Invited Articles

- Peronism and the Birth of Modern Populism
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- The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement from the European Parliament’s Perspective: A Landmark Agreement beyond Trade
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Peer-Reviewed Article

- Imagining Different Futures: Okinawans’ Arguments for Reversion to Japan in 1951
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The European Union and Japan in a Fluid Global Liberal Order: Establishing an Inter-Regional Studies Centre

Hidetoshi Nakamura

A newly launched joint research project

The Global Liberal Order has been constructed and contested since the end of the Second World War. This order has become more fluid than ever with the rise of Russia and China, but more seriously as a result of the Brexit referendum and the Trump victory in 2016. At the same time, however, the European Union (EU) and Japan have long shared liberal values – both economic and political. These two actors concluded their official negotiations over two significant agreements: an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA). Both agreements were signed at the EU-Japan Summit on 17 July 2018.

Against this backdrop, we are successfully carrying out a joint research project, generously funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) from April 2018 to March 2023: Core-to-Core Programme A. Advanced Research Networks (see http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-c2c/adopted_a.html; https://www.waseda.jp/inst/oris/en/project/).

The main objectives of this research project are, primarily, to carry out theoretical and empirical studies of EU-Japan relations, identifying three theoretical pillars and several case-study (thematic) strands, and subsequently, to establish a world-wide centre of ‘Inter-Regional Studies (IRS)’ in the academic field of Politics and International Relations. In order to establish an IRS centre, it is imperative for us to expand our research networks involving the researchers of Asian/Asia-Pacific Studies, while strengthening our existing networks of European Studies around the world. With regard to studies of the EU and European integration, Waseda University has already carried out substantial research collaboration and exchange with (1) Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) in Belgium, (2) Freie Universität Berlin (FUB) in Germany, (3) the University of Warwick (UW) in the UK, and (4) the University of Canterbury (UC) in New Zealand. This research project will strengthen these existing networks, by including other research institutes in each country and in both regions: Europe and Asia.

We have embarked on this project by organising several research groups with three theoretical pillars and four case-study strands, as shown in Figure 1. Three theoretical research groups focus on: (1) comparative studies of...
European integration and Asian regionalism (TG1: comparative regionalism); (2) studies on diffusion mechanisms of liberal norms between the two regions (TG2: inter-regional norm diffusion); and (3) studies of global and regional actorness, mainly comparing the EU with Japan (TG3: global and regional actorness). At this stage, we have four case-study research groups (CGs) focussing on: (1) free trade agreements (FTA); (2) sustainable development goals (SDGs); (3) comprehensive/ non-traditional security; and (4) history/ memory/ reconciliation.

Three major activities of this research project

1. Joint research

   The above-mentioned research groups are jointly operated by Waseda University and four core institutes in partner countries. Coordinators from the four universities are: Anne Weyembergh (ULB), Tanja A. Börzel (FUB), Christopher W. Hughes (UW), and Martin Holland (UC). We aim to expand and consolidate our research networks by inviting leading researchers not only from their own institutes, but also from other institutes in their own and neighbouring countries. Each research group intends to publish an edited book or a special issue of an academic journal.

2. Seminars and workshops

   Waseda and the four core institutes in partner countries organize international seminars. This gives presentation opportunities to both senior and young researchers in our project. We regularly organize workshops of a relatively small size, as we have also done at the Organization for Regional and Inter-regional Studies (ORIS), frequently in partnership with the Top Global University (TGU) Global Asia Studies project based in Waseda University.

3. Research exchanges

   The four core institutes in partner countries host short-term visits for seminars and workshops by our Japan-based researchers, and Waseda makes reciprocal efforts. Significantly for this research exchange project, we encourage young (early stage) researchers, post-doctoral and doctoral students, to pay medium- or long-term visits in order to conduct substantial research in partner countries. Particularly with the ULB and FUB, we have already made several substantial research exchanges. ULB and Waseda are currently implementing a 'cotutelle' system, by jointly supervising one PhD student under the auspices of the Gemstones project.

The role of this journal and the future of this research project

   We have now invited nine members of our overseas core institutes to the international board of editors for this Journal of Inter-Regional Studies: Regional and Global Perspectives, which was launched last year by ORIS at Waseda University. Together with the joint research project, forming this new international board of editors will be a substantial step towards an academic journal with a more international reputation.

   In this volume, we have two invited articles. One article explains the significance of the EU-Japan EPA, which came into force on 1 February 2019. It is not necessarily the product of the above-mentioned joint research, but Mr Pedro Silva Pereira, a Rapporteur of the European Parliament for the EU-Japan EPA, evaluates this agreement ‘in the context of a new global trade order’. In another invited article, Professor Enrique Peruzzotti ‘traces the genealogy of a model of democracy that arose in Latin America in the mid-1940s and that has attained significant momentum in today's politics’. This article suggests that we should not only study Europe and Asia, but also other regions like Latin America and Africa, if we really aim for a genuinely pluralistic and inclusive Inter-Regional Studies Centre.
Popular sectors. Modern populism then established itself as the foremost democratic challenger of liberal representative democracy. It is a presence that haunts representative politics, particularly in times of crisis. The relevance of modern populism can be seen today as populism has extended well beyond the region where it was born. Populist movements are gaining traction in old and new democracies alike. A new generation of populist leaders have come to power in very different national settings and are committed to bring the ideal of populist democracy to life. From Venezuela to Hungary, populist administrations have engaged in processes of constitution-making and/or legislative reforms with the goal of re-founding democracy on a new basis. This article traces the genealogy of a model of democracy that arose in Latin America in the mid-1940s and that has attained significant momentum in today's politics.

This article is organized as follows: section one presents a brief historical description of the rise and contours of classical Peronism in Argentina, section two describes the main tenets of the democratic model of modern populism through an analysis of some of the
institutional transformations promoted by Peronism in government, and section three analyses the comeback of such a democratic model in contemporary politics, as well as the distinguishing trait that differentiates contemporary from classical expressions of populism.

I. Peronism and the creation of modern populism

The rise of Peronism in Argentina in the mid-1940s marked the birth of the modern model of populism. The most distinctive feature differentiating modern from previous expressions of populism was the former’s rejection of dictatorial politics and its commitment to democratic institutions. Such commitment gives way to efforts at institutionalizing a particular form of democracy. The notion of modern populism consequently refers to a particular subtype of populism: to expressions of populism that have reached power and consequently are in a position to engage in processes of institutional transformation to establish a populist regime. The rise of Peronism in Argentina gave life to the first expression of a populist democratic regime. Such an experience would soon be followed by other Latin American countries, such as Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. In all those cases, populist governments propelled processes of democratization that changed the institutional and social landscape of their respective societies. As a consequence, the populist period in Latin America are always associated with the transition from semi-democratic or authoritarian regimes to mass democracy (Germani 1971, Di Tella, Collier and Collier 1991).

Peronism stands out from the rest of the regional expressions of populism not only because it was the first one to establish the foundations of a populist democracy, but also due to the extent and lasting consequences of the changes that it promoted. The experience represented a turning point in Argentine history and Peronism has since then remained the most influential electoral force in the country.

While Peronism has assumed many forms and identities and has governed Argentina in five periods: 1946-1955 (the first two presidential terms of Perón); 1973-1976 (Perón’s third presidency, succeeded by vice president Isabel Perón after his death in 1974); 1989-1999 (Carlos Menem’s two presidential terms); 2000-2003 (Eduardo Duhalde’s interim administration); and 2003-2015 (the period that comprises a presidential term of Nestor Kirchner and the two subsequent periods of Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner), the focus of the present analysis is on “the classical” and founding moment of Peronism: the regime that spanned from 1946, when Juan Domingo Perón was elected president of Argentina, to 1955, when Perón was removed from power by a military coup. During those years, Perón set up the foundations of a modern populist regime, establishing an institutional and political blueprint that has since haunted liberal representative regimes in Latin America, and more recently, worldwide. In an epoch where populism has made a comeback and converted itself into a global phenomenon, an analysis of the basis of modern populism can help us understand what is the nature of this enduring (and increasingly influential) understanding of democracy.

The phenomenon of Peronism is closely related to the person of Juan Domingo Perón, an army officer who broke into the Argentine political scene in the 1940s as an influential figure of the military regime that had been established on June 4, 1943. The military regime was the second such military experience since the country’s attempt to promote a transition from oligarchical rule to mass democracy. The political regime established in 1860, which is generally referred as “the conservative order” (Botana 1977), inaugurated a new political stage of Argentine politics marked by the closing of the state and a regime building period. Yet, the era of political peace that the
oligarchical republican order instated was relatively short lived. Already by 1980, the political order was being questioned by a new political organization, The Radical Party (UCR), organized around the claim of free elections. Eventually, an electoral reform was passed in 1912, which resulted in the election of the Radical Party’s leader, Hipólito Yrigoyen, to the presidency.

The election of Yrigoyen inaugurated a novel yet short-lived democratic experience: the democratic regime only lasted fourteen years, coming to a close in 1930, when a military coup removed Yrigoyen (who was then serving a second presidential term) from power. The episode not only truncated Argentina’s first attempt at consolidating a mass democracy but initiated a half-century long period of institutional instability and military intervention in politics that would last until the 1983 election of Raul Alfonsin to the presidency.

Despite their intentions, the military authorities that took power in 1930 did not stay for very long. A return to civilian rule soon came, yet one that was marked by the tampering with electoral institutions to prevent the majoritarian Radical Party from returning to power. This period of fraudulent electoral politics came to an end in 1943 when a pro-fascist military intervention took power. The military government banned political parties, dissolved congress, intervened in provincial administrations, established press censorship, and imposed religious education on the public school system, while promoting a purge of communist and other “undesirable elements” from trade unions, universities, and the public administration. It is during this period that Colonel Perón made his entrance into the national political scene. Perón had been appointed to the National Labor and Welfare Department (which he later upgraded to a Secretariat), a post which he used to develop political support from the labor movement. During his tenure in the Secretariat, Perón introduced generous fringe benefits, wage increases, and the enforcement of labor legislation, gaining increased political ascendancy within Argentine labor organizations.

The authoritarian measures of the military regime generated great political and civic uneasiness in large sectors of Argentine society. Awakened and inspired by the imminent fall of European fascist regimes, political opponents to the dictatorship began to mobilize, calling for a return to democratic rule. A massive mobilization of opposition forces in defense of “constitutionalism and liberty” took place in Buenos Aires in September 1945. The protest was followed a few days later by an aborted military coup from dissident liberal groups of the Armed Forces. President General Farrell, pressured by members of the cabinet and the Armed Forces, dismissed Perón from his governmental post and imprisoned him on Martin García Island in early October 1945. At Perón’s departure, his partisans in the labor unions launched a campaign for his freedom that culminated in a mass mobilization of working-class sectors to Buenos Aires’s central square in October 17.

