

## The Beginning of the 'Postwar Period'

Japan and the United States of America as Un-decolonized Alien Powers to  
Micronesia (*former Nan'yo gunto*)

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### 1 Introduction <sup>1)</sup>

When I first visited in 1990, Palau in Micronesia was still the last 'strategic' trust territory under the control of the United States of America. Palau became the Republic of Palau in 1994 after many political struggles. Since then, I have had many conversations with Palauan living not only in Palau but also in Guam, Saipan, Hawai'i, and Portland. Following are some of these impressive conversations among them.

- 1) There was held a centennial commemoration at the Roman Catholic Church at Koror, the former capital of Palau, in 1992. I was attending the ceremony and looking at a Palauan woman who really looked like a Japanese. One of my Palauan friends sitting side by side with me whispered to me "her parents, both father and mother, were Japanese." It is important to note that she did not say "she is Japanese" or "she is not Palauan." This is really meaningful in Palauan context as I was often told "if you would like to be Palauan, you can."
- 2) In the late nineties at Melekeok village, now the capital, a

Palauan man who raised a 'Japanese' baby told me that "after the war, we tried to look for her parents who left a baby girl and went back to Japan, but we were not able to find them."

- 3) There was still a Palauan meeting house (*a bai*) located on the way to Lovers' Promontory in the early nineties in Guam, and I frequently visited on every weekend to talk with Palauan residing and working in Guam. I happened to know one of them, a lady, who was 'a Japanese-Palauan (whose both parents were Japanese)'.
  - 4) During Japanese mandate period, patients of Hansen's disease in Palau were segregated in a small island near Koror. A Palauan lady told me the following story. A pregnant Palauan woman was segregated there and a baby was born on the island. One night, her relatives approached the island stealthily and took the baby back. She then asked me to find some Japanese graduate students to investigate Japanese Governments documents in order to clarify what Imperial Japanese Gov-

ernment or South Sea Bureau actually did in Palau.

- 5) When I was staying with a Palauan family in 1991, children took several fruit bats for their dinner. While I was taking pictures, our Palauan mother asked me that “are you going to represent Palauan as ‘savages’ (*yaban*)?” What was impressive is that she knew the Japanese word for savages.

These conversations are what I can clearly recall without referring to my field notes. These dialogues made me think about colonization/decolonization. Then I began collecting official documents to know the influence of the Japanese Mandate while doing my fieldwork.

I have found several interesting official documents at the Trust Territory Archives of Northern Mariana College in Saipan. For instance, there was a microfilm of declassified U.S. Navy’s list concerning the ‘half-Japanese’ and ‘half-Okinawans’ residing in Palau in the fifties. We can find several surnames still used in Palau like, Sugiyama (杉山), Nakamura (中村), Minami (南), etc. These documents help us understand the process of decolonization in Micronesia after the war. In other words, these people in-between who are ‘islanders’ as well as ‘Japanese’ indicates the unfinished process of decolonization.

- 2 Comparative Studies of *gaichi* (former Japanese overseas territories) as Imperial Studies

‘*Nan’yo gunto*’ (now called Micronesia, Guam not included, which has been America’s unincorporated territory since 1898) was occupied in 1914 by the Imperial Japanese Navy and was officially governed by Japan as Mandate through the League of Nations. The Imperial Japan withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933. After the WWII, as the vanquished, both Japanese Army and private citizens immediately had to withdraw (*hikiage*) from *Nan’yo gunto*. In the process of withdrawal from *gaich* to *naichi* (main Islands of Japan poper)<sup>2)</sup>, *naichi* to *gaichi*, or *gaichi* to *gaichi*, new categorization was introduced: ‘Japanese’ and ‘non-Japanese’. The latter includes Taiwanese or Formosan-Chinese, Koreans, Okinawans or Ryukyuan, and Islanders (*tomin, dojin*). The term *dojin* appeared in *Nihonshoki*, the first written formal history of Japan, to refer to the natives of the countries far from the capital (*miyako*).

GHQ and the Government of Japan were consistent in carrying out withdrawal of ‘Japanese’ from *gaichi* to *naichi*, but inconsistent toward ‘non-Japanese’, especially from *gaichi* to *gaichi*.

