

The Space of “Occupation”: Postcolonial Migrations in “Occupied” Okinawa

Johanna O. ZULUETA

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

Introduction

The United States is, and continues to be, the most powerful country in the world today. With the highest GDP among the world powers, notwithstanding, the U.S.’s vast network of military bases--a testament to its powerful military force (air, sea, and land)--signifies that the U.S. runs an empire, not a colonial empire, but as historian Bruce Cumings put it, a “territorial empire” that consists of “somewhere between 737 and 860 overseas military installations around the world, with American military personnel operating in 153 countries, which most Americans know little if anything about... which persists because it is politically and culturally invisible, at least to Americans” (Cumings 2009: 393).

In the Asia-Pacific region, one area stands out due to the sheer number of U.S. military bases in its territory--Okinawa, the southernmost prefecture of Japan, which was once an independent kingdom, named the Kingdom of the Ryukyus, before it was subjugated in 1609 by the Shimazu clan of the Satsuma fief (now present-day Kagoshima prefecture). In 1879, the Meiji government officially made the islands into a prefecture. The prefecture was also one of the most badly hit areas in the country during the Second World War, and was occupied by the American forces up until its reversion to Japan in 1972, 20 more years after the occupation of mainland Japan ended in 1952. The main island of Okinawa hosts around 75% of U.S. military bases in the whole of Japan, and the most number of U.S. installations in the Asia-Pacific region as well.

The continuing presence of the U.S. bases in Okinawa, as well as the military exercises being carried out in the southern Philippines under the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) seem to attest that Okinawa and America’s erstwhile colony, the Philippines, have been and still are seen as strategic areas by the United States. Japan’s “subordinated” position as a “client state” (McCormack 2007) of the U.S., where almost 75% of the country’s U.S. military installations are concentrated in the main island of Okinawa, making it a “military colony” (Yoshida 2007; McCormack 2007: 156) in the literal sense of the word, as well as the post/

colonial ties the world's largest superpower has with the Philippines, just goes to show that Asia continues to be a site where the U.S. exerts, not only its military, but also economic and political might. This being said, I indicate this region as the "space of occupation" of the United States, and set this in the Asia-Pacific region (hence not including the Middle East and South Asia) with Okinawa at the centre of this "space." This is simply due to the fact that Okinawa hosts the most number of U.S. military installations in the region (which points to the fact that the U.S. is exercising its military might on the region). Moreover, for this study, the Asia-Pacific region would cover the expanse of the Pacific Ocean, starting from countries that make up North-East Asia (particularly Japan, China, and Korea) down to South-East Asia (continental South-East Asia, the Philippines, and Indonesia) as well as the island groups in the Pacific (i.e. Guam, the Northern Marianas, and Micronesia).

This paper looks at post/colonial migrations in the context of existing American hegemony in the region, with particular focus on Okinawa, which I argue, is still "occupied" up to this day. I argue that post/colonial migrations (in the Okinawan case, in particular) are not only traced to socio-economic and politico-economic factors, but are also triggered by continuing U.S. hegemony in the region and the need to perpetuate this status quo.

I. The U.S. Military Bases and the "Occupation" of Okinawa

For this study, I differentiate between the Occupation and what I refer to as the "Occupation" (in quotes).¹ The Occupation, in simplest terms, points to the historical period from 1945 to 1972 when Okinawa was under U.S. military control. On the other hand, the "Occupation" indicates not only the aforementioned Occupation period, but also the occupation of "place" (i.e. Okinawa). In other words, my use of the word, "Occupation" does not only denote the 27-year occupation of Okinawa by the U.S. military forces, but also the continuing presence of the U.S. military in the prefecture.² I write "Occupation" in quotes to emphasize that the Occupation is not only a one-time event in history, but one that has repercussions on the present conditions in Okinawa as well as its future. My use of the term is also to indicate the need for one to regard the 27-year Occupation of Okinawa not only as an issue of politics, but as one that has socio-cultural and economic effects on the lives of common folk during this time and in contemporary times.

