

日欧若者文化・ライフスタイル研究(第5巻)

田野 大輔・吉田 純(編)

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檀割 仁平
Hitsuwari Jimpei

ヘルムートシュミット大学 ポスドク研究員
日本学術振興会 海外特別研究員



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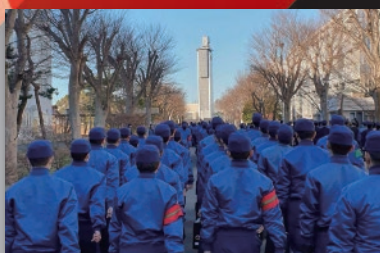
京都大学大学院 経済学研究科 准教授



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劉 カイウェン
Liu Kaiwen

東京大学大学院 学際情報学府 博士課程



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ジャスミン ルッカー
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はじめに

ヤンマー株式会社を母体に2016年11月に設立された山岡記念財団は、ヤンマー創業者・山岡孫吉の日独文化交流への熱い思いを継承し、日独をはじめ日欧の幅広い文化交流を推進することを目的として、様々な活動を展開している。その一環として、当財団は次世代の日独文化交流に貢献する人材を育成することを目的に、2016年度から毎年1回、日独の若者文化・ライフスタイルをテーマにした若手研究者によるシンポジウムを開催してきた。2018年度からは、当財団の研究助成を受けた若手研究者の成果発表の場を兼ねている。また、2022年度より日独から日欧へと範囲を広げ、幅広く研究助成の募集を行っている。

この『日欧若者文化・ライフスタイル研究』第5巻は、2025年3月12日にゲーテ・インスティトゥート・ヴィラ鴨川でオンラインを兼ねたハイブリッドで開催した当財団主催の第9回若者文化シンポジウム「歴史が紡ぐ日独の文化」に登壇した5名の研究者による研究報告をまとめたものである。

近年急速に進むグローバル化・情報化により、日本と欧州（ドイツ語圏）の若者文化とライフスタイルはどのように変化しているのか、また両国の文化交流に関して、今後いかなる展開が期待されるのか。読者の皆様には、ぜひ若手研究者たちの自由な創意に満ちた研究成果を読み取っていただき、日欧若者文化・ライフスタイル研究への理解を深めていただければ幸いである。

一般財団法人山岡記念財団

舞楽の美的鑑賞における日独文化比較

櫃割 仁平

ヘルムートシュミット大学 ポスドク研究員 / 日本学術振興会 海外特別研究員

Cross-cultural Comparison of Aesthetic Appreciation of Bugaku Between Japanese and German

Jimpei Hitsuwari

Helmut Schmidt University, Postdoctoral Research Fellow /

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Overseas Research Fellow

Abstract

This study explores cross-cultural differences in the aesthetic appreciation of bugaku, a traditional Japanese court dance performed as part of gagaku music. Through a mixed-method approach involving interviews, surveys, and a large-scale online experiment with Japanese and German participants (N = 801), we examined how cultural background influences the perception and evaluation of bugaku. Study 1 revealed that while experienced German viewers expressed impression using terms such as "sublime" and "awe," the general German public often found bugaku difficult to comprehend upon first exposure. Study 2 quantitatively demonstrated that Japanese participants rated bugaku higher in terms of preference, transcendental experience, gracefulness, and perceived harmony, whereas German participants scored higher in movement comprehension. Furthermore, individual differences such as attitude towards ambiguity significantly moderated aesthetic evaluation in culturally specific ways. These findings highlight the cultural grounding of aesthetic experience and offer insights into how traditional Japanese aesthetics, including the concept of *ma*, may be interpreted across cultures. The study contributes to the promotion of traditional Japanese arts and to fostering mutual cultural understanding between Japan and Germany.

1. はじめに

経験美学は、実証的方法を用いて芸術的認知と美的処理を検討する研究分野であり、過去20年間で劇的に発展してきた (e.g., Jacobsen, 2006)。この歴史における中心的な研究対象は視覚芸術や音楽だが、美的処理はそれらに限定されず、近年では嗅覚 (Hitsuwari et al., 2023) や触覚 (Marschallek et al., 2023) に焦点を当てた研究も増加している。特に、ダンスは身体感覚と動きに関連し、経験美学の中で急速に成長している分野である (e.g., Christensen & Calvo-Merino, 2013)。その中でも、神経科学的アプローチはダンスの知覚と鑑賞の理解に大きく貢献してきた (Cross, 2025)。ダンスは各文化の背景を反映しており、文化間比較研究では、西洋人とインド人のダンス評価に内集団バイアスが示された (Darda & Cross, 2022)。

本研究では、日本の伝統的宮廷舞踊「舞楽」に焦点を当てる。舞楽は雅楽の一部として演じられ (Sakata & Kurasaka, 2011)、2009年にユネスコの無形文化遺産に登録された。

舞楽の特徴的な概念「間（ま）」は、フレーズと意味に応じて変化する時間間隔として表れ (Daikoku & Yumoto, 2020), 文化によって異なる知覚をもたらす可能性がある。また認知における文化的差異として、分析的処理への西洋の傾向と全体的処理への東洋の傾向が指摘されている (Masuda et al., 2008)。本研究の目的は、日本人とドイツ人の参加者を対象に舞楽の知覚と評価を調査することである。具体的には、文化的背景が美的鑑賞と動きと音楽の関係の知覚にどのように影響するか、また曖昧さへの態度やダンスの熟達度などの個人特性がどのように調整効果をもたらすかを検討する。

2. 研究1

2.1 方法

2.1.1 参加者

ケルン大学の雅楽クラスの学生と天理日独文化工房 (<http://www.tenri-kw.de/en/aktuell-english/>) の雅楽クラス参加者にアンケートを実施した。舞楽を鑑賞した経験のある7名 (平均年齢31.86歳±12.95歳, 女性5名, 男性1名, その他1名) を分析対象とした。また、ドイツで24年間雅楽・舞楽普及活動を行い、ケルン大学で教鞭を執る志水美郎博士 (YS) に半構造化インタビューを実施した。

2.1.2 参加者

アンケートは、(1) 舞楽の観覧経験、(2) 舞楽の名称、(3) 印象、(4) 5つの形容詞による印象表現、(5) 西洋的ダンスとの差異、の5問で構成された。YSへのインタビューでは、(1) ドイツでの舞楽の反応、(2) ドイツ人への雅楽・舞楽の魅力的な伝え方、(3) 西洋的ダンスとの差異、について約25分間質問した。

2.2 結果と考察

2.2.1 ドイツ人舞楽観覧経験者の印象

参加者の印象は三つの観点から要約できる。第一に、多くの参加者は舞楽に感銘を受け、「印象的」「崇高」「畏敬の念」などの言葉で表現した。これはダンスの経験美学研究 (Grosbras et al., 2012) と一致し、雅楽の宗教的背景から自己超越的感情も喚起されたと考えられる。第二に、「流れるような」「ゆっくりとした」「穏やかな」といった動きの特徴が言及された。この結果は日本舞踊研究 (坂田他, 2003) や日中韓の舞踊比較研究 (Zheng et al., 2020) と一致している。第三に、「非常に正確」「細部まで入念」といった精密さも言及された。「入念さ」は日本文化の特徴とされ (Saito, 2007), 「機械的」という表現からも動きの正確さが印象づけられたと推測される。

2.2.2 ドイツで活動する雅楽・舞楽指導者の印象

YSの回答からは三つの特徴が浮かび上がった。第一に、ドイツ人は舞楽を理解しにくく、初見では好印象を持たないことが多い。ただし、現代音楽に精通した少数派やアニメの影響を受けた層には受容されている。第二に、舞楽には「間」があり、これは単なる空白ではなく緊張感や予期を含む (Daikoku & Yumoto, 2020)。これは「不一致」「即興性」「曖昧さ」として表現され、西洋の舞踊との大きな違いとなっている。第三に、ドイツ人は練習を通じて雅楽・舞楽のリズムに慣れることができる。「ある程度練習すると、誰もが不安定なリズムに安定感を感じる」とYSは述べ、文化的背景が異なっても人々は共演できる普遍的能力を持つと指摘した。

2.2.3 研究1のまとめ

総合すると、アンケート回答者は舞楽に好印象を持つ一方、YSの経験では多くのドイツ人は初見では理解しにくさを感じる。この差異は回答者の選択バイアスを示唆している。また、「ゆっくりとした」「流れるような」動きと「間」の概念は舞楽の特徴として認識され、継続的な接触と実践が異文化理解に重要であることを示唆している。

