Public Memory and Identity Politics at the Ruined Buddhist Temple Kudaraji ato in Hirakata City

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ABSTRACT
Cities throughout Japan have developed archaeological sites into public historical parks since the 1960s. These local parks are largely overlooked as a subject of academic study, yet function as integral public spaces for critical discourse by the local community as residents and lawmakers discuss how the park can best serve the public interest. The author examines the creation of the first historical park of a ruined Buddhist temple in Japan, Kudaraji ato historical park in Hirakata city, Osaka prefecture. Community activists representing the resident Korean population now seek a renovated park that reminds visitors of the ancient Korean heritage of Hirakata city, in particular the contributions made by the eighth-century founders of Kudara temple that are presumed to originate from the Korean peninsula. Contested versions of public memory and definitions of identity are formed, reformed, and translated into the built environment at these historical parks of ancient ruins.

Keywords: Heritage management, historical park, site preservation, national cultural property, heritage tourism, public memory, identity politics

Introduction
Whether to preserve or destroy historically sensitive ruins is a question many modern societies must answer. Is the site worth saving, at the cost of impeding the development of new homes, businesses, or transportation routes over the site and, if so, what form should this protected site take in a manner appropriate to the needs of modern citizens? Japan's response to this question since the second half of the twentieth century is an intriguing one, answered not by the monolithic state itself but often defined by local communities. While the methods and results of this Japanese remedy concerning the preservation of the material past may be questionable to some, and are not entirely unique to Japan, the public historical parks of ruined Buddhist temples, palace ruins, or other ancient settlements throughout Japan are essential places where citizen groups, academics, local authorities, and possibly national institutions negotiate the specific meaning of public good, both in terms of the physical built environment of a historical park as well as its ideological construct.

With their diverse physical layouts, designs, and degrees of authenticity, the success or lasting value of the built environment of such parks in Japan may seem
unclear, as is the question of how to reformulate an archaeological ruin in order to both protect the site and to enhance the site for use by people today. As evidenced in the case of the historical park established at the ruined Buddhist temple Kawachi Kudaraji ato in Hirakata city, Osaka prefecture, these built environments are not static and can be reinvented, actions which are almost entirely based on the activism of the sponsoring local government and its residents. That is, the parks can be remodeled and reformatted to adjust to the changing needs of a local community, and this act of periodic renewal allows a park to keep addressing and responding to the questions referenced above. In this sense, although the historical parks are intended to foster a direct, physical relationship between local residents or distant visitors and the context of Japanese antiquity, these public monuments are not simply modern replicas of ruins dating to the seventh or eighth centuries CE, but function as renewable symbols of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, primarily reflecting modern political notions and anxieties.

Terashima Soichiro, mayor of Hirakata city in Osaka prefecture, envisioned what was to become one of the first public parks of a historic site (shiseki koen) in Japan during the 1960s, several decades before the construction of major, large-scale historical parks such as Yoshinogari in Saga prefecture, Kyushu. What started as a kind of neighborhood botanical garden celebrating and marking the archaeological ruins of one of only two national “special historic sites” (tokubetsu shiseki) in Osaka prefecture, the Kudaraji ato historical park was transformed after a period of roughly four decades into a public space symbolizing the friendship between Japan and Korea, largely through the efforts of local community groups whose members identified with or were part of the resident Korean (zainichi Korian) population. As suggested in its name Kudaraji, or Kudara temple, Kudara is the Japanese transcription of Paekche, an ancient kingdom of Korea, and the initial founders of Kudaraji in Osaka prefecture are considered to be the Kudara no Konishiki lineage group, generally presumed to descend from the last king of Paekche. This paper investigates the reinvention of the Kudaraji ruins (Kudaraji ato) from an archaeological site into a historical park, and then the twenty-first century reappropriation of this park to serve as a place to redefine local identity based on the eighth-century origins of Kudaraji. In so doing, we will examine an instance of how a historical park can serve as a kind of barometer that indicates changes in the political attitudes and ideologies of particular localities in modern Japan.

Alternate Existences of the Earliest Buddhist Temples
On the Japanese islands, construction of Buddhist temples started after the initial introduction of Buddhism at the end of the sixth century. A few early temples founded

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1 An earlier version of this paper was presented in April 2006 at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, San Francisco, during a panel chaired by Morgan J. Pitelka (Panel 146: “Taming Time: Preserving Japanese History and Making Modernity in Memorials, Museums, and Parks”) with Jordan Sand serving as the discussant. I wish to thank both scholars, in addition to William Bodiford, Donald F. McCallum, Kate Nakai, Chari Pradel, Yui Suzuki, and Hirooka Takanobu for their insightful suggestions and support.

during the seventh and eighth centuries still remain active today, such as Toshodaiji in Nara city, Nara prefecture, whose prestige among other factors helped sustain the temple compound throughout the centuries. In some cases, such as Sekkoji in Nara prefecture, the present temple stands in the vicinity of the original temple grounds but in a considerably reduced form. However, a far greater number of the earliest temples built in Japan have fallen to ruin, perhaps after a disastrous fire. The ruins were hidden beneath layers of earth until their discovery and subsequent excavation by archaeologists, primarily during the twentieth century and later. At the conclusion of formal archaeological investigations the treatment of the ruined temple, usually referred to in Japanese as haiji, divides into one of the following three categories.

FIRST category: after salvaging as much as possible, the historical remains of the temple are destroyed to construct a commercial or residential building, parking structure, railway line, or perhaps a freeway overpass over the site. For instance, a bank and a four-way intersection connecting two major arteries were built over Kitano haiji in Kyoto, one of the earliest temples built in this region.

Figure 1. Mogami haiji, Wakayama prefecture.
The exposed heart stone for the Pagoda.

3 Toshodaiji's Golden Hall, whose date of construction is not without debate as various scholars propose between the second half of the eighth century and the first quarter of the ninth century (Ueda and Yamashita 2005, p. 33), was completely dismantled—piece by piece—for a major renovation which started in 1998 and is planned to continue until 2009; the wooden structure will then be reassembled. Although the Toshodaiji Golden Hall has been repaired on several occasions during the last one thousand years, this modern project is by far the most thorough. For color photographs and excavation reports, see the issue dedicated to Toshodaiji in Bukkyo geijutsu 281 (2005) with the translated title “Special Issue: Archaeology on Toshodaiji Temple – In Relation to Heisei Restoration Project of Kondo (Golden Hall).” A brief summary of the temple's history and the modern renovation project appears in Nara Bunkazai Kenkyujo 2003, 121-136.

4 Sekkoji is located near Taimadera. See Nara Kenritsu Kashihara Kokogaku Kenkyujo 1992 for details on the temple's history, in addition to color reproductions and reports from an excavation conducted at the site in 1991.

5 Roof tiles dating between the first half of the seventh century and the eighth century were unearthed at Kitano haiji in Kyoto, which supports a foundation date of the first quarter of the seventh century. See Uemura 1995, 119.
SECOND category: after the excavations, the ruins are simply re-buried. The ruins could be designated as a historic site (shiseki) by a local or national governing body, and a large sign identifying the ruins as an important cultural or historical property might be erected over the ruins. This sort of treatment usually occurs when the temple ruins are situated in a rural, agricultural setting where land is not in high demand, and there are no immediate plans to develop the local area. Examples are Ohara haiji in Tottori prefecture and Mogami haiji in Wakayama prefecture (see figure 1), which were located among fruit trees in the former, and fruit trees and gravestones in the latter at the time of my visits in 2001. The monumental heart stone for the Pagoda that served as the base for the structure's massive central pillar, remaining in situ at both sites, attests to the former prominence of these provincial temples dating to the second half of the seventh century.6

THIRD category: after the excavations, and usually after the ruins are designated as national historic sites, plans are made to construct a public historical park over the ancient ruins. Most of these small historical parks are situated in newly developing residential or commercial districts, often at risk of destruction.

