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# JAPAN AND RECONCILIATION IN POST-WAR ASIA

## The Murayama Statement and Its Implications

Edited by
Kazuhiko Togo

# Japan and Reconciliation in Post-war Asia

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# Preface

In the early spring of 2011, I began contacting my friends and acquaintances, asking them whether they would be interested in joining a project to reexamine Japan's historical memory problem and shed more light on the 1995 apology statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama. It is my view that the Murayama Statement is probably the most important expression by a Japanese leader of contrition for all the wrongdoing committed by Japan before World War II. Its importance, however, is far less understood or appreciated by Japan's neighbors and even by some Japanese themselves, meaning that something had to be done to bolster this Statement, which I believe is the best way for Japan to come to terms with its past and ultimately achieve reconciliation with Asian and other countries.

Toward the end of spring 2011, I was fortunate in assembling a number of experts in this area representing viewpoints from China, Korea, Taiwan, and Europe, while I myself addressed Japan's point of view. Our first workshop was held at Kyoto Sangyo University in December 2011, and was followed by a panel discussion at the Association of Asian Studies (AAS) meeting in Toronto in March 2012. With the publication of this book by Palgrave Macmillan, this project reaches its concluding stage.

The project had three objectives. First, I wanted to elucidate the Murayama Statement from the perspectives of five countries/regions to allow readers to grasp its essence, significance, limitations, and potential. Each analysis was to be neutral, fact-based, transparent, and inclusive; it

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could start from any theoretical background (philosophical, political, sociological, international relations–based, etc.) provided it had an objective scholarly framework. Second, I had a clear value-based policy orientation. I considered that Prime Minister Murayama's position was the right way for Japan to face up to its past, and that adhering to and consolidating the Murayama Statement, despite its limitations, was the most effective way for Japan to approach reconciliation with Asian and other countries. Thus this book is founded not on a power-based *realpolitik* view of the world, but on a fundamentally liberal approach, acknowledging that certain actions in history are right or wrong, that ultimately justice should prevail, and that on the basis of justice reconciliation between nations and people can be achieved—and that is a good thing. Third, I had one more objective in mind. Murayama's position is not supported by everyone in Japan. The opponents include not only agitated right-wing conservatives with loudspeakers, but also some intellectuals and top diplomats, who expressed harsh criticism of the Murayama Statement, with some reason. If Japan is to tread the path of maintenance and consolidation of this Statement, not only understanding but also support from neighboring and other countries will be essential. When I started this project I had some vague notion that my coauthors would share the same positivist analytical approach based on fundamentally liberal thinking accepting the right and wrong in history, but I was not sure to what extent understanding and support of the Murayama Statement would be included in their analyses.

I have been delighted with the results. All four of my coauthors clearly, cogently, and with admirable balance and fairness objectively evaluated the impact of the Murayama Statement in Asia, suggesting possibilities for further progress. It would perhaps be presumptuous to comment on each chapter in terms of the three objectives outlined above, but a summary overview may be useful, to share with our readers what has been achieved.

As far as neutral positivist analysis based on an academic framework is concerned, the chapters presented in this book have all come up to expectations.

Daqing Yang's chapter on China presents a lucid chronological analysis of how the Statement was received positively at first, but then met with serious obstacles as a result of subsequent developments that seemed to the Chinese to contradict the content of the Statement. Gradually, however, the Murayama Statement found a place in the fundamental

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approach toward Japan advocated by the Chinese leadership. Youngshik D. Bong provides a positive evaluation of the language used in the Statement, but he also uses recent Asan Institute survey data to show that the Statement has penetrated the Korean mind to only a limited extent, and he includes a long list of obstacles preventing a better understanding from the Korean point of view.

Rwei-Ren Wu writes a refreshing analysis of the geopolitical vulnerability of Taiwan that made it a pariah, or weak, state in international politics, and from this position, he sees the value of the universalist commitment of the Statement as well as the necessity for Japan to make reparations to individual and collective victims. Thomas U. Berger elucidates through his chronological analysis of European developments the difficult process of reconciliation with the past that Germany, Austria, France, and many other countries went through, and points out that in this respect Japan was no exception. But recent developments, particularly after the end of the Cold War, suggest that European countries are increasingly adopting a more penitent approach to history and that this approach is conducive to their national interest.

My own contribution starts with a textual analysis of the Murayama Statement, comparing it with German president Richard von Weizsäcker's seminal speech of 1985. This is followed by an analysis of the thought of the Japanese Buddhist philosopher Daisetsu Suzuki and of Karl Jaspers—in relation to the Murayama Statement and von Weizsäcker's speech, respectively—that aims to shed more light on the significance and the relative historical position of the Statement in the lexicon of the contemporary history of contrition and apology.

As for the liberal proposition that there are certain values in history that can be seen as right or wrong and that Japan needs to act further to meet its final goal of reconciliation, again all chapters seem to be in complete agreement, although the authors differ with regard to the areas in which Japan should proceed further. My own chapter, while emphasizing the unique position manifested by Prime Minister Murayama, asserts that further endeavor is needed in the areas of remembrance and education, in concrete actions to discharge political responsibility, and in resolving the issue of leaders–soldiers responsibility. Daqing Yang's concrete menu for further action by Japan starts from the Chinese point of view. It includes no official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, no government approval of revisionist textbooks, and no public statement by politicians denying Japanese aggression or atrocities. Youngshik D. Bong's

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list of further actions to be taken by Japan in order to anchor the positive effects of the Murayama Statement is rather long, including resolution of the issue of the comfort women, acceptance of the invalidity and unlawfulness of the 1910 Annexation Treaty, compensation of and apology for forced labor, and the resolving of the double-standard approach of Japan as perpetrator (Korea and China) and as victim (Russia). Rwei-Ren Wu's Kantian liberal view of history, combined with his view of Taiwan as a pariah state, sheds a special light on the Statement, namely that four factors—democracy, non-self-righteousness, international coordination, and peace—are the crucial commitments that Murayama made to ensure that past wrongs will never be repeated. His powerful conclusion is that a classical Kantian thesis of democratic peace is the path that Japan should follow, and he provides further concrete guidance from that perspective. Thomas U. Berger, who starts from the standpoint that the European experience is neither exemplary nor irrelevant for Asia, acknowledges the positive aspects of the Murayama Statement, advising a piecemeal approach to reconciliation with Korea, which shares Japan's democratic values, while limiting itself to damage control with China, which does not.

Finally, what is the extent of the understanding of and support for the Murayama Statement by the other contributors? To my genuine relief and appreciation, all authors seem to be in agreement that, limited and imperfect as it may be, there is no reason to view the Statement negatively or cynically, and as for general policy directions, there is no alternative to supporting it. Daqing Yang concludes that the Statement "has at least allowed China and Japan to manage potentially disruptive history issues. This is no small achievement." Youngshik D. Bong, after outlining what would be Japan's perfect apology as far as the Koreans are concerned, concludes that "pessimistic and at times cynical views about the Murayama Statement are misguided and dangerous. ... This is an important time to promote it." Rwei-Ren Wu's list of positive aspects of the Statement is rather long, and it starts with the following sentence: "these paragraphs [of the Statement] are commendable at least for one reason: they express an apology, albeit belatedly, for both Japan's aggressive wars *and* its colonialism in Asia. To be fair, Japan was the first former colonial power to issue an official apology for its colonialism in the past, and is the only one to have done so." Thomas U. Berger concurs with this evaluation, stating that the Murayama Statement "represents a stronger and far more forthright acknowledgment of Japanese responsibility for

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the horrors of the World War II period than was offered by most of European countries, with the exception of Germany, until the 1990s."

However, these positive acknowledgments of the Statement should not lead to complacency. On the contrary, there is no better and more powerful weapon than such positive statements to bolster its position in Japan and to maintain and consolidate the—sometimes fragile—position expressed in the Statement.

Before ending this brief overview of our collective work, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who helped and encouraged us during the realization of this project. In particular, my thanks go to Professor Gilbert Rozman of Princeton University, who greatly encouraged me to embark on this project. My thanks also go to my colleagues at Kyoto Sangyo University, who helped to organize the workshop in December 2011, as well as to the organizers of the AAS Toronto meeting, who provided the opportunity to hold a panel there in March 2012. Last but not least, I am deeply gratified that this collective work will be published in the newly introduced Palgrave Pivot initiative from Palgrave Macmillan. Many, many thanks to all the editors there for their efficient and professional guidance, without which we could not have produced this book.

*Kazuhiko Togo*

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# 1

# The Historical Role and Future Implications of the Murayama Statement: A View from Japan

*Kazuhiko Togo*

**Abstract:** *The Murayama Statement of 1995 was the pinnacle of Japan's apology for its wrongdoing before and during World War II. The position it put forward has been inherited by all subsequent Japanese cabinets. This chapter analyzes the holistic and unconditional character of the Murayama Statement, in which Japan as a nation was held responsible for its past colonial rule and aggression. It then clarifies this position by comparing the statement with West German president Richard von Weizsäcker's 1985 speech on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. It subsequently deepens the analysis by looking at the work of Karl Jaspers and Daisetsu Suzuki in relation to the statements by von Weizsäcker and Tomiichi Murayama, respectively. Finally, the severe criticism of the statement by elite diplomat Ryohei Murata and others on the right, as well as by left liberals, is explained. The chapter concludes with concrete policy suggestions for strengthening Japan's position on reconciliation with Asian and other countries.*

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The statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on August 15, 1995, is generally seen as the most unambiguous expression of Japan's contrition since World War II. This chapter is based on the premise that there are certain universal issues of moral responsibility from which states and their leaders cannot escape. The definition of an objective criterion by which they can be measured is complex, but I believe that global society is slowly but surely moving toward adherence to these moral responsibilities. Thus Japan should face and come to terms with the pain it caused other nations during World War II, and in this context the Murayama Statement represents the pinnacle of Japan's post-war apology.

In a previous paper (Togo 2011), I looked at Japan's post–World War II settlement of war-related issues, including the issue of wrongdoing and apology. This settlement occurred primarily through international treaties such as the San Francisco Peace Treaty. However, after the end of the Cold War, when the topic of war memory and apology reemerged in international forums, the 1995 Murayama Statement was instrumental in synthesizing the position of the Japanese government on historical recognition and on reconciliation with Asian and other countries. If ever the Japanese government's recognition of history has been expressed voluntarily and unambiguously, following the acceptance of the judgments of the war crimes tribunals prescribed in Article 11 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, it was in the Murayama Statement.

In view of the importance of the Murayama Statement, one is struck by the lack of serious study devoted to it. What are the major characteristics of the statement? What are its unique features, and how does it compare with other statements made in other countries that fought World War II? This chapter addresses these questions through a philosophical, political, and legal analysis of the statement, and through comparison with the experiences of other countries, particularly Germany. Since the chapter is concerned with adherence to universal moral responsibilities, much emphasis is placed on the thoughts and views of Richard von Weizsäcker and Karl Jaspers. Through this analysis, I attempt to define Japan's future policy in terms of facing its role in recent history and ultimately achieving true reconciliation with the Asian and other countries.

## Major characteristics of the Murayama Statement

Although the Murayama Statement should be analyzed in its entirety, usually only the key section is addressed:

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> During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.[1]

I begin my analysis of the Murayama Statement from the perspective of who perpetrated the wrongdoing, the nature of the wrongdoing, and the response to this wrongdoing, and then move on to address unanswered questions of responsibility and reconciliation.

First, who perpetrated the wrongdoing? In other words, who carried out this "mistaken national policy"? The subject here is "Japan," and the primary distinctive feature of the Murayama Statement is the clear affirmation that Japan, as a state, in its entirety, pursued the mistaken policy. There is no further qualification, such as "Japanese leaders" or "Japanese militarists" or even "the Japanese people."

Second, what was the nature of the wrongdoing? In other words, what was the content of the "mistaken national policy"? It was "colonial rule" and "aggression." This is another distinctive feature of the Murayama Statement: the clear and holistic description of the nature of the acts involved. A comparison with the Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace on the Basis of Lessons Learned from History, adopted by the Diet (the national House of Representatives of Japan) on June 9, 1995, clearly demonstrates the unconditional character of the Murayama Statement:

> The House of Representatives resolves as follows:
>
> On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, this House offers its sincere condolences to those who fell in action and victims of wars and similar actions all over the world.
>
> Solemnly reflecting upon many instances of colonial rule and acts of aggression in the modern history of the world, and recognizing that Japan carried out those acts in the past, inflicting pain and suffering upon the peoples of other countries, especially in Asia, the Members of this House express a sense of deep remorse.
>
> We must transcend the differences over historical views of the past war and learn humbly the lessons of history so as to build a peaceful international society.

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> This House expresses its resolve, under the banner of eternal peace enshrined in the Constitution of Japan, to join hands with other nations of the world and to pave the way to a future that allows all human beings to live together.[2]

This reads almost like a scholarly description of historical events. The "colonial rule and acts of aggression" cannot be understood as acts that were perpetrated by the Japanese alone, because they were common at a specific stage of world history. The resolution described this as an objective fact, saying that Japan was part of it. The Murayama Statement displays none of this relativism: it focuses solely on Japan's acts, without passing any judgment on the acts of other countries.

Jane Yamazaki clearly sees the unequivocal and exclusive nature of the historical recognition in the Murayama Statement: "In Murayama's apology, apologizing for 'aggression' and 'colonial rule'—accusations that could be leveled against many countries—allowed Japan to take the high moral road of having rejected militarism and colonialism when others had not. Strong condemnation of the wrongdoing is the hallmark of this kind of apology" (2006, 110).

Third, how does Murayama say Japan should respond to this wrongdoing? In other words, what should be done? "I express here my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology." Here again, the expression is straightforward and unconditional. In contrast to the resolution adopted by the House of Representatives, which mentions only "deep remorse," the Murayama Statement is an unequivocal apology.

The Murayama Statement also sets out concrete policy objectives, both before and after the key section quoted above. The preceding section outlines how

> the Government has launched the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative—to support historical research—in the modern era between Japan and the neighboring countries of Asia and elsewhere; and rapid expansion of exchanges with those countries. Furthermore, I will continue in all sincerity to do my utmost in efforts being made on the issues arisen from the war.