3. 研究2

3.1 方法

3.1.1 参加者

参加者は日本人についてはCrowdWorks、ドイツ人についてはProlificを通じて募集された。合計801名の参加者が研究を完了した（日本人：N=392、男性214名、女性176名、その他2名、平均年齢44.16歳±9.94歳；ドイツ人：N=409、男性263名、女性140名、その他6名、平均年齢33.14歳±10.94歳）。参加条件は18歳以上であること、それぞれ日本またはドイツに居住していること、日本語またはドイツ語を第一言語としていることであった。

3.1.2 刺激

研究で使用された舞楽ビデオは、プロの雅楽演奏ユニット「雅楽下熊健」に事前に許諾を得た後、「胡飲酒 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBjYtMPGJXA>)」のパフォーマンスを使用した。参加者の疲労を最小限に抑えるため、パフォーマンスのクライマックス部分 (胡飲酒破) のみに編集し、7分43秒の抜粋を作成した。

3.1.3 舞楽評価質問票

参加者は7点リッカート尺度 (1 = 「全く同意しない」, 7 = 「強く同意する」) を用いて39項目で舞楽を評価した。項目は先行研究と研究1に基づいて選ばれ, 「美しさ」や「畏敬の念」や「流れるような」(研究1より) などが含まれていた。これらの項目は, 鑑賞者の美的・情動的反応を多面的に捉えることを目的としていた。

3.1.4 個人特性質問票

本研究では以下の個人特性尺度が使用された: ゴールドスミスダンス洗練度指標 (舞踊関連のスキルと経験における個人差を評価), 美的体験欲求尺度 (美的体験に対する個人の好みを測定), 多次元曖昧さに対する態度尺度 (曖昧な状況に対する個人の態度), 経験への開放性, ダンス親密度 (舞楽と西洋伝統ダンスに対する親密度), 日本文化への接触 (日本の伝統芸術への興味, 日本語能力, 日本人との交流など)。

3.2 結果と考察

3.2.1 因子分析と平均比較

39の変数について因子分析を実施した結果, 両グループともに5因子解 (好み, 超越的体験, 優美さ, 調和と構造, 動きの理解) が適切であることが示された。日本人参加者はドイツ人参加者よりも好み ($t(799) = 10.31, p < .001, d = .73$), 超越的体験 ($t(799) = 8.29, p < .001, d = .58$), 優美さ ($t(799) = 6.14, p < .001, d = .43$), 調和と構造 ($t(799) = 6.46, p < .001, d = .45$)で有意に高いスコアを示した一方, ドイツ人グループは動きの理解が有意に高かった ($t(799) = -4.80, p < .001, d = -.34$) (図1)。

3.2.2 個人特性の調整効果

階層的重回帰分析を実施し, 好み, 超越的体験, 優美さの3つの結果変数を予測した。好みについては, 日本人参加者はドイツ人参加者よりも舞楽をより好意的に評価し ($b = 0.70, p < .001$), 調和と構造が好みを強く予測した ($b = 0.81, p < .001$)。文化と動きの理解の交互作用がみられ ($b = 0.15, p = .016$), 動きの理解の高さはドイツ人参加者の間でのみ好みの低下と関連していた (図2左)。文化と曖昧さに対する不快感の間にも有意な交互作用がみられ ($b = -0.18, p = .008$), 曖昧さへの不快感は日本人参加者のみにおいて好みを負に予測した (図2中央)。超越的体験については, 日本人参加者の方が高く ($b = 0.49, p < .001$), 調和と構造が強く予測した ($b = 0.86, p < .001$)。優美さについては, 調和と構造が強い予測因子となり ($b = 0.91, p < .001$), この影響はドイツ人参加者でより顕著であった (図2右)。

3.2.3 考察

予想通り、好みや優美さなどのスコアは日本人の方がドイツ人よりも高くなった一方で、動きの理解のスコアはドイツ人の方が高くなった。これは、自文化のダンスをより好するというDarda and Cross (2022) の結果と一致する。日本社会の中で、意識的であれ無意識的であれ、雅楽の音楽に触れたり、舞を鑑賞したりしてきたことによって、ドイツ人より親しみが高く、好みや優美さの評価を高くした可能性がある。また、ドイツ人がより動きの理解をしようとしていたことは、欧米の分析的認知処理 (vs. 東アジアの全体的認知処理) が関係していたかもしれない。欧米人は、視覚芸術の対象物に注目し、対象物が大きく映っている時に評価を高くする一方、東アジア人は、背景情報や文脈にも注目し、背景が広く対象物が比較的小さく映っている時も評価を低くしない (Masuda et al., 2008)。ダンスの鑑賞においても、親しみの低い舞楽を前にし、1つひとつの細かい動きにフォーカスして鑑賞をしようとした可能性がある。また、舞楽の評価に与える要因についても、文化差が見られ、ドイツ人にとっては動きの理解が、日本人にとっては曖昧さへの不快感が好みの評価を下げる要因となった。動きを理解しようとするほど、好みの評価が下がってしまったことは、曖昧なままでもダンスを楽しむことができうとした先行研究と一致する (Lee et al., 2025)。また、曖昧さへの不快感を感じやすい日本人は、好み下がったが、日本人であっても、舞楽の意味 (動きの意味、作品全体の物語など) をすべて理解する人は少なく、曖昧さを感じてしまい、評価を下げてしまったのかもしれない。さらに、調和と構造の評価は、両文化で優美さの評価を上げる要因になったが、特に日本人でその影響が小さかった。日本人は、不協和 (動きに違和感を感じるなど) をドイツ人よりは許容していることを示唆しており、間の感覚を体得していることがこの差に影響しているかもしれない (Daikoku & Yumoto, 2020)。

4. 結論

本研究では、日本の伝統的舞踊である舞楽に対する美的評価を、日本人とドイツ人という異なる文化的背景をもつ参加者を対象に比較し、舞楽の知覚・好み・感情反応における文化差とその調整要因を明らかにした。研究1では、ドイツにおける舞楽観覧経験者および指導者への調査・インタビューを通じて、舞楽に対する印象の多様性と、「間」や曖昧さといった文化特有の美的特徴が受容に与える影響が示された。研究2では、量的データに基づき、日本人は舞楽をより好意的に、また超越的かつ優美に評価する傾向がある一方で、ドイツ人は動きの理解において高いスコアを示した。さらに、評価に影響を及ぼす個人特性も文化によって異なり、日本人では曖昧さへの不快感、ドイツ人では動きの理解が舞楽の好みに影響することが明らかとなった。

これらの結果は、文化的背景が舞踊の美的評価に深く関与していることを示すとともに、曖昧さや「間」といった日本、または東アジア特有の美意識が異文化の中でどのように受容・理解されうるかについて貴重な知見を提供する。また、本研究は、舞楽という日本の伝統文化の美的価値を再評価する機会を提供すると同時に、異文化間の美的理解の可能性を探ることにより、国際的な文化理解の深化に寄与するものである。とりわけ、舞楽の海外での受容に関する知見は、日本の伝統芸術の文化振興や継承に資するものであり、教育・芸術活動における活用可能性を示唆している。さらに、ドイツという異なる文化圏における舞楽鑑賞のあり方を通じて、日独間の相互理解と文化交流の深化に貢献するものであり、今後の国際共同研究や文化外交の基盤としても重要な意義をもつといえる。

