

Japan and A Geography of Islands

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Abstract

This article takes the author's 2001 book, *A Geography of Islands: Small Island Insularity* and extracts from it a series of generalisations in both physical and human geography as applied to islands. These quotations are then set against the small islands of Japan, testing my 'contention that every island is impacted in some way by the range of insular constraints'. The islands considered are particularly those in Kagoshima Prefecture, using experience from the author's tenure as Visiting Professor at the Kagoshima University Research Center for the Pacific Islands as well as readings. The results show that whilst Japan does not display the full range of island types, mostly the generalities of a book written before the author had had much experience of the Japanese island realm can be seen to be expressed in Japanese islands.

Key words: islands, insularity, Japan, Kagoshima Prefecture, Satsunan Islands

Introduction

In my book, *A Geography of Islands: Small Island Insularity* I attempted to show that 'islands often share certain characteristics in social economic and political spheres which are brought about simply by their being islands' (ROYLE 2001: 1-2). The book has been frequently cited, is well used and is still selling. However, it received mixed reviews. One was negative, if admitting that *A Geography of Islands* had turned the first sod in the field although the reviewer hoped other geographers would make further (and, by implication, better) contributions so the field could be more productively cultivated. Although my book, still less its grudging review, were probably not causal, the field is now indeed productively

cultivated, insofar as island geography, within multidisciplinary island studies, has grown significantly since 2001. I continue to till this field (ROYLE 2014) and after retirement in 2015 came to the Kagoshima University Research Center for the Pacific Islands (KURCPI) for six months.

I had been to Japan before 2001 but had limited experience there and in the book the only references to Japan regarded island arc volcanicity, emigration following the closure of island mines, cost over-runs in infrastructure projects (the Seikan Tunnel), Okinawa's annexation by Japan in 1879 and its present situation regarding American bases and, finally, disputes over island sovereignty between Japan and China, Korea, Russia and Taiwan. After 2001 I made further visits but it has been my association with KURCPI that has brought my greatest exposure to Japanese islands. In this article I take generalities from *A Geography of Islands* and apply them in this fresh spatial context of Japan, testing my 'contention that every island is impacted in some way by the range of insular constraints' (ROYLE 2001: 210). This analysis is timely given that there are ongoing discussions about making *A Geography of Islands* available in a Japanese translation.

The Japanese islands used here will be, wherever possible, those of Kagoshima Prefecture: the Koshiki Islands and the Satsunan Islands: the Osumi, Tokara and Amami groups. Where these islands do not illustrate a point, others will be used, always those I have visited, except for Ogasawara. This spatial focus reflects travel in the island realm during my months as Visiting Professor. Secondly, principally due to the efforts of other researchers associated with KURCPI, much information accessible to me (by being written in English) is about the islands of Kagoshima Prefecture. Finally, I am following the steer from NAKATANI who wrote that these islands provide researchers 'with attractive and challenging research fields for tackling the local and global issues such as community development, conservation of biodiversity and disaster management etc' (2014: 1).

Island Formation

Let us begin on the physical setting, which provides the opportunities and constraints for human activity. The most basic building block is island formation and mention has been made of the volcanic island arc that is Japan, part of the North Pacific's ring of fire. The presence of bubbling, smoking volcanoes is novel to northern Europeans such as the author, giving a hitherto unexperienced immediacy to the term 'active volcano', not least to a temporary resident of Kagoshima dominated by the mighty Sakurajima. *A Geography of Islands* had island formation being a response 'to a set of physical circumstances operating at that place at the time of formation and since' (25). This can be confirmed by the appearance of a new volcanic island, Nishinoshima, in the Ogasawara chain in November 2013. The 'and since' can be exemplified by Sakurajima, which has been un-isled, lava flows in 1914 joining it to Kyushu's Osumi Peninsula.

Biogeography

The biogeography of islands is a topic of great importance, not just because of DARWIN. *A Geography of Islands* contains a number of statements to be put to the Japanese case.

'Isolation can ... cut species off and this may, given sufficient time, see them adapt to the specific challenges and opportunities of their environment by evolving into new forms' (33)

One of many examples is the Okinawa habu (*Trimeresurus flavoviridis*) an oviparous, venomous, pit viper endemic to Ryukyu Islands, Tokunoshima and Amami-Oshima, but not found on the region's coral islands. It has been claimed that the survival of forests on Amami is due to people being afraid to enter them because of the habu. Amami-Oshima also houses seasonally a sub-species of the ruddy kingfisher (*Halcyon coromanda bangsi*). Tokunoshima has its endemic spiny rat (*Tokudaia tokunoshimensis*). Yakushima, a more substantial island of 505km² reaching 1935m, provides a wide range of habitats and has four mammalian sub-species and two endemic bird sub-species:

- sika deer (*Cervus nippon yakushimae*);
- macaque (*Macaca fuscata yakui*);
- dsinezumi shrew (*Crocidura dsinezumi umbrina*);
- small Japanese field mouse (*Apodemus argenteus yakui*);
- Eurasian jay (*Garrulus glandarius orill*);
- Varied tit (*Parus varius yakushimensis*) (OKANO and MATSUDA 2013).

The Yakushima macaque (Fig. 1) is of particular interest. The Japanese Ministry of the Environment identified this as a rare species in 1991 then changed its classification to 'endangered' in 1998. HAYWARD and KUWAHARA (2013a) stated that this led local people to appreciate more the contribution made by macaques to natural heritage and tourism. Culling was replaced by cohabitation, numbers increased and the macaques were removed from official endangered species lists in 2007. Today substantial numbers are to be found in the west of Yakushima where grooming groups can be observed enjoying the warmth of the tarmac road, with, in the author's experience, reluctance to move for cars, which quite appropriately on what is a World Natural Heritage Site, must weave around them.

On Nakanoshima, one of the Tokara Islands, Tokara ponies, which descend from a group of Japanese horses isolated in Kagoshima Prefecture in 1890, have been collected and are managed to bring the breed back from near extinction.

