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Okinawan Perspectives on Japan's Imperial Institution

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On September 29, 2007, 110,000 people demonstrated in Okinawa to protest textbook revisions announced by Japan's Education Ministry that would delete references to the Japanese military's coercive role in so-called "group suicides" *(shudan jiketsu)* of civilians during the Battle of Okinawa. Speakers at the protest included Okinawan survivors of the battle who had witnessed the military rounding up civilians at "assembly points" (referred to in war propaganda as "places of shattering jewels"), and distributing hand grenades to them with orders to kill themselves to avoid capture by advancing U.S. forces. Yoshikawa Yoshikatsu, a battle survivor from Kakazu Village, recalled, "After the mayor of the village yelled "Long live the Emperor!" *(Tenno Heika banzai),* hand grenades exploded all around us. I could hear the screams of the dying."[1] A few days after the protest, author Kamata Satoshi interviewed a battle survivor at her home on Tokashiki Island, another site of what Norma Field has more accurately termed "compulsory suicide."[2] "Kitamura Tomi remembered hearing shouts of 'Long live the Emperor' as grenades exploded all around her. When she became aware again of her surroundings, her eldest daughter, sitting beside her, and her husband's younger sister were both dead."[3]

Published in 1996, the program guide for the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum explains, "These deaths must be viewed in the context of years of militaristic education which exhorted people to serve the nation by 'dying for the for the emperor' (*Tenno no tame ni shinu).*"[4] Okinawans cite the role of emperor-centered indoctrination of unquestioning self-sacrifice not only in compulsory group suicides, but also in many other deaths among the more than 120,000 local residents who lost their lives in the only Japanese prefecture subjected to ground fighting.[5] They also point to recently released documents showing that the Battle of Okinawa could have been avoided if the Showa emperor had not decided in early 1945 to prolong the war, rejecting the advice of former Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro to end it immediately.[6]



Cornerstone of Peace Memorial to Battle of Okinawa

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Paying respects at Okinawa Memorial

These are some of the reasons why criticism of and opposition to Japan's imperial institution, expressed in print and public discourse, is far more conspicuous and vigorous in Okinawa than in other Japanese prefectures. Such opinion was less in evidence during the first two postwar decades when limited information was available about the Showa emperor's role in decisions affecting Okinawa during and shortly after the war, and while Okinawa was still under direct U.S. military rule. It gained considerable momentum, however, with the approach of Okinawa's 1972 reversion to Japanese administration. Local educators were concerned because Japan's public school curriculum, overseen by the Education Ministry, presents distorted accounts of Japan's military aggression in Asia and downplays the Showa emperor's wartime role. Released for publication in the years since reversion, documents specifically describing both his wartime and early postwar role in decisions profoundly affecting Okinawa sparked outrage there that has fueled continuing criticism.

This criticism is not limited to the past. Okinawans express serious doubts that a clear separation exists even today, under Japan's postwar Constitution, between the monarchy's actions and government policies affecting Okinawa. Official gatherings hosted by members of the imperial family to commemorate events in Okinawa and such gestures as bestowing imperial commendations on Okinawan writers and artists or inviting Okinawan musicians to perform before members of the imperial family have been criticized in Okinawa as government efforts to use the imperial institution as a palliative, to divert attention from--and assuage opposition to--government policies with a negative impact on Okinawa, such as imposing 75% of the total U.S. military presence in Japan on a prefecture with 0.6% of the nation's land area.[7]

Besides published criticism of the imperial institution in Okinawa,[8] regular symposia are held at local universities on such topics as the "emperor system" and the Showa emperor's war responsibility. Labor unions, teachers' organizations, and anti-war coalitions have led demonstrations to protest visits there by members of the imperial family and official observances of the emperor's birthday as a national holiday. While these demonstrations have been consistently peaceful, Okinawans opposed to the imperial institution have been involved in a small number of violent incidents.

Publicly expressed antipathy in Okinawa toward the imperial institution relates mostly, though not entirely, to events closely associated with the Showa emperor that occurred during his reign (1926-1989). The first two decades of the Showa Period saw meager allocation of Japanese government resources to its poorest prefecture, severe housing and employment discrimination against Okinawans living on the mainland, and the costliest battle of the Pacific War that took the lives of more than 120,000 Okinawans,

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including thousands of civilians who died at the hands of mainland Japanese soldiers. While Imperial Army atrocities during the battle and other events of the Showa Period are central to an understanding of attitudes in Okinawa toward the imperial institution, it is also important to remember how the Japanese emperor's reign came to be extended there in the first place.

Background

What the Japanese government renamed Okinawa Prefecture in 1879 was most of what had been the Ryukyu Kingdom, established in 1429 with the unification of three regional kingdoms.[9] During the four and half centuries of its existence, the Ryukyu Kingdom maintained a formal tributary relationship with China. Although Ryukyu paid ceremonial homage and sent emissaries to the Ming court, China did not seek to exercise political authority there, and the tributary missions were highly lucrative for the Ryukyu court and merchants. Ryukyu also carried on a flourishing trade and cultural exchange with China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia.

In 1609 Daimyo Shimazu Iehisa of Japan's southernmost Satsuma-*han* (fief) sent an army of samurai to assert his regional dominion over the Ryukyu Kingdom after King Sho Nei refused to recognize it. Tokugawa Ieyasu had designated Shimazu "Lord of the Southern Islands" as part of the settlement negotiated with local daimyo to secure Tokugawa authority over all of Japan after Ieyasu's decisive victory in 1600 at the end of a long period of civil wars. For the next 270 years, the Shimazu daimyo levied taxes and imposed administrative controls in Ryukyu, but ordered that an appearance of Ryukyuan independence be maintained, particularly when Chinese diplomats and trade missions visited the kingdom. By imposing this contradictory policy in Ryukyu, the Satsuma daimyo could reap benefits from the kingdom's international trade while simultaneously enhancing their prestige and influence with the Bakufu as overseers of a foreign kingdom. It was also useful for providing the Tokugawa Bakufu access to China, indirectly through Ryukyu 's tributary missions, since there were no diplomatic relations between China and Japan where the Bakufu limited overseas trade to a small and strictly controlled volume at Nagasaki.[10]

In sharp contrast to the Satsuma daimyos' efforts to maintain the appearance of an independent--or at least distinct--Ryukyu, the Meiji government from the early 1870s moved to secure control over what it renamed Okinawa Prefecture in 1879. Its purpose was to eliminate vestiges of the kingdom--material and symbolic--in order to absorb Okinawa into a political, ideological, and cultural national polity centered on the Japanese emperor. China, which claimed suzerainty over the kingdom as a tributary state, protested in vain Japanese claims of sovereignty.[11]

The Japanese government offered China the smaller and less populous southern Ryukyu islands of Miyako and Yaeyama in exchange for recognition of Japanese control over the Okinawa and Amami islands in the north along with trading privileges and concessions in China. However, China refused to accept this agreement. Meanwhile, in March of 1879, the Meiji government publicly announced the "Ryukyu disposition" *(shobun)* to abolish the kingdom completely, having previously reduced it to a *han* (fief) of Japan in 1872. Sho Tai, the last king, was forcibly exiled to Tokyo. As

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Japan's central government appropriated more and more authority, residents of Okinawa bridled at the appointment of officials from the mainland who often showed disdain for local people and imposed harsh assimilationist policies.