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図表

図1. 舞楽の5つの評価観点における日本人とドイツ人の得点

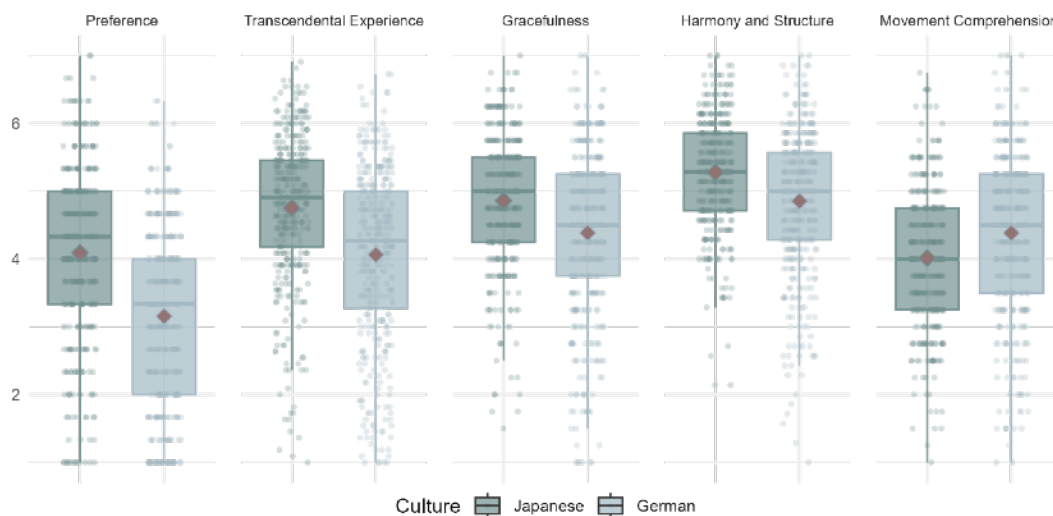
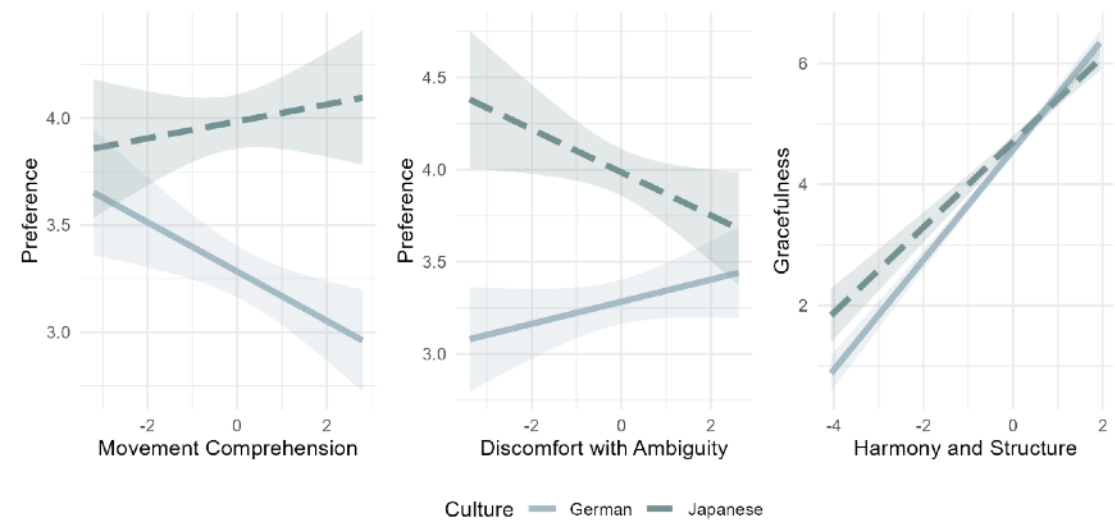


図2. 文化と個人特性の交互作用：動き理解，曖昧さへの不快感，調和と構造が舞楽の評価に与える影響



ドイツと日本における戦後移民の文化的記憶 —戦後帰還を扱う博物館の比較

スティーブン アイビンス

京都大学大学院 経済学研究科 准教授

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

Steven Ivings

Associate Professor, Graduate School of Economics, Kyoto University

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.

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アートと政治の境界をめぐる交渉：日独比較

劉 カイウエン

東京大学大学院 学際情報学府 博士課程

(共同研究者：劉 晨曦, フリッツ・バウアー研究所／ゲーテ大学 博士課程)

Negotiations of Boundary between Art and Politics:

A Germany-Japan Comparison

Liu Kaiwen

GSII, University of Tokyo

(Co-researcher: Liu Chenxi, Doctoral Candidate, Fritz Bauer Institut/Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main)

Abstract

This paper compares the controversies surrounding the 2019 Aichi Triennale in Japan and documenta fifteen in Germany, focusing on how artists and curators navigated the boundary between art and politics. While both exhibitions engaged with progressive politics, their reception was shaped by distinct historical and sociopolitical contexts. This study challenges the binary of Germany as a model of reflection and Japan as its counterexample, advocating for a more nuanced perspective.

1. Introduction

In 2019, an exhibit named *After "Freedom of Expression?"* was curated as a section in the 2019 Aichi Triennale. It featured sixteen artworks previously rejected or removed from public institutions, among which, *Statue of Peace*, depicting wartime "comfort women" victims, and *Holding Perspective Part II*, including a burning portrait of Emperor Hirohito, sparked intense backlash. Parallel incidents happened three years later. At documenta fifteen, one of the globally most prominent contemporary art festivals, held in Kassel, Germany, the mural *People's Justice* by the Indonesian collective Taring Padi was condemned for its antisemitic imagery, particularly a caricatured Jewish figure. Though the controversies stemmed from different political contexts, both exhibits faced suspension and threats of public funding withdrawal, reigniting debates on artistic freedom and its limits.

This study examines how the controversies unfolded amid global and local ideological conflicts and how the subjects involved struggled to navigate the political tensions and negotiate the politics-art boundaries, in similar or different ways in the two countries. The comparison is based on the premise that both festivals are part of a transnational biennial/triennial circuit that has emerged since the 1990s, alongside the expansion of the global art market and contemporary art discourse. As the 2019 Aichi Triennale's artistic director, Tsuda Daisuke, noted, the event was directly modeled on several European art festivals, including documenta (Tsuda 2020). Within this circuit, progressive political discourses—such as multiculturalism, postcolonialism, and feminism—not only reinforce contemporary art's avant-garde status but also create spaces for critical expression. However, in biennials and triennials, global ideological currents sometimes clash with local political dynamics—

particularly growing anti-globalization and nationalist sentiments—which paradoxically help facilitate these events (Belting 2009). Moreover, both Japan and Germany continue to grapple with complex issues of wartime memory. In this contested landscape, non-art actors—including politicians and social media users—played a crucial role in turning these exhibitions into sites of intense ideological struggle.

Rather than focusing on scuffles on social media or in political arenas, this study centers on the ways artists, curators, critics, and intellectuals respond to the predicaments, with an emphasis on their discursive strategies. With Critical Discourse Analysis as methodology, we first construct an archive of key discursive agents and essential texts related to both events, then examine the framing, agenda-setting, effects, and intertextual relationships in these discourse-as-practices.

2. The 2019 Aichi Triennale Controversy

The exhibit *After “Freedom of Expression?”* was curated by a five-member organizing committee which joined the 2019 Aichi Triennale as a collective. Working alongside Triennale artistic director Tsuda, they further selected sixteen artworks that addressed a wide range of political taboos, from wartime violence, the Japan-U.S. alliance, to the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Among them, two caught the most attention from the public. The initial controversy centered on the “comfort woman” themed *Statue of Peace*, which, according to the artists, symbolizes the “fight for memory” against war and sexual violence (Tsuda 2019). Later, protests escalated over *Holding Perspective II*, a film addressing the 1986 censorship of the artist’s collage work incorporating images of Emperor Hirohito, which, according to the artist, explores his self-identity as Japanese. Although neither work was intended to be “anti-Japanese,” both were condemned as such by alt-right protesters.

The controversy unfolded in three stages. First, a wave of harassment, especially by phone call, including arson threats, targeted the Triennale. Nagoya’s right-wing mayor, Kawamura Takashi, further inflamed the tension by calling *Statue of Peace* an “insult to the Japanese people’s heart.” Under mounting pressure, the exhibit was suspended on its third day for “security concerns (Bijutsu Techo 2019a).” In the second stage, artists pushed for resumption of the exhibit. Seventy-two artists issued a joint statement, over ten withdrew in protest, and several initiated the *Refreedom_Aichi* project to advocate the reopening. However, the Agency for Cultural Affairs further announced on September 26 that it would withdraw the Triennale’s financial subsidy, which led the controversy to its third stage. The decision expedited the exhibition’s reopening on October 8 and shifted the movement’s focus to protesting the government interference.

In the early stages, the debates revolved around whether the suspension of the exhibit constituted an act of censorship, thereby contradicting the exhibit’s concept itself. Tsuda Daisuke, a journalist, media critic, and the Triennale’s artistic director, was the one who initially approached the *After “Freedom of Expression?”* organizing committee and facilitated the exhibit. However, after making the difficult decision to shut it down, he repeatedly defended himself, insisting that it was not a problem of censorship but of terrorism against culture and art (Tsuda 2019). In response, the *After “Freedom of Expression?”* organizing committee asserted that the shutdown itself was “the largest censorship incident in postwar Japan” imposed by the Triennale (Bijutsu Techo 2019b), establishing a clear line of contention.

Meanwhile, based on their different understandings of the incident, overseas artists and domestic artists responded differently. Overseas artists—particularly Spanish- and Korean-speaking artists—tended to denounce the shutdown as censorship, and more than ten artists withdrew their works in solidarity. On the other hand, the call for a boycott received little support among Japanese artists. Many felt uncomfortable with such confrontational tactics, viewing them as little more than a performance aimed at international art circles (Tanaka 2020). Instead, some Japanese artists pursued more locally grounded approaches. In the opening statement of TAGA-GU, a space opened by Dokuyama Bontaro to bolster broader dialogues between artists, local residents, and even right-wing protesters, he wrote, “Beyond the confrontations between art and society, artists and the artistic director, the state and the prefecture, those who oppose the exhibition and those who support it, I feel the need for a space to show the artworks and engage in discussion (Dokuyama 2019).”

