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TIME, LOCATION AND IDENTITY OF WWII–RELATED MUSEUMS

An International Comparative Analysis

INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at educational messages offered by museums whose major theme is the history of World War II. It focuses on places that were heavily involved in the war or are closely related to its history.

Generally speaking, these museums provide well–thought, comprehensive and sometimes innovative educational programmes. Occasionally, distance learning is also available through online courses, payable by credit cards. A variety of programmes are designed for each of the different social groups of, for example, children, school teachers, soldiers and the general public. Several methods are devised for children to follow preparatory lessons at home or at school. The educational purposes and messages embedded in those programmes are explicit and conclusive.

At the same time, there are messages that are demonstrated implicitly, although still with an educational intention. This chapter tries to capture these messages connoted in aspects outside educational programmes. For this purpose, the chapter pays special attention to the location and the historical context in which individual museums have developed. Finally, an attempt is made to analyse the notion of the war history encompassed within different times and spaces.

POSITIONING OF HISTORY MUSEUMS IN SOCIETY

The origin of museums is traceable back to academic and cultural institutions in ancient Greece. It was a sanctuary for goddesses who presided over poetry, music, dance, other fields of arts, and knowledge. Thus, in the West, museums have long been an important source of learning and cultivation for human beings. For a long time until the modern age, access to museums was restricted to the elite of society, those who had political and economic power. Museums used to be places for displaying rarities that were only affordable for those people with such power.

The function of museums, however, has gradually changed, along with social transformation in modern European societies. From the period of the Enlightenment, interest in knowledge, along with that generated by materials, has spread to the people in the lower echelons of society. In the development of capitalism, the access

L. Vega (Ed.), Empires, Post-Coloniality and Interculturality, 59–74.

of the middle class to new cultural experiences entered the market. Control of the arts and materials extended from aristocratic and religious patrons to the paying public (Curran, 2001). Based on the belief of lay people in science and knowledge, museums became yet again a social institution for 'civilised' people, *i. e.* the members of civil society.

Museums are involved in collections, preservation and exhibition based on their judgement that those materials are worthy of knowledge for people. Exhibits in museums are selected for certain purposes and philosophies, such as the acquisition of 'correct' information and the exclusion of 'wrong' messages. As a result of such selection and allocation of knowledge, all the others are doomed to be underplayed or ignored in order to highlight the good one (Karp & Lavine, 1991). Therefore, visitors receive messages that are already built into the overall structure of museums. They function as an important medium of knowledge transfer. Since people judge things as to whether they are 'fact' or 'fiction', largely based on the form of media through which they receive information, the authority of the media is crucial. It can be suggested, as Zygmunt Bauman states, that museums are a symbol of Western modern society, in terms of the belief in knowledge and authoritarianism based on themit (Bauman, 2000). Attending to authority, modern museums have become, what Stanley Fish calls, an 'interpretive community', in which museums and visitors share a certain understanding of how they view exhibitions (Fish, 1980).

History museums exemplify this notion of modern museums. The 'History' that we see in museums is not 'the past' as such and neither does it tell us anything in itself. It is transformed into a form of history through the filters of the exhibitors (Jennkins, 2005; Le Goff, 1992). By understanding the same historical perspectives, people share the past as well as the future. In modern society, national history has supplanted a pre–modern, kin–based relationship that allowed people to believe in the 'sameness' of the members of community (Sakai, 2010). History works most effectively to integrate people emotionally.

Thus, the influences of history museums are significant both socially and educationally. Not to speak of the displays and educational programmes offered by museums, their construction and existence have drawn political attention and controversies. In the following sections, we shall look at the individual cases of the history museums within the perspectives of the timing, the location and aspects outside educational programmes that tell us how history should be remembered.

JAPAN: BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Museums in Japan were, along with other aspects of modern education, modelled after those in the West. From the end of the Edo period, a number of missions of young modernisers had been dispatched to the United States and Europe to investigate the political, economic, social and educational systems and their current functioning in industrialised societies. The whole purpose of this was to identify the sources of Western civilisation. They therefore understood that the main role of museums was

to teach proper knowledge and correct information in order to cultivate and civilise people (Shiina, 1988).