These ‘non-Japanese’ were classified into five categories by the Far Eastern Commission Working Committee: United Nations nationals, neutrals, enemy nationals, nationals whose treatment was changed as the result of the war, and Koreans and Formosans [Morris-Suzuki 2005: 62, Matsumoto 1996: 7-8]. According to these documents, the categorization of Formosans and Koreans was ambivalent, or in other words, haphazard, as they were treated

as 'Japanese' as well as 'non-Japanese,' for the sake of authorities' convenience.

After the WWII, on the principle of self-determination, political decolonization of former colonies has been processed. Among trust territories of the Pacific, the Republic of Palau was the last to be independent in 1994.

Imperial Studies have recently been carried out intensively throughout the world. Among these studies, Kihata pointed out that, from the point of decolonization, we have to pay attention not only to former colonies but also to colonizing powers. When comparing several colonizing powers, Great Britain and France have decolonized as immigrants from former colonies were gaining certain political influences. On the contrary, Japan and the United States of America, as the vanquished and the victor of WWII, failed in decolonization. He called this process as 'unfinished decolonization' [Kihata 2008].

It seems that Japan was suddenly oblivious to various former colonies after the WWII, using the fact of defeat as a very convenient reason. Tierny similarly insisted, comparing Taiwan and Micronesia under Japanese rule, the reason why Japanese colonial or imperial literature was abruptly forgotten as follows:

Jansen implies that Japanese have justly consigned, not merely works of colonial period literature but their imperial period as a whole, to the dustbin of history. One reason why this plethora of Japanese literature has been consigned to oblivion has to do with the modalities of

"decolonization" in the Japanese case, which greatly differed from that of French and British colonies" [Tierney 2010: 183].

### 3 The Politics of Representation

The picture of General MacArthur and the Japanese Emperor Hirohito has been one of the most famous and influential pictures in Showa-period of Japan. This picture has tempted many scholars to interpret in various ways.

Kitahara reads the Emperor's position as representing femaleness or motherhood. One of the reasons is that in the picture of the Emperor and Empress as something like god and goddess (*goshin'ei*) before and during the war, the Emperor was always on the left side [Kitahara 2003].

In the picture of the marriage ceremony of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣介石) and Soong May Ling (宋美齡) displayed at National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (中正紀念堂) at Taipei, Chiang is located on the left side. However, I had a chance to take a look at many pictures of marriage ceremonies at an exhibition (台灣資深作家結婚照展) held at Taipei, December, 2010, and the bridegroom is on the left side in only two pictures out of 30.

Yoshimi has paid special attention to how these discourses about the picture have historically formed [Yoshimi 2007]. MacArthur was known to be media-conscious and was very careful about releasing his pictures. In a talk with Morris-Suzuki, Yoshimi pointed out that after the picture was released, while the Emperor appeared frequently in front of people, MacArthur's pictures

were not provided. He called this phenomenon 'invisible MacArthur and visible Emperor in Occupied Japan' [Yoshimi & Morris-Suzuki 2010: 98-102].

Fujiwara, a famous photographer and writer in Japan, and Iizawa, a photo reviewer, analyzed several popular pictures which symbolize the Showa period [*Henshukaigi* 2003, February]. They pointed out two important retouches of the picture of MacArthur: first, a non-wrinkled face, second, neatly creased trousers. On the contrary, Emperor Hirohito's formal trousers were wrinkled.

I would like to read this picture for the time being as 'a marriage between the victor as husband and the vanquished as wife,' 'a ceremony of change among imperial powers,' or 'a consensus of 'decolonizing (recolonizing)' *gaichi* from Imperial Japan and exemption from war responsibility for the Emperor.' As a result of this consensus, both Japan and the United States of America have exempted themselves from decolonizing process as alien powers to *gaichi*, especially to *Nan'yo gunto*.

#### 4 Invented 'savages'

Takeyama's *Harp of Burma*, filmed twice in Japan by Ichikawa Kon, is one of symbolic anti-war, but controversial pieces of Japanese postwar literature. Masaki analyzed the strange relationship between *Harp of Burma* and the headhunting in the first chapter of his *The Illusion of Colony*. According to his observation, the elements of headhunting were borrowed from natives in Taiwan. Actually, Takeyama had not visited Burma but had traveled around Ta-

iwan before writing the novel.

