

## **War Memories and the History Textbook Controversy in 2000-2001: Seeking Constructive Dialogues over War Memories<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

The present study is to explore frames, values, and identities in a historical representation controversy, or the history textbook controversy of 2000-2001 in Japan, beyond dichotomized identities of victim and victimizer. Further, the study explores keys to transformation of the controversy into constructive dialogue across national borders. Data were 234 comments posted on the Internet by the Japanese people. Fantasy Theme Analysis was adopted for analysis. As a result, 15 fantasy themes and four memories were identified. The dominant frames were historical universalism or relativism. The values prevalent were relational and time orientation. The identities emerged were those of and for Japan. Comparing the memories emerged illustrated the importance of historical universalism frame and positive faces in historical representation controversy.

### **Introduction**

Representation of history in public sphere inherently involves problems. Physically, space available is limited for exhibitions and descriptions. What to represent involves choices by those who prepare for representation. Then, how to represent also becomes problems. Languages we use for representation reflect our frames and values unavoidably. Choices of representation about what and how incur challenges from those who do not agree with the use of space with a particular set of frames and values. The exhibition of the Enola Gay at the Smithsonian museum is one example of historical representation controversy.

In addition to space available and reflected frames and values, scholars point out problems of homogenized narratives and representation (Fujitani, White, & Yoneyama, 2001; Oka, 2000). Homogenized representation simplifies historical narratives in public sphere, dichotomizing and fixing identities of victim and victimizer across time. Although identities are situated in nature (Carbaugh, 1996), they remain unchanged in spite of actions before and after the selected historical event in historical representation and collective memories. Oka eloquently phrased the problems of fixed identities across time regarding the Holocaust and Palestinians, "Are there any cognitive logic structures that allow us to recollect the unimaginable depth of the violence exercised in the Holocaust and at the same time that does not contribute to forgetting and justifying the violence against Palestinians?" (p. ix, translated by the author of this study).

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<sup>1</sup> This article was drawn from a dissertation completed at the University of New Mexico in 2003 under the direction of Dr. Bradford J. Hall.

Further, historical representation has political significance in the era of globalization. Cultivating positive national images and identities are useful both internationally and domestically. Historical narratives and related memories are the bases of national images and identities. Memories about wars and historical incidents became the core issues, or tools, of inducing concession from other countries in international negotiations (Fujiwara, 2001; Gong, 2001). Governments and media manipulate memories of wars and images of self and others domestically, so that they can avert nation's criticism from themselves.

These problems and issues of historical representation as described above become more challenging for ordinary individuals in the information society. Physically, being familiar with all the new information is impossible. According to Billington (1966), a fast reader falls behind by 60,000 pages when scholars publish 500,000 pages a year of new findings even in the 1960s. Due to the Internet, information available is beyond our processing capability. Further, cyberspace became the site of playing and replaying wounds of the past with images compressing time, and attracting individuals who feel the strongest about historical incidents (Gong, 2001). Our capability of processing information is limited and still we have tools to create and recreate memories and representation reflecting our frames and values.

I believe personally that intercultural communication studies are for better understanding across cultures and that addressing the Japan's colonial past is necessary to have a constructive dialogue in Asia. Constructive dialogue is not only to understand the perspectives and backgrounds of others, but also to provide a larger paradigm to make the perspectives of disputing parties as correct on a mutually agreeable ground, viewing communication at meta-communication level (Lakoff, 1996; Pearce, 1989; Pearce & Littlejohn, 1997). The present study is to explore such a ground. It examined comments by ordinary Japanese regarding history textbook controversy of 2000-2001 in Japan. Examining their comments is important, because they have a right to vote to influence domestic politics and can seek alliances across national borders easier than the nation states. The controversy in 2000-2001 was selected, because history textbooks in Japan have been controversial since the end of WWII and because the year 2000-2001 was the first one when Tsukurukai's textbook was drafted. Accordingly, the present study explored the following questions: 1) Which frames, values, and identities were adopted by the ordinary Japanese people examined about war memories in history textbook controversy in 2000-2001?, and 2) How can we have constructive dialogue on historical representation beyond our own positions and national borders in the controversy?