Protecting the Ruins of Buddhist Temples
Hirakata city, located at the extreme northeast of Osaka prefecture, borders Kyoto prefecture and lies just across the Yodo river from the former Nagaoka palace. Kudaraji ato in Hirakata city, located at Chūgu Nishi no cho, is situated near the center of the city and the temple was built on top of a hill that overlooks the surrounding area of Miyanosaka. Formal excavation in 1932 by a prefectural authority, Osaka-fu Shiseki Chosa In, first confirmed the site as a ruined temple, identifying the remains of two Pagodas (to), one Golden Hall (kondō), and one Lecture Hall (kōdo), which is generally similar to the plan used at Yakushiji in Nara, a major Buddhist temple.7 However, although the Roofed Corridor is attached to the Lecture Hall at Yakushiji, the Roofed Corridor was attached to both sides of the Golden Hall at Kudaraji (see figure 2).

Significantly, no other temple in Japan has been identified with this exact plan but a nearly identical plan was used at the ruined temple of Kamūnsa in Korea, dating to the Unified Silla Dynasty (668-935 CE). Kamūnsa was built near the eastern sea coast about thirty kilometers east of Kyōngju, and Lena Kim claims the temple was completed in 682.8 On the basis of roof tiles excavated at Kudaraji during the first excavation in 1932 and during subsequent excavations, this temple in Japan seems to have been built during the second half of the eighth century, or more than five decades after the construction date of Kamūnsa according to Kim.9

6 The Ohara haiji heart stone measures about three meters in diameter, one of the largest in this San’in region. For excavation reports on Ohara haiji, a national shiseki, see Kurayoshi-shi Kyōiku Iinkai 1987; 1990. See Wakayama-ken Kyōiku Iinkai 1983 for an excavation report on Mogami haiji, which is not a national shiseki at this time.
7 Osaka-fu 1934.
Public Memory and Identity Politics
at the Ruined Buddhist Temple Kudaraji ato in Hirakata City

Figure 2. Sketch of the Kudaraji Temple plan, reproduced from Osaka-fu Hirakata-shi 1967, 19-20. The Golden Hall is attached on the east and west sides to the Roofed Corridor, and enclosed within the Roofed Corridor are the East Pagoda and West Pagoda.
On the basis of Kudaraji's importance as revealed through archaeological survey—that is, the unusual temple plan of Kudaraji in Japan—a temporary designation by the state (kari shitei) was obtained for the site by Osaka prefecture on 15 December 1933, followed by the national Ministry of Education's official designation of the site as a national shiseki on 27 January 1941; the Kudaraji ruins were subsequently upgraded to the status of tokubetsu shiseki or special historic site on 29 March 1952. Before continuing with the historical background of Kudaraji ato historical park, a brief explanation of the procedures involved in the official designation process for historic sites and their subsequent development into historical parks now follows.

According to Shimada Akira, the term shiseki was used in Japanese law for the first time in April of 1919 in Shiseki Meisho Tennen Kinenbutsu Hozonhō, the predecessor of the current Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties, Bunkazai Hogoho or Law No. 214 of 1950. As a kind of cultural property, a shiseki can be a place, building, or ruin with historic significance, and loosely translates as “historic site.” A shiseki can be designated a national, prefectural, or municipal historic site (shiseki shitei) and as such, is legally protected against further destruction. In 2007 there were over fifteen-hundred shiseki designated as national historic sites (kuni shitei shiseiki), including castle ruins, mounded tombs, shell mounds, and ruined Buddhist temples among others. Sites considered to be especially important by the national government for various reasons are designated as special historic sites, and there were sixty national special historic sites in 2007. A national historic site (shiseki) is not the same as a historical park (shiseki kōen) since the latter term usually describes a monument that has been redeveloped and renovated (seibi jigyō) in some fashion. However, most historical parks are national historic sites due to funding requirements. That is, for a ruined temple site to receive national support towards the development of a historical park, the site must first be a designated national historic site or special historic site.

Like the case with most matters of official business, a series of petitions must be filed and approved by various bureaucratic divisions for a ruined temple site to obtain national shiseki designation under the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (Law No. 214). To get a better sense of this law, I refer to an English pamphlet issued by the Agency for Cultural Affairs with the title “Our Treasure Cultural Landscape to Future Generations.” According to Article 1 of Law No. 214 in this pamphlet, “The purpose of this Law is to preserve and utilize cultural properties, so that the culture of the Japanese people may be furthered and a...
contribution be made to the evolution of world culture,” a statement open to very broad interpretation. The section concerning shiseki appears under Chapter Seven of Law No. 214 as Articles 109 through 133. Article 109 states that the Minister of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT; Monbu Kagakusho) may designate important monuments as national Historic Sites, Places of Scenic Beauty, and Natural Monuments; however, based on Article 153, the Minister must initially consult with the Cultural Council (Bunka Shingikai) before issuing decisions. First and foremost, in order to have a site designated by MEXT as a shiseki, the interested party proposing the new site designation must take initiative by submitting a formal request to the Commissioner of the Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkachô Chokan) and then, upon approval by this agency, the request would be forwarded to MEXT. This is typically not a top-down process, but a bottom-up series of requests made from the local to the national government in most cases; the exceptions are sites administered directly by national governmental institutions.14

Once approved as a national historic site, a designated shiseki needs to be protected and properly maintained as stipulated in Law No. 214, and if the regional public organization managing the site finds it necessary to purchase the land or buildings associated with the designated site in order to provide full protection, the national government can subsidize a portion of this purchase according to Article 129 of Law No. 214. In other words, local governments can receive substantial state funding to supplement their purchase of land that includes the shiseki. This is usually the first step in the process of developing a ruined temple site into a historical park. After buying the land, the local government managing the site can apply under Article 182 for additional funding to assist with the maintenance, repair, renovation, or public presentation of the site in order to both protect the site, as well as to make the site more accessible to the public by rendering it into a form that is practical, useful, and meaningful (hozon oyobi katsuyô). This last term katsuyô, or to make good or practical use of something, is significant and the interpretation of this concept into the built environment of a public historical park appears to be an important factor in the decision by MEXT to subsidize a new shiseki koen project.15 Katsuyô certainly involves the use of the site as a place to learn about ancient history, but also incorporates other concerns such as enhancing the local economy through boosting tourism to the new historical park.16

14 Generally, sites that have been perceived or demonstrated in the past century to be closely associated with the “ancient Japanese state” have fallen under the jurisdiction of the national government. In Nara prefecture, these include Heijo palace, certain mounded tumuli, and Buddhist temples believed to have been founded or patronized by the royal tennô lineage, such as Kawaradera. Different government ministries manage these national sites, such as the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport (MLIT; Kokudo Kotsusho) and MEXT. Examples of sites managed by MLIT are Takamatsuzuka and Kitora kofun, mounded tumuli with wall paintings and located in Asuka Historical National Government Park. For further information, see http://www.asuka-park.go.jp. Accessed on 15 November 2007.


