

REVIEW:

Peace education through the animated film “*Grave of the Fireflies*” Physical, psychological, and structural violence of war

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Abstract

This paper is based on a review of the animation film, “*Grave of the Fireflies*” (1988) directed by Isao Takahata and animated by Studio Ghibli. Though Takahata denied that it was an ‘anti-war film’, this study argues to categorize it as anti-war and useful in peace education. Analyzing the film in terms of peace research, we applied the ‘typology of violence’ methodology proposed by Johan Galtung (1969). The central question explored would thus be: ‘Why did the children have to die?’ The question of who is really responsible for their deaths is systematically examined by applying peace research methodology, and ‘physical violence’, ‘psychological violence’ and ‘structural violence’ in the state of war are depicted and scrutinized. The three types of violence shown in this movie help categorize it as an ‘anti-war film’ that conveys the memory of the Asia Pacific War and can be used for peace education.

Keywords: Anti-war films, peace education, physical violence, psychological violence, structural violence.

Introduction

This paper is based on a review of a Studio Ghibli animation film, “*Grave of the Fireflies*” (1988) directed by Isao Takahata, who has made other animation films, including “*Only Yesterday*” (1991), “*Pom Poko*” (1994), “*My Neighbors the Yamadas*” (1999), and “*The Tale of Princess Kaguya*” (2013). The making of the film was inspired by a novel of the same title, written by Akiyuki Nosaka, on the basis of his own war-experience, and published in 1968. Nosaka was born in 1930 and adopted in Kobe, but his foster father died and his foster mother was seriously burned due to the fire-bombing of Kobe in June 1945 (Nakai et al., 2012: 699). Therefore, his novel “*Grave of the Fireflies*” is categorized as ‘war literature’ that depicted “adolescence under the wartime” (Ibid).

This film was released on the same day with Director Miyazaki’s “*My Neighbor Totoro*” (1988) and might have influenced Miyazaki’s animation film, “*The Wind Rises*” (2013) that portrayed the interwar period between the two world wars and the life of Jiro Horikoshi, a designer of the Mitsubishi M6 Zero Fighter (Akimoto, 2013b). In a way, these two war-related movies animated by Studio Ghibli are connected to each other just as a cause-and-effect relationship in that the Japanese zero fighters were used in the Pacific War, especially in the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1942 that eventually led to the air-raids on Japanese mainland, including the fire-bombing of Kobe, which became a motif for “*Grave of the Fireflies*” (Table 1).

Director Takahata as well as Akiyuki Nosaka commented that this story was not an ‘anti-war’ work (Takahata, 2013a: 22; Takahata, 2013c: 140; Takahata and Nosaka, 2013: 74) but played an effective role in handing down the ‘memory of war’ from the Second World War in Japan to the next generations. Usually, animation films are apt to be nothing more than entertainment in which truth may be portrayed from an unrealistic angle. Nonetheless, Director Takahata’s film ‘*Grave of the Fireflies*’ provides realistic details of the process in which two children, a brother and a sister, suffer and die from hunger and malnutrition because

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of war. Accordingly, as Tadao Sato (1992: 293) pointed out, the work values the realism of the war experience. Yet, more importantly, Jun Yonaha (2013: 87) pointed to the enigma of “why the children died in the film?” Yonaha stressed the importance of exploring this question so as not to forget Japan’s war memory. The central question in this paper is “why did the children have to die?” In other words, the question of “who is really responsible for their deaths?” is systematically examined in a methodological application of peace research. The implications of this research in peace education will be discussed thereafter.

