

Tombs Research in the Ryukyus: Crossing the border between Okinawa and Kagoshima.



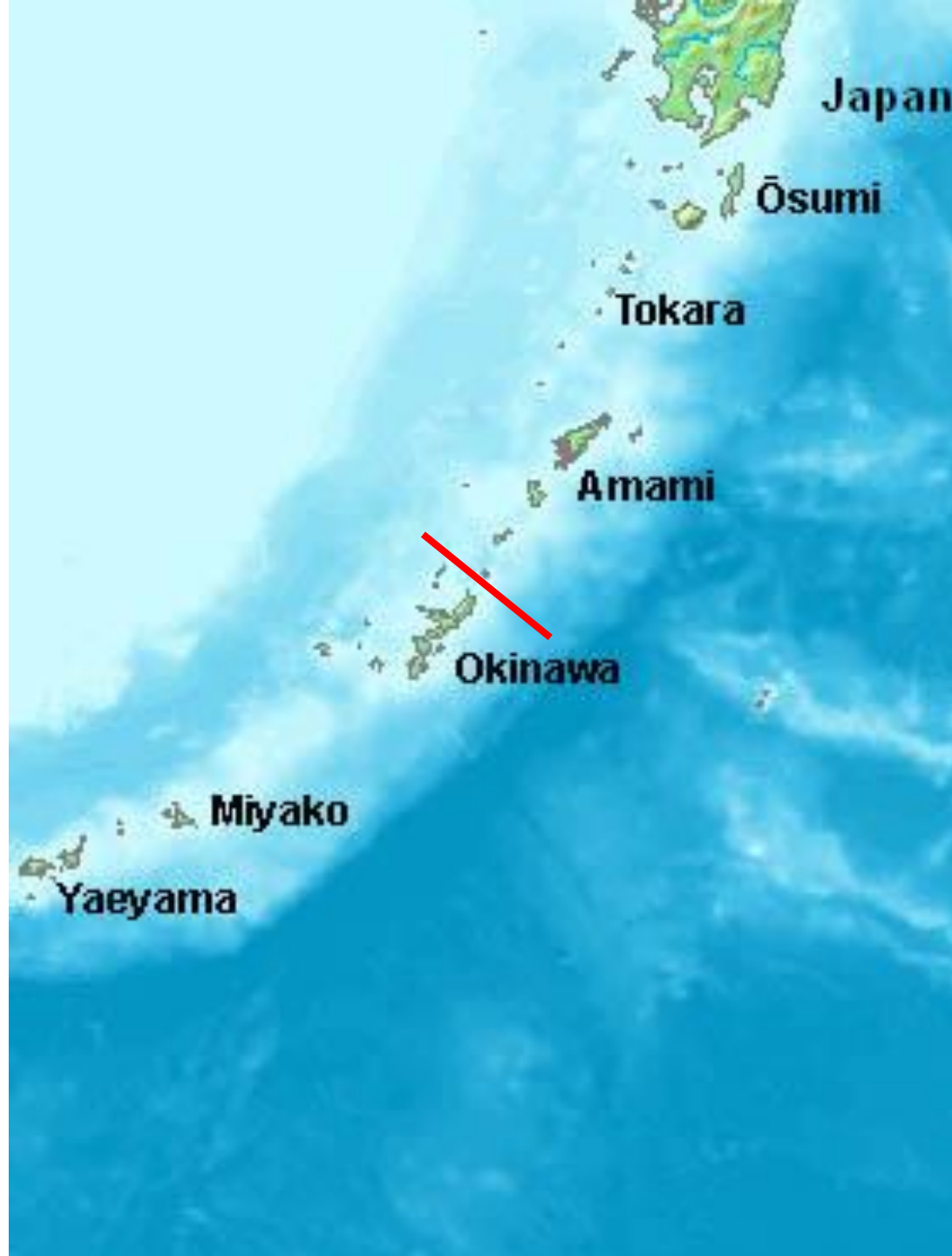
2018.3.18 ECAI / ApSTi Workshop
Heritage and Cultural Conservation -- Digital and Physical

