[Chapter 8]

Challenging U.S. Military Hegemony: 'Anti-Americanism' and Democracy in East Asia

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"Anti-Americanism" has become the new buzz word to describe a panoply of discontents. For many Americans, it represents fear of a world that seems unfamiliar, out of control and uncontrollable. For others, it is a reflection of guilt or embarrassment at having enjoyed so much power and plenty for half a century. But the meaning, intensity, and political enactment of anti-American sentiments and ideology have a wider range outside of the United States, from violent attacks against Americans and their political supporters to a *malaise* regarding U.S. military power even among historical allies and friends. Germany, France, South Korea, Australia, and the Philippines are just few of the latter.[1] In the early 2000s, nationally elected leaders and government officials in the first three countries, together with their general public, voiced anti-American sentiments and positions. In others, like Australia and the Philippines, the heads of state eagerly expressed their nation's loyalty to the United States (and its war on terror), while segments of their population demonstrated vigorously against the Bush administration and its policies abroad.

The nature, dynamic, and intensity of the anti-American malaise in East Asia are variable, sometimes sporadic, and often inconsistent. The 2002 Pew survey noted strong support for the U.S. among two allies: Japan (72%) and the Philippines (90%) and much lower support in Korea (53%).[2] Anti-Americanism is certainly not as hateful or violence-prone as the versions in the Middle East. On some occasions, anti-American protests take on carnival-like dimensions, with hip hop, punk and rap bands, folk dance and drama troops entertaining the audience. And many Asians generally view Americans in a favorable light, even if the U.S. government or specific policies are harshly criticized.[3] Yet,

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[1] For coverage of opposition in the Asia-Pacific to U.S. war plans in Iraq, see National Network to End the War Against Iraq, "Anti-war protests begin in Asia-Pacific," October 15, 2002. http://www.endthewar.org/features/asiapacific/htm (Access date: November 19, 2003).

[2] Pew Global Attitudes Project, *What the World Thinks in 2002* (Washington, D.C.: The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2002), p. 55.

[3] South Korea is a case in point. Although it was the venue of widespread and intense public protest against the United States in the winter of 2003 and 50% of the respondents in the Pew 2003 survey had a negative

anti-American sentiments can be emotionally intense and politically explosive, as the Korean demonstrations against the acquittal of the two U.S. soldiers whose 60-ton vehicle had run over and killed two teenage girls in 2002 graphically showed. And organized anti-American sentiment, whether in civil society or among political elites, can overturn the established political order and the structure and content of alliances. For example, it is now a cliché to say that Korean president Roh Moo-Hyun rose to power and planted his "new guard" of left-oriented actors by riding the wave of anti-Americanism in the winter of 2002. About a decade earlier, the Senate of the Philippines kicked out the U.S. naval and air facilities that had been a fixture in the U.S.-R.P. (Republic of the Philippines) relationship since the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) of 1947.

The task of recognizing and understanding the reasons for anti-Americanism among self-declared foes of the United States is challenging enough. But in some ways, the task is more confusing and difficult when the "perpetrators" are friends—especially those who have received large amounts of U.S. military assistance, development funds, skills training, market access, and tutelage on democracy. Americans cannot simply claim that the Korean families participating in candlelight protests were "thugs" or that Okinawan housewives' anti-base activism is motivated by religious fundamentalism.

To the contrary, anti-American sentiments and political acts among U.S. allies in East Asia tend to observe law and order and uphold democratic procedures and norms: registering with government authorities to hold protests; holding popular referendums; filing lawsuits for personal/community damages in court; voicing political opinions in print and assembly; lobbying local and national elected officials; mobilizing public support through civil society organizations (CSOs). Even if Asian anti-American sentiments share the opposition to or resentment of U.S. hegemony apparent in other parts of the world, its particular characteristics are unique. U.S. policymakers need to be cognizant of the specific historical, institutional, and cultural manifestations of anti-Americanism in order to assess and address them more accurately and constructively.

I argue that the redistribution of power *within* a nation significantly explains pro/anti-American responses in East Asia. In all three Asian societies, the balance of power between state and society, especially with respect to the state's monopoly of power over national security, has been shifting since the 1990s. Tom Berger's observation that national security involves ongoing "renegotiation," persuasion, legitimation, and institutionalization of political-military culture by competing political actors applies aptly

image of the U.S., 74% held favorable views of Americans (up from 61% in 2002, prior to the explosive anti-American demonstrations). In contrast, the most vocally anti-American nations in Europe, France and Germany, had significantly less friendly feelings toward Americans: 67% in Germany; 58% in France. The comparison is particularly interesting, given that 45% of Germans and 43% of French respondents viewed the United States favorably. (pp. 19, 21). See Global Attitudes Project, *Views of a Changing World* (Washington, D.C.: The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2003).

to the Asian cases.[4] In particular, analyzing the process of democratization and democratic deepening—namely, decentralization and heightened civil society activism—in Japan, Korea, and the Philippines is central to understanding the particular nature and enactment of contemporary anti-Americanism in all three countries.

Japan, Korea, and the Philippines serve the purpose of comparative inquiry for the following reasons: 1. Each has a bilateral security treaty with the United States and has housed significant numbers of permanently stationed American troops for most of the last half century; 2. They share similar histories of personal and community grievances toward U.S. troops, such as crimes against civilians, engaging in prostitution, abandoning their Amerasian offspring, racist and humiliating treatment by Americans; 3. Anti-base activism has taken place periodically in all three countries, with anti-American undercurrents; 4. All three instituted government decentralization in the 1990s; 5. Despite these similarities, there are significant national differences in support for U.S. military presence in each country.

Building Democracy

Democratization itself unleashes social and political forces that challenge the state's ability to define nationalism and national security interests. In an early post-war study of Japanese nationalism, Delmer Brown highlights the growth of "people's nationalism" in Japan during the early years of the U.S. military occupation: "The removal of the thought-control structure and the weakening of the authoritarian system by democratic reforms made it possible for the newly organized peasant and labor groups to express their views and aspirations…. The great mass of the people were now beginning to express national sentiments in their own terms,"[5] sometimes in direct conflict with those of the Japanese ruling class.[6]

One could apply a similar observation to Korea from the democratic transition in the late 1980s to the present. In the 1990s, Koreans got an extra push from the administration of President Kim Young Sam (1994-1998), which early on encouraged the diversification and democratization of policymaking. The new government highlighted the importance of "universally accepted values such as democracy, human rights, environmental protection, and social welfare" in policy considerations.[7] Hyuk-rae Kim underscores the rapidity and intensity of public response to such political liberalization:

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[4] Thomas U. Berger, "Norms, Identity, and National Security in Germany and Japan," in Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms, and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University, 1996), pp. 326-327.