Table 1: Sequence of historical events related to *The Wind Rises* and *Grave of the Fireflies*

Year	Month	Historical Events
1931	Sep	The outbreak of the Manchurian Incident
1933	Mar	Imperial Japan expressed secession from the League of Nations
1937	July	Outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War
1938	Apr	National Mobilization Act promulgated (came into force in May)
1939	Mar	Military drill at school required (by Ministry of Education)
	Apr	<u>The first flight of Zero Fighter (motif of the film “<i>The Wind Rises</i>”)</u>
1940	Oct	The Imperial Aid Association created (by PM. Konoe)
1941	Dec	The attack on Pearl Harbor (outbreak of the Japan-US War)
1942	Feb	The air-raid on Darwin (Australia) by Japan
	Apr	The first air-raid on Japan by the US (Doolittle Air Raid)
	June	The Battle of Midway Island (Japan lost initiative in WWII)
1945	Feb	Trial of Incendiary Bombing on Kobe by the US
	Mar	Great Tokyo air raids by the US
	May	Bombing of Kawanishi aircraft factory by the US
	June	<u>Incendiary bombing of Kobe (motif of “<i>Grave of the Fireflies</i>”)</u>
	Aug	The end of the Asia Pacific War

Source: Chronology of the Pacific War (Nakai et al., 2012: 708-711) modified by author

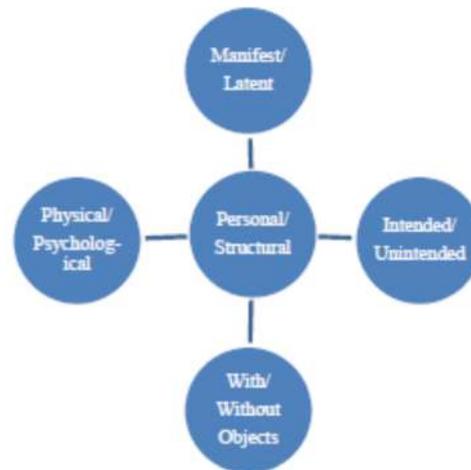
Methodology

Typology of violence from the perspective of peace research

From the perspective of peace research, it can be argued that the two siblings (Seita and Setsuko) are the victims of ‘physical violence’ in the air-bombing of the Pacific War (in which they lost their parents), ‘psychological violence’ committed by their aunt, and ‘structural violence’ in their community and the wider society under the influence of war. These perspectives stem from the typology of violence, proposed by Johan Galtung, one of the pioneers of modern peace research, in his paper “Violence, Peace and Peace Research” (1969), *Journal of Peace Research*. The typology includes a variety of violence as shown in Figure 1.

In the application of the typology of violence proposed by Johan Galtung (1969: 173), the question of “who is responsible for the deaths of the two children?” can be answered by analyzing the physical, psychological, and structural perspectives of violence. Physical violence and psychological violence are commonly understood and comprehended, but in terms of peace research ‘structural violence’ is more serious; it may be explained as “denying people important rights including sociopolitical rights, economic well-being, gender equality, a sense of personal fulfillment and self-worth, and etc.” A kind of violence exists when people starve to death, suffer from preventable diseases, and don’t have access to education, affordable housing, and opportunities to work, play, raise a family, etc. “A society commits violence against its members when it forcibly stunts their development and undermines their well-being, whether because of religion, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual preference, or some other social reason” (Barash and Webel, 2002: 7).

Figure 1: A simple illustration of the typology of violence by Johan Galtung (1969). The concept of ‘direct/indirect violence’ is implied within the depicted typology .



Director Takahata (2013a: 22; 2013c: 140), as well as some other observers, such as Toshio Okada (2013: 181) argued that this animated film is not an ‘anti-war film’. Indeed, they may be described as ‘war film’ or ‘war-related film’ instead of ‘anti-war film’ to avoid the nuance of ‘anti-war propaganda’. Nonetheless, the analytical process of the physical/psychological/structural violence in this review reveals whether this film may be classified as an ‘anti-war film’ or not. Finally, the implication of the film for peace education at home, school, and in the world will be explored.