'Both island fauna and flora are at risk from introduced predators' (36)

I would strengthen that statement now by adding introduced disease and other human activity, including loss of habitat. A prime example relates to the Lidth's Jay (*Garrulous lidthi*), native to Amami-Oshima and Tokunoshima. This was threatened by a biological control scheme, for the mongoose was introduced in 1979 to kill the habu but instead or, at



Fig. 1. Yakushima macaque.

the best, also threatened these birds as well as the endemic Amami rabbit (see below). The Mongoose Extermination Programme reduced numbers from 100,00 to about 300 between 2005 and 2012 with the aim of clearing the island entirely by 2020. To the north on the now uninhabited Mageshima, a deer sub-species, Mageshika (*Cervus nippon mageshimae*), is threatened by potential re-uses of the island for military purposes. A loss of habitat example comes from Tanegashima, which sadly contrasts Yakushima's success with macaques for its gentle topography encouraged extensive deforestation in the early 20th century resulting in this island's macaque becoming extinct around 1955 (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013a). Regarding introduced disease, Amami-Oshima hillsides are studded with the white remains of dead pines in an otherwise green wooded landscape. They were killed by an introduced disease, although pines being themselves an introduced species, once the dead trees have fallen and rotted the forests may be the better for it.

'Islands are sometimes important in ecological terms because their isolation has enabled species to survive there when they have been pushed from other more accessible spots' (38)

Islands can often serve as a refuge for animals threatened by loss of habitat or other problems elsewhere. This can be seen clearly in the Goto Islands in Nagasaki Prefecture, especially Shimayamajima off Fukuejima. This island's name, which in English would be 'Island Mountain Island', describes its topography. Connected by a bridge to Fukuejima, it only has a few hundred metres of roads, all along the strait by the bridge, serving the small fishing community. Otherwise, the island is left for the 'lovely figures' of the 'wild

Japanese deer' who have lived here 'since old times' as the eccentric English of a tourist signboard has it. A further stage along a refuge continuum is represented by the Amami rabbit (*Pentalagus furnessi*), an ancient species now endemic to just Amami-Oshima and Tokunoshima. It is a 'relict species', which diverged about 10 million years ago from other lines, a 'living fossil' with no related species, which has remained in a primitive form. This rabbit died out elsewhere due to competition or environmental change and remains on these two islands because they were separated from other landmasses in ancient times and no other animals compete. Indeed, 'the Amami Islands are an "Ark" of terrestrial plants and animals from an ancient continent' (OKANO 2013: 144). In addition, Amami is the northern limit for 239 plants (and the habu and Hallowell's tree frog (*Hyla hallowellii*)) and southern limit for 97 plants (OKANO 2013). For a marine example, Amami-Oshima is the most northerly location of the Pughead Pipefish (*Bulbonaricus brauni*) (KOEDA and FUJII 2015).

Some islands 'are mountainous enough to experience a variety of habitats as the climate changes with height' (61)

'Some islands exhibit tremendous variation in terms of altitude ... a variety of climatic zones and, thus, a range of opportunities' (166)

A splendid Japanese example here is the startlingly steep and high granite island of Yakushima, where its elevation to 1935m in Mount Miyanouradake, the highest point of/off Kyushu, and its 30 peaks over 1000m sees extensive bands of vertically zoned ecosystems relating to climatic zones from sub-tropical, through warm temperate, cool temperate to sub-alpine. The island's vegetation is supported by rainfall, from 4000-10,000mm per annum Yakushima houses more than 1900 plant species, including around 600 mosses, is the southern limit for more than 230 species of plants and the northern limit for about 70 others. Yakushima's steep topography helped to preserve its forests into an age of environmental protection, unlike Tanegashima, and its core wilderness region, which contains the famous cedars, *yakusugi*, seems never to have been logged. This was one reason why part of Yakushima was designated a World Natural Heritage Site. (KUWAHARA and SONG 2016, NAKATANI 2014, OKANO 2013, OKANO and MATSUDA 2013). The Japanese government in 2013 added Amami and Ryukyu to the UNESCO list as candidates for World Natural Heritage listing (KAWAI 2016).

Vulnerability

Had *A Geography of Islands* been written later there would have been more about climate change and its potential affects on islands. Further, after the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 and the tsunami caused by the Tohoku earthquake of 2011, tsunamis would have featured as potential causes of island vulnerabilities. Certainly islands have not become safer places in the last 15 years. The book did have this to say:

'Island ecosystems are ... vulnerable to natural disasters. Many tropical islands are subject



Fig. 2. Tokunoshima tsunami refuge.

to hurricanes, typhoons or cyclones; volcanic island ecosystems are threatened by eruptions ... low-lying islands ... are subject now to risks from sea level rise'(38-39)

Atolls are the island form most vulnerable to sea level rise. However, there are few Japanese atolls – the uninhabited Minamitorishima, 1848 km southwest of Tokyo, and Okinotorishima 1740 km south – so Japanese islands generally are not the most vulnerable to long-term sea level rise associated with climate change. It is different regarding vulnerability to tsunamis and on some islands, such as Tokunoshima, there are refuges in coastal areas, which usually just serve as observation platforms (Fig. 2). Further, markers around Tokunoshima, also Okinoerabushima, inform passers-by how far they are above sea level and to 'be careful to tsunamis'. Typhoons are another cause of vulnerability, especially for islands of Kagoshima Prefecture, which may experience six or seven in a year (KAWAI 2013). Strong winds and excessive rainfall can damage property, infrastructure and farmland and might disrupt services. Ferries, the lifeline for many remote islands, especially here those of the Tokara group without airports, have sometimes been forced to cancel sailings (KUWAHARA 2012).

Volcanic eruption is another major hazard for Japan. This potentially affects places on the main islands, not least Kagoshima on Kyushu, but differences between the 'mainland' city and the small island regarding volcanoes is the level of exposure to danger and the practical difficulties of escape. Many (but not all) islands of Kagoshima are volcanic in origin; some, indeed, are actual volcanoes. One such is Satsuma Ioujima in the Osumi



Fig. 3. Satsuma Ioujima.

Islands (Fig. 3). There was a huge eruption about 7300 years ago and KINOSHITA and SAKAMOTO (2013) state that there has been a continuous emission of gas clouds for several hundred years. The author visited Satsuma Ioujima and recorded in his field notes: ‘a copious quantity of white smoke issuing from its top, whilst from several places on its steep slopes smoke also rises, leaving behind bright yellow deposits of sulphur, for this island is aptly named, *io* being sulphur’. In the Tokara Islands the volcano on Nakanoshima smokes rather more gently, but to its southwest Suwanosejima is a dangerous – the Bunka eruption there in 1813-14 led to depopulation for 70 years – and much of the island is off-limits. Another of the Osumi Islands, Kuchinoerabujima, has had recent eruptions. In 1933 lava buried a village killing several people; there were eruptions in 1980, 2014 and in May 2015 when the population of 140 had to be evacuated (KINOSHITA and SAKAMOTO 2013).

