

Summation of the NASSS International  
Graduate Students Seminar  
History and Society, Workshop  
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The History and Society Section of International Graduate Student Seminar had nine graduate students as paper presenters, who were from the U.S., Japan, India, China, and Canada. They had diverse academic backgrounds: i.e., history, international studies, religious studies, social and cultural studies, sociology, and Anglo American studies. The professors who attended this session were Kousar J. Azam, Okuyama Michiaki, Sheri Yasue Love (partly), Ooi Yuki and Takagi-Kitayama Mariko. Professor Azam kindly served as a commentator for all the presentations, and moderators were Takagi-Kitayama for the morning session and Ooi for the afternoon.

All student-participants presented their projects, based on their master's thesis, dissertation or working paper, more or less under the overarching theme of the conference "Toward a Common Memory of Our Past." Each presenter was given fifteen minutes for the presentation and twenty minutes for comments, questions and answers. In this workshop, for the Q and A, we made it a rule that each presenter should accumulate as many questions and comments as possible from the floor and could respond to any questions and comments he or she liked. The presenter did not have to answer all the questions. In this way, the presenter could enjoy a number of various insightful comments from the floor for the future study.

The first presenter for the day was Swasti Rao from Jawaharlal Nehru University. Her thesis title was "Japan's Civil Society in the Eyes of American Academia: A Case of Epistemological Fallacy." First, she emphasized the significance of studying Japan as an interesting case study of the civil society movement, although this topic had been ignored by scholars for a long time. She pointed out that several path-breaking researches on civil society in Japan had been done by scholars both within and outside Japan in the past one and half decades. She discussed the interesting characteristics that many of the researches by American scholars on this topic unintentionally suffered from traits of ethnocentrism that in turn would bring forth epistemological fallacies. So, her presentation tried to be a critical response to such works by explaining how the ethnocentrism influenced American conceptualization of Japan's civil society and what were epistemological fallacies. Then she tried to give suggestions in the field of developing an alternative Japanese approach to its civil society movement.

Nakamura Hitomi from Nanzan University then presented a paper entitled “Changes in United States Perceptions of Nuclear Weapons: A Look at American Historical Textbooks,” which was a proposal for her master’s thesis. Studying different versions of history textbooks for junior and senior high school students used in the states of Texas and California, which were among the states with larger population, she tried to see how the American people consider the effects of nuclear weapons and how those recognitions have been changing over time. Her analysis would focus not only on the changes in descriptions of atomic bombing to Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945) but also on those of the Trinity Test (1945), Operation Ivy (1952) and Operation Castle more commonly known as the Lucky Dragon Incident (1954). Her presentation made us believe that thorough content analysis of ample cases of various textbooks would reveal interesting characteristics of and changes in American perception of nuclear weapons in her final thesis.

The third speaker for the morning was Anne Blankenship from University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Under a title of “The Incarceration of Japanese Christians in World War II America,” she tried to show us unique traits of *mukyokai* movement led by Uchimura Kanzo, and its influence on Japanese immigrants in the prewar U.S. Emphasizing the influence of *mukyokai* on Gordon Hirabayashi, a well-known Nisei for having defied U.S. government curfew and “evacuation” orders during World War II, her paper discussed the importance of studying the retention of *mukyokai* ideals by Japanese immigrants. Her study would shed a new light on the pre-war or pre-immigration beliefs of Japanese immigrants in the study of Japanese Christianity in the U.S., which had been less studied by the scholars of immigration history.

As the fourth speaker of the morning session, Nakao Maika from the University of Tokyo presented a paper entitled “Reviewing and Rethinking Nuclear Attitude from 1920 to 1945: Response to the Memories of the Atomic Bomb.” She pointed out that numerous studies of the memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and historiographies of anti-war and anti-nuclear movements showed how the discourse on atomic bomb was closely connected with nationalism in postwar Japan. She paid special attention to the fact that Japan was also one of the countries having engaged in atomic weapons research during World War II. She closely reviewed the changes in the images of nuclear physics and nuclear weapons, and examined the relationship between science and war from the discourses on science and technology in the popular media. And finally, she showed how the images were created and reformed along with drastic social changes over years.