The section following the key paragraph quoted states that "Japan . . . must eliminate self-righteous nationalism, . . . [and] advance the principles of peace and democracy."[3] It is a truism that Japan's fundamental contrition and compensation were the result only of a network of international treaty obligations that started with the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

But then comes the key question of "responsibility." Who should be considered responsible for past colonialism and aggression, and how

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should the present generation view their responsibility? Murayama did not use "responsibility" as a key word, but the fundamental concept he developed seems to allow three interpretations: (1) The state itself was responsible for all the pain caused by colonialism and aggression. There is nothing that limits or conditions the state's responsibility. (2) This applies to all who, in some way or other, participated in Japan's acts during the period of colonial rule and aggression. There is, for instance, no notion of the leaders' responsibility and their subordinates' exemption from responsibility. (3) Given that Murayama was speaking about acts more than fifty years in the past, while still addressing the need for a concrete apology, it appears that this responsibility also touches the generation that did not participate in any act causing such pain in other countries. This holistic approach to the concept of responsibility is an important characteristic of the Murayama Statement.

The last question that needs to be addressed before we move to the next section is why Murayama made this statement. The speech tells us that Murayama's primary motive was reconciliation with Asian and other countries that had suffered as a result of Japan's acts. In terms of concrete actions to achieve reconciliation, Murayama stated: "I believe that, as we join hands, especially with the peoples of neighboring countries, to ensure true peace in the Asia-Pacific region—indeed, in the entire world—it is necessary, more than anything else, that we foster *relations with all countries based on deep understanding and trust*" (my emphasis). Fostering relations with all countries based on deep understanding and trust indeed appears to be the reason Murayama made his statement. The boldness of the statement seems specifically designed to achieve this purpose.

## The Murayama Statement in comparison to Richard von Weizsäcker's 1985 speech

After World War II Germany took a very different approach to responsibility and compensation than that adopted by Japan, which tried to resolve these issues through international state-to-state treaties. After the full extent of the Holocaust became known, Germany followed a policy of apology and individual compensation for all the victims of the Holocaust and other atrocities. In this respect, it is generally recognized that the most symbolic act of contrition was by Willy Brandt, who knelt

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down in December 1970 to honor and apologize to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The most conclusive statement of apology was made by Richard von Weizsäcker in the German Parliament on May 8, 1985, on the fortieth anniversary of Germany's defeat in World War II.

In comparing the Murayama Statement with this speech, I address again the three questions of who perpetrated the wrongdoing, the nature of the wrongdoing, and the response to this wrongdoing. I combine this with an analysis of responsibility and reconciliation—albeit in a slightly different order. (Table 1.1 provides a summary of the comparison that follows.)

First, what was the nature of the wrongdoing? In other words, how did von Weizsäcker perceive the nature of German wrongdoing before May 8, 1945? His speech starts with a long list commemorating "all the

**TABLE 1.1** *Comparing Murayama and von Weizsäcker*

| | **Murayama** | **Von Weizsäcker** |
|---|---|---|
| Who did it? | Japan | Individuals; not the people or the nation |
| What was the wrongdoing? | Colonial rule and aggression | Long list of specific crimes |
| What should be done (fundamentally)? | Express deep remorse and heartfelt apology | Remember and do not forget |
| What is to be done (concretely)? | Government launches Peace, Friendship, and Exchange Initiative; Murayama will do his utmost to resolve war-related issues; Japan must ensure true peace | Ask the young generation to live in harmony with each other |
| What was the basic policy (apart from the statement/speech)? | Resolution through adherence to international treaties | Compensation and apology to individual victims of the Holocaust and other atrocities |
| Who is responsible? | Japan (as a nation, up to the present) | Everyone in the present generation, although they were not the perpetrators |
| What was the purpose of the statement/speech? | Reconciliation: establish relations with all countries based on deep understanding and trust | Ultimate acceptance of a united Germany by the world |

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dead of the war and of the rule of tyranny:... the six million Jews,... the unthinkable number of citizens of the Soviet Union and Poland, the murdered Sinti and Roma,... the sacrifices of the Resistance in all countries occupied by us," and so on (von Weizsäcker 1987, 43). The list is comprehensive, not limited to the victims of the Holocaust. It also does not exclude Germans as victims. The enumeration of the crimes committed vastly differs from the Murayama Statement, which mentions "colonial rule and aggression," adopting a most holistic approach without specification.

The next section concentrates on the Holocaust, describing the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis in detail. It uses phrases such as "the crime" and "the Holocaust" to refer to these acts (von Weizsäcker 1987, 47–48), and also describes how Hitler "wished to dominate Europe... by means of war." In general, von Weizsäcker's criticism emphasizes the scale and nature of the specific crimes discussed above (1987, 50), which again differs considerably from Murayama's broad statement of "colonial rule and aggression."

Second, I analyze the question of who perpetrated the wrongdoing in connection with the issue of responsibility. In a key section between his statements on the Holocaust and the domination of Europe comes the following sentence: "There is no such thing as the guilt or innocence of an entire people. Guilt, like innocence, is not collective but individual.... The predominant part of our present population was at that time either very young or indeed had not been born at all. They cannot acknowledge a personal guilt for acts which they simply did not commit" (von Weizsäcker 1987, 48). This is the fundamental difference between von Weizsäcker and Murayama, who took the holistic approach that Japan, in its entirety, was the perpetrator.

This, then, surfaces the issue of responsibility, which Von Weizsäcker also addressed: "All of us, whether guilty or not, whether old or young, must accept the past. We are all affected by its consequences and held responsible for it" (1987, 48). Probably the most famous theme of von Weizsäcker's speech was that although present-day Germans were not the perpetrators, they are nevertheless responsible for the crimes committed in the past by a limited number of individuals. Von Weizsäcker's position also helps to clarify Murayama's position on the issue of responsibility, as described above. Without conditions, Murayama accepted the responsibility of Japan, not even distinguishing between those who led the war and the soldiers who had to obey orders. Nor did he distinguish

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between the people who participated in the war and the people who were not even born at that time. Von Weizsäcker, on the other hand, made a clear distinction between the relatively small number of Nazis who perpetrated these crimes and those who were not the perpetrators—the people who did not participate in committing these crimes, not to mention the people who were not even born at that time, who nevertheless bear responsibility for the acts committed by their compatriots or forebears. This distinction lays bare the analytical weakness, if not a downright lacuna, in the Murayama Statement, namely the precise determination of who should bear the final responsibility, even if the whole of Japan accepts its responsibility.

Third, this naturally raises the question of how to respond to this wrongdoing. Von Weizsäcker's speech repeatedly emphasizes one theme: remember and do not forget. It also asks the young generation not to be carried away by antagonism or hatred but to live in harmony, hand in hand with each other (1987, 45–49, 59–60). As stated above, the basis of von Weizsäcker's emphasis on remembrance is formed by the policy of individual compensation and apology adopted by Germany.

This brings us to a final issue in this section: what was the purpose of von Weizsäcker's speech? It is generally perceived that the German president's speech was made to counterbalance the highly controversial visit to the Kolmeshöhe cemetery near Bitburg by Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan on May 5, 1985. Although the visit was intended to symbolize US–German reconciliation, the fact that former SS men were also buried at the cemetery led to severe criticism that the visit served to honor the Nazis.

This circumstantial event alone cannot explain the broader social and international context in which the speech was made. Von Weizsäcker himself disclosed it. Toward the end of his speech he addressed its political objective with amazing clarity: to serve the purpose of Germany's unification. "We Germans are one people and one nation," said von Weizsäcker, and stated his conviction that "the 8th of May will not remain the last date that binds all Germans together" (1987, 58). Masahiro Kawai has highlighted how von Weizsäcker's speech most effectively sent a message to the world to accept post–World War II Germany and thus pave the way for a possible reunification, even though this objective seemed remote at the time the speech was made (Kawai 2009).

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## Understanding Murayama in the light of Karl Jaspers

*The Question of German Guilt* was part of a lecture given by Karl Jaspers during the winter semester of 1945–1946 at the University of Heidelberg. It was published in 1946 by Lambert Schneider at Heidelberg, and it is now seen as a seminal work on German guilt and responsibility for the Holocaust. Jaspers' fundamental thesis is summarized in his "Four Concepts of Guilt":

1. *Criminal guilt*: Crimes are acts capable of objective proof and violate unequivocal laws. Jurisdiction rests with the court, which in formal proceedings can be relied upon to find the facts and apply the law.
2. *Political guilt*: This—involving the deeds of statesmen and of the citizenry of a state—results in my having to bear the consequences of the deeds of the state whose power governs me and under whose order I live.... Jurisdiction rests with the power and the will of the victor, in both domestic and foreign politics....
3. *Moral guilt*: I, who cannot act otherwise than as an individual, am morally responsible for all my deeds, including the execution of political and military orders.... Jurisdiction rests with my conscience....
4. *Metaphysical guilt*: If I was present at the murder of others without risking my life to prevent it, I feel guilty in a way not adequately conceivable either legally, politically, or morally.... Jurisdiction rests with God alone. (Jaspers 2000, 25–26).

Before we enter into an analytical comparison of the notions of guilt defined by Jaspers and Murayama, something needs to be said about the context in which Jaspers' thinking evolved. As already noted, *The Question of German Guilt* dates back to 1945–1946. As Jaspers describes in his book, this was a period when Germany—as a nation under occupation—was criminalized. His main motive for the lecture was to differentiate the types of guilt with philosophical clarity, without escaping responsibility for any of them, to create a spiritual space for each and every German to reflect on what was wrong and what was right, thus trying to bring back some spiritual courage for the Germans to face this difficult period.. In the configuration designed by Jaspers, the areas of criminal and political guilt are irrevocably intertwined. The jurisdiction of political guilt rested solely in the hands of the occupying Allied Forces, and not in the hands of the Germans themselves, as one would imagine from present-day analysis. It therefore appears that the Nuremberg Trials covered both the

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first type of guilt and the second. Jaspers' configuration does not include political guilt, where jurisdiction lies with Germans.

In later years Jaspers became critical of the Nuremberg Trials. In the commentary to the 1962 edition of *The Question of German Guilt*, he wrote:

> I consider everything that I wrote then still the truth, but there is one grave exception. I misunderstood one critical point in the interpretation of the Nuremberg Trial that was about to begin then. . . .
>
> A country based on Bolshevism, which has the same nature of dictatorial governance as a Nazi state is sitting at the judges' side. . . .
>
> The criminal procedures only applied to the side of the prisoners, whereas the destruction by the Allies without any military necessity was excluded from the investigation. . . .
>
> From the point of view of legal format, the tribunal was perfect, but one cannot help concluding that it was a fake tribunal. As a result, it turned out to be an unprecedented tribunal between the victorious and the vanquished states, and a common legal basis and legal will among the victorious states to create a common ground was lacking. (1984, 192–98)

Jaspers' denouncement of the Nuremberg Trials led to the assertion that justice—which was to be ensured by the occupying Allies—was not done as far as Germany's criminal and political guilt was concerned. Nevertheless, this does not deny or undermine the power of his basic analysis of German guilt, in particular his approach to moral and metaphysical guilt.

## Criminal guilt and the Murayama Statement

Jaspers' complex handling of criminal guilt elucidates one aspect of the Murayama Statement, which does not refer at all to Japan's criminal guilt. From the perspective of post-war Japan—which includes the government position and, arguably, the majority of public opinion—the post–World War II tribunals organized by the Allies and the subsequent acceptance of their judgments by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, as well as a series of peace treaty agreements, closed all legal issues, with the exception of Russia and North Korea. The Murayama Statement does not reopen this legal closure in any way. This clarifies that the state responsibility as pursued by international law does not fall under the competence of the Murayama Statement. This in turn clarifies Murayama's position that his statement did not interfere in any way with individual Japanese views on the 1946–1948 International Military Tribunal for the Far East (the Tokyo Trials). This is why both those who are critical and those who

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are supportive of the Tokyo Trials can be (and are) supportive of the Murayama Statement.

## Political guilt and the Murayama Statement

Von Weizsäcker's speech filled the vacuum of judgments concerning the political guilt to be determined by the Germans, rather than by the Allies. He argued that it was not the nation as a whole that was guilty, only the individuals who directly committed the crimes were guilty—although the following generations were still "responsible" for the actions taken by their predecessors. While this can be construed as an attempt not to accept the "political guilt" that Germany as a nation might be asked to bear, he did accept the "political responsibility," which served the ultimate political objective of letting the outside world reconcile with Germany and accept German unification.

In this sense, the Murayama Statement can also be understood as having the primary function of dealing with Japan's political guilt and responsibility. In this respect, the Murayama Statement can be said to be equivalent to the speech by von Weizsäcker; however, as we saw above, Murayama's expression of his acknowledgment of political guilt and responsibility was vastly different from von Weizsäcker's approach. Murayama was particularly criticized by the conservative right in Japan, as will be seen below. Nevertheless, in essence both statements addressed political guilt and responsibility, in their respective political contexts.

## Moral guilt and the Murayama Statement

It is clear that for both von Weizsäcker and Jaspers individual morality has crucial significance. The "remembrance" of von Weizsäcker almost has the exclusive character of a moral and individual obligation. Jaspers unequivocally defines the jurisdiction of moral guilt as resting with one's own conscience, which is the exclusive domain of the mind and spirit of the individual.

In contrast, the Murayama Statement lacks almost any reference to this moral and individual aspect of guilt and responsibility. Morality and ethics as fundamental guiding principles for individual behavior could play an important part in the Japanese social and spiritual context. The almost-complete detachment from morality and individual responsibility in the Murayama Statement is thus all the more conspicuous, and has drawn criticism from the Japanese liberal left, as will be seen below.

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## Metaphysical guilt and the Murayama Statement

According to Jaspers, the jurisdiction of metaphysical guilt rests with God alone. It is difficult to discuss metaphysical guilt in relation to the Murayama Statement, because metaphysics—a concept originating in Greek philosophy—is scarcely discernible in Japanese theological, religious, and spiritual life. However, Jaspers' definition of metaphysical guilt as the fourth type of guilt provides an interesting insight into why the Murayama Statement's holistic formulation could command support from Japanese intellectuals, opinion leaders, and the people in general, despite criticism from the right and the left.

Table 1.2 summarizes this interpretation of the Murayama Statement through the lens of Jaspers' Four Concepts of Guilt.

