International conference
“Negotiating the Time”
in Seoul, 2018

26-27 October 2018
Room 518, Kim Daegon Hall,
Sogang University

Korean-Japanese Forum of Western History
Interdisciplinary Research Project on the Function of
National Histories and Collective Memories for the
Democracy in the Globalized Society
Critical Global Studies Institute, Sogang University
International Conference “Negotiating the Time”

Any historical theory should make it possible for historians to account for the transformation of temporal experiences. Modernity affected the experience of time itself. With the advent of the modernity, the past and present became relocated in relation to each other. The competing periodizations in the modern historiography to which historians are familiar today reflect historians’ efforts to grasp and theorize the new temporality in the modern era. Despite all differences, those competing historiographical periodizations accommodated the promises of modernity such as freedom, progress, and utopian fulfillment brought the idea of linear and homogeneous time. Be liberal, conservative, or Marxist, all the modern historiography as the political project carried the temporal experiences of the modernity in the form of periodization and schematic development.

The globalization and the postmodernity, however, shattered the temporal experiences of the modernity. The shift of the globalization discourse from imagination to memory in the third millennium represents the transformation of temporal experiences in the postmodern era. The new temporality of the postmodern era may replace the idea of linear and homogenous time with a more complex, heterogeneous, and plural historical times. If the linear and homogenous temporality regulates temporal experiences and imposes a single temporality like in the official national history, the plural and heterogeneous temporalities demand negotiations.

The “Negotiating the Time” conference tries to figure out multilateral and multidirectional conciliations among the plural historical times in the postmodern era.
**Venue**

Room 518, Kim Daegon Hall, Sogang University
35 Baekbeom-ro, Mapo-gu, Seoul 04107 Korea
Timetable

26 (Fri.) October 2018
16:00 Opening Remark Nobuya Hashimoto (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan)
16:10 Keynote speech Naoki Sakai (Cornell University, USA)
   - Time as Progress and the Nationalism of Hikikomori (reclusive withdrawal): From an Outward-Looking Society to an Inward-Looking One
17:00 Coffee Break
17:15 Discussion
18:30 Welcoming Dinner

27 (Sat.) October 2018
10:00 Session 1 Historicizing the time?
   Moderator Satoshi Koyama (Kyoto University, Japan)
   Speaker 1 Stefan Tanaka (University of California San Diego, USA)
      - The Transience of Historical Time
   Speaker 2 Taisuke Nagumo (Yamaguchi University, Japan)
      - Two 'Late Antiquities' since 2015: Reconsidering the Periodization from Antiquity to the Medieval Ages
   Discussant Kyunghwan Oh (Sungshin University)
12:00-13:00 Lunch
13:00 Session 2 Politicizing the time?
   Moderator Nobuya Hashimoto (Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan)
   Speaker 1 Nikolay Koposov (Emory University, USA/Russia)
      - Populism and Memory: The Politics of the Past after the Death of History
   Speaker 2 Han Sang Kim (Ajou University)
      - Beyond Frozen Time: Excavated Film Footage and the Politics of How to Use It
   Discussant Seok-jin Lew (Sogang University)
15:00 Coffee Break
15:15 Session 3 Colonializing the time?
   Moderator Joohee Kim (CGSI, Sogang University)
   Speaker 1 Hunmi Lee (CGSI, Sogang University)
      - Time For Change: International Political Discourse in the Record of the Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895
   Speaker 2 Yuto Ishibashi (Chuo University, Japan)
      - Time Standards for the British Empire: Colonial Astronomical Observatories and the Transfers of Time-signalling Technologies
   Discussant Toshie Awaya (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies)
17:15 Coffee Break
17:30 Round Table
   Moderator Lim Jie-Hyun (CGSI)
   Introduction to the general discussion: Stefan Berger (Ruhr University of Bochum)
Abstract
Keynote speech

Time as Progress and the Nationalism of Hikikomori (reclusive withdrawal): From an Outward-Looking Society to an Inward-Looking One

Naoki Sakai (Cornell University, USA)

In 1968, many ceremonial events were held to commemorate the centennial of the Meiji Restoration. Now fifty years later there have been few events to celebrate the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Japan’s modernization. A half century ago the word ‘modernization’ attracted much of the public’s attention and enthusiasm, but today, at least among those countries that are supposedly in the post-industrial stage, modernization is rarely mentioned and can invoke little curiosity.

The idea of modernization seems premised upon two conditions. The first is the presumption that a community such as a ‘nation’ exists as a unified organic entity that grows or declines in chronology, that persists through the passage of historical time. The second is that such an entity does not exist alone; that it co-exists in the international world with other nations and competes with them. Modernization is an internal transformation of such a community whereas, at the same time, it also means an evolutionary hierarchy in which one community is always relatively ranked with others, either as more advanced or under-developed than others, and in constant competition.

