

# The Space Development Study of Former Okayama Shrine

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**Abstract**— Taiwan had been under Japanese rule for fifty years and Japanese introduced the modernized system of state and facilities into Taiwan. Meanwhile, they also introduced the Japanese traditional religion--Shinto to Taiwanese. In 1934(Showa 9), Taiwan Governor-general's Office implemented a policy of "One village one shrine", which meant widely establishing Shinto shrines. Then Taiwan Governor-general's Office implemented the policy of "Kominka Movement" in 1937(Showa 12) due to the July 7 incident. The ultimate target of Japanese government was to make Taiwan's inherent religion be substituted with Japanese Shinto. Against the newspaper literature, this paper introduces the changes in the landscape where Okayama Shrine is located today, and provides a reference of the changes in the historical and cultural landscape.

**Keywords**— Japanese colonial period in Taiwan, Okayama shrine, one village one shrine, space correspondence model

## I. INTRODUCTION

In Taiwan under Japanese colonial period, the establishment of shrines could be said to be part of the Japanese colonial government's recognition of the spirit of imperialization. After the war, most of the shrines in Taiwan were used for other purposes. Its function seems to have been taken away from people's lives, for example, the Taiwan Shrine in the Japanese rule era was replaced by the Grand Hotel. This article uses Okayama Shrine as an example. Today, Okayama Shrine is located in Taoist Temple, Gangshan Branch of Kaohsiung Public Library, and Gangshan Park. Okayama Shrine used to be one of the important landmarks of Okayama-gun. However, today, not only the "shrine" has disappeared from the landscape, but also many residents know only Taoist Temple. It is not known that this site was once an important sacred space in the Japanese ruling era. Why was Okayama Shrine built on this site? Why has the use of the site changed since then? It is quite curious.

Related studies on the construction of shrines have been conducted by Ms. Chen Luan-Feng et al [1]. In this article, we present the changes in the landscape of Okayama Shrine, using reports from the Taiwan Daily News and photos of the local area during the Japanese rule era. Understanding the policy background of the construction of Okayama Shrine during the Japanese rule era. Analysis of the interaction between Okayama Shrine and local residents from the newspaper data. Finally, we will introduce the change of the landscape where Okayama Shrine is located today, in order to provide a reference of the change of the historical and cultural landscape.

## II. THE CONSTRUCTION OF OKAYAMA SHRINE DURING JAPANESE COLONIAL PERIOD

In 1931, before the Mukden Incident, there were not many shrines in Taiwan, and the number of shrines was only 25. Since then, the number of shrines has increased significantly in order to strengthen the "imperial spirit" of the Taiwanese people. Under the slogan of "Respect for the gods and

ancestors" and "Shrine in the country, holy shelter in the house", the shrine building campaign of "one village one shrine" was promoted throughout Taiwan. On the other hand, there is a campaign of "worshipping the Ōnusa and setting up holy shelters" in every household in Taiwan. By 1945, the number of shrines in Taiwan had increased to 68. At that time, the number of states, cities and counties in Taiwan was 5 prefectures, 2 chōs, 9 cities, 45 guns, 38 streets and 217 villages. If we want to achieve the goal of "one village one shrine", at least 300 shrines must be built throughout Taiwan. This shows how difficult it is to implement in practice.

As a symbol of the empire's education of the people, there are certain regulations for the location of shrines. In 1924, the decree relating to the location of shrines mentions two points as follows:

1. The location of the shrine should be far away from the existing market place, so we do not have to worry about the inconvenience of worshipping when choosing the location.
2. The community should choose a quiet place, whether it is high ground or flat ground, and evergreen broad-leaved trees around the community so that it can become a solemn community in the future [1]. In 1934, the "one village one shrine" regulation also promulgated important ordinances for the construction of shrines.
  1. Objective: To build shrines in key areas throughout the island so that the islanders can respect the gods and honor their ancestors and return to their roots, and so that the shrines can also serve as centers of social education.
  2. Arrangement: create shrines in each village. One shrine for each village is not allowed to be established indiscriminately. In the case of areas where no shrines have been established, the first two items shall be the criteria.
  3. Equipment: Land: more than four or five thousand pings. Building: The main hall, about five pings. Worship hall, about 20 pings. In addition, there are also a Chōzuya, a social affairs office, and a Torii. The scale of forestation is planned according to the size of the worshippers. If it is difficult to build a shrine immediately, the land on which the shrine is located should be decided first [2].

