

ANU Japanese Studies On-Line

ANU Japan Institute

Issue 4/2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. *“Political Leadership in Japan: Are Effective Leaders Possible?”*

Arthur Stockwin, St Antony’s College, Oxford University

Pages 1-18

2. *“Orientalism, Mass Culture and the US Administration in Okinawa”*

Pedro Iacobelli, Australian National University

Pages 19-35

Australian National University, Canberra
JapanInstitute@anu.edu.au

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN JAPAN: ARE EFFECTIVE LEADERS POSSIBLE?

J.A.A.Stockwin*

Introduction

A widespread perception about Japanese political leadership is that by comparison with most parliamentary democracies Japan's leaders are weak. Another way of putting the same argument is that in Japanese politics power is unusually decentralised, or perhaps more accurately, dispersed. The focus of attention naturally falls on the prime minister, who is the figure normally assumed to be at the apex of the system in a Westminster-type system. It is the Japanese prime minister that will be the primary focus of this article.

One indicator of a possible difference in the leadership potential of a Japanese prime minister and his Australian or British counterpart is longevity. In Japan since 1945 there have been 34 prime ministers (Higashikuni to Noda), in Australia 12 (Chifley to Gillard), and in the UK 13 (Attlee to Cameron). Moreover, in Japan recently, prime ministerial turnover has occurred at particularly frequent intervals: since Koizumi Junichiro stepped down in September 2006, six men have occupied the position of prime minister. Of these, Kan Naoto is the first to cross the barrier of a single year in office. Now just because a particular individual spends a long time in post does not mean that he or she is an effective leader. We can think of leaders who have sat around without doing very much other than frustrating others, like elephants in a room. But when, as in Japan recently, prime ministers come and go like flowers after rain in the Simpson Desert, it seems a reasonable presumption that there might be a leadership deficit.

***Emeritus Professor, St Antony's College, Oxford University**

The argument

In constructing the argument of this article, I have been stimulated by a recent book by Ellis Krauss and Robert Pekkanen, titled *The Rise and Fall of Japan's LDP*,¹ which is incidentally the first serious book on the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in English since Thayer's *How the Conservatives Rule Japan* (1969),² and Fukui's *Party in Power* (1970).³ Krauss and Pekkanen adopt a historical institutionalist approach and are critical of rational choice theorists, most notably Ramseyer and Rosenbluth⁴ and their associates, who argue that changing the lower house electoral system in 1994 effected radical change in the LDP-centred political system. By contrast, Krauss and Pekkanen stress institutional complementarity, sequencing and path dependence. Interacting institutions tend to reinforce one another; the order in which changes take place affects outcomes; and the longer things have been done in a certain way, the harder it will be to change.

In their book they address the unexpected failure of the 1994 electoral reform on its own to centralise a decentralised and dispersed power system within the ruling party and government, despite assumptions based on the premises of rational choice that it would do so rapidly. They examine three key LDP institutions, *kōenkai*, *habatsu* and the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC). The *kōenkai*, personal support machines of individual parliamentary candidates — widely expected to give way to unified party branches after the electoral system reform — remained in place and were even strengthened. *Habatsu*, the celebrated factions of the LDP, even though they were no longer needed to support rival LDP candidates in the same multi-member districts (since these had been abolished), were still important players in intra-party power broking. Even though Koizumi was able more or less to ignore factional demands in constructing his cabinets, his successors hardly followed his example. And the PARC, previously the body which deliberated on all policy issues in the first instance, spawning 'tribal' politicians with great influence in certain policy areas, had lost some of its power but still played a significant role.

The first part of the argument that I put forward in this article is that while the exercise of prime ministerial leadership in Japan is and has been subject to many

frustrations, contingent factors are extremely important, and the extent of frustration of the leadership is far from even over time. This leads on to the point that different factors have affected, negatively or positively, prime ministerial leadership at different periods.

The second part of the argument is that whereas many attempts were made to reform the system so as to enhance prime ministerial power, most of these were unsuccessful, or even counter-productive, though a partial exception must be made for the restructuring of cabinet that came into force in January 2001. This leads on to the point, made effectively by Krauss and Pekkanen, that changes in the external environment, most notably the emergence of television and later the Internet as instruments of electoral campaigning, shifted the parameters of the system more effectively than most deliberate attempts at structural reform. Even here, however, stringent restrictions on the political use of the media served to delay and mitigate this effect. The operation of path dependence appears to have been extraordinarily strong in the LDP case.

Thirdly, the personal leadership qualities, and sheer intelligence (or otherwise) of a prime minister, has the potential to make a real difference to leadership capacity and achievement. A thorough understanding of the system, creativity in utilising opportunities it presents to a canny operator, and the ability to forge coalitions of interests, have meant on occasion that a prime minister is able to be much more effective than the system was designed to permit.

Fourthly, veto power over strong prime ministerial leadership has been most effective in those policy areas lending themselves most conspicuously to the distribution of benefits — in other words what Americans have dubbed ‘pork barrel’ policy spheres. These favour the operation of ‘tribal’ politicians and of powerful ministries, much of whose power is based on distribution of benefits. By contrast, foreign policy offers few material benefits to politicians, and thus at times has given political leaders opportunities to take the initiative.

Finally, even though the above relates to the long period of LDP government, since the change of government in September 2009 from the LDP to the DPJ, some

similar factors still apply. For instance *kōenkai* and *habatsu* still constitute an integral part of how the principal government party operates, but at the same time party direction is more centralised than in the days of the LDP, there is no real equivalent of the PARC, and 'tribal' politicians are far less conspicuous. On the face of it, prime ministerial leadership ought to have been strengthened by the change of party in power, but neither Hatoyama Yukio — party leader and prime minister from 2009-10 — nor his successor Kan Naoto showed much evidence of outstanding capacity to lead. This is partly a result of pre-existing institutional, political and even cultural obstacles to the exercise of strong leadership, in part due to inexperience, and in part due to the unfortunate fact that those thrust into the top positions rather lacked the personal characteristics that a leader needs to be effective.

Structural Factors Affecting Leadership under LDP Governments

Krauss and Pekkanen, with their historical institutionalist focus, place great emphasis on the early establishment of regular LDP presidential elections as acting to weaken central party leadership. This was a function of two parties — Liberals and Democrats — amalgamating in 1955 to form one party, but preserving strong loyalties to their original groups, which until the merger had been in fierce competition with each other. Regular party presidential elections thus became an established feature of intra-party management in the LDP, which in its early years was fractious and disunited. But since the president of a party holding a semi-permanent majority of lower house seats was bound to become prime minister, competition for the post was intense, and required careful organising. This requirement had the effect of turning loosely articulated personal factions into the 'divisions of the LDP army' as they were described at the time in the mass media. This leads us to one of the most crucial aspects of Japanese politics under LDP dominance, that the party's internal *habatsu* were a special sort of entity, tightly organised, hierarchical, functioning to channel funds and positions to their members, and very different from the informal groups in other parties. In some ways they were parties within a party, having their own histories and traditions, going back years or even decades, but they did not campaign under factional labels.

For party coherence, it soon became evident that without the principle of fair shares and rotation of posts, it would be difficult to hold the party together. In the early years after 1955, factional rivalries were intense and at times disruptive. But two principles were gradually established that served to preserve reasonable intra-party stability. One was that no party president (prime minister) should be able to remain too long in post, so that no major faction would be too long excluded from the top position. On the same principle, cabinet and party posts were frequently rotated, with allocation of positions resulting from regularised bargaining between the prime minister and LDP faction leaders. The other was a strict seniority principle in promotion to cabinet and party positions, whereby arrival at a particular level in the hierarchy depended essentially on the number of times a parliamentarian had been elected.

Any discussion of LDP *habatsu* must take into account the role of the *kōenkai*, the personal support machines constructed by nearly all LDP (and other party) parliamentarians as the most effective means of maximising electoral support. It seems probable that the extraordinarily strict campaigning rules that forbid door-to-door canvassing, and greatly inhibit the use of television and other mass media, are a key causal factor explaining the resort to *kōenkai*, and it is worth noting that these restrictions still apply. Though looser than they used to be, the links between *habatsu* and *kōenkai* remain strong. If party branches were the principal organisations to which candidates looked for local support, the top leaders of the party would no doubt be able to exercise greater control over campaigning. But they can have little influence over the totality of candidates' *kōenkai*.