After some negotiations, Perón was released and allowed to address the crowd of supporters from the balcony of the governmental house in Plaza de Mayo. In his speech, which was broadcasted on the radio, Perón promised to lead the people to victory in the upcoming presidential elections. The campaign polarized around the figure of Perón and the Unión Democrática, an electoral coalition that integrated the then most relevant political parties (UCR, Socialist Party, Partido Demócrata-Progresista, and Communist Party) with the aim to fight what they considered was a pro-fascist military dictatorship. The

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1 October 17, 1945 is considered as the founding day of Peronism and since then has remained as the most significant episode of Peronist imagery. For an analysis of the political events of that day see Torre 1995. For an analysis of the symbolic uses of the event, see Plotkin 2003, chapters 3 and 4
electoral results gave the victory to Perón's formula. While the electoral outcomes displayed a relative parity of forces between Perón and his contenders, the distribution of electors, legislative members, and governorships gave an overwhelming majority to the former's political force.

Perón's government inaugurated a new era in Argentine history characterized by the full incorporation of popular sectors into public life. Particularly during the first administration, the government promoted a strategy of economic growth and full employment based on a process of income redistribution via wage increases. This also included industry promotion by stimulating consumption and the expansion of the domestic market, the provision of subsidies and credit, and the addition of protectionist tariffs. Throughout Perón's two administrations, trade unions were strengthened under a corporatist scheme of state supervision and the working class' share of the national income rose dramatically: the share of wages in the National Gross Domestic Product jumped from 37 per cent in 1946 to 47 percent in 1955, largely thanks to the generalization of a system of collective bargaining that covered more than 80% of unionized workers.

The historical resilience of Peronism cannot be solely explained in terms of the substantial improvements the regime generated in the material conditions of the working class. Peronism also played a crucial symbolic role via the politics of recognition (dignificación) of popular sectors that resulted in the democratization of everyday life interactions, such as those in the workplace and public spaces, as well as the democratization of consumption patterns and leisure activities. In this way, the policies and initiatives of the regime altered established patterns of deference and respect that had previously regulated the interaction between elites and the popular sector. The distributive and symbolic dimension of the policies of Peronism profoundly changed the nature of Argentine society and gave way to a political and economic system in which popular sectors acquired a predominant place. That is what has established Peronism as an enduring political force that, despite its many faces and incarnations, still retains (seven decades after its birth) considerable electoral support within the lower classes.

While there has been ample discussion of the economic and redistributive policies implemented during the period (Collier and Collier 1991: 331-343) as well as about the "politics of recognition" that Peronism promoted within the working classes and the poor, none of those aspects is the focus of this article. Rather, in the next section the analysis seeks to disentangle the institutional features that gave the democratic experience of the Perón years its distinctiveness. As it will be shown, Peronism expressed a particular form of power exercise that laid out the foundations of the modern populist conception of democracy. The democratic imprint that Peronism promoted between 1946 and 1955 resulted in a particular interpretation of democratic ideals, one that has gained ascendancy in recent years. The next section describes the institutional features that contributed to the building of the populist democratic model.

II. The populist model of democracy

Modern populism is an original response to a particular global and regional conjuncture. On the one hand, global politics were marked by the end of World War II and the efforts of a triumphal United States to spread the model of liberal democracy to those countries where fascism had been defeated. On the other hand, Latin America was facing what the literature would referred to as "a crisis of incorporation" that signaled the decline of the oligarchic order and the arrival of mass politics. Latin American populist regimes would play a pivotal role in that historical juncture
as a vehicle for working class mobilization (Collier and Collier 1992; Germani 1971). They offered a particular democratizing path to channel the transition from semi-democratic or openly authoritarian regimes into mass democracy. In doing so, they helped establish a distinctive democratic model: populist democracy. Modern populism embraces the principle of popular sovereignty, establishing it as the organizing dimension of democratic politics. In doing so, populist democracy places elections as the paradigmatic mechanism of a plebiscitarian understanding of democratic representation that is openly hostile to other dimensions of representative democracy such as the principle of limited government. The rise of Peronism gave life to the first and most classical expression of modern populism, creating an elected populist regime that inaugurated a new stage in the broader history of populism. As Federico Finchelstein puts it, “If democracy starts in Athens, modern democratic populism starts in Buenos Aires” (Finchelstein 2004: 468).

What are the main tenets of the populist democratic model? The ideal of populist democracy organizes around three pillars: a) establishing elections as the key institutional mediation between leader and the people, b) undermining the centrality of liberal intermediating structures such as parliament and the public sphere, and c) erasing the distinction between constitutional and ordinary legislation.

Elections

In light of the historical challenges that Argentina encountered in consolidating a democratic regime based on free and competitive elections, it is not surprising that elections played a key role in developing the democratic credentials of Peronism. Elections provided the pivotal element for granting democratic character to an otherwise illiberal regime that introduced authoritarian practices and institutions in several areas of political life. Electoral reform had been a key issue in the agenda of opposition movements seeking to democratize the oligarchic order. The passing of the Saenz Peña law in 1912 made possible the election of an opposition leader to the presidency, breaking the hold that conservative elites had enjoyed on the presidential selection formula (Botana 1977). The electoral triumph of Radical Party leader Hipólito Yrigoyen in 1916 inaugurated an era of mass electoral politics in Argentina, yet the experience was short-lived: in September 10, 1930 a military coup put an end to this democratic period. While the military did not remain in power for long, calling for elections in November 1931, the return to civilian rule was tarnished by fraudulent electoral practices and the proscription of the Radical Party. The period become known as the “Infamous Decade” due to the predominance of a political system based on manipulated elections. Such a background explains why the issue of free elections figured as a prominent aspect of Perón’s rhetoric. On numerous occasions he made reference to past violations of the electoral rights of the population and proudly declared that the days of electoral fraud were finally over:

“In the political realm... we swept away all the ills that affected the country for almost a century, and we began by suppressing what gave Argentine democracy a vice of nullity: electoral fraud, fraud that made visible to the eyes of any spectator what an awful and terrible lie Argentine democracy was...” (Perón 1949: 21)

The free nature of elections was also repeatedly stressed:

“Today Argentine elections are honorable and clean, and there will be no fraud as long as I am in office, since it is my belief that there can be no democracy based on the lie of a staged election.
This has been our greatest political achievement. For many years, our country witnessed fraudulent elections. Elections were carried out in the post office, where the content of the ballot box was changed, or in the very voting site, where citizens were not allowed to vote. Because here we have witnessed a man who went to vote, who after handing his document to the authorities would be answered: 'it's okay (sic), you have already voted' and the one that had voted for him was the local caudillo. All elections were like that. A permanent lie. We had the Army supervise every electoral ballot box... and put an end to fraud.” (Perón, 1949, p. 97)

Elections, alongside the principle of social justice, became the defining feature of the Peronist model of democracy. Peronism granted elections a paradigmatic role as the key intermediating mechanism between the Argentine people and their leader. In this sense, elections gained preeminence over other mechanisms of political intermediation that were dear to liberalism, such as parliament or the public sphere.

Perón devoted a great deal of resources and time to electoral issues with the aim of preserving as well as expanding his electoral base. During Perón's initial administration the government actively promoted processes of suffrage expansion, most notably via the sanctioning in September 1947 of the law that granted women the right to vote. Another crucial moment was the granting of voting rights to the population that lived in the so-called "national territories," thanks to a law that changed their political status to that of provinces. Such process took place in three stages: in 1951, La Pampa and Chaco were "provincialized," followed by Misiones in 1953, and Neuquén, Río Negro, Formosa, Chubut y Santa Cruz in 1955. Both initiatives led to a notable growth of the Argentine electorate and strengthened Peronism's electoral performance in ulterior electoral contexts (Little, 1973).

Elections, specially presidential ones, occupy a place of privilege in the populist democratic model for they represent the paradigmatic instance of institutional intermediation between leader and people. Electoral institutions seek to establish the political and institutional supremacy of the presidential figure over other representative institutions. To that end, the regime promoted a series of practices to ensure its electoral supremacy. The sanctioning of the 1949 constitution introduced important changes into the electoral system, most of all, the replacement of indirect by direct voting in the presidential formula, the possibility of the immediate and unlimited reelection of the President, and the replacement of the system of the Saenz Peña's law’s incomplete lists with a winner-takes-all type of scheme. The change in the electoral system, as well the obstacles that opposition voices faced in a government-manipulated public sphere, contributed to the reduction of opposition representation in congress: in the 1951 election Peronists obtained 90% of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Additional measures were implemented with the aim of weakening the electoral strength of opposition forces. In districts that had been electorally adverse, such as the city of Buenos Aires, the government engaged in gerrymandering practices that resulted in subsequent processes of district redesign in 1951 and 1954. In addition, a 1949 law established electoral limitations on the formation of coalitions with the clear objective of preventing the emergence of a new “Unión Democrática”.

Elections (and their complement, mass mobilizations) are conceived as mechanisms of acclamation, not of representation. Elections are understood in a plebiscitarian key as a mechanism that merely confirm a leader's claim to incarnate the people. Thus elections do not function under a representative logic of production of temporary majorities and minorities or for that matter of a democratic leadership. Instead, they certify the dual nature of populist leadership: the leader “... was at the same time an elected
representative and a quasi-transcendental conductor of people” (Finchelstein, 2014: 199). Elections consequently acquire an extraordinary dimension; they represent an exceptional decisional moment that bestows upon the winner the right to impose his will over the rest of society. The following reflection of Perón regarding the meaning of his electoral triumph helps to illustrate the populist differences between this model of will formation and a liberal-representative one based on the deliberative interplay between majorities and minorities:

“... (we) confronted our firm and unbreakable will to the will of our opponents there is only one problem to elucidate: who is right and who has the acquired right to impose his own will? We have given the people the opportunity to choose, in the most honest election in Argentine history, between us and our opponents; the people have chosen us. Consequently, that problem is over. In the Argentine republic, what we decide is what is done.” (Perón, 1949: 9)

The electoral outcome forecloses any ulterior debate, conferring the “right to impose” the will of majoritarian forces over the rest of the political spectrum. In such conception, there is no space for the principle of legitimate opposition. Rather, those defeated at the ballot box are to subordinate themselves to the majoritarian will embodied in the person of the president. As Perón put it:

“it is necessary to obey whatever the majority decides, for it is the only way in a democracy to realize the will of the majority.... The free play of wills lasts until a decision is made. Once the decision is made, there must be an unconditional subordination to the decision of the majority” (Perón 1949: 29).

