

Session 2

Keynote Speech

The Evaporation of History: History Communication in the Age of the Post-truth and the Posthuman

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1. Introduction

Many commentaries and analyses about the use or abuse of history have already been accumulated during the recent rise of right-wing/nationalist discourse in Japan. In the vertical perspective, this can be located in the history of “Issues of Historical Perceptions” between Japan and other East Asian countries traced back to 1980s, especially through the “History Textbook Controversy” and the “Comfort Women Issue”. However, in the horizontal perspective, it can be interpreted as one of many instances of “the campaign against established knowledge” in the transformation of the public sphere boosted by digital media.

Not a few Japanese historians have been deeply concerned with the rising popularity of right-wing revisionism/denialism and have been trying to refute those discourses abusing history basically by showing the academically established views. However, their efforts seem largely unsuccessful, or rather counter-effective in reducing the popularity of the revisionist/denialist discourses. This problem shares, it can be argued, the same structure as what the Science and Technology Studies

characterized as the “deficit model”, the limit of enlightenment by the experts which aims to fill the “deficit” in scientific knowledge among the lay people. To the extent that this analogy is relevant, what would be called “History Communication”, a peculiar kind of Science Communication between the academic historians and the public, appears to be demanded. The problem is how we should appropriately communicate history given that while it shares the same structure of tension between expertise and democracy; history is classified under humanities unlike disciplines of natural science.

In my presentation, I will try to locate the problem at the intersection of post-truth politics¹ in the contemporary society and the posthuman² turn in the humanistic academia. History Communication has to take an even narrower path than Science Communication, through which, I would suggest, the conventional conceptualization of history may transform, if not lose, its demarcation both in terms of who writes and what makes the history.

¹ A *political* culture in which debate is framed largely by appeals to emotion disconnected from the details of policy, and by the repeated assertion of talking points to which factual rebuttals are ignored.

² Posthuman is a concept originating in the fields of science fiction, and philosophy that literally means a person or entity that exists in a state beyond being human.

2. The Long Swing to the Right

The following list of abuses of history in Japan indicates that this issue has not suddenly sprung out of nowhere but has emerged over a longer time and goes much deeper.

- 1982 History Textbook Controversy (歴史教科書検定問題)
- 1985 PM Nakasone's official visit to Yasukuni Shrine
- 1987 Sekihoutai (赤報隊) Terrorism Attack on Asahi Shimbunsha
(朝日新聞社)
- 1989 "The Japan that can say No" published
- 1991 Kim Hak-sun (金学順)'s first testimony as the victim of
Japanese Military Sexual Slavery
- 1992 "Gomanism" Manifesto (『ゴーマニズム宣言』)
- 1995 "Marco Polo" incident (holocaust denialism)
- 1996 Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (新しい歴史
教科書をつくる会)
- 1997 Parliamentary Group on History Textbook Affairs (教科書議
連)
- 1997 Japan Conference (日本会議)
- 1999 Shintaro Ishihara elected as Governor of Tokyo Metropolis
- 2001 PM Koizumi's official visit to Yasukuni Shrine
- c.2005 Dokdo/Takeshima Controversy, Diaoyutai/Senkaku Islands
Controversy
- c.2000-2005 "netto uyoku" (「ネット右翼」) began to be
circulated
- 2006 Abe Shinzo Cabinet (first)

2006 Zaitokukai (在特会)

2006 The Eternal Zero (『永遠のゼロ』)

2008 Toru Hashimoto elected as Governor of Osaka

2012 Japan Restoration Party (日本維新の会)

2012 Abe Shinzo Cabinet (second)

(1) Global Parallels

This trend is not just something peculiar to Japan; its context is shared globally. We can see many illustrations of the so-called “Retreat of Liberal Democracy” all over the world for example, and we can observe tides of populism almost everywhere, such as the Alt-right (Dark Enlightenment) in US, Brexit, the Radical Rights in Europe, the FN in France, the AfD in Germany, the PVV in Poland, and Lega Nord in Italy as well as the return of authoritarian regimes such as in Hungary, Brazil, Turkey, almost everywhere. In fact, Japanese Prime Minister Abe himself is a front runner of this trend, and the issue at hand is this long and wide context of this dilemma which is shared globally today.

(2) Academic Fronts of History

In this longer and deeper and wider context, what have the Japanese historians been doing? There are multiple fronts but I would like to concentrate on just two of them.

1) First Front

This includes the following:

- a) Criticism against the “National History” in Japan and all over the world. This is a constant theme in Japanese historiography. The most frequently cited work on this topic is Yoshihiko Amino

(網野善彦), “Social History (社会史) the lineage of social history in Japanese historiography” which emphasizes the internal heterogeneity in Japanese history. Japan is not a monolithic single national society; it contains much more diverse internal heterogeneity.

- b) The lineage of Regional/Maritime History (地域史／海域史):
Shosuke Murai (村井章介) and many other historians in Japanese history who emphasize the openness of Japanese history or the contextuality in the wider regional settings. Shosuke Murai jointly edited the six-volume work on Japanese history in Asia published from 1992 to 1993 that describes the layered external contexts and cross-border relationships between Japan and Asia.
- c) The theme of Post colonialism: “Deconstruction of Nationality” (酒井/伊豫谷/ド・バリ－) by Naoki Sakai et al. published in Japan in 1996. The theme is Japan as a colonial empire from the second half of the 1990s, a quite lively issue in Japanese historiography.

2) Second Front.

As a global trend the Linguistic Turning in historical studies is quite conspicuous in Japanese historiography too. It is a skepticism against the historical facts which has had quite a wide and deep negative impact on the popular appreciation of Japanese history.

(3) Limits of Enlightenment

As a starting point, what I want to emphasize is the limits of Enlightenment. The “Long swing to the Right” is quite conspicuous; many historians are deeply concerned and they have been engaged in pushing back against this swing to the right for four decades.