Thus, the Occupation indicates a particular event in the history of Okinawa (and Japan), while the "Occupation" denotes the current situation of (and in) Okinawa, stemming from this specific event. I also use "Occupation" to refer to the possession and the encroachment by the U.S. military of Okinawan land for the sole purpose of constructing military bases. In the 1950s, around 250,000

Okinawans were forcibly evicted from their lands for this purpose (some were even forced at bayonet point), whereas others became exiles to South America, in countries such as Bolivia, Argentina, and Peru (McCormack 2007: 174). These forced evictions are testament to the blatant usurpation of rights (i.e. human rights and property rights) of the Okinawan people. McCormack adds that these forced evictions resembled those that occurred in Diego Garcia, an island in the Chagos Archipelago on the Indian Ocean, where summary evictions of residents were carried out for the construction of an American military base in the 1960s (Ibid).

Meanwhile, the occupation of "place" points to the current condition of Okinawa as "Occupied" and the possession and occupation of Okinawa's land by the American military. Land seizures and the forced transfer of people (with many relocated to Bolivia) accompanied the construction of U.S. military installations in the immediate post-war period. This issue regarding the seizure of land and the property rights of Okinawans by the U.S. military, as well as the current presence of U.S. bases built on land once owned by local Okinawans, I argue, may be seen as an occupation of "place". By using the word "place" here, I refer to the tangible piece of land owned by the Okinawans, on which now sit many of the bases. This encroachment on Okinawan territory as well as on local Okinawans' territorial rights may also be seen as an encroachment on Okinawans' voice in the national polity, and thus an "occupation" of the "place" of Okinawans in the Japanese nation-state.

It may also be argued that this "Occupation," i.e. the continuing presence of the American military as signified by the existence of military installations, is not at all unique to Okinawa since other countries in the Asia-Pacific region also host these U.S. bases (e.g. Korea, and until 20 years ago, the Philippines). In fact, Okinawa is a "typical" case, and the conditions that arise due to the presence of the bases are also "replicated" in other countries where these military installations exist (Johnson 2004: 8). While this is certainly true, I would like to argue that the circumstances surrounding the "Occupation" of Okinawa make the Okinawan case unique in itself. First, despite the fact that Japan hosts a certain number of U.S. military installations in the country, 75 percent of these are housed on the main island of Okinawa in Okinawa prefecture, and on this small island alone exists most of the U.S. bases found in the Asia-Pacific region. Second, under the pretext of its strategic location in the Asia-Pacific region--hence, Okinawa as the "keystone of the Pacific"--the U.S. Occupation forces saw the strategic advantage of having military installations on this island. In relation to this, John Dower argues that the "primary mission" of the U.S. military in Japan and Okinawa "was never to defend Japan directly but rather to project U.S. power in Asia" and to support America's commitments elsewhere (Dower, in Gordon (ed.) 1993: 11). Third, Okinawa was, is, and will probably continue to be in a subjugated position as a "colony", whether as an "internal colony" (Tomiyaama 1990) of the Japanese

nation-state, or as a “semi-colonial territory” (Dower, in Gordon (ed.) 1993: 11) in Asia. Also, one should not overlook the fact that Japan pays for the existence of the bases, and for the Japanese civilian employees’ (who are employed as Japanese government employees) salaries and wages (including bonuses). As Chalmers Johnson says, the U.S. has military bases in 19 countries, but it is only Japan that pays for all the costs of local employees (Johnson 2000: 55). It is also said that Japan allots around five billion dollars (U.S.) a year for the bases that are in the country (Cumings 2009: 402). A secret agreement regarding the payment of the bases was believed to have existed between the U.S. and Japan. In 1971, the *Mainichi Shinbun* was said to have disclosed an agreement between the two countries that Japan would shoulder the 4,000,000 dollars (U.S.) needed for the restoration of the U.S.-held land to its “original state” (Yoshida 2001: 159). Moreover, in 1998, University of the Ryukyus Professor Gabe Masaaki was said to have discovered a document saying that the Japanese government had not only secretly agreed to the four-million dollar payment but also an additional 160,000,000 dollars for the improvement and relocation of the military facilities (Ibid). Apparently, the Japanese government denied this. With this, it can be said that the Japanese government is complicit with the government of the United States in perpetuating American military presence in Okinawa, thus sustaining the “Occupation” of the prefecture. While primarily political, this event of the “Occupation” needs to be seen as not only an issue of politics, but as an event that had cultural and social repercussions on the lives of ordinary people during the 27-year Occupation period and continues to do so in contemporary times.

