

GSI Caravan

Project Title: The Public Sphere and Diversifying Views of History: Memories and Reconciliation in Europe and Asia

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Progress Report for the Academic Year 2020

In 2020, we conducted all of our research activities online, including two workshops and one international workshop. For the 1st workshop, held on May 29th, we worked together to prepare the foundation required for discussing the subject of this project, the Public Sphere and Diversifying Views of History. Research members from Europe and Asia went over concepts and concept groups that are central to the project and with which they are also familiar from their own fields of research. These concepts and concept groups included “reconciliation,” “history, memory, and recollection,” “the public and civil society,” “the public sphere,” “public history,” and so on. The aim was for the researchers to compare notes, confirm with each other the current state of research in their respective domains, and talk about where their interests lay. We held our 2nd workshop on 16th October, where four members reported on their research. The goal was for each member to present key areas of focus for the project by way of concrete cases, thereby helping to secure a basic common understanding regarding the concepts and research perspectives. Our principal researcher, Ishida Yūji, presented a report on the project’s basic understanding of “History and Reconciliation”. Kawakita Atsuko presented a report analyzing the concept of “reconciliation” from a conceptual history approach. He provided a foundation for the future comparative research of different conceptions of “reconciliation” within Asia. Ōshimo Rise’s report focused on the concept pairs of “memory and recollection” and “public history,” which are particularly important domains of concern for this project. For each concept pair, Ōshimo outlined its historical origins, theoretical frameworks and connotations, while also clarifying the state of preceding research and future tasks. Meanwhile, Hiramatsu Hideto’s report introduced the analytical perspective of “urban space” to the various local problems surrounding “memory and reconciliation”. He was thereby able to provide suggestions on to how we might contribute to the ultimate goal of the present project, which is to help “secure a global perspective”. Through these four reports, we were able to secure a shared understanding and framework of discussion regarding the project’s core concepts. Each research member then developed a more concrete conception of the material and perspectives needed to tackle the subject of “memory and reconciliation”.

The internal research members built on the results of the two workshops, and on the 12th of March 2021, we held an international workshop where we invited researchers from the partner universities that we intended to later visit for investigatory trips. We conducted this workshop in collaboration with the Center for German and European Studies (DESK)’s research project “Reconciliation Research in Transnational Urban Space” (Representative: Hiramatsu Hideto), which is closely connected to our own project. Specialists in history and political science presented four reports (in both Japanese and German). Lennart Kranz (the Technical University of Dresden) spoke on “Continuity within Discontinuity: The Culture of Remembrance between Baroque and Modernity in Dresden.” Professor Christine Krüger (Greifswald University) presented a report on “Coventry – Dresden: Symbols of Action and Atonement, and the Thought of Reconciliation Edifices.” Ōshimo Rise discussed “The West German ‘Culture of Remembrance’ and the Brandt Government: Focusing on the Historical Exhibits of Berlin and Rastatt.” Professor Irenäus Pavel Kabalevsky (Leipzig University) examined “Games of Remembrance and the Politicization of Memory in the Post-Communist Era.” At the end of the workshop, Professor Michael Schneider (University of Bonn) shared some summary comments, and the coordinators Hiramatsu Hideto, Kawakita Atsuko, Ogawa Hiroyuki, and Ako Tomoko joined

in for a question-and-answer session and further discussion. This workshop included participants from various universities in German-speaking countries, such as Professor Hettling from Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg, with whom we hoped to build stronger collaborative research relationships through our investigatory trip project. At the same time, there were researchers from Britain, Poland, Israel, and Korea as well. This broad audience ensued that the intent behind this project was shared globally.

This academic year, it was necessary to work under numerous restrictions, including the inability to undertake an investigatory trip abroad. Nevertheless, through conducting two substantial workshops, as well as an international workshop at the end of the academic year, we were able to secure results that exceeded our initial assumptions. For the next academic year, we plan to conduct internal workshops. We also plan to set up a panel related to the project in November 2021. This will take place within the framework of the Center for German and European Studies' German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) East Asia Center conference. Throughout these activities, the participating members will work to expand upon their respective areas of research, with an eye toward the publication of our final results.