Aim of this research paper

This research paper aims to focus on the political factor and its role in forming the identity of the Okinawa's people in 1945 and aftermath.

The political factor and its role in forming the identity of the Okinawa's people in 1945 and aftermath

Ahmed Amr Ismail
Preliminary for Internship & PR II – Feb 21, 2012

The Battle of Okinawa in 1945

Okinawa was the only Japanese territory on which a ground battle was fought between American and Japanese forces during World War II. The battle took place from 26 March to 23 June 1945, and it brought the loss of more than 200,000 lives, including civilians and military personnel. The damage caused was immense, affecting both the environment and the economy. The battle left the island devastated, and the civilians suffered greatly. The American military strategy was to conquer the island and install a military government to end the war. Okinawa became an important military base for the United States.

Outline

• Introduction
• The research question
• Aim of this research paper
• The Battle of Okinawa in 1945
• Himeyuri students
• Kumejima Massacres
• Issue of the U.S. Military Basis
• School girl rape accident of 1995
• Peace Building in Okinawa
• Conclusion

Introduction

The diversity of cultures in the community of Okinawa Island (which contains some other islands beside the main one) through different historical periods, like the Chinese culture which influenced this Island during the Ryukyu Kingdom of the fourteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and during Meiji period (1868-1912) the Japanese Government, through military incursions officially annexed the kingdom and renamed it Ryukyu Han, later it's become Okinawa Prefecture of Japan in 1879. Also the results of the WWII after the battle of Okinawa, which resulted in the victory of U.S. forces and their occupation of this island for 27 years (1945-1972), when the Island was re-officially to Japan while keeping the number of U.S. military bases.

The Research Question

What are the factors that influenced the formulation of the Okinawan people Identity politically during 1945 and aftermath?

Peace Building in Okinawa

The Battle of Okinawa in 1945

Okinawa was the only Japanese territory on which a ground battle was fought between American and Japanese forces during World War II. The battle took place from 26 March to 23 June 1945, and it brought the loss of more than 200,000 lives, including civilians and military personnel. The damage caused was immense, affecting both the environment and the economy. The battle left the island devastated, and the civilians suffered greatly. The American military strategy was to conquer the island and install a military government to end the war. Okinawa became an important military base for the United States.
Peace Building in Okinawa

Issue of the U.S. Military Basis

Himeyuri students

The story of the group of female high school students and teachers formed into a nursing unit for the Japanese Army during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945, who had been killed by the American soldiers at the end of the battle, which is in the minds of most Japanese, the Himeyuri have come to embody an idea of Okinawa as sacrificial victim.

Kumejima Massacres

Issue of the U.S. Military Basis

From the experiences of the Okinawan people against both of the Japanese and the U.S. Governments is the disruptive presence of the 32 U.S. military bases on the main island of Okinawa and 5 more islands within the prefecture. These bases occupy 20 percent of the main island of Okinawa, concentrated in the most densely populated southern area, and that led to the escalation of the Anti-American Military Bases.

School girl rape accident of 1995

The previous experiences of the Okinawan people had played an important role during the U.S. occupation, as well as the daily suffering by the presence of the U.S. Military Bases, and violations committed against the people that are in some cases under the knowledge of the Japanese Government and sometimes in order to preserve the continuity of relationships and interests between Japan and U.S.A., and the discrimination that practiced against the people of Okinawa, all these and more has made the people more adherent to the politics, cultural, and social identity, which was enhanced by the privacy of this Island, which does not look like another place in Japan .

Peace Building in Okinawa

Conclusion

Note that the U.S. occupation and the crimes committed against civilians are not the only that changed the National Identity of the people of Okinawa, where the Japanese Army committed crimes against civilians which known as the Kumejima Massacres.
References

- Postwar U.S. Military Crimes Against Women in Okinawa
  - Linda Isako Angst, the rape of a Schoolgirl discourses of power and Gendered National Identity in Okinawa
- Okinawan Identity and resistance to Militarization and Maldevelopment
  - Asato Eilco, Okinawan Identity and resistance to Militarization and Maldevelopment
- Remembering the Kumejima Massacres
  - Matthew Allen, Wolves at the Back Door: remembering the Kumejima Massacres
- Culture, power, and Identity in contemporary Okinawa
  - Laura Hein and Mark Selden, Culture, power, and Identity in contemporary Okinawa
- The Territory of Identity and Remembrance in Okinawa
  - Linda Isako Angst, The Sacrifice Of A Schoolgirl: The 1995 Rape Case; Discourses of Power and Women's Lives in Okinawa
- Conflict Reconstruction of Education and Peace Building: Lessons from Okinawa's Experience
- Personal Interviews
  - A personal Interview with Mrs. Annette M. Eddie Callagain (a former American Judge Advocate General) in Feb 16, 2012
  - A personal Interview with Mr. Reiji Fumoto, the previous governor of Okinawa in Feb 16, 2012