The Second ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue (NEAD)
— Sharing Narratives, Mapping/Weaving History —

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I. Introduction

In February of 2005 the first North East Asian Dialogue (Wasilewski, 2005; Wasilewski and Hays, 2005) brought together Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Russian students and civil society members to identify major obstacles to intercultural communication in North East Asia. Using the Christakis/Bausch consensus-constructing, computer-assisted structured dialogue process in a form that has been in use by indigenous communities around the world since the late 1980s (Christakis and Bausch, 2006, see especially 111-113 and 118-119; L.D. Harris and Wasilewski, 2004; L. Harris and Wasilewski, 2004; Wasilewski, 2006, 417-419), 78 obstacles to intercultural communication in the region were identified. Eleven were selected as being of fundamental importance, and of these, the issue of contested history was seen as the "root cause" or fundamental obstacle. If this obstacle could be addressed, it would positively affect the ability to address all the other obstacles.

However, addressing this obstacle is further complicated by two facts. First, there is no common language of wider communication in the region. None of the state languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian) serve that function and neither does English. Second, there are not many occasions when people

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from throughout the region gather together to engage in any activity together, much less the collective management of challenging issues. Civil society relationships in the region are very thin.

II. The Second ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue (NEAD) and the Construction of the NEAD Virtual Space

The second ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue was, thus, organized to begin to address the historical issues in the region. It stressed the inclusion in the Dialogue of minorities within the various nation-states and combined the implementation of the second Dialogue with the creation of a website, of a virtual dialogue space, so that the interaction between the participants at the civil society level could continue independently of government funding support in the future. In addition, efforts were made to share the existence of this project with different groups of people both domestically in Japan and internationally.

1. *The Second ICU-COE NEAD: Sharing Narratives, Mapping/Weaving History, February 3-6, 2006*

The second ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue (NEAD) took place the first weekend in February, 2006, on the ICU campus. This Dialogue was not for problem-solving, but rather for beginning "to map" the historical "territory" of the region through the sharing of historical narratives in order to begin to create a 360 degree view of the history of the North East Asian region. We used David Bohm's (Bohm, Factor and Garrett, 1991) open dialogue process with its emphasis on building relationships.

In addition to discovering that there is no functional language of wider communication in the region, many of the participants in the first Dialogue also discovered that most of them had no idea at all about the history of the North East Asian region as a whole. They were only familiar with the mostly dyadic conflicts involving their own nation state and other states in the region. There seemed to be very few mutual perceptions of regional history. Thus, the long

term goal is to hold these dialogues in various venues as part of a kind of Multiple Community Regional History Project that can be continued on the internet even after the end of COE funding so that eventually there can be a mutual perception of regional history and a regional International Day of Reconciliation (IDR).

It is this comprehensive historical terrain that we began "to map" this year. We also wanted to include, not only the master narratives of the nation-states of the region, but also personal and family narratives, as well as the "hidden" narratives of the different groups of people making up each nation-state, for instance, those of Buryat, Evenki and Khanmigan people in Russia, of Ainu and Okinawans in Japan, of Korean-Japanese, Korean-Chinese, etc. Thus, the 2006 Dialogue was just a baby step in this direction.

(1) Participants: Approximately 75 active participants, observers, advisers, facilitators, interpreters and technical support personnel from 17 countries participated in the second Dialogue. Of those, approximately 48 eventually played very active roles, with some of the observers becoming active participants in the course of the Dialogue. Approximately one third of the total participants (23) had participated in the first Dialogue in 2005. The others were invited to participate through announcements in classes at ICU and at Obirin University and through word of mouth via participants in the first Dialogue. There was an attempt to make the group as diverse as possible, not only in terms of nationality, but in terms of sub-groups in each national society, i.e., students and civil society members, mainstream and minority, urban and rural, representing various regions, ages, genders, etc. The core active participants consisted of 16 women and 15 men, 23 undergraduate and graduate students, 8 older civil society members, 15 Japanese, 6 Chinese, 4 Koreans, 4 Russians and 2 "Euro-Asians." The Japanese consisted of 4 students with experience in Okinawa, 1 with a Korean and 1 with a Russian background, 2 Ainu and 1 older participant born and raised in North Korea. The Chinese, all students from the PRC, represented various backgrounds. The Koreans were all students or recently graduated

South Koreans. The Russians were half and half from Siberia and from European Russia. One of the Siberians was an indigenous Khanmigan and the other was a mixed Evenki/Ukranian/Pole, "mainstream" Siberian. The two "Euro-Asians" contributed historical narratives linking Poland and Germany with events in North East Asia in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

(2) Participant Preparation: When invitees accepted the initial invitation to participate in the Dialogue all were given Preparation Guidelines. These included advice to think about the history they had learned in school, to think about stories about history passed down in their families, to look around and see how historical issues were being covered in the media, to, if possible, look at the two very prejudiced *manga* on Chinese and Koreans published in Japan in 2005, to look at the joint history texts that had recently been developed to see how the accounts of history in these volumes differed from what they learned in school, to visit places where history is presented (e.g., Yasukuni Shrine, the Hiroshima Peace Museum, etc.) to see how it is represented, and to come to the Dialogue with a 20 minute long historical narrative to share. They were told that they would be videotaped as they told their story and that they should be willing to answer clarifying questions about their narrative. However, they were assured that there would be no debate about their narrative, that the goal of the Dialogue was simply to make the narrative public, have it understood by other participants and, eventually, to have it posted in five languages on the website being constructed to accompany this Project. To this end, they were also asked to provide an outline of their narrative for the interpreters and a text in English, if they told their narrative in Japanese, a text in Japanese, if they spoke in English, and a text in either English or Japanese, if they shared their narrative in another language. These preparatory activities were intended to enable participants to share a more rigorous personal perception of history and, therefore, to be more engaged in the dialogue process.