### **History of Textbook Controversies in Japan**

Textbooks are one site of struggles over historical representation and meanings universally (Hein & Selden, 2000), and Japan is not an exception. Representation of Japan regarding World War II (WWII) in a history textbook has its history in Japan. Nozaki and Inokuchi (2000) reviewed textbook censoring in Japan since the end of WWII. Censoring by the Japanese government over textbooks started soon after WWII. The Ministry of Education<sup>2</sup> instructed schools in Japan to *Suminuri*, black out militaristic content in textbooks and

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<sup>2</sup> The Ministry was reorganized and is named as the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT), currently.

educational materials, following the order by General Headquarters. Facing the recovery of the Japanese right wing in the 1950s and 60s, *Saburo Ienaga*, a historian and school teacher drafted his own textbook in 1946. He struggled to write about Japan's colonial past due to governmental screening in the 1950s and after. He filed three lawsuits to win freedom of speech guaranteed by the Japanese constitution (see Ienaga, 2001). In 1980, the media reported that the Ministry of Education instructed to change *shinryaku*, aggression, into *shinshutsu*, advancement, during its screening process. That report stirred more than 2,000 media reports in 19 Asian countries on Japanese governmental textbook screening as well as official protests against the Japanese government by South Korea (SK, hereinafter) and People's Republic of China (PRC, hereinafter) (Nozaki & Inokuchi). As a result, the Japanese government added a new clause for screening policy known as *kinrinshokoku jyoko*, a clause that requires consideration for neighboring countries in Asia and their sentiments about textbook contents and descriptions of history in order to achieve mutual understanding and collaboration internationally. Commonalities among the textbook controversies in the past were the Japanese government's practices which screened out undesirable descriptions about the Japanese colonial past and challenges from individuals and organizations domestically and internationally who were against the practices. The history textbook controversy in 2000-2001, however, was different from those in the past; the Japanese government was expected to act appropriately and to challenge a revisionistic history textbook and its authors.

### History Textbook Controversy in 2000-2001

The history textbook controversy in 2000-2001 started with media reports in July 2000, regarding one of the history textbooks submitted to MEXT for its approval. The textbook in question, which was reported to shed positive lights on the Japanese aggression and colonial activities in Asia during WWII, stirred controversy domestically and internationally. *Atarashii Rekishikyokasho wo Tsukurukai* (*Tsukurukai*, hereinafter)<sup>3</sup>, the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform in English, drafted the textbook. *Tsukurukai* was founded in December 1997 with its founders from various professions, including a politician, a university professor, and writers. The members of *Tsukurukai* consider historical narratives as subjective products and claim that each country should teach its own version of history domestically. Their primary goal is to correct historical narratives about Japan which is heavily based on Tokyo Trial's View of history and is imposed by the U.S. at the end of WWII (McCormack, 2000). *Tsukurukai* intends to correct current history education in Japan that are biased against Japan and to emancipate the youth from "*jigyaku shikan*" or "masochistic historical view," excessively self-critical views on Japanese history, so that they will be able to cultivate *hokori*, pride and self-esteem, of being Japanese. Drafting and distributing textbooks is one of the *Tsukurukai*'s activities to achieve this goal. *Tsukurukai* also publishes books and conducts symposiums to disseminate its views on history. *Tsukurukai*'s textbook passed the screening after revising the 137 sections identified as inappropriate by MEXT on April 3, 2001. *Tsukurukai* launched a commercial version of the textbook in the market in June 2001 and its publisher, *Fusosha* printed 650,000 copies by the end of August 2000.

*Tsukurukai*'s history textbook will attract media's attention every four year under the

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<sup>3</sup> *Tsukurukai*'s home page in English is at: <http://www.Tsukurukai.com/english.html>

current screening system in Japan<sup>4</sup>. Currently, selection of school textbooks requires two steps. The first step is approval from MEXT. The purposes of governmental approval of textbooks drafted by private organizations were to ensure appropriate education for Japanese students at elementary, junior high, and high schools (MEXT, 2002). MEXT carries out screening once every four years for each subject area. MEXT reviews all the submitted textbooks blindly, instructs revisions if necessary, and announces approved textbooks publicly as selection candidates. The second step is selection by the Board of Education of each prefecture for public schools or by principals for private schools. The Board of Education has the right to select textbooks for public schools, including elementary, junior high, and high schools. For a private or national school, its principal holds the right to select textbooks. Japanese schools select textbooks through these two steps, and the history textbook controversy of 2000-2001 began at the stage of governmental screening. In the summer of 2005, four years after the controversy of 2000-2001, Tsukurukai's history textbook became media agenda again. Although adoption rate for the 2006 school year was about 1%, which increased from 0.039% in 2002 school year, Tsukurukai seeks for higher adoption rate for future ("Tsukurukai text," 2005).

Public opinions polled in 2000-2001, however, are contradictory regarding the history textbook drafted by Tsukurukai. The poll collected by *The Asahi* Newspaper reported that 44 percent of the polled was against and 28 percent was for the textbook. Although *The Asahi* did not disclose raw number and details of polling procedure, their collection method can be assumed to be face-to-face or telephone interview. In contrast, the results collected on the Internet became opposite to those by *The Asahi*. *Vote.co.jp* polled opinions and 60 percent (232 individuals) expressed supports for the history textbook drafted by Tsukurukai ("The new history textbook," 2001). Regardless of polling methods, opinions of ordinary Japanese in public were simplified in number asking either pros or cons against the textbook without details. Accordingly, the present study adopted comments about the Tsukurukai's textbook as texts.