As briefly mentioned above, under the LDP proposed legislation had to be submitted to the PARC before being considered by the prime minister and the cabinet. Within the PARC certain politicians acquired policy expertise in particular areas, and emerged as the phenomenon known as *zoku giin*, or 'tribal' parliamentarians, who interacted intensively with public servants and interest group representatives, leading to policy-related 'iron triangles'. Thus great areas of policy-making were placed out of the range of influence by the top government leaders.

Notoriously also, the tradition of bureaucratic dominance was strong, and symbolised by the *jimu jikan kaigi*, or meeting of permanent vice ministers of government departments, that met weekly and pre-digested policy decisions meant for cabinet. Cabinet meetings were sometimes described by participants as brief document-signing exercises.

When we consider all these factors, it seems surprising that prime ministers were able to exert any substantial influence on policy-making at all. What then, about the attempts to reform the system that took off in the 1990s, under the influence of reformers like Ozawa who wished to restore to prime minister and cabinet what the reformers saw as their rightful executive prerogatives. Krauss and Pekkanen convincingly argue that the electoral law reform of 1994 had far less effect than widely predicted. On the other hand, Hashimoto Ryūtarō, prime minister from 1996 to 1998, put in train a package of reforms that came into effect in January 2001, reorganising government departments by widespread amalgamation, and strengthening prime minister and cabinet with the addition of junior ministers and the formation of the *naikakufu*, or cabinet office. Koizumi Junichirō, who became prime minister a few weeks after the reforms were implemented, made effective use of the new dispensation to assert his policy-making dominance in the areas that interested him. In particular, he single-mindedly utilised the Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy (*keizai zaisei shimon kaigi*) in order to remedy the difficulties of the banking system and speed economic recovery from the 'lost decade'. He was able to outflank the members of his own party hostile to privatising postal services and handsomely won the lower house elections of September 2005. However one feels about Koizumi's direction of policy, particularly on postal services privatisation and policy towards China, it seems difficult to escape the conclusion that his grip on policy (at least on the policy areas that interested him) was exceptional.



Note: In May 2001, the election poster of popular Prime Minister Jun'ichiro Koizumi becomes a surprise best-seller. A little more than a week after the poster went on sale for 50 yen each, 300,000 copies were sold. By July, a whopping 600,000 posters were sold, or as many as 10,000 copies per day. The poster shows a forward-looking Koizumi with the slogan, "Lend your strength to Koizumi's challenge" and "OK, let's reform."

Post-Koizumi political leadership

It therefore seems extraordinary that his successors, Abe Shinzō, Fukuda Yasuo and Asō Tarō, were unable to replicate his example, were forced into brief tenure and (with the partial exception of Abe) had little serious policy innovation to their credit. I shall not examine their leadership in any detail, but merely point out the new factor inhibiting the exercise of leadership by a prime minister created by the LDP defeat in the upper house elections of July 2007. Given that the House of Councillors has a power of veto over legislation coming to it from the House of Representatives much stronger than that in other comparable legislatures, if the government party or parties do not enjoy a majority in the upper house as well as the lower, this is a major obstacle to a government's legislative program.

This in turn reflects the emergence of far more volatile electoral behaviour than was the norm up to the 1990s. Successive prime ministers have enjoyed favourable levels of support at first, but this has rapidly declined, sometimes to catastrophically low levels. Thus it is not surprising that the runaway LDP victory in the lower house elections of 2005 was almost exactly reversed in favour of the DPJ in the lower house elections of 2009.

The Hatoyama government, formed in the aftermath of those elections and based largely on the DPJ, came to office with high ambitions and a list of manifesto commitments. Its success in breaking the grip on power held by the LDP over many

decades was dramatic. Moreover, it lacked some of the obstacles to effective leadership that had often hamstrung LDP leaders. It was in a dominant position in both houses of Parliament. Hatoyama did not have to contend with an equivalent of the PARC, nor of the *zoku giin*. Even though most of its parliamentarians had campaigned on the basis of their local *kōenkai*, DPJ factions were not so tightly organised as their equivalents in the LDP (though the Ozawa faction was a partial exception to this), and the leaders were determined to prevent a take-over of policy-making by the public service. Right at the outset, the new government proceeded to slash areas of public expenditure that had resulted from 'pork-barrel' politics, most notably in the area of dam construction.

So why did support for the Hatoyama government drain away so quickly, leading to a serious reversal in elections for the House of Councillors held in July 2010? One reason was that the DPJ had made promises in its 2009 election manifesto that were difficult to deliver because of the level of indebtedness in the public finances. A certain amount could be achieved through retrenchment of needless public spending, but not enough to satisfy an electorate attracted by promises of improved child welfare and improvements in welfare services more generally.

Another reason was that the DPJ was untried in government. Few of its members (Ozawa being an exception) had ever served in public office, and its leading members had little experience of the kinds of interactions with external bodies that any government must learn how to manage. In addition, the party consisted of members from a variety of political and ideological backgrounds, from the left to the right. Although much the same could be said about the LDP, in the DPJ case the party's foundation and later reorganisations were too recent to have permitted adequate consolidation of party processes. Over its short history it had experienced several changes of top leader, and relations among the leaders still in contention were notably unstable. The most serious fault line, however, was between Ozawa on the one hand and Kan Naoto on the other. Ozawa was a controversial figure who combined a radical reformist vision, well articulated policy ambition (new politics) with the kinds of 'money and influence' politics that found their origins in the former Tanaka faction of the LDP (old politics). Kan, his experience of politics derived from long service in 'citizens' movements', was more to the left and more pragmatic, yet

lacking Ozawa's flair. But Ozawa was a problem for the party in another way: from early in 2010 (and earlier) he had come under suspicion for dubious financial dealings in his personal organisation, forcing him to step down as leader early in 2009 when the party was still in opposition, and then having to resign his posts in mid-2010 at the time when Hatoyama — also facing problems concerning political money — resigned as prime minister.

The spectacle of Hatoyama and Ozawa, two of the leading lights of the government and party, both stepping down as a result of alleged financial improprieties, was most disillusioning to the electorate, which turned on the new government in the upper house elections of July. Kan succeeded Hatoyama as prime minister in June 2010, but then had to face an unsuccessful challenge to his DPJ leadership in September from Ozawa. Throughout the Kan prime ministership, the party and government were riven by the rivalry between these two men.

A further reason for Hatoyama's fall was his handling of the issue of the US Marine base at Futenma in Okinawa. The way he went about dealing with the relocation of the base was not conspicuously perspicacious, though the rigidity of American policies also did not help resolution. In part, Hatoyama was handicapped by the DPJ coalition arrangement with two other minor parties, including the Social Democratic Party, which held uncompromisingly to the proposition that the base should be moved out of Okinawa, preferably outside Japan. It had been probably unwise to take the SDP into coalition in the first place, but the DPJ on its own was just short of a majority in the upper house. The defection of the SDP from the coalition in June precipitated Hatoyama's resignation as prime minister.

Kan Naoto as prime minister faced severe challenges, not least the aftermath of '3/11', as the earthquake, tsunami and subsequent nuclear crisis are increasingly being called. To some extent the triple disaster strengthened his political position, and in June 2011 he survived a motion of no-confidence in his regime. But his public approval ratings fell to low levels, and he resigned in August, being succeeded as DPJ Representative and Prime Minister late in August by Noda Yoshihiko.



Note: On June 15, 2010 the Chair of the DPJ Election Campaign Strategy Committee Jun Azumi held a press conference at party headquarters to introduce the new DPJ poster for the House of Councillors campaign. The poster is a shot of then DPJ President Naoto Kan in shirt sleeves with the slogan “Restore Japan’s Vitality”.