Just before the Dialogue additional advice and information was sent to each

participant. First, each was asked to reflect on their *intention* in participating in the Dialogue Project. What did they want to accomplish through this participation? If they wished to "capture" or symbolize their *intention* in an object, then they were asked to please bring that object with them to share. (We had a table on which the objects could be displayed.) Second, the participants were reminded that they had three responsibilities: a) to tell their story as vividly as possible; b) to listen actively to the narratives of others; and c) to ask clarifying questions ONLY. "Clarifying" was defined through the following example: "Could you explain that again? I didn't understand ⋯" etc. As the tenets of *Powerful Non-Defensive Communication* suggest (Ellison, 2002), it was advised that questions should be driven by true curiosity, that is, by truly wanting to understand another person's narrative. Third, the participants were told that they would share their narratives in four Dialogue Circles, each reflecting the overall composition of the Dialogue with participants coming from Japan, Korea, China and Russia and that they would be with their Circle for one and a half days and form a small community. And finally, they were asked to e-mail their texts to us or bring them on a CD or memory stick so that the web designers from Hays' Media Studio at Kwansei Gakuin University would be able to test several methods for putting their histories on the internet so that everyone could see how they might look on the web. They were told not to worry about their texts being perfect, because there would be many opportunities to edit them. Participants were assured that they would be in complete control of what would eventually appear on the web.

(3) The ICU-COE 2006 North East Asian Open Dialogue Schedule in Detail: The 2006 Dialogue began on Friday evening and ended Sunday evening. A description of the overall flow of the Dialogue follows below.

Invitation: Building the atmosphere in which contested histories could be shared effectively began with how each participant was invited. Each person was invited individually, and the list of participants given out at the beginning of the

Dialogue was written alphabetically with no hierarchy implied in the order of listing.

Friday Night Gathering: The first gathering of the meeting, on the Friday night, was purposely held in an ordinary campus house, where nearly fifty participants and observers squeezed into a small space to share an informal dinner of pizza together. In that space, grace before the meal was said by one of the Japanese participants, Takeshi Sasanuma, a senior Christian gentleman, who had begun his life in North Korea. After dinner a short video was shown from the new National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) in Washington, D.C. (the facilitators for the 2005 Dialogue were of Native-American and Comanche heritage) on the nature of history, that the past is one thing and the stories we tell about the past are another (Smith, 2005). Each story, no matter what the story is, has a point of view. A schedule for the weekend's activities and some other materials on historical perspectives and the value of strengthening the relationships among the people of North East Asia were also handed out at this time. Thus, the purpose of this 2006 Dialogue was to begin to construct a multifocal history which could encompass the narratives of all the participants. And finally, one of the Japanese students with a particular interest in Okinawan music, Ryo Sekiguchi, played the song, *Tooshindoi*, that Okinawans traditionally played to welcome Chinese ships when they came to trade.

Saturday Opening: To develop a sense of "deep" as well as "wide" history, Saturday morning began with intentionally raising awareness of the history of International Christian University's (ICU's) historical space, the space in which we were holding our discussions. This space is simultaneously a Jomon archeological site, a former agricultural space, the site of an aircraft company in the Pacific War era, and now a university which is an artifact of the immediate post-WWII period in Japanese history.

The day began with the Ainu participants, as one of the peoples carrying

one of the longest histories in the Japanese archipelago, doing a *Kamuy Nomi Ceremony* for the auspicious beginning of this new project. This event was led by Ainu Elder, Haruzo Urakawa Ekashi, his sister, Makiko Urakawa and Ainu Art Project Director, Koji Yuki. Like the playing of the Okinawan song the night before, this event emerged out of the wish of various participants to contribute as designers of the event, as well as, as participants. The integration of this ceremony into the Dialogue involved a very interesting accommodation between the needs of the "timeless time" of ceremony and the linear "scheduled time" of the contemporary urban world. The *problematique* was that a "short" Ainu ceremony is about two hours long. We did not have enough time in the two days to spend two whole hours on a ceremony in the 9-5 schedule. But our Ainu participants said it was not necessary for everyone to attend the ceremony. What was important was that the ceremony took place. The Ainu participants said they would begin the ceremony at about 7:30 in the morning, early enough so that they could join the opening of the Dialogue in the Yuasa Museum at 9:30 or soon thereafter. Other participants were invited to attend the ceremony if they wanted to, but they could come and go as the spirit moved them, and they could leave in time to be at the Opening "on time" whether the ceremony was completed or not.

So, some participants attended the *Kamuy Nomi*, others came directly to the Yuasa Museum, and our Ainu participants arrived when the ceremony was finished. To reach the second floor of the museum where the Opening was taking place, the participants had to walk through the exhibits of **Jomon artifacts** found on the ICU campus, thus reminding us of the dawn of human history in Japan 5000 years ago. On the second floor of museum we gathered in a big circle in the middle of a **special exhibit of children's clothing and other textiles associated with children, like bath towels, from the turn of the twentieth century.** Emerging on the second floor, we were surrounded by beautiful textiles, some very elegant ones of silk, some modest ones of patchwork, but all beautiful, indicating how much these children of the turn of the 20th century were valued. Most of the textiles were imprinted with auspicious

symbols, cranes, carp, turtles, ... all symbols of energy and long life, ... to protect the children whose bodies were touched by these textiles from succumbing to the high rate of infant mortality at the time.

As we gathered in the circle, Professor Wasilewski, the Coordinator of the Dialogue Project, asked the participants to look at the objects and consider the following. **Children in Japan no longer suffer high rates of infant mortality. There is another problem ⋯ low birthrate.** In biological systems when an organism ceases to reproduce itself, that is usually a sure sign that something is wrong. What is the malaise that is affecting society so that its young people do not want to reproduce?

Perhaps the best luck we could wish the future generations of children would be to transform the contested history of the region. Also, if we looked around, all these objects were textiles, fabrics, which are made of threads. **Perhaps we might consider each of our narratives as a thread, and that our task is to reweave these narrative threads into a fabric that is both strong and beautiful for all the peoples of the region.** What would such a mutually "beautiful" historical "fabric" look like? Professor Hays, from Kwansei Gakuin University, whose students are creating the website for this project, suggested that before we could re-weave our narrative threads, we might have to disentangle them from already existing narrative constructions.

Next, one of the founding participants in this Dialogue Project from Siberia, former ICU doctoral student and present lecturer at the Buryat State University, Elena Kozoulina, read a **greeting from Darya Mironova, an indigenous Siberian Evenki woman**, Executive Director of the Municipal Educational Institution for Children, the "Evenki Cultural Center," in Bagdarin in the Republic of Buryatia in the Russian Federation. There are three groups of Evenki in the Siberian realm, reindeer pastoralists, horse pastoralists and also farmers, and the Evenki language is related to Japanese. In addition, as a result of 20th century

politics, there is a large group of Evenki in Chinese Mongolia. Darya Mironova had participated in the 2005 Dialogue but was unable to participate in 2006. As part of her greeting to this year's participants she explained the symbolism of a small fur rug that she had presented to the Project. The circular rug symbolized the foundation of a traditional Evenki dwelling that in turn represented the Evenki cosmos. She closed her greeting with the following words,

> I deeply thank you for your active involvement in the development of the cultures of people all over the world. I hope that the ··· Dialogue meetings will become a new tradition for young enthusiastic people like you. I wish all of you to stay optimistic, have initiative, creativity, happiness, prosperity and a peaceful sky.