In the approach taken by both Jaspers and von Weizsäcker we see a clear train of thought that divides the universe and brings out the truth through this division. Murayama's approach, in contrast, remains firmly rooted in a holistic grasp of the world. Large words such as "Japan," "colonialism," and "aggression" are used, without precise definition or delineation. If the Murayama Statement is equivalent to the speech made by von Weizsäcker, could there be any philosophical and religious thought underlying the spiritual basis of the Murayama Statement in criticizing Japan's totalitarian and militaristic behavior? Daisetsu Suzuki, who was one of the most renowned Buddhist philosophers, published a work called *Nihonteki Resisei* [Japanese spiritualism] in December 1944, eight months before the end of World War II. It was subsequently reprinted in March 1946. His main argument was that Japanese spiritualism took

**TABLE 1.2** *Comparing Murayama and Jaspers*

| Concept of guilt (Jaspers) | Murayama Statement | Jurisdiction (Jaspers) |
|---|---|---|
| Criminal guilt | Outside its scope | Court: criticizes Nuremberg Trials |
| Political guilt | Central issue | Power (the Allies): criticizes Nuremberg Trials |
| Moral guilt | Scarcely seen | Conscience: central issue |
| Metaphysical guilt | Difficult in Japanese political thought, but it leads us to question Japan's unique philosophical and religious thoughts | God: central issue |

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its clearest form during the Kamakura period, when the emerging ruling class of Samurai allowed all previous political thought to bloom, taking the form of *Zen* (under Dogen) and *Jyodoshu* Buddhism (under Honen and Shinran). These were developed from Buddhist thought imported from the Asian continent, but also included something that is uniquely Japanese. The uniqueness of *Zen* and *Jyodoshu* is that "people have the right to face the Utmost Respected without any condition,... in its straightforward intuitiveness.... Both share the characteristic trait not to let anything intervene between the two. The brighter side of the Japanese spirit is to jump into the heart of others without having anything in hand, and that can also be said in the spiritual realm" (Suzuki 2010, 39–40).

Daisetsu Suzuki's main aim was to elucidate the best part of Japanese spiritual and religious thought, not the narrow approach to exclusive Japanese-ness, but the thought that is part of universal values. In September 1946 he published "Resiseiteki Nihonno Kensetsu" (The construction of spiritual Japan), in which he formulated some straightforward criticism of Shintoism, which had produced the narrow, exclusive Japanese values that ultimately led Japan into a disastrous war (Suzuki 1968, 92–127).

After World War II both Jaspers and Daisetsu Suzuki tried to show that the spiritual basis of recovery was something truly universal. Each based his thought on his own philosophical tradition—Jaspers resorting to deductive thinking and Suzuki to intuitive and holistic thinking. It does not seem to be a coincidence that when von Weizsäcker and Murayama spoke about the approach to the war taken by their respective nations several decades later, von Weizsäcker used a deductive approach and Murayama a holistic approach. In discussing the Murayama Statement, Testuro Mori, professor of philosophy at Kyoto Sangyo University, and Fumiaki Fujino, former Itochu member and director of the China Research Center, stated that there was something typically Japanese in the broad and intuitive character of the Murayama Statement and that Suzuki's teaching of Japanese spirituality might provide a clue to understanding the essence of that character.[4]

## Criticism of the Murayama Statement by the right

As stated at the start of this chapter, the Murayama Statement was the most important voluntarily synthesis of the views of the Japanese government and played a decisive role in positioning the Japanese government

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in all issues concerning historical memory and reconciliation. The content and its durability show that the statement was generally supported by the Japanese people. In view of the positive role it played in government-to-government relations, the majority of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) officials worked to observe, support, and enhance the views it expressed (including this author while working in the MOFA).

However, some severe criticism was directed at the Murayama Statement from the conservative right, and some of the liberal left also found it unsatisfactory. In trying to understand the criticism from the right, I would like to call attention to the views expressed by Ryohei Murata in his autobiography, published two years before his death in 2010. Ryohei Murata was a distinguished diplomat who served as vice minister of foreign affairs from 1987 to 1989 under Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, and then became ambassador to the United States from 1989 to 1992 and to Germany from 1992 to 1994. Murata was certainly not a right-wing fanatic, and he was one of the most representative diplomats ever seen in post-war Japan. In fact, his concise analysis and blunt and straightforward criticism of pre-war Japanese militarism, which he called an "unforgivable outrage"—the Japanese army caused "no small personal and physical damage to the Chinese people" through its acts of aggression from 1937; it was an "irreparable failure" to have concluded the Axis alliance; and there was an "astonishing poverty of decision-making and grasping the essence" among top military officers—sounded more than convincing, and it commanded wide support among MOFA officials (Murata 2008, 348–55). And yet his view on the Murayama Statement—which was exceptional in the MOFA—was harsh, his criticism devastating. Let us examine his major contentions:

> There were many problems around the Sino-Japanese war of the 1930's and the Great East Asia War but they happened sixty years ago and the overwhelming majority of the present-day Japanese has nothing to do with it.…
>
> What is prescribed by the San Francisco Peace Treaty and all subsequent reparations signified Japan's "atonement" for the war and the question of responsibility for this war has to end with them.…
>
> Since these [renewed] apologies were actions taken unnecessarily, nobody paid attention. Naturally, human beings are the product of emotion, and a sentiment of resentment and indignation remains on both sides. Especially the indignation or dissatisfaction of individuals remains unhealed. But to draw the line with a Peace Treaty, that is the rule among states. Afterwards, time is the only healer.…

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> The Murayama Statement issued on August 15, 1995 was a useless and harmful Government view in the form of a Prime Minister's Statement. The Japanese Prime Minister might have stated it as his expression of sincerity, but the Chinese and Korean Governments had no intention to receive it as intended. They were just ready to utilize this Japanese stupidity for the benefit of achieving their future foreign policy objectives. . . .
>
> No one is allowed to express "deep remorse and heartfelt apology" in the name of 2.4 million soldiers who died for their country and 0.8 million victims who perished in the private sector. (Murata 2008, 370–75)

On the basis of these quotations, and indeed the entire logic permeating his writing, his argument has three essential strands: (1) World War II was fought in accordance with existing international norms; after its defeat, Japan went through a period of reparation and atonement by way of concluding the San Francisco Peace Treaty and equivalent agreements, and there is no need for Japan to do more to seek reconciliation. (2) To express deep regret and heartfelt apology for the acts of a nation, namely colonialism and aggression, is totally unprecedented. It is something no other country in the world has ever done, including Germany, which acknowledged guilt only in the name of individuals and never guilt in the name of the state. There is no reason for Japan to take this masochist position by acknowledging that Japan alone is guilty. This positioning is morally impermissible, because it deeply betrays the spirits of the people who fought for the country with good intentions. (3) It is also a politically foolish course to take, because it has not served in any way the political purpose of reconciliation with Asian and other countries.

Let us examine these arguments one by one. (1) As a historical analysis of how the war was fought before 1945, there are many compelling points in what Murata has to say. Some of the historical memory created by other governments to politically undermine Japan's history-related position may even reinforce Murata's logic. However, he missed one global change that occurred after the end of the Cold War. The suppressed indignation and resentment had been kept more or less under control during the Cold War, but they surfaced from the early 1990s onwards. The voicing of past indignations suffered had a global character. The legal structure utilized by Japan and its counterpart governments to resolve the issues from the war did not satisfy many people who had suffered in China, Korea, a number of ASEAN countries, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Australia. One position was, as Murata pointed out, basically to reject all their assertions, explaining that after

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the conclusion of the international agreements, in which each party took its own war-related responsibility, the grievances should be directed to these parties and not to the government of Japan. The Japanese government, however, adopted a "half-way" approach; legally it adhered to the position represented by Murata (i.e., the case is closed), but it also showed political readiness to do what it considered possible and appropriate to heal the wounds of those who had suffered.

(2) Did Murayama have to go as far as stating that it was Japan as a nation that committed acts of colonialism and aggression? This is a difficult issue, and opinions vary. On the one hand, Murata may have been right in asserting that Japan should not unilaterally have to apologize for its colonialism and aggression, when numerous countries did the same thing much earlier and also with the use of force. In addressing the resentment and indignation, would there not be a way to take a more measured approach, without giving the impression that the entire conduct of Japan's policy from Meiji to World War II should be negated? From the point of view of realism and looking at existing international law, it appears there is no room for political apology.

But there is another, more liberal way of looking at the world. Slowly but surely progressive movements in global society are gaining momentum. Colonialism, which was common practice by all major powers from the fifteenth century until the first half of the twentieth, can no longer exist as a formal system. Japan was the first, and possibly the only, country to officially recognize it had pursued a mistaken colonial policy. Is this not something Japan can be proud of? After all, in international law "aggression" is still difficult to define. Although crimes against humanity are now judged by the Hague International Criminal Court, the United Nations cannot even agree on the definition of "aggression." And even if the world still seems to adhere to the position of World War II, when "war of self-defense" and "aggression" were notions that were determined subjectively by each state concerned, nowadays no country can justify its acts by resorting to "aggression." Japan's view of itself as the aggressor may be interpreted as a courageous and progressive position, pointing to the future direction of the international community.

The rift between these separate views is sharply symbolized by Murata's contention that the Murayama Statement was an unforgivable mistake because it hurt the honor of the soldiers who died for their country. There is no question that many Japanese soldiers died with bravery, in a spirit of sacrifice, for their country. The wills of those soldiers, particularly of

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those recruited from universities—including the wills displayed at the Yushukan at the Yasukuni Shrine—provide ample testimony of the spirit of the soldiers who gave their lives for their country.

However, acknowledging the vision and idealism of the Japanese of that period does not mean that all acts that were perpetrated are proof of this same vision. The recognition that things went wrong at home and on the international stage can certainly coexist with vision and idealism. In other words, the visionary pre-1945 Japan could have committed wrongs that can be broadly defined as "colonialism" and "aggression," therefore warranting some humility, and affirming the remorse and apology expressed in the Murayama Statement. The *Kike Wadatsumino Koe* [Listen to the voice from the seabed] collection of wills written by perished soldiers, which includes the wills of kamikaze pilots, also provides a shockingly sharp and penetrating criticism of pre-war Japan, as if these soldiers were the precursors of Prime Minister Murayama:

> From the 2/26 incident, Japan took a mistaken road. Suddenly movements to ignore freedom erupted, and true patriots who wanted to act against them perished under cold points of edge. Power-mongers, seeking victory, ensnared Japan into a road, from which it was impossible to escape. (February 7, 1945, Ryoji Uehara)
>
> My true feeling for Japan: I love Japan. But the Japanese should think of something beyond Japanese policy, that is, the fate of human beings. If love for the homeland means a beautiful and pure Mt. Fuji, love for the native province and love for the people, I am the first one to express it. But I cannot consent to fight for past history and national policy. The emperor cannot escape from the tragedy of human beings. Every Japanese should become greater. Every person should become wider and greater, aware of other people's sweat and tears. (May 4, 1945, Konokichi Sumiyoshi)
>
> Japan was defeated amidst the fury of worldwide indignation and rebukes. If I think of the limitless injustice and compulsion which Japan dared to commit, their anger is totally justified.…I cannot die in honoring the Japanese military, but I die in a restful state of mind, bearing upon me the sin of and reproaches to the entire Japanese people. I can die with a smile. (late April 1946, Hisao Kimura)
>
> (Nihon Senbotsu Gakusei Kinenkai 1995, 373, 423–24 and 445)

(3) What invited the most criticism was probably Murata's contention that the Murayama Statement was foolish because it did not produce any positive response for reconciliation. However imperfect it was, however much it was also criticized by the left, and however uniquely masochistic

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it seemed in officially singling out his own country as a colonial power and aggressor, the Murayama Statement has served as the basis for the Japanese government policy of apology and reconciliation. Without it, sixteen years of government policy would not have existed, and relations with those countries where people had severe grievances could not have been settled in the way they have been. In other words, the Murayama Statement did serve, albeit to a limited degree, the purpose of reconciliation.

## Criticism of the Murayama Statement by the left

The tables comparing Murayama and von Weizsäcker and Murayama and Jaspers showed three shortcomings of the Murayama Statement. One can argue that these three weaknesses are logical conclusions that follow from these comparative analyses. By and large these same issues have been taken up by liberal left interlocutors.

First, in the Murayama Statement there is a conspicuous lack of attention to the issue of morality and individuals. In the thinking of both von Weizsäcker and Jaspers this issue is central. In fact, one of the most moving aspects of von Weizsäcker's speech and Jaspers' work is the question of how to address guilt and responsibility from a moral point of view. Von Weizsäcker stated: "The 8th of May is a day of remembrance," and "all of us must accept the past" (1987, 45, 48). This is profoundly individualistic. Jaspers does not specifically address the generational transcendence of moral guilt, but he does transfer moral guilt and responsibility to the current generation. In discussing the Murayama Statement, Professor Haruo Nishihara, a former president of Waseda University, said: "I do not think the current generation, which was not even born when the war was fought, has any responsibility for the wrongdoing committed. Then what can they do? They can recall these events and feel the pain in their heart. At least the remembrance in everyone's memory: that they can do."[5] This leads us to the conclusion that the key policy of the government should be in the area of education.

Second, the Murayama Statement probably lacks concrete follow-up action. Murayama outlined in his speech what he actually could offer in 1995, namely the launch of the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative, the resolution of war-related issues, and the fostering of relations based on deep understanding and trust. But what does this "resolution of

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war-related issues" mean? What has the Japanese government done in these areas in the sixteen years since the Murayama Statement was issued? The statement played an invaluable role in positioning the Japanese government when it came to "remorse" and "apology" with regard to the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, China, South Korea, North Korea, and the United States, among others. But now that the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative has ended its activities, as has the Asian Women's Fund, what are the concrete actions to be taken? The Supreme Court decision of April 27, 2007, closed all possibilities of legal prosecution by individual private citizens in a Japanese court, on the basis of the treaty obligations of the governments that fought the war with Japan or had other motives to conclude an equivalent agreement with Japan. Does this not give the Japanese government room to take concrete actions outside the framework of legal obligation, the latest example being the comfort women issue (Togo 2007)?

Third, this leads us to the question of responsibility. The Murayama Statement seems to be clear in this respect. It does not introduce any divided view on the question of responsibility. However, this holistic approach shows, as stated earlier, an analytical weakness if not omission in the Murayama Statement, namely an inability to pinpoint who should bear the final responsibility, even after Japan has generally accepted its responsibility as a whole. It also exhibits analytical weakness with respect to the nature of responsibility. Apparently, people who clearly took no part in the atrocities are expected to bear this responsibility. Providing the names of the people who were actually responsible seems to have become virtually impossible sixty-seven years after the war ended. But then how can the verdict of the Tokyo Trials—which provided the names of the people responsible for commanding the war effort—be related to the holistic apology of the Murayama Statement? The answer to this question may have relevance to the long-debated question of the enshrinement of class A war criminals in Yasukuni.

## Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis above, three concrete policy directions can be proposed:

1 It is crucial to maintain and consolidate the Murayama Statement as Japan's basic position when facing the past. However, having

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worked through the complex issue of historical recognition for the past sixty-seven years, the Japanese government does not have to repeat the process at each political occasion, such as summits with neighboring countries. In her *Sorry States: Apologies in International Relations* Jennifer Lind argues that countries do not necessarily have to resort to the German type of apology, and that the historical evidence shows that "many bitter enemies successfully reconciled with only modest contrition" (2008, 180). The main point is to preserve the principles of the Murayama Statement in mind and action.

2 Three actions have been suggested by the liberal left, namely (i) to devote the proper attention to individuals and remembrance, morality, and education; (ii) to seek the implementation of concrete actions based on political responsibility; (iii) to pursue the issue of the responsibility of leaders and soldiers and of participants and non-participants, and to seek solutions to the controversies surrounding the Tokyo Trials and the Yasukuni Shrine.

3 I have concentrated almost exclusively on the position taken by Japan and its policy implications. However, as Murayama acknowledged in his statement, its ultimate purpose was to seek reconciliation. One apologizes because one feels sorry. One does not apologize on the condition that one is forgiven. Irrespective of China's or Korea's future policy, Japan should adhere to the policy guideline suggested here. Nevertheless, reconciliation works only in two directions. It cannot be achieved unless the other side is prepared to accept. Thus the question remains: What will China's and Korea's policies be?

## Notes

1 "Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama 'On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End' (15 August 1995)," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed October 23, 2011, http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html.

2 "Prime Minister's Address to the Diet," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, accessed October 23, 2011, http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/address9506.html.

3 "Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama" (see note 1).

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4 Mori expressed his view on October 26, 2011, and Fujino on November 18, 2011, both in public conferences.
5 The discussion took place on November 18, 2011.

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# 2

# Political Apology in Sino-Japanese Relations: The Murayama Statement and Its Receptions in China

*Daqing Yang*

**Abstract:** *The 1995 statement by Japan's socialist prime minister Tomiichi Murayama, made at a time when history issues had become a major problem between Japan and its neighbors, was welcomed in China. However, it did not constitute a turning point, largely because subsequent statements and actions by some Japanese politicians seemed to contradict its spirit. Although the Murayama Statement has been upheld by all subsequent cabinets in Japan, its efficacy in managing Sino-Japanese relations was limited until the Chinese government and analysts began searching for a new approach to Japan policy to bring the escalating history problems under control. Since 2006, the spirit of the Murayama Statement, coupled with a tacit understanding concerning mutual self-restraint, has become a minimum condition for China to contain its history problems with Japan.*

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This chapter explores the topic of political apology in Sino-Japanese relations after World War II. In particular, it examines the role of the 1995 Murayama Statement in Sino-Japanese relations by addressing two key issues. The first is how the Chinese—both the government and analysts—have viewed the 1995 Murayama Statement. The second is the contribution of the Murayama Statement to the relative calm between Japan and China concerning history issues in recent years.

The 1995 statement by Japan's socialist prime minister Tomiichi Murayama, made at a time when history issues had become a major problem between Japan and China, was welcomed in China. At the same time, it did not constitute a turning point, largely because subsequent actions by some Japanese politicians seemed to contradict its spirit. Although the Murayama Statement has been upheld by all subsequent cabinets in Japan, its efficacy in managing Sino-Japanese relations was limited until the Chinese government and analysts began searching for a new approach to Japan policy to bring the escalating history problems under control. Since 2006, the spirit of the Murayama Statement, coupled with a tacit understanding concerning certain activities, has become a minimum condition for China. Ultimately, for China, political apology and actions reflecting the principles of a "correct understanding of history" are needed to keep the history issues at bay.

## Political apology in postwar Sino-Japanese relations

Since the 1980s, the "history problem"—a shorthand for disputes over Japan's past aggression—has been a constant irritant in Japan's relations with its neighbors, including China. Before that time, however, China had not insisted on a Japanese apology or a "correct understanding of history." Although China raised alarms about "Japanese remilitarization" during the 1950s and 1960s, they were aimed more at Japan's military alliance with the United States than at Japanese views of the past war. What explains this virtual absence?

Ideational factors played a role. Shortly before Japan's formal surrender in August 1945, the Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi), called on his fellow Chinese to "repay hatred with virtue" in dealing with the Japanese. To be sure, pragmatic calculation was undoubtedly present, and the catchy turn of phrase did not prevent the Chinese government from seeking reparations from Japan and punishing several hundred

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Japanese war criminals. However, it is also true that the ending of the long and bloody war between the two countries went on relatively smoothly: within two years the vast majority of three million Japanese troops and civilians had been repatriated, and there was no large-scale retribution against the Japanese. Understandably, Chiang's call for magnanimity was heartily welcomed and appreciated by many Japanese (Wakamiya 1999). At the same time, not a few Japanese expressed contrition toward China. Prince Naruhiko Higashikuni, who briefly served as prime minister immediately after Japan's surrender, even contemplated sending an "apology mission" to China (Higashikuni 1948).

Interestingly, the Chinese Communists' policy toward Japan displayed some striking similarities to that of their erstwhile political and ideological rival Chiang, who fled to Taiwan after losing the civil war in China. It is true that the PRC government strongly opposed the US military presence in Japan and what it called the "revival of Japanese militarism," but it blamed the war on a small clique of Japanese militarists and called for friendship with the vast majority of Japanese people. Echoing nationalist leaders, the Communist government emphasized the fact that the Japanese people had been victims of their own militarist government during the war. In the mid-1950s, Beijing released most of the several hundred Japanese held in custody on suspicion of war crimes, and sentenced none of the remainder to death at their trials (Liu 2010). In meetings with Japanese visitors to China, Chinese leaders occasionally downplayed the need for them to apologize for Japan's past aggression. As Chinese premier Zhou Enlai told a Japanese Diet delegation in 1954, "The history of the past sixty years of Sino-Japanese relations was not good. However, it is a thing of the past, and we must turn it into a thing of the past. This is because friendship exists between the peoples of China and Japan" (Yamaguchi 1955, 130).

There are several reasons for all this. In part it was because those Japanese who visited China during the 1950s and 1960s often made apologies on their own. The fact that many of the top Communist leaders of China either had studied in Japan or relied on others who had might also have shaped their views of the country. This created a virtuous circle between the Chinese and a significant segment of the Japanese: as many Japanese readily acknowledged Japan's responsibility for its wartime aggression toward China, the Chinese government was keen to focus on improving present relations with Japan. Of course, this "forward-looking" attitude on Beijing's part was also motivated by self-interest during the Cold War: by

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winning the hearts and minds of the Japanese, China sought to weaken the US-led containment of China and win diplomatic recognition by Japan at the expense of its domestic arch-rival Chiang.[1] Although this Japan-friendly policy did not bear fruit immediately, it did relegate the past conflict to a low priority in Sino-Japanese relations.

However, settling past issues became a problem when Chinese and Japanese governments finally negotiated normalization during the early 1970s. When Japanese prime minister Kakuei Tanaka expressed "deep regret" for the fact that in the recent past Japan had caused China *mei-waku*, his Chinese hosts were not pleased to hear what was translated as "have caused great inconvenience" (*tian le hen da ma fan*). Contrary to the common perception that it was an error of interpretation, the Japanese government had decided on such wording in advance, on the basis of an assessment of domestic opinion (Liu 2010; Hattori 2011). Moreover, when the two sides met to finalize the terms of the normalization, Japanese diplomats insisted on the validity of the 1952 treaty between Japan and the Republic of China, which they argued had terminated the war between the two countries and ended China's "right to reparations from Japan." At this point, Chinese premier Zhou became agitated and vehemently denied that Chiang, who had fled the mainland, had had any right to renounce reparations, equating it to "build[ing] up his own reputation [for generosity] by dispensing other people's things" ("Basic Documents of Postwar Japanese International Relations," n.d.). It is clear, however, that Chinese leaders were more concerned with the issue of legitimacy vis-à-vis Taiwan than with Japan's attitude toward the past or war reparations themselves. After this clash, according to a Japanese journalist covering the meeting, Tanaka overruled the opposition of a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official and included in the joint communiqué acknowledgment of Japan's responsibility for wartime aggression (Hirano 1978, 82).

In any event, the joint communiqué issued by China and Japan constituted a formal settlement of the past: "the Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself." Even though this was more an admission of guilt than an outright apology to China, the Chinese leaders seemed satisfied and ready to move on, pledging that "the government of the People's Republic of China declares that in the interest of friendship between the Chinese and the Japanese peoples, it renounces its demand for war reparations from Japan" ("Basic Documents of Postwar Japanese International Relations"

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n.d.). The Chinese public, having virtually no outlet for their voice, were told to move on as well instead of holding grudges against Japan for their past sufferings. If reconciliation is the state of relations between former adversaries that no longer allow past conflict to hamper current cooperation, then Japan and China seemed to have achieved what philosopher David Crocker (1999) calls "thin" reconciliation.

## The Murayama Statement and China, 1995–2000

### Toward the Murayama Statement

This state of affairs did not last long, however. From the 1980s, and especially after the end of the Cold War, those conditions that made the "thin reconciliation" possible underwent significant changes: ideological shifts in both China and Japan (from class struggle to nationalism in China; decline of the left and rise of cultural nationalism in Japan), new dynamics of state–society relations, and a changing geopolitical environment. In 1982, alleged Japanese government attempts to whitewash Japan's past aggression became headline news in the media in Japan and led to Chinese (and Korean) official condemnation. The Chinese government has repeatedly called for a "correct understanding of history" from Japan. China's turn to patriotic education at the end of the 1970s, initially for domestic cohesion, increasingly took on an anti-Japanese tone. Chinese society became more vocal, especially on nationalist issues, and this voicing of opinion was increasingly difficult for the government to shut down.

By the beginning of the 1990s, so-called military comfort women (the mostly Asian women who were coerced or tricked into providing sexual service to the Japanese military during World War II) had become one of the dominant issues. Together with lawsuits for compensation for various wartime abuses, the comfort women issue highlighted the widespread dissatisfaction with the "postwar settlement" among Japan's neighbors. In Japan, after the conservative Liberal Democratic Party was driven out of power, political leaders began to make apologies for Japan's aggression in the past, which also received more coverage in history textbooks. This produced a backlash: conservative politicians, scholars, and artists began to decry "masochistic" tendencies at home and "foreign interference" from Japan's neighbors. This set in motion a gradual intensification of the "history wars" in East Asia and created a vicious cycle between Japan and its neighbors. The "thin reconciliation" began to unravel (Yang 2002).

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It was against this background that Socialist Party leader Tomiichi Murayama became Japan's prime minister, in a coalition government, in June 1994. As a leader from the left, Murayama, with his allies, sought to go beyond his predecessors in addressing the history problem. In May 1995, Murayama traveled to China and became the first Japanese prime minster to visit the Marco Polo Bridge outside Beijing, the site of the launch of Japan's full invasion of China in 1937. In his press conference in Beijing, Murayama repeated his pledge to "deeply reflect upon" Japan's past aggression (*People's Daily* May 5, 1995). By all standards, his visit to China was a successful one.

Since 1995 was the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, both Murayama and his coalition partners contemplated using the occasion to make proper statements on the issue of Japan's war record. As the head of the Socialist Party—a minority party in the coalition—however, Murayama faced enormous resistance from the conservative wing of the much larger Liberal Democratic Party coalition partner. Moreover, legal barriers and resistance from the bureaucracy made it nearly impossible for the Japanese government to reopen the topic of state compensation for foreign victims. The Murayama cabinet had limited room for maneuver (Ônuma 2007; Hatano 2011).

The ruling parties proposed a Diet resolution marking the anniversary. After difficult negotiation over the exact wording, the early draft was revised and the final resolution was adopted. However, in the Lower House, only 230 voted in favor, with the majority absent from the floor. Murayama's own statement on August 15, 1995, went much further. Drafted by senior Foreign Ministry officials, the statement underwent revisions and was eventually adopted by the entire cabinet (Hatano 2011, 183; Murayama and Sataka 2009). Concerning his motivation, Murayama later recalled that he wanted to "produce a consensual, unified view on the understanding of history, and with that to provide a future guide to Japan to some extent and to put a full stop to the Postwar Era" (Wakamiya 2006, 256).

## The Chinese official response

On August 16, 1995, the day after Prime Minister Murayama's statement, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued the following statement:

> We've taken notice of Prime Minister Murayama's statement on behalf of the Japanese government on the occasion of August 15. We consider it a positive gesture on the part of the Japanese government to deeply reflect upon the history of colonial rule and aggression in the past and to apologize

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> to the Asian peoples. We must point out, however, that there are still those in Japanese society, including some politicians, who refuse to correctly recognize that period of history. Correctly recognizing and facing history, seriously drawing on and learning the lessons of history is not only conducive to Japan continuing to tread the path of peaceful development, but also is helpful to the development of neighborly cooperation between Japan and other Asian countries. (*People's Daily* August 16, 1995)

Although the Chinese government took notice of the official status of the Statement, it used the second half of this paragraph to express its dissatisfaction. This was a clear reference to an incident only days before when Japan's minister of education, Yoshinobu Shimamura, had made a comment justifying Japan's past war in Asia.

Thereafter, a pattern seemed to develop in official interactions between Japan and China: visiting Japanese officials affirmed the Murayama Statement when they met with Chinese leaders, often without being asked. This was especially true whenever a new cabinet was installed or after a Japanese politician made statements that upset China.[2] Chinese officials often emphasized the importance of a "correct understanding of history," but they rarely brought up the Murayama Statement on their own. One exception was the occasion, in a meeting with his Japanese counterparts in 1996, when the Chinese foreign minister, Qian Qicheng, praised the Murayama Statement and appreciated that the new Hashimoto cabinet would continue the spirit of the Statement. Otherwise, officials deployed a somewhat neutral term: "we have taken notice" (*People's Daily* April 1, 1996).

The official media in China was generally positive toward Murayama. On August 15, 1995, the *People's Daily* published a written interview with him. In it, Murayama "solemnly stated that Japan deeply reflects on and wholeheartedly apologizes for the enormous damage and pain inflicted upon the Chinese people by Japan." The Chinese reporter added, "This is the first time a Japanese prime minister has clearly apologized for Japan's aggression against China." The Chinese news report on the Murayama Statement, however, did not clarify that the Statement was based on a unanimous cabinet decision (*People's Daily* August 15, 1995).