Yet, even in the face of such policies and attitudes, opinions among people in Okinawa Prefecture remained divided over its future political direction. The Japanese government implemented a wide-ranging campaign against such local customs as the consulting of shamans, the wearing by men of topknots, and the tattooing by women of their hands to signify passage into adulthood. Government officials deemed these customs culturally, and therefore politically, incompatible with their conception of a unified and "modernized" nation. But assimilation also brought significant economic and technological benefits to the small but influential Okinawan elite, which received higher education on the mainland. Some started businesses on the mainland, and growing numbers of Okinawan youth found employment there that helped support their families back home. The local intelligentsia were split between what was called the *ganko-to* (stubborn faction), which opposed assimilation and favored continued tributary ties with China, and what was called the *kaika-to* (enlightened faction), which favored increased assimilation.

Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 convinced many Okinawans that identification with the victorious nation, rising in wealth and status, promised a better future. The pro-China faction rapidly declined, and newspaper editorials advocated thoroughgoing assimilation with Japan in areas ranging from education to styles of dress. Among the population at large, boys now voluntarily abandoned the traditional topknot and pin for the crewcut hairstyle popular on the mainland, and girls began wearing mainland-style kimono. People changed their family names to mainland pronunciations so that, for example, "Kanagusuku" became "Kinjo". In the more prestigious schools, teachers and students alike encouraged the use of "standard" (i.e., Tokyo) Japanese while students were punished and humiliated for use of Ryukyuan language in school.[12]

In 1887 the central government made Okinawa the first locality where portraits of the Meiji Emperor and Empress, called *go-shin'ei,* were stored in special structures built on the school grounds. Students were required to bow deeply to the structure when they arrived at school in the morning and left in the afternoon.[13] Members of what had been the Ryukyu nobility were assigned court ranks within Japan's imperial peerage. Among them was the last Ryukyu king, Sho Tai, who received the title of "marquis" *(ko-shaku).* The government in Tokyo also ordered the rearranging of statuary and the redesigning of architecture in shrines and temples to show that local deities were now incorporated into the national Shinto pantheon. The Bureau of Shrines reasserted the emperor's divine descent from the sun goddess Amaterasu-omikami, and directed that Shinto worship take precedence over Buddhist, Christian, and local religious observances. The traditional divinities worshipped in Okinawa at local field, forest, and oceanside shrines *(utaki)* were transformed into guardian gods defending the Japanese empire.[14]

With the death of Emperor Meiji in 1912 and his widow in 1914, "worshipping from afar" ceremonies were held throughout Okinawa to

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focus respect on the imperial palace in Tokyo. And every city, town, and village was required to celebrate the accession of Emperor Taisho. In the 1920s Tokyo ordered the building of new Shinto shrines and the remodeling of old ones to add torii gates and other Shinto architectural symbols.[15] These costly projects, paid for by local tax moneys, placed a financial burden on what was then, and remains today, Japan's poorest prefecture. When the world collapse of sugar prices in 1921 devastated Okinawa's economy, the result was widespread bankruptcy and food shortages.

To promote the imperial institution, members of the imperial family frequently visited Okinawa, and the Imperial Household Ministry *(Kunaisho)* made token grants of relief funds when there were droughts and typhoons. It was a source of local pride when a warship commanded by Captain Kanna Kenwa from Okinawa brought Crown Prince Hirohito there for a one-day visit in 1921 on the first stop of a celebrated tour of Europe. This, despite widely heard rumors that prejudice over Kanna's Okinawan origins had delayed his promotion to the top ranks of the Imperial Navy.[16] However, like later imperial visits to Okinawa, this one was not greeted with universal jubilation. According to the Imperial Household Ministry's own official record of the visit, the response of people who were mobilized to line the procession route "conspicuously lacked enthusiasm."[17]

The Showa Legacy

After the Manchurian Incident leading to the creation of the dependent state of Manchukuo in 1932, the government ordered local shrines to house and support Shinto clergy from the mainland, yet another financial burden.[18] The government and press repeatedly exhorted adults and school children for unwavering loyalty to the emperor and willingness to sacrifice their lives for the Japanese state, particularly after the outbreak of full-scale war in 1937. An editorial in the Kyuyo Shimpo, published in Osaka by leaders of Kansai's growing Okinawan community, marked the first anniversary of its founding by noting that "our newspaper's birth just after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident closely links it with the nation's destiny. . . .To report the arduous battles of the Imperial Army is our patriotic mission."[19] The paper published detailed accounts of sacrifices made by Okinawans on the battlefront and the home front. It printed the names and brief biographies of men departing for and returning from the China front, and of Okinawan dead. Headlines extolled "deaths with honor in battle" and "the silent return of heroes." A lead article in 1939 urged Okinawans to "be ready to serve with honor as Imperial Army soldiers in this time of crisis, and to shoulder your rifles at a moment's notice if summoned by his Majesty."[20]

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Emperor Hirohito as supreme commander

Renowned Okinawan historian Asato Nobu wrote the following year to mark the elaborate official celebration in 1940 of the 2,000-year anniversary of the Japan's mythical founding by the first Emperor Jimmu. "Buoyed by the great spirit of the nation's founding, our empire pushes forward to establish the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as the basis of a new world order, adopting the southern advance as our national policy. The mission of Okinawans at the front lines in the southern strategy becomes increasingly vital. The duty of the people of our prefecture, galvanized by the spirits of our august ancestors, is to contribute to this national policy."[21]

Okinawans recall the exhilaration of the early years of the war. Many welcomed the opportunity to express loyalty as citizens of a modern nation that had already defeated China and Russia and was on the winning side in World War I. Fujioka Hiroshige remembers feeling dissatisfied at the age of eighteen with his status as a "home front youth" *(gunkoku shonen)* when he heard about the start of war in the Pacific, and decided to volunteer for the military.

> My blood had been stirred by the string of victories in the Manchurian, Shanghai, and China Incidents, and I firmly believed, as did most Japanese, that Japan, the eternal land of the gods, was sure to win the Pacific War. . . It made me want to be a soldier even more. . . . I vowed to die in battle, and might even have volunteered to be a human torpedo if I'd had the chance. . . . Of course, today when I remember such proclamations, as "victory is certain," issued by the "national movement for spiritual mobilization" *(kokumin seishin sodoin),* they sound like slogans for some fanatical new religion or lines from a Kyogen comedy.[22]

Others who write in retrospect on this period describe different responses. Born in 1935, Yamashiro Kenko recalls that his elementary school classmates found some unintended humor in the daily cacophony of slogans and admonitions.

> We were taught that Japan had a single line of emperors that would continue forever and that, as the country of the gods, it would never lose a war. The emperor was an all-knowing, all-powerful living god who controlled everything, so we were told that, when we died, we had to raise both arms and yell "Long live the Emperor." Jokesters among us would

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> "practice dying" on the way to and from school, falling down by the side of the road while yelling, "Long live the Emperor." Some students even said that the emperor's shit must taste sweeter than sugar.[23]

Born in 1925, Takada Hatsu recalls feeling antipathy toward the indoctrination that filled her days at school.

> I first learned the meaning of war as a second-grader when I had to join a funeral procession to the shrine for a man who died at the front in China. After seeing his bereaved family, I found the increasingly militaristic curriculum at school hard to bear. [24]

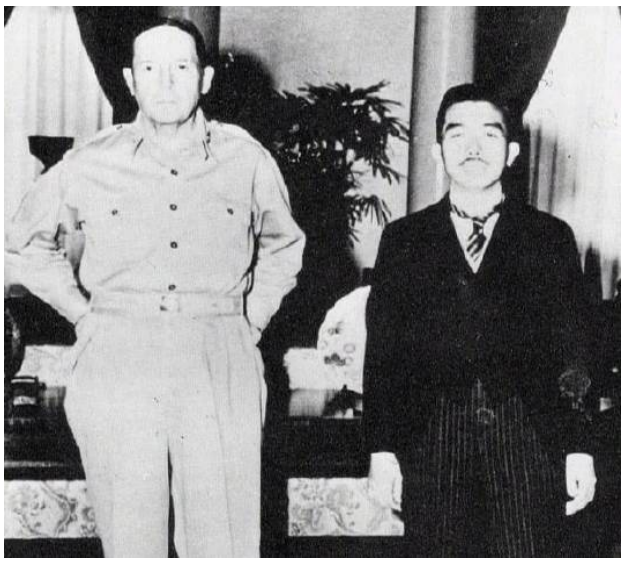
These diverse accounts all convey the ubiquitous intensity of wartime exhortation. Relentless indoctrination starting in elementary school in a militaristic, emperor-centered ideology would lead many youth to embrace the war effort with catastrophic consequences.