Baba reanalyzed *Harp of Burma* and pointed out that in the original text first running in a magazine the cannibal natives were referred as 'Kachin' of Burma and later the name was removed from the text. Several words, such as 「蛮人 (savages)」, were changed to 「未開な人 (aboriginals)」 or more neutral words [Baba 2004: 40-43].

At the end of Edo period when foreign powers demanded that Japan open the country to trade and diplomatic relations, it was urgent to present 'civilized Japan' to avoid being marked as 'savage Japan.' Later, Imperial Japan was trying to mark 'savages' to people of its colonies.

A Japanese literature critic Kawamura, Tierney's academic adviser for his Ph. D. dissertation, called this phenomenon as 'de-orientalism of Japan,' in order to reverse the dichotomy civilized/uncivilized. However, unlike Said's orientalism, the Japanese version of orientalism was having some difficulty in itself. The dichotomy we/others, civilized/uncivilized, colonizer/colonized, was ambiguous because marked/unmarked demarcation was always being shaken by 'civilized natives,' 'Japanese in-between' or some other elements.

Moreover, from the anthropological point of view, an important problem still remains: is it a mere coincidence that Masaki, Baba and Tierney failed to differentiate headhunting from cannibalism? Why is headhunting directly associated with cannibalism? It seems to me that decolonization, or in other words, deconstruction of colonization,

still remains unfinished.

##### 5 The United States of America as 'Democratic' Alien Power to Micronesia

According to a report about Palau in the *Yomiuri* in November 19th, 2010, former president Nakamura told the reporter that "anti-Japanese feeling was very strong in Palau until the seventies. We would not have imagined that a 'Japanese-Palauan' could be elected as the president of Palau at that time." He was elected as the president by general election in 1992 when I was doing my fieldwork. I did not hear anything like "he was unsuited for a president because he was Japanese-Palauan." What I heard was only "his Palauan is poor!"

The United States had studied carefully about the Japanese Mandate and utilized the result to control the trust territory. They tried to purge the influence of the Japanese Mandate from the trust territory.

Following are extracts from the textbook titled *Yap Our Island*, which was edited by the department of education, and was used in St. Mary's Mission School in Yap. It was published originally in February, 1956. According to a Japanese living for a long time in Yap, this textbook was written by some young American Peace Corps volunteers with the help from ninth grade Yapese students. The segregation of Yapese patients of Hansen's disease was told as follows:

In 1930, the Japanese told the Chiefs on Yap that they wanted to put the Yapese leprosy patients on this

island. The Chiefs on Yap Island agreed with this. They took all the leprosy patients and put them on Pakel Island. The number of people who lived on Pakel Island was about twenty, and they had to stay there a very long time. When the Americans came to attack this island the Japanese Administration and soldiers did not allow the patients to come to the main island of Yap. They lived on Pakel Island during the war. Some of them died and some of them are still alive [p. 15].

Figure 1 and Figure 2 The vestiges of house of patients, Pakel Island (pictured by the author)



Figure 1



Figure 2

Yap has experienced colonialism since the contact with Foreign Powers. Colonia, the capital of state of Yap, was named after Colony in the German period. Following is the historic narrative about colonialism:

Since the foreigners came to Yap, many things have changed. But when the Spanish were here, they did not interfere much with local affairs. When the Germans were here they worked with the important chiefs and made the chiefs responsible for affairs in the areas. Once a month these chiefs met with the district officer to discuss their problems. When the Japanese were here they brought many of their own people to work here. They did not have much to do with the Yapese people. But they had certain rules which the Yapese had to obey. Since the Americans came we have had elections in each municipality. Men and women who are eighteen years of age can vote in these elections. We elect a Magistrate for each municipality. The Magistrates' Council helps the District Administrator to decide what things are good for the people of Yap. Some of the chiefs of Yap are also Magistrates. They are Magistrates because the people of their municipalities elected them [p. 201].

These phrases connected acceptance of election with the American way of democracy very easily. However, for example, Palauan were perplexed with the acceptance of election as it was not

the traditional way to choose chiefs and representatives or to decide matters. Opposition between elected politicians and chiefs can still be observed.

