

**Japanese Civil Society, Local Government,
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A Preliminary Survey**

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Japanese Civil Society, Local Government, and U.S.-Japan Security Relations in the 1990s: A Preliminary Survey

Naoki KAMIMURA*

The 1990s witnessed a surge in interest in civil society in Japan, with an increasing number of Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) working in both international and domestic fields attracting growing public and governmental attention. National security issues have not been immune from these latest stirrings of Japanese civil society. Japanese citizens and civil society organizations, along with some local governments, challenged the country's security policy and its security relations with the United States in such issue areas as U.S. bases in Okinawa, the so-called Kobe Formula regarding nuclear ship visits, and Japan's global nuclear disarmament initiatives. The article examines the impact of this rise of Japan's civil society on the country's national security policy and security relations with the United States in the 1990s. It focuses on the interaction between Japanese civil society and the Japanese and, to a lesser extent, U.S. governments in the three issue areas indicated above. The article also discusses the role of local governments in the state-civil society relationship regarding security policy and the U.S.-Japan alliance because of the roles they played as a potentially significant ally of civil society actors in Japan. The conclusion tentatively discusses the meaning of the issues examined here in the larger context of state-society relations in Japan as well as the usefulness of the civil society concept in the analysis of security issues.

Keywords: civil society, U.S.-Japan security relations, Okinawa, nuclear disarmament, local government

Introduction

The 1990s witnessed a remarkable surge in the public's interest in civil society in Japan, with an increasing number of Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in overseas development assistance or domestic activities of various nonprofit organizations (NPOs) attracting increasing public and governmental attention.¹ National security issues

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¹ Tadashi Yamamoto, "Emergence of Japan's Civil Society and Its Future Challenges," in Yamamoto, ed., *Deciding the Public Good: Governance and Civil Society in Japan* (Tokyo: JCIE, 1999), pp. 97-98. For NPOs, see Robert Pekkanen, "Japan's New Politics: The Case of NPO Law," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 26 (1) (2000): 111-143. In Japanese parlance, NGOs usually refer to those working in the international and transnational arena, and NPOs refer to those working in the domestic arena. Tsujinaka emphasizes the difference in nature between the newly emerging civil society organizations of the 1990s and those of the

have not been immune from these latest stirrings of Japanese civil society. Japanese citizens and civil society organizations, along with some local governments, mounted significant challenge to the country's security policy and its security relations with the United States in several instances in the 1990s. In this article, I will examine the impact of this rise of Japan's civil society on the country's national security policy and recent security relations with the United States. In civil society literature, apart from such new or "soft" security issue areas as "environmental security" or "human security," traditional national security issues, such as disarmament or military alliance, have not attracted much scholarly attention.² In this context, this article can be characterized as an experimental piece applying the concept of civil society to the analysis of certain national security issues rather than identifying actors as simply citizens, NGOs or local governments. In the concluding section, I will tentatively evaluate the nature and extent of civil society's impact on the Japanese government's security policy and security relations with the United States. I will also give some preliminary thought to the meaning of the issues examined here in the larger context of state-society relations in Japan as well as to the usefulness of the civil society concept in the analysis of security issues. The cases examined in the article are: U.S. bases in Okinawa, the so-called Kobe Formula regarding nuclear ship visits, and Japan's global nuclear disarmament initiatives, all of which directly or indirectly had significant bearings on Japan's security policy and alliance relationship with the United States. Another significant case in the 1990s involving a "hard" security issue and Japanese civil society, a transnational campaign to ban landmines, will not be included because of its tenuous relationship with U.S.-Japan security relations.³

As for the meaning and definition of civil society, there is much diversity as well as confusion. On the one hand, there is, for example, Michael Walzer's fairly broad definition, which means a "space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks — formed for the sake of family, faith, interest, and ideology — that fill this space." There is, on the other hand, a narrower one focusing on the relationship with the state, such as Ernest Gellner's definition, namely "that set of diverse non-governmental institutions which is strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests,

previous decades, with the former's breadth of activities including "citizens' activities in public policy areas, citizens' think tanks, citizens' lobby" characterized in a new term as "NPO." Yutaka Tsujinaka, "Shiburu sosaieti no yakuwari to kozo [The Roles and Structure of Civil Society]," in Center for Global Partnership (The Japan Foundation), ed., *Civil Society: New Agenda for U.S.-Japan Intellectual Exchange* (Tokyo: CGP, 1999), p. 15.

² For exception to these general tendencies, see, for example, Jackie Smith, "Global Civil Society, Social Movement Organizations, and the Global Politics of Nuclear Security," Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *International Security Management and the United Nations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1999), pp. 139-172; Rebecca Johnson, "Advocates and Activists: Conflicting Approaches on Nonproliferation and the Test Ban Treaty," in Ann M. Florini, ed., *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 2000), pp. 49-81. For a related field of foreign policy, Chieko K. Otsuru, in a series of works on the National Endowment for Democracy's role in U.S. foreign policy, also utilizes the concept of civil society in foreign policy analysis. See, for example, Otsuru, "Boundaries of Democracy: Citizenship, Civil Society, and Formal Political Process," in Otsuru and Edward Rhodes, eds., *Nationalism and Citizenship I* (JCAS Occasional Paper no.6, Osaka, 2000), pp. 23-34.