In 1979, thirty-four years after the Battle of Okinawa, an American veteran from Rhode Island showed me a diary he had found in Okinawa shortly after organized Japanese resistance ended in late June of 1945. The writer was a 16-year-old Okinawan boy who had joined the local defense forces *(boeitai)* to repulse the invasion of the American "devils." His daily entries frequently mentioned his desire to show his Japanese spirit, *"Yamato damashii,"* and to die, if necessary, for the sake of the emperor. Published firsthand accounts of the Battle, such as the late Jo Nobuko Martin's autobiographical novel on the Himeyuri Student Nurses Corps, confirm that such sentiments of sacrificial loyalty were frequently expressed and acted upon by Okinawan youth, both women and men, girls and boys.[25]. Most of the Himeyuri nurses, many in the local defense forces, and tens of thousands of Okinawan civilians followed Imperial Army orders and went to their deaths.[26]

Most deaths were from enemy fire, but many resulted from the actions of "friendly forces" *(yugun).* After U.S. artillery and infantry destroyed their fortified positions in central Okinawa, Japanese soldiers made a long, chaotic retreat south, frequently turning murderously on local civilians. They executed Okinawans as "spies" simply for speaking to each other in the local dialect.[27] They ordered people sheltering from the battle in underground caves to move outside into deadly enemy fire so the soldiers could make room for themselves. They seized dwindling food supplies, causing widespread starvation. And, as noted above, soldiers coerced local residents, mostly women, children, and the elderly, to commit compulsory group suicide to avoid capture by the enemy. Imperial Army officers told civilians that the Americans would rape the women, torture captives for information, then massacre them. People killed themselves and relatives around them with hand grenades Japanese forces distributed for this purpose, or with kitchen knives, razor blades, or other household or farming implements turned into instruments of death. In desperation, some beat relatives with rocks or clubs, or used ropes to strangle them and commit suicide. Okinawans were exhorted to die joyfully for the emperor rather than become prisoners-of-war. And they were ordered at all costs to transport the emperor's portrait safely from school grounds during evacuations. Allowing it to get wet, lost, or captured could result in execution.[28]

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During the early postwar period that began with the Allied Occupation of mainland Japan (1945-1952), the emperor and the imperial institution were often portrayed in the Occupation-censored press as nonpolitical proponents of cultural tradition whose aspirations had been thwarted by the military.[29] The Japanese government joined with the Americans in promoting Hirohito as the peace emperor who bravely intervened to end the war. Yet, even before postwar revelations and the release of documents rendered this view untenable, both Okinawans and mainland Japanese occasionally commented on how the characterization of Emperor Hirohito after the war was conspicuously at odds with his widely publicized wartime appearances as commander-in-chief who issued bellicose pronouncements and was photographed in military uniform astride a white horse.



Emperor Hirohito and General MacArther, September, 1945

The Showa emperor's postwar image as a peacemaker suffered its biggest loss of credibility after publication of his own account of wartime events, as recorded by one of his closest advisors. The manuscript was discovered among the posthumous possessions of Terasaki Hidenari, who served as the emperor's interpreter and as his liaison to Allied Occupation Headquarters. Terasaki died in 1951, and his record of the emperor's dictated account created a sensation when the *Bungei Shunju* magazine first printed it in the December, 1990 edition. The next year Bungei Shunju Press published it with Terasaki's diary as a best-selling book.[30] The monologues *(dokuhaku-roku)* of March and April, 1946, offered the emperor's account of the first twenty years of his reign as told to several court officials, Terasaki among them. The emperor confirms that he personally interviewed civilian and military leaders in early 1945 and rejected the advice of former Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro to end the war immediately, siding instead with the army and navy for a final "decisive battle" that he assumed would be in Okinawa.

Konoe's recommendation was based on fears that internal dissent in a continuing war could be exploited to provoke a Communist revolution. The emperor rejected it because he hoped, unrealistically, that if Japanese forces could hold out, the Soviet Union would honor the Neutrality Treaty it had signed with Japan in 1941 and play an eventual role in negotiating a settlement.[31] Five months later in June of 1945, when Japan's top policymakers acknowledged that the war was lost, debates among them over acceptable surrender terms focused on the the imperial house. Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes that, after receiving a copy of the Potsdam declaration on July 27, "Hirohito's first and foremost preoccupation was the preservation of the imperial house."[32] Accounts of this period by Okinawans

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emphasize the sacrifice of Okinawa to serve the interests of the emperor. Senaga Kamejiro writes that "The emperor could have made the decision to end the war, but he prolonged it out of concern for his own personal safety *(jibun jishin no mi no anzen)*. . . and to preserve the emperor system."[33]

Military historian Edward J. Drea writes that Hirohito tried to intervene in tactical decisions in the Battle of Okinawa:

On 3 April [1945], two days after the American landings on the island, Hirohito told:

> [Army Chief of Staff] Umezu [Yoshijiro] that defeat would cause people to lose confidence in the Army and Navy. Couldn't the Thirty-second Army on Okinawa attack the Americans somewhere? If they didn't have enough troops, how about staging a counter- landing?[34]

The enormous sacrifices on both sides in this battle, including an approximate total of 200,000 dead[35], seem particularly outrageous to Okinawans because the Japanese military had decided six months earlier to abandon the prefecture as a "throw-away stone"*(sute-ishi),* a piece which is sacrificed, like a pawn, in the game of go. Okinawan civilians, including schoolchildren, were mobilized for a protracted war of attrition that Japan's military leaders hoped would inflict high American casualties, slowing the Allied advance, and buy time to prepare for an anticipated invasion of the mainland. They also hoped that high American casualties would lead the U.S. to accept surrender terms more favorable to Japan rather than risk an invasion of the Japanese main islands.



FIGURE 81.—Civilians of Okinawa, casualties from the battle areas, await their turns at the military government medical aid station, Gushikhan, Okinawa, June 1945.

Civilian refugees in the Battle of Okinawa

In 1979, a decade before publication of Terasaki's papers, the emperor's image had already suffered a damaging blow in Okinawa with the de-classification of a 1947 memorandum by General MacArthur's political advisor William Sebald. In the memo to MacArthur, Sebald summarized his conversation with Terasaki who, in his capacity as court liaison to Occupation headquarters, had conveyed the emperor's views on Okinawa's future status. Made available by the U.S. National Archives in March, the memo was discussed in the Diet in April, and published in the May, 1979 issue of the magazine Sekai (World). Sebald's memo, like Terasaki's record of the Showa emperor's 1946 soliloquies, stirred outrage in Okinawa. Known as "the Okinawa message" *(Okinawa messeji)* on the mainland, in Okinawa it is often referred to as "the emperor's message"*(tenno messeji).*

According to Sebald's text, "Mr. Terasaki stated that the Emperor hopes that the United States will continue the military occupation of Okinawa and other islands of the Ryukyus. In the Emperor's opinion, such occupation would benefit the United States and also provide