One of the frameworks often-times adopted by artists and intellectuals is the autonomy of art vis-à-vis politics. In this framework, politics is seen as rigid and ideological, whereas art is ambiguous and open-ended. For instance, artist Fujii Hikaru stated in an interview, “Art has the power to make us reflect on issues that are politically difficult to resolve (Fujii et. al. 2020).” Ideally, art’s potential to nurture empathy and its free expression without political interference should mutually reinforce each other. However, while emphasizing the autonomy of art may be pragmatically significant when it was under threats, this discourse overlooks the fact that the controversy stemmed from the deep conflicts in historical memory struggles and was geared up by the public suspicion of contemporary art. During a public discussion, a right-wing participant dismissed “comfort woman” as a political lie. Rather than countering with facts, artists responded by emphasizing the humanity and individual interiority implicated by *Statue of Peace* (ReFreedom_Aichi ed. 2020: 15). This exchange underscores the gap between artists, who insist on artistic discourse, and alt-right protesters, who act from a political stance. This belief in artistic value is shared by curators as well. According to Tanaka Koki, when he was considering boycotting the Triennale, curator Soma Chiaki met him and questioned “his responsibilities as an artist”, or in other words, his responsibilities toward the audience and the sponsors (Tanaka 2020). The reliance on the discourse of art may stem from artists’ familiarity with their craft and relative detachment from political issues. Multiple artists were eager to criticize the curatorial missteps in *After “Freedom of Expression?”*, pointing to disorganized layouts and overcrowded spaces as reasons for audience misinterpretations (Murayama 2019; Odawara 2019). However, the same critique was later echoed by a conservative-leaning investigative committee composed mainly of cultural bureaucrats. Their report also attributed the exhibition’s suspension to curatorial failures rather than external intimidation and threats (Aichi Triennale Organizational Review Committee 2019).

The next section examines the agenda-setting of *ReFreedom_Aichi*, a project launched by nine Japanese artists over a month after the exhibit’s shutdown. According to their statement, the initiative aimed to resume all closed exhibits and fully restore freedom of expression (ReFreedom_Aichi ed. 2020). While maintaining contact with boycotting artists, *ReFreedom_Aichi* adopted a dialogue-oriented approach, negotiating for the exhibits’ reopening. The project was widely praised for demonstrating Japanese artists’ solidarity and resilience (Keehan 2019). Through

creative interventions, it kept the agenda of resumption in the media spotlight and sought to provide positive narrative such as “turning Aichi Triennale from a symbol of ‘censorship’ to one of ‘freedom of expression,’ which is also favored by the Aichi government.

Nonetheless, this paper argues that by framing resumption as the sole objective and equating it with the full recovery of free expression, *ReFreedom_Aichi*’s agenda exemplified an ideological compromise. In the passive construction of “freedom of expression under threat should be restored,” “freedom of expression” becomes the anchor of value, while the agents responsible for the threat are effectively obscured. For example, in their project *#YourFreedom*, visitors were invited to share personal experiences of “freedom being deprived” or “episodes of discrimination, prejudice, or being forced to endure or give up” by posting notes on the doors of the closed exhibits. While visually striking, this approach issued a commonplace blame while downplaying conflicts over historical memory and targeted attacks rooted in racist ideologies. Efforts to build broader consensus also marginalized alternative voices. In a statement initiated by artists Ohashi Ai and Usui Yui, they adopted an explicit gender perspective, arguing that the core issue was not politics or anti-Japanese propaganda but the violation of women’s human rights—specifically, those of Japan’s wartime sexual slavery victims (“Gender Free” 2019). Although initially included in *ReFreedom_Aichi*, their perspective was largely rendered “invisible” within a project ostensibly aimed at increasing visibility.

In summary, in our examination, we find that the Aichi Triennale, as a still-maturing “international art festival,” significantly lacked engagement from international and Japanese critical circles, which could have provided a broader, more critical lens on the controversy. Meanwhile, Japanese artists, driven by their belief in “freedom of artistic expression” and a desire to bridge social divides, organized creative responses. However, in pursuing a broader consensus, these efforts lost their critical edge on gender, race, and colonialism, ultimately framing the issue as a domestic matter while overlooking its global context.

3. The documenta 15 Controversy

Documenta, one of the world’s leading contemporary art exhibitions, was founded in 1955 in Kassel as a response to Germany’s Nazi past. Its founder, Arnold Bode, sought to counter the suppression of so-called “degenerate art” by promoting open, international artistic exchange. In 2022, the Indonesian collective ruangrupa became the first non-individual curator of Documenta, marking a significant shift toward Global South perspectives.

Even prior to the exhibition’s opening, concerns emerged regarding the potential inclusion of antisemitic content, as ruangrupa and several participating artists from the Global South were perceived to have affiliations with the anti-Israel BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) movement. The curatorial team invited fifteen Palestinian artists but did not extend invitations to any Jewish artists from Israel, a decision that provoked considerable public criticism. German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier openly addressed this issue in his remarks at the exhibition’s opening, expressing concern over the absence of Israeli Jewish representation. In a further act of political dissent, then-Chancellor Olaf Scholz declined to attend the event altogether.

After the exhibition opened, two artworks were swiftly subjected to public criticism for alleged antisemitic elements. One of these was *Guernica Gaza* by Palestinian artist Mohammed al-Hawajri. While this work employed symbolic and metaphorical imagery, and therefore elicited a comparatively muted response, a much sharper controversy arose around *People's Justice*, created by the Indonesian art collective Taring Padi. This piece became the center of public and political debate due to its overtly antisemitic iconography and its highly visible placement in Kassel's city center. *People's Justice* was widely criticized for containing antisemitic imagery, including a vampire-like figure with sidelocks and a pig-like character bearing a Star of David. Prior to its removal, the banner occupied a prominent position within the exhibition space, rendering it one of the most visible and publicly scrutinized works at Documenta. Although the mural was initially covered and subsequently taken down in its entirety, the controversy surrounding it continued to escalate. Both ruangrupa and Taring Padi issued public apologies, stating that they had not been aware of the antisemitic connotations embedded in the visual motifs.

The core of this analysis lies in tracing the diverse perspectives articulated by curators, artists, and intellectuals throughout the course of the controversy, which can be broadly categorized into five main groups. At the heart of the controversy lies a contested terrain of definitions: the distinctions and overlaps among antisemitism, anti-Zionism, and anti-Israel sentiment. Following the backlash against *People's Justice* for its allegedly antisemitic imagery, ruangrupa issued a public apology, stating that they had not recognized the offensive depictions and that the ensuing debate had contributed to their understanding of both the historical and contemporary dimensions of antisemitism. Nonetheless, the apology was met with skepticism, particularly from those who had already accused ruangrupa of affiliating with the BDS movement. From this perspective, the exclusion of Israeli and Jewish artists was seen as indicative of a form of structural antisemitism.

A crucial context for understanding the debates surrounding Documenta is the series of similar controversies that had already unfolded in Germany in the years preceding the exhibition. In 2020, South African postcolonial theorist and historian Achille Mbembe came under public scrutiny for allegedly relativizing the Holocaust and promoting antisemitic views ([deutschlandfunk.de](https://www.deutschlandfunk.de) 2020). Shortly thereafter, in early 2021, American genocide scholar Dirk Moses published a widely discussed article titled *Der Katechismus der Deutschen* (Moses 2021), in which he argued that Germany's culture of remembrance had become rigidly dogmatic and resistant to engaging with alternative historical narratives. Against this backdrop, the controversy surrounding Documenta expanded along two discursive trajectories. One emphasized that the scandal was exacerbated by Germany's unique memorial culture, exposing what some critics perceived as its performative or superficial dimensions. Postcolonial scholar Jürgen Zimmerer, based in Hamburg, further denounced what he described as a prevailing double standard: while the Humboldt Forum was deeply implicated in colonial legacies and racialized violence, it had faced comparatively limited critique from within German postcolonial academic circles (Zimmerer 2022).

The second trajectory of the debate arose from the longstanding tension between antisemitism and postcolonialism, particularly within the intersecting fields of Holocaust and genocide studies. As historian Minh Nguyen has observed, these perspectives largely due to the friction between the

pluralistic, decolonial ethos of contemporary exhibitions and Germany's enduring Eurocentrism, coupled with its cautious and often sacralized engagement with its own past (Nguyen 2022). Michael Wildt has similarly argued that Germany's self-understanding as a nation with a "criminal past" is widely regarded within the country as a normative foundation and a universal moral premise for global dialogue (Wildt 2023). This perceived moral exceptionalism can contribute to frictions when confronted with alternative historical experiences or competing narratives of violence and memory.

