OPPRESSION AND SUPPRESSION

The lingering controversy surrounding the meaning of the Battle of Okinawa in Japanese memory

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HISTORICAL FACTS ARE SEALED, BUT THE MEMORY OF A PARTICULAR HISTORY CHANGES FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT. THE HIGHLY POLITICIZED NATURE OF HISTORICAL MEMORY DETERMINED THAT ONLY ONE INTERPRETATION CAN BE RIGHT AT A TIME. YET WHEN INDIVIDUAL MEMORIES CONTRADICT WHAT IS TAUGHT PUBLICLY, SUCH GAP CREATES AN IDENTITY CONFLICT WITHIN GENERATIONS OF WAR SURVIVORS. SUCH IS THE CONVENTIONALITY OF OKINAWA'S UNIQUE HISTORY. FOCUSING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN "MEMORY" AND "IDENTITY," COUNTERING THIS CONCEPTION IS THE SUPPRESSED MEMORIES OF INDIVIDUALS WHOSE RECOLLECTION CHALLENGED THE CONVENTIONAL PORTRAYAL OF VICTIMHOOD. DRAWING ON THE SECOND-GENERATION WAR SURVIVOR MEDORUMA SHUN'S FICTIONAL NOVELLA DROPLETS AS PRIMARY DOCUMENT, THIS PAPER EXPLORES THE CONFLICT OF IDENTITIES OF OKINAWANS FROM A PERSPECTIVE OF "MEMORY." EMPHASIZING THE CONSEQUENCE OF PROLONGED WAR TRAUMA CREATED BY THE LAPSES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEMORIES, THE PAPER POINTS TO THE BRIDGE OF THE TWO AS A POTENTIAL GATEWAY TO RESOLVE NOT ONLY IDENTITY CONFLICTS WITHIN INDIVIDUAL WAR SURVIVORS, BUT COLLECTIVE HEALING AS A GROUP IN RECONCILIATION WITH ITS OWN PASTCRIMES.

"The one responsible for the mass suicide on Kerama, too, must have ceaselessly repeated that kind of attempt at self deception and fraud toward others. Before there is too colossal a mass of sin to atone for, he wishes to somehow live on in sanity."

–Kenzaburo Oe, Okinawa Notes

Thirty-five years after the publication of his book, *Okinawa Notes* (*Okinawa Noto*), the famous Japanese writer and Nobel laureate, Kenzaburo, Oe found himself embroiled in an unexpected lawsuit over the disputed history in *Notes*. Families of two Japanese WWII veterans depicted in the book, Yutaka Umezawa and Hidekazu Akamatsu, who were part of the 32nd Imperial Japanese Army stationed in Okinawa during the last months of the war, charged the writer for defamation—Oe had explicitly named Akamatsu in charge of the military order of mass suicides on Kerama Island, where over 700 villagers committed suicide.

The lawsuit came at a time of change. In April 2006, the Ministry of Education (MEXT) had just revised the Fundamental Law of Education (*kyoiku ihonho*), also known as the "Patriotic Education Law."[1] In March 2007, MEXT, under the lead of the Abe administration, ordered the six publishers to revise in their history textbooks the Japanese military's involvement in coercion and mass suicides during the Battle of Okinawa. The ministry further stated that such passages can "generate the misunderstanding that all these actions were carried out under orders from the military."[2] The revision decision was met with fierce protests in Okinawa, resulting in the largest mass demonstration in the history of the island since its reversion to Japan in 1972.

These events are but two of many that show the contested memories behind the battle of Okinawa, the last and the bloodiest battle of the Pacific War. The eighty-two day campaign cost more than 200,000 lives, of which over 140,000 were Okinawan civilians,[3] about one third of the island's population. Not only was Okinawa the only Japanese territory that experienced ground battle, the Okinawan people were also the first Japanese civilians who came into contact with the United States military. Okinawa's status as a new Japanese prefecture meant Okinawans had to prove their loyalty as "imperial subjects," leading a considerable number of civilians to commit suicide under the ideology of *gumin-ittaika*, by which civilians and the military share a common purpose and destiny.[4] Others killed themselves in fear of the brutality of the American soldiers as depicted in Japanese propaganda. The Imperial Army distributed hand grenades to civilians, coercing many to kill themselves and their family rather than having them captured by the U.S. military.[5] Undoubtedly, the forced mass suicides of civilians by imperial Japanese soldiers became the key issue in the writing of history of the Battle of Okinawa. Many Okinawans came to see the act of forced suicides as evidence of Japanese discrimination against Okinawan lives.

