

New Developments in the Transperipheral Network: Implementation and Outlook of the Tokunoshima International Youth Camp

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Abstract

This paper examines the Tokunoshima International Youth Camp, a one-week program that convened undergraduate and graduate students from Japan, South Korea, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to engage with wartime memory, postwar trajectories, and local cultural heritage in the Amami Islands. Implemented within a Ministry of Foreign Affairs–funded research project, the camp combined lectures, guided visits to war-related sites and religious institutions, cross-national presentations, and exchanges with local schoolchildren. Drawing on participant observation and program records from the first two sessions (January–February 2024 and December 2024), the study analyzes both the educational outcomes of the camp and the broader cultural dynamics that shaped it.

Special attention is given to the long-standing ties between Tokunoshima and BiH, initially established through comparative research on bullfighting traditions and later reinforced by municipal diplomacy under the Tokyo 2020 Host Town program. These transperipheral connections illuminate how cultural practices rooted in peripheral regions can generate durable frameworks for international collaboration. The paper argues that such networks not only challenge conventional center-periphery models but also create new forms of cultural resources that enhance regional identity and global engagement.

By situating the youth camp within this wider trajectory, the paper demonstrates how periphery-driven exchanges can contribute to peace education, foster cross-cultural understanding, and offer innovative approaches to local revitalization. The case of Tokunoshima suggests that small islands, often viewed as marginal, can serve as strategic nodes in global cultural and academic networks, providing insights of broader relevance to studies of memory, heritage, and international cooperation.

Key words: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cultural heritage, Peace studies, Tokunoshima, Transperipheral networks, War memory

Introduction

This paper advances the concept of transperipheral engagement as a framework for understanding the current development where non-central interconnections between regions generate new cultural and educational possibilities that challenge the traditional center-periphery hierarchical structure. Rather than viewing peripheral regions as disadvantaged spaces dependent on metropolitan centers, the transperipheral perspective highlights the fact that peripheral regional actors are constructing social networks without central intermediaries, akin to the decentralized networks seen on the Internet, in opposition to geopolitical, economic, and cultural center-periphery models (KUWAHARA *et al.* 2007c). That is, it is a concept that captures the process by which geographically distant, yet similarly peripheral regional actors build transboundary horizontal connections, generating alternative forms of knowledge, solidarity, and exchange. Beginning with a focus on the mobility of bulls, people, and information in bullfighting, it has recently become discussed within the field of island studies, alongside the conceptualization of mobility and the exchange of emotions, reflecting the 'relational turn' in contemporary discourse, similar to the concept of translocality (GREINER AND SAKDAPOLRAK 2013, PAPOUTSAKI AND KUWAHARA 2018, PUGH 2018 CHIO 2019, PRINCE *et al.* 2021).

Building on this conceptual foundation, this paper seeks to capture the agency of island regional actors at work by repositioning the Tokunoshima International Youth Camp (徳之島国際ユースキャンプ / *Tokunoshima Kokusai Yūsu Kyampu*) within a longer historical trajectory. The project brought together students from Japan, South Korea, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to explore wartime memory, postwar society, and regional cultural practices on Tokunoshima Island (徳之島). This camp was conducted with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' "Research Grant for Diplomacy and Security Studies" as part of the large-scale research project of "Research Open Lab on Leadership and Entrepreneurship Strategy (ROLES, 創発戦略研究オープンラボ / *Sōhatsu Senryaku Kenkyū Rabo*)" within the Global Security and Religion Division at the University of Tokyo's Center for Advanced Science and Technology (CAST, 先端科学技術センター / *Sentan Kagagu Gijutsu Sentā*). As an outsider who has been involved in education and island studies in the Amami Islands (奄美群島 / *Amami Guntō*) for more than twenty years, I have engaged with the planning and management of this camp in a mediating role between the islands and the outside world.

While this camp was not necessarily designed as a social science investigation, this paper positions it within the long-term trajectory of transnational engagement linking Tokunoshima and BiH—a collaboration initially sparked by comparative research on bullfighting (KUWAHARA *et al.* 2006, NISHIMURA *et al.* 2006, OZAKI *et al.* 2006a, 2006b, KUWAHARA *et al.* 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, OZAKI *et al.* 2007) and subsequently expanded through municipal diplomacy and academic networks (NISHIMURA 2007, ABAZOVIĆ 2019)—reveals how such transperipheral exchanges function as cultural resources with the potential to reconstruct the agency of peripheral regions (HARFST *et al.* 2024, PAPPAS *et al.* 2025).

