

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REPRESENTATION OF NATIONAL MEMORY AND LOCAL IDENTITIES: THE POLITICS OF MEMORY IN TSUSHIMA, MATSUYAMA, AND MAIZURU

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Abstract: The establishment of stringent and homogeneous national master narratives in modern nation states is often contested by deeply-rooted local identities based upon different local versions of history. Even today, many regions of Japan are cultivating a unique account of their local history, often based on premodern events and personalities. These historical identities are expressed in prefectural museums, memorials and tourist locations such as medieval castles. However, in the past two decades the building of museums or memorials commemorating Japan's modern history has become increasingly prominent. In this context, tensions have become evident between the demands made by the national interpretation of history – which local museums and memorials cannot or do not want to ignore – and the strong desire for the preservation of local color and content in treatments of Japanese history.

This article analyzes museums, memorials and memorial ceremonies in three Japanese prefectures which have received considerable attention in Japan in recent years. The background and origins of the memorial to the naval battle fought in the Tsushima Straits (1905) on Tsushima Island; the politics of memory pursued by the city of Matsuyama, which relates mainly to the Russo-Japanese War (1904/05) and its heroes; and the memorial and museum to Japanese repatriates from the Soviet Union and the Asian continent after the Second World War in Maizuru are examined in relation to official versions of national memory as expressed in declarations of the central government and memorials in the capital region. The article demonstrates that the politics of memory in the three prefectures in question is not an expression of a re-affirmation of a local narrative, but that it rather obviates tensions with the national master narrative and aims at embedding the local narrative within the framework of national history in a harmonious and complementary manner.

1 INTRODUCTION

As the studies of Maurice Halbwachs (1925), Pierre Nora (2002, Internet), Jan Assmann (1992) and Aleida Assmann (1999) have shown, collective identities, whether those of social groups, geographical regions or subregions, localities or nations, rest to a large degree on popularized versions of history and historical recollection, or “historical memory.”

While academic interpretations of history mostly remain within a small circle of professional historians, the concrete shaping of historical memory (e.g., the carving of historical interpretations in stone or bronze as visual representations of history) is usually accompanied by intense discussions involving large sectors of society. As a result of the wide range of participants in these discussions, dominant interpretations are challenged in various ways by a diverse body of social actors. In many cases, national master narratives are challenged, or at least relativized, by previously suppressed regional and local versions of history. Such challenges need to be considered as reaffirmations of peripheral local identities (versus the national identity of the metropolitan center) in a situation where such local identities are threatened by a spreading and, to use Shmuel Eisenstadt's term (2000: 29–30), "homogenizing" national culture. Such discussions about the shaping of collective memory have become universal in recent decades and went hand in hand with a burgeoning "production" of historical memory in the form of historical museums, memorials and commemorative events since the 1980s, as well as with lively discussions in academia, the media and the political sphere.

In his celebrated work on the Realms of Memory (*Les lieux de mémoire*), Pierre Nora (1989: 13) emphasized that "modern memory is, above all, archival. It relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image." And he continues: "The less memory is experienced from the inside the more it exists only through its exterior scaffolding and outward signs – hence the obsession with the archive that marks our age" (*ibid.*). According to Nora (*cf.* also Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 2001), it is the threatened loss of collective memory which has led to the growing desire for its preservation and, therefore, to what he calls an "acceleration of history" (Nora 1989: 7). In another essay, Nora (2002, Internet) claims that these trends are "so widespread, so deep-seated and all-powerful" that the last two or three decades should be named "the age of commemoration." Recent studies of Japanese attitudes to the nation's past suggest that Japan fits Nora's characterization of a worldwide "age of commemoration" (Seraphim 2006) – the sheer number of commemorative events, memorials and newly established historical museums since the 1980s is hard to overlook, and the escalation of debate about Japan's war responsibility and its "coming to terms with the past" since the mid-1990s (Saaler 2005; Seraphim 2006: chapter 10) speaks for itself.

Nora (2002, Internet) identifies the most important *reason* for the advent of "the age of commemoration" as the "democratization" of history; that is, "a marked emancipatory trend [...], the emergence [...] of all

those forms of memory bound up with minority groups for whom rehabilitating their past is part and parcel of reaffirming their identity." For Nora, the most noteworthy *effects* of the "current upsurge in memory" are, first, "a dramatic increase in the uses made of the past for political, commercial and tourist purposes," and, second, the removal from "the historian of the monopoly he traditionally enjoyed in interpreting the past. [...] Today, the historian is far from alone in manufacturing the past; it is a role he shares with the judge, the witness, the media and the legislator." These phenomena, again, can also be witnessed in Japan, where a variety of social agents are involved in discussions about history and memory; where historical memory is a major drawcard for tourism (cf. Saaler 2005: chapter 3); and where subaltern memories are increasingly finding potent means of representation in the public sphere (cf. Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 2001; Saaler and Schwentker 2008), whether in the form of historical museums, commemorative sites and ceremonies, or tourist sites – or a mix of several of these. Particularly important in this context are memorial projects undertaken in the peripheral regions – projects which must, if we follow Nora and others, first of all, be seen as an expression and a reaffirmation of *local identity*.

Since the foundation of the Japanese nation state in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, local identities have constantly fought to reassert themselves in face of attempts by the metropolitan center to establish a homogeneous national identity based on a stringent national master narrative or "national memory." In previous research, the examples of Okinawa and Hiroshima/Nagasaki, tied to memories of "the only land battle on Japanese soil during the Asia-Pacific War" in Okinawa and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, all in 1945, have received some degree of attention in this context (Yoneyama 1999; Fujitani, White and Yoneyama 2001; Fujiwara 2001; Figal 2007; Schäfer 2008). In summer and fall 2007, the degree of emphasis placed on the preservation of such local narratives became clear, particularly in Okinawa, when the decision of the central government in Tokyo to erase passages concerning the Battle of Okinawa from national history textbooks – above all those passages describing the forced suicides of the civilian population of Okinawa by units of the Japanese Imperial Army – caused an outcry in the prefecture but also in other parts of Japan, culminating in a demonstration in Ginowan City, Okinawa, attended by more than 100,000 protesters (cf. *Asahi Shimbun* 30 September 2007: 1; *Ryūkyū Shinpō* 26 December 2007: 1). Apart from Okinawa and Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many other Japanese regions have also succeeded in cultivating a local identity based upon a unique account of local history, which often rests on *premodern* events and person-

alities. These historical identities are expressed in the large number of prefectural museums (*kenritsu hakubutsukan*), local museums (*kyōdo hakubutsukan*) and tourist locations such as (mostly reconstructed) medieval or early modern castles, and have been reaffirmed in recent decades through the official sponsoring of tourism and the founding of new local history museums (*rekishi hakubutsukan*) and memorial sites in many Japanese prefectures.¹

This contribution to the debate analyzes recent memorial projects in three peripheral Japanese prefectures that relate to events in modern Japanese history. The authors ask whether these projects can be seen in the framework of a reassertion of *local* identities in face of the encroachment of a national master narrative. As we have seen above, in the cases of Hiroshima and Okinawa, tensions have become evident between the demands of the national master narrative – which local museums and memorials on the periphery of Japan cannot or do not want to ignore completely – and a strong desire for the preservation of local color and content in historical interpretation. Are these tensions representative of recent memorial projects in Japan's regions? Are the majority of memorialization projects in Japan really the result of a “democratization” of history and, to use Nora's terminology, to be considered “emancipatory” in character – a term surely appropriate in the cases of Hiroshima and Okinawa? Are the local memorial projects analyzed below the expression of “a popular protest movement” fighting for the “revenge of the underdog or injured party” (Nora 2002, Internet) – that is, the retribution of the locality against the dominance of the metropolitan (urban) center(s)? Are they proof of the assertion that professional historians are being deprived of their monopoly over interpreting the past? Or are such ventures merely the product of an economically depressed countryside aiming to increase its income from tourism and, to this end, having recourse to the utilization of history?

