

## Power Relations, Situated Practices, and the Politics of the Commons

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# **POWER RELATIONS, SITUATED PRACTICES, AND THE POLITICS OF THE COMMONS**

**Compiled and edited by Akio ONJO**

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# Preface

**ONJO Akio**

The papers in this volume were written by members of the Japanese Research Group for the History of Geographical Thought, subsidized by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (Grant Number 26284132, Project Leader Professor Akio Onjo, Kyushu University, in fiscal years 2014 - 2016).

The common subject of our research group was “Geographical research of the commons—its intellectual history, theory, and social practice—”. This group succeeded a group led by Professor Toshiyuki Shimazu, Wakayama University. His group edited and published its results under the title of *Languages, Materiality, and the Construction of Geographical Modernities* in 2014. This research group has a long history—since 1978—and has published several reports that discussed not only the history and epistemology of geographical thought but also the social, political, and cultural theory of spatiality, place, and landscape from the radical or critical point of view.

The present volume discusses the power relations and practices of the commons or “communing” and public space. The problems of the commons have become more complicated recently, because the commons includes various cultural and social assets such as collective memories and images of local places and networks of social trust as well as natural resources and indigenous knowledges. Various local movements struggle together with governments and big business against the appropriation of material and immaterial commons. And the relationship between the social practice of communing and the control of public space is also hotly debated. The social practice of communing can be an art of creating new social relations between heterogeneous groups to resist the control of public space and change the meaning of the public.

We would like to thank the people who contributed to this volume and all those who participated in the study meetings for their many useful comments and suggestions. We hope this collection of papers contributes to the discussions on the commons and public space in geography and other human and social studies.



# Who stopped the US base construction?

## Recent anti-base movements in Okinawa and resistance from “bare life”

NAKASHIMA Koji\*

### Introduction

In July 2016, the Japanese central government sued Takeshi Onaga, governor of Okinawa Prefecture, for revoking a reclamation project his predecessor had endorsed in 2013 with regard to the relocation<sup>1)</sup> of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma from Ginowan City to the Henoko coastal area of Nago City. It was an unprecedented for the Japanese government to sue Okinawa’s prefectural government in spite of repeated manifestations of the Okinawan people’s opposition to US bases over a number of elections, including a gubernatorial election in 2014 that Onaga won. This evidences an acute confrontation between the sovereign power of the state and democracy in marginalized areas in Japan.

Since the publication of the final report of the Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in 1996, the relocation of the substitute airport for Futenma Air Station has been one of the hottest issues in US-base-related politics in Japan. Since then, Henoko has become a targeted area for the relocation (Figure 1) and a battlefield for the fierce conflict between the opposition movement and the Japanese government.

This paper focuses on the opposition movement against the construction of a new US base in the Henoko coastal area in relation to the relocation of the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, and examines both the theoretical and practical significances of the movement in considering the relationship between the sovereign power of the state and democracy in contemporary Japan. It relies on the theoretical frameworks of “space of exception” and “bare life” proposed by Giorgio Agamben.

Since the 9.11 attacks in 2001, the United

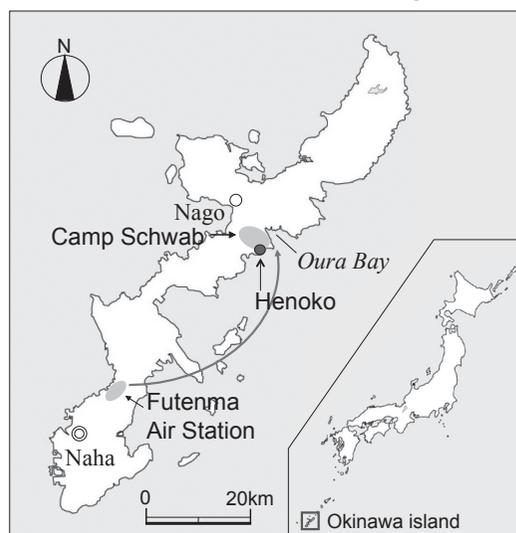


Figure 1. “Relocation” plan for the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma (Illustrated by author)

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States has shifted the focus of its military policy from “defense” to “security.” For example, the US Department of Homeland Security was established in 2002. It aims to protect US territory, mainly in the civilian sphere. As Hardt and Negri (2004: 20) note, “security is a form of biopower in the sense that it is charged with the task of producing and transforming social life at its most general and global level.” Minca (2006), referring to an incident where an innocent Brazilian man was misidentified as a terrorist and shot at Stockwell tube station by police in 2005, remarks on the progressive normalization of a series of geographies of exception within Western democracies and its relation to the new biopolitical nomos. The rising imperative of national security has promoted the militarization of our living world and paradoxically threatened peoples’ security. Under the regime of overall securitization of our living world, people’s lives are exposed to unreserved violence. As Agamben (1998) notes, the state of exception has transgressed its spatiotemporal boundaries and is now starting to coincide with the normal order.

Agamben’s (1998, 2002, 2005) series of works on “*homo sacer*” has had much influence on broad areas of the humanities and social sciences. In particular, in the field of human geography, several critical geographers have focused on “the camp” as a space of exception and attempted to theorize a spatialization of Agamben’s concept of the “state of exception” (Minca 2005, 2006, 2007, 2015a; Gregory 2006; Ek 2006; Kitagawa 2007). For example, Minca (2015a), relying on the works of Agamben, Gilroy, and Netz, attempted to develop “geographies of the camp” as constitutive hubs of modern geopolitical economies. Gregory (2006), critically developing Agamben’s theory on the state of exception, elucidates transnational spatialities of the US Naval Station at Guantánamo Bay constructed through geopolitical configuration of colonial past and present.

However, human geographers’ rising interest in camps is attended by several theoretical difficulties. First, an understanding of the “space of exception” needs not be limited to a territorial perspective marked by a definite boundary, as suggested by a camp surrounded by a fence. As Agamben (1998) defines, the state of exception is not a spatiotemporal suspension but a complex *topological* figure in which not only the exception and the rule, but also the state of nature and law, outside and inside, pass through one another. Gregory (2006: 407), in considering the space of exception, prudently criticizes the container model of space, and treats space as a performance, a doing, in which the passages between inside and outside and law and violence are affected. Drawing on Foucauldian understanding of biopower, Martin (2015) also problematizes the utilization of legal prisms and clear-cut distinctions for the understanding of the production of bare life and spaces of exception. Second, as Katz (2015) notes, “geographies of the camp” (Minca 2015a) seem to focus only on a thanatopolitics of the camp that dehumanizes and de-subjectivates the prisoners and detainees. She instead suggests the possibility of a camp as a site of *resistance* where new political subjectivities emerge and alternative global geopolitics sprout<sup>2</sup>). Third, “geographies of the camp” are inclined to criticize the complicity of law and violence exercised by sovereign powers, and thereby focus on mainly legal or juridical forms of resistance. Although Gregory (2006), criticizing Agamben (1998), emphasizes the necessity of a careful consideration of the possibilities of resistance, he does no more than suggest political struggle by politicians, civil servants, and lawyers within national and international juridical contexts. Even if, as Gregory (2006: 420) suggests, the law itself becomes the site of political

struggle in its formulation, interpretation, and application, it does not provide any theoretical or practical moment for people of *homo sacer* to break through the space of exception by themselves<sup>3</sup>).

On the basis of these arguments, this paper takes up the case of the opposition movement against the construction of a new US base in Okinawa and raises two points of discussion. First, it attempts to understand Okinawa as a “space of exception,” based on Agamben (1997), in which people suffer from threats of military violence. Though Martin (2015) and Lee et al. (2014) apply Agamben’s concept of the “space of exception” on the city scale (Beirut in Lebanon and Gwangju in South Korea) beyond the scale of a camp, in Okinawa the state of exception can appear anywhere at any time in the form of accidents and incidents caused by US troops, to whom Japanese law cannot apply under the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). Second, this paper explores the possibility of resistance against the regime of national and international security from within the space of exception by focusing on material practices such as “sit-ins” by opposition movements. Alternative politics intended to dominate the biopolitics of sovereign power arise from the site of “bare life” over which sovereign power exercises its crude violence and through which the secure existence of civil society is made possible. In that sense, this attempt at resistance demands the emergence of new subjects who have nothing but their own bodies.

## **I. Okinawa as a space of exception**

### **1. A brief history of Okinawa’s “exception”**

Okinawa is characterized by its unique history and culture and marginalized geopolitical position in Japan. After the Ryukyu Kingdom (1429–1879) was annexed to the Japanese Empire from 1872 to 1879, Okinawa Prefecture was established as a local public entity of Japan. After Japan’s defeat in 1945, Okinawa was occupied by US troops, and then the United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands became the government in Okinawa from 1950 to 1972. While Japan recovered its sovereignty with the effectuation of the Treaty of San Francisco in 1952, Okinawa was left as a trust territory under the United States. After 27 years of American rule, Okinawa reverted to Japan in 1972.

Even after the return of Okinawa to Japan, however, most of the US bases on its islands remained under the Japan-US Security Treaty. According to *Defense of Japan 2016* (Ministry of Defense 2016: 257), 74% of the US bases for exclusive use in Japan are located in Okinawa, while Okinawa occupies only 0.6% of the national land of Japan. It can be said that this is quite an uneven distribution with regard to the area of US bases in Japan.

As noted in the Introduction, the relocation of Futenma Air Station was decided by SACO in 1996. There was an important background to this political decision. On September 4 1995, three American soldiers from Camp Hansen (Kin Town, Okinawa) kidnapped a 12-year-old Japanese girl and raped her. Although the perpetrators of this crime were clear, they were not handed over to Japanese police and remained on the base until Japanese officials charged them with the crime. This incident and subsequent procedures outraged the people of Okinawa and led to an intensification of a fierce anti-base movement. As this crime was not committed while on

official duty, the perpetrators were finally prosecuted by a Japanese court. However, in the case of crimes committed by US soldiers acting on official duty, Japan has no jurisdiction. Thus, ordinary procedures from criminal cases provided by Japanese criminal law are not applied to crimes committed by US soldiers or civilian contractors, according to the provisions of the Japan-US SOFA.

Another example of “exception” in Okinawa is an incident where a US Marine Corps transport helicopter crashed into Okinawa International University in Ginowan City on August 13 2004. Due to inadequate maintenance, the helicopter crashed into a university building, destroying a part of it and burning the surrounding area. Although this accident took no human toll, including the crew, US troops’ response clearly shows the nature of “exception.” Immediately after the accident, US troops blockaded the affected area (within the campus of Okinawa International University) and all Japanese police, fire officers, government officials, and university staff found it impossible to access the spot until the US troops had completely removed all wreckage and any soil possibly contaminated with radioactive material (strontium-90).

## 2. Sovereignty of Japan and the state of exception in Okinawa

Figure 2 shows a conceptual model of the state of exception in Okinawa according to its brief history described above. As suggested in this figure, the US base itself in Okinawa is a space of extraterritoriality of the United States in Japan. However, the area surrounding the US base is also “exceptionalized” by its existence. Because the US troops and soldiers are able to move anywhere in Okinawa without restriction, accidents and crimes caused by US troops are omnipresent in the prefecture and Japanese law is not applicable to them. In other words, the law is suspended in Okinawa. In that sense, Okinawa is situated in a state of exception in which people’s lives are ordinarily threatened by military violence.

Of course, 26% of the US bases for exclusive use in Japan are on the mainland, where the lives of people living in the surrounding areas are threatened by military violence as well. However, in Okinawa, living space and the US bases are much more overlapped. Figure 3 shows a map of Futenma Air Station in the midst of Ginowan City, which is surrounded by Ginowan urban areas including residential areas, commercial areas, kindergartens, schools, a university, hospitals, and so on. People’s lives in Ginowan City are ordinarily threatened by the roar of military aircraft<sup>4)</sup>,

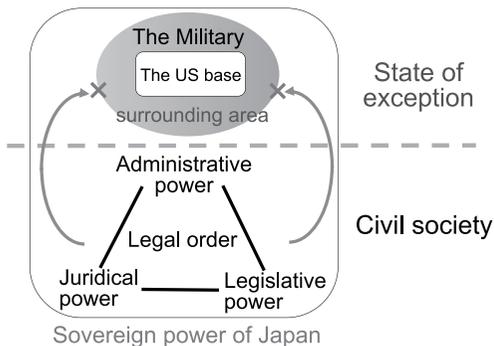


Figure 2. Sovereign power and state of exception, the case of a US base

(Illustrated by author)

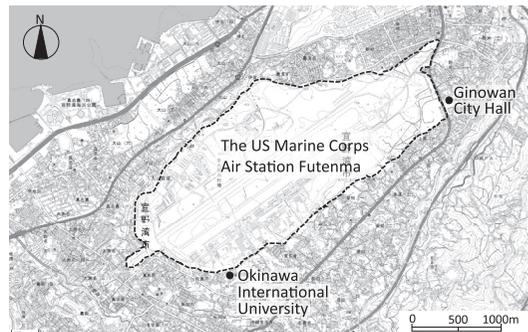


Figure 3. The US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma and Ginowan City

(Modified from a map from the Geospatial Information Authority)

crashing warplanes, and crimes committed by US soldiers. These threats are common to all areas surrounding US bases in Okinawa. This situation continued even after the return of Okinawa to Japan in 1972. In other words, the sovereignty of Japan has been constructed through continuous processes of exception of Okinawa from the civil society of Japan.

## II. Possibility of resistance in a space of exception

### 1. Sit-ins and the opposition movement

Since the planned relocation for Futenma Air Station from Ginowan City to Nago City and the construction of a substitute airport at Henoko was published in 1996—1997, various opposition movements have arisen in Okinawa. The author examined some of these movements with a particular focus on the relationship between the anti-base movement, nature conservation, and ecotourism (Nakashima 2008, 2009, 2010). Because the construction of a substitute airport for Futenma Air Station has been planned as a maritime base, it requires the reclamation of land at Henoko on a large scale. The construction of a maritime base devastates many organisms that depend on the sea including humans, dugongs, sea turtles, fish and shellfish, sea grass, and coral. The military destroys organisms on its base as well as on the battlefield. This suggests a contradiction in national security, as it aims for security of the state while threatening the lives of humans and other organisms.

However, it was neither nature conservation nor ecotourism that actually stopped the maritime base's construction. It was people's non-violent direct action of sitting-in on the ground and sea. Members of the Committee Against Heliport Construction, commonly known as "Inochi wo mamoru kai (Association for Protecting Lives)," of which the members were local residents of Henoko district, began a sit-in on Henoko beach in January 1997, and this non-violent direct action has continued for the last 20 years. In particular, since April 19 2004<sup>5)</sup>, a sit-in has taken place every day on the beach, on the sea, and on the road involving loosely networked local opposition groups and volunteers from all over the country. Among those opposition groups, the Association for Protecting Lives and Council against Maritime Heliport Construction and Seeking Peace and Democratization of Nago municipal government, commonly known as "Heri kichi hantai kyō (Council Against Maritime Heliport Construction),"<sup>6)</sup> has taken a leading role in practicing sit-ins.

Since 1996, the Japanese government has planned various types of substitute airport for Futenma to be constructed on the sea at Henoko. Roughly speaking, they are characterized by the first offshore plan (1997–2005) to construct a heliport on the reef crest, the second coastal plan (2005–2006) to construct an airport and military port by re-developing the ground of Camp Schwab and reclaiming the inner reef of the sea of Henoko and Oura Bay, and the third new coastal plan (2006–present), which is almost the same as the second but with a different-shaped runway. Against these construction plans, various opposition activities have been carried out by local opposition groups and their supporters. But the main action has consistently been sit-ins.

At first, a sit-in was conducted on the beach and road to Henoko. Sometimes members of opposition groups and staff of the Naha Defense Facility of Administration confronted each other on the road (Figure 4). Opposition groups blocked the road to the beach and prevented workers



**Figure 4. Sit-in on the ground** (Photographer: Yuko Asami, Date: September 7 2004)

Reprinted from Asami (2006: 60–61) with author's permission

and construction vehicles from entering Henoko beach. However, on September 9 2004, the Naha Defense Facility of Administration began the work for a marine boring survey off the beach within the US Camp Schwab in order to avoid the blockade by protesters. Since that day, the stage of the struggle has shifted from ground to sea.

Opposition group members resisted the marine boring survey by using ships and canoes, diving, and sitting-in. Figure 5 shows the scene of a sit-in on the sea. The Naha Defense Facility of Administration built a scaffold tower for the marine boring survey in November 2011. Protesters climbed up the tower and conducted a sit-in to stop the survey (Figure 5). At first, they stayed there only in the daytime, but later, they had to stay for 24 hours to prevent the boring work being conducted over long shifts. In spite of the violent enforcement actions by the Naha Defense Facility of Administration, this sit-in on the scaffold continued for more than half a year (from November 2004 to June 2005) and stopped the marine boring survey.

After the Japanese government abandoned the first offshore plan in 2005 because of the fierce opposition by protesters, it adopted the second and third new coastal plans in order to prevent protesters from accessing the construction site of the maritime base. These two coastal plans include no access routes to the construction site other than through the front entrance of Camp Schwab, which is strictly guarded by US troops and Japanese police. Furthermore, in July 2014, the Japanese government established a temporary restricted sea area surrounding the construction site to prohibit protesters from accessing the site by sea. Despite these countermeasures, opposition groups and their supporters have been conducting sit-ins in front of the entrance to Camp Schwab and on the sea at Henoko and Oura Bay with canoes and boats, as well as on Henoko beach. Not being discouraged by the repeated arrests by Japanese police and the Japan



**Figure 5 Sit-in on the sea** (Photographer: Yuko Asami, Date: May 28 2005)

Reprinted from Asami (2006: 78–79) with author's permission

Coast Guard, protesters have kept practicing sit-ins up to the present. They are trying to stop the construction of the maritime base on the ground and sea with their own bodies.

## 2. A resistance from bare life

Other than the non-violent direct action of sitting-in, the people of Nago City have practiced several democratic ways of objection to the construction of the maritime base. For example, some of the residents and citizens' groups of Nago City who oppose the base organized the Council for Promotion of a Nago Citizens' Referendum on the Construction of Maritime Base in June 1997. They collected 19,735 signatures, over a third of all voters, and a city ordinance called the Nago Citizens' Referendum was enacted in December 1997. The result of the referendum, held on December 21 1997, was that "opposition" obtained 53% and "approval" 45% of votes (Report of the Nago Citizen's Referendum Publishing Committee 1999).

However, ignoring the result of the referendum, then mayor of Nago City, Tetsuya Higa, declared his approval of the construction of the maritime base and resigned from the mayoralty on December 24 1997. In the following mayoral election held in February 1998, Takeo Kishimoto, a successor of ex-Mayor Higa, was elected mayor of Nago City, and he also declared his approval of the base on December 27 1999. Similarly, the then governor of Okinawa Prefecture, Keiichi Inamine, specified the coastal area of Henoko as the site for construction of the base on November 22 1999.

In the general election of 2009, ex-Prime Minister Hatoyama (also the ex-president of the Democratic Party of Japan) pledged to move Futenma Air Station from Okinawa to outside the prefecture. However, in May 2010, he broke this promise and concluded the Japan-US

Agreement to move it to the coastal area of Henoko. This reversion of governmental policy on the relocation of Futenma Air Station deeply disappointed the people of Okinawa.

As suggested by these political processes, every institutionalized method of representative democracy (signature campaign, local referendum, mayoral election, gubernatorial election, and national election) failed to stop the construction plan. People who opposed the maritime base construction had no choice other than to occupy the ground and sea with their own bodies. Sit-ins were the last resort for actual resistance to stop the base's construction. It can be said, at least, that the base might have been constructed in Henoko without continuous non-violent action.

The failure of resistance through the political processes of representative democracy suggests that the institutionalized method of resistance in civil society cannot be applied to a state of exception produced under the sovereign power of the state (Figure 6). Therefore, it is necessary to search for an alternative way to resist military violence in a state of exception from the place of "bare life," in which violence is exercised over all living beings, including both humans and non-humans. While the sovereign power of the state aimed at violently appropriating the ground and sea for its own security, protesters attempted to materially re-appropriate them by simply sitting-in to protect the lives of all organisms, including themselves. Because the ground and sea can never be fully appropriated by a sovereign power even if it aims to control them by troops and police. Protesters find out an "aperture" in time and space of the control, and repeatedly intrude into it even if violently removed. This "aperture" can be considered as an attribute of nature itself, and opens the possibility for another appropriation.

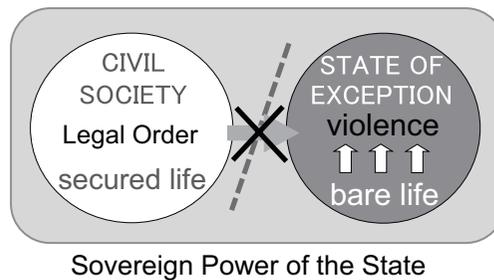


Figure 6. Resistance from bare life

(Illustrated by author)

## Conclusion

In the modern state, the presence of military bases is considered necessary for national and international security, but this is contradictory to people's security in their daily lives. Most of the military bases in Japan are located adjacent to and overlapping with the living environments of the local people. As a result, people's fundamental right to life is threatened by exercises of sovereign power by the state. In that sense, the grassroots anti-base movement can be defined as people's resistance against the violation of their life right by the state and a manifestation of a strong desire for that fundamental right.

Therefore, it is possible to consider the anti-base movement as the point of confrontation between constituent power and sovereign power. Constituent power is juridically the source of the production of constitutional norms, but Antonio Negri (1999) situates constituent power in contrast to sovereign power (see Figure 7). As suggested in this paper, from within the institutionalized system of contemporary representative democracy, it is difficult to resist military violence against bare lives in a space of exception. This is because this institutionalized system is constructed by a sovereign power and is based on the exception of specific lives from civil society. In order to break through this system of sovereign power, it is necessary to implode it from within a space of exception: but how is this possible? It is made possible when we face our own bare lives. When protesters climbed up the scaffold tower on the sea and clung to the pipes, they were faced with their own precarious bodies, which were simultaneously shared by others similarly clinging to the pipes. When protesters were sitting-in in front of Camp Schwab, they formed a scrum with their bodies so as not to be pulled away by the police. It is in such moments that constituent power emerges. As Negri (1999: 10) notes, “the paradigm of constituent power is that of a force that bursts apart, breaks, interrupts, unhinges any preexisting equilibrium and any possible continuity.”

As suggested in the struggles during the Arab Spring (2010–2012), Occupy Wall Street (US, 2011), Umbrella Movement (Hong Kong 2014), and Sunflower Student Movement (Taiwan, 2014), “sit-ins” can be an effective resistance strategy. As Hardt and Negri (2012) note, contemporary multitudes have “the power of creating new political affects through being together.” *Homo sacer* is not alone.

constituent power – sovereign power constituting power – constituted power democracy – totalitarianism ontology – system
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Figure 7. Scheme of constituent power  
(Modified from Negri (1999))

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## Notes

- 1) Relying on official US documents, Makishi et al. (2000) disclose that this relocation plan for Futenma Air Station was the realization of former construction plan for the US military base that targeted the reclamation of the Henoko coastal area in 1966.
- 2) Responding to Katz’s (2015) criticism, Minca (2015b) recognizes a possibility and a necessity

of alternative geopolitics for creating “counter-camps” and other spatialities.

- 3) Gregory (2006) mentions biopolitical modes of resistance by prisoners themselves, such as hunger strikes and suicide attempts. However, the enforcement of these modes of resistance could be another biopolitical nomos for them and it seems to me an irresponsible statement.
- 4) Since 2013, a tiltrotor military aircraft MV-22 Osprey has been deployed to Futenma Air Station. However, out of fear of accidents, there have been several demonstrations by citizens’ organizations against the deployment of Ospreys to Japan all over the country, including Okinawa, since 2012.
- 5) On April 19 2004, staff of the then Naha Defense Facility of Administration suddenly appeared and tried to begin the work for the marine boring survey, in preparation for the construction of the maritime base at Henoko fishing port, and members of the opposition groups stopped it (Council Against Maritime Heliport Construction 2005).
- 6) The Council Against Maritime Heliport Construction succeeded the Council for the Promotion of a Nago Citizens’ Referendum, which was organized for the implementation of a Nago Citizens’ Referendum in 1997. The Council Against Maritime Heliport Construction consists of citizens of Nago City, including Henoko district.

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# Rural landscapes with rice terraces and the politics of aesthetics

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## 1 Introduction

In Japanese society, rice terraces are widely appreciated for their beauty. An online search of rice terraces in Japan immediately yields content using such expressions as “beautiful terraced paddy fields,” “beautiful Japanese ur-landscape,” and “the highest art that the nature weaves,” in addition to countless beautiful pictures. Today, the subject of aesthetic appreciation in farming village scenery is often the rice terrace.