However, as Japanese historian Laura E. Hein points out in her short introductory article "The Territory of Identity and Remembrance in Okinawa," it was unclear whether official brutality and forced assimilation policies toward the Okinawans were racial discrimination or mere disregard for all but the elite Japanese.[6] Like Okinawans, rural farmers were also expected to assimilate linguistically and culturally, andas well as to sacrifice personal well-being for the war cause. She argues that, if the United States had invaded Kyushu as planned before Japan's surrender in August 1945, the people of Kyushu would have been asked to die "in circumstances very like those faced by Okinawans a few months earlier."[7]

However, if wartime policies on Okinawa were in fact like those in other prefectures, how does one explain Okinawans grievances about the way the history of the battle is written and discussed today? As a matter of fact,

AN AERIAL VIEW OF TOKASHIKI ISLAND, OKINAWA TAKEN DURING WWII (COURTESY OF *WIKIMEDIA COMMONS*)

"The memory of the battle came to shape a distinct Okinawa identity as an ethnic minority that continues to be treated as second-class citizens whose welfare is expendable to the Japanese state."

anti-base activists, intellectuals, and government officials often refer back to the Battle of Okinawa when speaking of the Tokyo government's persistent discrimination against the Okinawans today.[8] In order to understand the way war memory was constructed in Okinawa, it is important to keep in mind the self-consciousness of the majority of Okinawans as colonial subjects, who had to perform "Japanese" in order to prove their loyalty. Unlike the mountain farmers whose Japanese citizenship were not and cannot be questioned, the Okinawans however, fell into the category of the "other" due to their history of dual-subordination from both China and Japan.[9] This position between two dominating powers continued in the form of Japanese "residual sovereignty" and U.S. occupation after the war, and Okinawa was never fully assimilated into Japan. Hence, in order to understand the complex makeup of the way memory became constructed through the lens and experience of such people, the modern Okinawa identity has to be studied the context of its prolonged subordination under the security alliance between Japan and the United States. The memory of the battle came to shape a distinct Okinawa identity as an ethnic minority that continues to be treated as second-class citizens whose welfare is expendable to the Japanese state.

This paper seeks an understanding of the Okinawa identity through the study of war memory and the construction of the "Okinawa Peace Philosophy" through governor Ota's "peace promotion" policies. These constitute the construction of a new war monument, a new prefectural Peace Memorial museum, as well as an Okinawa Peace Research Center which would serve as the administrative organ of the new museum and monument. By looking specifically at the making of an "Okinawa Spirit" in the Corner Stone of Peace, this chapter hopes to present the conflicting nature of Okinawa war memory—hence, Okinawa identity—through an analysis of Okinawa writer Medoruma Shun's *Droplet* in the context of the 90s "memory boom" and its repercussions in the post-memory revisionist era.

SHAPING PUBLIC MEMORY THROUGH THE CORNER STONE OF PEACE

To an extent, the two incidents mentioned above reflect a continual nationalist backlash against the attempt to address Japan's war responsibilities in a post-Cold War world in the early 1990s.[10] The death of the Showa emperor in 1989 and the end of the Cold War brought forth new waves of debates on Japan's war responsibilities that were previously concealed under the Cold War political division. Exacerbating the debate was the United States' demand that Japan participate in the first Gulf War in 1991, putting the constitutionality of the Self Defense Forces again on the front page. The end of the LDP (Liberal Democratic Party)'s dominance in 1993, however, suggested a possibility for Japan to redefine its place internationally through reconciliation with its wartime deeds. Japan was facing increasing pressures and criticisms from its close neighbors, notably on the issues of "comfort women" and the white-washing of history in Japanese school textbooks. Either out of international pressure or a changing historical consciousness, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa made the first official apology after Hirohito's death during his visit to Seoul in 1991. He was soon followed by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosakawa in 1993, who publicly acknowledged Japan's "aggressive war," and Tomiichi Murayama, whose "personal" apology at the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII sparked intense international debates.

For Okinawa, the two events that marked Japan's transition were equally significant.. The Japan-U.S. Security Alliance, which had been built in the context of the Cold War order, where the United States had a justifiable reason (i.e. threat of communism) for maintaining its bases in Japan and Okinawa seemed to have lost its primary purpose. For some anti-base activists, the collapse of the USSR seemed to indicate the fulfillment of Okinawa's role as the "Keystone of the Pacific" and a final end to the military bases. The death of emperor Hirohito not only marked the

end of the Showa era, but also a completion of Japan's long "postwar" that was especially prominent in Okinawa.f Japan's defeat in WWII predetermined its, and thus Okinawa's, subjugation, then the beginning of the Heisei era and a new world order as the 1990s unfolded ought to have been a new beginning for both Japan and Okinawa.

