

Cultures of (dis) remembrance: War Memories at Shuri Castle

Justin Aukema

Abstract: This paper examines the history of the 32nd Imperial Japanese Army headquarters tunnels, a major wartime heritage site, or, war site (*sensō iseki*), from the 1945 Battle of Okinawa. The paper shows that the tunnels, and their roles in history and memory, have been shaped by the successive and cumulative effects of past and ongoing discourses in a process that it calls “cultures of (dis) remembrance.” In this context, the paper highlights three discourses that impacted the fate of the 32nd Army tunnels. The first is a pre-1945 “assimilation discourse,” in which Japanese and Okinawan officials argued the historical and cultural similarities between the two regions to integrate the islands into Japan’s imperial nation-building project. This transformed Shuri Castle, the seat of power for the autonomous Ryukyu Kingdom, into a staging ground for the dissemination of patriotic Japanese education, and it paved the way for the 32nd Army tunnels to be built there during the Battle of Okinawa. The second is a post-1945 “Cold War discourse” in which U.S. army occupiers remodeled memories and markers of Ryukyuan cultural heritage and Japanese militarism to align with their postwar vision for Okinawa; namely, this was as a showcase for U.S.-style liberal democracy and as a springboard for the Cold War. In this milieu, the remains of Shuri Castle were reconstructed as the University of the Ryukyus, while the 32nd Army tunnels were cast into the dustbin of history. The harshness of American military rule, however, caused many Okinawans to push for reversion to Japan, and, in this background, wartime heritage sites were used to promote nationalistic narratives of shared Okinawan-Japanese sacrifice for the “homeland.” After Okinawa returned to Japan in 1972, dual visions of the island’s heritage emerged. On the one hand, Okinawan progressives saw the 32nd Army tunnels as reminders of Okinawa’s subordinate position vis-à-vis the Japanese nation-state and the cause of the island’s wartime destruction. On the other hand, some conservative politicians sought to erase memories of the tunnels in favor of an affirmative view of Okinawa’s cultural identity.

Keywords: war sites (*sensō iseki*), 32nd Army Headquarter tunnels, Shuri Castle, discourse, cultures of (dis) remembrance, assimilation, Cold War, nationalization, heritage, identity

Introduction

From the late 1980s there has been a wealth of materials published on “war sites” (*sensō iseki*, or, *senseki* for short) from World War II in Japan. This reflects a broader global interest in what Pierre Nora identified as “sites of memory” (*lieux de mémoire*) and what Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka called “cultural memory” objects.¹⁾ The idea, as explained by Japanese war-site scholars Jūbishi Shunbu and Kikuchi Minoru is that, with fewer members of the wartime generation alive today, war memories are “moving from people to things (*hito kara mono e*),” and that these places and objects can be used to “narrate” (*kataru*) war memories to future generations.²⁾ One war site to receive attention in this context has been the 32nd Army headquarter tunnel remains underneath Shuri Castle in Okinawa Prefecture. During the Battle of Okinawa (April – June 1945), the commanding 32nd Imperial Japanese Army constructed over 1 kilometer of underground tunnels at this site, and from here they directed the deadliest fight of the Pacific in which 1 / 3 of the Okinawan population and over 200,000 Allied troops, Japanese soldiers, and civilians were killed.³⁾ Moreover, a barrage of shelling and bombing from U.S. ships and planes, so intense it was called a “typhoon of steel,” decimated the Okinawan landscape and turned the centuries-old Shuri Castle to rubble. Yet despite this monumental history, war memories and heritages including the 32nd Army tunnels at Shuri were largely forgotten in the postwar and were, instead, replaced with alternative discourses and narratives on Okinawan identity and traditional Ryukyuan cultural heritage.

The postwar history of the 32nd Army tunnels demonstrates that it is not war sites that “speak” (*kataru*) but rather people who speak *for* and *about* them. In other words, they are situated squarely within the realm of discourse, and, moreover, as this essay shows, these discourses shape not only perception of such places and objects, but they also have tangible effects on the physical and mnemonic landscapes surrounding war sites. This essay uses the case of the 32nd Army tunnels to show that war sites are engaged in processes that it calls “cultures of (dis) remembrance,” which it defines as the forgetting and remembering of objects in discourse.⁴⁾ As such, it is interested in untangling the various discourses that have impacted the tunnels either directly or indirectly vis-à-vis its, what Marie Louise Stig Sorensen and Dacia Viejo-Rose called, larger “biography of place.”⁵⁾ This means that, in addition to discourses related the tunnel’s roles in history and memory, the essay examines discourses on the larger biographical identity of the Shuri site and on Okinawan identity in general. From this, the paper highlights three main discourses that affected the postwar fate of wartime and cultural heritage at Shuri. These are: a prewar “assimilation discourse,” an early postwar “Cold War discourse,” and a 1972 reversion-era “nationalization discourse.” The essay then examines how these discourses and their effects have continued to compete for dominance into the present. In this milieu, dual visions of Okinawa’s identity vis-à-vis Japan have emerged and have

coalesced around war sites like the 32nd Army tunnels resulting in conflicts of memory there. By looking at the various cultures of (dis) remembrance produced by various cumulative and competing discourses, this essay sheds light on the complex relations between discourse, memory, and physical objects, and clarifies the transformation of memory at material sites over time.

1. “Assimilation discourse” and the construction of the 32nd Army tunnels

The first discourse to influence the modern history of Shuri stretches from 1879 to the end of WWII, and it can be termed an “assimilation discourse,” because, during this time, the Japanese government sought to assimilate Okinawan residents as loyal imperial subjects. Historically, Okinawa was home to the Ryukyu Kingdom, a semi-independent state with vassal relations to China and Japan, and which maintained trade relations with Korea and Southeast Asian nations. Originally divided into three separate kingdoms – *Hokuzan*, *Chuzan*, and *Nanzan* – the island was unified in 1429 under Shō Hashi, who made Shuri Castle the seat of his government. 1477 to 1526 was a golden age for the Ryukyu Kingdom. Under the reign of Shō Shin, Shuri Castle was expanded and renovated to its current Chinese architectural style, and many important cultural monuments were built in the area including Enkakuji temple in 1498 and an ornate stone bridge over Hōseichi pond in 1498. Major literary works like the *Omoro soshi* were also written around this time, and people of the kingdom developed a consciousness of their culture and history.⁶⁾ However, in 1609 the Tokugawa *bakufu* demanded allegiance from the Ryukyu Kingdom vis-à-vis the southern Satsuma domain, thus beginning a period of “dual-subordination” whereby Satsuma collected taxes from Ryukyu and monopolized their trade with China.⁷⁾

This situation continued until 1879 when the Meiji government forcefully abolished the Ryukyu Kingdom (i.e. the Ryukyu Disposition, or, *Ryūkyū shobun*) in response to Western incursions and ownership claims by Qing China. In fact, before his July 1853 visit to Japan, U.S. Navy Commodore Matthew Perry and his expedition visited Ryukyu and pressured the kingdom to enter into a compact of “courtesy and friendship” that granted the U.S. military and trading rights.⁸⁾ From this point, the Meiji government adopted the language of assimilation (*dōka*) to argue that the Ryukyus had always been a part of Japan since ancient times, and that the two peoples had shared racial, linguistic, and cultural characteristics.⁹⁾ Despite this rhetoric, however, the government’s true interest lay in transforming Okinawa into a military bastion for the southern defense of mainland Japan.¹⁰⁾ Therefore, they gave little thought to the island’s economic development and improvement of people’s daily lives, and instead focused on cultivating patriotic and loyal subjects through “emperor-centered moral education (*kōminka*)” and military training.¹¹⁾ Nevertheless, many Okinawan residents and intellectuals embraced the concepts of

Japanization and assimilation in hopes of modernizing the island, improving their economic standing, and securing political rights and representation under the 1889 Meiji Constitution.¹²⁾