Japan's catching–up in museum affairs continued after World War II. During the Allied military occupation of Japan (1945–1952), history and geography were among the school subjects most critically screened and radically revised by the American occupiers. The curriculum was revised and a new subject, *shakaika* (social studies or civics), was installed to teach the idea of democratic society to Japanese children. At that time too, Western reformers considered that museums could carry an important role for such purposes. They were positioned at the core of so–called social education (*shakai kyoiku*), mainly demonstrated outside school, and the Museum Law was enacted in 1951. Only recently, having recognised the challenges of museum education, especially in the training of qualified personnel, has the Ministry of Education begun to review the university curriculum and to create new courses for future curators.

The developing aspect of Japanese museums is recognisable in, for example, staffing. The author has conducted research and interviews in a number of war–related museums. The Kyoto Museum for World Peace, at Ritsumeikan University, is one of the few museums that were founded by the University. It is also a rare example since it has a qualified full–time curator with a graduate–level degree in the field. As one of its important missions, this museum tries to show not only the misery and cruelty of the war meted out to the Japanese people, but also those aspects in regard to Japan's waging of the war as an aggressor[1]. The Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum is often criticised, especially by Chinese and Korean people, because of its heavy focus on Japan and its people as victims. Despite the main purpose of the museum, it aims to demonstrate not only the impact of atomic bombs, but also the whole processes and the context of America's decision to drop bombs on Japan. The museum was founded by the Nagasaki Prefecture, and the staff members there, including the people in charge of developing educational programmes, are administrative civil servants. As elsewhere in municipal offices, those public administrators normally move from one office to another every few years. Therefore, the staff members must work to teach the history of the war within the routine process of personnel reshuffling, apart from their personal interests in the war or its history[2]. The Okinawa Prefectural Peace Memorial Museum also has a similar problem[3].

In sum, among the major functions of museums, *i.e.* collections; storage; research; and education, the last two aspects are underplayed in these war–related museums in Japan. Specialists in education are rarely involved. Moreover, verification of the materials for historical display is not as sufficient as in other museums abroad, as will be shown in following sections, which have their own historians or researchers within the institution, or at least maintain established professional relationships with history research institutions.

According to the enquiries of the author, the only exception in Japan is the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which has a standing committee consisting of scholars in various fields, *e.g.* international relations, architecture, physics,

information technology and so on. Their research results are publicised in the form of an annual report (Hiroshima, 2010). The staff members are divided into two groups to maintain professional consistency: one for administrative staff members and the other for permanent staff in education, museum studies and other lines of enquiry.

Given these tasks to be solved in Japan, let us turn our eyes to similarly war–related museums abroad, which can be regarded as 'models' for these Japanese museums in terms of technology and institutional settings. At the same time, they have their own background for development and the furtherance of educational messages.

GERMANY: THE CASE OF THE NUREMBERG DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

The official name of the institution is "Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds Nuremberg". It is located in Nuremberg, one of the major cities in the Fee State of Bavaria. Formerly, this centre used to be the site where Hitler and the Nazis conducted the annual party rally since their seizure of power. The vast size and somewhat solemn atmosphere of the rallies are perceivable from the *Triumph des Willens* (Triumph of the Will), a film shot by a controversial director, Leni Riefenstahl (1902–2003). Nuremberg is also associated with other memories of the National–Socialist (NS) past. In 1935, the Nazis declared the Race Laws, paving the way for the Holocaust. Moreover, *Der Stürmer* (The Stormer), a Nazi propaganda weekly tabloid, was issued here from 1923 until 1945.

At the zenith of Nazi power, the relatives of Richart Wagner in Bayreuth, another city in Bavaria, had been under the patronage of Hitler (Hamann, 2005). Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden, a Bavarian village in the German Alps, was the second base of the Nazi regime after Berlin. This tourist resort had a serious turning point in 1933 when Hitler purchased his summer villa there. In April 1945, the British and American troops bombed and destroyed most of the Nazi–related buildings there, except for the *Kehlsteinhaus* (the Eagle's Nest) and the bunker complex. From 1953 until 1996, parts of Obersalzberg had been in the hands of the American authorities, mainly used for the recreation of the US military. Then, *Bavaria Freistaat Bayern* and the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich chose the place for the exhibition of the central manifestations of Nazi dictatorship[4]. As late as 1999, the Dokumentation Obersalzberg was in use for that purpose.