³ According to Motoko Mekata, the Japanese government's "turnaround" was "in response to pressure from transnational civil society and other international sources" and "had little to do with the role of domestic civil society." Mekata, "Building Partnerships toward a Common Goal: Experiences of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines," in Florini, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society."⁴ For this article, I will somewhat rely on Gellner's narrower definition and simply use the term to signify a spontaneous, concerned group of citizens who pursue certain societal goals independent of and/or in collaboration or in opposition to the state and business.⁵

In this regard, a focus of my analysis will be on the roles of Japanese civil society groups and, particularly, organizations such as NGOs and their impact on Japanese security policy, but I will also focus on the roles of local governments regarding security policy. This latter focus is because of the important roles Japanese local governments played in the cases examined as well as of their potential for becoming a significant ally for civil society organizations. Japanese local governments, while generally playing subservient or surrogate roles for the national government, sometimes became a significant source of challenge to national policy in the past, for example, during the 1970s at the height of the *kakushin jichitai* (progressive or leftist local governments) movement. Currently, in combination with more active roles played by Japanese civil society organizations, local governments, which are more susceptible to stirrings of local citizens because of its very nature, have often played an independent and even defiant roles vis-à-vis the state even in the foreign and security policy realm when that policy seriously affects local communities, most typically in the case of Okinawa after the mid 1990s.⁶ In the following, let me first give an overview of the recent surge of interest in civil society in Japan.

I. Growth of Japanese Civil Society

Background

Since around the mid 1990s, there has been a strong and sustained public focus on NGOs in Japan, those working both domestically and internationally. There are several factors behind this.⁷ In the first place, this phenomenon is strongly influenced by what Lester Salamon calls the "global association revolution." It is a part of recent global trends towards a "proliferation and expansion of international NGOs and of transnational alliances among national and local NGOs," which, according to Jackie Smith, "signals the presence of a global civil society with deepening roots" despite its "infancy."⁸ According to

⁴ Michael Walzer, "The Concept of Civil Society," in Walzer, ed., *Toward a Global Civil Society* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1995), p. 7. Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty, Civil Society and Its Rivals* (London: Penguin, 1996), p. 5.

⁵ For the phrasing of "a spontaneous, concerned groups of citizens," I rely on Shinichi Yoshida's definition. Yoshida, "Rethinking the Public Interest in Japan: Civil Society in the Making," in Yamamoto, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶ Tadashi Yamamoto, "Nihon gaiko ni okeru 'shimin-shakai' ['Civil Society' in Japanese Foreign Policy]," *Kokusaimondai* [International Affairs], no. 484 (July 2000), p. 56. See also, Sheila A. Smith, "Preface," in Smith, ed., *Local Voices, National Issues: The Impact of Local Initiative in Japanese Policy-Making* (Lansing: University of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. vii-x.

⁷ For factors behind recent "transformations of Japan's political environment," see Ellis Kraus, "Local politics in Japan: Welcoming the Third Wave," in Sheila Smith, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.

⁸ Lester M. Salamon, "The Rise of the Nonprofit Sector," *Foreign Affairs* 73 (4) (July/Aug. 1994): 109; Jackie Smith, "Global Civil Society, Social Movement Organizations, and the Global Politics of Nuclear Security," Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *International Security Management and the United Nations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1999), pp. 140-141.

Tadashi Yamamoto, Japanese interest in those NGOs which focus on global issues deepened under the influence of these global trends.⁹

There is also a uniquely Japanese factor here, in the sense that Japan's coming of age as an economic superpower has created a somewhat obsessive interest in anything international in the last decade and half and that "*kokusai-koken* (international contribution)" has become a buzz word in Japan, especially after the Gulf War fiasco. Not only had Japan dramatically increased foreign aid budget during this period but the government, the Foreign Ministry in particular, had also come to emphasize partnership with NGOs in implementation of its aid policy. Indeed, according to Kim Reimann, this change in the Japanese government's stance and policy toward NGOs, particularly international development NGOs (IDNGOs), could be best explained in terms of international norms and pressure. Rising international interest, argues Reimann, "in the role of IDNGOs and 'participatory development' that led to stronger state-IDNGO cooperation in other industrialized countries put pressure on the Japanese government to reexamine its own relationship to society and somehow show that Japan, too, had an active IDNGO sector."¹⁰

There is also a purely domestic background to the heightened interest in NGOs in Japan. The 1995 Kobe [Hanshin-Awaji] Earthquake was said to usher in the "Age of Volunteerism" in Japan. Not only more Japanese are individually involving themselves in "volunteer activities" of some public purposes, but there have also been an increasing number of NGOs started in recent years to channel such "volunteer" energy.¹¹ Particularly important was the emergence of highly focused and professionalized NGOs which, following the pattern of more advanced European and American NGOs or in alliance with them, began to compete, or cooperate on equal terms, with the state with their expertise, organizational skill, and problem-solving capabilities.

Another phenomenon indicating an emergence of Japanese civil society is a significant increase in the number of local initiatives and referenda in recent years which have directly challenged local, regional, or even national policy agenda since the mid 1990s.¹² The location of communities in question spreads throughout Japan, ranging from Hokkaido to Okinawa. Issues in question also differ greatly, ranging from construction of industrial waste dump sites, nuclear power plants or dams to relocation of U.S. military bases. But many of these challenges were revolving around the issues of environment and local autonomy. This surge of referenda politics, so to speak, has coincided with a growing national debate on decentralization, but the National LDP and conservative-oriented local assemblies tended to reject popular petition for referendum on the ground that it would

⁹ Yamamoto, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-63.

¹⁰ Kim Reimann, "Civil Society and Official Development Assistance: International Politics, Domestic Structures and the Emergence of International Development NGOs in Japan." A paper delivered at the International Political Science Association World Congress, Quebec City, August 2000.