16 As stated in the English pamphlet issued by the Agency for Cultural Affairs with the title “Our Treasure Cultural Landscape to Future Generations,” referenced above, “The protection of cultural landscapes has several positive impacts on the local community and economy...” (n.d., n.p.).
Since the request to designate a site as a shiseki and develop the shiseki into a historical park usually originates from local governments, whether municipal or prefectural, these local governments must first decide to pursue such a project. The initial momentum to protect a site might start with active lobbying by citizen groups whose members belong to local preservation or historical societies, in addition to participation by concerned professional archaeologists and scholars. These activists need an official sponsor in the local government, perhaps a member of the city assembly, the board of education, or even the mayor. The official sponsor must then bring up the issue in city assembly meetings and convince the city legislature to pursue this cause by allocating public funds and submitting a request to the national government for supplemental funds. The narratives or motives used to persuade a regional governmental body to proceed with the protection and subsequent development of a ruined temple differ markedly from one site to another, and a successful campaign appears to result if the stated katsuyō of a site promises to fulfill the perceived needs of the local community served by that regional government.

Contemporary political and financial situations of the municipality or prefecture also play a major role in the decision to protect a specific archaeological site. Even if archaeologists and the general public protest the destruction of a certain archaeological site because of the site's profound historical importance, if the national and local government officials at the time do not agree, then the site can be destroyed to make way for a new development. In this sense, the decision as to which ruin is “important” in terms of early Japanese history largely depends on the agendas and motivations of current politicians who often reflect broader trends circulating in the social, economic, and political climate. To a certain degree then, the reason why some archaeological sites are protected and perhaps developed into historical parks while others are destroyed is somewhat more random than expected since a combination of personal initiative, grass-roots activism at the local level, and contemporary politics must all coincide to support the common goal of preserving an ancient ruin threatened by destruction.

17 Gina Barnes mentioned during conversation that archaeologists often report on sites that are in danger of destruction, as well as solicit further support, in the journal Kokogaku kenkyū 考古學研究 (Quarterly of Archaeological Studies). As one example, a preservation society informed readers of Kokogaku kenkyū that they appealed to scholars across Japan and collected fifteen thousand signatures nationwide to protest plans by the city of Muko near Kyoto to build a municipal pool over what may have been a detached palace for Kanmu tennō in the Nagaoka capital. See Nagaokakakyo To’in ato Hozonkai 1991, 1-2.

18 For example, the national and the Okayama prefectural governments prioritized the timely completion of an expressway for cars over the adequate excavation and preservation of Tsudera, an important temple ruin in Okayama city (Bunkazai Hozonmon dai linkai 1989). Apart from temples, one of the most tragic losses of ancient history in recent years is the destruction of the Nagayaō residence in the former Nara capital Heijō. The residential remains were discovered in 1988 by Nara Bunkazai Kenkyūjo prior to the construction of a new department store at the site and, regardless of the critical historical importance of this discovery, construction proceeded as planned. Nara Sogo opened its doors in October 1989. However, the financial collapse of the Sogo group soon followed and the Nara Sogo store closed its doors in December 2000. The building re-opened in 2003 under new ownership by the Ito Yokado supermarket chain (Mainichi shinbun 2003). Many external and internal factors led to the financial ruin of the Sogo group, but there is also popular belief that the course of events was caused by the curse of Prince Nagaya (684-729), a person with both the lineage and power to have eventually reigned as tennō had he not been falsely accused of treason and forced to commit suicide in 729.
Despite some anachronistic elements in terms of how Japanese law stipulates the protection of archaeological sites and the development of historical parks in the year 2007 as opposed to the late 1960s when the first historical park of a ruined Buddhist temple was created at Kudaraji ato, the fundamental law protecting cultural properties was already in place since 1950 and the basic premise of how the state views the protection of a historic site has remained relatively consistent. Our attention now returns to Hirakata city during the second decade following the Pacific War.

**Excavating and Building the Park at Kudaraji ato**

At some point during his two terms in office as mayor of Hirakata city (1947-1955 and 1959-1967), Terashima Soichiro looked back at the national special historic site of the ruined Kudaraji and felt regret that in the decades following the excavation of 1932, the site had become overrun with weeds and other vegetation. Due to the unkempt condition of the site, it was not an easy task to visit or appreciate this special historic site located in his city, the only other special historic site besides Osaka Castle in Osaka prefecture. He proposed to transform the ruins into a *shiseki kōen* and create a familiar place for municipal residents to enjoy. The mayor brought the issue before the Osaka prefectural Board of Education, and after consulting the Division for the Protection of Cultural Properties (Bunkazai Hogo linkai Kinenbutsuka) and gaining their approval, Terashima succeeded in securing funding in 1965 to excavate the site in preparation for developing a park.\textsuperscript{19} Construction of the first historical park of a ruined Buddhist temple in Japan, Kudaraji ato kōen, took place during 1965-1968. 1965 is also the year that the first historical park of a mounded tomb, Goshikizuka kofun in Kobe, commenced development.\textsuperscript{20}

Although the creation of Kudaraji ato historical park originated from the local city government, this park and others can also be considered as part and parcel of a larger, national initiative. “In the late 1960s and early 1970s... the national government began to use archaeological and historical remains as symbols of a new Japanese identity... One example is the development of a national park and special preservation area in Asuka Mura, Nara prefecture.”\textsuperscript{21} Ancient temples such as Yamadadera, royal palaces, and other architectural ruins provided material evidence in support of documentary references to Asuka as the location where “the Japanese state began [and these conditions made Asuka] an excellent place to create a ’hometown of the Japanese heart’” by the national government.\textsuperscript{22} These projects occurred during a time of critical self-definition in the 1960s, asking questions such as: what is national identity, national policy, public memory, or public space. According to Sasaki-Uemura, the “positions held by citizens’ groups, government officials, elite intellectuals, and the mass media were dynamic, and their articulations

\textsuperscript{19} Osaka-fu Hirakata-shi 1967, 2.
\textsuperscript{20} Ogasawara 1998, 100.
\textsuperscript{22} Fawcett 1996, 69.
of what constituted the public good constantly shifted." Concern for the public
good, in addition to remembering the achievements of the ancient builders of a
prominent and early Buddhist temple, were some of the incentives behind the initial
creation of Kudaraji ato historical park.