The analysis outlines the camp's design, participant composition, and educational structure before re-examining the practical operation of transperipheral engagement as

a platform for peace education and regional development. The conclusion considers the broader significance of periphery-led exchanges for reimagining international collaboration and suggests future research directions for transperipheral engagement.

Tokunoshima International Youth Camp

Camp Objectives

The primary objective of this camp is to foster mutual understanding among Japanese and international students regarding war memories, using Tokunoshima as the setting. While this aligns with the intent of the MOFA grant, it goes beyond that. Choosing war memories as the camp theme risks provoking conflicts over historical perceptions. Yet, we deliberately selected this theme because, even in the 2020s, the world situation seems to persist as if the 20th century—an era of war—still continues. We considered what kind of learning is necessary for the younger generation in this context. Of course, my own long-standing research on war memories and memorializing war dead played a role. I was also convinced that Tokunoshima's unique historical position, combined with careful participant selection, could yield a fruitful program.

The unique historical circumstances within Japan that Tokunoshima and the Amami Islands faced during and after the Pacific War were as follows. The military importance of Japan's southern seas had been recognized since around the time of the First Sino-Japanese War (日清戦争 / *Nisshin Sensō*, 1894-95), leading to the establishment of the Amami Oshima Fortress Command (奄美大島要塞司令部 / *Amami Ōshima Yōsai Shireibu*) in Koniya (古仁屋), Amami Oshima, in 1923. When the Pacific War began in 1941, Army and Navy facilities were successively established across Amami Oshima and Kakeroma Island (加計呂麻島 / *Kakeroma-jima*), separated by the Oshima Strait (大島海峡 / *Ōshima Ka'ikyō*). During the 1945 Battle of Okinawa, Tokunoshima, along with Kikai (喜界島 / *Kikai-jima*) and other islands, served as a supply base for kamikaze aircraft heading to Okinawa from mainland bases in Kyushu (九州), Shikoku (四国), and elsewhere along the Pacific Ocean. Even today, straight roads reminiscent of former runways and several bomb shelter ruins remain. Memorials also stand on Tokunoshima for the Second Fleet (第二艦隊 / *Da'ini Kantai*), including the sunken *Yamato* (大和), the *Toyama Maru* (富山丸) torpedoed while transporting soldiers and supplies, and the *Bushu Maru* (武州丸), an evacuation ship from Tokunoshima sunk off Nakanoshima Island (中之島) in the Tokara Islands (トカラ列島).

Considering these factors and based on an essay (NISHIMURA 2011) summarizing how the war situation and natural environment significantly shaped memorial practices, I concluded that field studies of war sites were feasible as a program of the camp. Tokunoshima, an island of just under 250 square kilometers with a population of over 20,000 spreads across three towns, is also advantageous for camp participants because its size allows them to grasp the island's overall character during a short stay. Furthermore, we judged that learning about the complex postwar history of the Amami Islands—which experienced administrative separation from mainland Japan until 1953, unlike the main island of Okinawa (沖縄本島) where U.S. military bases were established—could also be

a valuable experience.

The island's wartime experience, which cannot be fully understood through the dichotomy of perpetrator or victim, offers a micro-level perspective to reexamine the larger framework of inter-state war. My experience co-translating Keith CAMACHO's work (CAMACHO 2011) with MACHI Taiki (町 泰 樹), which illuminates the "mainland" Japanese and American understanding of war through the lens of the Chamorro people's war experience in the Mariana Islands and their approach to war memorials post-war, also supports this recognition (CAMACHO 2016).

Another deliberate design element was the composition of camp participants. We invited students from regions directly involved in the Asia-Pacific War—the largest conflict Japan engaged in during the first half of the 20th century (including Japan and South Korea, with planned participation from the Philippines in 2025), but also, students from BiH, which experienced a brutal civil war in the 1990s. This aims to enable a multifaceted re-examination of war and history.

During the three-year project period funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we planned and implemented the following three camps (the third is scheduled to take place after this paper is written).

First session: January 28 - February 2, 2024

Second session: December 2 - December 8, 2024

Third session: December 15–21, 2025

Next, we will introduce the specific programs of the first two camps.

First camp

The inaugural youth camp was held over six days from January 28 to February 2, 2024. Twelve participants attended: three each from the University of Tokyo, Kagoshima University, Jeju National University (JNU) in South Korea, and the University of Sarajevo in BiH.