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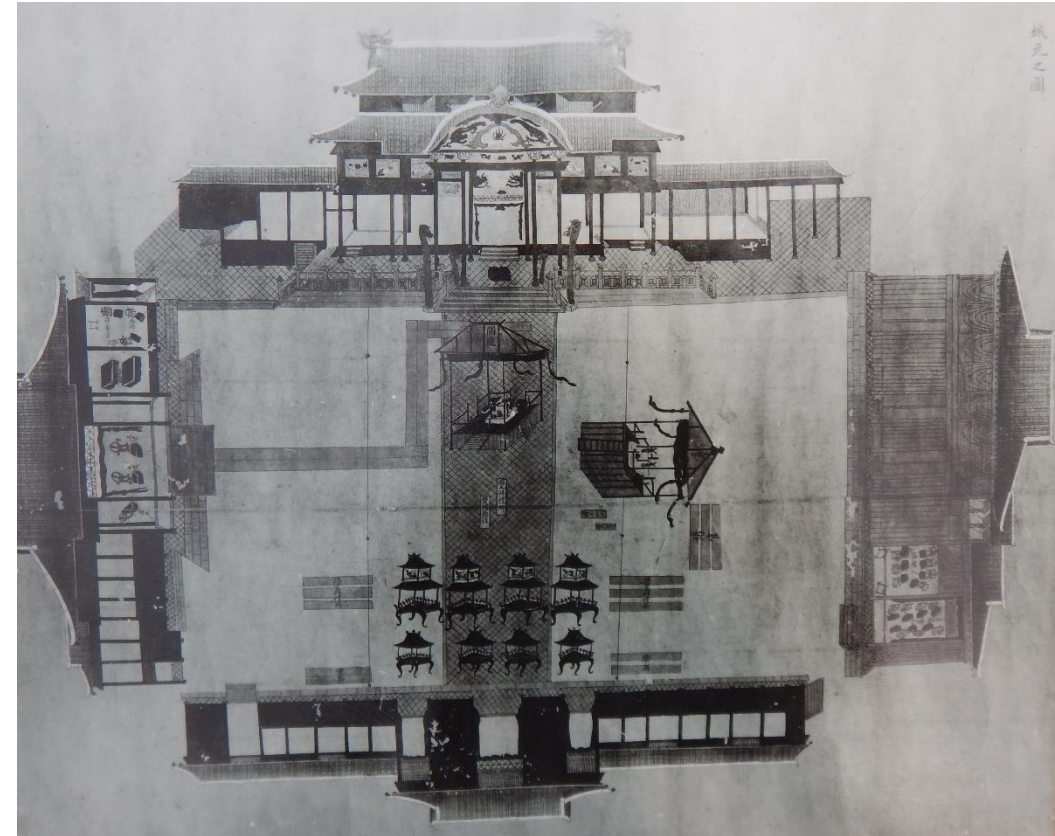
The Ryukyus

- geographical term
- two districts:
Kagoshima ken.
Okinawa Ken.



Ryukyu Kingdom (1429-1879)

- under the Tributary System
- 1609s invaded by Satsuma military
- 1879s turns into Japanese territory
- the American military occupied till 1972s

