



# TOWER OF PEACE/ HAKKŌ ICHIU TOWER

Miyazaki, Japan

31.948017, 131.414708



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## Executive Summary

Built in 1940, the *Hakkō Ichiū Tower* in the Miyazaki prefecture was meant to embody the Japanese spirit. The stone reliefs of the Tower, as well as the carving '*Hakkō Ichiū*' represent a world under Japanese rule. As a result of the Second World War, the slogan was removed. In the 1960s, *Hakkō Ichiū* was to be re-added to the Tower, only now to be interpreted as Japan's goal for world peace. However, especially locals of Miyazaki see the return of the slogan as a return to the militarist past. So far, a decision whether or not the slogan should be removed or re-interpreted and used to teach Japan's violent history, has been achieved between the government and private actors.

## Introduction

Built in 1940, this monument located in Miyazaki prefecture's Peace Park is officially known as 'Heiwa no Tō' (平和の塔) - (Tower of Peace) - but also goes by 'Hakkō Ichiu no Tō' (八紘一宇の塔) - (The Eight Corners of the World Under One Roof Tower) - for the 'Hakkō Ichiu' four kanji slogan emblazoned on its façade. Although this term is said to have roots in Japanese mythology, it is more widely known outside of Japan as the justifying philosophy for imperial expansion into Asia. 364 of the monuments' stones are from then Japanese colonies and warzones.<sup>1</sup> Local activists have been working to uncover its history from local government attempts to reinterpret it as a monument to world peace, and have often been in disputes with the park management over explanatory plaques, calling for them to be more explicit of the Tower's history as a physical embodiment of Japan's imperial ambitions and past. In 2015, a Chinese man 'representing the people of Nanjing' came to Miyazaki demanding the return of three stones, claiming they were potential historical treasures and erasure of the slogan.

## Background

### *The 2600th Anniversary of the Imperial Establishment Celebrations of 1940*

In 1939, Japan was in the midst of the Sino-Japanese War. Anticipating extended conflict, Japan had cancelled both the 1940 Tokyo Olympics and World Expo, leaving only the 2600th anniversary of the Imperial establishment to unify the nation, boost morale and drive support for the war effort.<sup>2</sup>

The idea for a towering monument was put forward by then Miyazaki prefecture governor, Aikawa Katsuroku. Despite the war in China, tourism both within, as well as out of, the country was experiencing a boom period. With the 2600th anniversary drawing attention to Japan's founding mythology, Aikawa saw an opportunity to draw visitors to Miyazaki prefecture, which was one of three prefectures popularly considered in myths and legends to be the 'birthplace of the Japanese nation'. The Emperor Jimmu, whose conquest of the Eastern lands of Yamato and thus 'unification' of Japan was being celebrated in the 2600th, was said to have departed from his court at Miyazaki on his eastwards conquest. In the late 1930s, the people of Miyazaki had the lowest individual earnings in all of Japan. Building the monument in Miyazaki was a matter of restoring prefectural pride, investing in its future and putting its people, who Aikawa describes as 'not trying hard enough', to work, as well as fulfilling Miyazaki's national duty to celebrate Japan.<sup>3</sup>

Plans were reported in the Osaka Mainichi on October 2nd 1938, presenting Aikawa's plan 'To build a great tower, to symbolise the advancement of the nation's destiny and Japanese spirit.'<sup>4</sup> Such a plan would be difficult for Miyazaki - in Aikawa's own words 'a third rate prefecture' but for its mythology -

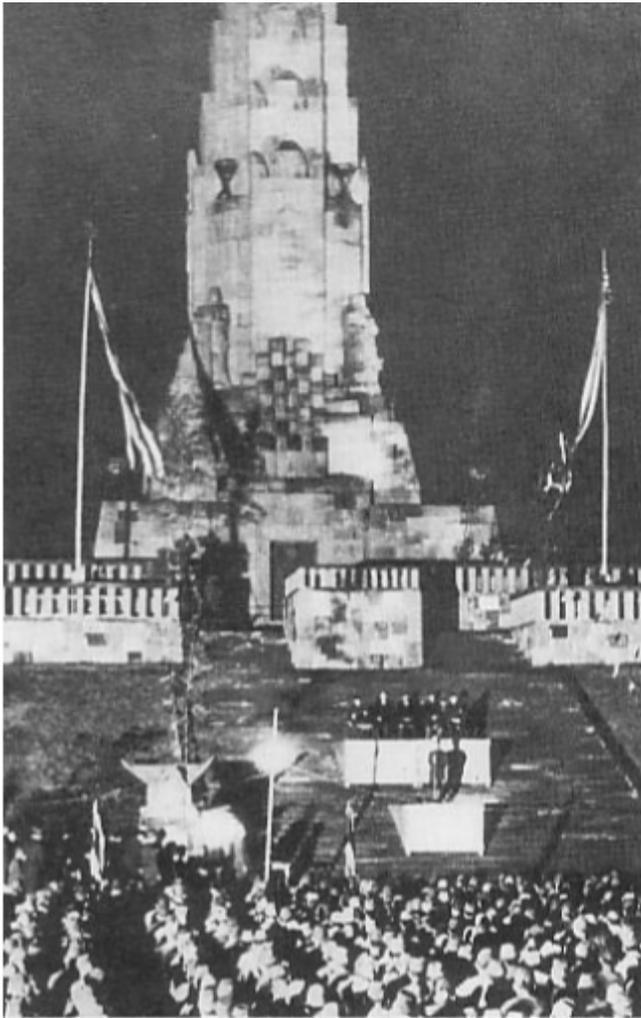
<sup>1</sup> Hideki Itō, "(戦争の痕跡 みやぎの戦後70年 4) 平和の塔 / 宮崎県" *Sahi Shimbun*, August 20, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Yoshimi Nagamine, Satoshi Tanaka, and Kazuo Ootsu, "昭和時代 第3部 戦前—戦中期 (1926—44年)," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 26, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Kazumasa Ikeda, "時の流れ: 聖火の起点 神話と重ね," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 5, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Translation by author, Walter Edwards, "宮崎市所在「八紘一宇の塔」の塔について," *Tenri University Journal*, vol 49, no 2 (1998): 143-155.