‘Small islands are fragile natural ecosystems’ (39)

The fragility of natural island ecosystems is exemplified by the care taken to prevent introduced species and to protect wildlife. At Kagoshima airport a leaflet is available warning about the transmission of pests and diseases to and from the islands served. At Tokunoshima’s airport a leaflet instructs drivers to take care when traversing roads there and on Amami-Oshima where the endemic Amami rabbit may be encountered. In the leaflet is a sad photograph of a dead rabbit, a victim of road kill. Along the roads themselves yellow warning signs feature a silhouette of a rabbit to reinforce the message.

Isolation

We move now to the type of issues studied within human geography. This part of the article is divided into separate sections, although there are overlaps and reinforcements; the problems of isolation, for example, are made worse by the small scale of some island communities.

'Even the remotest islands were not all cut off from the world' (70)

Ogasawara, the Bonin Islands, are amongst the most remote of all island groups. 'Bonin' may be a corruption of a word meaning 'uninhabited', but these isolated islands, 1000km south of Tokyo have not always been cut off from the world. Indeed, they were settled from Britain and America in the 1820s and 1830s before being claimed by Japan in 1862 and subject to Japanese immigration in the 1870s (LONG 2014). As to world affairs, Iwojima (Ioutou in Japanese), site of a decisive battle in World War II, is in this region.

'Two factors that make islands special are isolation and boundedness' (11)

Islands may not be cut off but, being places apart, separate identities and cultures can develop. One theme here would be language and several Japanese islands have or had their own dialect or language. The islands of Kagoshima display this regarding Okinoerabujima, with two dialects on Amami-Oshima. Further south is the language of the Ryukyu Islands. Elsewhere, DANIEL LONG (2007) has published a book on the development of the Ogasawara mixed language. This was an English-based creole, reflecting the culture of British and American settlers, influenced by Pacific languages and increasingly by Japanese. Most residents now just speak Japanese.

Other 'special' factors of island life would be cultural attributes such as music, cuisine and religious observance. Amami-Oshima's local musical tradition, *shima uta*, which translates as 'island songs' or the 'songs of the community' (SUWA 2007), is a living culture, not commodified or fossilised and the author heard local people playing and singing in a restaurant for example (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2008, YANAGAWA 2011). Amami's food speciality is *keihan*, a traditional dish of rice, sliced vegetables and sliced, cooked, chicken put in a bowl and topped with hot, clear chicken broth. Regarding religion, people on Shimo-koshikishima revere Toshidon, a deity who visits the earth to bring blessings, and has been registered as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity with UNESCO (HAGINO 2013, KUWAHARA 2013a). Also there is the masked deity, Boze, well known through the annual autumn celebration, on Akusekijima in the Tokara group (KUWAHARA 2013a). A depiction of Boze appears on marketing for Akusekijima.

A more secular island cultural tradition is the famous bullfights of Tokunoshima. Here bull fights bull, not the deadly human matador of the Spanish form of bullfighting. The tradition is lived, it is still strong, carried out for social and prestige reasons rather than for economic gain (OZAKI 2013). At a restaurant on Amami-Oshima I was presented with a small plastic model of a bull by a woman from Tokunoshima to express pride in her island's

traditions. Bullfighting is evident on the Tokunoshima even out of season given a full size statue of fighting bulls to be seen there and it features on Tokunoshima tourism literature. In sum:

Forms of traditional culture, such as unique family and kinship systems, religious beliefs, folklore and folk legends and cosmology, which had already gone from the mainland persisted on Amani (KUWAHARA 2013b: 7).

'Isolation [can be] a resource ... utilised by special groups' (49)
An island setting might be used 'to create an ideal community' (14)

A significant Japanese example of isolation utilised by special groups is that of the former island of Dejima, Nagasaki. During Japan's own isolation, the *sakoku* period, foreign trade was severely limited. That with Europe was in the hands of the Dutch East India Company, Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, who would send two ships a year to Nagasaki. The ships were granted access only to an artificial island, Dejima (Japanese for 'Exit Island'). Access could be controlled and the activities of the foreign barbarians housed there could be supervised, although the Dutch traders lived comfortably in their restricted world as is apparent from contemporary paintings and other material.

Utopianism is often a theoretical study or used as a device in literature, but there are examples of groups putting the idea into practice as with the Buzoku, the Banyan Ashram, a commune founded on Suwanosejima in the 1960s (HAGINO 2013).

'Isolation can have ... utility in that islands might be used for activities that are not suitable to being carried out in heavily populated regions' (54)

A relevant example here is the Japanese space agency on the southeast coast of Tanegashima. This has brought economic benefit from construction to jobs and spin-offs associated with operations, including tourism, with about 120,000 visitors annually by the late 1990s. However, the *Japan Times* wrote of the space centre becoming 'a distant, hackneyed feature' for most natives (6 April 1998) and HAYWARD and KUWAHARA (2013a) stated that the decision to locate the base there was because Tanegashima was sparsely populated so environmental impacts and actual danger would be kept away from urban regions.

Another, more speculative example of an island activity not suited to heavily populated regions with prying eyes comes from Takarajima in the Tokara Islands. Takarajima means 'Treasure Island' and there is a legend that the notorious pirate, William Kidd buried his ill-gotten gains here. This is presumably unlikely but it makes a nice island story (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2014).

Scale

'One of the common problems facing islands is the small scale of their societies and economies' (4)

'The normally restricted scale of the small island market means that there are no unit cost reductions to be gained from economies of scale' (121)

The economies of scale problem is seen on Yakushima where the price of gasoline is relatively high. However, scale might also be an advantage here in that distances to be travelled are relatively short and given an abundance of hydro-electric power opportunities on this steep, wet island, it has been suggested that Yakushima should be able to promote the use of electric vehicles (ICHIKAWA 2013).