At first, the Japanese government viewed Ryukyuan cultural heritage with suspicion and, after forcefully abolishing the centuries-old Ryukyu Kingdom in 1879, they took the royal family as exiled hostages and sent military troops to occupy the 15th century Shuri Castle. The Army's Sixth (Kumamoto) Division thereafter used the castle's main hall as their barracks until 1896.¹³⁾ In place of this, the government promoted assimilation policies through patriotic and militaristic education, and, toward this end, they constructed the Okinawa Normal School (*Okinawa jinjō shihan gakko*) and the Shuri Middle School on the former castle grounds in 1880.¹⁴⁾ At this time, Education Minister Mori Arinori introduced a military curriculum under on-duty military officers at Normal Schools around the country, reflecting the common perception was that military discipline was the most effective method to instill patriotic devotion to the state.¹⁵⁾ Moreover, in 1898, the military's Okinawa Garrison (*Okinawa chiku keibitai shireibu*) established their headquarters in the Okinawa Normal school to recruit soldiers.¹⁶⁾ In this context, Shuri Castle as a marker of Ryukyuan heritage was neglected and fell into disrepair during the decades of the Sino- and Russo-Japanese Wars (1894-5 and 1904-5 respectively). During this time, for instance, wartime austerity forced the Okinawa Normal School to temporarily use the castle's main hall as a dormitory, and student Toyokawa Yoshiki, recounted that the feudal structure had "fallen into ruin and had none of its former glory."¹⁷⁾ Inside, students slept on tatami mats that they spread around the floor and pillars and used white pieces of curtain cloth as room dividers. Toyokawa described the situation as "extremely unsightly," and wrote that "the dormitory rooms were incredibly unsanitary, and, because of the wartime austerity budget we didn't have enough to eat. In this situation, many students became sick from malnutrition and extreme fatigue."¹⁸⁾

However, even Ryukyuan cultural heritage like Shuri Castle eventually became objects of assimilationist discourse and were utilized in service of the Imperial Japanese nation state. In 1924, architect Itō Chūta, for example, convinced the Japanese Home Ministry to preserve Shuri Castle's main hall and transform it into Okinawa Shrine.²⁰⁾ The shrine honored, among others, the last Ryukyuan King, Shō Tai, for his role of incorporating Ryukyu into the Japanese state.²¹⁾ In



[IMG. 1] A prewar image of students from the Shuri First Normal Elementary School gathered in front of the main hall of Shuri Castle (Courtesy of the Naha City Museum of History)¹⁹⁾

this way, Itō disarmed Shuri Castle as a marker of Ryukyuan independence and, instead, and integrated it into the emperor-centered Japanese imperial project.²²⁾ Moreover, some mainland academics held a pluralist view of the Japanese empire, in which Ryukyuan culture was, in fact, simply a *regional* variation of “Japanese culture,” and, therefore, could be utilized to strengthen the foundations of the imperial state and *kokutai*. In 1943, and against the background of the Asia-Pacific War (1931 – 1945), for instance, a group of scholars writing in the Japanese magazine *Fūkei* (Landscape) stated that the “image of ancient Japan [...] still remains intact” in Okinawa, and that it was epitomized through Okinawan architecture, the “fundamental essence” of which “is originally Japanese.” Any cultural differences were explained away by these scholars to only be “slight regional differences from the mainland,” and they concluded that “Okinawan architecture is fundamentally the same as architecture on the Japanese mainland.”²³⁾

Okinawans also adopted an assimilationist view of Ryukyuan cultural heritage with an eye toward lifting the island out of poverty. Naha Mayor and head of the Okinawa Tourist Association (*Okinawa kankō kyōkai*), Kinjō Kikō, for instance, wrote in 1937 that increasing “the collective knowledge of Okinawa” by utilizing its “tourist potential” was “vital for the benefit of the Japanese state (*hōka*).”²⁴⁾ Likewise, in 1940 local politician Wakagumi Rōjin advocated preserving Shuri Castle by transforming it into a high school. In this way, he argued that “Shuri Castle could once again become the center of politics and culture in Okinawa for hundreds, perhaps even thousands of years.”²⁵⁾ Wakagumi framed his ideas in the context of Japanese empire building, and stated, for example, that as a school of higher education, Shuri could train Okinawans to go abroad and develop Japan’s southern colonies throughout Greater East Asia (*daitōa*).²⁶⁾

However, assimilation discourses had deadly consequences in the 1945 Battle of Okinawa since they reinforced the imagined hierarchical dichotomy between the “superior” Japanese colonizer and “inferior” Okinawan Other. Moreover, it created an atmosphere in which the patriotism and devotion of Okinawans to the Japanese imperial project was constantly in question, and the Japanese military in particular viewed island residents as “primitive natives” who lacked “loyalty” to the Japanese empire. Thus, they enacted harsh punishments on anyone caught speaking the Okinawan language, or those who inadvertently wandered too close to secure military facilities. Nevertheless, such rigid measures often had the effect of making many want to prove their loyalty as “Japanese” citizens even more, and, as Okinawan scholar Ōta Masahide wrote, such discrimination caused average Okinawans to “ben[d] over backwards to become more Japanese than the Japanese in mainland Japan.” “And to be Japanese,” Ōta continued, “meant to die for the Emperor like Japanese.”²⁷⁾ In this context, when the Japanese 32nd Army moved into their defense position on Okinawa in preparation for Allied attack, they commandeered school buildings including the Okinawa Normal School and put students to work for the war effort. From December 1944, Normal

School students were mobilized to construct headquarter tunnels for the 32nd Army underneath Shuri Castle. One Normal School Student who worked on the tunnels, Chinen Kiyoshi, said: "I thought that the stage was set for me to give my life for my country [...] I think all of us felt that way. [...] The militarist education had affected every sinew of my body."²⁸⁾ When they were completed, General Chō Osamu christened the tunnel complex "Heaven's Grotto" (*Ama no iwato*) in reference to the mythical cave where the goddess Amaterasu hid herself and concealed the world in darkness. This was the ultimate symbolic assimilation of Ryukyuan cultural heritage as Shuri – once the pinnacle of Ryukyuan independence – was sublimated into esoteric Japanese mythology.

2. "Cold War discourse" and the American "modernization" of Shuri

During their advance from April 1945, American forces pounded Shuri with a barrage of bombs and shelling that devastated the castle and turned the area into what one *New York Times* reporter described as a "crater-of-the-moon landscape."²⁹⁾ They also carried with them attitudes and discourses that shaped the future of the former castle-turned-military base. This led to the second discourse and culture of (dis)remembrance there – a "Cold War discourse" that replaced memories of the site's feudal and military history with narratives of its new role as a symbol of the victory of U.S.-style modernity and liberal-democracy. The Americans perceived their version of modernity (i.e. liberal-democratic government and capitalist economy) as not only superior, but also as the "correct model" for other developing nations to follow. This view, called Modernization Theory, blamed Japanese militarism on the country's inability to properly modernize and overcome feudalism.³⁰⁾ The aims of the U.S. in Japan, therefore, were to eliminate remnants of feudalism and militarism and to replace them with U.S.-style liberalism and institutions.³¹⁾ This would, it was hoped, not only guide Japan out of the feudal past, but also into the arms of "modernity" (i.e. "the U.S.") and away from its "deviant" form of Communism. The same was true for the U.S. military's aims in Okinawa, which was cut off from mainland Japan and placed under U.S. military rule from 1945 until 1972, and it manifest itself at the Shuri site in various ways. Namely, the site's history as a feudal castle and former military headquarters were forgotten and were replaced with a new identity as a symbol of the supremacy of the American way of life. This was illustrated by the University of the Ryukyus (hereafter UofR), which the U.S. built atop the rubble of Shuri Castle in 1949-50.