¹¹ Mitsuhiro Saotome, "Nihon gaiko to NGO [Japanese Diplomacy and NGO]," in Hisakazu Usui and Mikio Takase, eds., *Minsai gaiko no kenkyu* [A Study on Inter-National Diplomacy] (Tokyo: Mitsumine Shobo, 1997), p. 57.

¹² *Asahi Shimbun* (Newspaper), 2/13/00. For a more detailed discussion on referendum in Japan, see Hiroshi Shiratori, "Kokusai isshu wo meguru referendamu: Okinawa no jirei [Referendum on International Issues: Okinawa's Case]," *Kokusai Seiji* [International Politics], no. 120 (January 1999), pp. 135-154.

undermine representative democracy.¹³ Yet the number of successfully carried out referenda increased dramatically since 1995 from less than five on the previous decade's yearly average to over twenty toward the end of the 1990s in spite of the difficult political hurdles imposed on the Japanese referenda system.¹⁴

The stirrings of Japanese civil society in the form of the rise of NGOs and referenda politics have critically affected the government's national security policy and alliance management, as I will examine in the following. First, let me look into the U.S. base issue in Okinawa, which is relevant to the discussion of all the major issues involved in the activities of civil society groups and organizations, the rise of referenda politics, and the role of local governments.

II. Okinawa and the U.S. Base Issue, 1995-1998

According to Sheila Smith, the Okinawa case was "notable in the sense that a local politician took the leading public role in the expression of challenge against the state." That politician was Governor Masahide Ota, who sought not only to change Tokyo's policy on U.S. military bases in Okinawa but also to "renegotiate the policy-making process itself by giving the prefectural government a greater role."¹⁵ The Okinawa case is a complex story in which a local government led by an active and articulate governor first challenged and then lobbied and "negotiated" with both the Japanese and U.S. governments, in collaboration with and support from citizens and civil society organizations in the island as well as, to a lesser degree, in the mainland and abroad.

After a rape incident of a twelve-year old Okinawan girl by three young American military personnel in September 1995, which ignited a wave of indignant protest throughout Okinawa and, to a lesser but significant extent, in the mainland, Ota took utmost advantage of the momentum created by this situation to "explore a variety of avenues to advocate the prefecture's position" vis-à-vis the central government. He appealed to Japan's court system for a clarification of the Local Autonomy Law, made annual trips to Washington, D.C. to "convince U.S. policymakers and the American public of the need for a change in U.S. basing policy," and "supported the organization of a prefectural referendum on the base issue" in September 1996. Ota not only met "regularly with citizens' groups working on issues related to the presence of the bases," but he also had frequent meetings with two successive, sympathetic prime ministers, Socialist Tomiichi Murayama and Liberal Democrat Ryutaro Hashimoto, "to negotiate a way forward on the reduction of U.S. bases in Okinawa." Meetings between Ota and Hashimoto amounted to seventeen times.¹⁶ All this top-level attention was highly unusual in Japan's center-local relations.¹⁷

¹³ *Asahi Shimbun*, 6/21/00.

¹⁴ *Asahi Shimbun*, 2/13/00.

¹⁵ Sheila A. Smith, "Challenging National Authority: Okinawa Prefecture and the U.S. Military Bases," in Smith, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 79, 97. For the U.S. military base issue in general, see Paul Giarra, "U.S. Bases in Japan: Historical Background and Innovative Approaches to Maintaining Strategic Presence," in Michael Green and Patrick Cronin, eds., *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1999), pp. 114-138.

¹⁶ Sheila Smith, *ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁷ For details of interactions between Okinawa and the Japanese and U.S. governments after the 1995 rape incident, see Yoichi Funabashi, *Alliance Adrift* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).

Ota also had a responsive U.S. government, for it took the situation quite seriously. After the rape incident, the U.S. government, fearing that half-hearted measures would only worsen the situation and jeopardize their continued military presence on the island, acted quickly to soothe emotional wounds created by the incident. Beginning with apologies by the local commander and the consul general, U.S. military and political leaders on an ever higher level followed suit, culminating in President Clinton's formal expression of regret over the incident. The U.S. government also moved beyond this and swiftly established with the Japanese government a Special Action Committee on Okinawa (SACO) in November 1995 to "rearrange and consolidate" U.S. bases on the island.¹⁸

With the presence of sympathetic Japanese Prime Ministers and accommodating U.S. attitudes against the backdrop of highly mobilized public in Okinawa, Ota also took advantage of Japan's administrative structure regarding the center-local relationship. Drawing on Michio Muramatsu's theory on central-local relations in Japan, Sheila Smith argues that "overlapping authority between central and local government provides latitude for local initiative." By using this leeway, according to Smith, and refusing to "accept Tokyo's directives that he cooperate in base land expropriation procedures" regarding U.S. military bases in Okinawa, Ota momentarily created a situation in which the Japanese government had to negotiate with him over continued use of U.S. bases.¹⁹ The central government agreed in December 1995 to establish Okinawa Beigun Kichi Mondai Kyougikai (Consultative Committee on Okinawa Base Problems), an unprecedented forum in which representatives of Okinawa Prefecture directly negotiate the base consolidation and reduction issue with the top-level representatives from the central government. This Tokyo-Okinawa negotiation continued in parallel with SACO negotiations between Tokyo and Washington.²⁰