This was followed by a **brief presentation by a group of ICU students**, Yuka Mimura, Heiwa Kataoka and Yusei Ota, two of whom had **gone to Okinawa on ICU's Peace Research Institute's 2005 Fall Study Tour** under the direction of Professor Yasuhiro Tanaka, Professor of Media and Cultural Studies and Professor Wasilewski's colleague in the Department of Communication & Linguistics at ICU. Upon their return from Okinawa they had become interested in ICU's World War II history, and they had gone to one of the bomb craters on the ICU campus with the university's archeologist, Professor Richard Wilson. Standing at the bottom of the World War II bomb crater, they found themselves standing on the Kanto Loam, the threshold of human habitation in this area. Digging around in the dirt, within a few minutes they were able to locate several Jomon artifacts, pottery shards, grinding stones, etc. Then they found a golf ball from the 1960s when one of the university's golf fairways was located adjacent to the crater. Finally, they found the roots of some legumes, artifacts of the long practice of agriculture in this particular place. Professor Wilson then shared the story of an old farmer who, as long as he lived, maintained a garden on the land that had once been his family's farm before the land was alienated from his family's use for use as an aircraft factory and then as a university (talking about contested history!). Passing around their bowl of

artifacts the students asked their fellow participants to muse on the number of different narratives that could be constructed from this historical "evidence".

Yuu Tagawa, a 2005 ICU graduate, and one of the founder interpreter participants of the Dialogue Project, who is also studying graphic facilitation to add to her other group facilitation skills, then shared with the participants a "mindscape" (www.nancymargulies.com) of **"three keys" to boundary transformation** based on her senior thesis in which she drew on anthropologist, Satoshi Nakagawa's (1992ab), ideas about "talking systems" and how we discover the edges of our own cultural reality (Tagawa, 2005). The "three keys" are **curiosity, bravery and patience**: curiosity that another reality exists, bravery in order to have the courage to face another reality that may call our present reality into question and patience because exploring the boundary, coming to a mutual comprehension of the boundary and creating new common space *always* takes more time than we originally anticipate.

Next we began, one by one, to go around the circle and do **self introductions**: our names, where we came from, what brought us to the Dialogue. There were nearly 80 people in the circle. It took quite some time to listen to each other. However, Professor Wasilewski remarked that it was important, before we divided into smaller groups, that we had at least heard each other's names, that we knew of each other's existence. This decision to do brief self-introductions was done spontaneously. It grew out of the atmosphere in the room at the time, an atmosphere that had already been affected by the Ainu ceremony, the Jomon artifacts, the textile exhibit, by Darya Mironova's greetings and by the student contributions to the Opening.

Finally, Professor Wasilewski called everyone's attention to a small rug in a case in the middle of the room. It was a blue rug featuring a design of human footprints in white. She remarked that yet another way to think about what we were going to be doing over the next two days was that we were going to be

retracing the footsteps of the people who had walked across this terrain. What kinds of tracks had they left on the landscape?

The Four Dialogue Circles: We then divided into four Dialogue Circles **each of which reflected the complexity of the group at large**, students, academics, civil society members, from Japan, China, Korea, and Russia, male and female, young and old, with different ethnic and regional affiliations. Each of these four Dialogue Circles had a **facilitator** and a **language resource person** who could interpret between Japanese and English. Professor Wasilewski, who knew of the language abilities of each of the participants, tried to form groups that would be able to work mostly in Japanese or in English as a common language, but each group had to insure that those who preferred to speak in Korean, Chinese and/or Russian would be heard and understood using informal resources within the group.

The four facilitators were all young American master's students in ICU's Rotary International Peace Fellows' Program, two men and two women with very diverse backgrounds, Egyptian-American, Euro-African-American, Bolivian-Italian-American and Southern. Two were previous JET Program participants. All had previous facilitation experience, and three had already been assistant facilitators in the 2005 Dialogue.

The seven interpreters all benefited from the advice of Professor Yoshi Hongo, head of ICU's Interpreting Program. Three were his students or former students, and they all had interpreted in the 2005 Dialogue. Professor Hongo's concept of "intermediation" enables linguistically heterogeneous teams of people to work together effectively. The supportive "intermediation" in Russian by the three interpreters from Central Asia (all JICA supported grad students in ICU's Graduate School of Public Administration) for the young Khanmigan participant from Siberia was particularly effective.

Each group had **two main tasks** over the next two days: 1) to video tape each person's narrative and 2) on the afternoon of the second day to collectively construct a Graphic Representation of what they had experienced in their group in order to share their Circle's experience with all the other Dialogue participants in a final Circle of the Whole. The most important admonition was that each participant had **two main responsibilities**: to share and to listen.

To begin, the participants in each group **introduced themselves** to each other, decided on their **main languages of communication**, depending on the linguistic resources of their particular group, and decided on their **order of speaking** (round robin, volunteer, thematic, etc.) In some groups, to introduce themselves, each member threw the object they had brought to represent themselves into the circle and explained why that object had symbolic importance for them.

For a day and a half the four Dialogue Circles functioned as small communities accomplishing their two tasks. Breaks were taken in an organic fashion that matched the needs of each Circle.