Contingent Factors and Prime Ministerial Leadership

By comparison with other functioning democracies, the influence of a prime minister over policy making in Japan has undoubtedly been weak, and the reasons for this have been canvassed above. Nevertheless, there are exceptions, and it is the exceptions that suggest a much more nuanced understanding of the issues than the 'weak prime minister' stereotype. I shall take the examples of several past prime ministers before the advent of Koizumi, attempting to show that the obstacles and opportunities facing them evolved over time, and that contingent factors were important, including most conspicuously the native abilities of the persons concerned.⁵

Yoshida Shigeru (prime minister 1946–47, 1949–54)

Krauss and Pekkanen make much of Yoshida as a counter-example, arguing that he exercised a great deal of personal power on many fronts, and that he was largely in control of policy-making. But the objective situation Yoshida was facing differed fundamentally from that which prevailed at the height of the '1955 system' from the 1960s to the 1980s. In the early years of his supremacy he was protected by the Occupation, both implementing and modifying aspects of Occupation policy. Once his Liberal Party had convincingly won the general election of December 1949, he was protected by the Occupation's purge edict, which had removed from active politics a number of his potential political rivals. He was therefore able to dominate the party and make it his own bailiwick. This is something that no LDP leader was able to do, with one possible exception, as we shall see. But once the purge edict was

lifted, and then, in April 1952, Japan regained its independence, Yoshida's power gradually slipped away. By any reckoning, Yoshida — author of the policies later dubbed the 'Yoshida Doctrine' of minimal defence effort but reliance on the US for security — was Japan's great post-war prime minister, but it is difficult to generalise from his case.

Kishi Nobusuke (1957–60)

Kishi has been much reviled by commentators, and with good cause, for his attempts to roll back many of the democratising reforms of the Occupation, having been a pillar of the wartime regime. Even so, from the perspective of policy effectiveness, he achieved certain successes. Although he failed in his attempt to revise (strengthen) the Police Law in 1958, his initiative in proposing to the Americans a radical revision of the Japan–US Security Treaty of 1952 succeeded, despite huge problems. Granted that the price of success on this issue was loss of his position as prime minister, the revised 'Mutual' Security Treaty has proved permanent. There were enormous demonstrations from the Left against the treaty, leading to his humiliating decision to cancel President Eisenhower's visit, but more effective was the decision of rival LDP factions to turn against him. This episode presaged the role of factions in limiting a prime minister's real power.

Ikeda Hayato (1960–64)

If Kishi was an ideological leader, seeking by all means at his disposal to jump Japan into a right wing reactionary political mode, Ikeda was, in great contrast, a leader who rejoiced in the *tei shisei*, or low profile approach to politics. When confronted by a contentious political issue, he sought to defuse it, as in the case of the report of the commission on constitutional revision, which he succeeded in shelving. He was also deliberately low key over foreign policy issues. Rather, he steered Japan into the calmer waters of rapid economic growth, recognising that the economic 'miracle' already under way had the potential to change Japanese society out of all recognition, and in the process (so he thought) to consolidate conservative politics against threats from the radical Left. Ikeda had his problems with rival factions, but during his tenure the LDP had not yet developed the more sclerotic features of the 1955 system, so that for the most part he was able to have his way on policy issues. In my opinion, Ikeda

was one of Japan's greatest prime ministers, steering his country along a path towards economic stardom rather than political adventure.

Satō Eisaku (1964–72)

Satō succeeded Ikeda when the latter fell ill with cancer in 1964. He remained in office for longer than any prime minister since a parliament was first inaugurated in 1890 — some seven and a half years — and nobody has beaten his record since. A key reason for this was an astonishing piece of good luck for him, namely that his three most serious factional rivals, Ikeda Hayato, Kōno Ichirō and Ōno Banboku, all died within a year of his assuming office, being succeeded by much less effective faction leaders. But the longevity of Satō was not all down to luck, since personal qualities played a conspicuous part as well. Even though he was the younger brother of Kishi (the difference in surname relating to a *yōshi* adoption), he was far more moderate and cautious, moving right when it suited the occasion, but not dogmatically. He negotiated with successive US presidents about the return of Okinawa and on various defence and economic issues. Sometimes, as on textiles, his relations with the American authorities were confrontational. On Okinawa, he was ultimately successful. He showed an acute sense of political timing, allowing student radicals in the late 1960s to alienate public opinion sufficiently that when he struck with repressive legislation, the electorate would respond favourably. It was only when President Nixon took the rug from under his feet by announcing that he would visit China that Satō's power slipped away.

Tanaka Kakuei (1972–74)

By contrast Tanaka did badly on longevity in office, but he is famous for having gone right outside normal bureaucratic channels in his approaches to China, using intermediaries of his own choice. Tanaka is a good example of how resourcefulness and lateral thinking could open up channels of policy-making that bypassed the normal avenues of obfuscation, but he was undone in the end by his equally innovative approach to the financing of political campaigns. His sobriquet of 'Shadow Shogun' was well deserved. Parallels with Ozawa Ichirō, never prime minister but hugely influential, merit exploration.

Miki Takeo (1974–76)

Despite leading a small faction with a clear ideological position rather to the left of the LDP mainstream, Miki became prime minister after Tanaka's downfall, and proceeded to act in ways untypical of LDP leaders. In particular, he allowed the investigation to go ahead into Tanaka's part in the Lockheed scandal that broke early in 1976, something that a more typical and conservative leader would probably have suppressed. He lasted a full two years in post, in part because of an implicit threat to pull his followers out of the LDP should he be ousted from his position. This, however, did not secure his position indefinitely. He was in the top position on sufferance, and did not survive much beyond two years.

Ōhira Masayoshi (1978-80)

As leader of what had been the Ikeda faction, Ōhira with Tanaka faction help used the newly instituted primary election for LDP leader to undermine the prime ministership of the conservative Fukuda Takeo. In post, he innovated by setting up a number of advisory commissions on important policy issues, and in relation to the philosophy of national defence, he pioneered the term 'comprehensive security', venturing far wider than conventional defence specialists were normally prepared to go in examining various non-military aspects of security. Ōhira's survival depended on close co-operation between his own faction and that of Tanaka, but his government was eventually undermined by factional rivals incensed by the way he had scuppered the administration of his predecessor. A no-confidence motion against him was passed, he dissolved parliament and declared general elections, but died during the electoral campaign.

Nakasone Yasuhiro (1982–87)

Along with Koizumi, Nakasone is one of the few names of Japanese prime ministers widely remembered outside Japan. He, like Ōhira, was vitally dependent on support from the Tanaka faction. Building on pioneering work done during the Ōhira period, he set up a number of commissions, on education, economic policy and defence, and promoted privatisation of the National Railways, telecommunications and other areas. Relatively conservative in his political instincts, he had the personal charisma that allowed him to walk tall with international leaders such as Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. One local politician told me at the time that Nakasone was

shidōsha rashii shidōsha ('a leader that seems like a leader'). He managed five years in office, but in the later stages his popularity was fading, and not all of his initiatives bore fruit.

Hosokawa Morihiro (1973–74)

Hosokawa led a fragile but reformist coalition government (that excluded the LDP) for several months in 1973–74. Ozawa, rather than Hosokawa, was the leading strategic force in the coalition, whose sole substantial success was a radical reform of the lower house electoral system. Even so, the Hosokawa government placed system reform onto the serious political agenda, and heralded a turbulent period of reform and reaction across the political scene.

Murayama Tomiichi (1994–96)

Murayama, leader of the Japan Socialist Party, was the unlikely beneficiary of an LDP plot to oust the coalition by bringing over their ancient political enemies the Socialists into a coalition of convenience. He was prime minister for 18 months — a period that covered the Kobe earthquake and the release of Sarin gas on the Tokyo Metro. Despite the devastating effect of Socialist participation in this coalition, Murayama was able to promote some policies that the LDP would never have done on their own, notably a forthright prime ministerial apology to Asian nations on the 50th anniversary of the 1945 defeat, and a more positive approach towards wartime 'comfort women' in Korea and elsewhere.

Hashimoto Ryūtarō (1996–98)

Hashimoto, a veteran LDP politician from the Tanaka stable, who took over from Murayama in January 1996, saw the LDP regain its majority in the House of Representatives as the result of defections from other parties. Perceiving the structural weakness of the position of prime minister (and indeed of prime minister and cabinet), he was able to put in place structural reforms to the public service, as well as strengthening central leadership, though these would not come into effect until January 2001. Hashimoto was a strong, perhaps underestimated, prime minister, whose term in office was ended by a tax rise decision that resulted in poor results in an upper house election.