The response to the death of emperor Hirohito on Okinawa, however, contrasted drastically to that of mainland Japan. The emperor has been a controversial figure in Okinawa since the end of the U.S. occupation. In his 2008 article, "Okinawa Perspectives on Japan's Imperial Institution," Steve Rabson notes that the general awareness and criticisms of the emperor in Okinawa began around the time of reversion. Publication of Okinawa journalist Kawamitsu Shinichi's "Thought in Okinawa on the Emperor System" in 1970 marked the beginning of public debates regarding the emperor's wartime role. Intellectuals and political leaders alike began to express animosity towards Hirohito and emperor system as concerns arose over Japanese textbook's inadequate address of its wartime aggression.[11] Since then, acts of violence often took place in opposition to the "emperor system," notably the firebomb threats during then Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michio's visit to Okinawa in 1975. Rabson notes the newspaper reporting of the *Taimusu* and the *Ryukyu Shimpo* on January 7, 1989, where the word "*goseikyo*" was used instead of "*hogyo*," which was used in the rest of Japan. While both words denote death, the connotation differs greatly. The word "*hogyo*" is only used to indicate the death of the emperor or empress, where "*goseikyo*" is a mere honorific term referring to the death of any person. This contrast in terminology was said to be out of "consideration for the special sensitivities of the people in the prefecture."[12]

Radical change in Okinawa's politics followed the year after the Showa emperor's death. Masahide Ota, a professor of history at the University of Ryukyus, defeated the incumbent LDP governor, Junji Nishime, on a non-party platform to become the fifth governor of Okinawa. An outspoken anti-base activist and a central figure in public intellectual debates of Okinawa issues, Ota often referred to his own experience as a student in the Imperial Blood and Iron Youth Corps during the battle of Okinawa to criticize Japan's continual disregard for Okinawan well-being and human rights. Based on a campaign to remove all military bases on Okinawa, Ota's victory showed a collective desire for change. This is evident by his reelection in 1994 despite initial setbacks during his first term, mostly due to conservative oppositions in the Prefectural Assembly.

Ota captured the moment of change in the immediate years after 1989. Like his counterparts in Tokyo, he used the tide of shifting memory to reshape Okinawa's collective war remembrance beginning with the construction of a new prefectural peace memorial in 1991.

Before the construction of the Corner Stone of Peace, most war memorials on Okinawa were built in the 1960s during the height of the reversion movement. It is therefore unsurprising that more than half of these memorials contained expressions that glorify Okinawa's participation and sacrifices in the war. Gerald Figal, a professor of history at Vanderbilt University, observed that the surge of patriotic memorials in the 1960s can be seen as "an assertion of new-found Japanese national pride in the wake of postwar economic recovery and as a prelude to the Japanese re-territorialization of Okinawa."[14] Among them was the *Reimi-no-to* (Break of Dawn Tower), a memorial for the 32nd imperial army Commander Mitsuru Ushijima and his chief of staff Cho Isamu,[15] both of whom committed seppuku at the end of the Battle of Okinawa. It was built on behest of the Okinawa Bereaved Families Association in 1962. This monument was accompanied by *Kenji-no-to* (Exemplary Stalwart Youth Tower), which was dedicated to the students who fought along Ushijima, glorifying the noble sacrifices and the heroic deeds of the prefectural youths. Such memorials came to be increasingly at odds with Okinawa's anti-military base—thus anti-war—rhetoric, and the growing public criticism of Japan's continual disregard of the history of the battle of Okinawa in school textbooks.[16]

The Corner Stone of Peace, was meant to showcase a uniquely Okinawa war memory. The unveiling of the Corner Stone of Peace in June of 1995 at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII in Okinawa formally actualized the Okinawa peace philosophy (*heiwa no shiso*), which would come to shape Okinawa's identity as the "Locus for the Promotion of World Peace."[17] Drawing on Okinawa's painful experience in the Battle of Okinawa and the daily reminder of war with the presence of the military bases, Okinawa gained a unique qualification for peace promotion not unlike that of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Peace memorial, titled "everlasting waves of peace"[17] in the original design, took a

step further from its inspiration, the Vietnam War memorial in Washington D.C. On the black granite walls display the names of over 240,000 who lost their lives during the Battle of Okinawa, civilians and combatants alike, of all nationality and ethnicities. This unique characteristic of the Corner Stone of Peace is to

> convey Okinawa's spirit of peace, which has developed through Okinawa's history and culture, to the people of Japan and throughout the world. The names of all those who lost their lives in the Battle of Okinawa, military and civilian alike regardless of nationality, are inscribed on the Cornerstone of Peace as a prayer for eternal world peace.[18]