[5] Delmer M. Brown, *Nationalism in Japan: An Introductory Historical Analysis* (Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1955), p. 252.

[6] *Ibid*., pp. 252-253.

[7] Jung-Hoon Lee, "Globalization, Nationalism, and Security Options for South Korea," in Chung-in Moon and Jongryn Mo, eds. *Democratization and Globalization in Korea: Assessments and Prospects* (Seoul: Yonsei University, 1999), p. 240.

> Improving the quality of life, overshadowed over the years as a result of the country's growth-first strategy, was now to be an important part of the government's mission. Multiple dimensions of national security from economic and ecological security…to communal and societal security…were also emphasized as forming the new and more comprehensive foreign and security policy agenda for South Korea.[8]

In particular, the first half of the 1990s served as a crucible for the creation of organizations that have assumed leading roles in the organized criticism of U.S. policies and the terms and operation of the bilateral alliance. For example, the National Campaign for the Eradication of Crimes by U.S. Troops against Korean Civilians (National Campaign), the "clearinghouse" organization focused solely on collecting, investigating, publicly addressing and monitoring such crimes, both alleged and proven, by U.S. military personnel, was established in 1993 in response to the brutal murder of Yun Geumi. Yun, a young woman who had worked and died in the entertainment/prostitution industry that caters to American personnel in Dongducheon (home of the 2nd Infantry Division) posthumously became a nationalist symbol of Korea's powerlessness and "victimization" by the U.S. and catalyst for organized activism on issues related to the U.S. troop presence.[9] In 1994, the *banhwan* (return-of-land) movement was launched in response to the proposed relocation of the U.S. Forces-Korea Yongsan headquarters (in Seoul) to Pyongtaek/Osan in the early 1990s. In the middle of the decade, both the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and Green Korea United (GKU) were created, and Women Making Peace was launched in 1997. Moreover, People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, the nationwide umbrella organization for progressive issues and citizen participation/representation in domestic and international policy matters, was established in 1994. And from 1995 on, when negotiations on the revision of the SOFA were reintroduced onto the bilateral security agenda, activists and CSOs began to introduce their voices through the media and transnational networks.

Earlier in the Philippines, the ousting of Ferdinand Marcos and the installation of "people power" through the political rise of Corazon Aquino in the mid-late 1980s ushered in a decade of heated and at times bitter jousting between the Philippines and the United States over the presence and price tag of the U.S. Air Force base and naval facility stationed on the islands. Left-leaning and/or nationalist activists had acceded to elected office by the early 1990s, which enabled them to push for tough terms if the U.S. wanted to continue using the bases. For example, some of the most outspoken Senate opponents of a new base agreement, like Jovito Salonga, Orlando Mercado, and Aquilino Pimentel had

[8] Hyuk-rae Kim, "The State and Civil Society in Transition: The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in South Korea," *The Pacific Review* 13:4 (Winter 2000), p. 603.

[9] See Katharine H.S. Moon, "Resurrecting Prostitutes and Overturning Treaties: Gender Politics in the 'Anti-American' Movement in South Korea," forthcoming, *Journal of Asian Studies* (February, 2007).

been imprisoned by Marcos under martial law. Others like Sotero Laurel and Wigberto Tanada descended from well-known nationalists who were highly critical of American intervention in the Philippines; Tanada was the principal sponsor of the non-ratification resolution in the Senate.[10] The long-standing, though marginalized, activist critics of U.S. bases, who had regarded them as explicit symbols of U.S. neo-imperialism, were able to assert their voices and pressure political leaders without fearing punishment, since they no longer could be labeled as dissidents and punished at the will of the state. And like many political regimes that assume power after ousting their authoritarian predecessors, the Philippines under Aquino attempted to distance itself from the image that had stuck with Marcos, a U.S. lackey dependent on its patron for economic largesse and claim to power.

The privileged position of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) also ended as constitutionally backed civilian rule became the norm throughout the 1990s. Democratization reduced the power of this central institution and by extension, the role of the United States in the internal affairs of the Philippines. For the AFP, the loss of the U.S. bases meant a dramatic loss of funds and equipment. In order to retain U.S. military assistance, the AFP and the Department of National Defense entreated the Philippine Senate to pass the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Security (PACT), which was intended to replace the fast expiring MBA of 1947 for economic and security reasons. Lacking any political interest group to lobby on its behalf, the AFP undertook a media campaign for the extension of the U.S. bases, but to little effect. Wielding its new authority over the military, the Senate "belittled" and "chastised the AFP for publicly advocating the ratification of the PACT which a senator claimed was a policy matter, and that the military officials should not interfere unless authorized by civilian leadership."[11]

Throughout the 1990s, the AFP had the most antiquated military hardware in Southeast Asia, yet it had to struggle to get the Philippine Congress to enact and allocate funds for its modernization program. For example, Senate Defense Committee Chairman Orlando Mercado had raised the bar even higher in mid-1993 with a new condition for upgrade funds: "the AFP acquisition program will be directed more at protecting the natural environment than for conventional warfare and external defense."[12] The military therefore had to accept such non-military missions and identity or be left out in the cold. Former Lt. Gen. Arturo Enrile, who became the head of the AFP in 1994, "was realistic enough to know that to improve the AFP's equipment necessitates that he should 'follow a certain line,'" one that shows the '"civilian community that the AFP is part of the country, part of the community.'"[13] Enrile was reading the political mood of the legislature and

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[10] Many thanks to Professor Patricio "Jojo" Abinales of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University for information on the profiles of Senators and their political histories.

[11] On the relationship between democratization and changes in the AFP, see Renato De Castro, "The Military and Philippine Democratization: A Case Study of the Government's 1995 Decision to Modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines," in Felipe B. Miranda, ed., *Democratization: Philippine Perspectives*. (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1997), pp. 241-279. The quote is from p. 252.

[12] *Ibid*., p. 259.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 262.

civil societyy, and under his leadership, all three services of the military adapted their modernization goals to the new environmental and developmental mandate.