Despite, and arguably because of, the close connection to Hitler and his NS regime, Bavaria has gone a quite long way round in its *Geschichtspolitik* (history policy) and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (overcoming the past) in comparison with other western states. In this sense, Germany, even in the western part, is not monolithic in dealing with the national past. The Documentation Centre was founded in 2001.

It is true that West Germany, in general, as well, its government and the people had gone back and forth until they gained respect and admiration from around the world for the policy of overcoming the past of Nazi Germany. In history textbooks as well, those issued in the second half of the 1940s and the 1950s, offered descriptions about the war and the Holocaust that were apparently underplayed (Shibata, 2008).

Germany's dealings with the history of the NS regime started immediately after the War during the Allied military occupation. The so–called denazification, which the Allied authorities had conducted, was not the way in which the Germans expected, and they wanted to banish Nazis from their society. This personnel demilitarisation in Germany was thorough, unlike in Japan. The screening questionnaire *Fragebogen* consisted of over one hundred questions. Initially the US authorities planned to screen all German adults in a population sector of 16,682,573, and distributed thirteen million copies of the questionnaire, which largely exceeded the number of adults there (Montgomery, 1957). Many Germans harbour antipathy toward the Allies' denazification not only because of the thoroughness, but also the unfair judgement of the occupation authorities. The Bavarian regional council complained about 'renazification' (Woller, 1986), while Karl Jaspers expressed his concern for the "silent disappearance of the Nazi leaders" (Herz, 1982; Jaspers, 1946). Thus since its beginnings, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany took rapid legal measures to declare the end of denazification, despite communist opposition. Under the Konrad Adenauer administration (1949–1963), a gradual release of war criminals and a gradual comeback of former Nazis into public sectors took place. As late as in 1960, there was a report of 833 cases of attacks on Jewish cemeteries (Ishida, 2002).

The apparent policy for coming to terms with the NS past became visible from the middle of or the late 1960s in West Germany. Underlying this, there was certainly a growing political pressure from the Jewish people, who also needed time to fully grasp the humiliated past of their people from the immediate post–war period, as will be mentioned later. Persistent assaults on Jewish properties by Germans led the Jewish Congress in the US to stand up and take action against the German Ambassador in Washington D.C. as well as against Bonn in 1959. In the 1960s, there was also a powerful political movement of the German youth driven by their distrust and anger towards the older generations, especially those who had remained silent about the NS past[5]. In this sense, the student movement and its leadership of intellectuals in West Germany had a vital impact on the ways in which the country had begun to cope with the history of the war, and above all the Holocaust, as the national past. Therefore, it was in the 1970s and the 1980s when people became much more exposed to the history of World War II in the levels of culture and sub–culture than the earlier post–war period (Avisar, 1994). American TV drama, The Holocaust, and its popularity in US society in the late 1970s was another push for the German people to reconsider the interpretation of history. Moreover, in the 1970s and the 1980s the political leadership of West Germany, notably involving Chancellor Willy Brandt (1969–1974) and President Richard von Weizsäcker (1984–1994), together with popular respect for their policies created a solid basis for *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

Meanwhile, Bavaria had followed its own path. A US officer once expressed his perception of Bavarians' identity by saying that "the people are first of all Bavarians, then Catholics or Lutherans, and thirdly, Germans"[6]. The city of Nuremberg also

has taken a long time to use the Party Rally Grounds, which was once offered to the Nazis and was returned after their fall for educational purposes. After the Americans blew up the swastika on the Zeppelin Field, the grounds were used for different open–air events, for instance a motor cycle race in the 1950s. The building of the Congress Hall within the site became a place of a Jubilee Exhibition to celebrate the 900th anniversary of the city. In the 1960s, a suggestion was made by the municipal authorities that the Hall should be renovated for use as a football stadium, which was not followed through because of the large cost (Figure 1) (Täubrich, 2006).

Figure 1. Debate about the use of the Grounds in the 1960s.