[3] It is generally believed that the locations of shrines in Taiwan can be divided into four major categories: urban neighborhoods, parks, suburban hilly areas, and buildings. [4] Based on the above analysis, what are the characteristics of the site of Okayama Shrine? In 1942, Okayama Shrine was listed as one of the four rural shrines in Kao-hsiung Prefecture. [1] It was the Shinto ritual center of Okayama-gun under the "One gun one shrine" system at that time. In 1920, Okayama Street became an important local town as it was the location of Okayama-gun's officer hall and Okayama-sho's office site. During the Showa period, the east side of Okayama City was connected to the longitudinal railroad, and the west side was connected to the farmland, the naval station and the sugar railway. The development of the city is located right in the middle of these two railway lines, with the A-gong-dian stream running through the city. As shown in Figure 1, Okayama Shrine was built in the northwest of Okayama area.

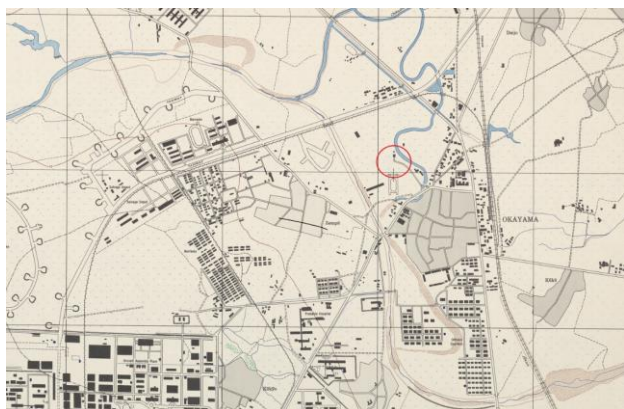


Fig. 1. Location of the former Okayama Shrine in Okayama area on 1944 [4].

In 1933, the tenth anniversary of the issuance of the "Imperial Edict for the Revitalization of the National Spirit", the construction of Okayama Shrine was planned as a memorial project. Construction began in April of 1935 and was completed on December 9 of the same year. [5] Why was Okayama Shrine built on the northwest side of the city? According to a report in the Taiwan Daily News, August 10, 1934, "..... The site for the establishment of Okayama Shrine was chosen as southern hill of Okayama area. The main reason was the low elevation (4m) of Okayama area, which was prone to flooding in case of storms. [6] It is evident that the site of Okayama Shrine was chosen from Kogonzan hill because the area of Okayama area was prone to flooding. It is preferable to build a shrine on a higher ground, according to the "Important Conditions for Shrine Treatment" of 1924 and the "One village one Shrine" of 1934. However, why is Okayama Shrine still located on Okayama street in the end? From Figure 1, the "Okayama City Plan" of 1938 shows that the shrine is located directly north of the district (circled at the top of Figure 1), and it is at the far north. The north side of Okayama City does not have a high ground opposite to the south side of the city, although the north side of the shrine faces south. However, the spatial location of Okayama Shrine is still in accordance with the provisions of No. 654-1, "Important Documents Related to the Establishment of

Shrines," issued by the Bureau of Education and Culture on October 22, 1935: "When selecting a site in the territory, make sure that the main shrine faces south. In the plan, the spatial correspondence between the shrine and the government office is between the north and the south. The shrine is in the north outside the old city, and the government office is in the south of the old city, with the dense urban area in the middle, and this spatial configuration is the most common. [1] According to the regulations of site selection, there are already characteristics such as far from the city street, public worship, and quiet place, not to mention that the ordinance has already pointed out that it is not limited to highland or flat land. [7] Okayama Shrine was completed and the festival was held on November 15 every year. As can be seen in Figure 2 and Figure 3, the torii and the sandō of Okayama Shrine were planted with trees to create a special space in order to create a solemn and sacred space in accordance with the government regulations.



Fig. 2. Former Okayama Shrine sandō [16].



Fig. 3. There are also many trees planted around Okayama Shrine [16].