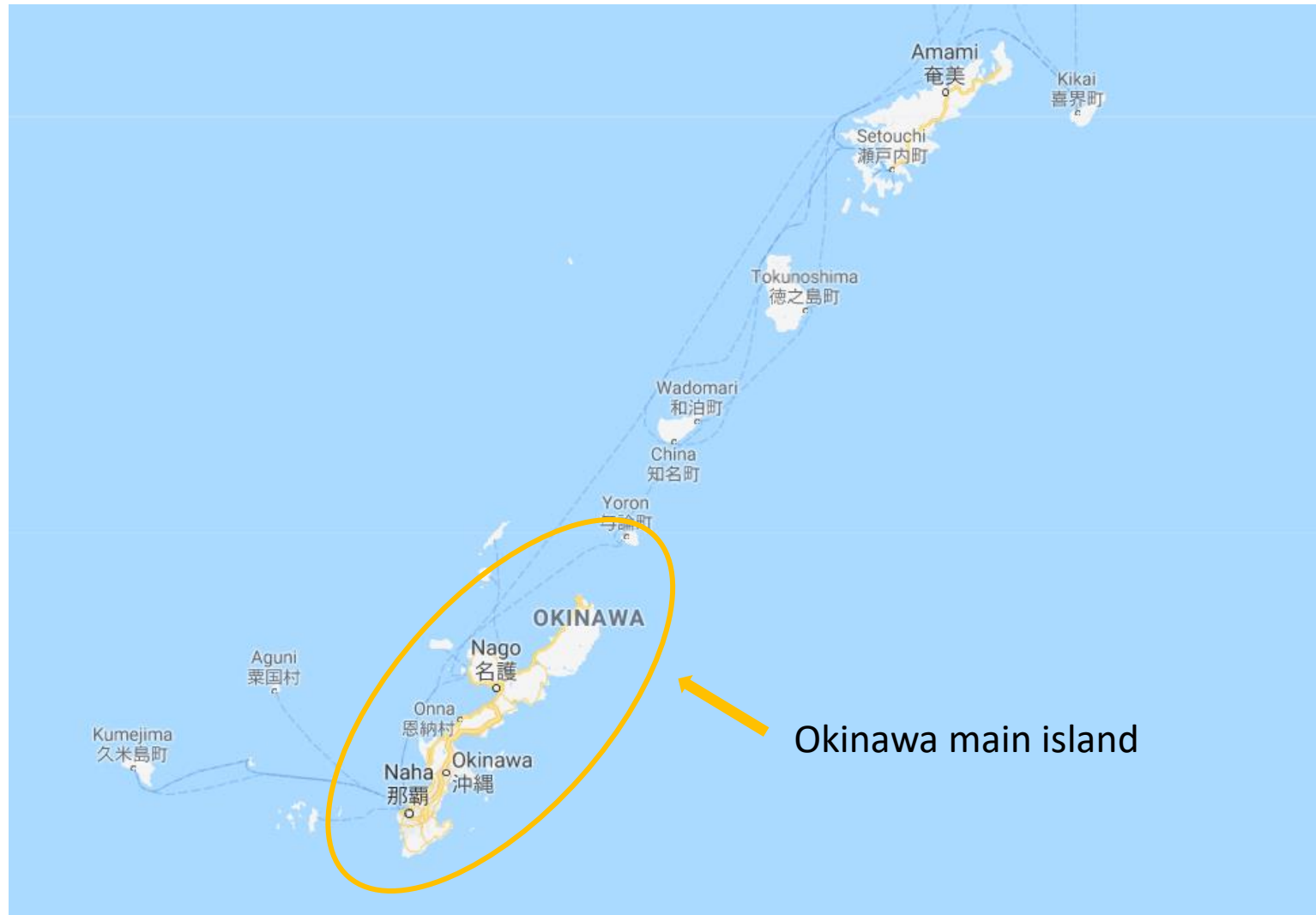


The Ryukyus: Fieldwork in 2017

- Before this trip
- Go all the way north
- between the border:
how the tomb style will change
the percentage of Japanese column
and Ryukyu style tombs is.
- Through the graveyard landscape