In a post-authoritarian environment, not only did the military have to improve its identity by identifying with civilian-defined "soft" projects like environmental protection and community development, it also had to compete for public funds and support with other political institutions and actors. Facing public opinion that was against "militarization" and the rise of NGOs that demanded government funds for socio-economic development and welfare projects, the military was politically placed at the end of the line. Moreover, Congressional funding for the military was "further complicated by the fact that many legislators were in one way or another ill-affected by the AFP's actions during the Martial Law years." [14] In short, democratization had changed the political and institutional landscape such that the military's organizational needs and national security outlook fell far from being a public priority. One report in November 2001 found that "of the 331.6 billion pesos earmarked to modernize the Armed Forces in 1995, only 11 percent was released by 2000."[15]

Decentralization and Local Empowerment

The decentralization of government, the legalization and application of new rights for local residents, and people's increased access to public information and institutional accountability took place in all three countries throughout the 1990s. Shin'ichi Yoshida's characterization of local empowerment in Japan—as a "series of epoch-making phenomena…that amounted to an open revolt by local communities against the central government's idea of what constituted the national and public interest"[16]—applies to Korea and the Philippines as well. In Japan, the process began with a recommendation by the Third Provisional Council for the Promotion of Administrative Reform (1990-93), of which former Prime Minister Hosokawa was a member. Having survived opposition from sections of the LDP and the central bureaucracies, the Law for Promoting Decentralization was enacted in May 1995, followed by the 1999 Omnibus Law of Decentralization, which strengthened and widened local government power and authority. Similarly, Korea adopted new laws to restore local self-rule after more than thirty years of centralized authoritarian control, permitting the establishment of local assemblies (1991) and the election of local government officials by popular vote (1995). Comparable changes took place in the Philippines with the establishment of the Local Government Code in 1991. Terrence George highlights the fact that "the Philippines enjoys the most supportive statutory environment for local political participation in all of

[14] *Ibid*., p. 255.
[15] www.worldpress.org/article_model.cfm?article_id=789&dont=yes (Access date: November 19, 2003).
[16] Shin'ichi Yoshida, "Rethinking the Public Interest in Japan: Civil Society in the Making," in Tadashi Yamamoto, ed. *Deciding the Public Good: Governance and Civil Society in Japan* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 1999), p. 33.

Southeast Asia" and boasts the only law that explicitly requires NGO participation in local governance."[17]

In all three countries, "democratization, globalization, and public-sector reform have contributed most to decentralization."[18] These very forces have shifted the balance of power between central and local government and between the state and civil society in all three countries, so that national security and foreign policy no longer remain the sole purview of the central government. "Never before have mayors and governors been expected to accomplish so much for their constituents nor given so much power to do so. And never before have citizens been so legally equipped to participate in local government affairs."[19] Again, this reference to the Philippines could easily describe local politics in Korea and Japan. Local autonomy also means that local leaders require the votes and support of everyday residents and therefore must be accountable to them, even if some financial and other resources get distributed by the capital. In short, decentralization has created new push and pull factors, making power struggles between the center and localities an inevitable part of the political process of deepening democracy.[20]

Japan offers several examples of this tension as it relates to national security policy, the most prominent being the defiance of former Governor Masahide Ota of Okinawa against Tokyo's control over private lands to be used by the U.S. Forces-Japan and the 1996 Okinawan referendum, in which 90% of the voters called for the consolidation and reduction of the U.S. military presence. In Tsuneo Akaha's view, the rape of the twelve-year-old Okinawan girl by three U.S. marines in September 1995, which triggered the defiant reactions, presented the "most serious challenge to the Japan-US security treaty since the end of the Cold War."[21] It was domestic political changes, not primarily geopolitical changes or a strategic debate between the two governments, that generated

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[17] Terrence R. George, "Local Governance: People Power in the Provinces?," in G. Sidney Silliman and Lela Garner Noble, eds. *Organizing for Democracy: NGOs, Civil Society, and the Philippine State* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1998), p. 225, 227.

[18] Shun'ichi Furukawa, "Decentralization in Japan," in Shun'ichi Furukawa and Toshihiro Menju, eds. *Japan's Road to Pluralism: Transforming Local Communities in the Global Era* (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2003), p. 23.

[19] George, p. 228.

[20] Ilpyong J. Kim and Eun Sung Chung refer to this dynamic as a "dialectic relationship between centralization and decentralization." See "Establishing Democratic Rule in South Korea: Local Autonomy and Democracy," *In Depth* 3:1 (1993), p. 212. Also see Kyoung-Ryung Seong, "Delayed Decentralization and Incomplete Democratic Consolidation" in Larry Diamond and Doh Chull Shin, eds. *Institutional Reform and Democratic Consolidation in Korea* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2000). For general discussions of this tension in the context of democratization and democracy, see Desmond King and Gerry Stoker, eds. *Rethinking Local Democracy* (London: Macmillan, 1996), Chs. 1 and 2; Dilys M. Hill, *Democratic Theory and Local Government* (London: Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1974), particularly Ch. 8; Diamond, *Developing Democracy*, Ch. 4.

[21] Tsuneo Akaha, "Three Faces of Japan: Nationalist, Regionalist and Globalist Futures," in Yoshinobu Yamamoto, ed., *Globalism, Regionalism and Nationalism: Asia in Search of its Role in the Twenty-first Century* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), p. 191.

the explosive anti-base activism in Okinawa. With the weight of voters behind him, Governor Ota went head to head with Tokyo, pitting the "public interest" (i.e., local) against the "national interest." Specifically, armed with the new Local Autonomy Law of 1995, he brought his case to the Japanese supreme court. Although he lost the battle, "Ota sought not only to change Tokyo's policy on US military bases in Okinawa but also to 'renegotiate the policymaking process itself by giving the prefectural government a greater role.'"[22]

Tokyo's monopoly over foreign policy and national security has been challenged by other localities. Although more than 2,000 towns and cities had declared themselves nuclear-free by the 1980s, the antinuclear/disarmament movement in Japan for the most part had "failed to seriously challenge the [central] government's nuclear disarmament policy, which strictly avoids any initiative that might jeopardize US nuclear deterrence capabilities."[23] But in 1998, Kochi Prefecture adopted the Kobe Formula of 1975, in which the city mandated visiting foreign ships to certify their nuclear-free status or be denied port privileges. But the legal premise could not have been more different: Kobe had relied on Port Law to claim local jurisdiction over the civilian port and had not raised the central government's ire for two decades. But after the passage of the Local Autonomy Law, Tokyo understood that localities would be able to exercise new legal muscle to challenge the central government's policies and adopted a hard line in the legal and political debate over jurisdictional authority to permit or prohibit port visits by foreign ships. Naoki Kamimura underscores Kajimoto Shushi's observation that "behind the vigorous opposition to Kochi's nuclear-free proposal by the national government and LDP lies the fear that the spread of the Kobe Formula would effectively ban US warships from these ports at a time when the US and Japanese governments are trying to give US warships easier access to Japanese civilian ports and other facilities."[24]