### III. SHRINE AND THE LIFE OF LOCAL RESIDENTS

After the construction of Okayama Shrine, did it have any connection with the lives of the local residents for almost a decade until the Japanese left the country? Perhaps we can get a glimpse from the following reports in the Taiwan Daily News. In November 1938, the Taiwan Daily News reported, "A pair of bronze horses was dedicated at Okayama Shrine by the Okayama Gun Animal Meat Association of Kao-hsiung Prefecture and the Okayama Nanzai Specialty Products Association. .... (omitted)". [8] From this report, we can see that merchants organized the dedication of the shrine to the government. There were rumors that this pair of bronze horses did exist, but I don't know where they have ended up today.

In addition, in 1938, the Taiwan Daily News reported, "A baseball game of the XX Section of Okayama Gun, Kao-hsiung Prefecture, was held at 10:30 p.m. on the 5th at Okayama Shrine's outer garden ..... (later omitted). [9] In

1942, also reported: "..... Junior sumo (school children) at 10:30 a.m. in the outer garden 4. Military lecture at 2:00 p.m. in the Gun conference room. Congratulatory Banquet at 4:00 pm at the village hall. [10] It can be seen that officially supported sports competitions such as baseball and sumo wrestling were held using the sports grounds of Okayama Shrine at that time. It is easy to see from this that these sports activities have a strong sense of Japan. As a result, the shrine space became a place for people's daily activities through sports, lectures, and other educational activities.

During the Showa period, the Japanese colonial government made the construction of shrines a direct focus of cultivating the spirit of imperialization. [11] By this time, Okayama Shrine had been built, and the prayer activities during the warring period were typical of the cultivation of the spirit of imperialization. For example, in October 1938, the Taiwan Daily News said, "After receiving the bulletin of the lost of Hankow, Okayama Street in Takao Prefecture held a prayer party for victory at Okayama Shrine at 9:00 a.m. on the eighth day, and students lined up with flags ..... (omitted). [12] In 1941, "Taiwan Daily News" reported, " The U.S.-British attack on the convention in the afternoon of the 12th, the Okayama Village Hall was held, and before the start of the ceremony, the soldiers from the county went to Okayama Shrine to pray for victory. .... (later omitted). [13] From this report of Okayama Shrine, it is easy to see the tension between Japan and the U.S. and Britain at that time. It is evident that the young students of Taiwan were included in the war system by joining the prayer team.

[14] Even at the end of the war, when the Japanese government should have been too busy to take care of itself, there were still plans to renovate Okayama Shrine, which shows that the shrine was an important project that the Japanese government was unwilling to give up from the beginning.

For the Japanese government, the orderly and disciplined activities gathered at the shrine and the many temporary festivals held for the blessing of the military illustrate the strong political consciousness and the strong edifying symbolism of Okayama Shrine.

#### IV. TODAY'S USE OF OKAYAMA SHRINE

After the Second World War, the ROC Government took over Taiwan. According to the "Guidelines for the Treatment of Shrine Land in Taiwan Province" issued by the Ministry of the Interior, the shrine land is divided into national, provincial, county and municipal, and township ownership according to the level of the administrative region to which the shrine land originally belongs. [1] And in 1945, through relevant meetings and orders, the establishment of loyalty shrines was required throughout the country. It is also stipulated that each county and city will change the Japanese shrines within its jurisdiction into the loyalty shrines of the Republic of China, replacing the gods with Taiwan's anti-Japanese heroes and martyrs of the Republic of China. [1] As a result, the Taiwan Patriotic Shrine became the Taipei City Martyrs' Shrine in 1969 and the Kaohsiung Shrine became the Martyrs' Shrine in 1977. In addition to the many shrines that have been converted

to Martyrs' Shrine or other sites, what has happened to Okayama Shrine?

During the Kangxi era of the Qing Dynasty, the Mazu of the Taoist Temple was brought to Okayama by devotees from the distraction of Mazu in the Tien-Hau Temple in Tainan. The original site, located at the intersection of Pinghe Road and Viren Road, was the center of the A-gun-dian Market in the old days and was a place of faith for merchants and travelers from the Okayama area in the early days.



Fig. 4. Former Okayama Shrine Torii [16].