The three case studies presented here investigate the background and origins of local efforts to commemorate the naval battle of the Tsushima Straits (1905) on Tsushima Island (Nagasaki Prefecture); the politics of memory pursued by the city of Matsuyama City in Ehime Prefecture, which is also mainly concerned with the commemoration of the Russo-Japanese War (1904/05) and its heroes; and the memorial and museum to Japanese repatriates from the Soviet Union and the Asian continent after the Second World War in Maizuru City, Kyoto Prefecture. In what follows,

¹ For a comprehensive list, see the category “Museums and Memorials” on the *Yahoo! Japan* website at http://dir.yahoo.co.jp/Arts/Humanities/History/Japanese_History/Museums_and_Memorials (found 28 May 2008).

the “memory politics” of these three localities will be examined and related to the national memory as expressed in various government declarations and official memorials in the capital region.²

2 TSUSHIMA AND THE MEMORY OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

As recent studies have demonstrated, the Russo-Japanese War has to be considered on a number of levels. On the *global* level, it signified the rise of Japan as a “first-rate power” (*ittōkoku*) and the realization by large parts of the Asian-African world that the European colonial powers were not invincible. On a *national* level, it resulted in the further stabilization of the Meiji state and the ruling oligarchy drawn from the Satsuma and Chōshū clans, but Japan’s victory also marked the beginning of the spread of national pride to large parts of the population and, to consolidate this, a large number of commemorative projects were initiated throughout the country shortly after the war (Dickinson 2005). On the *local* level, Japanese localities often climbed on the bandwagon of national commemoration of the Russo-Japanese War, while connecting this national endeavor with *local* identity and memory (cf. Ichinose 2004).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, commemorative events were again held on both the national and local levels – events that testified to a certain conflict between local interpretations of history and the national master narrative. The most important commemorative event on the *national* level, besides the issuing of a commemorative stamp by Japan Post,³ was the 100-year anniversary commemorative ceremony (*Nihonkai kaisen 100-shūnen kinen taikai*) held in Yokosuka on 27 and 28 May 2005, the date of the decisive naval Battle of Tsushima (or the Battle of the Japan Sea). Here, in Yokosuka, 60 kilometers south of the capital Tokyo, the flagship of the Japanese fleet that defeated the Russians in the Battle of Tsushima in 1905, the *Mikasa*, has been exhibited as a “memorial ship” since 1926. After it was almost destroyed by bombing during the last war, it was restored and reopened in 1961,⁴ but the number of visitors never reached prewar levels. While 200,000 to 320,000 visitors visited the Mikasa Memo-

² While this introduction and the conclusion have been co-authored by all three authors, the three case studies were carried out and written up independently: the study of Tsushima is by Sven Saaler, the study of Matsuyama is by Hirano Tatsushi, and the study of Maizuru is by Stefan Säbel.

³ See http://www.yushu.or.jp/p_stamp/ship1.htm (found 7 April 2008).

⁴ See MPS (2005) or the homepage of the Memorial Ship Mikasa at <http://www.kinenkan-mikasa.or.jp> (found 18 July 2008).

rial in the late 1920s and early 1930s, numbers peaked during the Second World War with more than 500,000 visitors annually in 1940 and 1941. In the 1970s and 1980s, numbers fluctuated between 150,000 and 200,000, showing a consistent downward trend. In 1994 the numbers fell below 100,000 for the first time, and remained there until 2005.⁵

Notwithstanding declining popular interest in the memorial ship, in 2005 the *Mikasa* became the set for a *national ceremony* attended by 2,000 guests including official representatives from the Japanese Defense Agency (since 2007, the Defense Ministry), the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF), the embassies of Russia, England (Japan's ally at the time of the Russo-Japanese War) and the United States (mediator of the Peace Treaty of Portsmouth which ended the war in 1905), as well as a number of Diet members and descendants of Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō, the commander of the Japanese fleet in the Battle of Tsushima, and descendants of sailors who had participated in the battle.⁶ The Defense Agency in an official statement explained its reasons for supporting the celebrations: "The Defense Agency supports (*kōen*) this commemoration ceremony (*kinen tai-kai*), since it acknowledges that it is held with the objective of raising awareness among the people, and particularly among the younger generation who are the future of Japan, of the importance of loving and defending one's country, and that it is also making a contribution to the wider dissemination (*keimō*, literally: "enlightenment") of defense policy thinking (*bōei shisō*)" (JDA 2005, Internet). The Defense Agency, part of the national government of Japan, clearly considered the commemoration of the Russo-Japanese War in Japan's national interest and held in high regard this historical event of 1905 as a focal point of national identity and pride.

Yokosuka, however, was hardly an *authentic* place in which to commemorate the Russo-Japanese War. The Memorial Ship *Mikasa* has been exhibited here since 1926, as the result of the decision by the Imperial Navy to turn it into a memorial and select a major naval base near the capital as the site for the commemoration of the war as a national event. Here the *Mikasa* has remained until the present day. However, the battle commemorated in the ceremony described above took place on the other side of Japan, in the Japan Sea near the islands of Tsushima. It therefore comes as no surprise that here, in a remote region of Japan, a commemo-

⁵ I acknowledge the kind cooperation of the Mikasa Preservation Society (Mikasa Hozon-kai) which provided figures for visitor numbers.

⁶ See the homepage of the city of Yokosuka at <http://www.city.yokosuka.kanagawa.jp> (found 18 July 2008). A video of the ceremony, including speeches, is available on the *YouTube* website at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7DQhIvB_R8 (found 28 May 2008).

rative project was initiated in 2003. Under the double motto “The 100th Anniversary – Peace of World from Tsushima” and “The Final Chapter of Shiba Ryōtarō’s *Saka no ue no kumo*” [“The clouds above the hill”, a reference to a well-known novel about the war], the Tsushima Committee for the Promotion of Activities Relating to Historical Commemorations (Tsushima – Rekishi Kenshō Jigyō Suishin Iinkai, hereafter “the committee”) organized a number of events which can be seen as an expression of memory or identity politics – but at the same time, as an attempt to promote local industry and tourism and to generate income for these remote and underdeveloped islands.⁷

While the naval battle of May 1905 is usually referred to in Japanese as *Nihonkai kaisen* [the naval battle in the Japan Sea], for a promotional pamphlet (see Fig. 1 in the appendix) produced to solicit donations the committee chose the English term “The Battle of Tsushima,” rephrasing it as “The Tsushima War” [sic] and using it throughout the pamphlet (TRKJSI 2004). The Japanese title of the pamphlet also emphasized the local character of the battle, calling it *Nichi-Ro Tsushima-oki (Nihonkai) kaisen* [the Russo-Japanese naval battle off the coast of Tsushima], only adding “Japan Sea” to qualify “naval battle” in a little box, presumably to avoid misunderstanding (in Japanese, *Tsushima kaisen* [the battle of Tsushima] is a rather uncommon term). By referring to the historical novel *Saka no ue no kumo* by Shiba Ryōtarō,⁸ which deals with the Battle of Tsushima, the committee aimed to exploit the popularity of Shiba, whose historical novels are among the bestselling in postwar Japan and, at the same time, have had an “unprecedented influence on the historical consciousness of the Japanese” (Nakamura 1998). The references to Shiba were part of a strategy aimed at generating broad national interest for the memorial projects envisioned by the local committee.

