproduction of the USJA, and thus contributed to the general understanding of base-related issues, they have, on the other, not displayed the same kind of plurality in their own interpretations and communication of the basic socio-historical narratives which undergird the activities of the groups and individuals involved in the ABM. As Kurayoshi Takara pointed out earlier, the prevalent tendency in the ABD is to emphasise Okinawa’s victimhood, and although this discursive strategy has gained public appeal and success on some levels, it equally – by placing blame on the USG, GOJ, and the apathy of the mainland Japanese public – automatically triggers resentment and reactive policies from the very institutions (the alliance and the base presence) which it is trying to change or modify.

Considering the fact that Okinawa does suffer from real socioeconomic problems stemming from the USM presence and its political separation from the Japanese mainland for almost thirty years – and that its residents continues to face threats to their everyday security on account of the proximity of the bases and the dangers of military accidents, incidents, or active combat (should a regional conflict arise) – the reproduction of narratives which have usually only been rewarded by short-term sympathy and long-term apathy runs the risk of undermining the goals of the ABM while reinforcing the PBD. The supporters of the latter have claimed that, because the PBD is based on current, rather than historical, issues, it is therefore more relevant to ‘national security’ than being purely ‘emotional’. Whether or not this is the reality of the situation matters little; instead, what matters is if the proponents of the ABD can present their case in such a way that the strategies they employ (such as describing the situation on the ground in Okinawa through their personal experiences with noise pollution, assault, and environmental contamination) are performative on the level of the policymakers themselves.

In this sense, then, as solidarity among its proponents and a unity in strategy propels the ‘success’ of any discourse, so does the inclusion of a wide variety of historical frames and political backgrounds broaden its appeal and strengthen its support from outside actors. The ‘All-Okinawa’ movement, therefore, appears to be a step in this direction with Onaga as its elected representative. In the months since he was elected to office, for instance, his vocal communication of the ABD from Tokyo to Washington, D.C. has caused waves in the news media and especially among Japanese policymakers, who were keen to put the Futenma relocation to bed after the 2013 deal between Abe and Nakaima. In June 2015, for example, the ‘All Okinawa Council’ ‘submitted a document to member states of the United Nations’ top human rights body requesting that they urge the United
States to alleviate the military burden shouldered by Okinawa Prefecture’ after the Abe administration’s escalation of FRF implementation efforts in 2014.  

While this movement has re-energised the ABM to a level not seen since Hatoyama’s rise and fall from 2009 to 2010, one of its biggest strengths – that it was started from within the prefecture and is supported by the top prefectural official – has also proven to be one of its more problematic aspects. This is because this movement, like its previous incarnations, has faced great difficulty in gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the Abe administration and the USG. The construction of the FRF, for example, is still being carried out by the GOJ with the full support of the USG behind it, and any legal or political challenges being posed by the OPG are promptly dismissed by officials in both governments as Onaga and his supporters ‘playing politics’ at the expense of national security and, ironically, the safety of the people of Ginowan. Likewise, when Susumu Inamine, the recently re-elected mayor of Nago City, maintained his firm stance opposing the FRF’s construction in Henoko, the central government has stopped giving the city a “‘realignment subsidy,” which is granted to base-hosting municipalities’ After Onaga’s election as well, the central government cut the budget allocated to Okinawa’s ‘economic development’ by 4.6% for fiscal year 2015, and though Onaga has challenged the suspension by the GOJ of his nullification of the land reclamation permit issued by Nakaima in court, his lawsuits have, thus far, been unsuccessful in lifting it.  

Nonetheless, the notion which some of these officials hold – that the discourse they promote is performative purely by virtue of their positions of power, and that of the Okinawan prefecture’s less so because it cannot be immediately translated into policy – has been and continues to be their blind spot. The USG and GOJ cannot stop, for example, exogenous events from taking this power out of their hands (such as a severe military crash in Ginowan, or any other violent incident related to US forces in Okinawa)—nor can they prevent internal dissent over the
sustainability of current alliance policies in the light of ever-changing economic, social, and political circumstances from gradually changing the nature of their own discourse.
Conclusion

We’re stuck with our own views – human rights, our daily lives, our culture is important, our environment is really important, the base is a big problem – but the Japanese government keeps saying national security is really important and that Okinawa is playing an important role, and “we thank you, but please keep the bases there” [...] Again, the numbers – 74 per cent of all US bases and facilities in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa, which accounts for 0.6 per cent [of Japanese land] – so the number itself is ... for us, that’s just too much. That’s why we say there’s no “middle ground”. We already yielded to your demands and your policies this much.

- Hideki Yoshikawa, International director of the Save the Dugong Campaign Center

Encapsulated in Yoshikawa’s statement above is, like the quote in the Introduction to this thesis, an interpretation of ‘security’ which extends beyond the confines of the territorial nation-state all the way down to the level of individual people—and, furthermore, an understanding that this level cannot be separated from concepts of ‘national’, ‘regional’, or even ‘global’ security. This is evident from the case of Futenma and USM bases in Okinawa generally speaking, as the seemingly ‘narrow’ concerns of local residents about their environment, physical safety, and general quality of life have had a demonstrable impact on the ‘wider’ concerns of policymakers and other officials on the national and bilateral levels—not to mention an impact on the formulation and execution of the policies themselves. Rather than any specific division over history, ethnicity, or culture, then, the mutually-held belief that there is ‘no middle ground’ – which for proponents of the PBD has meant that they cannot (and will not) significantly alter the current Futenma relocation plan, and for proponents of the ABD that they will not accept anything less than the relocation of Futenma outside of Okinawa, if not a more substantial reduction in US forces altogether – is what has kept, and continues to keep, these two discourses apart.