Obuchi Keizō (1998–2000)

Obuchi, like Hashimoto, was a politician schooled in the Tanaka Kakuei tradition, who proved more of an activist during his two years in office than many expected. He engineered a short-lived coalition arrangement with Ozawa's Liberal Party, and a much longer-lasting one with the Kōmeitō. He also succeeded in putting into law a bill to permit wiretapping in certain circumstances, and a law to require schools to raise the national flag and have pupils sing the controversial national anthem.

Mori Yoshirō (2000–01)

Mori, who became prime minister when Obuchi suffered a stroke in April 1999, soon got into trouble for his unguarded remarks and what was seen in the media as irresponsible behaviour. He was the butt of innumerable jokes during his brief tenure. Nevertheless, he was active in foreign policy areas, most notably negotiating with the Russian authorities over the Northern Territories issue, and in fostering relations with Africa. It is also significant that the transition from Obuchi to Mori was also a leadership transfer from the Tanaka faction tradition of pragmatic politics based on distribution of benefits, to the Fukuda faction tradition, which is ideologically right wing, and went on to dominate the LDP leadership until 2008. This is a point that is made much of by Gavan McCormack in his book *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace*,⁶ and also from the other side of the argument by a leading Fukuda faction supporter I have interviewed. I do not entirely agree with McCormack's tendency to elide differences between the various leaders concerned, in particular Koizumi and Abe. Nevertheless, it seems clear that an important change took place in April 2000, when Mori replaced Obuchi.

Conclusions

Krauss and Pekkanen's study of the LDP in power is a magnificent starting point for a study of political leadership in Japan. The authors rightly emphasise the constraints on the power of a prime minister, created by a government and ruling party structure that had the effect of dispersing power to an unusual extent when compared with democracies in other advanced countries. A system based on *kōenkai* and the *habatsu* that to a large extent funded them, the primacy of the PARC as a policy-making body, a politically dominant public service, a limited number of cabinet ministers and a

prime minister without even the constitutional right to present legislation to parliament, presents a prime minister with obstacles unimagined in Australia or the UK. The reforms of 2001 constitute an important breach in the model of dispersed power that prevailed, and of course the change of government in 2009 broke apart some aspects of the old system, even though the consequences are hardly encouraging so far.

The first part of my argument, however, is that a few prime ministers, even under the old dispensation, were able to exert a good deal more political influence than the system ought to have permitted them. In my opinion, the secret of their (relative) success was an ability to form strategic alliances. With the party as a battleground between the factions, it was important for a prime minister to be able to appoint the LDP secretary-general from his own faction. This, however, was not always permitted (Krauss and Pekkanen, pp. 212–13). But further than this, to exercise influence a prime minister needed to forge alliances across the party and government structure. This was easier at some times than at others. Contingent factors were therefore of prime importance in determining success or failure.

The second part of the argument is that most attempts at reform were surprisingly unsuccessful. In other words, the existing system was entrenched to an extraordinary degree, and has proved far less easy to shift into a new gear than most commentators had assumed. Since the millennium, even though Koizumi cannily utilised the Hashimoto reforms that had just come into effect when he took office, his successors quickly fell back into the old ways of doing things.

Thirdly, and Koizumi exemplifies this, personal qualities were also crucial. Tanaka's famed ability to motivate bureaucrats and to bypass normal channels with policy-making structures of his own creation is well known. Nakasone's unusual ability to project international charisma not only impressed foreign leaders of a similar political persuasion, but also increased his popularity at home. Koizumi's enigmatic persona, laconic utterances and flamboyant persona were an important part of his appeal, especially to the urban young. And he was shrewd in his ability not only to play the system but also to bump it into new modes of operation. But so many other prime ministers lacked this kind of ability.

Fourth, and this is a point emphasised by Krauss and Pekkanen, the pork-barrel areas of policy making have been those most difficult to reform. This, perhaps, was because these were the areas that were the nub of the old system where there was greater resistance to change.

Finally, how far has the change of government in 2009 affected the system as such? Some changes have been made, but there is no breakthrough. Moreover, a new obstacle to strong leadership has appeared in the shape of an upper house exercising veto power over the lower house. The unedifying spectacle of the LDP, desperate for the pork-barrel benefits of power, blocking budget-related bills in the midst of a national emergency, testifies to the continued strength of entrenched ways of doing politics.

The future of political leadership in Japan is murky. The Kan Government has been replaced by an administration led by the uncharismatic Noda Yoshihiko, still based on the DPJ. The blocking power exercised by the House of Councillors is deeply dysfunctional and hinders the proper workings of government whenever the two houses have different majorities. When other, earlier, structural restrictions on central power were beginning to fade, this one has taken their place. Superficially, it might be argued that such blocking power entrenches democratic checks and balances, as in the United States. The Japanese system, however, is very different from the American, and much more akin to the British, where however the upper house (House of Lords) by convention almost always refrains from blocking important legislation. One effect of this in Japan is that in circumstances of rough balance between two parties or groups of parties, almost the only way to ensure stable government is to create some sort of grand coalition. The LDP in its heyday was itself a kind of grand coalition, against which the so-called 'opposition' parties could hardly compete. If a grand coalition should emerge in the future, this would probably experience the problems of most grand coalitions, namely the production of lowest common denominator policies. This is hardly the result to be desired given the gravity of Japan's current problems. On the other hand, there is little evidence so far that the LDP, in opposition since 2009, has managed to reform itself in ways that would enable it to give Japan the political leadership and stability it requires.

The DPJ in office has performed below initial expectations, partly because of inexperience, partly because of structural and cultural obstacles, and in good part also because of uninspired leadership. It has, however, not been without achievement in the face of an appalling series of natural disasters, and has been slowly gaining experience in how to run a government. It has a maximum of two years before it needs to hold elections, and that time there is at least some prospect of improved political performance. For this to be realised, improved leadership will be needed.

¹cknowledgement

This article is based on a presentation to the Biennial Conference of the Japanese Studies Association of Australia (JSAA) held at Melbourne University in July 2011.

End Notes

Ellis S. Krauss and Robert J. Pekkanen, *The Rise and Fall of Japan's LDP: Political Party Organizations as Historical Institutions*. Ithaca NY, 2011.

² Nathaniel B. Thayer, *How the Conservatives Rule Japan*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1969.

³ Haruhiro Fukui, *Party in Power: The Japanese Liberal-Democrats and Policy-Making*. Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1970.

⁴ J. Mark Ramseyer and Frances McCall Rosenbluth, *Japan's Political Marketplace*. Cambridge MA and London, Harvard University Press, 1993.

⁵ As mentioned, Japan has had many Prime Ministers over the last three decades. Those not considered in the following section, in chronological order, are: Fukuda Takeo 1976-78; Suzuki Zenko 1980-82; Takeshita Noboru 1987-89; Uno Sosuke June -Aug 1989 (68 days); Toshiki Kaifu 1989-91; Miyazawa Kiichi 1991-93; Tsutomu Hata 1994; Abe Shinzo 2006-07; Fukuda Yasuo 2007-08; and Aso Taro 2008-09.

⁶ Gavan McCormack, *Client State: Japan in the American Embrace*. London and New York, Verso, 2007.

Additional Reference

Stockwin, J.A.A.. *Governing Japan: Divided Politics in a Resurgent Economy*. Malden MA and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, (Fourth edition). 2008.

Orientalism, Mass Culture and the US Administration in Okinawa

Pedro Iacobelli*

Introduction

In this article I examine the historical, political and cultural phenomena related to the United States military occupation of Okinawa after World War II. I argue that the US authorities encouraged an ‘Orientalist’ discourse about Okinawa in order to justify their own position in the islands. This discourse can be found in the post-war mass culture products which called for an American intervention in the Ryukyu Islands. In order to interpret this discursive process, I have found useful to borrow concepts from different theorists. In particular, Edward Said’s work on Orientalism, Michel Foucault’s theory on the creation of discourse and Frederic Jameson’s theory on mass culture have inspired this essay.