While the pamphlet showed that no war could be commemorated in contemporary Japan without taking into account the strong currents of pacifism in Japanese society, overall it was characterized by a strong nationalistic tone emphasizing the importance of Tsushima as an authentic site of Japanese *national* pride and a place where Japan “traditionally” had suffered from foreign attacks.

The “pacifist” aspect of the pamphlet is seen in the motto “Friendly Links,” which refers to the role of Tsushima in ameliorating national en-

⁷ The discussion that follows is based on newspaper articles, correspondence with the Tsushima Committee for the Promotion of Activities Relating to Historical Commemorations and field research in Tsushima in June 2004 and September 2007.

⁸ On Shiba cf. Saaler (2005: chapter 3) and below.

mities when 143 sailors who had drifted ashore on Tsushima after their ship, the cruiser *Vladimir Monomakh*, had been sunk, were saved by local people. According to the pamphlet, the people of Tsushima showed humanitarian feelings notwithstanding wartime nationalist fervor and anti-Russian emotions, and had thus made an advance contribution to the restoration of “friendly links” with the Russian Empire after the war. This emphasis on the correct treatment of Russian prisoners of war by Japan was further emphasized by reproducing a famous painting of Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō on the front of the pamphlet, showing Tōgō’s visit to the injured commander of the enemy fleet, Admiral Zinovy Rozhdestvensky, in a Japanese naval hospital in Sasebo after his capture in the Battle of Tsushima. In addition, the publication included a message from the mayor of Tsushima, Matsumura Yoshiyuki, emphasizing the global dimension of the Russo-Japanese War (“Let’s change the world from Tsushima”) and the importance of commemorating the battle in the context of peace education (*heiwa kyōiku*) and the politics of regional revitalization (*chiiki kasseika*). “Given the historical background of the friendship (*yūjō*) between the Russian sailors [who had drifted ashore in 1905] and the local people (*jimoto jūmin*) [who saved them], Tsushima is the best place on earth to talk about humanitarianism (*ningen-ai*)” (TRKJSI 2004).

However, when it comes to the question of donating funds for “activities relating to historical commemorations,” the pamphlet’s tone becomes more nationalistic, with local pride playing only a minor role. Clearly, the committee expected that subscriptions from the Tsushima community would be insufficient for the planned projects and therefore aimed at a wider national constituency for financial support. In this context, nationalist messages referring to Japan’s military victory over Russia in 1905 seemed to promise greater success. The message from the chairman of the committee, Takematsu Yasuo, is particularly outspoken in this respect. While Meiji Japan, Takematsu writes, achieved a glorious victory that astonished the whole world, “present-day Japan has lost its self-confidence,” and thus the committee proposes to foster national pride by “handing on the inheritance of 27 May [i.e., the date of the Battle of Tsushima] and engraving it in the hearts of the Japanese people. Only then will our country, NIPPON [written in katakana], be able to recover its great hopes and dreams. Our committee continues to plead for a return to [the old] Japan (*Nihon kaiki*) and considers this [i.e., the 100th anniversary of the battle] an opportunity to reassert [the values of] ‘Bushidō JAPAN’, ‘genuine nationalism’, and the creation of a proud Japan as objectives for future generations” (TRKJSI 2004).

The committee had three major ideas for commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of Tsushima. First, in the months leading up to the anni-

versary, a lecture series would provide the islanders with some historical background to the upcoming events. Second, “the largest relief in Japan” was to be created in Tsushima to commemorate the dead of the battle, planned for unveiling no later than 27 May 2007. The relief (see Fig. 1 in the appendix for an imaginative sketch) would depict Admiral Tōgō visiting his wounded Russian opponent in hospital and the names of all naval personnel (Japanese and Russian alike) killed in the Battle of Tsushima would be engraved on the front of the monument, with all donors to the project listed on the back. This would demonstrate that the Japanese, symbolized by their national hero Tōgō, harbored friendly feelings – even a chivalric respect – for their former enemies, rather than an attitude of hatred or superiority – just like the Tsushima islanders who saved the Russian sailors. The proposed name of the planned relief strengthened this notion: it was to be called the Monument to Peace and Friendship (*Heiwa to yūkō no hi*). The third idea was that on the anniversary day itself a memorial ceremony was to be held, including the unveiling of the relief and a maritime pageant of ships to commemorate the – Japanese and Russian – victims of the Battle of Tsushima.

While the lecture series went off without problems, funding efforts fared less well, despite calls for donations being sent to a large number of public figures including politicians, academics, media representatives and entrepreneurs. The donations received proved insufficient to build the “largest relief in Japan.” Eventually, the Russian government was approached and agreed to cover the costs of creating the relief. The committee had emphasized that the relief was to be erected to cement Japanese-Russian friendship and that the elevated site proposed for it was to be named the Hill of Japanese-Russian Friendship (*Nichi-Ro yūkō no oka*). Thus, it was made easy for the Russian government to agree to participate in the project. Russia has a strong interest in fostering ties with Japan, but on the national diplomatic level, this desire is still impeded by the territorial dispute over the southern Kuril Islands, or Northern Territories (*hoppō ryōdo*), as they are called in Japan. Strengthening ties with a group of islands in western Japan therefore was a welcome opportunity to demonstrate the possibility of Russo-Japanese rapprochement.

Like the relief, the other main event proposed, the maritime pageant was confirmed only at the last minute. Almost 100 fishing boats were assembled for the parade and, notwithstanding growing criticism of the use of public funds to commemorate an imperialist war (cf. *Asahi Shimbun* 26 May 2005: 31), the Maritime Self-Defense Forces also provided two warships, the *Makishima* and the *Ieshima*, following their declaration of support for commemorative events relating to the Russo-Japanese War quoted above. However, despite its spectacular character, the local Tsushima

ceremony was not widely reported in the national media and only a little over 300 guests – compared to more than 2,000 in Yokosuka – attended the ceremony. In contrast to the Yokosuka ceremony, no representative of the national government attended, the highest-ranking guest being the governor of Nagasaki Prefecture, to which Tsushima belongs (Saitō 2005: 7).

Despite the limited impact of the event at the national level (or perhaps because of the low national publicity the Tsushima project was receiving), the national significance of commemorating the Battle of Tsushima was emphasized with growing intensity in the publicity put out by the Tsushima committee in the months leading up to the ceremonies in May 2005. While its early announcements appealed both to pacifist notions of postwar Japan's national identity as well as to a strong nationalism with an emphasis on restoring pride in the nation and Japan's national history, expressions of *local* identity were pushed into the background in later publicity. The slogan "Let's change the world from Tsushima," with its appeal to humanitarian and pacifist ideals, gave way to *nationalistic* notions emphasizing a military victory in an imperialist war which had once made Japan a powerful nation. However, contrary to the expectations of the committee, this strategy also failed to elicit substantial funding from the public. Rather, it led to a conspicuous indifference to the proceedings in the media, or even critical coverage in some newspapers.

