

## Moving Beyond the War Memorial Museum

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A war museum tends to be used to glorify war while a peace museum tends to make visitors criticize war and think and act for peace. War memory displayed at public peace museums in Japan tends to exhibit only about Japan's victim side of war while private peace museums exhibit Japan's aggression honestly. How is it possible to move beyond war museums? It would be necessary to have spaces for holding lectures, concerts, showing films and so forth and to discuss impressions and opinions so that they may be able to think and act for peace.

**KEYWORDS:** Peace Museum; War Museum; Japan.

Over fifty museums in Japan are classified as peace museums - more than in any other country. The most famous one is the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum which was founded in 1955. In the same year, the Nagasaki International Culture Hall (since 1996: Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum) was built. The Okinawa Peace Memorial Museum was created in 1975, reminding its visitors of the only battlefield in Japan during World War II with some 150,000<sup>1</sup> people killed. Initially, these museums tended to show the horror of war only from victim perspectives, leaving aside exhibits on Japan's aggression.

Many witnesses of the US air raids of Japanese cities during World War II started to record their experiences during the Vietnam War in the late 1960s. A number of peace museums were established in the 1970s, among them was the Osaka War Memorial Exhibition Room for Peace that became the Osaka International Peace Centre later. In Kōchi, a city in the south-western part of Japan, an exhibition on US air raids opened in 1979 and the Grassroots House was also founded in 1989. In the 1980s, temporary "war exhibitions for peace" were displayed in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and other cities to commemorate the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945), and the defeat of Japan (August 15, 1945). The receptive response from the Japanese public was overwhelming, and people began to call for permanent peace museums. Also the anti-nuclear movement demanded that local governments build peace museums as well. Thus, numerous public peace museums were founded during the 1990s such as the Kawasaki Peace Museum, the Kanagawa Plaza for Global Citizenship, the Saitama Peace Museum, the Osaka International Peace Centre and the Kyoto Museum for World Peace. In the 1990s, many private museums were also established, for example the Shizuoka Peace Centre and the Grassroots House in Kōchi.

This proliferation of peace museum construction has resulted in considerable differences between museums receiving public or private sponsorship. It seems that public exhibitions are seen as problematic, because historical truths such as Japan's aggression are barely shown. This can be explained by the political influence of nationalists in Japan who tend to glorify war and thus also tend to attack exhibits presenting Japan's aggression in World War II to the public.

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<sup>1</sup> The number of the casualties in Okinawa is based on an investigation by the Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum (Katsube 1992:25).

Matters of historical truth can be more easily exhibited at private museums. We will take a closer look at how war memory is exhibited at peace museums and at war museums. To this end, the Yushukan War Memorial Museum at Yasukuni Shrine will be compared to the Kyoto Museum for World Peace. Lastly, methods of utilizing museums for peace education will be examined by introducing a case study of the Grassroots House.

### **The Concept of War Memory**

War memory varies among individuals, domestic groups and nations. For example, the atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima and Nagasaki remember World War II fundamentally different from American veterans. Accordingly, the war memory preserved and exhibited at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum contrasts with the one at the National Air and Space Museum in Chantilly, Virginia, USA. In Hiroshima, the hardships of the atomic bomb survivors are emphasized, while there are no exhibits showing the experience of the victims in Chantilly.

Another cross-border divergence concerning war memory surfaced in 2004, following the Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine on New Year's Day in Tokyo. A shrine of the Shinto religion, the Yasukuni shrine honors the estimated 2.5 million Japanese soldiers killed in wars since 1853. International controversy springs from the fact that fourteen A-class war criminals that were found guilty at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, held after WWII, were enshrined in Yasukuni Shrine in 1978. An editorial in *The Korea Times* (2004) criticized that Koizumi's visit

was ostensible to pay tribute to Japan's war dead, but the shrine also honors several of Japan's World War II criminals, including World War II-era Prime Minister Hideki Tojo. So, Koizumi cannot simply defend his visit, as he did, by saying that history, tradition and custom must be respected in any country.