In 1987, an idea for the use the grounds for recreation and a shopping centre was suggested, but was rejected by the State of Bavaria because of its irrelevance. In the 1980s, the educational administration of the State of Bavaria received a complaint about its way of teaching Holocaust history from Yad Vashem, a national memorial museum for the Holocaust in Jerusalem, Israel. Finally as late as 2001, as mentioned earlier, the historic site was opened to the public as the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds Nuremberg. This was the period, in contrast, when the other part of former West Germany had gradually shifted its policy for coping with NS history. It was the time of the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the national unification of the divided Germany, which can be interpreted as the end of the 'punishment' of Germany by international community (MacDonald, 2008). Inside and outside the country, people began to feel that West Germany had done enough to come to terms with the Nazi past, and as a result much more talk about Germany also being a victim of the war began to be seen, such as the Allied bombing of civilians in Hamburg and Dresden and the rape of German women by the Russian Army. In this sense, Bavaria can apparently be considered as a late–comer in the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

Since it is a relatively new museum, it is an innovative one in terms of a variety of educational programmes, their approaches, and the concepts. The centre attempts to reduce the numbers of old–fashioned guided tours in which the centre 'taucht the visitors about its own understanding and interpretations of history[7]. Instead, there are a number of seminar rooms where visitors, especially pupils and students, can discuss their own views and feelings about the war and Nazi Germany. A six–and–a half–hour Study Day, entitled 'Facades of Terror – From Fascination to Crime', is offered to examine the sensitive border and connection between the 'fascination' of the party rallies and the Nazi crimes. On this Day, visitors can choose and include a 90–minute 'Thematic Talk' including, for example, 'Against National Socialism – Human Rights' and 'From the Nuremberg Trials to the International Criminal Court'. Themes for discussion can also be proposed by visitors themselves.

The exhibitions are based on professional researchers who work for the centre as full–time staff. The results of their research are transferred to more accessible form specifically for school children, in coordination with an associate institution, the DokuPäd, located in the city centre[8]. Both institutions share a consistent educational idea and the concept of teaching about the NS past. They not merely focus on or emphasise the horror of the dictatorship or its acts. They do not deny the 'fascination' of power, but also try to make children understand the dangers of power. Membership to the management is open to various fields of society rather than exclusive. The board, called the *Dokuratorium*, involves politicians such as the Ministers of the State of Bavaria, the City Mayor, ecclesiastics such as an archbishop, publishers, and representatives from the Jewish Council and community.

THE UNITED STATES: THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM (USHMM)

One of the prime purposes of all Holocaust museums is to recall the mass murder of the European Jewry during World War II. Museums in places where the people were actually murdered, Auschwitz–Birkenau, Dachau and Buhenwald, reflect the incident by themselves. A small site in Mechelen in Belgium, too, is believed to be the only place that can demonstrate the tragedy of the Belgian Jews who were sent to Nazi death camps. Regarding the plan of its expansion and renovation, the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance in Mechelen unyieldingly rejects transfer to another site and sticks to the idea of building a new museum on this site[9]. Thus, these places show the tragedy through their existence without 'dramatisation'.

However, Washington D.C., the place of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, has no direct link to the event, and does not remind people of anything to do with it. Therefore, some justification was necessary for the museum to affirm that it is a 'living memorial'. At the launch of the Presidential Commission on the Holocaust in 1978, President Jimmy Carter stated that:

"Although the Holocaust took place in Europe, the event is of fundamental significance to Americans for three reasons. First, it was American troops who

liberated many of the death camps, and who helped to expose the horrible truth of what had been done there. Also, the United States became a homeland for many of those who were able to survive. Secondly, however, we must share the responsibility for not being willing to acknowledge forty years ago that this horrible event was in fact occurring. Finally, because we are humans, concerned with the human rights of all peoples, we feel compelled to study the systematic destruction of the Jews so that we may seek to learn how to prevent such enormities from occurring in the future" (MacDonald, 2008).
The Commission devised a plan whereby the museum 'must be of symbolic and artistic beauty, visually and emotionally moving' (Engelhardt, 2002).