#### 6 The Intimate but Hidden Relationship between Japan and the United States of America

Ichikawa proposed an interesting interpretation in his recent publication titled as *Why Aktagawa-Prize did not go to Murakami Haruki*. According to his opinion, Murakami's early novels nominated for the prize are too much Americanized for selection members belonging to the older generations who were having a complex feeling toward America after the war. On the contrary, novels struggling with the 'strong father=America' were awarded the prize.

Baba insisted that Japanese arguments concerning war responsibility still remain mere borrowed ideas from overseas and it is necessary to have more interdisciplinary discussion. One of the main reasons should be the failed, unfinished decolonization of both powers [Baba 2004].

According to recent imperial studies in Japan, although US foreign policy was originally an anti-Western colonialism, it has been ambivalent and, especially to Micronesia, is obviously western colonialism in itself [Suga 2009].

Recently, secret agreements concerning the reversion of Okinawa to Japanese control have been declassified and they have indicated clearly the intimate but hidden relationship of undecolonized alien powers, Japan and the United States, just like Ichikawa has

clarified. Japan as alien power to *Nan'yo gunto* (also to Okinawa) and the United States as alien power to Micronesia have been working in close cooperation just after the war.

What we should not consign to oblivion is 'people who once were subjects of Imperial Japan' or 'people registered in *gaichi koseki* (family register of colony) were left in-between during the shift of alien powers. Even Japanese who registered in *naichi koseki* (family register of Japan proper) might have their status changed at the time of marriages between people of *naich* and *gaichi* [Asano 2004, 2007; Mukai 2007]. In the case of Taiwanese and Koreans just after the war from the legal point of view, a person had Japanese nationality but did not have Japanese citizenship. The personal cases were really complicated and we need the help of jurists to analyze.

Finally, I would like to insist that one way to rebuild the theory of colonialism and decolonization is to pay special attention to how the postwar period began and how it has influenced the present situation of former Japanese colonies.

#### 注釈

1) This paper was originally read at a conference titled 「外来権力「含日本」多層累積形成的歴史認識」(The Historical Recognition Formed under the Multiple Control of Alien Powers including Japan) held at Academia Sinica (中央研究院), Taipei, December 28, 2010. The conference was made possible by the financial aid from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (No. 22251012, Organizer: Professor Yuko Mio, Tokyo University for Foreign Studies).

2) The Article 1 of the Common Law estab-

lished in 1918 said that this law was applied to *naichi* (including *Karafuto*), *Chosen*, *Taiwan*, *Kanto-shu*, *Nan'yo gunto*. This distinction is slightly different from customary usage.

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**ABSTRACT****「戦後」の始まりーミクロネシア（旧南洋群島）に対する  
非脱植民地化宗主国としての日本と米国**

遠 藤 央

1990年に現在のパラオ共和国を訪れたとき、そこはまだ独立以前の国際連合の「戦略的」信託統治領であり、独立への道を模索している最中であった。

さまざまな話を聞いたなかで印象的であったのは、敗戦後の引き揚げのなかで残されてしまった、両親がともに日本人であったこどもの話であり、日本統治がどのような影響を与えたのかを知ろうとする現地の人々の主張であった。

それらは、いわゆる「外地」の比較を帝国研究のなかでどのように位置づけることができるのかを研究するきっかけとなるものであった。敗戦後すぐにいわゆる帝国臣民は「日本人」と「非日本人」と分類され、「日本人」は外地から内地へ引き揚げ、「非日本人」は内地から外地へ、外地から外地へ、あるいはまれな事例であるが、外地から内地へと移動することになる。

「日本人」は「連合国国民」、「中立」、「敵国民」、「戦争の結果扱いが変更された国民」、「朝鮮人及び台湾人」に分類された。それらの人々がどのように移動し、また移動できず（せず）、そのことがどのように戦後秩序に影響したかを考察することが必要である。なぜなら、帝国研究において、まがりなりにもイギリスやフランスは、植民地の人々が旧宗主国に移動し、政治的な影響力を行使できるようになることで、「宗主国の脱植民地化」がおこなわれたのに対して、日本と米国はそうしたプロセスを経ていない点に特徴があると指摘されているからである。