Even if localities are not directly exerting their political muscle on Tokyo's foreign policy/national security prerogative, those housing U.S. installations voice complaints related to the quality of life of the local residents. For example, Japanese living near the bases in Yokota (Tokyo), Atsugi (Kanagawa Prefecture), Misawa (Aomori Prefecture), in addition to Kadena and Futenma (Okinawa), "have been battling in Japanese courts to protest noise pollution, inadequate safety measures, and environmental concerns."[25] They are not necessarily anti-American or anti-base protests, especially in the more politically

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[22] Cited in Naoki Kamimura, "Japanese Civil Society and U.S.-Japan Security Relations in the 1990s," *Medicine and Global Survival* 7:1 (April 2001), p. 21. For a detailed discussion of Okinawa-Tokyo politics over U.S. bases in the context of local autonomy, see Sheila A. Smith, "Challenging National Authority: Okinawa Prefecture and the U.S. Military Bases," in Sheila A. Smith, ed., *Local Voices, National Issues: The Impact of Local Initiative in Japanese Policy-Making* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).

[23] Kamimura, p. 23.

[24] *Ibid*.

[25] Haruo Iguchi, "Complication: American Military Presence in Okinawa and Enhancing the U.S.-Japan Alliance," in *United States-Japan Strategic Dialogue: Beyond the Defense Guidelines* (Honolulu: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Pacific Forum, May 2001), p.83. www.csis.org/pacfor/us_japan_dialogue.pdf (Access date: November 17, 2003).

conservative locales like Misawa; nevertheless, they reflect long-accumulated grievances that local inhabitants and officials had sought to address and redress for decades. Local autonomy has granted legitimacy and legal standing to what were once considered private, local, peripheral interests.

In Korea as well, local activism has increased its coordination, voice, and power to assert interests usually not considered by the central government. But unlike in Japan, anti-base issues *cum* local interests in Korea have been more coherent as a national agenda item and potent as the common "glue" that brings together disparate groups of people. In particular, complaints against the bases have served to bridge regional, political, and social gaps between the activist elite in Seoul and the "periphery," where most U.S. camptown residents live. Anti-base activism has facilitated the cross-fertilization of standpoints, issues, and approaches among hitherto disconnected communities. For example,

> villagers living near U.S. bases who have been complaining about damage to private property are learning about environmental issues and values, and environmentalists, who tend to be from the educated, [urban] middle class, are exposed to people, communities, and livelihoods that have existed on the fringes of Korean society.[26]

The economic, environmental, and social impact of military basing and closure has attracted much national and local attention in the United States and facilitated at times the cooperation of unlikely political partners.[27] But in Korea, the responsiveness of some local governments to residents' complaints about the U.S. presence and their cooperation with progressive civil groups is one of the most novel and remarkable developments in the country's democratization process. Until only a few years ago, local officials and citizen-activists who criticized U.S. bases or troops or advocated for the (alleged and real) victims of crimes and abuses by U.S. personnel had treated one another with distrust and hostility. And generally, local governments had kept a lid on local tensions and conflicts related to U.S. troops in order to avoid the ire of the authoritarian Park and Chun regimes, as well as negative reactions by the U.S. commands. For one, local leaders served at Seoul's whim and pleasure; for another, local camptown economies were dependent on the U.S. bases for employment and revenues from the 1950s until the 1980s.[28]

However, in recent years, local governments became active players in the larger anti-American movement. Some joined forces with local residents, businesses, and a variety of CSOs to voice their views of the U.S. facilities as obstacles to economic progress

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[26] K. Moon, "Nationalism, Anti-Americanism, and Democratic Consolidation," in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *Korea's Democratization* (NY: Cambridge University, 2003), p. 145.

[27] Fred Rose, *Coalitions Against the Class Divide: Lessons from the Labor, Peace, and Environmental Movements* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

[28] For a detailed description of the evolution of and the politics and social interactions in U.S. military camptowns in Korea, see Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University, 1997), Chapter 1.

and city planning and U.S. troops as threats to the environment and public safety (particularly of girls and women). Incheon City Council, which formed the "Citizens' Congress for the return of land used by the USFK in Bupyong" in May 2000 to reclaim land that the U.S. military was using as a junkyard, is a case in point. According to one Korean daily, "This is the first time for a city council to participate in a movement for the return of land used by U.S forces together with a civic group."[29] Participation included demonstrations in front of U.S. Camp Market for its relocation out of downtown Bupyong. Also in May, officials of the fourteen local governments that house U.S bases within their jurisdictions established the first-ever "nationwide consultative body" of local governments to exchange information about their relationship with base commands and the impact of the bases on local and regional development. They also sought to forge a collective front to demand more financial and development assistance from the central government.[30] In October 2001, they submitted a legislative proposal to the National Assembly. They claimed that their localities suffer a disproportionate share of the economic, environmental, and social burden of maintaining U.S. troops for the security of the entire nation.[31]

This argument echoes that raised in Okinawa. Accounting for only 0.6% of Japanese territory, the prefecture houses 75% of the U.S. bases (in acreage) and about half of the troops stationed in Japan. The sense of disproportionate burden is intensified by the fact that the prefecture's per capita income is the lowest in Japan and the unemployment rate is twice the national average.[32] In the context of local autonomy and empowerment in Korea and Japan, it is obvious that the U.S. base issue and the anti-American movement have become a means through which local governments can assert their interests vis-à-vis the central government.

