

Kyoto University Global COE

“Reconstruction of the Intimate and Public Spheres in 21st Century Asia”

Asian ERASMUS Pilot Program for the Next Generation Researchers and Students from Overseas Partners Institutions

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		Republic of Korea (South Korea)
Home Organization (University/ Institute, Dept./Faculty, Position/Status)	Ph.D. Candidate Department of Sociology at Seoul National University in Korea.	
Invitation Period	From September 1, 2010 to January 3, 2011	
Counterpart Graduate School/ Center at Kyoto University	Counterpart Professor: Prof. Motoji Matsuda Counterpart Graduate School/Center: Graduate School of Letter	
Title of Research	Research on Japanese Peace Museums and War Memories	
Titles of lectures/seminars which you attended and names of the lecturers. (List up to 5 classes.) Attended the seminar by Stephane Heim - From Practices to Discourses: The Construction of the Japanese Model of Industrial Relations (Oct. 19, 2010) Gave a speech at the 3rd Next-Generation Global Workshop ‘Migration: Global Reconstruction of Intimate and Public Sphere’ (Dec.11-12, 2010) Attended the International Conference “Empty Individualization” and Familism in Transitional Societies: Hungary as a Case Study ’(Dec. 14, 2010)		

Please attach a written report of evaluating your results/achievements of our GCOE Asian Erasmus Pilot Program.

(1) Submit a written report in 700 words. (2) Attach reference materials if any. (3) Also, email a digital photo to show your education or research activities if available. (A photo must be within 3000KB in size and shall not infringe on portrait rights.)

The submitted materials will be posted on the web page of this program.

*Please submit the written report within one month after the end of the invitation period to the GCOE office (intimacy@socio.kyoto-u.ac.jp) by email.

* Research Report : Sociological Analysis to the Japanese Peace Museums

I have researched in Kyoto on Japanese peace museums, especially the new emergence of the memory as an aggressor and an explicit recognition of war responsibility since 1990s.

In the most countries, the mainstream and official war memories are formulated to justify wars and victimize themselves. In the post-war Japan, a conquered nation, also have taken the "victimizing" tactics to avoid its responsibility on Asia-Pacific War and war crimes. But, since the 1990s, "new" peace museums embracing the memories of aggression began to emerge, challenging to the existing Japanese war memories. Those are what I'm focusing on in this study. I will review the political and social conditions that made it possible, and to analyse the contents exhibited in these museums.

For these reasons, it's very interesting to see how the politics of memory have been taking place in peace museums. Especially in Japanese society, these features are remarkable. Until 2007, the number of peace museums established in Japan was 56, which slightly outnumbered the total in other countries. Moreover, by 2001, the number of cumulative audience of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum was roughly over 70 percent of total Japanese population. That's the reason in many studies, Japan has described as the Nation of Peace Museums.

However, many previous critical studies about Japanese peace museums have pointed out the limitation. As I mentioned earlier, they have argued that Japanese war memory was mainly about "victimizing" itself(권혁태, 2010; Seaton, 2006; Orr, 2001; Dower, 1999; Hicks, 1998). Especially they indicate that the Japanese peace museums like Hiroshima have played an active role in showing the horror of war only from the victim's perspective, and exclude exhibits on Japan's aggression(여문환, 2008; 김상준, 2005; Jeans, 2005; Giamo, 2003; Buruma, 2002; 藤原 帰一, 2001; Yoneyama, 1998). Actually, Hiroshima's approach has been the common feature of most of the peace museums in Japan. Regarding this, Min-hwan Kim pointed out the decontextualized Japanese peace museum by using the term, 'Hiroshima-orientated' war memory. Kiichi Fujiwara(帰一 藤原) also commented that "the exhibition says wartime, but no mentions about war in it"(2001).

But, Since the early 1990s, 'new' peace museums began to emerge. These new peace museums were distinct from the existing Japanese peace museums by focusing on the perpetrator's memory, and Japan's war responsibility. Among these new peace museums, specific subjects of my research are Osaka International Peace Center(大阪國際平和センター) and Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University(立命館大学国際平和ミュージアム).

Through the research on the two Japanese peace museums, I could conclude two things. First one is that Japanese civil society is the key factor of new peace museums' emergence. Japanese civil society has constantly challenged this dominant official war memory. The Osaka International Peace Center, founded in 1991, was the fruit of long efforts of civil society. Representatives of the NGOs in Osaka began to form a preparatory committee to create peace/war museums since late 1970s. And

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then, by this committee, “Osaka War Memorial Exhibition Room for Peace” was opened on August, 1981. The Kyoto Museum for World Peace, founded on the campus of Ritsumeikan University in 1992, was also possible through the effort of civil society. In the late 1960s, when fierce air raids were made during the Vietnam War, the movement of Japanese citizens for the war exhibition about U.S. air-raid in Japan had been heightened. Especially in Kyoto, among the experiences of war, assailant experienced from Kyoto itself was more focused on rather than the experience from air raids and other war damages. For example, a book published at this time, "Sourcebook of Kyoto Army Related with Nanjing Incident(南京事件京都師團關係資料集)", illustrates the relationship between soldiers drafted from Kyoto and the Nanjing massacre. This insight of civil movement was inherited to Kyoto peace museum.

The other one is the way to make the recognition of complicity. By comparison to Osaka Peace Center, Ritsumeikan Peace Museum's way is the better way to feel one's own responsibility. Commonly in Japanese peace museums, wartime mobilization and student soldier described as adversities that only Japanese people had fallen into. But Kyoto Peace Museum exhibition dwells on its link between what started from here Japan, Kyoto, Ritsumeikan at wartime and the battlefield outside Japan.

It could be referred to as the change of war memories of Japan, but it also gives the lesson to all of us about possible alternative war memories beyond Japan. In any society, it is difficult to face their own aggression. In general, Japan has been contrasted to Germany with its attitude on post-war responsibility, and reconciliation with neighboring countries. And Japanese war memories have been also criticized for only victimizing Japan. But, Japanese civil society have constantly challenged this dominant official war memory. New Japanese Peace Museums are one of the best examples. I think these efforts and endeavors are what have brought, and will keep new peace museums in Japan.