This essay is divided in three sections. First, I set the context for the American position in Okinawa in the early 1950s. I argue that the wartime US role and structure of governance in Okinawa had to be redefined in order to combine the post-war US military objectives in the region and the welfare of the local population. Second, I scrutinise the formation of a new historical narrative on Okinawa during the post-war years. Indeed, the US authorities developed a new cultural discourse about Okinawa which emphasised the uniqueness of the Okinawan people. Here I argue that the Americans depicted the Ryukyans as the ‘Other’, in a fashion that benefited their own interests there. This representation was partly based on the stories and travel diaries written by sailors and explorers in the nineteenth century, but it was also a

*** PhD Candidate, School of Culture, Language & History, Australian National University**

a product of the cultural and historical contingencies of the Cold War years. Third, I analyse in sociological terms the story of the singular US 1956 film ‘The Teahouse of the August Moon’. This story, oriented to an American audience, describes an Okinawan village and reproduces the above-mentioned new discourse on Okinawa. I argue that this story, as a mass culture product, tells us more about the Americans and the American objectives in the region than about the social and political situation in post-war Okinawa.

The post-war US military position in Okinawa can shed light on contemporary issues and problems in Okinawa. Although the American administration of Okinawa ended in 1972, Okinawa has kept its military nature due to the ongoing presence of American military and Japanese Self Defence bases. Thus, this essay analyse the early stage of a process which has not concluded.

Historical Context and Redefinition of the US military role and structure of governance in Okinawa

The United States defeated the Japanese forces and attained control of Okinawa prefecture in June 1945. In August 1945, Japan surrendered to the allies, and like the rest of the country, Okinawa became an ‘occupied enemy territory’ until the treaty of San Francisco went into effect in 1952.⁷ The United States government, while preparing the end of the occupation in mainland Japan, organised a dual system of government in the Ryukyu Islands. On the one hand, the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu (USCAR), established in 1950, could exercise all the rights of sovereignty over the Ryukyu Islands. On the other hand, the local Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI), created in 1952 to ‘further the economic, governmental and social well-being of the Ryukyuan people’, could exercise ‘all powers of government within the Ryukyu Islands’.⁸ In sum, the San Francisco system gave birth to a new hybrid state.

The American position in Okinawa needs to be analysed within the framework of the first years of the Cold War. The triumph of the People's Army in China and the outbreak of the Korean War hastened the negotiations between Washington and the Japanese government to conclude a peace treaty and bring to an end the post-war occupation. The term 'San Francisco System' has been used to refer the Japan's peace treaty with other 48 countries and Japan's alignment with the United States policy. From an American point of view, the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty (SFPT) and the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in 1951 legalised — and more importantly perpetuated — its hegemonic military position in the Pacific.⁹

The American retention of the Ryukyu Islands was widely discussed in the years prior the SFPT. Okinawa had become a US military hub to support military action in East Asia and an important link in the US defence perimeter in the Pacific.¹⁰ Thus, the US government considered the long-term retention of the Ryukyu Islands an essential element in their strategic plan in East Asia. Consequently, in the SFPT the United States claimed the rights of administration over the Ryukyu Islands from Japan.¹¹

This meant that the United States could use Okinawa's soil for military purposes but also that, at least in the eyes of international public opinion, the American government was responsible for the local population. Since US troops were no longer an occupation force, and the Okinawans were no longer the enemy, the US military's structure and role (or its discourse) in Okinawa had to be redefined.¹² In terms of the military structure, the chain of command governing Okinawa was modified in December 1950 when the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) was established.¹³ The new structure of governance was headed in Tokyo by the Commander in Chief, Far East who became the 'Governor of Okinawa'. Also based in Japan, the Commanding General, Ryukyu Command became the 'Deputy Governor' (and from 1957 was called 'High Commissioner'). Finally in Okinawa itself, the military structure was completed with the 'Civil Administrator' who was until 1962 an army active-duty member.¹⁴ In sum, due to its strategic weight the Ryukyu Islands were kept within the American Far East Command and the chain of command was superficially adjusted. As in the novel *The Leopard* we could say: 'if we want things to stay as they are, things will have to

change'; the chain of command was modified to remain the same. The new structural element was the creation of an agency (USCAR) to perform the duties of sovereignty over the civilians. But ultimately, the island and its inhabitants remained subject to the military's decisions.

Orientalism and the construction of a new historical narrative in Okinawa

The SFPT made the American government responsible for the local population. It should be noted that before and during the war the United States claimed not to seek aggrandisement, but nevertheless, it retained possession of the Ryukyu Islands.¹⁵ In the 1950s, terms like 'The Rock' to refer to the island of Okinawa, or any detrimental expression against the Okinawan people or culture, so common in the early post-war years, were no longer valid in the American Okinawa.¹⁶ Instead, a new historical narrative which emphasised the local culture and the US mission in Okinawa was developed.

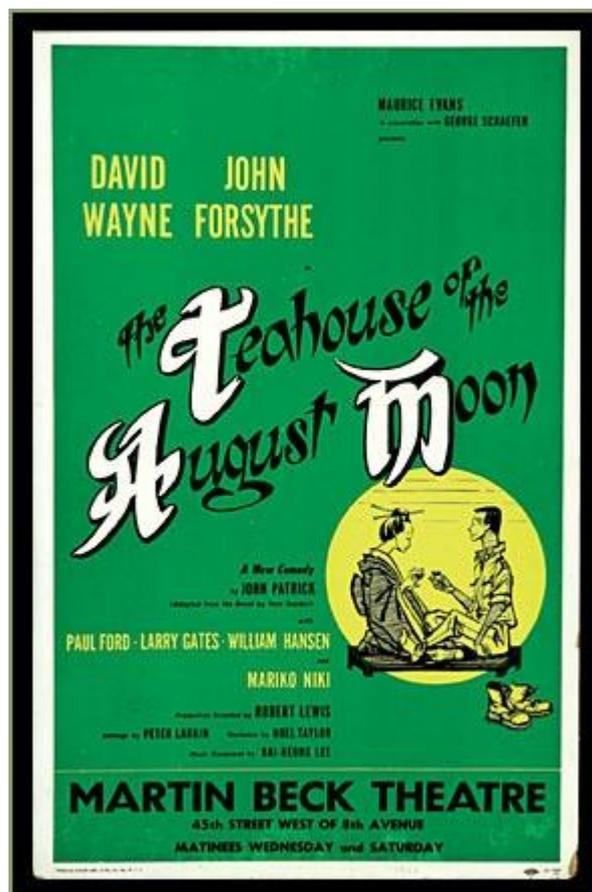
In terms of the local culture, the American authorities used the extensive research done by the military occupation experts in the 1940s and sought to encourage the re-emergence of the native culture and customs. This was an effort to reverse the pre-war Japanisation of Okinawa (*dejapanisation*) and to win the hearts of the local people for the occupation. The clearest example of this effort is the change in the name of the country from Okinawa, the name used by the Japanese, to Ryukyu which was the name that the region had when it was an independent kingdom.¹⁷ In terms of the US mission in Okinawa, the military encouraged a discourse about 'the other' (Okinawa and the Okinawan people) so that it served their system of interest.¹⁸ As seen above, the American system of interest in the Ryukyu Islands was markedly military and aimed to strengthen the islands' military potential (even to the detriment of its people).¹⁹ Consequently, in order to serve this system of interest as well as to redeem their role in the islands, a new discourse of power aimed to unite Americans and Ryukyuan in a teleological scheme based on the development of Okinawa.²⁰

E.W. Said defined Orientalism as ‘a corporate institution for dealing with the Orient- dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it(...) in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’.²¹ This definition evokes the Marxist idea that the production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and material intercourse of men.²² Indeed, Orientalism is ‘a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* (...) of a whole series of ‘interests’ which, (...) it not only creates but also maintains’.²³ In the case of Okinawa, the relationship between Americans and Okinawans was a relationship of power and domination, so it is not surprising that an Orientalist depiction of the other was elaborated for the administrator’s own interest.²⁴ Similarly, the *dejapanisation* of Okinawa and return to the local culture has been interpreted as ‘the consciousness of emancipation from discrimination’.²⁵ In other words, the new discourse of ‘the other’ emphasised a position of superiority of the Americans, giving them a libertarian role, whilst at the same time highlighted the native cultural elements.