The program was primarily held on the fourth floor of the Isen Town History and Folklore Museum (伊仙町歴史民俗資料館 / *Isen-chō Rekishi Minzoku Shiryō-kan*). This facility, repurposed from the former Kagoshima Prefectural Tokunoshima Agricultural High School (鹿児島県立德之島農業高等学校 / *Kagoshimaken-ritsu Tokunoshima Nōgyō Kōtō-gakkō*) building, was provided as a place for our indoor workshop by the Social Education Division of the Isen Town Board of Education (伊仙町教育委員会社会教育課 / *Isen-chō Kyōiku I'inka'i Shaka'i Kyōiku-ka*). On the first day of activities, January 29, following the opening ceremony, participants first received a lecture on the island's history from MATSUOKA Yuki (松 岡 由 紀) of the Isen Town Board of Education. The lecture focused on the period under U.S. military occupation after the war and the subsequent movement for reversion, leading to the island's return to Japanese administration. Afterwards, I gave a lecture on war experiences and religion on Tokunoshima.

The second day featured an island excursion. Sites included the memorial for the fallen servicemen of the battleship Yamato and the Second Fleet at Inutabu Cape (犬 田 布 岬 / *Inutabu Misaki*) in Isen Town located in the southwest of the island; the former Asama Army Airfield (浅間陸軍飛行場跡 / *Asama Rikugun Hikōjō Seki*) in Amagi Town (天 城 町) near

Tokunoshima Airport located in the northwest; and the two memorials for the troop transport ship *Toyama Maru* and the mainland evacuation ship *Bushu Maru* at Nagomi Cape (なごみの岬 / *Nagomi no Misaki*) in Tokunoshima Town in the eastern part of the island. The camp participants also visited the Catholic Church in Boma (母間), Tokunoshima Town, and petted a fighting bull at the Nakusami-kan (なくさみ館) bullfighting tourism facility in Isen Town.

On the third day, January 31st, a symposium titled “Border Zones During and After War: Experiences from Bosnia and Jeju Island” was held at the Yutina Hall (癒ていなホール) at Horaikan (ほーらい館) in Isen Town. In the morning, Selma ALISPAHIĆ, then doctoral candidate at the University of Sarajevo, gave a lecture titled “The Role of Women in Post-Conflict Reconstruction.” In the afternoon, CHO Sungyoun (趙誠倫), Professor Emeritus at Jeju National University, gave a lecture titled “Military Airfields on Jeju Island and the Memory of War.” This symposium was open to island residents and featured simultaneous interpretation by YAMASAKI Michiko (山崎美智子) from IS Interpreters Systems in Kagoshima City. CHO’s lecture also touched on the historical fact that Korean laborers were mobilized for the construction of the runway at Asama Army Airfield. Though subtitled “Considering Reunification from Outside the Island,” this event also coincided with the 70th anniversary of the Amami Islands’ returning to Japan on December 25, 1953. This commemorative timing provided an opportunity for islanders to reflect on wartime and postwar experiences from a different perspective.

On the final day of activities, February 1, the students discussed what they had learned through the camp and presented their findings to the island community. Following this, an international exchange event titled “Let’s Talk with University Students from Around the World” was held. While initially intended for junior high and high school students on Tokunoshima, the event drew approximately 60 participants ranging from elementary school children to the elderly. They engaged in discussions in several groups, enjoyed a rock-paper-scissors tournament for University of Tokyo novelty items, and danced together to Korean recreational dances and the *shimauta* (島唄 / island folk song) “Waido-bushi (ワイド節).”

Regarding the overseas participating universities this time, their connection to BiH will be discussed later. The approach to JNU originated from the shared interest in the sociology of religion and the sociology of war between CHO Sungyoun, who gave a lecture, and the author. This connection began over ten years ago when the author was a faculty at Kagoshima University. In 2017, when CHO expressed interest in applying for a visiting professorship at Kagoshima University’s Research Center for the Pacific Islands (CPI, 国際島嶼教育研究センター) during his sabbatical, the author recommended him as a candidate of a visiting professor. Consequently, CHO and I co-presented at CPI’s March 2018 symposium titled “Islands and the Asia-Pacific War: Focusing on the Inheritance, Preservation, and Utilization of Memory (Shimajima to Azia-Taiheiyō Sensō: Kioku no Keishō, Hozon, Katsuyō wo Chūshin ni).” Student participation from Kagoshima University was facilitated through the cooperation of KANESHIRO Itoe (兼城糸絵), who planned and moderated the symposium. Participation from JNU students was made possible thanks to the cooperation of KOH Sungman (高誠晩), the CHO’s successor at JNU.