Almost immediately after the Statement was issued, however, the *People's Daily* reported that Murayama had told the Japanese Diet that the 1905 and 1910 treaties with Korea were legally valid, and it noted that the Koreans were not amused. A few months later, in November, Murayama's general affairs minister, Takami Eto, caused a stir when he tried to justify Japan's colonial rule in Korea. Reporting the Korean response, the *People's Daily* quoted the

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Korean foreign minister as saying that "Murayama's statement [over treaties with Korea] created an impasse in bilateral relations" and that "Eto's words have once again provoked the Korean people." The issue was brought to a close when Murayama personally wrote to the Korean president, Kim Young-sam, affirming that the treaties dated "from the imperialist era that denied national self-determination and dignity" and promising to "deeply reflect and sincerely apologize" for the colonial rule in Korea. The *People's Daily* reported from Tokyo that so far four members of the Murayama cabinet had made erroneous statements concerning history issues, and that the Eto episode showed the "limitations of the Murayama cabinet" in handling important matters (*People's Daily* October 14, November 9, and November 11, 1995).

The fact that these reports were carried in the official Chinese media indicates a degree of ambivalence about the efficacy of the Murayama Statement, although it seemed to enjoy a better image in the official media during the next few years. A *People's Daily* article in 1997 painted an optimistic picture: since signing the 1972 Sino-Japanese communiqué, it said, Japanese leaders had gradually made progress on the issue of properly recognizing Japanese aggression, presumably under the good influence of China. The 1995 Murayama Statement, according to the article, "played a positive role in facilitating smooth development of bilateral relations" (*People's Daily* July 10, 1997). This was probably the most explicit public praise for the Statement.

Outside the government and official media, reactions to the Murayama Statement were somewhat mixed. Liu Jiangyong, one of the leading Chinese experts on Japan, praised Murayama for "squarely facing history, reflecting upon the past, and looking into the future." He emphasized the several unprecedented gestures of contrition by a Japanese prime minister: the visit to the Marco Polo Bridge; the letter of apology to the leaders of China, Korea, and other countries; "the first apology to China" in the written interview; and the call for public donations to compensate comfort women victims.

> Fifty years had passed since the war, and the Japanese Prime Minister has taken such a clear position, so China ought to treat history with a forward-looking attitude and develop friendship and cooperation with Japan.
>
> However, it is disappointing to peoples in Asia that Japan sends mixed signals to the world concerning its attitude toward its history of aggression.

He went on to note that on the very day Murayama had made his statement, several of his cabinet members had paid a visit to the controversial

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Yasukuni Shrine and various groups had formed in the Diet that had "tried to overturn the history of Japanese aggression" (Liu 1996).

## Dissonance over apology: Chinese leaders' visits to Japan

In 1998, the Chinese president, Zhang Zemin, made a historic state visit to Japan. Although a financial crisis was affecting the Asia region, the Chinese government also placed considerable importance on history issues. Jiang and the Japanese prime minister, Keizō Obuchi, issued the Joint Declaration on the Establishment of a Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation for Peace and Development. The document, which took the form of a joint press communiqué, defined the nature of the relations between China and Japan for the new century, envisaged the long-term development of friendly exchanges and cooperation in various fields, and identified all-round arrangements for these developments (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2000). The communiqué touched upon history issues:

> Both sides consider squarely facing the past and correctly understanding it is an important foundation for developing Sino-Japanese relations. Japan abides by the 1971 Sino-Japanese Joint Communiqué and the Prime Minister's Statement of August 15, 1995, is acutely aware of the responsibility for inflicting upon Chinese people enormous calamity and damage by aggression against China during a certain period in the past, and expresses deep reflection of this fact.

Although the language used here is similar to that of the Murayama Statement, "apology from the heart," a phrase used by Murayama, was notably absent. The Chinese government demanded that a formal apology for past aggression against China be written into the joint statement, but its demand was not fully met. Jiang went on to speak about history issues at every opportunity: he spoke of the spirit of learning from history and looking to the future, reviewing the history of Sino-Japanese relations, and openly summing up historical experiences, both positive and negative. The Japanese media and the public reacted negatively to Jiang's stern and repeated lecturing on the history problem during his visit (Tanaka 2008; Jin 2008).

The Chinese leadership seemed to learn from this. History issues did not dominate during Chinese premier Zhu Rongji's visit to Japan in October 2000. Nevertheless, Zhu caused quite a stir when he stated, while appearing as a guest at a town-hall-style meeting on a TBS program hosted by Tsukuchi Tetsuya, that Japan had never formally apologized

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to China. In answering an audience question about how long Japan had to continue to apologize, since China repeatedly demanded an apology from Japan, Zhu stated:

> This time I have not asked the Japanese people to apologize. I'd like to mention that in all formal documents Japan has never apologized to the Chinese people. *Of course in 1995 then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama expressed feelings of apology to peoples of Asia in general terms. But in all formal documents Japan never apologized to Chinese people.* Therefore, one cannot say China endlessly demands Japan to apologize. No! Whether to apologize is your own business, but we hope you would consider this issue. (Zhu 2009, 191; italics added)

Zhu most likely had in mind the failure of China and Japan to agree to a written apology during Jiang's visit in 1998. Nevertheless, his statement offers a glimpse into how the Murayama Statement was viewed by China's top leaders.

## The Murayama Statement in peril, 2001–2006

How well did the Murayama Statement work in subsequent years? As will be shown, it failed to calm the history problem in Sino-Japanese relations. At the same time, Chinese leaders and the media came to emphasize "the spirit of the Murayama Statement" in dealing with Japanese actions on history issues of which they did not approve.

### The Japanese revisionist history textbook

Even if the Murayama Statement did not fully satisfy China, it certainly created even more backlash in Japan, which was already building up in the early 1990s. Conservative Diet members established groups aimed at countering such apologies. Outside the Diet, conservative scholars and activists launched a movement to create a new history textbook to bolster the pride of Japan. By 2001, their textbook, published by Fusôsha, was ready for government approval.

The Chinese government and the scholarly community reacted with alarm. In February 2001, when the Fusôsha textbook was submitted for Japanese government approval, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman characterized the approval of this textbook as "a grave matter of political principle." He reminded the Japanese government of the promise that Japan was to handle history issues "strictly according to the principles laid out in the Sino-Japanese joint communiqué and the spirit of the Murayama

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Statement." In early April, after the Fusôsha textbook had been approved by the Japanese government pending numerous minor revisions, the Chinese Foreign Ministry expressed "strong anger and dissatisfaction." It accused the Japanese government of evading its responsibility and said that by granting approval, it "raised serious doubts in the international community about its real stance on the history issue as well as the sincerity of its previous reflections and apologies."

An academic gathering "strongly demanded the Japanese Ministry of Education learn the lessons from the two previous textbook incidents and abide by the 'neighboring country' clause [in the Miyazawa Statement of 1982] and the spirit of the Murayama Statement," as well as abiding by the three political documents between Japan and China (*People's Daily* February 5, 2001). The Chinese official media pointed out the apparent contradiction in the Japanese government's position: on the one hand, Prime Minister Yoshirō Mori had indicated that "the screening of textbooks should follow the spirit of the Murayama Statement"; on the other, the minister of education, Nobutaka Machimura, stated in the Diet that "the country does not have a fixed understanding of history" (*People's Daily* March 13, 2001).

After the Japanese government's approval of the Fusôsha textbook was announced, the Chinese government condemned the decision. The Chinese ambassador to Japan noted that the Japanese government's decision violated the "important consensus" reached between the two countries during Jiang Zemin's 1998 visit. Japan should implement the spirit of the Murayama Statement in its actions (*People's Daily* April 4, 2001). That the Japanese government would approve a textbook created by a group with an unmistakable nationalist bent was shocking to China (and Korea). Even if (mis)statements by politicians denying Japan's war responsibility were individual actions, the approval of the textbook was an action of the Japanese government (*People's Daily* April 6, 2001).

In July, the Japanese government notified China that it would not require further changes to the revised Fusôsha history textbook. It reassured the Chinese government that the views expressed in the textbook were not in accordance with those of the Japanese government, which had been expressed in the Murayama Statement. In response the Chinese Foreign Ministry reaffirmed that "correctly understanding and treating that period of history constitutes an important political foundation of Sino-Japanese relations." Although it expressed "strong displeasure," it added that "China has taken note of the stance on history issues

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expressed by the Japanese government, but places more importance on its actual actions" (*People's Daily* April 12, 2001). In this way, the Murayama Statement seemed to offer both sides a minimum common ground and helped bring the Fusôsha textbook case to a temporary close.

## Koizumi's visits to China and the Yasukuni Shrine

Barely a month after the approval of the Fusosha textbook, another issue surfaced in Sino-Japanese relations. When Junichiro Koizumi became prime minister of Japan in 2001, he, like his predecessors, reiterated his adherence to the Murayama Statement. Like Murayama he also visited the Marco Polo Bridge. At the adjacent Chinese Museum of the War of Resistance against Japan, he stated: "I express sincere apology and condolence to the Chinese victims of that aggression. Japan shall squarely face and reflect upon this history and will never again start a war."

At the same time, honoring a campaign pledge, Koizumi insisted on visiting the Yasukuni Shrine each year "to renew his feelings for peace." China did not take his intention lightly, but its demand that Koizumi not go to the shrine apparently had no impact. On August 13, 2001, Koizumi visited the shrine. Two days later, five cabinet members also made a visit. The Chinese government accused Koizumi of "betraying the grave statements and promises on history issues made by the Japanese government." In the next four year, the Yasukuni visits rocked Sino-Japanese relations, culminating in China's boycotting of summit meetings with Koizumi.

China reacted to Koizumi's visits with frustration and condemnation. The government resorted to a predicable cocktail of countermeasures: diplomatic protest, criticism in the media, reduction in the number of high-level meetings, low-key celebration of significant bilateral events, and emphasis on publicizing war atrocities committed by Japan's military. Chinese leaders voiced reservation over Japan's bid to gain a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. In spring 2005 Sino-Japanese relations reached a new low when tens of thousand of Chinese staged mass protests in a number of major cities across China.

In April 2005, at the Asia-Africa Summit in Jakarta, Prime Minister Koizumi made a statement apologizing for past Japanese aggression in Asia, repeating the ten-year-old Murayama Statement nearly verbatim. China's official press was not impressed. One article in the *People's Daily* was pointedly titled "Action Is More Important Than Promise." It quoted a Japanese Democratic Party official as saying that "it is meaningless to quote from the

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Murayama Statement, and one must take actions to win the trust of Asia." Another article, under a similar title, went into some detail:

> It is recalled that on August 15, 1995, then Prime Minister of Japan Tomiichi Murayama made the famous Murayama Statement. In it he acknowledged the enormous damage and pain inflicted upon Asian countries by Japan's aggressive behavior, and not only expressed sincere self-reflection but promised to tell the true history to the young generation in Japan in order to avoid repeating past mistakes. These words by Murayama were once a great relief to Asian neighbors. Nobody had expected that Murayama's words would have no restraining authority over some Japanese politicians whatsoever. Since then, Tarô Aso, Shinzô Abe, Takami Eto, Shigeto Nakano and other key cabinet members continued to behave as they liked. They not only visited the Yasukuni Shrine, but also often made wild statements and continue to justify aggression. Prime Minister Koizumi has not even taken the Murayama Statement to his heart, but has visited the Yasukuni Shrine four years in a row. Moreover, we noted that Koizumi's statement is basically a repetition of the Murayama Statement, with nothing beyond it. The past is a teacher. We have reason to be cautiously vigilant while welcoming Koizumi's statement. (*People's Daily* April 25, 2005)

Both the history textbook's approval and Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine once again placed the Murayama Statement in the spotlight. From the Chinese perspective, some Japanese politicians were insincere, since they paid lip service to the Murayama Statement but in action continued to visit the Yasukuni Shrine (*People's Daily* April 26, 2005). Interestingly enough, former prime minister Murayama himself did much to defend his personal legacy, including the Murayama Statement. During one of his numerous visits to China, in 2004 he delivered an eighty-minute speech entitled "The Murayama Statement and Sino-Japanese Relations" to a crowd of Chinese and Japanese. He criticized Koizumi for failing to understand the principles of the Murayama Statement; otherwise he would not have visited the Yasukuni Shrine. Reporting Murayama's comment, the *People's Daily* briefly introduced the Murayama Statement and noted that "its spirit has been followed by subsequent cabinets to the present but the understanding of history issues on the part of Japanese leaders has rarely gone so deep" (*People's Daily* February 13, 2006).

## The "new thinking" debate in China

In 2002, a group of Chinese opinion leaders and analysts began to call for what they termed "new thinking" in China's Japan policy. Ma Licheng,

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an editorial writer for the official *People's Daily*, fired the first salvo by expressing his concern at rising popular anti-Japanese nationalism in China. As a victorious power and great nation, Ma pointed out, China should not be too demanding with Japan: "The issue of [Japan's] apology is already resolved, and [China] should not insist on any particular format." The Japanese government had apologized to China on twenty-one occasions in the three decades since diplomatic normalization, he said. Ma later published a book in Japan with the title "Japan No Longer Needs to Apologize to China" (Ma 2002, 2004).

In contrast to the journalistic style of Ma, Shi Yinhong, one of the most respected international relations scholars in China and an expert on Sino-American relations, called for a "diplomatic revolution," or "Sino-Japanese rapprochement." From a strategic perspective, Shi argued that such rapprochement would serve China's interest by preventing Japan from closely allying with the United States in containing China. China and Japan needed to understand each other's core interest: security, economic as well as emotional. While trying to minimize the potential for conflict, they should strive to build and increase areas of common interest. Just as conflict in other areas—such as natural resources and territorial disputes—often spills over into history issues, increasing cooperation between China and Japan on significant issues such as the environment and energy could contribute to the confidence-building that is required for reconciliation over history. Satisfactory apology or not, history issues, then, had to be shelved in order to pursue China's more important core interests. Shi outlined the steps to be taken:

> First, over a relatively long period of time, China remains generally satisfied with the extent to which the Japanese government has openly reflected upon and apologized for the crimes of aggression against China in the past, unless the Japanese government backtracks in a severe manner. In other words, to remove the Sino-Japanese dispute over "history problems" from the diplomatic agenda vis-à-vis Japan for a relatively long period, and withdraw it from official and semi-official propaganda accordingly. To handle the greatest issue that increases hostility and prevents rapprochement, China must embrace, in addition to patience, a historical confidence that [history issues] will ultimately be resolved; China must possess a sense of priority with strategic consideration, an idea of grand strategy taking into consideration China's overall external environment and overall interest. (Shi 2003)

The "new thinking toward Japan" provoked a heated debate within China. Many voiced strong criticism, in print or on the Internet, and insisted that

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"history cannot be forgotten" (Reilly 2010, 59–61). For instance, one historian rejected the view that China's demand for a formal written apology from Japan resulted from rising popular nationalism in China. However, he cautioned against considering the demand for a Japanese apology a "diplomatic objective," because Japan might then satisfy China's demand simply as a diplomatic tactic. China's "supreme objective," in his view, was for Japan to "really reflect upon its war of aggression" (Yuan 2004).