Throughout this process, Ota was strongly supported not only by leftist parties and the labor movement, the traditional enclave of anti-base activism, but he was also supported by various citizens' movements in Okinawa. After the 1995 rape incident, there first emerged various women's groups, such as Women against Military Violence, which not only protested the presence of U.S. military bases but also engaged in activities to help rape and other crime victims. The 1995 incident was in fact just the latest one in a series of many rape incidents in the past caused by U.S. military personnel in Okinawa, but why did this particular incident have so much appeal to people not only in Okinawa but also throughout Japan? Apart from the extremely despicable nature of the case itself, one of the reasons could be found in the fact that the incident was perceived as a serious case of violation of human rights at a time when there was an increasing awareness of such rights in Japan, especially regarding women. After the announcement of Futenma Marine Base reversion in April 1996, environmental concerns also became prominent in citizens' anti-U.S. base movement, as the Japanese and U.S. governments sought to build an alternative marine air facility off the northeastern coast of the island. Such concerns also struck a chord among the people of the mainland. As Sheila Smith argues, in contrast to the rhetoric of "the older, more established base protest groups," the language and actions

¹⁸ Naoki Kamimura, "Post-Cold War U.S. Foreign Policy Decision Making and Security Policy toward Japan: A Preliminary Survey," *Hiroshima Journal of International Studies* 3 (May 1997): 26.

¹⁹ Quoted in Sheila Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 91, 98.

of newer groups that came to the fore in the 1995 . . . protest . . . were imminently understandable to Japanese across the country who wanted to see their governments, local and national, become more responsive to and reflective of citizen interests."²¹ Civil society in effect, with the help of a sympathetic governor, successfully reformulated the U.S. base issue into a post-Cold War one of protection and promotion of human rights and environmental values.

Momentum for drastic reduction of U.S. bases in Okinawa, however, lost steam through 1997 because of difficulties over finding an alternative marine air facilities site. In the process, the central government, for its part, succeeded in re-reformulating the base issue into an old one of jobs and subsidies (it may not have been as successful in reformulating it as an issue of urgent national security needs). The central government also closed the "loopholes" in military land expropriation procedures by enacting Tokuso-hou (Special Measures Law) in 1997, which denied the indispensable role a governor had played in the procedures before.²² The Okinawans also came increasingly to reveal some ambivalence toward the U.S. base issue, which could be detected even in the two crucial referenda, first the prefecture-wide one in September 1996 and then the December 1997 one in Nago City, where an alternative marine base for Futenma was planned to be built.²³ In the former, regarding reduction of U.S. bases in general, almost 90 percent voted affirmatively, which reconfirmed many Okinawans' commitment to base reduction. On the other hand, less than 60 percent of the voters bothered to participate in the referendum at the height of anti-U.S. base sentiment, a voter turnout rate much lower than in other recent elections.²⁴ In the latter, which asked whether to permit construction of an alternative marine air base off its eastern coast, those opposing the construction was only slightly over majority (52%), which revealed a community torn between opposition to base construction and expectation of large subsidies from the central government through base construction.²⁵ In the end, Ota lost his reelection campaign in 1998 largely due to the deadlock over the Futenma relocation issue and the subsequent shrinkage of central government funding to the island, which added economic injury to the already precarious Okinawan economy.

In the end, Governor Ota's actions, according to Sheila Smith, symbolized "contradictions faced by locally elected officials . . . as they attempted to cope with Tokyo's expectations of them as national policy administrators . . . and local citizens' expectations of them as representatives of their community." Ota was successful to the extent that he could muster strong public support behind his bold initiatives vis-à-vis the national government. Citizen activism played a critical role here at least initially, as long as he had control over the issue definition, which is to say that as long as the issue was defined as a new post-Cold War issue of human rights or environment instead of the old issue of jobs and the economy.²⁶ In the final analysis, the Okinawa case suggests a potentially powerful but at

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-122.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²³ For the two referenda, see two works by Robert Eldridge, "The 1996 Okinawa Referendum on U.S. Base Reductions," *Asian Survey* 37 (10) (October 1997): 879-904; "Okinawa and the Nago Heliport Problem in the US-Japan Relationship," *Asia-Pacific Review* 7 (1) (2000): 137-156.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-07.

²⁵ Reiko Maeda, "Reisengo no Nichibei-anpo-taisei to Okinawa no kichi-mondai [Post-Cold War Japan-U.S. Security Relations and Okinawa's Base Problems]" (master's thesis, Hiroshima City University, 2000), p. 22.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 81.

the same time limited and ambivalent role local governments play between the central government and civil society in Japan. As for the role of civil society in the U.S. base controversy, deep divisions in the Okinawan society also prevented civil society groups and organizations from forcefully promoting their agenda.

III. Antinuclear Movement and Nuclear Disarmament Initiatives

Nature of Japan's Postwar Antinuclear Movement

The antinuclear movement has a long and impressive history in Japan since the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Centering around the *hibakusha* (atomic bomb victims) and their families and relatives, the antinuclear movement, with political support from intellectuals, the labor movement, and leftist parties, has successfully created in postwar Japan political momentum for national victim support measures as well as for antinuclear and global disarmament initiatives. During the Cold War, however, the successive conservative governments gave utmost importance to the security relationship with the United States and refrained from advocating any policy initiative which would jeopardize U.S. strategic interests. They gave mostly lip service to the antinuclear cause through such measures as the so-called "three non-nuclear principles" enunciated by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in 1967.

