

Kohama-jima, Taketomi-chō, Yaeyama-shotō, Okinawa
Prefecture [former Kingdom of Ryūkyū], Japan
on the 7th day of the 10th lunar month [2024-11-07]
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How Japan could play the ‘Ryūkyū card’ from a cultural policy perspective in response to Xi Jinping’s imperialism. Report from the Ryūkyū Archipelago

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1. Abstract

Minority issues pose a threefold challenge for the scientific community. Firstly, they require ‘thinking against the grain’ of national narratives. In the spirit of Kant’s ‘Streit der Fakultäten’ (1798), a critical view of the academic mainstream is necessary insofar as the latter corresponds to the interests of the majority society of the respective state. This requirement necessarily runs counter to the citation merry-go-rounds à la Hirsch and their reputation temptations. Accordingly, the international number of relevant A-list journals is extremely limited.²

Secondly, the scientific treatment of minority issues requires a complex, pluridisciplinary-holistic approach, in accordance with the rarely sufficiently reflected interlocking of the most divergent aspects of the life plans of groups and individuals. In another context,³ we have tried to quantify the memes

- 1 I would like to thank Fujino Kazuo-sensei (Kobe) and Kimura Goro-sensei (Tokyo) for their kind support of the research trip, as well as Heinrich Patrick-sensei (Venice), Weber Till-sensei (Naha) and Fu Kenryuo-sensei (Toyooka) for their critical comments as well as Shinsuke Hayama (Tokyo) for proofreading.
I would also like to thank the DAAD for supporting the guest professorship at Sophia University Tokyo, where the research took place. Any remaining errors are my fault; I would be grateful for any suggestions and additions. The term ‘Ryūkyū card’ is taken from the South China Morning Post, Hong Kong, 17 September 2024.
- 2 The Hague Peace Library offers a good overview of law-related journals, databases and documents: <https://peacepalacelibrary.nl/research-guide/minorities>. Among the organisations active in this field are the German-Danish-financed *European Centre for Minority Issues* (ECMI) in Flensburg, with its *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe* (JEMIE) and the European Yearbook of Minority Issues 2024 <https://brill.com/view/journals/ymio/21/1/ymio.21.issue-1.xml>. The *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* <https://brill.com/view/journals/ijgr/31/5/ijgr.31.issue-5.xml>, on the other hand, has an intercontinental approach (Indonesia, Kenya, etc.). In the USA, the American Psychological Association publishes the *Journal: Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*.
- 3 Vogt (2022): “The brain is made up of around 86 billion neurons (8.6×10^{10} , giga-level), and these cells are interconnected by around 125 trillion synapses (1.25×10^{14} , tera-level). Unlike computers, which only operate in binary, synapses are said to be able to function in 26 dimensions. The human brain is estimated to have the capacity to store an estimated 2.5 quadrillion

of the individual human brain (2.5×10^{15}) and of humanity (1.95×10^{25}) and the resulting need for simplification in both politics and science. The interlocking of memes is still largely misunderstood, but precisely for this reason requires exploratory courage. Such courage far beyond their respective fields (and precisely for that reason fruitful for the latter) was methodically demonstrated, for example, by Virchow in 'Die Noth im Spessart' (1852)⁴ or Richthofen in 'China' (1877 ff.)⁵. However, it is difficult for individuals today to tie into the Humboldt tradition of the 19th century with its comprehensive educational horizon. In concrete terms, this means that minority issues require coordination in a multidisciplinary team in order to validly falsify or verify working hypotheses.

Thirdly, only the scientifically valid treatment of minority issues can provide a substantiated basis for political concepts that can achieve a meaningful balance between the interests of the respective majority society and the minorities concerned at both the symbolic and material levels. In view of the dimensions (in Europe alone, one seventh of the population belongs to a minority), the ivory tower is not an appropriate dwelling for minority studies either.

The Ryūkyū archipelago, scattered over about a thousand kilometres on the western edge of the Pacific, offers a classic example of the threefold challenge of minority issues for science, as mentioned at the beginning.

The Chinese name Ryūkyū⁶ (琉球 Liúqiú, 'glazed horn dragon') has been documented in Chinese sources since 607,⁷ but this does not necessarily refer only to the archipelago itself. With correct geography, it appears in this form in the Shomyoji Gyoki map of 1305, and under the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) it was written with the radical 王 as a sign of vassalage. Eventually, it was adopted as an exonym by the kingdom of only the main island (after long struggles to unify). Its Middle Chinese pronunciation is rendered as Lew Chew in American English.

The main island is called Uchinā in the local language, which is reproduced in Japanese as Okinawa. The name Okinawa chosen by the Japanese Empire when it annexed the islands in 1872 and formed the prefecture in 1879 was a deliberate departure from the Chinese name; while the USA, when it occupied the islands in 1945, followed the (Chinese) name Ryūkyū when setting up the administration, founding the university, etc., believing that this was the endonym. This is wrong because there is no single name for the entire archipelago in the languages of the local populations, nor is there one today. There is no Ryūkyū minority in the singular, but rather a dozen or so minorities that can hardly communicate with each other directly in their own languages, but almost exclusively through the lingua franca of Japanese.

The Ryūkyū archipelago is a geopolitical hotspot. Specifically, it serves the Japanese central government (for its existential need for defence by the US government against the expansionist claims of the People's Republic of China) as a pawn at the expense of the Ryūkyū autochthons. Their right to self-determination is simply denied by Japan and the US, but increasingly supported by the People's Republic. Of geostrategic significance is the fact that the Sakishima evacuation plans of the Japanese Ministry of Defence, presented in May 2024, in the event of an armed conflict between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, tie in with 19th-century American plans to divide the archipelago. China, for its part, is on the ball at the highest level. In 2023, Xi Jinping had himself shown a set of documents

(2.5×10^{15} , peta-level) perceptive and semantic contents. It is thought that today's human beings are holding about 19.5 septillion (1.95×10^{25} , yotta-level) memes. [...] As you can see from the above figures, national and international politics are inevitably overburdened by such dimensions, and it is necessary to reduce their complexity exponentially." Vogt, Matthias Theodor (2012): *The Corona Juventocide. Political immunosenescence due to distorted census weight at the expense of young age cohorts.* amministrativamente. Journal of Administrative Law (Classe A) Università degli Studi di Roma "Foro Italico". ISSN 2036-7821, 14th year, Volume 1/2022, pp. 33–94. <http://www.amministrativamente.com/index.php/formez/issue/view/836>.

4 Virchow, Rudolf (1852): *Die Noth im Spessart. A medical-geographical-historical sketch, presented to the Physikalisch-Medizinischen Gesellschaft in Würzburg on 6 and 13 March 1852*, Würzburg.

5 Richthofen, Ferdinand von (1877-1911): *China. Ergebnisse eigener Reisen und darauf gegründeter Studien* [China. Results of own travels and studies based on them, 5 volumes, 2 atlas volumes]. Berlin.

6 The Japanese sound /l/, which is rendered as 'R' in the Latin alphabet, is neither a 'rolling' voiced alveolar trill /r/ nor a voiced uvular trill /R/ nor a voiced uvular fricative /ʁ/. Rather, it is a short plosive sound made with the tongue against the front of the palate and is therefore more comparable to the 'L'. This explains the historical Anglophone names "Lewchew" (treaty with the USA of 1854) and 'Loochoo' (United Kingdom) for Ryūkyū. The former is currently used by some people in Okinawa.

7 'Sui Shu', Volume 81, *Biographies*, 46th, *Biography of the Eastern Barbarians, Kingdom of Ryūkyū. 3rd and 4th year of the Taigyō era, years 607 and 608*.

in the National Archives; his comment on China's historical connection with Ryūkyū was published on the front page of the People's Daily on 4 June 2023; Xi Jinping's first official statement on Okinawa/Ryūkyū since taking office.⁸

In the following, we contrast the narratives of the US Air Force with those of the Ryūkyū independence movement in a number of scientific fields. In 2024, the US Air Force still assumes: 'The people of Okinawa, formerly called the Ryūkyū Kingdom, were a mixture of three main Asian cultures: Mongolian [sic], Ainu [sic], and Malayan. The Okinawans adapted what they borrowed from their neighbours [sic] and created their own unique culture.'⁹ Almost everything about this is wrong; neither Mongols, nor Ainu are historically or prehistorically documented in the archipelago. On the other hand, the initial claim of the Ryūkyū independence movement / the Republic of the Ryūkyūs¹⁰ (3% in the 2022 survey¹¹) that the islands are 'ethnically, culturally, and linguistically distinct from Japanese people' is essentially correct. From a scientific point of view, this hypothesis can be supplemented by geological and biological facts.

We conclude with two specific proposals for Japanese politics..

(1) Let us recall what Japan signed vis-à-vis China in 1972: 'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself.' What if the Japanese government decided to take similar measures against the Ryukyu indigenous people?

'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the [Ryūkyū] people [through annihilation of local structures, rites, languages, trades, and important parts of the population], and deeply reproaches itself.'

「日本側は、過去に日本が琉球の住民に対して行った、[地方の制度、儀式、言語、貿易、および住民の重要な部分の絶滅による]深刻な被害に対する責任を痛感しており、深く反省している。」

This purely symbolic recognition would remove the basis for the political aspirations for autonomy on the one hand, and the urgent admonitions of the United Nations for adequate recognition of the Ryūkyū minority and the soft power policy of the People's Republic of China on the other. The date of this step should not coincide with the commemoration of the victims of the Battle of Okinawa on 23 June 1945. May 15, 2027, for example, 55 years after the US returned Okinawa to the Japanese central government, would be more appropriate:

(2) As Patrick Heinrich has convincingly explained, the cornerstone of Ryūkyū self-understanding is the local languages, of which there are half a dozen or a dozen or more in the archipelago, depending on the count. After almost 150 years of systematic erasure by the Japanese central government (including the Japanese military shooting people for using the local language in 1945), they have not been systematically researched, nor have they been adequately passed on to the younger generation.

We propose that, instead of a state funding policy based on the allocation of jobs or project funds, a funding policy for civil society as a whole should be implemented via the tax system, guaranteed for a period of 30 years and deliberately independent of the question of ethnic affiliation, i.e. open to New Ryūkyūans. A conceivable medium for such an initiative is language. Targeted rewards for language proficiency are part of Japanese history. Japanese officials were reluctant to learn Korean during the period of occupation of Korea until the government started paying them bonuses for a language certificate.¹²

8 <https://japannews.yomiuri.co.jp/politics/defense-security/20230611-115560/>

9 <https://www.kadena.af.mil/portals/40/documents/AFD-120828-077.pdf>

10 <https://www.peaceforokinawa.org/ryukyu-independence-restoration-movement.html>. Cf.

<https://www.ntt-i.net/kariyushi/> and: Li Ming-Juinn, Secretary-General, Taiwan Okinawa Association, Taipei, Taiwan: *Political Analysis of the Ryukyu Independence Movement*. Taiwan International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 235-69 Spring 2021.

11 <https://www.okinawatimes.co.jp/articles/-/956771>.

12 I would like to thank Kimura-sensei for his kind advice.

A tax exemption for residents (including new residents) of 25% for a command of Shimakutuba in the respective island variety upon presentation of a certificate at the B1 level, and 50% for the C1 level would be a complete novelty in the Japanese approach to the island kingdom since 1609, i.e. for a good three hundred years of alignment with the political and economic interests first of Kyushu and then of Tokyo.

B1レベルの証明書を提示すれば、それぞれの島々の方言を話す居住者(新規居住者を含む)に対して25%の免税、C1レベルの証明書では50%の免税という措置は、1609年以來の島国に対する日本のアプローチとしては全く新しいものとなる。すなわち、九州、そして東京の政治的・経済的利益に沿うようになってから300年が経過した後のことである

An ‘*omoiyari yosan* / sympathy budget’, this time not to finance the US occupation, but this time in favour of its own indigenous population, would be a decisive step towards culturally opening Ryūkyū’s minds and doors to the security interests of Japan and the wider world. The suggested date for the tax change would be 1 April 2027, the beginning of the 2027/28 fiscal year. In view of the longevity phenomenon in the Ryūkyū archipelago, as described in more detail below, the generation of the old and very old, who have the appropriate language skills, could be included as assistant teachers. Generous remuneration for their language lessons would at least partially alleviate the particularly pressing pension problems and need for additional income faced by Ryūkyū pensioners. The (then politically unquestioned) Okinawa prefecture could become a model region for this form of minority language support, far beyond Japan.

2. Geologie

Geologically, present-day Japanese prefecture of Okinawa does not belong to Japan; Japanese schoolbooks may need to be rewritten. (1) The Ryūkyū island arc lies on the independent Okinawa plate and moves 54 mm per year to the southeast into the Pacific Ocean towards the Philippine plate.¹³ The rest of Japan lies (2) from Nagoya to the Kuril Islands on the Okhotsk plate, (3) to the west of it on the Amur plate.

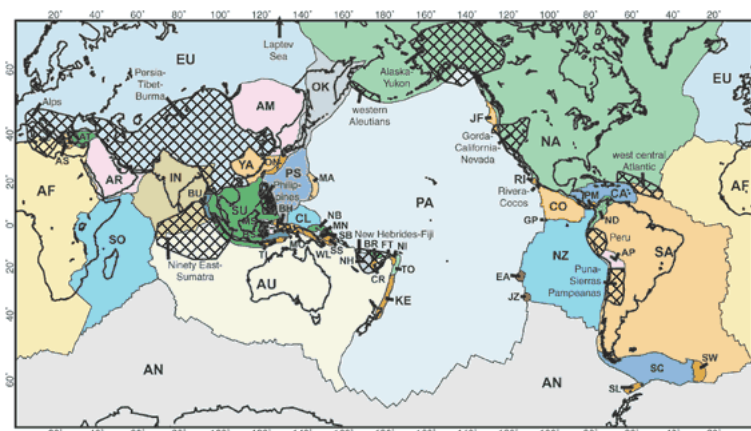


Fig. 1: (a) Bird, Peter (2003): An updated digital model of plate boundaries, Fig. 1: (b) Localisation of the plates ON, OK, AM. Table Vogt (2024) after Bird Peter (2003).

Identifier	Plate Name	Area, Steradian	Pole Latitude, deg. N.	Pole Longitude, deg. E	Rotation Rate, deg./Ma	Reference
ON	Okinawa	0.00802	48.351	142.415	28.530	Bird, Peter (2003). https://doi.org/10.1029/2001GC000252
OK	Okhotsk	0.07482	55.421	-82.859	0.8450	https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2001GC000252#ggge192-bib-0034
AM	Amur	0.13066	57.645	-83.736	0.9309	https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2001GC000252#ggge192-bib-0063

The tsunami earthquake of 24 April 1771 is referred to in Japanese literature as the ‘Great Tsunami of Meiwa’ (in the 8th year of the Meiwa period). The use of the Japanese calendar is not historically correct, since in 1771 the Ryūkyū kingdom was independent and had dual suzerainty with China and Japan: the term ‘Great Tsunami of Meiwa’ is cultural appropriation. In the opposite direction, i.e. with regard to the ‘own’ of the Japanese self-image, it is revealing that in the countless reports

13 Bird, Peter (2003): *An updated digital model of plate boundaries*. *Geochemistry, Geophysics, Geosystems*. Vol. 4, Nr 3, 14 March 2003, 1027. <https://doi.org/10.1029/2001GC000252>

on the triple disaster of 11 March 2011 (Tōhoku earthquake¹⁴ with an earthquake magnitude of Mw 9.0, tsunami and the Fukushima reactor) we could find no comparative reference to the much greater suffering of the population in 1771.