American Cold War discourse portrayed Okinawans as willingly casting off the fetters of their feudal past and accepting modernization of their own accord. Thus, a 1949 report from the Ryukyus Command (RYCOM) depicted local Okinawans as happily hauling away rubble as U.S. bulldozers leveled the castle site to create the foundations of the UofR.³²⁾ The idea of the backwards and traditional past being replaced

by the superior, modern future was also evidenced in the location of the university's administrative center, which was set atop the foundations of the former Shuri Castle's main hall, as well as its architectural design – a mix of Ryukyuan and American influences. In this regard, it served to mask the hard realities of American power. Accordingly, the first student handbook of the university (*gakusei binran*) issued in 1950 stated that “the university is neither Japanese nor American,” but was rather the harbinger of a new culture, blended from “the old and the new” and which would carry “a new light into every village in the Ryukyu islands.”³³⁾ At the same time, a January 1951 ordinance officially establishing the university stated that education would be provided only insofar as “is consistent with the military occupation,” and it stressed that “no avowed or proved Communist” was allowed to work there.³⁴⁾

The process of erasure/replacement at Shuri was evidenced, for instance, in a January 1951 invitation to the university's opening ceremony written by United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) Brigadier General John Hinds. “This institution grew out of the rubble of war,” began Hinds, and he continued:

The bulldozers were able to clear the debris from the location, but they could not scrape away three generations of moral and intellectual subjugation. [...] The day chosen for the ceremonies seems to me to be highly proper. Lincoln's birthday will be celebrated on these Islands for the sixth time since the close of World War II. In the Ryukyus, Lincoln's name is remembered with great affection as a symbol of devotion to the betterment of men and women who have known subjugation. The Ryukyuans have raised a monument to this ideal in the very building of the University by their own hands, standing as it does on a war-devastated eminence once dominated by a 14th century feudal castle.”³⁵⁾

Thus, Hinds described the construction of the UofR as a symbolic victory of U.S.-led modernity over the ancient forces of feudalism and militarism, a condition that he compared to liberation from bondage. In this capacity, the U.S. was playing a role similar to Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves, said Hinds, although he was also careful to give a nod to Okinawans themselves, indicating that they were willingly ridding themselves of their chains by building the University of the Ryukyus “by their own hands.” In this way, his statement served to mask the realities of American military hegemony on the island.

Similarly, General Douglas MacArthur wrote in a prepared speech for the ceremony that:

Establishment of the University of the Ryukyus is an event of outstanding importance in the cultural and intellectual history of these Islands. It is, moreover, particularly appropriate that the University, founded upon the ancient site of the throne of Ryukyuan kings, should be dedicated on the birthday of one who though personally humble was himself kingly among the great of the world -- Abraham

Lincoln. [...] Conceived in the aftermath of war and intended to flourish in the ways of peace, the University is born as the champions of freedom rally once more to defend their heritage against those forces that would enslave the mind of man. This concern for freedom of learning, for things of the spirit, which brought this University into being has never been dimmed by the obscurantism and the oppression designed to extinguish it.³⁶⁾

Building on the themes expressed by Hinds of the victory of U.S.-style liberal-democracy over feudalism and militarism, MacArthur further linked this to its eventual victory in the ongoing Cold War against communism. This view envisioned this as a fight between “freedom” and “peace” on the one hand, and slavery, “obscurantism” and “oppression” on the other. The establishment of the UofR, thus, became a symbolic expression tying Okinawans to their new role in defending this shared heritage in the fight for men’s minds.

The views of U.S. leaders toward the Shuri site were clearly expressed throughout the early history of the UofR. For instance, at a January 1955 dedication speech for the university’s newly-constructed Shikiya Memorial Library, USCAR Governor General Lyman Lemnitzer stated:

Less than one hundred years ago, it was upon this site that the leaders and rulers of Okinawa were born and educated for responsibilities of leadership. These were however, children born of a privileged class and in number few. History repeats itself, for it is here, upon the same location, that new leaders are being prepared and educated for later responsibilities. Today’s opportunities for development, however, differ in that they exist to be offered upon a democratic basis - not to those, alone, who are born of a privileged class and with financial wealth, but to those who, of themselves, possess the greatest wealth of all - the capacity for learning, the capacity for intellectual development, and the desire for constructive utilization of knowledge for the benefit of the society of which they are members. Dedicated to the concept of service, the University, with its subordinate institutions, embraces the philosophy of helping people to help themselves. [...] There are those who would cling to comforts in remnants of the old; there are those who would have this institution



[IMG. 2] Around 2000 people gathered on the grounds of the University of the Ryukyus on April 1, 1952 for the inauguration ceremony of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands. In the background is the university administrative building, which sat atop the former main hall of Shuri Castle.³⁷⁾

removed in order that a castle might be rebuilt as an emblem and a symbol of a philosophy of government and of living, that, may we pray to God, is forever dead. In its place, there stands a new national monument - a new national shrine - dedicated not to the dead of history, but dedicated to the living present and to the future living.³⁸⁾

Lemnitzer demonstrated a keen understanding of Shuri's history. Referencing its role as a place of education and governance, he indicated that this had been replaced by new, presumably superior and more modern, forms of these represented by the UofR. He then adamantly spoke against reconstructing any forms of the castle, saying instead that he hoped that the feudalism for which it stood was "forever dead." Moreover, Lemnitzer's depiction of the university as a "new national shrine" is hardly insignificant considering the site's brief prewar history as Okinawa Shrine. In this way, he critiqued the site's former incarnations, its history as a military base included, as the "dead of history" and instead indicated that its function as the UofR was where its true present and future lay.

Such statements illustrate how U.S. military leaders like Hinds, MacArthur, and Lemnitzer perceived the symbolic role of the university: as a representation of the victory of American-style liberal-democracy over feudalism, militarism, and, eventually (they hoped) communism. Moreover, the symbolic construction of the university in this Cold War discourse camouflaged the realities of American military dominance and power on Okinawa. This discourse continued throughout the U.S. occupation of Okinawa and was reinforced vis-à-vis U.S. Army programs like the Michigan Mission which sent educators from Michigan State College to the UofR from 1951 to 1968 to instruct Okinawan students in American values and to, in the words of one program organizer, to "give them a better understanding of democracy."³⁹⁾ Moreover, in this climate, challenges to this discourse were harshly suppressed, and students who threatened to expose the realities of U.S. military domination were expelled from the university.⁴⁰⁾ In this way, the U.S. military occupation of Okinawa and U.S. Cold War discourse there acted as a culture of (dis) remembrance at Shuri that replaced memories and narratives of one past with that of another. The material effects of this discourse were felt through the physical erasure of Shuri Castle and the 32nd Army tunnels and the construction of the UofR in their place.

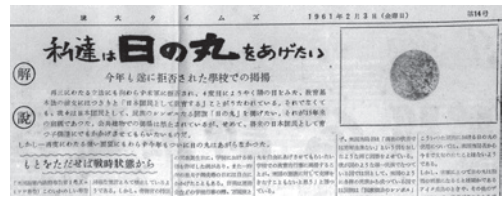
3. Japanese "nationalization and reversion discourse" and Shuri Castle (redux)

At first, popular attitudes in Okinawa largely aligned with U.S. Cold War discourse, and people generally accepted the idea that the Americans had rescued Okinawa from the slave-like yoke of Japanese militarism. However, by the mid-1950s the harshness of U.S. military rule, the seizure of Okinawan land by the U.S. military to build bases, and a desire by many in Okinawa to benefit from the economic boom underway on

the mainland prompted attitudes to shift back in favor of reversion to Japan. In this context, a “nationalization discourse” emerged vis-à-vis Ryukyuan heritage and wartime memories in Okinawa. Even students at the UofR, the U.S.’s pet project of pro-American style liberal-democracy on the island, became outspoken critics of U.S. military rule, and articles in one school newspaper, the *Ryūdai Taimuzu*, for example, carried headlines such as “We Want to Raise the Japanese Flag.”

The question in Okinawa, thus, became *how* to promote discourses of Japanese nationalization and reversion and how to utilize cultural and wartime heritage toward this end. This was complicated by the fact that USCAR and the semi-autonomous Government of the Ryukyu Islands (GRI) selectively manipulated elements of Okinawan cultural heritage to argue the idea of a *unique* Okinawan culture (as distinct from Japanese culture) in an attempt to drive a wedge between Okinawa and Japan and, thereby, making it easier for the U.S. to control.⁴¹⁾ In this context, members of the UofR initially *opposed* restoring and preserving Shuri Castle as a marker of Ryukyuan cultural heritage, not only because it would threaten the existence of the university itself, but also because it would, in the 1959 words of one Student Council member, play into the hands of the Americans and their efforts to “separate Okinawa from the homeland (*sokoku*) [i.e. Japan].” The author further argued that Shuri castle was a “symbol of feudalism” which represented the “culture of the rulers (*shihaiisha no bunka*),” and, therefore, “considering that Okinawa has not yet fully democratized [...] is not a cultural symbol [...] that we should be proud of.”⁴²⁾

Against this background, some Okinawans instead turned to the nationalization of war memories to promote their cause for reversion. This was done mainly through the construction of nationalistic historical narratives at former battle sites and monuments that emphasized the shared nature of Okinawan-Japanese sacrifice for the sake of protecting the nation and the *kokutai*. Although Japanese conservatives adopted a lukewarm attitude toward Okinawan reversion in general, they supported pro-Japanese nationalist narratives of the Battle of Okinawa and saw this as a relatively painless and cost-free opportunity to exercise Japanese sovereignty over the island by building historical markers at former battle sites. For example, between 1963 and 1966, thirty prefectural memorials to commemorate Japanese war dead were built at Mabuni.⁴³⁾ Meanwhile, some Okinawan businesses saw this as an opportunity to partially alleviate the poor state of the Okinawan economy that had suffered under exploitative U.S. military direction. This



[IMG. 3] This 1961 Ryūdai Taimuzu article titled “We Want to Raise the Japanese Flag” shows the extent of resentment toward U.S. military rule and the desire to revert to the Japanese mainland.

led to a war-site tourism boom via bus tours of southern war sites (*nanbu senseki*) that catered to mainland Japanese tourists, and especially former Japanese soldiers and bereaved family members.

