

HST 203: History of the United States Sp17 (Escobar Meta 41054 41053)

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Historical Amnesia

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Historical Amnesia

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, May 13, 2017, 7:27 AM

This thread is for discussions on the Historical Amnesia topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Historical Amnesia

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Re: Historical Amnesia - Rape of Nanking

by Giselle Flores - Sunday, May 14, 2017, 10:49 PM

After watching the videos on the Rape of Nanking and reading the articles on a Japanese war museum and China's concern for Japanese Textbooks, I think the greatest concern regarding historical amnesia is not being educated enough for the future. I think we learn a lot from talking about what has happened in history, and if we're not learning about it, how are we going to learn from the mistakes? For example, the holocaust. We learned a lot from that, and we also know how to deal with things like that if it were to ever happen again. If we're not

talking about things like the Rape of Nanking, I think it brings a greater chance of it secretly happening again. This is something that should not be taken lightly, it is something that should not be hidden either. It is not something that should be hid under the rug.

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Re: Sino-Japanese war Historical Amnesia

by Weichang Gu - Sunday, May 14, 2017, 11:32 PM

After watching the video on the Rape of Nanking and reading the articles on a Japanese War Museum and China's Concern for Japanese Textbooks, what do you consider are the gravest concerns regarding "historical amnesia" (by any country or group of people) in this specific WWII case?

First, I want to delimit what is historical amnesia in my head. In my opinion historical amnesia is modify or cover what happened in history. For me the gravest concerns regarding is Japanese government and a part of people(Right wing forces)try to explain why the war is reasonable." One textbook refers to the murders as an "incident" rather than a massacre. The books also underplay the use of sex slaves, women brought from all over Asia to service the Japanese military."(China Says Japanese Textbooks Distort History P.2) "Ultrationalists have threatened to burn down the museum." (War Museum Resists Japan's Historical Amnesia P.8) From the Japanese perspective it was a resource war, not a big deal. (in fact, some Japanese think China should apologize for Second Sino-Japanese War, because at first Japanese government just want to help China develop, but China rejected the goodwill) For a Chinese, I didn't hate Japan; On the contrary, I love Japan. We have similar culture, and Japanese food, music, and anime are great; but I have to say the distorted history gravely hinder the communication. "Some became academics and teachers and spent the rest of their lives writing and speaking about what they had done as soldiers. Their testimony was fueled by atonement, compassion, and the need to fight what they saw as Japan's historical amnesia. When they were not being ignored, however, they were objects of scorn, vitriol, and mistrust. Many critics said the returned veterans had been brainwashed by Chinese Communist propaganda."(War Museum Resists Japan's Historical Amnesia P.11) And the Chinese suffered tremendously during the War. The Rape of Nanking is just one example. During that "battle" two Japanese officers entered into a friendly competition to see which of them could decapitate the most civilians with their samurai swords. (video the Rape of Nanking 7:35) From my perspective, from what I think, this is an unfortunate scenario result, while simultaneously also arising from a complex mix of ambitions. Nanking is the end result that we all know, but it also stood as the biggest (negative) symbol of Chinese-Japanese relations: almost one whole century of Chinese hostility against Japan. I understand why Japanese government try to editorial whitewashing history in Sino-Japanese war. But keep questioning history and even trying to rewrite it, That will stoking regional tensions.(
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/20/opinion/shinzo-abe-and-japans-history.html>)

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Re: Historical Amnesia

by Weichang Gu - Sunday, May 14, 2017, 11:33 PM

fter you address these materials, what other concern do you have concerning historical amnesia on ANY subject. You are not necessarily limited to the WWII time period.

"Jochen Bittner's New York Times op-ed , "What Germany Can Teach Japan" he argues that postwar Germany has become "normal" – defined as "earning and enjoying the trust of its neighbors" – because it dealt properly with its history of genocidal mass murder.If Japan also wants to become normal, he recommends, it should simply follow the German example." (http://thediplomat.com/2014/05/what-japan-cannot-learn-from-germany/) "Japan should not mislead its citizens with wrong perspectives of its wartime history and should guard against the revival of militarism, a spokesperson of the Chinese foreign ministry said at a press conference in Beijing on Wednesday, in response to a recent move by the Japanese government to add a highly controversial course of bayoneting to secondary school education." (https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d517a4e304d7a4d/share_p.html) There are concerns that bayonet fighting, a training item for the Japanese Imperial Army before and during World War II, could revive nostalgia for militarism among students. I very worry China and Japan have another war. According what Japanese government did after second Sino-Japanese war, I have reason to worry.