The trend of landscapes to become aestheticized and symbolized has been one of the most significant issues among human geographers. A conceptual shift of landscape, that is, a shift from the Sauerian understanding of landscape to the landscape as a way of seeing, underlays this trend. Cosgrove (1998) stated in the preface of the second edition of *Social Formation and the Symbolic Landscape*, first published in 1985, that landscape constitutes a discourse through which identifiable social groups historically have framed themselves and their relations with both the land and other human groups, and further that this discourse is closely related epistemically and technically to ways of seeing. Landscape was interpreted as a text (Duncan 1998), and the ideas implicated in the landscape imagery were analyzed from the point of iconographic study (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988). The interpretation of aestheticized and idealized landscape leads to the consideration of national identity. Several case studies on landscape and national identity may be found in *The Iconography of Landscape* (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988), and Daniels (1993) also explored how various artists—including painters, landscape designers, and architects—have articulated national identities in England and the United States from the later eighteenth century to the present day in his book *Fields of Vision*. Above all, the “countryside ideal” and aestheticized pastoral landscapes attracted the attention of human geographers. Daniels (1993) clarified the relations between British landscape paintings and the countryside ideal, and Bunce (1994) discussed the countryside ideal that existed in the images of Anglo-American landscapes in relation to the idea of wilderness and the city.<sup>1)</sup> The colonizing power connecting national identity with the countryside ideal has also been pointed out. For example, Kinsman (1995) examined the photographic work by Ingrid Pollard entitled *Pastoral Interlude*,<sup>2)</sup> which tried to disrupt the common-sense notions about Britishness and the countryside ideal,

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and reconsidered the relations between rural landscape and national identity in terms of race. Tolia-Kelly (2006, 2008) also discussed how the landscape of the Lake District marginalized the mobile citizens of British Asian. The countryside ideal consisting of both aesthetic and moral values always serves to exclude or marginalize the “mobile” others.

The interpretation of landscape as a way of seeing has revealed the power relations and politics of representation. However, since the turn of the century, with development of cultural geography going beyond the representation theory, landscape has been considered not only as a visual image itself but also in terms of process, materiality, and affect. The same can be said about the study on British rural landscapes. In his book *Landscape and Englishness*, which sheds light on the intertwining of landscape and senses of Englishness, Matless (1998) referred to W.J.T. Mitchell who approached landscape as a verb rather than a noun and considered “not just what landscape ‘is’ or ‘means’ but what it does, how it works as a cultural practice.” Tolia-Kelly (2010) examined the value of landscape and memory for postcolonial migrants living in Britain and revealed social-historical narratives about migration, citizenship, and belonging. Thus, the English pastoral landscape should be explored through the experience of geographically mobile, racialized populations as a visual and material process of identity-making.

Based on this progress of study concerning the rural landscape, this paper focuses on the photography of rice terraces and examines the aestheticized images of rural landscapes. As shall be further discussed, a landscape of terraced paddy fields came to be highly evaluated as beautiful, and photography played an important role in that process. How did the rice terrace change from a site of agricultural production to a site admired for its beauty? In what social and political conditions did this shift occur? What is the beautiful image of a rice terrace and how is it naturally produced and consumed? This paper aims to make suggestions to answer these questions from the point of the politics of aesthetics.

## 2 Changing value of rice terraces in Japan

A rice terrace is a paddy field developed in a stepwise manner on mountain slopes and in valleys. There were once rice terraces everywhere in Japan, a mountainous island country. According to a survey conducted by Nakashima (1999), 8% of the country’s paddy fields were rice terraces even in 1993. A rice terrace was often considered to require much more labor than fields in the plains, and was typified as an example of inefficient agriculture. In other words, cultivation in a rice terrace was considered to have low productivity. In the 1970s, which saw rapid economic growth, the government encouraged farmers to stop cultivating paddy fields and to convert them into other fields including cedar forests. At the time, a rice terrace was not needed because, as mentioned above, they were not considered to be very productive. Consequently, their number decreased and the country faced a crisis of destroyed rice terraces.

However, the circumstances surrounding rice terraces changed dramatically in the 1990s due to national conservation movements as people began to work together to preserve rice terraces. For example, the first meeting of the Summit Conference on Rice Terraces in Japan took place in 1995. That same year, the Tanada Network was constituted (*tanada* means “terraced paddy fields”). Then, in 1999, the Rice Terrace Research Association, an interdisciplinary academic

and professional group, was formed. People became immediately interested in the critical conditions facing rice terraces and joined efforts to maintain them. The central government promoted the institutionalization of the conservation process. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries selected the “100 Best Rice Terraces in Japan” in 1999. At the turn of the century, Obasute in Nagano Prefecture and Shiroyone in Ishikara Prefecture, where rice terraces could be found, were designated as areas on the list of Places of Scenic Beauty under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties. In 2004 under the same law, Important Cultural Landscapes<sup>3)</sup> began to be protected as national cultural assets.

These phenomena occurred in parallel with a drastic shift in Japanese agricultural policies, which may be observed through a revision of the country’s basic law. The Basic Agricultural Act, passed in 1961, implied a social demand that agricultural productivity be improved and that farmers’ incomes increase. The national government had long encouraged farmers to reclaim paddy fields before the rice acreage reduction policy began in 1970. Under such agricultural conditions, the number of rice terraces fell quickly. It is important to note that during this time, rice terraces were considered fields for agricultural production. In 1999, the Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas Basic Act was passed and the former Basic Agricultural Act was repealed. The new basic law not only established agricultural production as a cornerstone of the industry in Japan, but also emphasized multifunctional characteristics of agriculture such as conserving national land, protecting watersheds, the natural environment, and cultural traditions, and forming “good” landscapes. In other words, agriculture played an important role beyond production and acquired cultural and environmental significance.

The shift from agricultural productivity to additional functions including the formation of good landscapes did not merely take place at the domestic level of politics. One must also consider the global conditions of agriculture and rural areas. First of all, one should not underestimate the consequences of the World Trade Organization Uruguay Round commitments on agriculture, which promoted liberalizing the trade of agricultural products. In order to mitigate its impact on Japanese agriculture, the central government launched various projects to improve farming and rural areas, stressing the additional various functions of agriculture. Secondly, a pioneering effort developed to maintain rice terraces as a cultural heritage. The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras was selected as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in 1995, which influenced the movement to safeguard rice terraces and the birth of the conservation system of Important Cultural Landscapes in Japan. Though Important Cultural Landscapes cover all sorts of landscapes by the law, as of April 1, 2016, 29 landscapes out of 50 areas have been selected as farming landscapes, and an English version of the introductory pamphlet on the Important Cultural Landscape<sup>4)</sup> uses some impressive images of rice paddy fields. The conservation of cultural landscapes in Japan was arose from the movement to conserve farming landscapes (Bunka-cho 2005).

### 3 Landscape photography and the conservation movement of rice terraces

#### (1) Photography's role in the conservation movement

Under the aforementioned circumstances, the conservation movement of rice terraces developed since the 1990s, and photographs have played an important role in the movement to protect them. Nakashima (1999) mentioned the following three photo books as viewing them would help to convey the special value of rice terraces to the public. The first example is *Tambo: The Sacred Fields* by Johnny Hymas (1994), an English photographer who has traveled to around 38 countries and found in Japan a timeless beauty, a variety of unspoiled landscapes that do not exist elsewhere. The second is *Satoyama Monogatari* by Mitsuhiro Imamori (1995), a nature and insect photographer who has influenced amateur photographers. The third is *Tanada* (Furukyara Network 1996), a collection of pictures that won the photography contest held during the first meeting of the Summit Conference on Rice Terraces in 1995. Since the Summit Conference on Rice Terraces, more than a few photography contests have been held both on a nationwide scale and on local and prefectural scales. The development from film cameras to digital cameras expanded opportunities to shift the presentation of photographs from galleries and magazines to websites, and photography contests of rice terraces became more popular (Figure 1). Additionally, the Rice Terrace Research Association honored two photographers with a prize, which is offered to the individual or the group who dedicate to the protection of rice terraces through their social activities, academic research, and publications. In 2006-2007, Kenji Aoyagi received an award for his activities to draw people's attention to the rice terraces in Japan and Asia and to promote better understanding through the publication of his photo books. Further, in 2008-2009, Hajime Yamamoto was awarded a prize for his commitment to the conservation movement through his photo books and his educational activities to amateur landscape photographers.



Figure 1 Photo gallery on the web managed by Tanada Network

<http://www.tanada.or.jp/gallery/> (last accessed January 4, 2016)

## (2) The imagery of a rice terrace as expressed in photography magazine *Fukeishashin*

A pastoral landscape with a rice terrace is one of the popular objects for photographers, and it is not difficult to see the rural landscape images in photography magazines in Japan. This section examines the imagery of a rice terrace from the pictures and texts in a photography magazine specializing in the genre of landscape photography, *Fukeishashin* (*Landscape Photography*), first published in 1989 when the conservation movement of rice terraces began to be active in the society. *Fukeishashin* is a magazine geared toward amateur photographers and intends to “find a new perspective in order to establish a genre of landscape and nature photography in the diversified photography world,” and further to offer and challenge eager amateur landscape photographers the opportunity to exhibit their works. The magazine also maintains the characteristic that it considers landscape photography in contrast to portrait, and stresses relations with nature.

The photography contest of this magazine is one of the opportunities open to all photographers to present their works and compete with each other. Table 1 shows all winning entries from 1989 to 2014, which involved pictures of rice terrace landscapes. The landscape photography of rice terraces was constantly presented in the magazine, and several popular shooting locations were selected as the “100 Best Rice Terraces in Japan.” In fact, one of those locations was that of Hymas’s *Tambo*. While each picture is a specific artistic expression, there exist some common characteristics among these works. Firstly, they express the changing seasons sophisticatedly. Secondly, they are well composed. Thirdly, they not only follow the good examples about the subject but are also uniquely expressed. Lastly and importantly, despite the subject as a specific landscape of rice terraces that is cultivated in a local environment, the image of a rice terrace is always appreciated in terms of Japanese beauty or Japanese identity.

Such an artistic expression of the beautiful image of a rice terrace is not natural, nor does it contribute to an individual sense of beauty. It is important to consider a framework in which landscape photography is made and valued. Here, much attention is paid to the professional photographers as a model for many amateurs and their lessons and manuals presented in the magazine. Shinzo Maeda is a special photographer for the *Fukeishashin*, and he is famous for the landscape photographs in the Biei and Oku-mikawa regions. The magazine often published a special issue of his works: the first issue featured his photographs “Haru no tanada” (Rice terrace in the spring) and “Ta no kyokusen” (The curve of paddy field), which expressed the beautiful form of a rice terrace. As Maeda stated with these photographs, “I try to take a picture of everything about a rice paddy field including the uncanny beauty of a paddy field as the spiritual home for the Japanese and the animals and plants existing there.” His photographs and essays were frequently published in the *Fukeishashin*. In July of 1994, an extra edition presented a feature of his photography, and the special issue “Landscape photographs to hand down to the 21st century” published in volume 56 (2001), listed him at the top.

Maeda is the most influential photographer in *Fukeishashin*, but there are other photographers who are famous for publishing their photographs of rice terraces in the magazine. One such photographer is Mitsuhiko Imamori, who lives in a village near Biwa Lake and takes pictures of the nature of *satoyama* (woods located near human habitats and tended to by human beings). Other examples include Ryoji Okamoto, who serialized his works under the title “Satobito no omoi” (Villager’s feelings), Hakudo Inoue who specializes in rural landscapes in Nara, Kenzo

Table 1 List of winning entries in Fukeishashin (1989-2014)

Year	Caption <sup>1)</sup>	Shooting location	Locations of 100 Best Rice Terraces	Location of <i>Tambo</i> <sup>2)</sup>
1990	Yamazato (Mountain village)	Shimizu Town, Wakayama	○	
1990	Gekko (Moon light)	Tenri City, Nara		
1993	Tanada shukei (Autumn landscape of rice terrace)	Asahi Town, Okayama	○	
1993	Haru no moyo(Spring pattern)	Tokamachi City, Niigata		○
1993	Tanada no aki (Rice terrace in autumn)	Nakamura City, Kochi		
1993	Suiden (Rice paddy field)	Shimizu Town, Wakayama	○	
1994	Yuki no tanada (Rice terrace in snow)	Tango Peninsula, Kyoto		
1994	S-ji no denen (Sigmate idyllic scenery)	Shuto Town, Yamaguchi		
1995	Ougon no tanada (Golden rice terrace)	Yabe Town, Kumamoto	○	
1995	Denen yukei (Pastoral landscape in the evening)	Asuka Village, Nara	○	
1995	Tanada no uta (Poetic of rice terrace)	Tomoch Town, Kumamoto		
1996	Suiden moyo (Pattern of rice paddy field)	Tondabayashi City, Osaka		
1996	Tanada akibae (Shining autumn of rice terrace)	Shimizu Town, Wakayama	○	
1996	Moeru senmaida (Glowing rice terraces)	Kiwa Town, Mie	○	
1996	Tanada yakei (Night view of rice terraces)	Genkai Town, Saga	○	
1996	Tasogare no nochi (Field at the sunset)	Miasa Village, Nagano		
1997	Tanada o mimamoru (Keeping a close eye on rice terraces)	Saeki Town, Okayama		
1997	Tanada no aki (Rice terraces in autumn)	Hoshino Village, Fukuoka		
1997	Tanada no forumu (The form of rice terraces)	Ena City, Gifu	○	
1998	Tanada yusho (At the sunset of rice terraces)	Oda Town, Ehime		
1998	Tanada (Rice terraces)	Ena City, Gifu	○	
1998	Kirameku tanada (Shining rice terrace)	Ena City, Gifu	○	
1999	Banshu (Late autumn)	Takachiho Town, Miyazaki	○	
1999	Sato no asa (A village in the morning)	Yamakoshi Village, Niigata		
2000	Yukimoyo (Snow pattern)	Shimizu Town, Wakayama	○	
2000	Sato no asa (A village in the morning)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2000	Saiden (Colorful fields)	Ena City, Gifu	○	
2001	Asagiri kagayaku (Shining morning mist)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2001	Irodoru tanada (Colodul rice terrace)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2004	Kakenoboru aki (The autumn going up)	Ichikawa City, Hyogo		
2005	Shujitsu (At an autumn day)	Asuka Village, Nara	○	
2005	Ougita (Rice paddy fields in fan-like fashion)	Ubuyama Village, Kumamoto	○	
2005	Unjo no ta (Rice fields above the clouds)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2005	Nichibotsu ni somaru (Stained deeply with sunset)	Yunnan, China		
2006	Shinsetsu (Fresh snow)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2006	Kibo (Hope)	Genkai Town, Saga	○	
2006	Megumi (Grace)	Waajima City, Ishikawa	○	
2007	Haru no yorokobi (Joy in the spring)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2007	Shunden usugiri(Spring field in light fog )	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2008	Yamazato shukei (Autumn scene at a mountain village)	Sakurai City, Nara		
2008	Tanada no kifujin (A lady in a rice terrace)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2009	Hojo heno kaidan (The stair toward fertility)	Kikuka Town, Kumamoto	○	
2010	Yamazato ni saku (Flowers in a mountain village)	Taki Town, Mie		
2010	Sanson fukei (Landscape of a mountain village)	Yasaka Village, Nagano	○	
2010	Asagiri no yamasato (Mountain village in the morning mist)	Tokamachi City, Niigata		○
2013	Mizu no yukue (Where water is going)	Matsushiro Town, Niigata		○
2014	Haru tookaraji(Can spring be far behind?)	Kyoto City, Kyoto		

1) English translation in the parentheses is given by the author.

2) Hymas(1994)

Yamamoto who photographs the idyllic landscape of the Sagano area in Kyoto, and Hajime Yamamoto who expresses the beauty of the rice terraces in Echigo Province, Niigata Prefecture. All of these individuals contributed to form a perspective for the beauty of (natural) landscape photography in *Fukeishashin*, and in the community of Japanese photography as a whole.

In addition to the pictures taken by photographers in a leadership position, the guides on landscape photography also exerted direct influence over amateur photographers. *Fukeishashin* published such essays as “Shinzo Maeda’s manner to take landscape photography” (Maeda 1990) and “For landscape photography” (Kawaguchi 1989). Two characteristics about these essays may be located. On one hand, they illustrate how to take landscape photography through such considerations as the relationship between the Japanese and landscape photography, what natural landscapes communicate to people, the importance of a brief encounter with scenery, and the naturalness created by picturing a landscape as it is. In other words, they seem to stress a moral part of landscape photography by mentioning the taken-for-granted relationship between the Japanese people and the natural environment. On the other hand, they include practical and technical tips about the selection of cameras and lenses, lighting, and exposure. Such technical advice, in fact, often appears in the magazine. For example, a question-and-answer guide in volume 52 answered such a question as to how to handle unnatural “noises” that result from such sources as electric wires and paved roads. Thus, the guiding messages create a technical, aesthetic, and moral framework, and within this framework is established the beauty of landscape photography, which “never stages on look natural and beautiful” but “appreciates the environments and phenomena as they are<sup>5)</sup>” .

### **(3) The impact of images of rice terraces on society**

The beauty of the images of a rice terrace is not only distributed and appreciated as visual. As stated previously, the imagery of rice terraces also played an important part in the practices of conservation movements. Nakashima (1999) pointed out that the imagery served to distribute the essence of rice terraces to the public and to explicitly show what areas should be protected. At the same time, the imagery may suggest inevitable elements in order to maintain the beautiful image of rice terraces as evidenced by Nakashima’s study (1999), wherein he examined all entries submitted to the photography contest held during the first meeting of the Summit Conference on Rice Terraces in 1995 and clarified the important essences to preserve. The imagery of a rice terrace now goes beyond the visual, as also pointed out in recent visual methodologies. Rose (2012) insisted that visual images should be interpreted not only at the site of the image’s production and that of the image itself, but also at the site where the image is viewed by various audiences. One must consider both the events and spaces where visual images are distributed and exhibited as the material, and what the images do in the society.

Consider the photographs of rice terraces from this point of visual methodologies: it is clear that these photographs are not merely visual. A caption of a picture including the technical information about shooting location, the camera and lens used by a photographer, and a photographing guide published in photography magazines promote people to go to sites and take a picture. People move in search for a visual image, and then encounter the local environment and people. Consequently, the areas with rice terraces place a device to “exhibit” the image to the photographers and other

visitors (Omotedani and Murakami 2006; Osawa 2005). Figure 2 illustrates a picture taken by the author at Maruyama *senmaida*,<sup>6)</sup> Kumano City, Mie Prefecture, which was selected as “100 Best Rice Terraces in Japan.” It is not difficult to reach this shooting point, because a small arbor with parking lots and a sign stating “Maruyama *senmaida*” indicate a suitable place to enjoy viewing and taking a picture. Further, there are other arbors and signs in a village. Now, a village becomes a place where visitors enjoy viewing while cultivation continues. More than a few ongoing projects are increasing the presence of visitors to the countryside and deliver added values of farming villages as recreational areas throughout Japan. This is a method fostered by the Japanese government since the late twentieth century that has emphasized the multifunctional characteristics of agriculture, including the preservation and utilization of cultural and natural environments under the Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas Basic Act in 1999.

Images of rural landscapes with rice terraces have led to a workable and material change in the countryside by fostering the exchange between urban and rural areas and adding value to the local environment. At the same time, it must be pointed out that the growing images of the pastoral beauty tend to epitomize the Japanese notions of essence and beauty rather than represent a regionally specific landscape constituted under complex social and political conditions of a region. The images of rice terraces repeatedly create a “Japanese landscape” that is considered natural and original, and contribute to reaffirm a Japanese “identity” and “sense of home.” This may be interpreted from the various discussions on the archetype of the Japanese landscape. Among them, the trilogy on landscape aesthetics written by Katsuhara (1979, 1986, 1999) is especially influential. Katsuhara examined the historical transition of the ur-landscape among the Japanese through an analysis of the government-designated school textbooks of modern times, and proposed two kinds of landscapes: a landscape appreciated through the visitor’s attitude, and a landscape anesthetized through the attitude of ordinary people living there. His conception of landscape, especially that of which combines practical use (e.g., farming) with aesthetic appreciation, exerted much influence over the policies of rural landscape design. However, is it possible to conclude that rural landscape, especially landscape with rice terraces, has acted as an ur-landscape for the Japanese? In the next section, the historical aspects of landscape photography in Japan are surveyed, and the images of rural landscape are examined.



**Figure 2 Maruyama senmaida**

(Photo by the author)

## 4 Historical considerations

### (1) Japanese version of pictorialism<sup>7)</sup>

Photography faced a challenge in its acceptance from the start. Capturing an image and affixing it to a surface was innovative, but was it art or mere documentation? Photography was introduced in Japan in the 1850s and 1860s when this question was being posed in Western countries. However, the pursuit of photography as art did not emerge in Japan at that time. Photography was imported as a modern visual technique and experience during rapid modernization. The images produced by photography presented people—especially Japanese painters—with a profound shock as they became involved in creating the visual images. For example, Renjo Shimooka was a photography pioneer who opened his photography studio in Yokohama in 1862. Although he was a painter, he did not try to pursue photography as art. As a professional and commercial photographer, he took photographs in his studio and sold portraits of beautiful women in ukiyo-e styles and pictures depicting Japanese folklore and customs. It was not until the 1890s that a substantial change occurred in Japanese photography. The tendency to consider and practice photography as art began under the strong influence of Western pictorialism. Pictorialism is an international style and aesthetic movement that aimed to establish photography as a legitimate art medium. The development of this aesthetic movement in Japanese photography was first initiated by the introduction of photography as art in the West. In 1893, the Foreign Photography Exhibition was held in Tokyo and organized by William K. Burton (a professor of sanitary engineering hired by the Japanese government), Kazuma Ogawa (a Japanese photographer), and others. The exhibition presented 296 pictorialist photographs by George Davidson, Peter Henry Emerson, and other British photographers; it featured the latest photography techniques and the frame of photography as art. Then, pictorialism involved the changing of actors in photography as amateur photographers emerged and began to establish photographers' groups. Thereafter, technical innovation was evident in printing methods that enabled amateur photographers to enter the world of photography. Finally, the development of Japanese pictorialism developed further as publication in photography magazines spread the latest techniques and ideas associated with photography to the public, inviting amateurs to enter photography contests. The magazines helped to broaden the base for amateur art photographers.

How did these Japanese photographers pursue photography as art? A unique development in Japan may be pointed out: pictorialism originally covered diversified subjects in the West, such as history, mythology, portraits, still life, and landscapes. However, the Japanese version of pictorialism was different from that of the West, characterized by an exclusive emphasis on landscape photography. In other words, art photography almost achieved the status of landscape photography at the early stage in Japan. This unique characteristic is also found in articles featured in the magazine *Photographic News*. In 1889, the painter Chu Asai (1889) contributed a series of articles entitled “Composition in photography,” in which he pointed out that most Japanese photographers—especially amateurs—lacked a sense of composition and maintained a painter's viewpoint. It is important to note that the only examples he provided were landscapes. The predominance of landscapes is evidenced in other articles as well. For example, Tasaka (1912-1913) wrote a series of articles entitled “Landscape research” in 1912 and 1913, and Paul

Anderson's book *Pictorial Landscape Photography* (1914) was summarized and translated in 1916. The two series were written when amateur photographers began to play an active role in landscape photography, thus making a strong claim about the importance of composition.

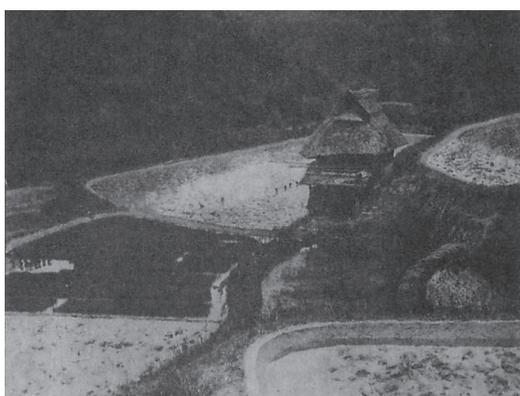
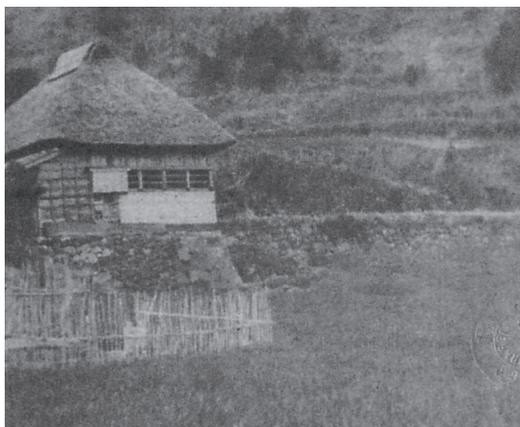
In the mid-1920s, along with the development of avant-garde art in Japan, mainstream photography changed from art photography to "new photography." However, the tradition of landscape photography never concluded in Japan. Landscape has always been at the center of amateur photographers' interests. In the following section, what kind of landscape they tried to express in their pictures is considered through the analysis of a photography magazine.

## **(2) Rural landscape photography and universal beauty**

As a case study, landscape photographs published in *Asahi Camera* are examined. This work was first published in 1926 as an official journal for a nationwide society of amateur photographers, the All-Japan Association of Photographic Societies. Until now, it has placed more emphasis on "photographing," a term that refers to photography equipment and photography techniques rather than the appreciation of images. The first issue devoted 48 of 75 pages to exhibiting the artistic photographs of prizewinners and leaders of amateur photographic groups. Most of these pictures were portraits and landscape photographs, while the remainder of the first issue included information regarding photography events, critiques of photography exhibitions, and articles concerning photographic theories and techniques.

In order to illustrate what types of images were featured by the magazine, the photographs designated for honorable mention in 1926 and 1927 should be examined. In spite of the competitions, which did not limit the subject to the countryside, a number of photographers took pictures of rural landscapes. Further, many of them used the word *denen* in the titles, which means "countryside," "rural," or "pastoral." Figure 3 illustrates some examples, as follows. The first photograph entitled "A rural spring" in 1926, impressively depicts the Tokyo countryside featuring fields, a stone wall, and a thatched cottage. The second photograph, taken in Nagano Prefecture and entitled "Rural view" in 1927, communicates a sense of depth, fields, and woods in the foreground and a thatched house in the background. The third, entitled "Rural landscape" in 1928, shows the terraced paddies in Shiga Prefecture and depicts a quiet, peaceful landscape containing irregularly shaped paddy fields with snow and a thatched house in the background.