However, the result is just as you can see today - a big failure for the efforts of the historians. Perhaps one reason for this failure is that the weapon of the historian has been appropriated by the enemy. I have termed this the appropriation of the logic of the cultural left by revisionism/denialism.

1) “Alternative” Perspectives of History

From the late 1980s or the 1990s on, the new generation of historians came up with a series of “alternative” perspectives of history again and again, and that cultivated a sense that any kind of historical perspective is fine; a sense that anything goes in a postmodern sense was cultivated through these historians’ endeavors.

This transformed the debate from the “Battle of Facts” to the “Battle of Interpretations”. It’s not about facts anymore, it’s just a matter of interpretations, so there is this overall skepticism against the historical facts and the linguistic terms have a strong tendency to fuel this trend.

In a wider social context, the market moralism of neoliberalism is spreading wider and wider, and historical works have become more and more considered as “history as commodity”, so that it is the history which sells that is taken to be “history”. This particular trend is propagated by the revisionists and denialists.

2) Counter-Attacks by Concerned Historians Against Revisionism/Denialism

The Japanese historians tried to push back against the tide of revisionism/denialism, but it has become quite a biased and unfair game.

There is a huge asymmetry between the academic historians and the popular writers of revisionist/denialist versions of history. This is because historians bear the burden of following the due process in historical academia while the popular revisionists and denialists just produce whatever they want to say.

The outcome is a huge disparity between academic historians and popular writers of revisionist and denialist versions of history which has resulted in the failure of historians to reach a wider readership.

This is a general explanation of what we are seeing today and it's not only the case with history. There is a link with the concept known as the "Deficit Model" in science and technology studies.

3. The Deficit Model

(1) Public Skepticism

The so-called deficit model has arisen from public skepticism or hostility to science and technology, which has resulted in a lack of understanding among the populace, due to a lack of information.

Up until the 1980s most science and technology experts believed in the deficit model and when they encountered public resistance in accepting some kind of scientific truth or technological merit, they tried to enlighten the populace. In other words, they tried to propagate the correct information in order to enlighten the people, to persuade them to accept the scientific truth or technological rationality.

This attempt at enlightenment was always believed to be the remedy within the deficit model, but in practice it never worked. A well-known instance would be the outbreak of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy commonly known as “mad cow disease” in Britain. The scientists tried to persuade the general public that the beef in their supermarkets was actually safe to eat, but nobody would believe them.

So now in the field of scientific studies there has been a radical shift from the deficit model to a more participatory model in which the scientific truth or technological rationality has to be released through joint participation by representatives of both the experts’ side and the lay people’s side. So that’s what happened in the field of science and technology, and now the experts emphasize the value of Science and Technology Communication and so civic engagement with technology assessment has become very important.

These attempts have resulted in the “Science café”; an environment where the moderators, facilitators and scientific experts are trying to communicate with the lay people. The “consensus conference” has also

become an important political device to create agreement between the powers, the experts, and the lay people.

(2) Trans-science Model

The term “trans-science” was coined by Alvin M. Weinberg, the nuclear physicist, in the early 1970s. This term can be defined as a domain of “questions that can be stated in scientific terms but that are in principle beyond the proficiency of science to answer”.

(3) History Communication

As this deficit in science communication is analogous to the deficit in history communication, so I believe the “trans-science” model can be applied by a kind of analogy so that historians can endeavor to enlighten the populace to counter revisionism/denialism. In other words, historians should shift to a more participatory approach when disseminating knowledge to non-experts.

We might call this “trans-history” as a variation of trans-science, and in this way we can think about a more democratized process in the sense of audience participation in the reading and writing of history.

Trans-history, as an offspring of trans-science, is already being practiced, even in Japan, and in Sendai some historians have formed a history café that provides a meeting place for historians and lay people. So it’s already happening, and in recent years there have been many publications about public history which invite known experts to write history so there is a convergence of readers and writers in the field of history in parallel with science communication which we would call “history communication”.

(4) School Textbooks

One of the most conspicuous events about the swing to the right is the so-called *schoolkai* textbook and there has been much civic

engagement in textbook selection after the *schoolkai* textbooks were authorized, but there is still the process of actually implementing those textbooks and there are several local initiatives which counter the actual use of those textbooks. There are many significant implications in school textbook production, and this is an ongoing discussion. The Japan/China or the Japan/South Korea joint history research committees have made efforts at negotiation but these take place only within the experts' community so it's not really history communication - but in some sense it's a more democratic process of reading and writing history so these are just lesser examples of this practice.

However, the analogy between science and history models ends here. We can't just apply the science communication model to history because the political structure is quite different.

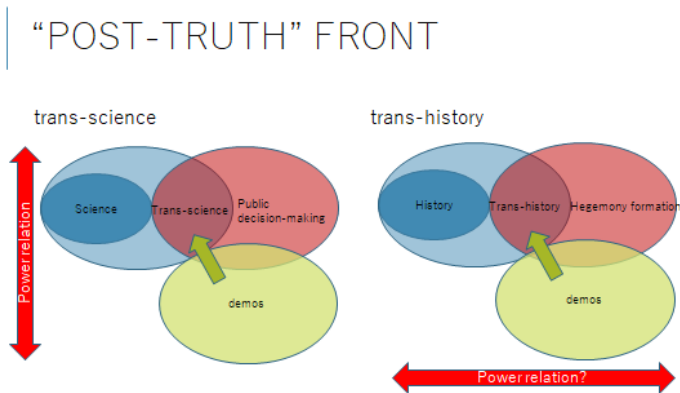
4. Different Politics

There are two dimensions of differences in politics, the “post-truth” front and “posthuman” front. The first point is relatively simple to explain but the second point is more complicated. Let me begin by explaining the first. The second, the “posthuman” front is a nested problem of trans-history within history as such.

(1) “Post-truth” Front

Let me begin by saying that the power relation between historians as experts and lay people is not really similar to the relation between scientific or technological experts and the people.