As Bernard Manin argues, when the majority will be equalized to the general will, minorities lose all political status (Manin, 1987: 360). Democratization is conceived of as the imposition of an alleged “popular will” over the rest of society. The latter opens up a questionable effort at political homogenization inspired by the untenable fiction of a unanimous will that leaves no space for critics of the administration:

“Our doctrine... is a patriotic doctrine. Therefore, I see no inconvenience in introducing it everywhere. If it were a bad doctrine I would be the first one in challenging it; but being a good one, we should try to introduce it everywhere, in all men and women so we can assure the triumph of a unified collective action.” (Perón, 1949: 46)

Erasing the distinction between constitutional and ordinary legislation

The realization of the principle of popular sovereignty demands erasing the distinction between ordinary and constitutional law. The constitution must reflect, not limit, the majoritarian will. To this end, populist regimes engage in processes of constitution-making that seek to replace the liberal notion of limited government with the principle of “unlimited elected government”. The plebiscitarian understanding of elections has to be translated into constitutional terms. Populist constitutionalism appeals to a questionable notion of constituent power to dismantle constitutional limits on popular sovereignty. From such a perspective, rights should not be external to power but are an expression of it: constitutional norms should reflect popular aspirations, not limit them. The populist conception of constitutionalism was clearly reflected in the statement of the new President of the Supreme Court, who declared that:
“The distinction of different governmental functions should not lead us to forget that the authority is always one. Expression of such authority is what the constitution refers to as the ‘supreme chief,’ to whose will all executive decrees and judicial decisions should conform…”

(Tomas Casares, quoted from Negretto 2012: 123)

Populist constitutionalism is hostile to the liberal notion of an autonomous judiciary. Such hostility translates into efforts at eliminating the autonomy of the judicial branch. Usually the first targets of populist administrations are apex courts, since they are the institution that is responsible for upholding the distinction between constitutional and ordinary politics (Arato 2017). Other targets are those agencies that integrate what Guillermo O’Donnell has referred as the mechanisms of horizontal accountability (lower courts, comptrollers, public prosecutors, electoral courts, ombudsmen, etc.) (O’Donnell 1993). Perón promoted the removal of the majority of Justices of the Supreme Court in his first year in office. In September 1946, the Chamber of Deputies impeached all but one Justice of the Court (who had openly declared his support for Perón) with the vote of 104 deputies and the opposition of 47 members of the opposition. The Senate unanimously approved the removal of the Justices.

Processes of constitutional reform also figure prominently in populist regimes. In 1948, Perón launched a constitution-making process whose aim was to establish “a Justicialist successor to the constitution of 1853” (Rock, 1987: 288). While the need for constitutional reform had been raised by other political forces, such as the Radical Party, the dynamics that the process of constitutional reform acquired indicated that the reform was not envisioned as a consensual undertaking. Under populism, processes of constitution-making adopt a supra-constitutional character: in this case, the process did not follow established amendment procedures, and instead the government resorted to a plebiscititarian strategy that resulted in the election of an unbound conventional assembly (Negretto 2012). The project of constitutional reform presented without previous announcement to the Chamber of Deputies on August 13, 1948 did not specify which sort of amendments would be subject to debate and called for a full delegation of powers to a constitutional convention. The Radical Party objected, arguing that such a procedure would give the convention a blank check that could affect the integrity of basic principles of the structure of republican government, and that such a procedure was aimed at avoiding a parliamentary debate with the opposition (Negretto 2012). Despite the opposition’s objections, the project was approved and an electoral campaign for the election of conventional delegates took place that resulted in the victory of Peronism, whose supporters gained majoritarian control of the assembly.

The dynamics of the constitution-making process was one of imposition, a logic that was conceptually justified by the main ideologist behind the reform. According to Arturo Sampay:

“A constitution determines the ordering of the governmental powers of a sovereign political community, the distributing of the functions of those powers, which one is the dominant sector in the political community and which are the goals assigned to the political community by that dominant sector.” (cited in Argumedo, 1989: 57)

The project that was finally approved express the personal wishes of Perón, who notably expanded his authority over the legislative branch, introduced the possibility of unlimited presidential reelection, and saw the emergency powers of the executive expanded and strengthened. Perón explicitly referred to the new document as being a “Peronist” or a “Justicialist”
constitution, underlining in this way the excluding logic that prevailed throughout the constitution-making process. It is illustrative to see the way Perón referred to the 1949 Constitution as a document that exclusively reflected the political will of the majoritarian party:

“The essential principles of the Peronist doctrine now shine as the polar star of the nation in the preamble of the new Justicialist Constitution... no well born Argentine can refuse to support what we want when we affirm our irrevocable decision to constitute a socially just, economically independent, and politically sovereign nation, without relinquishing his/her title of Argentine.” (Perón, 1983: 175)

In the eyes of the opposition, the brief constitution-making process represented an empty act destined to satisfy presidential political ambitions, particularly of solving the problem of political succession by amending the article that banned the possibility of an immediate presidential reelection. The procedure, far from cementing a new institutional compromise, served to further polarize Argentine society into two irreconcilable camps.

Undermining the centrality of liberal intermediating structures such as parliament and the public sphere

The privileging of elections as a mechanism of acclamation demand the parallel dismantling of representative instances of political intermediation: parliament and the public sphere. Under a plebiscitarian model, parliament is placed in a subordinate role towards the executive, acting fundamentally as a receptor and organizer of presidential decrees (Waldmann, 1981: 63-64). During Perón’s years the absence of a strong legislative opposition facilitated the efforts at establishing the institutional supremacy of the executive over the other powers. Throughout the two administrations, Peronism dominated both chambers, facing only the opposition of a reduced number of Radical Party legislators in the chamber of deputies. The impressive legislative labor of the first years of Perón’s administration, which is frequently cited as an example of congressional dynamism, concealed the fact that most of those laws had originated in the executive. In fact, many of the legislative measures represented mere ratifications of executive decrees that had been promulgated by the prior military regime. According to Mario Justo Lopez, in 1946 congress approved around 500 decrees, in 1947, 56 decrees and in 1949, 472 decrees, all dictated by the previous de facto administration (Lopez, 1961, p. 113).

The 1949 constitution weakened the accountability role of the legislative over the executive power while simultaneously strengthening the legislative prerogatives of the presidency (Negretto 2012; Waldmann 1981: 63, 100-1).

Another important intermediating structure that was seriously weakened was the public sphere. While in congress, Peronists employed their majority to undermine parliamentary debate, and a series of censorship and repressive measures sought to silence opposition voices in the media. The government seized control of newsprint distribution and exerted all sorts of pressures on opposition media outlets and journalists. Simultaneously, state sponsored media mounted relentless propaganda campaigns aimed at discrediting the independent media and opposition forces. The most vociferous opposition newspaper, La Prensa, was eventually expropriated and sold to the CGT labor union. Lastly, the government ran a chain of radio stations and newspapers as well as a generously financed system of state propaganda.

Through the described initiatives, Peronism produced a distinctive democratic model that
combined electoral and illiberal features into a new synthesis. Since then, modern populism established itself as a constant presence in democratic politics that acquired particular relevance in moments of political hardship. Populism erupts into the public sphere wherever representative institutions are in crisis, providing an alternative interpretation of democratic ideals. As such, it is a specter that haunts liberal representative regimes when they are weakened by citizen disaffection. In contemporary times, populism has made a comeback as many democracies are confronting economic hardships and growing political disaffection.

III. Populism’s comeback: the global diffusion of the populist democratic model

Populism returned with particular force in the aftermath of the third democratizing wave. The latter resulted in an impressive diffusion of liberal representative institutions to different regions of the world. In some regions, like Latin America and Europe, the process of democratization reached continental dimensions. It is precisely those regions where populism has made its strongest comeback, unlocking an ideological dispute over what democracy means. Contemporary populism gains prominence in already democratized societies in junctures where existing representative arrangements are in crisis: it appears as a democratic answer to the crisis of democracy.

The populist wave started in Latin America in 1999 with the election of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, which was soon followed by Rafael Correa in Ecuador, Hugo Morales in Bolivia, and Kirchner in Argentina. It subsequently spread to Europe, most notably, Hungary and Poland, and lastly to the United States with the arrival of Donald Trump’s presidency.²

The current centrality that modern populism enjoys is not only due to its geographical spread but also because of its attainment of governmental status in societies were populist forces were traditionally relegated to a politics of outsiders and marginal forces (Peruzzotti 2017). That is the case of Europe or the United States, where populist parties have gained a considerable electoral following in different countries and in some cases, reached power. Hungary, Poland, and the United States are experiencing the realities of populism as government as well as the attempts of those administrations to redefine the institutional landscape in a populist direction. Efforts at regime building took place or are currently underway in Ecuador, Venezuela, Hungary, and Poland.

Many contemporary democracies are witness to efforts at establishing populist regimes whose genealogy can be traced back to those processes that took place in Latin America during the second wave of democratization. An analysis of the historical process that led to the creation of modern populism can shed light into the challenges that many democracies are confronting nowadays.

There is, however, an important distinction to make regarding the contextual conditions that marked the emergence of modern and contemporary forms of populism. Classical Peronism as well as the other regimes that followed in the 1940s and 1950s in Latin America, emerged in societies that were yet not fully democratized. In fact, populist movements played a pivotal role at democratizing regimes that were either openly authoritarian or semi-democratic by expanding suffrage (and thus broadening the scope of electoral politics), promoting inclusionary welfare policies, and engaging in the politics of recognition. While some of those initiatives undoubtedly resulted in processes of social inclusion, the legacy of such

² On the global ascendancy of populism see De la Torre 2014; De la Torre and Peruzzotti 2008; Moffitt 2017; Judis 2016
experiences is a troublesome one at the level of regime-building for they created an institutional blueprint that suppressed key dimensions of liberal representative democracy. In brief, modern populism was a specific path towards democratization, offering an alternative road to democracy than that of liberal representative democracy. While the democratic model they implemented had many questionable features, those experiences nevertheless represented a democratic accomplishment when contrasted with the regimes and societies that preceded them.

By contrast, contemporary expressions of populism take place in already democratized societies. The most relevant expressions of populism as government have taken place in societies that had been successfully democratized during the third wave. So while the forms of political self-understanding of present populists do not significantly differ from those that inspired the building of populist regimes in the 1940s, contextual conditions set those two experiences apart. Contemporary populist governments emerged within democratic regimes that while facing serious crisis, still provided social and institutional mechanisms to make government accountable and could be set into motion to challenge the authoritarian features of those administrations. So the attempts by present administrations to redesign the institutional landscapes of current regimes in a plebiscitarian direction might be challenged by opposition forces within the political system or in the public sphere.

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This article examines the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) from the perspective of the European Parliament. In particular, it argues that the impact of this landmark agreement goes well beyond trade, sending a strong signal at a time of rising protectionism. The article describes the content of this ‘new generation’ agreement as well as its strategic, economic and sustainability relevance. The European Parliament played a supportive role throughout the negotiations but also took a demanding stance. In December 2018, the European Parliament approved the EPA and the agreement must now deliver on its potential to benefit both citizens and businesses.

1. The EU-Japan EPA in the context of a new global trade order

The negotiations for an EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which started in March 2013, took place for some years in the shadow of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the Transpacific Partnership (TPP) talks. However, the context for international trade policy has dramatically changed since the beginning of 2017. The United States’ (US) withdrawal from TPP and the de facto freeze of TTIP talks reinforced the EU’s and Japan’s shared objective to strike a trade agreement. The EU-Japan EPA, which was politically concluded in July 2017, a day before the G20 Summit in Germany, is a joint statement in favour of cooperation and a rules-based trade order at a time when confrontation is on the rise. The EU and Japan - two big economies that together cover nearly a third of world gross domestic product (GDP), almost 40% of world trade, and over 600 million people - are showing through this EPA that the way forward is cooperation and a more inclusive and regulated globalisation, not trade wars that have no winners. Both parties are defending high levels of environmental, social, food safety, and consumer protection standards, rather than lowering or rolling back such standards. The EU-Japan EPA is, in sum, a clear response to the protectionist agenda of US President Donald Trump.