Findings and Discussion

Physical violence: the bombing of Kobe during the Asia Pacific War

The main character is a 14 year old boy, Seita, who tries to look after his 4 year old sister after their mother dies due to the bombing of Kobe in the middle of the Asia Pacific War. Right from the beginning, the movie lets the audience know that the main character, Seita is already dead and he starts narrating what happened to him and his sister under the war: “I died on 21 September 1945”. When he passes away, fireflies, which usually die quickly, are flying around his body, symbolizing the brevity of the lives of Seita, Setsuko and other victims of the Asia Pacific War.

The dead bodies in the train station are caused by ‘direct and physical violence’ in the bombing of Kobe. The first air-raid attack by American B-25 Mitchel bombers on Japanese mainland was led by Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle on 18 April 1942, about 4 months after the Attack on Pearl Harbor, also known as the ‘Doolittle Raid’. The Doolittle Raid targeted not only Kobe city, but also Tokyo, Kawasaki, Yokosuka, Nagoya, and Yokkaichi on the same day (Kobe City Archives, 2004). Lieutenant Colonel Doolittle received a medal of honor for his leadership “in a highly destructive raid on the Japanese mainland” (US Army Center of Military History, 2013).

On 1 November 1944, American B-29 Superfortress bombers first appeared in the sky of Japan. In the first phase (early November 1944 to mid-March 1945), B-29 bombers conducted the so-called ‘precision bombing’ of aircraft factories as well as ‘area bombing’ of industrial cities. In the second phase (mid-March to 15 August 1945), indiscriminate area bombings killed a large number of civilians. At the same time, the United States dropped a mock-atomic bomb on Kobe harbor to prepare for atomic bombing. Major air-raids were conducted on 17 March, 11 May, and 5 June and killed more than 8,000 civilians. On 5 June 1945, 474 B-29 bombers conducted an air-raid on Kobe from 7:22am to 8:47am (Kobe City Archives, 2004; Ministry of Internal Affairs, Japan, 2010), which became a motif for “*Grave of the Fire Flies*” as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sequence of the Fire-Bombing of Kobe City by B-29 in the Pacific War

Date	No. of B-29	Time	Bomb weight (Ton)	Dropping altitude(m)	Target area	Purpose of bombing
4 Feb (Sun)	69	13:50-14:24	172.8	7470-8230	Kobe City	Trial incendiary bombs on a major city
17 Mar (Sat)	306	2:29-4:52	2328.1	1520-2900	Kobe City	Incendiary bombs on a major city
11 May (Fri)	92	9:53-10:03	459.5	4790-6100	Kawanishi Aircraft Factory	Daytime normal bombs on major industrial targets
<u>5 Jun (Tue)</u>	<u>474</u>	<u>7:22-8:47</u>	<u>3079.1</u>	<u>4160-5730</u>	<u>Kobe City</u>	<u>Incendiary bombs on a major city*</u>

* The fire-bombing motif in “*Grave of Fireflies*” (Kobe City Archives, 2004).

The United States conducted a ‘trial’ incendiary bombing on Kobe on 4 February, and continued the following bombings on 17 March, 11 May, and 5 June 1945. The bombing on 5 June 1945 was the largest air-raid of Kobe in terms of the number of B-29 and the weight of incendiary bombs. The United States confirmed the degree of devastation after the bombing of 5 June, and omitted Kobe city from the target list of incendiary bombing (Kobe City Archives, 2004).

In the beginning of the scene of fire-bombing in the film, some keywords of war memory can be identified. On hearing the ‘air-raid warning’ (*kūshū keihō*), Seita carries Setsuko on his back trying to go to an ‘air-raid shelter’ (*bōkūgō*). Setsuko wears a hood (*bōkūzugin*) in order to protect her head in case of air-strike. They come across ‘incendiary bombs’ (*shōidan*) dropped by B-29 on houses burning around them. The sound of the alarm and the air-bombing describes the scene and horror of the air-raids. Due to the bombing, Seita and Setsuko lose their house, and their mother is seriously burnt and sent to a clinic at a school where she passes away shortly afterwards. Without a doubt, the first section of the film reflects the ‘memory of war’ with direct violence as a traumatic experience.