Prior to planning the layout of the historical park, a new series of excavations
was conducted to both clear the land of unwanted trees and bushes, as well as to
uncover further details on the nature of the ruins themselves. Osaka prefectural
Board of Education, assisted by the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural
Properties (Nara Bunkazai Kenkyūjo), excavated Kudaraji ato in 1965.\(^{24}\) Visible traces
of the ruined temple remaining at the site were the raised, mounded foundation
platforms made of pounded earth (\textit{kidan}) at the Golden Hall, West Pagoda, and
East Pagoda, in addition to some of the original foundation stones used at these
buildings and others.\(^{25}\) The wooden architectural structures of these buildings had
not survived, perhaps the result of disastrous fires during the eleventh or twelfth
century as determined by the roof tiles unearthed at the site.\(^{26}\) Formed into a square,
rectangle or other geometrical shape, the earthen foundation platform supported
the wooden structure of each building (see figure 3). A layer of thinly cut stone
usually covered the exterior surface of the earthen foundation platform, and a set
of stairs leading up to the building from the ground was often made on each of the
four sides of the foundation platform.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3.png}
\caption{Excavation photo of the Yamadadera Golden Hall, Nara prefecture, reproduced from \textit{Asuka Shiryokan} 1997, 20. Only two foundation stones were discovered on the earthen foundation platform, located near to the center.}
\end{figure}

\(^{23}\) Sasaki-Uemura 2002, 81.
\(^{24}\) Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, an archaeological institute organized under the auspices of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, conducts excavations on behalf of the national government and also provides technical assistance that might include the development of a site into a historical park.
\(^{25}\) Osaka-fu Hirakata-shi 1967, 3.
\(^{26}\) On the basis of the Kudaraji roof tile styles, the oldest roof tiles date to the second half of the eighth century and the newest date to the middle of the Heian period period; evidence of fire damage on the newest roof tiles support the view that the temple experienced a disastrous fire around the eleventh or twelfth century. See Osaka-fu Hirakata-shi 1967, 7.
Establishing the dimensions of a foundation platform is of critical importance when attempting to establish the scale of the wooden structure built on the foundation platform but, unfortunately, many foundation platforms were partially or completely destroyed, perhaps by private landowners when clearing the land for cultivation. In other words, the exact sizes and shapes of the foundation platforms at many ruined temple sites cannot be determined with precision on the basis of excavation results, which is especially true in the case of the Kudaraji Lecture Hall foundation platform since it had been largely destroyed prior to scientific excavation. While the foundation platforms for the Kudaraji East and West Pagodas are described as being well preserved, the exact dimensions were not entirely clear.27 As for the Kudaraji Golden Hall foundation platform, the archaeologists discovered two layers of building activity, leading to the interpretation that the original foundation platform had been renovated at some point and a new foundation platform had been built over the original platform. Also, part of the exterior perimeter of the renovated Golden Hall foundation platform was missing so the remaining mound was diminished in size.28

Placed on the surface of each foundation platform at regular intervals were large foundation or pillar base stones (soseki; see figures 2 and 3) to serve as a base for the wooden pillar (hashira) that, as a group, carried the weight of the structure. A view of a structure's interior, or how the space was segmented and used inside, can be reconstructed on the basis of the pattern formed by the layout of the foundation stones. The overall dimensions of a building could also be suggested by the pattern formed by the extant foundation stones on the foundation platform if part of the foundation platform was missing, based on the assumption that the building was symmetric.

Ruined temples and their buildings typically have lost many or most of their foundation stones by the time of excavation; nonetheless, archaeologists might propose the total number and location of foundation stones by identifying missing foundation stones according to the holes the large stones have left behind. Another indicator of a missing foundation stone is a cluster of small stones used to stabilize a foundation stone (neishi), placed in the shape of a ring around the large foundation stone. Yet identifying large holes encircled by small stones as markers of missing foundation stones is not without error, as is the possibility of misinterpreting large, naturally-occurring stones that were perhaps shifted to a certain location by a flood as foundation stones. Concerning the Kudaraji foundation stones, archaeologists identified nine foundation stones and the heart stone which supported the central pillar at the West Pagoda, five foundation stones at the East Pagoda, five foundation stones at the Golden Hall, and none at the Lecture Hall. Yet the total number of foundation stones assumed to have been used for each building appears in a sketch of the initial temple plan (see figure 2), composed of sixteen foundation stones each at the West Pagoda and the East Pagoda, thirty-eight foundation stones at the Golden Hall, and thirty-six foundation stones at the Lecture Hall.29 What becomes apparent here is the relatively high degree of speculation in the relationship between what

was confirmed at the site by material evidence and what is believed to have existed on the basis of circumstantial evidence.

Contrary to the relative incompleteness of excavation results, at the conclusion of excavations a replica of each building’s foundation platform, or what was presumed to be the dimensions of the original foundation platform, was recreated at the park, presenting an uncomplicated and coherent picture of the initial temple complex. It is important to keep in mind that Kudaraji ato historical park was composed of markers of the ruins themselves, not full-scale reproductions of the original temple structures. This is a rather odd concept, of creating modern replicas of ancient ruins to resemble what had been excavated, instead of how the ruins had once appeared. To the uninformed visitor, the markers might be quite illegible and bizarre. Another key point, as mentioned above, is the degree of accuracy between what was actually excavated and what was replicated at the park. That is, although the surviving foundation platforms had diminished, changed, or disappeared by the time of scientific excavation, such modifications or unknown factors were not clearly acknowledged in the built environment of the modern historical park, whether in the form of a written explanation or other kind of informative display as explained below.

Although I did not visit the park until several decades after its completion, in the year 2000, the basic layout apparently had not changed. The temple grounds within the park were demarcated by white-colored gravel, separating the temple ruins from the rest of the leafy park. Constructed directly over a ruined foundation platform was a modern, earthen foundation platform, and a continuous row of neatly manicured shrubbery clearly outlined the exterior border of each foundation platform, serving to inform visitors of the building’s presumed scale. A set of cement steps interrupted the line of shrubbery in the East and West Pagodas, connecting the ground level to the entrances of each structure (see figure 4).

Figure 4. Replica of the East Pagoda’s Foundation Platform at Kudaraji ato Historical Park, Osaka prefecture, prior to renovation.

After climbing the steps to reach the top of the East or West Pagoda foundation platforms, the space inside was empty with the exception of foundation stones submerged into the ground. Regarding the numerous foundation stones visible on the West Pagoda’s earthen platform, there was no explanatory sign informing visitors
of whether these were the authentic stones unearthed at the site or were modern replicas of the stones. While the use of concrete for the stairs and shrubbery on the perimeter clearly indicated that these were modern replicas of the original temple foundations, the degree of accuracy concerning their sizes and shapes was not made transparent, and the overall significance of the historical park was unclear as well. In other words, the apparent simplification of the excavation results into a coherent visual landscape lacking in adequate explanatory signs did not contribute towards an informative or particularly meaningful learning experience at the time of my visit.

Exactly how did this park serve the public good and respond to questions concerning the past history of Kudaraji? What was this park really about? Here was an ungated public space located in a residential neighborhood, interspersed with trees and shrubs and used by a few people who were reading newspapers or walking a dog. The park was not an open-air art museum displaying art objects or original artifacts, it was not a revived Buddhist temple or sacred space as there were no indications of religious worship, devotion, or practice at the site, and it was unlike the common neighborhood public park containing playground equipment for use by children. One might suppose that this modern historical park was intended as a place to educate visitors about ancient history, specifically during the time the temple was initially built. Yet according to a study conducted by Ogino Yoshinobu, and confirmed by my own experience, this park functioned rather like a mute and passive reminder of the magnificent achievements by the eighth-century builders of the temple. Ogino indicated that the park primarily alerted the public about the physical presence of historical ruins, as opposed to engendering a deeper understanding of the site for the community that it served.30