Ryukyus: Fieldwork in 2017



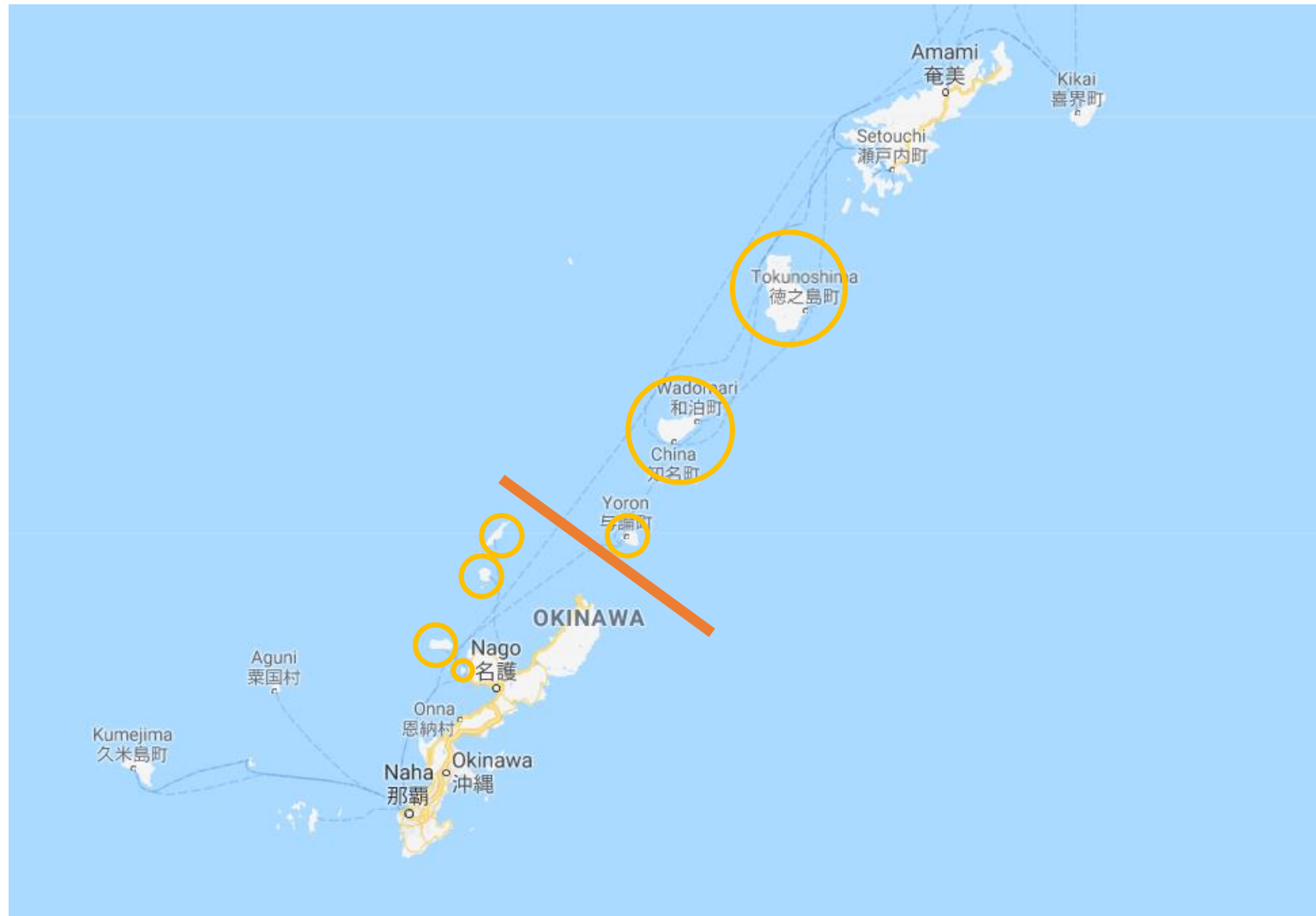
- 4 people
- Okinawa+7 islands
- 10 days

Tomb: The First King of the Ryukyu kingdom

尚's royal family



Ryukyus: Fieldwork in 2017



- 4 people
- 10 days
- Okinawa+7 islands:
Sesoko, Ie, Izena, Iheya,
Yoron, Okinoerabu,
Tokunoshima
- ThakBong website



Ryukyu Burial Custom

- 風葬: put body in a cave/thin plank, exposed to the air
- Wash bones → in a urn
- Put in a cave/different style tomb



Ryukyu Burial Custom

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- Wash bones → in a urn
- Put in a cave/different style tomb
- A family will sweep the tomb every year, till 33 years