Thus, the Tsushima memorial project did not lead to a reaffirmation of the *local* identity of Tsushima on the national stage, but instead contributed to a "nationalization" of local memory, emphasizing, above all, the importance of the battle in the framework of national history. In a similar vein, local economic development, including tourism, were only temporarily and insignificantly stimulated by the commemorative events of 2005. Even though it is still possible to find signs of the commercialization of the memory of the Russo-Japanese War on the Internet (although most of the products on offer are not local Tsushima initiatives),⁹ commemoration of the war is mentioned neither in the "Plan for Promoting Tourism in Tsushima" drafted by Nagasaki Prefecture,¹⁰ nor on the official homepage of the Tsushima Tourism and Merchandising Association (Tsushima

⁹ See "Anniversary Sake for the Commemoration of the Battle of the Sea of Japan" online at <http://www.gensui.jp/~kuratsu/html/index.html> (found 28 May 2008), "Tōgō Heihachirō Commemorative Wine" at <http://www.kurecci.or.jp/topics/wine.html> (found 28 May 2008), and "Commemorative Sake for the Centenary of the Naval Battle in the Japan Sea" at <http://sake.taihaku.biz/> (found 28 May 2008).

¹⁰ See <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudokeikaku/chiikiplan/nagasaki10.html> (found 28 May 2008).

Kankō Bussan Kyōkai).¹¹ A noticeable increase in tourists visiting Tsushima from *abroad* in recent years is very unlikely to be the result of commemorative efforts involving the Russo-Japanese War as, over the last ten years, the islands have experienced a huge increase in tourists from South Korea,¹² a country engaged in a territorial dispute with Japan over another island group, the Takeshima or Dokto Islands, and firmly opposed to any affirmative interpretations of the Russo-Japanese War, which had been the starting point for the colonization of Korea.¹³ Not only is the memorialization of the Russo-Japanese War unlikely to encourage Koreans to visit Tsushima but, as we have seen, it has also failed to stimulate mainland Japanese interest in the islands and therefore will be of limited long-term effect.

3 MATSUYAMA AND COMMEMORATION OF THE NOVEL “CLOUDS ABOVE THE HILL”

Matsuyama is known for its hot springs and historic castle, as well as for being the birthplace of many leading Meiji Era haiku poets such as Masaoka Shiki, Takahama Kyoshi, and Kawahigashi Hekigotō. The largest city on the island of Shikoku, Matsuyama, has attracted renewed attention in recent years in connection with the novel “Clouds above the Hill” (*Saka no ue no kumo*) by Shiba Ryōtarō (1923–1996).

Matsuyama is strongly associated with the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05 and therefore claims a special relationship to Shiba’s novel. The three main characters in the novel, journalist and writer Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902), General Akiyama Yoshifuru (1859–1930) and his brother Admiral Akiyama Saneyuki (1868–1918), were all real historical figures born in the city. The recent efforts to commemorate the two officers – regarded as heroes of the war – constitute the most important part of the “city planning of ‘clouds above the hill’” (*‘saka no ue no kumo’ no machizukuri*) initiated by present mayor, Nakamura Tokihiro, who was born in 1960. Further, dur-

¹¹ See <http://www.tsushima-net.org/tourism/history.php> (found 28 May 2008).

¹² While visitor numbers from Korea were only 1,600 in 1999, they grew to 42,000 in 2006 and exceeded 100,000 for the first time in 2007 (not least due to a weakening yen and a strong Korean won). I appreciate the kindness of the Tsushima Tourism and Merchandising Association in providing these figures.

¹³ For the Takeshima issue, see Min (2005) and the homepages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/index.html> and the homepage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of South Korea at <http://www.mofat.go.kr/english/political/hotissues/eastsea/index.jsp> (both found 28 May 2008).

ing the war, the first prison camp for Russian prisoners of war (POWs) was established in Matsuyama, and about 4,000 captive soldiers were placed to 21 facilities including temples, public plants and private buildings. During their imprisonment, 98 captives died and were buried in the Russian Cemetery located in the northern part of Matsuyama's urban district.¹⁴

But why does Matsuyama pursue the politics of historical memory with an emphasis on the historical novels of Shiba Ryōtarō? Shiba is one of the most popular novelists in the latter half of the twentieth century and author of numerous extremely popular historical novels dealing with the Sengoku/Azuchi-Momoyama Era (15th to 16th century) as well as the Bakumatsu Era (the last years of Tokugawa Shogunate during the middle of the 19th century) and the early Meiji Era (1868–1912). Being one of his main works, “Clouds above the Hill” was originally serialized in the newspaper *Sankei Shinbun* between 1968 and 1972, but has become one of Shiba's most popular works. In the novel, Shiba represented the European Powers as “clouds above the hill” in the sense that European civilization was for the characters in the novel a conspicuous danger, while at the same time being a lofty goal that was difficult to attain.

The novel is today recognized as a typical expression of *Shiba shikan* [the Shiba view of history]. This view is based on a clearly positive evaluation of the Meiji Era before the Russo-Japanese War and a negative estimation of the following period (Nakamura 1997). From this point of view, people of the Meiji Era were energetic, ambitious and encouraged to pursue the great purpose of overtaking Europe. Winning the war against Russia symbolized the realization of the spirit of Meiji. This brilliant era, according to the *Shiba shikan*, fell into ruin after the Portsmouth Treaty of 1905: Japan became self-centered, turned towards imperialism and militarism, and finally plunged into the disaster of the Asian-Pacific War.

The Shiba view of history is widespread in Japan today,¹⁵ but there are two different influential alternatives of historical memory: the liberalist view (*jiyūshugi shikan*) and the progressive view (*shinposhugi shikan*). The

¹⁴ Accounts of the actual number of POWs transported to Matsuyama vary anywhere from 3,000 to 10,000 (Matsuyama Daigaku 2004). Saikami (1969) calculates 6,019 as the total number in his standard work and is the number that appears on a plaque in the Russian Cemetery.

¹⁵ A typical example can be seen in the list of the original authors of the annual NHK large-scale historical drama series, *Taiga dorama*. From 1953 to 2008, Shiba was the single most prolific author of *Taiga dorama* scenarios having written six out of 47, out of which four dealt with Bakumatsu/Meiji Era. See the homepage of NHK at <http://www.nhk.or.jp/pr/marukaji/m-taiga.htm> (found 4 May 2008).

former is propagated mainly by conservative circles such as the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform¹⁶ (Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho o Tsukurukai) and tries to justify Japanese history before the Second World War (Saaler 2005: chapter 1). Understanding of the Russo-Japanese War according to this perspective is similar to that of Shiba, but its view of history after 1905 is completely different – it is consistently affirmative. On the other side, the “progressive view” is broadly shared not only in progressivist and leftist circles in Japan but also in Korea (e.g., Choi 2004). They insist that Japanese history both before and after the Russo-Japanese War was characterized by imperialist aggression, and that the Russo-Japanese War was a typical conflict between imperialistic powers and nothing more than an expression of greed for influence over the entire Korean Peninsula. The difference from the *Shiba shikan* lies in the interpretation of the period before the war between Russia and Japan, which was positively represented by Shiba. These two alternatives are, however, much less broadly shared in Japanese society than Shiba’s view, which is not only supported by ardent readers of Shiba, but also popularized by mass media such as TV programs, newspapers, historical novels and travel guidebooks.