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The US retreat into an ‘American First’ strategy left a large vacuum in the economic diplomacy in the world. This is an opportunity for the EU and Japan to advance their trade interests and approaches in global trade.

The EU-Japan EPA is, indeed, a vital piece of the EU trade agenda jigsaw. The conclusion of the trade negotiations with Japan and the strengthening of the EU’s presence in the Asia-Pacific region were clearly set as priorities in the European Commission’s October 2015 communication, ‘Trade for All – Towards more responsible trade and investment policy.’ The EU uses trade as a means to promote key EU values and principles as well as to encourage sustainable development. Japan is a like-minded partner of the EU as both share fundamental values, namely democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, as well as a strong commitment to sustainable development and a rules-based World Trade Organisation (WTO) system. This agreement with Japan is the EU’s most ambitious trade agreement and, therefore, it certainly advances the EU’s approach to global trade by setting high standards, promoting sustainable development, curbing protectionist pressures, and maintaining the rules-based economic order in the face of numerous challenges.

Trade policy has also been a centrepiece of Prime Minister Abe’s economic strategy and it has been used as leverage for necessary domestic structural reforms (the so-called third arrow of ‘Abenomics’), including reforms in the agricultural sector. Against the background of President Trump’s trade politics, Japan decided to further pursue high quality economic partnerships, successfully concluding the EU-Japan EPA and leading the multilateral TPP-11 agreement in 2018.² The EU-Japan EPA is an essential component for ‘Abenomics’ and it can also be helpful for the Japan-United States trade dialogue, as it sets new standards and can create incentives for the return of the US to multilateral trade agreements. Moreover, this agreement provides the groundwork for high quality free trade agreements (FTAs) in the Asia-Pacific region, namely for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations, which include China.³

The EU-Japan EPA is, in this sense, a landmark agreement that goes well beyond trade and the relations between the EU and Japan.⁴

2. The EU-Japan EPA: Content and unfinished businesses

The EU-Japan EPA is the most important bilateral trade agreement ever concluded. The outcome of December 2017 is a ‘new generation’ FTA that covers better market access for goods, services and public procurement, regulatory cooperation and the modernisation of trade rules, intellectual property rights, corporate governance, and sustainable development. The EPA does not include the protection of investment, on which negotiations are still ongoing for a future investment agreement, nor does it include cross-border data flows, even though personal data can now be safely transferred between the EU and Japan based on strong data protection guarantees.

2.1. Key elements of the agreement

When the agreement enters into force, more than 90% of the EU’s exports to Japan will be duty free. Once the EPA is fully implemented, we will see 99% of EU tariff lines and 97% of Japanese tariff lines liberalised.

The EU and Japan agreed to abolish tariffs for chemicals, plastics, cosmetics, textiles, and clothing. Tariffs will be removed on Japanese industrial products, notably for automobiles and car parts, general machineries, and electronics. The agreement will ultimately remove 100% of tariffs on industrial products in both directions. Moreover, around 85% of agri-food products will also be allowed to enter Japan duty-free, providing significant export opportunities for EU agri-food products such as wine, beef, pork, and cheese. Processed agricultural products such as pasta, chocolates, biscuits, and tomato sauce will also benefit from the elimination of customs duties. Japanese consumers can, therefore, enjoy such goods at lower prices. There are, nonetheless, safeguards to the most sensitive products through duty-free quotas, reduced duties, or staging periods. Customs duties of Japan’s export priority products, including fisheries products, beef, and tea, will also be eliminated, while rice and seaweed are excluded from tariff liberalisation. In addition, the EPA ensures mutual protection of Geographical Indications (GIs): 56 of Japan’s GIs, such as Kobe beef and Japanese sake, and 205 EU GIs, including 11 GIs from my country, Portugal, where Porto wine is produced.

Moreover, the EPA includes market access commitments in cross-border services, including postal, maritime transport, telecommunications, and financial services. The agreement also facilitates trade in services by including provisions on the movement of people for business purposes, which covers, for example, intra-corporate transferees, business visitors, and contractual service suppliers.

The agreement also deals with public procurement, granting the EU access to the procurement of 54 ‘core cities’ in Japan and removing existing obstacles to procurement in the railway sector. In turn, the EU grants Japan improved access to procurement by towns and cities and has agreed to a partial opening of procurement in the sector of overland and urban railways.

Furthermore, the agreement addresses many non-tariff measures (NTMs) that constituted a concern for EU companies, namely on motor vehicles, food additives, medical devices, textiles labelling, pharmaceutical products, and cosmetics. It also contains high requirements in the area of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, which reduces compliance costs and creates a more predictable regulatory framework for both the EU and Japan. Progress made by Japan in this respect, even before the entry into force of the agreement, was remarkable and must be acknowledged as an important contribution to the successful outcome of the negotiations.

Finally, the EPA represents a further deepening of trade agreements with the introduction of new chapters and provisions, such as those on climate change, corporate governance, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and sustainable agriculture.

2.2. Unfinished businesses: Investment protection and data flows

The negotiators originally intended to include an investment protection chapter in the EPA, but the issue was later decoupled for two main reasons. First, after a long debate in the EU on the major flaws of the private Investor-State Dispute Settlement mechanism (ISDS), namely in the context of the trade and investment agreement with Canada (CETA), the European Commission’s proposal is now the establishment of an Investment Court System (ICS). ICS is, in fact, a public arbitration mechanism.
mechanism and should be seen as a stepping stone for a future Multilateral Investment Court. However, the EU and Japan could not yet reach an agreement regarding the investor dispute settlement mechanism. Second, the Opinion of the European Court of Justice on the EU-Singapore FTA of May 2017 clarified that investment protection is a shared competence of both the EU and its Member States. This led to a natural split between the EPA (‘EU-only’ agreement) and the investment part (which will be a future ‘mixed agreement’), taking into account the two different ratification processes in the EU. Negotiations for an EU-Japan Investment Protection Agreement therefore continue and the European Parliament, which is strongly against the old-fashioned private ISDS, will closely follow any new developments.

Given the growing importance of the digital economy for growth and jobs, it is of the essence to have rules on cross-border data flows that are fit for the future. The EU-Japan EPA does not include, however, cross-border data flows provisions because, at the time of the conclusion of the negotiations, the EU was still discussing the right balance between the need for easier flow of data and strong privacy safeguards. The EPA foresees, nonetheless, a ‘rendezvous clause’ whereby the EU and Japan undertook to assess the situation and discuss data flows within three years after the agreement enters into force. In the meantime, and as a complement to the EPA, companies can now benefit from the recently adopted adequacy decision that allows personal data to be transferred safely between the EU and Japan.

3. Why it matters: a landmark agreement beyond trade

The relevance of the EU-Japan EPA was much highlighted during the ratification process in the European Parliament. This EPA is a joint effort by the EU and Japan to shape globalisation, drive sustainable growth and set high standards in international trade.

3.1. EU-Japan: reinforcing bilateral ties, shaping globalisation

The EPA, together with the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), definitely opens a new chapter in the long-standing EU-Japan relations. This partnership will go, however, well beyond the bilateral exchanges. At a time of serious protectionist challenges to the international order, the EU’s and Japan’s common interests and mutual trust make this partnership truly strategic.

Today’s economic ties between the EU and Japan are solid. For the EU, Japan is the second largest investor and the sixth largest trading partner. Nonetheless, trade between the EU and Japan only represents 1.1% of world trade, showing the underdeveloped potential of bilateral trade. The EU and Japan both need to maximise their growth potential while ensuring that it benefits all citizens. The EPA clearly opens new

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9 ‘Mixed agreements’ must be ratified by both the EU and the individual Member States following their own national procedures, which often requires the approval of national parliaments and regional parliaments. Trade agreements that cover issues under the exclusive competence of the EU only require the completion of the EU ratification procedure, that is to say, the approval by the Council and ratification by the European Parliament.
13European Political Strategy Centre, Ibid.
opportunities for economic growth, employment, business competitiveness and innovation as the economies of the EU and Japan are complementary.\textsuperscript{14} It will also strengthen EU’s presence in Asia and Japan’s political and economic profile in the EU.

Moreover, given the combined influence of the EU and Japan, the EPA will contribute to global rule-making and standard-setting in international trade.\textsuperscript{15} The agreement is, therefore, very important to help set high labour, environmental, and consumer standards in international trade, as well as shape an inclusive globalisation and uphold the multilateral rules-based trade order.

The European Parliament, in particular the International Trade Committee and the Delegation for Relations with Japan, which has existed since 1979, will continue to follow and nourish this important bilateral cooperation. This cooperation includes parliamentary dialogue on areas such as trade, environment, technology, and innovation.

3.2. Exploring the economic potential of the EPA

There are several studies about the economic impact of the EU-Japan EPA. Although estimates should always be taken with a pinch of salt, the potential of the agreement is clearly positive in terms of GDP, income, trade, and employment. According to the Trade Sustainability Impact Assessment of 2016, the long-term GDP increase for the EU is estimated to be 0.76% and bilateral exports should grow by 34%.\textsuperscript{16} With regard to the Japanese economy, the EPA is estimated to increase real GDP by approximately 1% and employment by approximately 0.5% (approximately 290,000 jobs).\textsuperscript{17}

The removal of trade barriers (tariffs, NTMs and regulatory cooperation) is expected to benefit both the EU and Japan, particularly in the food, feed and processed food, manufacturing, chemicals (including pharmaceuticals), business services, and motor vehicle sectors.\textsuperscript{18} No sector is foreseen to experience noticeable losses. 14% of the welfare gains should stem from tariffs, the remaining 86% from NTMs reform, with the services sector account for more than half of gains.\textsuperscript{19}

The largest gains for the EU are to be found in the agri-food sector, whose exports could increase by 294%. For the EU, considerable export opportunities are foreseen in industries such as agriculture, beverages, textiles, and leather products, which have high rates of SME participation in trade.\textsuperscript{20} The agreement has the potential to benefit SMEs for this reason, but also thanks to a dedicated chapter that will provide transparency about market access to the benefit of smaller companies. For Japan, the main gains are expected in the manufacturing and the services sectors. Benefits are to be expected in particular in the motor vehicle sector, followed by minerals and glass, machinery and equipment (including medical, precision and optical instruments), and

\textsuperscript{17}Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Ibid.
\textsuperscript{18}Lee-Makiyama, Hosuk, Ibid.
chemicals.\textsuperscript{21}

This agreement is economically balanced, so it has received broad support from European and Japanese businesses. We know, nonetheless, that the agreement will not be able to eliminate all the challenges of trade relations. This concerns notably informal barriers to market access in Japan, which includes a business culture with high entry costs, such as language skills and trusting networks of contacts.\textsuperscript{22} With the entry into force of the agreement on 1 February 2019, it is now crucial that stakeholders get to know the content of the agreement, so that businesses and consumers can reap the benefits of this comprehensive and balanced agreement.