A small population is linked with economic matters such as thresholds. If there is insufficient demand for a service it cannot be provided without support. It was notable regarding Satsuma Ioujima that after a brief spell as a resort in the late-20th century, the infrastructure for which included the provision of an airstrip, air services did not survive, demand without large scale tourism becoming insufficient. Nor on this small island or those of the Tokara group is there a normal range of retail functions; islanders are not able to go shopping in the way an urban resident would. To overcome the threshold issue, the state may have to step in to ensure that some vital services such as post offices are made available if at a cost to government coffers. Also there has to be medical and educational provision. Regarding medical care, *A Geography of Islands* mentions these generalities:

'The nation state to which an island belongs [has to] provide a health care system appropriate for that state in the island setting' (126)

'Small [island] populations do not generate sufficient demand for medical care to make its provision cost effective' (127)

The author participated in a student field trip to Nakanoshima where we visited the two bed 'hospital' which serves the population of about 150. It was staffed by a nurse with two assistants; a doctor visits regularly on the ferry, there being no airport. In an emergency, at least during daylight, patients can be medevaced from the island's helicopter pad or, if necessary, the nurse can be coached from distance to do whatever is needed. The two beds were not in use during our visit, nor was any of the basic medical equipment to be seen. It is clear that medical equipment is not used cost effectively and the cost of care per patient must be high. Further, whilst medical provision and plans for emergency care for Nakanoshima residents are as good as might be expected, they do not equate to those of urban Japan.

'Tertiary level education ... normally requires movement off a small island' (131)

A similar story can be told regarding education. We visited the school on Nakanoshima and from observation it was clear that the facilities were not under pressure. Amami-Oshima is much larger with a population of about 63,000. It has a number of high schools but no

university. Some feel that an island university is necessary, as it would help retain young people and provide them with the skills needed for island development, even though the cost of provision per student would be high given the lack of economies of scale.

One way in which island groups can deal with the lack of scale is to band together in some way to maximise demand and/or minimise unit costs. *A Geography of Islands* makes a number of statements to this effect:

'Each island does not have to market itself individually and economies of scale can be enjoyed' (192)

'Some islands have tried to scale up their political and economic influences' (60)

One strategy 'to cope with economic problems ... is to try and scale up production and services ...[an] example is the development of island co-operatives' (174)

An excellent example of co-operatives comes from Koshikishima, where a number of fishery co-operatives merged in 2003 into the Koshikishima Fishery Cooperative Association to maximise scale (TORII 2013). Political and administrative scaling up can be seen in that three small Osumi islands – Takeshima, Satsuma Ioujima and Kuroshima – form a single administrative unit, Mishima Village (Mishima means ‘three islands’) and also share a ferry, the *Mishima*. A similar arrangement pertains to the 12 small Tokara Islands – of which seven are inhabited – with the shared ferry, the *Toshima*. These islands form Toshima Village, which extends about 160km from north to south, the longest in Japan (KUWAHARA 2013a). The Tokara Islands share a web page (www.tokara.jp) and there is joint marketing, for example the author was presented with a 2016 calendar entitled in English *Adventure Islands, Tokara, Toshima Village*. There is a joint marketing campaign also for the three most southerly Amami Islands, Tokunoshima, Okinoerabujima and Yoronjima.

Powerlessness

'Small places such as islands are usually powerless in political terms' (4)

'Island histories are replete with examples of military, political and economic domination from outside' (43)

'The ... usual insular position regarding politics ... for small islands is one of powerlessness, dependency and insignificance' (134)

The validity of these quotes regarding Japan can be exemplified by what happened after World War II when several groups of islands were not returned to Japanese control until several years after the rest of the country. The Tokara Islands were held by the United States until 1952; the Amami Islands until 1953; Ogasawara until 1968 and Okinawa until 1972 (KUWAHARA 2012). Regarding Amami:

The region remained a largely overlooked regional ‘backwater’ with many islanders continuing to live in thatched huts with no access to mains water until well into the 20th century and with modernization ... not occurring on a large scale until the withdrawal

of the occupying American forces in 1953 (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013b: 30).

There are American bases still on Okinawa, even though there have been campaigns by local people for many years against them – powerlessness indeed. Further north, after Mageshima in the Osumi Islands was depopulated in 1980, several proposals for reuse ended with airport being built on the island which destroyed much of the natural vegetation with hopes by the private company responsible that there could be a military use (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013a). There are now no Mageshima islanders to contest this proposal but protests from other Osumi Islands about the ‘utter disregard for the will of the local residents’ brought together pressure groups, uniting people on Tanegashima and Yakushima, who usually have little to do with each other (yakushima.org/magekai/protest02.pdf). On Tanegashima itself it was not possible to stop the space centre being constructed despite its hazardous nature.

‘Islands as chess pieces ... islands contested for by outside power’s (73)

‘Islands ... are subject still to contestation, to competing claim’s (154)

The Amami Islands are the best example of a chess piece, having been ruled from Okinawa from 1440-1609; the Satsuma clan from southern Kagoshima from 1609-1871 before being incorporated into Meiji Japan; then being held by the United States from 1946-1953 before reversion (KUWAHARA and SONG 2016). The sovereignty history of Ogasawara is another small-scale example, whilst Japan’s colonial endeavours in Asia saw occupation of islands and archipelagos now in Chinese, Korean, Russian and Taiwanese possession. The notion of present contestation is certainly seen in cases involving Japan. The Liancourt Rocks, to use the neutral English name, are disputed with Korea; Japan and Russia continue to dispute sovereignty of four of the Kurile Islands off Hokkaido, Japan’s ‘Northern Territories’.

‘History is littered with incidents of islands being besieged, invaded and conquered’ (73)

‘Only rarely has an island fought off a determined invader’ (58)

‘When it comes to war, small islands are very vulnerable’ (134)

During World War II all civilian islanders on Ogasawara were evacuated to mainland Japan and nearby Iwojima was a major battlefield between Japan and the United States. Another battlefield was the Ryukyu Islands, especially Okinawa. In both cases the attackers triumphed, if only after much bloodshed. In the previous century the Ryukyu Islands were lost to local sovereignty when annexed by Japan in 1879; earlier, in 1609, Amami was seized by forces from Satsuma (LONG 2014).

‘Sometimes colonialism was/is internal for within island groups there can be quasi-colonial power relationships’ (137)

When occupied by the Satsuma clan Amami islanders were placed in bondage, forced to abandon a subsistence lifestyle in order to cultivate sugar cane for export. This enriched the rulers but was at a cost to local food production and bad harvests could lead to famine.

Many of the mournful Amami *shima uta* songs were written during this time (DE FRANCE 2014). Internal colonialism also applied to Hokkaido where the Ainu population were subjected to Japanese presence from the 14th century, increasing in the 19th century with the internal colonisation project instigated to ensure that Russia did not take the island.

Strategic location

So far problems associated with insularity have been considered; let us now begin to consider advantages.