The Okinawa peace ideology that crosses national boundaries, race, and religion, symbolized by the Corner Stone of Peace, quickly extended to what Figal calls "idealized history." Okinawa's peace discourse is used to create historical consistency of a "peace identity," tracing as far back to the "Golden Age of Trade" in the 15th century, when "men from the tiny Kingdom of Ryukyu traveled without weapons, armed only with words, consideration and good nature, and maintained peaceful relations with peoples throughout East and Southeast Asia."[19] In one story, the Okinawa King Sho Tai allegedly uttered "Life is precious" (*Nuchi du takara*) as he surrendered Shuri Castle to the Meiji government in 1879. His words later came to be understood as a core statement of or the fundamental "Okinawa spirit" (*Okinawa no kokoro*) where "in face of oppression, militarism, and colonialism the Okinawan people struggled to preserve the ideal of the supremacy of life over death, peace over war, the sanshin (*samisen*) over the gun."[20] These romanticized histories of the Okinawan past not only show contemporary efforts to create an Okinawa identity that is distinct from the "militant" Japan, but also emphasizes Okinawa's place in the context of a globalized world where it continues to promote peace through the "Okinawa Spirit," or as Ota puts it, "devotion to peace and the absence of weapons."[21]

1995, THE YEAR OF FLUX

With the unveiling of the Corner Stone of Peace, the year 1995 marked an important transitional moment for both Okinawa and Japan. Beginning with the Great Hanshin earthquake in January, Japan faced one crisis after another. The Tokyo subway gas attack in March sent shocks throughout the country, challenging the perception of Japan as a safe and crime free country. In the midst of natural disaster and terrorist attacks, the LDP and JSP (Japan Socialist Party) coalition government in Tokyo was in fierce debate over the *fusen ketsugi*, also known as the "Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace on the Basis of Lessons Learned from History." The Socialist party had sought to make an official statement to formally apologize for Japan's wartime deeds, but the deeply diluted language of the resolution was criticized by many, which further discredited the JSP, having already made major ideological concessions in order to form its political alliance with the LDP. Dissatisfied by the Diet resolution, Murayama delivered a "personal" apology that acknowledged Japan's "colonial rule and aggression" and apologized for "causing tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries."[22] His statement, however, could not undo the damages done by the resolution; he was further criticized by conservatives for using the commemoration to express his private opinion.[23]

The inability of the Murayama cabinet to quickly respond to the earthquake, the deepening of the economic recession, and the political upheaval over the *fusen ketsugi* and Muyarama's personal apology, became the trigger to what scholars referred to as the "nationalist backlash."[24] As the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) assumed premiership in 1996, previous reconciliatory effort was soon eviscerated with prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's multiple visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, a place of controversy since the enshrinement of fourteen Class A war criminals.[25]

CORNER STONE OF PEACE IN OKINAWA, JAPAN (COURTESY OF *WIKIMEDIA COMMONS*)

While Okinawa was able to escape the disasters that imbued much of mainland Japan, 1995 was also a momentous year for Okinawa for multiple reasons. Not only was it meaningful that it marked the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII, but it also was a pivotal moment for the Ota government in its declaration of a new Okinawa identity as it entered the third phase of its struggle against Japanese and American subjectivity.[26]

A month after the nationwide August 15th commemoration of the end of the war, three U.S. servicemen associated with Camp Hansen abducted a twelve-year old Okinawan schoolgirl as she was walking home at night. They beat her, and took turns raping her before dumping her body on an abandoned beach. Painfully reminding the Okinawans of the rape and murder of the six-year old Yumiko-chan exactly forty years ago, the incident caused some of the largest island wide protests and demonstrations in Okinawa and on mainland Japan. Landowners, women's organizations, intellectuals, and students alike marched in protest, often demanding the removal of all U.S. bases in Okinawa.[27] The rape incident prompted fierce debates over the issue of "extraterritoriality," given Japanese authorities could not demand the U.S. Military to turn over the three suspects.[28] It took an entire twenty-five days for the US military to turn over the three suspects, after the Naha District Court formally charged the three men of rape.[29]

As a response to the rape, Governor Ota announced his refusal to "act as the proxy of the [Tokyo] government," which required him to perform "delegated functions" of governorship by overwriting land leases of local land owners who refused to renew their leases in protest of the military base. Such incidents had became a normal occurrence in Okinawa, and local mayors were often asked to act as proxy before it escalated to the prefectural government.[30] However, in 1995, three local mayors had refused to act as proxies themselves.[31] Ota's decision, while unexpected, demonstrated the renewed sense of Okinawa consciousness that rejected its traditional self-subjugation under the imposition of the central government. As Julia Humphry summarizes, "[Ota's] action highlighted the extent to which the "Okinawa issue" implicated the core of foundations of US-Japan security relations and the democratic principles of Japan's postwar system."[32] After Ota's repeated refusal to concede, Prime Minister Murayama filed a lawsuit against Ota, making him the first prefectural governor sued by the central government.[33]