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My thoughts on Japan's Historical Amnesia

by Garrett Warner - Monday, May 15, 2017, 4:53 PM

Garrett Warner

I remember first learning about the Rape of Nanking in high school and first thought it was propaganda used by the US against Japan. The ruthless killings of women and children during this time is unsettling as a human being. It is sad to learn that some Japanese conservatives deny that any of it ever happened even though the proof is very clear. The brave work of smuggling the tapes out of the country was necessary to see for how ruthless they really were. You cannot deny posting children on trees and using their live bodies for bayonet practice for your soldiers. People like Tamaki Matsuoka should be more recognized and followed because uncovering history is necessary to advancing as a human race. Not trying to hide the facts so no one gets their feelings hurt.

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Erasing History

by Bailey Davis - Monday, May 15, 2017, 6:30 PM

I think the biggest concern with Japan's "historical amnesia" is that by ignoring the dark parts in its history, it makes it easier to repeat them.Japan removing details about the atrocities at Nanking from it's textbooks doesn't allow it's future (the youth) to learn from the mistakes of the past. It also erases the victimhood of the 250,000-300,000 people who were massacred, which is incredibly insensitive to the Chinese people. According to Article Two, 96% of surveyed Chinese citizens found Japan's distortion and erasure of the events that happened during The Rape of Nanking both insulting and hurtful.

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Re: Erasing History

by Weichang Gu - Friday, May 19, 2017, 9:17 PM

I totally agree with your point, but some people believe winners writing the history, and they didn't trust what China say or what document show. "This fact proves that the Nanjing Massacre was fabricated at the Tokyo trials," Shinzo Abe (Prime Minister of Japan)said. He urged China to remove a sign at their museum on the Nanjing Massacre putting the number of victims at 300,000 and also photographs the authenticity of which could not be verified. (https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/nanjing-massacre-a-lie-japanese-mps-say/article1087249/) Can you believe it ?

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Concerns regaurding "historical amnesia"

by Katlyn Smelcer - Monday, May 15, 2017, 8:38 PM

I feel that there are quite a few issues with not being able to own up to something as horrific as the Rape of Nanking. One of the major concerns is how Japan is down playing the massacre in Japanese textbooks. "One textbook refers to the murders as an 'incident' rather than a massacre" (Article #2 paragraph 4). This makes Japan look as if they have no remorse for their gruesome war crimes or they've just repressed it completely. I can see how China saw this as a slap in the face, "a survey of over 1,000 Chinese citizens by the Social Survey Institute of China reported that most people found Japan's approval of the textbooks insulting" (Article #2 paragraph 5). Not only is Japan trying to cover up how brutal the events at Nanking were but the fact that Hitler was just coming to rise didn't help people remember Nanking any better."It's often called the forgotten Holocaust" (0:23 into the Rape of Nanking overview). On the other hand I was surprised to read that China has also been guilty of leaving out horrific events in it's history like the events at Tiananmen Square. I think every country should learn ownership of bloody events that they've caused and be as clear and precise as possible when explaining the past.

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Re: Concerns regaurding "historical amnesia"

by Weichang Gu - Friday, May 19, 2017, 10:55 PM

Today's China can't be called a totalitarian system, but we cannot forget bloody events, and reasonable policy. more than 40 million innocent Chinese were murdered in violent political campaigns or starved to death following Mao's disastrous economic policy. Today's China, we don't talk about The Great Leap Forward, or Cultural Revolution, but we shouldn't forget it. I believe a truly great people are people who have the courage to remember their own past, and a truly great nation is a nation that has the courage to record its own history.

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Requisition

by Dana Lowder - Monday, May 15, 2017, 8:44 PM

In this specific case Nanking is a perfect example of “historical amnesia” any country is going to try their best to try and discard anything that makes them look like terrible people. After watching the videos, I was blown away at the atrocities done to the Chinese, but one thing stood out the most, which was the raping that occurred numerous times, or as one veteran said: “every day, with three to four men.” It ranged from the age of 7 to 70. Tammy Matsuoko who interview plenty of survivors and soldiers learned of one woman who was stabbed 27 times for resisting being raped. That is why I used Requisition as my topic for this forum because in an interview a veteran said they called it Requisition, but it really meant going on patrol looking for women. The things learned in this short time about this it makes me think of how rape has always been pushed under the rug, how women are scared to come forward, how it has happened since the beginning of time and one of first accounts actually being recognized is still not available in history books and museums. I don't want to come across as only caring about all of the rape that happened in Nanking. Everything that happened like being buried alive, burned alive, boys used as bayonet practice, and countless beheadings are all equally important to remember as well as the lives lost. History has always been a subject of interest to me, even the ‘bad’ history many people deny or try to forget cannot be shoved under the rug, or just like the article said, take the lid off the stinking pot.