To surmount the geographic and psychological distance to the genocide in Europe, the museum uses a number of effective means to bring the past into the memory of the visitors and give them 'powerful lessons' (Engelhardt, 2002). As Carter stated first, one of the most important messages of this museum is that Americans are presented here as 'liberators'. This is convincing if one considers the location of the museum. After various discussions and negotiations, it was decided to build the museum in the heart of Washington D.C., America's political centre. The large building, of 25,000m², has two entrances. One of them, on the western side, is surrounded by the Washington Monument, the National Mall and Capitol Hill, which symbolise the American idea of freedom and the central values of American society (Figures 2–4). The exterior of the museum's building is carefully structured to harmonise such surroundings.

Figures 2–4. 2(left) The Washington Monument; 3 (centre) USHMM;4 (right) The US Capitol and the National Mall (Pictures taken by the author).

Materials in museums are by no means exhibited randomly. Their location also conveys important messages, such as the degree of the significance of individual exhibitions. At the western entrance, visitors encounter an epigraph of the reminiscence of Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in

Europe, in the face of the Ohrdruf Concentration Camp which was liberated by the US Army. He pictured its horrific sigh, stating that:

> THE THINGS I SAW BEGGAR DESCRIPTION … THE VISUAL EVIDENCE AND THE VERBAL TESTIMONY OF STARVATION. CRUELTY AND BESTIALITY WERE SO OVERPOWERING … I MADE THE VISIT DELIBERATELY, IN ORDER TO BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE FIRST–HAND EVIDENCE OF THESE THINGS IF EVER, IN THE FUTURE, THERE DEVELOPS A TENDENCY TO CHARGE THESE ALLEGATIONS TO PROPAGANDA.
>
> GEN. DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ALLIED FORCES OHRDRUF CONCENTRATION CAMP APRIL 15, 1945.

At the other side of the building, the first thing visitors note are the twelve flags of the US army divisions that liberated released prisoners from Nazi concentration camps". Visitors entering the museum from either side will learn that Americans made a significant contribution to the end of a series of horrors which they only saw after the fact.

Figures 5–7. 5 (left) The entrance facing the Monument; 6 (centre) Eisenhower's epigraph at the entrance; 7 (right) "Flags of Twelve United States Army Divisions Active in Liberating Nazi Concentration Camps" in the entrance facing to the Mall (Pictures taken by the author).

Another important mission of the museum is to present lively memories of murdered or tortured Jews to those who have not experienced such pains and grief. As broadly argued, the whole construction of this massive museum is meant to be a historical lesson of the Holocaust (Linenthal, 1995; Young, 1993). The architect, James Freed, designed shapes, forms, materials and colour schemes through which visitors could feel what European Jews had gone through. He himself was one of the European Jews who had fled Europe after Hitler's power seizure. The initial blueprint he drew

contained too strong an assertion of his interpretation of the Holocaust. On rejecting this first design, the commission's executive secretary said that "The character of the building itself had an almost unintended link to fascist architecture. It was almost brutal. You could not escape identifying it with the architecture favoured by Hitler. It seemed to be more a memorial to the perpetrators of the crime, not the victims" (Young, 1993). In his revised design, his statement came to have a more subtle tone. As shown in following two pictures, visitors experience a well–known scene of the genocide viscerally. Visitors in the Hall of Witness cannot help imagining the 'death gate' in Birkenau, the second Nazi concentration camp site in Auschwitz. Moreover, the Hall is designed for people to feel constantly 'watched' from the windows of the corridor in the upper level and from the roof[10].

Figures 8–9. 8 (left) The Hall of Witness in USHMM; 9 (right) Auschwitz II–Birkenau (Pictures taken by the author).

Despite the acceptance of the Diaspora of European Jews, the US government took three decades to reveal their appalling history during the war. Indeed, the government had remained rather distanced from the event of the mass murder of European Jewry, except for the demonstration of it to the Germans. As late as the 1950s and the 1960s, as David MacDonald points out, American society was not yet ready to listen to the memory of Jewish suffering (MacDonald, 2008). It was discussed only within the American Jewish communities. This was partly because of the unwillingness of the Jewish people to talk openly about their humiliating experience in the not–too–distant past. The situation was also affected to a considerably extent by their relatively low status in American society in terms of their political, economic and cultural representation. The Six Day War of 1967 in the Middle East also devalued the position of the Jews in American society, who saw the war as an 'imperialist Zionist war' within the general movement of decolonisation (MacDonald, 2008).

