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The Influence of Sub-state Actors on National Security

Using Military Bases to Forge Autonomy



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Preface

I have been studying and doing research driven by my interest in international politics regarding the Arctic, including Greenland. When I was a graduate student in the latter half of the 2000s and the first half of the 2010s, through my fieldwork and studies at the University of Greenland/Ilisimatusarfik I built a human network consisting of many knowledgeable persons, among whom were not only researchers but also citizens, professional groups, officials from government agencies, and corporations, and fostered the budding ideas for my research. However, when I returned to my home country of Japan, rather than spending time on research itself, I found myself troubled (especially when in the circles of the Japan Association of International Relations) by the need to think of how to create a “cooking recipe” that would allow others “to consume the beast,” so to speak. That is, I was repeatedly told by my academic mentor that since nobody would touch peculiar foods such as Greenland politics or Arctic politics if served raw, I had to think of a way to make them look tasty. At a meeting on international politics held in Japan, I was even asked “Is there such a thing as politics in the Arctic?,” and as a person whose research is about Greenland and the Arctic politics, I have to say I experienced no shortage of such episodes. At least in Japan, where I am based, such was, overall, the reality until very recently.

However, since 2015 the environment has changed. In April of that year, one of the most authoritative international conferences on the Arctic region, the “Arctic Science Summit Week,” was held for the first time in Japan at the initiative of the Science Council of Japan. And in September, a project entitled the “Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS),” the core of which is formed by the National Institute of Polar Research, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology, and Hokkaido University, commenced work as the first national flagship project on the Arctic bringing together social and natural sciences. Furthermore, in October of the same year, based on coordination with the ArCS, Japan formulated its first national policy regarding the Arctic, announcing to the domestic and international public its interest in the region. The formulation of the Arctic policy meant that Japan, albeit late, entered that area. In connection with these developments, at Hokkaido University, a state university in north Japan, a national center for Arctic research

was founded, and in April of 2016, the Hub for the Promotion of Joint Research on Arctic (J-ARC Net), headquartered at that university and expected to function as a platform encouraging research, was established. Thus, the environment surrounding myself and my colleagues is now dramatically changing. Currently, in Japan a system dedicated to engaging the following versatile tasks related to the Arctic region is finally, little by little, taking shape: (1) offering recommendations regarding global environmental issues, (2) making contributions toward sustaining the livelihood and the cultural foundations of Arctic indigenous peoples, (3) providing scientific explanations of the mechanisms behind the climate change, (4) acting based on the rule of law and creating international networks, (5) exploring the possibility of a stable utilization of shipping lanes in the Arctic Ocean, (6) exploring the possibilities for developing natural resources in the Arctic region with an eye to diversifying own supply sources, and (7) analyzing the factors behind the changes in the security situation in the Arctic.

Of course, these activities are not meant to be limited only to the boundaries of Japan. For example, the government report “Achieving Innovative Solutions for Arctic Challenges,” published on March 7, 2018, by the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, advocates the need to collaborate with other countries in the international community in order to leave an open and sustainable Arctic to the posterity and calls on Japan to play an active role in the appropriate fields while taking five Is, international, interdisciplinary, inclusive, ingenuity, and innovation, as the guiding principles. Although this book is not directly related to these developments, it does involve a desire to make a contribution in the same direction.

The outline of this book was directly shaped by the joint research project “Study of Security in the Arctic from the Standpoint of International Relations,” supported by the 45th Research Grant for Humanities given by the Mitsubishi Foundation (principal investigator: Minori Takahashi). That was a joint effort started by three persons: Kousuke Saitou, who specializes in the US security policy; Shinji Kawana, who specializes in the politics of military bases; and myself. I was extremely fortunate to have been able to engage in such a project with these up-and-coming researchers. I still remember clearly the stimulating meeting in August 2015 in the Tokyo district of Hanzomon, when incipient ideas regarding our research were exchanged and the first step was made. Later, through their introduction, Yu Koizumi, who specializes in military issues and security policies in Russia and other former Soviet republics; Shino Hateruma, who studies US military bases in Okinawa; and Ayae Shimizu, who conducts research on the national security of the Philippines, all energetic researchers belonging to the same generation and abounding in personal charm, joined us, thanks to which our project received a strong boost.