In the case of trans-science, as you can see in the diagram below there is an overlap between trans-science and the field of public decision making, and in this trans-science field, the demos, the populace, has to be invited.



The scientific and technological experts and the public decision makers are in alliance and in power, so the power relationship is vertical here. There is a circle between the science and the public decision-

makers and the demos are excluded so it's quite a democratizing process when the demos are invited to be in the field of trans-science. That is why we can say that science communication in the domain of trans-science is basically democratized.

In the case of trans-history the structure is the same. There is the field of the academic historians, and there is the field of trans-history, and in the place of the public decision-makers there are the hegemony transformers. Now in most cases many historians are making counter hegemony against the hegemony formers so the power relation is actually horizontal, and now what is happening is that the hegemony transformers are inviting the demos to suppress history. So, the power relation is quite different, and if we simply repeat the same tactics of inviting the demos into the domain of trans-history it is just fueling the ties of popular revisionism. Due to this difference in power relations, the strategy of history communication as an analogy of science communication doesn't really work. So, what can we do?

(2) Defense of Humanities

The political difference between trans-science and trans-history is intertwined with the problem of the "usefulness" of humanities. In the case of trans-science, science is aligned with public decision making because science is useful for making money, reinforcing an order, and so on.

Actually, the discipline of history used to be useful in the 19th century. When the nation-states were being formed historians were employed to legitimize the history of the nation-states, so history was useful, but it is already a while since this record became the target of historical criticism and as I have pointed out the sheer academic interests of the academic historians are actually pitted against the national history, so now that former usefulness has gone. Actually, the vector is opposite and so today, for the hegemony formers, history is

not useful and that is why the power relations are different and actually there is no plus/minus balance between the experts in history and the hegemonists. Of course, there are a few conspicuous exceptions like those historians who sell through the media in alliance with the political powers.

So, the difference between science communication and history communication lies in the different power relationships between the two and that is intertwined with or contextualized by the problem of the usefulness of humanities and as history is a human science it is now considered as not useful by hegemonists.

So, we can conclude here that what is necessary is to retain the real substantive usefulness of history and maybe the conceptualization of an alternative form of solidarity as a mission of trans-history.

I think that this tentative, interim conclusion in this presentation is somehow shared with the first presentation today when Professor Dudden talked about hope and beautifully presented the three alternative imaginations of nation to cultivate another form, a different form of solidarity from the territorial sovereign national state type.

This is one tentative interim conclusion, but the discussion doesn't stop here because we have the more challenging issue about the posthuman front.

(3) Posthuman Front

Already in the first presentation we have heard the word "Anthropocene", as a new geological moment that measures human impact on the planet, dissolving the dichotomy between nature and society and nature and human, and actually that is the theme of the posthuman turn in humanity, so the impact of the posthuman turn in humanistic disciplines is quite ambiguous, and I will try to think it through in a very basic way to simplify the argument.

1) Humanizing Non-Human

There are two opposing impacts of the posthuman turn. One is relatively positive; it is the expansion of democracy into the non-human agencies, the humanizing of non-humans. Conventionally, modern history assumes that humans are the only subject of history, that humans make history and that non-humans are just materials to be used, to be exploited, by the humans in making history. Actually, the effect of human substance is much more limited, and we are just adapting to the environment and being nudged, pressed and guided by the surrounding substance. Therefore, we should be incorporating all these non-human agencies which contribute to making history, so the posthuman turn actually opens our eyes to those non-human agencies that participate in the making of history.

2) Erasing Historical Fault Lines

This expansion of democracy into non-human agencies is active in humanizing non-humans and opens our perspective when we write or read history, but on the other hand there's another deduction of the impact of the posthuman turn in humanistic disciplines, especially in history, that is the erasing of historical fault lines within humanity. When we talk about the posthuman turn or especially when we are talking about the Anthropocene, we take humanity as a whole, as a kind of single monolithic agent and we erase the fault lines within humanity. As a result, when we speak about the humanity's responsibility over the environment we erase the uneven responsibility that different humans have for example in the case of carbon emissions. Some people may say this is a human responsibility on the planet as a whole, but different groups of people have different responsibilities in the historical record.

In this way, the posthuman turn tends to erase the historical fault lines between the North and South, the East and West, all those historical fault lines within humanity, and these two trends are taking

place at the same time, which means that the ontological distinctions between humans and non-humans are blurred. We must be careful, because if we erase all the historical fault lines in humanity, we may end up dehumanizing humans.

5. The Dissolution of History

There are two opposite deductions from the impact incurred by the posthuman turn in humanistic disciplines and this dichotomous impact repeats itself, so when it is applied to the different fronts of knowledge production or even politics, there are cascades of ramifications. So, if there are two fronts, and in each front this dichotomy repeats itself, it has cascading ramifications.

(1) The Pressure of Naturalism

One of these fronts is related to the pressure of naturalism. The posthuman turn is being informed by the natural science disciplines. While most historians focus on the uniqueness of the particularities in each individual society's experience of history, it has been pointed out that the wider perspective of history is being lost. The resulting gap is now being filled not by historians, but by geologists and evolutionary biologists, natural scientists such as Jared Diamond, author of many popular science books like *The World until Yesterday*, and Yuval Noah Harari, author of *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, who wrote not as a historian but utilizing the recent findings of the evolutionary biology as a result of the pressure of naturalism.

The pressure of naturalism helps historians to incorporate the wider (non-human) agencies and an emerging trend is the success of ecological history that is ecological history in a wider sense. I do not mean the ecological history of the earlier period focused on by Marie MacNee, but rather for example the perspective of maritime history, the history from the sea. Actually, Professor Dudden's earlier presentation was a kind of practice of ecological history because it incorporated the non-human agency in multiple layers, the animals and the geological settings and all those different non-human agencies, and came up with three different types of alternative historical imagination. I think that

this is a positive acceptance of the post-human impact on history, but it also entails the dissolution of the (human) history into the longer evolutionary process and erases the human agency. Talking about the application of biology to the politics of hope, and historical imagination as an alternative invites many questions about the Romanticism and conservative humanism and these are all related issues.