A PROTEST REGARDIND THE US MILITARY BASE(COURTESY OF *WIKIMEDIA COMMONS*)

Humphry points to Murayama's lawsuit against Ota as an indication of the SDP's power limits in a LDP dominated coalition government and the extent of the dissolution of the post-war liberal ideals.[34] Ota's defeat in both the Fukuoka high court and the rejection of his Supreme court appeal in 1996 reduced any likelihood of successful negotiations with the central government. His prolonged opposition only caused Murayama's successor, Ryutaro Hashimoto, the leader of the LDP faction within the coalition government, to bypass Ota and act as proxy himself.

Meanwhile, Hashimoto attempted to strike a deal with Ota by proposing a five-billion "adjustment fund" and the establishment of an "Okinawa Policy Council" just for the discussion of Okinawa economic development and the issue of U.S. Military presence, provided that Ota back down and enforce the leases. Facing increasing pressure from Okinawa conservatives and right-wing factions within his administration, Ota eventually conceded to Hashimoto, fearing that an extended standstill with the central government would result in the revision of the Special Measures Law, which would permanently allow the prime minister authority to intervene in the land leasing process and act as proxy without going through legal proceedings.[35]

In light of the national turn towards conservatism, which emphasized on economic revival and a Japan that the youth can be proud of, earlier progressive voices for apology and reconciliation with past atrocities grew soft. Ota's concession to the proxy issue and his disintegrating relationship with the central government did not help him

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maintain public support. His stern opposition of the construction of an offshore helipad in replacement of the Futenma airbase[36] further cost him the support of the local business section. This lead to Ota's defeat in the gubernatorial election in 1998. The winner, Keiichi Inamine, promised to restore relations with the Tokyo government—thus resuming the money pipeline, frozen under Ota's disobedience—through his direct connection to the LD soft. Okinawa, whose economy still largely depends on mainland investment packages, was unable to stay aloof from changes in national politics.

MEDORUMA SHUN'S *DROPLETS* AND HIDDEN MEMORIES

It was in this atmosphere of intense political debates and civic movements of 1995 that Medoruma Shun began writing his Akutagawa prize-winning piece, *Droplets*. A second-generation war survivor, Medoruma[37] is not only renowned for his outspoken literary engagement with war memory, but also for his advent participation in public debates on political issues surrounding U.S. military bases.[38] Scholars of all disciplines have studied his works in depth. Perhaps the most comprehensive among them, is Kyle Ikeda's *Okinawa War Memory: Transgenerational trauma and the war fiction of Medoruma Shun*, which remains the only volume completely dedicated to Medoruma's works in the frame of war memory. Others situate Medoruma's literature in the context of Okinawa's unique history. Almost all point to *Droplets* as a turning point in Medoruma's writing career, which is of itself, a product of the turmoil of 1990s.[39]

Set in a village of northern Okinawa fifty years after the war, *Droplets* unfolds as an imaginary encounter between a Battle of Okinawa survivor, Tokusho, and dead soldiers whom Tokusho had known as a Blood and Iron youth. Portrayed as a lazy idler who avoids working in the fields, drinks excessively, and gambles away all his money, the protagonist's deeply buried recollection of the war slowly reveals itself during the time he was incapacitated due to a sudden swelling of his leg. As Tokusho recalls and confronts the suppressed memory of his abandonment of his friend Ishimane, the swelling subsides and he fully recovers from the illness. The story ends without a transformation, as Tokusho resumes his old habits of drinking and gambling, realizing that he would never be able to unleash the burden of his secret to anyone.

Droplets' criticism of the construction of a unified war memory is apparent, as witnessed by Tokusho's suppression of his own misdeeds, as it does not fit into Okinawa's publicized victimhood.[40] As demonstrated in *Droplets*, such suppression carries a large amount of guilt for the individual. Tokusho not only has to bear the burden of his own secret, he also reshapes his experience of the war in order to play into the "war hero" identity entrusted to him by others. "At first [Tokusho] spoke with blind intensity, but eventually he began to grasp what his audience wanted to hear and learned not to appear too glib."[41] While he enjoyed the children's praises and respect, Tokusho is aware of nature of his lies, for "as soon as he finished a lecture he always vowed to make it his last,"[42] and whenever "he [forgets] himself, he would suddenly look up at the intent faces of the children and feel ashamed or even frightened."[43]