to achieve on its own, leading Aikawa to seek help via the newspapers to turn it into a national project.<sup>5</sup> The stones for the monument's foundation would be sourced from Japan, from Japanese abroad (e.g. the 6 from the US, Canada and Peru were from Japanese diaspora communities), and Japan's global 'friends' (e.g. the stones from Germany and Italy) with each stone stamped with the name of the community 'gifting' it.<sup>6</sup> The majority of the stones from abroad, however, would come from China (104 stones), Korea (118), Manchuria (80) and Taiwan (36), Japanese colonies, or those places under occupation or war zones.<sup>7</sup> Some were 'gifted' by colonial local governments, some by NPOs (e.g. the Association of Patriotic Women's Korea HQ) and some by trade, industry and business associations (e.g. the Manchuria Railway Employees).<sup>8</sup> Carvings that read 'Manchuria, Mukden, 'Association of Japanese Settlers in Nanking' or 'Henan Province Maeda Squad' can still be read on the stones today.<sup>9</sup> Six of the Manchurian stones and 58 Chinese stones came from expeditionary forces.



**Figure 1:** "Founding ceremony of Hakkō Ichiu monument, November 25 1940" Image by あばさ

Costing around 670000 yen and totalling 1789 stones in its foundation, the Tower was built near the supposed site of Emperor Jimmu's court. It was given the name '*Ametsuchi no Motohashira*' (The Central Pillar of Everything on Earth), to be commonly called the '*Hakkō dai*'. It was claimed to be a monument to the mythical Emperor Jimmu, to whom was attributed '*Hakkō Ichiu*', a slogan described as deriving from a line delivered by Emperor Jimmu in the *Nihon Shoki*, one of Japan's books of founding mythology, that was carved into the monument's front.

Tying mythology to nationalism, national duty and mission, the 2600th-anniversary celebrations placed the Showa Emperor at the centre of Japanese mythology, religion, history and values, in a vast nationwide show of propaganda and public participation that Professor Kenneth Ruoff of Portland University compares to the Nazi Nuremberg rallies at a time when the Sino-Japanese War was being referred to as a 'holy war'.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 144.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> HBD in Liaodong Peninsula, "宮崎「平和の塔」- 大連から運ばれた礎石も," *Goo.ne.jp*, August 29, 2016.

<sup>10</sup> Yoshimi Nagamine, Satoshi Tanaka, and Kazuo Ootsu, "昭和時代 第3部 戦前—戦中期 (1926—44年)," *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 26, 2013.

## The Design of the Tower

The Tower was designed by sculptor Hinago Jitsuzō (1893 - 1945) who was tasked by Aikawa to make a monument inspired specifically by Miyazaki prefecture. Aikawa went so far as to demand that Hinago spent two months in the prefecture before setting out on his project. Hinago agreed, eventually producing a design inspired by both overlapping ancient shields and a *go-hei*, a common *Shinto* (East-Asian religion) ritual tool that he saw at Miyazaki Shrine.<sup>11</sup>



**Figure 2:** “Flag of Hakkō Ichiu at a Japanese air base with Japanese air force members” Image by Carpkazu

The Tower is 36.4m tall. At the time it was built, it was the tallest stone construction in Japan. It has a guardian statue at each corner: a warrior, a fisher, a farmer and a merchant or artisan, each 4.5m tall.<sup>12</sup>

Inside the tower are eight stone reliefs. Two show the Eastern and Western hemispheres of the world surrounded by fighter planes and gunships with Japan at the centre of the Eastern. The Western focuses on South America with ships thought to be carrying Japanese immigrants at its corners.<sup>13</sup> One shows a goddess, thought to be *Amaterasu*, goddess of the sun, surrounded by three children representing Japan, China and Manchuria, hand-in-hand, with tanks and soldiers holding rifles in the background. Another depicts the Meiji Restoration. The other four show scenes from the *Nihon Shoki* e.g. Emperor Jimmu set out for Yamato from Miyazaki and the arrival of the *Tenson kōrin*, the heavenly on earth.<sup>14</sup>

‘*Hakkō Ichiū*’ was carved down the front in the calligraphy of *Yasuhito*, Prince Chichibu, the younger brother of the Shōwa Emperor. It was

thought to inspire the Japanese people to a ‘true Japanese spirit’ and aspire to an ambition of a greater good, which was a world under one Japanese roof. A 1940 *New York Times* special correspondent noted ‘The symbolism around Emperor Jimmu is romantic and poetic, but in presenting

<sup>11</sup> Yomiuri Shimbun, “宮崎の遺産・平和台公園「平和の塔」,” *Yomiuri Shimbun*, July 2, 2008.