The historical background which must be recalled to understand such Korean criticism is that Koreans suffered from Japan's colonial and military rule from 1910 to 1945. Their war memory is completely different from that of Koizumi who admires Japanese rulers during World War II. The South Korean government went on to warn that "Japan needs to face the fact that Japanese words and actions based on distorted perception of history destroy the development of the relation between Korea and Japan" (*Kōchi Shimbun* 2004). Seoul suggested that the Japanese government build an alternative facility to the Yasukuni Shrine; however, the Japanese authorities did not react to this suggestion positively. The South Korean government also offered to research history jointly in order to revise Japanese history books. In the absence of government action, historians from both countries have exchanged opinions at the NGO level and a joint history book as a result was published. Japanese government officials refused to be involved.

Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine has become controversial not only overseas but also domestically. 631 Japanese citizens filed a lawsuit at the Osaka District Court in August 2001 against Koizumi claiming that his visit was in violation of the constitutional separation of religion and state.<sup>2</sup> Chief Judge Hiroshi Muraoka ruled in February 2004 that the Prime Minister's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine was not private but public. However, the judge did not go on to make clear whether the visit was in fact unconstitutional. Yet, in April 2004,

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<sup>2</sup> Article 20 of the Constitution of Japan reads as follows: "Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all. No religious organization shall receive any privileges from the State, nor exercise any political authority. No person shall be compelled to take part in any religious act, celebration, rite or practice. The State and its organs shall refrain from religious education or any other religious activity."

the Fukuoka District Court for the first time ruled that Koizumi's 2001 visit to the Yasukuni Shrine was contrary to the Japanese Constitution. Koizumi responded, "I can't accept the ruling. I don't understand why (my visit was) unconstitutional ... I will visit it again." (*The Daily Yomiuri* 2004) His attitude seems to show a lack of critical reflection on his own war memory and concept of history.

### Definitions of War and Peace Museums

The classification of museums into war and peace museums is not self-explanatory. In some cases, the label may be misleading. For example, the Imperial War Museum in London includes a section of oral history where visitors can listen to stories of pacifists from cassette tapes. But on the whole, war museums tend to glorify war by exhibiting weapons, soldiers' uniforms etc., while peace museums criticize war and make visitors think of peace and act accordingly. Johan Galtung refers to war museums as "museums telling the story of war, or of one particular war. Some of them glorify (war), directly or indirectly; and many inspire action supporting the next war." (1998: 8) On the other hand, "A peace museum informs us about peace and how to get there ... The museums that call themselves peace museums today are, however, mainly anti-war museums; there is very little about peace and very little about how to get there; except for one approach: war abolition, war negation." (Galtung 1998: 12)

Japanese peace museums are anti-war museums in accordance with Galtung's definition. According to Toshifumi Murakami (2003), an anti-war museum is "a peace museum aiming to inform the fear of war and to form anti-war attitude," while a "pro-peace museum" is "a peace museum aiming to form the attitude and skill for making a peaceful society and peaceful international relations". Many public peace museums in Japan emphasize the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the US air raids on various cities. However, in these museums there is no training of the public in skills for conflict resolution like in "pro-peace museums" such as the Caen Memorial in France. Regardless of the title of a museum, the exhibits and their intended aims determine whether it is a war or a peace museum. The following comparison of two war exhibits in two Japanese museums demonstrates the differences.

### Yushukan Museum in Yasukuni Shrine

The Yushukan War Memorial Museum was founded in 1882 as the first museum in Japan. It was rebuilt in 1932 and then renovated in 2002. A recent leaflet of the Yushukan museum explains: "We are especially pleased to have the opportunity to display a carrier-borne Mitsubishi Zero fighter aircraft. From the Yushukan's collection, which encompasses over 100,000 items, we have selected those that shed a new light on modern Japanese history." The mentioned aircraft was a main combat plane used by Japan's navy during World War II. The display of such a fighter plane is characteristic of war museums such as the Musée de l'Armée in Paris and the National Army Museum in London. It should be noted that the Yushukan leaflet puts emphasis on "a new light on modern Japanese history". Is the museum's concept of history really new? The exhibits do not seem to be new at all. At Yushukan, war memory is used to glorify war and there are, for instance, no exhibits on the Chinese people's sufferings, as the following example of a Yushukan exhibit shows.