The Empire of Japan had conducted ‘indiscriminate bombing’ in the Asia Pacific War, and the United States adopted not only ‘precision bombing’ but also ‘area bombing’ that inevitably led to the death of civilians through ‘indiscriminate bombing’. Toshiyuki Tanaka, also known as Yuki Tanaka (2008: 208-209) observed that the ‘strategic bombing’ of the United States was based on ‘racial discrimination’ against the Japanese and the ‘area bombing’ was ‘indiscriminate bombing’ targeting the civilians as ‘labor power’. American pilots bombed targets erroneously, dropping bombs from a high altitude where Japanese anti-aircraft artilleries could not shoot them. In addition, in case of bad weather, the pilots could not perceive the targets precisely (Ibid: 218). Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that the bombing of Kobe was ‘indiscriminate bombing’ and the killing of civilians (Senoo and Yoshiyuki, 2013: 214). Nonetheless, ‘carpet bombing’ of civilians was not judged as a ‘war crime’ in terms of international law after the war.

Director Takahata noted (2013d: 151) that General Curtis LeMay was responsible for adopting the incendiary bombs and for shifting the bombing targets from military bases to innocent civilians in the carpet bombings. Moreover, General LeMay was a commander in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, but the Japanese government later awarded him the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun for his contribution to the development of the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force in 1964 (Ibid). The direct/physical violence of the air raids, therefore, needs to be remembered as a negative aspect of the war memory. The fire-bombings as physical violence drastically changed the lives of victims, survivors and their family members.

Psychological violence: Seita, Setsuko and their aunt in ‘war of all against all’

The film depicts not only the terror of the war but also the ugliness of humans who used ‘psychological violence’. After the death of their mother, Seita and Setsuko virtually became ‘war orphans’ (*sensō koji* or *sensai koji*) because their father was serving in the Japanese navy and did not drop a line to them. Seita and Setsuko were able to stay at a distant relative’s house, but their aunt treated them as a nuisance. For instance, the aunt suggested that Seita and Setsuko should sell their mother’s kimono in order to buy rice. When Setsuko cried at night, the aunt told Seita off for the noise. In the daytime, Seita had to take care of Setsuko but the aunt ironically told Seita that he should make a contribution to the country by going to school or work. What the aunt meant was that all the citizens should make contributions to the ‘war’. In the dinnertime, the aunt did not serve rice to them, whereas her family members had better meals. In the morning, the aunt made rice balls for her family’s lunch, but not for Seita and Setsuko. Setsuko complained that the rice belonged to the siblings in exchange for their mother’s kimonos, but the aunt replied that they already finished the rice and suggested that they should have meals separately, that her family members contributed to the country, and hence, they deserved the rice. Again the aunt used the ‘contribution’ to the country (war) as excuse to mentally abuse the siblings.

Finally, Seita makes up his mind to leave the aunt’s house and to live on their own. This part of the movie narrates the negative aspect of human nature rather than the horror of the Asia Pacific War. In a way, the relationship between Seita/Setsuko and the aunt can be regarded as a war among human beings, described by Thomas Hobbes (1962) as ‘war of all against all’, a state in which human beings are wolves to each other. Indeed, Director Takahata (2013b: 60) utilized a similar metaphor for humans and wolves in a state of war or during natural disaster in which humans can be demons to each other (Ibid: 62).

Still, the ‘war’ between Seita and his aunt was asymmetrical and more like ‘bullying’ (*ijime*). Also, it is important to note that the aunt’s language and behavior are under the influence of war which makes humans insane. Clearly, this section depicts how humans conduct ‘psychological violence’ in order to survive and protect their own families and turn their backs on others’ misery. Seita and Setsuko might not know the difficulty to live on their own, but the aunt must know what would happen if the two children tried to live by themselves in that period. The worst thing the aunt did was to ‘suggest’ for Seita and Setsuko to live in a shelter outside and ‘deliberately’ not to dissuade the siblings from leaving her house. In this respect, it can be argued that the aunt is responsible for the death of the siblings.