The “Occupation” of Okinawa is closely linked to American hegemony and its imperialistic policy/ies towards the Asia-Pacific region. The U.S. Occupation forces occupied Japan and built bases (mostly located in Okinawa prefecture) as “punishment” for Japan’s role in the Pacific War and to “contain” Japanese threat in the region. Likewise, the U.S. presence also functioned to defend Japan - a country not allowed to have a military for offensive purposes, as stipulated in Article 9 of the Japanese constitution. The presence of U.S. military bases in the Asia-Pacific region was also crucial in addressing the communist threat in the Cold War Era. In relation to this, Shunya Yoshimi said that the “emphasis of America’s policy towards Asia shifted from democratization and the elimination of Japanese imperialism to the construction of an ‘anticommunist’ stronghold in Asia” (Yoshimi 2003: 444). Presently, the bases in Okinawa are deemed significant in their role in the current military exercises carried out by American troops in the war against terrorism and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It is also said that from the “19th century until and beyond World War II, most overseas bases throughout the world were ‘automatically provided by colonial control and were an important aspect and purpose of imperial domination’” (Espiritu quoting Harkavy 2008: 28). This resonates up to this day, with

the United States owning sole monopoly over the numerous military installations not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also worldwide. After the Cold War, the bases remained, and are presently considered significant in the war against terrorism that the United States and its allies are waging. With most of these installations situated in a small island off the southern coast of Japan, Okinawa is "used to project American power throughout Asia in the service of a *de facto* U.S. grand strategy to perpetuate or increase American hegemonic power" in Asia (Johnson 2000: 64).

Moreover, the "Occupation" of Okinawa would probably not be possible if it were not for Japan's need for continued U.S. defence of its territory. It is also a known fact that Japan spends for the bases' existence (i.e. lease payments, salaries of civilian base workers) as well as employs its nationals as a source of the labour needed for the bases to function. A large group of these workers are migrants and people of Japanese and Okinawan descent, who, are working in Okinawa mainly for economic reasons, but are unknowingly (or perhaps unconsciously) thrust into what I call the "space of occupation". This "space", I argue, is being enabled and sustained by labour migrations, and, likewise, the steady flow of people into Okinawa is being maintained by the American presence in the prefecture.

These military bases, which were maintained in Okinawa as well as in the Asia-Pacific region to fight burgeoning communism during the Cold War era, are still being maintained at present--more than two decades after the Cold War. Academics such as Chalmers Johnson (2000) attribute the U.S. presence as an exertion of the country's hegemony and imperial power. The maintenance of these military installations, however, would not be possible without the needed human resources and goods for them (bases) to function. Labour power has been supplied since the postwar period by the Philippines--a former colony that has been culturally and structurally shaped by the Americans' 50-year rule of the archipelago. At present, with the Japanese government paying for the stay of the U.S. bases in the country, much of the demand for human resources are filled in by Japanese workers, many of which have began returning to Okinawa since the 1970s.

American hegemonic interests in the Asia-Pacific are not limited to geopolitics and the desire to exert military power over the region. Economic interests of the U.S. also play a part in furthering its superpower status in the region as illustrated by the existence of unequal treaties between the U.S. and Japan, and the U.S. and the Philippines (particularly with regards to economic policies). Amid the flow of goods, information, and human resources in this "space of occupation," there exist unequal relationships among the actors, economically, politically, and structurally. In the next section, I first discuss the occurrence of migrations in the postcolonial context before looking at this

particular movement in what I call the “space of occupation.”

II. Of Migrations and Postcolonies

A large portion of literature dealing with migration looks at South-North migrations or the movement of peoples from the less developed “South” to the more developed “North.” More often than not, this type of migration has been attributed to socio-economic factors, or the classic “push and pull factors,” where factors such as low economic growth, lack of opportunities, lack of jobs, political unrest, etc., “push” people to migrate to other areas that would offer them better conditions than their home countries. These so-called “pull” factors include high economic conditions, demand for labour, availability of job and financial opportunities, and political stability in the host country, among others.