“City planning of ‘clouds above the hill,’” which is considered next, was introduced by Mayor Nakamura Tokihiro, who, inspired by the *Shiba shikan*, carried it through with a fierce initiative. Nakamura is, according to his own remarks, an enthusiastic reader of the novel. As soon as he was elected mayor in 1999, he advocated his “city planning of ‘clouds above the hill,’” and was re-elected in 2003 and 2007 with the wide support of Matsuyama citizens for his “clouds above the hill” policy. On his website, he explains that “Clouds above the Hill” is not a story of the Russo-Japanese War, emphasizing that the novel begins with the story of haiku poet Shiki. In this way he avoids supporting the war of 1904/05, while at the same time is repeating the positive evaluation of the Akiyama brothers. Another comment also reflects the influence of the *Shiba shikan*: “The soundness of the spirit of the Japanese,” he laments, “was lost after the Russo-Japanese War.”¹⁷

Nakamura’s “clouds above the hill” politics are based on four main ideas which are related to the characters of the heroes in the novel: (1) “youthfulness” and “brightness” as an attitude to effort towards a high aim; (2) “collection” and “comparison” of information and knowledge,

¹⁶ See the homepage of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform at <http://www.tsukurukai.com> (found 9 April 2008).

¹⁷ See the homepage of Nakamura Tokihiro at http://www.tokihiro.jp/diary/01_1127/03.html (found 28 May 2008).

which creates unique values; (3) “realism” and “reason” which can settle problems rationally; and (4) “effort” and “encouragement” to learn new ways of behavior and to promote relations with others.¹⁸

The central point of Mayor Nakamura’s city planning is the conception of a “field museum” (i.e., a “museum without a roof”) to be created with the cooperation of the whole population. He criticizes traditional local politics that spend a large amount of tax money on public projects, most of which are a waste of money. “Clouds above the hill” planning, however, does not exclude construction projects. Examples include the construction of the Museum of Clouds above the Hill (Saka no Ue no Kumo Myūjiamu; see Fig. 3), redevelopment of the Ropeway Street, and maintenance of the house in which the Akiyama brothers were born.¹⁹

There were already many commemorative sites in Matsuyama which relate to the novel and the Russo-Japanese War even before Nakamura became mayor, such as the Russian Cemetery, the old bronze statues of the Akiyama brothers²⁰ and the Shiki Memorial Museum (Shiki Kinen Hakubutsukan).²¹ However, before Nakamura’s election as mayor, these monuments were administered, as in most Japanese cities, by the city’s board of education (*kyōiku iinkai*). Yet in 1999, the new 39-year-old mayor founded the Team of the City Planning of “Clouds above the Hill” (“Saka no Ue no Kumo” Machizukuri Chīmu) in the Department of Industry and Economy of the Matsuyama City Municipal Office.

Although this project was initiated by a *local* actor (i.e., the city of Matsuyama), it does not mean that *national* actors are excluded – rather, the relationship between locality and nationality is remarkably cooperative. Between 2001 and 2006, the government under Prime Minister Koizumi Jun’ichirō, for example, strongly promoted Nakamura’s policy. Two years after the project was launched, the Koizumi Cabinet adopted the city plan-

¹⁸ See the homepage of the Team of the City Planning of “Clouds above the Hill,” the Municipal Office of Matsuyama at http://www.city.matsuyama.ehime.jp/sakakumo/1177934_912.html (found 28 May 2008).

¹⁹ See the homepage of the birthplace of the Akiyama brothers at <http://www.akiyama-kyodai.gr.jp> (found 28 May 2008).

²⁰ The old statues of Akiyama Yoshifuru and Saneyuki were rebuilt in 1970 and 1963 respectively, which were earlier than the rebuilding of statues of other military officers. In 2005, these new statues of the brothers were erected on the site of their house.

²¹ Being different from the Museum of Clouds above the Hill, there is no independent homepage run by the Shiki Memorial Museum. Information is available on a website of the Municipal Office at <http://www.city.matsuyama.ehime.jp/sikihaku> (found 28 May 2008).

ning of “clouds above the hill” as a case study for the National Model of City Revitalization (*Zenkoku toshi saisei moderu*).²² Matsuyama’s project was subsidized in 2003 within the framework of the Regional Revival Plan (*Chiiki saisei keikaku*).²³ With the financial assistance of the central government, the Museum of Clouds above the Hill was opened on 28 April 2007. The total construction cost was approximately 1,900 million yen, 700 million yen of which was subsidized by the national government.²⁴

Another case of cooperation between local and central actors is the dramatization project of the novel. NHK, the public broadcaster of Japan, is preparing for a large-scale series of dramas (*supesharu dorama*) based on the novel, which will be broadcast between 2009 and 2011.²⁵

The most important project of the “clouds above the hill” city planning policy is the construction of the Museum of Clouds above the Hill. A large proportion of the exhibits in the museum, which was designed by the well-known architect Andō Tadao, is related to Masaoka Shiki and the Akiyama brothers: for example, pictures and calligraphy works by these three figures, many explanation boards, and other first-hand materials such as school reports of Shiki and Saneyuki. The objects connected with the actual Russo-Japanese War, however, are small in number; the few exceptions, explanations in moving images, pictures and maps are exhibited in such a way as to avoid the dark side of warfare.

This method of exhibition is in stark contrast to that of the museum of Ehime Prefectural Lifelong Learning Center (Ehime-ken Shōgai Gakushū Sentā), which is located outside of the Matsuyama city center. The exhibits on display at this museum include uniforms and weapons owned by the Akiyama brothers. This exhibition does not avoid showing the role of the brothers in the war and is for the purpose of educating the prefecture’s

²² See the homepage of the Head Office of City Revitalization (Toshi Saisei Honbu), the Cabinet Secretariat (Naikaku Kanbō) at <http://www.toshisaisei.go.jp/05suisin/chugoku/04suisin/h15/17.html> (found 28 May 2008).

²³ See the homepage of the Head Office of Regional Revitalization (Chiiki Saisei Honbu), the Cabinet Secretariat at <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/tiikisaisei/osirase/040722/08.pdf> (found 28 May 2008).

²⁴ See the homepage of the city of Matsuyama at <http://www.koucho.city.matsuyama.ehime.jp/wakuwaku/detail.php?from=t&no=888> (found 4 May 2008).

²⁵ The official homepage of this program is not yet set up by NHK’s central broadcasting center. Instead, NHK Matsuyama Station has its own official homepage, which offers limited information at <http://www.nhk.or.jp/matsuyama/sakanoue/index.htm> (found 18 July 2008). This page does not mention the NHK *Taiga dorama*, though the drama “Clouds above the Hill” was originally produced in this framework (see UKZK and NKTS 2006).

inhabitants, rather than for the sake of attracting tourism from outside of Ehime Prefecture.²⁶

Matsuyama's case shows that "the popularization of history," which was pointed out by Nora (2002, Internet), is on the move not only at the national but also at the local level in Japan. The spread of the *Shiba shikan* in Matsuyama strongly contributes to its citizens' support for Nakamura's "clouds above the hill" policy.

Alongside the *Shiba shikan*, this policy is also connected with an important trait of Japanese society: pacifism. According to a member of the Team of the City Planning of "Clouds above the Hill," who responded to our interview in August 2007, there were no strong objections against this city planning, but some citizens have complained about its affirmation of aspects of war in general. At the same time, the member of the city planning team explained that the point of these complaints was to object to war in general. The *Shiba shikan* and the policy of "clouds above the hill" close their eyes to Meiji Japan's ambition in and aggression against Korea and China, and mentioning the aggressive aspect of the Russo-Japanese War is avoided, consciously or unconsciously. However, this aspect attracts no substantial attention. The *Shiba shikan* and Japanese pacifism can coexist and do in fact: That is why Nakamura and the Museum of Clouds above the Hill have to concern themselves with avoiding the connection between the novel and the actual historical fact of the Russo-Japanese War.