### Methods

Data were 273 texts by 234 individuals posted at a discussion site on the Internet, *E-mail debate at Mainichi Interactive*, around 2000 to 2001. *Mainichi Newspaper Co.*, a national newspaper company, hosted the site and posted a proposition regarding the history textbook as follows,

What do you think of the history textbook controversy? On April 3, the history textbook drafted by Tsukurukai passed the screening by MEXT with extensive revisions. The textbook stirred various criticism and discussion against the distortion of history by the organization domestically and internationally, especially from QSD and SK and it developed to a diplomatic problem with the two countries. What do you think of the history textbook controversy? Post your opinions.

Those who want to express their opinions toward the proposition and the controversy sent their opinions to the site. The organizer posted all the opinions without changes. The debate

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<sup>4</sup> There are exceptions for the year of selecting textbooks. Newly founded schools or programs select textbooks when they need.

collected total 314 opinions on the controversy and 13 percent of them ( $n = 41$ ) were discarded from the analysis due to nationality (non-Japanese or unidentifiable as Japanese). The factors used to assume nationality included their reference to themselves “we Japanese,” their country of origin “our country,” and their name. Among the remaining opinions, 20 individuals posted their opinions twice or more. Accordingly, 273 opinions posted by 234 individuals were analyzed.

Demographic information available through voluntarily disclosure was gender, age, and current address. Gender of the senders was assumed from their names. When a sender used a pseudonym or either a family name or first name only, she/he was categorized as unidentifiable. The senders were predominantly men ( $N=133$ , 56.8%) and a small number of women ( $N=14$ , 6.0%) posted their opinions. The remaining 37.2% of the data ( $N=87$ ) were unidentifiable as for gender. Those who sent their opinions multiply (twice to six times) were mostly men. Age of the senders ranged from 9 to 77 averaging around 35. Predominantly, opinions were from the postwar generation, those who were born after WWII and in their 20s to 40s (66.2%). The majority of the opinions (38.0%) were from those who lived in the Kanto region including Tokyo, Chiba, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Ibaraki, and Kanagawa. The remaining opinions were from other regions of Japan ranging from 1.3% to 10.7 or from undisclosed current addresses (18.8%). Majority of those who posted their opinions multiply was from the postwar generation living in the Kanto region.

Three characteristics of the data adopted for the present study should be noted in terms of demographic information, values, and technological environments. The first characteristic of the collected samples were skewed regarding demographic information. Voices of men in their 20s to 40s from the Kanto region were prominent. Still, demographic information remained undisclosed predominantly. The second characteristic is strong emotion brought in the study. Those who posted their opinions felt strongly enough about the controversy, so that they motivated themselves to take actions posting their opinions. The third characteristic is technological environment regarding the Internet at that time. The number of those who had an access to the Internet in Japan was relatively small when the discussion site collected opinions<sup>5</sup>. Those who posted opinions were eager to explore new technology.

### Methods of Analysis

In order to explore collective memories, the researcher adopted fantasy theme analysis for the present study. The analysis was based on Symbolic Convergence Theory (STC) by Bormann and his colleagues (Bormann, 1972; Bormann, Cragan, & Shields, 2001). This method was selected for its established analytical framework to explore shared subjective realities among group members. That establishment provides detailed concepts such as fantasy themes to examine multiple dimensions of a text.

Foss (1996) proposed the procedure of fantasy theme criticism through four steps:

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<sup>5</sup> Nielsen//NetRatings (2001) reported that Internet users in Japan were 28,360,000 (13% of the population) in December 1999 and increased to 28,360,000 (22.8%) in August 2001. It further reported gender ratio of the Internet users. In December 1999, 63 percent of all the Internet users in Japan was men and 37 percent was women, whereas in August 2001, 57 percent of them was men and 43 percent was women.

formulating research questions and selecting materials to analyze, selecting a unit of analysis, analyzing the materials, and writing up the results. In the present study, Fantasy themes were adopted as the basic units of analysis. Each text was examined for themes. The researcher set 10 percent of frequency as a rule to count as a theme. This rule is reasonably low enough to include diverse opinions and high enough to avoid researcher's bias. After the themes were compiled and categorized, collective memories as rhetorical visions were created. Each of the rhetorical visions holds properties that include *dramatis personae*, plot line, scene, and sanctioning agent.