Several decades back, particularly in the 1970s and the 1980s, international migration was linked to larger structural factors such as the “unequal distribution of economic and political power in the world economy” and thus migration was seen as a way of “mobilizing cheap labour for capital” (Castles and Miller 2009: 26). Dependency theory, which was popular in Latin America in the 1960s, saw colonization as a cause for the “underdevelopment” of the Third World due to the exploitation of its resources, and its continuing postcolonial dependency only work to retain the Third World’s “third-worldly” status via the unfair trade treaties imposed upon them by the developed First World (Ibid). Taking his cue from dependency theory as well as from Marx, Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) developed the World Systems Theory approach where the world economy is seen to be made up of two interdependent regions: the core and the periphery. The “core” is made up of developed, capitalist nations, while less developed nations make up the “periphery,” and are incorporated into the world economy which is largely controlled by the more developed nations at the core.

It cannot be denied that most migrations from the developing South to the developed North are actually tied to colonial relationships that still bind the once-colonized nation to its erstwhile colonizer up to this day (mainly through unequal economic treaties). Whereas former colonies have managed to break-away from the curse and now rank along more developed countries, the international movement of peoples is still tied to vestiges of colonialism and is further reproduced through this relationship. An example of this is the migration (temporary or otherwise) of Filipinos to the U.S. (and its territories such as Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands (CNMI)) that continue to this day.

For this study, I define postcolonialism simply in a temporal context, i.e. the period after colonialism, after colonies have been decolonized. In the same vein,

I use the term postcolonial--in its adjectival sense--to point to the condition/s brought about by postcolonialism, while postcolonial in its nominal form refers to peoples, places, and spaces, previously colonized, and can be said, at present, to be experiencing the legacy of colonialism, which has not disappeared even after independence or decolonization, but still lives and continues to shape the former colony (i.e. the postcolony) as well as the mentalities of former colonial subjects. Moreover, in relation to this, Ania Loomba says that it would be more "helpful" to think of postcolonialism as not only coming "literally" after colonialism, but rather as the "contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism" (Loomba 2005: 16). Loomba continues to say that in doing so, people "geographically displaced by colonialism" such as African-Americans or those people of Asian and Caribbean descent living in Britain would be included as "postcolonial subjects" even though they live in metropolitan societies (Ibid). Thus, included in these so-called "postcolonial subjects" are those essentially seen as migrants and those people tracing their ancestry to once-colonized places or regions, such as Africa and Asia. Hence, the continuing legacies of colonialism that are being referred to by the prefix "post" in postcolonialism are discursively contested and continually questioned.

III. The "Space of Occupation"

As previously mentioned, I locate Okinawa (the so-called "keystone of the Pacific") in the centre of this "space," where various movements/migrations take place: U.S. troops being dispatched to areas such as the Middle East, U.S. troops dispatched to the Philippines under the VFA clause to assist the training of the Philippine army in their fight against terrorism and the Muslim insurgency, the influx of migrant workers to Okinawa, and the shuttling back and forth of trans-migrants (many of which are people of Okinawan descent who travel between Okinawa and their home countries for business, work, visits), among others. I use the concept of "space" to describe this area in the simplest sense and refer to the fluidity of movement (notwithstanding nation-state borders) in the region. More specifically, I define the "space of occupation" as the space where different (nation-state) actors, with the United States and Japan occupying important roles (with the Philippines and Okinawa being significant players as well), interact as a plurality, and where interrelations among these actors are not necessarily equitable, amid the flow of goods, services, and human resources (i.e. migrants and migrant workers). While this "space" may be seen to be a characteristic of globalization or a global space, I argue that the military presence of the U.S. through its numerous bases in the region is what makes the conception of this "space" possible, only in part aided through and within globalization processes. What is distinctive about this "space" is the military presence of the U.S. as manifested in the large number of bases in the region.

I use the concept of “space” to describe this area in the Asia-Pacific region in the simplest sense. However, as opposed to using the concept of “place” to describe this particular region, I decided to use the concept of “space” to refer to the fluidity of movement--between and among nation-state borders - in the region. Here, I also refer to Doreen Massey’s use of “space” in which she considers “space”--which she sees as “always under construction”--as a “product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions,” and that this concept of space should be understood as:

... the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity in the sense of contemporaneous plurality; as the sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist; as the sphere therefore of coexisting heterogeneity. Without space, no multiplicity; without multiplicity, no space. If space is indeed the product of interrelations, then it must be predicated upon the existence of plurality.
(Massey 2005: 9)

Massey then states that “space” should be seen integrally with time, and that one should always think in terms of the formulation of space-time (Massey 1994: 2). This is because “space” is arguably seen as a construct of social relations; and these relations are not static, but rather are dynamic (Ibid). As social relations are “inevitably and everywhere imbued with power and meaning and symbolism,” the view of the spatial is “an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification” (Ibid. 3). This said, I look at the “space of occupation” as a “space” imbued with relations of power defining the unequal relations among the different actors involved in this “space.”