American perceptions of Okinawa and mass culture: The Teahouse of the August Moon

Comodore Perry — the US naval officer who made the first officially-authorized visit to Japan in the nineteenth century — had written in 1853 that the people of the ‘Lew Chew islands’ were ‘industrious and inoffensive, and I have already made considerable progress in calming their fears and conciliating their friendly’.²⁶ Before Perry, other explorers of the nineteenth century also spread in Europe and the United States the idea that the Okinawans were honest, inoffensive, generous and friendly.²⁷ Similarly, in mid-twenty century, we can see the same discourse being continued by the Americans who saw the Okinawan people as gentle, easy-going, a bit lazy and a bit crafty. This new discourse about the Okinawan had a good reception in the American public through different popular-culture productions. For instance, these characteristics of Okinawa can be found in the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production ‘The Teahouse of the August Moon’ (1956).²⁸

This satire, starring Glenn Ford as Captain Fisby and Marlon Brando as Sakini, his local subordinate, describes the efforts of a group of American army-men to govern Okinawa in the wake of World War Two. In particular, the movie narrates, through slapstick comedy episodes, the efforts of Captain Fisby to bring American democratic values into the village of Tobiki. He is under the orders of a sturdy and stubborn Colonel Purdy who constantly reminds him of his duty of enforcing the Manual of Occupation (dubbed 'Plan B'). However, his translator Sakini, through smart manoeuvring, orchestrates the construction of a teahouse instead of the officially sanctioned pentagon-shaped school. Finally, in a state of helplessness, Fisby accepts the idiosyncrasy of the locals and embraces their customs. In a first reading of the film, the locals are represented as smart, friendly, giving and a little lazy. In other words, the film repeats a discourse on the Okinawan people which matches with the American role of civiliser and democratic force.²⁹



Note: Poster for the 1953 New York play production.

Frederic Jameson argues, in 'Signature of the Visible', the proposition that 'the only way to think the visual, to get a handle on increasing tendential, all-pervasive visibility as such, is to grasp its historical coming into being'.³⁰ This proposition is very useful in order to analyse the development of the story. In this case, the *Teahouse* is based on a 1953's Pulitzer and Tony prize-winning Broadway play which is an adaptation by John Patrick of the 1951's novel written by Vern Sneider.³¹ All three versions follow the same basic storyline mentioned above. Consequently, the variant against which the film will be read are the novel and play. The novel was written during the American occupation of Japan when the new discourse about Okinawa was taking shape.³² It focuses on the difficulties that Captain Fisby had to face when two geisha girls arrive in the village that he commands. Compared to the movie, the building of the teahouse itself is less important than the conflict and division created by the two female new-comers. The play and movie were made after the SFPT and the US long-term administration of the island was a *fait accompli*. Thus, the play and movie focus less on the situation with the geisha (the geisha girls have been reduce to only one, Lotus Blossom) and stress the building of the teahouse.

The idea of creating a depiction of Okinawa by borrowing traditional Japanese elements (that is, the teahouse and geisha girls) is puzzling, particularly since the US government was trying to emphasise Okinawa's cultural difference with Japan. It requires us first to ask who is producing the image and who is the targeted audience. Following Said, 'the Orientalist is outside of the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact'; and thus, the principal product of this exteriority is representation.³³ In the *Teahouse*, the Ryukyu Islands are transformed from a very far distant and even threatening 'Otherness' into figures that are relatively familiar for the American audience (for example, using traditional Japanese symbols). The movie certainly does not reproduce a Japanisation of Okinawa in terms of its political construction, but it tries to provide an image of Okinawa that is not completely foreign for its audience. In this sense, the option for the Japanese elements taken by Sneider and Patrick needs to be observed from the idea of culture as a commodity. The film is governed by the principle of its realisation as value (for example, how many people see the film), and not by its harmonious formation or erudite content.³⁴ In sum, the story is an American representation of Okinawa. It is oriented to the American public and as such it tells us

more about the Americans and the American's image of Okinawa rather than about the Okinawan people.



Note: Above left: 1956 film poster.



Note: Above right: Glen Ford as Captain Fisby, and Marlon Brando as Sakini in a scene from the 1956 film.

Ideology, Utopian reality and Military Government

The population of Tobiki, the town where the *Teahouse* story takes place, can be read as a whole as one character with a polysemous function. This polysemous nature is profoundly ideological. The *Orientalisation* of Tobiki requires both the representation of a de-politicised, immoral and backward society, which requires intervention and correction; and also, the representation of a utopian reality or transcendental potential. It should be noted that in the *Teahouse* the people of Tobiki are de-politicised and disempowered. The film depicts them as having no interest in democratisation beyond the committees organised by the US military.

This representation contrasts with the history of resistance and struggle found in Okinawan in the 1950s. For instance, in 1956, the year the *Teahouse* film was

released, US congressman Melvin Price visited Okinawa and concluded in his report that the land expropriation and lump-sum payment should continue.³⁵ The Okinawan people reacted and protested against US rule. Political parties, landowners, students, workers and school teacher unions opposed the US role in the Ryukyu Islands.³⁶ Indeed, some authors date the beginning of the anti-US movement called Shima Gurumi Tōso (島ぐるみ闘争) in 1956.³⁷ In sum, the de-politicisation of the people of Tobiki can be read as an attempt to silence the complex political situation in Okinawa. The film, by depriving the Okinawa people of a political identity, is creating a character who does not question the American presence in the island. In other words, the *Teahouse* empties the people of Tobiki from their political identity, and thus, the problematic in the film becomes the dichotomy between West-led development and a materially happy existence instead of the negative aspects of the American occupation.

In the novel, the people of the village are depicted as immoral, lazy and irresponsible: 'In the morning when Fisby reached the village, no one was up; so he went from house to house, routing out his village officials.'³⁸ And later, after a meeting with the local officers: 'Fisby slumped. For a long time after the meeting broke up, he sat there. 'No sense of responsibility,' he told himself. 'No sense of responsibility whatsoever.'³⁹ This point is emphasised in the play and movie, particularly through Col. Purdy: 'No wonder you people were subjugated by the Japanese. *If you're not sleeping you're running away from work* (author's italics). Where is your 'get-up-and-go'.⁴⁰ Indeed, in the story the US military found in the idiosyncrasy of the locals an argument to justify their role as administrators of Okinawa, 'Purdy: teach these natives how to act human!'.⁴¹ Outside the realm of fiction, this view was also fanned in other spheres. For instance Daniel D. Karasik described, in an academic journal in 1948, the Okinawan people 'who greatly resemble the Japanese but do not value exactness, orderliness, and cleanliness to the same degree as do the Japanese'.⁴² Conversely, at the end of the story we learnt that the positive elements in the people of Tobiki's character (hard-workers when they have a motivation, generosity, wisdom to appreciate natural beauty, etc.) transformed Okinawa into an ideal society. This utopian reality is emphasised by Captain Fisby's personal journey from being exiled in Okinawa to becoming the leader of the most prosperous village in the island.

