



本庄国際奨学財団

Honjo International Scholarship Foundation

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理事長挨拶

理事長
本庄 八郎 Hachiro Honjo

本庄国際奨学財団の奨学生と卒業生の皆さん、こんにちは。2020年以降の機関誌の発行になります。2020年から2023年にかけてのコロナ禍では、留学を足止めされてしまった人、フィールドワークに行けなかった人、学会がリモート開催となり人脈作りや研究のディスカッションが十分にできなかった人、留学期間中ほとんど自宅にいてオンライン授業やオンラインゼミだけで課程を修了した人など、さまざまに影響を受けた方がいらっしゃいました。財団としましては、その影響を最小限にとどめるようサポート体制を取って参りましたが、皆さんがご自身の頑張りでもって卒業し、元気に新しい道に踏み出していられましたことは大変喜ばしいことです。

財団の行事もコロナ禍ではほとんどオンラインで開催いたしました。2023年からは対面での行事を再開し、皆さんの明るい笑顔にたくさんお会いすることができ、私も大変元気づけられました。

2023年からは海外同窓会も再開し、2023年にはタイとラオス、2024年にはベトナムで開催し、たくさんの卒業生の皆さんにご参加いただきました。25年にわたる世代の人たちが本庄国際奨学財団のプラットホームに集って、

新しい人脈を作り、仕事や研究で発展的な協力関係を築いていらっしゃいます。勤務する大学に招待して講演をしてもらったり、共同研究の計画を始めている人もいます。起業をした人が本庄ファミリーの後輩を採用したケースもあります。こういった化学反応は、財団設立当初には想像していなかったことです。留学中に知識や技術を学んだだけではなく、先輩を尊敬し、後輩を思いやる心を育まれたことが、卒業後の新たな絆を生んでいると思います。これからも海外同窓会を毎年各地で開催し、世代を超えたファミリーメンバーが本庄国際奨学財団を基盤として、新たな関係を築き、研究や仕事の発展に役立ててもらえれば光栄です。

残念ながら、この数年の間にも多くの戦争や紛争が発生し、未だに終わってはいません。多くの人たちが母国に安心して住めない状況が続いています。本庄ファミリーの中にもそのような困難な状況にいる人もいます。一人ひとりの力では戦争や紛争を終わらせることは簡単ではありませんが、近くにいなくても心の中で常に寄り添い、心のつながりを持ち続けたいと思います。みなさんとご家族の健康と安全を心より祈念いたします。

令和6年3月

本庄国際奨学財団の概要

【名称】公益財団法人本庄国際奨学財団
 【英文名称】Honjo International Scholarship Foundation
 【行政庁】内閣府
 【設立】1996年12月25日
 【理事長】本庄 八郎 (ほんじょうはちろう)
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この法人は、学術研究への奨学援助および研究助成を行い、もって我が国と諸外国との教育・学術・文化における交流及び相互理解を促進するとともに、人材の育成及び教育・学術・文化の発展に寄与することを目的とする。

エッセイ

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Knowledge not shared is wasted.



Obey Gotore Ph. D.

Researcher: Akita Prefectural University (Graduate School of Bioresource Sciences)

2020-2022 HISF scholarship recipient

Autobiography

After graduating with a BSc in 2011, I worked at Harare Polytechnic for over 5 years. It was during that time when I got the opportunity to get a JICA scholarship to study in Japan from 2017 to 2019. Fortunately, studying further to Ph.D. was a mind shift after offered an admission at Nagasaki University from 2019 to 2022. Yes, it was a great opportunity of its kind. I was awarded a scholarship from HONJO and that made my study life easier and more comfortable with enough time, space, and convenience. Currently am researching at Akita Prefectural University for an environmental bioremediation project in Aomori.

Student life in Nagasaki, Japan

It has been a pleasure in meeting different people with different cultures, habits, and backgrounds in the city of Nagasaki since 2017. Eating different cuisines from Japan and around the world was fantastic. Most importantly,

learning greeting words from different languages was an awesome event. Joining seminars and science workshops with Japanese students was fabulous and more fascinating because of their comprehensive warm welcomes. Travelling to cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, and Okinawa were a great experience. Additionally, working for Japanese companies as an intern was another avenue that made me learn the Japanese working culture which is totally different from my home country.

Research study

My Ph.D. research work is centered on environmental water treatment and access to rural areas or remote areas of developing countries through low-cost technologies of water and wastewater treatment. People in rural areas must be able to have access to clean water and health environment from local materials and cheap equipment



With high and elementary school students in Nagasaki volunteering cultural exchange activity



On my master graduation day



**Harvesting corn cob for my adsorption experiment in Shimabara, Nagasaki City in 2020

they can make themselves. For instance, available agricultural wastes and other abundant biomasses can be transformed to biochar under optimum conditions and can be used to recycle their water for other purposes. As water is becoming scarce these days, cheap technologies will be useful for rural dwellers to treat their water for re-use to achieve 2030 agender of the sustainable development goals.