If we surrender to the pressure of naturalism and totally erase the human agency, relativizing the position of humanity among the other non-human beings, we will actually devolve history into biology, bringing us to the point of the dissolution of human history into the longer evolutionary process, and then we may end up with extremely dangerous political consequences like the Holocaust.

(2) Writing History from Within

On the second front, the writing of history as an internal measurement, current history is basically dissolving the writer and reader of history and also dissolving the distinction between what is right history and what is written in history. In other words, the position of the writer cannot be found in any place transcendent from the history as such.

If a historian can write history only from within the history itself, writing history can be legitimized only as an internal measurement without any transcendental viewpoint of history. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it can imply the possibility of the radical practice of trans-history, that is that all kinds of agencies are making and writing history at the same time.

Hypothetically, any kind of beings, not only human beings can participate in making and writing history. Of course, this is just a logical extreme but to judge what we are doing we need some logical extreme point from which to measure our reality. But at the opposite extreme

there is a risk of the dissolution of history into an incessant series of emergence.

Professor Dudden mentioned Eric Norman's comment about the status of Okinawa Ryukyu, and history has many critical moments over which the world is completely differently made and remade. If there is no transcendent viewpoint of history and historians can only write history from within the historical events, the historian is contained at the moment that he or she is writing the history. From this perspective we can say that History is re/contained in the present at every moment because there is no transcendental viewpoint. My argument is that if we are totally surrendered to the posthuman turn the posthuman fact is that we may end up with the Evaporation of History as we know it.

Of course, as historians we should counter this tendency and I think that through Professor Dudden's remarks in the first session I have a sense of the real dichotomy between the elaboration of history and the politics of hope.

Thank you very much for listening.

Discussion

Doctor Miwa HIRONO's Remarks

Moderator: Thank you very much Professor Yamashita for a very enthusiastic presentation, and for making the connections between the first session and the second session. Without further ado I would like to turn to Doctor Miwa Hirono from the College of Global Liberal Arts.

Doctor Hirono: Thank you very much Professor Yamashita for your interesting and thought-provoking presentation. The issue you have presented today is both broad and complex, and in my opinion what you are describing here is the abuse of history. Your juxtaposing of history and science was noteworthy, and the diagram that you used illustrated some similarities between them.

In this age of populism, in trans-science, today's populist leaders are trying to create their own science about climate change. Meanwhile, the negative impacts of climate change are appearing, and these impacts are the result of public decision-makers trying to coopt or utilize science for their own benefit, which is very similar to what you have been talking about in trans-history. Therefore, in today's context of popularism the diagram you showed and the similarity between the two is even more salient.

One of the most important points in your presentation is your concept of trans-science and trans-history. You are making the argument that trans-history is taking over from history and you're also trying to promote the idea of an alternative form of solidarity, so I think you are right to focus on this concept of "trans". I would like to comment on the concept of "trans" which you have taken from trans-science and applied to history.

Trans-history as a space for participation, a space for democratization in the form of science cafes, history cafes, and consensus conferences is really interesting, but when you talk about democracy and participation, the concept itself varies a lot. Einstein wrote an article in 1969 in the field of development and he categorized responsive participation as having nine levels, starting from information dissemination. At the very top of the ladder there is empowerment, and in between there is the dubious practice of asking a question when you already know the answer in order because you are trying to guide people to a certain answer. So, from the top to the bottom of the spectrum there is a huge array of different ways of participating in the creation of knowledge.

The first question I have is about this concept of “trans” history. When you’re advocating this alternative force of solidarity, what kind of participation are you talking about? Certainly, you are not talking about information dissemination; it’s more a deficit model. So, to what extent can we talk about empowerment as participation, and participation as empowerment, when we talk about trans-history? In other words, to what extent can this trans-history space be a bottom-up process in the real sense that it brings power?

Let’s look at the example of civic engagement in social history or the history of the environment of the people who are participating in the creation of history. What about something people don’t feel so close to, like the history of Space or the history of the World? To give you an example, anyone can talk about the history of their grandfather, and participate in the creation of knowledge around their grandfather, but without possessing the historical expertise it’s very difficult to meaningfully participate in the creation of knowledge about the history of the World. So, my first question is, “To what extent can this trans-space you describe be truly empowering to people, not just something that seems to be democratizing?” That’s the concept side of the question.

This leads us to a really huge question about the role of the university. The university is filled with experts, so when we talk about the creation of knowledge, “What is the role of the university?” And even before that question, “What is the role of democracy in the creation of knowledge?” In your abstract you mentioned this tension between expertise and democracy. This is a very interesting and yet controversial point. Having expertise is great, and each of us in this room has expertise of some particular area, but how can it be democratic? Are democracy and expertise always opposites? How can these two co-exist?

My second question is about the method. “How do you actually do it?” The history cafe and the *school-kai*, this “trans” state that you mentioned were extremely interesting.

When I received the kind invitation from Prof. Mun to participate in this discussion, I asked him what I should say today. He said I should talk about my own view of history. To illustrate this, I would like to introduce an interesting episode that I recently experienced.

Last November I went to a conference in the Philippines for the first time and I wanted to learn about the history of the Japanese occupation, so I went to Corregidor Island where America and Japan fought. At the end of the war 6,000 Japanese soldiers committed suicide in the Malinta Tunnel. I participated in a guided tour. We took a ferry to the island and rode a bus to the tunnel where the Japanese people committed suicide and died. The guided tour I joined was conducted in English, but there were many Japanese tourists who were with a Japanese speaking guide. My guide didn’t realize that I was Japanese, as I was speaking English. He must have thought that all his customers were not Japanese, so he started to tell some jokes about Kamikaze and all those things that in Japanese society seem to be taboo.

