

ドイツと日本における戦後移民の文化的記憶 ー戦後帰還を扱う博物館の比較

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Historical Memory of Postwar Migration in Germany and Japan - Preliminary Comparisons of Postwar Repatriation Museums

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Abstract

This paper provides a preliminary comparative analysis of two postwar repatriation (return migration) museums in Germany and Japan: Museum Friedland and the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum. It seeks to understand how the theme of mass migration/displacement caused by war and imperial collapse has been presented at each museum and what accounts for these differences. In doing so, the paper shifts the focus of Germany-Japan war memory comparisons from the most prominent and contentious cases discussed frequently in the media to regional museums and topics that address the consequences of war on civilians. It offers a preliminary conclusion that the differences in the approach that each museum takes, and the contents of their display are derived from a combination of their position in contemporary society, and, to some extent, the lasting influence of the groups behind establishing the museums in the first place.

1. Introduction: Postwar Migration in Historical Memory in Germany and Japan

Germany-Japan comparisons are often made when it comes to the memory of World War II. Most comparisons tend to hold up Germany as a positive example of ‘coming to terms with the past’ (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) which enabled Germany to rebuild strong relations with the postwar nations that had suffered from German aggression and war crimes under the Nazi regime. Japan, on the other hand, is portrayed as having done little to address its wartime past, allowing space for the glorification of its wartime aggression and the denial of well-documented atrocities which complicates Japan’s relations with its neighbors. Such comparisons are made in the newspaper and television media in both countries, and in international media. They appear especially at the time of important war anniversaries, though they follow a rather simplistic narrative which ignores how each societies’ war memory culture emerged over time through socio-political and historical processes. Some scholars have also pointed out that the Germany-Japan contrast often lacks balance as research is usually conducted in European languages, others point to the shifting positions in each country over time, the early years of postwar Germany seemingly offering a contrast to the current image (Seaton 2007).

The comparisons also tend to focus on only a handful of the more controversial or extreme cases, such as holocaust remembrance in Germany and school textbook disputes and the visitation of prominent Japanese politicians to the controversial Yasukuni shrine. My hope in this project is that we can take a broader approach to these comparisons and extend them to local areas, focusing in particular on how war memory narratives were formed and became institutionalized in museums and monuments over time. Furthermore, I would like to broaden the focus on war memory to include the crises that war produces such as human displacement and internment, because although it has been a less prominent theme in war memory in both countries, as a largely civilian-oriented theme it provides the space to produce a more sympathetic, if not a 'tragic' victim narrative (Kossert 2009). In this preliminary study I will examine two museums that treat this topic in each respective country, namely the Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum (*Maizuru Hikiage Kinenkan*, hereafter 'Maizuru museum') in Kyoto Prefecture, Japan; and Museum Friedland in Lower Saxony, Germany. This study is based on archival research, on-site observation and interviews with curators/scientific directors at each museum. Ultimately, I argue that the present circumstances at each of the memory sites and the groups that were influential in their initial establishment largely account for the differences in approach at each museum.

2. Return to Friedland/Maizuru in History

The basis on which Germany-Japan comparisons are made is not a weak one. There are plenty of commonalities and some important differences that must be kept in mind. Both countries waged wars of aggression and were ultimately defeated then occupied by foreign powers. In the German case occupation under multiple parties eventually led to division into the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany (*Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, commonly referred to as West Germany) composed of the American, British and French occupation zones, and the socialist German Democratic Republic (*Deutsche Demokratische Republik*, commonly referred to as East Germany) composed of the Soviet occupation zone. Division would have a profound impact on society and politics in the two Germanies established in 1949, and the legacy would be felt decades beyond reunification in 1990. In contrast, Japan, though it lost its empire, was never divided. Its postwar occupation (1945-52) was essentially US-dominated, though British Commonwealth forces also participated outside of military government. Japan, thus, emerged from the occupation period with a comparatively stable political situation, firmly aligned with the US strategically in the cold war.