Medoruma skillfully depicts Tokusho's conflicted identities as both victim and perpetrator in the manifestation of his strange disease. Incapacitated by the swollen leg, he is forced to come to terms with his own past by fulfilling what he had failed to do during the war—quenching the thirst of the soldiers by giving away his body. His initial fear and resentment towards the soldiers sucking his toe for water turned into a strange eroticism as he recognized Ishimane amongst them, "when the tip of [Ishimane's] tongue brushed across the pond on his toe, a tingling shot up from his foot through his thigh to the root that had handed in his groin. A small moan escaped from Tokusho's mouth, and his aging body emitted the scent of young grass."[44] In other words, the release of his hidden memo-

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ries, in the form of providing Ishimane what Tokusho had taken away from him (i.e. water) became both mental and physical liberation. However, Medoruma limits Tokusho's liberation in the boundary of his dreamy encounter with the dead soldiers, for his personal apology to Ishimine only lightened part of his burden. Tokusho was able to come to terms with the trauma of his own war crime, but in a culture that was not ready to accept his other identity as perpetrator, the secret is to remain hidden. His transformation, thus, is half finished.

Droplets raises several key issues as a fictional piece in its historical context. Jordi Serrano Munoz and Kyle Ikeda have already pointed out the dualism evident throughout the novel. Their analysis can be summarized to that between the public and private. On the outside, Tokusho is the honorable war survivor who represents Okinawa's victimhood subjected under Japan, but privately, he is the lazy and unreliable husband who makes profit off the war. Having said that, it is important to recognize the private identity of Tokusho, as Ikeda rightfully points out, is deeply connected to his war trauma that cannot be expressed in the public.[45] Medoruma engages such dualism to challenge not only the national, but also prefectural representation of history, suggesting the inadequate nature of such representations. He also emphasizes the undermining consequence it could have for not only the individuals who bears different memories, but perhaps also second and third generation war survivors like Medoruma himself, who can only know the partial truth.

One can interpret Medoruma's novella as a critique of the heightened identity politics through the construction of a shared war memory represented by the Corner Stone of Peace. Medoruma brings forth the issue of Okinawan war responsibilities, which is seldom mentioned in Okinawa's history books or oral history accounts. Instead of disputing historical factuality, he used Droplets as a means to fill in the gaps of public memory while suggesting a potentiality to bridge such gaps between the public and private by coming to terms with trauma, not merely as an individual, but as a collective community.[46]

CONCLUSION

Following Ota's defeat, Okinawa returned to LDP rule under Keiichi Inamine, whose election saw a return to the pre-1990 "construction state" with high economic dependency on the mainland. Like that of Hashimoto's, Inamine's election demonstrated a general consensus in Japan as well as in Okinawa for political and economical stability after the short experiment of the socialist party. Immediately after Inamine's election, Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo doubled the amount of "adjustment funds" promised earlier to Ota.[47] In exchange, Inamine was to resolve the Futenma relocation issue. Following the central government's announcement to appoint Nago as the host city for the 2000 G-8 summit in April 1999, the Inamine government began secretly revising the proposed displays at the new Yaeyama Peace Memorial Museum. Bypassing the supervisor of the original exhibition plans, the Inamine administration altered eleven captions out of twenty-seven for photos and diagrams, including some that depicted the forced mass suicide of civilians.[48] It was later revealed that Inamine had allegedly stated that these exhibitions should consider museum displays in other parts of Japan. He also declared that they "should not be too anti-Japanese" out of respect for the different visitors of the G-8 summit from all parts of Japan who make take offense at such displays.[49]

If Ota's effort to construct a new peace memorial was an Okinawa reaction to the political shifts in Japan, then the Inamine administration's alteration of museum displays can be seen as a direct counter to Ota's identity policies. The pendulum-swing-like battles on war memory as demonstrated by the Ota and Inamine administrations can

only be contributed to the politicized nature of war memory. By appealing to memory, both Ota and Inamine sought to instill a sense of shared identity. Whether that is Okinawa as a "Locus of Peace Promotion," or Okinawa as a prosperous prefecture of Japan, any form of public commemoration is meant to leave out those who do not share a common past. The conflict of identities thus arises from an inability to share one's own recollection of a communal past, as Medoruma characterizes in the villager Tokusho.