In the afternoon session of the History and Society section, five graduate students--three were doctoral and two pursuing master’s degree--presented their work, and Ooi served as a moderator. Again, each participant had twenty minutes for presentation and fifteen for questions and comments from the floor.

The first presenter, Chen Xin from the University of Alberta, gave a talk

under the title “Beyond ‘Separate Spheres’ of our Common Memory: Historical Writings on Protestant Missionary Women in China and Japan.” Paying special attention to how historical writings on Christian missionary women in English, Japanese and Chinese literature continuously constructed the East/West dichotomy, she discussed how memory was constructed based on a “separate spheres” ideology according to gender, race and nationality. In other words, she examined the way ideology, in writing history, paradoxically obstructed further understanding of the histories of missionary women. However, she suggested that learning the historical writing could oversimplify our past and could be the starting point to reconstruct memory beyond the “separate spheres” ideology.

The next presenter was Yamato Yumiko from Kyusyu University. With the thesis title “Building a Local and Transnational Memory: Japanese Citizens’ Practice toward Transnational Memory-Making between Japanese and Koreans,” her presentation sought to demonstrate how historical reconciliation and transnational memory-making between these two nationals could be made possible. To answer this question, she traced a history of a certain Japanese citizens’ movement for memorialization and reconciliation, which rose out of the tragedy of the coal mine accident of 1942 in Ube, which took lives of Korean miners. Through her participant observation of the group called the Association for Engraving the Submergence Disaster of Coal Mine as Historical Memory, she revealed that behind their efforts for reconciliation lies a rise of human rights consciousness of Japanese people and their realization of responsibility for what the Japanese did to Koreans in the past.

As the third speaker, Mariam Ashitani from the University of California, Irvine, shared her research “Criminal Justice of Injustice?: The Differential Racial Effects of Drug Arrest on High School Dropout.” With a three-decade war on drugs in the United States and its apparently desperate situation as a background, she dealt with two unexplored questions regarding the effect of drug use on young people in different racial groups. She first showed that having a drug arrest affects one’s likelihood of dropping out of high school. Second, she explained that the effect of a drug arrest on dropout differs for black, white and Hispanic juveniles, among whom the most affected group is the black.

Our fourth presenter, Otori Yukako from the University of Tokyo, examined a child-feeding program called Quäkerpeisung. This relief work, starting in 1920, was conducted by American Quakers in Germany after World War I, when religious activism became more organized. She attempted to make surface not only its emphasis on religious sympathy but also political complexity, with the title “Quaker Goodwill and American Benevolence: Quäkerpeisung and American Involvement in Post-WWI Germany.” Reviewing how the Quakers’ organization called American Friends Service Committee initiated the aid at the request from Herbert C. Hoover, she revealed its political and strategic dimension, although Hoover insisted that it should be apolitical. With this, she concluded that the work of Quakers served as an example of postwar reconciliatory efforts and of

rivalry and coordination between political shrewdness and religious conscience.

The last presentation, “The 1960’s Anti-War Movement: The Democratic National Convention in Chicago 1968” was given by Nagaya Keisuke from Aichi Gakuin University. He focused on the Democratic National Convention held in Chicago in August 1968, which was used by anti-Vietnam War activists as a great opportunity to voice their opposition. Paying his special attention to the arrest of eight activists named Chicago Eight and explaining the anti-war organizations in 1960’s, he reviewed questions such as how and why the arrest was needed and whether or not the arrest was really appropriate.

The session, with a warm and insightful commentator Professor Azam, worked as a good opportunity for each participant to exchange his or her ideas and comments. The moderators would like to express deep appreciation to all the participants for their active participation in the discussion. It is sincerely hoped that the workshop will help them make further progress in their future research, thereby contributing to reconciliation in history.