In this context, active roles played by the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their successive mayors tended to represent more genuinely the central goal and aspiration of Japan's antinuclear movement, which advocated immediate abolition of all nuclear weapons on earth. According to Hiromichi Umabayashi, this all-or-nothing approach was quite natural for the antinuclear movement in Japan which was indeed the only country suffering from atomic bombing, but this gave a particular slant to the Japanese antinuclear movement by making any intermediate language such as "reduction" or "freeze" somewhat unrespectable. This "absolutist" stance, argues Umabayashi, helped generate tendencies to refrain from hard-headed analysis of international politics and pay lesser attention to the direction and roles of the overseas NGOs which tended to emphasize influencing international politics.²⁷

There is another problem which has seriously undermined the effectiveness of the Japanese antinuclear movement. The antinuclear movement developed rapidly in Japan after the end of U.S. occupation in 1952, especially after the 1954 Bikini hydrogen bomb test and the subsequent *Lucky Dragon* incident in which crews of a Japanese fishing vessel suffered from the deadly effect of nuclear fallout. After successfully organizing the first World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in Hiroshima on August 6, 1955, a broadly based coalition of politicians, scholars, and representatives of civil society organizations established Gensuikyo (the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs) in the following month. Gensuikyo, however, soon fell victim to the international Cold War conflict and was beset by its domestic political repercussions, especially the rivalry between the Communists and Socialists. Opposed to the increasing domination of the organization by the Communists, who acquiesced in Soviet nuclear tests while strongly denouncing Western tests, groups led by the Socialists split from Gensuikyo and

²⁷ *Asahi Shimbun*, 8/12/98.

established in 1965 a separate organization, Gensuikin (Japan Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs), with the Communist-led movement remaining as Gensuikyo. As a result of this politicization and split of the Japanese antinuclear movement, according to Lawrence Wittner, the overall movement "no longer attracted a broad cross section of the Japanese population." Although the Japanese antinuclear crusade continued, argues Wittner, it lost "much of its grassroots, popular flavor, as well as a substantial portion of its influence."²⁸ The two organizations were locked in a bitter political struggle and competed with each other for the leadership of world-wide grassroots antinuclear activism, holding separate World Conferences for nuclear abolition on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days. The older organizations also failed to have much impact on the policy of successive conservative national governments during the Cold War despite their strong international moral appeals.

Local Government Initiatives

In the 1980s, when strong antinuclear and nuclear freeze movements spread throughout Europe, the United States, and the South Pacific in an unprecedented scale, the Japanese antinuclear movement was reinvigorated under the strong influence of these movements and a strong nuclear-free communities movement emerged. As in Europe, the United States, and the South Pacific, there spread throughout Japan after the early 1980s towns and cities declaring their communities nuclear-free, whose number now amounts to more than two thousand. About Two hundred of these nuclear free local governments established Nihon Hikaku Sengen Jichitai Kyougikai (Consortium of Nuclear-Free Local Governments) in 1984 for consultative purposes. The consortium has remained, however, more or less a ceremonious organization without any active political role in pushing the nuclear disarmament agenda domestically or internationally. Even the Hiroshima City government, despite its membership, has not played much active role in the consortium. More substantial than this consortium in advocating a nuclear-free world is Sekai Heiwa Rentai Toshi Shichou Kaigi (Mayors' Conference on World Peace Solidarity) established by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1983, with the current membership of 456 local governments from 100 countries and regions. The Conference holds annual meetings between August 6 and 9 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as providing member municipalities with information and materials related to the atomic bombing of the two cities.²⁹ These antinuclear movements of Japanese municipalities, while having symbolic appeal, failed to seriously challenge the government's policy on nuclear disarmament which strictly avoided any initiative that might jeopardize U.S. nuclear deterrence and capabilities.

²⁸ Lawrence Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb* (Vol. II): *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), pp. 9-10, 42, 92-94, 321-324.

²⁹ Peace Depot, *Kaku gunshuku to hikaku jichitai 1997* [Nuclear Disarmament and Nuclear-Free Local Governments 1997] (Tokyo: Peace Depot, 1997), pp. 71-72. Interview with an official in the Peace Promotion Office, Hiroshima City Government, 8/9/00. Interview with Hiromichi Umebayasi, director, Peace Depot, 8/10/00.

Kobe Formula and Nuclear Ship Visits

More important and influential than the above regarding the nuclear-free policy of local governments has been a nuclear-free policy adopted by the City of Kobe in 1975 under the leadership of a newly elected *kakushin* mayor, Tatsuo Miyazaki, with a strong backing from citizens and local labor unions.³⁰ This so-called "Kobe Formula" has generated a great deal of political controversy in the past few years after years of benign neglect by the national government. Under the Kobe Formula, the city requires visiting foreign military ships to present a certificate to prove its nuclear-free status. While most nuclear-free declarations or resolutions by local bodies do not specify measures for implementation, the Kobe Formula has an established procedure for implementation. It is based on the City Council's March 1975 resolution rejecting port visits by ships with nuclear weapons. It is not based on a local code, rather it is an administrative measure continuously upheld and practiced by Kobe City since 1975.³¹ U.S. military ships, which had visited the city port 423 times between 1960 and 1974, ceased their visits after the adoption of the policy because of the U.S. Navy's "neither deny nor confirm" policy regarding the presence of nuclear weapons on a particular ship.³² The legal basis on which Kobe's local government can supposedly accept or deny visit requests by foreign military ships is said to be Kowan-ho (Port Law) which designates the local government as administrator of a civilian port which is located within its jurisdiction.³³

The Kobe Formula had remained in force without much challenge from the Japanese national government or visiting foreign ships until very recently, when Kochi Prefecture under the leadership of Governor Daijiro Hashimoto in 1998 began earnestly to emulate Kobe's example. Kochi's move went even beyond Kobe's case by introducing a local code that requires certification of visiting foreign ships by the Foreign Ministry.³⁴ The city of Hakodate also started deliberations on adopting a similar measure under the initiative of citizens' groups. The national government, especially the Foreign Ministry, mounted a vigorous campaign particularly against Kochi, in collaboration with the national and local LDP, to stop Governor Hashimoto from enacting a nuclear-free code. The Foreign Ministry insisted that Kochi's nuclear-free code infringes upon the state's prerogative on foreign policy making while Hashimoto refuted that his government was not trespassing on the state's jurisdiction but was only trying to implement Japan's three non-nuclear principles.³⁵ Ultimately, strong opposition from LDP representatives in the Prefectural Assembly which constituted its largest faction and the lack of strong support from public opinion and other local governments made Governor Hashimoto retract his nuclear-free proposal in early 1999.