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Re: Requisition

by Weichang Gu - Friday, May 19, 2017, 9:43 PM

The manner of apologies is important factor in explaining the different attitudes to Japan and Germany. Germany won respect by apologize for World War II crimes. Japan never get respect, because they always try to deny history. The number of people who have personally experienced in the colonial era will continue to decline, but Japan continues to refresh people's memory about what they did on WWII."Japan has never had a similar moment of abject, emotive public remorse. Instead, official apologies from Japanese officials have been perceived as too little and too late, and often contradicted by other comments from officials that seemed to whitewash history or question whether Imperial Japan's atrocities really occurred. "https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/08/13/germany-won-respect-by-addressing-its-world-war-ii-crimes-japan-not-so-much/?utm_term=.9fa478aba867

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Historical Amnesia and Global Relations

by Matthew Brownlee - Monday, May 15, 2017, 11:21 PM

My main concern short-term is how historical amnesia affects the relations between groups of people who committed atrocities and had atrocities committed against them. As we can see in Article #2 in the forum materials, it's disrespectful to brush away and/or minimize the atrocities

your country has committed, and misinformation and lack of understanding leads to hatred and conflict. Even though it is difficult and embarrassing to admit such wrongdoings, it's vital if those old wounds are to ever heal.

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great problems in the quest for power

by Jordan Okoniewski - Monday, May 15, 2017, 11:23 PM

The Rape of Nanking was is one of the great tragedies of history. Unfortunately however, it has been largely underplayed by the Japanese Government when it comes to owning up and educating future generations about it. Obviously this would be offensive to any group of people that this kind of brutality was inflicted up, but it especially is in the context of the Chinese culture's binding to honor and shame. As article 2 said, in a survey of a thousand Chinese citizens, "96 percent of them said "such action had severely hurt the Chinese people's feelings and constituted an insult to the Chinese people."

However there are further problems that arise with this sort of revisionist history. People need to learn the actual human cost of brutality and atrocities such as these in order to prevent them from happening in the future. I'm not saying that it is a 100% effective strategy to prevent senseless violence, but isn't knowledge always better than ignorance? The article also refers to riots at the Japanese embassy in China- violence stemming over this issue that could have been prevented.

This makes me most uncomfortable in the context of Japan wanting to cover up their past in their bid for power in the UN. Though I highly doubt we'll see Japan attempt to get imperialistic militarily any time soon, that's how this whole situation began - in a quest for power. Let's hope more restraint is exercised in the future.

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Re: great problems in the quest for power

by Weichang Gu - Friday, May 19, 2017, 11:03 PM

China warns Japan against revival of militarism

(https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d517a4e304d7a4d/share_p.html)

This article is about the Japanese government to add a highly controversial course of bayoneting to secondary school education. There are concerns that bayonet fighting, a training item for the Japanese Imperial Army before and during World War II, could revive nostalgia for militarism among students. The denial of crimes on the scale of the Rape of Nanking has only one meaning—it is the ideological preparation for new wars and new atrocities.

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Re: Hoping to avoid a repeat.

by Jason Pickens - Wednesday, May 17, 2017, 5:45 PM

After watching the video on the Rape of Nanking and reading the articles on a Japanese War Museum and China's Concern for Japanese Textbooks, what do you consider are the gravest concerns regarding "historical amnesia" (by any country or group of people) in this specific WWII case?