'Islands can ... be of ... utility to outside groups because their location is strategic' (52)
'Holding an island with access to a potential rival's shipping lanes was of considerable importance' (52)

One Japanese island that has been contested because of its strategic location is Tsushima, situated between Japan and Korea. Indeed, Tsushima has been claimed by both, immediately after World War II, a border dispute emerged (KUWAHARA 2012). Tsushima's strategic location regarding shipping lanes leading to and from the northern coasts of Japan and Eastern Russia, including its naval base at Vladivostok has seen international incident. At the decisive naval Battle of Tsushima in 1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, Japan destroyed the Russian Baltic fleet, which was trying to reach Vladivostok. Earlier, in 1861, was the Tsushima Incident when a Russian corvette appeared despite the port not being open to foreign ships. There was concern that Russia was seeking to establish a base and Japan received help from the British navy to encourage the Russians to withdraw. Japan remained wary of further foreign interest in this island, whilst western powers were suspicious of each other's activities. Thus, in 1875 when Britain thought French and Russian vessels were at Tsushima, this was of such concern that Britain considered seizing in retaliation the Korean islands of Port Hamilton (now Geomundo). The British actually took those islands in 1885 and when they were thinking of leaving in 1887, there were suggestions that Tsushima should be occupied instead (ROYLE in press).

'Islands could ... be used as forward bases' (72)

A Japanese island that served as a forward base was Fukuejima in the Goto Islands. In 1849 Japanese authorities had Ishida Castle built there to guard the approach to the main Japanese islands from the west as foreign ships had appeared in the waters.

Stepping Stone

'An island, being small and bounded, can serve as a secure base from which interaction with a larger continental area can be occasioned' (50)

Tsushima was again the example here, a stepping stone to interaction with Korea and

the Japanese trading post at Busan. Not quite literal stepping stones are many islands of the Seto Inland sea which have been utilised as bridge supports for the two great sets of bridges joining Shikoku to Honshu. The Great Seto Bridge built from 1978-1988 is, in fact, six bridges with five island stepping stones; to the west the Nishiseto Expressway, opened in 1999, runs over nine bridges, with eight island stepping stones. A Kyushu example is the Five Bridges of Amakusa, which connect the two big islands of Amakusa – Kamishima and (over another bridge) Shimoshima – to Kyushu across four islands.

Prison/Exile/Refuge

Islands are surrounded by water and, as with a moat around a castle, the water forms a defensive barrier. This has often led to islands being utilised as prisons and/or places of exile, the barrier keeping undesirables on the island; alternatively the water can be a barrier which keeps people and influences out – the island as refuge.

'It is problematic leaving islands at the best of times, to have to escape from not just the prison building but then the island and its stretch of water is difficult indeed' (50)

'Islands... as places to which people needing to be separated from normal society could be confined' (73)

It has been said of Japan that a sense of the outer islands' peripherality led them to be used as places of exile for internal dissidents, resulting in the terms *shima okuri* or *shima nagashi* (literally 'throwing away to an island') being used to refer to political exile (SUWA 2012: 12).

A number of examples from the Satsunan Islands can be put forward. The Kagoshima resident, Saigo Takamori, later to be leader of the 1877 Satsuma Rebellion, was exiled during the Ansei Purge first to first Amami-Oshima from 1859 for two years and then after a brief recall, to Okinoerabujima between 1862-1864 when he was pardoned. He helped to educate local people from his prison on the island and is something of a hero there, with much memorialization. Members of the Ryukyu royal family were also held on Okinoerabujima.

Another notable island exile was the 12th century Buddhist monk, Shunkan who had been involved in a failed coup. Records have him exiled on Kikaijima but it is not clear if was the island of that name off Amami-Oshima or Satsuma Ioujima whose volcano sits on the Kikai caldera. There is another candidate island, Iohjima, in Nagasaki Prefecture. Satsuma Ioujima has anyway assumed the role of Shunkan's place of exile by building a huge statue to him overlooking the harbour (Fig. 4). There is a *noh* theatre masterpiece called *Shunkan*, attributed to Zeami Motokyo, who was himself exiled to Sado Island in 1434 where he died in 1443 (SUWA 2012).

Regarding islands as places of refuge, examples off Kyushu relate to Catholics. The Nagasaki area was exposed to Christianity through contact with European traders but



Fig. 4. Shunkan statue on Satsuma Ioujima.

the Catholic clergy were expelled in the 17th century and the religion's adherents were persecuted, especially following the Shimabara Rebellion of 1637-1638. Remote insular locations such as Amakusa and Goto became places of refuge. A large signboard at Fukuejima airport illustrates the Catholic churches there as this Goto island celebrates its Christian heritage.

Communality

'Islanders would, on occasion, maximise the utility to be made from [island resources] by employing them communally' (83)

'Traditions of equality and, more strongly, those of mutual help ... survive' (85)

An island where these words ring true is Kikaijima, the small, agricultural island off Amami-Oshima. Here the *haroji* social relation, kinship group, system developed, based on direct blood relationship. This worked as a joint labour organisation for the sugar cane industry. Under *haroji* there was much cousin marriage to ensure that land was kept within the group and not lost by being given as a dowry to an outsider (NAKATANI 2013).

Resources

'Small islands often suffer from a restricted range of resources' (60)

'Small island economies often struggle to manage on their domestic resource base' (185)

Resource restrictions of small islands can require employment of domestic opportunities in ways perhaps not necessary in larger societies. Thus, in Amami-Oshima there was a need at times to seek out a famine food, something maybe not palatable but which sustained life during times of shortage. This was a cycad, sotetsu (*Cycas revoluta*), the pulp of which was used to bulk out other foodstuffs, despite it having to undergo special preparation to deal with its toxicity (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013b). Island resources were also utilised for medicinal uses (YAMAMOTO 2016). Another example comes from Yakushima fish production:

All of the manufacturing waste is used. The liquid in which the mackerel were boiled is boiled down and sold as soup stock. The heads and bones are powdered and used as manure. The ashes of the wood that was burnt to smoke the mackerel are used as wood ash in charcoal braziers. The... residents ... of Yakushima ... waste nothing (OKANO and MATSUDA 2013: 75).