In 1968, for example, the Okinawa Tourism Association (*Okinawa kankō kaihatsu jigyōdan*) surveyed the 32nd Army tunnels to gauge their tourist potential among mainland Japanese visitors. For the OTA, tourism was an “intangible export” and war sites for Japanese tourists were the top draw. In their survey report, the OTA envisioned the Shuri area transformed into a park and recreation area, surrounded by businesses and hotels, that centered around the restored and accessible 32nd Army tunnels as the main attraction. The report explained:

These days, the biggest tourist draw is battle sites from World War II and war sites at those places. This includes the monuments and memorials that each prefecture has built to memorialize the brave souls, who gave their precious lives for the glory of the state and died fighting in a far-off land on the southern front. Some may certainly hesitate a little at the idea of turning war sites into tourist attractions (*shigen*); however, if we stop to consider that these places are being developed as places where the hatred of war can be turned into prayers for peace, their significance should be evident. To develop the tourist potential of war sites, it is necessary to provide the proper facilities for them as sacred spaces (*reichi*) and to transform the various war memorials, headquarter tunnels, and hospital tunnels into properly serviced and landscaped park areas.⁴⁴⁾

In this way, the OTA perceived war sites as tourist materials to cater to mainland visitors. Moreover, in the pro-reversion and Japanese-nationalist climate of the time, the group espoused an historical narrative that would appeal to Japanese visitors’ sensibilities. Namely, this was the idea that war sites were sacred memorial spaces where visitors could honor the memory of Japanese soldiers who gave their “precious lives for the glory of the state.”

In addition, in 1970 the OTA restored and opened the Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters on the Oroku Peninsula near Naha, and at this site, too, they similarly emphasized a narrative that portrayed Okinawan war deaths as glorious sacrifices for the Japanese nation-state. A centerpiece of the tunnel’s historical description, for instance, was a telegram sent to Imperial Headquarters by Japanese Navy commander Ōta Minoru just before the Battle of Okinawa ended in June 1945. The telegram read:

In desperation, some parents have asked the military to protect their daughters, for fear that when the enemy comes, elders and children will be killed and young women and girls will be taken to private areas and harmed (*dokuga*).⁴⁵⁾ After military medical personnel had moved on, the volunteer nurses stayed behind to help the badly wounded move. They are dedicated and go about their work with a strong will. [...] The Okinawan people have been asked to volunteer their labor and conserve all their

resources (mostly without complaint). In their heart, they wish only to serve as loyal Japanese. [...]

This is how the Okinawan people have fought the war. And for this reason, I appeal to you to give the Okinawan people special consideration from this day forward.⁴⁶⁾

Despite its nationalistic overtones, Ōta's message likely struck a chord with many in Okinawa in the late 1960s and early 1970s who strongly wished in their hearts to be Japanese. Moreover, it would have appealed to the high number of Japanese tourists visiting Okinawan battle sites like this one at the time. Incidentally, Ōta's telegram continues to form a key part of the Japanese Navy tunnels site which is operated by the OTA's successor, the Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Meanwhile, once Okinawa's reversion to Japan had become a concrete reality by the late 1960s and early 1970s, heritage discourses were adapted to suit the changed political and diplomatic climate.⁴⁷⁾ Namely, Ryukyuan cultural heritage lost its potency as an American propaganda tool and instead was readied for its transformation and sublimation into the Japanese system of cultural properties (*bunkazai*). In short, these objects represented valuable cultural capital for the Japanese government that promised not only high returns from the tourist industry, but also, as in the prewar, to strengthen and deepen the foundations of "Japanese" culture by portraying it as more diverse and multifaceted than may have been previously imagined. In other words, it was the nationalization of heritage. An outline of the specific plan for the reversion of Okinawa passed by the Japanese Diet in 1970, for instance, noted the preservation and restoration of Okinawan cultural properties as an important pillar of reversion. Moreover, it made clear that these were to be made into "Japanese [national] cultural properties" (*kuni no bunkazai*).⁴⁸⁾ Similarly, Adachi Kenji, head of the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs, stated in 1971 that "Okinawan cultural properties hold a unique place in our national heritage" and "are a part of ancient Japanese cultural traditions."⁴⁹⁾ The GRI also petitioned the GOJ to restore Shuri Castle, emphasizing its "high value as a source for tourism" and stating that "this kind of unparalleled cultural heritage is fundamental for a correct understanding of our national citizen's (*kokumin*) history and culture."⁵⁰⁾ In this context, with the mission of reversion secured, the UofR began plans to close down its Shuri Campus and move its buildings to the new Senbaru Campus about 7.5 km away to make way for the reconstruction of Shuri Castle, this time as a marker of Japanese-Okinawan integration.

4. Dual visions of "Okinawan heritage"

At the same time, the reality of reversion to Japan meant that Okinawan progressives and leftists no longer had to adopt discourses of pro-Japanese nationalism that had previously surrounded wartime and cultural heritage. Instead, they sought to redefine Okinawan's positionality and identity vis-à-vis the Japanese

mainland via a critical reassessment of the historical narrative. Especially given the subordinate position of Okinawa in the framework of the Japanese nation-state post-reversion (e.g. excessive burden of military bases, poorest economy, high unemployment etc.), wartime and cultural heritage were revaluated with a critical eye toward historical instances of subjugation and discrimination by Japan. This led to dual visions of “Okinawan heritage.” On the one hand, the GOJ emphasized its nationalized version of traditional Ryukyuan heritage like Shuri castle (redux) that served as a symbolic reminder of Okinawa’s successful incorporation into the Japanese nation-state. On the other hand, Okinawan progressives used cultural and especially wartime heritage to emphasize historical and ongoing instances of Okinawa’s subordinate position relative Japan.

This became apparent from around the time of reversion. In 1972, for instance, Ōta Masahide, one of the mobilized students that dug the 32nd Army tunnels and who witnessed the wartime destruction of Shuri Castle, blamed the destruction of Okinawan cultural heritage partly on prewar nationalist assimilation policies and Japanese militarism.

We [...] were so busy with military training and digging tunnels that we didn’t even have time to use these pieces of cultural heritage [Shuri Castle] to consider the unfinished work of our ancestors. Moreover, since we hadn’t adequately acquired the knowledge to grasp the meaning of this cultural heritage, we couldn’t correctly pass it on to later generations. One reason for this was that the Central and Prefectural governments only utilized unique (*koyū*) Okinawa culture when it was useful to achieve their military aims. In all other cases, as the policies to eradicate the “Okinawan dialect” indicated, the government judged that persistently emphasizing Okinawan cultural difference would negatively affect their efforts to incorporate Okinawans as national Japanese citizens. Therefore, they denounced such culture, and this was the main reason why susceptible youth such as ourselves were not made fully aware of our cultural heritage.⁵¹⁾

This was a much different view of Ryukyuan cultural heritage than had been previously emphasized in the postwar. On the one hand, Ōta eschewed using such heritage to support either side in the dichotomy of “independent Ryukyu” vs. “common ancestry,” and instead he accepted that Okinawa was, for better or for worse, a part of the Japanese nation-state. On the other hand, he was high critical of Okinawa’s *positionality* in this framework, and he blamed the wartime loss of traditional cultural objects on the mistreatment by the Japanese central government.