Along the way we had the privilege to receive three grants from the Japan Arctic Research Network Center (J-ARC Net) Program for the Promotion of Joint Research for the following topics: “American Policy towards the Arctic and the Reaction of the Concerned Countries: About the Renewed US Involvement in Keflavik” (principal investigator: Kousuke Saitou), “Multilateral Political Developments regarding

Security in the Arctic: The Changes in the Views of the US, Russia and Scandinavian Countries and their Effects” (principal investigator: Kousuke Saitou), and “Autonomy and Military Bases in the Arctic: A Relativization of a Viewpoint” (principal investigator: Kousuke Saitou). Thanks to them we were able to conduct several study meetings and collate the texts. In November 2017 at a workshop at the Hokkaido University Institute of Low Temperature Science, Saitou, Kawana, and Koizumi delivered a progress report on this book, receiving huge support from Sumito Matoba, who organized the event, in everything from the composition of the session to the payment of travel expenses. Also, I would like to extend my deep gratitude to principal investigators Shinichiro Tabata and Shin Sugiyama, with whom I worked within the abovementioned ArCS project. The two have helped me immensely, not only with their tough but careful comments but also with funds for travel expenses and equipment purchases.

Incidentally, Kousuke Saitou, who served as the principal investigator for multiple projects, was affiliated with the same laboratory as me when I was a graduate student and is, thus, my direct senior and one of the researchers in whom I place most trust. In fact, the origins of this volume can be traced back to the time we were graduate students in our mid-20s and to the “future research plan” we talked about in a pub near the university campus. This book can be regarded as a progress report on that research.