For both nations war and defeat brought mass migrations, these included migration as part of the demobilization process, the voluntary repatriations of civilians and forced laborers, deportations and expulsions. In the German case expulsion often extended to long-established German minority communities throughout Eastern Europe, as well as what might be deemed colonial settlers (Lehmann 1991: 18-19). The numbers displaced are disputed, but something in the region of 14 million (ethnic) Germans and 6-7 million Japanese were displaced at the end of World War II, to which we should add 1.5 million non-Japanese who were repatriated/deported from Japan (Kossert 2009: 9; Watt 2009: 77, 93). The reception and then reintegration (for some integration would be

more accurate) of this population was a major socio-economic challenge in the early postwar years in both countries. Furthermore, the prolonged internment of a proportion of this population, mainly in the Soviet Union, was a prominent political question in both countries straining relations in the emerging cold war (Gatrell 2019: 52-59; Watt 2009).

Both the navy seaport of Maizuru and the small rural railway town of Friedland were at the forefront of these issues. They each hosted an important transit camp or repatriation center, and thus played a role in processing and temporarily housing displaced persons, which by the late 1940s and into the 1950s included returning internees from the Soviet Union, some of whom were suspected war criminals. Because of these roles, especially in the 1950s, these somewhat remote localities gained a degree of national media attention, becoming almost synonymous with the topic of repatriation and as such they also emerged as sites where the subject became memorialized through monuments and museums.

The Friedland Transit Camp was partially built on the facilities of a Göttingen University experimental farm and emerged because of its strategic location at the border between the British, US and Soviet occupation zones. As the first railway stop into the British zone from the Soviet zone, later between West and East Germany, it was a logical place to handle populations crossing these borders. The Friedland Transit Camp has operated since 1945 until the present, with some gaps, first it was overseen by the British and then later the regional and federal governments. The operation of the camp also came to involve civil, charity, and religious groups such as the Red Cross, women's associations, student volunteers, church groups and groups that advocated for returnees/repatriates.

Friedland Transit Camp since its opening has hosted or housed approximately 4 million people, 1.8 million of whom passed through the camp between 1945 and 1952, mainly returnees and expellees. It should also be noted that approximately 380,000 left Friedland for East Germany (Museum Friedland 2016: 12-14). In the mid-1950s the arrival of internees from the Soviet Union became something of a political spectacle and media sensation, reaching something of a fever pitch when the Bundeskanzler Konrad Adenauer visited in January 1954 (Spatz 2020, 116-117). In the 1950s through to the 1970, almost half a million *Aussiedler* (resettlers, i.e. people of German descent from Eastern Europe) also came to Friedland, and many others would follow in the decades to come (Spatz 2020). It was not only ethnic Germans who came to the camp, refugees or asylum-seekers from Hungary, Vietnam and Chile in the late 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, and then in more recent years from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc., have passed through or been temporarily housed there (Museum Friedland 2017; Museum Friedland 2016: 32, 46-47). In this way the Friedland Transit Camp is not just a site of memory, it continues to function as a transit camp even as its role is being memorialized.

The Maizuru Regional Repatriation Center was set up in the naval seaport of Maizuru with its location on the Japan Sea coast providing access for ships travelling between Japan and the Asian continent. Established mainly utilizing former naval facilities, it was operated by officials of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, with support from Maizuru City, and during the occupation period (1945-52) it was overseen by the US military. Between 1945-1958 almost 700,000 were repatriated to Japan at Maizuru and approximately 33,000 Koreans, Chinese and Okinawans left Japan (Maizuru

Chihō Hikiage Engo Kyoku 1961: 543). In the early years of operation Japanese arriving at Maizuru were processed at the main port facilities and non-Japanese outbound traffic was processed at Taira, several kilometers out of the main urban area. In later years, outbound traffic was greatly reduced and Japanese repatriation shifted to Taira, where repatriates from the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union took their first steps in postwar Japan (Maizuru Chihō Hikiage Engo Kyoku 1961). Like Friedland, the Maizuru Regional Repatriation Centre operated with multiple groups involved including the Red Cross, local and national women's associations, groups of student volunteers, and returnee groups.

Maizuru was only one of fifteen regional repatriation centers and in terms of the number of repatriates it received it ranked behind both Hakata and Sasebo (Watt 2009: 71). However, because it was the only one still open into the 1950s it received far more press coverage and national fame, becoming synonymous with repatriation and the return of internees from the Soviet Union. Maizuru's association with repatriation was consolidated in popular culture through the hit song and film *ganpeki no haha* about a mother awaiting her son's return in Maizuru (Watt 2009: 146, 165). Unlike Friedland, however, Maizuru's role as repatriation port ended in 1958.