In his 1995 song, the Okinawan singer Tsukayama Hiroyoshi uses King Sho Tai's famous phrase, *Nuchi du takara* (Life is a Treasure), capturing the complex yet painful memory of the battle of Okinawa:

> Forget, I can't forget, the sorrows of the warring world
> Everytime I remember, my hair stands on end
> Truly, we must tell of the war
> Truly, life is a treasure
> To Survive the war, we hid in caves
> But the caves also became hells, the houses of devils
> Truly, we must tell of war
> Truly, life is a treasure[50]

In appealing for truth, Hiroyoshi resonates to Medoruma's presentation of Tokusho's magical reality in *Droplets*. The complex and layered nature of Okinawa identity proved that a publicly commemorated memory is certain to undermine the private, but the public and private need not to be in dualistic positions. By acknowledging conflicting memories and identities, the hidden memories of the individuals act as supplements to the gaps in public memories. In the case of the Battle of Okinawa, the richness of private memories not only paint a fuller and more vivid picture of Okinawa's past, but also show a true commitment to the "Okinawa Spirit" that upholds peace and life.

ENDNOTES

1. Japanese scholar Mark Mullins had called this revision "a radical shift in the educational system from one that seeks to nurture individual character to one aimed at cultivating individuals who will comply with the policies of the state." Quoted in Jeff Kingston, "Nationalism in the Abe Era," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14, issue 20, no. 4, Oct 2016, 3. accessed Feb 27, 2017. http://apjjf.org/2016/20/Kingston.html and Yamasaki (2006).
2. "Mass Suicides in Okinawa," *Asahi Shinbun Editorial*, December 27, 2007.
3. Ryukyu Shimpo, *Descent Into Hell: Civilian Memories of the Battle of Okinawa*, trans. Mark Ealey and Alastair McLauchlan (Portland, ME: Merwin Asia, 2014), xix.
4. Masahide Ota, "Ryukyu Shimpo, Ota Masahide, Mark Ealey and Alastair McLauchlan, Descent Into Hell: The Battle of Okinawa," December 1, 2014, accessed Dec 5, 2015, http://www.japanfocus.org/-Ota-Masahide/4230/article.html.
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6. Laura E. Hein, "Introduction: The Territory of Identity and Remembrance in Okinawa," *Critical Asian Studies*, 33:1, 34, DOI: 10.1080/14672710122729
7. Laura E. Hein, "Introduction: The Territory of Identity and Remembrance in Okinawa," 34-35.
8. See Aniya Masaaki, "Compulsory Mass Suicide, the Battle of Okinawa, and Japan's Textbook Controversy," and Kanata Satoshi, "Shattering Jewels: 110,000 Okinawans Protest Japanese State Censorship of Compulsory Group Suicides," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, no. 1, (Jan 8, 2008), accessed Feb 23, 2017, http://apjjf.org/-Aniya-Masaaki/2629/article.html, http://apjjf.org/-Kamata-Satoshi/2625/article.html.
9. Christy observes the disproportional educational expenditure in Okinawa in 1902(which is more than half of the prefecture's revenue as compare to Taiwan's six-thousandth) as a result from Okinawa's past ties with China. See Alan S. Christy, "The Making of Imperial Subjects in Okinawa," *Positions* 1, no. 3 (1993): 607–39.
10. See Akiko Takenaka, "Japanese Memories of the Asia-Pacific War: Analyzing the Revisionist Turn Post-1995," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14, issue 20, no.9, (Oct 2016), accessed Feb 15, 2017.
11. Keitoku Okamoto, "Okinawa ni okeru tenno-sei ron," quoted in Steve Rabson, "Okinawa Perspective on Japan's Imperial Institution," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, issue 2, no. 0, (Feb 1, 2008). accessed Feb 24, 2017. http://apjjf.org/-Steve-Rabson/2667/article.html
12. Quoted in Steve Rabson,"Okinawa Perspective on Japan's Imperial Institution," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 6, issue 2, no. 0, (Feb 1, 2008). accessed Feb 24, 2017. http://apjjf.org/-Steve-Rabson/2667/article.html
13. "Corner Stone of Peace," Wikimedia Commons, Oct 2006. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cornerstone_of_Peace.jpg. accessed Mar 17, 2017.
14. Gerald Figal, "Waging Peace on Okinawa," *Critical Asian Studies*, 33:1, (2001), 47.
15. Cho Isamu is often associated with the massacre of Chinese prisoners during hi time in Nanjing in December 1937 as an aide to Prince Yasuhito Asaka. See note 2 of Medoruma Shun, trans. Rum Nakamoto and Matthew Allen, "We Cannot Allow Governor Nakaima to Falsify the History of the Battle of Okinawa," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10, issue 15, no. 2, (April 2012).
16. The 1983 lawsuit against the Ministry of Education by historian Saburo Ienaga is representative of such contentions, but general dissatisfaction towards Japanese textbooks began to appear as reversion approached. See Rabson, "Okinawa