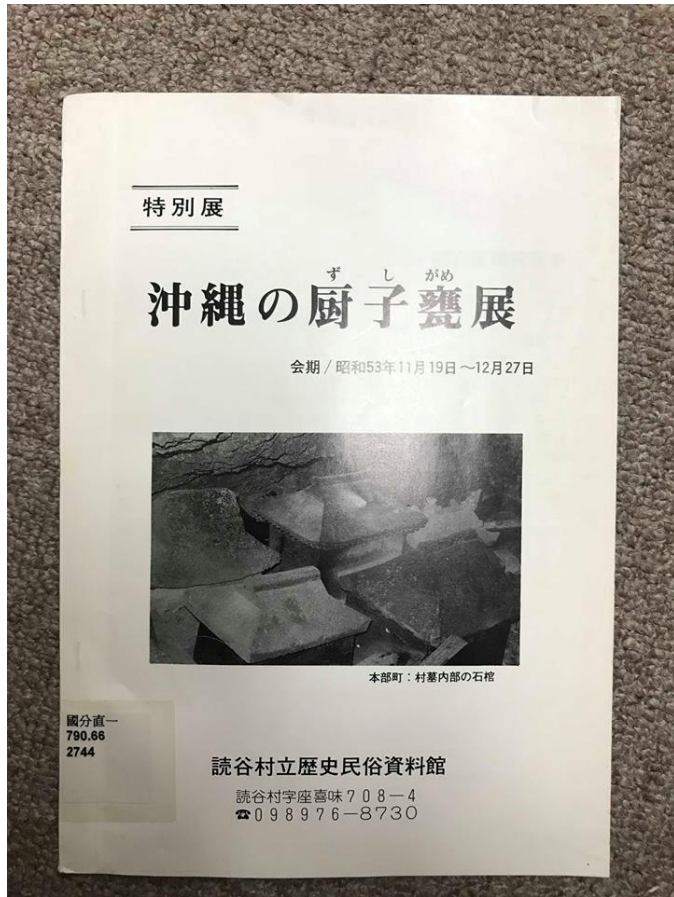


Ryukyu Burial Custom

- 風葬: put body in a cave/thin plank, exposed to the air



廚子甕



Yomitan museum 昭和53

廚子甕

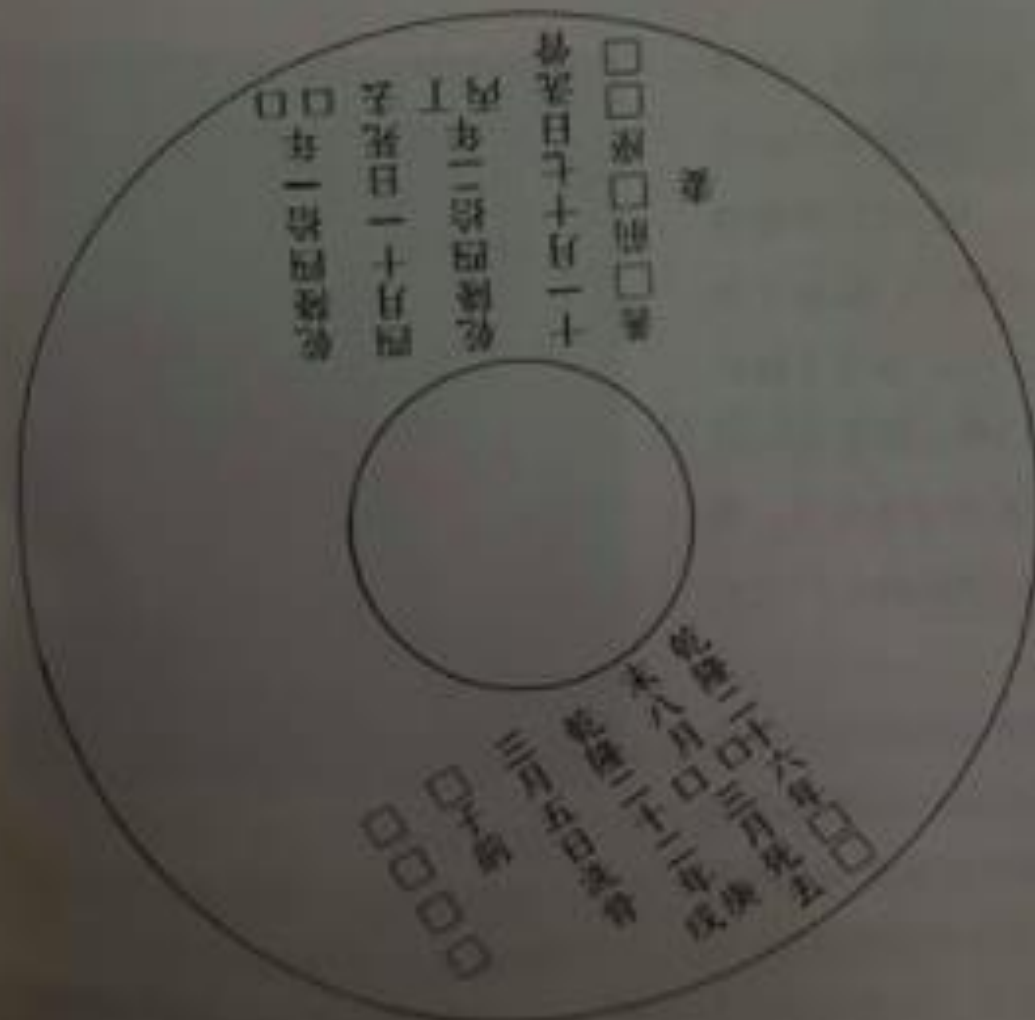
- use to put the bones after it washed.
- it won't retrieve: Ryukyu people believe used urn have loaded a soul
- More than 1 person



- More rare



□事例 (2) (No. 64. 台帳 1067) 甕の蓋の内側



夫婦が祀られている。

- (夫) ① 死亡年月日
② 洗骨年月日
③ 姓名

- (妻)
① 死亡年月日
② 洗骨年月日
③ 夫の姓名
④ 妻 (配偶者)

On the back side, the lid has written characters.