Okinawan writer and critic Ōshiro Tatsuhiro adopted a similarly critical reassessment of wartime heritage sites and the historical narratives that had been previously emphasized there. In 1977, he wrote that these places catered to mainland Japanese visitors by glorifying the noble sacrifices of Japanese

soldiers and Okinawan civilians for the nation-state, rather than emphasizing the view of many Okinawans that their deaths in battle had been for nothing (*inuuji*). In this way, he stated, they were “just like a memorial that would have been built in Tokyo or somewhere else on the mainland” and made “no attempt to narrate Okinawan experiences and the Okinawan subjectivity.”⁵²⁾

The idea of using wartime heritage sites, i.e. war sites (*sensō iseki*), to emphasize narratives of civilian suffering rather than wartime heroism and to stoke anti-war sentiment – the main contemporary view in Japan – in many ways, began in this context in Okinawa. In particular, they were part of an attempt to illustrate the suffering and subjugation of Okinawa at the hand of the Japanese government and military. As a 1977 statement by the Association to Reflect on the Battle of Okinawa (*Okinawa-sen o kangaeru kai*) read, for instance:

War sites where Okinawan civilians wandered the battlefield and were either killed in battle or narrowly survived, sites that express a particular characteristic of the Battle of Okinawa, or sites such as buildings or structures that bear the destructive scars of battle are extremely important historical materials for Okinawa. Such war sites are tangible materials that can relate (*kataru*) the details of civilian wartime experiences which form the backbone of postwar Okinawan thought and behavior. [...] Moreover, these war sites and war remains show the results of the Asia-Pacific War – the culmination of events in modern Japanese history – and they are unique historical markers that can be found nowhere else in Japan but in Okinawa. At the same time, as common historical heritage with Japan they have great value as historical resources for all of Japan.⁵³⁾

In other words, this statement conveys the idea of war sites and heritage as tangible markers of Okinawan suffering and physical proof of a history of unequal relations between Japan-Okinawa that eventually resulted in the sacrifice and destruction of the island.

Two events in the early 1980s further strengthened this understanding of wartime heritage. The first came when the Japanese Ministry of Education (MOE) removed a passage about Japanese troops murdering Okinawan civilians during the Battle of Okinawa from high-school history textbooks in 1982. This caused an uproar in Okinawa and led to greater efforts to uncover civilian experiences at war sites there.⁵⁴⁾ The second was the 1982 release of the Japanese government's (hereafter GOJ) Second Plan to Promote the Development of Okinawa (*Dai niji Okinawa shinkō kaihatsu keikaku*) which planned to greatly increase tourism to Okinawa.⁵⁵⁾ Following this, in the mid-1980s the GOJ also permitted Japanese schools to use airplanes for travel on school trips, meaning that Okinawa became a popular choice for children's educational field trips.⁵⁶⁾ Thus in 1985, over 280 schools and nearly 49,500 students visited the island.⁵⁷⁾ Although the GOJ was focused on promoting Okinawa as a tropical paradise and sea resort with

unique cultural heritage, Okinawan progressives seized this tourism boom as an opportunity to also educate visitors about Okinawa's subordinate position in the Japanese nation-state.

One key method to do this was through the use of wartime heritage sites, and Okinawan progressives and peace groups released informational guides to these places, as well as pushed for their preservation. In his 1985 book *Okinawan War Sites and Military Bases* (*Okinawa no senseki to gunji kichi*), for example, author Aniya Masaaki criticized the GOJ's attempts to censor the Battle of Okinawa and to portray it simply with "beautified stories of sacrifice for the nation (*junkoku bidan*).⁵⁸⁾ He also lamented the prior and current use of wartime heritage sites like those at Mabuni which were uncritical of the war and were like "Okinawan version[s] of Yasukuni."⁵⁸⁾ Nevertheless, Aniya maintained that war sites had tremendous potential to counter beautified official GOJ narratives of the war by serving as critical spaces to reflect on the past and to pass on civilian wartime experiences and memories.

Traveling around to war sites and investigating what the war was actually like there is one of the best ways to promote peace education. As of yet, we haven't been able to fully survey these places and make use of them as teaching materials. More than anything, what we need to do now is to quickly survey and record the conditions of war sites, and to urgently work for their preservation. As the touristification of Okinawa proceeds, many valuable war sites are being destroyed, or are being used instead to beautify the war. In addition to maintaining critical perspectives toward war, we must also offer detailed plans for the preservation of war sites and think of means to pass them on to later generations.⁵⁹⁾

Aniya's call to preserve war sites was taken up by other Okinawan progressives. Since 1983, for instance, high-school teacher Yoshihama Shinobu had been working with his classes to record civilian wartime experiences in their community of Haeburu. Eventually, this drew their attention to the remains of the Japanese Army field hospital tunnels that were also located there. This was the site where many members of the Himeyuri Corps had worked to treat injured soldiers and had lost their lives. In 1987, Yoshihama began to work to have the army field hospital tunnel remains designated as a Cultural Property (*bunkazai*).⁶⁰⁾ This was the first instance that such a designation had been sought for any war site in Japan, and it had the potential to transform interpretations not only the concept of "cultural heritage" but also of Okinawa's relationship to the mainland. However, the GOJ opposed Okinawan efforts to utilize wartime heritage in this way. The Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA), for example, countered Yoshihama's aim to preserve the army field hospital remains by claiming that "not enough time has passed for their historical value to be established."⁶¹⁾ This was an extension of their unofficial policy that at least one hundred years must have passed for an object to be recognized as a "cultural property" (*bunkazai*).⁶²⁾

These two opposing views of Okinawan heritage came into conflict at the Shuri Castle site. The GOJ pushed for the further nationalization of the site and strove to make ancient Ryukyuan cultural heritage the center of dominant memories there. Takara Tetsuo, head of the Okinawa Council for the Preservation of Cultural Properties, for example, wrote to the Okinawa Board of Education in 1980 that “existing buildings and objects, or the construction of new structures, within the grounds



[IMG. 4] An image of the main hall of Shuri Castle; photo by the author, November 1, 2015

of the Shuri Castle site that do not fit in with its operation as a Nationally Designated Historical Site should be removed.”⁶³⁾ Moreover, in 1986 the central government further nationalized the Shuri site by designating it as part of its Okinawa Commemorative National Government Park (*kokuei Okinawa kinen kōen*) and pushed forward plans to reconstruct the castle under the catchphrase “Okinawa’s postwar won’t be over until Shuri Castle is restored.”⁶⁴⁾ This drew the ire of some local residents, however, when newly reconstructed castle park forced fifty households off the property to make way for a parking lot capable of accommodating large tour buses. In one angry report, residents critiqued the plan as “undemocratic” and “profit-motivated,” and claimed that it “sacrificed residents for the sake of tourism.”⁶⁵⁾ In addition, the group drew parallels between Okinawa’s wartime treatment and the current castle restoration writing that “during the war, the same place that was turned into a battlefield and experienced the ravages of war for the sake of the Japanese Empire’s policy of preserving the *kokutai*, is once again being rushed through an administrative-led project for the success of the *kokutai*.”⁶⁶⁾

With no little irony, the GOJ completed the restoration of Shuri Castle in 1992 to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Okinawa’s reversion to Japan. Yet many in Okinawa criticized the fact that this restoration project now seemed to be serving to erase memories of the Battle of Okinawa at the site including the 32nd Army tunnels. In 1992, for instance, the *Ryūkyū Shinpo* serialized a forty-six-part series titled “The Battle of Okinawa Lies Below Shuri Castle” (*Shurijō chika no Okinawa-sen*). The series began by ironically contrasting the scene of Shureimon bustling with tourists with the nearby entrance to the 32nd Army tunnels that were covered in brush and which “hardly anyone knows.”⁶⁷⁾ This was a shame, it stated, because the tunnels were, in fact, the “hypo-center of the tragedy of the Battle of Okinawa,” a fact that it pounded home throughout the rest of the series by focusing on civilian wartime memories and tying them to the 32nd command post at Shuri. In addition to highlighting first-hand testimonies of the murder by the

