

Journal of Heritage Tourism >

Volume 15, 2020 - [Issue 6](#)

899 | 5 | 1  
Views | CrossRef citations to date | Altmetric

Articles

# 'Kamikaze' heritage tourism in Japan: a pathway to peace and understanding?







Richard Sharpley 

Pages 709-726 | Received 27 Jan 2020, Accepted 13 Apr 2020, Published online: 28 Apr 2020

 Cite this article  <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743873X.2020.1758117>



Sample our  
Museum and Heritage Studies  
Journals  
>> **Sign in here** to start your access  
to the latest two volumes for 14 days

-  Full Article  Figures & data  References  Citations  Metrics
-  Reprints & Permissions [Read this article](#) [Share](#)

## ABSTRACT

Reflecting the wider belief that international tourism offers the opportunity to encourage peace and understanding amongst peoples and nations, one objective of Japan's recent tourism development policy is the enhancement of mutual understanding and the promotion of international peace. The purpose of this paper is to consider the extent to which this objective is achievable, particularly in the context of continuing controversy surrounding the country's confrontation of its twentieth century military heritage in general and its role in the Pacific War in particular. Based on research at two 'difficult' heritage sites, Chiran Peace Museum in Kagoshima Prefecture and Yūshūkan War Museum in Tokyo, it explores specifically how the kamikaze phenomenon is commemorated and interpreted for international visitors, in so doing revealing a significant degree of dissonance at both sites. Not only is a selective narrative of heroic sacrifice presented within a wider revisionist history of the Pacific

War but also no attempt is made to acknowledge the prevailing cultural context that might underpin a more nuanced understanding of the kamikaze. Hence, the paper concludes that a meaningful opportunity to enhance international understanding has been missed.

#### KEYWORDS:

Tourism and peace Japan difficult heritage dissonance Chiran peace museum  
Yūshūkan War Museum

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Note on contributors

Richard Sharpley is Professor of Tourism and Development at the University of Central Lancashire, UK, and Visiting Professor with the Centre for Tourism Research, Wakayama University, Japan. His principal research interests are within the fields of tourism and sustainable development, the tourist experience and dark tourism. He has published numerous books and papers in all three areas. Currently, he is engaged in three-year project exploring the presentation and interpretation of Japan's difficult pasts.

## Related research

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by  
5

[Memories of the Tokko: An Analysis of the Chiran Peace Museum for Kamikaze Pilots](#) >

Ako Inuzuka  
Howard Journal of Communications  
Published online: 8 Mar 2016

## Information for

[Authors](#)

[R&D professionals](#)

[Editors](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Societies](#)

## Opportunities

[Reprints and e-prints](#)

[Advertising solutions](#)

[Accelerated publication](#)

[Corporate access solutions](#)

## Open access

[Overview](#)

[Open journals](#)

[Open Select](#)

[Dove Medical Press](#)

[F1000Research](#)

## Help and information

[Help and contact](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[All journals](#)

[Books](#)

## Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email



Sign me up



Copyright © 2026 Informa UK Limited [Privacy policy](#)

[Cookies](#) [Terms & conditions](#) [Accessibility](#)

Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954  
5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG



**Taylor & Francis**  
by informa