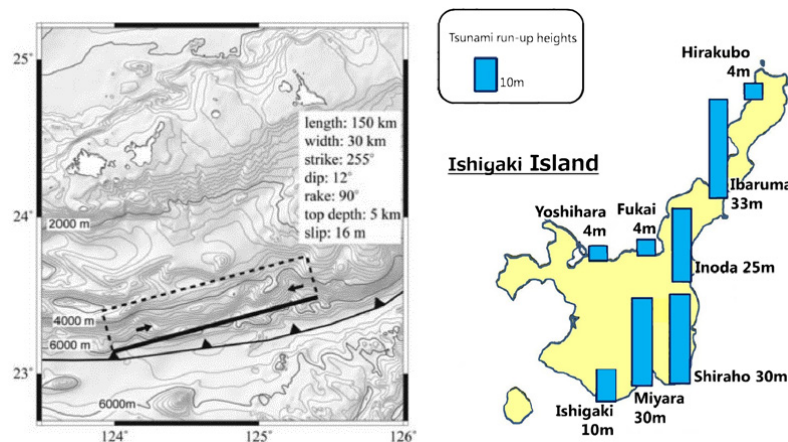


Fig. 2: (a) Fault model of the 1771 Yaeyama earthquake along the Ryūkyū Trench. Fig. 4 in Nakamura (2009). (b) Runup Heights 1771 at Ishigaki Island. Fig. bei Nakamura (2017).

The epicentre of the earthquake was located about 40 km south-south-east of Ishigaki Island at depths of up to 5 km (Nakamura 2009). The Yaeyama earthquake triggered a tsunami up to 33 m high (Nakamura 2017)¹⁵ and caused a singular disaster. In his ‘Quantification of Historical Tsunamis by the M_t Scale’, which covers the years 1498-1998, Abe Katsuyuki (1999)¹⁶ calculated a tsunami value of 8.5 for the Yaeyama quake of 1771. Until 2011, this was the highest historical value ever recorded on the present-day territory of Japan. (For the Tōhoku earthquake, Abe calculates a tsunami magnitude $M_t=9.1$).¹⁷

In 1771, the tsunami entered the interior of Ishigaki Island along rivers and rolled westwards along the saddle, eventually flooding 40% of the island. The villages of Ohama, Maezato, Miyara and Shiraho, located in the area between the southern and southeastern part of the island, lost 80 to 90 per cent of their population to the tsunami. The villages of Inoda, Iharuma and Yasura in the northeastern part of Ishigaki Island lost 100 per cent, 90 per cent and 95 per cent of their population, respectively. The disaster (a) claimed the lives of 9,313 people in the southern group of the Yaeyama Islands, which corresponds to 32.1% of the total population of 28,992 (including 48% of the population of the islands around Ishigaki) and (b) 2,548 lives in the central island group around Miyako. A total of 11,861 people lost their lives.

The tsunami triggered a famine that lasted for eighty years, until around 1850. There were epidemics of dysentery and malaria, which led to a further population decline; cows and horses died due to a plague of blood-sucking flies; food production fell dramatically due to the loss of agricultural land. The tax burden imposed by the Japanese occupiers became all the more oppressive.

14 Regarding the terminology, the Earthquake Research Institute (ERI) notes: ‘We would suggest to call this “2011 Tohoku earthquake” in short like the 1923 Kanto earthquake, since the official JMA name “The 2011 off the Pacific coast of Tohoku Earthquake” is too long.’ https://www.eri.u-tokyo.ac.jp/TOPICS_OLD/outreach/eqvolc/201103_tohoku/eng/

15 In preparation for the student meeting ‘High School Students Islands Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day in Okinawa 2017-11-07’, the prefecture of Okinawa commissioned Nakamura Mamoru, Professor at the University of the Ryukyus, Faculty of Science, Physics and Earth Sciences, to prepare a document for the meeting, which all participants were then able to read in advance. Cited here as Nakamura (2017). Detailed report of the student meeting at the Okinawa Convention Center https://www.okinawa-congre.co.jp/tsunami-summit2017/files/report_en.pdf.

16 Abe, Katsuyuki (1999): *Quantification of Historical Tsunamis [1498-1998] by the M_t Scale*. *J. Seismol. Soc. Jpn.* Volume 52 Issue 3 Pages 369-377. DOI https://doi.org/10.4294/zisin1948.52.3_369. See also Abe, K., *J. Geophys. Res.*, 84, 1561-1568, 1979

17 At the 892nd DANWAKAI (ERI Monthly Meeting). The other $M_t > 9.0$ are, according to ABE 1960 Chile 9.4; 1837 Valdivia, Chile 9.3; 1946 Aleutians 9.3; 1964 Alaska 9.1; 1841 Kamchatka 9.0; 1868 Arica, Chile 9.0; 1877 Iquique, Chile 9.0; 1952 Kamchatka 9.0; 1957 Aleutians 9.0; 2004 Sumatra, Indonesia 9.0. https://www.eri.u-tokyo.ac.jp/TOPICS_OLD/outreach/eqvolc/201103_tohoku/eng/#Mt

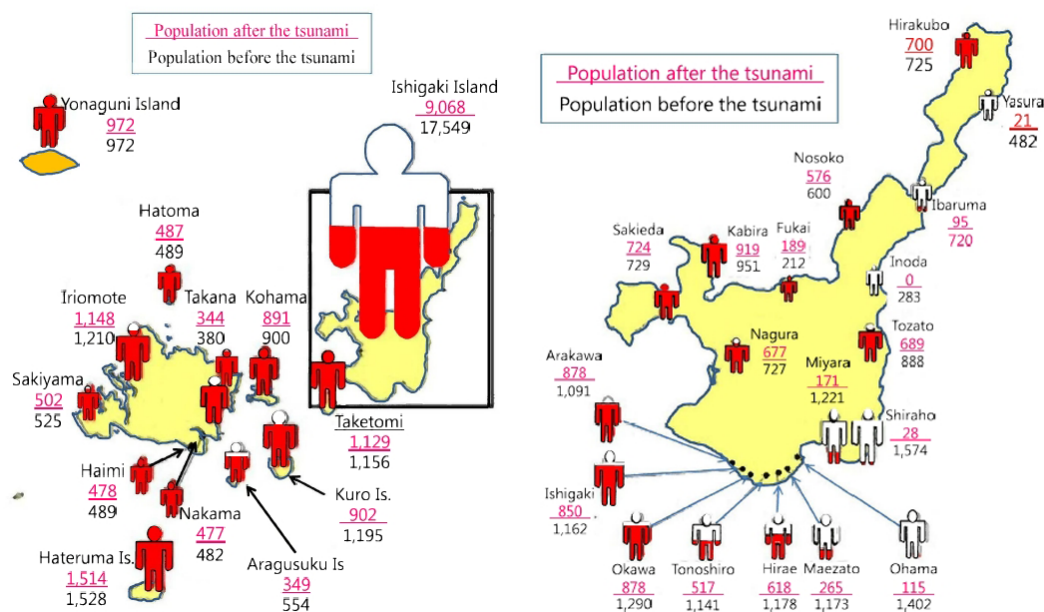


Fig. 3: Population before and after the 1771 tsunami. Figure from Nakamura (2017)

3. Biology

The southern Yaeyama Islands are a paradise for nature lovers. The Sekisei Lagoon, which covers an area of approximately 400 km², is the largest coral reef in Japan and part of the Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park. Kohana in the middle of the lagoon, with its many *Idea leuconoe riukiuensis*, the white clouded nymph butterflies, its *Hibiscus schizopetalus* and its fifty shades of green, looks like a butterfly zoo. Wild peacocks break out of the bushes everywhere with heavy flapping of their wings.

For natural scientists, the biodiversity is outstanding.¹⁸ Well-known endemic species include the Iriomote wildcat, the Noguchi-gera (Okinawa woodpecker), the Yanbaru-kuina (Okinawa rail) and the Yambaru-tenaga-kogane (Yanbaru long-arm scarab beetle). Among the 1,600 ferns and seed plants, more than 100 are endemic, with more than 120 varieties. The 26 species of terrestrial mammal represent about 25% of the 105 species currently native to Japan; the rate of endemic species in the Ryūkyū Islands is extremely high at 58%. Among the marine mammals, about 30 cetaceans have been identified so far. The Kerama Islands marine area, now a UNESCO World Heritage natural site, is an ideal breeding and gathering place for humpback whales. Of the 542 bird species in Japan, 395 have been recorded in the Ryūkyū Islands, accounting for about 73% of Japan's bird species. There are 95 native reptiles in Japan. About 75% of these, namely 71 reptiles (15 marine reptiles and 56 terrestrial reptiles), live in Okinawa. Of the 56 terrestrial reptiles, 46 are endemic species, which is a very high proportion of about 82%. Of the approximately 800 coral species worldwide, around 200 have been recorded in Okinawa.

The word 'biodiversity' already contains the idea of regional diversity, which is strictly opposed to all forms of nationalism and economic thinking in terms of exponential scales. In a similar way to the National Museum for Nature and Science Tokyo, the Natural History Department of the Naha Prefectural Museum uses the examples of cicadas, swallowtail butterflies, dragonflies and stag beetles, carefully tracing how the biodiversity of the Ryūkyū Islands – which even varies within the archipelago – differs from that of the main islands of Japan, Taiwan and mainland China. It proves the unique distinctness of the Ryūkyū habitat region. The two natural history museums are conducting cultural policy based on facts and using museum resources – the Ryūkyū archipelago is a unique feature within the territory of Japan, its flora and fauna form an independent bridge between the surrounding areas.

18 Figures according to https://www.pref.okinawa.jp/site/kankyo/shizen/koen/ryukyusyoto_sizentokusai_gaiyou-1.html, photos can be found at https://filmoffice.ocvb.or.jp/en/en/about-okinawa/okinawasnature_001/.



Fig. 4a: (a) Soft coral *Nephtheida* (Gray, 1862, AphiaID 146762). Found 07.11.2024 on the beach of Kohama-Jima. Photo: M. Vogt. (b) *Idea Leuconoe Riukuensis*. Kohama 08.11.2024. Photo: M. Vogt..



Fig. 4b: (c), (d) Distributions in the Ryūkyū Archipelago of (1) *Platyleura*—Cicades (2) *Atrophaneura alcinous*—Swallowtailed Butterfly, (3) *Coelicia*—Ryūkyūan Damselflies; (4) *Prosopocoilus*—Stag Beetles. Natural History Department, Okinawa Prefectural Museum, Naha.

4. Settlement and language

Archaeological evidence shows that the islands were settled from 35,000 years before present;¹⁹ who settled them is the subject of heated controversy. We quote Fujita M et al. (2020):²⁰

The Minatogawa human fossils 20k [...] had many morphological traits such as relatively short stature, short clavicles, and a slender upper body with relatively robust lower limb bones. They differ from those of Jomon people, the Holocene hunting-gathering-fishing people who lived in the Japanese Archipelago including the Ryūkyū Islands, from 3000 to 15,000 years ago. [...] Genetic analysis of modern Okinawan people also suggests the weakness of the relationship between the Pleistocene and Holocene populations of the Ryūkyū Islands. Sato et al. indicated that modern Okinawan people diverged from the continental group (Han Chinese) more recently than 15,000 years ago, based on a comparison of the modern Okinawan genome [50]. If so, the Paleolithic people who had lived in the Ryūkyūs before this divergence would have little or no genetic contribution to the present population of Okinawa. [...] A morphological study of the recently unearthed 27,000-year-old human skull from Shiraho-Saonetabaru Cave in Ishigaki Island suggests a possible relationship between Paleolithic Ryūkyū Islanders and prehistoric Southeast Asians. Kono et al. pointed out that the Paleolithic skull of the Shiraho-Saonetabaru showed a morphological similarity to that of the Mesolithic Vietnamese [51]. This result coincides with the results of ancient mtDNA analyses of two other Paleolithic human bone fragments obtained from the same site. The haplotypes B4 and R were obtained in the mtDNA analyses [52]. The current center of the distribution of haplotype B4 is in Southeast Asia, and that of haplotype R is an ancestral haplotype of the haplogroup that includes European, Southeast Asian, and Australian Aboriginal people.

The Naha Prefectural Museum presents two completely different reconstructions side by side (2007, 2014), based on the latest research in each case, which is a fine example of a confident scientific approach.

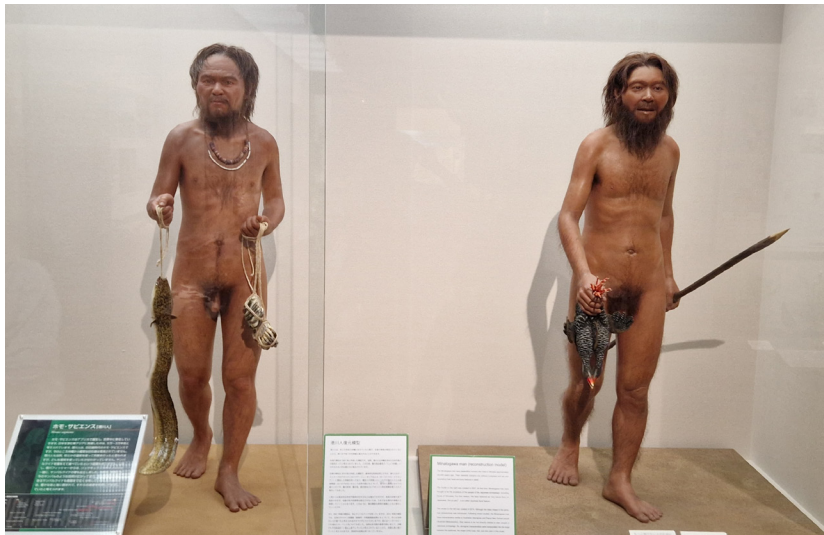


Fig. 5: Two completely different reconstructions of the prehistoric Ryūkyū people based on the respective state of science (right 2007 and left 2014) in the Prefectural Museum Naha. Photo: M. Vogt 2024-10-31.

The Ryūkyū languages, which are largely mutually unintelligible (self-designation: *Shimakutuba*, literally: *language of the local community*²¹), are all non-standardised and therefore *endangered*.²² Regarding the classification of the Ryūkyū languages,²³ Patrick Heinrich, Professor of Japanese Studies at Ca'Foscari

¹⁹ years before 1950 according to the radiocarbon method, age determination in archaeology.

²⁰ Fujita M et al. (2020): *The Migration, Culture, and Lifestyle of the Paleolithic Ryūkyū Islanders*. *Pleistocene Archaeology - Migration, Technology, and Adaptation*. IntechOpen. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.92391>. They quote: [footnote 50. Sato T et al. (2014): *Genome-wide SNP analysis reveals population structure and demographic history of the Ryūkyū islanders in the southern part of the Japanese archipelago*. *Molecular Biology and Evolution*. 2014;31:2929-2940]. & [footnote 52. Shinoda K et al.: *Ancient mtDNA analysis of human remains found from Shiraho-Saonetabaru Cave Site*. The Shiraho-Saonetabaru Cave Site, Okinawa Prefectural Archaeological Center Excavation Report, 2013; No. 65. pp. 219-234].

²¹ A more inclusive alternative, as the name 'Uchinaaguchi', which is often used to refer to the language, only refers to the main island.