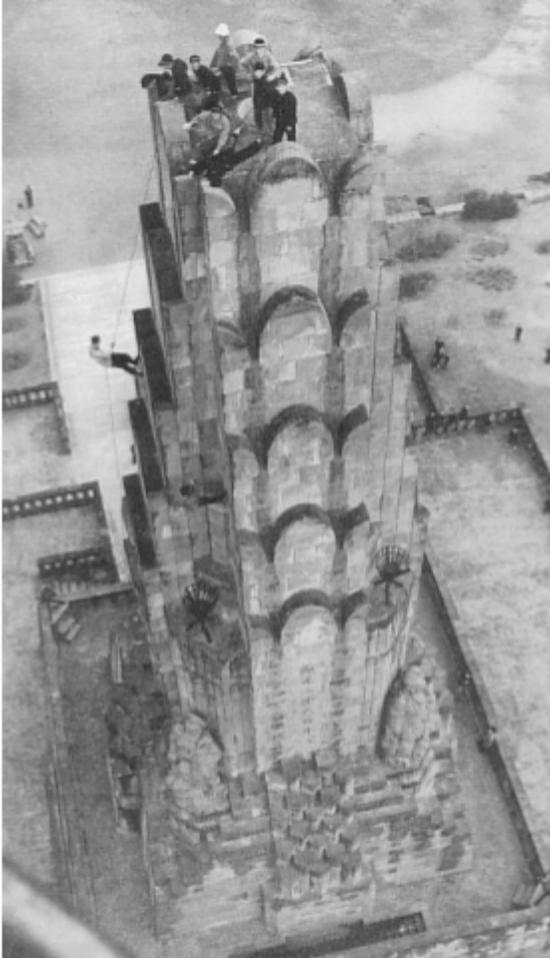
<sup>12</sup> Miyazaki Prefecture Local Government Town Planning Division pamphlet, “「平和の塔」内部公開”, *Miyazaki Prefecture Local Government Town Planning Division pamphlet*, October 23, 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Midori Ogasawara, “「日本民族の優位性」描く壁画 宮崎の「平和の塔」内部を Asahi Shimbun, August 16, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

the Emperor as absolute in authority, it invites the military to run rampant.<sup>15</sup>

### *Hakkō Ichiu and Imperial Ideology*



**Figure 4:** "The Tower being used for rock-climbing in the 50s." Image by あばさ

For all that the 2600th presented '*Hakkō Ichiu*' as an essential virtuous ideology for the Japanese to live by, it became seen as a slogan of empire, justifying the invasion and the forced assimilation of other nations under a Japanese rule. The claim that the word and ideology were ancient and attributable to Emperor Jimmu and so was inherently Japanese was spurious. Emperor Jimmu's line in the *Nihon Shoki*, a book of Japanese history, is broadly interpreted and means 'the world will be as one house (family)'. *Hakkō Ichiu* was invented in 1913 by Tanaka Chigaku of the *Kokuchukai Nichiren* Buddhist group and did not exist before the 20th century.<sup>16</sup> The *Nihon Shoki* was compiled in 720 AD, around 1400 years after the founding. The idea of '*Hakkō Ichiu*' as an ancient Japanese mythological virtue passed down from Emperor Jimmu was an artefact of 20th-century nationalistic myth-making. Alongside the idea of a Greater East Asia co-prosperity sphere, *Hakkō Ichiu* was at the heart of the National Shintoism driving Japan's divinely defined exceptionalism.

For this reason, *Hakkō Ichiu* became a taboo word after the Japanese surrender and was erased from many public spaces in Japan. In January 1946, GHQ, General Headquarters of the Allied Occupation of Japan, ordered the removal of the *Hakkō Ichiu* carving and the warrior guardian from the front of the Tower.

Renamed the *Tower of Peace*, it was allowed to fall into disrepair. In the fifties, its irrelevance was such that it was allowed to be used for rock-climbing practice (see Figure 4). However, it remained standing.

### History of the Contestation

#### *1964 Olympic Torch Relay and World Peace*

<sup>15</sup> Translation by author, Yoshimi Nagamine et al., "昭和時代 第3部 戦前—戦中期 (1926—44年)," *Yomiuri Shimbum*, October 26, 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Tadasan's Room, "雨の中," *Ameba*, August 20, 2017.

Things began to change with the arrival of the Olympics when by the earnest petitioning of Miyazaki prefecture local tourism division chief Iwakiri Shouta. It was decided that the second course of the Olympic Torch Relay would begin at the Tower of Peace site. Post-World War II Miyazaki prefecture is described as having been somewhat left behind by the high-speed development that happened elsewhere. Youth drain from the prefecture was a great concern. Bringing the torch relay to Miyazaki was thought to give the prefecture citizens something to get behind.<sup>17</sup> The Tower was described as representing a 'pre-WWII sentiment for world peace', with all citizens of the world living harmoniously together. It was thus presented as a fitting starting point for the Olympics, in which all the world would come together under the 'roof' of the games. Iwakiri is quoted as saying:

That Miyazaki is called the birthplace of Japan makes it the most fitting for the starting point of the Olympic torch relay. *Hakkō Ichiu* originally means 'The world as one family/house'. I wish the relay could have started under the carving.<sup>18</sup>

The Olympic Torch Relay was a success. In the following year, Iwakiri petitioned the prefectural governor to re-carve '*Hakkō Ichiu*' into the front of the Tower. He was granted permission to do so in two weeks.<sup>19</sup> The explanatory plaque put up in 1971 gave the reason for restoring the *Hakkō Ichiu* carving as: 'the opportunity arose to bring about the complete restoration of the Tower as a work of art.'<sup>20</sup> The statue of the warrior had already been reinstated in 1962 for reasons unknown - an article from 1970 remarks that it had happened 'whilst the prefectural citizens were absolutely unaware'.