Then he said something quite revealing: “Look we have one history, but two interpretations of history; we are giving you this tour, but those

Japanese over there are hearing a different version of history. That guy has to talk about Japanese war heroes”. It was really interesting because Japanese people probably come to this place trying to study the history, but in this business model, they want Japanese who participate in this tour to hear good stories about Japan and the sacrifice that Japan had to make, not necessarily about the sacrifice of the Filipinos.

The reason I’m mentioning this is that if this is public education, if this is an example of the “trans-state”, what exactly are we talking about? In this day and age, the business aspect is always there, so people want to sell the history that people want to hear. I don’t know who started this war story business in the Philippines, dividing people into different types of tour, but when I was looking at your slides and listening to your presentation I thought, “What really is trans-history? It’s certainly very different from the point about solidarity, because it’s dividing people.” Unfortunately, at the end of the day we live in this world of business and I think the business aspect is important in this history discussion.

I’d like to mention another really interesting point. It’s not really related to your issue but another shocking thing I saw was lots of pictures of what happened on Corregidor Island. One of the pictures was of Japanese soldiers throwing a baby in the air and then killing it by stabbing it with a bayonet. I was horrified and told a Filipino man that what I had learned in my history textbooks about this episode was really different from actually being there and seeing all those atrocities. He said, “Oh you’re Japanese aren’t you?” and I said, “Yes”, so he explained: “O well you don’t have to worry about that because the guide who is doing that is actually Korean”. I was shocked and thought, “What is he assuming?” I was quite alarmed and so I exclaimed, “What do you mean ‘don’t worry’”? The people who are doing that are Japanese soldiers, so why do you make a distinction?” He couldn’t really conceptualize what I was expressing so he just walked on ahead.

The point I am illustrating here is that this kind of business-focused rendition of history is going on and so in that reality, “What can we do to ensure the acceptable dissemination of trans-history?”

The second point is regarding the method. How do we do this? We can talk about usefulness to humanity and solidarity, but the business aspect is always there, and many people only listen to what they want to hear, so in that reality, “What is a good method that you would advocate?”

My final point is that I work on China, and so when I heard your phrase “campaign against established knowledge”, which was the starting point of your discussion, I thought about China. Your diagram showing history versus hegemony formation in the context of authoritarian states like China is very useful, but in that kind of context it’s difficult for experts to say what they really want to say. Your discussion is based on the assumption that we live in a democratic society, but as you rightly said we are seeing the return of authoritarianism, we see a lot of authoritarian states who do create history so, “What does that mean for this diagram?”

Another trend we are seeing is the rise of religious extremism, and during your discussion on posthuman thought I was thinking that their idea of human nature is radically different from secular people, so maybe that might be another trend to consider. It’s already becoming a complicated subject, but to find satisfactory answers we need to go beyond the typical democratic society and think about different contexts such as authoritarian states and places where religious extremism is taking place.

I apologize for my wide-ranging comments but there are many aspects to this topic. I’m looking forward to your answers to my questions.

Professor Hiroyuki TOSA's Remarks

Moderator: Thank you for your comments and questions. The next discussant is Professor Hiroyuki Tosa of Kobe University.

Professor Tosa: Thank you for your exciting stimulating discussion. First of all, I'm curious and interested in the way in which Professor Yamashita tried to introduce the deficit model into history communication. First of all, let me comment about his diagram. Relating to the first speaker, Professor Dudden's point about the dividing line, maybe the demos is not really homogeneous in the context of Japanese. As you know there is some controversy about our historical past, and recently I read a very interesting book titled *Historical Sociologies of the Right-Wing from 1990 to 2000*, by Ito Masaki. Now according to him, there are two kinds among the lay people, one is the regional civic citizen *shimin*, and the other is the *shomin*, which is the right-wing people. Around 1995 the *shomin* formed a network with right-wing politicians like Abe and Aso and their people, and the *shimin* were manipulated like pawns by propaganda. This kind of thinking can lead to sexism, racial discrimination, and so on.

Actually, there is a huge discrepancy, between the two opposing wings, and it seems to be closely related to how we appropriate the logic of the cultural references. We should pay attention to the way the lay people sometimes apply the historical positivist message to counter civic historical education. Take the example of Yoshida Shoin³; that's one way in which the right-wing sometimes selectively applies the historical positivist method arbitrarily. Perhaps we should pay more

³ Yoshida Shōin (September 20, 1830 - November 21, 1859), was one of Japan's most distinguished intellectuals of the Tokugawa shogunate. He influenced the Meiji Restoration.

attention to that kind of thing. In addition, there can be a structural transformation of the lay peoples' historical understanding. Maybe some of you remember the Tamogami controversy⁴ around 2007-2008 that pushed the Comintern conspiracy theory⁵. It was so called faked history, but some right-wing lay people began to believe in such faked history. That kind of thing also can be noticed even in the past times. Another example is climate denial. People tend to deny the facts if it feels uncomfortable because it doesn't fit their own belief system. Take the case for example of the Evangelists, they still deny Darwinism. So, in this sense maybe we cannot use this scenario of trans-science and trans-history.

My point is that the real problem is how to persuade the people who reject the past because of their own beliefs. Democratizing, as you mentioned might continue to produce some solutions, but sometimes the democratizing process, on the contrary contributes to negative outcomes such as the climate denialists and the historical revisionists. An outcome of the democratic process in the cyberspace is that it can contribute to that kind of democratizing process.

So how do we overcome these difficulties? That's a big question. That's the first question, and maybe those kinds of things are closely related to the future, the present and the past. Today the younger generation has lost their future, and history has become a battlefield for political studies, even for the right-wing. We can notice a similar situation in Japanese society. Actually, history is the main battlefield.

⁴ Toshio Tamogami, a member of Nippon Kaigi, argued on October 31, 2008 that "it is a false accusation to say (Japan) was an aggressor nation" during World War II and that it was rather drawn into the war.