In 1968, the Japanese nation could afford to recognize itself as what some devotees of the US Modernization Theory called ‘the only genuinely modern society in entire Asia,’ since it enjoyed its superiority to other neighboring countries in terms of standard of living, scientific and technological rationality, the politics of parliamentary democracy, a modern universal education, or liberal mass media.

Today the Japanese nation does not seem as confident in itself as a half century ago. Younger generations in Japan used to be much more open to the outside world in the 1960’s and 1970’s, but today one may well argue that many among Japanese suffer from a reclusive withdrawal, and have lost interest in the world outside Japan. What happened between 1968 and 2018?

I would like to discuss the politics of historical time with regard to a general trend observed not only in Japan but also in other post-industrial societies including the United States and the United Kingdom; in fact a global trend from being an outward-looking society to an Inward-looking one.
This panel is designed to clarify the significance and implicit function of periodization as the primary instrument of historicizing the time and theorizing the temporal experiences. Periodizations will be explained as the discursive tool to manipulate, regulate, and control the past by aligning the experience of past and present.

The Transience of Historical Time

Stefan Tanaka (University of California San Diego, USA)

Historical time as we commonly use it in modern society is linear, flows in one direction (usually as progress), and facilitates the connection of a past that is distant and different to our present. In this paper I argue that this understanding of time is historical, that is it derives from Newtonian science, a mechanical understanding of the universe that measures force, objects, and motion using grids of absolute time and absolute space. History, too, is historical; it became a key conceptual system to bring this physical understanding to human activity. This conflation of absolute time and history enabled both to become the basis for a new understanding through which human activity could be ordered; it still is the basis of our modern system. This transformation happened in Europe and was brought to Asia (and the world) through nineteenth and twentieth century imperialism. Interestingly, especially for this conference, the adoption of this historical time has been accepted in Asia as natural, despite societies using different time systems.

I will end my paper arguing that we need to be mindful of more recent scientific understandings of time that recognize the impossibility of ordering all human life and activity according to one standard. Since the late nineteenth century thermodynamics, relativity, and biological times have relegated Newtonian time to classical time. Consideration of these times, at minimum allows historical interpretation to move from a mythical foundation to a scientific one. More important, it allows us to move toward temporal understandings and relations that are multiple, multilinear, and based on heterogeneity.
Two ‘Late Antiquities’ since 2015: Reconsidering the Periodization from Antiquity to the Mediaeval Ages.

Taisuke Nagumo (Yamaguchi University, Japan)

‘Late Antiquity’ as a ‘distinctive and quite decisive period of history that stands on its own’ (G.W. Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar eds., Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World, Cambridge MA & London, 1999.) has been widely discussed and has greatly deepened our understanding of the transition and transformation from Antiquity to the Mediaeval Ages.

The chronological boundaries of ‘Late Antiquity’ as a concept of periodization, however, remain a point of disagreement among scholars, as American historian C. Ando presented in his article in the first issue of the Journal of Late Antiquity in 2008. At present, the problem with chronology is seemingly becoming further confused; French historian H. Inglebert recently argued in his concluding remarks in R. Lizzi Testa ed., Late Antiquity in Contemporary Debate (Cambridge, 2017. This volume is based on the session at the 22nd CISI/ICHS at Jinan City in China, August 2015) that a ‘consciousness of a New Short Late Antiquity’ from the third or fourth to the seventh century was born at Jinan, and that this concept is differentiated from Peter Brown’s model of ‘Long Late Antiquity’, which roughly extends from the third to the eighth century. Since this time, two types of ‘Late Antiquity’ have existed.

A periodization is an interpretation that is the specific product of its era. The current situation regarding two characterizations of ‘Late Antiquity’ should be reassessed, with consideration for the ideological background of each. The present fragmentation of periodization might be owing to the practical need for research to characterize a particular time, as well as some aspects of the intellectual atmosphere of the second decade of the 21st century. Historicizing ‘Late Antiquity’ would require the simultaneous historicizing of our period as well.
Session 2: Politicizing the time?

This panel will elucidate the way how the time has become the arena for domestic and international political conflicts. The discussion will focus on the emergence of national history, regional history and world history as a political project since the 19th century. Memory politics in the postwar era including “memory laws,” “transitional and retrospective justice,” or “politics of apology and reparation,” “heritage capitalism,” and other memory-related topics will be discussed here.