However, if we question whether relations between local and national commemoration politics possibly have an antagonistic character, as Nora (2002, Internet) argued, it must be answered in the negative after examining the case of Matsuyama. Although the city of Matsuyama is cooperating in NHK's dramatization of the novel "Clouds above the Hill," the drama clearly reflects the historical view entertained at the national level in Japan, rather than the local view of the events. And, from the side of the central government, there is support – materially and ideologically – for Matsuyama's city planning.

For a Japanese local government to pursue the goal of city planning effectively, cooperation with the national/central actors can be more profitable than confrontation with them. Through this cooperation, the local government can expect financial aid from the national government and attract more tourists from many parts of Japan through the central media. In the case of Matsuyama, *Shiba shikan* is an important parameter in the

²⁶ The mid-term administration plan of Ehime Prefectural Lifelong Learning Center concentrates the contribution to the learning and education of Ehime inhabitants and does not mention tourism. See the homepage at <http://joho.ehime-iinet.or.jp/museum/index.html> (found 4 May 2008).

harmonious relations between national and local actors: the city of Matsuyama strengthens its local identity, utilizing the story of *Saka no ue no kumo* as a local variant of the national level of the *Shiba shikan*.

4 MAIZURU AND THE COMMEMORATION OF REPATRIATION

Unlike the two case studies presented above, in Maizuru in the northern part of Kyoto Prefecture, the memory of the Russo-Japanese War does not feature much in local memorial projects. This is despite the fact that in the Meiji Period the hero of the Russo-Japanese War, Tōgō Heihachirō, was appointed the first commander of the newly established Maizuru naval base in 1901. This past as a military base is still evident today in the form of redbrick storehouses of the former Imperial Navy and the fact that Maizuru has continued to play a role in national security by hosting major facilities of the Maritime Self-Defense Forces in the postwar era. While Maizuru's military role is an important part of local history, it is the role Maizuru played as a repatriation port in the post-World War II era that has been at the center of local memorial projects and forms an important part of local identity.

At the end of the Second World War, six million Japanese awaited repatriation to the Japanese islands from former colonial or quasi-colonial territories, about half of them military personnel, half of them civilians (Narita 2005). The Japanese term *hikiage* generally refers to civilian repatriates, while the term used for the repatriation of demobilized soldiers of the Japanese Imperial army is *fukuin*. However the more general term *hikiage* is also often used for those Japanese soldiers who returned to Japan from the Soviet Union where they had been taken for forced labor in 1945. According to Marukawa Tetsushi (2004), there has been a tendency in postwar Japan to reduce the vastly differing experiences of repatriation into a small number of dominant narratives. They were geographically diverse in the sense that Japanese faced different circumstances in the overseas areas they had occupied (in areas under Soviet, Chinese, U.S. jurisdiction, etc.) and diverse in the sense that experiences changed with time (if one compares for example early repatriations from Korea until 1946, to the repatriations from the Soviet Union starting in 1947).

The often-gruesome experiences of repatriates before their arrival in Japan found their way into Japan's public memory and have been amalgamated into a general image of victimhood.²⁷ With regard to civilian repatri-

²⁷ Wakatsuki (1995) has a comprehensive account of repatriation and the hardships that went with it.

ates, the experiences of mostly women and children in Manchuria and North Korea after the Soviet invasion in 1945, which are told in Fujiwara Tei's novel *Nagareru hoshi wa ikite iru* [The drifting stars are alive], have become a symbol for the sufferings of repatriates as a whole (Fujiwara 1978). For Siberian returnees, the popular song *Ganpeki no haha* [Mother at the quay] describes the feelings of the wives and mothers of the Japanese internees, while the song *Ikoku no oka* [Hills of a foreign country] has become a symbol for the sufferings of the internees in the Soviet Union (Marukawa 2004).

These two narratives – victimization of civilians in the postwar chaos in Manchuria and the northern part of Korea on the one hand, and the suffering of the internees at the hands of the Soviet Union (and the suffering of the relatives waiting for their return) on the other – are also evident in a museum in the center of Tokyo – the Heiwa Kinen Tenji Shiryōkan [Exhibition Center and Reference Library for Peace and Consolation].²⁸ This museum is run by the Heiwa Kinen Jigyō Tokubetsu Kikin [Public Foundation for Peace and Consolation], an organization approved as an administrative agency by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (Sōmushō). The museum's mission is to pass down knowledge about the suffering of repatriates and internees (along with a third group of non-pensioned veterans) and to convey the value of peace to future generations. However, the exhibition does not mention war victims of other Asian countries (Asano 2004; Saaler 2005: 107–110).

While the national memory of repatriation focuses on the hardships repatriates had to endure, the local memory of repatriation in Maizuru is influenced by the role it played as a repatriation port. Maizuru was one of ten ports designated by the government to receive the repatriates. The reason why Maizuru has entered the national memory as the major repatriation port cannot be found in the number of repatriates that landed there. Many more Japanese landed in Hakata or Sasebo than in Maizuru. However, Maizuru continued its role as a repatriation port until 1958, long after the last of the other repatriation ports had been closed in 1950, and during this period repatriations to Maizuru were often covered in the national media. The other characteristic that sets Maizuru apart is that nearly 70 percent of the 664,000 repatriates were returnees from the Soviet Union, while most of the rest were civilians from China and the Korean Peninsula. As a result Maizuru holds a special place in the memory of the returnees. Being designated a repatriation port had a considerable impact on city life. Although repatriates were to be transported back to their home re-

²⁸ Refer to the museum's homepage at <http://www.heiwa.go.jp/tenji/> (found 18 July 2008).

gions after a short stay at the repatriation facilities at Maizuru, supplying the repatriates caused great strains on the city's resources, especially in the early postwar years. Furthermore, many local citizens were mobilized to care for the repatriates. Through the mass media national attention was focused on Maizuru whenever a repatriation vessel entered the city's port. As a result repatriation has been remembered as a communal effort and also as a part of the greater national endeavor to welcome and bring the repatriates safely back to their home country (Maizuru-shi 2000).

After the repatriation facilities were shut down in 1958, at first not much local effort went into the commemoration of the role Maizuru had played as a repatriation port. The repatriation offices were demolished, and the land taken over by a timber company the city had attracted to Maizuru. The initiative for commemoration came from Siberian returnees themselves and local citizens who first erected a memorial near the landing site of the repatriates in the early 1960s. However, it was not until 1970 that the Repatriation Memorial Park (Maizuru Kinen Kōen) was inaugurated – again as a result of the lobbying of local citizens and repatriates. In 1988 the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum (Maizuru Hikiage Kinenkan; see Fig. 4) opened, after repatriates and Maizuru citizens had decided on the establishment of a museum commemorating the history of repatriation during the 40th anniversary celebrations of the start of repatriations in 1985.

Since its opening, the museum has been supported by the city of Maizuru and by the Maizuru and Nationwide Association of Friends Commemorating Repatriation (Hikiage o Kinen suru Maizuru Zenkoku Tomo no Kai) founded in 1989. The association also started a fundraising campaign to reconstruct one of the landing bridges (*hikiage sanbashi*), which was accomplished in time for the 50th anniversary celebrations in 1995.²⁹ The landing bridge and the *kataribe no kane* [bell of the narrator] erected next to the bridge were intended as sites of commemoration and consolation for those internees who had died in the Soviet Union. In 2007, the association was given the Award for Regional Development of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications,³⁰ honoring its commitment in passing on the knowledge of repatriation and thus contributing to the re-

²⁹ This information is based on the exhibition catalogue (MHK 2000) and the homepage of the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum at http://www.maizuru-bunkajigyoudan.or.jp/hikiage_homepage/next.html (found 18 July 2008), and on communication with the head of the Repatriation Museum.