As the Tower of Peace had been reinterpreted in the Olympic coverage as a monument to Japan's hope for world peace, '*Hakkō Ichiu*' too was reinterpreted in the same manner. Emperor Jimmu was presented as having a grand ideal for world peace that was hijacked and corrupted for the World War. The Tower became part of routes for anti-war protests.<sup>21</sup> The white doves gifted to the Peace Park in 1964 from Tokyo Hibiya in celebration of the arrival of the Olympics continued (and continues) to have their population maintained.<sup>22</sup>

In 1970, a delegation petitioned for the name of the Tower to be reverted back from the Tower of Peace to the *Hakkō Ichiu Tower*. This delegation was largely made up of worshippers from Miyazaki Shrine, but also included the names of many of the prefecture's elite in political and business circles, who claimed the following:

Hailing from the holy land that is the birthplace of the Japanese people's spirit, Miyazaki citizens are, of course, the pride of all Japanese. However, with the end of the war and the occupation of the fatherland, we have been made spineless and feeble, with Japan's original traditional spirit utterly denied and erased. The *Hakkō Tower* has been renamed the Peace Tower, a flavourless name to pander to the Allied Forces, and this is most lamentable. We beg with this petition to consider the Ametsuchi no Motohashira's radiant history and traditions, and to restore its name as

<sup>17</sup> Ikeda, Kazumasa, "時の流れ:聖火の起点 神話と重ね", *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 5, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "唐草模様が示す礎石の「略奪」 「平和の塔」 建立60周年", *Asahi Shimbun*, January 21, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Hideki Itō, "(戦争の痕跡 みやぎの戦後70年 4) 平和の塔 / 宮崎県", *Asahi Shimbun*, August 20, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> Unknown member of Miyazaki anti-Vietnam War group, "神話の国の聖なる話"「週刊アンボ」3, no. December 15 (1969) quoted in Yuichi Yoshikawa, "宮崎市デモコース", 吉川勇一の個人ホームページ.

<sup>22</sup> Kengo Umeno, "塔舞う白バト 五輪に起源", *Yomiuri Shimbun*, January 20, 2020.

the Hakkō Tower, as worthy of the fatherland Hyuga,<sup>23</sup> the land of myths and legends.<sup>24</sup>

Their reasoning was that ‘it should be restored according to the spirit in which it was built.’<sup>25</sup> They were unsuccessful on the back of other Miyazaki citizen complaints, who were wary of what was perceived as a potential creeping return to militarism nationwide. It had been announced recently that mythology would be making a return to textbooks and that, from the following spring, Emperor Jimmu would be taught in classroom’s again, raising criticisms such as, ‘It’s the return of militarism!’<sup>26</sup> Within a week, the Miyazaki Council of Trade Unions had presented a counter-petition and another fifteen groups followed, including youth groups and the anti-Vietnam War group. Their opinions ranged from ‘take down the Hakkō Ichiu letters’ to ‘replace the four guardians with a goddess of peace.’<sup>27</sup> It might be worth noting that it was the politically left-leaning trade unions that led the opposition against a delegation backed by the Miyazaki Shrine, which is associated strongly with the right-wing.

After this failed petition and success of the counter, there were no further records of subsequent attempts in the 70s and 80s.

### *1990s Kangaerukai Investigations*

On 26th April 1992, the first symposium was held in Miyazaki Town Hall by the *Heiwa no Tō' no Shijitsu wo Kangaerukai*, the Association to Examine the Historical Truth of the Peace Tower. It was the brainchild of Tokyo animation director Arihara Seiji, who had discovered the Tower on a research visit to Miyazaki prefecture and was ‘shocked to see the iconic phrase that had urged Japan to war in a major tourist spot.’<sup>28</sup>

*The Kangaerukai* came together initially out of Arihara’s film work connections in Miyazaki City, but soon gathered the interest of local citizens. The aim was to turn the Tower into a *hanmen kyoushi*, a negative example,<sup>29</sup> by which later generations could learn of Japan’s past mistakes, and to ensure it would be maintained that way. One of the opinions raised at the symposium was the following: ‘As our testimony to aggressive war, our wrong of the past, and so that we do not repeat those mistakes, having consolidated such meaning, the Tower should be left as it is.’<sup>30</sup>

The Kangaerukai would do this in two ways: 1) volunteers would act as educators, holding an annual ‘Watching’ day on Japan’s End of War Day on August 15th, and having obtained permission to enter the Tower from the local government to take visitors on tours explaining the Tower’s history; 2) They would investigate the Tower’s history and publish their findings in their ‘The Testimony of the Stones’ books.

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<sup>23</sup> Hyuga: Miyazaki prefecture’s historical name is Hyuga Province.

<sup>24</sup> Satomi Tada, “神々が生き返った,” *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 16, 1970.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, “「八紘一字」の塔を考えるシンポ 後世への反面教師 *Asahi Shimbun*, April 27, 1992.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

Through the *Kangaerukai*'s efforts, in 1994 their investigations uncovered the list of the stone donors, and it emerged that one of the foundation stones had been taken from the old Shanghai Government Administration Building as a spoil of war. Members of the group visited Shanghai to confirm that the distinctive arabesque pattern on the granite Tower stone was a 'perfect match',<sup>31</sup> to that on the building (now Shanghai University of Sport) still. Part of the building was destroyed in 1937 in the war before it was made into a base for the Japanese army, and the stone's pattern matched that of the entrance archway, which had been partially destroyed in the fighting. The archway was repaired in 1959 according to blueprints of its original design. One of the signs about the Tower's origins, at this time still the panel from 1971, read that the stones for the Tower's foundations had come from 'countries that were friends of Japan's.'<sup>32</sup> The donor label carved on this particular stone was that of a Japanese army unit (「中支志賀中山隊」),<sup>33</sup> claiming it had come from 'Near Shanghai Government Office.'<sup>34</sup>

A representative of the university commented that 'a Chinese person would never have sent this stone. There's no doubt that it must have been stolen by the Japanese army.'<sup>35</sup> Sugio Tatsuya, then leader of the *Kangaerukai* said in response to the findings, 'It's a shame that the likelihood that the stone was plunder has increased, but it is important to tell this and let this be known to others.'