It is also important to consider the lessons from articles in *Asahi Camera*, which advised readers regarding techniques for taking a landscape photograph. The magazine began to publish such lessons in the 1930s. In "Visit to the autumn countryside," Sakai (1936) explained the setting for photographing a landscape, stating his preference for autumn landscapes in a suburban area over travel destinations. He depicted the landscapes in Musashino, an outlying village in Tokyo, with both photos and texts. He also mentioned that both the literary and deep expression by poet and novelist Doppo Kunikida, as well as the unsophisticated landscape that was different from that in the Kansai area, attracted photographers to Musashino. "Taking a good picture of the countryside" by Sato (1938) offered detailed information on photo equipment, shutter speed, the diaphragm, films, and development techniques; the article also explained how to settle composition, express light, and shadow efficiently. Further, "Photographing the countryside" by Kawasaki (1940) stated that there were subjects for photographers everywhere in the



**Figure 3 Photographs with the word denen in the caption**

(above: "Denen-soshun (A rural spring)," Asahi Camera 1(3),1926

middle: "Denen (A rural view)," Asahi Camera 4(6),1927

below: "Denen-fukei (Rural landscape)," Asahi Camera 6(2),1928)

country, and that all photographers were attracted by the rustic, natural, and simple atmosphere. Kawasaki advised photographers to pay careful attention to three points: the relationship between subject and background, the contrast of light and dark, and perspective, which is needed to create a good rural picture. Thus, rural landscape photographers serve as models, and these lessons on how to take a picture in the countryside exerted influence over the growing number of amateurs who had just entered the world of rural landscape photography. As is the case with the interpretation of the photographs published in *Fukeishashin* at the turn of the century, it can be said that these visual images and lessons created the imagery of rural landscape photography. Then, what is a good picture of a rural landscape, and how can one express it?

This emphasis on rural images was never limited to *Asahi Camera*. It is worth considering Sakai's mention of Kunikida's words carefully when exploring the photographed/invented rural image. Doppo Kunikida published the romantic essay *Musashino* in 1898, in which he poetically presented the beauty of the landscape in the place where he lived and walked. This work is not the only one that evaluated such beauty; *Gloom in the Country* by Haruo Sato is another example. In the early twentieth century, on one hand, Japanese society took a growing interest in the urban; on the other hand, it appreciated the rural atmosphere and landscape in suburban areas. Thus, the countryside provided a useful resource for artistic activities. Furthermore, it is also crucial to stress the way through which Doppo Kunikida defined and appreciated a rural landscape of Musashino. In contrast with the classical manner by which a landscape of Musashino was expressed as a deserted field by the ancient poets, Kunikida "discovered" a wooded landscape combining the natural environment with the residents living there. This landscape might be referred to as an ordinary landscape. Kunikida refused the concept of Japanese landscape as emblematic that Shigetaka Shiga appreciated in his influential and nationalistic book *Nihonfukeiron (Japan Landscape Theory)* (1894). Further, Kunikida rejected the traditional and stylized ways of expressing love for and singing about the sceneries (for example, see Kogita 2013). In other words, Kunikida, a novelist and poet working in the Japanese romantic and naturalist literature movement influenced by Western trends, discovered a universal beauty in an ordinary rural landscape. Based on the fact that Kunikida's attitude and artistic expression were often mentioned in essays on landscape photography, it may be concluded that photographers received a universal sense of beauty rather than one that was nationalistic.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper examined the aestheticized images of rural landscape by first focusing on the relations between the visual images of a rice terrace and the conservation movement since the 1990s, followed by an interpretation of the pastoral images in modern times. Comparing photographs as the images of aestheticized rural landscape of both periods—after the 1990s and the beginning of the twentieth century—reveals several similarities, though the photographic techniques have greatly developed and the power of expression has been enhanced. Specifically, a visual image is made through a good sense of composition, and a rural landscape is depicted as the natural or harmonious relations between nature and human beings. Further, such photographs are often expressed with keywords such as "beautiful," "rustic," and "idyllic." Finally, the photographs

and texts published in these magazines serve as a model, and the visual image is presented beyond the local farming image and becomes universal. In contrast, there is a difference between the imageries of two different times. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was no evidence of “Japaneseness” in the representation of rural landscapes; rather, the images of rural landscapes emphasized their relationship to landscape paintings and literary works influenced by Western styles. A rural landscape was discovered as an ordinary landscape that was opposed to a nationalist emblematic imagery.

When and how did rural landscape photography become a symbol of “Japaneseness”? Rural landscape photography may have played a significant role in Japan’s preparations for World War II, and seemed to represent the country’s energy and power. However, this art form stressed the wealth and strength of the countryside as a site of production at that time. Following the rice acreage reduction policy initiated in the 1970s, Japanese people began to consider the image of rural landscape to represent the “Japanese mind,” a sense of a “home for the Japanese,” and the “Japanese essence.” A sense of loss of rural landscapes and shifting agricultural policies heightened people’s tendency toward “Japaneseness,” which was created through rural scenery and rice terraces both visually and materially.

## Notes

- 1) There are many studies on the British rural landscape even in Japan. For example, see Shioji (2003) and Mori (2012).
- 2) Ingrid Pollard is a British artist and photographer born in 1953 in Georgetown, Guyana. For more information on *Pastoral Interlude*, see her official webpage: <http://www.ingridpollard.com/pastoral-interlude.html> (last accessed January 4, 2016).
- 3) Cultural landscapes are defined as “landscape areas that have developed in association with modes of life or livelihood of the people and the natural features of the region, which are indispensable for the understanding of our people’s modes of life and livelihoods” in Article 2 of the Laws for the Protection of Cultural Properties.
- 4) Agency of Cultural Affairs, ed. (n.d.), *Our Treasure Cultural Landscapes to the Future Generations: Cultural Landscape Protection in Japan*. [http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei\\_hakusho\\_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai\\_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet\\_en\\_01.pdf](http://www.bunka.go.jp/tokei_hakusho_shuppan/shuppanbutsu/bunkazai_pamphlet/pdf/pamphlet_en_01.pdf) (last accessed January 4, 2016).
- 5) *Fukeishashin* 91 (2006), p.91. Translation by the author.
- 6) *Senmaida* means “thousand rice fields” in a literary sense. A group of small rice fields regularly assembled on a steep slope, all of which can be seen at a glance, are referred to as *senmaida*.
- 7) For more information on the development of Japanese art photography during that period, see Keneko (2003) and Iizawa (2004).

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# British Colonialism and “Illegal” Immigration from Mainland China to Hong Kong

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## 1. Introduction: Border Porosity and Contrived *Laissez-faire*

In the neoclassical theoretical framework, labour is one of the economic factors supposed to have right of *laissez-faire* mobility with the objective of maximising revenue. Workers make attempts to migrate from lower-income to higher-income regions in search of higher wages, much as multinational corporations and speculative financial capital seek regions with cheaper labour or lower tax rates. The “global convergence” tenet, originally put forward by neoclassical economists, is substantiated only through the *laissez-faire* approach to the spatial mobility of capital and labour, and in particular, to the acceptance on the part of the capitalist class of the unrestricted spatial migration of workers from lower- to higher-wage territories and countries. This is the prerequisite for the posited global convergence.

However, such unrestricted mobility of labour erodes the very condition of the existence of capitalism: the class superiority of capital vis-à-vis labour. This is because, if low-wage workers enjoyed unrestricted labour migration to high-wage regions, lower-wage labour would eventually disappear in the former lower-wage regions and capital attempting to exploit low-wage labour would no longer find it available.

In contrast, if labour markets in higher-wage regions are spatially bounded by tight control of border porosity, the supply of labour becomes limited and capitalists cannot find labour to exploit at home. Primitive accumulation may not take place, or higher wage rates and fierce class struggle may ensue. Thus, in the period of primitive accumulation or in boom times, allowing higher porosity of borders towards higher-income regions is in the positive interests of capital.

Nevertheless, this inflow of labour cannot be left *laissez-faire*. The unrestricted inflow of low-wage workers aggravates unemployment issues and increases social expenditures, which will erode the vested interests of the existing population and capitalists and will eventually lead to the breakdown of social integration.

Thus, the porosity of borders<sup>1</sup> must be regulated and the spatial migration of labour across international boundaries must always be controlled to an optimal level by the state, which generally embodies the intent of capital. The *laissez-faire* condition thus needs to be contrived.

Countries with higher wages are under unremitting pressure from the influx of labour at their

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boundaries from low-wage countries, just as those countries with higher-profit investment opportunities face the influx of capital, like a spigot under pressure. Taking advantage of these conditions, state power attempts to optimise the system of capital accumulation through more purposeful control of border porosity. In other words, a higher-wage and higher-profit country regulates economic conditions by deploying state power to control border porosity and thus the inflow of labour and capital.

The action space<sup>2</sup> of the economy having widened and both labour and capital having become more mobile, capitalist regulation by means of controlling the porosity of space has become a more important policy variable.

Manipulating the porosity of national borders through the authority of the state so that capital can enjoy higher porosity than labour creates spatial configurations in which labour is contained in certain areas and wage level disparities persist in each sovereign state.

Workers, who are micro-level economic entities, contest this state power to transform the pristine space into a mosaic of differentiated wage rates by resorting to spatial “guerrilla warfare” by physically breaking through national borders. This warfare is sometimes called “illegal immigration,” in which *laissez-faire* migration from low-wage to high-wage regions continues, in spite of attempts by state power to control the porosity at the border. These migrants thereby overcome the spatial constraints of sovereign states and win the global space for their own, just as capital does.

However, since this “illegal” immigration is an attempt to evade state power, these workers are also exempt from any kind of protection of their human rights by the state. They are exposed to the most primitive and barbaric relations between labour and capital as the price they pay for ignoring state power. Many of them work in sweatshop factories or at the bottom of the social strata, and social discrimination is norm rather than the exception. States and capital feign ignorance of the human rights of such “illegal” immigrants, while they continue to take advantage of the influx of workers for the accumulation of capital by deploying them in the production process. In this, we can recognise a renewed strengthening of class divisions intermediated by the manipulation of border porosity.

Workers in a higher-wage country feel threatened by “illegal” immigrants who do not mind working under slave labour conditions. Even political groups that supposedly represent workers view these immigrants as instigators of unemployment and discriminate against them, and may demand that borders be made impermeable to “illegal” immigrants. Governments that allow the free inflow of immigrant labour across borders will be frowned upon by their people. The global unity and solidarity that should exist among the working class will be skilfully shredded to bits within each country, while state power attempts to maintain social integration by at least pretending that they have carefully created an impermeable border to fend immigrants away from the country. Thus, based on the power to regulate border porosity, a new, close class alliance between labour and state will even appear in high-income countries, seeking further reductions in porosity.

The hypocritical nature of the assertion of globalism by neoliberalism is most plainly seen in the spatial control of worker migration. In actuality, the euphoria brought about by the global equality made possible through the equalization of wage levels predicated on the unconstrained

international migration of labour will never happen under a capitalism predicated on class relations. Despite this, the neoclassicist theory of “global convergence” spreads the lie that this equalization will happen. A simplified understanding of economic or social action space that grows to encompass a region, or indeed the world, while appearing to be perfectly reasonable, is nothing more than a fig leaf obscuring the true essence of globalization, and does not correctly recognize the restructuring of global class relations on the basis of the discriminatory manipulation of border porosity.

Labour migration in today’s globalism must be understood as the spatial restructuring of class systems across various spatial scales—global, regional, and national—wherein the capitalist state apparatuses unilaterally attempt to alienate workers from the global as well as regional space and adjust the porosity of their territories for the purpose of maintaining and strengthening the vested interest of capitalists and state power.

## **2. Early History of Immigration in China and Southeast Asia**

### **a) British Colonialism and Immigration**

The colonization of Hong Kong maintained this territory under a separate state domination from the rest of China. A state boundary was set up and the control of its porosity was vested in the British colonial government.

Since Hong Kong was originally “a barren island with hardly a house upon it,”<sup>23</sup> except for small fishing villages on the southern shore of the island, an influx of immigrants, mainly Chinese from the natural cause of its geographical position, was essential for the British to maintain the economic and political functions of the colony. From the early period of Britain’s colonization of Hong Kong, the Chinese in poor farming villages of Central and South China were the primary sources of immigrants to Hong Kong.

As the colony developed, chain migration ensued. Migration routes were created based on information that spread on a relatively local scale in China. Each of these routes was used by a Chinese group with a clearly distinct point of origin and language. The coastal cities that were the former destinations of rural-urban migration for these hinterland villages now acted as relay points; and ethnic Chinese moved to Hong Kong to settle down, or moved further, travelling by boats that used Hong Kong as a hub port to reach other colonial cities and villages of Southeast Asia. For example, Chinese from agricultural regions primarily around Guangdong Province’s Pearl Delta migrated to Kuala Lumpur in the former British colony of Malaya. In this action space, Hong Kong functioned as one of the coastal nodes, connecting the Chinese inland with British overseas colonies and other areas under British influence. Hong Kong thus became one of the preferred destinations for Chinese migrants.

The pre-World War II region from China to Southeast Asia was spatially reorganised out of colonial and quasi-colonial territories, but with relatively weak boundaries, primarily in those areas placed under the rule of the British Empire; and relatively wide scale successive migrations primarily of groups of Chinese and Indians occurred. The colonial British took advantage of this wide expanse of migration action space, supported by the high porosity of colonial

boundaries, in deploying Chinese and Indian labour as colonial compradors or middlemen in creating the colonial social structure based on the principle of indirect rule.

### **b) The Evolution of National Border Porosity in Post-war Asia**

The pre-war action space of migration that spread across a relatively wide swath of Asia was radically transformed with the independence of one Southeast Asian country after another through the 1960s and the communist revolution in China in 1949.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) vanquished the British domination that had existed in Shanghai, the cities along the Yangtze River, and Guangzhou. The PRC aimed for "self-reliance" through socialism in one country. In achieving this, the PRC government drastically reduced the porosity of its borders and drew into itself, not allowing its citizens to move outside the country. The Southeast Asian colonies that had gained independence also became sovereign states, controlling their own borders and also pursuing self-reliance and closed borders. Further, post-World War II Asia had extraordinarily low porosity in its borders due to the "Bamboo Curtain," the Cold War corollary to Europe's "Iron Curtain," falling from north to south and placed between communist and capitalist countries such as North and South Korea, and the socialist PRC and British-ruled capitalist Hong Kong.

This transformation fragmented and destroyed the action space of the chain migration and labour migrations now shifted essentially within sovereign states and neighbouring territories. The porosity of borders for capital increased, especially for multinational companies headquartered in the US, EU, and Japan, while at the same time leaving porosity for labour at a low level. The network of the new international division of labour (NIDL) in Southeast Asia that developed after the US loss in the Vietnam War effectively followed the specific geographic mosaic of locations of low-wage labour; and Hong Kong was indeed the major actor in this "East Asian miracle."

## **3. Migrations from Mainland China to Hong Kong**

### **a) Introduction**

The reality of Hong Kong's colonial government, which Friedman<sup>4</sup> claimed "the modern exemplar of free markets and limited government", was vastly different from what Friedman assumed under neoclassical economic theory. Migration was no exception.

If Hong Kong had been returned to China immediately after World War II, the migrations to Hong Kong would have been nothing more than the normal domestic migrations from lower-income villages to a higher-income city as discussed in neoclassical regional economic theory.

The area covering Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta (PRD) is essentially the living space of the Cantonese-speaking Chinese. There have been strong kinship networks among the indigenous Chinese for centuries. Their language, customary laws, and lifestyle were identical. The Sino-British border was therefore a typical case of a superimposed boundary created as the consequence of the colonization of the New Territories by the British.

If there had been no border, there would have been no way for the government to control its porosity. However, in reality, the international boundary separated China and Hong Kong, and

after the Chinese revolution, it became the border where two economic systems met: socialism and capitalism.

In the early 1960s, the colonial government constructed a stout fence of steel wire with lights on its side of the border, which reminds us of the former border between the two Germanys. The fence, ca. 4.5m high—higher than the 3.6m-high Berlin wall, and lit with bright searchlights all through the night—could be called the “Hong Kong Wall” (Plate 1). Despite its height, an unyielding stream of PRC Chinese crossed this boundary, as evidenced by the clothes and cardboard left behind along the fence<sup>5</sup>, and entered into Hong Kong in secrecy.

The history of migration from mainland China to Hong Kong can generally be divided into four stages:

1. *The first stage*: the period from the British reoccupation of Hong Kong to the introduction of immigration control in 1950. Chinese people were allowed free entry into Hong Kong. There was no restriction on the Chinese side from leaving the country, either. It was these immigrants who achieved the primitive accumulation of post-war Hong Kong capitalism.
2. *The second stage*: the period until 1974, when the colonial government started to restrict immigrants, yet under a lenient and haphazard policy. The colonial government essentially repatriated the “illegal immigrants” caught in the border area, yet tolerated immigrants who escaped from the search and managed to reach the urban areas of Hong Kong. The PRC government also started to impose restrictions on exiting the country in 1951, and Chinese living in Bao An county, sharing a border with Hong Kong, were also generally subject to similar restriction after 1956<sup>6</sup>. These Chinese supplied low-skilled labour power to the



Plate 1: The “Hong Kong Wall” or “Bamboo Curtain” constructed by the British colonial government at Tsim Bei Tsui (尖鼻咀)

(photo taken by the author in 1990)

growing Hong Kong economy.

3. *The third stage*: The years between 1974 and 1980, when the “Touch-Base Policy,” to be discussed in Chapter 5 of this paper, was in effect.
4. *The Fourth Stage*: The period after 1980, when all the Chinese from the PRC without proper travel documents were repatriated with few exceptions. The opening-up of the pool of cheap labour in Shenzhen and the intention of the colonial government to shift Hong Kong economy into more knowledge-intensive made the inflow of the cheap labour from the PRC no longer necessary.

In the following sections, these four stages are dealt with in turn.

## **b) The First Stage: Free movement of Mainland Chinese into Hong Kong until 1950**

The first comprehensive census taken by the colonial government in 1911 showed the population of Hong Kong to be 456,739<sup>7</sup>. According to the last census before WWII, taken in 1931, the population of Hong Kong was 840,473<sup>8</sup>. Immediately prior to its occupation by Japan in 1941, Hong Kong’s population was estimated to be approximately 1.6 million.

Before the war, when a free population flow between the Republic of China and Hong Kong was allowed, it was noted that “[t]here is little difference between the rights and obligations of Chinese born in Hong Kong and Chinese immigrants.”<sup>9</sup> Many of them had not regarded Hong Kong as a place of settlement. Because cross-border movement had been unrestricted, they simply returned to China as circumstances changed, and when conditions were right, they could even migrate to Southeast Asia.

At the time of the post-war reoccupation by the UK, the population was reduced to approximately 600 thousand, due to forcible “repatriation” by the occupying Japanese government of Hong Kong of some Chinese to the mainland. Immediately after the reoccupation, Hong Kong’s population surged dramatically. By the end of 1947, the population had risen again to 1.8 million, surpassing pre-war levels. The overwhelming majority of incoming people being naturally Chinese, the total combined size of the non-Chinese population has been estimated at around 13,000, including 7,000 to 8,000 British and 2,200 Indians, as well as some Portuguese.

In the initial period of the reoccupation, the colonial government did not require incoming Chinese to have an entry permit until 1950<sup>10</sup>. The huge influx of Chinese from the mainland began from 1948 as the civil war between the Kuomintang and the communists intensified in central and south China. Chinese from neighbouring Guangdong Province began settling down in Hong Kong with virtually no possessions. Then, from around the time Shanghai fell under Communist control in May 1949, Chinese industrialists and engineers—mainly from the textile and cotton-spinning sector, as well as influential British colonials such as the Kadoorie family—moved to Hong Kong, bringing vast quantities of capital and extensive skills along with them. The number of immigrants from mainland China who settled in Hong Kong before September 1949 was 815,780, or 26.7% of the total Hong Kong population in 1961, according to the census taken in 1961<sup>11</sup>.

Upon foundation of the PRC, border control was established in April 1950. By this time, the estimated population of Hong Kong reached 2.36 million. For the two-year period of 1948–1949, 584,000 persons migrated into Hong Kong; 64% of these were motivated by political

reasons<sup>12</sup>, which includes those of a more capitalist or business-minded inclination. These incoming immigrants triggered primitive accumulation in post-war industrialised Hong Kong.

Of particular note in this respect was the massive exodus of textile entrepreneurs from Shanghai. As the communists pushed the front of the civil war against the Kuomintang southward, Shanghai's textile entrepreneurs began to prepare an exodus. If Shanghai was taken over by the communists, their capital assets would be confiscated and they would be subject to arrest and prosecution as the evil capitalists who once exploited labour. There were several options for their exodus. Prospective destinations included Hong Kong, Thailand, and Taiwan<sup>13</sup>. However, there was excessive bureaucracy Thailand and Taiwan, such as the required participation of local capital or restrictions on the amount of production to prevent overproduction<sup>14</sup>. Some ex-Shanghai entrepreneurs did relocate their plants to these countries, yet their operations were generally not successful due to these stiff government restrictions.

Thus, from 1947 to 1959, a total of 20 spinning mills were established by the Chinese from Shanghai<sup>15</sup>. Their scale of investment was exceptionally large in Hong Kong, where small and medium scale enterprises dominated. These spinning mills employed on average 500 people, and stood at the acme of the inter-industrial linkages<sup>16</sup>.

These relocations did not entail the Shanghainese entrepreneurs dismantling their existing equipment, shipping it in parts, and reassembling it in Hong Kong. The machines and plant buildings were mostly brand new, shipped directly from the UK or US to Hong Kong<sup>17</sup>. The fresh and modern equipment meant that the spinning industry in Hong Kong was efficient and had a strong competitive edge. It soon became a stable foundation for the entire industrial infrastructure of Hong Kong by supplying cotton yarn domestically to local garment manufacturers. Some of these manufacturers later deployed the capital thus accumulated for property speculation, thereby contributed to foundations of the Chinese property sector in Hong Kong.

However, this was not the outcome of policy foresight in which the colonial British took steps to invite investment from China. Right after reoccupation, the colonial British still counted on the possibility of carrying on the pre-war *entrepôt* trade. In the meantime, however, unlike their Thai or Taiwanese counterparts, the colonial British did not impose any restrictions on the migration of Chinese into Hong Kong or to their setting up of manufacturing plants. Through this immigration policy, the ex-Shanghai Chinese spinners "turned out to be an industrial asset for Hong Kong."<sup>18</sup>

In 1949, when the communist takeover of the mainland China had become inevitable, however, the Financial Secretary of the colonial government finally became proactive and proposed to the Legislative Council of 16 March 1949 to establish the Department of Commerce and Industry, with a new post of Assistant Director (Industry), which "will have on its staff an officer who can devote his full time to the encouragement of new industries and the expansion of existing ones" and "to advise potential industrialists on factory sites and allied questions."<sup>19</sup>

Right after the establishment of the PRC, the new PRC government allowed, albeit passively, the Kuomintang Chinese and the capitalists who were potentially hostile to the communist regime to leave the country. Many of them crossed the border towards Hong Kong. In late 1949, Lo Wu Bridge, connecting the PRC with Hong Kong, was flooded with more than a hundred thousand people every day at the peak period<sup>20</sup>.

There came also a multitude of penniless people from the adjacent Guangdong Province into Hong Kong as unskilled labour. The coupling of capital and labour thus accomplished the primitive accumulation of capital for Hong Kong's post-war export-oriented economy.

This influx of mainland Chinese was instigated more by political rather than economic causes and thus was beyond the control of the colonial British. They sat back and took a passive policy in terms of the migration flow. The spontaneous inflow of entrepreneurs was merely an outcome of the huge political transformation in China.

After this round of exodus had passed, the PRC government from 15 February 1951 began to impose restrictions on leaving the country<sup>21</sup>. This kind of exit restriction was common in many socialist countries, including the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries.

## 4. The Second Stage

### a) In-migration of the PRC Chinese in the 1950s

The colonial British government began to control the PRC Chinese in 1950. However, the restriction on the immigration from the PRC to Hong Kong did not apply to the natives of Guangdong Province<sup>22</sup>.

To comply with this rule, the Hong Kong immigration officers carried out a simple language test at the border checkpoint. The officer asked a would-be immigrant in Cantonese, "*Hoey bin dou* (where do you go)?" and if he or she responded properly in Cantonese, "*Hai Heung Gong* (to Hong Kong)," then the immigrant was allowed in, otherwise, he or she was refused entry and sent back<sup>23</sup>.

Thus, in the early 1950s, most of the PRC Chinese of Cantonese origin were still virtually free to settle in Hong Kong.

In the meantime, as early as the first part of the 1950s, the colonial government of Hong Kong started making claims about social problems related to immigrants, such as social expenditures to deal with squatters, the waste of urban space, increased costs for schooling, aggravated crime, and other issues<sup>24</sup>. Yet, a tacit and real contentious issue was the need to subsume these "illegal" immigrants into the system of colonial capitalist regulation in a way that would not undermine the ethnic integration and capital accumulation in Hong Kong.