³⁰ See article in the online version of the magazine *Chiiki-zukuri* [Regional Development] published by the Japan Center for Regional Development at <http://www.chiiki-dukuri-hyakka.or.jp/book/monthly/0706/html/t08.html> (found 18 July 2008).

vitalization (*kasseika*) of Maizuru, and in sending out a message of peace from regional Japan to the rest of the nation.³¹

The museum, the memorial park and the landing bridge have become the most important places for the commemoration of repatriation in Maizuru. The museum exhibition focuses mainly on the hardships Japanese internees had to endure in Soviet labor camps, and the role Maizuru and its citizens played in welcoming and hosting the repatriates. The basic tone of the exhibition can be said to be in line with the national narrative described above, and very similar to that of the exhibition in the Heiwa Kinen Tenji Shiryōkan with the added mention of the role Maizuru played as a repatriation port. Mostly absent from the permanent exhibition however are exhibits of repatriates other than the returnees from the Soviet Union, reflecting the fact that the main force behind the establishment of the museum had been those particular returnees.³²

The exhibition avoids any critical judgments on Japan's war responsibility, but its tone is also not overtly anti-communist or nationalistic, allowing visitors to interpret the exhibits themselves. Given this neutral tone, guides at the museum have taken on a crucial role in communicating the history of repatriation. While, during the first years, guided tours of the museum were mainly given by returnees themselves, since 2004 this role has been taken on by the Association for the Narration of Repatriation in Maizuru (Maizuru Hikiage Katari no Kai), a registered non-profit organization. The association has been training guides for the exhibitions and recently even started a distance learning course. Participants are expected to learn general facts about repatriation and read personal accounts of repatriates, but there are also visits to the Kyoto Museum for World Peace at Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto,³³ which is cooperating with the Repatriation Museum, and to other peace museums in Japan. Participants have to prepare scenarios of their guided tours which allow them to include their own interpretations of history. After the end of their training, guides exchange "recipes" for tours via the association's newsletter. As a result, depending on the individual interpretations of the guides, different versions of history are passed on to visitors. However, all the scenarios maintain the basic tone of the exhibition, which stresses the sufferings of repatriates

³¹ For the exact wording, see the homepage of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications at http://www.soumu.go.jp/c-gyousei/2007/pdf/070314_1_1g.pdf (found 18 July 2008).

³² For an outline of the exhibition refer to the catalogue of the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum or see the homepage at http://www.maizurubunkajigyoudan.or.jp/hikiage_homepage/next.html (found 18 July 2008).

³³ See the museum's homepage at <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/mng/er/wpmuseum/english/index.html> (found 18 July 2008).

and the importance of peace.³⁴ The activities of the guides in the Repatriation Memorial Museum may thus serve as an example of Nora's democratization of history mentioned in the introduction to this article, as individuals are given the freedom to disseminate their own interpretations of history.

Increasingly, members of the association have become involved in peace and human rights education in schools and other institutions in the region, and have been invited to hold lectures on repatriation in other prefectures as well. With the museum becoming increasingly well-known, the association has also started to broaden the focus of the museum's exhibition by holding special exhibitions at the end of 2007 and in 2008 on civilian repatriates from Manchuria. The museum is thus becoming a national center for the commemoration of repatriation, and an important institution for disseminating the memory of repatriation throughout Japan.

As has been outlined above, the initiative for the commemoration of repatriation in Maizuru has come mainly from local citizens and repatriates rather than from the city government. The city government, however, has been supportive by offering funding and by taking over the running of the museum in 2005. Support for the museum reflects the city government's attempt to use the city's history as a repatriation port to portray postwar Maizuru as a city promoting peace throughout the postwar era. In 1995, the city passed a peace proclamation (*heiwa sengen*) which stressed Maizuru's obligation as a repatriation port to pass down the experiences of repatriates to future generations and disseminate the preciousness (*tōtosa*) of peace.³⁵

In a tourism pamphlet titled "Romantic Road of Maizuru" that details the attractions of Maizuru, the memorials related to repatriation are grouped together on one double page with the Navy Memorial Museum (Kaigun Kinenkan) and the Maritime Self-Defense Forces pier (*jieitai sanbashi*; see Fig. 5). The pamphlet states that Maizuru had been an Imperial Navy town (*kaigun no machi*) until the end of the war, but through the experience of welcoming repatriates from the Soviet Union and China the city had been reborn as a "city of peace" (*heiwa no machi*).³⁶ One cannot help but see a certain tension between the role Maizuru plays in Japan's

³⁴ This and the following paragraph are based on the newsletter of the Association for the Narration of Repatriation in Maizuru and the materials of the distance learning course. I would like to thank the association for providing me with these materials.

³⁵ The text of the proclamation can be accessed on the following homepage at <http://www.city.maizuru.kyoto.jp/contents/7d34180d1c171d0/7d34180d1c171d010.html> (found 18 July 2008).

³⁶ The tourism pamphlet can be accessed on <http://www.maizuru-kanko.net/panf/index.html> (found 18 July 2008).

national security as major military port – with ships from Maizuru having participated in the controversial refueling of American military vessels in the Indian Ocean since 2001 and Aegis destroyers being stationed here – and its self-promotion as a peace port.

The 60th anniversary celebrations of the start of repatriations, co-sponsored by the Heiwa Kinen Jigyō Tokubetsu Kikin, contained a similar ambivalence and reinforced the impression that institutions at the national and local level involved in the commemoration of repatriation were not in conflict with each other. The celebrations focused mainly on the important role Maizuru had played as a repatriation port and stressed the importance of passing on the experience of repatriation for future generations and of promoting peace. In contrast, the memorial lecture by right-wing commentator Takubo Tadae tried to justify Japan's war in Asia, stressed the criminal character of the Soviet regime, and concluded that peace could "not be had for free," implying the necessity of Japan's postwar security policy. The lecturer at the time was an adviser to the Heiwa Kinen Jigyō Tokubetsu Kikin, showing a direct connection between the state-sponsored foundation and events at the local level.³⁷

The city government's support for the commemoration of repatriation presumably also has an economic motivation. Annual visitor numbers of the repatriation museum have been increasing steadily, with average annual visitors numbering around 150,000 people. By March 2007 a total of more than 3,000,000 people had visited the museum since its opening. In addition, annual commemoration events that also attract visitors to Maizuru include musicals, theatre plays, etc. However, while there is some commercialization of repatriation (with souvenirs such a *ganpeki no haha* sweets, etc.), the sites related to repatriation only form a part of the tourist attractions the city tries to promote, the others being the "redbrick" buildings of Maizuru, pre-modern historical sites and the natural scenery surrounding Maizuru.

The tourist development of the redbrick buildings in particular has been a major concern for the city in recent years. Emphasis is put on the fact that these buildings form one of the largest surviving collections of redbrick buildings in Japan and thus represent an important "legacy of Japan's modernization" (*kindaika no isan*). Associations are made not with Maizuru's history as a military port, but with the "modernization" of Japan. The buildings are already in use for the Redbrick Museum (Akarenga Hakubutsukan) and a recently opened museum showing local culture, and there are further plans to renovate the area for tourism purposes.³⁸

³⁷ This account is based on the author's visit to the celebrations on 7 October 2005.