²² According to UNESCO Atlas World's Languages in Danger, Amami, Kunigami, Okinawa and Miyako languages are "definitely endangered" and the Yaeyama and Yonaguni languages are "severely endangered". (Stephanie Yuuko Iso, 白鷗大学論集 第33巻 第2号, 論文). See now: Heinrich, Patrick (2021): *Waves of Language Diversity Loss in Japan: An Ecological and Theoretical Account*. *Journal of Asian Linguistic anthropology*, Volume 3 Issue 1, January 1, 2021, 33 – 55, DOI: 10.47298/jala.v3-i1-a2.

²³ Eleven according to Heinrich 2007 based on intensive field research; thirteen according to Ethnologue; six according to UNESCO.

University of Venice, writes: ‘In [my] classification of 11 languages, the high number of languages in Northern Ryūkyū is striking. This can also be understood as an expression of research knowledge. The Northern Ryūkyū languages are much better researched than the Southern Ryūkyū languages. In the case of Yaeyama in particular, it is unclear whether these are not multiple distance languages. [...] *Shima* in Okinawan refers to a local community. I therefore always translate *shimakutuba* as “community language”.’²⁴ Together with Hachijō (on the Izu Islands south of Tokyo) and mainland Japanese, they belong to the Japonic language family. The claim, once widespread in Japan, that Ryukyuan is just a dialect of Japanese, is not supported by the evidence.

However, the Okinawans themselves often call their languages ‘hogen’, i.e. dialect, which reflects old hierarchisation, not scientific facts.

Uchinaaguchi / *Shimakutuba* was explicitly forbidden in public at least since 1880. The ‘dialect eradication campaign’ of the Japanese school authorities in the 1940s was particularly perfidious.²⁵ Pupils caught speaking the local language were given a *hougen-huda* (方言札, dialectal tag) as a sign of disgrace. They could only get rid of it if they denounced a fellow student and had the tag given to them. During the Battle of Okinawa, there was a military order that all those who used Ryūkyū languages should be executed.²⁶ The state support in the revitalisation campaign of Okinawa Prefecture is low: according to its own account, it amounted to one million yen or EUR 6,000 in 2018.²⁷



Fig. 6: Hougen-huda (dialectal tag). A tool of shame used by the Japanese school authorities to enforce standard Japanese in schools, 1940s. From: Miyagi Nobuo: Sketches of [the] Okinawa World. Naha 2022, p. 100.

The Japanese suppression of the *Shimakutuba* island languages is bearing rich fruit. In 2005/06, Patrick Heinrich²⁸ examined the development of the individual varieties in five of the islands from a generation-specific perspective and identified major differences in the use of (1) local language, (2) standard Japanese and (3) mixed language. In Yonaguni, in the far south-west of the archipelago, the local language has died out among the younger generation, and standard Japanese is predominant. In Amami, in the far north-east, the mixed language is dominant. In Miyako, around 30% use the local language.

24 Heinrich to Vogt, email 29 November 2024.

25 Heinrich, P. *Language Planning and Language Ideology in the Ryukyū Islands*. Springer Nature, Language Policy 3, 153–179 (2004). <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:LPO.0000036192.53709.fc>.

Heinrich, P. (2013). *Hogen ronsō: the great Ryūkyūan languages debate of 1940*. Contemporary Japan, 25(2), 167–187. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cj-2013-0008>.

Ogawa, Shinji. “23. Orthography development”. *Handbook of the Ryūkyūan Languages: History, Structure, and Use*, edited by Patrick Heinrich, Shinsho Miyara and Michinori Shimoji, Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2015, pp. 575–590. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781614511151.575>

26 Heinrich, 2012, *The Making of Monlingual Japan*, Seite 92.

27 For more information on the prefectural revitalisation project, see しまくとうば普及推進計画(平成25年度～平成34 年度) <http://www.pref.okinawa.lg.jp/site/bunka-sports/bunka/shinko/simakutuba/keikaku.html>.

28 Heinrich, Patrick. (2007). *Look who's talking. Language choices in the Ryukyū Islands*. Universität Duisburg-Essen, General & Theoretical paper No. 691.

Table 5: Languages choices of the young generation (N = 87 x 6 domains)

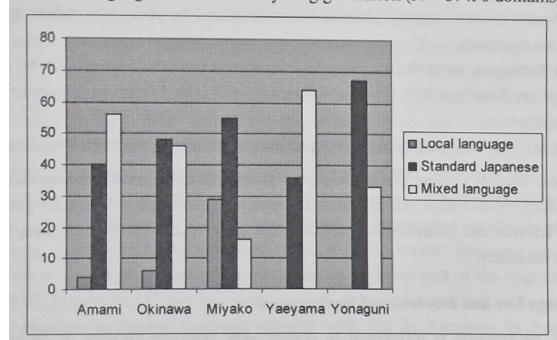


Fig. 7: Language choices of the young generation on the Ryūkyū islands. Fig. 5 at Heinrich (2007).

A German attempt at the origin of the Japanese languages^{29/30} is a study by the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, Jena (Robbeets et al. 2012): ‘By triangulating data from linguistics, archaeology and genetics, a new study by an international team of researchers proposes a “Farming Hypothesis” for the spread of Transeurasian languages, tracing the origins of Japonic, Koreanic, Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic to the movements of Neolithic millet farmers from the region of the West Liao River, China. [...] Our results indicate a time-depth of 9,181 bp [...] for the Proto-Transeurasian root of the family; [...] and 5,458 bp (3,335–8,024 95 % HPD) for Japonic-Koreanic. [...] In summary, the age, homeland, original agricultural vocabulary and contact profile of the Transeurasian family support the farming hypothesis and exclude the pastoralist hypothesis.’

As for whether this AI-based approach also applies to the Japonic languages themselves, Patrick Heinrich tells me: ‘In her research, Robbeets applies the well-known tree analogy of historical-comparative linguistics. However, it is doubtful whether there was such a tree-like diversification in the case of the Japonic languages and Korean. Specialists such as Vovin, Pellard or Whitman see the emergence and diversification of the Japanese languages differently. According to this, the Ryūkyū languages only came to the Ryūkyū Islands with rice-growing immigrants. Proto-Ryūkyū was spoken on Kyushu before that, but was replaced by Old Japanese there (language shift). Proto-Japonic came to the Japanese archipelago with the Yayoi immigration and was spoken before that on the Korean peninsula (continental Proto-Japonic). The structural parallels between Japanese and Korean are due to centuries of language contact (linguistic band) and not an expression of a historical genealogy.’^{31/32}

5. The Kingdom of Ryūkyū 1429–1609–1879 under dual suzerainty

In the eyes of some locals, the former royal seat of Shuri Castle in Naha is a ‘symbol of oppression’ (Nakashinjo Makoto) of the common people. In 2019, the castle went up in flames again (as it did in 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa), this time for reasons that are still unknown. The castles with their specific wall curves on the main island of Okinawa (or: Okinawa-honto) from the clan period until 1421 and the subsequent kingdom period are now listed as UNESCO heritage. They were built with extorted taxes from the rural population. It is significant in terms of cultural policy that no plaque is dedicated to the latter today.

29 Robbeets, M., Bouckaert, R., Conte, M. et al. *Triangulation supports agricultural spread of the Transeurasian languages*. Nature 599, 616–621 (2021). <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-021-04108-8>.

30 See P. Heggarty et al. (2023) for analogous localisation south of the Caucasus and temporalisation of 8,120 years bp of the origin of the Indo-European language family to 8,120 years ago, based on an analysis of 161 modern and non-modern languages: P. Heggarty et al. (2023): *Language trees with sampled ancestors support a hybrid model for the origin of Indo-European languages*. Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Science, doi: 10.1126/science.abg0818.

31 Heinrich, Patrick (2021): *Waves of Language Diversity Loss in Japan: An Ecological and Theoretical Account*. Journal of Asian Linguistic anthropology, Volume 3 Issue 1, January 1, 2021, 33 – 55, DOI: 10.47298/jala.v3-i1-a2, <https://iris.unive.it/handle/10278/5017422>.

32 Heinrich to Vogt, email 29 November 2024.

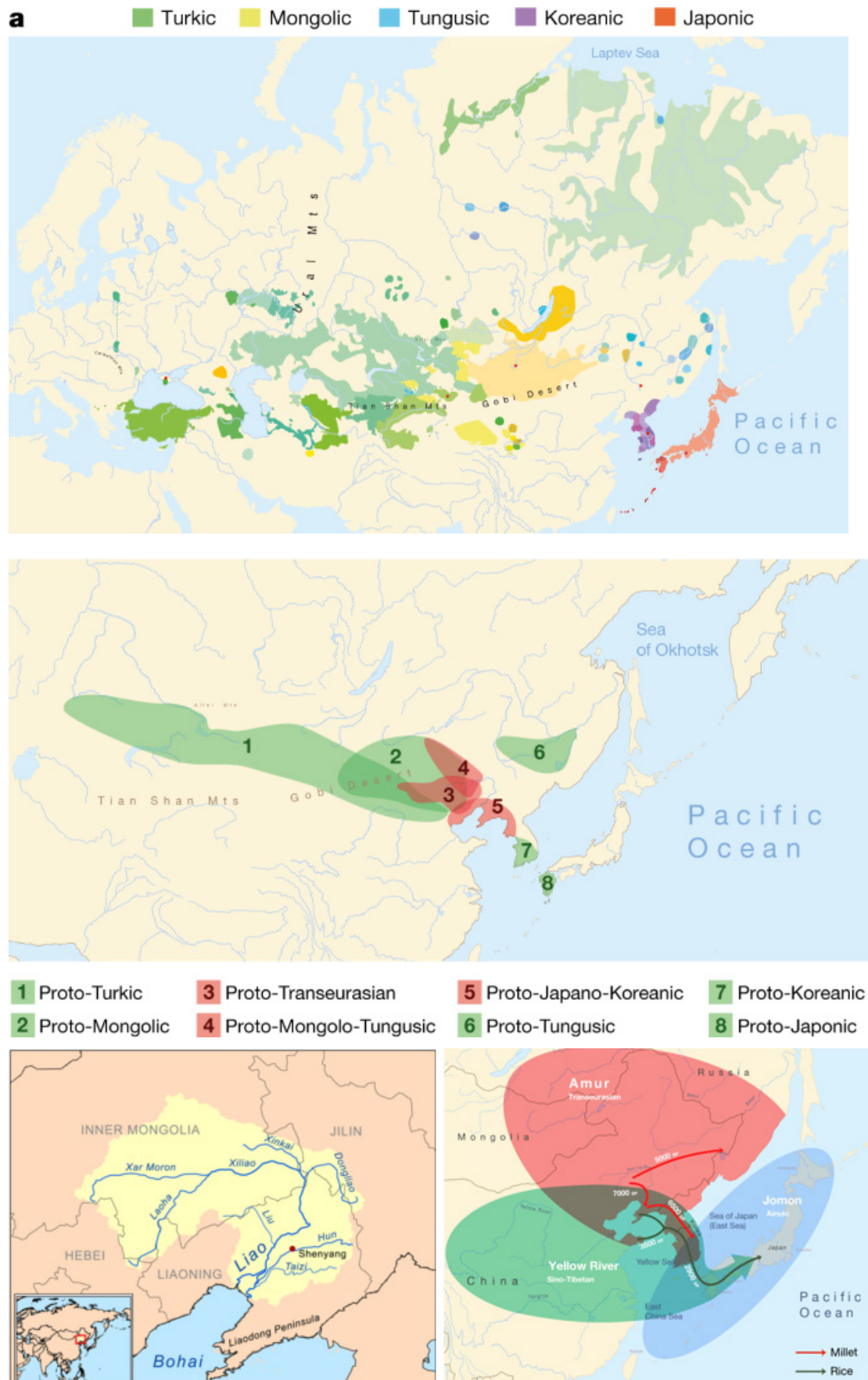


Fig. 8: (1), (2), (4) Robbeets M et al., Nature, November 10, 2024,
 (3) <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%BE%BD%E6%B2%B3>



Fig. 9: Nakin-jin-jo. Photo: M. Vogt 2024-11-01.

The Kingdom of Ryūkyū from 1429 was doubly subjugated under suzerainty. This old French term (only re-established in Western international law in the wake of the Crimean War around 1853) denotes an unequal relationship between two states. One of them is sovereign over the other, while the other is referred to as a vassal using an older word. A double suzerainty is extremely rare.³³ In the Ryūkyū, the kings had to have their office confirmed by both the Chinese and the Japanese shogun from the early 17th century (whereby the Chinese ruler was not informed of the connection to Japan), which favoured intensive intermediate trade. This, in turn, was in the interest of both sovereign states, so that we can speak of a *ménage-à-trois* for the benefit of all three partners. Naha became the crucial intermediate port for the mutual trade of goods from China, Japan, Korea and Southeast Asia.



Fig. 10: Flow of goods through Naha in the inner-East Asian intermediate trade and with Southeast Asia. Prefectural Museum Naha.

Although the vassals of the Chinese emperor, such as Korea and Ryūkyū, were obliged to pay high tributes, the emperor, in turn, sent gifts that – far removed from the merchants' greed for profit on both sides – documented his imperial clementia and superiority over the vassals. Historical comparison makes it clear why Xi Jinping's New Silk Road is not an imperial project due to a lack of clementia, and why it is meeting with reservations from an increasing number of countries, most recently from Brazil in November 2024. Far removed from the ancient imperial understanding of sovereignty on the part of the, according to his self-image, necessarily infinitely generous *tiānzǐ* (天子, Son of Heaven), today the very earthly greed for profit of the CCP is plunging more and more states into debt and immaturity at the expense of third parties. At least parts of the population of the Ryūkyū archipelago are therefore

33 Today, France and Spain are suzerain over Andorra. In 1598, Mihai Viteazul paid tribute to both the Ottoman Porte and the Habsburg Emperor in Vienna in order to have himself confirmed as governor in the first unified country (today: Romania). In 1847, Thailand and Vietnam agreed on dual suzerainty over Cambodia. In 1914, the Republic of China, Tibet and Great Britain came to blows in Simla over the question of whether the newly founded republic should continue the traditional suzerainty of the Qing Dynasty [position of Tibet and Great Britain] or whether China should now be able to rule over Tibet with sovereignty [position of China]. The Mongolian People's Republic was not formally, but de facto, the object of dual suzerainty from 1924, when it was able to emancipate itself to some extent from its powerful neighbour China by aligning itself with the Soviet Union.

watching all the more closely as the transition period for Hong Kong is halved under Xi Jinping (1997–2047, ‘one state, two systems’ was agreed as a transition period, but it is already ‘one state, one system’) and the events in Inner Mongolia and Xian. This could also be the fate of Taiwan, the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and the Ryūkyū archipelago.

As for Japan, the archipelago has not forgotten the rampages of the Japanese Satsuma clan from 1609 onwards, with its cruel *jintozei* system (1637, head tax starting at 143 cm in height), which demanded forced labour and forced levies from all islanders. On the distant islands, significantly more, which, according to legend, led to a first wave of Japanese-induced mass suicides among the indigenous population even then.³⁴ The Satsuma clan ended Ryūkyū’s foreign trade except with China and skimmed off the profits of the latter. In the 18th century, Ryūkyū was completely impoverished.

In 1872, the Kingdom of Ryūkyū was incorporated into Japan as a province, and in 1879 it was abolished and transformed into a domestic Japanese prefecture.