After watching the videos and reading the articles, I came to the conclusion that the grave concerns anyone could have about this case are repeating it, and downplaying the suffering of what the persecuted group had to go through. I like how Mike Rowe at the beginning of the History Channel video listed a few atrocities that were already committed and historically significant. In the first part of the video he says "There is sometimes incidents in war-time of such brutality that they defy comprehension. The Roman sack of Carthage, the My Lai massacre." I do know that the My Lai massacre was during the Vietnam War, but the sack of Carthage was in ancient times. However, we can still learn from the ancient conflicts and apply them to our modern day lessons learned. In more recent times before the Rape of Nan King, the brutality of civilian casualties was probably a missed opportunity for learning about the impacts that innocent civilians will endure during war. What is now dangerous in the modern era would be the fact that sometimes modern politicians at times can downplay, or sugar coat the atrocities that have happened. During class lecture, the former president of Iran, Ahmadinejad was identified as a Holocaust denier. I think it is this kind of rhetoric coming from leadership that could delay any peace or dialogue between these two cultures in the Middle East. It is this kind of rhetoric that will foster a more profound dislike between Jews and Arabs thus making the world a more dangerous place.

-Jason P.

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Re: Historical Amnesia - My thoughts

by Giselle Flores - Thursday, May 18, 2017, 12:14 PM

A concern I would say I have for historical amnesia is that students are being cheated. They should be learning these things in school. In the long run, they will at least know more about who we are and where we came from, and the things we, as a country, and other countries, had to overcome. The event of 9/11 is taught and talked about so often. What that has done is raised awareness and taught us how we came back from such a tragedy. That is exactly what we need. We need to prepare students for the future, in case anything horrible like 9/11 were to happen again. How are we going to learn from mistakes if we never even learn the actual mistakes in the first place? This is why it is important to teach kids about history, and not keep things hidden. The rape of Nanking is such a sad tragedy, and to say it never happened is a slap in the face to the many people and families that were affected by it.

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Re: Historical Amnesia - My thoughts

by Weichang Gu - Friday, May 19, 2017, 10:06 PM

You said "9/11 is taught and talked about so often". 9/11 is a sad tragedy, over 3,000 people were killed, it including more than 400 police officers and firefighters. Could you tell me how American talk about it, or how to teach children. I am a Chinese. My family told me

Japanese is evil, because Sino-Japanese war, they killed to many Chinese; and my high school textbook taught me again.

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Forgettin

by Tyler Ingram - Saturday, May 20, 2017, 5:36 PM

After watching the video on the Rape of Nanking and reading the articles on a Japanese War Museum and China's Concern for Japanese Textbooks, what do you consider are the gravest concerns regarding "historical amnesia" (by any country or group of people) in this specific WWII case?

In terms of greatest concerns, I believe the worst part of Japan's "historical amnesia" in this case is the misleading understanding Japan has of their relationship with the rest of the world, and the implications this may cause. For example, we learned of the anger of Chinese citizens: "Such painful wartime memories led to the violent protests in China with demonstrators throwing stones at the Japanese embassy and breaking the windows of some Japanese restaurants" (second to last page of the second article, Paragraph 6). Although I'm not sure China has much grounds to talk about this, I completely agree with them that it is wrong for the Japanese to try and forget about these crimes. Over a long time, this is going to lead to an unapologetic Japan not understanding why China is so resentful towards them. This causes a terribly un-needed tension between countries, with unknown consequences, that could easily be prevented by just telling the true history of the country.

On a moral note, It is also a terrible thing to pretend none of the warcrimes had ever happened, and the pain inflicted on the Chinese never happened. For example, we were told during the long video, that some soldiers went out every day with another soldier or two, specifically to rape women every day. The women were so scared, that they didn't run or move. If they did resist, they would either be caught up to and raped, killed, or both.(8:20-9:30)

Another example relates to the terrible truth suppressed from Japanese youth, "You won't find these things in school textbooks," says one of the veterans, Tsuyoshi Ebato, who helped compile the archive. The accounts include that of a sergeant major who had raped and killed a Chinese woman, and then actually joined other members of his unit in eating her flesh. Mr. Ebato says he himself trained recruits to use captured Chinese for bayonet practice." (Last paragraph of page 2)" We can all agree that all of these are horrible things, and none of the Chinese who suffered through this deserve to have such a terrible part of their lives completely forgotten about.

It should be noted that the Japanese and Chinese are not the only ones to do this, and shouldn't be looked at on a black to white spectrum; we shouldn't call these countries evil because of their historical amnesia without giving ourselves proper credit. Even this term alone, our teacher has spoken multiple times against the "facts" textbook authors supplied to us, in an attempt to distort our view of history. These call-outs only applies to this specific textbook, in this specific section of US history, and only the parts of history that haven't been so distorted that our teacher doesn't even know the full truth about them. Therefore, there are likely plenty of examples of historical amnesia we are blind to. Historical amnesia of all kinds should not be ignored, and it is important that we fight to learn history as it truly happened.

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