In the back of lid (Itheya)





海州

新56年

日

母

Ryukyu Ethnography

- 風葬 is a common custom in the Ryukyus
- economic conditions
- interview people :
 1. 金関 丈夫: talked about this practice only reluctantly
 2. Our research team: talked about it as an old custom

Ryukyu people are requested to use cremation recent years

琉球民俗誌

金関 丈夫

Publish in 1978



Tomb styles in Okinawa island

■外形別にみる沖縄の墓



洞穴墓



岩穴囲込墓



岩陰墓



ヌーヤ墓



石積墓



壁がん墓



亀甲墓



破風墓



箱形墓



搭式墓



平葺墓



掘込墓



家形墓

Photo credit/名嘉真宜勝(1999年)
「沖縄の人生儀礼と墓」沖縄文化社

We have found in this fieldwork

■外形別にみる沖縄の墓



洞穴墓



岩穴囲込墓



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ヌーヤ墓



石積墓



壁がん墓



亀甲墓



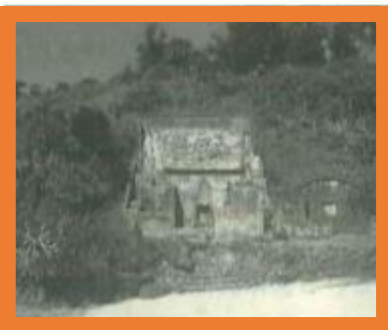
破風墓



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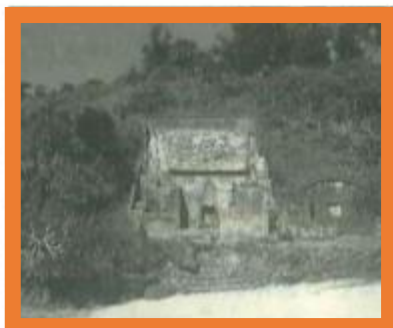
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Ie island



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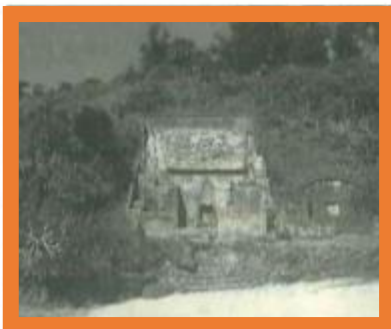
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Okinawa island
The tomb in a crag. Near the beach

We have found in this fieldwork

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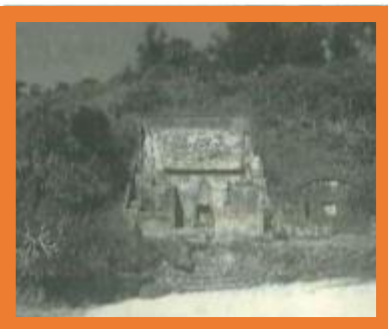
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Ie island