A closer look at the intended functions of the park when it was first built reveals a few clues as to why the first shiseki kōen of a ruined Buddhist temple commemorates the past in a somewhat ambiguous manner, without clearly emphasizing what the public is to learn and remember after visiting the park. An assistant professor at Nara Joshi Daigaku at the time who specialized in landscape architecture and gardens, Kondō Kimio helped design the historical park at Kudaraji ato (see figure 5). He reasoned that the main goals for the park were to restore the remains of Kudaraji ato and create a space for recuperation (kyūyō enchi) with the goal of supporting the psychological well-being (seishin seikatsu) of the nation's citizens.31 The park was not only designed to foster an atmosphere of learning based on the historical ruins, but also to create a quiet, green zone conducive to restful

30 Ogino Yoshinobu surveyed Kudaraji ato historical park in the late 1970s. Roughly eighty percent of the park's visitors lived within a fifteen-minute bicycle trip, and their main purpose was to play or stroll on the premises (Ogino 1980, 234). Eighty-five percent of those surveyed were aware of the park's identity as a historical park, but only forty percent comprehended the difference between a historical park and a standard, neighborhood park. Regardless, Ogino concluded that if a historical park can inform visitors about the presence of historical ruins, provide a general summary of the ruins, and reproduce the overall scale of the ruins, these were sufficient contributions. Ogino then offered several recommendations that would deepen a visitor's understanding of the park (Ogino 1980, 236), indicating his position that the park could be improved to make it more legible to the public.
31 Kondō 1967, 23. See pages 23-29 for the complete text.
rejuvenation. To fulfill this secondary role as a type of botanical garden, the names of specific plants and their detailed locations within the park appear in the city's report. Also planned were pedestrian walkways, a parking lot large enough to accommodate five large buses, a shady rest area planted with pine and cherry trees on a grassy field, and sufficient benches to seat one hundred people.

Meanwhile, new layers of earth would be mounded over the archaeological ruins, covered by a layer of grass on top and plantings of ornamental shrubs around the perimeter. Since the remains of the East Pagoda, West Pagoda, and Golden Hall were relatively well preserved, Kondo proposed to allow the surfaces of the original foundation stones to remain uncovered when building the mounds over the original foundation platforms. Interestingly, he mentioned future plans for a small structure (köen sentaa) to display artifacts, provide information to visitors, and also serve as a kind of office for park administrators; this building was nowhere in sight at the time of my visit. Kondo’s initial plans agree with the notion that commemorating the past through the creation of Kudaraji ato historical park during the late 1960s was not specifically concerned with narrating ancient history, but appears to have been intended as a corporeal reminder of the distant past to local residents as they spent a relaxing afternoon in a green-filled environment.

This basic premise of how a shiseki köen of a ruined temple can serve the public good, and the decision to recreate an idealized version of excavation results by building modern replicas of foundation platforms at Kudaraji ato, established a model that would be reflected at many other historical parks of Buddhist temples planned during the 1960s and 1970s, albeit with a certain degree of variation. Depending on the park, the replicas might exhibit more aspects that were imagined or clearly unknown, likely due to the loss of material evidence. Yet with little indication of such discrepancies between what was actually found and what was

Figure 5. Sketch of the initial plan proposed for Kudaraji ato Historical Park, reproduced from Osaka-fu Hirakata-shi 1967, pp. 21-22.

32 For instance, see Okazaki-shi Kyoiku inkai 1991 for details on the construction of a park during 1975-1979 at Kitano ruined temple, Kitano haiji, located in a suburb of Okazaki city in Aichi prefecture. Yamadadera in Sakurai city, Nara prefecture, is an example of a ruined temple site administered and excavated by national institutions, Bunkacho and Nara Bunkazai Kenkyōjo.
recreated to serve as a “replica” at a historical park, the uninformed visitor might assume that the replicas were faithfully based on actual excavation results or, even worse, that the replicas were not replicas at all but the actual ruins themselves. Another point of departure among the various historical parks of ruined temples is the extent of reconstruction. At some parks, the replicas of the foundation platforms and foundation stones were made using raised cement platforms with natural stones, recreating the excavation findings by using new materials. At other parks, there might be a full-scale replica of a wooden structure based on what may have existed, such as the replica of the South Gate at Noto Kokubunji ato Historical Park at Nanao city, Ishikawa prefecture, which is entirely hypothetical.33

Post-1990s Historical Parks and Public Memory
Japan during the 1980s, as described by Jordan Sand, “experienced an economic bubble based on hyperinflated urban real estate prices”34 but the bubble would burst towards the end of the decade, effecting transformations in public policy, historical memory, and identity due to the changing social realities of a Japan in recession amidst an increasingly global economy. Concurrent with this phenomenon, “[i]n the past two decades memory has simultaneously become more global and more local,”35 a trend that resulted in the emergence of a new kind of historical park in Japan: one that moved away from uniformly treating the park as a passive and timeless space filled with trees and shrubs, to one that was responsive to local agendas which could include an adaptation of the historical park into a fun, touristy location where visitors could actively learn about ancient history.36 A major landmark representing this new conceptual shift was Yoshinogari Historical Park in Saga prefecture, Kyushu, under excavation since the late 1980s and opening to the public in 2001.37 According to Koji Mizoguchi, excavation results were simplified and deliberately confused when building Yoshinogari Historical Park, and the full-scale reconstructions of Yayoi-period structures made the park resemble a “gigantic theme

33 The South Gate is not an authentic or factual replica; moreover, the state of preservation of the ruined gate was “poor” when it was excavated between 1970 and 1972. See Nanao-shi Kyōiku Iinkai 1973, 14.
34 Sand 2001, 352.
36 As other interpretations concerning this shift, Ogasawara Yoshihiko finds parks developed after the 1990s as being fundamentally different from earlier parks due to the diversity of the technical methods used to replicate the ruins. See Ogasawara 2002, 123. Clare Fawcett indicates that Japanese municipal planners and developers used “archaeological parks, museums, and exhibitions to create a sense of local identity” during the 1980s and 1990s in their effort to attract new residents to their neighborhoods, and they “no longer [emphasized] their communities’ industrial development as they would have thirty years ago.” See Fawcett 1996, 73.
37 See Ogasawara 1998, 102 for a reference to Yoshinogari Historical Park and its role towards changing the target visitor to historical parks from that of history buff to souvenir-seeking tourist. For a discussion of Yoshinogari Historical Park, described by the park’s website as “the largest ruin among all the Yayoi ruins excavated in Japan” (http://www.yoshinogari.jp/pages/info/info_1-en.html. Accessed on 1 November 2007, see Mizoguchi 2006, 1-12. As stated by Nodomi Toshio, who helped develop the Yoshinogari Historical Park, the Saga prefectural government submitted a request to turn the site into a national government park (kokutei kōen) and as such, to fall under the administration of what is now MLIT, in order to secure substantial funding towards the establishment of the historical park. See Nodomi 1997, 152-170. Although Nodomi refers to the Ministry of Construction (Kensetsushō) in his book published in 1997, this ministry became the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport in 2001.
park pretending to be an exotic ancient fortress in a setting most unusual and at the same time most mundane.\textsuperscript{38}

Due in part to a prolonged period of economic downturn since circa 1990, the transformation of an important archaeological ruin into a profitable historical park such as Yoshinogari was seen as a regional development project (\textit{chiiki zukuri}) intended to serve as a major source of revenue.\textsuperscript{39} In other words, the main priority for the administrators of the park was seemingly focused on attracting large numbers of tourists to the park that would, in turn, boost the local economy, and these concerns apparently overshadowed the question of whether the parks were entirely accurate or not. And these anticipated tourists were no longer limited to the local Japanese, but an increasing number of foreign visitors from Korea were also welcomed. The National Museum of Korea and Saga Prefecture Education Committee presented a special exhibition with the translated title “Yoshinogari: Ancient Korean Culture in Japan” in Seoul, Korea, between 16 October and 2 December 2007, and according to the description on the museum’s website, “Many relics excavated [at Yoshinogari] are regarded as evidence of the ongoing process of cultural exchange which took place between Korea and Japan throughout the prehistoric period... This exhibition of relics produced about 2000 years ago by the early residents of Korea and Japan is expected to help visitors acquire a new perception of the process of cultural exchange in East Asia.”\textsuperscript{40} Addressed in this exhibition was a version of the updated public memory of ancient Japanese history in relation to Korea, or that of a common cultural sphere existing between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese islands since the prehistoric period.