The Marco Polo Bridge (Lugouqiao) Incident on July 7, 1937, was a flashpoint of Japan's aggression against China. Yet an article from the Tokyo *Nichinichi Shimbun* newspaper dated

July 7, 1937, is exhibited in the Yushokan museum without any criticism of Japan's aggression. The incident is explained in the article as follows: "On July 7th, 1937, while Japanese troops were conducting night maneuvers near the Marco Polo Bridge on the outskirts of Beiping (modern Beijing), shots were fired at them. Shots were also fired at Japanese reinforcements who arrived the next morning. A battle was subsequently fought against the Chinese at Wanping ..." There is no indication in this article that the incident marked the start of Japan's all-out invasion of China. The text seems to imply to the average museum visitor that from the Japanese point of view there was good reason for these Japanese troops' attacks on the Chinese.<sup>3</sup>

Another example from the same museum was an exhibit on the Nanking Massacre of 1937/38. When I visited the Yushukan Museum, there was the following explanation: "The purpose of the Nanking Operation was to surround the capital, thus discouraging the Chinese from waging war against the Japanese. Tang Shengzhi, commander-in-chief of the Nanking Defense Corps, ignored the Japanese warning to open the gates of the city. He ordered his troops to defend Nanking to the death and then escaped. Therefore, when the hostilities commenced, the leaderless Chinese troops either deserted or surrendered. Nanking fell on December 13." There is no mentioning of or reflection on Japan's aggression in this explanation. It should be also noticed that the neutral word "operation" is used although the rest of the world calls it a "massacre". A postcard picture illustrates the night assault on Nanking in November 1937.<sup>4</sup> It is estimated that "more than 300,000 Chinese civilians and soldiers were systematically raped, tortured, and murdered - a death toll exceeding that of the atomic blasts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined" (Chang 1998: cover). There are no exhibits on the brutal aftermath of the night assault on Nanking at the Yushukan War Memorial Museum.

What are the impressions of visitors to the Yushukan museum, considering that exhibits like those covering the Marco Polo Bridge Incident and the Nanking Massacre only show Japan as a successful military power and disregard the nature and consequences of Japan's aggression?

Handwritten notes in Japanese in a guestbook at the end of the exhibition give an indication. There are two types of opinions: some tend to praise the museum and the others criticize the content of the exhibits. A 24 year-old man wrote, "I felt that I touched a spirit that modern Japanese tend to lose." On the other hand, a 19-year-old girl wrote, "The Japanese military is glorified at this museum. It is important to do so, but it is necessary to reflect on the war." A 15-year-old non-Japanese noted, "There was really a Nanking Massacre!! Japan is telling a lie. She should reflect on the war. Down with Japanese Imperialism!!" An anonymous person commented, "Are you Chinese? You, the Chinese, are brainwashed by the Chinese government. Wake up! The more China and Korea fuss about the past, the more the USA and Europe would be happy. Try to look at the world more openly, Chinese!" The visitors referred to above were all born after World War II and did not experience war directly. A 71-year-old man, reflecting on the war, wrote that "We should not forget that three million Japanese and twenty million foreigners were killed. Japan should not try to justify the aggressive war. I was forced to be a suicide bomber and was taught to die for the emperor. I thought Japan would fall even if the emperor was protected. Though the emperor system remained after World War II, people suffered terribly from the lack of food. War means murder and there is no just war." This older man is

<sup>3</sup> There has been an argument about "shots" among historians. The historian Keiichi Eguchi believes that shots were fired by the Chinese, but he maintains that the war was a product of Japan's aggression that had started one decade earlier (Ienaga 1996:35).

<sup>4</sup> The picture shows "brave" Japanese soldiers but did not show the Chinese suffering.

very critical of the museum. It seems that many young people who lack personal experience of war tend to be persuaded by the Yushukan museum.

### **Kyoto Museum for World Peace**

The Kyoto Museum for World Peace was founded on the campus of Ritsumeikan University in 1992. It is the only peace museum in the world that exists at a university. Its aim is written in an inscription in six languages (Japanese, Chinese, Korean, English, French and German) near the entrance (Kyoto Museum for World Peace 1999: 1):

The Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University, was built with the hope of contributing to the realization of world peace. Through these exhibits, we hope to convey the tragic reality of war, to illustrate the efforts of those who oppose war, and to provide an understanding of the importance of establishing peace.