The colonial government worried that incoming Chinese from the communist PRC would undermine this stability, especially in political terms, as they were regarded as maintaining loyalty with the PRC rather than with the colonial British, just as the Russians in the UK maintained loyalty to the Soviet Union. The colonial British had a sense of unease that the Chinese would never be in accord with the British. A confidential government report<sup>25</sup> pointed out as follows:

From a long term point of view it is thought that the Chinese in Hong Kong are Chinese by race and thought and the vast majority will remain so rather than become true British Colonial persons with a personal interest in Hong Kong as a colony. ... Their only interest is economic (money and a living) and little else. It is possible, therefore, that as with the ex-Russians in the United Kingdom, their secret loyalty may lie with their mother country. In any case it creates an uncertainty for the country housing them.

On the PRC side, the PRC government required its nationals to obtain the “exit permit” to leave the country<sup>26</sup>. Chinese migrants did keep coming from Guangdong Province in spite of this exit restriction, often without permits. The PRC government did not demand the repatriation of arrested “illegal” Chinese immigrants<sup>27</sup>.

## **b) The “Hong Kong Wall” in Cold War geopolitics**

In 1950, the colonial government began to build a physical barrier right *inside* of the northern rim of the New Territories, along the Shenzhen River separating Hong Kong from the PRC. A series of surveillance posts was set up along the border called the MacIntosh Forts, planned by D. W. MacIntosh, the Commissioner of Police in 1949, and built during the period ending 1953 (Plate 2). Behind the Forts, higher on the ridge, there was another surveillance post and a base.

The government also issued a Government Gazette Notice in June 1951 designating the areas along the border as the Frontier Closed Area (FCA). The FCA was then extended in May 1962<sup>28</sup> to form a total area of about 28 square kilometres.

The PRC had 22,117 km of international boundary and shared borders with 13 countries before the break-up of the Soviet Union. Yet most of these borders were either with socialist countries or in remote areas at high altitude. The borders shared with the United Kingdom (Hong Kong) and Portugal (Macau) were thus the only lines in populous flatland areas that separated different modes of production: socialism and capitalism. The South China Branch of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) also strengthened control along this “bamboo curtain” in three stages.

First, in 1951, those who were not natives of Shenzhen or not loyal to the communist regime were expelled inland. Second, around 1956, the border area was designated as the “Shenzhen–Hong Kong frontier defence area” and three parallel defence lines along the international boundary were set up: from the inland towards the border, there was a frontier defence line, a prohibited area line, and a warning line.

Although those without proper permits to cross these lines were prohibited entry<sup>29</sup>, there is no evidence that any fences were erected along these designated lines. Thus, border policy was more lenient on the PRC side when compared with its Hong Kong counterpart.

It is intriguing to compare this “bamboo curtain” with the “iron curtain” in post-WWII Germany. The same ethnic group lives on both sides of the latter border: Germans. It was socialist East Germany (DDR) that built the wall right inside the borders of its own territory. West Germany (BRD), to the contrary, erected no such physical barrier or fence, but accepted all immigrants who fled from the DDR without requiring any documents. However, in Hong Kong, although the same ethnic group of Cantonese-speaking Chinese lives on both sides of the border, it was the capitalist UK (Hong Kong) that built the physical fence, which the author calls “the Hong Kong Wall,” within its territory. Although the socialist PRC designated the frontier a defence area, not much in the way of a physical “wall” existed.

Why were there such clear differences in bounding the territories between the inter-German and the Sino-British borders?

Behind this seemingly clear contrast between iron and bamboo curtains, there is a common

geopolitical background. Across both borders, the capitalist zones accepted immigrants as long as they were useful as labour power in promoting capital accumulation. The post-war West German economy profited greatly thanks to immigrants from East Germany. However, there was a clear political difference: Hong Kong was not a country dominated by the same ethnic group, as was the case with Germany. The colonial British did not need to care as greatly about the indigenous ethnic group as did the West German government, but could remain indifferent to the reintegration of the Chinese or to the ties of families that had been divided by the colonial border. The colonial British had much cooler heads rather than warm hearts in decision-making as to whether to accept immigrants from the PRC.

### c) “Illegal” Immigrants and Repatriation by the Colonial British

Toward the end of the 1950s, both the British colonial and PRC governments intensified border security year after year. The PRC Chinese who overcame this barrier and managed to enter Hong Kong without proper immigration formalities had “illegal immigrant (II)” status in the colonial legislature and were subject to arrest and repatriation.

The method of repatriation, called “hole in the fence,” was initially very haphazard, yet its repeated application turned it into a kind of informal formality. P. Thompson<sup>30</sup>, a former British officer of the Royal Hong Kong Police (RHKP), explained this method as follows:

[T]he Chinese authorities took to shouting out the number of those caught so that the Hong Kong police could tell them whether this corresponds with the numbers pushed through the fence. It was a summary method of returning illegal immigrants with no checks being made on the credentials of those arrested before their expulsion<sup>31</sup>.

Yet, a considerable number of PRC Chinese evaded this process of repatriation and did settle in Hong Kong. In the 1950s, they took up farming in the New Territories, since they were “skilled vegetable growers” in their former villages in Guangdong Province and vegetable farming as a sharecropper needed less initial capital outlay than rice farming, which the indigenous



Plate 2: A MacIntosh Fort at Pak Kung Au (photo taken by the author in 2016)

New Territories farmers practiced, because the latter “regarded vegetable an inferior crop”<sup>32</sup>. Interestingly, however, the demand for locally produced fresh vegetables increased, while rice production lost its competitive edge against imported rice, and rice production in Hong Kong disappeared by the end of 1970s. The immigrant farmers thus became much better off in later years, as did the indigenous New Territories landowners who could obtain more farm rent from the sharecroppers<sup>33</sup>.

In 1961, when the first census was taken after the British reoccupation, the total population was 3,129.6 thousand, out of which 1,643 thousand, or 52% of the population, were post-war immigrants. About half of the population of Hong Kong of the age of 30 or older (i.e., older than 20 at the time of in-migration) were migrants who came to Hong Kong before 1949; and almost a half of those between the age of 20 and 24 came from the PRC after 1949. In total, 1,643 thousand persons out of 3,129.6 thousand, or 52.5% of the population of Hong Kong, were immigrants in 1961<sup>34</sup>. Thus, the exodus from mainland China made Hong Kong “a society of immigrants”<sup>35</sup> indeed.

#### **d) “62 Da Tao Gang”: The Huge Influx of Immigrants in April–May 1962**

A huge influx of PRC immigrants into Hong Kong called “*Liu Er Da Tao Gang* (六二大逃港, 62 Great Exodus to Hong Kong)” took place in April and May 1962. It started on 13 April, when a massive number of PRC Chinese congregated at the foot of Wutong Mountain (梧桐山, elevation 944m) in Shenzhen and attempted to enter Hong Kong.

In the PRC, many people starved due to the failure of the Great Leap Forward policy. In people’s communes, rice was rationed, and starving people had to look for wild grass or roots of ferns to fill their empty stomachs. The word of mouth enticing to leave the country for a better life in Hong Kong spread rapidly across the province. In Bao An county, the entire members of a people’s commune in Bao An (寶安) county, 174 in all, fled to Hong Kong<sup>36</sup>. Even the leaders disillusioned with communism left the people’s commune and headed for Hong Kong; and the number of people who left the communes amounted to 11,547 in Bao An, and 27,197 from Dongguan (東莞) counties up until 31 May 1962. The origins of the immigrants spread to Guangzhou city as well as Huiyang (惠陽) and Haifeng (海豐) counties. Guangzhou Railway Station was filled with people clad in tattered clothes wanting to buy tickets to Pinghu (平湖), the southernmost Kowloon–Canton railway station for which one did not need to produce the frontier permit. In Shenzhen and Bao An, crowds of several thousand people constantly congregated to find an opportunity to cross the border. Most of them were 17 to 40 years old, male and female<sup>37</sup>.

They “marched along the C[hinese] T[erritory] border under escort, often roped together”<sup>38</sup>. Each of them had a wooden stick at his/her hand to fight back in case of attack. They waited for sunset at the foot of Wutong Mountain. At dusk, they crossed the border at Pak Kung Au (伯公坳), the highest col along the Sino-British border at ca. 160m above sea level, forming the watershed of Sham Chun (Shenzhen) and Sha Tau Kok (Shatoujiao、沙頭角) Rivers. The advantage of the Pak Kung Au route was that there is no river to wade across there. The physical barrier built by the British at the border was still physically primitive, equipped only with chain-link fencing. The immigrants crossed the border fence in the dark by covering the top of

the barbed wire with the coats they had worn, and upon a light signal they moved on amidst the bushes along the mountain ridge leading to Robin's Nest (紅花嶺、492m). Along the rough mountain trail, adults were supporting their older parents, mothers holding their children in malnutrition. They were thirsty and hungry after a long journey, some fainted and fell on the ground<sup>39</sup>. They eventually reached Wa Shan (華山, 139m) near the rural town centre of Sheung Shui (上水). Another reason for taking this route along the mountain ridge was the prospect of the least surveillance of the British border police as compared with the flatland.

Wa Shan, at the tail of the mountain ridge, became a kind of midway station for these immigrants. Beyond Wa Shan, the route was on the flatland and the immigrants often had to reach urban Hong Kong using illegal taxis that charged an exorbitant HK\$100 (US\$17.2 at the 1962 exchange rate) per person<sup>40</sup>. The immigrants hid themselves in the tropical bush and waited for contact from their friends and relatives who had already settled in Hong Kong. The number of immigrants from the PRC that “accumulated around the Wa Shan area was about 30,000.”<sup>41</sup> Some of them had eaten nothing for three days<sup>42</sup>. The sheer number of congregated Chinese immigrants, however, created power in itself: “they were able to help each other”; and “it could be a tough job to arrest any” for the Hong Kong Police<sup>43</sup>.

For the week ending 21 April alone, 2,182 immigrants without the travel documents the colonial British required crossed the Sino-British border, according to the colonial government estimate<sup>44</sup>.

A local newspaper in Chinese called *Sing Tao Daily* published regular information on the names of incoming Chinese immigrants and the addresses of their friends and relatives in Hong Kong. Many Hong Kong Chinese felt obliged to visit Wa Shan to rescue their relatives and friends<sup>45</sup>, carrying food and drink for them<sup>46</sup>.

A strong sense of sympathy developed not only among Hong Kong Chinese in the border area, but in the whole of Hong Kong. They donated relief goods to the headquarters of a local Chinese newspaper *Ming Pao*, which cried, “Rush! Save life! (*Huosu! Juming! 火速! 救命!*)” in an editorial and reported that the small office of the newspaper company became “a humanitarian relief centre.”<sup>47</sup>

The local Hong Kong Chinese residents were quite sympathetic to the immigrants; no wonder, they are of the same ethnic group, speak the same Cantonese language, and sometimes have strong kinship ties.

Chen Bing An provides a narrative of the scene in Wa Shan as follows<sup>48</sup>:

A reporter wrote “The soil became wet because there are too many people crying.”

Thousands of policemen were moved by the scene ...

Who can be so hard-hearted as to arrest a refugee who is crying with their friends and relatives?...

The police commander found it impossible to carry out the duty of seizure, he was forced to suspend pursuing refugees, but by setting up barricades prevented Hong Kong citizens from going into the mountain.

Therefore, a quaint scene happened on Wa Shan: the group of humans having split by the police, the immigrants within the police barricade cried “Mum—,” “Brother—”; local citizens outside the barricade cried “Daughter—,” “Sister—.” They were within several metres of each other, but unable to get any closer. People on both sides were crying...

Eventually, two hours later, with orders to use force from the superior officers, policemen took action again, and people had to watch their friends and relatives being dragged away from them.

Another wave of shouts and cries raised at Wa Shan...

Groups of refugees were dragged to the vehicles arranged by the government. In the meantime, hundreds of cars formed a long queue, waiting downhill.

“Brother—” / “Mum—” / “My younger son—”...

When the gate of the shelter opened and the deportation motorcade began moving, the escort policemen were surprised.

People flooded towards the motorcade.

Thousands of people concentrated along the road between shelter and the border, some of them came before dawn to bid farewell to their relatives.

Most of them were holding bags of foods in their hands—for their relatives and friends.

Names were shouted again when the motorcade left the shelter.

“You need to leave, you need to go back to suffer again!” When people found their relatives sitting in the vehicles, they threw at them the food in their hands—even though you have to leave, bring the food with you, bring the food back home, to our parents, to the villages where people are still suffering from starvation!...

Dear driver, please drive slower to allow us another look at our relatives! Drivers of the motorcade seemed to understand how people felt, they drove so slow. The motorcade wriggled like a lazy worm...

However, no matter how slow it went, the motorcade was bringing the refugees away from Hong Kong bit by bit...

Another action that surprised Hong Kong Police happened.

A person broke the blockade, jumped onto the road, and lay on the ground to stop the vehicles. What happened next—one, two, ten, a hundred—hundreds of people followed and lay in the middle of the road.

The motorcade, consisting of dozens of vehicles, stopped.

“Jump off the vehicle—” / “Jump—”

People along the blockade started to shout.

Detainees on the vehicles started to jump off the vehicles.

There was cheering when people jumped off the vehicles. The scene became chaotic.

Intriguingly, this interaction between the Chinese and colonial British was filled with the elements of spatial struggle. Those with power (the colonial police) bounded blatantly the Chinese from PRC away from those from Hong Kong, by dividing one from the other with the barricade of policemen; whereas all the Chinese, belonging to the same ethnicity (Cantonese-speaking Chinese), attempted to convert Wa Shan into spatially contiguous “commons” by communication with tears in shouting and by offering bags filled with foodstuffs and clothes reciprocally. The colonial police then destroyed the “commons” for good by deploying another spatial power of removing the PRC Chinese away by the motorcade, against which hundreds of the grass-root Chinese protested physically by lying on the road.

On 26 April, a massive immigration flow took place from Macau. In late June, there were 3 to 4 thousand Chinese in Macau “waiting for a chance to enter Hong Kong.” Many “illegal” immigrants from Macau arrested in Hong Kong were in possession of Macau identity cards issued in May and June 1962<sup>49</sup>.

In fact, up until the late 1950s, the Macau route had been the principal passage for immigrants from the PRC. In the Port of Macau, several travel agencies carried out a “lucrative business” of handling “illegal immigrants” from the PRC. The number of such agencies increased towards 1962 to 22<sup>50</sup>. These migrants crossed the Sino-Portuguese border at Gongbei (拱北) aided by the opposite numbers of these Macau agencies in the PRC; they then stayed in Macau for a while. Ultimately, about 200 Chinese per day<sup>51</sup> departed at night in darkness from the port of Macau, thanks to the blind eye of the Macau police (probably in exchange for bribes), sailing by junk<sup>52</sup> to the fishing settlement of Tai O (大澳), situated on the western tip of Lantau Island (大嶼山島). Here they were met by agents in Hong Kong and took a *pak pai* (illegal taxi、白牌) to the ferry port of Mui Wo (梅窩) for Hong Kong Island. The colonial government, much concerned about this immigration route, even proposed to tap the telephone network of Macau in secrecy, in order to get information on the departure of junks for Lantau Island in time to intercept vessels loaded with immigrants<sup>53</sup>.

In the middle of May, the entry points of immigrants from Shenzhen shifted to the flatlands in the Ta Ku Ling (打鼓嶺) – Lo Wu (羅湖) area, where the Kowloon–Canton Railway crosses the border<sup>54</sup>. Here, the immigrants had to wade through the Shenzhen River. When a tropical rainstorm hit the area on 21 May, the river grew wider and deeper, and thus many would-be immigrants attempting to swim across failed and drowned<sup>55</sup>.

Echoing this compassionate action and feeling of the local Chinese in Hong Kong, the immigrants began to take a firmer attitude. On 19 May, a large group of immigrants crossed the border and remained in the area between the two fences and belligerently demanded assurances that “amongst other things that they would not be sent back to China.”<sup>56</sup> Some of these immigrants managed to escape from the space enclosed by the line of policemen, throwing stones and swinging bamboo poles, and climbed to the hilltops, awaiting contact from friends and relatives in Hong Kong. Some immigrants expected that their friends and relatives would apply for admittance to the Hong Kong British authority on their behalf<sup>57</sup>.

RHKP played this sympathy down, claiming “considerable agitation in the local press concerning the policy of returning illegal immigrants arrested to China”<sup>58</sup>. In Wa Shan,

[p]olice realised they must take tough action if a deportation was needed, otherwise they may lose control of the scene. / Following, a large group of armed riot policemen were deployed to disperse people who were blocking the motorcade. / The motorcade proceeded back on its journey towards the other side of Shenzhen River amid all the crying and shouting<sup>59</sup>.

The intercepted Chinese were brought to the Lo Wu (Luohu) border post, “checked against the group list and escorted in groups on to the bridge.” The list was then handed over to the China Travel Service (a PRC representative) or the PRC police, which checked the Chinese against the list and then brought them into the PRC<sup>60</sup>.

With the increasing inflow of immigrants, the Hong Kong British started to call for military assistance from 5 May. On 22 May, the Local Emergency Committee, comprising “Assistant Commissioner of Police NT & M[arine], the District Commissioner New Territories, and the Commissioner 48th Gurkha Brigade”<sup>61</sup> was established. The armed forces were then deployed in the border area from Sheung Shui to Ling Ma Hang (蓮麻坑). The numbers of the immigrant

influx reached its peak on 23 May, when 5,620 Chinese were arrested<sup>62</sup>.

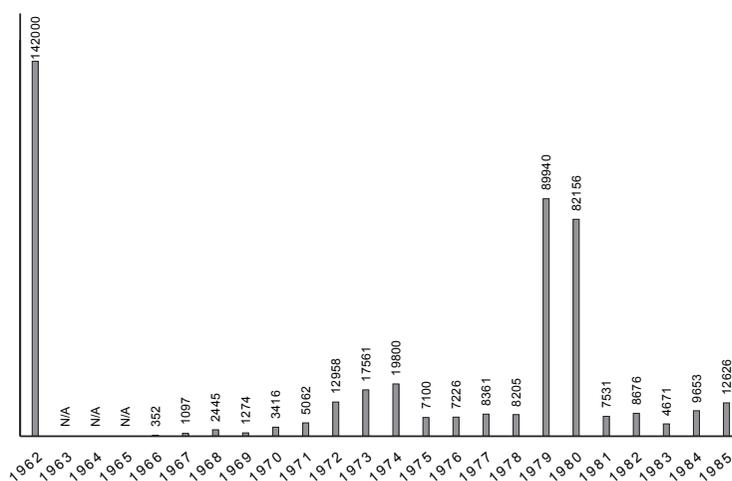
The ethnic cleavage of the Cantonese-speaking Chinese and the British, with the former set themselves against the latter to protect their ethnic “commons”, was clear. The Hong Kong Chinese passively and tacitly waged a struggle against the British in their creation and management of the superimposed boundary, which blatantly tore apart the ties of families, relatives, and friends with its colonial power. Hong Kong Chinese used many more tactics, “offering transport, hiding the refugees in local people’s homes, etc., to protect the immigrants in Wa Shan”<sup>63</sup>. Chinese policemen of the RHKP sometimes resorted “deliberate disobedience.” The Cantonese-speaking Chinese allied together, albeit passively, virtually to break the artificial bounds that British colonialism had imposed upon them. Thanks to these sympathies, it was estimated that about a half of the incoming PRC Chinese made their way to the urban areas of Hong Kong<sup>64</sup>.

On 23 May, the CCP unilaterally announced the sealing off of the PRC side of the Sino-British border to block the flow of prospective immigrants into Hong Kong<sup>65</sup>. Then, the Beijing government officially announced to the UK that it would hold back the immigrants trying to enter into Hong Kong<sup>66</sup>. Thereafter, the inflow of immigrants waned rapidly, and the border area returned to normal by 29 May<sup>67</sup>.

The colonial British did not forget to penalise the wholehearted compassion shown by the Chinese in order to confirm the legitimacy of the border using its judicial system. For example, a farmer living in Ta Ku Ling was prosecuted under the charge of bribing a policeman to turn a blind eye and let a young immigrant go. He was found guilty and fined<sup>68</sup>.

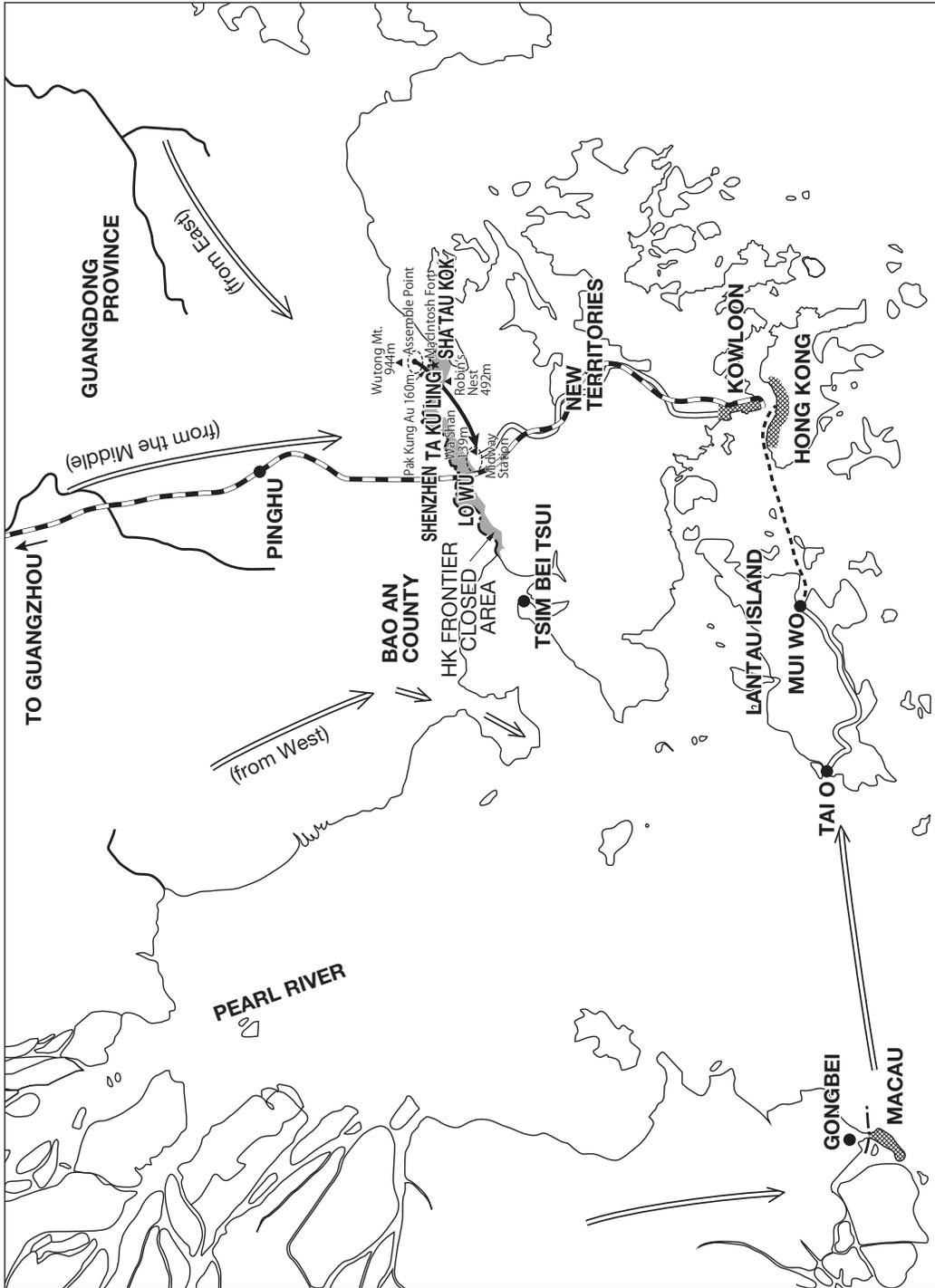
Spatially, the colonial government expanded the “Frontier Closed Area,” which was placed under constant military and police surveillance. Ordinary Hong Kong citizens were prohibited entry, with violators in the area to the north of Robin’s Nest being subject to prosecution<sup>69</sup> (Map 1). Contact between Hong Kong and incoming PRC Chinese was thus banned by the colonial power.

In the year 1962, while 142,000 persons were arrested (Figure 1), 69,581 “illegal” Chinese



**Figure 1: NUMBER OF 'ILLEGAL' IMMIGRANTS ARRESTED**

(Source) Thompson P., *op. cit.*, Annex B



Map 1: The Spatial Flows of "Illegal" Immigrants from the PRC

immigrants succeeded in settling in Hong Kong, having obtained their Hong Kong ID cards<sup>70</sup>. Hong Kong's economy thrived during these years, with annual GDP growth rates of 14.2% in 1962 and 15.7% in 1963.<sup>71</sup>

From these facts, we can infer the causes of the “62 Great Exodus to Hong Kong” as follows:

First, on the PRC side, the restriction against leaving the country was lifted and surveillance on those entering the frontier area was eased, so that the Chinese could freely approach the Sino-British border. In most cases, the PRC police did *not* stop these Chinese attempting to leave the PRC without proper travel documents. The Chinese authority did not intervene, not even arresting some of them on suspicion of “smuggling” out of the country; and far from being impeded, this immigration flow was quite organised<sup>72</sup>. The Beijing government must have wanted to test its political claim that Hong Kong was occupied by the British through a series of wars of aggression and subsequent unequal treaties with the Qing Dynasty, thus the PRC should have residual sovereignty in Hong Kong. This political position was manifested later in an independent left-wing Chinese journal published in Hong Kong quoting the words of a senior official of Guangdong Province, who proclaimed the need to “crash the imperialistic blockade (*chong po di guo zhu yi feng suo*, 衝破帝國主義封鎖)”<sup>73</sup> imposed by the British colonial government and claimed that, as Hong Kong was an indispensable part of Guangdong Province, any Chinese should therefore be free to enter Hong Kong. In responding to the PRC claim of “residual sovereignty,” the British Hong Kong government mobilised the police force to assert the legitimacy of its territorial sovereignty by removing the Chinese through labelling them as “illegal.” However, being aware of the tacit source of this international dispute, the British authority in Hong Kong ordered the RHKP *not* to use firearms<sup>74</sup> to avoid incidents that might develop into a dispute questioning the legitimacy of colonial rule over Hong Kong.