⁵ Tamogami argued that Japan was drawn into the Sino-Japanese War by the Chinese Nationalists who were manipulated by the Soviet-controlled agency known as the *Comintern*.

So, to observe the infield we must start with the main field, the *Shusenjo*⁶ in the physical landscape.

That's my first comment and the second comment or question is the empiric polemical and complex point about post human. Actually, we cannot see the divide, and the majority still cling to so-called centrism - maybe 99%, but some, like the increasing number of young climate activists are trying to push for anti- or post-anthropocentrism. It is still very difficult to expand anthropocentrism because most of the religions, including Islam, Christianity, and most of the religious doctrines situate the human being as the sole master of this universe, so how can we persuade these people to accept the post-anthropocentric idea or argument? It's very difficult.

I have another question or comment. Some students of science are trying to apply or to co-opt environmental history, as global history, world history, like Jason Moore for example. Maybe it seems to be possible to expound the non-human in global history but the theoretical problem is how to overcome the problem of the dissolution of dualism. Theoretically, we must dissolve the dualism between nature and culture but after the dissolution of nature and culture it is quite impossible to apply some social science methodology. For example, some orthodox Marxist scholars pointed out that weakness, so you are just throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

There is no analytical clarity. At the individual level it's possible, as for example in the case of famous scholars such as Timothy Morton, one of the object-oriented ontological philosophers, who is interested in Buddhism. The teaching of Dogen philosophy is located in the dissolution of purity. Well, a Zen master can learn the dissolution of purity, but how can the majority of the people accept the argument? Yes, it is also very difficult. That's my comment and my question.

⁶ *Shusenjo* meaning "main battlefield" is a film by Miki Dezaki on the comfort women issue.

Professor YAMASHITA's Response

Moderator: Professor Yamashita, would you like to respond?

Professor Yamashita: Quite frankly it's beyond my capacity to answer all your questions in the best way but I'll try. To answer the first question from Doctor Hirono about participation, I'm referring to the political theory of democracy when I'm talking about trans-science, and participation is conceptualized as opposed to parliamentary democracy and what is important for participatory democracy is deliberation. So trans-science and trans-history are just labels for the domains, they're not the method or practices, just domains. In the field of trans-science, and I believe also in the domain of trans-history, there is participation which introduces deliberation. This is a guideline for better practice in the domain of trans-history or trans-science. What is important in deliberation is not just to communicate; the value of deliberation is changing the preference of each participant. Participants understood the parochial nature of their own fixed preferences and found that they had been transformed, something was different, a new subject with a different set of preferences.

This partly answers the second question about the people who only listen to what they want to hear and also the business aspect, but we have to keep market moralism away from the domain of trans-science and trans-history to make the deliberation robust, and because in market moralism the preference of the consumer has to be consistent. Here again the main benefit in the domain of trans-science and trans-history was expected to be deliberation through which each participant could experience a transformation of his or her own preferences and for that the market moralism of neoliberalism has to be kept away from that domain. That is how I would briefly answer that question.

Regarding the third question about that diagram and the authoritarian regime, the argument about trans-science assumes some sort of liberal democracy so we need some additional twist if we are to apply this argument to an authoritarian regime and at this moment I don't know what to do. However, Professor Tosa pointed out that there is no essential difference between trans-science and distributive history but I think the issue is not the distinction between science and history, because the scientific expert in the field of ecology resembles the history model rather than the science model this model rather than this model (pointing to diagram shown on page 64), because they are considered as not useful for capital or for power. So, the substantial dividing line is not between science and history as such but their usefulness from the viewpoint of the political power. I think this may partly answer the philosophy of the third question and Professor Tosa's first question, but as to the persistence of anthropocentrism, Professor Tosa's second point, I am not sure how a monotheistic civilization reacts to the posthuman turn, but the posthuman thrust in humanistic discipline does not only come from the awareness of the ecological crisis but also from the technological advancement.

We are becoming more and more like cyborgs. For example, I can't write any article without a keyboard. Of course, I am not a cyborg with a keyboard grafted in, but in my opinion human beings are essentially cyborgs from the 21st century if you think about the essence of a human in past time. In that sense some people take anthropocentrism as an ideology, or some kind of theme but I personally do not think that the persistence of anthropocentrism is such a solid thing. The more important point about the second question is the analytical powerlessness of epistemological monotheism. I am actually translating Jason Moore's book at the moment. Monotheism, which denies the ontological distinction between nature and society, does not deny the expert modes of knowledge production in each kind of thing.

It just tells us to follow the network of each being, human or non-human and to stick to the internal measurement. But the truth of the internal measurement can be various. The mainstream Marxists often accused Jason Moore and other monotheists of political thought by obscuring the analytical expert, but I'm defending Jason Moore's point.

Questions and Comments

Moderator: Now the floor is open. Any other comments from anyone?

Questioner 1: It seems that within the room there's a bit of tension over how to relate history to the Anthropocene, because one of the issues with the Anthropocene is that once we think about the Anthropos, we can't depoliticize all the issues and also we tend to forget about the uneven responsibility that people must think about given the uneven sense of the agency disparity. Men tend to have more agency than women in different races so the moment we select men there's a feature. On the other hand, when we try to stick to the humanist notion of history, we end up politicizing because everything is political.

In terms of the deliberation that you mentioned about how to guide the masses it seems to me that you are hinging on this enlightenment notion of gradually offering even access. But the moment you said there's good direction and bad direction that seems to already presuppose that there's the right kind of talking about history and the wrong kind. This denies the masses ability to democratically engage with historical understanding and knowledge because you're presupposing good knowledge and bad knowledge. I'm thinking of Hannah Arendt's article about truth and politics where she says the truth is anti-political because if there's only one truth it's not subject to deliberation. That becomes a matter of a divide between the philosophers with their solitary thinking and the demos, the masses which need to be enlightened. So, in short, I'm not really convinced about your idea of deliberation and what it really means to democratize history.