At one small village in Kyushu, this reappraisal of the relationship between ancient Korea and Japan was used to particular economic advantage when the village was on the verge of extinction. The village successfully reinvented its local identity on an international scale by appropriating local myths and material evidence involving royal immigrants from the former kingdom of Paekche on the Korean peninsula. Kudara no Sato or “Paekche Town” was planned and realized in what was formerly Nangō village, currently part of Misato town in Miyazaki prefecture, and located among heavily wooded mountains approximately forty kilometers inland on the southeast coast of Kyushu. With a population of 2,600 in 1985, the mayor of the village felt troubled when children declined to state the name of the village when asked about their place of origin, instead responding with the name of the largest nearby city. It was one thing for the village to lose residents, but the mayor wanted to rehabilitate the villagers’ sense of pride in their local identity when planning the economic redevelopment of the village (\textit{chiiki okoshi}). As a focal point for the village’s identity and cultural heritage, the mayor recalled the local legend passed down by villagers: after the fall of the Paekche kingdom to the combined forces of Old Silla and Tang [around the middle of the seventh century], several members of the Paekche royal family escaped to settle in Nangō, and were then

\textsuperscript{38} Mizoguchi 2006, 1-12.
\textsuperscript{39} Nodomi 1997, 69.
subsequently enshrined as the Shinto deity at the Mikado shrine in the village.\footnote{Nikkan kensetsu kōgyō shinbun 2001.}

In 1986, what began as a fact-finding mission to Korea by Nango representatives, presumably to research the historical authenticity of the legend, later evolved into a series of international exchanges and eventually to a sister-city agreement with the city of Puyo in Korea, the location of the ancient Paekche capital. At Nango village, a new exhibition space with the name “Paekche Hall” (Kudara no Yakata) was completed in 1990, and Paekche Hall was modeled on a building in the National Museum of Puyo after receiving generous support from the Korean government. Displayed inside Paekche Hall were modern replicas of national Korean treasures associated with the ancient Paekche kingdom.

Another significant building project at Nango village consisted of a full-scale replica of the eighth-century Shōsoin at Todaiji in Nara city, referred to as “Shōsoin of the West” (Nishi no Shōsoin) and opening its doors to the public in 1996. This historically accurate wooden structure, Shōsoin of the West, was built through the support of various Japanese government agencies including the Imperial Household Agency. Because the actual Shōsoin stands as one of the most venerated monuments of eighth-century Japan, the construction of its replica in this small village could indicate a sense of competition between the Japanese and Korean governments, of not wanting to be outdone by the other, or possibly signal a genuine reappraisal of the cultural exchange that occurred between the two cultures during the seventh and eighth centuries. The basis for Shōsoin of the West was the bronze mirrors discovered under the floor of the Mikado shrine in Nango village, among them being a mirror that was found to be nearly identical to another bronze mirror stored inside the Shōsoin at Todaiji.\footnote{Graburn 2009, 21-22. Exchange students, scholars, and government officials from Korea have visited Kudara no Sato, and there are numerous signs and information boards written in Korean to welcome these tourists. As one reason why Koreans might choose to visit this site in Japan, Graburn 2009, 30, claims, “we should realize that the Koreans, too, both at the popular and the scholarly level, are looking for ‘stolen’ or ‘escaped’ remnants of Korea’s rich historical and cultural heritage in Japan.”}

According to Nelson Graburn’s analysis of this reinvented village, “the insertion of Koreanness into the structured panoply of meibutsu (things to be famous for) has reflected with both the ideological trend towards liberal multiculturalism in Japan... and pragmatic responses to Koreans’ emergence as the leading source of foreign tourists entering Japan since the early 1990s.”\footnote{Graburn 2009, 28-30 for a study of the village and the significance of the monuments, both ancient and modern. I am grateful to Nelson Graburn for kindly providing a pre-publication draft of this article.}

The initial success of Paekche Town,\footnote{In 1996, when Shōsoin of the West was completed, approximately sixty-thousand people came to visit Kudara no Sato in Nango village. But by the year 2005, the number of tourists dropped to about eight thousand and the economic stability of Nango village had once again become insecure. In an effort to consolidate resources as part of a nation-wide phenomenon of combining several villages or towns into a larger entity, Nango village merged with two other villages in January 2006 to become Misato town. The village has disappeared but Nango-ku, a district within Misato town, reminds residents of the area’s traditional name. See Mainichi shinbun 2006 for details.} an extraordinary campaign that attracted many tourists to the village through the promotion of an ancient Korean heritage in Japan, appears to have served as a source of inspiration to others who were already
involved with similar kinds of activities in their own local communities, particularly in Hirakata city. The climate of “liberal multiculturalism” mentioned above by Graburn, and precedents such as Kudara no Sato were factors that influenced the twenty-first century renovation project at Kudaraji ato historical park.

Reappropriating the Park at Kawachi Kudaraji ato
Among the newspaper clippings, pamphlets, articles published in local gazetteers, and other apparently unpublished material that I received from Satō Kiyoshi in the fall of 2007 was an undated, typed, three-page pamphlet outlining the detailed history of Kudara no Sato, commending the vigorous efforts of this small village with big ambitions. Referring to an article published in the Miyazaki local edition of Asahi shinbun dating to 18 January 1989 and reporting on Kudara no Sato, the pamphlet outlined similar goals between Kudara no Sato and those anticipated for Kudaraji ato by several citizens at Hirakata city. Proposed was a full-scale reconstruction of Kudara temple to serve as a facility for receiving tourists and conducting cultural events. In addition to becoming a source of pride and emotional connection for the residents of Hirakata city, this reconstructed temple would stand as a visual monument to the cultural achievements by the Kudara no Konishiki lineage group. In other words, as a temple founded by the presumed descendants of the royal Paekche family, the special national ruins of Kudaraji in metropolitan Osaka prefecture deserved just as much recognition, if not more, than what the legends and mirrors accomplished at what was formerly Nangō village in Kyushū. At the end of the pamphlet, further questions are directed to Kudara no Konishiki Ichizoku Jiseki Kenkyukai, located at the Miyanosaka post office in Hirakata city. Satō Kiyoshi, who is the postmaster of this post office, serves as president of this citizen group founded in 1967. This group seeks to establish museums and memorial steles that relate the contributions made by immigrant clans from the Korean peninsula during antiquity, particularly the Kudara no Konikishi lineage group. Although a printing date for this pamphlet is not indicated, it might have been circa 1999 when the project to redevelop the park at Kudaraji ato started to gain considerable momentum.