In the 1970s, Jewish 'success' became more discernible than earlier both for Americans as well as Jewish immigrants. This coincided with the shift in the attitude of the Holocaust victims themselves to their own experience, now understanding it with 'moral leadership and almost heroic pride' rather than as a 'humiliated degradation' (MacDonald, 2008). Politically as well, the 1970s was also an important turning point in positioning Jewish history. During the Carter administration (1977–1981), the diplomatic relationship between Israel and the US was worsened as the latter's affiliation to Arab countries was bolstered by the sale of American fighters: McDonnell Douglas F–15 Eagle' (Engelhardt, 2002). This was the political background as to why Carter was enthusiastic about the establishment of the above–mentioned presidential commission for Holocaust recognition.

In the 1980s, there was a big 'push' aimed at boosting Carter's idea of the public recognition of Jewish history in the Holocaust. This was in the form of a controversial visit by President Ronald Regan, arranged by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, to the Kolmeshöhe Cemetery in 1985, where dozens of Waffen–SS members were also buried (Ishida, 2002). The official representation of Holocaust history in the US and elsewhere is closely bound to its relationship with the Israeli and Jewish communities around the world. Finally in 1993, the museum was inaugurated by President Bill Clinton (1993–2001), whose administration had maintained good relationships with Israel.

This vast museum is now run by about 300 staff members, including researchers, mainly in history, curators, and educators such as former school teachers. Seminars are offered regularly to young children, school teachers and the general public. Online teachers' workshops are extensive in size. Research conducted in the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies is by no means a small part of the museum's activities (Table for the Revenue and the Expenses). One can see the devotion and commitment of the museum to Holocaust teaching from this development, which has been attained in a relatively short period of time.

Table: The Budget of USHMM (USD)[11]

Support and Revenue	*Private*	*Federal*	*Total*	
Federal appropriation revenue		45,712,768	45,712,768	47.2%
Contributions	29,093,979		29,093,979	30.0%
Membership revenue	10,468,822		10,468,822	10.8%
Museum Shop	2,337,921		2,337,921	2.4%
Endowment payout	7,767,702		7,767,702	8.0%
Contributed services	31,526		31,526	0.03%
Imputed financing source		1,141,023	1,141,023	1.2%
Other	339,336		339,336	0.4%
Total	50,039,286	46,853,791	96,893,077	

(*Continued*)

Table: Continued

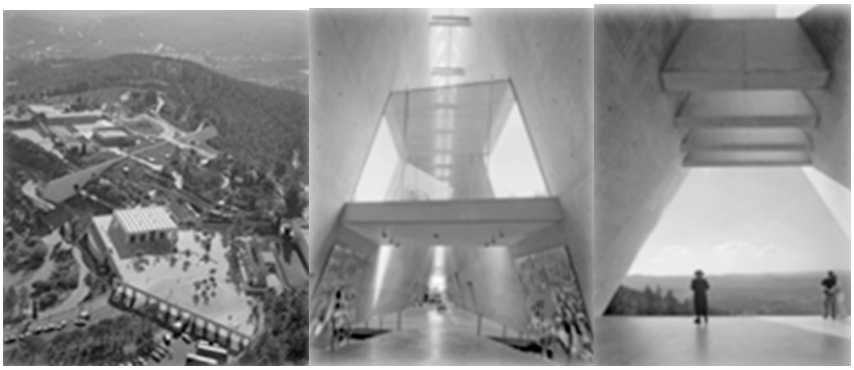
Expenses	*Private*	*Federal*	*Total*	
Museum operations	3,847,920	21,217,063	25,064,983	28.1%
Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies	5,025,690	2,435,638	7,461,328	8.4%
Museum and public programs	10,326,468	10,583,583	20,910,051	23.5%
Outreach technology	2,608,468	3,912,564	6,521,032	7.3%
Museum Shop	1,993,700		1,993,700	2.2%
Management and general	6,698,088	7,605,003	14,303,091	16.1%
Membership development	4,928,002		4,928,002	5.5%
Fundraising	7,879,881		7,879,881	8.8%
Total	43,308,217	45,753,851	89,062,068	

ISRAEL: THE CASE OF YAD VASHEM (THE HOLOCAUST MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE AUTHORITY)