This “space of occupation” is composed of different actors, i.e. nation-states, nations (e.g. Taiwan), autonomous governments/areas, etc., that interact with each other, oftentimes as a plurality. Interactions between and among these actors however, as I pointed out earlier are not necessarily equal, and these non-equitable relationships are usually due to the existence of unequal treaties between and among these actors, which are in turn created through socio-historical conditions and events such as colonialism and the core-periphery relationship in the existing world system.

Several important players in this “space of occupation” are worth mentioning, but the most significant of them are Japan and the United States.³ The former, due to its economic stronghold on the region as the largest economy in Asia (before it was taken over by China in the latter half of 2010) as well as its history of imperialism in the region and its close ties with the U.S.; the latter due to its “heavy” presence in the region, as attested to by the military bases present in Asia and the Pacific, as well as the permeation of American influence (cultural, political, social) in most countries in the region, particularly the Philippines, and in other countries such as Japan and Korea, not to mention the American

territories of Guam and the CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands). While at the outset, both the U.S. and Japan seem to share the same position in this "space of occupation," it ought to be noted that inequities between the two actors exist, particularly with regards to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. From an antagonistic relationship that began and culminated in the Pacific War, the U.S. began to see Japan as an important ally in its fight against communism in the Cold War era. Both Japan and the U.S. consider each other as having significant roles in their foreign policies, particularly in trade and foreign relations. Filipino scholar Neferti Tadiar describes this relationship to be "libidinal/economic in character and thus can be truthfully described as a marriage of interests" (Tadiar, in Dirlik 1993: 185). She goes on to talk about how this "marriage" demonstrates an "unequal and potentially antagonistic relation" in the economic union, whether this refers to the Asia-Pacific region or to the whole international community (Ibid). This "marriage" also reflects Japan's desire for incorporation in the international community in the 1960s. Half a century later, Japan has earned its place in the international community with its economy second only to the U.S. (but it has been overtaken recently by China). Japan continues to be seen as an important ally of the U.S. politically and economically (not to mention the blatantly pro-U.S. stance of the government). Nevertheless, this relationship is not devoid of inequities, particularly in the name of American interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

Along with Japan and the U.S. are several players--equally significant--but because of their "peripheral" status in this "space of occupation," their roles are usually overlooked. One of these is Okinawa--the actor at the centre of this "space of occupation." It was once an independent trading kingdom, but became part of Meiji Japan in 1879. The natives underwent a process of assimilation, but despite this, many have experienced discrimination from the people of mainland Japan. It was the most devastated part of Japan with around 150,000 civilians killed. Okinawa was also under the Americans for 20 more years and was "forced" to house 75 percent of the U.S. military facilities in Japan, despite resistance from various local groups. Problems regarding the base issue abound and still continue to haunt Okinawans even after Okinawa's reversion to the Japanese mainland in 1972.

Okinawa may be in the centre of this "space," but it continues to occupy a marginal position vis-a-vis Japan and the United States. While it may be said that this is due to the fact that Okinawa is not a sovereign state nor an autonomous entity as it is part of Japan, Okinawa is deemed important to U.S.-Japan relations due to its strategic geographical position as well as the U.S. military forces stationed there. Okinawa is also host to the largest air base in the region - the Kadena Air Base, which covers 14,000 acres of land with two runways measuring 3,650 metres, and has a population of almost 25,000 (Cumings 2009: 402). This

being said, Okinawa is central to this “space of occupation,” however, its marginal status in the Japanese national polity renders the prefecture a peripheral status in this “space.” However, I would like to point out that “peripheral” or “marginal” here does not necessarily mean passivity on the part of Okinawa as the U.S. presence in the prefecture more often than not fires up the locals’ sentiments. The U.S.-Japan treaty, the base issue, and unequal relations notwithstanding, it is also necessary to look at the fluidity of this “space of occupation” as it is in itself a region in flux--where goods, information, services, as well as human resources cross borders and boundaries, contributing to the maintenance of this “space,” in turn sustaining American hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region.