It should be noted that in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the US military personnel in Okinawa were also depicted negatively, being portrayed as less efficient than in other military posts. This image of the US servicemen in Okinawa presumably began when General Douglas MacArthur appointed men, whom he did not consider good enough to be close to him in Japan, to serve in Okinawa.⁴³ The lack of resources for the reconstruction of the islands during the 1940s and the initial basic conception of the role of the military government, as a means to control disease and population, may have impacted on the public's opinion about the administration of the island.⁴⁴ Mass media reports of the situation in Okinawa also contributed to spread this negative image of the US servicemen. For example, in 1949 the *Time* magazine pointed out that in Okinawa the 'more than 15,000 US troops, whose morale and discipline have probably been worse than that of any US force in the world, have policed 600,000 natives who live in hopeless poverty'.⁴⁵ Similar articles appeared in other prominent US publications such as the *New York Times*, *Christian Century*, *The Progressive*, *Harper's Magazine* and *Life*.⁴⁶

In the *Teahouse* this negative image of the US troops is highlighted in the character of Colonel Purdy, portrayed as a stupid and authoritative man who spends his time reading 'Adventure' magazine and following his wife's advice on how to run the occupied territory.⁴⁷ Therefore, Fisby's success in adapting himself to the local customs and managing to run Tobiki can be read as the transcendent potential of Okinawa. In the novel, more than in the play and the movie, this utopian reality is developed. Captain Fisby is describe as a 'chubby five foot seven' with one trouser leg out of his combat boot and whose 'perspiration stood out on his forehead', overall, 'it could hardly be said that he cut a military figure'.⁴⁸ However, whilst in Tobiki, Captain Fisby learns that the Plan B and military's approach to develop the local villages are impractical since they do not take into account the locals' character and necessities. Indeed, by the end of the novel Fisby had immersed himself into the local culture and learnt to speak the dialect.⁴⁹ In Fisby's eyes, Okinawa has become a utopian reality. He says: 'I have never been happier. I feel reckless and free. And it all happened the moment I decided not to build that damned pentagon-shaped school'; his perspective about the Okinawan people has changed completely. 'FISBY: These are wonderful people with a strange sense of beauty. And hard working when there's a purpose. (...) Don't let anyone tell you these people are lazy'.⁵⁰

In sum, in the *Teahouse* the useless captain redeems himself by leading a buoyant village's economy. Captain Fisby's journey not only emphasises that Okinawa really is a land of opportunities, but it also notes the necessity of the American aid. The *Teahouse*, as a mass culture product, remains implicitly negative and critical of the social order from which, as product and commodity, it springs.⁵¹ The story is critical to the top-down military approach to the occupation, yet, it argues for American leadership in a merry but backward society.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the construction of a dual system of government is based on the strategic nature of the Ryukyu Islands and on an Orientalist conception of the Okinawan people held by the Americans. The USCAR had *de facto* control of every aspect of life in the Ryukyu Islands. Moreover, the GRI's activities were framed within the American regulations. In its foundational document, the GRI remains under the authority of the Deputy Governor, who 'reserves the right, in the event of necessity, to veto, prohibit, or suspend the operation of any laws, ordinances or regulation enacted by the Government of the Ryukyu Islands or any civil government or agency of any such government; to order the promulgation of any law, ordinance or regulation he may deem advisable; and to resume, in whole or in part, the exercise of full authority, in the Ryukyu Islands'.⁵² The *Teahouse* describes the post-SFPT's political structure in Okinawa (geopolitical awareness in aesthetics). This description emphasises the Orientalist American gaze on Okinawa and supports the occupation. However, as a mass culture product, it is critical of the society from where it comes. The US authorities, in order to protect their interests, allowed the creation of democratic institutions and showed themselves as benefactors. The establishment of the USCAR and the GRI is an expression of this tremendously unequal relationship.

Acknowledgement

The author wishes to acknowledge the helpful comments from Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Trevor Wilson, Shin Takahashi, Adam Croft and Nicolás Lema.

⁷End Notes

It should be noted that whilst Japan was occupied by the US-led allied forces, Okinawa prefecture was occupied by the US alone.

⁸ Art. II, C.A. Proclamation No. 13, 29 February 1952; in United States Civil Administration:1950–1972, *Laws and Regulations During the US Administration of Okinawa: 1945–1972*, ed. Gekkan Okinawa sha, vol. Book 1 (n/d). p.112.

⁹ This arrangement is what John Dower and many others have called the most inequitable bilateral agreement the US had entered into after the war. John W. Dower, 'Peace and Democracy in Two Systems: External Policy and Internal Conflict', in *Postwar Japan as History*, ed. Andrew Gordon (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). p.8.

¹⁰ Indeed, as early as 1944, the US government considered Okinawa to be a good outlet to accomplish military ends at minimum cost to the US in the 'PWC-123 Japan: Mandated Islands: Status of Military Government'. Masahide Ōta, 'The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper,' in *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, ed. Robert W. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987). pp. 285–289. Later in the document 'NSC 13/3: Report by the National Security Council on Recommendations with Respects to United States Policy Toward Japan' (6 May 1949) the National Security Council confirmed the US intentions to 'retain on a long-term basis the facilities at Okinawa and such other facilities as are deemed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be necessary in the Ryukyu Islands (...) the military bases at or near Okinawa should be developed accordingly'. As for the Okinawan people 'The United States agencies responsible for administering the above-mentioned islands should promptly formulate and carry out a program on a long-term basis for the economic and social well-being and, to the extent practicable, for the eventual reduction to a minimum of the deficit in the economy of the natives.' See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*, vol. VII, The Far East and Australasia (in two parts) Part 2. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976). pp.730–736. In other documents such as the NSC 49 and the NSC 60/1 the National Security Council complemented the view that bases in Okinawa and the administration of the former prefecture should remain under US control. In this regard, the NSC 60/1 of September 1950 expressed the view that a future treaty with Japan must guarantee the US 'Exclusive strategic control' of the Ryukyu. Quoted in Kensei Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under US Occupation*, ed. Edward H. Kaplan, vol. 23, *Studies on East Asia* (Bellingham: Western Washington University, 2001). p.45.

¹¹ '(...) the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial waters'. See Article 3rd, 'Treaty of Peace with Japan' in UCLA East Asia Studies Documents at <http://www.international.ucla.edu/eas/documents/peace1951.htm> Visited on April 7, 2010.

¹² During most of the occupation the Ryukyu Islands were under the jurisdiction of the General Head Quarters of the Far East Command GHG/FECOM Eiji Takemae, *Inside G.H.Q. : The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*, trans. Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann (New York: Continuum, 2002). pp.121–123.

¹³ Mikio Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa* (Vancouver University of British Columbia, 1963). pp.23–24.

¹⁴ Usually an Army Brigadier General. Ibid.

¹⁵ This contradiction has been studied in Yoshida, *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under US Occupation*. p.xix.

¹⁶ The term ‘The Rock’ was amply used and had negative connotations. See Maj. Gen. David A.D. Ogden, ‘Keystone of the Pacific,’ *Army Informative* 9, no. 1 (1954). It was also common during the first years of the occupation that U.S military personnel were unwilling to support the war-devastated local population. For instance, Brigadier General William Crist, deputy Commander for the Military Government stated after landing ‘The Military Government will take measures to provide the minimum relief needed for civilian survival under international law’. Ōta, ‘The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper.’ Also it was also depicted as ‘simple minded country cousin’ of the Japanese. See Masanao Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*, vols., vol. 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2008). p.40.

¹⁷ For a complete study on the US efforts to highlight the local culture for their own purposes see Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*. pp.60–101.

¹⁸ For Michel Foucault’s theory in the role of the discourse to create structure of power see Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Leo Marshall Colin Gordon, Honh Mephram, Kate Soper (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1980). p.116.

¹⁹ Mark Selden, ‘Okinawa and American Colonialism,’ *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 3, no. 1 (1971). p.55.

²⁰ As Antonio Gramsci stated, ‘a principle of hegemony [implies that] for its hegemonic apparatus realization, it creates a new ideological terrain, determines a reform of consciousness and of methods of knowledge’. Thus, the creation of a new discourse (or ideology) is a necessary step in order to attain hegemony. David Forgacs, *A Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988). p.191.

²¹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). p.3.

²² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C.J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970). p.47. But, in Said’s works there is strong criticism of Marx’s Orientalist approach to Asia and India.

²³ Said, *Orientalism*. p.12.

²⁴ Ibid. p.5. Following Said, the American version of Orientalism was moulded by the European example. For instance, the foundation of the ‘American Oriental Society’ in 1842 was politically — and not scholarly — framed. In the 1950s, Orientalism in the United States had a Cold War area-studies approach. Said, *Orientalism*. pp.294–296.

²⁵ ‘その非日本化を被差別状態からの’解放’と意識させることであつた’(trans. Is mine) Kano, *Shisōshi Ronshū*. p.60.

²⁶ Letter to the Secretary of the Navy in George H. Kerr, *Okinawa, the History of an Island People*, 1969 ed. (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1958). p.313.

²⁷ For instance Basil Hall and Jules Dumont. See Basil Hall, *Voyage to Loo Choo and Other Places in the Easter Seas, in the Years 1816: Including an Account with Buonaparte at St. Helena, in August 1817* (Edinburg: Constable, 1826). p.129. And Patrick Beillevaire, *Ryukyu Studies to 1854: Western Encounter Part 1*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Edition Synapse / Curzon, 2000).

p.355..