This ‘Americanisation of Holocaust memory’ had a definite impact on the extensive and intensive development of Israel’s Holocaust museum in the 2000s. The beautiful hill top overlooking the city of Jerusalem, where Yad Vashem is located, does not remind people of the horror of the Holocaust either. Thus, like the USHMM, although in different ways, the museum has elaborated various plans to demonstrate the importance of the museum in remembering Holocaust history. In its vast complex of 180,000m², Yad Vashem maintains a Holocaust History Museum, the Children's Memorial, the Hall of Remembrance, The Museum of Holocaust Art, and the "Righteous among the Nations". Like USHMM, Yad Vashem also has a fully–fledged research centre, called the International School for Holocaust Studies, which regularly holds international conferences, workshops, symposia and seminars. It also provides postdoctoral fellowships.

Among the different constructions, one of the most important for visitors is the Holocaust History Museum which is on the middle of the hill top (Figure 10). It is made in the shape of ship, indicating the museum’s purpose of demonstrating the voyage of the Jews. The first thing to be encountered by visitors in the dim–lit entrance is children singing the national anthem of Israel, Hatikva. The floor of the museum is not entirely flat, but it is gently dented toward the centre of the building to show the Jews at the nadir of their history during the war. Passing by the bottom, visitors walk upwards again towards the exit where they see the gorgeous panorama of Jerusalem, which implies that European Jews were able to obtain this treasure because of the Holocaust (Figure 12). Yad Vashem is located higher than any other buildings or institutions on the hill, including the national military cemetery. The whole museum and the whole site of Yad Vashem tell visitors that the Holocaust is

at the core of the raison d'être of the nation and its 'national' history, which belongs to no one else but the Jews and their country, Israel.



Figures 10–12. 10 (left) The whole site of Yad Vashem in Mt. Herzl (Mt. of Memory); 11 (centre) Inside the ship–shaped museum; 12 (left) The exit of the museum and a panorama of Jerusalem (Ockman, 2006).

Thus, Israel needs to own the history of the Holocaust, and maintain control over that history. Therefore, when there are different interpretations and representations of the history that are considered unacceptable, they do make claim to it, as in the above–mentioned case of the Nuremberg Documentation Centre. When this current massive construction was founded in 2005, it was first introduced to 'special guests', such as historians, before the general public by announcing that 'this is bigger' than USHMM[12]. It is broadly accepted that there has been a sense of 'rivalry' around the interpretation of Holocaust history' (Engelhardt, 2002; Young, 1993).

Not only the location and the size of the museum, but also the timing of its development is also a key to understanding Israelis' perception of Holocaust history. Initially, the museum was located on a lower part of the hill. The size of the building and exhibitions was far smaller than today. The foundation was based on the Yad Vashem Law which was passed by the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, in 1953. However, the actual establishment of the small museum was in 1957. In the meantime, there was also an important movement for Israel in terms of the control of history abroad[13]. In Paris in 1956, the Mémorial de la Shoah was opened to the public. The major materials of its presentation came from collections and documents that had been amassed by Zionist activists, Isaac Schneersohn and his associates, in Nazi–occupied Grenoble. They founded the first Holocaust documentation centre in the world, and those materials were used as reliable evidence in the Nuremberg Trial (Mémorial de la Shoah, 2006).

In this early post–war period, representations as well as education about the Holocaust had different focuses from those currently seen in Yad Vashem. The period from the foundation of the State of Israel throughout the 1950s is often referred to as

the ‘statist’ era (MacDonald, 2008). Similarly to the case of the Republic of China, the government of Israel regarded this initial period as one for nation–building and the formation of a national identity. For these aims, the figures of ‘strong Jews’ and Jewish values, shown in their heroic resistance to the Nazis, were highlighted rather than teaching about the helpless humiliation of earlier generations (Mitter, 2003).