Second, there was indeed cause among grassroots PRC Chinese to leave the country for Hong Kong. The Great Leap Forward policy by Chairman Mao created impoverishment, starvation, and accidents arising from irrational policy of rural industrialisation, e.g. to set up a blast furnace in every commune; these conditions provided more than enough reason to force peasants in the communes to seek a better life in Hong Kong. The words of an elder in Shenzhen, which sound just like the Tiebout hypothesis, depicts this mentality: “Capitalism or socialism, I voted with my foot!”<sup>75</sup> This cause was quite similar to that for population flow from East to West Germany.

Third, as had always been the case, the Hong Kong British took a passive attitude to the inflow of immigrant Chinese, yet actively curbed it if it was excessive, as it might have put a burden on the squatter clearance and resettlement programme rather than supplying fresh labour power to the growing export-oriented industrialization process. Nevertheless, the community spirit and reciprocity shown by the ethnic Cantonese-speaking Chinese in Wa Shan must have created astonishment and serious worry, as it was a manifestation of the Chinese setting themselves against the British. To wedge apart this community of Cantonese-speaking Chinese at the Sino-British border and cultivate the identity of “Hongkongers (*Heung Gong Yahn* 香港人)” rather than Chinese, in the intersubjectivity of the locals to establish Hong Kong as a territorial entity thus became the task of the colonial British thereafter.

### e) Narrow Scope of Colonial British Towards “62 Da Tao Gang” in Cold-War Geopolitics

The population of Hong Kong increased from 1946 to 1962 by 2 million to 3.5 million<sup>76</sup>. In the face of the huge influx of immigrants, the colonial British decided to erect much tougher fence with dannert wire behind the then-existing chain-link fence. The border thus became armed with two parallel fences.

Yet with this “Hong Kong Wall” having been erected out of the narrow interests of the colonial British, it created problems on a global scale when inserted into Cold War politics. In fact, the immigrants during the “62 *Da Tao Gang*” included two to three thousand Chinese, whose demeanor was “tinged with truculence,” showing up and determined to enter into Hong Kong. The police allowed them to enter “quietly,” arrested and transported them to the Police Training Contingent for repatriation. The RHKP suspected that they were of urban origin, as compared with the starving peasants<sup>77</sup>.

The intention of the “wall” was thus suspected to block dissident PRC Chinese who wanted to seek political asylum in the capitalist world by way of Hong Kong. Hong Kong had consulates of various western countries, which occasionally accept genuine political asylum seekers. Yet, in order for these dissident Chinese to be reviewed by these consulates for qualification for political asylum, they somehow had to pass through the “Hong Kong wall” in their own capacity without being intercepted by the Hong Kong police, to reach Hong Kong Island where the consulates clustered. The United States, for example, maintained a huge consulate building in the Central District of Hong Kong Island partly as a base for intelligence targeted against the PRC. In many cases, however, these asylum seekers were regrettably caught at the border and invariably repatriated to the PRC together with would-be immigrants who wanted to stay in Hong Kong for economic reasons.

However, this issue was not seriously taken up by the colonial British, and thus no major changes of policy took place as a consequence<sup>78</sup>. The British colonial government obviously did not want to dabble in Cold War global politics head on, as it did not want to arouse the unwanted anger of the PRC government, which could have taken over Hong Kong by military force with ease. Protection of Hong Kong as a territorial entity under British sovereignty on Chinese soil was thus achieved through the sacrifice of the human rights of the Chinese.

This narrow-minded colonial geopolitics aroused the concern of a Member of Parliament in London in the British Parliament on 15 May 1964, this being the Conservative MP Sir William Teeling<sup>79</sup>. Sir William pointed out, “The Foreign Office is absolutely terrified of Peking and it would not do anything to offend Peking unless it looked as if it might offend the United States a bit more.”

Demands not to repatriate immigrants back to the PRC, but to forward them to Taiwan, were also dispatched from various bodies in Taiwan to the Governor as well as from descendants of the Kuomintang in Rennie’s Mill, Hong Kong<sup>80</sup> to the Prime Minister of the UK, but not much respect was given, either.

## f) Immigrants Fill the Labour Demands for Capital Accumulation in the Late 1960s

From the year 1961 to 1970, 57,524 natives of Guangdong Province migrated legally into Hong Kong. The exact figure of “illegal” immigrants who succeeded in settling themselves in Hong Kong, estimated through the number of Hong Kong identity cards issued, was 178,324<sup>81</sup>.

The Chinese living in the people’s communes near the Hong Kong border earned incomes ranging from one-seventh to one-tenth of those of citizens in Hong Kong. This created a permanent pressure for potential labour migration from the PRC into Hong Kong.

An RHKP officer named Singleton identified a kind of chain migration, mediated by market agents called *se tau* (“sneakhead,” 蛇頭) who played a considerable role. They recruited prospective immigrants for a fee by spreading glamorous rumours of life in Hong Kong. Singleton described the property of the immigrants coming from the PRC as follows<sup>82</sup>:

The average illegal immigrants is male, aged between 15-19 years, is single, poorly educated and comes from a rural agricultural background. He is disenchanted with life in his home province/county/village where even if he has a job he is very poorly paid (200 RMB, HK\$300 a month if he is lucky) by Hong Kong standards.

Hong Kong’s economy flourished, on export-oriented industrial capitalism, growing at 213.2% per decade from 1961<sup>83</sup>. It picked up in 1968, enjoying annual GDP growth rates of 3.3% in 1968 and 11.3% in 1969. For the from period August 1967 to May 1968, the Hong Kong government sometimes suspended and at other times resumed the repatriations on a seemingly ad hoc basis<sup>84</sup>. The Governor of Hong Kong then directed that repatriation be ceased, and further confirmed in March 1969 that “there should be no question of using force to repatriate illegal immigrants”<sup>85</sup>. The immigrants from the PRC thereby could enter Hong Kong freely if they were determined to do so. The fundamental policy in the late 1960s was that they were “released in Hong Kong if it was confirmed that they would resist repatriation”<sup>86</sup>.

Furthermore, even immigrants from the PRC

who did not qualify for release within Hong Kong under the Director of Immigration’s policy were presented for repatriation at Lo Wu. If the illegal immigrants resisted repatriation they were presented at the Border line on two further and separate occasions. If repatriation was not successful after a total of three attempts, the immigrants were set free in Hong Kong<sup>87</sup>.

Some immigrants crossed the border into the PRC, but changed their mind and came back again to Hong Kong.

In this period, the amount of immigration from the PRC was highly controlled by the PRC government, rather than that of Hong Kong. The PRC took quite a restrictive policy toward out-migration in the period between 1966 and 1976. “[A]ny person who applied to leave China was regarded as being dissatisfied with the Chinese socialist system and suspected of having colluded with a foreign country to carry out illicit activities against China.”<sup>88</sup> Migrants therefore risked their lives for attempting to leave the PRC. The number of immigrants into Hong Kong in the late 1960s inevitably became much smaller than in the first half of the 1960s. In spite of the establishment of the “Anti-Illegal Immigration Bureau” in September 1962<sup>89</sup>, the colonial government did not need to block the number of incoming immigrants.

Immigrants thus came at their own risk to Hong Kong, where they received a rousing reception. They were expected to fill the lowest segment of the labour market, since no prerequisites for qualifications were set by the government as to, for example, the extent of funds or skills that they possessed.

In many cases, the incoming PRC Chinese did not have any ties of family and friends in Hong Kong. Upon their release from Yuen Long (the New Territories) Police Station, there were in many cases no one receiving them with a working knowledge of the geography of Hong Kong. They thus quite often became victims of illegal taxi sharks who charged exorbitant fares for transporting them to the city centres of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. The police were then generous enough to give them free bus tickets<sup>90</sup>. Lui was quite apt in pointing out, “[i]llegal immigration from China during this period [1960s] was by no means a major problem... Especially in the early 1970s, there was in Hong Kong a labour shortage which was actually alleviated by migrants from China.”<sup>91</sup>

Another reason for this policy was to achieve social integration within the colony. The colonial British was naturally aware of the struggle in Wa Shan in 1962. Governor thus commented that it was “not of sufficient importance to risk the considerable public outcry” for maltreatment of the incoming Chinese<sup>92</sup>.

Thus, this apparently lenient policy of in-migration worked to kill two birds with one stone.

## **5. The Third Stage: The “Touch-Base Policy” and Contrived Laissez-Faireism in the Labour Market**

### **a) Need for a More Systematic Control of Border Porosity**

In this straightforward admission of immigrants from the PRC, the Hong Kong Government did not effectively deploy its major weapon: the manipulation of border porosity as a policy variable in 1960s.

In the latter half of the 1960s, the ideological impact of China’s Cultural Revolution began to be felt severely in Hong Kong. Labour struggles with strong ethnic undertones resistant to British colonial rule took place on Hong Kong’s factory floors, with workers reading the *Analects of Mao Zedong*. This trend continued into the 1970s, with 40-60 thousand lost labour days per year. These labour struggles were not official actions, such as walkouts by organised labour unions exercising their right to strike, but included such things as lost labour due to guerilla-type struggles and wildcat strikes, breakages of company equipment, or harsh arguments between management and disgruntled workers<sup>93</sup>. In fact, the power of organised labour was rather weak in Hong Kong. The labour market and concomitant eruption of class struggle was thereby much dependent upon laissez-faire market situation.

The economic boom of Hong Kong based on export-oriented light industrialization continued up to 1973, thanks to the competitive advantage of Hong Kong in labour cost thus created; yet the rapid GDP growth rate of 12.4% in 1973 plunged to 2.3% per annum in 1974. The colonial government then began to claim that the excessive inflow of immigrants from the PRC would increase social expenditures by the Government Office in housing, education, policing, and other areas, and presented a huge dilemma for the government.

Seen from this light, the ad hoc immigration policy of the colonial government in the 1960s to the early 1970s needed to be restructured into a more systematic one. As the labour supply from the PRC had been totally dependent upon the will or aspiration of the Chinese people to flow into Hong Kong, instigated by the income difference between both sides of the border, there had been little way for the British to control it to hit the balance between the need for a labour supply and the social expenditure that the government had to pay for the immigrants.

With the economy stagnating, it became necessary for the colonial government to proactively scrap the past haphazard reiteration of suspending and resuming the repatriation of the PRC Chinese, and instead to introduce more systematic labour market regulation through the manipulation of border porosity.

### **b) The “Touch-Base Policy”**

The policy that thus reached fruition was the “Touch Base (or “Reached Base”) Policy.” It was introduced on 30 November 1974, together with the resumption of the forced repatriation of *intercepted* “illegal” Chinese immigrants; and the policy lasted until the day before 23 October 1980, when the colonial Government adopted the new policy of repatriating *all* the “illegal” immigrants to the PRC.

Industrial production was clustered beyond the hilly New Territories in the urbanised areas, which were more than 20 kilometres away in Kowloon and on Hong Kong Island. In this new policy, only the immigrants who somehow managed to cross this area to reach the urbanised areas without being intercepted could get a Hong Kong ID card, a job, and a place to live. Skeldon commented that the “Touch Base Policy” seemed “a very British, ‘sporting’ approach to a unique international problem.”<sup>94</sup> Taking the configuration of space of Hong Kong to be a ballpark, it indeed worked something like baseball game: incoming immigrants from the PRC spotted and arrested in the hilly terrain of the New Territories were regarded as “out” and forcibly repatriated to the PRC irrespective of their will to remain in Hong Kong; while migrants who succeeded in making their way to reach bases in the urbanised areas of Kowloon or Hong Kong Island were considered “safe” and allowed to remain, and were issued with Hong Kong identity cards that gave them the right to work in Hong Kong.

While the flow of immigrants might seem like “sport” to the colonial British, it was for PRC Chinese a serious act indeed of risking one’s life to join this “sport” game to come to Hong Kong for a higher income and better life. Just like stoical athletes, they kept trying “until they make it.” Some prospective immigrants were captured on nine occasions<sup>95</sup>. Naturally, not everyone won in this game. Other would-be immigrants from the PRC attempted to swim across Deep Bay and Mirs Bay, which separate the PRC from Hong Kong. In 1979, 451 dead bodies of prospective Chinese immigrants were found in Hong Kong, and in 1980, the final year of the Touch-Base Policy, 224 dead bodies were found, among whom 188 were caught in fishing nets in Hong Kong’s territorial waters. The bays separating the PRC and Hong Kong are notorious for their strong currents, sharks, and cold water temperature that causes “cold shock” quickly. Some fragile boats that left PRC fully loaded with Chinese disintegrated and sunk before they reached the shores of Hong Kong<sup>96</sup>.

Another way for immigrants to cross the border was to hide themselves in a freight car or

in the freezers of Hong-Kong bound freight trains. After the train crossed the border and approached the terminus, they jumped off in Beacon Hill Tunnel or at the railway yards<sup>97</sup>.

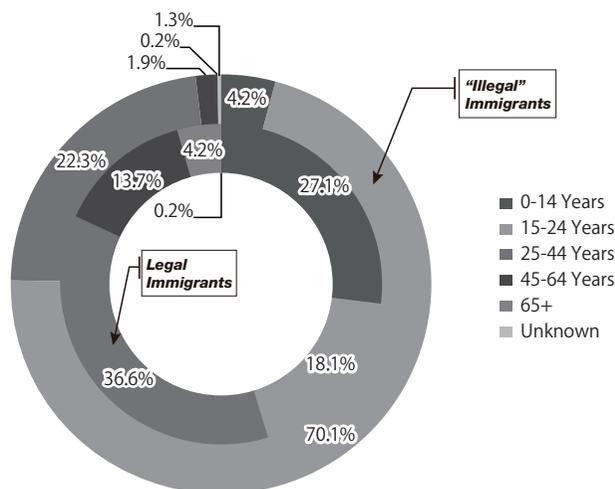
**c) Demographic Property of the Immigrants from the PRC**

The demographic property of the migrants coming from the PRC to Hong Kong during this period are shown in Figure 2.

The places of origin of “illegal” immigrants were 99.7% from Guangdong Province, whereas in case of legal immigrants, the places of origin spread to wider provinces of the PRC, with Guangdong Province consisting of only 55.1% and neighbouring Fujian Province 24.9%<sup>98</sup>. One of the main reasons for this difference was the language barrier. In order to enter into job market immediately upon arrival, one needed to be able to speak Cantonese, the unofficial native language of Hong Kong, as well as the dialect in most parts of Guangdong Province. Speakers of Putonghua or Mandarin Chinese, the national language of the PRC, cannot make conversation in Cantonese without learning. Immigrants from elsewhere in the PRC therefore took more time to assimilate into the local language environment, which only legal immigrants could afford.

In terms of age and gender, as shown in Figure 2, legal immigrants between the ages of 25 and 44 comprised 36.6% of the total, and were the largest group; while among “illegal” immigrants, those between the ages of 15 and 24 were more than 70% of the total. Among all age groups, the ratio of male to female shows slightly less male at 97.6 for legal immigrants (female = 100), while for “illegal” immigrants the figure was overwhelmingly male dominated, at 311<sup>99</sup>. From this, we can see that the migration of “illegal” immigrants was essentially a labour migration from low-income farming villages to urban areas in search of higher wages by immediately entering the unskilled segment of the labour market.

In this regard, the 1981 Hong Kong census shows the unemployment rate for the overall Chinese immigrant population between the ages of 15 and 39 who arrived in Hong Kong in the period between 1976 and 1980 at between 2.0% and 3.4%. This low figure suggests that



**Figure 2: Age Distribution of Immigrants from the PRC**

Source: *Immigration Statistics*, Census and Statistics Dept., Hong Kong

(quoted in: Ronald Skeldon, “Hong Kong and its Hinterland: A Case of International Rural-to-Urban Migration?” *Asian Geographer*, 5 (1), 1986, p. 8)

qualifications and personal traits of immigrants from the PRC were clearly extremely well adapted to the demands of Hong Kong's labour market.

The segments of the labour market that immigrants entered are shown in Figure 3. Almost 75% of "illegal" immigrants engaged in jobs as unskilled labour, including factories, driving, and other physical labour. The most sought-after labour in Hong Kong at the time was for industrial production and construction, and we can see that immigrants supplied labour to these sectors and thereby contributed substantially to the growth of the Hong Kong economy.

The wage rates of the immigrants ("illegal" and legal combined) were lower than those of the local, non-immigrant Hong Kong residents (Figure 4). The median wage rates when the "Touch Base Policy" was in effect were approximately 80% those of Hong Kong residents. The

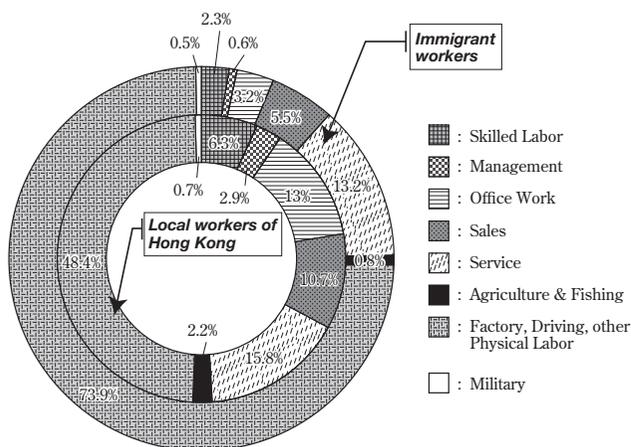


Figure 3: Worker Occupations: A Comparison of Local and Immigrant Workers

Source: Hong Kong 1981 Census, Main Report, Vol. 1 p. 190

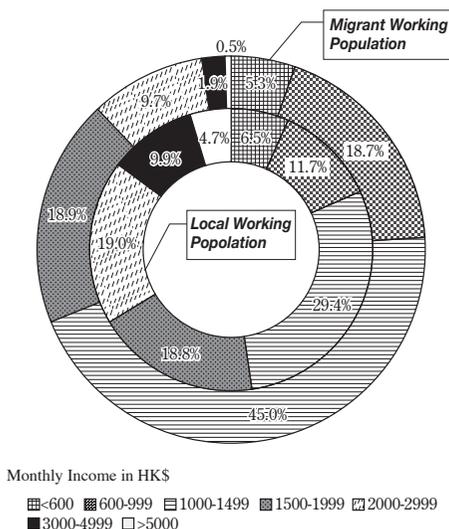


Figure 4: Percentage Distribution of Migrant and Local Working Population

Source: Hong Kong 1981 Census, op cit., Vol. 1, pp. 190-1.

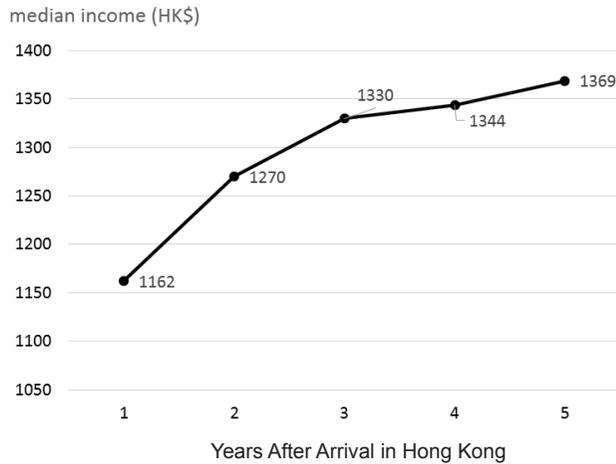


Figure 5: The Relation Between Median Income (1981) and Number of Years After Arrival in Hong Kong

Source: *Hong Kong 1981 Census, op cit.*, Vol. 1 pp. 190-1.

census taken in 1981 also show that the median income of the immigrants rose as their year of arrival got earlier (Figure 5). This suggests frequent job hopping of labour, seeking and moving to higher wage positions whenever possible. In sum, these data show that the immigrants who managed to enter into Hong Kong worked hard in spite of lower wages, yet they acted individually as microeconomic agents to strive for higher incomes. Their “market-fundamentalist” behaviour was fairly successful.

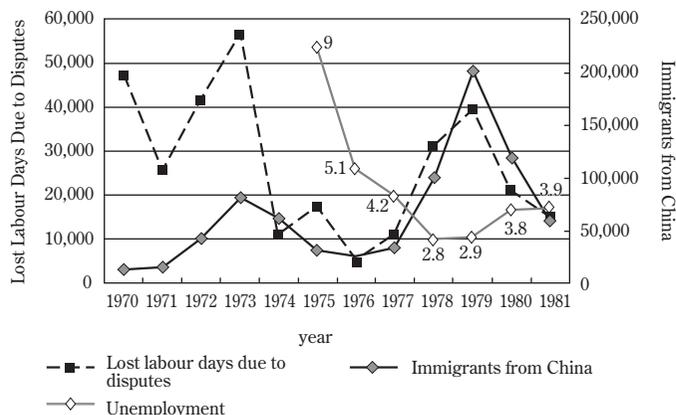
#### d) The Effect of the Policy on the Regulation of Capitalism in Colonial Hong Kong

Based on the above statistical observations as to the nature of immigrants in relation to the nature of the labour market in Hong Kong, let us consider the effects of the “Touch Base Policy” on the Hong Kong economy as well as on social integration.

When the policy was implemented in 1974, the labour disputes of the late 1960s had already begun to ebb, and the total inflow of both legal and “illegal” immigrants from the PRC (the solid black line) began to show a remarkable parallel trend with lost labour days associated with labour disputes (the broken line). Further overlaying the solid grey line of the unemployment rate from 1975, we obtain Figure 6.

The unemployment rate in 1975 was high, despite a moderate increase in disputes compared with previous years, mainly due to economic stagnation generated by the oil crisis that was carried over from the previous year<sup>100</sup>. The general government unemployment statistics before 1975 are absent, yet in the plastics industry, then one of the leading economic sectors in Hong Kong, the unemployment rate was 26% for the period from April to December 1974, as opposed to 11% in the previous year<sup>101</sup>. Chinese labour was obviously becoming superfluous, which must have the reason that triggered the colonial government to introduce the “Touch-Base Policy.”

Thereafter, the unemployment rate dropped precipitously, heading toward almost full employment towards the end of 1975, due to low inventory in the North American market and



**Figure 6: Effects of the “Touch Base Policy”**

Sources: “Lost Labour Days Due to Disputes” was compiled from *Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics*, various years. “Immigrants from China” is a total of both legal and “illegal” immigrants. Data on legal immigrants for 1970 were obtained from *EPA Resources* Vol. 1, no. 1; for 1971 from *South China Morning Post*, 10 September 1973; for 1972-77 from *Parliamentary Information* No. 68, HK Government Office, London; for 1978 from *South China Morning Post*, 2 January 1979; for 1979 from *Hong Kong: The Facts of Immigration*, HK Government, 1980; for 1980 from *South China Morning Post*, 22 September 1981; and for 1981 from *South China Morning Post*, 5 February 1982. Data on illegal immigrants for 1970-72 were obtained from *Annual Department Report*, Director of Immigration, HK Government, various years; for 1973 from *South China Morning Post*, 19 November 1974; for 1974 from *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 20 December 1974; for 1975-76 from *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 March 1978; for 1977-78 from *Hong Kong 1981: A Review of 1980*, HK Government; and for 1979-81 from *Parliamentary Information*, 8 January 1982, HK Government Office, London. “Unemployment” data were obtained from *Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics and Monthly Digest of Statistics*, various years.

a concomitant increase in orders<sup>102</sup>. At the end of March 1976, the President of the Chinese Manufacturers’ Association warned “that local industry will soon be faced with a serious shortage of labour.”<sup>103</sup>

In June 1976, an electronics plant was forced to shut down temporarily due to labour shortages, which led to a dramatic increase of labour disputes in 1976. The capitalists in Hong Kong were well aware of the relation between the class struggle and the condition of the labour market. For example, a major printing firm commented, “workers are taking advantage of the [labour] shortage ... with excessive wage demands”; thus “printing house are being forced to pay more wages to prevent strikes.”<sup>104</sup> An electronics factory was also forced to raise the wage rate by 25% to attract enough labour for continuing operations<sup>105</sup>.

The capitalist class in Hong Kong became more vocal in solving the tension in class relations by regulating the labour market. When the labour supply became depleted again in 1978, five organizations among the garment factory owners asked the government to “relax immigration laws to enable companies to import labour for the industry.”<sup>106</sup> They realised that control of border porosity was the key to regulate labour markets, although mention of the immigrants from the PRC was carefully avoided. There was accepted antipathy towards them among Hong Kong Chinese, who had been brainwashed to call the immigrants from the PRC “*Tai Huen Chai*” (big circle boys, 大圈仔), and discriminated against them, even though the ethnicities are the same on both sides of the border.