It was **during the breaks** that participants could do a number of things in addition to having a cup of tea or coffee. They could add a comment to the **Graffiti Wall**, locate their narrative on a **map** of the North East Asian region, or look at several **videos** (the video of the 2005 Dialogue, Professor Marek Kaminski's video of an NHK documentary on the Polish/Ainu grandson of Bronislav Pilsudski, the famous Polish ethnographer of the Ainu for the Russian Geographic Society at the turn of the 20th century, the NMAI video on the nature of history, and videos of Evenki and Ainu song and dance). They could also browse through the historical **artifacts** brought by some of the participants, for instance, books and pamphlets on Ainu life and culture, on life on the Korean/Manchurian frontier in the early 20th century, etc. Participants could also **visit the room where the students from Kwansei Gakuen University's**

Information Science Program, under the direction of Professor Paul Hays, were creating the website that will support this dialogic process into the future. Participants being able to see their texts on line and students being able to incorporate elements from the discussions into their design of the site (like the image of the Evenki rug that was shared at the Opening) allowed participants to give instant feedback and critique the virtual space that was being created. This provided great synergy for both the participants and the technical team. This is important since the intent was to create a virtual space that extended the face-to-face discussions

Saturday Reception: Saturday night we had a collective dinner in the university's Alumni House to which some special guests who were not able to attend the Dialogue during the day were invited. One of these guests was **Professor Kiyotaka Aoyagi**, a former professor of anthropology at ICU, who shared his story of working as a teenager during the Pacific War in the building which is now ICU's main classroom building, but which was then the main engineering building of the Nakajima aircraft corporation. After dinner we then participated in **singing and dancing**, Okinawan and Ainu, listened to a song about the Japanese nostalgia for one's home town, sung by another of the senior participants, Akiyoshi Nagashima, who, as a teenager, also worked for the Nakajima aircraft corporation, and John Lennon's song, "Imagine," sung by two of the facilitators.

Graphic Representations of the Experience in Each Circle: On Sunday, after the video taping was finished, each Circle constructed a Graphic Representation of what they had experienced in their group and presented it to all the Dialogue participants in the final Circle of the Whole. These presentations were also video-taped.

Closing: After the presentation of the Graphics in the Circle of the Whole, the closing proceeded in three parts. First, since it was the beginning of

February, we did a **mini Setsubun Festival** and drove three volunteer *Oni* out of the room (only to welcome them back into the Circle when they decided to be human beings again — after all we *are* promoting reconciliation!). Then we had a final **Circle of Appreciation** where each of us circled around and paused before each person silently acknowledging them through eye contact alone. Finally, there was a **spontaneous Ainu closing ceremony**, bringing us back full circle to where we had begun our Dialogue in the early morning the day before, once again acknowledging and being acknowledged by the people in the room with the longest history in the Japanese archipelago.

Sunday Dinner: Finally, those who had the time gathered at a local restaurant for an optional dinner.

(4) Outcomes: Over the day and a half of video taping each group was successful in taping each participant's narrative. We have about **30 hours of videotaped narratives** from participants, from some observers and from some of the interpreters. We have **texts (or at least outlines) for half** of the narratives in either English or Japanese.

Collecting written texts in Japanese and English is taking more time than expected. Sometimes, after participation in the Dialogue, people were not satisfied with their initial text that they had brought with them. We were hoping that by videotaping the narratives, we could just use those videotaped narratives to create written texts. But sometimes people shared things in the small group "community" context of the Dialogue Circle that they were uncomfortable sharing in the more public virtual space of the internet. In addition, this project is being carried out in a larger socio-political context where Japanese society is increasingly concerned about the privacy of personal information and in an environment experiencing increased sensitivity regarding regional history. So, we are proceeding very cautiously in the development of the public website.

A preliminary analysis of the oral and written narratives reveals some very interesting **themes**. There are narratives about constructing a new cosmopolitan concept of the global citizen. Across the different nation-states there are parallel experiences of destruction and loss. There is the emerging, previously untold, comprehensive story, of the Korean diaspora. There are the "hidden" histories of Ainu, Okinawans, Evenki, Khanmigans, Buryats, Japanese "returnees" from Siberia, Manchuria and North Korea, and of people left behind in all three areas. And there are the generational stories of people who actually experienced events versus those who have just read about them in books.

These themes were reflected in the **final Graphic Representations** of the experience of each Dialogue Circle over the two days. A young graphic arts professional from Columbia, Maria Antonia Perez, who came from Peace Boat Japan to observe the Dialogue, drew illustrations of the Graphics. Some of the representations were chart-like, some like paintings and others like sculptures. There is an **Identity/History Wheel**, a **Dynamic 3-D Culture Cylinder**, an **Infinity Plant** and a representation of the fact that **We Are All On the Same Train**.

There is also a **video tape of the story of the whole event**, as well as the video tapes of each of the four Dialogue Circles.

What was remarkable in each group was the **quality of human relationships** that emerged from the work of the Dialogue Circles. Once again, just as Wasilewski's pioneer ancestors found and just as U.S. educators found in the work of desegregating schools in the United States, when people have tasks to do together, which require the integration of all their skills, this functional necessity seems to enable people to create productive relationships. For this project, it will be these real relationships that carry on the work of the Circles after government funding for the activity has ended. This is why the virtual space

being created by Professor Hays and his students at Kwansei Gakuen University is so important as a space for the continuation of the relationships and of the narrative sharing so recently established.

2. The Construction of the NEAD Virtual Space (nead.kscmedia.net)

(Much of this section is based on Hays and Wasilewski, 2005.)

Thus, the aim of this Project is to create, not only face-to-face, but also virtual interactive spaces where an ever broader range of the peoples of North East Asia may continue to encounter each other in mutually supportive environments where, together, they can **transform and transcend challenging issues, both historical and contemporary**. We hope this Project will **nurture** what Horvat (2003) and Gardner-Feldman (2006) call **transnational non-state actors in the student population and in civil society in general**. These scholars have identified the key role such people have played in reconciliation and integration dynamics in Europe. North East Asia has very few of these actors in proportion to the population of the region. The goal is to see that participation in this **"dialogue among histories"**, in this **incipient multiple community history project** will provide a valuable resource for a broad range of real world discussions so that the Project can eventually culminate in an International Day of Reconciliation in the North East Asian Region.

Supporting this expanded dialogue are four information science students, Yusuke Mori, Shingo Ota, Chiaki Yamakawa, and Takuma Yoshida, of the **Hays Media Studio in the Department of Applied Informatics in the School of Policy Studies at Kwansei Gakuin University**. Some of these students were observers during the first Dialogue, and they are all students of Professor Paul R. Hays, one of the advisers to the first Dialogue, and a professor of Information Science at Kwansei Gakuin. Their task is to construct a multilingual website which presents the results of the first and second Dialogues, archives the narratives and provides a virtual meeting space for further dialogue.