However, a number of events in the 1960s made the Israeli government and the people look at the Jews as the victims of the Holocaust rather than the heroes. Among them, the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961 arguably had the greatest impact on this shift. It triggered the opening of the Jewish mind and eyes to directly confront their past (MacDonald, 2008). Afterwards, in the 1970s and the 1980s, Holocaust survivors gradually began to release the feelings and memories of their agony experienced in Nazi–occupied Europe to the public. At a half century after the end of the war, the current presentation of Holocaust memories in Yad Vashem demonstrates Israelis’ memory about the Holocaust.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As said, all the above three newly–built museums are well advanced in terms of the development of educational programmes with high–tech and innovative ideas about historical approaches. Unlike museums in the old format, these contemporary museums provide visitors with time and space for ‘thinking’ by reducing the volume of old–fashioned, ready–made guides. Unlike many cases of war–related museums in Japan, these three are proud of, and confident about, the epistemological relevance of their exhibitions, which are the based on scientific research. In each of these places, this is institutionally well structured.

At the same time, as seen above, one could understand their approach to the history of the war from things outside the exhibition or educational programmes as such. In the case of Nuremberg, for example, the rather delayed launching of the addressing of war history to the public explains the difficulty felt by the authorities of Nuremberg and the State of Bavaria in dealing with the NS past. This involves about local history and the identity of the people there. In the case of USHMM, its development cannot be explained without considering the increase in Jewish power in post–war American society, the growth of their confidence in it, and the international politics surrounding Israel, Germany and the United States. The museum’s architecture is elaborated in such a way as to remind visitors of the heaviness of Holocaust history, which the location itself does not tell us about. The architecture and the location of the museum also imply important message, *i.e.* Americans as liberating heroes in the history of the Holocaust. The Americanisation of Holocaust history certainly threatened Israeli control over the history. Indeed, it has always been a primary concern of the Israeli government since its establishment in 1948. The development of Yad Vashem has progressed hand–in–hand with that of major Holocaust representations outside the country. Control over Holocaust history involves the establishment of a national identity of its people.

Museums that conventionally used to be showcases have grown as an important means to educate and cultivate 'good citizens' along the development of civil society in Western Europe. In particular, museums that are related to the history of peoples and nations have played a crucial role in the formation of national identity and national cohesion. As seen above, the *raison d'être* of individual museums is can be seen in the presentation of materials and documents, as well as many choices involved in this.

The materials were never 'naturally' there. They were chosen to be presented at a specific time in a specific location, so that visitors can 'learn' that they are important parts of past events. In this sense, there exists a kind of a community within which visitors who receive information and messages and museums which provide these to the visitors. Needless to say, this argument can be applied to history textbooks and history lessons in schools. But the difference between such classroom learning and museum education is the existence of other messages, discernible from the place, the air, the light, the colour, and the smell of memorial materials and the existence of museums' as such, which allow visitors to perceive the history not merely as knowledge but as their own experience. Since history is regarded as an important political instrument for the formation of national cohesion and national identity, history museums are among the most effective social institutions that demonstrate the *raison d'État* of nations and the key to understanding it.

NOTES

1 Interview with Dr. Junko Kanekiyo of Kyoto Museum for World Peace, Ritsumeikan University on 17 July 2008.
2 Interview with Mr. Mitsuyoshi Taira of Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on 28 January 2009.
3 Interview with Mr. Ken Sonohara of Okinawa Peace Memorial Museum on 5 December 2008.
4 "A permanent exhibition on the history of Obersalzberg and the Nazi dictatorship", an introductory leaflet issued by Dokumentation Obersalzberg.
5 Interview with Dr. Eckart Dietzfelbinger of Nuremberg Dokumentation Centre on 4 August 2007.
6 "Report of the Education and Religious Affairs in Bavaria" of 30 June 1945 (OMGUS Fiche # Z45 F 5/307–3/21).
7 Interview with Mr. Alexander Berdich of Nuremberg Dokumentation Centre on 4 August 2007.
8 Interview with Dr. Prölß–Kammerer and Julia Oschmann of DoKuPäd on 21 January 2010.
9 Interview with Mr. Tuvia Zuckerman of the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance on 10 August 2008.
10 Interview with C. Gjolaj of USHMM on 17 November 2010.
11 The Annual Report 2009 (http://www.ushmm.org/museum/press/annual report/2009 (acces on 5 January 2011).
12 Interview with Professor D. Porat of the Hebrew University on 14 June 2010.
13 Interview with Dr. Karel Francapane of Mémorial de la Shoah on 3 December 2010.

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