In the Philippines, the logic of decentralization has yielded a very different outcome: eager support for U.S. troop presence through Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder) military training exercises in 2002. Initiated by the United States as a way to address Abu Sayyaf activities in the southern island of Mindanao, Balikatan turned the Philippines into the Asian front in the war against global terrorism. Although the arrival of 660 U.S. troops with the purported purpose of training 5,000-7,000 Philippine soldiers to hunt down Abu Sayyaf members in the southern region created a political crisis in Manila, the locals welcomed Americans in uniform. For example, when in January 2002 the U.S. troops arrived in Zamboanga City, Mindanao—the site of their training camp—they were greeted

[29] *Munhwa Ilbo*, May 30, 2000.
[30] *Daehan Maeil Sinmun*, May 24, 2000.
[31] Republic of Korea National Assembly, Bill #16102, Migun kongyo chiyok chiwon mit chumin kwon-ik poho e kwanhan pomlyullan (Legislative bill on support to the USFK regions and protection of the rights and interests of residents). http://www.assembly.go.kr (Access date: March 27, 2003).
[32] Iguchi, p. 79.

with friendly placards: "Welcome back, GI Joe."[33] Later in March, Zamboanga residents "staged a large march…to thank the Americans for their presence."[34]

Although the Philippine public held a favorable view of the U.S. military presence in the southern islands, the people of Basilan, where the actual exercises were concentrated from winter through July, 2002, were particularly eager to host the foreigners. According to the *Manila Standard* (July 30, 2002),

> Before the [U.S.] soldiers came, the Basilan folk lived in constant fear. It was, for them, a hellish existence as the Abu Sayyaf bandits sowed their seeds of terror on the island and neighboring areas. Some of the Basilan women were raped and killed; many of their men and children were forced into servility or slaughtered by the bandits during murderous orgies.

In Lamitan, a rural town on Basilan island, the local parish priest regularly carries a 9mm submachine gun and a .45 caliber pistol for self-protection against Abu Sayyaf thugs who were prone to hide in the jungles and take along Filippino and American hostages. So, official sigh of relief at the American presence seemed logical: "'To be honest, I'd be very glad. I trust the Americans,' said Wahab Akbar, a stocky former Muslim rebel who is now the island's governor. 'We're very thankful the U.S. government has not abandoned this corner of the world.'"[35]

Pro-Americanism stemming from the U.S. troop presence was the prevailing sentiment in the southern islands and the general public throughout 2002. By contrast, a small minority of left-oriented students, activists and intellectuals staged public demonstrations against Balikatan and U.S. hegemonic policies, including daily protests in front of the U.S. Embassy in Manila during the winter of 2002. They carried "Yankee Go Home!" signs and by late February burned American flags at what were deemed the largest rallies as of then (2000 people). They campaigned aggressively against the re-entry of U.S forces into the Philippines on two grounds: 1) nationalism and Philippine sovereignty; 2) constitutional authority. For many Filipinos, the return of American soldiers were not only reminders of a bygone colonial era, but also a source of fear that the U.S. seeks to reclaim the former bases, which had been returned to the Philippines in the early 1990s. As one Manila resident put it, "I think that the American government would be happy to have us as a colony again." Such suspicions were spray-painted on Manila's street curbs: "U.S. troops out now."[36]

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[33] www.worldpress.org/article_model.cfm?article_id=501&dont=yes (Access date: November 19, 2003).

[34] www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2002/03/mil-020301-ss02.htm (Access date: November 19, 2003).

[35] *Washington Post* Foreign Serice, January 28, 2002 www.mcsm.org/filipino01.html (Access date: November 19, 2003)

[36] *Stars and Stripes* (Pacific edition), March 1, 2002 www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2002/03/mil-020301-ss02.htm (Access date: November 19, 2003).

The relationship between the center and the localities significantly determines the nature and force of anti-base/anti-American activism and their effect on policymaking. Despite the politicization and political activities (referendum on the U.S. bases, legal battles with Tokyo over base-related policies, widespread media coverage of citizen movements) in Okinawa in the mid-late 1990s that were targeted against the U.S. bases and the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, mainland Japanese activists never adopted the cause as their own. The fact that the overwhelming majority of U.S. forces resides on an island whose cultural and historical identity is already marginal to the mainland's means that overlapping interests, personnel, and alliances are weak. On the other hand, the much smaller land mass of South Korea makes communication and travel between Seoul and the localities much more accessible. Plus, there is no historical or cultural divide per se between the periphery and the center. Additionally, democracy activists and radical students began targeting U.S. military camptowns in the mid-late 1980s as symbols of subjugation by the U.S. government and its authoritarian "lackeys," former presidents Chun Du Hwan and Roh Tae Woo. After the murder of Yun Geumi, the former prostitute, by Private Kenneth Markle in 1992, military camptowns became central to CSO activism on foreign policy, national security, and reunification issues. The growth of such activism was part and parcel of the dynamic spread of civil society participation in politics in general.

Civil Society Organizations in the World of Policy

In tandem with decentralization in the three countries has been the exponential growth of and public interest in civil society organizations (CSOs, including nongovernmental—NGOs; nonprofit—NPOs; transnational networks), local residents' associations, and volunteerism, such that Yamamoto argues that "the development of civil society itself has become the issue of governance."[37] In the 1990s, East Asian CSOs broadened and diversified their issue areas, ranging from consumer rights, social welfare, political reform, environment, and human rights to peace, defense spending, national security, and troop deployment to Iraq. Hyuk-rae Kim notes the "unprecedented growth of the [Korean] NGO sector," with a concentration in the following areas: Between 1993 and 1996, 62% of organizations advocating citizens' rights, 51.4% for the environment, 48.9% for youth, and 44.8% for human rights were established. In sum 74.2% of NGOs in Korea were established between 1987 and 1996.[38] In Japan, Yoshida observes that NGOs focusing on international cooperation have increased significantly.[39]

In the Philippines, NGO communities were highly supportive of the Local Government Code and the potential for "people power" that it promised, such that a prominent rural development NGO lauded it as "arguably the most significant legislation

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[37] Yamamoto, p. 104.
[38] H. Kim, p. 603.
[39] Yoshida, p. 42.

passed under the Aquino administration."[40] Specifically, "at least one-fourth of the seats on local development councils" and "at least one seat on four other boards, dubbed 'local special bodies' [e.g., school and health boards, peace and order council]" must be filled by NGOs, POs, and "in some cases private sector individuals.[41] The code empowers local governments by substantially increasing their access to financial resources,[42] enhancing their regulatory powers, and broadening their authority over planning, development, and social service provision. In order to facilitate capacity-building and delivery of services, the central government transferred tens of thousands of workers from central bureaucracies to localities: "The Department of Health alone devolved forty-five thousand staff—two thirds of its total personnel—to provincial and municipal government from 1992 and 1994."[43]

Although leftist students and intellectuals in the Philippines began targeting the U.S. bases and the local camptowns as incarnations of American neo-imperialism and militarism as early as the 1960s and 1970s, they were never able to mobilize the larger population around such issues. Their successors are still active, for example, putting out statements against the U.S. war in Iraq and their government's support of the Bush administration and/or protesting in front of the U.S. embassy in Manila against Balikatan. But they are a very small minority, and there is a wide ideological and social gap between them, who are concentrated in Manila universities, and poor peasants of the southern islands. For residents of Basilan and Mindanao, U.S. military presence is more about immediate daily survival, as long as the Abu Sayyaf and other "bandits" can be eliminated. They are not enamoured of the U.S. presence, especially the Muslim populations, but poverty and underdevelopment are what bind the various communities together to support the temporary presence of U.S. forces.