Second Camp

Since the project itself began in the fall of the first year, the camp was held at the end of Japan's fiscal year. However, starting with the second camp, the timing was moved up to avoid spanning two years. The second camp was held for seven days, from December 2 to December 8, 2024. Participating institutions this time included the University of Tokyo and Keio University from Japan; Kangwon National University (KNU) from South Korea; and from BiH, the University of Sarajevo, the University of Mostar, and the University of Banja Luka. Two participants from each university attended, totaling 12 participants.

Including the University of Mostar and the University of Banja Luka from BiH as participating universities this time was a significant challenge. The ethnic conflicts between Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs during the civil war in the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s left deep-seated resentments. Each ethnic group also has distinct religious backgrounds—Islam, Catholicism, and Serbian Orthodox Christianity. This complex history, spanning ancient times (from the East-West Schism of the Roman Empire to the birth of Islam) to modern history (including Ottoman rule, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the outbreak of World War I, and the establishment of the socialist state of Yugoslavia) in the BiH region, casts a shadow over the region. With the cooperation of the Japanese Embassy in BiH, meticulous preparations were made for inviting students from the three universities representing the aforementioned ethnic groups. This included prior visits to the region to request cooperation. Furthermore, during the students' travel and the program's implementation, Dino ABAZOVIĆ from the University of Sarajevo, mentioned earlier, provided invaluable support by leading the group and caring for the students.

The invitation from KNU was facilitated by the cooperation of LEE Yungjin (李榮眞), whom the author had accepted as a visiting researcher at Kagoshima University's Faculty of Law and Letters. Lee had previously stayed in Kagoshima to conduct research for his doctoral dissertation, "Commemoration of Kamikaze Soldiers and the Politics of Death," submitted to the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Seoul National University.

This program focused not on memories of war, but on the "postwar society" in which each participant currently lives. The main venue, the Isen Town History and Folklore Museum, was the same as last time. Following the opening ceremony and explanation of the program's purpose, MATSUOKA gave a lecture on the history of Tokunoshima and the movement for its return from US occupation. Participants then visited the town offices of Tokunoshima's three towns to learn about community education and the use of ICT. The subsequent schedule involved sharing presentations on each country's war experiences and ethnic/religious situations, followed by repeated discussions and slide creation to convey their own "postwar society" to the island's children. Participants also visited religious facilities and war-related historical sites, including shrines, churches, museums, and the Battleship Yamato Memorial Monument, deepening their understanding of the region's history and peace challenges.

Towards the end, they interacted with local elementary school children. Each group presented their findings on themes such as "Peaceful Coexistence Beyond Ethnicity and Religion" and "Bridges of Peace Symbolized by Bridges." After the presentations, they

shared cultural experiences through origami and island songs, fostering international mutual understanding and friendship to conclude the camp.

Third Camp Scheduled

The third camp is scheduled for seven days from December 15 to December 21, 2025. Participation from the three universities—the University of Tokyo and BiH—will remain the same as the previous two sessions. Preparations are underway to recruit students from Kagoshima University and Ryukyu University domestically and from De La Salle University in the Philippines, replacing the Korean university.

The Connection Between Tokunoshima and BiH

It began in 2005

To understand why BiH students were brought to Tokunoshima for these camps, the background must be explained. This came about after a long period of preparation, largely due to intermittent interactions between the two groups. It is also a curious coincidence that the camp organizers, TATTA Yukie (立田由紀恵) and myself, were the ones who created the initial opportunity.

The story goes back roughly 20 years. In 2004, I was appointed as an associate professor of comparative religion at Kagoshima University's Faculty of Law, Economics and the Humanities. Starting in the spring of 2005, I joined two fellow cultural anthropologists, KUWAHARA SUEO and OZAKI Takahiro, in the CPI research project "A Research Project for Sensor Zone Setting on Kagoshima Chain Islands from South to North for Cultural & Environmental Transition (Nanboku Renzoku 'Shin-Michi-no-Shimajima' Sensā-Zōn Kyoten Keisei)." began investigating the relationships between bullfighting venues across Japan, focusing primarily on Tokunoshima. The results were published as a co-authored paper by NISHIMURA, KUWAHARA, AND OZAKI in *Occasional Papers* No. 46 of the Research Center (NISHIMURA *et al.* 2006).