3.3. A step forward on sustainable development

Trade is more than boosting growth and jobs. Trade agreements should also increase the well-being of citizens and upgrade social, environmental, and consumer standards. In these hard times for trade and international cooperation, the EU and Japan are taking the lead towards a more responsible way of dealing with globalisation. Two of the world’s biggest economies show it is possible to deliver ambitious and comprehensive FTA agreements that are mutually beneficial and create opportunities for businesses, while also better protecting consumers, raising standards, and protecting labour rights and the environment.

The EU-Japan EPA has three fundamental elements in terms of sustainability. First, the EU and Japan recognise the importance of enhancing the contribution of trade and investment to the Sustainable Development Goals in its economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Second, the agreement includes a commitment to implement effectively the Paris Agreement on climate change and other environmental multilateral conventions. Japan also undertook to work towards the ratification of the two outstanding International Labour Organisation (ILO) core conventions (on discrimination and on the abolition of forced labour). Third, the EPA also includes chapters on SMEs (enabling smaller companies to access information and benefit from the agreement), corporate governance (based on the G20 and OECD’s principles), and on sustainable agriculture and the sustainable use of natural resources (which foresees cooperation mechanisms for rural development, safe food for consumers, and fighting illegal fishing and illegal logging).

Before the ratification of the EPA by the Japanese Diet and the European Parliament, Japan established an interministerial framework to deal with the implementation of sustainable development commitments in the EPA, including the ratification of the ILO core conventions. This shows Japan’s commitment to sustainable development, which is also a key issue for the EU. Although the European Parliament sees room for improvement regarding the enforcement and the effectiveness of trade and sustainable development provisions in trade agreements - at the request of the Parliament a review clause was included to this effect- the EU-Japan EPA is clearly a step forward on sustainable development.

4. The role of the European Parliament

The European Parliament has significantly increased its powers in EU trade policy with the Lisbon Treaty, which requires the Parliament to be regularly updated by the European Commission during the negotiations and to give consent to any trade and investment agreement negotiated. The rejection
of the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement in 2012 has particularly increased the European Parliament’s influence in EU trade negotiations. The European Parliament followed very closely the trade negotiations with Japan from the very beginning and took a demanding position towards the negotiators. The final agreement was then fully discussed and it culminated in a positive vote for the EPA as well as a resolution that expresses the European Parliament’s recommendations for the good implementation of the agreement.

4.1. A demanding stance from the start

The European Parliament was always supportive of the trade negotiations with Japan, but it also had a demanding stance towards the negotiators. In October 2012, the European Parliament adopted a resolution expressing its views on the EU mandate for the negotiations, notably calling for a ‘one year-review,’ in which the EU would need to assess Japan’s progress on the elimination of NTMs. This evaluation was, indeed, carried out and negotiations continued for three more years.

The European Parliament scrutinised these negotiations through a dedicated monitoring group of the International Trade Committee for Japan, which I chaired as Rapporteur for the EPA. Over the past years, 28 meetings of the Japan monitoring group took place, regularly meeting with the European Commission, but also with European and Japanese business associations as well as representatives of trade unions and civil society. The European Parliament had three main requests during the negotiations: first, more transparency about the negotiations and greater involvement of civil society in the process; second, no lowering of EU standards, notably on environment, labour, food safety and consumer protection, and respect for the right to regulate; and third, the outcome needed to meet the interests of both citizens and businesses.

The content of the EPA, its relevance, and the priorities set out by the European Parliament (that were particularly focused on sustainable development), were all very important elements in the deliberations ahead of the European Parliament’s vote.

4.2. Ratification and implementation recommendations

After the conclusion of the EPA negotiations in 2017, the European Parliament analysed the agreement and heard from as many stakeholders as possible ahead of its final vote. In September 2018, as Rapporteur of the European Parliament for the EU-Japan EPA, I presented a draft recommendation for the approval of the EPA and a draft resolution accompanying the consent of the agreement. After numerous debates, the European Parliament approved the EU-Japan EPA on 12 December 2018 by a large majority (71% of favourable votes). The Japanese Diet also approved the agreement in December 2018, allowing for its entry into force on 1 February 2019.

The European Parliament also adopted a resolution that gives recommendations for the monitoring and the implementation of the agreement. This is

politically significant as the European Parliament could not adopt such a resolution at the time of the vote on CETA. The resolution highlights the importance of: first, monitoring the proper implementation of the agreed removal of NTMs, the commitments made on public procurement, and the management of tariff-rate quotas for agricultural products; second, promptly establishing SME contact points and a website containing information about the agreement and market access; and third, transparency and stakeholders’ involvement in the regulatory cooperation committee. Regarding sustainability, the European Parliament in particular calls for: first, progress from Japan towards the ratification of the two outstanding ILO core conventions; second, the speedy set-up of a domestic advisory group that will monitor the implementation of the TSD chapter; and third, both parties making good use of the review clause in the chapter on trade and sustainable development to improve the enforceability and effectiveness of labour and environmental provisions.

The EU-Japan EPA is a very important trade agreement and it will now be crucial to swiftly implement the agreement as well as involve civil society during all steps. The European Parliament will continue to do its part to ensure that the agreement delivers on its potential to the benefit of both citizens and businesses.

The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement from the European Parliament’s Perspective: A Landmark Agreement beyond Trade

/ Pedro Silva Pereira

Conclusion

The EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement is a landmark agreement that enters into force at a time of growing inward-looking protectionist pressures. The answers of the EU and Japan to the challenges of globalisation are global standard-setting and better cooperation. This agreement between two of the world’s biggest economies is, in this sense, a treaty against trade war.

The EU-Japan EPA is a ‘new generation trade agreement that does not only cover the elimination of tariffs but also many beyond-the-border measures, creating opportunities for economic growth and employment in the EU and Japan. It is also the most ambitious trade agreement ever concluded by the EU regarding sustainable development, with several innovative elements, including a commitment to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The European Parliament played a supportive role throughout the negotiations but also took a demanding stance. The International Trade Committee of the European Parliament fully debated the content of the final agreement in all detail, and considered its importance from the strategic, economic, and sustainable development points of view ahead of the final vote. In December 2018, the European Parliament approved the EU-Japan EPA by a large majority, conscious that the agreement has great potential in shaping globalisation according to our shared rules and values, driving sustainable growth, and setting high standards in international trade.

The most important bilateral trade agreement ever concluded must now be a gold standard in terms of implementation. The European Parliament expects nothing less than a swift implementation of the EU-Japan EPA, with the involvement of civil society, and to the full benefit of citizens and businesses.

References


Introduction

The Japanese government repeatedly insisted that Japanese nationals would not tolerate the separation of Okinawa Islands from Japan and that local Okinawans also confirmed their desire to be in the Japanese domain when they communicated with the United States before the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951 (Eldridge 2003: 204-209, 222). Some local people in Okinawa launched a signature campaign in April 1951 to express their preference for a reversion to Japan. The pro-reversion group of Okinawans in Tokyo actively sent petitions to the policy makers of Japan and the United States. A previous study indicates that U.S. government officials paid careful attention to the nation-wide sentiment and to the pro-reversion preference in Okinawa, in the process of preparing the Treaty draft that underpinned the efforts of the Japanese government (Eldridge 2003: 214-217).

Abstract

This study aims to interpret the narratives in favor of a reversion to Japan by Okinawans in Okinawa and in Tokyo/Japan in the socio-political context of 1951. Pro-reversion arguments in Okinawa rarely mentioned the presence of U.S. bases due to the exclusive U.S. occupation. Pro-reversion opinion in Tokyo that prioritized the issue of Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa in exchange for the bases reflected the fear of being seen as akin to the “non-Japanese” Koreans, who were regarded as pro-communist in GHQ occupied Japan. Okinawans’ wish to return to Japan in 1951 should be understood as a maneuver to seek better living conditions in both Okinawa and Tokyo/Japan.

Imagining Different Futures: Okinawans’ Arguments for Reversion to Japan in 1951*

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1 Ogasawara Islands were another case raised in the territorial issue regarding islands to which the Japanese government insisted on the “national sentiment,” along with Okinawa’s case.
The story of the territorial issue of Okinawa in 1951, the year of the San Francisco Peace Conference, seems to fit comfortably into the nationalistic narrative of Japan. The general explanation for the pro-reversion preference of Okinawa of that time resonates with it: they sought to return to "homeland" Japan (Arakawa 2013:47-48), or it is understood in the continuity of the effort of becoming "Japanese" in the prewar era (Oguma 1998: 497-498). In this narrative, the pro-reversion Okinawans in Okinawa and in Tokyo tend to be described as one political entity that forged the reversion campaign in each place to support the "national goal" of Japan.

Close analysis of the pro-reversion discourses of Okinawans in Okinawa and Tokyo, however, sheds light on different aspects of the story. This study aims to submit alternative explanations of the pro-reversion preference in 1951 within the contemporary socio-political context. As discussed in the following sections, the pro-reversion argument in Okinawa emphasized the image of prewar Okinawa as the ideal, while avoiding mention of how the U.S. base would affect the lives of people on the island. Okinawans in Tokyo prioritized the confirmation of Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa, which secures their Japanese nationality in exchange for allowing the U.S. military station in Okinawa. The two pro-reversion arguments should be interpreted in the context of the contemporary socio-political conditions, that is, the exclusive power the United States held over Okinawa and the suppression of Korean people under GHQ (General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers) occupied Japan. Through analysis and interpretation, this study will demonstrate that the emergence of the pro-reversion preference in 1951 could be better understood as a result of the contemporary historical contingency and not entirely the outcome of Japanese nationalistic sentiment of Okinawans or the continuity from the prewar era.

Recent years have witnessed a series of publications on the society and politics of early postwar Okinawa (Mori and Toriyama 2013; Toriyama 2013; Koike 2015; Wakabayashi 2015). The status issue, however, has not yet received much academic analysis. A few exceptions are Oguma (1998), Toriyama (2001), and Sakurazawa (2007). Toriyama clarifies the drastic change of the social structure due to the intensive military base construction that possibly fostered a pro-reversion sentiment in Okinawa. The scope of his analysis is, however, restricted mainly to the Okinawa Islands. Oguma and Sakurazawa explain why the pro-reversion opinion emerged and attracted people's support in 1951 from a historical viewpoint, but both tend to treat Okinawan people as a collective agent, paying less attention to the location of the advocates, that is, from where the arguments were made. Regarding the difference inside the Okinawan community, Tobe (2000) points out the complicated cultural power relations between Okinawa and Tokyo. Political issues such as the administrative status of Okinawa are, however, not the main theme of his historical analysis. This study expects to contribute to the literature by offering a cross-border, socio-political analysis on the Okinawans' orientation to reversion in the early postwar period.

