

---

《研究報告》

Proposals  
for  
Further Development of the International Conference of 'Peace Museums':  
with special reference to the definition and categorisation  
of 'peace museums'

Chikara TSUBOI

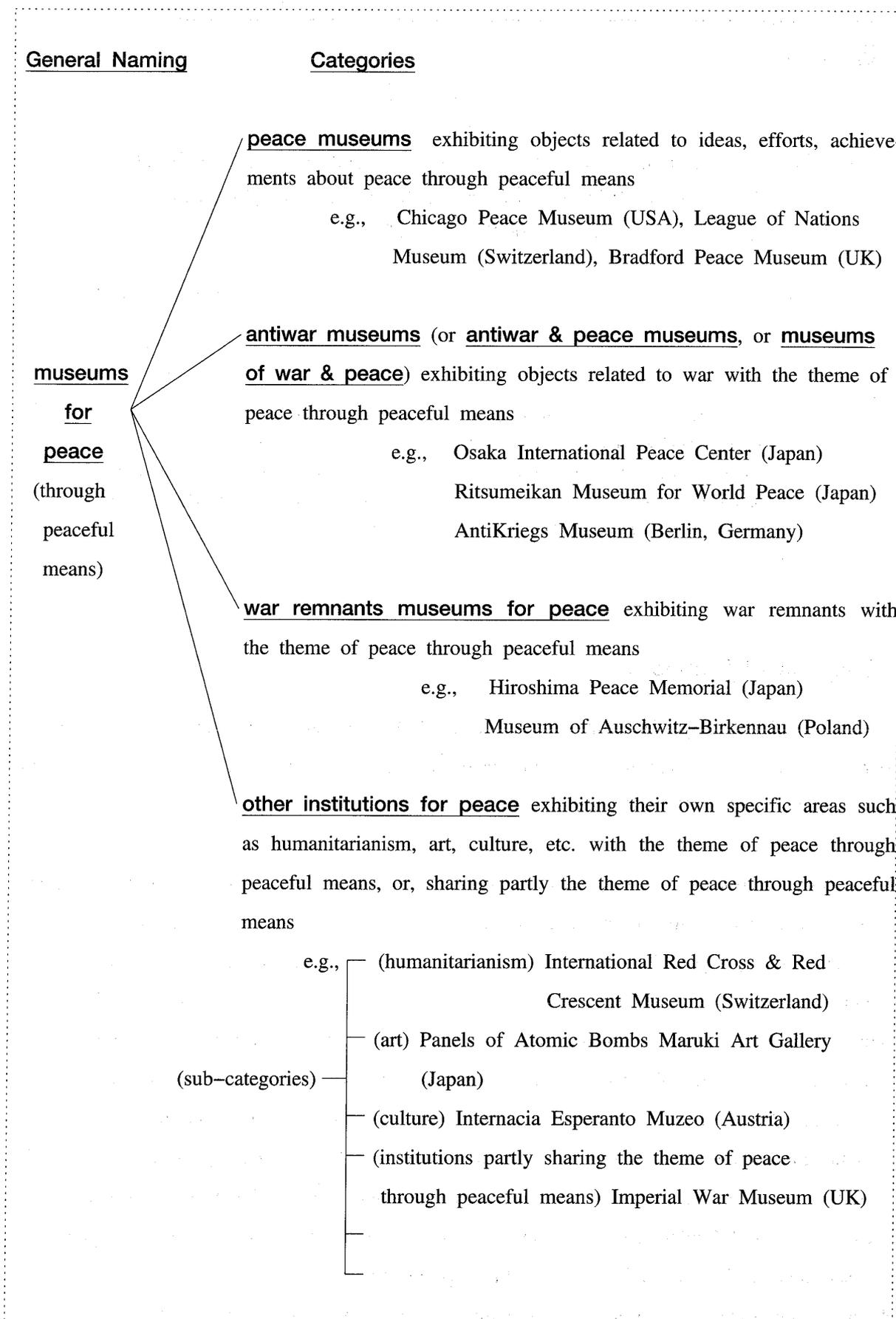
---

N.B. *This is the whole text of (revised) presentation paper submitted to the 3rd International Conference of Peace Museums (Osaka & Kyoto, Japan), November 6–10, 1998, Workshop 1–A (On the definition of a 'peace museum'), under the original title of "Proposals for Further Development of the International 'Peace Museums' Movement: with special reference to the definition and categorisation of 'peace museums'. This text may be reprinted in a report of the Conference (to be issued in April, 1999).*