Given these circumstances, it is critical to recognise the practical impossibility of isolating the policy products of institutional negotiations from not only the individuals who perform and influence these processes, but also these same individuals’ personal experiences which inform their interpretations. It is these distinct, personal interpretations which decide, in the end, the purposes of political institutions like alliances, how they are created, how they change over time—and how they are reproduced.

This concluding chapter therefore aims to synthesise the preceding analysis of such circumstances in the following four ways: 1) discussing the overall findings by analytical theme from the discourses identified in this thesis (the PBD and ABD) and their attendant myths, narratives, and stories; 2) addressing the central research questions outlined in the Introduction of the thesis; and 3) discussing the limitations and contributions of this research for future alliance studies, studies of the USJA, and the Okinawa base issue; and 4) providing suggestions for future research based on these.
1. Overall findings (by theme)

1.1. Historical memory and threat perception

It was generally difficult to structure the subsections under each theme so that they reflected one another across the three main sites of exchange under study. This was especially the case with this first theme, which encompassed the often vastly different historical experiences undergone by the actors surveyed in each site—not to mention the equally differing interpretations of those experiences. For example, alliance ‘managers’ in diplomatic and defence sites, by and large, interpret the renewal of the USJ-ST by the two governments as evidence of the existence of the continued ‘threats’ posed by states like China and North Korea to the region. This, in turn, means for them the continued relevance of the alliance, the continued utility of the USFJ and their facilities for ‘deterrence’ in Okinawa, and guaranteed public acceptance of the alliance as a ‘cornerstone’ or ‘keystone’ for ‘security’ in the region (not to mention public acceptance of the term ‘alliance’ itself).

On the other hand, ‘everyday’ actors – citing their experiences during the Battle of Okinawa, the disenfranchisement of living under USM administration during the post-war period, and their scepticism of the efficacy of USM bases against the ‘threats’ as conceived by the GOJ and USG – portray this same renewal as one which reoccurs at the expense of their views being fully considered in the policymaking process. The same contrast can be observed into the more recent ‘rebalance’ strategy of the Obama administration and in the ways in which it has been interpreted by actors at these sites: as one that ‘ensures that our alliances are nimble and adaptive’, makes the US defence posture ‘operationally resilient, and politically sustainable’, or one that ‘ensures [the US’s] dominance through the 21st century’, to name but a few.¹

However, given that this theme covers, in each subsection across each chapter, roughly the same time periods and the same officials and policies, it is natural that they should reflect one other in the language used by actors cutting across sites. ‘Cornerstone’, ‘keystone’, or its attendant terminology (such as the alliance as a ‘pillar’ or ‘linchpin’ for security in the region, for example) appear throughout the narratives within the PBD in diplomatic and defence sites. The actors repeating these words assume that their respective audiences understand their usage not only in the sense of the alliance serving as a literal ‘pillar’, but also – in cases where they are speaking with/reassuring each other – that they understand the symbolic importance of these words, as their usage has deep historical precedents. The same applies to their use of terms such as ‘instability’ or ‘uncertainty’ as threats in the post-Cold War era. The audiences they target, however, appear to implicitly exclude ‘everyday’ actors, especially in Okinawa, as this same language has been interpreted – and performed – to fulfil a very different function in the propagation of the ABD (for

¹ Clinton 2011; Gates 2010; Briemberg 2011.
example, appropriating ‘cornerstone’ in terms of returning the prefecture to its mythic status as a ‘cornerstone for peace’ in Asia, or by taking the concept of ‘instability’ as ‘threat’ to mean that no new adversaries could be found against which to justify the continued existence of the alliance—and therefore ‘maintaining the alliance is the goal of the alliance’⁴).

In outlining the specific language or devices historically constituting the PBD and ABD, therefore, this theme not only traced how ‘threats’ to the alliance specifically were conceptualised in the post-war era, but also how they were reproduced and inverted by actors across the three sites. This three-step process, moreover – creation, reproduction, inversion – very clearly juxtaposed the discursive interpretations offered at each site of exchange, and thus highlighted just as clearly the internal contradictions and tensions existing therein which can ‘hide or conceal other realities’.³ In terms of the PBD, its proponents’ framing of ‘threats’ based on historical precedent has effectively justified the status quo in terms of alliance continuity since WWII, though this has ‘concealed’, to a large extent, the ‘reality’ of a large USM presence (and its impacts) in Okinawa. For the ABD, its proponents’ challenging of this framing has led to a sustained and ongoing anti-base movement which relies heavily on a self-victimising interpretation of the same historical events.

1.2. Defining and redefining security

This self-victimisation similarly colours the discursive interpretation of ‘security’ by ‘everyday’ actors—including the way in which they understand what it means, who (or what) can provide it, and for whom (or what) it is provided. Drawing on both historical and current impacts related to living next to USM bases, such as pollution and crime, narratives within the ABD have consistently reproduced a notion of ‘everyday’ security as being one which is more concerned with ‘human’ security: that is, the physical safety and quality of life of Okinawan residents. They distinguish such concerns from those of mainland Japanese residents and especially from those of USG officials, both of whose distance from base-related problems, according to these narratives, reduces their ability to fully comprehend the extent to which the USM presence has detrimentally affected Okinawa. At the same time, however, through the actions which members of the ABM have taken over the years in relation to the Futenma relocation issue – including staging protests and engaging in discussions with OPG, GOJ, and USMC officials – it is clear that these same actors have been and continue to actively attempt to enhance general awareness of this distance and its contribution to the ‘status quo’ not only on Futenma, but on alliance policy more generally.