Meanwhile, in August 2006, TATTA, the colleague organizing the camp and a fellow master's student from my cohort, who was then enrolled at Harvard University Graduate School and conducting research on BiH, invited me to participate in the International Conference on "Unity and Plurality in Europe: Religion and Public Life" held in Mostar, BiH. I gave a lecture on Japanese war memorials and folk religion (NISHIMURA 2007).

Just before traveling to BiH, I had the opportunity to stop by Isen Town, one of the bullfighting venues and also the location for this camp. When I mentioned my trip to BiH to then Mayor OKUBO Akira (大久保明), he told me, "I saw on an NHK TV program recently that they have bullfighting in Turkey too." I replied half-jokingly, "Well, BiH was once part of the Ottoman Empire, so maybe they do have it."

However, while traveling by bus along the mountain road from Sarajevo to Mostar, I happened to notice a poster near a village bus stop. It resembled the match cards often seen in Japanese bullfighting venues like Tokunoshima or Okinawa, featuring photos of the opponent bulls facing each other. Half-doubting, half-believing that bullfighting could

exist in such a place, I thought it was probably a poster for a beef cattle show or something similar. Without time to take a photo, I continued on to Mostar.

After presenting at the international conference, I returned to the apartment in Sarajevo where Tatta was staying with her host family. I asked her host mother about the bullfighting poster I had seen on the mountain road. She replied, “Bullfighting is a national event in Bosnia!” I confirmed it wasn’t the Spanish style of man versus bull, but rather bulls wrestling each other, and returned home with a surprise. I told my colleagues on the bullfighting research project about this fact and simultaneously tracked down more information online. Despite the limitations of online translation accuracy 20 years ago, my research revealed that in BiH, bullfighting was called ‘borba bikova’ or ‘Balkan corrida’ named after Spanish bullfighting. However, as mentioned earlier, it was a game of bulls butting horns, similar to Japan. As the term ‘Balkan’ suggests, I also learned it was a traditional festival held not only in BiH but throughout the former Yugoslavia. In BiH, it takes place in locations like Ključ, Banja Luka, Hadžić, and Pazarić, with the event on Grmeč Mountain being the most famous (Figure 3). Since BiH experiences snowfall in winter, tournaments are mostly held in summer. Based on this information, I co-authored a paper (KUWAHARA *et al.* 2007a) and informed Mayor OKUBO that bullfighting did indeed exist in BiH.

Tokyo 2020 Olympics

The developments up to 2006-2007 unfolded as described above. For a while afterward, this story remained merely an interesting anecdote, but in reality, it was only the first step in a series of actions. Personally, I continued visiting Tokunoshima frequently afterward—whether for classes at the Amami Satellite Classroom Tokunoshima Branch (奄美サテライト教室徳之島分室), participating in symposia for the Kagoshima Environmental Studies (鹿児島環境学) project, or leading student field surveys after my appointment at the University of Tokyo starting in 2013. However, a new stage in the relationship between Isen Town and BiH, mediated through bullfighting, unexpectedly arrived in 2019.

In June of that year, I suddenly received an email from MATSUOKA Yuki of Isen Town. She would later become a powerful local counterpart for implementing the camp. According to her, with the Tokyo 2020 Olympics scheduled for the following year, municipalities nationwide were implementing the Host Town Program to welcome national teams and promote exchange. Mayor OKUBO had entered BiH as a partner country, and MATSUOKA had been urgently dispatched with the mayor for a site visit. She requested an introduction to someone familiar with the local situation, as she had no prior knowledge whatsoever. I immediately introduced TATTA and arranged for them to contact each other.

According to MATSUOKA’s later account, the circumstances leading to Mayor OKUBO volunteering to host the BiH team were apparently as follows. Namely, host municipalities for major countries were primarily filled by metropolitan areas, and the Cabinet Office of the Japanese government apparently suggested Caribbean nations to municipalities in the Amami Islands. The mayor, not quite grasping the proposal, asked, “Are there no countries with bullfighting events? Like BiH?” Fortunately, BiH’s host had not yet been decided (When I later spoke with the mayor, he seemed to have forgotten my mention of BiH’s bullfighting,

but the fact that BiH has bullfighting appeared to have registered on his mind). The week-long visit to BiH in July proceeded smoothly, thanks to the full support of the Japanese Embassy in BiH. In September, representatives from BiH's bullfighting association visited Isen Town, and a memorandum of understanding regarding the Host Town project was signed.