### Contents of Proposals

With a sincere hope for further development of the International Conference of 'Peace Museums' in mind the present writer of this paper will make the following three proposals to the International Board of Peace Museums:

- that the definition of a 'peace museum' should be as follows: "A 'peace museum' is a museum whose aim is to educate visitors on the importance, the necessity, and the perspective of peace through peaceful means by exhibiting its (systematic) collection of artefacts and by undertaking its related activities;
- that, in order to avoid confusions which might be felt amongst visitors (and would-be visitors) and also within the Conference as described below, the above-mentioned term 'peace museum' should be changed to museum for peace and, in the same vein, the namings such as the International Conference of 'Peace Museums', the International Network of 'Peace Museums', and the International Board of 'Peace Museums' should be changed respectively to the International Conference of Museums for Peace, the International Network of Museums for Peace, and the International Board of Museums for Peace;
- that a (simplified) categorisation of museums for peace should be such as follows:



## Explanations

The issue of the definition of 'peace museums' was raised at the 2nd International Conference (at Schlaining, Austria, in 1995) by Dr Ursula-Maria Ruser of UN League of Nations Museum as the most important and urgent issue to finalise. "Without the definition," she said, "we're just dotted here and there, and can't feel that we're heading for a common goal together on the same line." For lack of time, discussion was not held and was carried over to the next International Conference, which is this Conference.

To define 'peace museums' has become more imperative than it was three years ago. For, the Conference, since its start in 1992, has continued to expand its horizon and now has reached the time when it should think about the affiliation to the UN as an international NGO. At UN, as one knows, a clear-cut, solid definition is definitely required. Over the past three years, however, this has not been made possible, partly because of the time and efforts taken for the expansion of the Conference, but mainly because of the fact that different notions of a 'peace museum' have still existed within the Conference.

This notional difference within the Conference has, unfortunately, created rooms for confusions amongst ordinary people outside the Conference. For instance, people outside might not be able to understand in what point International Esperanto Museum (Austria) is a 'peace museum'. They might not be able to see the reason why *Peace Museums Worldwide* does not treat 'Auschwitz' as a 'peace museum' whilst Japanese publications such as *SEKAI NO HEIWA HAKUBUTSUKAN* (*Peace Museums Worldwide* in English) do. They might be confused with an explanation in *Bringing Peace To People* that reads that "some of war memorials and war museums can be regarded as constituting peace museums." Imperial War Museum of London, for instance, is a war museum to the public eyes. Why is the Museum counted as a 'peace museum', they may wonder and might hold a misunderstanding in mind that 'peace museums' are war museums.

How can we define a 'peace museum'? Are we to continue discussing each other's notion of a 'peace museum' and finally take up one particular notion as the 'centre', letting others down to be 'peripheries'? This is not a good way. Take, for instance, two different notions of 'Bradford' and most Japanese museums. The Bradford notion is, in short, that a 'peace museum' is a museum exhibiting peace-related objects. In fact, they exhibit (or intend to exhibit) ideas, efforts, achievements related to peace. The 3.6 million signatures from all over the world, which successfully gave pressure on International Court of Justice to open a court on the question of the illegality of nuclear weapons, are actually one of their exhibits. On the other hand Japanese

museums exhibit war-related objects. According to Prof. Ikuro Anzai, Director of 'Ritsumeikan', the 90 per cent of objects there are war-related. 'War' is an indispensable element in Japanese museums. Hence the Japanese notion of a 'peace museum' is that it is a museum exhibiting war-related objects, of course, with the theme of peace. Neither will want to be and can be 'peripheral'.