In both Germany and Japan, the memory of displacement and repatriation was for many years not a core part of war memory. In the immediate postwar years repatriates or expellees were one of several groups struggling to survive and though they received some welfare support, this was sometimes resented by the general population and discrimination was an issue in both countries (Kossert 2009: 43-70; Lehmann 1991; Watt 2009: 79, 144). As the economic and political situation stabilized and both countries regained sovereignty, the topic of non-repatriated people, particularly those interned in the Soviet Union, remained a current issue rather than a subject of memory. Overtime, however, the theme of displacement/expulsion and repatriation became an established part of war memory in both countries. Sometimes this has been controversial as by highlighting the displacement, detention and violence directed against Germans and Japanese it opens the possibility that they can be portrayed as victims of retribution from Poles, Czechs, Russians, Chinese and Koreans, etc. Over time repatriate groups in both countries began to build monuments and establish 'memory communities' based on former 'hometowns' or shared experiences such as internment (Katō 2020: 171-200; Kossert 2009: 301-335). In Japan these efforts began to focus on Maizuru (and to a lesser extent Sasebo) in the 1970s and 1980s. In Germany, though monument sites are more dispersed, Friedland emerged as an important site of memory as early as the 1950s and 1960s.

3. Return to Friedland in Memory

Museum Friedland was established in 2016 and is housed in a historically significant site, the former railway station building. The display spans the two floors of the building and currently it attracts approximately 15,000 visitors per year. Besides the main museum there are several other sites around the town of Friedland that the museum introduces to visitors, such as related monuments and churches, and that it manages itself such as examples of Nissen Huts which were once used as temporary housing and now contain additional display space. Museum Friedland is currently undergoing expansion with a new building scheduled to open in 2026 with a display that will focus more on contemporary migration both in Germany and globally.

Museum Friedland was established at the initiative of the State of Lower Saxony (*Niedersachsen*) and as such its management and budget come under the State of Lower Saxony's Ministry of Science and Culture (*Niedersächsische Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur*) which is supplemented by a five-euro admission fee for adults. Museum Friedland employs a professional curator and a scientific director who oversee the display content, as well as several other supporting administrative staff. Audio guides are available in several European languages for visitors to use as they walk through the museum exhibitions and bookable tours of the exhibition and nearby sites are available in German, Arabic, Russian, Farsi, English and French. The explanatory panels throughout the museum exhibition are offered entirely in German and English.

The current museum display is organized into several sub-sections with the ground floor dedicated to the transit camp up to the mid-1950s and the upstairs exhibition space continuing chronologically until the present. The ground floor begins with a lengthy and detailed multi-screen videographic narration of the theme of wartime and early postwar displacement. German expulsion and internment are contextualized as having been just one of several other cases of mass-displacement caused by Germany's war of aggression, with forced labor of occupied persons and concentration camps also mentioned. In the following sub-sections, the administration and organization of the transit camp and life in the camp are presented from multiple angles, using both objects and testimony. An interactive digital chronicle (resembling a scrapbook) allows the visitor to scroll through the media coverage and a detailed chronology of the camp. The remaining exhibition space on the ground floor introduces how missing persons were handled, as well as critical discussion of how Friedland came into the media spotlight as politicians such as Adenauer sought to use the camp for political gain by taking credit for the return of political prisoners of the Soviet Union (some of whom were suspected war criminals). Upstairs the exhibition narrates successive groups of people passing through the camp and a critical discussion of their reception in German society, this includes non-Germans such as Hungarians, Chileans and Vietnamese, and ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe. A comprehensive factual contextualization of these and more recent arrivals is given with reference to shifts in German immigration policy including with reference to refugees and asylum-seekers.

Overall Museum Friedland takes an academically rigorous approach which is both factual and critical, presenting multiple angles on and contextualizing the topics presented, raising questions and interrogating them. Museum Friedland also is willing to foreground its content, wherever relevant, in global themes as is evident on the second floor where contemporary migration is discussed. If one were to be critical of Museum Friedland, it could be said that the display is quite dense and thus may be inaccessible to young children. This is compounded by a rather dark exhibition space. In terms of content, there is little discussion of the life of migrants after leaving the transit camp, namely the question of integration.