The original texts are written in Japanese. The author of the present study translated necessary parts for quotation into English. Parentheses, ( ) in the quotations were in the original text. The author added brackets, [] in the English translation to clarify meanings in the light of Japanese language and other parts that were not quoted. The initial after the Japanese phrases such as "HT1" refers to the original source. "HT1" indicates the first text at the discussion site regarding the history textbook controversy.

### Findings

Upon examination, 15 fantasy themes (FTs) emerged. Some FTs were related to each other and many of the Japanese people examined expressed multiple themes. Two of the 15 themes referred to historical perspectives. FT1 was about a universal standard for moral judgment across time and historical events (FT1: Historical universalism). There exists a standard that applies to all historical events and people from the present time can criticize events in the past with the standard. FT2 was opposite to FT1. All historical events are both situated and conditional, and people should acknowledge inevitable reasons of historical events, such as causes of wars (FT2: Historical relativism). FT3 referred to problematic education system in Japan including screening system and history education (FT3: Problematic education and related systems). FT4 and FT5 regarded representation of countries in history. FT4 was about unfair historical representation to Japan across countries, because other countries also engaged in colonial activities or atrocities, but only Japan has been criticized (FT4: Unfair representation across countries). FT5 was about frustration towards under-representation of Japan, because Japan has been mis- or under-represented for their positive conducts even during the colonial era (FT5: Japan mis- or under-represented). FT6 and FT7 referred to responses of PRC and SK. Whereas FT6 criticised unfair responses and misplaced anger by the two countries (FT6: PRC & SK, unfair and biased), FT7 was about empathy towards their criticism and angers (FT7: PRC & SK, understandable).

FT8 and FT9 were about criticism against Japanese and organizations who oppose Tsukurukai. FT8 includes criticism of media and politicians for their biased view and political inability (FT8: Media/politicians, poor performance). FT9 addressed criticism towards those who are against Tsukurukai for their irrational comments and lack of logic in debate (FT9: Opponents, inappropriate). FT10, FT11, and FT12 were pros and cons about Tsukurukai's textbook. FT10 referred to criticism of the textbook due to its justification of the last war (FT10: Tsukurukai's text, problematic). FT11 was positive comments on the textbook in terms of diversifying historical interpretations and stimulating discussion on Japan's past (FT11: Tsukurukai's text, good for antithesis). FT12 was about positive comments on the textbook which reflects Japan's position and views during the war (FT12: Text, of, by, & for the Japanese people). The last three fantasy themes address important issues for the present time and future. FT13 regarded facing and addressing the Japan's colonial past as good

(FT13: Good to face/address own past). FT14 referred to significance of freedom of speech and democracy (FT14: Freedom of speech & democracy). FT15 referred to the significance of communication domestically and internationally to improve education and/or relationship with neighboring countries (FT15: Communication for future).

Examining the 15 fantasy themes led to four collective memories as rhetorical visions. Table 1 shows the visions and their characteristics. Vision names represent the assumptions of the four visions. Table 2 illustrates which of the 15 themes fit with which of the four rhetorical visions. Some FTs belonged to two or more rhetorical visions.

**Table 1**  
**Rhetorical Visions (Vision) Appeared in the History Textbook Controversy**

Vision name	Vision 1: Reform for JPN	Vision 2: Ideas for JPN	Vision 3: Reframing for JPN	Vision 4: Pragmatism for JPN
# of indiv. belonged	139 (59.4%)	42 (17.9%)	40 (17.1%)	13 (5.6%)
Dramatis Personae	<i>I</i> as a Tsukurukai's (un)conscious supporter vs. opponents.	<i>I</i> as an idea generator for history, education, and/or communication for Japan.	Tsukurukai vs. <i>I</i> as a Japanese reframer /negotiator & PRC/SK.	<i>I</i> as an analyst of international politics, Japan, & the world.
Plot Line	Present historical representations of JPN are biased against JPN. Principles such as democracy & freedom of speech should be protected.	Issues are epistemology of history, how education should be, or how we need to communicate. Better to explore these issues as the foundation of the controversy.	JPN invaded Asian countries. Facing the past will enhance pride, justice, & friendship with neighboring countries, coordinating historical representation.	Survival in the world is a priority. Favorable representation for own country is global common sense. Or admit wrongdoings to ally with others for survival
Scene	The world, present founded on segmented past.	Cognition/Japan. Present &/or future.	The embedded world, founded on past, present, & future.	The embedded world, competing present for future survival.
Sanctioning Agent	Construction of positive face for self &/or own group, principles.	Fundamental problems behind the controversy.	Humanity &/or collaboration with neighbors for future.	National interests for future survival.