6. Onarigami – Religion in the Hands of Women

(instead of the Japanese „女には知行をやってはいけない“)

The Miyama and Yaeyama islands (which today, as the ‘offshore’ Sakishima islands, have become essential for the Japanese Ministry of Defence) were only annexed *little by little* from the main island of Uchinā (replicated in Japanese as Okinawa), essentially only after 1500. Even after that, they led a life of their own, so that rites and culture were preserved long after their incorporation into Japan as part of the prefecture of ‘Okinawa’ in 1879 (this is again the Japanese name in deliberate contrast to the Chinese one; while after 1945 the USA adopted the Chinese name Ryūkyū believing it to be the endonym, the native name, which is also wrong).

The autonomy of the Yaeyama Islands applies in particular to Onarigami (おなり神), the notion that spiritual power is the domain of women.³⁵ The symbolic figure is Sanai-Isoba on Yonaguni-jima, just off Taiwan, a 2-metre-tall mythical female figure with superhuman powers who is still worshipped today. In sharp contrast to this image of female supremacy, the Japanese issued formal decrees from 1611 onwards to exclude women from any intellectual and spiritual activity (3. 女には知行をやってはいけない。Women should not be given any intellectual or other authority).³⁶ But as late as 1991, researchers on Iriomote found that the priesthood was exclusively female.³⁷ Göttner-Abendroth concludes from this that it must have been a purely matriarchal early form, which is an external view; in fact the islands are ambilineal, that is, both patrilineal and matrilineal. This, in turn, is typical of Southeast Asia and the Pacific (just think of the composer Lili‘uokalan, who was the last queen of Hawaii until the US Marines occupied the island on behalf of the sugar barons and deposed her, and who had a worldwide success with her song ‘Aloha oe’ in 1891). But it is incompatible with Japanese tradition.

After 1945, the modernisation of infrastructure and the economic system in rural areas outside the main island opened up an opportunity for enculturation³⁸ for the Catholic Church.³⁹

34 Kubara-bari, Yonaguni-jima: In order to reduce the population and so ease the area’s per capita tax obligations, pregnant women were gathered and forced to jump over the crevice in a process called Hitoberashi (reducing the people). In 1974 it was designated a place of scenic beauty by Okinawa Prefecture. http://rca.open.ed.jp/web_e/history/map/map6/aaa0331.html.

35 Wacker, Monica. “Onarigami: Holy Women in the Twentieth Century.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 30.3/4 (2003): 339-59

36 http://rca.open.ed.jp/history/story/epoch3/shihai_3.html

37 Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie: Cosmology, Rituals and Society: Preliminary Observations on the Religious Creeds and Practices in Iriomote Jima. Antonio J. Guerreiro

38 On enculturation, cf. Vogt et al. (2016).

39 Bora on Miyako-jima: “Together with these changes in occupations, the integrative function of the village ceremonies, closely connected with agriculture and fishing, started waning. When, in 1964, waterworks were installed and, the following year, constant electricity transmission and gas were made available, folk beliefs in the gods of water and fire rapidly declined. [...] Always suffering from typhoons and drought, the villagers hoped for a humane and prosperous life, and in that period of change they were also in quest for a safe haven for their hearts. With these and other expectations they flocked to the Catholic meetings. [...] Catholic Church: It shows a flexible attitude of adaptation towards Buddhist altars, ancestor tablets, annual mortuary services, ground-breaking ceremonies, and other traditional religious observances and customs. However, in the Catholic ceremonies, the way of thinking, the life of faith, etc., adaptation to Okinawan life culture is lacking.” Shin ANZAI 1976, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.1177/003776867602300104>.

7. Zivile Opfer der Schlacht um Okinawa April bis Juni 1945

The Okinawan civilian minority suffered unimaginably during the Battle of Okinawa in World War II. ‘We were taught to prefer suicide to becoming a captive’ (Moriguchi, 1992). The Japanese military applied a specifically male concept of honour, *jiketsu* (自決),⁴⁰ to women as well.

The population statistics of the Japan Bureau of Statistics show a gap in the number of victims (for 1945 as the only one among the 47 prefectures of Japan).⁴¹

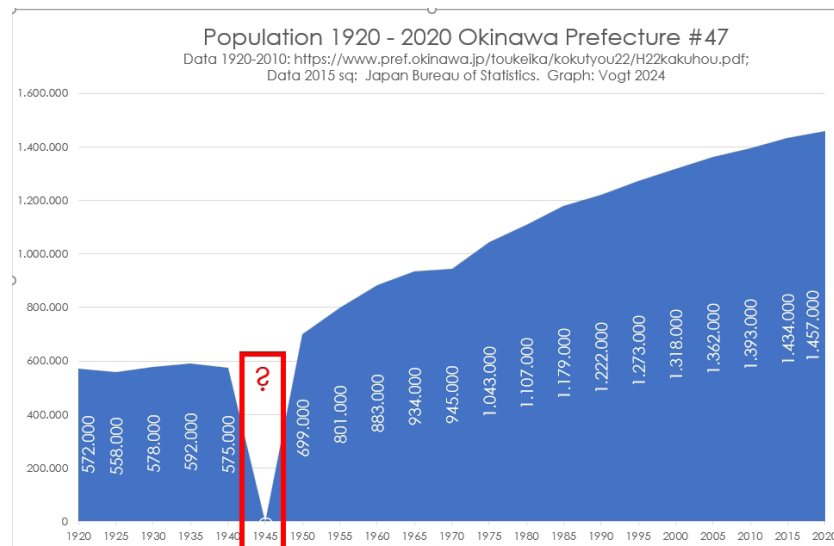


Fig. 11: Gap in the official population figures for 1920-2020 in the area of the former and present Okinawa Prefecture.

The Cornerstones of Peace now list 242,225 names of civilian and military war dead (as of 24 June 2024). The exhibition at the Prefectural Museum is still based on the 200,656 war dead known at the time, but it lists the individual proportions in detail. According to this earlier figure, the prefecture of Okinawa lost 122,228 people of the archipelago's total population, including 94,000 civilians (77%) and 28,228 military personnel (23%). Accordingly, the population of 575,000 (1940) decreased to 452,772 (end of 1945), corresponding to a population loss of -21.3 %. In the population figures from January 1946 (i.e. before the return of the prisoners of war), there were five women for every man aged 21-25.

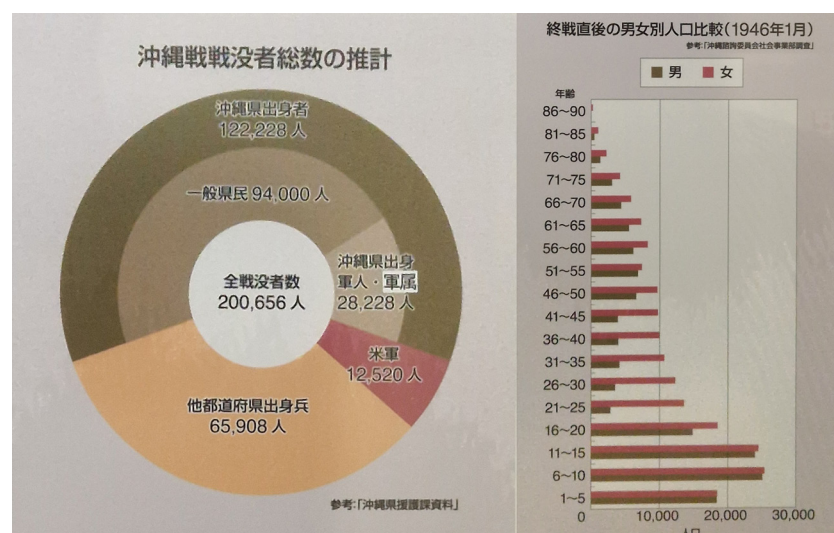


Fig. 12: (a) Number of victims among the civilian population and military personnel on both sides in the Battle of Okinawa, April to June 1945. (b) Population by age group and gender, January 1946. Naha Prefectural Museum.

40 “*jiketsuis* [meant] to honor and glorify the person who had the extraordinary courage to kill himself or herself in this manner. Calling such cases *jisatsu* would amount to a blasphemy.” Koji Taira, “The Battle of Okinawa in Japanese History Books,” JPRI Working Paper No. 48: July 1998, formerly stored at <http://www.jpri.org/publications/workingpapers/wp48>, now deleted. Therefore quoted from Janice Matsumura (2015), *Japanese Military Suicides During the Asia-Pacific War: Studies of the unauthorized self-killings of soldiers*.

41 新規文書1 <https://www.pref.okinawa.jp/toukeika/kokutyoutou22/H22kakuhou.pdf>

We did not find a comparison between the numbers of victims in Okinawa and those in the rest of Japan. Therefore, we can only give roughly estimated figures for the rest of Japan. Of the 200,656 deaths in Okinawa, 12,520 were US military (6.2%) and 188,136 were Japanese or Okinawans (93.8%). Among the latter, exactly half (50.0%) were civilians; the other half were Japanese military personnel. The death toll among military personnel recruited from Okinawa is three times lower (14.1%) than that of the civilian population. It would be desirable if the Prefectural Museum could (a) update its figures and (b) calculate comparative data for the rest of Japan.

In the rest of Japan (excluding Okinawa), the losses among the civilian population were -1.1% (including those who died from long-term nuclear effects), which is about one-twentieth of the rate in Okinawa. Among military personnel, -21.3%. For both groups together, civilians and military, -2.8%. According to our preliminary calculations, Okinawa has a ratio of victims that is ten times higher than in the rest of Japan (-21.3% to -2.8%). This is shocking. Even more shocking is the fact that the reference to the triggering of the Okinawa suicides in 1945 by the Japanese military was removed from Japanese school books in 2023.⁴²

Fig. 13: (a) Number of victims in the Battle of Okinawa April to June 1945 according to the statistics of the Prefectural Museum.
(b) Summary of the estimated number of victims among the Japanese civilian and military population in the rest of Japan for comparison. Data and graph: Vogt 2024.

	Okinawa	rest of JP	military US	
200.656	122.228	65.908	12.520	Deaths total
	60.9%	32.8%	6.2%	
	94.000			civil population from Okinawa prefecture
	28.228			Military & military civil persons from Okin. prefecture
		65.908		Japanese soldiers from other prefectures
			12.520	US military
1940	575.000	100.0%		population in 1940
1945	-122.228	-21.3%		losses in battle of Okinawa
1945	452.772	78.7%		population end of 1945 [presumably]
	rest of JP	Civil	Imperial Army 1945-08	
71.998.104	2.8%	65.903.104	6.095.000	population Japan Empire 2025-11 (without Okinawa)
		1.1%	21.3%	
		700.000	1.300.000	fatalities, Rest of Japan [estimates]
		100.000		Tokyo on March 9-10, 1945, Operation Meetinghouse
		350.000		civilians in incendiary raids on 67 Japanese cities
		210.000		nuclear bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki [incl. later dyings]
		40.000		others

In the Sakima Art Museum in Ginowan, which had been purpose-built for the artist couple Maruki Iri and Maruki Toshi having depicted the events of the Battle of Okinawa in 14 large paintings, adding lyrical texts to create a vivid and poignant sense of empathy.



Fig. 14a: Maruki Iri and Maruki Toshi [n.d.]: [poem for] the painting of the Battle of Okinawa. (a) autographic calligraphy in the catalogue of the Sakima Art Museum Naha.

42 <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20230628/p2a/00m/0na/007000c>. Cf. Hidefumi Nishiyama, *Mainland ignorance: Okinawa and Japanese colonial unknowing*, Geoforum, Volume 157, 2024, 104146, ISSN 0016-7185, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2024.104146>.

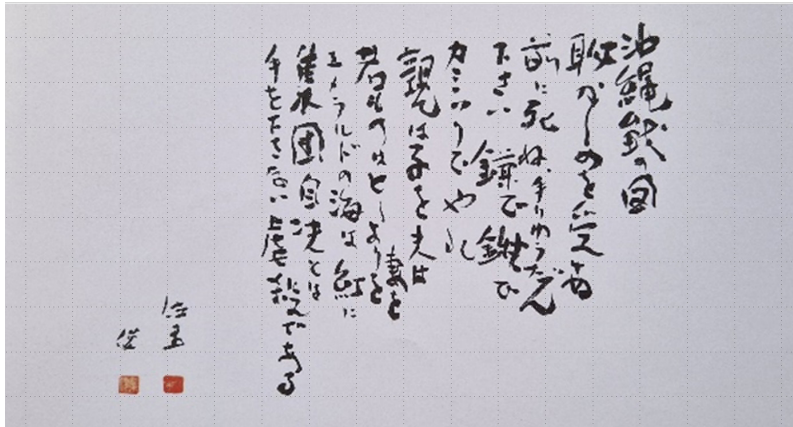


Fig. 14a: Maruki Iri and Maruki Toshi [n.d.]: [poem for] the painting of the Battle of Okinawa. (a) autographic calligraphy in the catalogue of the Sakima Art Museum Naha.

Buchstäbliche Übersetzung

Stirb bevor Du gedemütigt wirst
 Geben Sie uns Handgranaten.
 Schneide dich mit Sichel, mit Hacke oder Klinge.
 Eltern sollen ihre Kinder [töten], Ehemann soll seine Frau
 Junge Menschen sollen alte Menschen.
 Die Smaragdfarbe des Meeres änderte sich in Blutrot.
 Massenselbstmord ist
 [..ist] selbst Gemetzel zu tun.

Literal translation

Die before you are humiliated
 Give us hand grenades.
 Cut yourself with a sickle, a hoe or a blade.
 Parents should [kill] their children, the husband should [kill] his wife
 Young people should [kill] old people.
 The emerald colour of the sea turned to blood red.
 Mass suicide is
 [..is] to commit carnage oneself.

Fig. 14b: literal translation of the individual terms into German by students in the German department of Sophia University, 3rd semester, (c) Stichomythie translation Matthias Theodor Vogt 2024-11-17.

[Gedicht zum] Bild der Schlacht von Okinawa - Maruki Iri, Maruki Toshi [o.J.]

[Soldat:] Bringt Euch um! Bevor Ihr [von den amerikanischen Teufeln] geschändet werdet!
 [Okinawa:] Sir, geben Sie mir eine Handgranate, bitte.
 [Soldat:] Bringt Euch um – mit Euren Sicheln, mit Euren Hacken, mit Euren Rasierklingen;
 Eltern, bringt Eure Kinder um; Ehemänner, bringt Eure Frauen um;
 Ihr Jungen, bringt die Alten um!
 [Erzähler:] Smaragdgrün war das Meer gewesen. Nun ist es rot von Blut.
 Es heißt, dies war ein Massenselbstmord.
 Tatsächlich war es Mord,
 beim dem [die japanischen Soldaten] ihre Hände nicht schmutzig machten.

[Poem for the] Painting of the Battle of Okinawa - Maruki Iri, Maruki Toshi [undated]

[Soldier:] Kill yourselves! Before you are defiled [by the American devils]!
 [Okinawa:] Sir, give me a hand grenade, please.
 [Soldier:] Kill yourselves – with your sickles, with your hoes, with your razor blades;
 Parents, kill your children; husbands, kill your wives;
 You boys, kill the old!
 [Narrator:] The sea had been emerald green. Now it is red with blood.
 They say it was a mass suicide.
 In fact, it was murder,
 in which [the Japanese soldiers] did not dirt their hands.

It is also noteworthy in terms of cultural policy that the artist couple and the museum have produced (a) the catalogue of the 14 pictures and (b) an analytical publication, as well as (c) a children's book on the subject.