Like the mayor of Nangō village in Kyushū, Satō was committed to redefining the modern identity of residents in his community by focusing on traces from the past. In a brief quotation appearing in a newspaper published in Japan for the resident Korean population, Korian warudo nyusu, Satō claimed it was none other than “our ancestors” (watashitachi no sosen) who helped create Japan long ago by giving rise to many new cultural forms, and readers should have a sense of confidence and pride in knowing about the contributions made by “their” ancestors. The ruins of Kudaraji were appropriated by activists such as Satō to function as a public monument representing the connection between ancient immigrants from the

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45 Satō Kiyoshi kindly responded to my inquiry about the renovation of Kudaraji ato park, and provided these materials.


Korean peninsula and the present Korean Japanese community. As discussed below, the redevelopment of Kudaraji ato historical park was pursued by a group that has faced strong discrimination in modern Japan, and their motives appear to involve both an attempt to reclaim a sense of positive identity through reminding the public of ancient history during a period of “liberal multiculturalism” in Japan, in tandem with boosting the local economy through increasing the number of domestic and foreign visitors to their newly redeveloped park.

Satō Kiyoshi was involved with more than one of the several citizen groups taking action with regard to Kudaraji during 1999-2000. A new group, Association for Thinking about the Traces of the Kudaraji Ruins (Kudaraji ato o Kangaerukai) was inaugurated on 25 May 1999 in the third floor meeting room of the Hirakata post office, presumably at the invitation of Satō. Inoue Masao, the out-going Hirakata city assemblyman, served as chairman, Satō as director, Hanamura Takeshi as the chief of financial affairs, and fourteen other individuals were also selected for specific posts on this day. Hanamura, the director of a company managing grave stones and stone steles in Hirakata city, Shōho Sangyō Kabushikigaiisha, was the chairman of another citizen group with related interests, Kudara Association (Kudara no Kai), with a membership of roughly four hundred. Kudara no Kai has been commemorating the ruins of Kudaraji through a series of modern reenactments and festivals. Since 2000 this group has held an annual festival in early May, the Hirakata-Kudara Festival that typically begins with a processional parade winding through the city between the Keihan Hirakatashi train station to Kudaraji ato historical park. Participants don traditional clothing to represent members of the Kudara no Konishiki clan, in addition to other figures dating to the Nara and early Heian periods. Appearing at the festival grounds might be performers of ancient Korean dances, a speaker giving a commemorative lecture pertaining to Paekche or the Konikishi lineage group, and ethnic foods for the benefit of a crowd numbering approximately one thousand each year. The festival promotes the international heritage of Hirakata city, showcased by the ruins of Kudaraji, and rising awareness of the ruined temple’s significance in the community may have streamlined the process of renovating the park, an initiative that Hirakata city assemblyman Ariyama Masanobu formally introduced in 2002.

Hirakata city’s eventual decision in 2005 to renovate the historical park was largely due to the efforts of Ariyama, who repeatedly pursued the issue during regularly scheduled meetings of the city assembly. Ariyama came to office in 1999 and his immediate predecessor, Inoue Masao mentioned above as chairman of the Association for Thinking about the Traces of the Kudaraji Ruins, introduced Ariyama to representatives of local citizen groups such as Sato Kiyoshi. Ariyama first asked

48 See Manda henshūbu 1999.
49 Sankei shinbun 2005. According to an article in Köhō Hirakata, published monthly by Hirakata city, after the festival site was moved to another, larger park in 2007 in anticipation of increased attendance, approximately 2800 people attended the seventh annual festival that year. See Köhō Hirakata 2007, 14.
to hear opinions concerning a plan to further develop Kudaraji and transform the park into a tourist venue (kanko shigen) at the fourth-quarter city assembly meeting held in December 2002. A representative from the city's board of education, Take Masayuki, responded by first describing the kinds of public lectures and publications concerning ancient Japan and Paekche that had already been organized by his department, and then voiced his support of gaining national attention for the Kudaraji ruins. Regarding the redevelopment project, he offered to research possibilities and to consider how the current storage facilities at the park could be improved in terms of displaying the artifacts from the ruined temple for the benefit of the city's residents.

Ariyama referred to Kudaraji again in 2003 at a special committee meeting on financial affairs by asking how the monies spent for the site in 2002 had been used. Mori Shin from the board of education replied that 509,250 yen was spent to repair a fence and set up netting at the site. After Ariyama inquired about the land erosion problem, Mori replied that simply adding more dirt would not remedy the issue and his department was currently discussing plans with the prefectural and national authorities. In response, Ariyama reemphasized the importance of Kudaraji, a national special historic site, and then presented the renovation project as something that could redefine the park as a symbol of friendship between Japan and Korea. He urged the city to aggressively move towards expanding the site's appeal beyond national borders, to now include the international audience. Mori acknowledged the importance of the site and reiterated his prior statement that negotiations were taking place within various branches of the local government, as well as between Hirakata city, Osaka prefecture, and the national government.

Kudaraji's new identity as a symbol of friendship between Japan and Korea was embraced by civic leaders, as Nakaguchi Takeshi from the board of education favorably repeated this slogan when responding to Ariyama's third inquiry of the proposed project during the fourth-quarter assembly meeting held in December 2004. Nakaguchi stated that the conditions at the site had deteriorated to a degree that redevelopment was a necessity, and an advisory committee for the redevelopment would meet next year to form plans, which would then be submitted to the national Agency for Cultural Affairs. On 10 May 2005, an advisory committee was established, consisting of three university faculty members specializing in archaeology or ancient history and two archaeologists employed at Nara Bunkazai Kenkyūjo. Uehara Mahito, a renowned professor of archaeology at Kyoto University, was selected as the committee chair. Hirakata city's appointment of the committee members was approved by the national Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Osaka prefectural Board of Education, and these governmental agencies would continue to provide guidance to the city concerning the new excavations planned at the site prior to renovating the park. By December 2005, the city's decision to redevelop the park was finalized.

Not long afterwards, in January 2006, a newspaper article in Yomiuri shinbun informed the public that forty years had passed since the first historical park in

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51 I am grateful to Ariyama Masanobu who provided a transcript of relevant civic meetings between the years 2002 and 2005.
Japan was built at Hirakata city, and some of the trees planted at that time had overgrown to a degree that their roots were damaging the foundation platforms, especially the West Pagoda, while land erosion damaged other areas in the park. The article then described the historical significance of the site, stating that here was a temple founded by the Kudara no Konishiki lineage group, descendants of the last king of Paekche, and because the ruins served as evidence of the exchange between ancient Japan and Korea, it was therefore considered an invaluable site. Hirakata city will redevelop the park over the next ten years [or until 2015], initially conducting further excavations before drawing up final plans for the new park. In the article, there is no mention of specific plans for the renovated park, such as whether a full-scale reconstruction will be built. These issues likely have yet to be resolved, but what is significant is clear mention of the site's importance as evidence of an ancient Korean heritage at Hirakata city.