Japanese army of Okinawan civilians as “spies” at the Shuri site, it also included calls from wartime survivors and others for the preservation of the 32nd Army tunnels. Nakamura Fumiko, for example, said that “the 32nd Army Headquarter Tunnels were the main source of Okinawa’s suffering. Isn’t there something wrong about reconstructing Shuri Castle but not restoring the tunnels?” Similarly, Tokuyama Osamu stated: “the 32nd Army Headquarter Tunnels symbolize the horrors of the Battle of Okinawa. We need to move beyond seeing the Shuri Castle site as a bright marker of Ryūkyū culture, and to understand the human suffering that is hidden by this.” And finally, Higa Fusao, one of the Okinawa Normal School students who had dug the tunnels, explained that “once you’ve lost the ability to criticize, you’ve lost everything. All the war history should be brought to light and made clear. The tunnels should be opened to the public.”⁽⁶⁸⁾

5. The erasure of war memory at Shuri

Indeed, the time to recognize war memories at Shuri by preserving the 32nd Army tunnels seemed to be ripe under the tenure of Okinawa Governor Ōta Masahide in the 1990s. Ōta planned three pillars to form what he termed his “peace administration” (*heiwa gyōsei*), to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war, and to transform Okinawa’s image into a “transmitter of peace” (*heiwa no hasshinchi Okinawa*).⁽⁶⁹⁾ As previously mentioned, Ōta was one of the original Blood and Iron Student Corps members who had built and worked in the tunnels. In addition, as a scholar and prolific writer, Ōta was perhaps the most knowledgeable person alive regarding the tunnels and their history. During his tenure as governor of Okinawa, in regard to war memories, he led one of the most progressive administrations in postwar Okinawan history. The 1990s was also a special time for war memory in Japan. In particular, some Japanese politicians publicly took a more conciliatory stance regarding Japan’s wartime responsibility. In 1993, Kōno Yōhei, for example, partly acknowledged the Japanese government’s role operating the “comfort women” system of forcing women to work as sex slaves for the Japanese Army.⁽⁷⁰⁾ And in 1995 Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi apologized for Japan having fought a war of aggression against its Asian neighbors.⁽⁷¹⁾ Regarding war sites, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) was preserved as a Nationally Designated Historic Site (*shiseki*) that same year.



[IMG. 5] A section of tunnels underneath Shuri Castle. The entrance to this section is closed with metal bars; photo by the author, November 1, 2015

In the early 1990s, Ōta thus made efforts to survey and preserve the 32nd Army tunnels, and he appeared to have support across the political spectrum in the Okinawan Prefectural Assembly. Ōta and his administration secured funds to survey the tunnels and commissioned a special committee of academics and public officials to assess the feasibility of preserving and opening them to the public. In 1996, the committee released their first report which described that the tunnels were invaluable “chroniclers” (*kataribe*) that were “indispensable for relating the tragedy of the Battle of Okinawa” to future generations.⁷²⁾ Moreover, the report noted that, prior to this, the GOJ had focused solely on constructing the site’s identity around the reconstructed Shuri Castle while neglecting markers of the site’s wartime history like the 32nd Army tunnels. The committee rejected this approach, however, and advocated a pluralistic approach to the Shuri site’s biographical identity, writing that:

Through the cultural heritage of Shuri Castle and the historical heritage of the 32nd Army headquarter tunnels, the site relates both the history of the Ryukyu Kingdom and the conditions of the Battle of Okinawa. While the heritage from the Ryukyu Kingdom is splendid and “bright,” the parts from the Battle of Okinawa are tragic and “dark.” Nevertheless, both of these constitute the history of Okinawa.⁷³⁾

In addition, the report critically assessed Okinawa’s relationship to mainland Japan by focusing on such wartime markers. These places it said, clearly showed that the Battle of Okinawa was simply a “bid to buy time (*jikan kasegi*) to build up defenses for the mainland and to protect the *kokutai* (emperor system).”⁷⁴⁾ Finally, the report noted that although the weakness of the surrounding rock foundation and the issues of multiple land ownership (private, prefectural, and national) presented considerable obstacles, preserving the tunnels and opening them to the public was not only important from the standpoint of historical education, but was also physically possible.

But Ōta’s administration ended in 1998 before the tunnel-preservation plan was carried out. His successor, the conservative, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)-backed Inamine Keiichi, abandoned the critical view of the Battle of Okinawa and Okinawa-Japan relations adopted by Okinawan progressives in favor of a pro-Japanese nationalist position. His historical views became clear, for instance, during a debate over the proposed exhibit of the newly revamped Peace Memorial Museum scheduled to open in 2000. At this time, it was revealed that Inamine had ordered changes to the exhibit including changing the term *gyakusatsu* (massacre) to *gisei* (sacrifice) and the term *suteishi sakusen* (referring to the sacrifice of Okinawa to save the mainland) to *jikyūsen* (war of attrition).⁷⁵⁾ Then, in 2009, during another conservative administration led by Governor Nakaima Hirokazu, chief of the prefectural Environmental and Community Affairs Department (ECAD), Chinen Kenji, citing the high cost of the project and safety concerns,

announced to the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly that the prefectural government had abandoned plans to preserve the 32nd Army tunnels or to open them to the public.⁷⁶⁾ Later that year, Chinen explained that the prefecture would instead erect an historical marker near the site.⁷⁷⁾

In 2011, ECAD head Shimoji Hiroshi, appointed a special committee led by University of the Ryukyu's professor, Ikeda Yoshifumi, to draft plans for the proposed historical marker. However, when the final version of the marker was released in 2012, Ikeda and other committee members were shocked to see that Shimoji's office, with the approval of Governor Nakaima, had altered its contents consulting with them about the changes. Namely, Shimoji erased passages that explained about the presence of comfort women in the tunnels, and about the nearby murder of Okinawan civilians as "spies" by the Japanese Army. As originally conceived, the two passages in question read:

Along with Commander Ushijima Mitsuru and Chief of Staff Chō Isamu, there were around 1000 officers and men, Okinawan military personnel and mobilized students, and women attached to the military including comfort women who were residing in the tunnels.⁷⁸⁾

Some residents around the tunnel headquarters were accused by the Japanese military of being 'spies' and were massacred for this.⁷⁹⁾

However, Shimoji and his office erased the term "comfort women" from the first sentence and removed the second sentence entirely.⁸⁰⁾ Moreover, when the marker was eventually erected in March 2012, Ikeda and other committee members were shocked to see that there was no mention of Okinawa being a *suteishi* for the mainland in the accompanying English translation.

When questioned about the changes in the prefectural assembly, Shimoji explained that he viewed the purpose of the marker to explain the role that the 32nd Army tunnels had played in the destruction of Ryukyuan cultural heritage like Shuri Castle, and that he wasn't interested in "explaining the meaning of every single aspect of the Battle of Okinawa."⁸¹⁾ In other words, the Nakaima administration saw wartime heritage for its capacity to explain the loss of Ryukyuan cultural heritage rather than having intrinsic value itself. Moreover, Shimoji justified his actions by saying:



[IMG. 6] The final version of Okinawa Prefecture's historical marker for the 32nd Army headquarter tunnels was erected outside remaining tunnel entrances on the grounds of Shuri Castle in 2012; photo by the author, November 1, 2015

The Prefecture decided to delete some sections since we could not conclusively prove their veracity. Especially in regard to the sections on the presence of comfort women in the tunnels, there are some testimonies which confirm this and others that deny it. Therefore, since there are conflicting testimonies, we could not sufficiently determine the facts of the matter and, thus, we could not include this history on the marker.⁸²⁾

Vigorous debate ensued in the prefectural assembly, with progressive and left parties opposing them as censorship of history. Kayō Shūgi of the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), for instance, said that there was no problem with original plan to preserve the tunnels, and she chastised the Nakaima administration for abandoning it: “as Mayor, you have the responsibility to ensure that war sites are used in a way that conveys the historical truth of the Battle of Okinawa and ensure that such a tragedy never occur again. [...] To revise the historical marker in such a way as this is completely outrageous.”⁸³⁾ Later, JCP member Nishime Sumie said: “the issue of the massacre of Okinawan civilians by the Japanese army and their use of comfort women is established historical fact. The one-sided actions of the Governor to erase this history from the historical marker is a serious breach of Okinawans’ trust.”⁸⁴⁾ Similarly, Tokashiki Kiyoko of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) compared the Nakaima administration’s actions to earlier attempts by GOJ to erase Battle of Okinawa from school history textbooks and said: “even though this is a cruel history that we may want to avert our eyes from, we must convey the historical facts.”⁸⁵⁾ However, Nakaima personally defended changes to the marker and refused allowing further modifications.⁸⁶⁾