Professor Yamashita: Let me explain that when I use the words "good" and "bad" my hypothesis is about defending the value of humanities as

a whole. When I use the word “bad” I’m implying that in this direction we are destroying the humanities and we are denying or totally erasing away the humanities if we follow that logic to the extreme. And when I use the word “good” it implies the opposite, so it’s just a shorthand for my dissertation on the dichotomy on each side of the argument.

Basically, I’m pointing out the quite heavy and powerful trends of the elaboration of history but I am not saying that it leads history to be ambivalent. Against that trend of the erasing of history, we need to find a way to retain the place of humanity. That’s the message behind my presentation and an explanation of my usage of “good” and “bad” directions.

Professor Dudden: Thank you for your presentation. I completely agree. We all have a lot of work to do if we don’t want to romanticize or shall I say beautify history, and also recognize that history does have a value. And maybe it doesn’t. Even if you evaporate something there’s always something that matters in the evaporated crystal, isn’t there? (This is why Fukushima’s water should not be evaporated.) But I like very much Doctor Hirono and Professor Tosa’s comments too, especially when Doctor Hirono talked about the trans-space as a place of empowerment, and Tosa-sensei introduced the film *Shusenjo*, Miki Dezaki’s masterpiece. He’s not quite the demos that we’re talking about, because he used knowledge but it wasn’t an accredited knowledge, which is why to make the film *Shusenjo* he was able to get those very extreme views on film as a form of communication and achieved what he achieved.

I wish we could all make film because it’s a very successful medium for conveying debate, for conveying ideas and maybe the world is shifted. For many people their phone is how much their going to read, which brings me to the problem of the social value of the university professor and the place of the university. Those of you who

are students are accruing value in society by the more degrees that you are obtaining right?

However, there is the open wild free space of the unregulated internet which has its own. I think Tessa Morris-Suzuki already in 2004 called it the “gladiatorial space”, because you could say anything and kill anybody and it didn’t really matter; but still to this day if you want your voice to be heard about the topic of history you have to be a university accredited historian valued by an already valued print media. You know what we are talking about here. To get a really big point about history across from the Asahi Shimbun or the New York Times you have to be a university professor of history, or you have to have published a really successful history book.

So, if we’re trying to encourage a broader space, where do we target it? How do we make the history cafe not something that’s just a lot of fun in Sendai? And I’m not putting it down because I think it’s a great idea, but it reminds me of the cartoon Peanuts. Lucy the black-haired girl was playing the psychiatrist, and she set up her psychiatrist stand and charged a few cents and that was hilarious. But how do we have the history cafe? Or the psychiatrist’s cafe? But at the same time, it has the same weight as the Asahi Shimbun historian who’s accredited by Ritsumeikan?

Professor Yamashita: Well my presentation today is grossly schematized and there’s a long gradation of public engagement in making a live history. Even in this diagram I do not erase the domain of history proper. It’s the darker blue oval, and actually the way to trans-history is becoming heavier and heavier, and at this moment, in the current circumstances it seems that trans-history is overwhelming history proper, but I’m not saying the history proper disappears. There’s a trend to deliberation which implies the disappearance of that dark oval (Diagram on page 64) of the history domain but I am not saying that the

dark oval disappears. If there's no expertise, there is no meaning to exchanging views about history. I emphasize the value of deliberation through which each participant has to change. That means the different participants have to have the different strengths and the academic historical expertise is one of the strengths which can be appreciated, and which can be utilized to enhance the transforming power of deliberation. So when I'm saying that trans-history is already history and that there is a trend of the evolution history, I am not saying that history is disappearing, and I'm not saying that the historic thesis is becoming useless - actually it's useful but it has to find the place to be appreciated as useful, that's what I am saying.

Questioner 2: Thank you very much. I am not a student of this area, so I have too much to digest from your delicious meals. I always describe a researcher as a cook who makes ingredients to cook or produce some kind of meal. I feel from Professor Yamashita's presentation a sensation that we need to consider our responsibility for history in general. I found this diagram very interesting, not because it connects science with history, but rather because it doesn't. It's just putting them in contrast. Now, I want to go back one step before this to history and science in the first place. History could be called a truth, while if we look to science or if we look to what was considered to be science one-hundred years ago, there are too many things that were considered to be truth and they have been proven to be wrong. However, for history we have the ultimate truth always, because it's history, so nothing can be changed.

Then, we have a very difficult problem to deal with. We are dealing with too many layers like the people who are telling the history and the people who are receiving the history. My question here concerns the people who are telling the history, because most of the time history has been written by people from the perspective of the strong people, not

the people who were conquered by them, at least in the past. Now through technology and social media anyone can contribute to writing history. In the past, history was more or less the history of the victors. How can we deal with this issue? My second question is how to deal with the facts of history today in examples such as Professor Tosa already mentioned where history has been misused or abused by radical religious groups? Most of the radical religious groups support what they are doing by their interpretation of history. How do we deal with this issue?

Professor Yamashita: Actually, overcoming the history written by the powerful and victorious has been the long and persistent concern of modern history as a scientific discipline. They have been trying to overcome the triumphalism, to overcome this weak interpretation of history.

One corner in which history legitimized itself as a scientific discipline is what the Kantian philosophers call ideographic epistemology as opposed to nomothetic epistemology which is the epistemology in which the mission of science is confined to the governing law, and idiographic epistemology legitimizes the scientific activity in locating the uniqueness of each event. In the latter 19th century, history defined itself to be an idiographic scientific discipline and they tried to figure out a systematized method to identify and locate the uniqueness of the fact. That gave historic activity an affinity with the particularistic approach to the history, and that partly ended up with the naturalist thrust against history, and I'm not directly answering your question but to better conduct history in the domain of trans-history, I think we need to open up the historical discipline from the containment of idiographic epistemology and to incorporate the wider perspective from the nomothetic approaches to history, with which to counter the posthuman turn on humanistic disciplines.