'One way of coping with island resource restrictions is to maximise production of the resource that provides the best return' (61)

There are some excellent Japanese examples here. Shodoshima in the Seto Inland Sea produces olives, an unusual crop for Japan. A visit shows this even without the need to see production areas. The ship bringing the visitor might have been one of the Olive Line; a huge olive wreath dominates the harbour wall, the souvenir shops have branded olive goods from cosmetics, through foodstuffs, including olives themselves, to wooden artefacts including simple olive sticks adorning key rings. Gardens around the harbour are planted out in olives. Regarding the Satsunan Islands here the climate is warm enough for sugar cane and it is produced in Amami-Oshima, Kikaijima, Okinoerabujima, Tanegashima, Tokunoshima, and Yoronjima, all of which have factories (PARK 2013). The author was on Tokunoshima during cane harvest and the landscape was buzzing with the sound of harvesting machines (Fig. 5) and the roads busy with large trucks carrying loads of cut cane to the factory. Kikaijima is intensely agricultural, especially for sugar cane, given its limestone geology and flat topography. It can be compared to another small island of Amami-Oshima, Kakeromajima, which has a steep volcanic topography and fewer resource opportunities. Kikaijima has 7785 people on 57km², a density of 136 per square kilometre compared to Kakeromajima with 1352 people on 77 km², just 18 per square kilometre. Okinoerabujima is another flat, limestone island, which can produce successfully not just sugar cane, but also flowers and vegetables. Its museum features the lily bulb industry, bulbs having been exported to Europe since the early 19th century. Horticulture is to be seen throughout the island, has brought good rewards and HAGINO (2013) says this explains the island's lack of focus on tourism.



Fig. 5. Sugar cane harvest on Tokunoshima.

Island 'resource use may... change with time as demands for different goods and services vary' (61)

With the islands well-connected to the outside world now there has been a reduction in crops once needed for subsistence in favour of focusing on export crops to maximise financial returns. On Yakushima farmers now cultivate not foods to eat themselves but fruit, especially ponkan (*Citrus reticulata*) and tankan (*Citrus tankan*) oranges, flowering plants such as cymbidium (*Cymbidium sp.*) and other orchids, and gajutsu (*Curcuma zedoaria*), a herb of the ginger family (OKANO and MATSUDA, 2013). On Amami-Oshima rice cultivation has given way to the specialization in sugar.

'Where an island does not have a diversified economy but concentrates on one export product, its dependence on outsiders can be near total' (142).

Islands can be 'at the whim of outside forces that control the economy' (60)

One of the few Japanese references in *A Geography of Islands* was to the abandonment of Hashima and Takashima when coal mining stopped. Sado's gold mine reached peak production in the 1940s and the island's economy declined when the mine closed, not through a lack of gold so much as through the expense of its extraction compared to production costs elsewhere. Satsuma Ioujima, produced sulphur from its active volcano and when that industry ceased, its population fell from 700 to about 100. Amami-Oshima manufactures Tsumugi silk, but production started to decline in 1972 as fashion changed and

kimonos were replaced by western dress on most occasions (NISHIMURA 2016).

The most common [resource] problem is water supply (62)

Because of scale, on-island freshwater supplies limited and Suwanosejima and Kodakarajima installed desalinisation plants in 2000 and 2001 respectively. It is to be noted on the limestone island of Okinoerabujima the reservoirs have to be lined with plastic to stop water being lost through percolation through the porous bedrock.

Migration/Population

'Out-migration ... has seen islands in the limiting case being completely abandoned' (3)

'There are often high rates of emigration from small islands' (87)

'Most migrants tend to be young, which means that the population left behind will be an ageing one' (90).

Island emigration, even unto abandonment, or at the best leaving a residue of an ageing population are 'notable and significant problems' for the Japanese small islands (NAGASHIMA 2013: 75). KUWAHARA (2012) lists a number of islands that have been abandoned including Gaijima of the Tokara group in 1970. Another was Mageshima in 1980 when the remnants of a population that had peaked at over 500 in 1959 voluntarily relocated to Tanegashima (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013a). Other islands may not have been deserted but have faced population decline at rates exceeding Japan's national decline. Amami-Oshima (including Kakeromajima, Ukejima and Yorojima) had 103,907 people in 1955, 75,832 in 1995 and 65,770 in 2010 (JOHNSON and KUWAHARA 2013). Most of the people who left were young adults, leaving an increasingly ageing population, with a greater ratio of elderly than Ryukyu or Japan as a whole (KUWAHARA 2012). An interview the author conducted with representatives of Amami City Council in February 2016 revealed that whilst population continued to fall, there had been a recent slight increase in the number of families, which would tie in with an ageing population, usually characterized by more single-family households. In particular, the officials were concerned at the decrease in 17 year olds, a key age group at the threshold of adulthood. One response was the instigation of a pro-natalist population policy based around the development of good education and medical facilities; available and affordable childcare provision; the promotion of marriage and financial support for second and further children. On smaller islands the closure of schools can be pivotal, for any remaining families with children might emigrate. The school of Ukeshima closed in 2014 leaving a small elderly population facing an uncertain future (NAGASHIMA 2016). The ageing of island populations was brought home to the author on Tanegashima when viewing the, to him, exotic pastime of gateball given the proportion of elderly people enjoying the game.

'More remote islands, those with fewest resources undergo relative population decline' (95).

The easiest way to confirm this for Japan is through a short quotation:

The policy of high economic growth caused the outflow of population from the whole area of remote islands. At the same time, rapid migration occurred from villages to a main city or town in a big island, or from subordinating islands to a main island in the group of islands (KUWAHARA 2012: 8-9).

'Recovery in economic vitality can lead to a population influx' (96)

The author has not come across much evidence of this for the Japanese islands, but it was interesting to see an official brochure encouraging migration to Amami-Oshima emphasise business successes in foods, crafts, agriculture and catering as well as the clean environment, sports, festivals, wildlife, silk and music. A specific mention of return migration relates to Tokunoshima where some people who left when young given the lack of economic and social opportunities return later to participate in the bullfighting (OZAKI, 2013).

Access

We begin to move now into how to improve island living. One area relates to access and Japan has made strenuous and costly efforts to improve access to its islands at all scales from the four main islands downwards. Mention has been made of the expensive links from Honshu to Hokkaido and Shikoku, there are fixed links, too, between Honshu and Kyushu, one for the *shinkansen*.