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protection for Japan . . . after the Occupation [of mainland Japan] has ended."[36] The U.S. had earlier indicated its intention to maintain control of strategically located Okinawa, even after the Allies concluded a peace treaty with Japan.[37] Okinawans have viewed the emperor's message as his effort to use Okinawa again as a "throw-away stone," in this case to secure an early and favorable end to the Allied Occupation of mainland Japan. His offering of Okinawa to the U.S. has been compared to the Meiji government's 1880 offering of Yaeyama and Miyako islands to China in an effort to settle the dispute that followed Japan's unilateral declaration of sovereignty over the Ryukyus. In Diet deliberations on the memo held in April of 1979, Okinawan Lower House Representative and Japan Communist Party member Senaga Kamejiro charged that the emperor's message constituted unconstitutional interference in the affairs of state.[38] The emperor's statement has also been viewed in Okinawa as an attempt to curry favor with Allied occupation authorities to protect himself and the imperial institution.[39]

Protests and Violence

Public criticism of the emperor and the imperial institution was less common in Okinawa during the early postwar years. University of the Ryukyus literary historian Okamoto Keitoku points out that, in the early 1950s, local accounts of the battle condemned atrocities by Japanese soldiers and war in general, but did not criticize the Japanese state, the emperor, or the emperor system.[40] At this time, a return to Japanese sovereignty was thought by a large majority of Okinawans to be their best hope for ending the denial of political, civil, legal, and property rights, along with the dangers, disruptions, and indignities imposed by U.S. military colonization.[41]

As a U.S. Army draftee stationed in Okinawa for eight months during 1967-68, I observed almost daily protests, including marches, picketings, and sit-ins reminiscent of civil rights demonstrations in the U.S. Protesters opposed war in Vietnam, military occupation *(gun-senryo),* and rule by an alien people *(i-minzoku shihai).* They demanded "reversion to Japan" *(Nihon fukki),* a nation described as a democracy governed under a "peace constitution" *(heiwa kempo).* This characterization seems oversimplified, considering the presence of U.S. bases on the mainland, the Japanese government's support of U.S. intervention in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and the constitutional issues raised by Japan's Self-Defense Forces. But it is easy to understand why status as a prefecture in a country where civilians governed and the standard of living was steadily rising seemed preferable to military rule and a third-world military base economy in which the main "industry" was the "service sector" with bar hostess, prostitute, and maid as major occupations.[42]

Okamoto writes that public debate over the "emperor system" didn't really begin in Okinawa until after reversion had been negotiated in 1969, around the time Kawamitsu Shin'ichi published a 1970 essay entitled "Thought in Okinawa on the Emperor System."[43] By this time, with reversion slated for 1972, Okinawan intellectuals began to express concern about the failure of school texts to address Japan's wartime aggression and the emperor's wartime role.[44] From this point on, antipathy toward Hirohito and opposition to the "emperor system" were regularly expressed, often with passion, by

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Okinawan educators, students, political parties, labor leaders, anti-war activists, authors, journalists, and people with memories of the battle.

A professor at the University of the Ryukyus in his mid-fifties, interviewed in 1998, recalled first learning about the "emperor system" and Showa history on a visit to Tokyo around 1965. A few years later he discussed the issue of the emperor's war responsibility with other students at the university he attended in Okinawa, and came to favor abolition of the imperial institution which he viewed as a "totalitarian symbol that could be used by the government to manipulate people in a crisis." In 1998, the manager of a small apartment building in her early forties said that she first heard about the emperor from her father, a Battle of Okinawa survivor, who denounced *(warukuchi)* the emperor as responsible for the war, and especially for the battle. She also believes the Showa emperor bears major responsibility for the war, and that, because Okinawa was the only prefecture in Japan subjected to ground fighting, its relationship with the imperial institution is different from that of other prefectures.[45]

The conditions for reversion, which left the vast U.S. military presence there largely intact, reminded Okinawans of past discrimination suffered under imperial rule. The reversion agreement" *(henkan kyotei)* came to be called "the prejudiced agreement" *(henken kyotei)* in Okinawa. Okinawan writers and activists protested the Japanese government's acceptance of the 1969 reversion agreement that perpetuated the U.S. militarization of Okinawa and the 1970 renewal of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty with provisions that expanded the right of the U.S. military to use bases in Japan for logistical support in Vietnam and other areas of conflict.[46] As demonstrations against the reversion agreement and renewal of the Security Treaty raged during the final years of widespread student activism in Japan, Okinawans were involved in two violent outbreaks of anti-emperor protest.

In what was called the "Tokyo Tower Incident," Tomimura Jun'ichi, an itinerant worker from Okinawa, took an American missionary hostage on the observation platform of Tokyo Tower on July 8, 1970. Shortly after his arrest, the press quoted him as having yelled "America, get out of Okinawa" and "Japanese, shut up about Okinawa." The press did not initially report that he had written on his body a demand for an accounting of the emperor's war responsibility. It was only during Tomimura's trial in 1971 that his action was recognized as a denunciation of the emperor.

In an essay written partly in prison entitled "From the Depths of Bitterness" (Onnen no fuchi kara), Tomimura describes himself as a lumpen proletarian who had dropped out of school as a teen-ager. Arrested in Okinawa for stealing and for illegally entering an American base, he spent time in a local jail where he participated in a riot of the inmates. After his release, he traveled to the mainland, working as a longshoreman and manual laborer in several localities where he experienced prejudice as an Okinawan. These experiences, he said, led to his bitterness against the emperor who personified the Japanese state that continued to exploit and sacrifice Okinawans.[47]

On September 25, 1971, four young men from Okinawa attempted to force their way onto the

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grounds of the imperial palace shouting that the emperor was a war criminal and demanding cancellation of his impending visit to Europe. Such confrontational anti-emperor actions were rare. However, numerous peaceful protests occurred as the debate over the emperor and "emperor system" widened and deepened among Okinawans following announcement of the terms of the reversion agreement. Three years after reversion, protest demonstrations were organized, largely by local labor unions, to oppose the visit to Okinawa of then-Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko (now Emperor and Empress) for the July 1975 opening ceremonies of Ocean Expo *(Kaiyo-hakuran-kai)*. Demonstrators marched carrying banners and placards in peaceful protest.

During this visit the prince and princess traveled to Himeyuri Shrine on July 17 to honor the teenage school girls drafted as battlefield nurses who had died during the Battle of Okinawa. The Japanese government had dispatched 2400 special security forces from the mainland to augment the 1400 prefectural police on patrol during the prince and princess's visit. Nevertheless, protestors hurled a bottle of burning gasoline at the couple's motorcade as it passed through Itoman City en route to Himeyuri Shrine, and another in their direction as they stood before it. The second firebomb burst into flames three or four yards from the prince, the princess, and a Himeyuri Student Corps survivor who was explaining the corps' history. None of them were hurt, but a guard from the Imperial Household Agency was injured when the suspects were arrested. Three weeks later four men in their twenties, two from Okinawa and two from the mainland, were indicted. This attack was vigorously denounced in Okinawa by local educators, political parties, and labor unions. Organizers of the peaceful demonstration against the emperor's visit condemned the violence as damaging to their cause and as "terrorism that distorts the true voice of the Okinawan people."[48]

Protests were also held when Okinawa was designated as site for the 1987 National Athletic Meet *(Kokumin tai-iku taikai)*, an annual event customarily attended by the emperor. Again, labor leaders organized demonstrations, denouncing the emperor's proposed visit as "exploitation of the National Athletic Meet to promote emperor politics;" and, as ignoring "the history of the emperor's discrimination against Okinawa."[49] Teachers led public forums for critical discussion of the visit on April 29, Emperor Hirohito's birthday and a national holiday. Negative reaction in Okinawa, compared with the lack of controversy over his attendance at National Athletic Meets held previously in other prefectures, again revealed the high levels of Okinawan criticism of the emperor and the imperial institution. In the end, the emperor, who had become seriously ill, did not attend the 1987 meet.

