

Whither Security on Okinawa:

Recapitulating international relations through a layered approach

Ra Mason

(Associate Professor of IR and Japanese Foreign Policy)

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I define security as the absence of direct conflict in military or other comparable terms, combined with freedom from political, social, environmental and economic oppression, typically providing an environment in which socio-economic exchanges can flourish. International Relations Theory (IRT) should serve as a means by which to realise security. Yet, arguably its three most influential prisms – Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism – fail to do this when applied to empirical analyses. In response, this talk offers a recapitulated analytical framework, using the combined practical strengths of these broad theoretical prisms, in a *layered* approach to the increasingly precarious security situation surrounding the small Western Pacific islands of Okinawa. Ultimately, I argue that security is possible if structure, agency and norms are properly accounted for in an integrated form.

Ra Mason is Sasakawa Associate Professor of International Relations and Japanese Foreign Policy at the University of East Anglia (UEA). He is author of *Japan's Relations with North Korea and the Recalibration of Risk* and co-author of *Regional Risk and Security in Japan and Risk State*, as well as writing and researching on Okinawa for the Asahi Shimbun, The Conversation UK and The Asan Forum. In 2014 he was awarded a JSPS Fellowship to research nationalism in Okinawa at the University of the Ryukyus. He has been Associate Professor of Public Policy at Tohoku University and a visiting Professor at Ritsumeikan University (Kyoto) and Meio University (Okinawa).

This talk is organized by Anno Tadashi (SIIR and ICC) and Minako Imayoshi (SIIR)