(1) A Space Where Every Voice Is Heard: One of the greatest barriers to

resolving conflicts is **gathering the stakeholders** (Hays and Michaelides, 2004). When conflicts often involve thousands or millions of people, getting them all to the "table" can be daunting. However, modern technology offers the potential to gather all the stakeholders into a virtual space and greatly expand the participation. From the very beginning of the North East Asian Dialogue it was anticipated that there would be a corresponding virtual space that would compliment the face-to-face dialogues. This has provided a laboratory in which to explore the potential of virtual spaces in structured dialogue processes for conflict resolution. The focus of the second North East Asian Dialogue on history also led to the possibility of redefining history itself, from a single, linear story into a web of diverse stories based on the experiences of many individuals.

We are **using the term virtual space rather than website intentionally**. While at the moment most of us are familiar with websites, the technology is advancing every day and expanding into new uses and forms. Focusing on websites locks any discussion into the present level of technology and hinders an open-ended exploration of the potential for this technology. The term virtual space also implies a parallel to the real spaces in which conflicts arise and are resolved. The *agora* was a real place in ancient Greece where one could buy onions, as well as discuss the issues of the day. The **internet has become a sort of super-*agora*** where one can buy anything or say anything and even find a lot of interesting information. It is an alternative reality that is pervasive in our contemporary world and virtual only in the sense of physical space.

At the virtual level of dialogue for the Project a **truly multilingual site** is necessary, although not every bit of information can be provided in every language. Some languages in the region may not even have a writing system. Merely recording a personal history, however, is not enough. It is the sharing of these histories that leads to understanding. Posting these on a website where they can be accessed with multilingual summaries is one option. Having participants record their histories in at least two languages may be another

possible solution. In any case, various approaches are being discussed and will be tried in order to allow participants to feel comfortable both in the face-to-face space and in the virtual space.

(2) Basic Principles for the Virtual Space: Creating a virtual space that mirrors the process and facilitates the goals of the NEAD Project is a challenge. Beginning with the principles on which the original dialogue was founded, these principles get slightly modified for the virtual space. For one thing, the people who participated in the dialogue accepted the basic principles. The texts presented on the site are a much more public offering, and not all those viewing the site will have accepted the principles. Understanding these principles and how they interact with various technical issues was the focus of the work by the team from Kwansei Gakuin University. Work on resolving these issues is on going and pushes the envelope in many areas, including technology, community building and history.

First, **all interested parties are encouraged to submit a story or text to the site.** This is an extension of the idea that all interested stakeholders should participate. One reason the contested histories are problematic for this region is that governments cherry pick various incidents and use them to promote a particular view. The purpose of this site is to go beyond any one view, political or personal, and to encompass all views so that every story is available for public viewing. History is a summation of the individual experiences of all the people who lived through the events of a particular time. We are trying to create a space that will grow into a web of stories and experiences that can give rise to a shared understanding of the history of the region.

Second, **the story or text from each participant is valued, and it remains his or her own.** Any participant has the right to edit or even withdraw their text at any time. They may even ask that their identity not be publicly revealed. This principle leads to **two issues:** 1) the authenticity of texts and

translation and 2) the preservation of the identity of authors who may post stories that may involve personal or public risks. One of the issues for authorship is **the authenticity of a possible translation**. Is a translated story the same story? Would the author approve of the translation and still accept ownership of the story? This is a difficult question. Certainly each author should have editorial control. Some authors are multilingual and can provide their own story in multiple languages. Where stories must be translated, ideally, the community would keep translations authentic. If there are many multilingual members reading these texts, then we can trust the texts in translation.

The other issue is **the public nature of the texts and the private nature of the stories**. In the protected face-to-face interaction space, with supportive group members, some things were revealed that are not for public release. However, these may be critical parts of the collective story that are important to share. One way to do this is to allow authors to withhold their names from publication. Stories are not accepted anonymously, but if the web masters are convinced that the text is from a real person, then they may allow the text to be included in the history space anonymously. Authors may choose to reveal little or no information about themselves. The guiding principle is that each author owns, not only his or her own text and its translations, but their entire presentation of self on the website.

Third, **in order that each story or text be "heard" as widely as possible, each should be translated into at least two of the target languages**. As noted earlier, one of the problems for dialogue in the North East Asian region is the lack of a common language. The basic languages for the region are several forms of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian and English. There are also several indigenous languages, such as Ainu and Evenki. However, the speakers of these indigenous languages are usually fluent in one of the five widespread languages. Of course, some indigenous languages are not written languages with no orthography at all, or only a borrowed orthography.

Issues of participation of people from oral traditions on the internet and in virtual sites, such as this one, is beyond the scope of this dialogue, but it is an important issue nonetheless.

In the 2005 and 2006 Dialogues, many of the participants were university students studying in a foreign country. They understand these language issues and have some fluency in more than one language. As a result, both of the face-to-face interactions have used interpreters who were often, themselves, participants in the process. **A willingness to listen and to work through language issues was one of the founding principles of these Dialogues.** No such restriction is imposed on visitors to the website. And yet, in order for the site to create a public space for citizens of the region, it must be functional in several languages. A Chinese speaker must be able to access the stories in Russian or in Japanese. Ideally, all the stories should be told in all five target languages. This would entail a massive translation project, especially if the goal is to collect hundreds of stories. As a first step, because most of the present participants are fluent in more than one language, we are asking that they submit their stories in more than one language. This gives enough overlap so that the "web of stories" can begin to be created.

Fourth, **the texts will be presented in such a manner that none has precedence over any other. All are equal.** This is one principle where the technology gives some suggestions for implementation. In thinking about the visitors who will come to the site and explore the history space, how will they move through this space and read these texts? Readers may want to randomly explore, or they may want to search for stories on a particular topic. For those wanting just to explore randomly, the texts have been arranged in a ring. Because the readers may not be fluent in multiple languages, there are actually five parallel rings, one for each of the five basic languages. Links are also made between the versions of a text that are in multiple languages. This allows readers to see what languages have been used for each story and to move between the

various text rings. Of course, the basic interface, the top pages will also be translated into the five languages. In a sense, it is like five websites with a consistent design and links between all of them. Maintaining such a site is difficult and taxes the abilities of the technical team, not the least because we are not fluent in all of the five languages. However, if the technology cannot be made to serve the higher purposes of the dialogue, then what hope can there be for building communication between the various peoples of the region?