On the same 1994 trip to China, the *Kangaerukai* members also visited Nanjing and Qingshuihe County. Although the roots of the stones could not be confirmed, local experts suggested that the patterns and carvings indicated a Nanjing stone to have come from either the grave or house cornerstone of a Ming dynasty nobility, and a Qingshuihe stone from a grave at a temple for Imperial examinees. By 1997, their investigations had uncovered a stone sent by an army unit from the Great Wall of China. 1998 expanded on the Nanjing stone, drawing from the *qilin* (kirin in Japanese) carved onto it that it was indeed from a Ming dynasty Imperial palace built at the start of the 15th century and unlikely to have been a 'gift'. It was described by a local museum curator, Wang Xingping of Nanjing Municipal Museum,<sup>36</sup> who was shown a photograph, as 'undoubtedly of great cultural value.'<sup>37</sup> Another stone was also identified as having come from the steps of the mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen, provisional first president of the Republic of China.<sup>38</sup>

On invitation by the *Kangaerukai*, Yu Yanjun, the vice-curator of the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression of Beijing visited the Tower in 1993. On seeing the stones in the Tower foundation, she remarked, 'The Tower is evidence of the entire Asia invasion project ... it is hard to believe it is called the 'Tower of Peace' and added for the Great Wall stone, 'The Great Wall is the symbol of the people of China. It makes my heart ache.'<sup>39</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Asahi Shimbun, "模様・大ききピタリ一致 宮崎「平和の塔」礎石と上海の建物のAsahi Shimbun, July 27, 1994.

<sup>32</sup> Translation by author, Asahi Shimbun, "平和を考える 53回目の終戦記念日 / 宮崎," Asahi Shimbun, August 16, 1998.

<sup>33</sup> Asahi Shimbun, "宮崎・平和の塔の礎石、旧上海政府庁舎から奪ったもの," Asahi Shimbun, June 11, 1994.

<sup>34</sup> Asahi Shimbun, "模様・大ききピタリ一致 宮崎「平和の塔」礎石と上海の建物のAsahi Shimbun, July 27, 1994.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Masashiro Hashida, "礎石「略奪」探る動き 拡大「平和の塔」60周年 Asahi Shimbun, January 19, 2000.

<sup>37</sup> Translation by author, Asahi Shimbun, "南京の宮殿の石使用 宮崎「平和の塔」また「傷 Asahi Shimbun, September 6, 1998.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Translation by author, Asahi Shimbun, "宮崎市の「八紘一字」を視察 中国人民抗日戦争記念館長ら Asahi Shimbun, June 3, 1997.

These findings made their way into a documentary made by TV Miyazaki in 1999 of the same title as the *Kangaerukai*'s books 'The Testimony of the Stones', which was nominated for the FNS Documentary Awards. The documentary drew upon the *Kangaerukai*'s work and letters that had been found from Governor Aikawa to then War Minister Itagaki Seishiro asking for help procuring stones for the monument. Letters were then sent out to units in Manchuria and China with the following orders: 'For the stone donations, the standard number each unit should seek to send is two. One should come from the area around the unit or troop's commanding base, the other should come from a frontline if possible.' 'With regards to the frontline, it should be one best representing the far reach of the Imperial authority. These stones should be sent by the end of November this year at the latest.'<sup>40</sup>

The *Kangaerukai* also conducted visits to Korea and Taiwan. Around 2012, they changed their association name to *Hakkō Ichiu no Tō wo Kangaerukai*, The Association for Examining the Historical Truth of the *Hakkō Ichiu* Tower. The rationale is unknown, but it could be a response to increasing difficulty to call the Tower a 'Tower of Peace' with their research.

### *Disputes with Local Government over explanatory plaques*

On the back of the *Kangaerukai*'s first findings with the Shanghai stone, the town planning division of Miyazaki prefecture local government, who was responsible for maintaining and managing the Peace Park and the Tower, responded in 1994:

The Tower has been accepted as a symbol of peace by many of the prefecture's citizens. If the results of the investigation turn out to be true, it would lead to a complicated state of feelings, but at present, we are not thinking of taking any particular steps in response.<sup>41</sup>

In March 1996,<sup>42</sup> the *Kangaerukai* launched their first petition to the local government to change the explanatory signs, plaques and pamphlets about the Tower. Found not just at the park, but at the local airport, train station and in the town, some of the explanations used phrases like the following: 'It was built with stones gifted,<sup>43</sup> from all over the world', 'the letters of '*Hakkō Ichiu*' inscribed in the front have at their heart a wish<sup>44</sup> for peace.'<sup>45</sup> The *Kangaerukai* argued that these were ignoring the Japanese Army's aggressive war activities. The local government agreed that there were some expressions that were not appropriate,<sup>46</sup> and said they would consider revision. In August 1996, it was announced that the signs across the prefecture would be changed. Passages saying '*Hakkō*

<sup>40</sup> Translation by author. FujiTV PR "フジテレビ広報部" "第8回FNSドキュメンタリー大賞ノミネート作品『石の証言 ~平和の塔の真実~』," *Fuji Television Network*, June 28, 1999.

<sup>41</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "宮崎・平和の塔の礎石、旧上海政府庁舎から奪ったもの," *Asahi Shimbun*, June 11, 1994.