In fact, according to the *Asahi Shimbun*, most local governments with major ports are reluctant to introduce a Kobe style nuclear-free policy. The government of Osaka City,

³⁰ For details, see, Yosiatsu Okawa, *Hikaku "Kobe Hoshiki"* [Nuclear-Free "Kobe Formula"] (Kobe: Hyogo Buraku-mondai Kenkyujo, 1992), pp. 16-24.

³¹ Okawa, *ibid.*, pp. 2-5.

³² *Asahi Shimbun*, 3/3/99.

³³ Okawa, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

³⁴ Peace Depot, *Kaku gunshuku to hikaku jichitai 1998* [Nuclear Disarmament and Nuclear-Free Local Governments 1998] (Tokyo: Peace Depot, 1998), pp. 123-125.

³⁵ *Asahi Shimbun*, 2/16/99, 2/17/99, 3/12/99.

which declared itself nuclear-free, for example, has sent inquiries to the Foreign Ministry and the local U.S. Consulate General regarding the nuclear status of visiting U.S. ships. The Foreign Ministry always responds that there is no nuclear weapon on board because there was no request for previous consultation by the U.S. government while the U.S. Consulate responds that generally speaking visiting U.S. ships do not carry nuclear weapons but that they can not certify for individual ships. Legal scholars are divided on whether local governments can use its authority to prohibit port visits by foreign ships admitted by the national government.³⁶ According to Kajimoto Shushi, behind the vigorous opposition to Kochi's nuclear-free proposal by the national government and LDP lay the fear that the spread of a Kobe Formula would effectively ban U.S. war ships from these ports at a time the U.S. and Japanese governments are trying to give U.S. war ships easier access to Japanese civilian ports and other facilities based on the new defense guidelines.³⁷

NGOs and Global Disarmament Initiatives

In the area of advocacy and research on national security and disarmament, the mid 1990s witnessed an emergence of highly focused and internationally well connected NGOs and think tanks. As for think tanks, several peace research institutions were established in the decade which are either affiliated with universities or based on grass-roots contributions. What distinguishes them from most of the older ones is the fact that they are free from the control of the national government, political parties, business or the labor movement, the traditional sponsors of the limited number of those more established Japanese think tanks and research institutions in the field. An example of those new institutions is Hiroshima Peace Institute, which was established in 1998 by the City of Hiroshima as an affiliate of Hiroshima City University and successfully organized the Tokyo Forum on nuclear disarmament in collaboration with the government-supported Japan Institute of International Affairs. Although the achievements of the Tokyo Forum was widely acclaimed as a legitimate successor to the prestigious Canberra Commission which had published its report in 1996, the policy impact of the Hiroshima Peace Institute itself is somewhat mixed. Essentially its role in co-organizing the Tokyo Forum was one of a facilitator rather than putting in original and independent ideas of its own into the discussion and thereby influencing official policy. It is in itself remarkable that a research organ of Hiroshima City jointly organized such a major global nuclear disarmament initiative with a research arm of the Foreign Ministry, with which the city had awkward and sometimes antagonistic relations in the past.³⁸ It has yet to be seen, however, before the Institute's full potential as a locally based independent think tank is fully realized and tested.³⁹

³⁶ *Asahi Shimbun*, 2/24/99, 3/12/99. See also Masaru Kanbara, "Hikaku-joreika wa jichiken no koshi dearu [Nuclear-Free Codification Is an Exercise of Local Autonomy]," *Sekai* (May, 1999), pp. 43-49.

³⁷ Kajimoto Shushi, "'Hikaku Kobe Hoshiki' kogeiki no nerai [Motives behind Attacking 'Nuclear-Free Kobe Formula']," *Asahi Shimbun*, 3/3/99.

³⁸ The role of the first director of the institute, Yasushi Akashi, former undersecretary general of the United Nations, appears to be instrumental in realizing such a collaboration.

³⁹ For detail, see Kazumi Mizumoto, "Idealism and Realism in Nuclear Disarmament Proposals: Unsolved Issues of the Tokyo Forum Report," *Hiroshima Peace Science* 22 (2000): 115-135. See also the homepages of the Hiroshima Peace Institute <<http://serv.peace.hiroshima-cu.ac.jp/English/index.htm>>; and the JIIA <<http://www.jiia.or.jp/report/conference/tokyoforum/e-tokyo-forum.html>>.