However, the Olympics themselves were postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent travel restrictions meant exchanges did not progress as hoped. Even so, I never imagined that discovering a bullfighting poster on a mountain road in BiH years ago would lead to such developments.

Then, Towards the Youth Camp

Amidst these long, intermittent exchanges, the groundwork for implementing the camp was laid. Regarding the camp's implementation, this time Tatta requested cooperation for a large-scale MOFA grant project. Upon hearing MOFA's request, stated at the beginning of this paper, to "promote international mutual understanding centered on young people, implemented in rural areas," the vision of "hosting a youth camp in Tokunoshima's Isen Town, inviting students from BiH" suddenly came to my mind.

In addition, academic exchanges had not ceased since 2006 either. Through Tatta, an academic network existed that supported this concept of the camp on a different level from the diplomatic aspect of the host town initiative. For instance, in 2018, during a regular meeting of the War Sociology Research Association where the author served as chair, Dino ABAZOVIĆ—mentioned as the leader of camp participants from BiH—delivered a guest lecture in Tokyo (ABAZOVIĆ 2019).

Further Transperipheral Network

Transperipheral Network

Reflecting on this 20-year trajectory—from the start of the bullfighting research, through our engagement with BiH, to the realization of the international youth camp—I would like to conclude by considering, from a cultural resource studies perspective, the potential for sustained engagement between the island and the external society.

The key to this lies hidden within the framework discovered during the bullfighting research conducted with former colleagues. Through collaborative research with KUWAHARA and OZAKI, we observed that bullfighting venues across Japan—Tokunoshima, Okinawa, Oki Islands (隠岐島), Uwajima (宇和島), Ojiya (小千谷), Yamakoshi (山古志), and Yamagata Village (山形村). These domestic bullfighting venues have formed a network of bullfighting culture. This network emerged through direct exchanges of cattle, people, information, and techniques—not necessarily mediated by urban centers—facilitated by the shared cultural practice of bullfighting. This network grew to include the National Bullfighting Summit and eventually incorporated bullfighting venues in South Korea. We focused on this dynamic network formation process, initially calling it the "periphery-periphery network" (OZAKI *et al.* 2007, KUWAHARA *et al.* 2007a). We further developed this concept into the 'Transperipheral Network' (KUWAHARA *et al.* 2007c).

The Japanese bullfighting sector consists of a broad social network involving bulls, bull owners, various organizations, and bullfighting venues. It points out that, contrary to the conventional “center-periphery model” based on geopolitical, economic, and cultural dimensions, bullfighting venues themselves—which possess peripheral characteristics—are constructing a social network through direct, mutual exchange without intermediary central entities (Figure 4).

Periphery-Centered Networks

Given the above Transperipheral Network model observed in Japanese bullfighting culture, can the Olympic Host Town Program and International Youth Camp initiatives examined in this paper also be understood within the same framework? These initiatives, emerging as a new step based on the transperipheral dynamics of bullfighting culture, involve central agents like the Cabinet Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the University of Tokyo. At first glance, this might appear to be a regression to the “center-periphery model.” However, while the center-periphery model implies unidirectional influence from the center or radial connections from a central point to each periphery, the Host Town and Camp initiatives reveal a different dynamic: the peripheries themselves took initiative, leveraging their distinctiveness and unique historical contexts to draw the center into their own networks. In other words, the mayor utilized the Host Town initiative to open new circuits with these peripheral areas upon obtaining information, and the hosting of camps can be seen as an extension of these newly established connections.

Therefore, the movement of the Further Transperipheral Networking can be described as a “periphery-to-center model” where the periphery drives the reversal of relationships, or perhaps, with a touch of humor, a Periphery-centered model. To emphasize the dynamism of networking, it should rather be understood through the concept of Transperipheral engagement. This allows us to view it as an active process whereby regional actors, even geographically distant from one another, build horizontal connections that transcend peripheral contexts, generating alternative forms of knowledge, solidarity, and exchange—moving beyond the conventional perspective premised on the geo-political unevenness of center and periphery. While this phenomenon is not exclusive to islands, the unique contours of an island’s identity—shaped by its history of building relationships with the external world, its geopolitical singularity, and its geographical isolation—make it fertile ground for the idea of leveraging these elements as cultural resources. In Isen Town’s campaign to become an Olympic Host Town—a step toward expanding youth camps—the mayor’s deliberate choice to nominate the BiH team, conscious of the town’s peripheral location and unique cultural identity, reveals a bricolage-like strategic approach inherent to island life. This approach seeks to enhance viability and sustainability despite constraints imposed by a social environment distinct from urban areas. From such environments, conscious efforts emerge to play these cards tactically. Furthermore, it is anticipated that Periphery-centered Networks—where connections with the external society unfold while involving the center—can be observed beyond the cases examined here.