'Transportation facilities are vital to island living' (110)

In an interview on Amami-Oshima the author asked an official what was needed now in terms of infrastructure, given recent investments on the island including a series of long road tunnels. The answer related to improved access, more frequent air flights with better timings for the tourist market, especially regarding the smaller islands off Amami-Oshima itself. Access was key. *A Geography of Islands* reinforced this:

'On islands people consider and talk about their ferries or air connections ... with ... continued interest' (111)

I gave a public lecture on Amami-Oshima in a high school. It related to small island living and I became conscious that some constraints I identified did not relate particularly to an island whose population remains over 60,000. Afterwards a member of the audience said she would like to stay and talk but had to rush to catch the ferry: access, transportation, is an inescapable island trope. On small islands the ferry's arrival or departure is an occasion for activity, for business, for social interaction, no matter what time of day it is. Our field trip to Nakanoshima reached the island in the dark at 06.30 to a harbourside thronging with activity, a level of activity repeated when we left in torrential rain

'Island transportation is often in the hands of governments' (113)

Again this can most efficiently be exemplified by a direct quote:

Prior to the 1960s Takarajima and the rest of the Tokara islands were highly inaccessible, with no regular ferry routes to or from main island Japan or Okinawa. The introduction of ferry routes and jetties on the Tokara islands as part of a central government initiative facilitated easier access to the islands for northern tourists and prompted a vogue for southern island tourism in the late 1960s/early 1970s that brought the first tourists to Takarajima (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2014: 28).

Note the central government involvement; access is subsidised, it would probably be cheaper to resettle people from small islands onto main island Japan than to continue to subsidise their island living.

'On an island, except for any domestic production, there is the added cost of all goods reflecting the extra stage of transportation necessary to get the goods to [and from] the island' (121)

An example here relates to fisheries on the Koshiki Islands where the small internal market means that producers must rely on transporting their product off the islands. This is expensive and, in some cases, the ferry timetable constrains fishing operations. Further, prices received at mainland markets might be reduced because the journey from the island means that the catch is not as fresh as that of competitors closer to the market (TORII 2013).

Policies

'Many [small islands] have to be helped in some way from outside. Often such help is in the form of national and regional development policies' (184)

This is true of Japan nationally:

After World War Two, the term and concept of *ritou* ('remote islands') has served as a key trope in the imagination of islands, especially as depopulation became a serious issue in the 1950s. A number of programs were planned to 'de-ritou-nise' islands (SUWA 2012: 13).

In 1953 the Remote Islands Development Act was enacted with the mission to 'eliminate backwardness' in such islands through application of a substantial national budget. This act was not applied to the Amami, Okinawa and Ogasawara islands, which remained under US military control and were granted their own programs upon reversion to Japan, such as the Act on Special Measures for the Development of Ogasawara Islands in 1969. The first national islands' plan (1953-1962) sought to deal with isolation or remoteness from the mainland and to develop social infrastructure. The second (1963-1972) saw improvement of transportation and telecommunications as basic measures for 'eliminating backwardness'.

The third (1973-1982) broke 300 eligible islands into five categories based on population size, hydrographic conditions, remoteness and geographical form, seeking to strengthen collaboration between local industries and tourism and to promote marine recreation (KUWAHARA 2012).

The term *shimachabi*, meaning the pains and troubles of remote islands was ‘widely used in Okinawa to express the hardships caused by weather ... as well as difficulties in accessing health care, education, transportation and communication on these islands’ (NAGASHIMA 2013: 74). One can follow up the policies put into operation for Okinawa in KUWAHARA (2012). To the north, the economy of the Amami islands was weak at the time of reversion to Japan so the government established the ‘Special Measures Law for the Reconstruction of the Amami Islands’ in 1954, which with later revisions become known as ‘Amashin’. Consistent underlying objectives have been to raise average income levels to those of Okinawa and mainland islands and to make Amami economically independent (KUWAHARA 2012; IKEDA 2013). Infrastructure projects such as roads and harbours were key in the early years (MINAMURA 2013) and consumed about 80% of the budget. In recent times natural environment and culture have received more attention given contestation between pro-development and anti-development/environmental protection groups (KUWAHARA 2011). At my interview with officials from Amami City the promotion of tourism, which marketed history, culture, traditions and nature was highlighted within a job creation strategy.

Branding

‘Branding is [a] well-tryed strategy for island economies’ (176)

This relates to attempts to add value to island produce by capitalising on the island’s name and, hopefully, good reputation. Island production is often small-scale so to market goods as premium products stamped with a premium brand can be a useful strategy. Most of the Satsunan Islands have shelves of island-branded foods on sale at airports or ferry terminals. These range from locally made sweets to more significant industrial output such as sugar cane *shochu*. The Amami islands have seen replacement of rice production by sugar to feed *shochu* production: ‘the disappearance of paddy fields has not simply been a socio-economic effect, but rather demonstrates the enormous impact on the Amami islands environment’ (MINAMURA 2013:72). The olives on Shodoshima and the oranges of Yakushima (HIDAYAT 2012) were mentioned above. Demand for Amami’s Tsumugi silk with its 1300 year tradition has declined massively as the wearing of the kimono has fallen away but producers are countering this by seeking new products to utilise the branded fabric as an article on the front page of *Japan News* announced (30 January 2016). For Tanegashima, knives and scissors have been made on the island since 1543 as the packaging on the boxes for *Tane* scissors has it in English. Further, HAYWARD and KUWAHARA (2013a) write of a classic Tanegashima food product, a sweet made from the island’s *kumara* (sweet potatoes) being sold in the shape of a rocket to celebrate the space centre.

Regard

'Islanders, being from even beyond the rural periphery are inevitably the equivalent of culchies' [an Irish term meaning 'provincial' or 'rustic']' (46)

One relatively recent change in island matters relates to regard. In the past islands and their people were sometimes seen as backwards, the very word 'insular' has negative connotations. Now there is a more positive spin:

The remote islands are beginning to shift away from the conventional constraints of being far removed, surrounded by sea and smallness and are headed towards using their unique characteristics to the advantage and benefit of their populations (NAGASHIMA 2013: 77).

Thus, it used to be that cultural differences between Amami and mainland Japan led to discrimination, with the use of local dialect at school being forbidden for example and *shima uta* being listened to in private, but around the 1980s cultural differences began to be valued as an asset (KUWAHARA 2013b). More generally policies towards remote islands, which had focused on 'eliminating backwardness' and closing income differentials came to appreciate the differences from the other places regarding, for example, biodiversity (KUWAHARA 2012). Further:

'The island as a "refuge for the soul" is a good encapsulation of the appeal of islands for those seeking succour of this nature' (13)

NAGASHIMA moved islands from the negativity of *shimachabi* to the realization that they 'have unique healing properties and provide space for relaxation' (2103: 75). KUWAHARA (2012) also wrote of islands as healing spaces given their environment, seafood, traditions and culture. Thalassotherapy – seawater cures – could encourage visitors and centres opened in Okinoerabujima in 2005 and Amami-Oshima in 2006 (NODA 2016).