At the time of the historical-marker controversy, prominent Okinawan writer Medoruma Shun wrote that the current historical revisionism should be viewed against the background of the GOJ attempts to increase the presence of the Japanese Self Defense Forces on the island, and to strengthen the US-Japan military alliance. Inconvenient historical truths from the Battle of Okinawa like the massacre of Okinawan civilians by the Japanese Army and the comfort women, however, “work at cross purposes” to this aim, he said, because they demonstrate that “the army doesn’t protect civilians.”⁸⁷⁾ It was for this reason, Medoruma explained, that the national and prefectural government were seeking to “erase negative attitudes toward the Japanese Army among Okinawans.”⁸⁸⁾ Moreover, he was critical of the current relationship between cultural and wartime heritage at the site, writing that the government wants to “sell Shuri Castle as a main tourist attraction of Okinawa,” and to “recreat[e] the splendor of the Ryukyu Kingdom” there, while at the same time they are neglecting the “history of the Battle of Okinawa represented by the underground 32nd Army Headquarter tunnels.”⁸⁹⁾ Instead of this, Medoruma urged, the government should not just be contented with a simple historical marker, but should work to build an historical center there that explains the connections between Shuri Castle and the Battle of Okinawa. He wrote:

It's important to [...] understand the history at the Shuri site as multilayered, and to see that, in the shadows of this glorious past, there is also the history of the common people who suffered after being forced out of the land and exploited when the castle was built, and the modern history of the castle including the Battle of Okinawa.⁹⁰⁾

Thus, Medoruma emphasized the need to adopt a holistic view of the Shuri site that accounted for its multiple iterations and transformations including its history as Shuri Castle and the 32nd Army tunnels rather than seeing these things as isolated events. This view is perhaps closest to the perspective that this paper has taken in arguing for the importance of applying biography of place approach to the Shuri site. In addition, Medoruma criticized one-sided approaches that selectively drew from the site's past to create desired identities in the present, and he particularly singled out narratives that beautified Shuri's past connections to the Ryukyu Kingdom while simultaneously ignoring its modern history and wartime roles. In effect, Medoruma's comments point to the aim of this paper, which has been to show the material effects of various cultures of (dis) remembrance, or, that is to say, the process of memory objects being remembered and forgotten in discourse.

Conclusion

This paper employed the concept of "cultures of (dis) remembrance" to explain how memory objects are remembered and forgotten in discourse, and it applied this concept to the case of Shuri Castle and the 32nd Army headquarter tunnels. It identified three discourses in particular that had important material effects at the Shuri site: an assimilation discourse, a Cold War discourse, and a heritage discourse. Moreover, each of these discourses were adapted to fit changing socio-historical conditions. In this way, Shuri Castle was largely stripped of its connotations as a symbol of Ryukyuan independence and was sublimated into the framework of the Japanese nation-state in the prewar. In addition to facilitating the militarization of Okinawa and making imperial subjects of its people, the nationalist-assimilationist discourse of the prewar also had material effects including the neglect of Shuri Castle and the construction of patriotic centers of national education like the Okinawa Normal School nearby. During the Battle of Okinawa, this conflicted with another discourse promoted by the Americans that saw Japanese militarism as a consequence of Japan's inability to overcome feudalism and fully "modernize" (i.e. Modernization Theory). This resulted in the subsequent denigration of Shuri's role as the former seat of feudal authority, and the castle itself was replaced with a memorial to U.S.-led modernity and liberal-democracy, the University of the Ryukyus, during the U.S. occupation of Okinawa. American planners envisioned the university as a key part of its strategy to win the hearts and minds of men in the Cold War (i.e. Cold War discourse).

Yet following their damaging defeat in the Vietnam War, the U.S. abandoned this aspect of the propaganda war against China and the Soviet Union, and they allowed Okinawa to revert to mainland Japan in return for the right to retain semi-permanent military bases there. This context paved the way not only for the nationalization of Okinawan education (the University of the Ryukyus became a national Japanese university in 1972), but also for the nationalization of Okinawan cultural heritage. Shuri was once again transformed as the UofR prepared to move off the site, while the GOJ nationalized Ryukyuan cultural heritage under the rubric of Cultural Properties (*bunkazai*) and placed the reconstruction of Shuri Castle at the center of Okinawa's newly-constructed post-reversion identity. But this heritage discourse became involved in conflicting visions for Okinawa's identity and history vis-à-vis the mainland. Namely, the continued subordinate position of Okinawa in the framework of the Japanese nation-state led to a critical assessment of Okinawa-Japan relations and, moreover, memories and wartime heritage from the Battle of Okinawa were placed at the center of this critique. In this context, the GOJ and LDP-backed Okinawan politicians took a pro-Japanese nationalist position toward history that emphasized Ryukyuan cultural heritage like Shuri Castle. This painted not only a bright picture of the past, but also strengthened the foundations of the Japanese nation-state and "Japanese" culture by giving it an added element of diversity. At the same time, progressive Okinawans stressed wartime heritage like the 32nd Army headquarter tunnels to demonstrate the negative effects of militarism, both past and present.

In conclusion, each of the discourses examined here left material footprints and changed the geographical landscape of the Shuri site. Moreover, the tangible remains engendered by past and present discourses have shaped the way the site is interpreted and its contemporary identity. Up to this point, such markers have been selectively utilized resulting in some being emphasized at the expense of others. The final example of the historical marker and the artificial dichotomy that was posited by various sides between "cultural" and "wartime" heritage exemplifies this. It also illustrates one of the key mechanisms of what this paper has termed cultures of (dis) remembrance. However, the paper additionally suggested that this dilemma can be overcome via a biography of place approach which views the history of objects not in isolation, but rather as intertwined in each other's histories through their shared connection of place.

Endnotes

- 1) Nora 1989; Assmann and Czaplicka 1995.
- 2) Jubishi and Kikuchi 2002, p.3.
- 3) Ōta 1984, p.xi.
- 4) The author has previously written about "cultures of (dis) remembrance" in English in "Cultures of (dis)

remembrance and the Effects of Discourse at the Hiyoshidai Tunnels,” in *Japan Review* (Fall 2018), and in Japanese in “‘(Hi) kioku suru bunka’ to Hiyoshidai chikagō ni okeru gensetsu no kekka,” in *Kyoto joshi daigaku gendai shakai kenkyū*, (November 2018). Stuart Hall defined “discourse” as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – i.e. a way of representing – a particular kind of knowledge about a topic” (Hall 1993, p.291). Moreover, Michel Foucault showed that material objects exist in discourse and discursive contexts which change over time and, in addition to influencing perception of those objects, transform the physical nature and structure of objects (Foucault 1982, p.53). When the object (s) of discourse are what Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka referred to as “cultural memory” objects or what Pierre Nora identified as “sites of memory” (*lieux de mémoire*), then shifting discourses additionally shape memory vis-à-vis those places and objects (Assmann and Czaplicka 1995; Nora 1989). It is in this way that this paper speaks of “cultures of (dis) remembrance,” etymologically related to the German *Erinnerungskulturen* (“cultures of memory”; see Erll 2011, p.49), but with the added prefix “(dis-)” to indicate the dual mnemonic processes of remembering and forgetting, and to highlight the appearance and/or disappearance of memory sites and objects in discourse. Furthermore, the paper notes that the cumulative effects of competing discourses over time remain etched on the physical and mnemonic landscape of a site and together comprise its larger “biography of place” and biographical identity (Sorensen and Viejo-Rose 2015, p.13). The author would like to thank Lihn Vu for her assistance in coming up with the term “cultures of (dis) remembrance.”