<sup>42</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "宮崎市の「平和の塔」案内板に市民反発 市は表記変更検討," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 11, 1996.

<sup>43</sup> Translation note Ghosh (2020): 贈る (*okuru*) is a verb very specifically meaning giving something as a gift of well-meaning.

<sup>44</sup> Translation note Ghosh (2020): lit. 'have a wish for peace packed into them'.

<sup>45</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "宮崎市の「平和の塔」案内板に市民反発 市は表記変更検討," *Asahi Shimbun*, March 11, 1996.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

*Ichiu* means 'We are one world',<sup>47</sup> would be erased from autumn with stickers (to be replaced with new signs at a later date), and the *Kangaerukai* evaluated this as a 'first step to a correct understanding of history.'<sup>48</sup> In terms of contextualising explanations e.g. about '*Hakkō Ichiu*' or the meaning of the Tower, rather than erasing them, however, the local government said: 'Unlike during the war, '*Hakkō Ichiu*' now means 'all the world as one', and we're sure that the peoples of our neighbouring countries will be able to understand this (without additional explanation).'<sup>49</sup>

In January 1997 new signs were put up that were, in the words of the tourism division of the local government, 'Objective and appropriate.'<sup>50</sup> Explanations relating to sourcing the stones were erased, leaving only descriptions of the Tower. An example would be this sign from the airport, where 'The foundation stones were gathered from all across Japan, and sent from the Japanese residents from many places around the world', was erased to leave only 'In the centre of the park is the 37 metres tall 'Tower of Peace.'<sup>51</sup>

It was, however, noted also in 1997 that the local government's approach seemed superficial. The end of the millennium saw Miyazaki take a growing interest in 'internationalisation'. In 1997 Miyazaki had started lobbying to host the 2000 G8 Summit. Tourism and PR links had been made with Seoul. The university was accepting an increasing number of international students from China and Korea. Choi Intag, then lecturer at Miyazaki Public University, which had a foreign exchange program, however, had noted that the Tower of Peace was skipped out of the tour route that foreign students were taken on when introduced to the prefecture.<sup>52</sup> He comments:

It's true that, on the one hand, by having regular international flights and drawing more tourists from Asia, Miyazaki is aiming to internationalise. However, on the other hand, issues like the 'Tower of Peace' at the Prefectural Peace Park remain unresolved. Before they talk about internationalisation, maybe there's something they ought to be paying more attention to right at their own feet.<sup>53</sup>

To this, the prefectural international relations division commented: 'Our work is chiefly in international relations, so we do not touch upon this issue (of the Tower). The management of the park is the town planning division's responsibility.'<sup>54</sup> The town planning division is noted to have said: 'We understand that there are many opinions (concerning the Tower), but we have no intention of making any revisions.'<sup>55</sup>

*Kangaerukai* member Saita Keiichiro writes in the *Asahi* (Japanese newspaper), that the prefecture's

<sup>47</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "市民の指摘で削除します 宮崎市・平和の塔観光案内板の表記" *Asahi Shimbun*, August 15, 1996.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Translation by author, Keiichiro Saita, "史実を語る「平和の塔」" *Asahi Shimbun*, July 26, 1997.

<sup>50</sup> Translation by author, *Asahi Shimbun*, "「平和の塔」石の由来削除 宮崎市内、観光案内板取り換え" *Asahi Shimbun*, January 17, 1997.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, "真の国際化(おカネどう使いますか 97県予算 ②)" *Asahi Shimbun*, February 28, 1997.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

response regarding revision over erasure in 1997 was quite simply: 'There is no need for revision.'<sup>56</sup>

In March 2000, the *Kangaerukai* put in a second petition regarding signage, demanding revision and adding a request to restore a sign that was taken down in 1946, which read: 'With this alliance with Germany and Italy ... we will make manifest this grand ideal of *'Hakkō Ichiū'*.'<sup>57</sup> A representative of the group said this was to: 'By clearly leaving evidence of how wrong pre-war Japan was, we want to make this into a place of historical education that allows contemplation and regret over aggressive warfare.'<sup>58</sup> This petition, however, was ignored with no sign of response a year later.

This seems to have been the pattern ever since of petitions followed by no action. An article from 2015 suggests a return to previous signage, as it quotes the presence of a sign reading that the foundation stones were 'donated by friendly nations.'<sup>59</sup> The pamphlet from 2019 from Miyazaki prefecture's local government website describes the Tower in the following:

This monument was built within the historical context of Japan heading into war, but it is now, as a park space, an important historical heritage site that is much-loved by the prefecture's citizens.<sup>60</sup>

The reliefs inside that aren't related to mythology have no description other than that they are 'reflecting the times at which the Tower was built.'<sup>61</sup>

### *The Community Museum of Nanjing Civil Resistance Against the Japanese Visit (2015)*

On October 27, 2015, Wu Xianbin, the founder and chief curator of the Community Museum of Nanjing Civil Resistance Against the Japanese, delivered a written request to the governor of Miyazaki, Kawano Shunji, for the return of 3 stones from the Tower's foundation to China. The stones in question were the Ming dynasty *Nanjing palace qilin carving stone*, a stone carved with the location label, and the stone from the mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen labelled 'Nanjing Central Mausoleum.'<sup>62</sup> All three were therefore stones with clear origins in Nanjing. Their donor labels read 'Association of Japanese Settlers in Nanjing' Sina Expeditionary Force, and 'Inner Sina Expeditionary Force', respectively.<sup>63</sup>

Wu Xianbin founded his museum in 2006, having previously worked at the Nanjing Civil Resistance Against Japan Movement, with the aim of filling what he saw as a gap of community participation in

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Translation by author, Asahi Shimbun, "'議論が必要(「聖戦とは」憲法54年大碑の波紋 3)', *Asahi Shimbun*, May 3, 2001.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Translation by author, Hideki Itō, "(戦争の痕跡 みやぎの戦後70年 4) 平和の塔 / 宮崎県', *Asahi Shimbun*, August 20, 2015.