Beyond theoretical discourse, a significant portion of the debate also centered on questions of artistic form and the very nature of art. Jörg Sperling, then chairman of the Documenta Forum, staunchly defended the principle that a free society must tolerate controversial subjects. He argued that any form of pre-emptive censorship—including the removal or covering of People's Justice—amounted to a violation of artistic freedom (dpa 2022). His refusal to compromise on this position ultimately led to his resignation. In contrast, German art critic Bazon Brock adopted a more critical stance. He contended that "people are settling scores in the name of artistic freedom," suggesting that the controversy surrounding Documenta marked a victory for authoritarian and fundamentalist tendencies within the art world. In his view, both defenders and detractors of the exhibition had reduced culture to questions of collective identity and internalized a form of political correctness, thereby undermining the Western art tradition grounded in individual expression and aesthetic autonomy (Brock 2022).

Finally, although less prominent within the broader debate, critiques were also directed at the organizational structure and funding mechanisms of Documenta. Renowned German contemporary artist Hito Steyerl, who withdrew from the exhibition, publicly voiced concerns regarding the management and governance of the event. However, these criticisms were neither systematically investigated nor fully addressed in subsequent discussions.

Following this systematic examination of the German debate, one quickly observes that, despite its ostensibly greater sense of righteousness and moral clarity, the discussion often felt like a discursive theater: structurally elaborate, yet based on performative consensus and ultimately devoid of substantive, constructive exchange or genuine communication. This points to a set of deeper, interrelated problems: On the one hand, political discourse overshadows artistic expression. From the early involvement of political parties to the mid-stage entry of institutions like the Anne Frank Foundation, and finally the intervention of a university-appointed review committee, the debate saw a steadily expanding range of participants across Germany's political, educational, and academic spheres. While this broad engagement may appear inclusive, curators, and particularly the affected artists, issued comparatively few statements. Nor did many participants show interest in understanding their individual perspectives beyond assumed political alignments. While this dynamic may not constitute, as Bazon Brock suggested, a triumph of (Eastern) collectivist authoritarianism over Western traditions of individualism, it is clear that artistic perspectives were relegated to the margins of the conversation.

On the other hand, a contradictory phenomenon emerged: the hyper-scandalization of antisemitism risked obfuscating its actual manifestations. The trend toward de-thematization and the

removal of discursive taboos effectively transformed the debate into a closed circuit rather than a space for open and plural dialogue. This dynamic must be understood within the specific historical context of the Federal Republic: radically distinct from the practice of Japan, Germany's political discourse is tightly bound to its history, whereby antisemitism is often conceptualized almost exclusively through the lens of National Socialist ideology and the Holocaust. As a result, contemporary debates become confined within a narrow national-historical framework, leaving them ill-equipped to engage with the complexities of antisemitism as it emerges in global, transnational contexts. The recurring emphasis on German exceptionalism in these discussions reflects, in many ways, the limitations of this framework.

This, in turn, challenges the widely held idealization of Germany as a model for historical self-reflection. Despite having pursued a path that appears fundamentally different from Japan's, Germany too demonstrates a striking similarity in its tendency to avoid direct confrontation with controversies on a global level. When faced with the challenges of transnational, multidirectional dialogue, both nations reveal a comparable inclination toward closed discourse and discursive containment.

4. Conclusion

The controversies surrounding the 2019 Aichi Triennale and documenta fifteen reflect broader tensions between globalization and locally situated political contexts. While both exhibitions sought to engage with progressive political discourses, their reception was deeply shaped by the specific historical and sociopolitical conditions of Japan and Germany. This study argues against the simplistic binary that casts Germany as a model of historical reflection and Japan as a counterexample. Instead, it calls for a more nuanced understanding of each country's historically embedded responses.

When it comes to the relationship between artistic value and political positioning, discussions in Japan tended to avoid direct confrontation with contentious topics such as colonialism and wartime sexual slavery system. In contrast, in Germany, these issues have sparked sharp conflicts between postcolonial perspectives and anti-antisemitism discourses. Interestingly, in Japan, artists struggled to defend freedom of expression by asserting the autonomy of art. However, due to the lack of intervention from critical perspectives, this strategy has instead led to the downplaying of political issues. In contrast, in Germany, an overly suffocating political discourse suppresses artistic expression, resulting in the marginalization of individual voices. From another perspective, whereas in Germany, despite the high degree of polarization, the possibility to confront critical issues is preserved, in Japan, such issues were to a large extent marginalized, although the discussions have also nurtured more politically engaged artworks and activist practices in the following years.

Another persistent challenge lies in the difficulty of sustaining dialogue itself. Initiatives intended to foster open discussion often rely on conciliatory or depoliticized language, which can dilute the force of critical engagement. This is evident in *ReFreedom_Aichi* in Japan, and similarly in Germany, where efforts such as those led by the Anne Frank Foundation failed to bring together Jewish representatives and members of *ruangrupa* or figures associated with the BDS movement—

one side would often withdraw if the other was present.

Ultimately, the two case studies demonstrate how the politics of memory and contemporary art interact within both national and transnational frameworks. While Japan and Germany differ significantly in their historical narratives and in the ways political discourse is negotiated within the art world, both cases expose the profound difficulties involved in navigating the boundaries between art and politics in an increasingly polarized global context. These comparative insights not only deepen our understanding of the entanglements between art, memory, and politics, but also underscore the value of cross-cultural analysis in navigating the increasingly complex landscape of global cultural discourse.

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日本とドイツの士官学校における反軍国主義と再軍備の共存

ベン メラー

オックスフォード大学 博士課程

Reconciling Anti-Militarism and Rearmament at Japan and Germany's Military Academies

Ben Moeller

DPhil Student at University of Oxford

Abstract

This research project analyses the consequences of the recent changes in defence policy in Germany and Japan by looking at the tensions between anti-militarism and rearmament at military academies in the two countries. In particular, it is concerned with how these institutions deal with the legacy of the war-time militaries. Through an ethnographic study comparing this topic at military academies in Japan and Germany, this report details how although the two countries have remarkable similarities in recent history, the way this history is dealt with differs significantly. This point is made specifically through analysing traditions and customs at military academies, and comparing how they inform the students' views on the past. It shows that at Japan's military academy, customs and traditions that have been passed down from the imperial military continue to be treated as an important part of the students' education. This stands in contrast to Germany, where a policy to emphasise discontinuities between the war-time Wehrmacht and the postwar Bundeswehr make such emotional and spiritual connections politically taboo.

1. Introduction

In the year 2022 both Japan and Germany marked an epochal change in their defence policies. After having been defeated by the allied powers in World War Two, both countries were subjected to rapid demilitarisation, leaving them with only a comparatively small military force throughout the second half of the 20th century. In Asia, China's rapidly accelerating military buildup in the 21st century, as well as the country's growing military presence in the region, led some Japanese leaders to argue that the budget and capabilities of the SDF should be increased to counter this perceived threat. In Europe, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 prompted European governments to increase defence spending, even leading the German chancellor to declare a '*Zeitenwende*', an epochal change in the country's relationship to its military. Since the war has continued raging, calls to increase defence spending across the European continent have only grown louder. Most recently, even the European Union has begun rolling out plans to boost the defence industry across its member states. In the same year that Germany marked its own departure in defence policy, the Japanese government marked a turning point, too, by announcing that it would double its own defence spending, leaving behind a precedent of limiting defence spending to one percent of the

gross domestic product. It also announced that it would acquire new capabilities in the form of long-range missiles, breaking with another precedent. In both countries, then, the two militaries suddenly experienced a rapid increase in their budgets, status, and responsibilities. Given the background of the two countries' expansionist history during World War Two, this change became a hotly debated topic throughout the societies which had in the previous decades not spoken much about military affairs at all. This project is interested in how the consequences of this rapid change played out at their respective military academies, where future officers learn how to think about their profession, the military, and its role in society. In particular, this report offers a case study of student life at the National Defense Academy (NDA), Japan's joint military academy, asking how its students are taught to think about the SDF's relationship to the imperial military.

2. History and War Memory as a Societal Flashpoint

The way that state institutions, such as the SDF and the Bundeswehr, teach their new recruits about the past exists in the context of historical memory in the wider society. In both Germany and Japan, two countries who formed the core of the losing side of World War Two, the question of how to address the past has become one of the defining elements of the two postwar states. In Germany, reconciliation with its neighbours has become the foundation of the European Union, defining the structure of the European economy and security for the past decades. In Japan, likewise, the alliance with the United States, its former enemy, has become the foundation of the Pacific security landscape. Given this weight of history and its effects on the present, the question of how to teach younger generations about what happened leading up to and during the war has been debated hotly throughout different eras. In Germany, historians have argued bitterly about whether the crimes of the Nazi regime were unique to Germany or could ultimately become possible in other countries, too, and whether the memory of the Holocaust should be seen as the central element of the self-perception of postwar German democracy or not. In Japan, bitter debates about the extent to which contemporary Japan should be held accountable for the behaviour of the imperial military and government in South Korea, China and other countries continue to hamper bilateral relationships. Domestically, in both Germany and Japan, there is an ongoing debate about the extent to which these topics should be taught to younger generations in schools. This research project seeks to take these general debates and apply them to the military sphere, a topic which has only received little attention by researchers in both in Germany and in Japan.