So, my answer is twofold. One is making the modern discipline of history a process of overcoming history written by the powerful, but then we will end up confining history to idiographic epistemology, and that makes history relatively vulnerable to the posthuman thrust so in that sense we need to open up the epistemology for historical reconsideration. That's my tentative answer.

Professor Kosugi: Well, I'd like to ask a question to both keynote speakers. Regarding the doctrine of enlightenment and the subject of history as commodity, skepticism about the endeavors of historians goes with any kind of interpretation which pleases the people. That's the basic trend of nationalism, remaking history as national. On the other hand the global history discourses as I understand from today's speeches have a dehumanizing element, making it global, making a demarcation between the human and nonhuman worlds, and when the global history discourses started I had a hope that it would deconstruct world history which I felt was basically made by the triumphant powers. Some of this was achieved but the mainstream is not in that direction. So now we are caught between the evaporation of history, between the globalizing dehumanizing tendency, and the renationalizing tendency. Apparently, discourses of history within national boundaries have a usefulness or value as a commodity.

Now when Professor Dudden showed her slide showing the map of the shape of our country, it was the first time I had seen it and I found it quite shocking. That kind of idea about talking about the shape of the country's history ignores what happened on the other side of the border. In this place where we are engaged in Asia-Japan Research, we often think of Asian history as a kind of common history which Asian countries can share. I am sure that they are not in complete agreement but there are things which we can share and by having a common perspective of history as a group of nations we may reconstruct the

hegemonic world history so that we believe it serves more globally. However, between the split in these two different tendencies, more nationalizing again, or dehumanizing globalizing, can we have such a vision, as a hope for our research endeavors?

Professor Dudden: I really like how Professor Kosugi has said that the shape of Japan ignores the other side of the border. I think when we look at a number of trends; you could mention the local level, like Okinawa, to look at the local view in the Imperial outpost, rather just the metropolis and the colony. For example, to do the history of India from a port city back to the British Empire, rather than what the British Empire brought to the port city. I do think there are a number of encouraging trends in this regard. Professor Yamashita mentioned the value of history in the nineteenth century in creating the concept of the nation-state and we have spent the last hundred years trying to tear that down. We're trying to revalue history in order to denationalize the nation-state to make it more encompassing.

Here I think of the question: Why do so many voices that have been erased want to be included in national history? I encounter this when I speak with former sex slaves, former victims; these are people who do not want to be left out of Japanese history. So, the map that Watanabe Miwa and the people's museum created of all of the comfort stations is an effort to be part of Japan's history, and it's that the more complex it gets the more tension there is. As an American I will later send an email of a new initiative by a lawyer named Brian Stevenson, who has a new project on lynching. A new museum opened last year, and he has a feature film right now in the US called "Just Mercy", and this is an effort to give names to those bodies that were lynched and say this is American history. He's not trying to say that this is African American history, but that this is American history and I think it's making the face of the nation much more problematic. Again, as historians, we're doing

what we can, because you're absolutely right to say that the forces of darkness are really powerful.

Professor Tosa ended with the comment "We want to have hope". But how do we have hope? It is very difficult right now. We know what we're up against and my president decided just yesterday that my country doesn't even need a justice department. He's just announced that he is a dictator and it's okay!

Am I powerless against this? No! My weapon is pretty weak right now, but I will try. I know that I sound silly, and rather like a politician, but we have to be as active as we can within the limits of what we can do. We have pretty good constitutions so we've got to fight for those and I think that's where there's a lot of work for all of us to do, That's all I have to say except that I think bringing the other side of the border into the national history is precisely what my responsibility is.

Professor Yamashita: Well against Professor Tosa I argued the skepticism about the persistence of anthropocentrism but on the other hand I'm suspecting that we still think about solidarity based on spatial imagination. There's also the concept of networks and long-distance nationalism, although they are novel concepts, but we are still quite bound by the spatial foundation when we are thinking about solidarity. Professor Kosugi's picture is divided between the global history and the national/renationalized history, but perhaps we should find a third way because this dichotomy is deeply embedded in the spatial imagination of solidarity. So, in that sense, I really appreciate Professor Dudden's presentation today because her version of a maritime perspective may have potential for reforming our land-based spatial imagination when we are thinking about solidarity. There is a different logic, a different dynamism about forming and reforming solidarity in the ocean, so in that sense Professor Kosugi's final question, coming full circle to the first presentation is a good point to wrap up this discussion.

Moderator: Thank you very much. You have certainly wrapped up with a good point and I think this is the end of the second session.

Keynote Speech 2



Professor Norihisa YAMASHITA

Norihisa Yamashita is a professor at the College of Global Liberal Arts at Ritsumeikan University. Some of his areas of research include historical sociology, world-system analysis, and comparative civilization. His most recent publication is *Historical Literacy in the Age of Post-Globalization* (in Japanese). This is one of the achievements of a very aspirational research project “The ‘Great Divergence’ and the ‘Great Convergence’ ” in which he aimed to create

a new history textbook that breaks away from a Eurocentric world history.

Discussant 1: Doctor Miwa HIRONO

Miwa Hirono is an associate professor at the College of Global Liberal Arts at Ritsumeikan University. She is an expert on China's international relations and has published widely on peacekeeping operations. Other areas of research include disaster management, cultures of humanitarianism in East Asia, China's role in conflict-affected regions, and peacebuilding.

Discussant 2: Professor Hiroyuki TOSA

Hiroyuki Tosa is a professor at the Graduate School of Global Cooperation Studies at Kobe University. He is an expert on international relations and political sociology. His recent works include *Anarchical Governance* (in Japanese) and "The Pitfalls in the Project of Overcoming Western Modernity: Rethinking the Lineage of the Japanese Historical Revisionism".