Tourism

Tourism is a 'near universal development strategy ... predicated upon the innate romance and mystery of islands' (4)

This is certainly true in Japan. Tourism promotion for Amami seeks visitors for all the islands using the romance of local attractions. It features endemic species: Lidth's jay, the Amami black rabbit, butterflies, the Ruddy Kingfisher if not the menacing habu. Marketing makes use of the particular attractions of each island:

- Amami-Oshima is Natural Island;
- Tokunoshima is Sports Island, symbolised by a fighting bull;
- Kikajima is Butterfly Island;

- Okinoerabujima is Flower Island;
- Yoronjima is Resort Island, symbolised with a bottle of *shochu*

'Tourists provide job opportunities for islands in many ways' (190)

Yakushima is an example here The island gets around 300,000 tourists a year, increased from the 120,000 in the 1980s before World Natural Heritage Site designation. About 20% of Yakushima's adult population now engage with tourism related activity including 100 full time mountain guides and about the same number working part time (KUWAHARA and SONG 2016).

'There are problems regarding tourism and islands. Even the economic benefits may be somewhat illusory' (195)

Indeed, HAGINO wrote that tourism has brought 'only moderate growth' even to Yakushima (2013: 79). On Amami-Oshima tourism numbers have fluctuated in recent years between 670,000 and 740,000; Yoronjima, 'Resort Island', once had the cachet of being the most southerly part of Japan but has since lost tourists who now go further south to Okinawa following its reversion in 1972 (KUWAHARA and SONG 2016). Satsuma Ioujima's major resort development in the 1970s failed in the 1990s and where its hotel was sited is now a more lowly camp site and the airstrip where guests used to arrive is now used only for charter flights.

'Small islands have to market whatever they have' (194)

It helps if islands can market world class attractions. Okinoerabujima is not as focused on tourism as some islands, but does benefit from its Shoryudo limestone cavern, marketed as one of the nine best stalactite grottos in Japan. Yakushima is much more significant for tourism with its World Natural Heritage Site designation of 1993, even though its most famous attraction is nothing but an old tree. However, this is *Jomon Sugi*, a massive cedar 16.4m in circumference, 25.3m high and anything from 3000-7200 years old. And hiking several hours to reach the tree, which is in the high, very steep, wilderness in the interior of the island, is an attraction for tourists in itself. Indeed:

so popular have visits to view the tree become that they might best be regarded as a contemporary secular pilgrimage, with many visitors travelling to the island specifically to hike up the long path to a viewing platform overlooking the tree and photograph it (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013a: 37).

Further, Yakushima offers and markets its turtles, deer and macaques. The last two species are commonly found on the western section of the road that circumscribes the near circular island. Elsewhere, attractions may have less physicality, if any at all. Perhaps the most uncertain relates to Takarajima, Treasure Island, with the speculation that it is the location of Captain Kidd's buried treasure (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2014). Finally we might consider Tanegashima's space centre:

Rocket launches do not represent [an] unwelcome acoustic and environmental intrusion ... they represent a lucrative tourism opportunity valued by the community with little apparent concerns over the dispersal of ignited rocket fuel contaminants in the air, ocean and land surrounding the NASDA launch site (HAYWARD and KUWAHARA 2013a: 34).

'Tourism ... is a double-edged sword' (206)

Even for islands with a strong tourism economy find this might not solve their economic problems. Most tourists on Yakushima do not visit the lowland villages whose residents struggle with island agricultural and fishery production (OKANO and MATSUDA 2013) and there are reports of friction between locals and the tourism industry (NAKATANI 2014).

'Another problem relates to the pressures of tourism upon the insular environment' (200)

Continuing with Yakushima as an example, its visitors tend to concentrate in specific places, like the route to *Jomon sugi*, which has had negative effects, such as congestion and the destruction of vegetation (OKANO and MATSUDA 2013). There is also an issue relating to toilet needs on the way to the old tree (KUWAHARA and SONG 2016).

Tourism can provide 'a useful outlet' for the expression of local culture but 'commercialised ... island traditions' can be 'unsettling to local people' (203)

The island tourism world contains too many examples of the commodification of aboriginal and island cultural traditions. In Japan one might observe there seems to be little sign of this; rather the author's experience has been positive. This was particularly true of my visit to the restaurant on Amami-Oshima where local people sang *shima uta* with obvious pleasure and not as a stage show for visitors.

An 'island [can become] a museum of itself' (204)

As with the commodification of culture, this comment was negative, expressing a concern. I would now not necessarily see this issue in a totally negative light for Nagasaki has two situations where museumification has been positive. The first is the former island of Dejima where the Dutch traders were based. This site is being rebuilt as a heritage project and is a major educational facility and visitor attraction. The second is Hashima, the former mining island which once housed over 5000 people on its 6.3 ha. Now it is deserted, its more than 1000 apartments, school, hospital and other facilities silent and lifeless. Its eeriness, the accidental resemblance of its profile to a battleship – hence its alternative name of Gunkanjima – and its use as a set in the James Bond movie, *Skyfall* attracts tourists to land or at least sail round it.

Conclusion

This exercise gave me the opportunity to re-read *A Geography of Islands* from cover to cover perhaps for the first time since it was published. If I were to write it now I think I would be more positive, particularly about matters such as island cultures. On the other hand there are problems now that were not so evident before 2001, which would have to be further addressed. One is climate change and associated sea level rise. This affects migration; that theme would also need to be discussed regarding the mass migration movements into Europe affecting islands such as Lesbos. Most of the book's generalities still stand and have certainly been able to be exemplified for Japan, although this island nation does not have major examples of atolls, the most vulnerable island type. JORDAN WALKER (2015) wrote that Japan had a traditional view of itself as a continental rather than an island nation and whilst swishing along on the *shinkansen* on the main islands one is not conscious of insularity. However the term *shimaguni*, island nation, is now used (LONG 2012); Japan has over 6000 islands not just four and over 400 of them are populated. Those small islands, not least those in Kagoshima Prefecture, certainly exemplify issues associated with insularity.

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