3. The SDF and the Relationship to the Imperial Military

The extent to which the German and Japanese postwar militaries are connected to their predecessor organisations has proven a controversial topic in the past years. In both countries, the militaries occasionally make headlines when high-profile incidents lead to the perception that this connection is stronger than previously thought. In the case of Japan, such allegations have been made in the news media at much higher frequency since the announcement of the doubling of the defence budget in 2022. Many of the related scandals that are reported revolve around the Yasukuni Shrine, where the spirits of Japanese soldiers who fell in past wars are commemorated. Although visits by

uniformed SDF personnel in official capacity are prohibited by ministerial directive, uniformed members often visit the shrine in groups, regularly prompting controversy and criticism. One reason why the issue of SDF members visiting the Yasukuni Shrine looms so large is that it is perhaps the most visible element of the relationship between the SDF its imperial predecessor. But it is certainly not the only way in which this relationship can be observed. For students at the NDA, the imperial military is an organisation that they come into contact with almost on a daily bases in the form of customs and traditions. Flags which were also used by the imperial military, such as the flag of the rising sun and the 'Z' flag, are flown proudly on campus throughout the year, and military songs composed during the Asia-Pacific War are taught to incoming first-year students every year. Each year there are also two major events in which NDA students are confronted with the imperial past on a more personal level. One is a visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, to which students march from Yokosuka through the night and without rest. The other is a training trip to the island of Iwo Jima, a notorious battle site during the Asia-Pacific War.

4. Learning to Think About the Imperial Military at the NDA

The NDA was founded in the early years after the Asia-Pacific War with the intention to provide a steady stream of graduates who could go on to serve as officers in the postwar SDF. Because these future officers took some time to climb the ranks, the SDF initially relied on former imperial military officers and soldiers to run the organisation. The NDA was meant to limit the influence of this personnel continuity, considering that a large part of Japanese society was skeptical of rearmament and was critical of former imperial soldiers serving in the postwar SDF. Rather than relying on one of the prewar military academies as a foundation, the NDA was established as a new organisation in Yokosuka. This was done partly with the idea in mind that an officer academy closer to Tokyo might be less likely to develop a politically isolated organisational culture. Likewise, the academy was to be run by civilian authorities rather than the military. It was placed under the control of the Ministry of Defense, rather than the SDF, and the presidency of the academy was given to a civilian professor. This way, the NDA became an academy that educated future military officers, but which was firmly under the control of civilian society.

Despite all the effort to create an officer academy that was distinct from the imperial military and served to limit the influence of former imperial military personnel, there were also continuities. Among them were traditions, such as the annual *bōtaoshi* competition adopted from the Imperial Naval Academy, as well as imperial military songs that students learned to sing as part of their first-year training. But the annual visit to Yasukuni Shrine and the trip to Iwo Jima arguably mark the most important way in which a continuity between the Imperial military and the SDF is emphasised. During these two events, students learn not just about the history of the battle, but they also learn to develop an emotional relationship to the imperial soldiers. Likewise, the events foster a spiritual connection, by treating the two places not just as places to commemorate, but as places to worship. In this way, students learn to think of imperial soldiers not just as historical figures, but as spirits who they are connected to.

5. Germany and the Wehrmacht

While the focus of this research project has been to study the Japanese military academy, there are also lessons to be learned from a comparative angle to Germany. The German counterpart to the NDA can be found both in Hamburg and Munich. The two institutions are called Bundeswehr universities, rather than academies, equally emphasising the civilian elements of the organisations. As in the case of the NDA, the two Bundeswehr universities are headed by civilian professors. Perhaps the biggest difference to the Japanese academy is that their students are not obliged to live in dormitories on campus, which arguably marks the most important element of student life at the NDA. This difference means that daily life outside of the classroom at military academies in Germany is to a much smaller extent marked by rituals and customs than in the Japanese case. These rituals and customs are important ways in which students connect not only to past cohorts, but also to the idea of a military history that connects the postwar and wartime militaries. As a consequence, student life in the German military universities is characterised by fewer occasions through which students can develop an emotional link to past militaries when compared to the Japanese counterpart. Instead, students receive virtually all of their information on how to think about history from their civilian lecturers. Even prior to 2022, scandals regarding the Bundeswehr which emerged in the news media demonstrated that there seemed to be little tolerance among civilian society for continuities even in the form of Wehrmacht memorabilia, which some Bundeswehr personnel who were accused of far-right connections were found to have collected in their homes. But while public sensibilities to such continuities appear to be remarkably comparable in Germany and Japan, the ways in which future officer candidates are taught to think about these continuities differ across the academies in these two countries.

6. Conclusion

This report summarises the results of a comparative study on the way in which future military officers in Japan and Germany are taught to think about the relationship between the SDF and Bundeswehr to the Imperial military and Wehrmacht respectively. It shows that although eighty years have passed since World War Two, a shared history still makes for remarkable similarities between the two countries. Recent changes in the defence postures and budgets of the two countries have accordingly proven similarly controversial and sparked discussions about similar related issues. One of these is the issue of continuity between the current militaries and their war-time militaries. In both countries, the establishment of postwar military academies or universities has been marked by efforts to emphasise civilian control and an organisational departure from the institutions of the war-time militaries. Yet, as the analysis of the NDA has shown, there are also ways in which students are taught to develop a link to the past. This link is developed both emotionally and spiritually, going beyond a factual narration of the events of the past. While showing that there are differences in the way that the link to the war-time militaries are treated in Germany and Japan, this project demonstrates the extent to which the two countries are still facing similar controversies and issues even eighty years after the end of the war.

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対立から理解へ：日本とドイツの博物館が子どもたちに戦争を教える戦略

ジャスミン ルッカート

デュッセルドルフ・ハインリッヒ・ハイネ大学講師 博士課程

From Conflict to Comprehension: Japanese and German Museums' Strategies in Educating Children about War

Jasmin Rückert

Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Lecturer, PhD candidate

Abstract

This paper examines how museums in Japan and Germany represent war and peace, with a specific focus on exhibitions designed for children and youth. While the memorial cultures of both countries differ due to their distinct historical experiences of the Second World War, a shared commitment to peace education underscores their approaches to teaching younger audiences about conflict. Based on fieldwork conducted in six museums—three in Japan (the National Museum of Japanese History, the National Shōwa Memorial Museum, and the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum) and three in Germany (the Deutsches Historisches Museum, the Deutschlandmuseum, and the Anti-War Museum)—this study explores how exhibitions make war-related themes comprehensible for children. Using a qualitative approach, the analysis considers exhibition content, curatorial strategies, spatial design, and accessibility. As an abbreviated account of fieldwork rather than a fully developed theoretical study, this paper presents preliminary findings and suggests directions for further research on the role of museums in peace education. It contests that apart from the reflection of nationally diverging memorial politics, the investigated museums differ strongly depending on whether they are private or public institutions. Specifically, the influence of concepts of peace education appears strongly represented in the investigated private museums of both countries.

1. Introduction

The representation of peace and war in museums shapes public understanding of historical conflicts and their aftermath. The memorial cultures of Japan and Germany vary with regard to the experiences of the Second World War, and Germany has in the past been repeatedly pointed out as a good example for a memory politics fostering reconciliation and shaped by the critical recognition of war responsibility. However, a commonality of both Japan and Germany is the development of peace education as a way of teaching children and youth about war experiences.

The current paper investigates the role of museums that address youth and children and asks how they communicate and mediate the topics of peace and war. The paper approaches museums as places of interaction, education and critical discourse. Specifically, history museums not only narrate national or global historical events, but can encourage visitors to reflect on these events critically

and show the connections of the past to the present and legacies of earlier events or political structures. History museums moreover provide insights into historical research, and into the scholarly interpretations of historical events from a contemporary point of view. The thematization of war and peace is an important, but particularly difficult task of history museums (see e.g. Messner/Pirker 2021). By trying to convey the historical background of military conflicts and the supposed lessons learned from them, museums take on a great responsibility in society and play an important role in providing guidelines for understanding war and peace.