By comparison, ‘security’ appears to be considered less empty signifier open to interpretation in diplomatic and defence sites, but one whose meaning is intrinsic to the concept

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² Gabe 2014.
³ Fischer 2003a.
itself: that is, national and/or regional security in the form of ‘deterrence’ provided by the USM presence, especially in Okinawa. Within this interpretation, ‘local’ or ‘everyday’ security is not ruled out as an impossibility—rather, it is simply assumed that there can be no ‘everyday’ security without ‘national’ security, and therefore distinguishing between the two on the level of national policymaking to a large degree is missing the point of the alliance’s purpose. It is in this way that certain frames have been accepted and even absorbed into the language used by supporters of the PBD – such as Okinawa’s base ‘burden’ or Futenma as being a fundamentally ‘dangerous’ base (a ‘ticking clock’) – but with the caveat that any modifications made to policy in favour of improving this ‘burden’ or quality of life issues remain secondary to the primary goal of ‘securing’ the region from the aforementioned ‘threats’ covered in the first theme. In framing the ‘burden’ as a ‘lower-order’ issue, therefore, actors in diplomatic and defence sites have been able to largely reproduce narratives which posit the inevitability of the FRF’s construction and the alliance’s continuation.

These have translated directly into policy, as with the decades-long choice of Henoko specifically as the FRF site, but have also demonstrated performative power beyond paper—such as in the overwhelming pushback from both the USG and GOJ against proposals to relocate Futenma outside of Okinawa by the Hatoyama administration, leading, in part, to his early resignation. Based on just such events, this theme was thus essential in illustrating not only the discursive development of the concept of ‘security’ following on from historical precedents, but also how its ‘naturalness’ (in the context of ‘national’ or ‘regional’ security) has been challenged and has oftentimes failed to gain purchase at each ‘level’ of the alliance.

1.3. Institutional and cultural identities

Likewise, identities have been equally difficult – if not more so – to translate and transmit across these ‘levels’. Being tied explicitly by the actors surveyed to their own experiences, their interpretations of others’ historical experiences, and their current conceptualisations of what or whom constitutes ‘threats’ or ‘security’, identities under this theme were shown to have a twofold purpose. First, they ‘secure a notion of “who we are”’; second, they define ‘who we are not’. In the first instance, actors in diplomatic and defence sites identified themselves as members of, by and large, the communities within which they were professionally socialised, such as the MOD, DOD, or MOFA. At the same time, however, they made distinctions not only between themselves and ‘everyday’ actors, such as mainland Japanese citizens or Okinawans, but also between themselves and other officials or ‘experts’ at various tiers within their own organisations. For example, consider the discussions about the Ambassador in charge of Okinawan Affairs in MOFA, or the role of the ODB

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4 Yamaguchi 2014.
5 Anonymous 2014d.
in Kadena. In both cases, although the individual or groups are formally subsumed within MOFA or MOD, respectively, their roles – essentially as ‘go-betweens’ for the GOJ and OPG/Okinawans – not only distinguishes them in terms of their influence on the policymaking process from those directly involved at ‘higher-level’ bilateral negotiations between the USG and GOJ, but also allows them a greater awareness and potentially clearer understanding of the ABD purely on account of reduced geographical distance.

In reproducing the insulation of their ‘managerial’ sites from individuals not only within the alliance, but also from those outside of it, actors in diplomatic and defence sites have contributed to an increased feeling of alienation among many Okinawans from the central government in Tokyo (and from Washington). As argued in the conclusion of Chapter 5, they employ this feeling in the form of their narrative of victimisation, though their focus on historical discrimination against Okinawa and its residents – especially in harking back to the suffering experienced during the Battle of Okinawa, and of the discrimination leading to the prefecture’s handover to USM administration – does little to appeal to people outside of Okinawa in terms of helping the ABD to ‘succeed’ or become more widespread, and certainly does not help the ABM’s case with central government officials.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that in the latter’s attempt to downplay the bases and Futenma as a ‘side issue’ for decades in favour of reproducing the status quo with which it is familiar and identifies, it has festered and generated significant resentment across all sites of exchange. Furthermore, it has helped to perpetuate the very victim narrative which they argue so vigorously against— and with the perpetuation of this narrative, it has become increasingly difficult for the central governments, particularly the GOJ, to argue in favour of a unified national identity which can only be protected by the USM presence.

1.4. Discursive intersections and divisions

Given the clear lines of difference drawn out between the discourses under the previous three themes, the challenge of the fourth was to identify and highlight areas of overlap or potential agreement—as well as those where such ideational ‘alliances’ are more difficult to establish. On discursive intersections, it became clear that, if we could measure at all the ‘success’ of a discourse in this research, one which could be considered is the widespread argument evidenced at every site that there should be a greater understanding of, and therefore sympathy towards, Okinawa’s unique history with both the USJA and the USM presence. While the depth of this argument is, indeed, contestable (as ‘everyday’ actors would claim that the use of such language as ‘burden’ or promises
to take action to alleviate said ‘burden’ represent merely empty political rhetoric’), its pervasiveness throughout the PBD should not be taken lightly. This is because other arguments related to it – such as those in favour of improving the ‘sustainability’ of the USM presence through increased environmental clean-up measures, or even of considering alternatives to the current Futenma relocation plan – may very well have been silenced or non-existent within diplomatic and defence sites without accepting, in the first instance, the bases as a physical and symbolic ‘burden’ on Okinawa and its residents.

On the other hand, where the bases as a ‘burden’ has become a widely-understood concept *in theory*, this has not necessarily always translated to the policy level beyond speeches by PMs and presidents. There remains a significant distance between the ways in which legislators and officials in diplomatic and defence sites interpret why the alliance is reproduced and what justifies the continued USM presence in Okinawa from ‘everyday’ actors. This is not only due to the differences in their experiences and recollections of historical events shaping the USJA and base presence, but also to their learning and re-learning of the discourses (re)produced by the communities and organisations within which they have been, and continue to be, socialised. In repeating narratives which have not been altered significantly in decades – whether they be ones that see the bases as a ‘necessary’ burden, link the USMC’s survival as an organisation with their significant presence in Okinawa, or frame opposition to the USM presence as ‘the fringe’ – they leave little room for argumentation and negotiation within the PBD over its constitutive concepts and myths.