The author of the novel, Nosaka, as an actual figure, was not treated badly, but the story tells the memory of ‘war orphans’ who lost their parents as a result of the war. According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Japan under the US occupation, the Asia Pacific War caused as many as 123,500 war orphans in Japan (Kaneda, 2013: 22). In some cases, war orphans were taken care of as adopted children, but they tended to be sold for prostitution, treated like slaves, and eventually abused to death. This is the reason why many war orphans ‘escaped’ from the houses of their relatives or foster families just like Seita and Setsuko. However, the war orphans had no choice but to become homeless, to be called germs and to die in train stations or elsewhere (Ibid: 23). Although the film is fictionalized based on Nosaka’s own experience, the aunt’s psychological violence against the siblings brings back the memory of war orphans who were forsaken or abused by their relatives or foster parents.

Structural violence: who is responsible for their deaths?

Third, the film shows audience how the two children were victimized not only by the war but also by an unfair and unjust social structure under the influence of the war. Therefore, it can be argued that they were

killed by ‘structural violence’ that gradually killed the war orphans. At first, their new life in an air-raid shelter seemed to be adventurous and enjoyable like a camping trip, but as time passed, Setsuko started suffering from diarrhea and skin problems caused by malnutrition. To feed Setsuko, Seita started stealing vegetables from the neighbor’s field and was finally caught and brutally punched by the owner. Here, the film shows an asymmetrical, ‘physical bodily violence’ against a 14 year old boy by a male adult representing ‘war among all against all’ between the weaker and the stronger. Structural violence may thus result in more direct physical violence, killing the weakest in the society.

Economic inequity stemming from structural violence undermined the health condition of Setsuko. When Seita took Setsuko to a hospital, a doctor told him to feed her with nourishing food. This scene simply indicates that there was nothing Seita could do for Setsuko without money and the doctor had to overlook the tragedy of the poor siblings. Despite Seita’s desperate endeavors, Setsuko finally died of malnutrition and Seita incinerated his sister’s body by himself. Eventually, Seita suffered from malnutrition and died as a war orphan at the end of the film. In this way, the social structure devastated by the war led to the deaths of the siblings, and thus ‘structural violence’ can be identified in the film.

Some analysts, for instance Okada (2013: 181-184), have suggested that Seita was responsible for the death of Setsuko, because he made the final decision to leave the aunt’s house for his pride. It is logical to consider that if Seita tolerated humiliating words by the aunt, it was likely that Setsuko would not need to die of malnutrition. The author of the story, Akiyuki Nosaka might have felt guilty for having to let his little sister die and the sense of guilt was reflected in the story (Senoo and Yoshiyuki, 2013: 219).

Nevertheless, it is fair to argue that the aunt forced the siblings to leave her house, and they were only minors who would not have sufficient knowledge, capacity for judgment, and ability to survive on their own (Saito, 2013: 163). In the original novel version, Nosaka depicted that Seita had money but did not know how to buy stuff at the black market (Nosaka, 2012: 620). In a live-action version of the film, the daughter of the aunt emotionally says that her mother ‘killed’ the siblings; still, the aunt had lost her husband and her family needed to survive at the sacrifice of the lives of children under war circumstances. In the live-action version, the war burned humans, cities, and humans’ hearts are noted (NTV 2014). On account of the war devastation, the policy-makers of Imperial Japan could not take appropriate action to save 123,500 war orphans in the country (Kaneda 2013: 22-23). In this regard, the social structure was too devastated and dysfunctional for war orphans to survive under such circumstances.

Accordingly, not only Seita and the aunt, but also the owner of the field who punched Seita, the police who saw the desperate situation of the siblings, and the doctor who diagnosed Setsuko’s health condition, forsake Seita and Setsuko in some way. In other words, ‘structural violence’ caused by war is to blame for the tragic deaths of the siblings. Needless to say, decision-makers of the Empire of Japan that started the war and those of the United States who conducted air-raids and victimized civilians were responsible in the first place.