Presenting complex historical issues in understandable and approachable ways, which is necessary for addressing children and youth as part of museums' general audiences, poses a challenge to museums. The ability to chronicle historical events is only learned over time, and is often still underdeveloped in children of primary school age, who think in terms of concrete operations and have not yet internalized the abstract categories of chronological time. Also, teenagers, for whom chronological events may be easier to grasp, approach museums in ways that differ from adults; they may be more drawn to interactive exhibits, digital media, or personal narratives rather than traditional text-heavy displays. Their engagement is often influenced by prior exposure to historical topics through school curricula, shaping their expectations and level of interest in museum content. Even young children often already have some abstract ideas regarding peace and war and are subjected to these topics also through news or social media and popular culture, which is even more so the case for teenagers. Given that young audiences are already exposed to narratives of war and peace through various media, museums must consider how their presentations reinforce, challenge, or expand these existing understandings.

For the current paper I investigated six museums in both Japan and Germany, to compare the way in which these museums thematise war and peace generally, and address young audiences such as children and youth specifically. The museums are: The National Museum of Japanese History, the National Showa Memorial Museum (Shōwakan) and the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum in Japan; and the Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum) in Berlin, the Deutschlandmuseum (Germany Museum), and the Antikriegsmuseum (Anti-War Museum) in Germany.¹

In the following sections, I ask how peace education as a concept emerges in the museums' exhibitions, what curatorial means are used to make exhibits accessible to young audiences, and what aspects of thematization are foregrounded or lost when children are considered as target audiences. However, I want to point out that this paper is not a scientific study in the strict sense but rather an abbreviated account of recent fieldwork activities, it therefore only offers a condensed overview of key observations, and some preliminary reflections gathered during my visit to different museums. Rather than presenting a fully developed theoretical framework or exhaustive analysis, my aim is to indicate potential directions for further research.

¹ Basic information on the museums referenced in the article can be found on their websites, which will be listed below.

2. Methodology

During my fieldwork in Japanese and German history museums, I systematically analysed **exhibition content** by focusing on thematic emphasis, historical depth, and contextualization. I examined how narratives were structured, which events or perspectives were highlighted, and how historical complexity was conveyed through artefacts, texts, and multimedia. Particular attention was given to war- and peace-related messages, assessing nuances in representation, implicit or explicit messaging, and the framing of conflict and reconciliation.

In addition to exhibition content, I paid close attention to **curatorial decisions** regarding spatial design, material selection, and accessibility. I examined how museum layouts influenced visitor engagement, considering the placement of key artefacts, pathways through exhibitions, and the use of lighting and sound. Accessibility for children and diverse audiences was also a focus, including the availability of age-appropriate explanations, hands-on activities, and the use of easy language. Furthermore, I analysed the use of affective and interactive elements, such as immersive installations, personal testimonies, and digital interfaces, to understand how museums sought to evoke emotional responses or encourage active participation. By integrating these aspects into my analysis, I aimed to assess how curatorial choices shape the visitor experience of young audiences and how they were guided to an interpretation of historical narratives.

My methods included detailed observation, note-taking, and photographic documentation of displays, as well as reviewing accompanying publications and visitor materials. Where possible, I conducted interviews with curators or examined institutional statements to gain further insight into exhibition design choices. This comparative approach allowed me to evaluate how different museums construct and communicate historical narratives.

The museums I was able to visit belong to different categories of museums, that can broadly be differentiated as public museums, private museums and, for the Deutschlandmuseum exclusively, commercial museums. Since my analysis has shown specific similarities that concern these categories rather than just the differentiation between memorial politics in Japan and Germany, I will present my findings based on this categorisation.

3. Public Museums

The three public museums I was able to visit during my fieldwork were the National Museum of Japanese History and National Showa Memorial Museum (Shōwakan) in Japan, and the Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum).

The first museum I visited is the National Museum of Japanese History, which is located in Sakura City, Chiba Prefecture. The National Museum of Japanese History was established in 1981 and operates under the Inter-University Research Institute Corporation. Situated on the former site of Sakura Castle, the museum spans 130,000 square meters and houses approximately 230,000 historical and folkloric artefacts. Its six galleries present different periods of Japanese history through different types of material including even reconstructed architectural models, with additional special exhibitions held periodically. Generally, the National Museum of Japanese History

emphasizes accessibility and historical research, making it a key institution for understanding Japan's cultural and historical developments. It is overall well researched and provides visitors with detailed information on not only historical events, but sociological trends, politically active groups, individuals, parties and associations that shaped these trends.

This is also true for the explanations concerning the period of the Second World War, where original artefacts and detailed replicas were used to give insights into the developments leading up to the war, the organisation of propaganda, involvement of civilians and activities of soldiers. Noteworthy is the consideration of Japan's imperial expansion, and acknowledgement of war crimes, which has been shown to be absent in other famous Japanese museums (see e.g. Takahashi 2006, Kal 2011). Whereas some of the curational choices, such as the inclusion of colourful large-scale maps, the exhibition of clothing items and posters show that visual materials are apparently considered important elements for making history approachable, their presentation often takes the form of illustrating the contents that were otherwise conveyed through text. Due to the complexity and detailed nature of information conveyed in the sections exploring the history of the war, it is likely that older youth and adults were considered the primary audiences of this section of the museum, whereas other parts of the museum appear more geared towards children, which for example contain more hands-on exhibits.

This stands in contrast with the second public museum in Japan I visited, the National Showa Memorial Museum (Shōwakan). Opened in 1999 and located in Chiyoda district of Tokyo, “at the urging of the War Bereaved Families Association” (Shibuya 2024: 387), this museum is a government-run institution under the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. It focuses on the experiences of ordinary Japanese citizens during and after the Second World War, particularly from the 1920s to the 1950s. The museum exhibits personal belongings, photographs, and testimonies of children who lived during the war in particular, offering insight into their daily life during wartime and Japan's post-war recovery through highlighting and explaining vernacular objects from children's toys to repurposed military items. Moreover, it provides information material in easy language for children, offers tours for children from primary school age onwards, and provides immersive experiences through which children and youth can relieve some of the aspects of life at the “homefront”.

Many of the curational elements thus appeal to children, while they also make the museum attractive to international visitors with little prior knowledge of Japanese history or limited Japanese language skills, including foreign families with children. The museum is also, as Kerry Smith critically noted, characterised by the exclusion of the experiences of non-Japanese (Smith 2002). Despite this neglect, Shibuya Momoyo notes that “the message of the National Showa Memorial Museum highlights the lives of ordinary people in the wartime period, which anticipates a common response regardless of the viewer's background and makes it relatively easy to find clues to a dialogue (2024: 387). The main strategy of incorporating peace education taken by this museum appears to be to shifting the focus from abstract political and military strategies to individual human experiences and help audiences connect emotionally to the themes. Since children can often relate to the experiences

of others their age, showcasing wartime stories is a way of thematising historical realities in ways that resonate with them.

Finally, the third public museum which I want to compare to the former two is the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin, housed in the historic Zeughaus, which normally presents German history from the early Middle Ages to the present. Its collection of around a million objects includes artefacts from various historical periods, such as Napoleon's hat and relics from the World Wars. In the past 25 years, it regularly hosted exhibitions explicitly thematising Germany's fascist past and the period of National Socialism, whereas war or peace were tangential but often not exclusively addressed topics. The institution is funded by the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, reflecting its role in historical education and research.

As the museum is currently under reconstruction, I was only able to visit the special exhibition "The Road Not Taken", which explored 14 key moments in German history, posing questions about how events might have unfolded differently. While war and peace were not the primary focus, they remained central themes in the exhibition, concerning many of the 14 key historical moments. The exhibition was designed with partial accessibility for children and youth since many explored themes were abstract and complex, but the curation included easy language options, and emphasized interaction and gamification to engage young visitors. However, the exhibition's section which explored elements of National Socialist politics appears to have targeted older audiences, it contained fewer interactive elements than other parts of the exhibition and no simplified explanations.

All of the public museums I visited situate the narration of war and peace primarily within a national framework, yet, in the special exhibition of the German museum, there were more references to global events including war experiences of other countries, explicitly referencing key historical events in Japan, China and Korea. The strong focus on the use of digital interactive media in installations and through the provision of tablets also differentiated the curation from those in the other investigated museums. Another difference was a focus on rethinking individual responsibilities – for example through various media and games, children and youth were encouraged to imagine themselves in the position of individual historical characters, and were given choices for how they could have reacted in different ways had they been in the place of these individuals.

4. Private Museums

A commonality of all three public museums was the seemingly "neutral" presentation of historical events in academic or simple, but usually not emotional language, with facts being foregrounded, artefacts used as a gateway for understanding history, and spatial designs matching the sombre themes presented. In some of these aspects, private museum curators made different choices. Two private museums I investigated during my research were the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum in Japan and the Antikriegsmuseum in Germany.