In contrast to the Yushukan museum, in the Kyoto Museum for World Peace Japan's aggression and its results are exhibited in a section called "The Colonies and Occupied Areas". For example, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident is explained in a completely different light: "Japan gained control of north-eastern China as a result of the "Manchurian Incident"<sup>5</sup>. Japan then aimed at occupying the northern part of China. She started total war against China using the military conflict at the Marco Polo Bridge in July 1937." This explanation is much more accurate and honest than the one given at the Yushukan museum. The result of Japan's aggression is also explained correctly: ten million Chinese were killed and many Chinese and Korean men were drafted into Japanese military service and often sent to the front lines while many women from occupied territories were forced into sexual slavery for the Japanese military personnel.

As for the Nanking massacre, the museum displays a photo which shows Chinese people being buried alive. The photo used is from a Chinese book. The Kyoto Museum for World Peace, together with other museums in Japan has started to exhibit Japan's past aggression. This fact began to receive international attention. An article titled "Japan: Fresh Look at Aggression" in the August 15, 1994, edition of International Herald Tribune exemplifies the international response: "War museums recently built in Osaka, Kyoto, Kawasaki, Saitama and Okinawa all deal forthrightly with Japan's aggressive strategy, its harsh and often murderous treatment of conquered Asian peoples and its refusal to surrender until the United States unleashed nuclear weapons." Strangely the institutions cited were introduced as "war museums", although they included the word "peace" in their names. Nonetheless, this report correctly highlighted Japanese peace museums' attempts to exhibit historical truth.

Beyond its domestic relevance, the Kyoto Museum for World Peace also serves as a tool for reconciliation with citizens from other countries. The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recently invited many foreigners, among them former Dutch prisoners of war, to this private museum. These foreign guests were not taken to the Yushukan museum in the Yasukuni Shrine or the National Showa Memorial Museum. Representatives of the Dutch Association for Compensation visited the Kyoto Museum for World Peace four times, consecutively from 2000 to 2004. The association founded in 1990 has several thousand members who were former prisoners of war in Japan or were internees in the East Indies. Since December 1994 the members have held monthly demonstrations in front of the Japanese embassy in the Netherlands to demand Japan's official apology and compensation for damages suffered during World War II. Formal dialogue between the Dutch and the Japanese began in 1995, following a suggestion

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<sup>5</sup> The Japanese military attacked the Chinese army in Liutiaohu, Liaoning, on 18 September 1931.

for further interaction by the Japanese ambassador Mr. Yukio Sato. The Dutch delegation visited the Kyoto Museum for World Peace on October 23, 2002, and exchanged opinions with Japanese students at Ritsumeikan University. A Dutch representative shared his experience about the cruel behavior of the Japanese military and said, “I don’t dislike the Japanese people at present. I can forgive the Japanese for their crimes, but please don’t ask me to forget the past.” (*Kokusai Heiwa Museum Dayori* 2003: 20) During a conversation one year later, a Dutch man talked about inhumane behavior by Japanese guards at a concentration camp in the East Indies, adding that many lives had been saved because of the atomic bombing of Japan. A student argued that many Japanese people were killed by the atomic bombs and it had not been necessary to use them because Japan was already close to defeat. The Dutchman asked the student to accept his opinion. However, when a student asked him how the Dutch colonial policy is taught in schools in the Netherlands, he claimed that the question is not related to the principal object of the meeting. The museum’s director Ikuru Anzai, who reported on this meeting in a letter to the author, pointed out that it seems that it is not easy for both sides to face the past sincerely. The differences of opinion between the Dutch visitors and the Japanese students were made clear in the dialogue, which is very important because this could be the beginning of the mutual realization that they have different concepts of history.

### **Peace Education through Peace Museums**

It is natural that exhibits, permanent and traveling ones, are used to promote peace education at peace museums. Equipment such as audiovisual devices and space to hold lectures and concerts and show films are helpful in carrying out this role. It is also necessary for visitors to have spaces and opportunities to think quietly and discuss their impressions and opinions so that they may be able to think and act for peace in the future. Cooperation with NGOs, especially art groups has proved desirable in order to promote peace education. A peace museum can play a key role in promoting peace education in various fields. By introducing projects undertaken at the Grassroots House in Kōchi City I will clarify how we may begin to move beyond the institution of the war memorial museum.