Populism and Memory: The Politics of the Past after the Death of History

Nikolay Koposov (Emory University, USA/Russia)

Since the 1980s, a newly-emerged group of historical concepts became central to the cultural studies' vocabulary, including “historical memory,” “identity,” “politics of history,” “memory wars,” and “memory laws.” Their coming to prominence signals an important change in contemporary politics and historical consciousness, in the West and elsewhere. Indeed, all of them were forged to account for the increasingly important role of the past in present-day politics, as well as for the new forms that the past has taken in our collective imagination and the new ways in which politicians use it. I will argue that the age of memory, which came to replace that of history-based ideologies (“master-narratives”) in the 1970s and 1980s, was initially welcomed as a promise of modern man’s more human and democratic relationships with the past, although some skeptics claimed that it rather signified a crisis of “transformative politics.” Those skeptics could be right. I argue that the age of memory is characterized by a widening gap between academic historiography and history politics and by increasingly manipulative uses of the past by national populists. In its turn, the rise of national populism can be partly explained by the new cultural climate and the crisis of master-narratives.
Beyond Frozen Time: Excavated Film Footage and the Politics of How to Use It

Han Sang Kim (Ajou University)

“What’s the use of an additional discovery of the film footage when there is already a photographic evidence?” When the U.S. Army Signal Corps’ footage documenting the Korean victims of wartime sex slavery in the Imperial Japanese Army in China was discovered and released to the public in the summer of 2017, some South Korean academics questioned its admissibility as new evidence since some of the subjects of the moving image had already been located in several photographs that had been discovered in the 1990s. This looked a complete opposite reaction to the footage to that of the mainstream media (and the social media) that excitedly praised the discovery of the “brand-new” evidential document depicting those “moving” women.

This paper examines the politics of using film footage excavated from archives after a long lapse of time from the original production of the film. Both reactions shown towards the “comfort women” footage shared the same attitude that limited the footage just as a storage that contained a photographic-mechanical evidence to prove someone’s existence in a scientific manner. Such a belief in the scientific nature of the photograph has an affinity with the positivist historical approach led by Leopold von Ranke, as his famous phrase “Wie es eigentlich gewesen (how it actually or essentially was)” demonstrates.

Contrastingly, what German-born sociologist Siegfried Kracauer saw in film as a medium were rather things hard to freeze and solidify. His concept of the “flow of life,” an affinity with life in the form of everyday life films have but photographs do not have, covered “the stream of material situations and happenings with all that they intimate in terms of emotions, values, thoughts” (1960, 71).

This paper reevaluates Kracauer’s theoretical approach as a visual and historico-sociological method and seeks to explore the film as a medium that embodies the reality of the subalterns and, if circumstances allow, speaks on behalf of them.
Session 3 Colonializing the time?

This panel will scrutinize how the colonial modernity brought the transformation of temporal experience to the colonized. It will focus on the palimpsest structure of the new temporality in colonies as a result of multidirectional negotiations between the colonial modern and the vernacular temporality of the colonized.

Time For Change: International Political Discourse in the Record of the Sino-Japanese War 1894-1895

Hunmi Lee (CGSI, Sogang University)

In East Asia, the rise of an evolutionary temporality was closely related to the historical experiences of international politics. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, in which the Meiji Japan surprisingly defeated the traditional East Asian regional power Qing China, was a “transformative event” that changed the regional order. The argument that a reform of the ancient regime was inevitable became influential in the post-war discourse. One of such arguments, The Causes and Consequences of Sino-Japanese War (中東戰紀本末) was published in Shanghai by American Protestant missionaries in 1896-97. This pamphlet exposed a civilizational interpretation of the Sino-Japanese War, and played a crucial role in framing the East Asian regional order in the modern geopolitical discourse. It also had a great influence on the progressive Chinese intellectuals in the Hundred Days' Reform Movement in 1898. In 1900, Syngman Rhee, who would later become the first president of the Republic of Korea, translated this pamphlet into Korean, which was published in Hawaii in 1917 after many attempts. Rhee advocated the pro-American diplomacy as the only strategy for Korea’s independence, while dismissing the independence movement from the bottom up, such as the March 1st Movement in 1919 and the rise of socialism in the 1920’s. Thereby, The Causes and Consequences of Sino-Japanese War (中東戰紀本末), which appeared as a pamphlet calling for a political reform in the late Qing China, by means of translation into Korean, turned into a highly realistic and conservative international political textbook.
Time Standards for the British Empire: Colonial Astronomical Observatories and the Transfers of Time-signalling Technologies

Yuto Ishibashi (Chuo University, Japan)

This paper will investigate the large-scale attempts for standardization and unification of time through the transplantations of time-dissemination technologies in the late-nineteenth-century British empire. It begins by discussing the emergence of a colonial network of astronomical observatories established in some growing cities in India, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and other regions. These institutions served for astronomical and meteorological observations, determination of longitude and latitude, terrestrial surveying, measurement of time, and other practices. Almost all these observatories were closely connected to the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, from which they derived important information and advice through George Biddell Airy, British Astronomer Royal. Airy’s notable influence can be seen elsewhere too in the management of colonial observatories, such as in the appointment of astronomers, selection of scientific instruments, and the devising of programs of observations. In particular, this scientific connection between the metropolis and colonies effectively operated in an effort to transplant time-signaling and horological technologies into colonial cities. This paper tries to illustrate how the latest knowledge and techniques for standardisation of time were transferred in the astronomical network, thereby contributing to the discussion relating to the close relationship between time-keeping and imperial expansions.