²⁸ Daniel Mann, 'The Teahouse of the August Moon,' (United States and Japan: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1956).

²⁹ This film promotes an Orientalist perception of the other; and by promoting it, this movie was contributing to the realization of the discourse. Michel Foucault, *El Orden Del Discurso*, trans. Alberto Gonzalez Troyano (Barcelona: Tusquets, 1970; reprint, 2008). p.18. Cf. Nicholas Evan Sarantakes, *Keystone: The American Occupation of Okinawa and US-Japanese Relations* (College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University, 2000). p.24–25.

³⁰ Frederic Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1992). p.1.

³¹ John Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider) (New York: Dramatists Play Service INC., 1952), Vern Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (New York: Signet Books, 1956 (1951)).

³² Even though the novel states that the story happens in the wake of the war, there are no elements whatsoever that remind us of the Battle of Okinawa. The play and the movie ignore any reference to a precise date, making the movie simply a story that happened in Okinawa. Similarly the Japanese elements have been almost completely erased (in the novel and play the inhabitants speak local dialect and Japanese).

³³ Said, *Orientalism*. p.21.

³⁴ This, of course, does not hinder the film from providing an 'American vision' of Okinawa. For an essay on Culture Industry see Theodor W. Adorno and Anson G. Rabinbach, 'Culture Industry Reconsidered,' *New German Critique* 6, no. Autumn (1975).

³⁵ Helen Mears, 'Our Blindspot in Asia,' *The Progressive* 21, no. 7 (1957). p.16.

³⁶ The main parties by 1952 were the Okinawan People's Part (Okinawa Jiminto) led by pro-communist Senaga Kamejiro; the Okinawa Socialist Masses Party (Okinawa Shakai Taishuto); Ryukyu Democratic Party (Ryukyu Minshuto). Initially some political parties celebrated the independence from Japan, however from 1952 on all political sectors concurred with the goal of reversion. Higa, *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. p.29, 31 Miyume Tanji, *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa* (London: Routledge, 2006). pp.55–56

³⁷ Moriteru Arasaki, *Okinawa Gendaishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 2005).

³⁸ Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. p.30.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p.38.

⁴⁰ Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider). p.8.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.13.

⁴² Daniel Karasik p.255. We could add that this vision on the Okinawa people has continued over time even after the reversion to Japan. For instance Kevin Maher, from the State Department, was reported saying in 2010 that the Okinawans were 'lazy (too lazy even to grow goya, the Okinawan staple bitter melon), immoral (there were too many out-of-wedlock children and they drank too much strong liquor), and as 'masters of manipulation and deception'' in Gavan McCormack, 'Deception and Diplomacy: The US, Japan, and Okinawa,'

in *The Asia-Pacific Journal* (2011).

⁴³ John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999). p.222.

⁴⁴ Arnold G. Fisch, *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands. 1945–1950*, 2005 ed. (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1988). pp.5–6.

⁴⁵ Frank Gibney, 'Okinawa: Forgotten Island,' *TIME*, Nov. 28, 1949.

⁴⁶ Time, 'Okinawa: Unskilled Labor,' in *Time.com* (1958).; Mears, 'Our Blindspot in Asia.'; Otis W. Bell, 'Play Fair with Okinawa!,' *The Christian Century* LXXI, no. 3 (1954).; Barton M. Biggs, 'The Outraged Okinawans' *Harper's Magazine* 1958.

⁴⁷ Sneider, *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. pp.5–14.

⁴⁸ Ibid. p.15. In the movie, the character was played by Glenn Ford a leading Hollywood star of the times.

⁴⁹ In the book Sakini becomes less relevant. However in the play and in the movie the translator occupies a leading role.

⁵⁰ Patrick, *The Teahouse of the August Moon (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider)*. p.50.

⁵¹ For a study on mass culture and its critical approach to society see Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible*. p.29.

⁵² Art. VII, CA Procl.13. United States Civil Administration:1950–1972, *Laws and Regulations During the US Administration of Okinawa: 1945–1972*.

Bibliography

Adorno, Theodor W., and Anson G. Rabinbach. 'Culture Industry Reconsidered.' *New German Critique* 6, no. Autumn (1975): 12–19.

Arasaki, Moriteru. *Okinawa Gendaishi*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shinsho, 2005.

Beillevaire, Patrick. *Ryukyu Studies to 1854: Western Encounter Part 1*. Vol. 3. Tokyo: Edition Synapse / Curzon, 2000.

Bell, Otis W. 'Play Fair with Okinawa!' *The Christian Century* LXXI, no. 3 (1954): 76–77.

Biggs, Barton M. 'The Outraged Okinawans' *Harper's Magazine* 1958, 56-60.

Department of State. *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949*. Vol. VII, The Far East and Australasia (in two parts) Part 2. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976.

-
- Dower, John W. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999.
- . ‘Peace and Democracy in Two Systems: External Policy and Internal Conflict.’ In *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Fisch, Arnold G. *Military Government in the Ryukyu Islands. 1945–1950*. 2005 ed. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 1988.
- Forgacs, David. *A Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988.
- Foucault, Michel. *El Orden Del Discurso*. Translated by Alberto Gonzalez Troyano. Barcelona: Tusquets, 1970. Reprint, 2008.
- . *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*. Translated by Leo Marshall Colin Gordon, Honh Mephram, Kate Soper. Edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1980.
- Gibney, Frank. ‘Okinawa: Forgotten Island.’ *TIME*, Nov. 28, 1949.
- Hall, Basil. *Voyage to Loo Choo and Other Places in the Easter Seas, in the Years 1816: Including an Account with Buonaparte at St. Helena, in August 1817*. Edinburgh: Constable, 1826.
- Higa, Mikio. *Politics and Parties in Postwar Okinawa*. Vancouver University of British Columbia, 1963.
- Jameson, Frederic. *Signatures of the Visible*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Kano, Masanao. *Shisōshi Ronshū*. vols. Vol. 3. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2008.
- Kerr, George H. *Okinawa, the History of an Island People*. 1969 ed. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1958.
- Mann, Daniel. ‘The Teahouse of the August Moon.’ 123 mins. United States and Japan: Metro-Godwyn-Mayer, 1956.
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels. *The German Ideology*. Edited by C.J. Arthur. New York: International Publishers, 1970.
- McCormack, Gavan. ‘Deception and Diplomacy: The US, Japan, and Okinawa.’ In *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 2011.
- Mears, Helen. ‘Our Blindspot in Asia.’ *The Progressive* 21, no. 7 (1957): 15–18.

-
- Ogden, Maj. Gen. David A.D. 'Keystone of the Pacific.' *Army Informative* 9, no. 1 (1954).
- Ōta, Masahide. 'The US Occupation of Okinawa and Postwar Reforms in Japan Proper.' In *Democratizing Japan: The Allied Occupation*, edited by Robert W. Ward and Sakamoto Yoshikazu. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987.
- Patrick, John. *The Teahouse of the August Moon (Adapted from the Novel by Vern Sneider)*. New York: Dramatists Play Service INC., 1952.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Sarantakes, Nicholas Evan. *Keystone: The American Occupation of Okinawa and US - Japanese Relations*. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University, 2000.
- Selden, Mark. 'Okinawa and American Colonialism.' *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 3, no. 1 (1971).
- Sneider, Vern. *The Teahouse of the August Moon*. New York: Signet Books, 1956 (1951).
- Takemae, Eiji. *Inside G.H.Q. : The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy*. Translated by Robert Ricketts and Sebastian Swann. New York: Continuum, 2002.
- Tanji, Miyume. *Myth, Protest and Struggle in Okinawa*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Time. 'Okinawa: Unskilled Labor.' In *Time.com*, 1958.
- United States Civil Administration:1950–1972. *Laws and Regulations During the US Administration of Okinawa: 1945-1972*. Edited by Gekkan Okinawa sha. Vol. Book 1, n/d.
- Yoshida, Kensei. *Democracy Betrayed: Okinawa under US Occupation*. Edited by Edward H. Kaplan. Vol. 23, *Studies on East Asia* Bellingham: Western Washington University, 2001.