- 5) Sorensen and Viejo-Rose 2015, p.13.
- 6) Kerr 2000, pp.60-2, 85-6, and 108-9.
- 7) Ibid., pp.156-69.
- 8) Ibid., p.335.
- 9) Oguma 2014, p.27.
- 10) Ibid., p.38.
- 11) Christy 1993, p.608.
- 12) For instance, the father of Okinawan studies, Iha Fuyū, advocated a “common ancestry” theory between Japanese and Okinawans, and stated in 1918 that “the most urgent task above all in Okinawa is to Japanise the language, customs and manners” (ctd. Oguma 95).
- 13) As Tze Loo noted, this was not entirely unprecedented: Meiji government forces similarly occupied many *daimyo* castles around Japan after the *bakuhau* system was dissolved in favor of prefectures in 1871 (2014, p.53).
- 14) The purpose of the Okinawa Normal School was to educate future elementary school teachers in the Japanese language, and to inculcate in them a sense of patriotic loyalty that they could carry to future students. Okinawa Normal School began as the Communications Practice School (*wadenshūjo*); see Kondo 1993 and Ryūkyū Daigaku 2010, pp.3-4.
- 15) Duke 2009, pp.327-335.
- 16) Okinawa kenshi 2012, p.501.
- 17) Toyokawa 1931, pp.242-43.
- 18) Ibid., pp.243-4.
- 19) Courtesy of the Naha City Museum of History; from *Shashin-shū Naha hyakunen no ayumi*, Material Code 02000352, File No. 001-04.

- 20) Loo, pp.55-56 and Itō 1942, p.18.
- 21) Loo, pp.93-94; In fact, Shō Tai was forced against his will to abdicate, and was held as a virtual captive in Tokyo until his death in 1901.
- 22) Indeed, Itō engaged in other similar empire-building projects, constructing the Grand Shrine of Taiwan in 1901 and the Grand Shrine of Chōsen in 1925; see Loo, pp.75-78
- 23) Tanabe 1943, pp.316-17.
- 24) Chōboku 1937.
- 25) Ctd. in Ryūkyū Daigaku 2010, pp.12-14.
- 26) Ibid.
- 27) Ōta 1984, p.16.
- 28) Ryūkyū Shimpō 2014, p.40.
- 29) W.H. Lawrence 1945.
- 30) For more, see Gilman 2007.
- 31) See, for instance, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff 1945.
- 32) Ryukyus Command (RYCOM) 1949.
- 33) Ryūkyū Daigaku 1950, p.11.
- 34) USCAR January 10, 1951.
- 35) USCAR January 9, 1951.
- 36) MacArthur, 1951.
- 37) Courtesy of the Naha City Museum of History, Material Code 02006958, File 010-13.
- 38) USCAR 1955.
- 39) Michigan State College 1951. Mire Koikari has written a book on the Michigan Mission (2015).
- 40) Yamazato 2010, p.202.
- 41) Loo, p.149.
- 42) “Bunkazai no hyōka ga kaiketsu ten,” April 28, 1959.
- 43) Figal 2007, pp.97-8 and Fukuma 2015, p.131.
- 44) Okinawa kankō kaihatsu jigyōdan 1968, p. 5.
- 45) Literally “poisonous fangs,” but perhaps more accurately expressed as “to fall prey to.” However, the nuance here is that the women will be raped. This is clearer in a modern Japanese translation of Ota’s telegram found in a pamphlet sold at the visitor center which uses the term *bōkō* – usually translated as “rape” or “assault.”
- 46) Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau 2015.
- 47) The reason the U.S. permitted Okinawa’s return to Japan in 1972 is that its material and monetary resources had been stretched thin following the disastrous Vietnam war, and it was eager to shift the economic burden of governance onto the Japanese government (See Oguma 2014).
- 48) “Dai Ichiji Fukki Taisaku Yōkō No Zenyō.” *Okinawa Taimuzu*, November 20, 1970.
- 49) Yamanaka and Ōhama 1971.
- 50) Ryukyu seifu bunkazai hogo iinkai 1971.
- 51) Ōta 1972, p.112.

- 52) Ōshiro 1977.
- 53) Ctd. in Yoshihama 1998, pp.9-10.
- 54) Taira 1998.
- 55) Government of Japan 1982.
- 56) “Heiwa kyōiku o katasumi ni” May 2, 1987.
- 57) Ibid.
- 58) Aniya 1985, p.40.
- 59) Aniya 1985, pp.40-41.
- 60) “Okinawa senseki o bunkazai ni” November 11, 1987.
- 61) Ibid.
- 62) Obinata 1993, p.94.
- 63) Takara 1980. Note that the exact phrasing is that the structures are “not desirable” (*nozomashikunai*); however, the nuance is that they should be removed from the site.
- 64) Shurijō kōen jigiyō ni kakawaru jūmin no kai 1989.
- 65) Ibid. pp. 8, 9, 6.
- 66) Ibid. 11.
- 67) Ryukyu Shinpo June 17, 1992.
- 68) Ibid.
- 69) See Meeting Minutes of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly 1993 and Dai 32 gun shireibu gō hozon, kōkai kentō iinkai 1996.
- 70) Kōnō 1993.
- 71) Murayama 1995.
- 72) Dai 32 gun shireibu gō hozon, kōkai kentō iinkai 1996, p.3.
- 73) Ibid. p.3.
- 74) Ibid. p.3.
- 75) See Figal 2001, p.63 and Yonetani 2000, p.159.
- 76) Meeting minutes of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, June 26, 2009.
- 77) Meeting minutes of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, October 2, 2009.
- 78) “‘Ianfu’” *Ryukyu Shimpō*, Feb. 24, 2012.
- 79) Ibid.
- 80) Ibid.
- 81) Meeting minutes of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, February 24, 2012.
- 82) Ibid. As writer Medoruma Shun indicated, there are at least six eyewitness accounts including by former Normal School Students, local residents, and military men that testify to the execution of one or numerous Okinawan residents as “spies” in the Shuri vicinity (2012, pp.11-12). In addition, accounts of former Okinawan comfort women and military officers attest to the presence of comfort women in the tunnels (Medoruma 2012, pp.13-15). Ōta also described the presence of Korean comfort women there (1972, p.79-80).
- 83) Ibid.

84) Meeting minutes of the Okinawa Prefectural Assembly, February 27, 2012.

85) Ibid.

86) Ibid.

87) Medoruma 2012, p.10.

88) Ibid., p.10.

89) Ibid., pp.10-11.

90) Ibid., p.11.

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(非) 記憶する文化：首里城における戦争記憶

ジャスティン・アウケマ

〈要旨〉

本論文では、沖縄戦（1945年4月—6月）における代表的な戦争遺跡である32軍司令部壕の歴史について分析する。その中で、32軍司令部壕及びそれにまつわる歴史と記憶が現在までの連続的・累積的な言説の結果によって形成されてきたということを主張し、その過程を「(非) 記憶する文化」と呼ぶことにしている。本論文は32軍司令部壕の運命に特に大きな影響を与えた三つの言説を指摘する。一つ目は、沖縄を日本帝国に統合するため、沖縄と日本の関係者が両地域の歴史的・文化的な類似点を論じた1945年以前の「同化言説」である。これによって、首里城は独立国家であった琉球王国の権力の府という立場から、日本の愛国教育を普及させるための拠点に変身させられた他、1945年の沖縄戦において同地での32軍司令部壕の建設を主導する拠点ともなった。二つ目は、「冷戦言説」である。この言説では、米国占領軍は自ら目指していた戦後沖縄イメージ（すなわちアメリカ流自由民主主義の見本及び冷戦を遂行するための拠点）を構築するため、琉球伝統文化、及び日本の軍国主義に関する記憶や痕跡を変容させようとした。この文脈において、廃墟となった首里城を琉球大学として再構築し、32軍司令部壕は忘却の彼方へと沈んでいった。しかし米軍の厳格な支配により、多くの沖縄市民は沖縄の日本本土への返還を訴えるようになった。そのため、32軍司令部壕のような戦争遺産は沖縄と日本が「祖国」のために成し得た共同的な犠牲についての国家主義的な語りを推進するために利用された。そして、沖縄の1972年の返還後は、沖縄の遺産について二つの異なる見解が現れた。まず、沖縄の進歩派にとって32軍司令部壕は日本の中での沖縄の下位的地位を表す象徴であり、また戦争における沖縄そのものの物質的破壊を招いた原因でもあった。一方、ある保守系政治家は、日本国家概念を固定した沖縄文化遺産についてのイメージを助長させるために、地下壕にまつわる記憶を抹消しようとしてきた。

キーワード：戦争遺跡、第32軍司令部壕、首里城、言説、(非) 記憶する文化、同化、冷戦、国営化、遺産、アイデンティティー