### ***Peace Education for Families***

Families who visit peace museums receive the opportunity to learn about various issues contributing to peace, which include the environment, human rights and sustainable development. Once visitors learn about these issues, they can become active participants in solving the world’s problems. For example, the families of the Grassroots House members traveled to a forest called “Forest for the Constitution”<sup>6</sup> and began to plant samplings in Otoyō-cho, Nagaoka-gun of Kochi Prefecture, in 1995. The forest has become a symbol of promoting peace and protecting the environment. Visiting children drew a huge picture remembering their experiences of planting trees at the Forest for the Constitution in an art class at the museum. This picture was then exhibited at the Kōchi Art Museum and became a traveling exhibit to the International Museum of Peace and Solidarity in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. As a result, paintings by Uzbek children were sent to the Grassroots House and were exhibited there. Thus, peace education for families can also help in creating a culture of peace in the community and internationally.

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<sup>6</sup> Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution renounces war and prohibits Japan from owning military forces. This article has been in danger of being changed by the government.

### *Educational Cooperation with Schools and Universities*

There are various methods to teach schoolchildren and students about peace. Teachers regularly take classes of children to the Grassroots House so that they can see various items that were used during World War II, such as outdated school textbooks, conscription papers and army uniforms. Children learn about the past by viewing these exhibits and listening to witnesses of World War II. These speakers have been invited to report about their war experiences and activities for peace at various schools. As eye witnesses to the war age and become fewer, their stories are recorded on videotapes that can be used in schools. One example has been the sending to schools lecturers with a traveling exhibition concerning US air-raids on Kōchi which killed about 400 citizens. Mr. Masahiro Okamoto, the director of the Grassroots House, lost his mother and sister then in these air-raids. He made a picture-story show about the air-raids and talked about the history in Kōchi along with his wife at elementary schools. Teachers occasionally visit the museum to rent some exhibits so that they can display them at schools.

The Grassroots House is also involved in the peace education of college students. There is a course called “Peace and Disarmament” that started in 1987 at Kōchi University and I am one of its lecturers. About 150 students from departments of humanities, science, education and agriculture have participated. The theme for a course in 2001 was “Peace in Asia and Japan” and focused on Japan’s relations with China and Korea. Mr. Shigeo Nishimori, the founder and former director of the Grassroots House, gave lectures on the past, present and future of the Sino-Japanese relations. Many students were shocked to hear about Japan’s aggression against China and Korea because these historical facts were not taught to them at their schools. Mr. Kensaku Umebara, the then president of the Association of Recording US Air Raids and Damages in Kōchi, gave lectures on Japan’s dual capacity as aggressor and victim. He particularly emphasized the aggression against Korea and the deportation of Koreans who had been forced to work for Japan. The Grassroots House has introduced lecturers to schools and universities and has been playing an important role as a peace education centre for children and students as well as for young teachers who have no experience of war.

Various teaching materials have been published as Grassroots House booklets. Several booklets on Japan’s wartime aggression were written by members of the museum, who had traveled to China to investigate the damages caused by soldiers from Kōchi. A booklet on the Japanese-American history<sup>7</sup> was published in conjunction with an exhibit called “For the Sake of the Children” which was displayed at the Grassroots House, the Kōchi Art Museum and at various locations in Tokyo. This booklet re-examined the deportation of Japanese-Americans into ten concentration camps during the war. Other booklets have been devoted to peace history, which is not taught in Japanese schools. For example, readers are informed about Kou Makimura who protested against Japan’s aggression and was tortured to death at the young age of only 26, in a prison in Kōchi. In short, the Grassroots House and other peace museums contribute to the documentation and distribution of peace-related information that has been neglected by the official Japanese curricula.

### *Peace Education for Community*

The Grassroots House is a community based peace museum, and as such it is a place where various NGOs meet together. Groups focusing on peace, the environment, human rights, women and art conduct activities such as art exhibitions, lectures, meetings, concerts, plays and movies.

<sup>7</sup> The Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community. *For the Sake of the Children*. Trans. Kazuyo Yamane and Kyunosuke Yamane. (Kōchi: Grassroots House, 1998).