Implications for peace education at school, at home, and in the world

As its original novel, the film “*Grave of the Fireflies*” can be utilized as teaching material in peace education, because one of the important agendas of education is to teach the war memory to children (Saito, 2013: 160, 166). Some analysts (e.g. Kido, 2013: 169) observe that this story is like a textbook to teach children about war. The original novel by Akiyuki Nosaka can be used as material for peace education, after watching the movie. Nosaka himself (2013: 78-81) noted that the animated version of the story was more effective than his original novel. Mitsuharu Dannno (2003) observed that the film shed light on the brother-sister love as a

four-handkerchief movie, whereas the original novel showed the nihilism of the black market where Seita died.

Compared to ordinary Japanese animation films, it is fair to argue that this work is designed not for entertainment but for education. Simply, the audience might feel that if it were not for the war, Seita and Setsuko, as innocent civilian children, did not have to die like that (Kondo, 2013: 101). Just as other Studio Ghibli animation films, this film can be part of educational material at college level (Yonemura 2003: 10). For example, the author has offered an analysis on the implication of the film for war and peace in the classroom of peace education at Soka University (Akimoto, 2013a).

Since there are only a few war films that focus on children in wartime (Saito, 2013: 159), students at school might benefit from a feeling of closeness towards Seita and Setsuko. Although Director Takahata mentioned that the film is not an anti-war film, he also realized that this film could be accepted as an anti-war film by the audience, especially children (Takahata, 2013c: 143). For instance, after watching this film, elementary school students expressed their anti-war sentiments saying that they felt sorry for Seita and Setsuko and that war is scary and tragic, and that war should never be repeated. In addition to the comments by elementary school students, it was noted that the male students of junior high school cried aloud right in front of the screen at the theater (Ibid).

Likewise, the film can be watched at home as part of domestic peace education. Special consideration and parental guidance are required for the intense and violent scenes, but it is a very important peace education material at home. In fact, this film is categorized as one of the war and peace related movies for peace education at school and home. Seiichi Ueda (2000) for example suggested that mothers and children should watch the film together at home to consider war and peace issues. Ueda (Ibid: 141-142) categorized the film “*Grave of Fireflies*” among war and peace related animation films in the same list with the famous anti-war/anti-nuclear film, “*Barefoot Gen*” (*Hadashi no Gen*) (1983) by Kenji Nakazawa. Indeed, “*Grave of Fireflies*” has been broadcast on TV especially in *Kinyō Roadshow* (Movies on Fridays) (Nippon Television, 2013). Hisae Kido (2013: 171-172) showed her son, a nursery school toddler, this film; although her son probably could not figure out the war and peace issue, Kido learned a different angle of the film (Ibid). By watching the film, not only children, but also mothers can educate themselves so that they could remember the war and teach their children the war memory.

This film contains violence and traumatic scenes, especially dead bodies covered with maggots, and therefore, adult guidance would be necessary for younger audience at homes and schools. The author watched the film at the age of eight with a teacher and other students in the classroom of an elementary school. It may be shocking and even traumatic for elementary school students to watch animated dead bodies, but the author and other classmates found the film very educational as an anti-war animation film. There are no battle scenes in the film (Senoo and Yoshiyuki, 2013: 227), and therefore, the film does not contribute to military education, but to peace education.

As a peace education material, this movie can convey the horror of war so that students can remember the Asia Pacific War. Some analysts argue that the Japanese Peace Constitution, especially Article 9 as an anti-war clause, should be protected (e.g. Yamada, 2013). In the first place, Director Takahata is a strong constitutional protector. Anti-war pacifism of Takahata is much more thorough than that of Director Miyazaki who recognizes the importance of the dispatch of Japanese Self-Defense Forces to international peace operations (Miyazaki, 2013: 9), whereas Takahata opposes it on the basis of the Peace Constitution (Takahata, 2013a: 20). Director Takahata argues that Japan has been able to avoid militarily involvement in

US-led wars because of Article 9, and therefore, he contends that peace in Japan has been guaranteed by Article 9. Takahata moreover admits that it is natural for audience to regard his film “*Grave of the Fireflies*” as an anti-war message, hence, the utilization of the film in peace education could be politicized by educators. Nonetheless, the implication of the film is anti-war and for peace rather than a certain political message. Students might recognize the significance of Article 9 after watching this film. Regardless of the political stance of educators or parents, children are likely to understand the horror of war and the significance of peace.