Reaction in Okinawa to the Showa emperor's death

Okinawa's two daily newspapers reported the emperor's death two years later on January 7, 1989, in ways that differed significantly from reporting in other Japanese newspapers. First of all, the word *"hogyo"*, denoting the "death of an emperor or empress,"[50] which was used elsewhere in Japan on January 7, did not appear in the main headlines of either Okinawan daily. Instead, *"go-seikyo,"* a "term of respect for the death of another person"[51], was used. Hosaka Hiroshi of the Department of Journalism at the University of the Ryukyus

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explained the reason for choosing *"go-seikyo"* in Okinawa on January 7 as "consideration for the special sensitivities of the people in the prefecture."[52]

Coverage in background articles in Okinawa on January 7 focused on the Showa emperor's connections with Okinawa's history, especially during and after the war. The *Ryukyu Shimpo* printed his postwar public statements about Okinawa, highlighting his expressed, but unrealized, desire in the final months of his reign to visit the prefecture "as soon as possible when my health recovers. . . . I want to comfort the spirits *(rei o nagusame)* of those who died in the war, and express my appreciation for the suffering *(kuro o negiraitai)* of the people in the prefecture." In other statements quoted, the emperor said in 1962 that he was "encouraged to hear about efforts for postwar recovery *(sengo fukko)* in Okinawa." At a press conference in 1965, seven years before reversion, he was asked about people in Okinawa who were hoping he might visit. He replied that "there are now many difficult questions regarding the status of Okinawa; if I went, it would be sometime in the future, so I cannot say definitely now whether or not I will go." On September 8, 1969, in the midst of reversion negotiations between Japan and the U.S., the emperor was quoted as saying to a group of reporters that "I have deep sympathy for the people in Okinawa hoping for reversion to the homeland *(sokoku fukki)*. I want the people of Okinawa to trust that our government is making every effort." On May 15, 1972, the day of reversion, he was quoted as saying, "I fervently hope for utmost efforts in development and construction of a peaceful and prosperous Okinawa Prefecture." On June 11, 1984, the emperor presented the Imperial Award *(onshi-sho)* to University of the Ryukyus Professor Nakasone Seizen who had been one of the teachers supervising the Himeyuri Student Nurse Corps, and had written about this experience. The emperor is quoted as saying, "The Second World War must have been a terrible time for you." *(Dai-niji-taisen no toki wa, taihen datta desho.)*

All these statements were presented in the *Ryukyu Shimpo* without comment on January 7, the day of the emperor's death. No mention was made in this article of his role in the Pacific War, his decision to order a battle that devastated Okinawa at a time when Japan's defeat was a foregone conclusion, or his support for prolonged U.S. military occupation after the war. Nor was there reference to criticism in Okinawa of Professor Nakasone for accepting the Imperial Award. However, shortly before and soon after the Showa emperor's death, Okinawa's newspapers covered public discussion of the Showa emperor's wartime responsibility and of demonstrations opposing the imperial institution. Like many journalists, labor leaders, and teachers in Okinawa, the editors at both of Okinawa's daily newspapers have been strongly critical of the imperial institution. Author Arakawa Akira and the above-cited Kawamitsu Shin'ichi, who have published critical essays in books and journals, have served, respectively, as president and vice-president at the *Taimusu*. The *Shimpo* reported on December 22, two weeks before the emperor's death, that Yamauchi Tokushin, mayor of Yomitan Village in central Okinawa, had stated the previous day, in response to a question at a village council meeting, that he agreed with Mayor Motoshima Hitoshi of Nagasaki who had said at a meeting of the Nagasaki City Assembly on December 7 that the emperor bore responsibility for the war.[53] Motoshima had

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added to reporters later that, in his opinion, "if the emperor, in response to reports from his senior statesmen, had resolved to end the war earlier, there would have been no Battle of Okinawa and no nuclear attacks on Hiroshima or Nagasaki."[54] Mayor Motoshima, who was only stating established historical fact, was subsequently seriously wounded in an assassination attempt by a mainland Japanese.

Like Motoshima, Yamauchi stated that the emperor was "the person with the greatest responsibility" *(saiko sekinin-sha)* for prolonging the war. Both Nagasaki and Yomitan have special significance in the war and its aftermath. Nagasaki, of course, was devastated by the atomic bombing of August, 9, 1945. The U.S. Navy base at Sasebo is nearby. Yomitan Village, the site of a Japanese Imperial Army airfield, was a target of the initial amphibious assault by U.S. forces landing on Okinawa Main Island April 1, 1945. Much of it is still occupied today by Kadena Air Base, the largest American air base in Asia and a continuing source of noise, accidents, and serious crimes committed against Okinawans by U.S. forces stationed there.

In the month following Motoshima's and Yamauchi's statements and twelve days after the Showa emperor's death, the *Okinawa Taimusu* printed an article attributed to the Kyodo news service under the headline "Large crowds attend rallies against the emperor system." It reported that, during the week following the emperor's death, overflow gatherings for protest demonstrations of citizens groups in Tokyo, Kyoto, and other cities had surprised everyone, including the organizers, with their numbers and intensity. Participants were quoted as especially critical of media coverage following the emperor's death, which, they said, projected a "mood of emperor-glorification" *(tenno sambi no mudo)*[55]. These protests might suggest that the potential for organized opposition to the imperial institution on the mainland has been underestimated. Many such demonstrations had, of course, been taking place in Okinawa since reversion.

Recent Imperial visits

Four years after the Showa emperor's death, the visit of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko to Okinawa in April of 1993 on the occasion of the annual Arbor Day Festival *(shokuju-sai)* provoked criticism in the press and among local educators. Both local newspapers emphasized that this was the first visit ever of a reigning emperor in the history of Japan's monarchy. They pointed out that Akihito's father had traveled to Okinawa as crown prince in 1921, and had visited every other Japanese prefecture after becoming emperor. While Governor Nishime Junji of the ruling conservative "Liberal Democratic Party" (L.D.P.) had welcomed the 1987 visit to "bring an end to the postwar period,"[56] a *Taimusu* editorial criticized it eight years later as an attempt by the L.D.P. to "beautify" the emperor's image *(tenno bika)* in Okinawa.[57] A *Shimpo* editorial printed during the 1993 visit quoted the words of consolation Emperor Akihito offered to the survivors of the Battle of Okinawa. While noting that his statement reflected a deeply felt hope for peace, the editorial explained that the suffering of the Okinawan people during and long after the battle, which took more than 200,000 lives, was directly related to Japan's "emperor system." Many Okinawans, as well as mainland soldiers, perished in the name of the emperor. It concluded that at least some Okinawans were

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displeased that Emperor Akihito's words were devoid of any reflection on this fact.[58] In its April 23 evening edition, the *Taimusu* published statements protesting the visit issued at a conference of the Okinawa Teachers Union's youth and women's committees that was attended by about 100 members on April 22. The teachers wrote that "This way of observing Arbor Day diverges far from its intended purpose of spreading the philosophy of afforestation; it has become a ceremony centering on the emperor and promoting his beautification." They also protested the "oppressive assault" and "overreaction" of heavy-handed security measures that included visits to people's homes.[59] On April 27, the *Taimusu*_quoted an interview with Governor Ota Masahide, elected in 1990 with support from a coalition of opposition parties. While calling the visit a success, he emphasized that it "in no way marks an end to the postwar era in Okinawa where many problems remain."[60]

In June of 1995 Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko visited Okinawa to attend ceremonies observing the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Okinawa. June 23, officially identified as the day the battle ended, is observed in Okinawa as "Memorial Day" *(irei no hi),* an annual prefecture-wide holiday. Their visit stirred less controversy than the couple's previous visits as crown prince and princess in 1975, and as emperor and empress in 1993. On this occasion, they were two of many dignitaries who attended, including Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi and ambassadors from the United States and South Korea. American veterans of the battle also participated at the invitation of the Okinawa Prefectural Government. In 1985, while still a professor at the University of the Ryukyus, Ota Masahide had criticized plans for the proposed visit of the Showa emperor to attend the 1987 National Athletic Meet.[61] Ten years later as governor he issued a brief statement welcoming the emperor "to come and offer condolences as a symbol of state," emphasizing his postwar constitutional role, and hosted a reception for the imperial couple at the prefectural government offices.