People in the community enjoy these activities, especially the folding of paper cranes.<sup>8</sup> About 100,000 citizens, from children to senior citizens, fold one million paper cranes every summer which are used to decorate downtown Kōchi, where the US air raids took place. Focused activities for peace started in Kōchi on the eve of the United States attack on Iraq in 2003 and have continued to this day. In 2003, people were asked to write their own messages on a huge role of paper. The messages were photographed and then sent to US-President George W. Bush and the Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi. On these occasions people had the opportunity to think about the past, present and future, which is important activity for creating a culture of peace in the community.

### ***Peace Education through Art***

Through The Grassroots House artists and ordinary citizens have been given the opportunity to become involved with peace concerts, art exhibitions, dramas, film festivals and peace marches that are held every summer. “Think globally and act locally” has been practiced for almost three decades in the Kōchi Prefecture. One of the activities was a peace concert performed by young Chinese, Japanese and Korean musicians. It was initiated by Ms. Keiko Tamaki, Vice Director of the Grassroots House, after the launch of military operations in Afghanistan in 2001. The concerts have been held four times a year in public places throughout the city. At the concerts, a fundraising campaign was conducted to help the people of Afghanistan.

### ***Education and Activities for Reconciliation***

In the *UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace*, dialogue and cooperation are regarded as vital means to create a culture of peace. The Grassroots House contributed to creating such a culture of peace both domestically and internationally. When members of the museum went on trips to China, it was not easy for them to face Japan’s aggression knowing what soldiers from their hometown of Kōchi had done during World War II. At first, some of the Chinese people they encountered expressed hatred towards the Japanese, but opportunities for reconciliation became possible for these visitors by their action of listening and learning from the Chinese people’s history and supporting their demand for Japan’s apology and compensation for damages done during the war. The Grassroots House also has supported the creation of a culture of peace between high school students from Japan and South Korea. Japanese students conducted research projects about Koreans who were forced to work in Kōchi during World War II and this action has helped them to gain friendships across borders. Japanese high school students went to the Republic of Korea to learn what happened to Korean women who were forced to work as sex slaves for the Japanese military during the war. These student activities were filmed and published in a book to make the experiences available as teaching materials for further peace education. There are some other museums besides the Grassroots House that exhibit Japan’s wartime aggression honestly and support the Korean and Chinese lawsuits against the Japanese government for an apology and satisfactory compensation for the victims of Japan’s aggression.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> According to a Japanese proverb, the folding of 1000 paper cranes makes a person’s wish come true. Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl who died of leukemia due to the long-term consequences of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, folded hundreds of paper cranes before she passed away in 1955 at an age of twelve.

<sup>9</sup> Other museums that actively participate in this project are the Women’s War and Peace Museum (Women’s Active Museum) in Tokyo and the Oka Masaharu Memorial Nagasaki Peace Museum.



## Conclusion

War memory is quite different from country to country, as the example of reconciliation efforts between China and Japan shows. In a war museum, war memory tends to be used to glorify war. While a peace museum helps visitors to think critically about war; and in the future to think and act for peace. War memory displayed at public peace museums in Japan has emphasized victims within Japan and has downplayed the aggression. On the other hand, Japan's aggression is well exhibited at private peace museums, and the reconciliation between small groups of Chinese, Korean, Dutch and Japanese people has become possible.

A peace museum has shown to be a positive means to promote peace education through exhibits, art, dialogue and encouraging cooperation at home, school, in the community and worldwide. Art is universal and art can be used in a traveling exhibit that can move throughout the world. A peace museum can also play a role in conflict resolution and reconciliation among conflicting parties. The *UN Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace* states, "A culture of peace could be promoted through sharing of information among actors on their initiatives in this regard." The International Network of Peace Museums, the Association of Japanese Museums for Peace (to which relatively big museums belong) and Japanese Citizens' Network of Museums for Peace work to this end. Currently, these networks are still in the making and their influence remains limited. Keeping in touch with like-minded people who have the same concern for a more peaceful future and have the sense of solidarity is necessary to create a culture of peace. An important step towards this goal will be to further increase cooperation between the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), especially the Asia and Pacific Peace Research Association (APPPRA), and the International Network of Museums for Peace in the coming years.

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