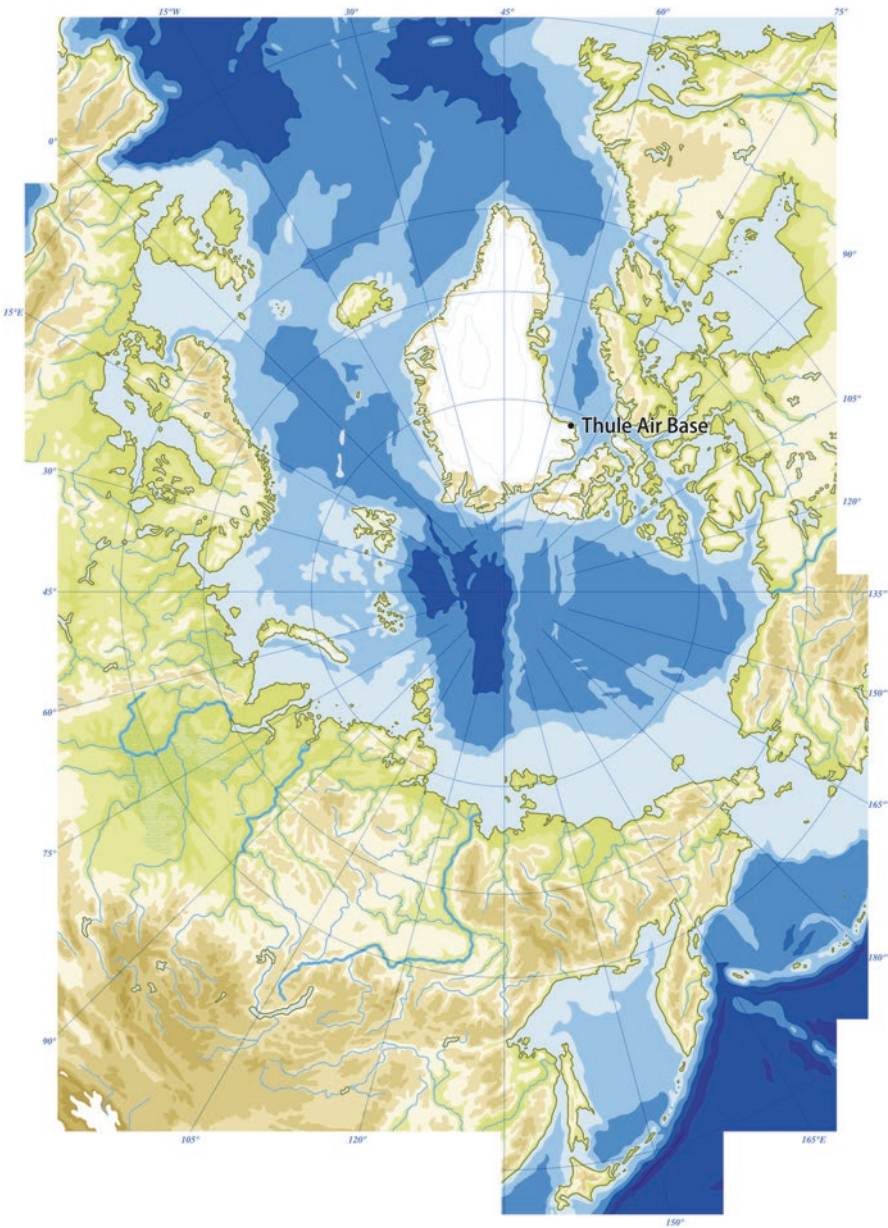
In writing this volume, we have received the guidance of very many persons, to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude. It is impossible to list them all by name for there are too many. Nonetheless, I am obliged to mention Lill Rastad Bjørst and Ulrik Pram Gad from Aalborg University, where I conducted overseas research from March 2017 to January 2018, who gave me many critical and useful comments from the draft stage of this book (my research at their university was financially supported by the ArCS program for Overseas Visits by Young Researchers). Furthermore, Saitou, Kawana, Koizumi, and I made a joint presentation in December 2017 at the Arctic Politics Research Seminar held in Copenhagen and received beneficial advice from distinguished scholars, such as Hans Mouritzen, Uffe Jakobsen, and Kirsten Thisted, as well as from the abovementioned Ulrik and Lill. In February 2018 my university had the opportunity to host an open seminar, and on that occasion, we had substantial help from the co-organizer the Hokkaido International Exchange and Cooperation Center (HIECC) and their Senior Fellow Yoshihiro Takada. Also, we have received apt comments backed by high scholarly expertise regarding the content of the book and English terms from Ilja Musulin and Adam Worm. I hereby wish to thank them.

I was blessed with the good fortune of meeting Springer’s Margaret Deignan during the Arctic Science Summit Week in April 2017 in Prague, Czech Republic, who informed me of the possibility that this book could be published. In addition, during the editing process, we have received tremendous help from Catalina Sava and Truptirekha Das Mahapatra. Our research is still in progress, but we are extremely grateful to Springer for pointing us into the direction of publication.

Finally, on behalf of all the authors, I wish to express our utmost gratitude to our family members for their understanding and support for our research. Wife, husband, child, partner, or parent – their roles are different, but without their presence and understanding for our work, none of us could exist. It is thanks to such support that that we have been able to materialize the present phase of our research in the book before you.

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Introduction: The Influence of Sub-state Actors on National Security



Minori Takahashi

Abstract In this volume we shed light on the process in which the sub-state actor of Greenland has strengthened its *de jure* participation in the national security of Denmark. In doing so, we will take up the U.S. Thule Air Base in Greenland as a case that shows that in the relationship between great powers, small countries and local actors within small countries, it is possible for local actors (sub-national entities) to have an influence on higher-level actors in the field of diplomacy on the national security level. For that purpose, we examine political trends involving Greenland, Denmark, the U.S. and Russia by using the multilateral multi-archive approach. We shall also shed light on how the local voice, i.e., the intention to regulate own actions (self-control) and self-rule that concretely embodies it, appear and function in various political matters pertaining to U.S. military bases at the level of national security, by taking up the cases of Okinawa (Japan) and Olongapo/Subic (the Philippines) as reference axes that provide additional insight into the interaction between the U.S. policy regarding overseas basis and the host countries' politics.