Likewise, the self-identification of many actors within the ABM as victims of discriminatory policies of the USG and GOJ breeds a certitude within the narratives they promulgate about the ill-intent of actors within those sites. This ill-intent encompasses not only all of the historical injustices performed against Okinawa and its residents (whether they be in the form of the bases or lower socioeconomic development), but also the continued stationing of US forces there and the governments’ obstinacy with regards to altering the FRF plan. This certitude is only amplified when such concepts as the ‘heart’ of Okinawa or ‘nuchi du takara’ are cited as intrinsic elements of an Okinawan identity undergirding the ABD, since they are framed as being drawn from a historical precedent predating the alliance (the Ryukyu Kingdom). In framing them as arising from this historical source, they thus justify not only adopting a protest movement that calls for ‘peace’, but one within which this ‘peace’ is defined as an essentially anti-militarist concept—and, therefore, one with which a continued USM presence is fundamentally at odds.

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7 Norimatsu 2011; McCormack, Norimatsu and Selden 2011.
8 Forbes 2014.
2. Research questions and answers

While the themes outlined above are useful in illustrating the specific findings of the thesis as related to the USJA, the Okinawa base issue, and Futenma, it is also important to ‘zoom out’ and consider how these findings relate to the broader central research questions about alliances and how they function (as outlined in the Introduction). Although some of the specific findings from the case of Futenma and the USJA are not necessarily generalizable to other bilateral and multilateral alliances in terms of their sociohistorical developments, it nonetheless serves as a window through which observations can be made about the function of alliances within international relations, and the actors whom and processes which both constitute them and enable their reproduction.

2.1. What is the role of alliances in international relations?

Given the increasingly critical analyses that have been made of alliance ‘persistence’ in the literature overviewed in Chapter 1, it follows that this thesis would thus make a basic inquiry into what, exactly, the purpose or role of alliances are in contemporary international relations. From that overview and in considering the case of the USJA, it is apparent that they do not only serve purely military-centred goals such as providing ‘deterrence’ against potential ‘threats’ or increasing joint interoperability of member states’ armed forces, but also provide HADR assistance on a regional or even global level, assist in PKOs, and act as institutional frameworks through which bilateral or multilateral negotiations take place over security, trade, energy, and other policy areas. Nonetheless, it is also apparent that in taking on these other functions, the utility of referring to these interstate relationships as ‘alliances’ – a term which primarily still relates to their military origins not only within IR studies, but also among the actors surveyed across all sites within this thesis – is increasingly questionable.

2.1.1. How do they function?

An alliance, therefore – in being created via treaty – must technically be renewed by its member states and discursively reproduced by their supporters in order to physically continue. Moreover, these same individuals must be able to successfully argue that an ‘alliance’, on the one hand, is able to assume responsibilities beyond just military-related ones, while on the other keeping the institution distinct from the broader, already existing interstate relationships between member states as one which is useful primarily in a defensive capacity. In containing this inherent contradiction, alliances such as the USJA which have ‘persisted’ past their ‘expiry date’, so to speak, have thus been the products of long-term negotiation and renegotiation between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ actors of the core beliefs constituting them. While the outcomes of these negotiations are often more evolutionary and gradual than revolutionary and sudden – with change being observed over years rather than days or months – they nonetheless illustrate the basic discursive processes
driving not only institutional reproduction, but also the day-to-day functioning of an alliance as a physical presence in the form of the individuals who ‘manage’ it.

Beyond simply maintaining regular contact and reassuring each other, these ‘managers’ – including current and former central government officials, ‘experts’ at government-affiliated think tanks (or non-affiliated ones) and research institutes, and military officials – also make an alliance and its impacts deeply felt through their interaction, if limited, with the general publics of their member states. Although it has been argued by some scholars in Chapters 1 and 2 that the consent of the publics is not necessarily needed (or heeded) in terms of the reproduction of security alliances specifically (such as the arguments in favour of ‘path dependence’)9, it is clear that in cases where alliance-related policies have directly and negatively impacted upon some segments of these publics’ quality of life (or has the potential to do so), the latter’s ‘insurgent narratives’ are difficult to ignore or dismiss entirely.

2.2. How do competing discourses about the current conditions and future of a security alliance interact? How do they influence one another?

It is difficult to ignore or dismiss them due to the impact that these narratives can have specifically in terms of their potential influence over the public—and thus the potential of the public to demand policy-level changes. These changes can directly challenge the \textit{modus operandi} of an institutionalised alliance with regards to not only the core beliefs about ‘security’ or ‘threat’ undergirding its creation and current state, but also the discourse based on these which is employed to reproduce it (and the actual policies in which this discourse is articulated). Alliance ‘managers’ thus must directly or indirectly engage with the oppositional or ‘competitor’ discourse challenging status quo reproduction. In the process of argumentation and negotiation there is, naturally, the potential for their own discourse to be influenced by the language used by their ‘opponents’, whether that be in its coherence, style, or in the use of specific devices like euphemism and connotation.