For the most part, the general portrayal of the temple's early history does not seem to present major concerns. The identity of the initial founder is not clear but there appears to be little doubt among scholars that Kudaraaji in Hirakata city was the clan temple of the Kudara no Konishiki lineage group. In a Shoku nihongi entry, the heavenly sovereign (tenno) Kanmu went hunting at Katano near what is now Hirakata city on Enryaku 2 (783 CE). In the next entry, dated two days later, Kanmu awarded Kudaraaji (also known as Kudaratera) with tax credits just before promoting various members from the Kudara no Konishiki lineage group to higher ranks. Kanmu left Katano two days hence, or on the eighteenth day. The reference to Kudaraaji, followed by references to members of the Kudara no Konikishi lineage group while Kanmu visited Katano where he was most likely being entertained by members of this lineage group, support the interpretation that the temple's sponsors were part of the Kudara no Konikishi lineage group. The hereditary founder of this lineage group in Japan is claimed to be Zenko (? - 693?), believed to be the younger brother of Puyö P'ung, and both may be the sons of the last king of Paekche, Úija (r. 641-660).

Given the high degree of anticipation by citizen-group leaders such as Satô Kiyoshi on the role of a renewed Kudaraaji ato historical park – functioning as a symbol of an empowered, rehabilitated identity for the resident Korean and Korean Japanese community, as well as to serve as a popular tourist destination for resident Korean schoolchildren in Japan and foreign visitors from Korea – whether the latest physical transformation of the park will meet expectations cannot be answered for a few more years. Was it simply persistence by activists who wanted the public to remember the peninsular roots of the founders of ancient monuments in Japan that led to the reinvention of Kudaraaji historical park – Part of the project's success might be explained as such, but there also was a convergence of interest in twenty-first century Osaka, between the interests represented by advocates such as Sato and those of governmental institutions responding to changes in the official consideration

52 Yomiuri shinbun 2006.
53 See Sakamoto and Hirano 1990, 262-266 for biographical details.
54 Personal communication from Sato Kiyoshi, postmarked 24 October 2007.
of Japan’s early history, at a time of “liberal multiculturalism” and increasing numbers of tourists from Korea. Additionally, as a metropolis that tolerates critical interpretations, particularly the relationship between Japan and Korea during the last century, there are other precedents in Osaka prefecture for the reconfigured symbolism of Kudaraji ato historical park.55

Commemoration of Ancient History and the Politics of Monuments
Why spend vast sums of public monies to create, maintain, and promote historical parks of ruined temples? Aside from serving as regional development projects in order to enhance the local economy, there is more at issue behind these parks. As symbols, historical parks in Japan often serve as staged representations of the ancient past, communicating or reinforcing certain narratives concerning public memory. That is, the modern monuments recreate structures or parts of structures dating to the historical past and, because the degree of accuracy can vary, some might look more like an imagined theatrical stage than what has actually been determined according to the archaeological evidence. Local communities often make the decisions as to what the historical park should represent and the overall narrative being played out at the park. John R. Gillis reminds us that memories and identities are constructions of reality based on political and social agendas and, moreover, they are highly selective, serving particular interests and ideological positions.56 At Hirakata city, various citizen groups representing the resident Korean population mobilized behind Kudaraji ato historical park with the aim of revising the public monument to both remind and educate the public about the peninsular origins of this ancient historic site’s founders, and to essentially transfer the prestige and legitimacy associated with the ruined temple to the modern identity of ethnic Koreans in Japan today.

Identity, as defined by Richard Handler, should be considered a communicative process and not as a fixed, bounded entity.57 The shifting notion of identity, in terms of how residents of specific cities in contemporary Japan define their relationship to each other and to the global community, are given material form in the local historical park. This sort of discourse centering on historical parks and identity is

55 For example, in Daniel Seltz’s comparison of peace museums addressing the effects of the Pacific War in Japan, “Peace Osaka, founded in 1989, sits on the grounds of Osaka Castle... The lower floor distinguishes this museum even from the other harshly self-critical peace museums. This exhibit comprehensively covers the period of Japanese expansionism in the 1930s and frankly condemns the military’s actions. One panel is entitled ‘Invading the Asian Continent’ and is accompanied by displays of the military’s brutal actions in China... There is a section on the annexation of Korea in 1909 and the subsequent labor conscription of many Koreans, ending with a note that ‘Japan still has many unsolved problems’ regarding the human rights of the 680,000 resident Koreans in Japan today. There is a level of self-accusation in the room that makes the exhibits seem almost as if they were written by the victims of the Japanese.” See Seltz 2004, 141.

56 Gillis 1994, 3-5.

57 While considering the meaning of identity, Handler states that “For any imaginable social group—defined in terms of nationality, class, locality, or gender—there is no definitive way to specify ‘who we are,’ for ‘who we are’ is a communicative process that includes many voices and varying degrees of understanding and, importantly, misunderstanding.” See Handler 1994, 30.

Public Memory and Identity Politics
at the Ruined Buddhist Temple Kudaraji ato in Hirakata City

part of a critical, ongoing dialogue. As one example of how local historical parks function as public spaces to contest and redefine public memories of antiquity, the most recent transformation of Kudaraji ato historical park into a place for ritualistic and performative activities promoting the mending of relationships between holders of Korean and Japanese identities, namely the annual Hirakata-Kudara Festival, this development indicates that historical parks administered by local municipalities are the kinds of essential civil spaces described by Gillis: “In this era of plural identities, we need civil times and civil spaces more than ever, for these are essential to the democratic processes by which individuals and groups come together to discuss, debate, and negotiate the past and, through this process, define the future.”58

As a civil space where discussions converge on notions of ethnic identity and ancient history, the twenty-first century reinvention of Kudaraji ato historical park has not yet materialized and Kudaraji ato is still being excavated on a yearly basis at the present time. It can be argued that Hirakata city decided to renovate the site, starting with extensive archaeological reexamination, partly in response to active lobbying by residents seeking to redevelop the site into a structural monument to signify an ancient Korean heritage. But the exact form and shape that the park will take at the conclusion of excavations shall demonstrate whether the dialogue is, in practice, open between local community leaders of Hirakata city such as Sato, and various government officials. The eventual renovation of the historical park, proposed to occur in the year 2015, will serve as an interesting test case that indicates the degree of financial commitment and the overall political standpoint regarding what the public significance of the park should be, according to responses by the Japanese national government, the Osaka prefectural government, and the Hirakata municipal government. What will be of highest priority? On the one extreme, the renovated park could attempt to display a high degree of historical accuracy based solely on excavation results. On the other extreme, the reinvented park could be treated primarily as a place for heritage tourism and special cultural events, showcased by a fully reconstructed temple building that is speculative in nature and without firm historical basis. And will it take substantial funding from the Korean government, similar to the case of Paekche Hall built at Kudara no Sato in Kyushu, for resident Korean activists in Japan to realize their plans at Kudaraji ato? After the latest round of negotiations concerning this site takes place in the future, it is the author’s hope that the built environment at Kudaraji ato historical park reflects how diverse voices and perspectives can effectively contribute to meaningful discourses on cultural and identity politics, as well as to the public good.

GLOSSARY

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Public Memory and Identity Politics
at the Ruined Buddhist Temple Kudaraji ato in Hirakata City

shigaichi ni aru shiseki kōen to chūki shakai to no tsunagari” 百濟寺跡公園の利用実態について：市街地にある史跡公園と地域社会とのつながり. Conference proceedings published in Nihon kenchiku gakkai Kinki shibu kenkyū hōkoku shokei gakai 日本建築学会近畿支部研究報告集計画系. 233-236.