As for published commentary on the 1995 visit, a *Taimusu* article on June 25 mentioned that the emperor and empress also planned to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki for fiftieth anniversary observances, but "with the many victims in Okinawa of civilian massacres by the Imperial Army *(kogun)* during the Battle, feelings of people in the prefecture about the emperor's visit are complicated *(fukuzatsu)*." The article also noted that the emperor's traditional visits to the local venues of such annual events as the National Athletic Meet and Arbor Day are made at the invitation of local organizers. In contrast, this visit was "quite exceptional" *(kiwamete reigai)* because it had been "planned actively" *(sekkyoku-teki ni keikaku suru)* at the request of the emperor and empress. Finally, it quoted a 71-year-old woman from Naha interviewed at the ceremony in Itoman unveiling the Cornerstone of Peace *(heiwa no ishiji)* memorial to the dead in the Battle of Okinawa, completed shortly before the fiftieth anniversary observances. Its sweeping rows of stone panel monuments, a design reminiscent of Washington's Vietnam Memorial, is engraved with the names of persons, grouped by nationality, known to have died in the battle. "I wish Emperor Showa had come here just once," the woman said. "I wanted him to apologize to the people of Okinawa."[62]

Responses to the imperial family's gestures at reconciliation

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In recent years, members of the imperial family have made conspicuous efforts to convey what has been widely referred to as a "special feeling" or, in author Takahashi Hiroshi's words, a "deep understanding" for Okinawa. As the *Okinawa Taimusu* noted, the emperor and empress took the highly unusual step of initiating a request to visit when they attended the 1995 Memorial Day ceremonies instead of responding to a local invitation.[63] That same year Prince Akishino chose the *yuna* (lion's cup) as the floral emblem *(o-shirushi)* for his second daughter, born in 1995. Often associated with Okinawa in painting and literature, the subtropical *yuna* grows there and in Southeast Asia. Okinawa's press covered the official announcement as a minor news story. The choice of *yuna* was interpreted as a gift from the imperial family in recognition of Okinawa's wartime ordeal on the 50th anniversary year of the conflict's end. Two Okinawan university professors I interviewed in 1999 were more skeptical, however, calling it yet another effort to improve the image *("imeji uppu")* of the imperial institution in Okinawa.

Commenting on what he called Emperor Akihito's "deep understanding" of Okinawa, Takahashi Hiroshi wrote in the February, 1999 issue of the semi-official English language magazine *Japan Echo* on the emperor's studies of "the Okinawa problem:"[64]

> What's not well known is that [Emperor Akihito] was already at the time [he was crown prince] engaged in serious research into the Okinawa problem. . . . During a gathering in the memorial hall [in Okinawa] dedicated to the remembrance of the Okinawan war victims, there were so many war bereaved packed into the room that the air conditioners did little to help; it was like a sauna in there. But even though sweat was streaming off the prince and princess, they remained respectfully motionless, not once using their handkerchiefs. Over time, the crown prince paid numerous visits like this, and at last people came to recognize that he had a deep understanding of Okinawa and its people. A sign of this understanding remains today on the nearby island of Ie in the form of a stone tablet inscribed with a poem composed by the prince during a tour of Ie, the site of a particularly ferocious battle during World War II.[65]

Many Okinawans object to the term "Okinawa problem," used here by Takahashi, because it implies that Okinawans, and not the American and Japanese governments, are somehow to blame for the prolonged postwar occupation and continuing U.S. military presence. Okinawans might also object to Takashashi's mention in passing of Okinawa's "war victims" and "war bereaved" as a prelude to his elaborate praise for the sweating imperial couple's stoicism in refraining from using their handkerchiefs. Okinawa's summer heat "like a sauna." The crown prince and princess's visits are remembered there at least as much for the enormous police presence and the 1975 firebombings as for their attendance at memorial ceremonies. Since Takahashi's article, Emperor Akihito has spoken publicly of his interest in Okinawa. Interviewed at the Imperial Palace on November 12, 1999, for the tenth year commemoration of his reign, he was asked to comment on the legacy of World War II. In his response he spoke mostly about Okinawa, mentioning the battle and explaining that he had begun his studies of Okinawa's history and culture while he was still crown prince.

A truly tragic battle unfolded in Okinawa

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which, besides soldiers, involved many people of the prefecture. Countless lives were lost. Moreover, Okinawa went through 27 years under U.S. administration before finally being returned to Japan. I believe all Japanese must never forget the hard road seeking reversion to Japan. I turned my attentions to the history and culture of Okinawa because it was my duty, with the reversion, to understand Okinawa's history and culture as I joined in the welcoming. [66]

Using such passive voice expressions as "unfolded" and "countless lives were lost," the emperor's statement applies the same rhetorical strategy as pronouncements about the battle by government officials that make it sound as if some natural disaster had occurred, ignoring the responsibility of the Showa emperor, the Japanese military, and the American military for the devastation.

In 1999, the Imperial Household Agency invited Okinawan celebrities, including the rock band "Speed" and singer Amuro Namie, Japan's most famous pop music superstar at the time, to perform at a concert held in the palace environs to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Emperor Akihito's reign. Their appearances at this event were strongly criticized by Okinawans in the prefecture and on the mainland. A university professor I interviewed a year earlier expressed regret that fewer of his students in recent years took an interest in issues associated with the imperial institution, and tended to think of the imperial family as media celebrities who wear the latest fashions and are the subjects of gossip in mainland magazines. Since becoming emperor, Akihito has also invited such Okinawan scholars as linguist Hokama Shuzen to the palace for lectures on Okinawa's history and culture. Reactions to Emperor Akihito's attempt at composing *Ryuka* poetry in Okinawa's traditional 30-syllable (8-8-8-6) verse form were decidedly mixed. His *Ryuka* drew compliments from Oshiro Tatsuhiro (b. 1925), Okinawa's best-known novelist, but Oshiro was chided later by Medoruma Shun (b. 1960), a prolific younger novelist with a growing reputation, for praising "the emperor's lousy *(heta-kuso)* poem."[67] Medoruma also joined other writers in Okinawa who criticized Oshiro, as in the case of Nakasone Seizen, for accepting an imperial commendation, in this case the "Culture Prize" *(Bunka Kunsho),* awarded annually by the emperor.

Summing up

Published and publicly expressed criticism of the imperial institution is far more conspicuous and vigorous in Okinawa than in other prefectures, with some there calling, at least indirectly, for its abolition. Critics point out that the Showa emperor bears responsibility, confirmed by recently released documents but still unacknowledged by the Japanese government, for decisions that brought catastrophic devastation on Okinawa as a sacrificial pawn in the Battle of 1945, and for facilitating the prolonged U.S. occupation and continuing military presence after the war.[68] They maintain that, even today, when the emperor's constitutional role is supposed to be "symbolic," the government in Tokyo exploits this symbolism for propaganda purposes in sacrificing Okinawa to a disproportionate burden of military bases. Interviewed in 1998, a university professor in his late forties said that Emperor Akihito's "special feelings" for Okinawa, whether sincere or not, were being used politically to pressure Okinawa on issues that affect the prefecture.