**Table 2****Fit of Fantasy Themes (FT) and Rhetorical Visions (Vision) Regarding the History Textbook Controversy**

Fantasy Themes	Vision 1: Reform	Vision 2: Ideas	Vision 3: Reframing	Vision 4: Pragmatism
FT1: Historical universalism.	---	XXX	XXX	XXX
FT2: Historical relativism.	XXX	XXX	---	XXX
FT3: Problematic education & related systems.	XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
FT4: Unfair representation across countries.	XXX	---	---	XXX
FT5: Japan, mis- or under-represented.	XXX	---	---	XXX
T6: PRC & SK, unfair and biased.	XXX	---	---	---
FT7: PRC & SK, understandable.	---	---	XXX	XXX
FT8: Media/politicians, biased and poor in performance.	XXX	---	XXX	XXX
FT9: Opponents, inappropriate.	XXX	---	---	---
FT10: Tsukurukai's text, problematic.	---	---	XXX	XXX
FT11: Tsukurukai's text, good for antithesis.	XXX	XXX	---	XXX
FT12: Text of, by, & for the Japanese people.	XXX	---	---	XXX
FT13: Good to face/address own past.	---	---	XXX	XXX
FT14: Freedom of speech & democracy.	XXX	---	XXX	---
FT15: Communication for future.	---	XXX	XXX	XXX

Note. XXX denotes FT present in Vision

The following sections explicate details of each vision. Each section started with a narrative example which illustrated the vision. Then, details of each vision including dramatis personae, plot line, scene, and sanctioning agent were addressed.

**Vision 1: Reform for Japan**

The first rhetorical vision, titled *Reform for Japan*, was shared among 139 Japanese people (59.4%). Here is an example story of this vision.

HT173: It is wrong to evaluate history with the standards of the present time. [What is acceptable is] to describe the situation at that time and to let an individual evaluate historical incidents individually. In that sense, the conventional [history] textbooks had too many ideologically biased descriptions. The claims by the two countries,



PRC and SK, are clearly interference in [Japanese] domestic affairs. It is natural for each country and individual to have a unique historical view. If we are allowed to have only one, it is nothing less than totalitarianism. Media should not protect the interests of textbook publishers with innately collusive characteristics or leftists such as *nikkyoso* [the Japan Teachers Union]...

In Vision 1, the *dramatis personae* were Tsukurukai, *I* as a Tsukurukai's conscious or unconscious supporter, and Tsukurukai opponents including media, leftist Japanese, and PRC and SK as well as other disapproving individuals. *I* supported some or all of the frames promoted by Tsukurukai consciously or unconsciously. Tsukurukai and its supporters stood for replacing negative Japanese images with more positive ones.

The *plot line* was about the frustration felt by Tsukurukai and *I* as a Tsukurukai's supporter and about how to rectify current education problems in Japan. One major cause of the problem is negative descriptions of Japan's colonial past in history textbooks. History cannot be coordinated or perceived as correct by all people when they have various perspectives (HT2: Relativism). The representation of history in education has not been fair to Japan since the end of WWII (FT3: Problematic Education, FT4: Unfair Representation, & FT5: Misrepresented Japan). Media sources, politicians, Japanese leftists, and other countries such as PRC and SK contributed to this unfairness (FT6: Unfair PRC/SK, FT8: Inappropriate Media/politicians, & FT9: Inappropriate Opponents). In order to rectify the unfairness of Japan's representation, re-examining Japan's representation in history adopting standards and principles such as truth, objectivity, rationality, democracy and freedom of speech should be carried out (FT11: Tsukurukai as Antithesis, FT12: Textbook for Japanese, & FT14: Freedom & Democracy).

The *scene* was the world, including Japan and countries that have relationships in the past and at present. Progression of time in the shared memory, however, proceeds from the present to the past. Biases held against Japan at the present time should be corrected by manipulating historical information in the past.

The *sanctioning agent* was positive images of Japan. Holding positive images to own country is necessary to be a normal country and to cultivate relationships with other countries on an equal footing in the future.

## Vision 2: Ideas for Japan

The second vision, held by 42 Japanese people (17.9%), was titled *Ideas for Japan*. There existed three ideas in this vision. Here is an example story of an idea.

HT122: ...As far as I know [about the Japanese colonial past], I do not think it possible to deny the atrocious behaviors of the Japanese military on the [Asian] continent and I think it positively shameful that the Japanese government did not dig up or record historical evidence. In this sense, I have negative opinions about the alleged contents of [Tsukurukai's] text. Backing off by a step, however, I see positive value in a textbook with a unique historical perspective.... In the field [of history], where minor views and interpretation [of historical incidents] did not appear in public, I see positive changes for the [Japanese] society as *hitaiseiyokusanteki*, [less controlled situations by the government]. So, minor opinions [like Tsukurukai's] could show their presence in public. [The textbook's] contents will be questioned and examined from now on....I hope the Japanese society will use this controversy

as the opportunity to excavate correct facts of history during the war and to increase momentum for recording objective historical evidences.