Proponents of an ‘oppositional’ discourse, in turn, can also experience this kind of gradual change within the language and strategies they employ through interaction. This change, however, does not just take place through active argumentation and negotiation over core beliefs and interpretations. Rather, due to the pervasiveness of the status quo, pro-alliance discourse within the public sphere, it follows that even its challengers, being conditioned to its existence and familiar with its constitutive narratives, could come to accept (in some aspects) its ‘naturalness’. This is

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9 Pierson 2000b; Beckert 1999.
evident, for example, in the fact that the ABM – as covered in Chapter 5 – is divided in its aims in part due to the acceptance of the USJA’s ‘necessity’ by some of its constituent groups, not to mention the effects of militarisation on everyday life in Okinawa.\(^\text{10}\)

### 2.2.1. What is the process that determines the prevalence of certain discourses over others?

Given the inherent accessibility and availability of the pro-alliance discourse across all sites of discursive exchange, it should not come as a surprise that it often prevails over the opposition in terms of successful translation to policy. By contrast, an oppositional discourse – while it has the potential, depending on the content and strategic employment of its ‘insurgent narratives’, to have greater purchase with the general publics or even with government officials – is often created and reproduced with a much narrower audience, at least in its beginning stages. Due to the cultural and political influence which an institutionalised alliance may hold not only within governmental sites, but also public ones (especially after exposure to prolonged and repeated argumentation in favour of it), it can thus be incredibly difficult to counter effectively. This is especially the case when the focus of an oppositional discourse is on an aspect of the alliance and its related policies which affects, as in the case of military bases, only a small segment of the general population. In such cases, it is easier for supporters of the prevailing discourse – like the pro-alliance one – to dismiss this opposition as not seeing ‘the big picture’ and being too narrowly concerned with their own interests. This is easier still when the argument is over how to interpret concepts such as ‘threat’ and ‘security’, which are often set apart from public debate in the first place.

### 2.2.2. How do actors (both internal and external to the alliance) effect policy changes?

Even in sites where discourses are traditionally more easily translated into policy, however, actually enacting change *within* a set policy is not necessarily a straightforward process. Given the long-term reproduction of a prevailing discourse and its attendant narratives by actors across various sites within an alliance – these cutting across political and ideological divisions which might otherwise be the natural sources for change – it can be difficult to both argue for and actually effect changes to it. This difficulty can be enhanced, furthermore, when reproduction has been so successful that even actors ‘outside’ of the alliance’s institutional framework – such as the general public – support it and might oppose even internal challenges to it (see, for example, the Japanese public’s disillusionment with the Hatoyama administration when it proved unable to provide viable alternatives to the FRF plan).

In such circumstances, even in cases where actors 1) have alternative ideas or suggestions to the status quo and 2) are ideally located in sites where they have an increased number of

\(^{10}\) Lummis 2014; Yoshikawa 2014.
opportunities and chance of success in promoting these, they have been so socialised within the alliance and conditioned to promote the discourse and narratives in support of it that they often do not publicly air their arguments or seek approval for them (see, for example, the interviewees cited in Chapters 3 and 4 who, while privately supporting alternative relocation sites to Henoko, expressed that these views would not be taken ‘seriously’ in public\(^\text{11}\)).

The challenge to actors ‘outside’ of this institutional framework in effecting policy changes, then, is twofold: 1) it is a challenge in terms of these actors’ distance from policymaking sites (not only professionally, but also, in some cases, geographically); and thus 2) it is a challenge with regards to making a successful argument against this framework, as actors from sites of exchange close to the policymaking process also have traditionally greater access to and influence over the general publics. By contrast, these ‘outsider’ actors – in representing only a segment of the publics, and sometimes a very small one at that – must employ narratives and even physical strategies which may assume a confrontational style in order to garner media attention. In doing so, their oppositional discourse includes not only frames alliance supporters (especially in governmental sites) as antagonistic and reproducing policies with the explicit intention of marginalising ‘outsider’ or ‘everyday’ actors, but also frames themselves as victims suffering from this marginalisation in both political and socioeconomic aspects (for example, the narrative within the ABD framing Okinawa as a ‘sacrificial stone’). Although this confrontational style can provoke negative or dismissive reactions from alliance supporters – including those who might otherwise agree with certain ideas constituting the oppositional discourse – it can nonetheless also gain enough attention and support from actors at other sites to result in actual policy changes (as was the case with the original SACO agreement).

2.2.3. What is the impact of analysing the issue of alliance reproduction from a top-down versus a bottom-up approach?

Considering their quite different discursive strategies and traditionally limited abilities in being able to successfully argue for and implement changes on the policy level, it is perhaps unsurprising that the majority of alliance studies, in discussing ‘persistence’, exclude ‘outside’ actors and, therefore, a ‘bottom-up’ approach to this phenomenon. This is in part due to the basic labelling of this process as ‘persistence’ rather than ‘reproduction’, as discussed earlier—the former implying passivity, the latter activity. In doing so, the former largely relies on nonhuman mechanisms considered intrinsic properties of the institutional structure, such as ‘path dependence’ or ‘sunk costs’, to explain why an alliance is maintained. When collective or individual agency is considered as

\(^{11}\) Teare 1998; Gregson 2014; Anonymous 2014a.
a possible element in alliance ‘persistence’, the extent of its influence on this process is portrayed as dependent upon those endogenous, institutional factors. Furthermore, the agents which may exert this limited influence are circumscribed to those already within the confines of the alliance (the ‘top-down’), as these are likewise assumed to be the only ones with any feasible proposals or correct ‘knowledge’ upon which to base their arguments (for example, the ‘Japan hands’ within the USG, or ‘Alliance hands’ within the GOJ).

By contrast, reproduction – in taking this maintenance to be conditional upon active argumentation and negotiation between individuals in support of (‘top-down’) or challenging (and ‘bottom-up’) its purpose – can investigate in more detail both how and for whom it is maintained. An analysis of alliance reproduction which thus integrates both of these approaches widens the range of actors whose interpretations may be seriously considered to those outside of traditional policymaking sites. In reassessing this phenomenon on the level of discourse across these levels, this inclusive approach also avoids the analytical pitfalls of looking at reproduction purely from the other side: the ‘bottom-up’. As outlined both in Chapters 1 and 5, many activist-academics’ tight focus on the ‘everyday’ or ‘outside’ actors in the case of the Okinawa base issue – while illuminating the arguments and narratives undergirding the oppositional discourse in great detail where they might otherwise not be heard – is often played out at the expense of discussing the influence of and potential for endogenous change within diplomatic and defence sites from whence the pro-alliance discourse is primarily reproduced.