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Okinawan critics of the imperial institution have also identified it more broadly as the core of a national mythology, espoused publicly by government leaders, which asserts the central position of the emperor, chosen by male succession, and extols the "homogeneity" of the Japanese "race." They argue that such mythology, supported by high government officials, has the effect of devaluing or excluding people of diverse ethnicities and national origins.[69] Interviewed in 1999, the director of a culture center in his early forties strongly advocated abolition of the imperial institution, explaining that officials' public embracing of this mythology has made it easier for the Japanese government to oppress Okinawans. He pointed to officials' widely reported statements in support of it as abetting political, economic, and social discrimination against resident minorities and recent immigrants in Japan. [70]

Finally, in this essay I have discussed the frequency and intensity of published and publicly expressed criticism of the imperial institution in Okinawa. This does not suggest that opinion in Okinawa on this, or any other issue, is monolithic. The two Education Ministry administrators I interviewed in 1998 indicated support for the imperial institution in its postwar form. A senior official at the Ministry in his early fifties said he believed Emperor Akihito felt a special sympathy *(omoi-yari)* for Okinawa. A junior official in his mid-forties said that the Showa emperor bore responsibility for the war, but that the emperor is now without political power and helps to maintain national unity. In his interview, the university professor in his late forties, who was sharply critical of the imperial institution, noted with disappointment that a diminishing number of his students seem interested in the issue.[71] The free-lance journalist in her mid-forties, who indicated that she was unconcerned about the issue, said that it was given exaggerated importance in Okinawa. The apartment manager in her early forties was sharply critical of the imperial institution, but said she was far more concerned about the actions of the prime minister and the Diet who make policies that directly affect the prefecture, such as maintaining U.S. bases there, one of which, the Futenma Marine Corps Air Station, is close to her home in Ginowan. Other critics cited above argue that the government uses the imperial institution to manipulate opinion in Okinawa and dampen opposition to such policies.



Protesting bases

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Notes

[1] Kamata Satoshi, "Shattering Jewels: 110,000 Okinawans Protest State Censorship of Compulsory Group Suicides" This is a slightly abbreviated version of a two-part article translated in Shukan Kinyobi, No. 674 and 676, October 12 and 26, 2007. Posted at *Japan Focus* on January 3, 2008. Also see, in the same issue of *Japan Focus,* an article by Aniya Masaaki and editorials in the *Okinawa TimesAsahi Shimbun* (December 28, 2007) (December 27, 2002) and the on the textbook controversy. The *Okinawa Taimusu* editorial reports that the Education Ministry agreed, after the massive protest in Okinawa and at the request of textbook publishers, to restore the words "Japanese military" *(Nihon gun)*, but in a context that leaves some ambiguity in the relationship between the military and "group suicides."

[2] Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor: Japan at Century's End* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993): 67. Field writes that "Okinawans . . . had been imbued with both the horror and shame (as Japanese) of falling into American hands." (Field, 66)

[3] Kamata, *Japan Focus* (January 3, 2008): 7.

[4] Tsuha Kiyoshi, et al., ed., *Okinawa-ken Heiwa Kinen Shiryo-kan: Sogo Annai* (Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum: Comprehensive Guidebook: Naha: Okinawa-ken Heiwa Kinen Shiryo-kan, 2001): 72.

[5] Figures in Tsuha, et al., 90. Of the 1,780 teenage boys mobilized for the Tekketsu kinno-tai (Emperor's iron and blood corps), 890 lost their lives. (See Arashiro Toshiaki, *Ryuykyu, Okinawa-shi* (History of Ryukyu and Okinawa; Naha, Okinawa, Toyo Kikaku, 1997): 211.) Ota Masahide, a member of the corps who later became a professor at the University of Ryukyus and governor of Okinawa Prefecture (1990-98), wrote in 1953, "I was one of those obedient students who believed unquestioningly what our teachers taught us and what we read in our textbooks—that we must give our lives for the emperor and the nation. We devoted ourselves completely to training our bodies and our minds in preparation for that day." Nakadomari Yoshikane, another teen-age member of the corps, wrote a will to his parents that was found in a cave after the battle. "My body does not belong to me. I am his Majesty's subject. My life was bestowed by Imperial Japan, and I do not hesitate to give it for the nation. This is only natural. I have no regrets about dying, and have faith in our certain victory." Quoted in Nakahodo Masanori, *Okinawa no senki* (Accounts of the Battle of Okinawa; Tokyo: Asahi Shinsho, 1982): 81 and 93, respectively.

[6] See Terasaki Hidenari *Showa Tenno no dokuhaku-roku--Terasaki Hidenari goyogakari nikki*_(A Record of the Showa Emperor's Monologues—Diary of the Emperor's Aide, Terasaki Hidenari; Tokyo: Bungei Shunju-sha, 1991).

[7] *Okinawa Taimusu*¸ April 23, 1993.

[8] In addition to such categories as local history, economy, literature, language, and performing arts, bibliographies published in Okinawa listing books about the prefecture often include a special section titled "tenno-sei" (emperor system). *Amami, Okinawa-gaku bunken shiryo mokuroku* (Bibliography of Published Materials on Amami and Okinawa, June, 1991 edition), published by the Roman Shobo bookstore chain, lists fourteen recent

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books in this section with such titles as *Okinawa kara tenno-sei o utsu* (Attacking the emperor system from Okinawa) by Arazato Kinbuku (Shinsensha, 1987) and *Tenno o kyohi suru Okinawa* (Okinawa's rejection of the emperor), Shakai Hyoron-sha 1987.

[9] Amami Oshima, the northernmost of the major Ryukyu Islands, was part of the Ryukyu Kingdom, but is now administered by Kagoshima Prefecture in southern Kyushu.

[10] See Arashiro, 79-98 and Steve Rabson, *Okinawa: Two Postwar Novellas* (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1996): 7-22

[11] Steve Rabson, "Assimilation Policy in Okinawa: Promotion, Resistance, and Reconstruction," Chalmers Johnson, ed., *Okinawa: Cold War Island* (Cardiff, CA: Japan Policy Research Institute): 133-138.

[12] Ibid., 140-142.

[13] Aniya Masaaki, et al., *Okinawa to tenno* (Naha: Akebono Shuppan, 1987): 82.

[14] George Kerr, *Okinawa: The History of an Island People* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1958): 450-51.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 453-54.

[17] Quoted in Aniya Masaaki, "Tenno to Okinawa no Showa-shi" (The Emperor and Okinawa in Showa History), *Bunka Hyoron* 320 (November, 1987): 80.

[18] Kawamitsu Shin'ichi, "Okinawa ni okeru tenno-sei shiso" (Okinawa and emperor system ideology), *Okinawa no shiso* (Tokyo: Kikurage-sha, 1970): 78-82; and Kerr, 451-53.

[19] *Kyuyo Shimpo* (July 25, 1938).

[20] Ibid.(February 13, 1939).

[21] Aniya et al., 99.

[22] Okinawa Kenjin-kai Hyogo Ken Honbu, ed., *Shima o deta tami no senso*

taiken-shu (Collected war experiences of people who left the islands; Amagasaki: Okinawa Kenjin-kai Hyogo Ken Honbu, 1995): 178-80..

[23] Ibid., 263-64.

[24] Ibid., 198.

[25] Jo Nobuko Martin, *A Princess Lily of the Ryukyus* (Tokyo: Shin-Nippon Kyoiku Tosho, 1984).

[26] Jo Nobuko Martin, *The Ryukyuanist* 20 (Spring, 1993): 4-5.