The chairman of the Hongkong Christian Industrial Committee was, however, more explicit about this. He stated, “We have an influx of 50 to 60 people every day from China”; thus, “why do we want to import labourers from elsewhere?”<sup>107</sup> A Chinese journal explicitly stated in 1979:

“From [19]57 to 69, the industrial workforce increased by more than 370 thousand, whereas during the same time period, including the tide of incoming immigrants, more than 200 thousand people entered from the mainland to Hong Kong, having well replenished the great portion of the labour force needed for rapid growth of industry.”<sup>108</sup> The journal therefore pointed out that “Everyone is equally Chinese, from a geographical area of their own to another area that also belongs to him/her [Hong Kong]; this is the natural cause of things, and there is no reason to refuse the Chinese from this side [mainland].”<sup>109</sup>

Indeed, it was not the border between Hong Kong and such neighbouring countries as the Philippines or Taiwan that mattered, but the one right to the north of the colony. Statistics reveal that the colonial government tacitly regulated the labour market of Hong Kong by adjusting the immigrant inflow from the PRC, deploying the “Touch-Base Policy.”

The relationship is striking (Figure 6). The labour market of Hong Kong industry was kept optimum through tacit regulation of the volume of “illegal” immigrants entering into the urban areas of Hong Kong. The immigrants were controlled in the New Territories much like turning a spigot on and off, and in doing so, the labour supply from the PRC into Hong Kong increased and decreased at the will of the British Hong Kong Government, such that class struggle within Hong Kong would never boil over. Through this effort, the colonial government regulated both capital-labour and ethnic relations; and thereby it regulated the stable accumulation of capital and achieved social integration among the Chinese in Hong Kong, which might turn into anti-British ethnic struggles, like those that happened twice in the late 1960s.

The Hong Kong mass media repeatedly lambasted the government’s lack of effective measures to prevent PRC immigrants from flowing into Hong Kong while the “Touch Base Policy” was in effect. The authorities also continued to ignore completely the indispensable contribution of these PRC Chinese to the Hong Kong economy. For example, the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, the leading English-language magazine in Hong Kong close to the government, published an article “Much talk, but little action,” noting that, over the previous three years, the dream of better, less crowded housing, schools, and hospitals envisioned by Hong Kong Chinese did not materialise, thus essentially putting the blame for the lack of public services on the 400 thousand immigrants from the PRC, rather than on the colonial government, where the responsibility actually lay<sup>110</sup>.

Cantonese-speaking immigrants from Guangdong Province, once given stable labour and housing, were quick to assimilate into Hong Kong society. There were almost no violent conflicts between Hong Kong Chinese and the Chinese from the PRC, except for those engaged in the organised triad societies. In the end, while the Hong Kong Chinese were subjects of the British dependent territory, most of their grandparents hailed from mainland China a couple of generations previously. They are in the same ethnic group after all, as they manifested in Wa Shan in 1962.

## **6. The Forth Stage: The End of the “Touch-Base Policy” and Forced Repatriation**

### **a) Termination of the “Touch-Base Policy”**

After the death of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiao Ping declared in the third plenary session of the 11th CPC Central Committee, held at the end of 1978, the economic reform toward a market economy and opened the door to foreign direct investment. While containing labour behind the “Bamboo Curtain” and under single-party communist control, the PRC government volunteered herself into the system of the NIDL. With the competitive advantage of an inexhaustible supply of low wage labour, the PRC burst onto the global economy, earning the sobriquet of “factory of the world.”

In 1980, there were problems of soaring local interest rates and the concomitant trend of the relocation of manufacturing plants outside of Hong Kong<sup>111</sup>. The unemployment rate again increased, and labour disputes dropped sharply.

In this shifting economic and political situation, the “Touch-Base Policy” was scrapped for good on 23 October 1980. Until the midnight on 26 October, when the grace period for the “illegal” immigrants from the PRC expired, a huge queue of 6,952 Chinese was formed in front of the Victoria Barracks in Hong Kong Island to apply for Hong Kong identity cards<sup>112</sup>. Thereafter, not only the immigrants, but also those employers hiring workers without the proper identity card were to be prosecuted.

The termination of “Touch-Base Policy” was due not only to the short-term economic fluctuation, but also to the consequence of longer-term and structural reforms of the Hong Kong economy and the designation of the once desolate farming village of Shenzhen right opposite the Sino-British border as a special economic zone in March 1980. In response to these developments, the Hong Kong government’s Financial Secretary of the Colonial Government Office, Philip Haddon-Cave, was named as Chief Secretary of the Legislative Council in 1979.

Haddon-Cave laid out a policy of industry diversification and indicated a move in the direction of a more sophisticated industrial structure and knowledge centralization<sup>113</sup>. In the 1980s, Hong Kong gradually shifted from light industrial manufacturing to being a management center, processing contracts on commission using a new pool of unskilled, low-wage labour located in Shenzhen. Thanks to this spatial shift to the East Asian NIDL, Hong Kong no longer needed an influx of PRC immigrant labour that placed demands on the colonial government in bearing the burden of its social cost. The PRC Chinese workers were kept on the other side of the border, the porosity of which had been reduced to a minimum for labourers, while the only increase in porosity was that of investment by the capitalists in Hong Kong and overseas. Thus after the scrapping of the Touch-Base Policy, all PRC Chinese were subject to forceful repatriation.

### **b) Continued Inflow of Migrants from the PRC after October 1980**

There were two exceptions to this repatriation by the colonial power:

First, the colonial government kept accepting legal immigrants even after the scrap of the Touch-Base Policy. The quota of legal immigrants from the PRC was 150 per day, which was

distributed across the provinces by the PRC authority. Provinces far away from Hong Kong, such as Heilongjiang or Yunnan, had unfilled quotas, which was exploited by PRC Chinese living closer to Hong Kong, who legally moved to these remote provinces. The number of legal immigrants amounted to 55,473 in 1980<sup>114</sup>.

Second, the Immigration Department of Hong Kong in the beginning gave humanitarian treatment to allow minor immigrants to remain in Hong Kong, provided that both parents lived legally in Hong Kong and the minor was handed over directly to them<sup>115</sup>. This policy measure however instigated the “smuggling” of children and gave rise to immigration syndicates in the PRC that offered “safe passage” of children from the PRC to Hong Kong for HK\$20,000<sup>116</sup>, so that the children could travel alone. Children were smuggled into Hong Kong with the parents hoping that once the child was able to get legal right of abode in Hong Kong, they as parents could also legally settle in Hong Kong. In one month from 1 October 1981 alone, 1,148 children under the age of 12 arrived in Hong Kong. Upon arrival, they enrolled in schools and applied for registration to remain legally in Hong Kong, obviously with the assistance of the immigration syndicates. The parents in the PRC then applied to enter into Hong Kong for sake of “family reunification.”<sup>117</sup> In addition, some pregnant PRC women “illegally” entered into Hong Kong to give birth to an infant<sup>118</sup>, who could legally remain in Hong Kong by *jus soli*.

In order to curb this practice of using children as a tool to evade the immigration restrictions, a new immigration law passed on 9 December 1981 stipulated that the children smuggled into Hong Kong without parents should be placed under “protective custody” in a boys’ or girls’ home and then eventually repatriated<sup>119</sup>. Further, on 27 April 1987, the Immigration Department introduced a stricter regulation, requiring parents who had already settled in Hong Kong legally to register their children within 26 hours of their arrival from the PRC.

In the meantime, control over the residents of Hong Kong was also strengthened. Every resident was asked to carry some form of identity, which was, for most of the residents, the Hong Kong identity card. The RHKP and the Immigration Department were given power to check this form of identity at any time<sup>120</sup>. The RHKP did actually check the identity cards of ca. 750 thousand Hong Kong residents<sup>121</sup>. Hong Kong thus became more of a surveillance society, using “illegal” immigrants as pretext.

Adult immigrants did keep coming from the PRC to Hong Kong overland or by means of boats (a speedboat or a regular boat with a secret compartment) across the bays separating Hong Kong with the PRC, although the number diminished considerably. Whereas 400-500 “illegal immigrants” had been captured per day before the scrapping of the “Touch-Base Policy”, by late 1980 the number had dwindled only to 2 to 20 per day; and whereas 9,248 “illegal” immigrants were captured in November 1979, the number went down to 625 a year later<sup>122</sup>.

There were immigration syndicates for adults that undertook “illegal immigration” for a package deal of HK\$ 25 to 30 thousand, which included assisted passage to Hong Kong and a forged Hong Kong identity card, essential to get a job once the immigrants arrived<sup>123</sup>. These immigrants were enticed by groundless rumors such as “jobs available on construction sites, factories and restaurants,” HK “\$4,000 to \$6,000 a month can easily earned,” “[a]ll I[illegal] I[m]migrants] will be issued with ID cards soon,” etc<sup>124</sup>.

According to RHKP observations, these would-be immigrants came from poorer eastern

counties of Guangdong Province, while those from more prosperous areas such as the Guangzhou metropolis or the Pearl River Delta were rare. There were eight counties from whence most of the immigrants originated<sup>125</sup>, suggesting the existence of a chain-migration process. The reality of this process being encouraged through word of mouth was evidenced by the fact that the “aiders and abettors,” mostly from the same county of origin, were of assistance in crossing the border into Hong Kong “at a particular place” well known to their predecessors<sup>126</sup>. However, with the share of those “coming from the provinces other than Guangdong” amounting only to about 10%<sup>127</sup>, the rural–urban migration pressure from the poorer rural areas in the PRC to enter more prosperous Hong Kong never ceased.

Some of these migrants were unable to find jobs because of fear among the Hong Kong Chinese, whom the colonial Government came to penalise stiffly if they hired Chinese without the proper Hong Kong ID card. Those who couldn’t find jobs turned to beggars and slept in the streets; and ultimately they sometimes gave themselves up to a police station for repatriation to the PRC<sup>128</sup>, committed suicide<sup>129</sup>, or engaged in such crime as armed burglary<sup>130</sup>.

Yet, some determined immigrants did gain employment on construction sites, restaurants, factories, farms, etc., with a forged Hong Kong identity card produced and provided by professional syndicates operating in the PRC<sup>131</sup>. They earned ca. HK\$100/day to HK\$5,000 to 6,000/month, and remitted a part of their wages to their home in the PRC<sup>132</sup>. Among them, construction sites were most popular, as there was a labour shortage in this sector<sup>133</sup>. Occasionally the police raided these sites, and for two years from the beginning of 1990 to the end of 1991, 2,367 “illegal” immigrants were arrested<sup>134</sup>. Nevertheless, their stay was often temporary, even if they could evade the police raids; they were singletons living in small cubicles and after they earned the desired amount in Hong Kong, they tended to return to their homes in the PRC<sup>135</sup>. Although some of the immigrants engaged in such criminal activities as armed robbery and were specially recruited in the PRC for this purpose, even the RHKP admitted that “their involvement in crime is low.”<sup>136</sup> Thus, these immigrants did contribute to the Hong Kong economy by reducing construction costs, thus promoting the international competitiveness of Hong Kong.

## 7. Conclusion

The colonial government contrived the *laissez-faire* migration of labour from low-wage to high-wage regions by manipulating border porosity. This contrived *laissez-faire* approach with respect to immigration policy, rather than the real *laissez-faire* flow of the people across the Sino-British border, regulated capital accumulation and the social integration of Hong Kong, allowing more stable governance of the colony.

Under the constant pressure of *laissez-faire* in-migration of Chinese from mainland China, the colonial British remained passive in accepting such immigrants. Yet it was colonial British, not the Chinese, who had the power to control the porosity of the Sino-British boundary. In protecting the colonial entity of Hong Kong and regulating its capitalism, the colonial British had no respect for the ties of the family, friends, and relatives, and even the lives of the Cantonese-speaking Chinese, the natives of the area. The colonial government instead took pains to refine ways of manipulating border porosity to regulate capitalism in Hong Kong, in terms of class and

ethnic integration as well as in the sustenance and promotion of the colonial entity. At its acme stood the intriguing Touch-Base Policy. The colonial British deployed the power to control the porosity of the boundary skillfully, so that capital accumulation was best promoted while class struggle was well contained.

In achieving this, the colonial British were much skilful in deploying various spatial strategies. They split the ethnic integrity of Cantonese-speaking Chinese with the international boundary, using propaganda directed against *Tai Huen Chai*. They further confined the PRC Chinese off the Sino-British border, who remained there to create huge pool of cheap labour to be exploited by the capitalists of Hong Kong after 1980. This was indeed the secret key that pulled Hong Kong up into the ranks of the Asian newly industrialised economies, and eventually to become the administrative centre of manufacturing in East Asia.

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- 52) “The Coombes Report on Illegal Immigration in Hong Kong,” *op. cit.*, para. 13.
- 53) Minutes of the 4th and 5th Illegal Immigration Working Parties, held on 28 March and 11 April 1962, <CR 1/2/2091/57>.
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- 79) *Hansard*, 15 May 1964, columns 823-826.
- 80) The letter, signed by 68 bodies in Hong Kong, among which at least 14 were in Rennie’s Mill, was dispatched to the UK Prime Minister on 25 May 1962, and a letter signed by 176 civil organisations addressed to the Governor of Hong Kong was dispatched on 23 May 1962

<27 and 26 in CR 15/2091/62>.

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- 86) Thompson, P., *op. cit.*, para. 60.
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- 88) Guofu Liu, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-315.
- 89) Lui Ting, Terry, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
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- 91) Lui Ting, Terry, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
- 92) Thompson, P. *op. cit.*, para. 67.
- 93) Similar phenomena were reported in the Pearl River Delta. When a Japanese company attempted to reduce labour costs by reducing the quality of meals for its Chinese employees amidst the tight labour market conditions, the disgruntled employees brought the factory to a halt by destroying cafeteria facilities (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 9 November 2004).
- 94) Ronald Skeldon, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- 95) *Bradford Telegraph & Argus*, 21 August 1979
- 96) *Hong Kong Standard*, 26 January 1981
- 97) *Hong Kong Standard*, 19 June 1979
- 98) Ronald Skeldon, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
- 99) Ronald Skeldon, *op. cit.*, pp.7-8.
- 100) *SCMP*, 2 June 1974.
- 101) *Hong Kong Standard*, 2 January 1975.
- 102) *SCMP*, 2 January 1976.
- 103) *SCMP*, 31 March 1976
- 104) *SCMP*, 8 April 1978.
- 105) *The Star*, 18 June 1976.
- 106) *SCMP*, 1 April 1978.
- 107) *SCMP*, 15 April 1978.
- 108) Wu Mo Ran, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
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- 112) Mary Lee, 31 October 1980, *op. cit.*, pp.10-11.
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- 116) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 32.
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- 119) *SCMP*, 12 December 1981.
- 120) Lui Ting, Terry, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- 121) Lui Ting, Terry, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- 122) *SCMP*, 5 January 1981.
- 123) *Hong Kong Standard*, 4 April 1981.
- 124) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 36.
- 125) Singleton, *op. cit.*, paras. 38-39.
- 126) Singleton, *op. cit.*, paras. 46 and 49.
- 127) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 40.
- 128) *Hong Kong Standard*, 2 February 1981.
- 129) *SCMP*, 13 January 1981 and *HK Standard*, 8 January 1981.
- 130) *SCMP*, 1 May 1981.
- 131) Singleton, *op. cit.*, paras. 93-97.
- 132) Singleton, *op. cit.*, paras. 73-75.
- 133) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 76.
- 134) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 79.
- 135) Singleton, *op. cit.*, para. 73.
- 136) Singleton, *op. cit.*, paras. 79 and 102.

# “Moroccan Architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century” and Public Space:

## A Viewpoint for Localizing Colonial Heritage

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### Introduction – Colonial Heritage and Public Space

To discuss colonial rule and its heritage holds difficulties that surpass the simple fact of their historical importance. For about 50 years, post-colonial studies have clarified the history and structure by which the colonizing countries and societies discriminated against the colonized people, the ruptures and conflicts within the colonized societies, and the duality and flexibility with which individuals made decisions within the limits of the time and the society. These accounts show visions of multiple actors, but are often different from not only the government’s position but also the shape of memory of the society; this has sometimes evoked an emotional backlash or research on a different country in a different era could often require that connections be made with contemporary social issues.

The research on the history of French colonial rule has also progressed over several decades. The fact that the idea of the “civilizing mission” legitimized the domination of other nations under the Republic, and that there were several positions for both colonial and colonised people has been revealed<sup>1</sup>. These results linked with laws on indemnification for colonial soldiers, or recognition of the slave trade as crimes against humanity, but also included a law which contained an article on education about the positive side of French rule.<sup>2</sup> There is also a discussion among historians as to whether it is possible to treat history as a field of politic.<sup>3</sup>

In that sense, the interpretation of constructions built in the colonial period is always queried on its positionality. Positively evaluating the value of constructions is different from supporting colonial rule, but sometimes it might be treated as the same issue and blamed as if it were. In this article, I will report a Non-Profit Organization in Casablanca, Morocco, which tries to protect the constructions of the colonial era. I have to confess that I initially thought that the meaning of their activity with its connection to French rule derived from its influence on their mentality. However, what we can see in this instance is the very simple fact that an evaluation of a building is not the same in every era, and that the use of buildings differs at different times in history. Buildings are used in different ways by multiple people, and acquire new meanings as time passes.

Morocco became a protectorate of France and Spain in 1912, and gained independence in

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1956. Casablanca developed rapidly during this relatively short period. The public space at the center of the city, which is now the object of re-evaluation, was created with prestigious buildings. Its centrality in the city now has the effect of increasing accessibility. No small number of people visit these buildings, which gives them the meaning of being a part of the public heritage. In this paper, I will discuss the efforts to retrieve colonial heritage as citizens' own public property through the activities of an NPO that facilitates this process.

## 1. Four spaces created under French rule

Casablanca became a window for commerce with Europe in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. After 1907, as France took advantage of this area and laid the foundations for its domination, European industries started to increase.<sup>4</sup> When Hubert Lyautay became the first General Resident, disordered urbanization was already underway. He designated Henri Prost who, as a master architect of urban planning in Moroccan cities, had received the prize – the *Grand Prix de Rome*. An architect who worked with Prost, Albert Laprade, left an essay in which he remembered that Prost had arrived with a three-month mandate and left ten years later.<sup>5</sup>

Prost, who had participated in an association – the *Musée Social* – which gathered together researchers for social reform, introduced zoning in Casablanca to improve sanitary conditions and separated the residential areas from industrial areas (Figure 1). Downwind of the latter, he planned factories, railways, cemeteries, slaughter house, and barracks. Europeans were not supposed to enter the old city – called the *médina* in the local language – which was separated from the new city lived in by Europeans, so as not to “diffuse” its sanitary situation (Figure 2).

The European commercial and residential area created in this way became a city with an *Art Déco* design which was popular in Europe in that period (Figure 3) and has a landscape that is very similar to European cities.

In one area of this European city, there was a quarter for the garrison. Prost planned to change this to an administrative block. Around the square, public sector buildings like the post office, city hall, bank, etc. were distributed, and an equestrian statue of Lyautay was erected in the center. The prestigious buildings around the square were designed by French architects, and they partially adopted local motifs (Figures 4, 5, 6). For example, the green roof tiles,

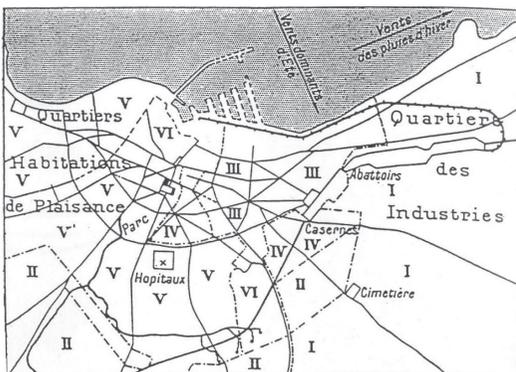


Figure 1. Zoning of Casablanca

(Cited from Cohen et Eleb 1998)



Figure 2. Old Postcard of Casablanca



Figure 3. European area



Figure 4. Post Office



Figure 5. City Hall



Figure 6. Bank



Figure 7. Habous District

which had been used for religious buildings, and local mosaics called *zellige*, ironworks, etc. were used somewhere in them.

Prost also created a residential area for local people (shown as VI in Figure 1, in the internal area). It was designed in “Arabic style” using the traditional houses of Rabat and Salé as a model, and a European sanitary system was also introduced<sup>6</sup> (Figure 7). It is called “Habous district” because it used a North-African religious fund of the same name, and two architects,

August Cadet, and Edmond Brion, carefully elaborated it. This area was lived in by relatively wealthy people.

Workers who streamed into Casablanca could not find enough places to live in the old médina and the Habous district alone. The *nouvelle médina*, the city for locals, was expanded, but people could not be enclosed in these places and instead formed *bidonvilles*, or squatter settlements. Laprade, among architects of the period who wrote a great deal about Morocco, said that no one could imagine such a large increase in the population.<sup>7</sup> After the Second World War, another architect, Michel Ecochard, made an effort to reduce the bidonvilles. He planned to mass produce houses in keeping with the idea that houses for locals should be Arabic. As a result, a suburban area was created with simple houses.

Thus, during 40 years of French rule, four types of urban spaces were created in Casablanca: the old médina, the new city for Europeans, the nouvelle médina including the Habous district, and a suburban area. The composition of these four urban spaces with very different landscapes is the basis of Casablanca today.

## **2. Casamémoire and Moroccan architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century**

After independence, until the 1980s, urban planning in Casablanca focused on eliminating the bidonvilles and people ignored buildings under French control. The policy to protect historic constructions was introduced in the protectorate period,<sup>8</sup> but modern buildings in Casablanca were not involved. The actor who brought a new movement was an NPO, Casamémoire. This group, which was founded in 1995, tries to establish the value of buildings constructed under French control and to promote their protection.

In the background, there is a global movement concerned with the protection of modern architecture. The DOCOMOMO, which aims to conserve modern architecture and its documentation, was founded in 1988, and the system of protection has been legislated in a number of countries. It is related to the situation where some distance has been gained from the period of modernization concerning conversion of industrial structures in developed countries, and there is a need to commercialize former factories and unused mines for tourism. Casamémoire also wants to create a core for tourism and urban planning using Casablanca's modern buildings<sup>9</sup> and it has begun research to protect and exploit them.

As I mentioned earlier, the Art Déco style was prevalent in Europe in the protectorate period, and there is a concentration of this style in Casablanca. Casamémoire investigates buildings one by one, lists the important ones, works with the government to protect them, and increases their value by publishing guidebooks and organizing events to inform people of their importance. Before they began their activities, some Art Déco buildings had been destroyed, but in 2003, 23 of them became the objects of protection of the Ministry of Culture.<sup>10</sup> They are classified as "architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century," rather than of the "protectorate period." In a guidebook titled *Guide to architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of Casablanca*, which Casamémoire published in 2011, 98 constructions including three anterior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century are presented.

Are there any objections to protecting buildings that recall French rule? In the interview with Casamémoire,<sup>11</sup> they said that there were "nationalists," however, they were very small in

number. On what basis can their activities be supported? To consider this question, we may turn to an event organized by the NPO – the “Casablanca Heritage Days.”

### 3. Casablanca Heritage Days

The buildings that Casamémoire tries to protect are both public and private; they are used for work or living, and people normally cannot visit them. The NPO organizes an event named the “Casablanca Heritage Days” with the city of Casablanca, the Ministry of Culture, the *Institut Français*, and the agglomeration of Casablanca, when people are allowed entry to public buildings, with the cooperation of a number of organizations. The event covers the old médina, the central part of the European city, and the Habous district, and some suburban buildings are also open depending on the year. What will be described here are my observations when I participated in this event in 2012.

The old médina is not only intricate and complex, but composed of many private spaces where nonresidents are not welcomed. If visitors are lost, they may bother residents, so Casamémoire provides a guided tour (Figure 8). In 2012, musical or magic performances for local children were also offered. Through examining the history of every building, the guide explained that the old médina cannot be understood as only in the Moroccan tradition; the continuous influence of Europe in features such as balconies which are not common in other Moroccan old cities indicates that Casablanca has had historically profound relations with other civilizations. The old médina of Casablanca has no lengthy history as cultural heritage itself, but if the functions of the European features are emphasized, a new evaluation appears from another perspective.

In the former European district, a guide waits in front of every building opened to the public in the central city, and people can visit with or without the guide (Figure 9). In each building, explanations are focused on the building’s details, and especially on the workmanship, rather than the whole design or the architect’s name. For example, in the city hall, the guide explained that the tile work used on the pillar was hand-crafted by Moroccan craftsmen, and the color was influenced by impressionism, or that partitions of the office were well elaborated, and there was no distortion even now because of the Moroccan art. In the tribunal court, another guide explained that there were very fine tile and iron works. In the bank, the explanation was that there were wonderful handmade wooden handrails on the staircase, and that on the front floor, people used white Carrara marble to display status along with green Moroccan marble. That is, the



Figure 8. Guided Tour in the Old Medina



Figure 9. Inside of the City Hall with Guide



Figure 10. In the Habous district

buildings are understood as Moroccan fabrications rather than having been left by the French. In fact, there was even a guide who explained that Moroccan craftsmen willingly participated in these projects.

In the Habous district, there was a guided tour because it is also a complex configuration, if not one comparable to the old médina. There the guide explained how the French architect, August Cadet, planned the whole design of this district, which was accepted by locals, and how local craftsmen made an effort to materialize this city without a help of European money (Figure 10). On the whole, the history of French rule is relativized, and people are trying to revise the ways of understanding the city of Casablanca within the context of the longer history of Morocco.