Fig. 15: Maruki Iri and Maruki Toshio: Catalogue volume for the 14 panels on the Battle of Okinawa and children's book

In the video 'Your voice came out through my throat' (directed and filmed by Sunagawa Atsushi, 2009), Yamashiro Chikako records the voice of a contemporary witness to the Battle of Okinawa, contrasting it with the face of a young actress who repeats the text with her lips until the film shows an overlay of both faces – a remarkable artistic approach to the oral tradition of historical experience, which was the only possibility in all preliterate cultures and, in the case of the mass suicides, which were largely silenced by the official Japan, it represents almost the only possibility of resonance.



Fig. 16: Video 'Your voice came out through my throat.'
Director: Yamashiro Chikako, Camera: Sunagawa Atsushi, 2009. Prefectural Museum Naha.

8. US occupation 1945–1972–[2024 and following years]

No other area in the world, including the United States itself, has more U.S. military forces deployed per square mile than Okinawa. Okinawa Prefecture makes up 0.6% of Japan's land area, but accounts for 70.3% [2024] of U.S. useable land and 70.1% of U.S. personnel stationed in Japan. Under the 'omoiyari yosan / sympathy budget,' the Japanese government will contribute US\$2.17 billion in fiscal years 2022–2027, rising to US\$2.6 billion, corresponding to about two-thirds of the costs. In turn, the US occupation largely bypasses Okinawa's economy; it now accounts for only 5% of GDP.

Between 2001 and 2018, the prosecution rate for crimes committed by US military personnel was only 13.2%.⁴³ Most perpetrators are simply flown out, thereby evading Japanese justice. When a young woman was raped to death by three US soldiers in 2016, the senior US general on the scene stated that he could not understand the crime, since the cost of a taxi to the scene of the crime would have been enough for the three of them to go to a brothel. It is no wonder that up to 80,000 people are demonstrating against the US occupation and that the prefecture does not say a word about the strategic advantages for Japan, neither on its Washington, DC website⁴⁴ nor in the Japanese version 2024⁴⁵ ('the people of Okinawa continue to bear the excessive burden derived from the presence and operations of the U.S. military bases.')

43 <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/AOCHR.pdf>

44 <https://dc-office.org/brochure>

45 <https://www.pref.okinawa.lg.jp/heiwakichi/kichi/1017273/1017274/1025056/1031514.html> Version 2024-march, accessed 2024-11-19.

46 <https://dc-office.org/basedata>, version 2018, accessed 2024-11-19.

However, the anger in Okinawa is not necessarily directed against the Japanese Self-Defence Forces. Mayors, local councils and even voting citizens, for example in Yonaguni, have currently approved the increased presence of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces in view of the threat posed by China and North Korea.

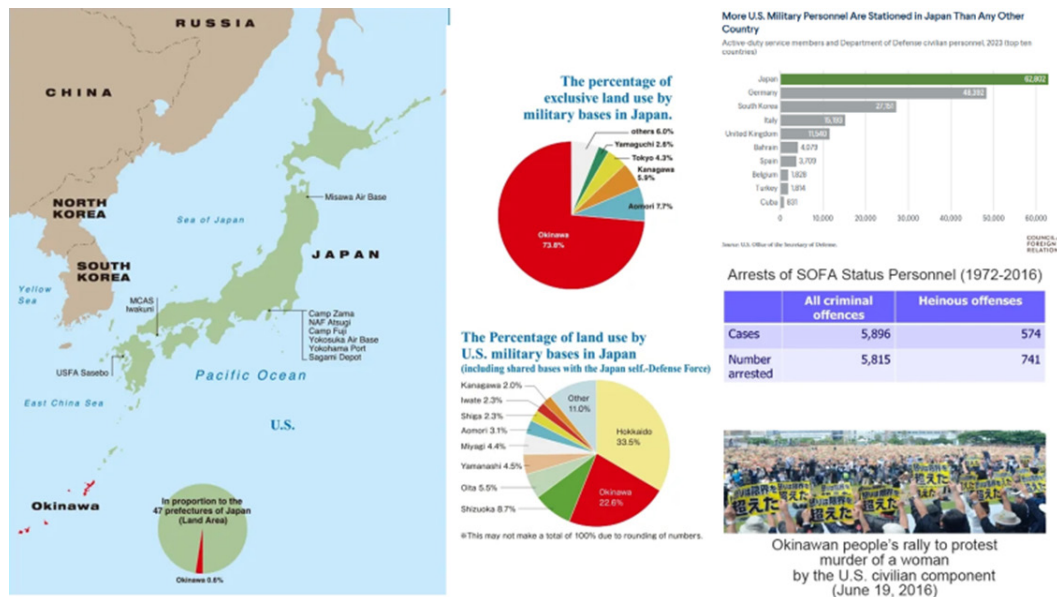


Fig. 17: (a), (b), (d): American military zones in Japan; land use; arrests 1972–2016. Illustrations on the website of the prefecture of Okinawa on 2024-11-19; [2024-11-19]. (c): US Personnel stationed abroad. The U.S.-Japan Alliance—Council on Foreign Relations [2024-11-19].

9. Longevity Jurōjin 寿老人

The widespread media coverage of the longevity⁴⁷ of people in Okinawa (one of the five blue zones) may be a forgery. The Australian-born researcher Saul Newman suspects missing (burned) birth certificates and pension fraud, but his contribution has not yet been peer-reviewed and does not show any knowledge of the area.⁴⁸ The fact is that Okinawa's youth growing up next to US bases show an increased tendency towards obesity, the highest in Japan.⁴⁹ In the long term, it is possible that the US occupation caused the god of longevity Jurōjin 寿老人 to disappear.

In any case, among all 47 Japanese prefectures, the proportion of young people under 15 years of age in Okinawa is the highest (2023: 16.1%) and the proportion of older people over 65 years of age is the second smallest (2023: 23.8%), just after Tokyo (2023: 22.8%).⁵⁰

10. Art for the minority, art by the minority

Today, the Okinawa minority is in a similar situation to the Sorbs in Germany. The prefecture and the central government provide extensive funding for the arts, including for an art academy that also focuses on traditional arts⁵¹ and a national theatre that puts on an average of three performances a month (a total of 34 from April 2024 to March 2025).⁵² The *Kumiod ori* – a court theatre piece from 1719 combining

47 Cf. the New York Times bestseller: Willcox, Bradley J.; Willcox, D. Craig; Suzuki, Makoto (2002): *The Okinawa Program: How the World's Longest-Lived People Achieve Everlasting Health – And How You Can Too*. With further references to Shima Kyoiku.

48 Hasebe, T., Hasebe, N. (2023): *A big issue on a small island—Obesity increases hypertension*. *Hypertens Res* 46, 2237–2239 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41440-023-01343-6>: “In the present study, 54.3% of male and 32.3% of female on Yonaguni Island were reported to be obese, which is an extremely high complication rate.”

49 <https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/704080v3>. “The story of blue zones as bastions of health is too good to be true.” <https://www.nzz.ch/wissenschaft/blue-zones-alles-quatsch-findet-longevity-forscher-newman-ld.1854149>.

50 <https://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/jinsui/2023np/index.html>

51 Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, B.A., M.A., PhD. Fine Arts, Music, Theater, Traditional performing arts and crafts. <https://www.okigei.ac.jp/>

52 <https://www.nt-okinawa.or.jp/english#apr>

words, music and dance, which combines Chinese, Japanese and Okinawan elements⁵³ – was declared a nationally important intangible cultural asset of Japan in 1972 and added to the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage in 2010. From a professional point of view, the performance of *Kumiodori* we attended was rather unsatisfactory in terms of direction and could be improved.

In 2023, a research project by the Japan Chamber Music Foundation (JCMF) committee, chaired by Kazuo Fujino, looked at the situation of minority art. The results were published in June 2023 under the title ‘Ryūkyū Dentō Geinō no Genzai.’⁵⁴ Remarkable among the findings in terms of cultural policy is that the dissolution of the kingdom in 1879 led to unemployment among the musicians and dancers previously employed by the court, who then used their skills to teach the general population, who were now coming into contact with more complex forms of music for the first time. This has had immediate consequences to this day. The exuberant musical temperament of young Okinawans means that they are disproportionately represented on Japanese hit parades. Naha is full of live houses of highly talented young artists.

If one analyses the worldwide success of the soft power cultural policy of the Republic of Korea with its K-Pop, which creates the geopolitical conditions for empathy with South Korea in the first place, then one wonders why Japan does not use the musical talents from Okinawa for a global soft power cultural policy.



Fig. 18: A live house performance and a performance in Naha aimed at tourists, November 2024.

11. Tradition versus modernity

Traditional religion is centred around *mabui* (まぶい), around *life essence* in the balance between ancestors, the world beyond and this world. Hygiene is also part of this. Typical of human-animal interaction until the 1960s was the pig toilet, which came from China and was under the protection of *fuuru nu kami*, the toilet god (in Goa and Vietnam until the 2000s, the latter as a fish pond toilet).



Fig. 19: 名越左源太 [Nagoya Sagenta (1820-1881)]: Traditional pig toilet. Cf. 今村規子、「名越左源太の見た幕末奄美の食と菓」[Imamura, Noriko: Food and confectionery of Amami at the end of the Edo period as seen by Nagoshi Sagenta], pp. 15-22, 2010, Kagoshima.

Today, the days of the pig toilet are long gone. The Ryūkyū Islands have all the blessings of Japanese civilisation, but combined with the Enzensberger categories of longing: space (unlike Tokyo), silence (unlike Tokyo), togetherness (unlike Tokyo). No wonder that so many people have moved from Osaka

53 “The kumiodori was created by Tamagusuku Chokun, who was appointed odoribugyo, a dance judge, in the early 18th century to entertain Chinese envoys called sapposhi who were sent by the Chinese emperor to coronate the new king of the Ryukyu kingdom. NidoTekiuchi and ShushinKaneiri were first played at the enthronement ceremony of King Sho Kei in 1719. Chokun created the Kumiodori based on the indigenous performing arts and fables of Okinawa, drawing inspiration from the performing arts of mainland Japan (Noh and Kabuki) and Chinese theatre. Mekarushi, Onnamonogurui and Kokonomaki, together with the two works mentioned above, are known as ‘Chokun’s five masterpieces.’” <https://www.nt-okinawa.or.jp/traditional-okinawan-performing-arts/img/pdf/pamphlet-2021.pdf>

54 <https://jcmf.or.jp/about-jcmf/research/>

and Tokyo to the small island of Kohama, for example, and that Okinawa prefecture is second only to Tokyo in Japan in terms of net immigration.⁵⁵

The central part of the main island, however, is catastrophically overbuilt, as it is sandwiched between American military bases. The rail network that still existed in 1945 was dismantled by the Americans and replaced by streets that were much too narrow and had too many crossings, so that rapid communication is not possible. The short monorail line is not a sufficient replacement for the inadequate north-south connection, for which only a generous tunnel solution would be possible in view of the American occupied areas. On other islands, the creation of building land would be quite conceivable and far more people could enjoy the categories of longing Enzensberger describes: space, silence, togetherness.



Fig. 20: View from the guest house of Sophia University of Tokyo by night. The noise level 24/7 is rarely below 40 db. Photo: M. Vogt 2024

However, the neophytes have little to do with the autochthonous culture; almost none of the newcomers know about the ritual site 200 metres from my guesthouse in the dense jungle (where the autochthonous people still place flowers and whose entrance is heavily trampled). There is a distinct lack of incentives for both the local young population and the new arrivals to engage intensively with the indigenous Ryūkyū culture, either for themselves or for their children. This could be changed. And it should be changed.



Fig. 21: Kohama ritual site. Photo: M. Vogt

55 Intra-prefectural migrants to prefecture #47 Okinawa 2023: 28,847
 From the Tokyo metropolitan area 10,598
 From the Osaka metropolitan area 3,984
 From the special wards of Tokyo 3,667
 From the Nagoya metropolitan area 2,450
 From the other 21 large cities: 11,582
 Not from large cities: 233 (1%).
<https://www.e-stat.go.jp/en/stat-search/file-download?statInfId=000040139260&fileKind=4>

12. Geopolitics – ‘If the Ryukyu Kingdom falls, the whole realm will follow’ (Mao Zedong). The ‘Ryukyu card’ behind Tokyo’s position on the Taiwan issue

How does official Japan now show the special character of the Ryūkyū archipelago? The National Museum in Tokyo provides the museum-political ‘proof’ that the islands (unlike the postulation of the independence movement) **are by no means** ethnically, culturally and linguistically different from the Japanese. In the last of the exhibition halls, #16, some showcases initially show (a) that the Ainu were civilisationally backward (for a critical view of the terminology used by the Japanese government in minority issues, see Iwama et al. (2020)).⁵⁶ The last two display cases in room #16 then show (b) the proximity of Ryūkyūans to Japanese craftsmanship in the late 19th century. In the typically Japanese women’s kimono, the pattern and Bingata dyeing technique show a certain, but not predominant, Ryūkyūan distinctiveness. The men’s writing set is a typical Japanese utensil made in Okinawa.



Fig. 22: Last and second-last display case in the National Museum Tokyo, room #16, on the female and male culture of Okinawa Prefecture. Photo: Vogt 2024.

From a geopolitical point of view, Xi Jinping therefore also has good cards. This applies not only (1) to the uninhabited Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands northeast of the Ryūkyū chain beyond the Okinawa Trench, which, from a Japanese perspective, represent a *terra nullius* due to their uninhabitability, thus lying outside the scope of Article 2 of the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty and whose administration was transferred bilaterally from the USA to Japan in 1971.

The near universal conviction in Japan with which the islands today are declared an “integral part of Japan’s territory” is remarkable for its disingenuousness. These are islands unknown in Japan till the late 19th century (when they were identified from British naval references), not declared Japanese till 1895, not named till 1900, and that name not revealed publicly until 1950.⁵⁷

(2) As for Taiwan⁵⁸ (linguistically the origin of almost all Austronesian languages according to Robert Blust, which is also supported genetically),⁵⁹ Japan signed as early as 1972:

The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself. [...] The Government of Japan recognizes that Government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal government of China. [...] The Government of the People’s Republic of China reiterates that Taiwan is an inalienable part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China. The

56 IWAMA Akiko, YU Hyo-Chong, KIMURA Goro Christoph, *A Report on Problems in the Protection of Minority Rights in Japan*, Report submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues, 31. May 2020. <https://researchmap.jp/kgc/published-works>.

57 Gavan McCormack (2011): Small Islands – Big Problem: Senkaku/Diaoyu and the Weight of History and Geography in China-Japan Relations 小さな諸島—大きな問題——尖閣／釣魚と日中関係における歴史と地理の重さ. Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus. Volume 9 | Issue 1 | Number 1

58 For economic details of the Japanese occupation, see the historical document of Grajdanzev, A[ndrew] J. (1942): Formosa (Taiwan) Under Japanese Rule. Pacific Affairs, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Sep., 1942), pp. 311-324, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2752241>. For more on the Siberian-born author, see <https://jonintaiwan.blogspot.com/2019/05/the-slightly-less-mysterious-andrew-j.html>.

59 Hill, Catherine, Soares, Pedro & Mormina, Maru, et al. (2007). A Mitochondrial Stratigraphy for Island Southeast Asia. *American Journal of Human Genetics* 291:1735–1737. The indigenous population of Taiwan, numbering 580,000, accounts for 2.5% of the population.

Government of Japan fully understands and respects this stand of the Government of the People's Republic of China, and it firmly maintains its stand under Article 8 of the Potsdam Declaration.⁶⁰

Some experts⁶¹ assume that the annexation of Taiwan by the People's Republic will be completed 20 years before the anniversary celebration of 'One Hundred Years of the People's Republic of China' in 2049, i.e. before 2030. This would then include Senkaku / Diaoyu and open the passage to the Pacific for the united China. Since August 2012, the People's Republic has not tired of historically underpinning its military preparations for the annexation of Senkaku / Diaoyu.