Family Tomb

We have found in this fieldwork

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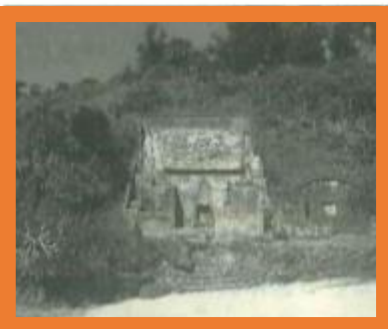
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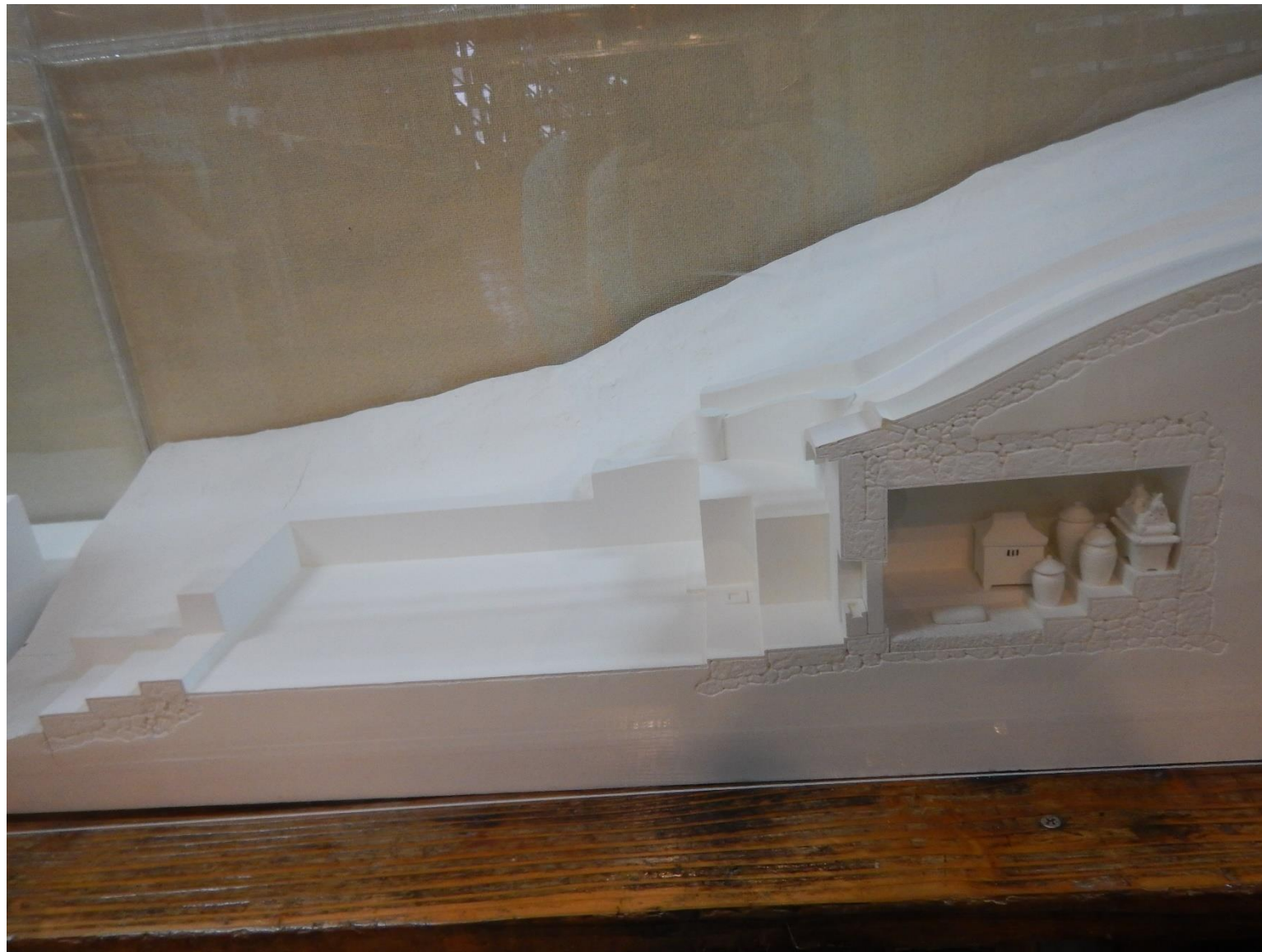
家形墓

Photo credit/名嘉真宜勝(1999年)
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Ie island