This film can be utilized as peace education material everywhere, as it has been widely recognized worldwide (Suzuki, 2013: 52). It has received a number of international awards and has been broadcast for more than 20 years in France (Ibid). Notably, a world-renowned American film critic, Roger Ebert (2013) observed that ‘*Grave of the Fireflies*’ is “the most realistic animation film” he ever watched (Ibid: 178) and can be added to the list of best war films (Ibid: 180). Likewise, another film critic, Ernest Rister (1999; Ebert, 2013: 175) noted that the film is the most profoundly human animated film he had ever seen: “This is to animation what *Schindler’s List* was to Spielberg – both a long overdue display of artistic maturity and a bold statement of ability”.

Mark Seldon (2014) also described the film as one of the “notable exceptions to the literary and artistic silencing of the firebombing”. Moreover, as Illan Nguyễn (2013: 184, 191) noted, the film was broadcast at the Annecy International Animated Film Festival, the world’s oldest and largest animation film festival, in 1991. There are only a few educational animations other than this film (Ibid: 189), and hence, it has been broadcast at least once every two years on the national television, ARTE in France (Ibid: 188) which is similar to *Kinyō Roadshow* in Japan. Again, the film does not show audience any combat scenes of the war but the story of a family (Senoo and Yoshiyuki, 2013: 227), and therefore, it is acceptable and suitable for peace education not only in Japan but also all over the world.

Conclusion

We examined the film “*Grave of Fireflies*” directed by Isao Takahata in terms of peace research and education by paying special attention to the three types of ‘violence’ (physical, psychological, and structural violence) in the film. First, it was clarified that the bombing of Kobe was ‘direct physical violence’ as well as ‘indiscriminate bombing’ and a ‘war crime’ that killed civilians including women and children. Yet, it should be noted that Japan started the war and this is a case of the ‘vicious circle of violence’ that needs to be discussed in peace education.

Second, it was analyzed that the aunt of the two children was responsible for the death of the siblings. Her abusive language and behavior demonstrated ‘psychological violence’ that made the children leave her house. The aunt’s worst guilt lies in the fact that she almost forced the siblings to leave her house and did not stop them, even though she was able to do so. The aunt’s language and behavior can be interpreted as a case of ‘bullying’ (*ijime*) that resulted in the death of the victims due to psychological violence and could be criticized and discussed in the peace education program at school and home.

Third, it was emphasized that the social structure, or ‘structural violence’, murdered the siblings. The government could not take appropriate measures against war orphans promptly, and hence, the aunt, the medical doctor, and the police had no choice but to forsake the suffering siblings. The economic inequity and social discrimination against the war orphans silently but surely killed the kids in the end. Simply, the

structural violence deprived the civilians of the right to live with human dignity. More fundamentally, the war itself should be blamed for the deaths of the sibling in the first place.

Despite all these negative images and results of the bombing of Kobe city, is this movie really not an ‘anti-war film’? The physical, psychological and structural violence indicate that various types of violence are responsible for the death of the siblings. The negative image of the war as ‘violence’ causes an ‘anti-war’ sentiment inside the hearts of audience, and therefore, it is fair to assume that this film can be categorized as an ‘anti-war film’. Finally, this film can be watched for the purpose of remembering the Asia Pacific War as an important historical lesson not to be repeated in the future. This animation film as well as the original novel can be utilized as teaching material for peace education at home, school, and in the world.

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