Like this example story, those who explored a philosophical idea expressed their thoughts about nature of history if it is subjective or not. Accordingly, they evaluated Tsukurukai's attempts to diversify perspectives of history (FT11: Tsukurukai for Antithesis). Also, other individuals in Vision 2 pursued an idea of communication. They attributed the cause of the controversy to lack of communication between Japan and other countries or among the Japanese. They were not clear, however, about their attitudes on historical representations of the Japanese past. The remaining individuals in Vision 2 pursued an idea of education such as ideal textbooks and history education. These three ideas regarding philosophy, communication, and education appear different from each other on surface. They, however, shared similarities in their stance and attitudes. Rather than participating in frames being negotiated in the controversy, they remained distant and impartial, focusing on a narrow range of issues as the essence of the controversy.

In Vision 2, the *dramatis personae* were *I* as a thinker of ideas for Japan and those who were involved in the history textbook controversy. The *I* does not attribute negative images to other countries in the controversy.

The *plot line* was about *I* as a thinker and his/her thoughts. He/she watched the controversy from a distance, observing people and countries debating the pros and cons of the textbook drafted by Tsukurukai. Because of the distance, he/she remained impartial and could explore secondary issues in the controversy, such as the epistemology of history and reality, an ideal educational system, and the importance of communication opportunities (FT2: Relativism, FT3: Problematic Education, & FT15: Important Communication). He/she framed what he/she explored as the essence of the controversy, and thus worthy of improvement.

The *scene* was a cognitive world. Those who expressed ideas about historical nature, education, and communication remained in their cognitive world suggesting a direction of Japan for future. Accordingly, the scene in this vision emphasizes the present and future of the relationship as for its time orientation.

The *sanctioning agent* was the essential problem behind the controversy. It was not about the contents of Tsukurukai's textbook, but was an issue at a higher level of abstraction regarding historical epistemology, education, and communication opportunity.

### **Vision 3: Reframing for Japan**

The third rhetorical vision held among 40 Japanese people (17.1%) was *Reframing for Japan*. They challenged Tsukurukai and its supporters, reframing and negotiating meanings and perspectives in the controversy.

HT112: I saw some opinions by those who supported "the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform," saying that criticisms against the textbook and claims about Japan by neighboring Asian countries were "interference in Japanese domestic affairs." Can't the nations and their citizens who were direct victims and their families criticize the history textbook which depicts the Japan's worst interference in their domestic affairs (a war of aggression) as if that was not a crime? What is reasonable here is to see their claims not as their interference in Japanese domestic affairs, but criticism against Japan which does not reflect on its [worst] interference

[in the past]....Should the history of a country be discussed solely domestically when it has some historical relations with neighboring countries? [No!] When we take a look at a historical perspective adopted by a country, I believe that it indicates not only its understanding about the historical relationship with neighboring countries, but also about desires for future relationships with neighbors. If we want friendly relationships with neighboring Asian countries, even though they are difficult to be realized soon, dialogue over history textbooks and the coordination of historical perspectives will be necessary, an area in which Europe has made some achievements. We Japanese might be shocked when we see anti-Japan education in neighboring countries. In order to improve this type of situation, mutual approaches are necessary. It is Japan, as a victimizer in the last war, which should approach the other first....

In Vision 3, the *dramatis personae* were Tsukurukai, *I* as a Japanese reframer, Japan, and neighboring countries, especially PRC and SK. Tsukurukai and *I* as a reframer were in opposition to each other. The former attempted to revise the Japanese colonial past in Asia and the latter challenged the former for their revision.

The *plot line* was about the reframers' challenges against Tsukurukai and their attempts to sanitize Japan's colonial past. The organization attempted to justify the Japanese invasion of Asian countries to restore Japan's positive face and images. The reframers challenged Tsukurukai's meanings and frames about what it means to be Japanese, what it means for Japan to address the past, and where the pride and self-respect of being Japanese are originated (FT1: Universalism, FT3: Problematic Education, FT10: Problematic Tsukurukai, & FT13: Good to Face Past). In the reframers' frames, PRC and SK's responses in the controversy are reasonable and understandable due to an inadequately addressed past by Japan (FT7: Understandable PRC/SK). The reformer emphasized collaboration and friendship with neighboring countries for coordinating historical representation in the future (FT15: Important Communication).