Our discussion first serves to introduce the outline of the Okinawa status debate in 1951, and the common characteristics of the pro-reversion arguments respectively in Okinawa and Tokyo. It then clarifies the difference between Okinawa and Tokyo in the way the pro-reversion opinions were expressed, based on the arguments that appeared in the media. In the following section, the cause of the difference is explained in the context of the socio-political conditions in both places. This study focuses especially on the political context of the GHQ occupation in order to interpret the "Japanese sovereignty first" argument made by Okinawans in Tokyo.
1. The Okinawa status debate and pro-reversion argument

The pro-reversion argument, or the status of Okinawa in general, became a political agenda in Okinawa in 1951 when the schedule of the Sun Francisco Peace Conference was fixed by the Allied Powers. *Uruma Shimpō* and *Okinawa Times*, the two main local newspapers, offered a forum for the Okinawa status debate from February to August 1951.² The framework of the debate was the dichotomy of the pro-reversion position vs. the anti-reversion. Although the anti-reversion camp could be divided into the pro-trusteeship and pro-independence factions, the discussion on the whole showed a dichotomous structure. This pro and con framework was shaped by the anticipation that Okinawa would be put under the "trusteeship" of the United States or the United Nations after the Peace Treaty.³ From February 6 to August 15, *Uruma Shimpō* featured five pro-reversion opinions (by four persons) and seven anti-reversion opinions (by five persons) while *Okinawa Times* printed six pro-reversion opinions (by five persons) and four anti-reversion opinions (by three persons) from March 23 to July 25, 1951.

In the pro-reversion camp, Kamiyama Seiryo, Takamine Meitatsu, and Kaneji Saichi are the most active contributors, who publicized their opinions in a long series of columns.⁴ Kaneji was chief secretary of the local political party Okinawa Social Mass Party (Shakai Taishū tō), while Kamiyama and Takamine, ex-bureaucrats with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce and Industry, respectively, were residents of Tokyo from prewar times. Having participants from Tokyo was one of the characteristics of the pro-reversion group. The main contributors on the anti-reversion side, Ikemiyagi Shui, Nakasone Genwa, and Shiroma Morio, were all local residents, respectively president of *Uruma Shimpō* newspaper company, general manager of another local political party the Republican Party (Kyōwa tō), and a lawyer.

The pro-reversionists in Tokyo and Okinawa shared many points in their narrative. Returning to Japan is "just natural" and "like a child going back to its parents' place" according to the phrases frequently used in the arguments.⁵ Besides this naturalization, they stressed the positive aspects of pre-war Okinawa prefecture, despite the fact that the Okinawan had faced social discrimination under the rule of the Japanese Empire.⁶ They highlight the political autonomy and suffrage

² A few exceptions are Nakasone Genwa and Nakayoshi Ryōkō. Nakasone publicized his pro-independence opinion as early as 1945 in the name of "house rent" that insisted that the Okinawan people are the owner of the islands from which the U.S. military rent the land (Nakasone 1955:183). Nakayoshi Ryōkō started publicizing his pro-reversion opinion in Okinawa in August 1945, then launched the political campaign in Tokyo in 1946 by organizing the "Association for the reversion of the Okinawan islands to Japan" (沖縄諸島日本復帰期成会) (Nōtomi 2004: 49-53).

³ *Uruma Shimpō* has 22 reports about Okinawa's future status from 1946 to 1950 in which 12 items imply trusteeship as the possible option. *Uruma Shimpō* continued to feature similar articles in 1951. For example, "Peace treaty suggested from comments/Ryūkyū and Bonin islands will be under trusteeship of the United States" (談話からうかがう講和／琉球, 小笠原は米国の信託) on February 12.

⁴ Kamiyama Seiryo, "Advocating for reversion to Japan" (日本復帰提唱), vol.1 to 3 in *Uruma Shimpō*, Feb. 10, 11, 13; Takamine Meitatsu, "Okinawa, where are you going" (沖縄何処へ行く), vol.1 to 4 in *Uruma Shimpō* from Jul. 10 to 13, and in *Okinawa Times*, Jul. 10, 12, 13, 15; Kaneji Saichi, "Advocating to belong to Japan" (日本帰属提唱), vol.1 and 2 in *Okinawa Times*, Apr. 1 and 3, and "Again, advocating reversion to Japan" (改めて日本復帰提唱), vol.1 to 6 in *Uruma Shimpō*, May 22 to 25, 28, 29.

⁵ Kaneji emphasized the geographical closeness and racial and linguistic similarity between Okinawa and Japan (ibid., *Okinawa Times*, April 1 and 3). Kaneji and Kamiyama use the expression that Japan and Okinawa are "parent and child": Kaneji, "Advocating to belong to Japan" (日本帰属提唱), *Okinawa Times*, Apr. 3, and Kamiyama, "Advocating for reversion to Japan" (日本復帰提唱), *Uruma Shimpō*, vol.1, Feb. 10, 1951. Similar rhetoric appeared in the petitions for Okinawa's reversion to Japan sent by the Okinawan people in Tokyo. Eight out of ten of these petitions filed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan contain such expressions. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1950)

⁶ Okinawa, once known as Ryūkyū Kingdom before the Meiji Restoration, experienced discriminatory treatment and was exposed to the pressure of assimilation under the rule of the Japanese Empire. Reference to the memory of discrimination was found in the Okinawa status debate in 1951. For example "Opinions of status issue from the street" (帰属問題街の中の声), in *Uruma Shimpō* Atr. 23, 1951. Pro-reversionist Takamine also referred to the "discriminatory treatment" in expressions such as "...young people in these day have no inferiority complex as the elderly did when they mentioned 'the discriminatory treatment' ...", in "Okinawa, where are you going," *Uruma Shimpō*, vol. 4, Jul. 13, 1951.
they gained as Japanese nationals, the economic development Okinawa achieved under Japan's rule, and the cultural and educational modernization they experienced in prewar times. In evaluation of the postwar situation, they emphasized that Japan has changed drastically to a democratic country, which implied that Okinawans would not suffer from discrimination anymore in Japan. They argued that the Japanese economy was recovering steadily from the damage in the war so that Okinawa, still suffering from the severe destruction of the land battle, could continue its rehabilitation if aid from the United States were to stop due to its return to Japan.

The future image of Okinawa would be, they suggest, a continuation from that in prewar Okinawa prefecture: that is, enlargement of political freedom, regaining suffrage, and smooth recovery of the islands' economy within the Japanese domain. In other words, returning to Japan was portrayed as going back to the "normal" path Okinawa had been tracing since it had become a part of the Japanese nation state.

2. Differences among pro-reversionists over “leased land” status

There is a new factor brought in to the postwar Okinawa scenario, however: the U.S. military presence. This was the very point that the anti-reversion group was concerned about. One of the reasons why they opposed reunification with Japan was the possibility of Okinawa becoming "leased land" (租借地). Ikemiyagi, an active contributor to the status debate, preferred U.N. trusteeship, claiming that if Okinawa returned to Japan now, that would mean return with the massive U.S. bases left intact. The United States would keep full control over their military installations even if Okinawa became a part of Japan again. Therefore, it was highly possible that Japan and the United States had an agreement to put Okinawa under a form of "leased land" status that would allow Japan to hold the sovereignty and the United States to keep political power over the land. It would bring a more difficult situation to local Okinawans. The expectation that the United States would not withdraw from Okinawa was held not only by Ikemiyagi, but was widely shared by local Okinawans. They had witnessed, since the late 1940s, the huge investment in base construction and related expenses that had changed the landscape of the island drastically (Toriyama 2013: 103-112).

Despite the U.S. presence in postwar Okinawa, the pro-reversion camp in Okinawa seldom mentioned how the U.S. base's presence would affect the society

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7 Assimilation and "Japanization" was, in some aspects, regarded as a "tool" to achieve modernization (Oguma 1995: 281-282). Pressure to be Japanese also tended to have resulted in a discriminatory mindset among Okinawans (or sometimes called "Ryukyans") against "less modernized" people such as the indigenous people in Taiwan, as was revealed in the case of "Junruikan jiken" (Human exhibition incident in the 5th National industrial exposition in Osaka) in 1903.
8 See Kamiyama (ibid., Uruma Shimpō, February 10), Takamine (ibid., Uruma Shimpō, Jul. 11 to 13, and Okinawa Times, Jul. 12, 13, 15), and Kaneji (ibid., Okinawa Times, April 3, and Uruma Shimpō, May 25, 1951).
9 In terms of the continuity, Takamine stresses the importance to hold on the same path that Okinawans came through in prewar times. He assesses that the Okinawans succeeded in becoming "authentic Japanese" (rippa na nihonjin) so that continuity in education, which is necessary to preserve Japanese identity, is important to him. See Takamine, "Okinawa, where are you going," Uruma Shimpō, vol. 4, Jul. 13, 1951. Kaneji uses a similar expression: "At this moment, I cannot stand for seeing all the effort of nearly one century become in vain when Okinawa is cut off from Japan and Okinawan people reject being Japanese." See Kaneji, "Again, Advocating Reversion to Japan," Uruma Shimpō, vol. 2, May 23, 1951. The obsession to keep being Japanese itself, of course, implies the uneven position Okinawa was given in the Japanese Empire.
10 Shiroma Seizen (城間盛善), another anti-reversionist in the local debate, criticized the Okinawa image drawn by the pro-reversion group as implying the complete returning to the prewar status, with U.S. military withdrawal. Shiroma, "On accepting the Peace treaty" (講和の受入れ態勢について), Uruma Shimpō, vol.2, Mar. 4, 1951.
and lives of the islanders when Okinawa was put under Japanese sovereignty again. Kaneji did not respond to the risk of the “leased land” arrangement that Ikemiyagi had raised in the status debate. He only replied that the concern of being “leased land” only displays overanxiousness, by citing the statement of the Consultant to Secretary John Foster Dulles that the United States was not demanding extraterritorial rights over the military bases, but only the continued extension of facilities.\textsuperscript{12}

It was some members of the pro-reversionist group in Tokyo, instead, that referred to the future presence of the U.S. military bases and the possibility of becoming “leased land.” Pro-reversion opinions in Okinawa Shin Mimpō sometimes expressed a different opinion from those of the local Okinawans: they suggested that they would accept U.S. military bases in Okinawa, or agree that Okinawa would become leased land for a certain period, if Japanese sovereignty were allowed over the islands.\textsuperscript{13} For example, the editorial in the issue of January 5, 1951 argued “considering the tension in world politics today, we think there is no choice but to let the United States use Okinawa as a military base to ensure the future of Okinawa, Japan, and peace for the Far East. However, we have a completely different opinion on the idea to cut Okinawa off from Japan and put it outside Japan’s territory.” A similar argument appeared again in the editorial “Appeal again to Envoy Dulles” on February 5, 1951.