3. Implications for alliance studies

3.1. Contributions of research

Of course, as the MOD researcher highlighted at the beginning of this chapter points out, expanding the number of ‘levels’ or, as I have outlined in this thesis, ‘sites of exchange’ under analysis, clearly complicates what was previously a field of fairly straightforward, ‘top-down’ studies of alliance ‘persistence’ by integrating this ‘bottom-up’ perspective. This is not only in the sense that individuals in ‘everyday’ sites have been excluded in much of the alliance literature (and in the USJA literature as well), but also in that individuals within government or military-based sites whose views do not exactly agree with the overarching pro-alliance discourse have also been silenced or ignored. In bringing these voices back into the analysis, this thesis has highlighted both the role of active agency and the role of social interaction (or the lack thereof) in the reproduction of this discourse between and within these sites—not to mention how this reproduction is challenged. Moreover, in taking on this agent-centred approach which identifies individuals as the referent objects of security, even at the level of international institutions such as alliances, this research urges a transformational conceptualisation of the latter as much more than just ‘treaties’. Instead, they are carriers of
collective memories, constituted by a wide gamut of personal narratives, and, at their foundations, the products of human interaction.

While it is clear that actors at each ‘level’ do have ‘very different motivations [and] very different ideas’, the interpretative approach embraced here fundamentally challenges the ‘naturalness’ not only of the continued existence of alliances like the USJA in the post-Cold War world, but also that of the fundamental concepts which are held up as the key reasons for their existence. It does so in enhancing awareness of how actors from each site of exchange define such concepts as ‘threat’ and ‘security’ based on not only their own, individual experiences, recollections, or interpretations of historical events, but also on those that have become accepted within their communities or social/professional circles. This can be applied not only to the specific case of the Futenma relocation and the USJA, but also to other ‘institutionalised’ alliances to which there are attached decades (if not longer) of entrenched narratives and stories related to their historical creation and reasons for reproduction. Furthermore, in opening up these concepts to interpretations by a wide range of actors across diverse sites of exchange, this thesis has made the case for integrating lived experience and ‘local knowledge’ alike as serious evidence alongside the more traditionally considered ‘expert’ opinion or ‘scientific demonstration and verification’ provided by actors with direct access to policymaking sites.

As has been evidenced by the case of the USJA and the controversial relocation of Futenma, continued attempts by actors from ‘managerial’ sites of exchange to insulate the alliance from the unpredictable ‘winds’ of popular opinion (and even the protests of local officials) contributes to an ever-increasing disconnect between the ‘everyday’ from those in power—and this resentment has already demonstrated an ability to disrupt and destabilise the USJA, let alone how it has affected and will continue to affect other institutionalised alliances like it. By demonstrating the impact of the power of ‘insurgent’ everyday narratives on security-related policies – those usually portrayed as being ‘untouchable’ by officials and scholars alike – this research thus challenges not only the prevailing conceptualisation of alliances as being in a rarefied realm above ‘politics’, but also that well-defined notions of ‘national security’ and ‘threat’ are just as contestable and open to deliberation as the ‘security guarantee’ provided by these kinds of political institutions.

3.2. Research limitations

While I have attempted, in this thesis, to undertake a comprehensive overview and dissection of the processes and individuals involved in reproducing alliances, there are nonetheless several caveats to address. These include:

Language barrier. All interviews in Japan were conducted in English and all materials collected for the purposes of this research, primary and secondary alike (with the exception of some
examples of visual discourse which are more easily translated, such as anti-base protest signs or one-page pamphlets), are also in English. Therefore, this dissertation suffers from a lack of Japanese-language sources and the insights they could provide, especially with regards to domestic Japanese discussions regarding the alliance, its future, and public sentiments towards the base situation.

**Relatively weak focus on ‘everyday’ actors.** This limitation arises largely from the first – the language barrier – in that the interviews conducted in Japan, being in English, excluded many of the ‘everyday’ Okinawan members of civil society and/or prefectural officials who only speak Japanese. As there are significantly more current and former Japanese officials in Tokyo who speak English, it was much easier to secure interviews with them. Furthermore, the language barrier also prevents me from being able to do a full investigation into the online activity of anti-base groups, many of whose websites are solely in Japanese. As a result, the emphasis in this thesis was on more ‘elite’ sites of exchange and the actors within them (Chapters 3 and 4).

**Obfuscation of information on the part of interviewees.** Given the fact that many of my interviewees with officials and/or activists were recorded, it is highly possible that whatever information given by them during the course of the interviews includes obfuscation or misdirection. However, as previously discussed, because this research focuses more on the specific discourses employed by project participants and the way (the ‘form’) in which they use them as opposed to trying to discover their motivations or why they chose to promote one discourse over another, this particular issue may not have actually been much of a limitation in practice.

**Focus on discourse at the expense of other variables.** As discussed in this chapter and in Chapter 1, the majority of the previous approaches to alliance ‘persistence’ and, in particular, the USJA have posited any number of material, ideational, or hybrid variables in their explanations. Therefore, the tight focus on discourse and the process of reproduction means a lack of discussion regarding those specific explanatory factors (such as asset specificity or shared values) unless they are directly cited by the discourses under examination in this research.

**Thematic structure.** Practically speaking, it is difficult to disentangle individuals’ interpretations of ‘security’, their historical memories, and self-representations (identities) from one another, and thus separating them out in the analysis as I have is not necessarily reflective of how these various concepts are, in reality, very much connected to one another. Moreover, in covering each of these concepts – rather than in focusing on one in particular as other studies might do, such as identity – this thesis could not delve into the smaller (but still important) details regarding their evolution (for example, a fuller discussion on the development of the native pro-independence
movement in Okinawa\textsuperscript{12}, or of the ‘generation gap’ between young and old Okinawans in their attitudes towards base issues\textsuperscript{13}).