Fifth, **all participants should have a sense of ownership and responsibility for the site and so are encouraged to participate as equal members of a website editorial board**. The members of the technical team view themselves as facilitators of the technology for the participants. The team members did not give personal stories in the groups, but gathered ideas from various individuals and tried to create a web space that is as much a consensus as the Dialogue itself. As designers and technicians, they view the dialogue members as their clients and seek to bring the clients' ideas, concepts, content and desires into life on the web. So, part of the website will function as a technology advisory group. Any contributor will be eligible for membership, limited only by their desire to actively participate. A **periodic e-mail newsletter** will help connect the members of this advisory group. Due to the limitations of the technicians, this group will function mainly in English with some work being done in Japanese.

(3) The Process of Creating the Virtual Space: As mentioned above, the members of the technical team are all from Kwansei Gakuin University and are specializing in web design and internet technology under Professor Hays. They were selected because all of them expressed a desire to learn this technology in order to change the world for the better. The North East Asian Dialogue Project seemed a good chance for them to do just that.

At a preliminary meeting at Kwansei Gakuin University, all the students

watched a film of the first Dialogue. Explaining the Dialogue and the structured dialogue process is often difficult. The students were unsure of exactly what was going to happen and how it could be reflected in a virtual space on line. Still, they were enthusiastic about the possibility of trying something practical.

At ICU, the technical team members were welcomed as full members of the Dialogue. They participated in the opening ceremonies by the Ainu elders and the first gathering of all the participants, as well as in meals with all the participants. During the first day, a technology center was set up for the technical team, and we spent the day brainstorming a basic design for the virtual space. The students also took the time to listen in on several of the groups to see what was actually going on in the sessions. They also took photos of the process. One text was available for the students with which to begin the history space.

Saturday evening, after the dinner, the technical team began crafting the website in earnest. Working until early in the morning, Sunday, they combined the photos, preliminary documents and ideas into a functioning site. At nine the next morning, they were ready to show the site to all the participants. All that day in the technical workroom, participants stopped by to view the site and make comments. As people came in, they often brought their narratives, and these were quickly uploaded to the site. As the day progressed, the site grew. People were able to give feedback as they saw the site and interacted with it. It was a very fruitful process.

On returning to Kwansei Gakuin, the work continued. In further consultation with Professor Wasilewski, it was decided to reformulate the site to reflect the four discussion groups. There were two reasons for this. First, the site was seen as cementing and furthering the relationships that had been created in the face-to-face dialogue. Using the site as a way of building on those relationships was a primary function. Secondly, there were various ancillary materials that fit the structuring of the site into the four groups. These materials

included video of the Dialogue event as well as photos of the final graphic representations of the work of the four Dialogue Circles. In order to display this visual information in context, the four groups had to be a prime organizing structure for the site.

(4) The Future of the Virtual Space for a History of North East Asia:
While the current site is a reflection of the four discussion groups of the 2006 Dialogue, there is greater potential for a truer redefinition of the regional history. The current set of narratives is only a beginning. **Plans are being made to collect narratives from a wider range of stakeholders.** Several NGO/NPO groups and numerous individuals have expressed interest in submitting narratives. With the help of these groups there is a possibility of collecting hundreds if not thousands of narratives. This is the beginning of a true virtual historical space. With all of these narratives available, **the people of the region can begin to explore the richness and variety of the region's history and begin to create a shared vision of that history.** This is analogous to the goals of several other dialogue/history projects elsewhere, such as Facing History, Facing Ourselves (www.facinghistory.org), the Story Corps (storycorps.net), World Café (www.worldcafe.com), etc. (See IV. 2. & 3. and References -Websites for other dialogue and history projects with which we are networking.)

Beyond just collecting and archiving hundreds of historical narratives, the function of the virtual space must be to provide access to the narratives. Once we have created or begun the creation of this virtual history space, then readers should be able to search the space for various topics. In the beginning, the website will use Google Search. This technology is given away by Google and can be used by a reader to search within the site or even out into the World Wide Web. Google search is useful for several reasons. First, the technology is well developed, supported and extended by one of the largest companies in the technology field. Second, Google allows search in many languages. This **allows**

readers to search for Japanese, Russian, Korean or Chinese words and topics, not just English terms. Going beyond separate searches in multiple languages, it is hoped that the site **will eventually incorporate a cross-linguistic lexicon** that will allow search across the various languages. A search for "Shanghai" will also bring up texts with the Chinese character or Russian word. Of course, if all texts are translated, this feature might seem redundant. However, if this site encompasses hundreds of personal stories, then translating all of them will not be practical. Cross-linguistic search would be practical. Eventually, the hope is that key topic terms will be highlighted and linked across texts. If we read a text that mentions Shanghai, it will have a link that will bring up a list of other texts in various languages. Perhaps clicking on a search term could reorganize the reader's history ring so that they can click through a series of texts referring to a single topic.

This searchable space will have the potential to recreate the notion of history. Rather than history as the summation of events by an authority, whether an academic, a novelist or a government, **history will be this shared, collective, virtual history space.** Rather than reading a single text for a view of history, any interested person can search for a topic and read through various narratives to understand the experiences of the people for whom it was a real experience, not just a story.

The intent is for readers of one script to be able to search through the various narrative spaces using their own language first. Later, as links are established for key topics, geographical places, and major events across the narratives and the various languages, a network of connections will begin to emerge. The history of the region can then be explored through the narratives of the citizens. **Students can read history though data mining the narrative space and the historical web that emerges from that space.** As these narratives are shared across a larger audience, a shared vision of the history of the region can develop.

And, as with any search, people will find new things, things unlooked for in their search. They will **not be restricted by pre-selection of events by an authority**. The second Dialogue, thus, began to develop a view of history as the sum of all the personal experiences or stories of all the individuals. Rather than taking a broad look at the political movements, wars, social errands and such that are the fodder of most histories, we are creating a space where individuals can share their stories of the times. By sharing our personal stories, we come to a larger understanding of the region and its history. The idea is to create a web of narrative that builds a common understanding. As this understanding grows, it can counter the history imposed by experts or authorities. The history is emergent from the experiences of the participants.

What we search for may not be what we find, even if we find what we need. As Moreville (2005) notes in his book *Ambient Findability*, "The journey transforms the destination." **We may begin by seeking the truth and find ourselves, instead, with a shared awareness of and respect for each other's experiences.**

This echoes the dynamics of what one of the observers of both the 2005 and 2006 Dialogues, Chad Stewart (2004), from the consulting firm, Interkannections, calls **"triple loop learning"**. This is a concept that pays attention to three foci: what we are looking at **[content]**, what we are looking through **[context]** and what we are looking with **[ego-structure and culture-structure]**. In short, the process of constructing this virtual web of personal historical narratives has the potential of contributing to a common understanding of the complexities of history and to the foundation of a contemporary *agora* for the region.