Although their voices were largely drowned out in the popular media and on the Internet, Ma and Shi did find some support among scholars of international relations. For example, in the same policy journal a young Chinese scholar of international relations called for "changes to present ways of handling history issues and to lower the temperature in China's reactions. In the meantime, the government should cultivate friendly feelings toward Japan and cultivate a psychological basis among people in both China and Japan." The author did not mention the Murayama Statement, but addressed the issue of Japanese apology. Obviously not satisfied with the existing apology, he noted that "China cannot influence or change the internal *Zeitgeist* in Japan, nor does China have the power to force Japan to bow and admit guilt." "Even if Japan makes a written apology," he noted, "it would give China little concrete benefit beyond psychological satisfaction" (Xue 2003).

The public debate over "new thinking" seemed inconclusive, but some of the key policy recommendations showed striking parallels with shifts in official policy. In fact, some Chinese analysts began calling for a rethinking of the Japan policy and a shifting of emphasis away from history issues as early as 1997. The public discussion of "new thinking" around 2002–2003 was a culmination of such rethinking and may well have been a trial balloon for the new Chinese leadership under Hu Jintao. In any case, improving relations with Japan seemed to be in tune with newly minted concepts such as "building a harmonious society" and "China's peaceful rise." The history issue, then, had to be contained while China pursued its core interests (Zhu 2005).

## History in the age of "common strategic interests"

In September 2006, Koizumi finally stepped down as prime minister. Shinzō Abe, his successor, a young politician known for his nationalist views, chose to visit China on his first overseas trip. It was described as a trip that "broke the ice." Reciprocating his visit, the Chinese premier, Wen

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Jiabao, visited Japan in 2007, in what was described as a "trip of warm spring." In his speech to the Japanese Diet, Premier Wen refrained from seeking new apologies from Japan. Instead, he reiterated the Chinese "official line": the older generation of Chinese leaders had repeatedly stated that the responsibility for that war of aggression should be borne by a very small number of militarists; the vast majority of Japanese people were also victims of war; the Chinese must maintain friendly relations with the Japanese people (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007a).

China and Japan launched the first-ever government-sponsored joint history commission at the end of 2006 to study the entire history of Sino-Japanese relations from antiquity to the postwar era. Like Shi Yinhong, Professor Shinichi Kitaoka, who headed the Japanese team, pointed out that the joint effort backed by the governments could depoliticize some of the countries' differences and allow political leaders to focus on other urgent issues confronting them (Kitaoka 2007). The commission seems to have worked for both governments, although not all historians are happy about it.

Since then, both Chinese and Japanese political leaders have exercised considerable self-restraint over the sensitive issues of history (for example, Yasukuni Shrine visits) and have chosen to emphasize "a mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests." This was affirmed in a series of high-level meetings and joint statements.[3] Perhaps more importantly, when sensitive history issues did come up in the media, the Chinese government refrained from escalating them as it had done before. For instance, in May 2007, when it was reported that Prime Minister Abe had sent potted plants to the Yasukuni Shrine, the Foreign Ministry simply made the following comment:

> The Yasukuni Shrine is a matter of grave political sensitivity in Sino-Japanese relations. China and Japan have reached an agreement to overcome obstacles affecting bilateral relations and promote healthy development of friendly cooperation between the two countries. This shared understanding should be followed.[4]

Later that year, during his visit to India, Abe met with the descendants of the Indian justice at the Tokyo Trials, R. Pal, who had issued a dissenting verdict. In response, the Chinese Foreign Ministry refrained from direct criticism of Abe but affirmed:

> The Far Eastern International Military Tribunal has made a stern and just verdict on Japanese militarism. It represents the rightful yearning for peace

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> and opposition to war among all peoples of the world, including those of Japan. It is also the important foundation of Japan's return to the international community after the war. There has long been a definitive verdict in the international community. (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2007b)[5]

In 2008, Japanese newspapers reported that one of the country's top military officers, Japan's Air Self-Defense Force chief of staff, Toshio Tamogami, had published an essay that denied Japan's war responsibility and openly challenged the Murayama Statement. The Japanese government acted swiftly to remove him from office. Although his dismissal may have had more to do with the violation of civilian control of the military in Japan, repercussions for relations with Japan's neighbors were no doubt taken into consideration. The Chinese government reaffirmed that "correct understanding and handling of history is a political foundation of healthy and stable development of Sino-Japanese relations" (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008).

All in all, Sino-Japanese relations after Koizumi's premiership have not been rocked by disputes over history, as the tacit agreement between the two governments seems to have held. What explains China's restraint on history issues in recent years?

A number of factors are relevant. The "new thinking" on Japan policy closely resembled Chinese government policy in the post-Koizumi years: no escalation of history issues, and efforts to improve public exchanges and attitudes. Equally important, there is no question that this policy would not have worked without the cooperation of Japanese leaders from Abe onwards. The situation became somewhat more relaxed after the Liberal Democratic Party was driven out of power in 2009. No cabinet members in the Democratic Party of Japan government have visited the controversial Yasukuni Shrine until 2012. Other facilitating factors include the relative calm over the Taiwan issue, with the Kuomintang's return to power in 2008 temporarily removing another major irritant in bilateral relations between China and Japan. Moreover, economic interdependence between China and Japan has continued to grow. In 2009, China overtook the United States for the first time to become the largest destination for Japanese exports. By 2011, Japan's exports to China had reached US$161.5 billion, and imports from China stood at US$183.5 billion (Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011).

Although disputes over history have not dominated Sino-Japanese relations as they did in the previous decade, not all is well between the two neighbors. For one thing, territorial disputes—often with roots in

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different interpretations of history and international law—have increasingly flared up and spiraled out of control. This was especially true in the case of the arrest of a Chinese fishing boat captain by Japan's Coast Guard in waters around the disputed Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in September 2010. More recently, China reacted angrily when the Japanese government purchased three of the islets from their private Japanese owner. At the same time, the Chinese side seems to have stalled in implementing the agreement for joint development of gas fields in the East China Sea, reached in 2008. Conflicting claims over such islands and waters now constitute a major source of bilateral friction. From the Japanese perspective, frequent intrusions into the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone by Chinese ships and airplanes demonstrate a new Chinese assertiveness, and Japanese responses, such as naming the islands and dispatching the Self-Defense Force to the area, are likely to lead to retaliation.

Another ominous sign in bilateral relations is the persistently high level of negativity in popular mutual perceptions. In a nationwide poll conducted in China in late 2006, 90 percent of those who viewed Japan unfavorably chose "Japan's aggression against China in modern times" or "Japan's lack of serious retrospection for the aggression" as the primary cause for their views (Jiang 2006). There has been some improvement in Chinese attitudes toward Japan, especially after the great earthquake in China in 2009, when Japan sent a rescue team. The relative calm over history seems to have played a role as well. The leading causes for the negative views, however, continue to be related to the past war or "failure to correctly recognize the history of aggression" (Genron NPO 2011). Any improvements may be fragile, as evidenced by the popular anger in China over the recent denial of the Nanjing Massacre by the populist mayor of Nagoya and his refusal to retract it. Moreover, there has been no similar improvement in attitudes toward China in Japan. "China's criticism of Japan over history issues" continues to be one of the major causes for the negative view of China among Japanese people. This indicates that the sources of Japanese negative attitudes are most likely to be found elsewhere. In fact, the very Japanese perception that the Chinese are overwhelmingly "anti-Japanese" may be hard to change. As one scholar has recently argued, while the Chinese party-state retains an impressive capacity to shape the narratives surrounding critical periods of modern Chinese history, Chinese leaders are likely to find themselves increasingly constrained by domestic forces and by external events beyond their control (Reilly 2011).

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## Conclusion

At the press conference after he made his now-famous statement on August 15, 1995, Prime Minister Murayama was asked to clarify what he meant by the "erroneous national policy" in his speech. Specifically, he was asked whether the Shōwa Emperor should bear any responsibility, and which cabinets made what erroneous policies. Understandably, Murayama denied that the emperor had any responsibility and then skirted the second part of the question altogether to emphasize his apology to the Asian victims (Murayama 1995). Indeed, some see the lack of clarity on the question of responsibility as a key deficiency of the Murayama Statement. Nevertheless, as a clarification of the Japanese government's views on Japan's past aggression and an apology to Asian victims in general, the Murayama Statement is significant both in itself and in the fact that it has been upheld by subsequent cabinets in Japan.

Neither of these attributes may have fully satisfied the Chinese (or the Koreans for that matter). The Chinese government and analysts have tended to emphasize the fact that words do not seem to match actions for some Japanese politicians. Of course, this is because the Chinese government and analysts interpret the Murayama Statement in their own way: there should be no official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine; no government approval of revisionist history textbooks; no public statements by politicians denying Japanese aggression or atrocities. However, the Chinese probably realized such expectations had to be backed up by their own actions to elicit reciprocity from Japan. In the end, it was this awareness that led, after Koizumi stepped down, to a new kind of mutual understanding between the Chinese and Japanese leaders that potentially explosive issues of history had to be properly managed. It is this new understanding that has preserved the ceasefire over historical disputes between Japan and China.

In her work on apologies in international politics, political scientist Jennifer Lind points to the irony that well-meaning efforts, such as apologies, to soothe relations between former enemies can actually inflame them as a result of the backlash they generate at home. Moreover, she argues that international reconciliation can take place without apologies or other gestures of contrition (Lind 2008). An examination of apologies in recent Sino-Japanese relations seems to support her warning about the backlash and its damaging effect. However, some form of apology seems to have been in place between Japan and China after the war, even though the emphasis on this has varied greatly depending on the overall

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agenda of the two countries. In this light, even though the Murayama Statement has failed to live up to Murayama's own expectations that it would draw a line under Japan's history problems with its neighbors, it has at least allowed China and Japan to manage potentially disruptive history issues. This is no small achievement.

The September 2012 Diaoyu/Senkaku disputes will impact all aspects of the historical memory issues between Japan and China, but it is too soon to judge the depth of this impact, and thus analysis of these disputes is outside the scope of this book.

## Notes

1 Here the theory of elite myth-making may imply elites cynically fabricating myths out of thin air rather than themselves embracing such myths as their worldview.
2 Japanese officials or politicians who have evoked the Murayama Statement during their visits to China include foreign minister Makiko Tanaka (2001), head of the Conservative Party Takeshi Noda (2001), foreign minister Junko Kawaguchi (2002), and head of the Democratic Party Seiji Maehara (2005). Controversial statements have included those by Seisuke Okuno (1996), Seiroku Kajiyama (1997), and Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori (2000). A Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman also evoked the Murayama Statement after the Osaka International Peace Center allowed a meeting by neo-nationalists denying the Nanjing Massacre in 2000.
3 These include the Joint Statement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Comprehensive Promotion of a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests" (2008).
4 The Chinese government made a similar comment when Prime Minister Tarō Asō sent potted plants to the Yasukuni Shrine in April 2009.
5 The Chinese government also remained restrained when Yoshihiko Noda, then running for president of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, commented that convicted Class A war criminals were not considered guilty under Japanese domestic law.

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# 3

# In Search of the Perfect Apology: Korea's Responses to the Murayama Statement

*Youngshik D. Bong*

**Abstract:** *Recent public opinion surveys show that the South Korean public has become either unaware of the 1995 Murayama Statement or confused about its core message in the absence of concrete measures by the Japanese government that would have converted the words of Japan's apology for its colonial past into policy measures. But rejecting the Murayama Statement's value as an important official document on historical reconciliation and justice would trap the political elites and the public in both South Korea and Japan in their own negative self-fulfilling prophecies, leading them to believe that it was a mistake to put their trust in the other government making genuine efforts to settle historical issues.*

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## The apology issue between Japan and South Korea

Unresolved territorial and historical issues between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK, or South Korea) have become increasingly politicized (Kim 2005). The politicization of history has impeded progress in bilateral cooperation between the two governments. Efforts to upgrade the trilateral security cooperation between the United States, South Korea, and Japan have failed to overcome sentiments of concern entrenched in domestic politics. It is therefore premature to allow Japan to assume an enlarged role in regional security. Critical voices in South Korea demand, as an absolute precondition for further cooperation, that Japan objectively face its history and accept full responsibility for the misdeeds it committed during its period of military imperialism in Asia. During the "historical textbook crisis" of 2000–2001, the South Korean government cancelled a joint military exercise with Japan and temporarily banned imports of a number of Japanese pop culture products (Kirk 2001). Seoul also declined to accept the US proposal to invite the Japanese Self-Defense Forces to join the US–ROK joint naval exercises conducted in the Yellow Sea after North Korea's shelling of Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010.

South Korea's reservations regarding the potential elevation of levels of cooperation and integration with Japan are not confined to the realm of national security. Negotiations with Japan for a free trade agreement have been gradual and protracted, and the agreement has remained by and large an ideal abstract goal to be achieved in the distant future. This lack of progress in talks on economic partnership is puzzling, considering the substantial objective conditions in favor of economic integration in existence.

Experts on East Asian political economy often point out objective conditions under which a trend toward higher levels of economic integration between the two countries might be expected. In state-to-state trade in 2010, Japan and South Korea were each other's third largest partner. Korean exports to Japan reached $28 billion in 2010, which accounted for 6 percent of Korea's total value of exports and 4 percent of Japan's total value of imports (Korea International Trade Association 2010). Imports from Japan reached $64 billion, which accounted for 15 percent of Korea's total value of imports and 8 percent of Japan's total value of exports (Japan External Trade Organization 2010).

Chung-in Moon and Taehwan Kim argue that the 1997 Asian financial crisis "gradually changed" South Korea's "attitude toward Japan's

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regional economic initiatives" (Moon and Kim 2004, 269). Moon and Kim also point out that the increase in South Korea's intraregional economic interdependence has compelled it to actively facilitate regional bilateral and multilateral free trade arrangements (FTAs) because South Korea "stands to gain the most from participating" in any "subregional FTA involving China or Japan" (Moon and Kim 2004, 268). Promoting an FTA with South Korea is a rational strategy for Japan to maintain the long-term growth potential of its national economy. William Grimes notes that, at least over the past decade, the Japanese economy has become more closely integrated into East Asia. He observes that, since 1979, Japan has imported more from East Asia than from North America and, since 1990, has exported more to East Asia than to any other region (Grimes 2004, 184–85). This trend appears to be strengthening, owing to the continued growth of the South Korean economy and the spectacular rise of the economy of the People's Republic of China (PRC, or China).

