

**Research Summary**

The purpose of the project is to examine how different ethnic groups in West Kalimantan and North Sumatra remember the Japanese. Research was conducted in West Kalimantan, North Sumatra and among the Indonesian Chinese in Hong Kong. It is found that memories of the Japanese mainly focused on the Japanese Occupation of Indonesia. This is particularly prominent among the Chinese, especially those who were politically oriented towards the People's Republic of China. In fact, it was among the returnees to China that commemoration activities were given special emphasis, resulting in a workshop and publication of a book.

In terms of local commemoration in Indonesia, this is not very significant. In Pematang Siantar, North Sumatra, while there is an epitaph to remember the war dead, the small monument was relegated to the marginal space of a local Chinese cemetery where it was not well-maintained at all. Only a handful of the older generation of Indonesian Chinese still remembers the Japanese Occupation.

In West Kalimantan, commemoration of the war has been formalized into a provincial ceremony at the war monument in the town of Mandor, held at the end of June every year. This is because the war claimed victims from all ethnic groups and has become a ceremonial platform for articulating the shared memories and identity of the Dayaks, Malays and Chinese of the province. The weight given to the ceremony depends on the political climate in West Kalimantan. In years when a united political identity needs to be articulated against new migrants to the province, the shared memories of victimhood suffered during the war was accentuated through a more elaborate ceremony. When it was not so necessary to articulate a sense of political unity among the different ethnic groups, the ceremony became much simpler. As such, memories of the Japanese Occupation were related more to current political dynamics in the province than to any form of direct relationship or interaction with the Japanese. This was also apparent in interviews with people who attended the ceremony. While there were students present who attended the commemoration ceremony as part of school activities, it was found that most of the other attendees were people who had relatives who died during the Japanese Occupation. These attendees, of different ethnic groups, did not exhibit adverse emotions but went to Mandor simply as an act to remember the dead.

In sum, unless memory is summoned to serve a political purpose in Indonesia, memories of the war will fade with the passing of generations.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

To be planned in 2012