It is also important to recognize that the identity and interests of NGOs in the Philippines have become moderate and society-oriented rather than state-oriented since democratizaton. That is, they believe that societal changes must occur first before the state can act constructively, whereas before democratization, most civic organizations were either pro or anti-state (Marcos). Majority of NGOs are also development-oriented, reflecting economic priorities in the Philippines. It is also not a coincidence that heavy funding by foreign/international sources, particularly U.S. AID, tends toward moderation in issue orientation and political activities. In general, NGOs have paid less sustained attention to security issues than socio-economic ones. This is in stark contrast to Korea, where economic development is no longer a policy concern, but national security and reconciliation/reunification are hot issues.

Regional/International Networks

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[40] George, p. 228.
[41] *Ibid*., p. 227.
[42] For details, see *ibid*., p. 225.
[43] *Ibid*., p. 227.

The national anti-American movement needs to be understood in the context of regional and international anti-base activism. For starters, networks of activists in Korea, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Vieques (Puerto Rico) exchange information about organizational activities, agendas, political strategies, mobilization of resources, and methods of political expression. Second, transnational networks help broaden the audience for each national movement. Third, the transnational solidarity provides a kind of international legitimacy to each national movement. Fourth, international interaction provides new ideas and interpretive schemes.

Korean and Okinawan activists have been exchanging and in some cases coordinating information, agendas, and "personnel" since the late 1980s. The initial participants were women from Korea, Okinawa/Japan, and the Philippines who began to meet to discuss problems related to the U.S. troop presence and women/gender relations in each country/locale. After the 1995 gang rape of an Okinawan teenage girl by U.S. marines in Okinawa, the anti-base activism on the island broadened and intensified within and reached outward toward Korea. Korean activists also extended their solidarity and network to Okinawa. For example, in 1997, Okinawans visited Seoul to participate in the weekly Friday demonstration in front of Yongsan Garrison (organized by the National Campaign). In August 1996, Kim Yonghan (co-leader of the National Campaign in the early-mid 1990s) went to Japan at the invitation of peace activists there. He participated in activities commemorating the 51st year of the bombing of Hiroshima, learned about the particularities of the U.S. presence in Japan, namely "private" leasing of land and "rent" paid by the Japanese government, and was impressed by the diversity and dynamism of peace and anti-base activism among Japanese. Arriving during the lead-up period to the referendum, he inquired about the procedures and details of the return-of-land movement there. He also enlisted Okinawans' help in the Korean *banhwan* (return-of-land) movement and proposed an international, collective demonstration (with activists in Okinawa, Philippines, Australia, Germany and other NATO countries) for the following spring.[44] In 1998, Okinawans formed the *Han-Oki minjung yondae* (people's solidarity) with the purpose of educating themselves about U.S. military-related problems affecting Koreans in particular, and of networking with peace activists in Taiwan, Philippines, and Puerto Rico.[45]

In addition to Okinawan support for Koreans through joint conferences, visits, and other gestures of solidarity,[46] activists from Vieques, Puerto Rico have built bridges of cooperation and solidarity with Koreans, especially those protesting the American use of Gun-ni (Maehyangri) range for bombing practice. Ismael Guadalupe Ortiz, a leader of the

[44] Yonghan Kim, "*Okinawa migun kichi banhwan undong e seo baeunda*" (Learning from the return of U.S. military base movement in Okinawa), *Wolgan Mal* (Monthly Mal Magazine), September 1996, 92-95.

[45] *Hankyore sinmun*, August 2, 2000 www.hani.co.kr/section-00300…/00300401120000802212700 1.htm (Access date: March 4, 2002).

[46] *Hankyore sinmun*, August 6, 2000 (www.hani.co.kr/section-00300…/003004011200008062303001.htm) Access date: March 4, 2002.

anti-base movement in Vieques, visited Maehyang-ri in July 1999 and expressed alarm at how much worse the situation is for the Korean villagers, given that they live much closer to the strafing area than their Vieques counterparts.[47] Such words of empathy were highlighted by the Korean media and NGO groups in their newsletters and periodicals. More recently, Guadalupe sent a message of "solidarity with the people of Korea" condemning and protesting the U.S. troops' role in the deaths of the two teenage girls: "This is one more abuse added to those crimes perpetrated by the US military against the Korean people since the Korean War. These crimes committed by the U.S. are awaiting the repudiation of the world community…."[48] This message was delivered not only to Koreans but also made available to netizens around the world by various websites.

Democratization, then, unleashes new political actors and interests in the domestic and international arena. It also creates new opportunities for dissent and solidarity that complicate national and multi-national policymaking. Amitav Acharya offers evidence of this trend in Southeast Asia:

> Civil societies in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region have felt resentful towards ASEAN for its reluctance to support their cause or involve them in its decision making. This has led to a call from the NGO community in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia and Malaysia for ASEAN to become more open. Democratisation has thus undermined the legitimacy of ASEAN's elite-centred regionalism.[49]

Additionally, the diversification of issue areas across national boundaries mirrors those within boundaries. In Asia at large, CSO scrutiny of and activism around human rights, environment, and inequalities abound and confront official policy priorities and interpretations. National security is no exception: "Southeast Asian [and Northeast Asian] NGOs have also called for alternative approaches to national security that emphasise the security of people over that of states and regimes."[50]

U.S. Interpretive Frames and Policy Responses

It is clear that the Cold War changed the meaning of old enmities and alliances, facilitating the active exploration among East Asian nations for new configurations of cooperation and neighborliness with one another. Numerous regional cooperation schemes have been nurtured to simultaneously advance national and regional interests and ensure against an overbearing U.S. regional hegemony. The large majority of Japan's