Given these assessments, it may seem puzzling that South Korea and Japan have remained reluctant to move ahead with proposals for economic cooperation and integration, as theoretical analyses would predict. It is even more puzzling when the lack of progress between South Korea and Japan is compared with the successful ratification of the Korea–United States FTA in 2010 and ongoing diplomatic negotiations between Seoul and Beijing for an FTA.

One of the main reasons for South Korea's reluctance to upgrade its partnership with Japan, a reluctance that Japan tends to reciprocate, is a strong suspicion in South Korean public opinion of Japanese power. International security scholars whose research emphasizes the influence of identity and norms on international relations have noted that a durable security partnership requires trust and a common identity among potential members (Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; Suh 2007). They argue that the creation of a regional community is often predicated upon achieving "deep" historical reconciliation between former adversaries (Crocker 1999; He 2008; Ku 2008). The fact that South Korea and Japan have not yet signed any agreement for high-level security cooperation signals that the two countries have not built sufficient trust and a common identity. One telling example came when South Korea called off signing the General Security of Military Information Agreement on June 29, 2012, less than an hour before the scheduled official signing, citing strong public outcry against closer military ties with Japan.

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Jennifer Lind (2002) explains how apologies and denials affect the perceptions of threat between countries. One state perceives another state's power and intentions by evaluating the way it admits to and demonstrates remorse for its past aggression and atrocities. In Lind's theory, apology reduces threat perception in three ways. First, apologies signify a low level of nationalism within the state (Van Evera 1997). They signal that the state is no longer seeking expansion to restore its former glory. Second, apologies by a previously aggressive state generate emotional effects that influence the cognitive processes of the people of the formerly victimized state. Apologies help restrain people in the formerly victimized state from interpreting ambiguous information negatively or concluding, without concrete evidence, that the formerly aggressive state harbors hostile intentions. Third, apologies signal that the formerly aggressive state rejects hostile intentions and accepts peaceful norms. Acknowledgment of and remorse for past misdeeds are understood by other states as signals that the formerly aggressive state has broken away from its past behavior (Lind 2002, 4–6).

According to Lind's theory of apology, levels of threat perception remain high between South Korea and Japan because the issue of apologies and denials by Japan remains prominent in the South Korean consciousness (Lind 2002). From the perspective of the South Korean public and political elites, Japan has failed adequately to apologize for its past wrongdoings. The South Korean government has persistently conveyed these sentiments to the Japanese government through a variety of channels. At present, there is no strong indication that the ROK government will cease pressuring the Japanese government to apologize any time in the near future. ROK president Lee Myung-bak delivered a stern message, demanding Japan's heartfelt apology and official acceptance of responsibility for the plight of the victims of imperial wars and colonial occupation, both during a summit meeting with his counterpart, Japanese prime minister Yoshihiko Noda, on December 18, 2011 (Matsumura and Hakoda 2011), and in his message to the nation on March 1, 2012, in commemoration of the March First Movement of 1919 (Kaise 2012). The two governments also clashed over the erection of monuments dedicated to the wartime sex slaves (or "comfort women") in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul. On August 10 President Lee visited Dokdo (called Takeshima by the Japanese) for the first time as the head of the state and stated that the emperor of Japan should not visit South Korea unless he is ready to deliver a heartfelt apology for the Korean victims of the colonial occupation by Japan.

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According to a recent public opinion survey, there is a wide perception gap between Japan and South Korea on whether the issue of the colonial past has been settled. In the ROK-PRC-Japan Survey conducted by *Donga Ilbo* and Research & Research on December 18 and 19, 2011, 31 percent of Japanese respondents said that they believed historical issues, including Japan's colonial occupation of Korea and China, were already settled, and 61 percent of Japanese answered that there were still unsettled historical issues between Japan and South Korea. In contrast, only 8.2 percent of Korean respondents appeared to believe these issues were settled, and 87.5 percent believed the issues were unresolved (Research & Research 2011, 32).

With this as background, this chapter investigates the potential of the 1995 Murayama Statement to act as a centerpiece document for Japan and South Korea making progress toward settling the apology issue. It first examines the merits and limits inherent in the Murayama Statement in terms of whether it could be accepted by both Japan and South Korea as an essential basis for negotiations by possibly settling the terms for historical reconciliation. It then examines the conditions that affect the importance and utility of the Murayama Statement as a core document for apology diplomacy between Japan and South Korea.

The analysis of survey data regarding public opinion in South Korea and the chronology of political events related to the apology issue imply that there is a substantial perception gap between South Korea and Japan over whether their historical issues are settled. It also indicates that the Murayama Statement is neither widely recognized nor highly popular among South Koreans as a significant official document that shows Japan to have made a clean and irreversible break from its imperial past. For its content and spirit of introspection, the Murayama Statement may easily be regarded as the most "advanced" official document ever produced by the Japanese government in terms of admitting its moral and political responsibilities for its past colonial occupations and its catastrophic wars. However, in the eyes of South Koreans, the Statement is not advanced enough to assure Japan's candid and forward-looking commitment to historical reconciliation.

## Merits and limits of the Murayama Statement

What would make the Murayama Statement a critical centerpiece on the basis of which Japan and South Korea might effectively negotiate the

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settlement of the apology issue, and thereby progress toward historical reconciliation? Broadly speaking, we can identify constitutive elements (what is said in the Statement) and perceptional elements (how the Statement is received and cited). First, the Murayama Statement should contain elements that are positive and useful to Japan and South Korea in supporting their positions in negotiations over the settlement of the apology issue. Those elements might be found in the particular choice of words, in descriptions of critical and controversial historical facts, and in declarations of official positions. The Statement has both positive and negative aspects, which may undermine its coherence.

Second, once announced, the Statement must be made to "stick" in negotiations between Japan and South Korea in order to settle the issue of apology through subsequent events and by conscious effort on the part of both governments. Any later denial of the content of the Statement by a party to the settlement negotiations would undermine the status of the Statement. Conversely, citing the Statement as a key reference on the matter of the settlement of the colonial past and the accomplishment of historical reconciliation, in political speeches, diplomatic dialogue, and intellectual discourse, would consequently elevate the significance of the Statement. As a result, the Statement would be perceived as a critical reference by both parties to negotiations concerning the settlement of the apology issue.

There are a few positive elements, both constitutive and perceptional, in the Murayama Statement. First, the Statement clarifies for whom the apology is intended. It clearly states that Asia was the victim of Japan's imperialism in the past, and is thus the subject of Japan's apology. The Murayama Statement contains this in a clause stating that there was "tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations." Such focus on Asia and its people is in contrast to the Tokyo Trials, in which Korea and Taiwan were missing as victims of Japan's "aggression."

Furthermore, the Murayama Statement frankly admits that Japan carried out tremendous atrocities against Koreans and the Chinese in the past. Compared with Japan's earlier apologies, which were mainly expressions of personal remorse by government leaders and the Japanese emperor, the Murayama Statement was explicit in the language it used to describe Japan's responsibility for the atrocities that affected all Asian nations and people during Japan's military expansion in the early twentieth century (Dodds 2003; Edwards 2005, 325). This admission is also in contrast to the wording of the preamble of the 1972 joint communiqué signed by Beijing and Tokyo. The Statement, sanctioned by the Japanese

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Diet, recognized destructive acts perpetrated by Japan's military expansionism as "irrefutable facts of history" (Edwards 2005, 325).[1] After the Murayama Statement, Japan's responsibility for perpetrating such atrocities during its colonial past is no longer a point of contention between Japan and other Asian countries.

Third, as Kazuhiko Togo (2012) points out, the Murayama Statement was the first official statement of apology for colonial rule made by a former colonial power (including the former colonial powers in Europe and North America).

The Murayama Statement appears to inscribe the parameters of official apologies delivered by the Japanese government on important occasions since 1995. For instance, Article 2 of the Pyongyang Declaration, which was signed by the DPRK National Defense Commission chairman, Kim Jong-il, and the Japanese prime minister, Junichiro Koizumi, on September 17, 2002, also notes that "the Japanese side regards, in a spirit of humility, *the facts of history* that Japan caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of Korea through its colonial rule in the past, and expressed deep remorse and heartfelt apology."

In August 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Pacific War and offered an official apology for Japan's past. Historian Alexis Dudden notes that Koizumi's apology quoted the Murayama Statement almost verbatim. It was carefully worded to ensure that it would not exceed the parameters set by the Murayama Statement issued ten years previously.[2] Naoto Kan's address in commemoration of the end of the Pacific War, which he delivered to the nation on August 29, 2010, is also steeped in the language of the Murayama Statement. Prime Minister Kan declared, "I express a renewed feeling of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology for the tremendous damage and suffering caused by colonial rule. . . . The Korean peninsula was annexed 'against the will of the Korean people' " (*Chosun Ilbo* 2010).

Despite these merits, the Murayama Statement has weaknesses. The first weakness is its ambiguity regarding what is being apologized for and what substantive measures it will support. Had the Statement benefited from a series of concrete statements that confirmed the government's resolution to convert the apology into policy measures, its credibility would have been enhanced. However, from the perceptional standpoint, South Korean suspicions of the credibility of the Murayama Statement grew in the absence of successful measures to lock in the positive effects created by the announcement in 1995.

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For South Koreans, the Japanese government fell short in converting its apology for the sufferings of the Korean people and the promises Japan made in the 1995 Statement into concrete measures for settling how the suffering of the Korean victims of Japanese colonial occupation and war mobilization would be properly compensated. A good case in point is the Asia Women's Fund, which was created to put the spirit of the Murayama Statement into practice but was later rejected by former wartime sex slaves in South Korea. The victims argued that only the Japanese government could be the vehicle for legitimate financial compensation. Similarly, the demand from Korean elites for the Japanese government to declare the forced annexation of Korea in 1910 null and void was not met by action on the Japanese side.

South Koreans have perceived inconsistency in Japan's policies toward Russia and toward Korea with regard to assessing moral and political responsibility for providing due compensation to former forced laborers. It has been the official position of the Japanese government that, with the signing in 1965 of a treaty normalizing diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea, the Korean victims of atrocities carried out during Japan's colonial occupation and war mobilization lost their rights to pursue individual legal claims against the Japanese government and Japanese companies. The basic legal ground the Japanese government cites to defend its position is Article II of the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of Korea concerning the Settlement of Problems in Regard to Property and Claims and Economic Cooperation, signed on June 22, 1965. The sections relevant to the current discussion are as follows:

> Section 1. The High Contracting Parties confirm that the problems concerning property, rights, and interests of the two High Contracting Parties and their peoples (including juridical persons) and the claims between the High Contracting Parties and between their peoples, including those stipulated in Article IV(a) of the Peace Treaty with Japan signed at the city of San Francisco on September 8, 1951, have been settled completely and finally. . . .
>
> Section 3. No claims shall be made with respect to the measures relating to the property, rights, and interests of either High Contracting Party and its people which were brought under the control of the other High Contracting Party on the date of the signing of the present Agreement, or to all the claims of either High Contracting Party and its people arising from the causes which occurred prior to that date.[3]

In short, in response to demands for financial compensation for individual plaintiffs, the Japanese government has consistently maintained

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that, while it acknowledges the historical facts of sex slavery and forced labor as well as other forms of violence and abuse committed against Asian people during the colonial period, the plaintiffs lost their rights to pursue individual legal claims against the Japanese government and Japanese companies because the home governments of these plaintiffs agreed not to pursue these cases by signing diplomatic normalization treaties (in 1965 for South Korea, and in 1972 for the PRC).

Challenges to this position by the governments of South Korea and the PRC have increased. These governments have submitted that the people of Korea and China, irrespective of a nation's right to diplomatic protection, possess individual rights to claim their property and seek compensation for harm to their interests.[4] Some legal scholars have challenged the position of the Japanese government on the grounds that the 1965 normalization treaty between Japan and South Korea does not provide an adequate legal definition of what constitute "claims," which are alleged by Japan to be nullified for individual victims (Kim 2002).

The Japanese government also cites Article 4 of the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty to support its position. However, the counterargument made by critics is that Article 4 concerns only Japan's right to claim its people's property, rights, and interests in Korea. Moreover, neither South Korea nor the PRC was a signatory to the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Therefore, Article 4 has no legal bearing on individual Koreans' rights to claim compensation (Cheol-Hee Park 1998).

In its dealings with the former Soviet Union, and subsequently with Russia, with regard to wartime reparations for Japanese citizens, the Japanese government has maintained a position that is very similar to that of the South Korean government in its dealings with Japan. In diplomatic engagements with Russia, the Japanese government has argued that giving up the right of a state to diplomatic protection for citizens should be linked with protecting private persons' rights to claim compensation. The Japanese government has maintained that Article 6 of the 1956 Japan–Soviet joint statement stipulates only the governments' rights to diplomatic protection, not private persons' rights to claim compensation.[5]

The Japanese government has defended this perceived inconsistency in Japan's official position on private persons' rights to claim compensation by arguing that this difference stems from the different contexts of Russia–Japan and Japan–Korea relations, and that the Russian government has made no official response to Japan's assertions. Nevertheless,

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this perceived double-standard in Japan's position regarding the separation of a government's right to diplomatic protection for its citizens from private persons' rights to claim compensation strengthens South Korea's perception that Japan may not be seriously committed to making a genuine apology for its colonial past. From the perspective of South Korea, Japan is interested only in playing a disingenuous diplomatic game to maximize its strategic position.

This negative perception in South Korea tends to be reinforced by occasional denials of Japan's responsibility for past atrocities or glorification of Japan's imperial past by some high-ranking official in the Japanese government. Contemporary examples include Koizumi's visits to the Yasukuni Shrine during his tenure as the head of the coalition government and the denial by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on March 9, 2007, that there is any evidence that comfort women from Korea were forced to work as prostitutes (Yang 2008, 74–75).