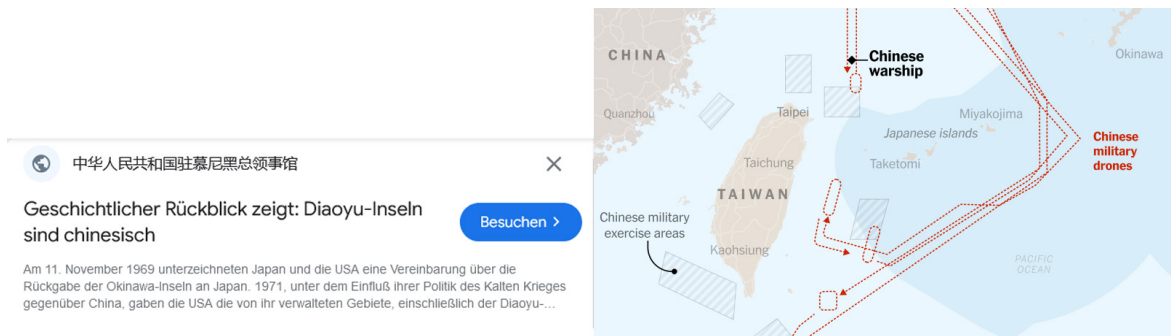


Fig. 23: (a) Website of the Munich Consulate of the People's Republic of China on the islands called Diaoyu by China. (b) Flight zone of Chinese military drones east of Taiwan, including the Sakishima Islands.

For an illustration of the Chinese ship movements by the Japanese government⁶², cf. Izumikawa Yuk at the University of Okinawa.⁶³

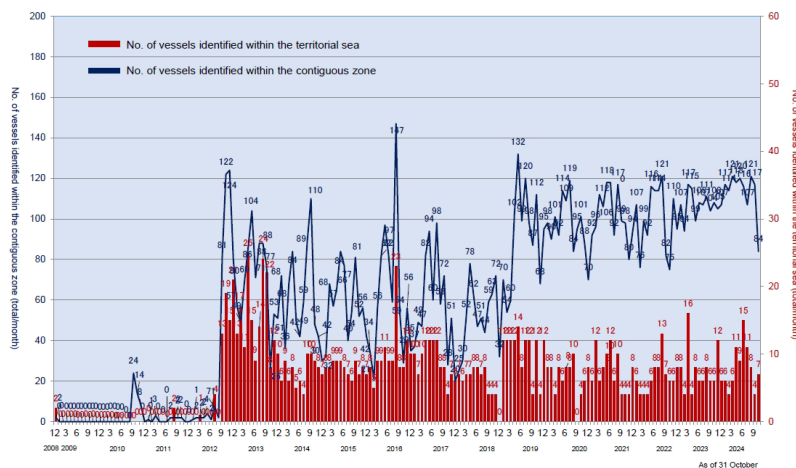


Fig. 24: Illustration of Chinese ship movements by the Japanese government.
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100647455.pdf>

(3) Now, however, China's soft power policy also extends to Okinawa itself. The South China Morning Post, Hong Kong's largest English-language daily newspaper, ran the headline on 17 September 2024:

⁶⁰ Among others, former US intelligence officer James E. Fanell assumed during a congressional hearing that, analogous to the twenty years between the suppression of the Tienanmen uprising and the appearance of the entire world political elite at the opening of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, a similar period of 20 years should have passed before the anniversary celebration in 2024. Cf. among others <https://www.nzz.ch/international/taiwan-gibt-es-in-zehn-jahren-die-freie-inselrepublik-noch-ld.1651017>.

⁶¹ Among others, former US intelligence officer James E. Fanell assumed during a congressional hearing that, analogous to the twenty years between the suppression of the Tienanmen uprising and the appearance of the entire world political elite at the opening of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, a similar period of 20 years should have passed before the anniversary celebration in 2024. Cf. among others <https://www.nzz.ch/international/taiwan-gibt-es-in-zehn-jahren-die-freie-inselrepublik-noch-ld.1651017>.

⁶² <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/100647455.pdf>

⁶³ <https://apjif.org/2024/10/izumikawa>

“Is Beijing about to ‘play the Ryūkyū card’ over Tokyo’s stand on Taiwan? University plans research centre on the ancient kingdom as academics emphasise its significance to ‘national security and reunification.’ Chinese academics are calling for new emphasis on Ryūkyū, linking the ancient kingdom that is now Japan’s southernmost prefecture of Okinawa with China’s national security. Observers say the push could be part of Beijing’s efforts to challenge Tokyo’s position on Taiwan.”

In fact, a Sino-Japanese agreement on Ryūkyū-Okinawa was negotiated from 1879 onwards, after the Japanese annexation met with fierce local resistance, and the Chinese mandate holder in Tokyo had successfully approached the three Western powers that had already signed treaties with the Kingdom of Ryūkyū: The United States, the Netherlands and France

The partition plans cannot be found on the English-language internet, and only marginally on the Japanese-language internet, as far as I can see.⁶⁴ There is no Ryūkyū-language Wikipedia (and there cannot be one for the time being due to the lack of standardisation), so a medium for a counter-narrative is obviously missing.

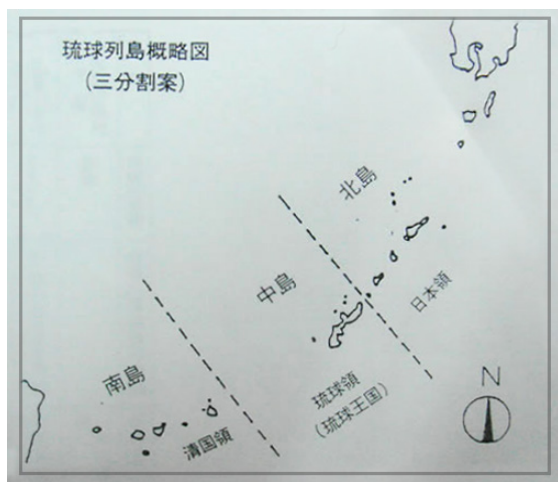


Fig. 25: Three-way division of the Ryūkyū Islands in 1880: (a) southern islands = Qing territory. (b) central islands = Ryūkyū domain (Ryūkyū kingdom). (c) northern islands = Japanese territory.

However, the plans can be found in detail in the Okinawa Prefectural Museum in showcase 6-1-1 ‘Negotiations between Japan and China concerning the Ryūkyū’ with the note: ‘The negotiations were concluded, but no signature was signed.’ The legend lists in detail the Chinese desire for a three-way division and the Japanese desire for a two-way division:



BLAU Die Qing-Seite fordert Ryūkyū-Dreiteilung
Japan -- Ryūkyū-Königreich -- China
ROT Japan fordert Vertragsrevision und Ryūkyū-Zweiteilung
Japan -- China

Aufgeführt werden

(Qing)

Taiwan
Yonaguni-Insel
Iriomote-Insel
Ishigaki-Insel
Miyakojima

(Ryūkyū-Königreich / Japan)

Kumejima
Okinawa-Insel

(Japan)

Yoron-Insel
Tokunoshima
Amami Oshima
Yakushima
Tanegashima
Kagoshima

Fig. 26: Negotiations between Japan and China concerning the Ryūkyū.
Okinawa Prefectural Museum,
Showcase 6-1-1

64 e.g. at <https://4travel.jp/travelogue/11674180> [Museum] and <https://the-liberty.com/article/112/> [Drawing, obviously in two languages] and https://www.cyzo.com/2022/06/post_313543_entry_3.html [Drawing] and especially in the online lecture <http://jugyo-jb.com/nihonsi/%E8%BE%91%E7%8F%B5%E4%BB%A3%E5%8F%B2%E3%82%92%E8%80%83%E3%81%88%E3%82%8B%E8%AC%9B%E5%B%A7%E5%8F%A4%E7%90%89%E7%90%83%E3%81%A8%E7%90%89%E7%90%83%E7%8F%8B%E5%9B%BD/%E3%80%8C%E7%90%89%E7%90%83%E5%87%A6%E5%88%86%E3%80%8D%E3%81%A8%E7%90%89%E7%90%83%E6%B2%96%E7%B8%84%E3%81%A%E8%BE%91%E4%BB%A3/>.

Chronology of the Ryūkyū attribution issue [from the board in the prefectural museum]:

- 1867: Establishment of the Empire of Japan (Meiji government).
- 1871: Abolition of feudalism and establishment of prefectures throughout Japan. Incident involving the shipwreck of the Ryūkyū ship (Miyako Island citizen boat) in Taiwan. Treaty of friendship concluded between Japan and China.
- 1872: Establishment of the Ryūkyū domain.
- 1874: Saigo Tsugumichi sends troops to Taiwan
- 1876: Master Kochi asks the Qing Dynasty for support
- 1878: The Qing Dynasty protests to Japan about the treatment of the Ryūkyū Kingdom
- 1879: The Ryūkyū domain was abolished and the Okinawa prefecture was established
- 1880: Negotiations on the Ryūkyū question begin with US General Grant acting as mediator. A plan to separate the Ryūkyū Islands and to supplement the treaty (renegotiation) was negotiated between Qing and Japan (the negotiations were completed but no signature was signed).
- 1894: Sino-Japanese War
- 1895: The Treaty of Shimonoseki is signed between Qing and Japan (Ryūkyū is considered Japanese territory).

Takashi Okamoto has recently (17 Aug 2024) traced this in detail:⁶⁵

American mediation finally became a reality when former American president, Ulysses S. Grant, made stops in both China and Japan during his grand tour of the world in the late 1870s. [...] Grant met Li on June 12, 1879. [...] Out of Grant's mediation came the idea of dividing the Ryūkyū islands between Japan and Qing China. This idea made its way to the negotiation table in the Beijing negotiations of 1880, with two proposals coming under debate: a 2-way split and a 3-way split. The 2-way split gave Okinawa island and everywhere north of that to Japan, and the Miyako and Yaeyama islands, and the area south of that, to the Qing. In this proposal, we find no taking of Ryūkyūan 'autonomy' into account which, again, was expressed through the terms *zizhu/jishu* and *ziwei yiguo/mizukara ikkoku wo nasu*. Meanwhile, the 3-way split, which emerged after the 2-way split was proposed, was a proposal which paid greater attention to the Qing perspective. Indeed, the 3-way split proposed that the Ryūkyū Kingdom was reinstated on Okinawa island, with the Amami islands and everything north of them placed under Japanese jurisdiction, and the Miyako and Yaeyama islands and everything south of that placed under Qing jurisdiction.

The key individual involved behind the scenes in devising these two ways of splitting up the Ryūkyū islands was a missionary called Divie Bethune McCartee, who had been in close contact with Grant throughout his stay in Japan. His 2-way split idea, while taking the Japanese position into account, nevertheless necessitated the Japanese to offer some concessions and to give up a part of the land it had annexed in 1879. Meanwhile, McCartee's 3-way split idea was devised in line with the Qing perspective and Qing logic in that it would allow for the Ryūkyū Kingdom to subsist. It was unsurprising that McCartee was able to design solutions for two settlements that addressed the viewpoints and positions of Japan and the Qing respectively. he had spent a considerable number of years in Japan, but, at the same time, he had served as a member of staff at the Qing legation in Tokyo.

The suggestion to split the Ryūkyū islands between Japan and the Qing was an idea which sought to extricate Ryūkyū from its early modern 'dual dependency' status and to effectively re-calibrate this status according to the logic of the modern sovereign state system. While the ideas pertaining to a division of Ryūkyū had themselves derived from the mind of an American missionary, the fact that they came under discussion at the Sino-Japanese negotiation table was significant for two reasons. For the remainder of the negotiations, Japan sought a compromise which took the 2-way split as a basis for settlement. however, the Qing was unwilling to settle unless the 3-way split, which would allow the Ryūkyūan court to subsist as it always had done, was taken as a basis for settlement. These differences in opinion and perspective were undoubtedly a product of Japan and Qing China's asymmetric understandings of what was entailed by the notion of 'dual dependency' which came to the fore after the term came to be openly used to refer to Ryūkyū's international status in the late nineteenth century.

The two key terms between which no agreement was possible in 1880 are (East Asian) ambiguity versus (Western) linearity. For China, it was indeed possible to recognise the Ryūkyū Kingdom as autonomous, but autonomy was granted by China and within the power system of the 'Central Empire.' For Japan, on the other hand, which had just become 'modern' and was oriented towards Western linear concepts, suzerainty and sovereignty were categorically mutually exclusive.

⁶⁵ Takashi Okamoto (17 Aug 2024): Rethinking the 'Dual Dependence' of the Ryūkyū Kingdom, *The International History Review*, DOI: 10.1080/07075332.2024.2392529. It would be helpful to critically supplement this with a reference to the bells of 1485 [see below Fig. 28], which address the Ryūkyū Kingdom's position between China and Japan.

Today, the Ryūkyū independence movement is pursuing a policy of ambiguity. After the Japanese central government reneged on its promise to reduce the burden on the islands caused by the US military, and instead promised the US a further expansion of the military occupation, the independence movement successfully achieved recognition under international law as a minority by the United Nations. In a landmark ruling in 2023, the Supreme Court forced Kyoto University to hand over mortal remains.⁶⁶ The minority's negotiator was economist Yasukatsu Matsushima of Ryūkyū University.⁶⁷ After still being sceptical about China around 2010, he appeared in October 2023 in Beijing at the *Fourth International Conference on Frontier Issues in Ryukyu and Okinawa Studies* – again⁶⁸ organised with great effort⁶⁹ and 60 scientists.⁷⁰ At the end of the conference, on 30 October, the scientists marched to the cemetery of the Kingdom of Tungzhou Ryukyu and then to the Memorial Hall for the Anti-Japanese War. There they read and discussed Mao Zedong's poem 'Sacrifice for the Tomb of the Yellow Emperor' from 5 April 1937, in particular lines 7 and 8:

[7] 琉台不守、 三韩为墟、	If the Ryukyu Kingdom falls, the three [Korean] Han Kingdoms will lie in ruins.
[8] 遼海燕冀 漢奸何多	遼 Liao: Liaoning Province, Northeast China. 海 Hai: Hebei Province. 燕 Yan: present-day Beijing. 冀 Yan: present-day Beijing traitors to the Chinese cause everywhere. ⁷¹

66 令和4年(ネ)第1261号 琉球民族遺骨返還等請求控訴事件, 令和5年9月22日 大阪高等裁判所第6民事部判決, https://www.courts.go.jp/app/hanrei_ip/detail4?id=92437. Case (Ne) No. 1261 of 2022: Appeal proceedings for the return of Ryukyuan ethnic remains, etc. 22 September 2023: Judgment of the Osaka High Court, 6th Civil Division.

67 <https://www.econ.ryukoku.ac.jp/en/teacher/matsushima.html>.

68 #1: Beijing at 2013 [not documented]. #2: Beijing 2016-05-15: . #3 [not documented]. #4 Beijing 2023, October 28-29, 2023 cf. Wuhan 2024, September 21-22. Historical Changes in Modern Okinawan Society..