Fig. 5. Current status of the Taoist Temple [16]



Fig. 6. The closed mouth koma-inu of former Okayama Shrine [16]



Fig. 7. The opened mouth koma-inu of former Okayama Shrine [16]

The authors visited the current site of Okayama Shrine, which is now the site of Gangshan Park, Taoist Temple, and the Gangshan branch of Kaohsiung Public Library, as shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5. At the intersection of Park Road and

Viren Road, before entering the Gangshan branch of Kaohsiung Public Library, you will see a red pagoda, which used to be the torii of Okayama Shrine.

different from the solemn realm created during the Japanese rule era.



Fig. 8. Two Japanese mikoshi (portable shrine) remain in the Taoist Shrine[16]



Fig. 9. The Dai (left), Hibukuro(Right down), and Kulin(Right upper) of Tōrō remain in the Taoist Shrine[16].



Fig. 10. Chōzubachi remain in the Taoist Shrine[16].



Fig. 11. Chōzubachi remain in the Taoist Shrine (Cont.)[16].

[15] The original site of the shrine has been changed to Taoist Temple. If you walk along the Chinese pagoda in the direction of Taoist Temple, although the shrine building is no longer there, the park on both sides is densely wooded and exudes a quiet atmosphere. The atmosphere is somewhat similar to the solemn and quiet atmosphere deliberately created by shrines in the past. The difference is that in this past shrine space, many elders are talking, playing chess, and making tea, which could not be more leisurely. This is a far



Fig. 12. Tōrō remain in the Taoist Shrine[16].

Taoist Shrine is dedicated to Mazu and is currently the main center of worship for the residents of Gangshan district. Today, the residents have long forgotten the three gods (Kunitama, Ōkuninushi, and Sukunabikona) and Prince Kitashirakawa Yoshihisa that were worshipped at Okayama Shrine in the past. [1]

In 1931, in order to eliminate the flooding in Okayama town and to improve the appearance of the city and traffic, the Mayor of Okayama, Yang Shou, demolished the Mazu Temple and looked for a site to build it again. However, it was not rebuilt until 1977. In front of the Taoist Shrine today, you can still see the same pond as in front of the shrine in the past, as shown in Figure 3. The two koma-inu in front of the Mazu Temple, shown in Figures 6 and 7, also date from the Japanese colonial period. Shown in Figures 8, Two Japanese mikoshi (portable shrine) still remain in the Taoist Shrine. Every year, the birthday of Mazu is a major event in Gangshan district, and during the Lunar New Year, Taoist Shrine is filled with worshippers who worship Mazu for a peaceful year, demonstrating the power of traditional folk beliefs. There are also Chōzubachi and some remnants of the stone Tōrō, as shown in Figures 9 to 12. Sandō was approximately near the present-day the Gangshan branch of Kaohsiung Public Library. The whereabouts of a pair of bronze horses that were dedicated by the Okayama Gun Animal Meat Association in 1938 are unknown.

## V. CONCLUSION

In Taiwan under Japanese rule, shrines were built as part of the Japanese colonial government's efforts to honor the spirit of imperialization. After the war, most of the shrines in Taiwan were used for other purposes. In the past, Okayama Shrine was one of the important landmarks of Okayama-gun, but today, not only has the "shrine" disappeared, but many residents only know about Taoist Shrine, not that the site was once an important shrine space during the Japanese rule. This article discusses why Okayama Shrine was established at this site, using the Taiwan Daily News and other relevant information. And how has the site been used since then?

For at least ten years until Japan's defeat in 1945, Okayama Shrine was an actual sight. However, with the change of government and the demolition of Okayama Shrine, what you can see today is Taoist Shrine, the library, and Gangshan Park, and the memory of the shrine is gradually being erased. Most of the items related to the shrine have been discarded, or even left unattended on a roadside corner. Even though Taoist Shrine once disappeared from the city streets, when it replaced the site's landscape, residents soon continued the activities and customs of the traditional faith there. It is evident that the shrine, a product of the imperialization movement, was a policy imposed on the people from the top down and did not reach the people. It is interesting to note that the official religious space centered on the shrine, which served as a gathering place for activities for nearly a decade during the Japanese rule, was replaced by traditional temples in Taiwan after the war. The address continues to function as a symbol of religious and cultural activities in the neighborhood, and plays the role of a religious spiritual landmark.

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