

Intention of Setup of the War Archive Museum in Kobe

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Why do we need a museum of war crime in Kobe now? What was the purpose of starting the campaign to establish the war crime museum in Kobe in 2012?

We would like to carefully pick up the facts of war inceptor / perpetrator / victimizer. We should not end only with the intelligent analysis. We need an opportunity to reconsider the war empirically in “real”. It is because politicians are insisting obstinately as “phantom”, “lying” or “made-up” after the war, even though the Japanese army definitely conducted “war of aggression” to the countries around Asia. The post-war Japanese government insists not only domestically but also internationally that it was the war of “self-existence and self-defense”. We cannot deny that a lot of Japanese have a tendency of indifference, oblivion and fading as if nothing like mass massacres, forced labors and comfort women exist. Those facts are removed from school textbooks, and the history of war is not mentioned directly.

There are problems that Japanese people in the 21st century cannot think realistically even through reading historical documents, because not only they never experienced the reality of the war-time, but also they haven't learnt about it. People are not able to grow their mind to against the society that would be driven back to the war again. Contemporary Japanese people neither experienced a bombing like a rain on the battlefield nor became a witness of the Nanjing Massacre by the Japanese armies from December 1, 1937. They even do not know the scenes that comfort women were forcibly taken away from the Korean Peninsula, China and Southeast Asian countries.

Immediately after receiving the opinion that Japanese army conducted brutal actions before and during the war-time, the climate of “masochistic view of history” instantly, like a parrot, covers the entire Japan.

However, the lethal human experimentation carried out by the Unit 731 (Under General Ishii's supervision. Chemical and biological weapons towards Chinese civil people), the massacre of residents in Fushun at Liaoning Province of China and the genocide (group mass killing) of local people in Okinawa, are not a fabricated history at any means.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unit_731

<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/731%E9%83%A8%E9%98%9F>

The awakening the history that should not be forgotten is not only the purpose of the museum. Learning about the history from the real fact, which were done by Japanese soldiers that should not be repeated, is the primary purpose.

For example, “Fort Siloso, Sentosa Island War Museum” in Singapore and “JEATH War Museum (พิพิธภัณฑ์อักษะเขตยศึก)” IN Thailand were established in the memory of the atrocities that Japanese armies conducted to the local residents or allied prisoners of the war.

<https://discoversg.com/2016/02/15/5-war-museums-in-singapore/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JEATH_War_Museum

After the war, the German government convicted 7189 people, including 10 death sentences and 163 life sentences by pursuit of the Nazi war crime.

On the other hand, Japan has not been judged any war criminals by Japanese on own.

Apologizing to the war victims is a national policy of Germany to keep the past crimes. However, in the immediate after the war, conservative opinions that did not want to acknowledge their perpetration responsibility covered even in Germany. German citizens, politicians and medias came to think that the war by Hitler’s instigation after the 1939 is the first crime, while at the same time, the attitude that to do not think seriously about the crimes as the perpetrator after the war is the second crime. As a result, they built nearly 1000 war crime museums. Whether the country was facing difficulties to budget deficits, the plan of museum was never stopped. For example, in 2005, the German government approved a construction fee of 27 million euros (about 3.7 billion yen) with the best location in Berlin.

Kobe is the only place where the martial law was executed in 1948, three years after the war. It is a routine practice for the war actor to deprive the language of the country or region where they occupied. Domination of the language center is the method of mind-control. There was a Kobe Gun Shooting Incident (commonly known as “Hanshin Educational Struggle”. April 24, 1948), which threaten the Korean school (or Joseon Hakkyo) to eliminate the opportunity to study in Korean language even after the war. Pak Jubeom (1885-1949) who requested a permission of school education by using mother language Korean, died without fulfilling his life ambition.

The reason for setting monument of crime in the past is the prof that we will never repeat the same history. In Germany as well, nearly 20 years after the war, the thought of “we are not responsible for anything” was common. From the viewpoint that the country was saved thankfully by the sacrifices of the spirits of the war dead, they shifted to the logic of opposite denial of accepting what they did as a sin obediently. Therefore, the neighboring country France, which was trampled and occupied during the war time, was able to acknowledge a former enemy Germany as a trustworthy state again.

In Japan, there are excellent facilities that were “damaged”, such as Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. On the other hand, the Japanese government does not talk about “crimes”, and even they show attitude of reflection in overseas, but never apologize. Then such attitude makes the young people who will be responsible for the next generation will be an absolutely ignorant Emperor’s

New Clothes. Just like being proud of the heroes who appeared in the past history, we should not neglect our negative legacy in the past.

In order to deepen friendship with neighboring countries with a future-oriented approach, young people must be adults who can reflect their sin on their own, apologize and compensate. It is too selfish to try making own past never be existed. We should cast off to be a mature country that looks directly about the war. Even if democracies hold back globally, even though the country may step out form the road, we must not abandon the belief to preserve peace. Rather than making an assertion of own damages, it is a premise that the whole Japanese share a perspectives that apologies and compensation as the perpetrators will brings future national interests to Japan. For that purpose, the war museum will be beneficial for deterrence of outbreak the war, being a facility of peace message and education. I will be a chance for Japanese people, who has been sealed their past documents and materials, to revive the historical facts that should be preserved in the memory storage of Japanese people by this war museum. I hope the next generation to have a perspective of inheritance to remember “memory from the past”. It is, so to say, a memory movement.

Peace is a common concept that universally easy for many people to accept regardless of ethnics, philosophies or religions.

I wish the day will come that the facility with archives of massacres, forced labors and comfort women will be established ahead of other Japanese cities.