<sup>60</sup> Translation by author, *Miyazaki LocalGovPamphlet*, 2019.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Translation by author, Hideki Itō, "中国の博物館長「南京の石、返還して」 宮崎「平和の塔」県は応じぬ意向', *Asahi Shimbun*, October 28, 2015.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

research into the Nanjing Massacre. Until his museum, all research, he says,<sup>64</sup> had been directed and carried out by the government. He claimed with his request for the stones to be representing 'the citizens of Nanjing', travelling with a delegation called 'The Representatives of Nanjing Citizens 2015 Journey for Peace.'<sup>65</sup>

His request was headed: 'Please return the stones from Nanjing.'<sup>66</sup> He noted that the stones were 'Sent by soldiers as plunder from the midsts of war.'<sup>67</sup>

Wu Xianbin also added that *Hakkō Ichiu* was a slogan of war and invasion and demanded that the letters be erased from the Tower. Moriyama Fukuichi, head of the town planning division responsible for the park, is quoted with the following response:

*Hakkō Ichiu* is an ideology that fervently wishes for world peace. It has nothing to do with war. Also, there are no documents detailing the specific circumstances of the stones donations.<sup>6869</sup>

After the meeting, Morikawa added the following to the Sankei:

Having been presented with the opinions of the Chinese side, we dauntlessly saw through the position of the prefecture in response. Should they return to Japan, we will be prepared to persuade them to understand the prefecture's stance.<sup>70</sup>

There has been no reported follow-up visit since. In 2016, when the Chinese Ambassador to Japan Cheng Yonghua visited Miyazaki prefecture and met with Governor Kawano as part of a Kyushu tour, he was questioned on the 2015 incident and responded:

I am not aware of this particular case ... With a correct awareness concerning past matters, and by honouring the principles laid down since the Joint Communique of 1972, let us make history our mirror<sup>71</sup> and proceed into the future. So long as we honour and adhere to those principles, our relationship will be able to develop healthily and stably.<sup>72</sup>

In November 2015, however, Wu Xianbin opened a photography exhibition at his museum in collaboration with the Miyazaki branch of the *Japan-China Friendship Association*. It was titled 'The Testimony of the Stones - The Tower of Fake Peace'. In relation to his visit, Wu Xianbin was satisfied that it had gained national attention, and commented, 'It left an impression, not just on Miyazaki prefecture, but on the whole of Japan, and drew the attention of many Japanese citizens to the history

<sup>64</sup> 人民網日本語版, "盧溝橋事件77周年 「南京民間抗日戦争博物館」館長の話," 人民網日本語版, July 17, 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Translation by author, 人民網日本語版, "宮崎県の平和の塔に使われた南京産の石 県知事「返還すべき」," 人民網日本語版, December 3, 2015.

<sup>66</sup> Translation by author, Hideki Itō, "中国の博物館長「南京の石、返還して」 宮崎「平和の塔」県は応じぬ意向," *Shimbun*, October 28, 2015.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Translation: 寄贈 (kizou) is a term specifically meaning 'donation, presentation, gift'.

<sup>69</sup> Masakazu Nakamura, "「八紘一字を削れ」「何度でも来る」...平和の塔をめぐる、宮崎に仕掛けられた根拠なき歴史戦," 産経 "West, October 28, 2015.

<sup>70</sup> Translation by author, Masakazu Nakamura, "「八紘一字を削れ」「何度でも来る」...平和の塔をめぐる、宮崎に仕掛けられた根拠なき歴史戦," 産経 "West, October 28, 2015.

<sup>71</sup> 'Make a mirror of history' is a phrase common to both Japan and China relating to history. Originating in China, it inspired the early history books in Japan (10th century) to be called 'Kagamimono' i.e. 'Mirror Texts'.

<sup>72</sup> Translation by author, Hideki Itō, "中国の駐日大使、知事訪問や視察 「観光通じ交流期待」," *sahi Shimbun*, November 18, 2016.

of the Tower of Peace's construction.<sup>73</sup>

The 2015 article from the People Daily Japanese version adds that the younger brother of the leader of Japan-China Friendship Association, who is a member of Miyazaki public assembly representing the Communist Party, telephoned Governor Kawano to ask him personally whether he thought the stones should be returned.<sup>74</sup> According to the article, Kawano said they should be returned, but gave no indication of timeframe.

This, however, does not match up to Governor Kawano's statement at a press conference on October 19th, quoted in the Sankei, when he said the following:

The stones were gathered from the nations Japan had relationships with at the time of construction, but there is no documented evidence that they were taken as spoils of war. We would like to firmly keep the Tower of Peace and the Park in their present state in which they are much-loved by many people.<sup>75</sup>

The stones have remained in the foundation of the Tower.

## Decision-Making Processes

With regards to historically accurate and appropriate signage, the decision-making is top-down and local citizens are aware of this, hence their petitions to the prefectural governor (publicly-elected), the town planning division or the forests division, i.e. whichever department responsible for the Peace Park and the Tower has been handed to. The actual decision-making, however, seems to stop here. 1997 and 2000 saw an assurance that signs would be changed but nothing, as of December 2020, is openly written about the source of the Tower's stones on any of Miyazaki prefecture's visitor websites. The Peace Park website continues to depict a cartoon version of the Tower next to a cheerful rainbow-coloured 'Come and play in the park!' sign without any further explanation.<sup>76</sup> A decision has in effect been made to not make a decision.