The ex-Diet member Ie revealed this type of pro-reversion argument in the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Councilors in February 6, 1951. Regarded as knowledgeable of the current situation of Okinawa and the Okinawans, Ie pointed out the difficult situation that Okinawans in Japan would face should Japan lose sovereignty over Okinawa. He said: “If Okinawa is put under a trusteeship system, we will fall into a sad situation in which our koseki (household registration) won’t belong to any country.” On the U.S. military bases stationed in Okinawa, he said “because we accepted unconditional surrender at the defeat, it can’t be helped that Okinawa’s land will be leased to the U.S. bases, or that we will allow them to stay in Japan’s sovereignty territory.” After the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Councillors, Ie commented that “it is Okinawans outside Okinawa that will be in a troublesome situation,” and confessed that he honestly felt that it would even be fine if Okinawa become “leased land” for military use in exchange for achieving Okinawa’s reversion to Japan.\textsuperscript{15} The rhetoric of “we are not opposed the U.S. bases being stationed in Okinawa” was repeatedly expressed in the petitions sent to U.S. authorities by the pro-reversion group in Tokyo.\textsuperscript{16}

Kamiyama and Takamine did not use such an apparent rhetoric in the arguments they published in the local newspapers.\textsuperscript{17} The prioritization of Japanese sovereignty, however, meant to put the U.S. base issue in Okinawa in secondary position. This shows a striking contrast with the pro-reversion argument in Okinawa. The pro-reversion advocates in Okinawa just kept silent on the U.S. presence. Few responded

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[13]Okinawa Shin Mimpō is the ethnic newspaper published in Fukuoka prefecture from 1946 to 1953. The main readership was the Voluntary Okinawans in Tokyo / Petition to the U.S. president / Voluntary Okinawans in Tokyo / Petition to the U.S. president (沖縄出身東京在有志／米大統領に請願) in Okinawa Shin Mimpō, Feb. 15, 1951.
\item[14]For example, the petition to the “Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway” dated Apr. 18, 1951 (Nakayoshi Ryōki Documents, 009), the petition to President Truman dated May 10, 1951, “Voluntary Okinawans in Tokyo / Petition to the U.S. president” (沖縄出身東京在有志／米大統領に請願) in Okinawa Shin Mimpō, Jul. 15, and the petition to “His Excellency the Ambassador John Foster Dulles” dated July 14, 1951 (Nakayoshi Ryōki Document, 016).
\item[15]One exception is Kamiyama, who suggested that the goal of the United States is just the securement of the military institutions in Okinawa, not the territoriality. “Suggestion for reversion to Japan” (日本復帰提唱), Uruma Shimpō, vol.2, Feb. 11, 1951.
\end{enumerate}
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to the concern of the risk of being “leased land” as discussed above.

For the local Okinawan, however, daily life with massive U.S. bases did matter if Okinawa returned to Japan. When Takamine visited Okinawa in early 1951, a local Okinawan asked him: “I think it’s no problem belonging to Japan. But the U.S. military would not withdraw from Okinawa for sure. Given this, what happens to the legal and economic status of people in Okinawa? Without a clear explanation, I cannot agree with Okinawa’s reversion to Japan.”

Introducing this conversation in The Okinawa, an ethnic magazine issued in Tokyo, Takamine continues his reply: the reversion to Japan is “the primary issue of ethnic survival” (民族存立第一義的要件) and “concrete issues” (具体的問題), such as the U.S. base problem, could possibly be solved by the “good will” of Japan and the U.S. government.18

It is highly possible that the reversion-to-Japan advocates in Okinawa would have known their counterparts’ way of arguing in mainland Japan. Pro-reversion groups in Tokyo and in Okinawa have confirmed that, via personal contact in 1950, they shared the same political preferences and common goal so as to push forward the campaign hand in hand (Yoshida 1976:41). Besides, Okinawan people in Okinawa, in Japan, and in overseas immigrant communities such as Hawaii were sharing the ethnic journals and publications since the postal service was restored.19 In spite of the active exchange of information among Okinawa communities, the pro-reversionists in Okinawa seem not to have commented on this “sovereignty first, base issue second” type of argument.

The intricate relationships and positionalities between Tokyo and Okinawa were the flip side of the argumentation over the status issue. Early in 1951, Nakayoshi and Kamiyama in Tokyo encouraged the local Okinawan people to clarify their political attitude toward the Okinawa status issue as the peace treaty was being scheduled.20 At the same time, however, they describe their position as that of “being an outsider,” and assumed the people in Okinawa to be the primary stakeholders. Takamine stated that “this status issue is primarily up to the local Okinawan people. If the majority are against going back to Japan, I will withdraw my pro-reversion argument.”21 A similar tone was found in Nakayoshi’s narrative.22 On the other hand, Taira Tatsuo, the Okinawa Guntō Governor and well-known advocate of reversion to Japan, struck a different tone in his new year’s remarks in 1951. He said that fellow Okinawans in Tokyo cry out to encourage the locals to declare their opinion on the status issue, but this is because the Tokyo Okinawans do not know the actual conditions in Okinawa.23

3. Interpreting the opinions gap based on the socio-political context

Why did the pro-reversion advocates in Okinawa refrain from referring to the U.S. bases issue? How can we understand the "sovereignty first, base issue
second” style of their counterparts in Tokyo? Focus should be set on the contemporary socio-political factors in order to answer the questions.

Local Okinawans under U.S. control
As I mentioned, the pro-reversionists in Okinawa described the post-reversion blueprint as one in which pre-war Okinawa would be resurrected. They assumed that Japan, the newborn democratic state, would assure political rights and support economic rehabilitation. This logic, i.e. that reversion to Japan equaled returning to the “normal” Okinawa, implied that the then current situation of Okinawa was somehow “irregular.”

Okinawa had changed drastically, however, by the time of the peace treaty. The construction of the U.S. base and related industries received huge investment and caused a sudden economic “bubble.” On the other hand, some social aspects such as agriculture and education were paid less attention and provided less money (Toriyama 2013: 103-107, 112-121). Agriculture was once the main industry of Okinawa in the prewar era, but the majority of the arable land was taken forcibly by the Unites States for the military’s use in the first few years of the occupation era (Toriyama 2013: 133-134, 153-157). Taking these postwar changes into account, together with the frustration and worries of the local Okinawans caused by the rapid social change, the way the pro-reversionists imagined the future of Okinawa can be interpreted as a form of negation of the present Okinawa that has been customized for U.S. military purposes.

The U.S. presence in Okinawa was intensive. It held exclusive power in governing Okinawa, which was unlike mainland Japan where GHQ exercised control indirectly. In such an atmosphere, it is easy to imagine how difficult it would be to question the future of the U.S. bases should Okinawa return to Japan. Vice Governor Matayoshi Kowa implied such difficulty in his contribution to Uruma Shimpō. Showing his understanding of the desire of Okinawan leaders in Tokyo, he said that pro-reversion argument is “too sensitive an issue” in facing the U.S. friends who had given the hand of support to the devastated Okinawa and shared the hardship of reconstructing it.24

Added to this, the political tension in East Asia at that time made the local Okinawans feel that they could not intervene in or negotiate with the United States over the military bases. The Korean War had broken out in June 1950, roughly one year prior to the San Francisco Peace Treaty Conference. By the time of the Okinawa status debate, as mentioned already, many articles in local newspapers suggested that Okinawa would be put under the trusteeship of the United States or the United Nations. Keeping silent on the military base issue in the pro-reversion argument might have been the safest strategy the local people could take in such a political climate.25

Okinawans in Tokyo and their reversion-to-Japan argument might evoke the image of “colonial elites.” Previous work points out the cultural hegemony Okinawans in Tokyo held over fellow Okinawans (Tobe 2000: 50-51). Indeed, most of the active reversionists in Tokyo were “successful people,” such as ex-bureaucrats and an ex-Diet member. Nevertheless, they represented all of the Okinawan people. Regarded themselves as an “outsider,” they behaved as an informant when summoned to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.26 They kept sending

25To put the stress on the cultural, historical, and “blood line” connections between Okinawa and Japan (Japan as parents and Okinawa as an orphan, for example), so as to describe the reunion with Japan as “the natural course,” could be understood as the strategy of the pro-reversion group in order to mitigate the impression that they were rejecting the U.S. control over Okinawa.
26At the committee, the summoned Okinawans stated it was the wish of all islanders to have Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa even if they are put under “leased land” with the military bases. “Even if becoming leased land militarily / Okinawa hopes reversion to Japan / Ie and Nakayoshi plead in the Committee on foreign affairs,” Okinawa Shin Mimpō, Feb. 15, 1951.

the message to the decision makers that they would accept, if reluctantly, the military bases in exchange for Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa.27

Local anti-reversionists were dissatisfied with such behavior by their representatives. Shiroma Morio, who posted a series of articles questioning the pro-reversion opinion, claimed that “we, Okinawan residents” had never received any inquiry from Tokyo about their opinion on the Okinawa status issue, nor had they entrusted Okinawans in Tokyo with authority regarding this matter. His statement was a reaction to the message the Tokyo group had sent to Ambassador John Foster Dulles that the local Okinawans in Okinawa also wished to return to Japan but that they had just hesitated to clarify their opinion.28

Okinawans in Tokyo/Japan
The behavior of the Okinawan elites might have come mainly from their personal affinity with Japan. They could simply be criticized for having been ignorant about the local Okinawan situation. This study, however, tries to clarify why the majority of Okinawans in Japan also supported that sort of argument, by taking the contemporary factors into account, that is, the ambiguous political status of the Okinawans under the GHQ occupation, and of the Korean people oppressed in Japanese society due to their dual status of being “liberated people” and “Japanese.”

Koreans and the Okinawans had been exposed to similar discriminatory treatment under the prewar Empire of Japan, while their legal and administrative status varied in some aspects such as the eligibility and suffrage for national election and the category of Koseki (household registration). “No Korean, no Ryukyuan” in “room for rent” signs indicates their similar social status in prewar Japan (Ishihara 1992: 96). Okinawan people sometimes compared their social position to the “colonies.” Higa Shunchô, an Okinawan intellectual living in Tokyo, wrote in his diary in September 1910 that Okinawa is the first son, Taiwan the second and Korea the third, when he referred to the annexation of Korea by Japan (Higa 1969:37). Prewar Japanese society tended to regard Okinawan people as akin to Korean people, which was more obvious in Kansai area where the largest communities of both were located (Uechi 2015: 9).