4. Suggestions for future research

Because the situation with regards to Futenma and the future of the relocation remains fluid\textsuperscript{14}, future studies of the ‘Okinawa base issue’ or the USJA generally speaking would be able to draw on this thesis as a reference point. Specifically, future incidents and accidents in the prefecture relating to the USM presence will continue to pose a challenge to the PBD and its proponents, as the former represents the physical manifestation of a ‘threat’ to ‘everyday’ security. Whether these incidents and accidents can raise public ire to the point that the relocation plan itself is cancelled completely is unclear, but the discourse(s) presented in this thesis will undoubtedly continue to evolve and influence one another to some degree regardless. In this process, furthermore, discussions of the broader purposes and future of the USJA – as has been demonstrated in the preceding chapters – will also inevitably be caught up. Given these circumstances, it is important to continue to conduct research on this issue that is agent-centred and sensitive to the interplay of language and meaning between individuals from various sites of exchange—not just to remain narrowly focused, as in previous studies, on the actions of ‘elites’ and their networks.

This can apply not only to the Futenma relocation specifically, but also to other cases like it—such as that of a US Naval Base constructed on Jeju Island in South Korea\textsuperscript{15}—where the impact of

\textsuperscript{12} See, for example: Eiichiro Ishiyama, ‘Ryukyu pro-independence group quietly gathering momentum’, \textit{The Japan Times}, 26 January 2015, available online at: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/01/26/national/ryukyu-pro-independence-group-quietly-gathering-momentum/#.V2LAkvkrLIU.


\textsuperscript{14} Onaga, for example, has visited Washington several times since taking office and met personally with members of Congress. During these visits, he has appealed to them to “listen directly to the voices from Okinawa”. Moreover, a 2015 OPG survey – the first ever to [‘canvas’] local views on the [relocation] plan – found that 58.2% of respondents are ‘against’ the plan, with 25.5% in favour of it. (For more, see: ‘Onaga asks U.S. to listen to Okinawan residents over base issue’, \textit{The Japan Times}, 19 March 2016a, available online at: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/19/national/politics-diplomacy/onaga-asks-u-s-to-listen-directly-to-the-voices-of-okinawan-residents-over-base-issue/#.V2LDLvkrLIU; ‘58% of Okinawa residents say ‘no’ to U.S. base relocation: survey’, \textit{The Japan Times}, 31 March 2016b, available online at: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/03/31/national/58-okinawa-residents-say-no-u-s-base-relocation-survey/#.V2LPFkrLIU).

\textsuperscript{15} This base, constructed in the village of Gancheong in southern Jeju, was completed in February 2016 for the purpose of ‘protect[ing] shipping lanes for South Korea’s export-driven economy, which is dependent on imported oil’, but also in order to ‘enable South Korea to respond quickly to a brewing territorial dispute with China over Socotra Rock, a submerged reef south of Jeju that the Koreans call leodo’, according to Sang-Hun Choe of \textit{The New York Times}. Home to over ‘20 warships, including submarines’, the base’s construction was delayed by local protests over environmental concerns that it ‘would harm the island’s ecology’ (‘Island’s Naval Base Stirs Opposition in South Korea’, \textit{The New York Times}, 18 August 2011, available online at:
military installations, though deeply felt on a local level, has not necessarily been integrated into broader US-ROK alliance studies. Outside of the base issue, it would also be useful to study the discursive reproduction of the USJA through the lenses of other controversial issues in the two countries’ relationship, including trade (through, perhaps, the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership\textsuperscript{16}), nuclear energy (especially in light of the 2011 Fukushima-Daiichi power plant disaster, the ensuing anti-nuclear protests on mainland Japan, and in consideration of the strong anti-nuclear movement in Japan which has existed since WWII\textsuperscript{17}), and increasing military interoperability between the USM and SDF (a topic which was touched on in this thesis, but which may be expanded upon significantly in future studies with regards to SDF involvement in USM missions overseas), among others.

The same can be said of many other of the US’s long-standing bilateral and multilateral alliances – the US-UK ‘special relationship’, NATO, or US-Philippines, just to name a few – which all produce policies that directly impact upon the ‘everyday’. Whether in the form of sending soldiers overseas in the face of public opposition to support US combat operations (such as the UK’s involvement in the War on Terror), USM facilities forward-stationed in precarious locations (such as NATO’s new ground-based missile defence system in Romania, raising the Russian government’s hackles\textsuperscript{18}), or agreements to build new ones in places where there has, in the past, been demonstrated public passions against their construction (such as the Philippines’ offer to host eight new US bases ‘amid rising tension with China over the South China Sea’\textsuperscript{19} and reopening the USN’s Subic Bay base, previously closed in the 1990s), it is undeniable that an alliance exists and is felt outside of the ‘elites’ and ‘experts’ which enable its continuation. In recognising this, then, it is critical that future research points out that the role of ‘elites’ in managing and reproducing an alliance is only half the story (if that), and the other half – constituted by the experiences and

\textsuperscript{16}Mitsuru Obe reports, for example, that this agreement involves a ‘shakeup’ of Japan’s agriculture sector in that it introduces ‘easier access to Japan for products such as California rice, Canadian pork, Australian beef and New Zealand butter’. Obe warns that this development may mean that ‘many small Japanese farmers could be taken over by large enterprise operators’ (‘TPP Deal Expected to Shake Up Japan’s Agriculture Sector’, \textit{The Wall Street Journal}, 6 October 2015, available online at: http://blogs.wsj.com/japanrealtime/2015/10/06/tpp-deal-expected-to-shake-up-japans-agriculture-sector/).


interpretations of individuals within and outside of this site, not to mention the interaction between the two – remains to be told.
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Appendix 1. Additional resources and illustrated materials

1. Map of U.S. military bases in Okinawa

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2. Map of training areas in Okinawa