However, it is difficult to assert that such “periphery-center” dynamics occur universally across all phases. For instance, last-century imperialism and nationalism persist,

where peripheries remain swayed by situations where the center exerts strong initiative, such as military tensions between nations. Whether Periphery-centered Networks possess sufficient dynamism to alter such relational structures remains unknown, though the possibility certainly exists.

Accordingly, the camp demonstrates that confronting the island’s exposed past is integral to shaping the future.

Figures

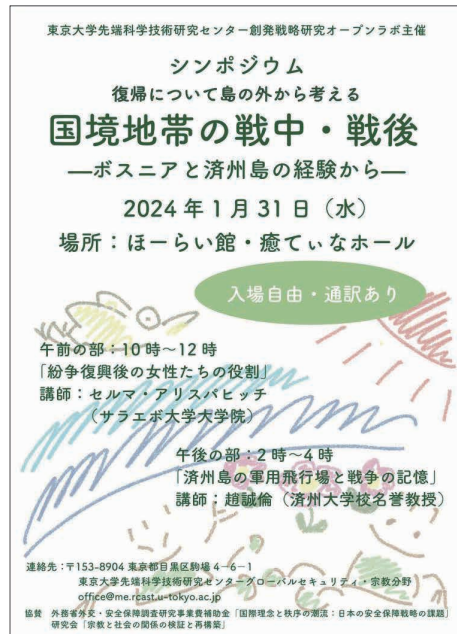
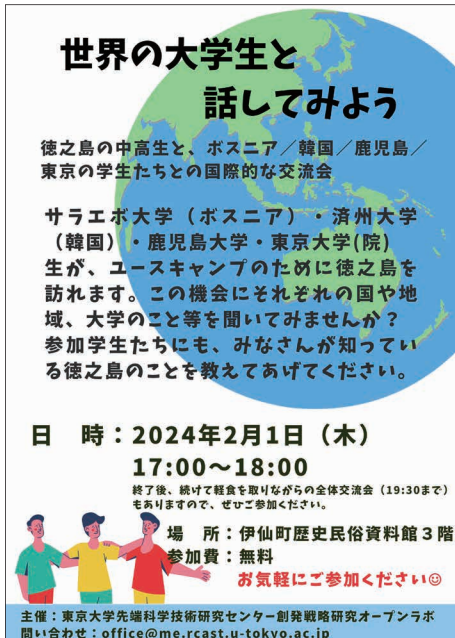


Figure 1 & 2: Posters for the symposium (left) and exchange meeting (right) during the first camp



Figure 3: BiH post stamp featuring the bullfighting at Mt. Grmeč (Wikipedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grmecka_korida.jpg)

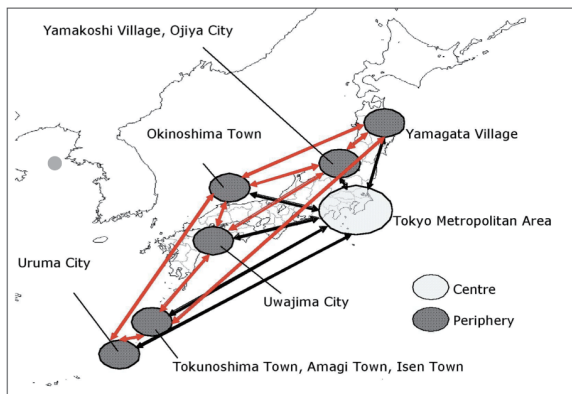


Figure 4: Transperipheral Networks among Bullfighting Venues (KUWAHARA et al. 2007c)

Figure 3: BiH post stamp featuring the bullfighting at Mt. Grmeč (Wikipedia Commons https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grmecka_korida.jpg)

Figure 4: Transperipheral Networks among Bullfighting Venues (KUWAHARA et al. 2007c)

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