Keywords Sub-state actors · National security · Autonomism · Separatism · Greenland/Denmark · U.S. military bases

1 Opening Remarks¹

Regionalist movements seeking different degrees of autonomy within states or independence have been the subject of numerous debates, with movements for the acquisition of the right to self-rule emerging in West European societies since the 1970s often serving as the case in point (Iwasaki 1992).² The goal of the debates has

¹ This part owes a lot to the paper Takahashi 2016: 25–43.

² “Autonomy” here refers to the intent to regulate own actions (self-control), as well as to the concrete expression of it (self-rule).

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been to shed light on various characteristics of social change that could not be fully grasped using the state-centric framework, through the medium of the region and notions such as autonomy, decentralization and participation. For example, movements demanding greater or lesser degree of autonomy appearing on the periphery³ of European states, such as those in Northern Ireland, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Bretagne, Occitania, Alsace, Corsica, South Tyrol, Scotland or Wales, have all been taken up many times as study cases for elucidating the character of the relationship between the state and regions (or groups of people within the state), and the power and authority sharing arrangements between them. Such instances of rising regionalisms within the state have been termed “small regionalism”, in comparison to the regionalism that transcends individual states, called “grand regionalism”. However, “small regionalism” carries within it the constant potential to evolve into “grand regionalism”, and activities questioning what the nation state ought to be have, especially after the end of the Cold War, become a trend that is impossible to ignore both in domestic and international politics. For example, the Catalan movement for autonomy and independence from Spain has in recent years made us cognizant of such a cross-over between the small and grand regionalism.

One of the factors behind the manifestation of the desire for autonomy and independence in regions is the creation of uniform policies and the control of the entire demarcated space by the central government (the sole power center), with the goal of maintaining the territorial integrity of the state. Of course, methods for the concentration of power are diverse even under the same form of control, but movements for acquiring the right to autonomy all share a common trait in that they present a protest against a certain kind of rigidity of the state-centric structure.⁴ Generally speaking, central governments (power centers) have, as a way of dealing with such protestation, or in an attempt to cushion it, tended to confer a certain degree of autonomy to sub-state entities (the periphery) and to support decentralization for the purpose of establishing a stable internal, and by extension, international order (Iwasaki 1992: 146–148). For example, law scholar Sun Zhan Kun has focused on

³“Periphery” here denotes what has been variously understood as “the invisible” world within the system of the territorial sovereign state. The field of the study of international relations has made extensive attempts to capture the dynamics of the periphery from the following viewpoints. One strain of thought is the criticism of imperialism, i.e., the critique of the dual structure consisting of Western powers (=empires) and non-Western areas (=colonies and subordinated areas). Another is theory of nationalism, which, while taking into account regional differences, criticizes movements for autonomy and independence, which rely on regionalist solidarity, and the postcolonial situation that developed after such movements took place. Third, the Marxist strain, which influenced both the critique of imperialism and the theory of nationalism, and which, based on socialist thought, openly advocates the possibility of socialist revolution coming from the social periphery. Furthermore, today, attempts to understand the periphery from the viewpoint of gender studies, aboriginal studies, or by turning attention to environmental issues are also visible, and this is where the departure point of this book is.

⁴Central governments have tended to award a certain amount of autonomy to sub-state actors to answer or alleviate their protests. The transfers of powers, while similar in structure in the sense that they are conducted between the power center and the periphery, differ in form, as powers can be transmitted within the same organization or from one organization to another, etc.