Perspective on Japan's Imperial Institution," and Julia Humphry, "Making History from Japan's Margins: Ota Masahide and Okinawa," PhD diss., Australian National university, Canberra, 2002, 61-62.
17. Masaie Ishihara, "War Experience of the People of Okinawa and the Development of the Okinawa Philosophy of Peace," Okinawa International University, no.1, (Dec 1995), 19.
18. Peace Memorial Park, accessed Mar 13, 2017. http://sp.heiwa-irei-okinawa.jp/stone/stone01.html.
19. Ishihara, 16.
20. Gavan McCormack and Satoko Norimatsu, "Gavan McCormack, Norimatsu Satoko, 'Ryukyu/Okinawa, From Disposal to Resistance,'" *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol 10, issue 38, no. 1, (September 17, 2012), accessed Mar 11, 2017, http://www.japanfocus.org/-satoko-norimatsu/3828/article.html.
21. Masahide Ota, Essays on Okinawa Problems, Yui Shuppan Co., (Okinawa, 2000), 274.
22. "Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama 'On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end' (15 August 1995)," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, accessed Mar 14, 2017. http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html
23. For an in depth analysis of Japanese political apologies, see Franziska Seraphim, *War Memory and Social Politics in Japan*, 1945-2005, Harvard University Press (Cambridge, MA and London 2006), 262-286.
24. Jeff Kingston, "Nationalism in the Abe Era," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14, issue 20, no. 4, Oct 2016, 3. accessed Feb 27, 2017. http://apjjf.org/2016/20/Kingston.html and Yamasaki (2006).
25. "Japan Premier Visits Shrine to War Dead," *The New York Times*, June 30, 1996. accessed Mar 10, 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/1996/07/30/world/japan-premier-visits-shrine-to-war-dead.html.
26. 1995 is considered a new phase of the Okinawa struggle due to the military rape incident and the subsequent Futenma base relocation controversy, which is yet to be resolved.
27. The resolution issued at the People's Rally on Oct 21, 1995, which over 85,000 attended, demanded the enforcement of military discipline, apology and compensation to the victim, immediate reversion of SOFA, and the reduction and realignment of U.S. bases in Okinawa, *Okinawa Peace Network of Los Angeles*, accessed Mar 11, 2017. http://www.uchinanchu.org/history/1995_rape_incident.htm
28. Under Article seventeen of the Status of Forces Agreement declared that "The custody of an accused member of the United States armed forces or the civilian component over whom Japan is to exercise jurisdiction shall, if he is in the hands of the United States, remain with the United States until he is charged by Japan." See "Agreement regarding the Status of United States Armed Forces in Japan," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed Mar 14, 2017. http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/ref/2.html
29. "Americans Charged In Rape in Okinawa," *The New York Times*, (Sep 29, 1995).
30. Julia Humphry, "Making History from Japan's Margins: Ota Masahide and Okinawa," PhD diss., Australian National university, Canberra, 2002, 240.
31. Ibid, 240.
32. Ibid, 242.
33. "Japan sues on U.S. Bases," *The New York Times*, Dec 8, 1995.
34. Humphry, 247.
35. Humphry, 264-268.
36. The issue of Futenma and anti-base movements are discussed in detail in the following chapter.
37. The author is often referred by his first name instead of last.
38. Kyle Ikeda, *Okinawa War memory: transgenerational trauma and the war fiction of Medoruma Shun*, Routledge, (Abingdon and New York, 2014), 1-3.
39. Divider Bhowmik, "Fractious Memories in Medoruma Shun's Tales of War," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 10, issue 38, no. 3, (Sep 2012), 3.
40. See Bhowmik, 8, and Jordi Serrano Muñoz, "Droplets, by Medoruma Shun: Personal Guilt as Collective Responsibility," *Stanford Journal of Asian Studies* 15, (Fall 2015), 115.
41. Medoruma Shun, "Droplets." in Southern Exposure: Modern Japanese Literature from Okinawa, ed. by Michael Molasky and Steve Rabson, (Honolulu, HI: U of Hawai'i, 2000), 271.
42. Ibid, 271.
43. Ibid, 271.
44. Ibid, 265.
45. Ikeda, 60.
46. Ikeda, 69.
47. Humphrey, 306.
48. Julia Yonetani, "Contested Memories: Struggles over War and Peace in Contemporary Okinawa," in *Japan and Okinawa: Structure and Subjectivity*, ed. Glenn D. Hook and Richard Siddle (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 196.
49. Ibid, 197.
50. Tsukayama Hiroyoshi, "Nuchi du Takara (Life is a Treasure)," cited in James E. Roberson, "Songs of War and Peace: Music and Memory in Okinawa," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 8, no. 31 (July 2010), apjjf.org/-James-E--Roberson/3394/article.pdf.

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