3. Map of main bases and facilities under study


Appendix 2. List of sites visited on fieldwork research

### 1. Military facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of site</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marine Corps Air Station Futenma</td>
<td>Ginowan, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Marine Corps Camp Foster</td>
<td>Ginowan, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Air Force Kadena Air Base</td>
<td>Kadena, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Marine Corps Camp Schwab</td>
<td>Nago, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Marine Corps Camp Kinser</td>
<td>Urasoe, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Navy Fleet Activities Yokosuka</td>
<td>Yokosuka, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former site of Yomitan Auxiliary Airfield</td>
<td>Yomitan, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 2. Sites of cultural/historical importance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of site</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wajii Cliffs and caves</td>
<td>Ie Jima, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum</td>
<td>Itoman, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himeyuri Monument and Peace Museum</td>
<td>Itoman, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yasukuni Shrine</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yushukan (Museum at Yasukuni)</td>
<td>Tokyo, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese battleship Mikasa</td>
<td>Yokosuka, Japan</td>
</tr>
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### 3. Interview sites

#### 3a. Japan

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Defense</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keio University</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Japan Institute of International Affairs</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<td>The Canon Institute for Global Studies</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<td>Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institute for International Strategy</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Tokyo Foundation</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Ryukyus</td>
<td>Senbaru, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okinawa Prefectural Office</td>
<td>Naha, Okinawa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts</td>
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<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs Okinawa Liaison Office</td>
<td>Naha, Okinawa</td>
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<td>U.S. Consulate General Naha</td>
<td>Naha, Okinawa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Okinawa Peace Assistance Center</td>
<td>Naha, Okinawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of site</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Okinawa Defense Bureau</td>
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<td>Okinawa International University</td>
<td>Ginowan, Okinawa</td>
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</table>

### 3b. US

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of site</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Boston University</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard University</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cato Institute</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mike and Maureen Mansfield Foundation</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johns Hopkins University</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional Research Service</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National Bureau of Asian Research</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US House of Representatives</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avascent International</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Heritage Foundation</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>George Washington University</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American University</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMV Consulting</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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Appendix 3. List of sample interview questions

The following is a sample list of questions I asked interviewees in the US and Japan during fieldwork. Please note that questions asked varied widely and were largely dependent upon the occupation and experiences of each individual interviewed.

1. The US-Japan alliance

1. The implications of the word ‘alliance’ have evolved significantly since its appearance in a 1981 joint communique issued after a meeting between Pres. Reagan and PM Zenko resulted in then-FM Sonoda resigning due to the term’s militaristic connotations. Today, however, alliances such as NATO encompass many more functions, including peacekeeping, economic cooperation and disaster preparedness. In the case of the US and Japan, has the term ‘alliance’ evolved in the same way? Or is the US-Japan relationship still one that mainly concerns itself with more traditional security issues?

2. To what extent is the US-Japan alliance institutionalised along the lines of a larger regional alliance, such as NATO?
   a. If it is not deeply institutionalised to the NATO-level, then should it be?
   b. What might be some of the benefits/drawbacks of deepening the alliance?

3. Does the Obama administration’s on-going ‘rebalance’ to Asia represent a significant change in the US’s approach to the region?

4. What is the future of the USFJ presence in Japan given the last few decades of Japan slowly modernising its military?
   a. If Japan amends its constitution, would this mean a reduction in the US presence?

5. What is the (or is there a) role of (for) public deliberation in alliance policymaking?

2. Okinawa

1. Officials in Washington and Tokyo often cite the militarisation of China and the DPRK’s unstable leadership as reasons for the US’s continued military presence in Japan. To what extent do Okinawans (officials and civilians) share these concerns about the wider regional threats?
   a. Do they prioritise other security issues above these? If so, which ones?

2. What is the security value of the American bases to Okinawans?
   a. Would it be different if they were JSDF bases?

3. How have the protests against the bases in Okinawa affected (or not) the official messaging on them (re: their necessity) and on the broader alliance from Washington and Tokyo?
a. For example, when former PM Yukio Hatoyama began discussing the possibility of relocating Futenma out of Okinawa altogether, he was rebuked quite strongly by the State Department under Secretary Clinton. Was this surprising, given the more cooperative diplomacy advocated initially by the Obama administration?

4. How has the official response to the anti-base protests changed the messaging of the ABM in Okinawa? In Ginowan and Henoko?
   a. Has it radicalised the movement? Or tempered it?

5. Can the ‘Okinawa problem’ be resolved through reducing land use by the US military?
   a. If no, what are some of the variables that complicate the final resolution of this issue? (E.g. historical animosity between Okinawa and mainland Japan)

6. To what extent are Okinawan officials involved in the discussions over US bases—not only relocation/reduction/return, but also in the overall discussions of alliance policy/its future?

3. Futenma

1. There’s been some disagreement over the years as to how the relocation plans should proceed in the face of protests. Were the new plans that arose out of these disagreements promoted more by the US or by the Japanese? Or both equally?

2. How does the US military intend to contend with the possible detrimental effects on the environment in Oura Bay should Futenma be relocated there?

3. Alternative sites to Henoko outside of Okinawa prefecture been discussed, such as Hawaii or Guam (to which thousands of Marines are already being moved). However, these have not seemed to gain much traction. Why have these not been pursued further?
   a. What obstacles exist to relocating the Marines to these areas?

4. At times the Futenma issue has been characterised as a ‘roadblock’ or simply ‘delaying the inevitable’. Why this choice of language?
   a. Does the government believe that the anti-base movement in Okinawa will reduce in size/disappear altogether if the current relocation plan prevails?

5. Do the protests against Futenma’s relocation present an opportunity for ‘policy learning’ for government and military officials?
   a. How entrenched is the idea that the current plan must be maintained?

6. What information from on-going negotiations over the base relocation does the public have the right to know?