In a conference held at the event, speakers discussed the built environment of Casablanca in the larger global context. The urban planning of the colonial age in other countries was presented, and there was a discussion about the same problems (for example, bidonvilles), which occurred in the same period, even in France. The activities of Casamémoire are aimed exactly at re-interpreting the buildings of Casablanca in alternative ways.

The number of participants to this event approached 21,642 in 2016 according to the organizers.<sup>12</sup> The events are not only for adults, but for school programs, and there is also a stamp-collecting game for children. Through these programs, the NPO aims to increase the residents' affection and pride in their city. Guides are mainly volunteers, and wear the same T-shirt on which is written the words, "volunteers for my heritage." It is not "our" but "my" heritage. On the flyer of the 2013 event, they say "Please discover the heritage of your town." In doing so, they aim to change the consciousness and the historical view of their city.

## Concluding remarks

In 2013, the city of Rabat was inscribed on the world heritage list with the name "Modern Capital and Historic City: A Shared Heritage." Rabat became the capital under French control and the new city was constructed by the French, so it could be seen that Morocco was a positive country that accepted the history of colonization. However, when we consider the case of Casablanca, we can say that the background logic is not so simple as taking a colonial perspective. I would like to note some particular points of view on this matter.

First, Morocco was not a colony but a protectorate. France retained the sultan and decisions were ultimately made with his signature. In reality, sultans rarely refused the French decisions, but the difference in how this system was ruled may not be inconsequential. Baudez and Béguin, who undertook a research on colonial urban planning compared Algeria with Morocco and described the first as the style of the conqueror, the latter as the style of the protector.<sup>13</sup> They stated that in the style of the conqueror, the French showed their power to the locals through construction, but in the style of the protector, they refrained from destroying the local culture. As we saw above, the division of urban spaces that France created served the convenience of governance<sup>14</sup>, but the means of keeping a distance from the local culture would eventually lead to a positive understanding of actual buildings and urban landscapes. It is possible to say that the French ruling style facilitated the realization of the continuity of Moroccan culture.

In addition, the protection of modern architecture is shown in a global movement in these days. Moroccan cities that rapidly modernized in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are a treasure trove of modern architecture. It is possible that architects who had a chance to study in Europe or the United States, and who had a connection with global academic networks, realized the richness of architecture in Casablanca and wanted it to inform local people. Buildings with value are mainly situated in the former European district where investment was concentrated, but now this area can simply be seen as the “central city.”

Furthermore, what seems the most important to me is the length of time already 100 years these buildings have existed. They are precisely a part of the old history of Morocco. The expression “Moroccan architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century” is a restructured recognition of historicity beyond a superficial revision of “colonial buildings.” It is also important that they use “my” or “your” rather than “our” in the messages of the event. This protection should be supported by the affection of every citizen, and not merely be an evaluation by the government or specialists. If the citizens accept the buildings by visiting them, new public meanings can be created. The buildings in the central city were prestigious when they were constructed, but now the centrality of their position allows people easy access. If citizens visit them one by one, the buildings will continually gain even greater public value.

If we think of the situation like this, seeing the buildings just as part of the history of colonialism may be a biased way of seeing. As I mentioned it in the beginning, the meaning of a construction changes over the course of history. Through the interventions of citizens, it can be possible to create new public meanings.

On the other hand, with respect to the new meanings of public space, the social classes that can participate in the event may be limited. Even if there is a program of tours for schools, evaluating architecture is an elite act. The performance for children in the old médina during the Casablanca Heritage Days worked by absorbing the extraordinariness of the guided tours, but it did not connect to the understanding of the buildings. An inclusive approach might be, perhaps, a subject for Casablanca in the future.

## Acknowledgements

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## Notes

- 1) Chikako Hirano and other researchers of French history are introducing these fruits in Japan. Ex. Hirano C., *History of French Colonialism*. Jinbunshoin, 2002.
- 2) The article was heatedly criticized by former colonial countries and the national assembly decided to remove it one year after its adoption.
- 3) See Matsunuma, Miho, 2007, L'histoire, la mémoire et la loi – la controverse autour du passé colonial en France d'aujourd'hui. *European Studies*, pp.119-132.
- 4) Cohen, Jean-Louis et Eleb, Monique, 1998, *Casablanca : Mythes et figures d'une aventure urbaine*, Editions Hazan / Editions Belvisi, pp.33-39.
- 5) Laprade, Albert, *Lyautey, urbaniste : Souvenirs d'un témoin*, Horizons de France, 1934, p.9.
- 6) Laprade described it in this way: "the General Resident of France was a leader (...) considering the natives not as despicable subjects, but as men worthy of being respected and loved." (Laprade, Albert, Une ville créée spécialement pour les indigènes à Casablanca, in Jean Royer(dir.), *L'Architecture et l'urbanisme aux colonies et dans les pays tropicaux. Communications et rapports du congrès international de l'urbanisme aux colonies et dans les pays de latitude intertropicale*, vol.1, La Charité-sur-Loire, Delaunay, 1932-1935.)It shows that the sanitary system was seen as a symbol of civilization.
- 7) Preface of the book Cadet, A., 1953, *La Mahakma de Casablanca*, Paul Hartmann.
- 8) Belatik, Mohamed, 2003, Le patrimoine culturel marocain : richesse et diversité, In. Gaultier-Kurhan, Caroline, (dir.) *Patrimoine culturel marocain*, Maisonneuve & Larose, pp.17-37.
- 9) See interview of Amina Alaoui, the first president of Casamémoire: Daoud, Zakya, 2005, *Casablanca en mouvement : Des innovateurs dans la ville*, Autrement, pp.128-135.
- 10) Ibid. p.131.
- 11) September, 2011.
- 12) <http://www.journeesdupatrimoine.ma/> (December 23, 2016).
- 13) Baudez, Guidas and François Béguin, 1980, Arabisances: Observations on French colonial architecture in North Africa between 1900 and 1950. *Lotus international*, 26, pp.41-52.
- 14) I do not support the idea in which France tried to protect local urban structure. If it is true that the French were attracted to Moroccan civilization, urban planning was aimed at the dispassionate control of the local society.

# The Politics of Urban Festivals and Community in Postwar Japan: —“Hakata Gion Yamakasa” in Fukuoka City—

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## Introduction

This paper explores the politics of urban traditional festivals (*matsuri* 祭) and the transformation of community in postwar Japan. Festivals serve the function of constructing and regulating socio-spatial systems (Di Méo 2001a, b). In particular, local festivals play a crucial role in enabling locals to construct their shared feelings, boost their collective identity, and form their local community (Creytens 2014, Ellefson 2006, Wazaki 1993). Further festivals can forge a sense of solidarity and comradeship among participants beyond their daily social positions and strata by strengthening the social relations of shared territorial bonds and marking a clear distinction between “us” and “them” within the local scale (Onjo 1992, 2006; Smith 1999). However, the modes or roles of festivals change with the times, the meanings of festivals and local identities are also not fixed or permanent, but constantly reinterpreted, renegotiated and revised by both the locals and outsiders in the wider social, economic, and cultural contexts (Di Méo 2005). As shall be further explored, while local festivals result in mixing of locals and non-locals and the producing of “a sense of togetherness” among heterogeneous participants, such festivals can be a strategic tool to construct a new image of a city by marking a uniqueness of place (Barthon et al. 2007).

Since the 1980s, many municipal authorities have held or invited many festivals, large events, and exhibitions. Such municipal authorities have competed with one another in mega events such as the Olympic Games and World Cup, and have rediscovered local festivals as cultural and touristic assets simultaneously. In such a way, cultural becomes more and more involved in the economy and politics in the contemporary world (Zukin 1995). In order to create a good image of a city, various cultural assets and events are integrated in urban development policies and economic cycles. Thus the attractiveness of a city is a collective product of innumerable agents within and beyond the city, but this product is likely to be appropriated and used by a few interests, such as the real estate entrepreneurs, developers, municipal officials, and so on. Further, these political and economic strategies have strengthened the system of surveillance and the intervention in cultural practices and collective memories by placing these into the context of other cultural and historical interpretations. Therefore, such strategies have caused strong

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conflicts and antagonism in urban societies, as local people have resisted such policies.

Harvey (2012, p.73) points out the importance of the commons and the social practice of “*commoning*” (italic in original). According to him, “The commons is not to be constructed as a particular kind of thing, asset or even social process, but as an unstable and malleable social relation between a particular self-defined social group and those aspects of its actually existing or yet-to-be-created social and/or physical environment deemed crucial to its life and livelihood.” Therefore, local festivals or an “atmosphere” (Borch and Kornberger 2015; Löfgren 2015) are also crucial elements of the urban commons. In line with this, this paper focuses on the unstable and malleable social relations that are based on the collective bodily practices and experiences and the various narratives in *matsuri*.

Hakata Gion Yamakasa 博多祇園山笠, held in the Hakata area of Fukuoka City, is one of most famous traditional *matsuri* in western Japan.<sup>1)</sup> For many locals, Yamakasa is a symbol of the identity of locality and the tradition as an “autonomous city”. In fact, the phrase “Hakata would lose its essence without Yamakasa” was once the slogan of a local television commercial. Yamakasa has been embedded in local life in this area, and has produced unique social ties, local customary practices and a consciousness of solidarity or commonality. However, the municipal authorities have used Yamakasa in order to raise the urban image and value of Fukuoka city to outsiders. Such creation of a hegemonic urban image reveals many conflictual or contradictory processes and causes antagonistic relations within neighborhood communities and urban society.

This paper has four sections. First, the basic outline and territorial nature of Yamakasa is outlined. Second, some crucial transformations of the social and territorial structures in the neighborhood community and local events in Yamakasa, from 1945 to 1980 are traced. These transformations fluctuated a traditional mode of sociality that structured a sense of belonging to community and local social relations, and have had a deep influence on the management of Yamakasa.

Third, the relationships between locals and non-locals in Yamakasa are discussed. As is the case for other *matsuri*, the non-local or outsider participants in Yamakasa have increased since the 1970s, but this trend causes some important issues for locals: who are “Hakata men (*Hakatakko* 博多っ子)?” In particular, the bodily experiences, the narratives of tradition and the unwritten custom are focused upon to consider how locals accept and control non-locals.

Finally, attention is paid to the relationships between neighborhood community and the police or municipal government. On one hand, the police have strengthened the regulation and surveillance of Yamakasa; on the other hand, the municipal authorities have made Yamakasa more attractive to outsiders or tourists. How do participants cope with these situations? This paper seeks to address this question to assess the power of such local festivals.

## Urban Community and Yamakasa

Until the Meiji period, Fukuoka City was composed of two areas: Fukuoka and Hakata. While Hakata had a long history as a port and commercial town during medieval period, Fukuoka was also an ancient port that became a castle town in modern times (the *Tokugawa* period). Hakata prospered as a trade city and was guaranteed a kind of political and economic autonomy by

feudal lords during the medieval period. As local residents respect this geo-history and its memories even now, the local atmosphere is very different between Fukuoka and Hakata.

Yamakasa performs a pivotal role that enables local residents in Hakata to construct their shared feelings, collective solidarity and attachment to their community. Therefore, it is deeply embedded in the daily life and has been a symbol of the culture, sociality and historical collective memories, and has also produced the visible and invisible demarcations between Fukuoka and Hakata.<sup>2)</sup>

Every year from the first to fifteenth of July, Yamakasa is held in the Hakata area. Yamakasa is a *matsuri* of the Kushida Shrine 櫛田神社 and seems to have been introduced to about 700 years ago. Yamakasa, short for *yama* 山 among locals, is a kind of float decorated with the dolls of historical figures and other items, with an estimated weight of about one ton. As this float is without a wheel, participants must carry the heavy float on their shoulders, and many men are required to move around the *yama* within the Hakata area. Today, seven territorial groups (*nagare* 流) participate in Yamakasa. *Nagare* is composed of several participating neighborhoods (*cho* 町). However, the number and territorial boundary of *nagare* has changed, as will be further illustrated.

On July tenth, eleventh and fourteenth of each year, each *nagare* moves around their own *yama* within their neighborhood, *nagare* area, or Hakata in order to respect their predecessors and pray for the well-being and stability of local life. This event, referred to as *nagaregaki* 流昇, is more deeply-rooted in local life compared to other events. In particular, *asayama* 朝山 or *shugiyama* 祝儀山 which starts at 5:00 a.m. on the morning of July eleventh each year is the most religious in nature compared to all other events in Yamakasa. Through respecting their elders and praying for the recently deceased who made great contributions to Yamakasa, participants are able to experience a significant connection to their ancestors during *yama*. Many local residents consider that the essence or soul of *yama* is very-well expressed in the solemn atmosphere of *asayama*.

On the twelfth and fifteenth of July each year, *nagare* groups rival each other on the same route, and the event on the fifteenth called *oiyama* 追山 has a special meaning for participants. This event, which begins at a.m. 4:59 in the morning, involves *nagare* groups competing with each other for a certain amount of time over the course of two sections: the first, called *kushidairi* 櫛田入り, involves selected members who march with the *yama* in the precincts of the Kushida Shrine, while the other takes place on route within the Hakata area measuring about 5 kilometers. As the members of *kushidairi* are selected from neighborhoods and thus considered very honorable, they rival one another heatedly. Although participants pretend not to worry about the result of the time required, many of them recognize that Yamakasa is a kind of time race as well as religious *matsuri*, and this sport-like character is different from other traditional *matsuri* and attracts younger generations.

During these events, local residents and spectators receive *yama* through the sprinkling of water (*kioimizu* 勢い水). Water is an essential material for Yamakasa, as it holds a religious meaning and plays a substantial role in *yama*. *Kioimizu* can cool and revive participants' hot bodies.

Yamakasa membership is typically bestowed at birthplace. As it is a natural affiliation, many

local residents participate in Yamakasa with their fathers or grandfathers from early childhood. However, the social relations are masculine in nature, because women are not allowed to participate in *yama* for religious reason. Although women play the role of supporting *yama* behind the scenes, it seems that female consciousness to the locality of Hakata differs from the male identity of *Hakatakko* that is developed through various experiences and practices of *yama* from childhood. This difference between male and female is an important and interesting issue to understand the social structure and cultural practice or disposition of Hakata, but this theme should be addressed in detail through other works as this is not the specific focus of the current paper.

The social relations are also explicitly territorial in nature. As previously mentioned, Hakata is divided into territorial groups, *nagare* whose history dates back to the medieval period. After the Meiji era, *nagare* became an informal local organization, but continues to be a basic and important territorial group for local residents. Therefore, *nagare* organization has had an influence on individual and collective practices, memories, and a sense of belonging, and has also become the scaffolding of local politics or economic activities. Each *cho* and *nagare* has developed their own rules to manage Yamakasa independently, and has cooperated with one another in negotiating with police as well as municipal and prefectural authorities.

Yamakasa produces exceptional spatiality and temporality within contemporary homogenized urban spaces, and creates real and imaginative difference and sameness by drawing some lines between “us” and “them”. In this way, Yamakasa is an event that allows participants detach from their social routines in everyday life, raise a sense of togetherness among heterogeneous participants, and revitalize the identity and social cohesion of a group at various spatial scales, as followed: individual, neighborhood, *nagare*, and Hakata.

It seems that Hakata men belong first to *cho*, and second to *nagare* in the context of everyday life as well as Yamakasa. Thus, there are ambivalent relations between *cho* and *nagare*. As residents feel a strong attachment to *cho*, the relationships between *cho* and *cho* within the same *nagare* are often inclined to be competitive or rivalrous rather than cooperative. Therefore, many *cho* are integrated into or unified as one *nagare*, only when they are involved in opposed and competitive relations with other *nagare* groups. Yamakasa produces dialectical relations between interior group and exterior one at various scales. As these scales are a locus of conflict and discord as well as consensus and cohesion, the identities of Hakata men are dynamic and scale-embedded social and spatial processes that are fluctuated and strengthened by tensions and conflicts of intra- and inter-communities. Next chapter briefly explores a geo-history of community and Yamakasa after World War II in order to better understand the present situation.

## A Brief History of Yamakasa after World War II

Until 1945, *nagare* within Hakata were divided into two parts. One made up of seven *nagare* groups, as followed: Daikoku 大黒, Doi 土居, Ebisu 恵比須, Gofukumachi 呉服町, Nishimachi 西町, Higashimachi 東町, Fukujin 福神). Each of these groups could take part in Yamakasa as formal members. As Fukujin ceased building *yama* in 1905 due to some issues, six *nagare* groups have built *yama* since that time.

The other section was made up of four *nagare* groups, as followed: Kushida 櫛田, Oka

岡, Hama 浜, Chiiko 築港. All of these groups were located in the Hakata area and were not allowed to participate in Yamakasa as formal members. Instead, they took part in Yamakasa only as an assistant group called *kasei* 加勢 whose participation was limited in scope despite the fact that they lived within the worshiping zone of the Kushida Shrine and payed various costs. As these neighborhoods (*kaseicho* 加勢町) could not make their own *yama*, they made an agreement among neighborhoods within seven *nagare* and participated in *yama* as assistants. Therefore, *yama* did not enter into *kaseicho* territory.

The reason these *kaseicho* could not participate in Yamakasa as formal members is commonly considered to be due to the fact that Kushida, Oka, and Hama were less populated areas before the Meiji period and the Chiiko area was new land reclaimed after the Meiji period, so many residents were typically small-scale artisans, self-employed persons, workers, and labors in contrast to seven *nagare* groups. While Yamakasa produced the interchanges and shared experiences between heterogeneous local residents in Hakata, it acts as an event that reasserts and makes visible the different geo-historical backgrounds of neighborhoods, and the unequal and hierarchical relationships between territorial groups.

In June 1945, almost all of the Hakata area was burned by a U.S. Air Force bombing attack. Despite such upsetting circumstances, local residents partly resumed Yamakasa in 1946. Yamakasa played a symbolic role in revitalizing social ties between residents and raising their emotional energy to reconstruct their socio-economic local life.

The following section examines the three crucial changes of these territorial groups and the management methods of Yamakasa following the postwar period. First of all, territorial groups that had not previously been considered formal participants demanded the right to take part in Yamakasa as formal members. These groups may be divided into two categories: residents in four *nagare* groups and residents of outside areas located next to Hakata.

As the former group's residents lived in the worshiping zone of the Kushida Shrine, they felt they had been discriminated against as they had been eliminated from Yamakasa for so long, and insisted that "old and feudal systems had to be abandoned" and that the we,—Hakata people—, should make equal relationships "in order to build a newly democratic, peaceful and cultural Japan" (*Yamakasa documents* 1949). In the discursive situation of the postwar period, "democracy and culture" became hegemonic terms to present the legitimacy of an insistence wherein material and immaterial "traditions" were treated as mere objects that could be denied.

Meanwhile, the latter group was comprised of residents in the Chiyo and the Nakasu areas located next to Hakata. Although neither area was located in the Kushida Shrine worshiping zones, they also participated in Yamakasa as *kaseicho* for a long time.<sup>3)</sup>

In April 1949, seven *nagare* groups consented to the demand of the four *nagare* groups, and the Chiyo and the Nakasu. A couple of reasons may exist as to why seven *nagare* groups admitted a formal participation for *kaseicho*. First, it is likely that they preferred to avoid conflicts with *kaseicho* in the context of the "New Period" by making these groups independent *nagare*. There were many confrontations and conflicts between the seven *nagare* groups and *kaseicho* concerning the route of the float and the role or position of *kasei* in Yamakasa (Onjo 1992, 2006). Second, it may be difficult to sustain the traditional ways of management of Yamakasa by only the seven *nagare* groups. As a result, the representatives of twelve *nagare* groups and local

leaders formed “The Association of the Aim of Promotion of Hakata Gion Yamakasa 博多祇園山笠振興期成会”<sup>74</sup>). This association came to regulate the interrelations between *nagare* groups and manage the troublesome negotiations with municipal or prefectural government and police.

Whereas many people would be able to participate in Yamakasa and begin to change to be a more open and inclusive *matsuri*, it seems that some local residents who belonged to the seven *nagare* groups may feel a sense of loss of their priority or the purity of Yamakasa and even be obsessed with the imagery of authenticity in order to maintain their identity of Hakata. An aged man remarked to the author as follows:

Why can those who live outside the worshipping zone of the Kushida Shrine participate in *yama*? They are not “*Hakata*”?

This historical consciousness and memory of territory still causes conflict and antagonism among participants. Therefore, participants have different narratives and interpretations of collective memories of *yama* according to their various positions.

However, the new *nagare* groups (Hama, Kushida, Oka, and Chiiko) could not continue participating in Yamakasa and stopped building *yama* until 1962. On what grounds did they halt their participation in Yamakasa? Some reasons may include the burden of cost and the lack of knowledge of managing *yama*, the steady decreasing of local residents and participants by urban development, and the decrease of their enthusiasm for *yama* among others. It has been approximated that only about 200-300 people participated in these *nagare* groups in those days. However, some younger residents who remained in Hakata and succeeded their family business after graduating high school regretted the halt and were eager to participate in Yamakasa

Following the rapid economic growth of the 1960s, the participants of Yamakasa as a whole decreased sharply in the Hakata area. Many self-employed locals moved to suburban regions and thereby the number of salaried workers increased. Further, young men were generally reluctant to participate in the traditional *matsuri* in comparison with other newly created secular festivals. Therefore, local residents had no choice but to offer part-time jobs to university students in order to move around the *yama*. Many *matsuri* have been influenced by such large transformations of economic, social, and cultural structures in Japan.

In addition to these factors within the Hakata area, the municipal government enforced a change in the system and rules of the names of streets, house numbers, and boundaries of neighborhoods in 1965-66. This policy was promoted by the national government and enforced on a national scale in order to streamline complicated neighborhood organizations.

Originally neighborhoods in traditional Japanese cities were composed of a range of houses aligned on either side of a street. The street was not a boundary between neighborhoods, but considered a common space of the neighborhood. After the government’s change, however, each block became the basic unit of neighborhood and the street lost the character and function of a common space.

Although there were one hundred thirty three neighborhoods in the Hakata area up until this point, the municipal government’s enforcement involved reorganizing and integrating these neighborhoods into eighteenth larger neighborhoods. As these dramatic changes of boundaries between and sizes of neighborhoods had a strong impact on local resident’s everyday sociality,

interactions, and consciousness as well as *matsuri*, most residents were opposed to this policy.

How did *nagare* groups make a measure to cope with these significant changes? To answer this, three major cases may be observed. First, local residents decided to dissolve *nagare* and stop participating in Yamakasa as *nagare* groups. In the case of the Gofukumachi *nagare*, many residents had already moved out due to the extension of the main street and the redevelopment of neighborhoods. However, in the Doi *nagare*, elderly group in who decided to dissolve *nagare* was particularly opposed by residents of a younger generation who strongly objected to this determination. Thus these younger residents voluntarily formed “The Association of Reservation of Doi Nagare (Doi Nagare Hozonkai 土居流保存会)” in 1965 with the aim to continue Yamakasa. After two years, the Doi *nagare* determined to return to Yamakasa as a formal member.

As a second explanation as to how the *nagare* groups coped with the governmental changes, new *nagare* groups were launched in accordance with new boundaries of neighborhood and *nagare*. The Nishimachi and Higashimachi *nagare* integrated some neighborhoods of former Gofukumachi, Kushida, Oka, and Hama, and changed their names to Nishi and Higashi *nagare*. However, for quite a time, it was very difficult to agree upon and unify a common idea, attitude, and behavior among neighborhoods within the framework of creating a new *nagare* (Nishinagare 2016).

Finally, local residents maintained former neighborhood boundary and organization. The Daikoku and Ebisu *nagare* continued to participate in Yamakasa in nearly former neighborhood boundary and organization. Although the former *cho* was abolished by municipal government officially, it was customarily maintained as the basic group for Yamakasa. Although Yamakasa was eventually held and managed by seven *nagare* groups in 1966 (Daikoku, Doi, Nishi, Higashi, Ebisu, Nakasu, and Chiyo), this confusing state and the effects continued for a few years.

Thirdly, Yamakasa became an important cultural asset for the municipal government of Fukuoka. The municipal government has established subsidizes to support Yamakasa (Onjo 2006) and has at times intervened in *yama* in order to make it more attractive to tourists and Fukuoka City residents who lived outside of the Hakata area.

In 1962 a new event referred as “showing seven *nagare* groups together (*shudanyamamise* 集団山見せ)” was initiated at the request of the municipal government. According to this plan, the seven *nagare* groups moved their floats on the main street and traveled together to the city hall located in the Fukuoka area. However, up to that point, local participants had not traveled with their *yama* outside of the Hakata area, except for a few rare cases. As they considered that the localness or territoriality of Yamakasa expressed its uniqueness and distinctiveness, local participants complained that a commercial or touristic element was added to Yamakasa. Further, the fact that participants were also declining in number at the time also caused them to take a strong objection to this plan.

As Yamakasa was designated to be an “Important intangible folk cultural asset 重要無形民俗文化財” by Agency of Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in 1979, it grew to become one of the most significant cultural symbols and assets of Fukuoka City and was recognized as “*matsuri* of Fukuoka City” among outsiders. Yamakasa received invitations to participate in various

national and international festivals and exhibitions, including those held by Hawaii (1980) and, Australia and New Zealand (1988). Many residents would develop a deeper pride in Yamakasa and seek to make Yamakasa a more open *matsuri*. It is therefore natural that participants are conscious of the gaze of tourists and mass media and at times deliberately exhibit violent or brave behaviors in attempting to act the part of *Hakata* *akko*.