³⁸ See the homepage of the Akarenga Kurabu Maizuru [Redbrick Club Maizuru] at <http://www.redbrick.jp/> (found 18 July 2008).

Here again the military prewar legacy of Maizuru has been played down by emphasizing the positive term “modernization” and staging events such as jazz festivals that are totally unrelated to the original purpose of the buildings.

The decision of the Maizuru municipal government to promote the memory of repatriation and use it as a rationale for the promotion of peace rather than deriving a commitment to peace from Japan’s past as an imperialist power can also be seen in the way the sinking of the repatriation ship, the *Ukishimamaru*, has been commemorated at the local level. At the end of the war the repatriation (*sōkan*) to their homeland of Koreans and Chinese who had emigrated to Japan during the colonial era or had been forcibly taken there for forced labor in Japan’s war economy occurred at the same time as the repatriation of Japanese to Japan (Mun 1995). The *Ukishimamaru* left Aomori with several thousand Koreans on board, many of whom had been forced laborers in an Aomori coal mine. The ship was on its way back to Korea when, after a short stay at the port of Maizuru, an explosion caused it to sink in the bay of Maizuru causing the death of at least five hundred people, making it one of the biggest maritime disasters in Japan’s postwar era. Throughout the postwar era there were persistent rumors that the explosion had not been caused by an American sea mine, as the official explanation went, but by the Japanese authorities themselves (Kim 1994). A memorial for the victims was not unveiled until 1978 at a site in the outskirts of Maizuru. Memorial services continued, with citizens from Maizuru and the Japan Communist Party being the most involved. In recent years, the mayor of Maizuru has also paid annual visits to the memorial. However, there is no sign that this “perilous” piece of memory of Japanese colonial guilt will be integrated into the broader image Maizuru seeks to project to the rest of the nation.³⁹

In conclusion it can be said that the way repatriation is commemorated in Maizuru does not attempt to disassociate itself from the way repatriation is remembered at the national level and at institutions sanctioned by the central government. Instead, there seems to be a tendency to stress the uncontroversial aspects of repatriation and the importance the local efforts by Maizuru citizens had for the national endeavor of repatriation and how the experiences of the repatriates (civilians as well as Siberian internees) serve as a lesson against war, a message concurrent with Japan’s postwar pacifism.

³⁹ See Fujitani, White and Yoneyama (2001) and Yoneyama (1999) for the ways in which the war experiences of non-Japanese and minorities have been commemorated in postwar Japan.

5 CONCLUSION

Previous research has generally emphasized the tensions between national and regional versions of historical memory. The construction of historical memory on the periphery of Japan is often considered in terms of resistance or opposition to national or central metropolitan narratives, i.e. national history. However, the kind of historical memory found in the memorial projects discussed in this paper is not at variance with the national narrative, but rather accommodates it and sets local and regional history harmoniously within a national framework. Although many of the activists described in this chapter have strong local roots, they are, above all, concerned with *harmonizing* local and national narratives.

While in the cases of Okinawa and Hiroshima, the memory of war is often used to challenge the national narrative, in Tsushima, Matsuyama and Maizuru, the memory of modern wars – the Russo-Japanese War and the Second World War – are presented as *not* in opposition to the national narrative, but are rather embedded in national history in a harmonious and complementary manner. Above all, regional achievements are emphasized within the framework of national endeavour.

Why do the three regions in question pursue this kind of strategy? Unlike in Okinawa and Hiroshima (and other regions), the events commemorated in these cases did not bring (significant) destruction to the regions involved and thus encourage an attitude of skepticism toward “the nation,” its wars, and its history – let alone some kind of collective trauma. The historical experiences of Tsushima, Matsuyama and Maizuru are presented as exemplary cases of honorable and laudable contribution to the nation, and thus can be used to help write “bright chapters” of national history in a manner that is affirmative and uplifting. These affirmative or positive views are intended to evoke nostalgia – something that would be difficult to achieve with depictions of unrelieved disaster. While in other regions the memory of *premodern* history (i.e., the history of the premodern feudal domains) is referred to in order to evoke nostalgia, in Tsushima, Matsuyama and Maizuru the history of *modern* Japan is presented to evoke a similar response – a strategy enforced through references to historical fiction, as in the cases of Tsushima and Matsuyama with the historical fiction of bestselling author Shiba Ryōtarō.

The nostalgia underlying historical exhibitions and memorials is, of course, strongly related to the desire to stimulate tourism and economic development and contribute to the “revitalization” of these depressed peripheral regions. In this context, the emphasis on a positive and inspiring local narrative set in the framework of a broader national history is expected to generate support from central government. It seems that in the con-

text of the politics of memory in Tsushima, Matsuyama and Maizuru (and probably other regions, too) the “age of localism” (*chihō no jidai*), which the national government advocated during the 1970s (Yoneyama 1999: 44), has been superseded by the wave of re-nationalization that marked the 1980s and 1990s. Although localization or decentralization (*chihō bunken*) has come onto the political agenda once again in the first decade of the twenty-first century, this process is being led by the central government and strongly reflects its own interests.

In sum, the politics of memory in the regions discussed here cannot be seen simply as a reaffirmation of local narratives, but rather should be considered instances of the nationalization of local history or – at least from the viewpoint of the periphery itself – as a boost for local history in the larger framework of national history, a history which is, however, not fundamentally challenged or even seriously questioned. This tendency can be seen in other prefectures, too, and is obviously a manifestation of the general tendency toward re-nationalization that has appeared in recent years. However, as some of the memorialization projects described here have received very little attention at the national level, it is doubtful whether the nationalization of local history is really appreciated among the wider population and whether it is not in fact in strong contradiction to the realities of accelerating globalization.

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APPENDIX



Fig. 1: Front page of a pamphlet produced by the Tsushima Committee for the Promotion of Activities Relating to Historical Commemorations

Source: TRKJSI (2004).

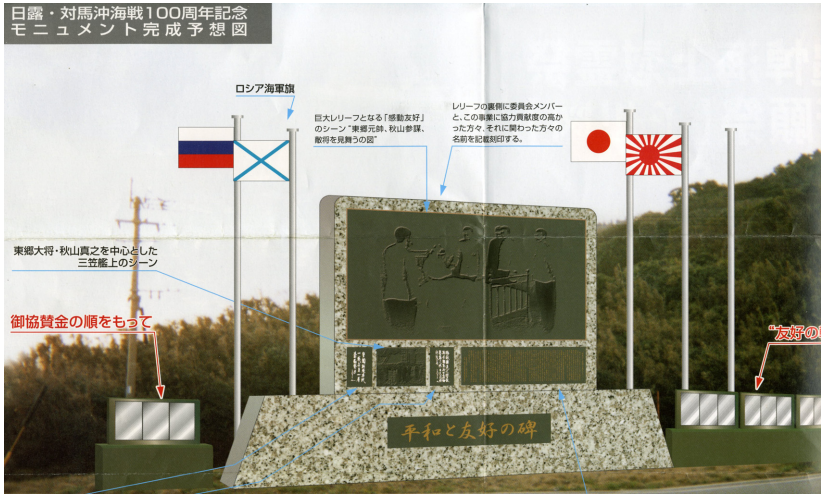


Fig. 2: Imaginative sketch of the Monument to Peace and Friendship



Fig. 3: The Museum of Clouds above the Hill



Fig. 4: The Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum



Fig. 5: The Maritime Self-Defense Forces pier in Maizuru