Among grass-roots Japanese NGOs with a focus on peace and disarmament advocacy, the 1990s have been characterized by increasing networking among themselves and those outside the country as well as the emergence of new NGOs with much expertise and organizing skills. One of the most successful among those is Peace Depot in Yokohama.⁴⁰ In fact, its creation and activities may most clearly indicate the coming of age of Japanese civil society in the area of national security. Peace Depot is a quite unique organization in the context of Japanese NGOs, in the sense that its focus is not just advocacy but also on collection, analysis and dissemination of national security information for citizens' use. It was formally established in 1997 by current director Hiromichi Umebayashi and other disarmament advocates and scholars, even though its roots go back to the Pacific-wide anti-Tomahawk campaign in the mid 1980s. It works as a hub for a network of citizens' peace organizations in various regions in Japan. In fact, one of its constituent member organizations, Peace Link Hiroshima-Kure-Iwakuni, itself is a recently formed network hub of various peace and antinuclear groups in the Hiroshima area. Peace Depot disseminates information on national security and nuclear issues through publication of the biweekly *Nuclear Weapon & Nuclear Test Monitor* and other publications as well as lobbying the government for nuclear disarmament. Since its establishment, Peace Depot has quickly become a standard bearer in Japan's nuclear disarmament movement, with international disarmament NGOs often designating Peace Depot or Umebayashi himself as a point of contact and collaboration with Japanese organizations, along with other older and more established organizations.⁴¹ Because of its background, Peace Depot has a Pacific focus shown by its being the Japanese representative of the Pacific Campaign for Disarmament and Security.

One of the reasons behind this rapid rise of a new comer in Japan's antinuclear movement was perhaps widespread frustration among nuclear-free advocates with the long-standing political and ideological conflict and division among older organizations, especially between Gensuikin and Gensuikyo. In the post-Cold War period, the two rival organizations still suffer from historical divisions in ideology and politics although there have been some concerted efforts in recent years on amending the historical enmity of the Cold War era and forming a stronger single voice. There have also been gradual efforts on ending a domestic Cold War between the national government and the Japanese peace movement. Gensuikin in particular took the lead in initiating a dialogue with the government on nuclear disarmament policy. Gensuikyo also has taken advantage of the 1990s' new global environment regarding nuclear disarmament by way of increasing contact with such new and effective international forces as the New Agenda Coalition through inviting its representatives to its annual conference.⁴²

Compared with the older organizations, Peace Depot has enjoyed closer attention from the national government and transnational networks. There was in fact an unprecedented collaboration between the Japanese Foreign Ministry and Japanese disarmament NGOs, particularly with Peace Depot, toward the April 2000 NPT Review Conference in New York. The Foreign Ministry used to be very jealous of its prerogative in nuclear

⁴⁰ Interview with Hiromichi Umebayashi, director, Peace Depot, 8/10/00; Peace Depot homepage <<http://www.jca.apc.org/peacedepot/katsudo-keii.html>>.

⁴¹ *Asahi Shimbun*, 8/12/98. Interview with Umebayashi, 8/10/00.

⁴² *Asahi Shimbun*, 8/8/00.

disarmament diplomacy, but this time, for the first time, the Ministry invited NGO representatives, including Umebayashi and other Peace Depot members, for a series of pre-conference consultations. This was motivated by the Ministry's realization of the necessity for listening to the voice of influential NGOs, in other words, civil society. Although the Ministry did not adopt Peace Depot's advice, which centered on the idea of Japan taking the same position as that of the New Agenda Coalition for securing more concrete pledges from nuclear states for abolition of nuclear weapons.⁴³ Peace Depot had been requesting these consultations since its establishment, but it was only recently, especially for the past year or so, that the Foreign Ministry has become quite forthcoming. According to Umebayashi, now that most other developed countries have come to form a close link with civil society organizations, the Japanese Foreign Ministry could not but actively pursue a similar course even in the realm of security and nuclear disarmament.⁴⁴ Interestingly enough, this is exactly the same effect international norms and pressure had on the Japanese government's attitudes toward international development NGOs, as previously discussed regarding the factors behind the recent stirring of Japanese civil society in general.⁴⁵

Conclusion

I have briefly examined how Japanese civil society has influenced the country's security policy in the post-Cold War period, with particular focus on the role of NGOs and local governments in such issue areas as U.S. base problems, nuclear ship visits, and nuclear disarmament, all of which have particular relevance to the U.S.-Japan security relationship. Although local governments are not exactly civil society actors per se, I will discuss the effects of both actors together here, for, as I have shown, the local governments I analyzed took up the causes of civil society in their local context and challenged the national government's policy in close and complex collaboration with civil society actors. Overall, the achievements of both NGOs and local governments have been mixed.

Limited Impact on Policy Outcome

In terms of actual policy outcome, their influence has been largely limited. Because of their built-in advantages in the form of authority over land expropriation or port management stipulated in Japanese local autonomy laws, local governments tended to have greater influence on policy outcomes. The Okinawa Prefectural government under Ota took utmost advantage of this, with strong backing from articulate local civil society actors as well as from public opinion in general, and successfully introduced local voice directly into the national government's policy making over the U.S. base issue. Ota in fact succeeded, at least temporarily, in transforming the national security policymaking process

⁴³ For details, see Hiromichi Umebayashi, "Turning Point for Japan's Nuclear Disarmament Diplomacy," a paper presented at the International Symposium on Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century, Hiroshima, July 29, 2000; Seiichi Noboru (Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Conference on Disarmament), speech on Japanese policy regarding 2000 NPT Review Conference, delivered at the International Symposium on Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century, Hiroshima, July 29, 2000. See also <<http://serv.peace.hiroshima-cu.ac.jp/English/index.html>>; <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/npt/index.html>>

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Reimann, *op. cit.*

in Okinawa's favor. But even Okinawa's case had limited impact on actual policy outcome because the most important immediate goal of Ota's policy of base reduction/elimination, namely the reversion of Futenma, is still in abeyance. Even if the reversion process resumes, the current national plan presumes building of a vast substitute base on Nago's eastern shore against Ota's and his civil society supporters' explicit objection to building another U.S. base in Okinawa.