Founded in 2002 in Koto, Tokyo, the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum is managed by the non-profit Tokyo Raids & War Damage Resource Center. It focuses on the firebombing of Tokyo during the World War and its devastating effects on civilians. The museum presents personal testimonies, wartime photographs, and artifacts to highlight the human impact of the bombings. Dedicated to historical awareness and peace education, it seeks to preserve the memories of those affected while fostering discussions on war and its consequences. This museum clearly addresses youth in particular, and also cooperates with local schools. Despite its focus on war victims in Tokyo, the museum manages to combine and connect information on local events with more general, well researched information on air warfare as used by different countries, including Japan, over the course of the 20th century. Like the National Showa Memorial Museum, the recreation of wartime reality is one the museums' strategies, and includes amongst other a small room with darkened windows to provide glimpses into the atmosphere felt during air raids. Among the sources used in the curation are also oral history accounts of air raid victims, and graphic photographs of victims, which point to the addressing of audiences older than primary school age. In its focus on war victims and comparatively more explicit peace messages, the museum shares many aspects with the second visited private museum in Germany, the Antikriegsmuseum.

Founded by pacifist Ernst Friedrich in 1925, the Antikriegsmuseum in Berlin (for details, see Spree 2015) focuses on the consequences of war and the importance of peace. Its exhibitions include photographs, personal testimonies, and wartime artefacts, illustrating the destruction caused by armed conflicts. Originally shut down by the Nazi regime, the museum was re-established in the late 20th century in a new location which includes an original air raid bunker that is integrated into the museum and is particularly popular among young audiences. The museum is today run by the grandson of the original founder and serves as both a historical archive and an educational space, encouraging critical reflection on war and violence. This museum too uses toys and other items such as gas masks for babies to help young audiences relate to the experiences of children as victims of war. Somewhat eclectically, graphic photographs of war injuries by soldiers during the First World War are juxtaposed with information and mostly vernacular objects that often highlight the involuntary involvement of civilians into war efforts and their exposure to war propaganda at different times and places. Concerning the history of the Second World War, references to the lives and experiences of victims of the Shoah were added the exhibition. Prominent aspects of the museum are the accentuation of pre- and post-war peace movements, and the consideration of war as a global phenomenon. Another commonality between this museum and the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum is that both thematize specific kinds of warfare and, more prominently in the Antikriegsmuseum, arms production as a condition of warfare. These topics are integrated into the broader discussion on war as a modern phenomenon. Both private museums incorporate peace education methods through a focus on individual victim narratives, but also provide incentives to consider systemic issues.

5. Commercial Museums

Finally, the Deutschlandmuseum in Berlin presents a condensed but interactive overview of 2,000 years of German history. The exhibition is structured to engage visitors through dioramas, multimedia elements, and immersive storytelling techniques. The museum emphasizes accessibility and experiential learning, aiming to provide an introduction to key historical events in an engaging format – yet, it often lacks the historical depths of other museum types introduced earlier. The exhibition places an emphasis on National Socialism as shaping the overarching narrative of Germany's wartime history. Its heavy reliance on affective display techniques, such as dark lighting and unsettling music, appears designed to evoke emotional reactions rather than encourage deeper analytical engagement and in the thematization of this time period, complex issues are distilled into simple, easily digestible messages that prioritize clarity over nuance. The representation of the Second World War is limited to the listing war dead on a digital screen, de-emphasizing personal war-experience, whereas a display of the destruction of German cities can be read in the framework of national suffering. That there is no explicit anti-war message foregrounded in the museum is indicated by the parallel playful curation of the period of the First World War with walk-through reconstructed trenches in this museum, but also by the neglect of thematising the stories of victims of both the Nazi regime in Germany and of victims of war more generally. While the museum's approach to combine historical narratives with modern museum technologies to make historical developments tangible for a broad audience appears effective, these curatorial decisions stand in contrast to peace education's emphasis on the importance of balanced victimhood narratives and a more comprehensive exploration of war experiences and their political backgrounds.

6. General Observations

As indicated above, the current paper can only superficially touch upon most of the investigated aspects, and will therefore focus on highlighting observations from individual museums and exhibitions to map out some similarities and differences that concern the above described questions. The number of museums and time spend researching them does not allow for general distinction to be made between museum culture in both countries.

Some aspects concerning the exhibition content of various museums confirm the observations that have been made elsewhere regarding the memorial culture in both countries. Namely, there is a stronger focus on the role of ideology in the German museums, which see the period of the Second World War as intimately connected with the rise of fascism. However, this aspect was less strongly pronounced in cases where children were addressed as audiences. The exhibition of the Germany Museum further shows that a focus on National Socialism does not always go hand in hand with a nuanced representation of history, and that it can be integrated in a curation which is not necessarily able to convey historical complexities or is guided by principles of peace education. On the other hand, the Antikriegsmuseum, although its focus was not on the historical exploration of National Socialism specifically, encouraged a critical engagement of young audiences with the regime in the broader context of war and violence.

In contrast to public and private museums in Germany which considered effects of war on diverse victim groups, a commonality of the Japanese museums was a comparatively stronger focus on the experiences of Japanese civilians. This included a focus on the experiences of children and youth during the wartime period, making the exhibitions more approachable for younger audiences. Overall, the visited Japanese museums show and, to varying degrees, critically reflect civilians' integration into war efforts and exposure to propaganda, but primarily show them as victims of the war. As mentioned, this aspect stood sometimes in a questionable relation to the missing thematization of other, non-Japanese war victims. However, particularly the Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum also managed to encompass a wider framework of empathic relations through making non-Japanese victims visible both in and outside of Japan as part of its exhibition.

These observations have directed my attention to the importance of private museums and initiatives of both countries in giving impulses for a reconsideration of and further development of peace education beyond the national framework. I thank the Yamaoka Foundation for the possibility to investigate this interesting topic and hope that it can inspire future, more in-depth research endeavours.

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National Showa Memorial Museum (Shōwakan): www.showakan.go.jp

Tokyo Air Raid and War Devastation Museum: www.tokyo-sensai.net

Deutsches Historisches Museum (German Historical Museum): www.dhm.de

Deutschlandmuseum (Germany Museum): www.deutschlandmuseum.de

Antikriegsmuseum (Anti-War Museum): www.antikriegsmuseum.de

編集後記

本論文集は、一般財団法人・山岡記念財団が主催する「第9回若者文化シンポジウム 歴史が紡ぐ日独の文化」（2025年3月12日、ゲーテ・インスティトゥート・ヴィラ鴨川にて開催）の研究報告を収録したもので、論文集としては第5巻にあたる。

本シンポジウムは、財団が毎年募集する「日欧の若者文化・ライフスタイル」の研究助成を受けた若手研究者の成果発表の場として、毎年度末に開催されている。当研究助成には毎年数多くの応募があり、厳密な審査を経て採択された研究の内容も年を追うごとに深度と多様性を高めている。審査にあたっては研究テーマの妥当性と独創性が重視され、とくに日本と欧州（ドイツ語圏）の比較を行っていること、若者の新たな文化やライフスタイルに関わるテーマであることが採択の基準となっている。

今年度の研究助成に採択され、本シンポジウムで成果発表を行った5名の研究も、舞臺鑑賞時の感情的反応、戦後移民の文化的記憶、アートと政治の関係、士官学校における反軍国主義、博物館の平和教育と、各々が対象とする文化現象は多岐にわたっているが、そこには全体を通底する共通項として、日欧（日独）比較という分析枠組みと、若者のアイデンティティや社会的役割を問うという視点を見いだすことができる。こうした研究の趨勢は、グローバル化と情報化が進む現代社会において、若者の価値観や自己認識の再編がますます多様な文化領域に広がりを見せている現状を反映しているように思われるが、他方、本シンポジウムで報告された研究成果からは、若い世代の研究者たちが各々の柔軟な感性と鋭い観察力をもってそのような現状に目を向け、新たな展望と活路を切り開こうとしている様子も鮮やかに伝わってくる。本論文集を手にとられた方々には、そうした新鮮な研究の成果を味わっていただければ幸いである。

なお、シンポジウムの開催方式は2020年度以降、感染症対策の必要性から対面とオンラインを併用するハイブリッド方式となり、さらにドイツからの参加者に配慮して、日本時間午後4時開始という変則的な時間設定が採用されている。この方式はコロナ禍を契機に導入されたものだが、結果的に日本語圏とドイツ語圏を結ぶ国際的な研究交流を実現する上で大きな効果をもたらしたと言える。

最後に、本研究助成・シンポジウムが今後さらに継続的に発展していくことを願うとともに、今回報告を行った5名を含む多くの若手研究者の方々、また常務理事の雪野弘泰氏をはじめ、若手研究者たちの研究活動を力強く支えてくださっている山岡記念財団の皆様 に心から感謝を申し上げ、本論文集の結びとしたい。

山岡記念財団諮問委員
甲南大学文学部教授
田野大輔

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編 者 田野大輔・吉田 純

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大阪府大阪市北区茶屋町1番27号ABC-MART梅田ビル7階

TEL:06-7636-0219 FAX:06-7636-0212

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