The *Kangaerukai* volunteers still run annual 'Watching' events and engage with other peace activists in Miyazaki prefecture, such as WeLove9 Association, Miyazaki prefecture's pro-Article 9 society<sup>77</sup>, which features *Kangaerukai* collaboration events on their website, and the Japan-China Friendship Association efforts to bring to better attention the history of Chinese forced labourers, brought to Miyazaki prefecture to work for Mitsubishi Metalworks during the war.<sup>78</sup> These networks of local activists would suggest a requirement for a general consensus approach in decisions regarding the meaning of the Tower.

<sup>73</sup> Translation by author, People Daily Japanese Version, "宮崎県の平和の塔に使われた南京産の石 県知事「返還すべき」,"人民網日本語版, December 3, 2015.

<sup>74</sup> Translation: 寄贈 (kizou) is a term specifically meaning 'donation, presentation, gift'.

<sup>75</sup> Translation by author, Masakazu Nakamura, "「八紘一宇を削れ」「何度でも来る」...平和の塔をめぐる、宮崎に仕掛けられた根拠なき歴史戦," 産経 West, October 28, 2015.

<sup>76</sup> Heiwadai Park, "平和台公園", accessed 15 December 2020.

<sup>77</sup> Article 9: Article in Japanese constitution that is commonly interpreted to mean that Japan can never engage in offensive warfare again.

<sup>78</sup> WeLove9, "ウォッチング「平和の塔」(八紘一宇の塔)," WeLove9, September 13, 2010.

One theme that has been constant in decision-making is Miyazaki prefecture's local economy and wish to appeal to tourists. The Aiwa Miyazaki Golf Resort and Hotel's description of the *Peace Park* having 'The Tower of Peace from which you can look out over Miyazaki City, and the Haniwa Garden which exudes an atmosphere of ancientness' is an example of what the local tourism might wish to appeal to visitors, that being Miyazaki's association with 'ancient' mythology and the view from the Tower, rather than the Tower itself.<sup>79</sup> Miyazaki Shrine calls the Tower on its website '*Ametsuchi no Motohashira*', as it was called in 1940, and describes its construction in their list of local attractions as, 'With stones having been gathered from all over the world, (the construction) was a great task to which many holy servants<sup>80</sup> applied themselves.'<sup>81</sup>

It might be worth considering the rurality of Miyazaki prefecture. Much of the news concerning the Tower has been limited to local or 'Western' newspapers at best. Despite Miyazaki's claim to being the land of Japan's mythological origins, its remoteness from the centres of power means news rarely travels beyond it to be contested at a national level or considered relevant to the rest of the nation.

Dynamics to consider in decision-making include: the lack of community power in decision-making; Japanese bureaucratic processes; prefectural income and international tourism; mythology and internal tourism; Japanese prefectural; town vs country.

## Summary and Conclusions

At the heart of this case, time and time again, there is one key question: that of erasure vs revision. GHQ erased the first *Hakkō Ichiu* carving and some original signage, allowing the *Hakkō Ichiu* meaning and the Tower to be reinterpreted when reinstated in a way that enabled evasion of war guilt and historical responsibility. The initial response of the local government was to erase mention of the Tower's stones coming from abroad altogether. This removed any opportunity to learn of the Tower's history from a simple visit and made it seem as if there was no issue at all. Wu Xianbin demanded the *Hakkō Ichiu* carving to be removed and the Tower to be destroyed, but the *Kangaerukai* wanted it to remain, with revised explanations, as a testament to wrong-doing that Japan could not deny and would have to learn by.

The issue of signage remains unresolved. The *Kangaerukai's* activities to turn the Tower into an educational tool for teaching Japan's Imperial past may have enabled the Tower to avoid challenges so far, but the trouble is the localness by which this education takes place. Their primary education events of the 'Watching' rely on face-to-face interactions at the monument itself. Although this allows the direct local community to accrue meaning to the Tower in the manner the *Kangaerukai* wishes, this understanding then fails to travel beyond Miyazaki or abroad. The rise of the internet and social media (particularly Japan's internet right-wing) is likely to be a challenge to their particular vision of Tower, as its image goes beyond the reach of their careful curation. Those abroad will hold

<sup>79</sup> Translation by author, Aiwa Resort, "平和台公園," *Aiwa Resort*, accessed 16 December 2020.

<sup>80</sup> Translation note: 奉仕者 is an odd word to translate. It is somewhere between servant, disciple and lowly person.

<sup>81</sup> Translation by author, Miyazaki Shrine, "宮崎神宮の由来," *Miyazaki Shrine*, accessed December 17, 2020.

their own communications and debates about the Tower without the *Kangaerukai* and attach their own meanings to it.

## Research Contributed by Cecilia M. Ghosh

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## About Contested Histories

In recent years, there have been many contestations over memorials, street names, and other physical representations of historical legacies in public spaces. These contestations often reflect deeper societal tensions whether triggered by political transitions, demographic shifts, inter-ethnic strife, or a growing awareness of unaddressed historical injustices.

The Contested Histories project is a multi-year initiative designed to identify principles, processes, and best practices for addressing these contestations at the community or municipal level and in the classroom. Conflicts about history, heritage, and memory are a global phenomenon, and, although each case is different, comparative cases can indicate lessons learned and reflect best practices.

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The Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation (IHJR) is a research centre at EuroClio - European Association for History Educators in The Hague, The Netherlands. The IHJR works with educational and public policy institutions to organise and sponsor historical discourse in pursuit of acknowledgement and the resolution of historical disputes in divided communities and societies.

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