The *scene* was the world and time through the past, present, and future. Japan had embedded relationships with other countries in the past. The unaddressed part of the past has created the problems at present time (FT8: Inappropriate Media/politicians). Sincerely facing and addressing the past in the present is important for Japan to establish solid relationships with neighboring countries in the future.

The *sanctioning agent* was humanity and needs to repair relationships with neighbors for future. Injustice should be addressed regardless of situations in history. Injustice may be resolved by addressing the past and then, cultivating friendship. Collaboration and communication for coordinating historical perspectives are for future.

#### **Vision 4: Pragmatism for Japan**

The fourth rhetorical vision, held by 13 Japanese people (5.6%), was titled *Pragmatism for Japan*. Here is an example story of this vision.

HT264: ... Although the tone of the argument against Asian countries stood out, I think it is ridiculous. Asia and Japan should be allies for each other. Europe and the U.S. made a hit in the stock market [taking advantage of Japan]. Asians would not trick Japan (at least in comparison with the ruling classes in Europe and the U.S.). Since Japan is experienced in handling environmental problems, Japan should

support environmental protections in Asia where industrialization is ongoing. That [support] is environmentally friendly and we will kill two birds with one stone. The Japanese economic problem should be overcome by allying with Asia. If we understand this [importance of collaboration with Asia, we know how we should handle] the textbook controversy this time fundamentally.

This story is one of the two types of competition/alliance in this vision. One type emphasized competition among countries in the world, whereas the other type, like the example story, emphasized an alliance of Japan with Asian countries to survive against the West.

In Vision 4, the *dramatis personae* were Japan and all other countries in the world. They were competing with each other to survive politically, presenting their own historical interpretations domestically and internationally (FT2: Relativism & FT12: Textbook for Japanese). Sometimes the PRC and SK appear as *dramatis personae*. They also perform politically on the stage. Sometimes, Japan and Asia are projected to be honest and nice, in contrast with hegemonic and manipulative Europe and the U.S., both of which take advantage of other countries.

The *plot line* was about the survival of each country in a competitive world. Each country engages in diplomatic activities, rigorously pursuing national interests in the future and placing humanity and injustice in the past secondary (FT7: Understandable PRC/SK). Apologizing and reflecting on their own colonial past are damaging to national interests, and thus, are undesirable (FT3: Problematic Education, FT8: Inappropriate Media/politicians, & FT11: Tsukurukai for Antithesis). Apologies and reflections would be desirable only when they need an alliance for survival with others (FT1: Universalism, FT13: Good to Face Past, & FT15: Important Communication). Positive representation of self is *common sense* for survival in the competitive world. Otherwise, others take advantage of the past for concession and containment. Accordingly, PRC and SK were not unreasonable, but merely following a global common sense.

The *scene* was the world at present and in the future. The past, however, can be manipulated at will to enhance national interests in the present for future survival (FT4: Unfair Representation, FT5: Misrepresented Japan). Or, the past should be acknowledged and addressed at present for alliance with Asia against the West for the future.

The *sanctioning agent* was national interests for future survival. Survival is the priority for each country. The interests come either by using political tactics to offer a positive representation of self or collaboration with Asia addressing the past. Ethics and humanity are secondary before national interests in a competitive world.

### Discussing and Addressing Research Questions

Research Question One was: Which frames, values, and identities were adopted by the Japanese people examined about war memories in history textbook controversy in 2000-2001? The examined four visions represented the collective memories that were shared among the Japanese people. Examining the four visions illustrated adopted frames, values, and identities as reported in the following sections.

#### Frames: Universalism or relativism

The most dominant set of frame was historical universalism and relativism among the four visions. When individuals discussed a historical representation controversy, they referred to ethical judgment on the original historical incident of a representation. In a way,

the original incident is inseparable from a representation. Individuals bring their judgments of a historical incident into the representation controversy. In the textbook controversy of 2000-2001, the Japanese people examined negotiated and challenged each other if the Pacific War was justifiable or not. Those in Vision 1 justified the war or relativism, whereas those in Vision 3 did not. Those in Visions 2 and 4 were mixed in their judgment on this matter. The difference between universalism and relativism among the visions relates to values expressed.

### **Values: Relational orientation and time**

Relational orientation was a prominent value among the four visions. Visions 1 and 4 valued self and their own interests over relationship with others, but differently. Vision 1 saw the controversy as a domestic issue and cared about positive face of Japan within Japan, whereas Vision 4 saw it as international politics emphasizing positive face of Japan in the world. Some individuals in Vision 4 also sought for collaboration with Asia acknowledging crimes committed by Japan during the war. They, however, valued collaboration for survival in a competition against the West. Vision 3, however, valued collaboration with Asia to regain the lost relationship due to the last war, valuing humanity and equality. According to the people in Vision 3, war crimes in the past needs to be compensated and lost relationship should be regained for future. Although some people in Vision 2 cared for communication with others, many of them remained in their cognitive world without expressing a particular relational orientation.