69 For the layout, see the photo at <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202310/1300750.shtml>.

70 In their summary of the contributions to the Fourth International Conference on Frontier Issues in Ryukyu and Okinawa Studies, the Chinese side states: 纪要 | 第四届琉球・沖縄前沿学术国际研讨会纪要<https://user.guancha.cn/wap/content?id=1119009>, Shanghai 2023-11-06: 松島泰勝(龍谷大学)の《琉球民族の遺骨返還運動所明確の歴史文化の源流——摆脱日琉同祖論这一殖民地主義》提出日琉関係の非同祖論, 通过对墓志銘、头盖骨等の考古研究可以得知, 琉球文明の源流应该是中华文明, 日方拒绝归还骸骨, 无疑是日本帝国殖民主义的现实表现, 与中国和琉球之间的友好交往, 形成了明显的对照。Taikatsu Matsushima's (Ryukyu University) 'The Origin of History and Culture Clarified by the Movement for the Return of the Remains of the Ryukyu Nation - Getting Rid of the Japanese-Ryukyu Same-Ancestor Theory of Colonialism' proposes that the non-same-ancestor theory of the Japan-Ryukyu relationship is based on the fact that it can be learned through archaeological research on epitaphs, skulls, and so on, that the source of Ryukyu civilisation should be Chinese civilisation, and that the refusal of the Japanese to return the The refusal of the Japanese to return the skeletons is undoubtedly a manifestation of the reality of Japanese imperial colonialism, in marked contrast to the friendly relations between China and the Ryukyus.

71 Mao Zedong (5. April 1937): Sacrifice at the Yellow Emperor's Tomb. Four-character poem. Full Chinese text at <http://www.ccview.net/htm/xiandai/shi/mzd019.html>. – Our translation of line 7 with 'if...' is free, but corresponds to the ambiguity of traditional Chinese poetry (I thank Fu-sensei for pointing this out). Mao's poem was published on 5 April 1937, coinciding with the Qingming Festival, also known as Tomb-sweeping Day. Traditionally, this is a day when people honour and pay respect to their ancestors by visiting their graves, cleaning the tombstones and offering food, flowers and other symbolic items. – Mao's poem must be read in the historic context. On the one hand, of the imminent Second Sino-Japanese War. This began on 7 July 1937 with the Marco Polo Bridge incident near Beijing and lasted until 9 September 1945. On the other hand, in retrospect of the First Sino-Japanese War 1894-95, which ended with the loss of Formosa/Taiwan and implicitly with all claims of sovereignty of the Qing Dynasty on Ryukyu. Thirdly, the long-term effects of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904, in which (a) Korea was occupied by Japan in 1905 and annexed by Japan in 1910 until Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945, and (b) the previously Russian-occupied Manchurian homeland of the Tungusic Qing Dynasty formally reverted to China, but Japan built the South Manchurian Railway Company in 1906, which was the core of the later exploitation from 1931 to 1945.

The Chinese conference report concludes: ‘These two historical sites and their memorial buildings show that the Ryūkyū people and the Chinese people are culturally connected and share the same destiny.’⁷²

A small event, but what a flawless example of a soft power policy;⁷³ almost without cost, but with lasting effect! What prevents Japan from pursuing the issues of Ryūkyū with comparable attention and comparable intellectual and artistic intelligence? Is it wise of the Japanese government to leave the field to Mao Zedong and his poetry?

13. In summary: the Ryūkyū card from a cultural policy perspective

The Ryūkyū / Okinawa is a paradise. For naturalists, for minority researchers, for linguists. Unfortunately, however, it is also a paradise for geopoliticians on both sides of the Pacific, who are reviving the battles of the 19th century and combining modern soft power, including science, with traditional hard power.

The fundamental problem in the relationship between official Japan and the Ryūkyū autochthones is the lack of empathy of official Japan towards other, non-Japanese groups. The Japanese imperative of harmony, so impressive in its thoughtfulness between citizens, applies only internally. Insofar as the Ryūkyū natives insist on their ethnic, linguistic, cultural, feminine-spiritual, historical, geological and biological independence – as scientifically demonstrable – they are excluded from the imperative of harmony.

This is particularly evident in the annex of the National Museum in Tokyo, which is dedicated to the Asian neighbours and has no structure at all, but rather resembles a random collection of artefacts from different places. From a Japanese point of view, however, it does not lead into their own culture: it only leads into the Other.

Japan does engage critically with its own history; the exhibition ‘Modern Images of Ancient Clay Figures’ at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, which carefully and unflatteringly traces the appropriation of the Jomon clay figurines with their empty eyes by the Japanese imperial military, is noteworthy in 2024. So are the post-war efforts of many artists to overcome this interpretation.



Fig. 27: Entrance to the exhibition ‘Modern Images of Ancient Clay Figures’ at the Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo. Photo: Vogt 2024

72 代表们在抗日战争纪念馆的一张展板前，阅读并讨论了毛泽东祭黄帝陵“琉台不守、三韩为墟”诗句 [...] 两大历史遗址及其纪念建筑，都显现出了琉球人和中华民族文化相联，命运与共。“In front of a display board at the Museum of the War of Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, the delegates read and discussed Mao Zedong’s poem ‘If the Ryukyu Kingdom falls, / the three [Korean] Han Kingdoms will lie in ruins.’ when he visited the mausoleum of the Yellow Emperor. [...] The two historical sites and their commemorative buildings all show that the Ryukyans and the Chinese nation are culturally linked and share a common destiny.” <https://user.guancha.cn/wap/content?id=1119009>.

73 Cf. the analysis of Joseph Nye in Houguet, Adrien (2023): *La diplomatie culturelle allemande et française et fédération de Russie: entre soft power et accommodation*. Chemnitz.

But empathy for the Ainu and the Ryūkyūans, which would recognise their distinctiveness, is basically non-existent in official Japan. Such empathy, however, could help present-day Japan to play the Ryūkyū card from a cultural policy perspective in response to Xi Jinping's imperialism.

Let us recall what Japan signed in relation to China in 1972: 'The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself.' What if official Japan were to decide to take a similar step in relation to the Ryūkyū autochthons?

„The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the [Ryūkyū] people through [annihilation of local structures, rites, languages, trades, and important parts of the population], and deeply reproaches itself.“

「日本側は、日本が過去に「地域の構造、儀礼、言語、交易、住民の重要な部分を消滅させること」を通して[琉球の]人々に深刻な損害を与えた責任を痛感し、深く自責の念に駆られている」

Is the hope of the Ryūkyūans for such a purely symbolic declaration, which would not incur any costs, unworldly? To understand the effect of such a step, we have to go back to the imperial Chinese understanding of suzerainty. The infinite generosity of the Son of Heaven, unsurpassable by any mere mortal, required vassal tribute to be met with gifts of a far greater magnitude, beyond the grasp of any mercenary soul. In 1945, post-war Germany was faced with the same difficulty as Japan had been. West Germany responded to the difficulty of overcoming the call of nefariousness with a cultural policy strategy based on the Bible verse 'For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.' (Matthew 23:12). In today's international context, a gesture of apology by official Japan towards Ryūkyū would be followed very closely and perceived as a sign of strength. (It should be noted that this would also apply to Manchuria, to the merciless plundering of which Japan owed a third of its national budget, to Korea in any case, and to Formosa/Taiwan, which was lavishly endowed with infrastructure by Japan, but not unselfishly. There is a lack of a Japanese conclusion to the 20th century in the belief of strength everywhere).

In terms of economic policy, the result of the administration of Okinawa by the Japanese central government in the five decades from 1972 to 2024 is a complete disaster. In 2023, Okinawa ranked 47th out of 47 prefectures in terms of GDP per capita (JPY 4.531 million, approx. EUR 27,186). In 2020, Okinawa contributed only 0.76% to Japan's GDP (JPY 4,051 billion, approx. EUR 24.7 billion). The dependence of Okinawa's economy leads to high unemployment rates in the low season. An interesting bright spot is the development of technical patents. In 1990, West German industry had taken over the territory of the former GDR and degraded it to a land of workbenches that extraterritorialised corporate profits; a similar thing happened in 1972 when the prefecture of Okinawa was taken over by the Tokyo and Osaka corporations, where corporate profits still largely flow, as the GDP statistics vigorously show. In terms of economic policy, the resentment of the citizens of Ryūkyū is understandable.

The current situation in Okinawa is roughly equivalent to the situation in South Tyrol (Alto Adige) in Italy before autonomy was granted; it was one of the poorest areas. Autonomy unleashed untapped potential and catapulted South Tyrol to become one of the best-managed regions in Italy in just a few decades.

The Japanese central government should therefore consider granting Okinawa partial autonomy in economic and similar matters, which would result in a similar unleashing of resilient forces.

However, such an unleashing requires a specific culture of its own. Only such a culture is strong enough to counter China's soft power, which is trying to open *Ryūkyū's minds and doors*. Sakishima means 'islands on the tip'; this is the Tokyo perspective on the islands of Yonaguni, Iriomote, Ishigaki, Miyakojima. It is hard to imagine a more exonymous (from outside) place name. With its evacuation plans for May 2024, the Japanese Ministry of Defence has already begun to implement in political practice the division

plans for the handover of ‘Sakishima’ to China, now to the People’s Republic, which were negotiated in 1880 but not signed between Qing and Japan and which in turn go back to an American missionary. Such a division would destroy the unity of the Ryūkyū archipelago, which is scientifically evident in all its dimensions – geological, biological, linguistic, and in terms of its history of religion, rites and customs. Before the necessity of a division arises, the Japanese Ministry of Defence would be well advised to launch a soft power initiative in favour of the Ryukyuan population and to gain sympathy.

A conceivable medium for such an initiative is language. Targeted rewards for language skills are part of Japanese history. During the period of occupation of Korea, Japanese officials were reluctant to learn the Korean language until the government started paying them bonuses for a language certificate.⁷⁴

A tax exemption for residents (including new residents) of 25% for a command of Shimakutuba in the respective island variety upon presentation of a certificate at the B1 level and 50% for the C1 level would be a complete novelty in the Japanese approach to the island kingdom since 1609, i.e. for a good four hundred years of alignment with the political and economic interests first of Kyushu and then of Tokyo. An ‘omoiyari yosan / sympathy budget,’ this time not to finance the US occupation, but this time in favour of its own indigenous population, would be a decisive step towards culturally opening Ryūkyū’s minds and doors to the security interests of Japan and the wider world.

The suggested date for the tax change would be 1 April 2027, the beginning of the 2027 fiscal year. In view of the longevity phenomenon in the Ryūkyū archipelago, as described in more detail below, the generation of the old and very old, who have the appropriate language skills, could be included as assistant teachers. Generous remuneration for their language lessons would at least partially alleviate the particularly pressing pension problems and need for additional income faced by Ryūkyū pensioners. The (then politically unquestioned) Okinawa prefecture could become a model region for this form of minority language support, far beyond Japan.

With such a step, the Japanese Ministry of Defence could in its own way tie in with the bronze bell that the King of Ryūkyū had cast in 1458 [sic] as a symbol of his then newly won dual sovereignty: ‘China as close as the spokes to the wheel’ and ‘Japan as close as the lips to the teeth.’ Today, this is almost exactly the task of Japan itself: To be close to China and the United States and independent at the same time.

In order to successfully tackle this task, the first step is to eliminate the division among Japan’s citizens into those who are good and those who are not so good, and to help the people of Ryūkyū to achieve their historical rights.



Fig. 28: Bronze bell with inscription from 1458; symbol of the Ryukyu Kingdom’s function as mediator between China (as close as the spokes to the wheel) and Japan (as close as the lips to the teeth). Naha Prefectural Museum. Photo: Vogt 2024-11-01.

74 I would like to thank Kimura-sensei for the reference.

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Cultural Policy against the Grain 流れに逆らう文化政策

liber amicorum for Matthias Theodor Vogt in honour of
his 65th birthday, edited by his colleagues and students

Dieter Bingen, Köln; Stefan Garsztecki, Chemnitz; Goro Christoph Kimura, Tokyo; Luigi Ferrara, Neapel; Peter Lah, Rom; Beat Siebenhaar, Leipzig, in Verbindung mit Günter Beelitz, Düsseldorf; Agnieszka Bormann, Görlitz; Andreas Bracher, Wien; Jelena Budanceva, Riga; Adam Chmielewski, Breslau; Maria Davydchyk, Berlin; Jürgen Erfurt, Berlin; Princesse Esperance Fezeu, Bafoussam; Pierpaolo Forte, Benevent; Annemarie Franke, Görlitz; Erik Fritzsche, Dresden; Kazuo Fujino, Kobe; Miloš Havelka, Prag; Adrien Houguet, Taschkent; Zoltán Huszár, Pécs; Sebastian Lalla, Ulaanbaatar; Stefan Liebing, Hamburg; Luca Lombardi, Rom; Katarina Markovic, Boston; Jean Bertrand Miguoué, Yaoundé; Christoph Pan, Bozen; Oliver Reisner, Tiflis; Róza Zuzanna Różańska, Krakau; Mihály Sári, Pécs; Una Sedleniece, Riga; David Simo, Yaoundé; Anton Sterbling, Fürth; Paul Videsott, Bozen; Susanne Vill, Wien; Eduard Werner, Leipzig; Ivan Zadori, Pécs; Gabriele Zaidyte, Vilnius; Kamil Zágóršek, Liberec; Reiner Zimmermann, Dresden

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Matthias Theodor Vogt, Görlitz
Photos von Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz

Documentation of the conference – 30 Years of IKS on 24 May 2024

Conference *Against the Grain – Cultural policy in history and in present-day Saxony*

30 years of the Saxon Cultural Area Act and its accompaniment in research and teaching by the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony

24 May 2024, 2 – 7 p.m.

Large lecture halls G I 1.01 and 0.01

Zittau/Görlitz University, Brückenstr. 1, D-02826 Görlitz

<https://kultur.org/veranstaltungen/tagung-24-mai-2024/>

Organisers:

Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony, Upper Lusatia-Lower Silesia Cultural Area and Zittau/Görlitz University in cooperation with Chemnitz University of Technology and the Institute for Territorial Development of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship

Download Documentation (Photos: Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz)

https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Kulturpolitik24Mai2024Goerlitz_PhotosZgraja_2024-06-01k.pdf

Presse

Andreas Hermann: Gepfeffelter Gruß aus Görlitz

(Spicy greetings from Görlitz)

Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten. Dresden, 31. Mai 2024. S.11.

Photo: Andreas Hermann, faktenreich Dresden

<https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Hermann-Dresdner-Neueste-Nachrichten-31.05.2024->

[Seite-11.pdf](https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Hermann-Dresdner-Neueste-Nachrichten-31.05.2024-)



Peter Chemnitz: Wissenschaftler verabschieden Professor Vogt

(Scientists bid farewell to Professor Vogt)

Görlitzer Nachrichten Sächsische Zeitung, 29.Mai 2024, S. 16

https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/SZ-Goerlitz-29Mai2024_Wissenschaftler-verabschieden_Professor-Vogt.pdf

(1) Invitation

by Dr. Stephan Meyer, Landrat des Landkreises Görlitz (shire county president) and Chairman of the Cultural Convention for the Upper Lusatia-Lower Silesia Cultural Area

Thirty years ago – on 1 August 1994 – the Saxon Cultural Area Act came into force.

In the same month, the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony was founded to support the Cultural Area Act in research and teaching. In order to attract the experts needed for cultural policy, the institute and the Zittau/Görlitz University shortly afterwards established the Görlitz degree programme ‘Culture and Management,’ which now has around 500 graduates who are successfully working all over the world.