IV. Migratory Flows within the “Space of Occupation”

There are some conditions that enable the existence of what I call the “space of occupation.” Many of these conditions are political in nature, however economic and socio-cultural conditions should not be overlooked. I then point out three important points here: contemporary U.S. hegemony (that is likely to continue in the near future), the need for defence of both Japan and the Philippines against perceived threats from North Korea and the Muslim insurgency (and other terrorist threats), respectively, and both these nation-states’ roles as allies of the United States.

Within this “space of occupation” are movements or migrations not only of humans, but also of goods, information, and services. Along with the movements of these goods, information, services, and human resources are the more conspicuous movements/migrations of military troops (which are more often than not, characteristically fluid and are not being limited by nation-state borders, as most of these personnel are not covered by the host country’s population census) --U.S. troops dispatched to areas such as the Middle East (particularly Iraq and Afghanistan) as well as U.S. troops dispatched to the Philippines under the VFA to assist in the training of the Philippine army in their fight against terrorism and the Muslim insurgency, as well as the regular movements of military personnel dispatched to work on military bases in the region. While military movements or transfers are the most conspicuous “corporeal migrations” within this “space of occupation,” apparently due to the presence of U.S. bases in the region, it should be noted that the presence of these military installations also demand and facilitate the flow of civilian and migrant workers to Okinawa, enabling as well the shuttling back and forth of transmigrants (with many of them maintaining links to their home countries), who may or may not be directly linked to this “space,” but are nevertheless part of this “space of occupation.” Many of these civilian workers work on base and many of them are of Okinawan descent.

A few conditions enable migration within this “space of occupation,” and I

mention three here:

- 1) The demand for labour (unskilled and semi-skilled) particularly for the construction of U.S. military installations, and the need for base employees (mostly skilled workers) to assist in accomplishing the various objectives of the U.S. Forces in Japan;
- 2) The need for people to address the needs of the U.S. military and their families who are stationed in Japan, such as teachers and service industry employees (i.e. hotel and restaurant industry workers);
- 3) The need for entertainers (not to mention sex workers) to work in bars and pubs surrounding these military bases for the purposes of providing “affective labour” (Hardt 1999) for U.S. soldiers stationed in Okinawa.

Migrations within this “space of occupation” are facilitated and likewise sustained mainly through the American presence in Okinawa. It is also apparent that the demand for labour and services--which is mainly provided for by the Japanese government--is primarily for the reason of sustaining the existence of a U.S. stronghold of power in the region through the military bases.

The “Occupation” of Okinawa would probably not be possible if it were not for Japan’s need for continued U.S. defence of its territory. It is also a known fact that Japan spends for the bases’ existence (i.e. lease payments, salaries of civilian base workers) as well as employs its nationals as a source of the labour needed for the bases to function. A large group of these workers are migrants and people of Japanese and Okinawan descent, who, are working in Okinawa mainly for economic reasons, but are unknowingly (or perhaps unconsciously) thrust into what I call the “space of occupation.”

In any base construction, there is always a demand for contractors and labour power, and in the case of American military base constructions, it is usually former colonials, such as Filipinos, who take on the bulk of these jobs. Upon Okinawa’s Occupation by the U.S. forces in 1945, recruitment for labour was carried out in Manila, which saw numerous Filipinos (mostly men) applying for these jobs, some even coming from provinces not exactly in close proximity to the Philippine capital. This is likewise recently seen in the case of Guam, where the planning for the construction of a U.S. naval base is currently underway, and that Filipino construction and health workers are said to be favoured for this (Philippine Digest 2009: 7). Filipinos also make up a significant percentage of the workforce in U.S. military installations in Iraq. Due to relations between the U.S. and the Philippines, as well as the 50-year colonization of the islands by the Americans, it is said that Filipinos are favoured as workforce due to the fact that they speak and understand English and are familiar with American customs. Another reason is that the Philippines is the U.S.’s staunch ally and that many, if

not most, of the Philippines' economic and political policies favour Philippines-U.S. relations (needless to say, most of these policies are tilted towards the U.S.).