III. Current NEAD Site - nead.kscmedia.net

The above is the grand vision. How far we have progressed towards this vision can be viewed at the current site.

1. *Accomplishments*

Much background material has been posted, but it still needs to be translated into the other languages. Narratives are still being edited, translated and posted. Privacy issues, access to the internet in various parts of the world, student learning curves on the technical side, student flows (founding students have finished their studies and have embarked on the next stages of their lives) and overall translation dynamics are constraining the process, but things are proceeding step-by-step as some of the original participants in the Dialogues continue their participation or become re-involved and as more participants are added.

2. *Current Activities*

(1) Completing Stage One Development of the Website: We are currently completing stage one of the website's development. This involves the **posting of all the narratives in at least three languages along with a video clip of each speaker from the DVD.**

(2) Compression of the Video Footage to DVDs for Additional Analysis: It was hoped that the videotapes would provide a good record of each of the narratives and of the overall 2006 Dialogue. The videotapes succeeded as a record but not as cinematography. The decision was made not to involve professionals to videotape but to engage participants in videotaping each other. This joint task succeeded in building community but did not produce broadcast quality video. Thus, while the original idea was to post each participant's complete video narrative on the web, clips will be used instead. (There was also a technical problem involving streaming video.) However, **the videos of the narratives have now been compressed on DVDs, and a set of the five DVDs (one DVD of each Circle, I-IV, plus a DVD of the entire event) is being sent to each participant.** This will help each participant to continue to **develop their narrative text** for the website and to **translate it into additional languages.** There is an additional request that each participant and

each Circle review the whole 2006 Dialogue to help us **collectively to analyze the themes and patterns** 1) in each of the Four Dialogue Circles, 2) in the Overall Dialogue, 3) in the experiences of Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Russian, "Euro-Asian," and Indigenous people from the points of view of both participants and observers, plus 4) other possible themes and patterns around age, gender, etc.

IV. Conference Presentations, Networking and Mention In/On Other Publications and Websites

Over the past year the activities of the ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue Project have been presented at eight conferences, networked with 15 other people, organizations and projects, and been noted in three other publications and two other websites.

1. *Presentations at Conferences*

November 14-17, 2005: The New Roles of Systems Sciences for a Knowledge-based Society, the First World Congress of the International Federation for Systems Research, Kobe, Japan.

March 17-21, 2006: ICU-WSU Research Partnership Preliminary Meeting; Toward a Grand Theory of Peace, Security, and *Kyosei*, ICU, Tokyo, Japan.

May 21-22, 2006: Annual Student Research Fair, Kwansei Gakuin Univerity, Sanda Campus, Sanda, Japan.

May 11, 2006: Mitaka Network University, Mitaka, Japan.

June 23, 2006: Sapporo University Community Lecture Series, Sapporo, Japan.

June 24, 2006: Japan Institute for Negotiation, Sapporo, Japan.

July 9-14, 2006: Complexity, Democracy and Sustainability, the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the International Society for the Systems Sciences, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California, USA

September 9-10 2006: Cultural Diversity and Social Integration in Asia and Europe: What Now? Joint Conference Between the University of Munster (WWU) and ICU, ICU, Mitaka, Japan.

2. *Networking*

(1) People and Organizations:

Ken Bausch, Director, The Institute for 21st Century Global *Agoras*, Riverdale, Georgia, USA (www.globalagoras.org)

Andrew Horvat, Director, International Center for the Study of Historical Reconciliation, Tokyo Keizai University, Kokubunji, Japan

Kyoichi Kijima, President, International Society for the Systems Sciences, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Graduate School of Decision Science and Technology, Tokyo, Japan

Ming-Fen Li, Professor, Adult and Continuing Education, School of Education, National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Jack Petranker, Director, Center for Creative Inquiry, Berkeley, California, USA

SEED (Source for Educational Empowerment & Community Development) Graduate Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico (www.seedgraduateinstitute. org)

(2) Other Dialogue Projects:

Dreamfish Sustainablity Exchange (dreamfish.org)

The Global Silk Road (www.theglobalsilkroad.com)

Mindscapes (www.nancymargulies.com)

National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (www.thataway.com)

Positive Futures Network (David Korten - The Great Turning & Earth Community Dialogues) (www.davidkorten.com)

Tomorrow Makers (www.tomorrowmakers.com)

World Café for Conversations That Matter (www.worldcafe.com)

(3) Other History Projects:

Facing History, Facing Ourselves (www.facinghistory.org)

StoryCorp (storycorps.net)

3. *Noted In Other Publications and on Other Websites*

Co-Laboratories of Democracy. How People Harness Their Collective Wisdom and Power to Construct the Future. By Alexander Christakis with Ken

Bausch. Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age Publishing, 2006, p. 118-119.

"A problem shared ···" by Mutsuko Murakami in The South China Morning Post, Saturday, February 26, 2006, p. 17.

"Understanding Intercultural Space, Toward Peace" by Kazuo Ajishi in The Hokkaido News, Tuesday, June 20, 2006, p. 2.

Evelin Lindner's Human Dignity and Humiliation Website, Conflict Resolution Network, Columbia Teachers' College (www.humiliationstudies.org)