We may consider that the process of becoming a tourist attraction and objectifying traditional bodily practices began to have an effect on *yama* from this point onward. Therefore, some local residents were afraid that becoming a cultural symbol of Fukuoka City would force a change of the characteristics of Yamakasa as local *matsuri* by and for local residents.

## Locals and Non-locals in Yamakasa

Since the 1970s, the number of Yamakasa participants has gradually grown. There are essentially two reasons for this recovery. First, the locals began to gather outsiders or non-locals and admitted them as formal participants, though they still were not considered to be quite in the same position as local residents' participants. As we have already seen, various *kasei* groups had consistently supported Yamakasa. This old type of *kasei* was based on the interrelation or agreement as groups between *nagare* neighborhoods and *kaseicho* or villages, whereas the new type of *kasei* is based on the interrelations between individuals. It is possibly that the various impacts of urbanization on urban and rural society evoked the individualization of participation. However, non-locals do not share the same position with locals, as shall be discussed later in this paper.

Another reason for the growth of participants is due to the end of rapid economic growth in 1973. Though many local communities had lost their social and economic basis during this period, these economic and social changes promoted the rediscovery of the value of local cultures or traditions for Japanese people. Local *matsuri* came to be re-evaluated not only by local residents but also by outsiders, and Yamakasa also attracted many individuals who had no connection to Hakata. It seems that these outsiders experienced a nostalgic sense of longing for a "homeland (*furusato* 故郷)" or local community that had been lost, and perhaps longed to rediscover the idealized local face-to-face interrelations in Hakata and Yamakasa.

However, the population of the Hakata area sharply declined from 34,773 in 1965 to 16,196 in 1990 and its social and economic basis was growing weaker as a result, meanwhile, the population of Fukuoka City exceeded one million in 1975. The main reasons for such a population decrease were the effects of urban redevelopment planning and the shortage of convenient housings for families. Large redevelopment plans by private-public partnerships provided office buildings and housings for single individuals, and promoted the displacement of local residents and small shops. Especially as the so-called bubble economy in the middle of the 1990s led to skyrocketing land prices in Hakata area, more local residents were forced to move to other areas. After bursting the bubble economy, many lots remained vacant or became a parking lot.

In 1998, four elementary schools in Hakata were combined into one in spite of the opposition of local groups who had strong attachment to their schools. While local residents lost one of basis of social ties, such school mergers would also be capable of offering an opportunity

to produce enlarged new social relations and consciousness to locality among residents, as an elementary school entails communal activities and social relations among parents as well as children.

In many neighborhoods, family households declined, while newer residents,— mainly single household residents who had little interest in or connection to the local activities—, increased in number. For many new residents, the neighborhood community and Yamakasa were considered to be limited to the locals only.

Who, then, would take part in and maintain Yamakasa under the present circumstances? Although the number of participants is different among the seven *nagare* groups, they are estimated to be from approximately 700 to 1,000 men. It is important to note that recently among participants the non-locals or outsiders amount to from 70% to 80% in every *nagare* groups. Therefore, it is clear that local residents can no longer maintain and manage Yamakasa exclusively. In the case of a neighborhood, the social relations in everyday life that are bounded by shared territorial bonds of neighborhood come to not have any connections to Yamakasa. Due to the fact that only former residents and non-locals take part in Yamakasa and the present residents are almost new comers who do not participate in *yama*, these participants call their neighborhood a “virtual community” that emerges and functions only during Yamakasa. Whereas Yamakasa is fundamentally organized by the territorial rule and bond of neighborhoods and *nagare*, non-local participants are able to choose what neighborhood community to join in participating Yamakasa. Such participants refer to connections available through their friends, jobs and so forth. In general, *matsuri* acts as scaffolding of producing the dense social networks between locals and non-locals in the context of the contemporary city.

Based on this observation, it may be possible that the membership of Yamakasa becomes not only territorial but also networked. Although these networks are mainly place-based or locally embedded, they expand to nation scale. This membership is based on a kind of shared structure of meaning or communal experience and bodily sense through *yama* as well as a traditional “vertical social relations (*tateshakai* タテ社会)”. As the membership of Yamakasa eventually becomes socially and spatially more opened than before, the background, motivation and disposition of the participants are also diversified and complicated.

It seems that locals have ambivalent feelings in regards to the increase of non-locals. On one hand, they admit to relying on the power of non-locals to preserve Yamakasa as well as move around their own floats. On the other hand, they feel that Yamakasa should not be separated from local activities and social relations in everyday life, and further that their authentic image of and identity to Yamakasa and Hakata are also changing or being lost. For example, an older resident remarked to the author as follows:

To be honest, I can't feel our hometown or community recently, because there are many new members but I don't know who they are. We don't have any connection with them in everyday life. Locals (*jinomon* 地のもん) always do a lot of everyday chores and discuss to prepare for Yamakasa, Dontaku and other small *matsuri* and all sorts of events. If one wishes to participate in *yama*, he has to be engaged in not only Yamakasa, but also other activities in our neighborhood.

What matters for locals is that quite a few neighborhood communities have been compelled

to change the method of managing of Yamakasa. As previously mentioned, its organization is essentially managed by the rule of vertical social relationships. Above all, youth group (*wakate* 若手) plays a major role in carrying out a series of events in Yamakasa, and its vertical social relationships are strong and strict. Within this group, there are three main positions: The top leader is *torishimari* 取締, the next is *eisei* 衛生, and the third is *akatenogoi* 赤手拭. The *torishimari* is a representative of the neighborhood, and the *torishimari* group can determine how the yama is moved about in *nagare* area.

Although these positions are selected according to some criteria that consider years of experience, the contributions to Yamakasa, and involvement in neighborhoods, for example, only locals were selected. Non-locals could not occupy these positions formerly. Therefore, there was originally a clear line between locals and non-locals in terms of posts. Since about thirty years ago, however, non-locals were admitted to take the post of *akatenogoi* in most of the neighborhoods and even *torishimari* in some neighborhoods, due to the decreasing presence of locals.<sup>5)</sup> While non-locals typically express strong gratitude in being selected for such an honorable position and make efforts to help and lead locals, these changes in vertical social relations can sometimes cause tensions and conflicts both within and between neighborhood communities.

Although Yamakasa has been maintained by the assistance of various types of *kasei*, locals could draw the line between locals and outsiders concerning their roles. However, this line is blurred, and non-locals are no longer outsiders yet still not considered equal to locals. How, then, do locals accept, treat and control heterogeneous non-locals who are considered outsiders? How do they try to integrate them into Hakata in order to preserve the tradition of *yama*. The following section focuses on some tactics by locals used to manipulate non-locals in order to form an identity as *Hakatakko* among them.

First, locals try to increase opportunities for collaborating with non-locals in not only Yamakasa but also everyday life, and raise their consciousness of belonging to the neighborhood community. As they consider that Yamakasa is based on the accumulation of social practices and face-to-face interrelations in everyday life, they attempt to embed the network of social relations grown through Yamakasa into territorial relations. For instance, non-locals are demanded to participate in many events such as a sports day, cleaning the street, local *matsuri*, and so on. After these events, a drinking meeting (*naorai* 直会) is always held. Locals consider *naorai* as an important opportunity to frankly discuss *yama* and many other problems in the neighborhood, and further to cement human relations and raise a kind of networks of trust among participants. Some locals think that these corporal and discursive experiences of communal working and discussing can lead non-locals to notice the roots of Yamakasa that embody the historical memories of a “self-governing mind” in Hakata.

Second, locals try to inculcate this unwritten tradition of Hakata to non-locals. When discussing a series of events surrounding *yama* and other issues in *naorai*, they emphasize the importance of a traditional mind of Hakata. Such phrase may be argued to be a bit ambiguous, and has various implications including the inheritance of a self-governing mind, respect for their predecessors, the obeisance to religious functions, and so on. As locals recognize that tradition is not stable and always changes, they manipulate the narratives and practices of these discourses of tradition in order to make heterogeneous participants consent and control them.

It is especially crucial for locals to preserve unwritten or tacit rules that form a basis of social relations and trust between them. For example, locals always insist that it is important to “stick to their own principle 筋を通す” in order to manage *yama* fairly and rightly. When they disagree on the management of *yama* and continue to discuss it on and on, they often use this phrase in order to judge their discussion and assert their own legitimacy. If they finally reach to agree with one another, they always perform a sort of ritual called “*hakata teippon* 博多手一本” that participants clap their hands to a distinctive rhythm. This is considered a very important practice to confirm their agreements in a visible manner. Once they have conducted *teippon*, the determination must be followed and treated as a rule. As it is difficult for non-locals to judge whether they agree with such rules, this may sometimes cause new conflicts. It is therefore necessary for non-locals to learn this unwritten rule through sharing the distinct methods of speaking and acting of locals, and also to deepen their experience through the sharing or communing of space and time.

Third, locals attempt to more deeply enable non-locals to understand the practical ways of moving around *yama*. Indeed, the history, various customs, and religious functions are important, but what locals emphasize in this regard is how they move around their *yama* smoothly, quickly and beautifully. In such a way, therefore, Yamakasa enables a community of shared bodily practices of doing. Individual participants are demanded to strengthen their bodies, but rather than an individual bodily capacity, many locals consider that learning a collective bodily sense and rhythm is crucial for understanding *yama*. As *yama* is held upon the shoulders of twenty-six men and pushed from behind by several other men (*atooshi* 後押し), and they take turns frequently at about thirty-second intervals, the timing in taking turns is essential for keeping this collective corporeal rhythms. A *torishimari* stresses the meaning of collective bodily rhythms and voices as follows:

We must perform in tune with each other in order to move *yama* straightly, quickly and beautifully. The collective rhythms of body and voice are very important to make a good performance. Therefore, we ban individual loud performance.

The individual corporeal feeling of touching, the collective bodily rhythms, and the harmonious voice of all participants in *yama* can lead to intense interactions between participants, and may unify them and cultivate a sense of camaraderie.

In addition, these individual/collective bodily and voice rhythms are capable of constituting an atmosphere as “sites-of-belonging” in a way that reaches people beyond participants. These rhythms can produce synchronization of the participants and spectators and merge them into a kind of collectivity (Duffy, Waitt, Gorman-Murray, and Gibson 2011). While the gaze of spectators has an influence on individual performance, collective rhythms of participants can instill a sense of a communing of space and time between both groups<sup>6</sup>. This power of including the spectators may be one of the most significant attractions of Yamakasa.

## “Traditional *matsuri*” Under the Era of Urban Entrepreneurialism

Since the 1980s, the strategy and policy of urban governance have shifted from urban

managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism under the expansion of neo-liberalism and the economic context of intense interurban competition. According to Harvey (2001, p.402-403), urban entrepreneurialism is the “pattern of behavior within urban governance that mixes together state powers (local, metropolitan, regional, national or supranational) and a wide array of organizational forms in civil society (chambers of commerce, unions, churches, educational and research institutions, community groups, NGOs and the like) and private interests (corporate and individual) to form coalitions to promote or manage urban/regional development of some sort or other.” An entrepreneurial city may be the most productive way to resolve the economic and social problems of cities. However, these policies have also had an impact on local life and cultural activities, as a city must always offer something different from other cities to outsiders.

Like many other cities, the Fukuoka municipal government has strived to sell and market a good image of the city, so as to enhance the appeal and interest of Fukuoka City to domestic and foreign tourists, business firms, divisional headquarters, investment capital, conventioners, residents and so on. Above all, former mayor Keiichi Kuwabara took the strategy of public-private partnerships to promote an urban redevelopment project. He was the former bureaucrat of the Ministry of Labor and served three terms (1986-98) as mayor. He coined the new slogan of Fukuoka city as a “Gateway (exchange) City to Asian Countries”. Particularly, he kept East Asian regions including Korea, Taiwan, and China in mind. Many cities have used the word of gateway to show the advantage of the place in relation to its competitors. The municipal government held the Asia-Pacific Exhibitions in 1989<sup>7)</sup>, built the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, and promoted new cultural events. For example, September has been named the “Asian Month” and a parade of foreign students from Asian countries, the “Fukuoka Asian-Prize Ceremony”, and the “Asian Cinema Festival” are held by public-private partnerships. In addition, the municipal government has been invited major sports events such as the World University Games (1995) and the World Swimming Championships (2001), and the number of international conferences held in Fukuoka City has also been second only to Tokyo among Japanese cities in 2015. Fukuoka City has been considered the most energetic and vigorous city in Japan even under the economic recession in the discourse of mass media.

In this context, the municipal government has made use of the local cultures and histories of the Hakata area to promote the image of Fukuoka City now more than ever before<sup>8)</sup>. As such a place promotion involves the appropriation of contested images and practices of histories, memories, and identities, reconstructing these only around the official urban image, the struggle of determining the narratives or interpretations of the tradition of Yamakasa can be quite intense among locals as well as between locals and outside organizations.

As has already been discussed, however, redevelopment projects in the late 1990s accelerated the destruction of neighborhood communities in Hakata. How do local residents consider and cope with this situation? The relationships between local residents and the municipal government have been in some ways apparently cooperative, but in other ways may appear to involve opposition. The municipal government and the police seem to have held a negative image of Yamakasa for a long time due to the fact that the deviant or violent behaviors of participants on the street are regarded as very dangerous, undesirable, or unsanitary for a public space. Yamakasa also causes traffic congestion in the central business district of Fukuoka City.

Moreover, new residents in the Hakata area who do not participate in Yamakasa are discontent with *yama* due to traffic congestion, street noises, and excessive garbage among other undesirable factors. The conflicts and troubles among participants have also gradually increased. Some non-local participants, for example, have on several occasions caused trouble through drinking and fighting. One may consider that the separation between Yamakasa and local's daily lives cause such trouble, as participants may not understand the present situation of local life and may only be considered with experiencing the atmosphere of *yama*. Today, this gap in perception between participants and non-participants may be larger than previously.

As a result, the police and municipal government strive to strengthen the control and surveillance of individual participants and the series of events in Yamakasa as a whole, compared with regulations of the past. We shall examine three particular conflicts between locals and outside institutions as well conflicts between locals, focusing on the antagonistic narratives and acts of tradition.

First, at the individual level, the bodily practices of participants are surveilled and checked rigorously. For instance, violent acts and quarrels are banned, and the habits of drinking and the code of clothing (*happi* 法被) are controlled very strictly. All participants are required to sign a written pledge made by *cho* and are requested to adhere self-discipline or self-regulation. If they break these rules, they are to be expelled from the neighborhood. The police often use the discourse of tradition or cultural assets of Fukuoka City to control the behaviors of participants.

However, some participants have held a kind of consciousness of special privilege that slightly deviant acts can be overlooked due to the non-everydayness or irregular nature of *yama*. In general, by temporarily inverting the hegemonic social relationships and orders in everyday life, this non-daily or deviated experience in *matsuri* or all sorts of festivals can lead participants and their communities to regain their activation in daily life (Bakhtin 1984). Therefore, it is difficult to draw the line between “violent or dangerous acts” and those considered to be “brave or deviant”. Naturally, such line is not to be explicitly drawn, but instead manipulated in practice. For example, a *torishimari* remarked as follows:

We are often scolded and yelled at for little things by the men of experience in Yamakasa, and sometime provoke them to a quarrel or fight due to disagreement. But in some cases a quarrel or conflict is a kind of deliberate act or art in order to detach consciousness and behavior of participants from their daily routine, immerse them in *yama*, and raise their morale. A fight is also a tool to perform the masculinity of *Hakata*. It is just the rivalry between individuals or neighborhoods that is the attraction of *yama*.

A quarrel or fight is regarded as a part of traditional acts or embodied tradition by locals. Therefore, they struggle with the police over the cultural hegemony of the narratives and interpretations of discourse and acts of tradition. If various measures of control become excessively severe from outside of and inside within Hakata, local and non-local participants may lose the cultural code of the exchange of unwritten acts that is necessary for managing and regulating *yama*.

Second, the police strengthen the control of urban public spaces. Neighborhood and *nagare* leaders often negotiate with the police persistently to obtain permission to use the streets for the route of *nagaregaki*. This route is very important, because one of the aims of *nagaregaki* is

to purify every corner of the *nagare* area by moving around the *yama*. However, the police are unwilling to permit the use of main streets year by year due to the many complaints of traffic congestion. For example, a few years ago, when one *nagare* presented the police a petition of appeal that emphasized the narrative of a “conservation of traditional events”, access to the main street was still not permitted and the *nagare* were forced to change the route against the traditional custom.

In addition, *nagare* and the police stand in opposition in regards to the place of Yamakasa house (*yamagoya* 山小屋). Each *yama* is put in *yamagoya* to protect the doll from the weather, and *yamagoya* becomes sacred territory during Yamakasa. Although six *nagare* build *yamagoya* in private spaces or sidewalk, only the Nishi *nagare* continue to build it on the main street. However, the negotiation with the police has recently become more and more difficult and severe<sup>9</sup>). A leader of *cho* explained why they build *yamagoya* on the street:

Formerly the street was the life space for the local residents. We can remember our historical landscape to be lost and our dear memory by building *yamagoya* on the main street. Of course, we understand traffic and other issues carefully. But we have a duty to convey the traditional style, landscape and memory of Yamakasa to younger generations. I think we ought not to change this tradition.

It seems that locals consider *yamagoya* as the embodiment of a historical memory and the recovery of it to be only temporary. As we have seen, the change of boundaries of *cho* and its effects on local life and Yamakasa. As Harvey (2012, p.74) pointed out, “(b)efore the car came along, however, streets were often a common—a place of popular sociality, a play space for kids”. The building of *yamagoya* on the street may be considered to be a kind of communing for local residents.

Third, the changes of events have caused some conflicts between local residents. While local residents are regulated by the police and municipal government, they are requested to make Yamakasa more attractive for outsiders. Two cases will be briefly expanded upon to illustrate this further<sup>10</sup>).

On one hand, about ten years ago, some people who had influential powers on Yamakasa proposed to add a new event to *yama* in order to increase the number of tourists. As local people recognized that they associated with the city government and this proposal was the commercialization of Yamakasa event, they objected to it and prevented its realization.

On the other hand, since 2008, the Higashi *nagare* had altered and extended the route of *tanagaregaki* 他流昇き on July eleventh in order to visit the JR Hakata station<sup>11</sup>). The JR Kyushu Company requested the Higashi *nagare* for tourists and passengers, and this was a significant alteration. Although it is difficult to thoroughly explore the processes of agreement, it is said that there were quite a few voices against the entire way of managing of the Higashi *nagare* as well as this alteration. In both cases, locals tried to legitimize their positions by utilizing a narrative of conservation of tradition.

Though there are many conflicts or disagreements between locals as to such commercialization of Yamakasa, locals are and were against the commercialization and make an effort to maintain an autonomous management of *yama*. It is the existence of Yamakasa itself that attracts

many non-local people (participants and spectators) to Hakata, and they are actively engaged in the preservation and development of Yamakasa and local life.

Can these territory- and network-based communities become one of the agents for alternative urban governance from the ground up? Some local residents organize NPOs or NGOs that are based on the memberships of Yamakasa. Their aims preserve and convey their own image of Hakata cultures and memories to new residents of Hakata, citizens of Fukuoka City and tourists, and increase the number of residents who shall participate in Yamakasa and the daily activities in their neighborhood. They sometimes associate with the municipal government, but do not necessarily have common images and opinions of the future of Hakata. Local residents try to promote the Hakata area according to their own approach, but there are some limitations including a lack of fund and the antagonistic relations within Hakata.

In addition, the social relations in local life and NPOs or NGOs are sometimes chained to the vertical hierarchy and relations established through Yamakasa. As these vertical relations can sometimes disturb free discussion and action and cause divergence within the group, this strong social bond or tie at the local scale tends to confine locals and non-locals to narrow interests and prevents them from having new social relations and wider perspectives. Locals say that it is important to make efforts toward the revitalization of Hakata, but horizontal relations between *nagare* or NPOs are relatively fragile. Therefore, the influences of Yamakasa are ambivalent. While it can produce new social networks and a strong social bond and trust within and beyond local scale, these networks and social relations are structured around clear hierarchical and vertical relations.

Since the 1980s, many social scientists have researched the potential capacity of “social (relational) capital” and “networks of trust” in rural and urban areas. As Häkli and Minca (2009, p.1) point out, however, “social capital (is) an unevenly distributed resource that depends on individuals’ ability to enact the power potentials that reside in their membership in social networks.” In the case of Yamakasa, this resource may be not available to all local residents or participants and tends to be concentrated among a few men. Therefore, the neighborhood community can be the site of constructing the opened social relations and resistance and, simultaneously, the vertical exclusionary relations<sup>12)</sup>.

## Concluding Remarks

This paper has examined some significant transformations within neighborhood communities and the politics of an urban *matsuri* in postwar Japan. Following many historical difficulties, territorial- and network-based communities coexist in Hakata and have become the scaffolding for both Yamakasa and local everyday life. The formation of a community identity is a process through which individuals work jointly and recognize in each other some affinities. In this way, locals and non-locals can experience the opportunities of communing around public spaces through the events in Yamakasa and construct dense cooperative relations. On the other hand, these strong social ties in *yama* sometimes restrict the everyday social, economic, and political activities. When estimating these social ties and relations as a kind of social capital, it is necessary to investigate these unequal and contradictory relations within locals or between locals and

non-locals.

On December 2016, “*Yama, Hoko, and Yatai Gyoji* 山・鉾・屋台行事” including Hakata Gion Yamakasa was designated as “the Intangible Cultural Heritage” by UNESCO. Local residents as well as the municipal government welcome this decision, but the management of Yamakasa may be increasingly separated from local life and objectified as tradition, and participants may be requested to perform the practices, acts and narratives deserving of Cultural Heritage or ‘World *matsuri*’. It is necessary to consider how the effects of this cultural hegemony on the modes of sociality might define all sorts of relationships in Yamakasa.

## Notes

- 1) This research is mainly based on the author’s fieldwork and interviews. As there are many differences between neighborhood communities concerning the management of Yamakasa, the author’s view and information may be limited.
- 2) Two traditional *matsuri* in particular are characteristic of the culture and sociality in Hakata. The first is Yamakasa, and the other is Dontaku どんたく. The latter draws its history all the way back to Edo period, and was mainly local festival within Hakata until World War II. After the war Dontaku was integrated into the “All Fukuoka Citizen’s Festival—Hakata Dontaku Port Festival—” by the municipal government and many citizens outside of Hakata and many groups from other prefectures were able to participate in this festival. Today, Dontaku is one of the largest and most famous festivals in Japan, and gathers about two million tourists over the course of two days in May. Although local residents take part in Dontaku, preserving the traditional style, some of them complain about their position or status in the festival, as they find that Hakata culture and identity is ignored.
- 3) *Kasei* groups also expanded the rural area around Hakata from modern times. For example, before a modern sewage system was constructed by the municipal government, each urban neighborhood made a connection to rural villages in terms of the disposal of human waste, which was valuable fertilizer for farmers. Local residents used these human relations to ask farmers to be *kasei*, and many farmers participated in *oiyama*. The participation in Yamakasa was considered a kind of relaxation for farmers in the middle of the busy season.
- 4) This association changed its name to “The Association of the Promotion of Hakata Gion Yamakasa 博多祇園山笠振興会” in July 1955, and began to manage Yamakasa more actively. However, some local residents have at times expressed complaints and disapprovals as to the decisions and actions of this association.
- 5) According to Creytens (2014), among the Ebisu *nagare* and the Higashi *nagare*, non-locals can occupy the positions of *chosodai* 町総代 who is a top leader of *cho* during Yamakasa. The participants of Ebisu *nagare* are the least of seven *nagare*.
- 6) Lefebvre and Régulie (1986, pp.99-100) pointed out the plurality or relativity of rhythms in their “Rhythmanalysis”. According to them, “reassembling human body is polyrhythm which is composed of diverse rhythms, each parts, each organs or function, having them in the perpetual interaction that constitute an ensemble or a totality. The latter do not mean a closed totality, but opened one”. See also Meyer (2008).

- 7) Yamakasa participated in the closing ceremony.
- 8) In the down town area, there are many stalls (*yatai* 屋台) on the street that formerly catered to working-class men, mainly dockers, and that now have become an attractive landscape for tourists and even local residents.
- 9) Five years ago, the Nishi *nagare* receives a former police officer with high ranks as an adviser. The main aim of this allocation was to more easily negotiate with the police.
- 10) The calendar is also a crucial problem for both participants and spectators. In many traditional *matsuri* today, their program is altered and simplified and many events are held on weekends, as this is convenient for both participants and tourists. However, the basic program and calendar of Yamakasa are preserved. Though participants must participate in it on a weekday, it is difficult to obtain the consent of participants' employers.
- 11) The route of *shudanyamamise* was altered at 2010, due to the easing of traffic congestion and the facilitating of spectators. There seems to be a disagreement in regards to this alteration within the Hakata area. As previously mentioned, however, locals may not be very interested in this event.
- 12) There are many debates on the community and place in contemporary geography. For example, one might recall the opposition between D. Harvey and D. Massey. For the former, the process of "time-space compression" and the interurban competition leads to the rise of reactionary place-bound identity. He admitted that place-bound or territorial based politics can be the base of oppositional movements, but community and place have an exclusive character, deny difference and subsume otherness, and it run the risk of being dominated by the universalizing power of money (Harvey 2012). On the other, for latter, community and place is not a closed entity and defined in terms of linkages with otherness and she emphasized the possibility for a "more progressive sense of place" (Massey 2005). One of purposes of this paper is to advance the theoretical and empirical understandings of urban community or practices of communing by framing these concepts in a historical and cultural contexts.

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