The legal status of Okinawans under GHQ occupation was unclear. Official statements by the Japanese government suggested that they were supposed to be Japanese until the Peace Treaty was enacted. General MacArthur made the statement in July 1947 that Okinawans are not Japanese (Amakawa et al. ed. 1996: 30).29 Indeed, Okinawan people were the subject of the census survey in March 1946, together with Koreans, Taiwanese and Chinese.30 GHQ repatriation programs implemented on the basis of the census intended to send back “non-Japanese” to their homelands. While the GHQ repatriation project sent 141,582 Okinawans back to their home islands by the end of 1946, 60,000 or more stayed in Japan (Amakawa et al. ed. 1996: 32). The decision to return or not was a difficult one due to the limited information on the United States controlling

27 Some petitions sent to GHQ authorities and the Japanese government by the Association for reversion of the Okinawan islands to Japan contain the names of Kamiyama and Takamine as well as that of Ie Chiyo, a prewar Diet member (member of the House of Peers), and Nakayoshi Ryôkô, the founder. See, for example, the petition to MacArthur dated Oct. 2, 1946 (Nakayoshi Ryôkô Documents, vol.1, 001, Naha City Museum of History), and a document titled “Petition on Okinawa’s reversion to Japan” sent to “Democratic Party of Japan, the House of Councilors” which seems to be dated in 1947 (Nakayoshi Ryôkô Documents, vol.1, 002).
30 “Survey on return or stay / Implement in March 18” (帰るか、残留かの調査／三月十八日一斉に実施／洩れない登録しよう) in Okinawa Shin Shimpô, Mar. 5, 1951.
Okinawa. Being cut off from Japan administratively, it was difficult for them to come back to Japan once they were repatriated to Okinawa (Tobe 2010: 230-235). Okinawans who had decided to stay on in Japan had no choice but to keep on making a living in Japan.

Okinawan people who had stayed back in Japan started to regard themselves as “non-Japanese.” In the early occupation period, Okinawans were willing to utilize their unique status to try and secure their day-to-day existence. The League of Okinawans (沖縄人連盟) petitioned and won a GHQ proclamation in January 1946 that referred to Okinawans as “refugees,” in respect of whom special consideration was required. The League of Okinawans described their social position thus, that they “have to demand the right to live as Japanese from the Japanese government” while they “have to request protection as non-Japanese to the GHQ authority.” The League of Okinawans also held communication with Korean organizations over the “common” issues they faced in Japanese society (Tobe 2004: 223).

The legal status of Korean people in GHQ Japan was also ambiguous. They numbered approximately two million in Japan at the end of the World War II (Kim 1997: 77). With the voluntary return and repatriation project of GHQ, 538,196 Koreans had stayed back as on April 30, 1950, thus constituting the biggest ethnic group in postwar Japan (Amakawa et al. ed. 1996: 196). Officially, they held Japanese nationality until the Peace Treaty enacted between Japan and the Allied Powers, similarly to the Okinawans. The GHQ authority, however, excluded them from the “Japanese” category while recognizing that they had been Japanese subjects, and held the option to treat them as “hostile nationals” (like the Japanese) if necessary (Amakawa et al. ed. 1996: 11).

Japanese society tended to regard Korean people as “disruptive elements” since the early occupation period (Heo 2010: 169-172). The Hanshin educational struggle in April 1948, the first and the only case in which GHQ issued an emergency declaration, symbolized the severe suppression of the Korean people in Japan. The nation-wide newspaper Asahi Shimbun frequently featured reports on Korean-related events and incidents from 1948 to 1949: the Hanshin educational struggle from April to May 1948, North Korean flag-raising cases in late 1948, the control over illegal brewing from late 1948 to the first half of 1949, and the closing down of Korean ethnic schools and resistance of the Korean community in late 1949. Most of the descriptions connoted a negative evaluation of the Koreans. For example, an article of April 24, 1948 points out “the unlawful and irresponsible leaders in the Korean community” as partially responsible for “the recent social disorders.” It continues that GHQ authority has stated that all of the remaining Koreans in Japan should obey Japanese laws and regulations since November 1946. Similar unfriendly tones could be found in other articles. The Korean Ambassador to Japan also pointed out

34 Hanshin Educational Struggle refers to the collisions in Kobe and Osaka between the GHQ-led Japanese government and Korean residents in Japan over the autonomy of Korean ethnic schools. Protesting to the local administration against their forcibly closing down Korean elementary schools, large demonstrations were held on April 24, 1948. More than 1700 people were arrested in Kobe. A clash in Osaka resulted in the death of a teenage boy shot by Japanese police (Kim 1997: 409-411).
36 For example, “Big scuffle in getting back the seized illegal liquor / Again in Yao city / 8 police injured” (Oct. 23, 1948) and “4 teachers confined / Complaining ‘we don’t understand Japanese’ / 200 Korean children” (Dec. 3, 1949).
the negative image imparted in the way Japanese mass media reported on Korean-related cases, in the memorandum sent to the Chief of Staff in April 1949 (Kim 1997: 537-538).

To be regarded as similar to Korean people meant another difficulty in GHQ Japan because of the connection between Korean organizations and the communist party. GHQ first supported the communists as an anti-militaristic and pro-democratic group. As early as May 1946, however, they started to harden their attitude. In May 1950 General MacArthur officially attacked the Japanese Communist Party in a public statement and banned the party’s periodical Akahata in June 26, the day following the outbreak of the Korean War (Takemae 2002: 209-210).

Close relations of Korean people with the communist party were visible from the beginning of the occupation. Kim Chon Hae (金天海) was a leading figure of the prewar Japanese Communist Party, among the other Japanese communist leaders such as Shiga Yoshio (志賀義雄) and Tokuda Kyuichi (徳田球一). A mass meeting on October 10, 1945 to celebrate the release of political prisoners including the three leaders gathered more than 1,000 people, the majority of whom were Koreans (Takamine 2002: 168-171; Kim 1997: 172). The League of Koreans, the nation-wide ethnic organization in Japan founded in October 1945, was largely dominated by the Korean communists by 1947 (Kim 1997: 177).

Besides the activist network from the prewar era, the Korean organizations’ approach to the Communist Party should be ascribed to the severe living conditions of the Koreans in GHQ Japan. Dismantling of the Japanese munitions companies and repatriation of more than 10 million Japanese from the overseas territories resulted in high unemployment rates among the Korean population. Illegal breweries and other small businesses were the way they made their living (Rhee 2013: 137-142). The League of Koreans tackled this hardship by engaging in campaigns and activities to secure their right of living (Heo 2010: 175-179), in which the Japanese Communist Party cooperated. They even proclaimed, in the first-year commemoration meeting of the Hanshin Educational Struggle held in April 1949, that joining the party was the only way to realize better living conditions. More than 300 Koreans joined the Japanese Communist Party on the same day, and another 1,300 did by July. The recruitment of such a large number of people was meant to be, as the League of Koreans clarified, a mass demonstration against suppression by the Japanese government (Kim 1997: 543-544).

GHQ Government Section (GS) had paid special attention to the League of Koreans since the North and South Korean governments were established in the Korean peninsula in August and September 1948 (Kim 532-533). The ex-enemy state Japan became the strategic bulwark for the United States against the rise of communism in East Asia. In August 1949, GS suggested to Japanese officials that the League of Koreans be dissolved. This decision reflected the need GHQ felt to deter the League of Koreans from exerting influence over the political climate in the Korean Peninsula as well as in Japan (Kim 1997: 561-564, 567).

The negative representation of the Korean people under the shadow of the Communist Party is the clue to understanding the “Japanese sovereignty first” discourse brought in by pro-reversionist Okinawans in Tokyo. Collaboration between the League of Okinawans and Korean organizations seems to have ceased in the first half of 1947 (Tobe 2004: 223). At the central meeting held in July 1948, a member of the League of Okinawans criticized another member who gave a speech to encourage Korean people in the Hanshin struggle rally as his act would “have a

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37 The release of the political prisoners was realized on the initiative of Korean communists (Kim 1997: 170; Takemae 2002: 174).
serious impact on the public image” of the League. The article reporting the central meeting also picked up the members’ unwillingness to be regarded as pro-communist.38 When Kamiyama Seiryō, the ex-bureaucrat and active pro-reversionist, was assigned to the chair of the League of Okinawans in August 1948, he visited the official residence of the prime minister to explain “the characteristics of the League of Okinawans” to correct “the misunderstanding” of prime minister Yoshida (Kamiyama ed. 1966: 25). The League of Okinawans changed its name to the League of Okinawa (沖縄連盟) in October 1949. Kamiyama retrospectively admitted that the intention in changing the organization’s name was to differentiate themselves from the League of Koreans, “that means, the sort of communists” (Arasaki 1982: 44-45).

Okinawan people with their ambiguous nationality and memory of discrimination in prewar Japan realized the difficulties of living in Japan as a “foreign national.” An article in Okinawa Shin Mimpō, June 25, 1951 stated that Okinawan people in Japan are Japanese who hold suffrage, and are entitled to the rights of subsistence and free choice of employment as was declared in the new Japanese constitution. The article describes the embarrassing situations they experience in their daily lives, such as being told not to vote in the election, requests to present a foreign resident registration card at their children’s schools, and “the unreasonable treatment in university admission which treats Okinawans students as though they were as foreign as Koreans.”39 These are because Okinawa was regarded as a “foreign country,” the article explains. For those living in Japan under such conditions, the sovereignty of Japan over Okinawa was felt to be the primary goal to be achieved in the peace treaty.

4. Conclusion

Detailed analysis of both pro-reversion arguments sheds light on the contemporary socio-political situation among each of the groups that moved the Okinawans to reunion with Japan in 1951.

The pro-reversionists in Okinawa were living under exclusive control of the U.S. military and would, for the foreseeable future, have to keep living next to U.S. military institutions. Therefore the U.S. base issue was a very risky item to touch on for them. Pro-reversion arguments with the prewar Okinawa image could be read as the negation of the reality in which the U.S. ruling and military institutions were changing the whole society. Keeping silence on the presence of U.S. bases could be understood as the strategy of the governed, the people with limited power in the increasing Cold War tension in East Asia.

In Tokyo, on the other hand, it might be true that the handful of “political elite” Okinawans in Tokyo claimed to represent the whole Okinawan community, working close to the Japanese policymakers. The majority of Okinawans in Japan also gradually realized how difficult it would be to live as “foreign nationals” and “pro-communists” in Japanese society, learning from the hardship the Korean community faced in GHQ occupied Japan. They found the way to secure the right to live in Japan in assuring their Japanese nationality. The U.S. base in Okinawa was something they could tolerate in exchange for Japanese sovereignty over Okinawa.

In retrospect, the strategy of the pro-reversionists in Okinawa and Tokyo in 1951 seems too optimistic and...
opportunistic. The exclusive U.S. control that lasted until 1972 caused serious human rights violations and the reversion to Japan did not drastically change Okinawa’s political situation in terms of the U.S. base installation. The concern of “leased land” was not overanxiousness in this sense. In postwar Japan, the Korean community has been fighting for the human rights of the ethnic minority. Political maneuvers in Tokyo/Japan that distanced themselves from the Koreans and identified with the Japanese under the GHQ occupation could be criticized as being selfish and fainthearted.

Nevertheless, the contemporary socio-political context in Okinawa, Japan, and East Asia should be taken into account as far as the reversion to Japan in 1972 is concerned. The early postwar pro-reversion issue is worthy of being revisited in order to clarify the way people with limited power sought better living conditions under the uncertain political situation of the early Cold War era. Such research will offer a view of the historical and structural standpoint from which political power operated in the early Cold War situation of East Asia and of how the people negotiated and reacted for safeguarding their own right of existence.

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In this regard, the mechanism of how the right to live and the legal status are connected, and how the nation-state (and the governing power in general) appropriates the connection to the nationalistic discourse and the ruling tactics, should be analyzed in further research.
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