[27] See Matthew Allen, "Wolves at the Back Door: Remembering the Kumejima Massacres," Laura Hein and Mark Selden, ed., *Okinawan Responses to Japanese and American Power* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003): 39-64.

[28] See Field, 56-69 and Matthew Allen, "A Story That Won't Fade Away: Compulsory Mass Suicide in the Battle of Okinawa," *Japan Focus*, July 12, 2007.

[29] See, for example, Yuri Kaoru, "Heiwa o ai suru kokoro" (A heart that loves peace), *Akiko no shogai* (The life of Yosano Akiko; Tokyo: Saika Shobo, 1948): 23-25.

[30] Terasaki Hidenari (1991). See discussion in Herbert P. Bix, "The Showa Emperor's

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'Monologue' and the Problem of War Responsibility," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 18, 2 (Summer, 1992) and Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, *The End of the Pacific War: Reappraisals* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

[31] Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: HarperCollins, 2000): 489.

[32] Hasegawa Tsuyoshi, "The Atomic Bombs and the Soviet Invasion: What Drove Japan's Decision to Surrender?" *Japan Focus* (August 17, 2007).

[33] Senaga Kamejiro, "Tenno no senso sekinin, sengo sekinin" (The emperor's responsibility for the war and after the war) *Bunka Hyoron* 320 (November, 1987): 45-53.

[34] Edward J. Drea, *In the Service of the Emperor: Essays on the Japanese Imperial Army* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1998): 199.

[35] A recorded 122, 228 Okinawans, including approximately 94,000 civilians and 28,228 in local defense forces or working for the military, 65,908 mainland Japanese, and 12,500 Americans died during the 82 day battle. Tsuha, et al., 90.

[36] "Memorandum for General MacArthur," 20 September, 1947.

[37] Robert D. Eldridge. "Showa tenno to Okinawa: 'Tenno messeji' no saikosatsu." (The Showa emperor and Okinawa: the "emperor's message" reconsidered) *Chuo Koron*_114, no. 1377 (March, 1999): 152-171.

[38] Government officials claimed to "lack sufficient information," and declined comment. *Asahi Shimbun* (February 22, 1989): 13.

[39] Aniya et al., 17-20.

[40] Okamoto Keitoku, "Okinawa ni okeru tenno-sei ron," *Okinawa ni totte tenno-sei to wa nani ka* (Naha, Okinawa: Okinawa Taimusu-sha, 1976):5-14.

[41] Tsuha, 104-5. For comparisons by Okinawans in the 1950s and 1960s of political and economic conditions in Okinawa and on the mainland, see Uezu Hisashi, et al., ed., *Koko ni Yoju Ari: Okinawa Kenjin-kai Hyogo-ken Honbu 35 nen-shi* (The banyan tree here: Thirty-five-year history of the Hyogo Okinawa Prefectural Association; Kobe: Okinawan Kenjin-kai Hyogo-ken Honbu, 1982): 363-372.

[42] Rabson, *Okinawa: Two Postwar Novellas*, 7-22.

[43] Kawamitsu, 78-82.

[44] Okamoto, 5-8.

[45] During the summers of 1995, 1998, and 1999, I conducted open-ended interviews of nine Okinawans, asking their views on the emperor and the imperial institution. I spoke with men and women of various ages. They were three university professors, one university research associate, two administrators at the prefectural Education Ministry, a free-lance journalist, the director of a culture center, and the manager of an apartment building. I had not previously discussed the imperial institution with any of them. The interviews were not intended to be a representative sampling of Okinawan opinion, but were conducted to elicit fuller expressions of individual views than would be possible in, for example, multiple-choice responses to newspaper opinion polls.

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[46] Okamoto, 12-14.

[47] Tomimura Jun'ichi, "Onnen no fuchi kara," *Wan ga umari Okinawa* (Tokyo: Takushoku Shobo, 1972).

[48] *Okinawa Taimusu* (July 18 and August 7, 1975):1.

[49]Ibid. (October 18, 1987): 2.

[50] Shinmura Isuzu, et al., ed., *Kojien* (Iwanami Shoten, 1972): 2012.

[51] Ibid., 1217. Later, some mainland dailies also used the word *"go-seikyo,"* but not until the day after the emperor's death.

[52] *Okinawa Taimusu* (May 7, 1993): 3.

[53] *Ryukyu Shimpo* (December 22, 1988: 11.

[54] Translation in Field, 178.

[55] *Okinawa Taimusu* (January 19, 1989): 1.

[56] Ibid. (October 12, 1985): 3.

[57] Ibid. (April 23, 1993): 13.

[58] *Ryukyu Shimpo* (April 24, 1993): 3.

[59] *Okinawa Taimusu* (April 23 and 24): 2-3.

[60] Ibid. (April 27, 1993): 2.

[61] Ibid. (October 12, 1985): 1.

[62] Ibid. (June 25, 1995): 3.

[63] Ibid. (June 25, 1995): 2.

[64] Takahashi Hiroshi and Tokoro Isao, "Uncertain Future for the Imperial Line," *Japan Echo*_14, no. 1 (February, 1999): 47-53.

[65] Takahashi, 53.

[66] *Okinawa Taimusu* (October 12, 1985): 1.

[67] Interviewed in the magazine *Keeshi Kaji,* no. 13 (November, 1999): 28.

[68] Aniya, et al., *Okinawa to Tenno,* 13-55.

[69] Okamoto Keitoku, "Kindai Okinawa to tenno-sei: sono shoso to mondai-ten."(Modern Okinawa and the emperor system: its aspects and problems), Okamoto, 335-338.

[70] Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro's characterization in 2,000 of Japan as a "divine country centered on the emperor" was criticized by opposition party leaders as reviving an ideology that fueled militarism and aggression during Japan's imperial era. Foreign Minister Aso Taro stated in 2005 that "Japan is one nation, one civilization, one language, one culture, and one race, the like of which there is no other on earth." In 2000, Tokyo Mayor Ishihara Shintaro stated that "many of the atrocious crimes" in Tokyo are committed by "third country nationals," using the derogatory term *(sangoku-jin*), and "foreigners." This claim, unsupported by police statistics, brought calls for his resignation.

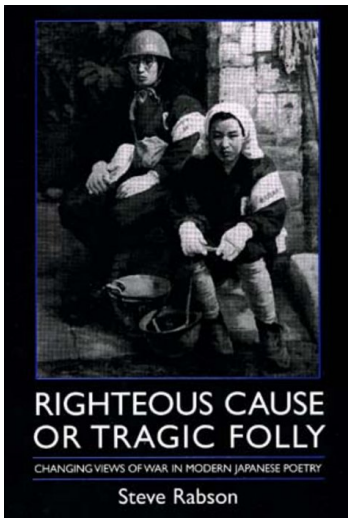
[71] According to opinion polls conducted by the *Ryukyu Shimpo*, 43.4% of respondents expressed ambivalence or indifference toward the imperial institution in March and April of 1987, 24.5% in March of 1995, and 35% in late 2001 for a poll published on New Years Day, 2002.

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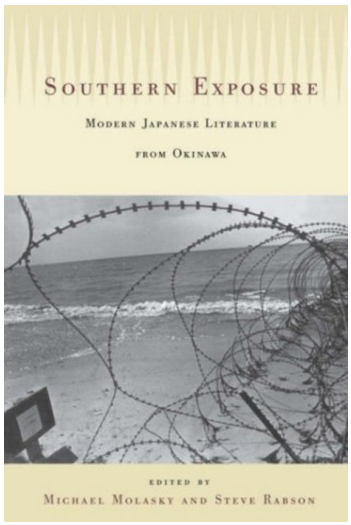
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Japanese Poetry, *and a translator of Okinawan literature.*

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