Vigdor Schriebman's Lovers of Democracy Website (sunsite.utk.edu/FINS/ loversofdemocracy)
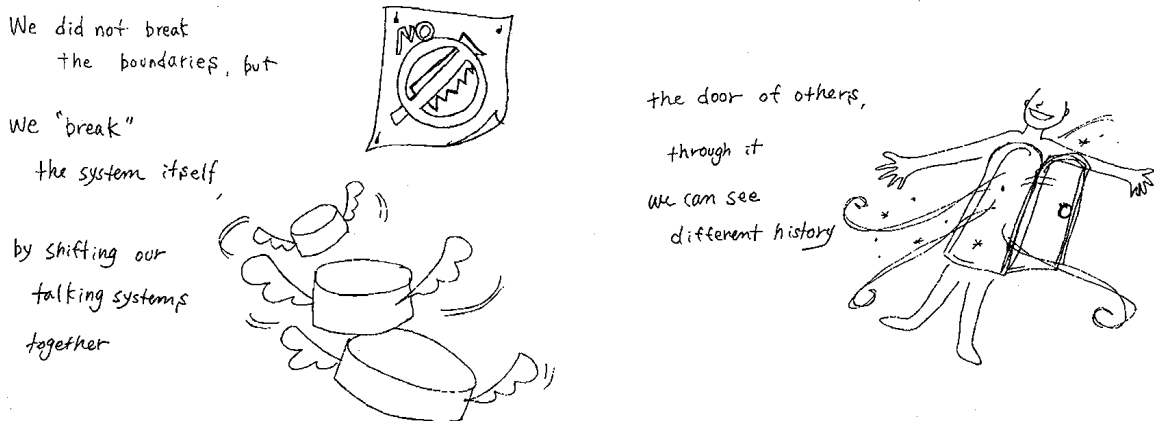
V. Conclusion

According to Kwame Anthony Appiah, in his book, Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers (2006), if we affect each other, we are responsible for each other. Therefore, because in a global society we *all* affect each other, we must forge a world of practice, at least in the public sphere, which is acceptable to all. To do this, we must **construct new and creative forms of moral relationship** (in which we take reciprocal responsibility for each other) and practice these new forms of relating daily.

But in order to create this inclusive and mutual sphere of practice we must be able to engage in what University of Sidney, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, Associate Lecturer, Genevieve Souillac (2006) calls **"moral conversations"**. Drawing on the work of French political theorist Etienne Balibar, Souillac notes that these conversations must happen across "value groups" and "across barriers of suffering". Souillac further notes that "a self-reflexive dimension is a crucial component in a globally conceived dialogue". "Intersubjectivity and reciprocity" and the symbolic representation of "society as the collective subject of emancipation" are necessary, if there are to be "public sites of conscience and action" where, following the ideas of Godamer, the moral universes of others become less strange, and there is a kind of **"fusion of**

horizons."

One of the Japanese interpreters for the Dialogue, Yuu Tagawa, who presented the *Three Keys* "mindscape" at the Opening of the Dialogue, captured the process dynamics of the 2006 North East Asian Dialogue in a series of graphic facilitation images that conceive of the dialogue dynamics as transforming the whole system of perception rather than as "breaking" existing boundaries.

These visuals suggest that Godamer's "fusion of horizons" was taking place.

We did not break the boundaries, but

We "break" the system itself

by shifting our talking systems together

the door of others, through it we can see different history

In addition, in a note to Professor Wasilewski after the 2006 Dialogue, Russian participant, Andrey Krasilshikov, also indicated that perhaps the 2006 Dialogue succeeded in enhancing the participants' capacity for engaging in the "moral conversations" across the "boundaries of suffering" mentioned above.

I am just writing a quick mail to you to thank you for creating and actualizing such a terrific event as this intercultural Dialogue. I would go as far as to admit that these three days spent in ICU were one of the best times I have had throughout the four years of my stay in Japan. Do watch the video shot in our group (2), and you will understand why I am feeling so euphoric. Living in the country where

most people never crawl out of their shells and then getting a chance to listen to all these sincere stories full of mixed feelings about their homeland and its future turned around many of my preconceptions about this country, or rather some of its people.

To return to the ideas discussed by Professor Souillac , perhaps the 2006 North East Asian Dialogue, not only **succeeded in approximating Habermas' (1971) "ideal speech situation"**, where the power relationships of the external world are equalized, or at least neutralized in the dialogue space, but it **also succeeded in enacting a version of Balibar's ideas of radical democracy** (referred to by Souillac, 2006), **a democracy based on nonviolence, openness and social solidarity, in the enactment of a kind of "discursive idealism" characterized by "civility as a communicational ethics"**.

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World Café for Conversations That Matter (www.worldcafe.com)

The Second ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue (NEAD)
— Sharing Narratives, Mapping/Weaving History —

〈 Summary 〉

Jacqueline Wasilewski and Paul R. Hays

In February of 2005 the first ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue brought together Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Russian students and civil society members who dentified 78 major obstacles to intercultural communication in North East Asia. Eleven were selected as being of fundamental importance, and of those, the issue of contested history was seen as the "root cause" or fundamental obstacle. If this obstacle could be addressed, it would positively affect the ability to address all the other obstacles.

The 2006 ICU-COE North East Asian Dialogue was, thus, organized to begin to address the historical issues in the region. Participants divided up into four Dialogue Circles, each of which represented the diversity of the overall group. Each participant contributed a twenty-minute historical narrative generated from their specific socio-cultural-historical point of view. The other participants in the Circle had an opportunity to ask clarifying questions about each narrative. All the narratives were video taped and are being archived (eventually with translations of the texts into five languages - Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Russian and English) on a website that is being developed to accompany this project. This virtual dialogue space is meant to provide a venue so that interaction between the participants at the civil society level can continue independently of government funding support in the future.

The Circles were successful in taping each participant's narrative. There are about 30 hours of videotaped narratives, as well as a videotape of the whole

three day event. There are texts for half of the narratives in either English or Japanese. Collecting the written texts is taking more time than expected. Sometimes, after participation in the Dialogue, people were not satisfied with their initial text. We were hoping that by videotaping the narratives, we could just use the videotaped narratives to create written texts. But sometimes people shared things in the small group, "community" context of the Dialogue Circle that they were uncomfortable sharing in the more public virtual space of the internet. In addition, this project is being carried out in a larger socio-political context where Japanese society is increasingly concerned about the privacy of personal information and in an political environment experiencing increased sensitivity regarding regional history. So, we are proceeding very cautiously in the development of the public website.

A preliminary analysis of the oral and written narratives reveals some very interesting themes. There are narratives about constructing a new cosmopolitan concept of the global citizen. Across the different nation-states there are parallel experiences of destruction and loss. There is the emerging, previously untold, comprehensive story, of the Korean diaspora. There are the "hidden" histories of Ainu, Okinawans, Evenki, Khanmigans, Buryats, Japanese "returnees" from Siberia, Manchuria and North Korea, and of people left behind in all three areas. And there are the generational stories of people who actually experienced events versus those who have just read about them in books.

What was remarkable was the quality of human relationships that emerged from the work of videotaping each other's narratives in the Dialogue Circles. Real listening was accomplished, and a small step was taken in the creation of a multifocal regional history.