Museum Friedland was not, however, the first memorialization initiative in Friedland related to the Friedland Transit Camp. Two examples, entirely unconnected to Museum Friedland, are particularly noteworthy. The first was built in 1955 at the height of media coverage of Friedland due to the return of German political prisoners of the Soviet Union. It is a six-meter statue standing in front of

St. Norbert's Church depicting a man in a long *Wehrmacht* military coat stepping over barbed wire with a hopeful gaze. The statue represents a returnee from Soviet internment and was created by sculptor Fritz Theilmann, himself a returnee, and funded by the Association of Returnees (*Verband der Heimkehrer*, VdH) as a memorial to the Soviet internment experience. St. Norbert's church also contains several artworks of Theilmann which using Christian motifs and, like the statue, portray German victimhood without reference to the victims of German aggression.

The second noteworthy memorialization in Friedland is a much larger memorial monument (*Mahnmal*) built on a hill overlooking Friedland in 1967, again the initiative of VdH. The foundation stone was laid by then former Bundeskanzler Adenauer who had long supported the idea. It was supposed to commemorate the return to (West) Germany of millions of Germans displaced by the war, and, through its elevated location which made it visible across the border into East Germany, it was supposed to symbolize freedom in the West (Spatz 2020: 178-181; Schiessl 2016). The memorial monument is made up of four almost 30-meter-high concrete segments that jolt up from the ground forming a circle in the middle. Panel inscriptions on the memorial monument note only the German victims of war, expulsion, and imprisonment. As such, there has been criticism of the memorial monument, and it has been sprayed with graffiti that references concentration camps or the holocaust on numerous occasions. The controversy over this monument memorial continues to this day, though it was the last major memorialization in Friedland until Museum Friedland was established in 2016, 50 years after Adenauer laid the memorial monument's foundation stone.

4. Return to Maizuru in Memory

The Maizuru Repatriation Memorial Museum was built in 1988 on a hill overlooking the location of the Taira section of the former Maizuru Regional Repatriation Center. This was the area initially used for the deportation of Koreans and Chinese from Japan, and in later years, for Japanese repatriation from the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. The Maizuru Museum charges an admission fee of ¥400 and attracts approximately 75,000 visitors per year. It was initially established based on donations from repatriates and others throughout the country and was managed at first by repatriate groups and the City of Maizuru. As repatriate groups began to cease activities due to the aging of their membership, full management was transferred to the City of Maizuru in 2012. The Maizuru Museum employs a professional curator, has an academic advisor as a consultant rather than full-time staff, and besides administrative staff there are several volunteer guides who offer free tours in Japanese. The display panels are in Japanese with a limited number (usually sub-section title panels) providing a short paragraph in English, Chinese and Russian.

The current Maizuru museum has special exhibition space, a reference corner and a large space with seating that can be used for hosting events and for school group visits. The regular exhibition is organized into several sub-sections that largely focus on the Siberian internment and the operation of the Maizuru Regional Repatriation Center. These themes are foregrounded in a section that gives the historical background starting in the 1930s with Japan's expansion into Manchuria and the economic crisis, essentially overlooking the longer history of Japanese colonial expansion. Next the museum narrates the displacement caused by the collapse of the Japanese empire, focusing solely on the

Japanese experience. The internment of Japanese in the Soviet Union fills approximately half of the regular exhibition space. It includes panels that describe the conditions and expanse of Soviet labor camps, a recreation of the inside of a Soviet labor camp lodging, several items that internees brought back with them and the centerpiece of the display ‘the white birch diary’ (*shirakaba nisshi*) a diary written on tree bark that details the internment experience and was smuggled back to Japan. This diary is one of the most important items in the Maizuru museum’s successful bid for UNESCO Memory of the World (MoW) recognition in 2015—a bid that aimed to increase the museum’s profile and visitor numbers. The remainder of the display presents the operation of the Maizuru Regional Repatriation Center in a way that sentimentalizes the topic. The joy of return and family reunion and the hospitality local people showed in receiving repatriates are emphasized, while the place of Maizuru as a repatriation port in popular culture is presented without ever being interrogated.