We would like to celebrate this with you and Professor Matthias Theodor Vogt, the ‘father’ of the Act, on Friday, 24 May 2024, in Görlitz. After 27 years, he is retiring from his university position with a keynote speech on the future of cultural areas in Saxony. In cooperation with the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony and the Zittau/Görlitz University, we invite you to a symposium with keynote speeches from academia and practice, as well as a panel discussion.

We don’t just want to celebrate and engage in navel-gazing within Saxony, but also to receive external input on the history and present of cultural policy in order to reflect together on the next thirty years of cultural spaces in Saxony. We have invited speakers from the Council of Europe, Tokyo, Riga, Naples, Krakow, Marburg and, of course, Görlitz, who will present core elements of state, municipal and independent cultural policy ‘against the grain’ in keynote speeches and short presentations. Afterwards, we will discuss with the chair of the Culture Committee in the Saxon State Parliament, members of the Culture Senate and Culture Convention, and representatives of the art scene.

(2) Welcome



Rector of Zittau/Görlitz University, Alexander Kratzsch
https://youtu.be/6Imh0TNbyIM?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_je3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



(3) Introduction

Landrat Stephan Meyer, Görlitz: *Outline of current problems and expectations of municipal cultural policy in Saxony by the Chairman of the Cultural Convention of the Upper Lusatia-Lower Silesia Cultural Area,*
https://youtu.be/cjROQsTqrCY?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_je3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0

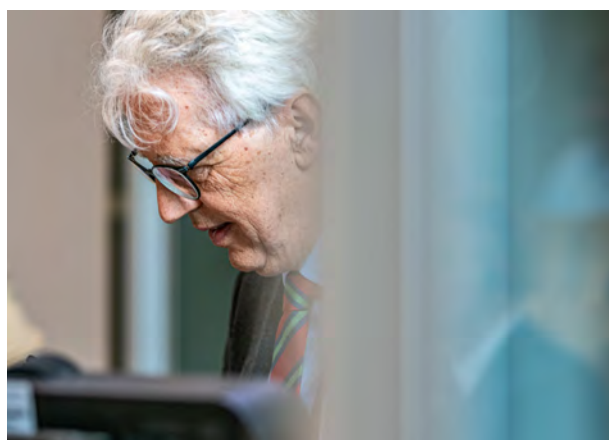
(4) Impulses: External suggestions for Saxony's cultural policy

Una Sedleniece, former State Secretary, Riga: *Memories of her time as a student in Görlitz from 1997 to 2001 in the first cohort of the UNESCO degree programme 'Culture and Management' in Görlitz at the Zittau/Görlitz University and the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony*
https://youtu.be/jKB-0Govtac?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Kimura Goro Christoph (Sophia-University, Tokyo): *Japan learns from Saxony*
https://youtube/3gVq1Btd5sc?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0

Gregor Vogt-Spira
 (Philipps University of Marburg):
Emperor Augustus and the invention of 'cultural policy'
https://youtube/00iVWcYxYT?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Róża Zuzanna Różańska (Jagiellonian University Krakow): *Royal cultural policy of the Baroque era*
https://youtu.be/o4rVJFW1Yp4?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Stefan Garsztecki (Chemnitz):

Province takes place in the mind

https://youtu.be/_XavYiqjEi0?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Beate Sibylle Pfeil
(Council of Europe expert):

Minorities in three classes.

Current language policy in Ukraine

https://youtu.be/ZPjNQLPoiPc?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Luigi Ferrara (University of Federico II Naples): The Saxon Cultural Areas Act as a model for Italian legislation?

https://youtu.be/yKympfBwEGo?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0

(5) Coffee break in the auditorium





(6) Keynote speech

Matthias Theodor Vogt (IKS and HSZG):
On the future of cultural areas in Saxony
https://youtu.be/M5HIZcKotuc?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



(7) Discussion: 30 years of cultural areas in Saxony



Moderator: Cultural Secretary Annemarie Franke, Cultural Area Oberlausitz-Niederschlesien
 Theresa Jacobs (Leipzig): Sorbian Institute Bautzen and Leipzig Dance Theatre
 Franz Sodann MdL: Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Science, Higher Education, Media, Culture and Tourism in the Saxon State Parliament
 Thomas Zenker (Zittau): Lord Mayor and member of the convention
 Kirstin Zinke (Dresden): Senator for Culture and Managing Director of the Saxony State Association for Socio-Culture
https://youtu.be/Zev0Hpg3fYk?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0





(8) Closing remarks

Benedikt Hummel, Mayor for Culture of the City of Görlitz
as representative of the graduates of 'Culture and Management'
https://youtu.be/t7EuD-oQ_a4?list=PLwU1_FuHyok3HB_jc3E7rV8vtbJhOrrW0



Many thanks to all the hard-working helpers who made this conference possible:

Dr. Annemarie Franke and her team from the Upper Lusatia-Lower Silesia Cultural Area: Sabine Hohlfeld, Manuela Mieth, Maria Förster, Liane Seiffert, Sabine Zimmermann-Törne, Anna Caban
Dipl.-Ing.(FH) Andreas Sommer, IT administrator at the Faculty of Management and Cultural Studies,
Remigiusz Socha, Maximilian Helm, computer science students, Zittau/Görlitz University

Clara Linnemayr [remote coordination from the USA], Zoe Schulmayer, Victoria Hentschel, Antonia Weber (students of „Culture and Management“)

Joanna Bär and Alexandra Grochowski (translators)

Johanna Metzner, student of culture and management, and her family from the ‘Bierblume Görlitz’
<https://www.bierblume-goerlitz.de/>

Financing

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INSTITUT FÜR
KULTURELLE INFRASTRUKTUR
SACHSEN

*30 Jahre
1994 – 2024*



Hochschule
Zittau/Görlitz



Freistaat
SACHSEN

Matthias Theodor Vogt, Görlitz
Photos von Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz

Documentation of the art night celebrating 30 years of IKS and the premiere of the film 'Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures' at Benigna, Görlitz

<https://kultur.org/institut/30-years-iks/>



The Art Night took place at the 'Benigna' on Görlitz's Untermarkt, one of the city's most historically significant buildings. It is named after Benigna Horschel. On Pentecost Sunday 1464, she was impregnated by the mayor's son Georg Emmerich and then callously abandoned. The conflict between the Emmerich and Horschel families was to become a turning point in the city's history, far more exciting than the teenage drama Romeo and Juliet [https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Hoch_Benigna_Spannender-als-Romeo-und-Julia_in_Vogt-et-al-Benigna-2024-04-25.pdf].



In the fine tradition of debate among Görlitz students of 'Culture and Management' [https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Vogt_3Gruende-fuer-Goerlitz-als-Studiengangsort_Benigna-2024-04-25.pdf] with complex issues in the city and region (and often far beyond), the institute received an enquiry from Robert Lehleiter and Christian Weise. They wanted a concept for the use of the 'Benigna'. Supervised by Matthias Theodor Vogt and Maik Hosang, 12 female students and 1 male student explored this issue in a research seminar, in collaboration with council archivist Siegfried Hoche and a Bonn theatre group, supervised by René Harder.



The theory [download: https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Hoch_Benigna_Spannender-als-Romeo-und-Julia_in_Vogt-et-al-Benigna-2024-04-25.pdf] was put to the test at the art night on 24 May 2024.

Art Night

Photo documentation

[https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/IKS30y-Benigna24Mai2024_PhotosZgraja-k.pdf] with photos by Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz mail@andi.film.



Maestro Luca Lombardi and Miriam Meghnagi from Rome performed a work to mark the institute's 30th anniversary (world premiere and first joint performance of the couple).



Former Prime Minister Georg Milbradt from Dresden gave the laudatory speech.



Maria Davydchyk performed a Belarusian folk song.



Steffi Bärman from Zittau recited in the Upper Lusatian dialect.



Elisabeth Domsgen from Görlitz recited a ballad by Bürger.



Honorary Consul Stefan Liebing from Hamburg commended the research and institute projects on Africa.



Princess Esperance from Bafoussam sang a Cameroonian song.



Joseline Amutuhair performed a Ugandan dance, accompanied on the drums by Tomas Ondrusek from Waldheim.



Hans-Peter Struppe from Görlitz and Cornelia Wosnitza from Dresden sang cheeky modern songs.



The art night ended with a song by 21 former UNESCO students of 'Culture and Management' (class of 1997), who offered their congratulations in Latvian, Polish, Sorbian, Czech and German.

Museum: Thirty Years of IKS

Some of the 30 years of work of the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony is documented at <https://kultur.org/>. To mark the institute's anniversary, the archives were opened and an exhibition was put together, supported by our student intern Jakob Bormann as curator.



Film Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures

Premiere 24 May 2024, Benigna Görlitz

on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony

Concept: Matthias Theodor Vogt, Görlitz

Camera and editing: Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz mail@andi.film

The film can be downloaded free of charge as Creative Commons ShareAlike CC BY-SA (1.0 2.0 2.5 3.0 4.0) and installed on your own website.

‘Without immigration, Görlitz is lost,’ said the then mayor Siegfried Deinege during research for the study ‘Arriving in the German world’ [<https://kultur.org/forschungen/merr/>]. However, immigration is a process in which preconceived assumptions – positive or negative stereotypes – play a decisive role in choosing a destination.

When Cameroonian mayor Roger Tafam promoted Görlitz in June 2023, he found that the city was so heavily disparaged as xenophobic on English-language social media that the parents of the young people he wanted to send to Görlitz for training vetoed the idea and none of them wanted to come.

The objective data tells a completely different story. No city in Saxony has a higher proportion of foreigners than Görlitz, not even Leipzig, and certainly not the state capital Dresden. Data from the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the criminal investigation departments indicate peaceful coexistence (see Vogt 2023). If Görlitz entrepreneurs want to attract excellent workers in times of skilled labour shortages, they urgently need to counter the media's denigration with facts. The inglorious first-place finish of the Görlitz district in the European elections on 9 June 2024 has opened the door to further suspicions.

Roger Tafam suggested presenting parents with a film about the real Görlitz in English in YouTube format in order to respond to the allegations of ‘manifest xenophobia’ circulating on the internet. With the film **‘Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures’** and in cooperation with the Municipal Hospital, the Maltese Hospital, the Zittau/Görlitz University and many civil society actors, the Institute implemented this idea together with Andi Zgraja, Görlitz (camera and editing).

The film is short and asks only one question: **What is so special about Görlitz?** The data is impressive and stimulates discussion.

To mark the institute's anniversary, we are making the film available to all Görlitz-based companies in two audio tracks: (a) with Leoš Janáček's 2nd String Quartet ‘Intimate Letters’ and (b) a brass recording. **Which music do you prefer? And which one do you think your contacts will like best?**

Film “Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures”**Musik: Leoš Janáček (1854-1928): String**

[\[https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Goerlitz-Rhythms.IKS-30y.Janacek.2024-05-24_HD_neu_2.mp4\]](https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Goerlitz-Rhythms.IKS-30y.Janacek.2024-05-24_HD_neu_2.mp4)

Film “Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures” Musik: Leoš Janáček (1854-1928): String Quartet No. 2, „Intimate Letters“, IV. Allegro – Andante – Adagio. With kind permission of Erica Brenner and Jessica Sherwood [6 December 2023) Alexi Kenney, violin 1 (Chamber Fest Cleveland Young Artist), David Bowlin, violin 2, Dimitri Murrath, viola, Julie Albers, cello Performed on June 24, 2016 Mixon Hall, Cleveland Institute of Music Cleveland, Ohio Chamber Fest Season 5 <http://chamberfestcleveland.com> Audio: Ian Dobie – Dobie Digital Productions, Editing: Erica Brenner <http://ericabrennerproductions.com>

Film “Görlitz Rhythms – A Dance of Cultures”**Musik: O Chanucah (Instrumental).****YouTube Audio-Bibliothek**

[\[https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Goerlitz-Rhythms.IKS-30y.Brass_2024-05-24_HD_neu_1.mp4?_=1\]](https://kultur.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Goerlitz-Rhythms.IKS-30y.Brass_2024-05-24_HD_neu_1.mp4?_=1)

Görlitz Rhythms: A Dance of Cultures

Uraufführung 24. Mai 2024, Benigna Görlitz
aus Anlaß der Dreißigjahrfeier des
Instituts für kulturelle Infrastruktur Sachsen

Konzeption: Matthias Theodor Vogt, Görlitz
Film: Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz

Görlitz Rhythms: A Dance of Cultures

Uraufführung 24. Mai 2024, Benigna Görlitz
aus Anlaß der Dreißigjahrfeier des
Instituts für kulturelle Infrastruktur Sachsen

Konzeption: Matthias Theodor Vogt, Görlitz
Film: Andreas Zgraja, Görlitz

Wissenschaftliche Vorarbeiten unter anderem

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2002年に東京の単一橋大学を卒業し、博士論文「少数言語の保存と再生における人間の介入に関する展望」で学位を取得しました。2004年から東京のソフィア大学に勤務し、2007年から准教授、2012年から教授を務め、現在は外国語学部の学部長です。北海道大学(札幌)のスラヴ・ユーラシア研究センターで客員教授、ソルビアン研究所(バウツェン)、ヨーロッパ大学ヴィアドリーナ、ライプツィヒ大学で客員研究員として勤務。彼は、ポンテス・ゴリツィー・ズゴジェレツ・ゾルジェレツ・カレッジウムの研究員でした。2022年から日本スラヴ語文学研究会の理事兼事務局長を務めている。

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To listen, to reflect, to act Cultural Policy against the Grain

What are the premises of today's cultural policy? What insights can the past, present and theory offer for a contemporary cultural policy? How can art counteract agoraphobia, digital isolation and populist temptations? How can local authorities give their citizens ample space to develop civil society solidarity 'for the good of the city. For only when the city is well will you be well.' (It should be noted that Jeremiah 29:7 addresses immigrants who are to become citizens in foreign Babylon. Does our cultural policy also achieve this?) Are the arts not precisely the place where we can first listen to the other before we think together and then act together?

It is the historical achievement of Matthias Theodor Vogt, in the Free State of Saxony, which was re-established in 1990, to not only conceive the Saxon Cultural Area Act between 1991 and 1995 in a unique process of analysis and dialogue with the state, municipal and civil society levels, but also to have it enshrined in law and, last but not least, to have it implemented with little friction. It was therefore only natural that, on the thirtieth anniversary of the law's entry into force, the cultural areas of Saxony invited Matthias Theodor Vogt's colleagues and students to a conference entitled 'Kulturpolitik gegen den Strich' (Cultural Policy Against the Grain). We are hereby presenting the results of this conference in a commemorative publication to mark his 65th birthday.

What can art do better and differently than the digital world? What political, structural, economic, and, last but not least, intellectual conditions are necessary for art to develop its own life for the benefit of humanity? The cover image shows Haus Klingewalde, Görlitz, home of the Institute for Cultural Infrastructure Saxony since 1998. The watercolour by Lynne Beal, Cologne, relates to a conversation with Matthias Theodor Vogt about the vanishing point in Alberti: *De pictura* | *De pictura* (1435 – 1436). According to Corinna Laude, in the *centricus punctus* of Alberti's intromission theory, 'the orthogonal vanishing lines, the depth lines of the representation, converge "quasi persino in infinito" (as it were out into infinity), it lies in infinity – and thus, according to contemporary understanding, in God'. Which "vanishing points" does today's post-secular society use?

How can political science in Chemnitz interact in a multidisciplinary, cross-continental manner, always with reference to human beings themselves, with cultural studies in Tokyo and linguistics in Leipzig, with legal studies in Naples and social sciences in Rome? This volume shows that cultural policy studies require a fact-based holistic approach and that this may be achieved by working together.

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