Then, are we to talk about chronology of the word: 'peace museum' and to decide which is to hold the 'copyright' of the word? To look at recent years, 'Lindau', which is of the same kind of 'Bradford', was the first to use this word in 1980, and in 1981 followed 'Chicago', which is also of the same kind of 'Bradford'. Japanese, a group called Association To Establish The Japan Peace Museum, started to use this word in 1983, after they visited 'Chicago'. And as their 'peace museum' they envisaged a museum where a variety of datum and information about so-called 'war and peace' should be collected and exhibited to the public. Also as regards the choice of the word: 'peace museum' they explained that, after considering many other words such as 'peace archives', 'peace centre', 'peace hall', etc., they had come to the conclusion that 'peace museum' might be an appropriate word. Since then, the word: 'peace museum' has gained popularity in Japanese society and, as one sees, many 'peace museums', which, to Europeans' and Americans' eyes, are antiwar museums, or antiwar and peace museums, or museums of war and peace, have been built in Japan. So, as far as recent years is concerned, 'Lindau' and 'Chicago' have the 'copyright' of the word: peace museum. But, to date back to as far as 1935, we will find the fact that there was a German called Ernst Friedrich who already used 'peace museum' for his antiwar museum and for his publication: *Vom Friedensmuseum zur Hitlerkaserne* (From Peace Museum To Hitler Barracks in English). This is not a good way, either.

A good, and perhaps the best, way to reach the definition is to try to find out the ultimate goal which underlies all different notions and approaches and at the same time regulates the definition. Jerzy Wroblewsky, Director of 'Auschwitz', a world-famous museum of the horrors of war, gives us a suggestion. In 1991 he was here at 'Peace Osaka' and spoke about the aim of the museum: "By exhibiting the remnants of brutality of war we aim to make visitors conscientious guardians of peace, to prevent them from feeling aggressive or revengeful, and to lead them to the awareness that, whate difficulties they may face, they should try to solve them through peaceful means, which is the only rightful deed for them to take." Can't we take his 'peace through peaceful means' as a connector between European and American 'peace museums' and Japanese 'peace museums'? Can't we take 'peace through peaceful means' as our common goal for which we head together on the same line? Japanese can, because they respect

their peace constitution which categorically states that peaceful solution in international conflicts should be the Japanese way to take. 'Bradford' can, needless to say. They are speaking for it. 'League of Nations Museum'? She also can. She is exhibiting the achievements of peaceful solutions such as international laws and treaties to prohibit war. What about International Esperanto Museum? I've never been there, I'm afraid. But, in my knowledge of Esperanto, the language was created as a peaceful, cultural means to connect people of the world. So, it also can. Then comes out a doubt about Imperial War Museum. As I said earlier, she is a war museum, but she is now trying to share, though partly, the importance and the necessity of peace through peaceful means by letting visitors know the fact that there were antiwar people called conscientious objectors or by putting the holocaust exhibits to make a contrast with the 'glories' of the British soldiers.

Finally there is one thing we must be prepared for. That is that, if any museum exhibiting the nation's historic experiences of having been oppressed and brutalised in the beginning, and of having resisted and counterattacked with armed forces at the end to get their, say, freedom or independence, or whatever, wouldn't agree to state categorically that, notwithstanding such sad experiences of the past, she will have to choose 'peace through peaceful means' instead of 'armed peace' or 'peace through deterrence', then we will have to say to her, "You're a history museum, not a 'peace museum' of our kind. We all are museums fighting for peace through peaceful means." [ END ]

24th December 1998

(つばい ちから 本学人文学部教授 平和学専攻)

Chikara TSUBOI:

professor at Sapporo Gakuin University (Hokkaido, Ebetsu, Bunkyo-dai 11, Japan 069-8555: Telephone +81-11-386-8111, Fax +81-11-386-8113); born in Tokyo; BA in English & American Literature (Aoyama Gakuin, Tokyo), Diploma in English Studies (Ealing Technical College, UK), Diploma in Peace Studies (Bradford, UK); coedited (with Peter van den Dungen) *War Against War* (Ryukeishosha, Tokyo); since the 1st International Conference of Peace Museums (1992), acted as a 'matchmaker' of European & American museums and Japanese ones, hoping that the Conference will develop as a really and systematically international peace movement. His long-term interest is to make the war-renouncing Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution a 'weapon' for international peace.