A bright and spacious museum, except for the recreated interior of a Soviet labor camp, the display is relatively accessible to children, perhaps even at senior elementary school level. While the Maizuru museum takes a factual approach it is hardly critical, and this means omissions are necessary to sustain the rather singular narrative presented of Japanese suffering abroad via displacement and detention followed by the joy of return. Several topics are overlooked including the oversight of the center by US occupation forces, the deportation of Koreans and Chinese who used the same facilities and ships in their outbound repatriation journeys, the Ukishima-maru tragedy (a vessel returning Korean forced laborers to Pusan just after the war that sank in Maizuru bay killing hundreds), as well as the contentious politics of repatriation (Bull and Ivings 2020; 2019). There is also no attempt to link the themes to the present, be that in Japan or globally. The Maizuru museum singularly emphasizes Japanese suffering to highlight the suffering that war brings, offering a narrative that avoids controversial questions of war responsibility.

The Maizuru museum was not the first memorialization effort in the area. Indeed, it was built next to a memorial park established in the 1970s by repatriate and internee groups who went on to build several monuments and plant cherry blossom trees in the park (Katō 2020: 176-177). Many of these groups’ members were reaching retirement age and Maizuru City saw an opportunity to promote tourism to Maizuru as a site of memory for these groups. The Maizuru museum was built capitalizing on the momentum seen in the park and monument construction and thus came to involve Maizuru City and repatriate groups. The current display largely reflects a narrative acceptable to both of them, i.e. one which firmly recognizes repatriate suffering and presents Maizuru as a hospitable destination.

5. Concluding Remarks: Why the Differences?

From the above discussion the main observations in comparing the displays and approaches taken at the Friedland and Maizuru museums should be relatively clear. At Friedland the museum adopts a highly critical approach to its past as a transit camp. It makes a concerted effort to communicate how the camp was used by successive politicians and political groups, how it was covered in media, as well as to locate its history in the broader context of the theme of migration and German society

from the postwar to the present, including the contentious topics of the regulation and control of migration. At Maizuru there is little to no effort to situate the theme of the return of Japanese from their colonial and wartime empire to Japan within the broader history of Japanese migration or the development of its current migration regime. Nor is there an effort to critically question the media image of Maizuru that emerged in the 1950s and its political background. To some extent this difference reflects the continuation of Friedland's role in hosting migrants to this day which means it cannot ignore the present significance of the topic, while Maizuru's role in processing migrants effectively ended in the late 1950s. However, one suspects that the management of the Maizuru museum by Maizuru City itself comes with an urge not to problematize the image of Maizuru as a hospitable and welcoming port because it serves the city's tourism branding well. While the Maizuru museum emphasizes the unforgettable and positive experience of repatriation to Maizuru, the Friedland museum is willing to admit that for some Friedland was 'nothing more than a transitory stop'.

Other key differences are the way the museums provide background to their topics and the emphasis they place on German/Japanese suffering. These are potentially controversial themes as they confront visitors with questions about war guilt and victimhood. Friedland unequivocally locates the emergence of Friedland as a postwar transit camp in the context of the mass displacements that resulted from World War II which, its display states, was 'started by the German Reich as a war of extermination'. The people passing through Friedland were diverse and some among them can be viewed as victims of the war via their displacement, uprooted from their centuries-long family homes, while others among them included proven or suspected war criminals, supporters of Nazi expansionism and German wartime colonial settlers. In any case, while room is left for narratives of German victimhood, the question of ultimate German war responsibility is answered emphatically. By contrast the Maizuru museum largely sidesteps the question as it narrates the presence of large numbers of Japanese abroad beginning with the great depression and the establishment of Manchukuo, a Japanese puppet state in northeast China. In so doing, it ignores decades of Japanese imperial expansion and colonial settlement. The incidents that marked the beginning of wars against China and then the US and British empire are described as "breaking out" (*bōpatsu*) without identifying the perpetrator (the exception being the Manchurian incident), while the Soviet entry into the war against Japan and attack on Manchuria is described as a Soviet invasion (*shinryaku*). Though further research is required, the reason for these differences appear to stem from the legacy of the narratives established in the Maizuru museum's early years in which repatriate and internee groups were heavily involved. Similar narratives can be found in Friedland too, in the main monuments around the camp, but as Museum Friedland was established many years later and independently of such interest groups its display and the narrative presented have been apparently designed by professionals, with critical input from academics and historians.

6. References

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