In Okinawa Museum



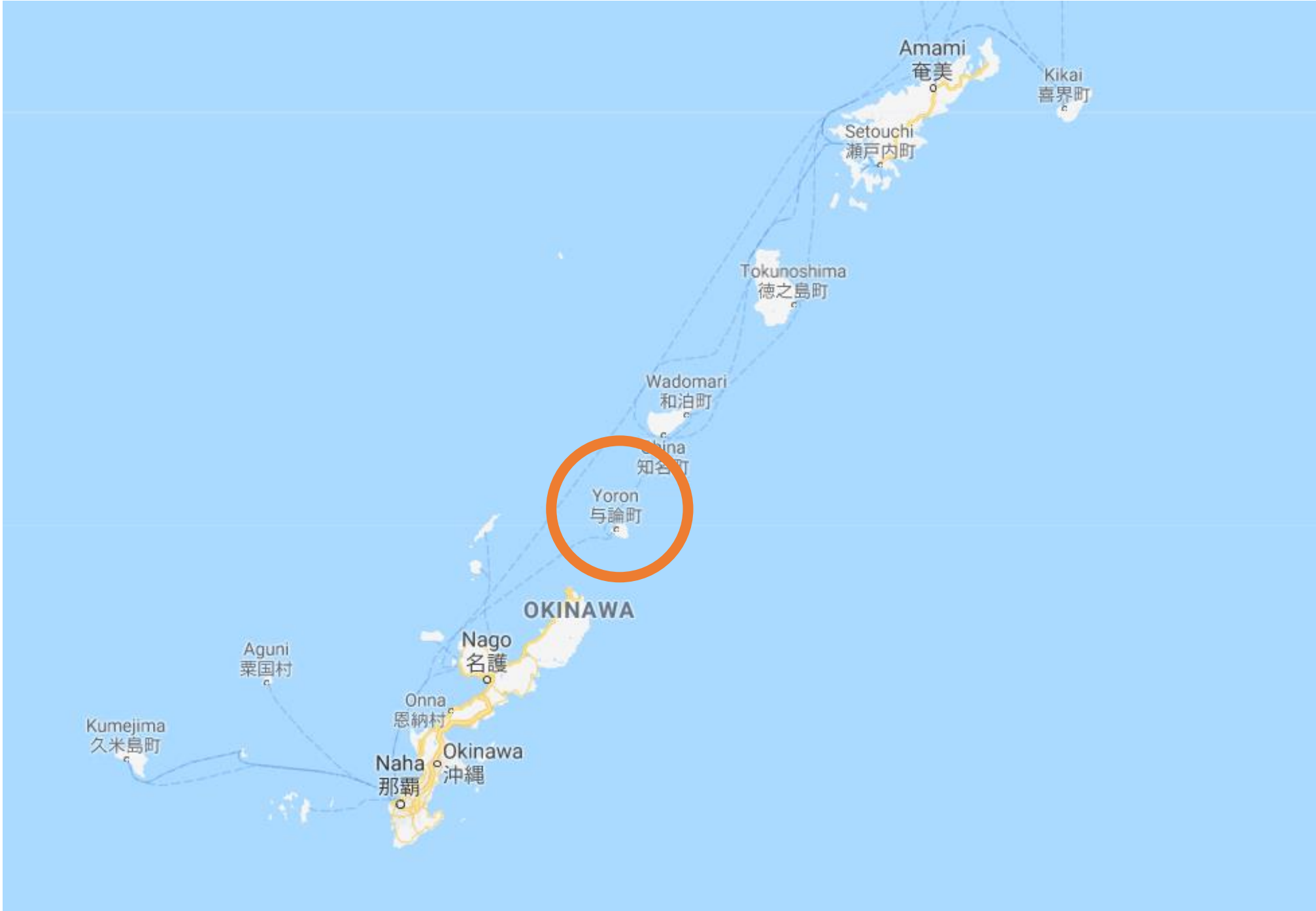


Okinawa
island





Crossing the border








 The highest place in Yoron

 Graveyards we have recorded

 A writer's tomb



If you have visited Japanese graveyards before...



- the urns are buried in the sand instead of put into a cave or into a tomb.
- New tradition/
Pre-tradition





A new tradition?

- Ryukyu burial custom have changed.
- balance the original custom and state power.



eclectic approach

- tactics and imitation of original environment
- suit the new graveyard environment.



Invert urn



imitation

use coral rocks
to pretend that
the tomb is near
the beach.





imitation

the rocks surround
the urn.

It is the same
concept with the
tomb use rocks to
pile up.

Ryukyu people are
finding a new
proper way



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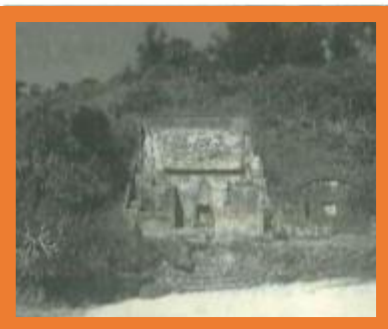
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