In case of the port visit issue, the Kobe Formula has not been explicitly deprived of its legal basis by national authority, but, as the vigorous and successful campaign against Kochi's nuclear-free policy by the national government indicates, the movement by local governments backed by local civil society groups has been clearly stalemated and, far from changing the government's policy, it is possible that the Kobe Formula itself might be deprived of its legal basis by the national government due to changes in Ports Law or some other means just as a change in the Land Expropriation Law effected by the national government critically undermined Okinawa's bargaining power. In the case of nuclear disarmament, local governments and traditional antinuclear organizations had very limited, if any, impact on official policy. As for newly emerged NGOs and think tanks, such as Peace Depot and Hiroshima Peace Institute, their influence on actual policy has been also circumscribed. While the Japanese government took an explicitly different, pro-U.S. position in the 2000 NPT Review conference in spite of recommendations by the former for more "drastic" steps toward the abolition of nuclear arms, the latter's role in co-organizing the Tokyo Forum was essentially one of a facilitator rather than putting in original and independent ideas of its own into the discussion and thereby influencing official policy.

Achievements

On the other hand, the very fact that the Japanese government began to take NGOs seriously in the area of disarmament and national security policy is itself a positive sign and in a sense an achievement of recent stirrings of Japanese civil society. The government-NGO dialogue has finally begun in earnest in this area and is expected to advance quickly. International collaboration with other countries' NGOs is also expected to widen and deepen rapidly, which in turn is expected to influence the national government's attitudes more favorably toward Japanese NGOs. Yet Japanese NGOs have a long way to go compared with similarly focused NGOs in other developed countries in terms of their number, size, and expertise. Especially wanting is their influence on the political process and on security policy making in particular (although this latter weakness is not limited to Japanese NGOs but also found among their counterparts in Western countries). There are two particular weaknesses in Japanese NGOs, namely insufficient availability of funds and security-related information from the Japanese government, but these weaknesses might probably be overcome gradually in part because of the recent enactment of the NPO (Nonprofit Organization) Law and the Information Disclosure Law.

Civil Society and Local Government in Japan

Because of the "underdeveloped" nature of civil society in Japan, collaboration between civil society actors and local governments is likely to remain crucial in the coming years for the former to more effectively pursue its goals vis-à-vis the state in the national security arena. For their part, collaboration with and support from civil society actors are also

crucial for local governments when they found themselves in a position to challenge national policy. Regarding prospects for the civil society-local government relationship and its impact on national security policy, much depends, in the first place, on how the state-civil society relationship in general will evolve in Japan and, secondly, on what kind of security relations the nation will seek to forge with the United States and other Asia Pacific neighbors in the post-Cold War environment. Since the latter point about Asia Pacific regional security aspects is beyond the scope of this article, let me just briefly comment on the former.

In fact, there are certain crosscurrents between steady trends towards greater local autonomy and more vocal assertion of local interests and concerns in national security and disarmament areas, on the one hand, and efforts, on the other hand, by the national government to reassert its foreign and defense policy prerogatives, especially as they seriously affect the security alliance with the United States. These two opposing forces will certainly continue to work in the national-local relationship in the security area, but what direction that particular relationship leads to should greatly depend on general trends the Japanese society as a whole would follow. Although more detailed research is needed, Kochi's and Okinawa's cases seem to indicate the crucial role civil society plays to sustain local governments' disarmament and other security initiatives. The maturing of Japanese civil society, if it indeed happens, will bring about a more diversified society and active NGOs representing different interests and aspirations of that society. Such a situation will certainly make the national government's security policy less and less immune to those social and political currents. And this will also greatly affect the U.S.-Japan security relationship, which has been predicated so much on the assumption of generally silent and docile citizenry and communities vis-à-vis the national government.

Utility of the Civil Society Concept

In the final analysis, the concept of civil society could be an effective tool to analyze an emergent state-society relationship in Japan over security issues in the current post-Cold War environment. During the Cold War, security issues have often been described more or less as a political and ideological conflict between the conservative national government and "progressive" anti-government forces (*hoshu* vs. *kakushin*) or as a conflict between national prerogatives based on realist perspective vs. parochial local interests. With changing international norms and environment as well as the emergence in Japan of more diversifying society, various less ideological NGOs, and more assertive local governments and residents, the interaction between the state and society even in the security area has become too complex to allow for a simple analysis based on the ideological conservative-progressive axis or a simplistic realist perspective on national-local conflict. In this context, the concept of civil society could allow for a broader and more flexible perspective to look at societal forces opposing or collaborating with the state over security policy.

Finally, a word of caution is in order. The three issues analyzed here were not necessarily newly emerging issues in the post-Cold War period, but rather Japanese citizens and local governments periodically challenged the national government's security policy and its security relations with the United States exactly in the same issue areas throughout the Cold War. In fact, it might prove productive if one gives a fresh look at the Okinawa base issue

and the antinuclear and nuclear disarmament issues during the Cold War from a civil society point of view and see if such a perspective can shed new light on the meaning of these issues. In this sense, further research is necessary to clarify what is really "new" in the recent stirrings of Japanese civil society in those security areas, compared with what happened during the Cold War. More scrutiny is also necessary whether the end of the Cold War was really a watershed in this respect and, if so, why. These questions have to be answered before one has a clearer understanding of the meaning of current stirrings of Japan's civil society and their impact on its security policy and security relations with the United States.