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[47] *Saram i saram ege* (October/November, 2000), p. 25.
[48] Base21 (www.base21.org/show/show/php?p_cd=0&p_dv=0&p_docnbr=21475) Access date: October 2, 2002.
[49] Amitav Acharya, "Democratisation and the Prospects for Participatory Regionalism in Southeast Asia," *Third World Quarterly* 24:2 (2003), p. 381.
[50] *Ibid*., p. 384.

trade is with its regional neighbors, and China is now Korea's top trading partner. Without doubt, the anti-Communist "glue" that once held together the military and political commitments between the United States and its East Asian partners and propped up American cultural hegemony in the region has lost much of its adhesive power with the changes in the international system. Koreans, who had for decades imitated nearly everything American and set aside things Korean, now buy and view more home-made music and films/videos than American imports. Moreover, Korean pop culture is a commodity with a fast-growing audience in Japan, China, and Southeast Asia. And Japan plays the leading role in introducing concepts and techniques to "Asianize" western culture and thereby forge an eclectic but distinct Asian system and aesthetic for media entertainment and pop culture.[51] In this dynamic context, the role of the United States in East Asia has become ambivalent and open to question by Asian publics, generating what John Ikenberry calls a "legitimacy deficit" that stems from the changing distribution of global and regional power.[52]

But without understanding the changes in the internal political systems of Asian countries, explaining external relations and outcomes remains limited. If authoritarian rule had remained the dominant trend in much of Asia, the crisscrossing transnational linkages between private actors, experimentation with entrepreneurial and cultural risk-taking, the exchange of information and political opinions across cultures, the willingness to construct new political interests and identities, and the freedom to challenge the official framing and justification of policy priorities and implementation would not characterize today's East Asia. Without the freedom to scrutinize U.S. policies and their respective government's relations with the U.S., Asian societies could have kowtowed to elite perceptions and explanations of foreign policy and national security and harnessed more tightly U.S. power and protection in the face of rapid change and accompanying uncertainty in the region. But democratization (and liberalization) since the mid-late 1980s challenged the domestic political power structures and the established versions of the relationship with the United States that had been the *modus operandus* for much of the authoritarian period in Cold War Asia. Here, Samuel Kim's critique of Realist approaches to Northeast Asian security is worth emphasizing: "[D]ifferences in internal constructions and resulting domestic politics have a greater impact on how states or their decision makers define threats and vulnerabilities [as well as opportunities], and therefore on the whole security problematic, than does the structure of the international system."[53]

America is good at invoking democracy in its foreign policy, but not good at responding to it during the tough times. Ironically, it is the very success of post-World

[51] Koichi Iwabuchi, *Recentering Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002).
[52] G. John Ikenberry, "Anti-Americanism in the Age of American Unipolarity," in David I. Steinberg, ed., *Korean Attitudes Toward the United States: Changing Dynamics* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005), p. 4.
[53] Samuel S. Kim, "Northeast Asia in the Local-Regional-Global Nexus: Multiple Challenges and Contending Explanations" in Samuel S. Kim, ed., *The International Relations of Northeast Asia* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), p. 27.

War II American hegemony that has gotten the U.S. into the current predicament of having to ward off both enemies and friends who are hostile to its power and policies. The very fact that the U.S. believed it was able to fashion the world according to its own image abetted a type of liberal myopia regarding the process and progress of democracy. As revealed by the United States' rather painful attempts to "rally" its European and Asian allies behind its cause in Iraq, democratic nations simply don't fall into line. They don't easily play follow-the-leader, and their own leaders contend with the wrath of public opinion as much as, if not more than, the wrath of the United States. The soil that the United States helped make hospitable for the seeds of democracy in Western Europe and East Asia have yielded fruit that is both sweet and bitter. On the one hand, democracy promotion serves the U.S. national interest by advancing peace, stability, legality and human dignity, but it also risks the creation of democratically elected regimes that are hostile to U.S. interests[54] or a democratization process that degenerates into civil strife and regional instability.[55]

Democratic realities in the three East Asian cases are not prone toward extremes in terms of hostility toward to the U.S. or civil strife, but U.S. attempts to push for internal democratization have spawned a liberalization process and foreign policy repercussions that the U.S. did not bargain for. The example of U.S.-R.P. relations in the mid-late 1980s is most obvious. Following the fraudulent presidential election victory of Marcos in early February 1986, the Reagan administration put a dent into decades of U.S. economic and military support for the corrupt authoritarian regime of Marcos. Then President Ronald Reagan warned the dictator "against suppressing the independent poll-watching group, NAMFREL; vigorously challenged the election's credibility; and finally told Marcos it was time to go."[56] The U.S. shared the credit for enabling "people power" to transform the Philippines nearly overnight into a political democracy, but within a few years that very democracy also enabled the Philippines government to "kick" the U.S. bases out. Even though Corazon Aquino tried to "overturn" the Senate's decision by appealing to "people power" through a national referendum, she backed down because of the political and legal battle she would have had to wage against "constitutionalists": Aquino's populist move was sure to "set off a series of time-consuming court challenges by lawmakers and others who [would] assert that the Constitution permits voters to overrule a vote by the Senate on a regular law, but not on a treaty."[57] Even if nationalism served as a motivation for the Senate decision against the U.S. military, it was constitutional authority that was served and advanced through the political struggle over the bases.

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[54] Larry Diamond, "Promoting Democracy in the 1990s: Actors, Instruments, and Issues" in Alex Hadenius, ed., *Democracy's Victory and Crisis*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 352.

[55] Tony Smith, "National Security Liberalism and American Foreign Policy" in Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *American Democracy Promotion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 100.

[56] Diamond, p. 347.

[57] *New York Times*, September 16, 1991 (late edition).