Okinawa, with its large number of military bases, has a high proportion of civilian workers working inside these facilities. Mainly employed by the Japanese government through the Labour Management Organization for USFJ Employees, Incorporated Administrative Agency (LMO/IAA), the agency is said to provide "high-quality services to the USFJ (United States Forces in Japan) employees in order to secure the workforce for the U.S. forces stationed in Japan in accordance with the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty" (LMO/IAA website). There are about 25,000 USFJ employees working throughout Japan to "support the activities of the USFJ", and these employees work in a wide range of positions such as clerks, technicians, security guards, waiters/waitresses, cooks, and sales clerks, among others (Ibid). Based on five-year employment data from the years 2006 to 2010, an average of 3,000 (or 3,083) people had been hired as USFJ employees every year. The number of retirements also numbers nearly 3,000 (an average of 2,956.60) people in this five year time span. Table 1 below gives more detailed information on this.

Table 1: Number of USFJ Employees and Retirees (2006-2010)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of hired employees	2,730	2,790	3,234	3,460	3,201
Number of retired employees	2,596	2,866	3,009	3,117	3,165

Source: LMO/IAA website, <http://www.lmo.go.jp/results/index.html>.

I mentioned earlier that one of the conditions that enable and sustain the "space of occupation" is the demand for people to address the needs of the U.S. military and their families. These include teachers, sales clerks, and service staff such as waiters/waitresses, cooks, and others. Musicians and other entertainers are also sought to entertain military personnel in these overseas bases. Furthermore, there are numerous bars and pubs that encircle these military bases that once employed local women but in recent years began to hire workers from overseas, particularly from the Philippines.

As earlier mentioned, the unequal relations (particularly economic) within this "space of occupation," worked as a catalyst in furthering the migrations (including "return" migration) between and among the various nation-state actors in this "space." The demand for base labour coinciding with the current economic recession in the region, not to mention the peripheral position that the Philippines currently occupies in the world system--hence the steady outflow of people as labour migrants--provides a situation wherein these flows of people (as well as goods and information) in the "space of occupation" help create a vicious cycle seen to perpetuate American interests in the region.

Conclusion

The existence of the U.S. military installations in Okinawa (as well as in other areas in the "space of occupation" such as Guam, Korea, the Northern Marianas, etc.) furthers the continuing demand for workers as it needs human resources to enable the bases to function, in turn, carrying out the supposed purposes of these installations, i.e. American hegemony in the guise of security in the region and the fight against terrorism. Without the workers, there would be no bases; without the bases, there would be no demand for workers. It is this cycle of demand that furthers the whole condition of the "Occupation."

Moreover, it has been said that many Okinawans feel that they are indirectly contributing to the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq by leasing Okinawan land to the U.S. bases. Indeed, Okinawa as the "keystone of the Pacific," with its strategic location in the Asia-Pacific, plays a major role in the current wars and conflicts that occurred in the years after the Cold War. With the people of Okinawa, despite opposition from various groups, unable to effect change in the current situation regarding the U.S. presence in the prefecture, one can argue that Okinawans themselves (even those who do not work on base), are also in a situation of, what I call, "passive complicity" with the U.S. The ambivalence exhibited by Okinawans regarding the existence of these military installations--the people who oppose the existence of the bases as well as the people who prefer that the bases be maintained (i.e. people who work on base and who benefit from the bases' existence)--seems to signify that the "Occupation" will continue further, unless a united stance (from the people of Okinawa prefecture) against the U.S. presence will prove otherwise.

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Notes

1. For this research, the word occupation--written in lower-case characters - points to the nominal form of the verb "occupy." On the other hand, the Occupation--with a capitalized "O"--points to the period when Okinawa was occupied by the U.S. "Occupation" (in quotes) meanwhile, points to the continuing presence of the U.S. military in the prefecture.
2. In his work about the Occupation of Okinawa, Toriyama Atsushi (2009) also used the term "senryō 「占領」" ("occupation") to indicate the continuing existence of the American military in Okinawa. He writes in Japanese.
3. With China's current position as the second largest economy in the world, as well as the influence it exerts over the Asia-Pacific region through trade, etc., I consider it to be an important player in what I call the "space of occupation." However, as my study is limited to discussions about Japan and the United States, I do not include any discussions about China or issues regarding it in this study.