Time was also a prominent value with connection to relational orientation. Those who were concerned about past and present (Visions 1 & 4) did not need harmonious relationship with others and could remain with their own frames and values. Those who were concerned about future (Visions 2, 3, & 4), however, saw the influences of the past incidents on the present and future relationship. Therefore, valuing relationship with others guide our attitudes towards the past and behaviors at the present time for future.

### **Identities of and for Japan**

Identities of and for Japan were prevalent. Identities of Japan were concerned about the degree of victimizerness of Japan in WWII. The Japanese people examined acknowledged victimizer identity of Japan, but proceeded differently. Those who supported historical universalism as a frame (Visions 1, 2, & 4) attempted to change negative images of Japan, pointing out Japan's positive conducts and other countries' misdeeds. Those who supported historical relativism as a frame (Visions 2, 3, & 4) acknowledged Japan as victimizer regardless of situations and other countries' behaviors.

Identities for Japan emerged among the Japanese people examined. As the names of the four visions illustrated, they stood for Japan consciously or unconsciously, defining "national interests" differently. Those who were in Vision 1 sought for positive face of Japan in historical descriptions, feeling unfair about Japan's representation in history. They seemed to define national interests as a pride and confidence of being Japanese. Those who were in Vision 2 generated ideas for solving history textbook controversies for the Japanese society. Those who were in Vision 3 reframed "national interests" different from those in Vision 1 defining them as restoring relationship with Asia through addressing the Japan's colonial past. Those in Vision 4 emphasized political pragmatism for survival. Their national interests were to have positive images of own country to compete against others.

Research Question Two was: How can we have constructive dialogue on a historical

representation controversy beyond our own positions and national borders? As defined earlier, constructive dialogue is to provide a larger framework at meta-communication level, so that disputing parties can make their stance and opinions as comparable or right. Although the four visions appear mutually incompatible, addressing Research Question One implied similarities and keys to transformation at two points: historical frame and face needs.

### **Historical frame: Historical universalism**

The first key for transformation is historical universalism as a frame in a historical representation controversy. Adopting historical universalism, which sets a standard of ethical judgment universally across time and historical incidents, would provide a sense of fairness although the standard should be carefully examined and set. As FT5 (Japan, Misrepresented) implies, individuals in Visions 1 and 4 felt unfairness in historical representation to Japan. Many countries in the world including PRC invaded others in history and only Japan has been demanded for apology and repentance for years regarding the Pacific War. Their sense of unfairness remained there and turned into historical relativism. Under the frame of historical relativism, each country can justify its own interpretation of historical events, ignoring others' interpretation as one of the multiple views. Although setting a standard of historical universalism which is free from cultural bias is difficult, attempts to discuss the standard would mitigate the sense of unfairness. Further, conversation across victim and victimizer identities in an incident would be constructive, if we can acknowledge pains of being attacked and invaded by other countries across historical incidents and across national borders fairly and sincerely. Asking and pursuing a question, what could or should be done for fair representation across countries and historical events could have guided the discussion on the history textbook controversy on the Internet better.

### **Face needs**

The second key to transformation is needs of positive face. Scholars pointed out significance of face issues in a conflict (cf. Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). The four visions in the present study demonstrated needs of positive face for Japan. All the visions proposed ways and means to cultivate positive images of Japan as a country. They, however, were different in definitions of what national interests are to Japan and how to achieve them as discussed earlier. In the history textbook controversy of 2000-2001, acknowledging needs of positive face such as honor, prides, and national interests and then, guiding discussion for clarifying their meanings might have transformed a conflict into a constructive dialogue. Realizing the needs of positive face for Japan also could extend the needs for other countries including PRC and SK. This extension of needs for self to those for others would cultivate empathy for victims across national borders and incidents.

### **Limitations and Implications**

The present study has a limitation in lack of details on demographic data and skewed sample. These limitations made it impossible to examine regional, generational, and experiential differences among the Japanese people as suggested in other studies (see Okuda, 2002; Yoneyama, 1999). Although Fukumoto (2004) examined another historical representation conflict in Japan and findings are similar to those of this study, comparing findings of a controversy of other country would be interesting.

For future studies, examining the suggestions of this study is necessary. As

mentioned earlier about the significance of historical universalism and positive face needs, examining their effectiveness in a real controversy over a historical representation is important to see if these two are applicable to other controversy or unique to the case examined in this study.

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