The U.S. was also quite blunt about the need to democratize the highly centralized Japanese political establishment as a way to liberalize the Japanese economy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Fueled by frustration and nationalism, "Japan-bashing" became commonplace in the United States in response to America's economic woes. "Senator John Danforth publicly referred to Japanese as 'leeches' as U.S. politicians began to publicly blame the Japanese for the $59 billion bilateral trade deficit."[58] According to Takashi Inoguchi, the "United States government may not have been the only actor engineering the 1993 dismantling of the LDP's one-party dominance; nevertheless, it played an important part."[59] 1993 ushered in Morihiro Hosokawa as prime minister and the rise of the Japan New Party. Although observers have focused on his efforts to liberalize the electoral and party system as soon as he stepped into office, "[i]f Hosokawa had a particular cause, it was not electoral reform but deregulation and decentralization. For years, he railed against what he viewed as excessive power of central-government bureaucrats,"[60] and immediately prior to assuming his newly elected office, he served on the council which proposed recommendations for decentralization. The U.S. government found a Japanese politician who was willing to push a political and economic liberalization agenda, but one of those agenda items, decentralization, had the effect of redistributing power to local governments and CSOs in the localities that house U.S. bases, most prominently, Okinawa. For the United States, anti-base activism and policy initiatives by residents are just some of the costs of local empowerment.

In the last two years, policymakers, academics, the media and other "Korea observers" in the U.S. have been quick to offer generational change (i.e., from old to new) as the main reason for the sudden outpouring of anti-American sentiments. But youth does not necessarily translate into historical amnesia, blind nationalism, radicalism, or anti-Americanism. In Japan, it is the older generation that keeps its eyes, ears, and minds closed to the realities of Japan's war atrocities, while the younger generations are more eager to step up to the historical plate and acknowledge past wrongs, mend old wounds, and forge new friendships with their regional neighbors and the country that dropped the atomic bomb on them. They are the ones busily exchanging views on the internet, working together with regional CSOs, and admiring the cultural products (film, videos, music) imported from their nation's ex-colonies.

In Korea, as critical and nationalistic as the younger generations might be about the bilateral relationship and U.S. foreign policy, they are also pragmatic and know how to differentiate between sentiment and interests, both personal and national. According to Youngshik Bong, Koreans in their 20s and 30s "think negatively of America, but many of

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[58] Keith A. Nitta, "Paradigms," in Steven K. Vogel, ed., *U.S.-Japan Relations in a Changing World* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2002), p. 81.

[59] Takashi Inoguchi, "Three Frameworks in Search of a Policy: U.S. Democracy Promotion in Asia-Pacific" in *American Democracy Promotion*, p. 280.

[60] Gerald L. Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics: Leaders, Institutions, and the Limits of Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 24.

them prefer to have U.S. citizenship. They denounced the U.S. war against Iraq as unjust invasion, but support the government decision to dispatch troops for U.S.-Korean cooperation over the North Korean issue."[61] More importantly, Bong points out their one constancy: they acknowledge the importance of the alliance relationship and support it for the sake of national security and economic stability.

Moreover, it is the younger generations, folks in their twenties and thirties, who have been developing new consciousness about peace, human rights, and multicultural orientation. They have been at the forefront of forging peace movements, something that had been an oxymoron in a Korean society steeped in Cold War thinking. And whatever the cause for their nationalism, it is not of the myopic variety. They criticize U.S. policies, but they also have taken the initiative to investigate and repent for Korea's own war atrocities and human rights violations of the past--specifically toward Vietnamese civilians. Even though they had to confront aggressive criticism from Korean veterans and other conservative (nationalist) "elders" who wanted them to keep a lid on these less than heroic images of Korean troops, the young activists have been engaging in people-to-people reconciliation projects with Vietnamese villagers since the 1990s as a way to apologize for human rights violations perpetrated by Korean soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War. They put pressure on their own government in the mid-1990s to offer a formal apology to the Vietnamese but failed to get such a result.

Regarding young Koreans as politically naïve or economically complacent because they grew up in times of relative stability and wealth does not make sense unless one also emphasizes the fact that they grew up in a social and political environment of relative freedom in the 1990s. They don't long for the right to speak out against the government or for independent opinions like their predecessors had in the 1960s and 1970s; they take it for granted. And no form of authority, including the U.S. government and its troops, is off limits to them. Korean sociologist Jong Sook Lee makes this clear:

> One consequence of democratization and institutional reforms has been the economic decline of the older generation and the rise of the younger generation…. The older generation is also being pushed to the political and social sidelines. This generation is perceived as supporting the status quo and resistant to reform…. In addition, [the younger generation's] easy access to information [technologies] and ability to create and mobilize political networks gives them the ability to be an effective political force.[62]

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[61] Youngshik Bong, "Yongmi: Pragmatic Anti-Americanism in South Korea," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 10:2 (winter/spring 2004), p. 161.

[62] Sook-Jong Lee, "The Rise of Korean Youth as a Political Force: Implications for the U.S.-Korea Alliance," paper presentation, June 16, 2004. Available through the Center for Northeast Asia Policy Studies, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.), p. 20. www.brookings.edu/fp/cnaps/events/20040616.htm (Access date: July 5, 2004).

In short, forging a democracy means not only constructing political and social institutions, but creating empowered citizens. In Korea, the labors of the past for a democratic society have produced progressive-minded, outspoken youth.

Conclusion

Despite the missionary-style zeal with which American leaders tout democracy and work to export it abroad, Americans do not live up to democratic realities very well. In some sense, the U.S. likes to take credit for giving birth to democracies, but it does not like the youthful nature of new democracies whey they are unruly (disobedient), assertive (nationalistic, emotional), and quite willing to challenge the power of the U.S. (rebellious and ungrateful). This was the case in the Philippines in the late 1980s and early 1990s and more recently in Korea. And when Japan, the most established democracy in East Asia, began to define national interests in a way that threatened U.S. economic hegemony, it no longer was treated as the chosen son in Asia.

In the midst of current U.S. attempts to offer democracy and freedom as candy-coated medicine to cure the ills plaguing Afghan and Iraqi societies, the East Asian alliance partners of the United States serve as timely reminders of what democracy can bring: vibrant civil society activism and local empowerment in the historical context of over-centralization and social oppression. With them may come acute challenges to the ability of even pro-U.S. governments to tow the U.S. line. They also teach the U.S. to be careful and wary of how it uses its power in the country of occupation, for today's foibles, faux-pas, and slights by the foreign government can accumulate in the collective memory and become potent sources of mistrust and hostility toward the U.S. in the future. Outright acts of humiliation and disrespect will bear even more bitter fruits. National interest can only serve the national interest when other societies' histories, pride, and perspectives are taken into account. The East Asian cases show that people's political identities and expressions may end up directing, rather than following policies. If the United States does not keep abreast of and adapt to the serious changes within other societies, its superpower days may be numbered.