My life in Maejo, Chinag-Mai, Thailand

It was a great pleasure to be in the Kingdom of Thailand for the period of 2018 – 2019 when I was having a research collaboration with Maejo University students in Chiang-Mai Province (Northern part of Thailand). I learnt many things and experienced new life in a Southeast Asian country including spicy food.



***My life experience and visits in Thailand between 2018-2019



****Teaching automatic water control systems at my previous institution in 2019 after graduating with a master's degree in Zimbabwe

Knowledge not shared is wasted.

It was my utmost pleasure to share my study experience and exposure to my students back in Zimbabwe when I finished my Master course. I shared different water control systems to Irrigation and Civil Engineering students from my workplace. This pictures above shows interested students learning water control systems with an Arduino system.

Post Graduation life in Akita city

After graduation, I got an opportunity to receive a research fellow position at A University in Akita city. I learnt one thing, never limit yourself, always do the best out of yourself and believe it whatsoever. Working in a Japanese environment will let you learn and harness the culture you never know when outside. It is a great chance and would like to take it with me to the next level of my career. Research was and is always my dream because of the impact it has in academia and in industry, for economic and technology development. I am enjoying the food in Akita, nature, snow seasons and having fun with people around me. All the best!!

A few thoughts on researching our collective perception of the past



Patrick Vierthaler
Ph. D. candidate at Kyoto University

2021 HISF scholarship recipient

Introduction

History as a research subject is often situated between the natural and social sciences. To many, history is but a mere chronic of past events, in other words, an *absolute truth* waiting to be written down. Yet, the truth is closer to the fact that history is a necessarily *subjective interpretation* of the past. It is shaped by present values and conceptions of time, and its contents are subject to change and revision depending on discoveries of previously unknown primary sources.

For the past six years, I have written my PhD thesis in contemporary history at Kyoto University on the history and memory of division and dictatorship in South Korea since democratization in 1987. As a global economic power renowned for its smartphones and computer hardware, South Korea today stands among the most prosperous nations in the world. Korean popular culture has become popular in Japan and around the world. Yet, behind this apparent success story is a turbulent modern and contemporary history. The Korean peninsula suffered three decades of colonial rule, followed by political division, war, and decades of anti-communist dictatorship in the South.

What is collective memory?

After democratization, South Korea's ideological landscape can be broadly divided into two major camps: the former ruling elite (conservatives) and the heirs to the democratization movement (progressives). Naturally, these two camps possess entirely different perceptions

of the past. In reference to German Cultural studies scholar Aleida Assmann, I approached this ideological polarization as a state of “asymmetric remembering,” and inquired into how perceptions of liberation (1945), division (1948), the Korean War (1950–53), and anti-communism differed between the two camps and evolved since 1987.

A useful concept to understand our collective understanding of the past is the metaphor of “cultural memory.” This refers to the official narrative we learn in school textbooks, experience in national museums, or hear in public statements by political representatives. This connects to essential questions for mnemohistorians, i.e., those who study how societies collectively remember the past: How do we remember? What do we remember? Why? How? And: how should the past be remembered?

Examples from Japan and Korea

In Japan, for example, World War II is often remembered as the “Pacific War” of Japan against the United States. To many Japanese, the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the bombing of Japanese cities come to mind when thinking of this period, not the colonialization of Asia or its earlier war with China. The aim to a scholar like me is not to take a side, but to make the discursive constructions of the past visible: how were our contemporary understandings of the past shaped? And what do they tell us about the society we live in?

In South Korea, the subject of my thesis, democratization

and the end of the Cold War resulted in a “re-discovery” of previously forgotten historical events. Since the 1990s, many incidents of state violence were discovered thanks to the efforts of citizens around the country, and the responsibility for the Korean War could be proven to lie with the northern side. Yet, questions of whether continuity with the colonial state and anti-communist autocracy was necessary to develop the economy continue to divide the two major camps.

A personal case study

A particularly interesting case study during my study was the “National Museum of Korean Contemporary History,” a museum located in central Seoul, not far from one of the city's major tourist sites.

Exhibiting Korean history since the late nineteenth century, the museum was opened in 2012. Its construction itself was pushed forward by the ruling conservatives at the time in a direct backlash to earlier progressive politics of history. As a result, the initial museum was overly state centered, criticized by progressive historians and intellectuals alike. Under a progressive president, however, the museum was fundamentally remodeled in 2019–21 — only to see another partial remodeling in 2022 once conservatives were in power again. As the two photographs from the very same section in late 2022 and mid-2023 show, with each remodeling, the section on 1945–53 was changed significantly.

Studying the case of South Korea does not only foster

understanding its domestic context, but will contribute to further understandings of bilateral history disputes. After my PhD thesis, I aim to further situate my previous studies in a global context. How was the Cold War crucial in shaping the cultural memories of (de jure) WWII defeated states such as Japan, South Korea, Austria, or Germany? Why are the histories in those “Cold War frontlines” strikingly similar, yet the cultural memories very different? As an Austrian living and working in Japan, I hope to further connect the dots to make seemingly unrelated parallels visible.



Above: Exhibition on liberation (1945) from 2021 to late 2022



Below: The same exhibition since December 2022