One conceivable solution for the question of the precise legal interpretation of individual rights to claim is for the two governments to sign a separate bilateral agreement that provides mutually acceptable interpretations of the rights and obligations stipulated in the text of the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty, especially with regard to Article 14, which prescribes the abandonment of claims by the signatories of the treaty against Japan, and Article 19(a), which prescribes the abandonment of claims by Japan against other signatories of the treaty. For instance, the government of Japan and the government of the Netherlands produced the Exchange of Notes, which was signed by Japanese prime minister Shigeru Yoshida and Dutch foreign minister Dirk V. Stikker on September 7, 1951, and September 8, 1951, respectively. Both governments also signed the 1956 Japanese–Dutch Protocol on Private Claims Based upon Violations of Morality. The Japanese government then provided additional reparations for the plaintiffs who were nationals of the Netherlands.[6]

However, it appears unlikely that the governments of Japan and South Korea will follow this precedent with each other. The accords between Japan and the Netherlands were negotiated and signed under geographical, historical, and political conditions that are markedly different from the contemporary conditions of South Korea and Japan. The controversy surrounding the issue of individual rights to claim has become more complicated and politicized since the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed. Political leaders in Seoul and Tokyo do not possess the autonomy, vis-à-vis their civil societies, to endorse the idea of producing

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a bilateral protocol separate from the San Francisco Peace Treaty for the sake of expediting the diplomatic settlement of their historical issues.

## South Korean public opinion on the Murayama Statement

The Asan Monthly Opinion Survey (2012) conducted by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies in March 2012 shows that the vast majority of the South Korean public are not aware of the Murayama Statement (Table 3.1).[7] Even many of the South Koreans who claimed to have heard of the Statement misunderstood its core message. The survey revealed that only 14.3 percent of South Koreans had heard of the 1995 Murayama Statement, while 78.6 percent said they had not heard of it. This lack of interest appears to be fairly evenly spread across gender, age, level of education, and political ideology, although it is more pronounced among young South Koreans between 19 and 29 years of age.

The majority of South Korean citizens who claimed that they were aware of the Murayama Statement falsely believed that it focused on the issue of Korea's sovereignty over Dokdo (25 percent), the Japanese prime minister's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine (10.2 percent), trade and cultural exchange between Japan and South Korea (8.0 percent), or Japan's pledge to return the Korean national treasures taken by Japan during the colonial period (4.5 percent). Among the respondents, 28.9 percent did not remember what the Statement was about, and only 19.0 percent correctly answered that the Murayama Statement apologizes for the atrocities inflicted by Japan during its colonial past (Table 3.2).

Combined, Tables 3.1 and 3.2 suggest that only 2.7 percent of South Koreans are both aware of the Murayama Statement and correctly understand the Statement's main message. Thus, it is unlikely that the Murayama Statement will soon be accepted as a linchpin document for future international negotiations with Japan on historical issues.

In addition to the low level of public awareness, there are three other reasons it is likely that South Korea's acceptance of the Murayama Statement as a groundbreaking official apology by Japan will remain low in the future.

First, the Murayama Statement is not a message of apology delivered by the Japanese emperor. Since the mid-1980s, South Korean elites have developed a strong belief that the most sincere apology for Japan's past

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**TABLE 3.1** *"Have you heard about the Murayama Statement that was issued in 1995?"*

| | Number of respondents | Have heard (%) | Haven't heard (%) | Don't know (%) | Total (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 1,000 | 14.3 | 78.6 | 7.1 | 100.0 |
| *Gender* | | | | | |
| Male | 495 | 16.1 | 77.5 | 6.4 | 100.0 |
| Female | 505 | 12.6 | 79.6 | 7.8 | 100.0 |
| *Age* | | | | | |
| 20s | 186 | 8.5 | 88.3 | 3.2 | 100.0 |
| 30s | 206 | 15.1 | 81.6 | 3.3 | 100.0 |
| 40s | 221 | 16.2 | 75.5 | 8.3 | 100.0 |
| 50s | 188 | 16.1 | 73.5 | 10.4 | 100.0 |
| Over 60 | 199 | 15.2 | 74.5 | 10.3 | 100.0 |
| *Level of education* | | | | | |
| Middle school graduate or less | 139 | 5.6 | 81.4 | 13.0 | 100.0 |
| High school graduate | 314 | 16.7 | 76.6 | 6.7 | 100.0 |
| College graduate | 538 | 15.4 | 78.8 | 5.9 | 100.0 |
| Do not know/no answer | 8 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 |
| *Political ideology* | | | | | |
| Progressive | 321 | 15.1 | 80.2 | 4.7 | 100.0 |
| Neutral | 327 | 12.1 | 81.4 | 6.4 | 100.0 |
| Conservative | 263 | 17.5 | 72.9 | 9.6 | 100.0 |
| Do not know | 82 | 8.9 | 78.9 | 12.01 | 100.0 |
| No answer | 6 | 21.3 | 78.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 |

as an imperialist power should be made by the Japanese emperor, not by the Japanese prime minister.

There have been two occasions on which the emperor of Japan has "apologized" for Japan's past to an ROK president. ROK president Chun Doo Hwan met with Emperor Hirohito on September 6, 1984, with the promise that the meeting would produce a genuine and heartfelt apology by the Japanese emperor to the people of Korea. However, despite the

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**TABLE 3.2** *"If you have heard about the Murayama Statement, what was the main point of the Statement?"*

| | Number of respondents | Sovereignty of Dokdo (%) | Apology for colonial rule and consequent damage (%) | Suspension of visits to Yasukuni Shrine (%) | Economic and cultural exchange (%) | Repatriation of cultural assets (%) | Don't know (%) | No answer (%) | Total (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 143 | 25 | 19 | 10.2 | 8 | 4.5 | 28.9 | 4.4 | 100 |
| *Age* | | | | | | | | | |
| 20s | 16 | 28.7 | 22.8 | 14.9 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 16.3 | 6.4 | 100 |
| 30s | 31 | 28.6 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 14.8 | 8.3 | 10.6 | 0 | 100 |
| 40s | 36 | 21.6 | 14.8 | 14 | 11.5 | 4.1 | 31.2 | 2.8 | 100 |
| 50s | 30 | 25.7 | 14.9 | 0 | 13.4 | 2.4 | 39.2 | 4.3 | 100 |
| Over 60 | 30 | 22.6 | 37.1 | 8.5 | 0 | 0 | 21.9 | 9.9 | 100 |
| *Level of education* | | | | | | | | | |
| Middle school graduate or less | 8 | 70.6 | 7.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22.1 | 0 | 100 |
| High school graduate | 52 | 12.1 | 24.7 | 7 | 12.1 | 2.4 | 33.5 | 8.2 | 100 |
| College graduate | 83 | 28.9 | 16.5 | 13.1 | 6.2 | 6.3 | 26.6 | 2.4 | 100 |
| Do not know/no answer | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| *Political ideology* | | | | | | | | | |
| Progressive | 48 | 21.9 | 27 | 9.6 | 9.2 | 9.4 | 22.9 | 0 | 100 |
| Neutral | 40 | 23.6 | 18.3 | 10.8 | 11.9 | 1.7 | 27.9 | 5.8 | 100 |
| Conservative | 46 | 34.2 | 13.4 | 10 | 4.9 | 2.6 | 27.6 | 7.2 | 100 |
| Do not know | 7 | 0 | 8.5 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 69.5 | 9.1 | 100 |
| No answer | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 | 100 |

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fanfare created by the bold promises made by the Korean government to its people, the meeting was a disappointment. The rhetoric of the emperor's "apology" failed to meet the high expectations of the Korean public. The emperor simply stated, "[I]t is indeed regrettable [*makoto ikan de ari*, 誠に遺憾であり, 진심으로 유감] that there was an unfortunate past between us for a period in this century and I believe that it should not be repeated again" (Dudden 2006).

The other occasion on which an imperial apology was the key issue was the meeting between ROK president Roh Tae Woo and Emperor Hirohito on May 24, 1990. Once again, Emperor Hirohito adhered to mild and indirect expressions of his regrets. He stated, "I think of the sufferings your people underwent during this unfortunate period, which was brought about by my country, and cannot but feel the deepest regret (痛惜之念)" (Weisman 1990).

After these two disappointments, obtaining a genuine, heartfelt apology from the Japanese emperor has almost become the ultimate prize for the South Korean public and elites. In this regard, the Murayama Statement is likely to remain an important, but not central, basis for Japan and South Korea to work together to make a critical break from the past. Furthermore, the Murayama Statement was conceived primarily not as a statement of apology for public audiences in Asia, but, as its official title in the Japanese language implies, as a message from the prime minister, not from the emperor, to the citizens of Japan.

Second, South Koreans' acceptance of the Murayama Statement will hinge upon their perception of how useful the Statement might be with respect to settling the question of the sovereignty of Dokdo. Cheol-Hee Park (2008, 339–41) argues that it is unlikely that any progress in reconciliation at one level of bilateral interaction will directly lead to progress at other levels of bilateral interaction. In this regard, South Koreans' apparent preoccupation with the defense of Korea's sovereignty over the islands is cause for concern. A public opinion poll conducted in 2011 by Seoul's Asan Institute for Policy Studies discovered that Koreans overwhelmingly regarded the clash with Japan over Dokdo as the "biggest obstacle to the development of Korean–Japanese relations," averaging just above 60 percent in importance across the spectrum in both the age and ideological leaning categories, with the textbooks issue coming in second, at roughly 30 percent, and the comfort women issue at just under 10 percent (Asan Institute for Policy Studies 2011). These findings suggest that, unless the Murayama Statement helps advance

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ROK–Japan territorial negotiations, suspicion that Japan is strategically, and only partially, dealing with the issue of apology will linger as long as the Japanese government does not make substantial concessions in negotiations over the territorial dispute with Korea.[8]

The fragmented political system and weak leadership in Japanese party politics is the third and final reason for the pessimistic forecast that the Murayama Statement will not become a centerpiece for future domestic and diplomatic efforts at historical reconciliation between Japan and South Korea. A strong and visionary government leadership that can resist a wave of domestic political criticism imbued with conservative nationalist sentiment is essential for promoting the principle of harmony and the spirit of justice embedded in any forward-looking political gesture such as the Murayama Statement. Otherwise, the initial effect of any political statement on historical reconciliation will not be properly institutionalized.

In Japan, loose coalition politics dominate the parliamentary system. The fragile nature of coalition politics deprives a prime minister of creative options for departing from old inertia. Since the start of the Cold War, there has also been a long series of frequent leadership successions in Japan. There have been no fewer than eighteen prime ministers in the past twenty-five years, and six prime ministers in the past six years. Experts on party politics in Japan point out that the bicameral structure of the Japanese parliamentary system has contributed to its present paralysis, creating a kind of "perpetual bargaining and stalemate" (Iwakuni 2011; Saito 2011). The Triple Crises of 2011 weakened Japan's already-fragmented political system, as well as the government's decision-making capacity.[9]

## Conclusion

The apology issue began to dominate bilateral relations between Japan and South Korea in the early 1980s, owing to a series of domestic leadership changes in South Korea and the gradual thawing of Cold War security conditions in northeast Asia. Since then, the political leaders of Japan (emperors, prime ministers, cabinet secretaries, and foreign ministers) have issued at least forty statements apologizing for Japan's misdeeds in the past toward the government and people of South Korea. However, these messages of apology have not produced political climates

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that could elevate the level of bilateral diplomatic efforts at historical reconciliation. The 1995 Murayama Statement was an important step in mending relations between Japan and South Korea, but, with the issue of apology, there are still substantial obstacles to these two countries strengthening their relations. A fundamental departure from the festering stage of apology diplomacy remains a rather tall order.

The low level of interest in the Statement among South Koreans, the resilience and volatility of the Dokdo issue between South Korea and Japan, and the absence of creative and acceptable legal arrangements for individual rights to claim compensation seem to be major obstacles to the Murayama Statement becoming a centerpiece for South Korea and Japan to engage in effective diplomatic efforts to move together toward historical reconciliation. Considering the magnitude of these hurdles, one might be tempted to conclude that it is hopeless and naïve to wait for South Korea to assign any political significance to the Murayama Statement in the foreseeable future. Such a view would submit that it is in Japan's national interest to revoke its current position, which recognizes the Statement as one of the key official documents representing the government's view on historical justice and reconciliation with neighboring countries in Asia.

This chapter argues that such pessimistic and, at times, cynical views about the Murayama Statement are misguided and dangerous. It is safe to say that the Statement has not generated as much of a direct and discernible impact on settling historical issues between the two countries as originally hoped when it was issued almost twenty years ago. Moreover, the Murayama Statement has failed to capture the minds and hearts of the Korean people as an important official document of apology by Japan. But this is not the time to prematurely reject the Statement. This is an important time to promote it.

The Murayama Statement should be valued not simply in absolute terms, but in relative terms. Having an official statement such as the Murayama Statement, which the Japanese government has consistently endorsed, is better than having no such common document at all. One should also consider how difficult, if not impossible, it would be to replace the Murayama Statement with a new statement that expressed Japanese contrition and apology for its colonial past as clearly and openly. In addition, rejecting the Murayama Statement would certainly produce a political atmosphere in which the consensus of the political elite in Japan would quickly shift toward believing that trying to reason with South Korea, in pursuit of genuine historical reconciliation, was simply inconceivable.

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Were the political leaders in Japan to accept such fatalistic pessimism, the South Korean political elite, trapped in their own negative self-fulfilling prophesy, would likely conclude that it was a mistake to have put their trust in the Murayama Statement's message of contrition and apology in the first place. Furthermore, once the downward spiral of relations between Japan and South Korea began, it might spill over to affect dialogues on political apology and historical justice between Japan and other Asian countries.

As historian William Callaghan cautions, the use and abuse of history is more than an academic issue. It is a dangerous political exercise because it informs the elite and the public (2012, 45–52). Political elites and the public are easily caught up in waves of particular historical narratives that dismiss nuanced notions of identity and politics while empowering hard-core activists at home focused on defending and privileging their respective national identities, interests, and security perceptions related to historical issues. Protecting the status of the Murayama Statement will help prevent negative self-fulfilling prophesies from setting in.

## Notes

1 The preamble states: "The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the *serious damage* that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through times of war, nd deeply reproaches itself" (Shimokoji 2003).

2 "In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Sincerely facing these facts of history, I once again express my feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology, and also express the feelings of mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, in the war. I am determined not to allow the lessons of that horrible war to erode, and to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world without ever again waging a war" (official translation of the apology by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, quoted in Dudden 2006, 7).

3 See also Law No. 144 (December 17, 1965): Law Concerning Measures on Property Right of the Republic of Korea, Etc., To Be Taken for the Enforcement of Article II of the Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (United Nations 1972). On November 5, 1965, the foreign minister of Japan, Noriyuki Shiina, stated that "through signing the treaty, *only* the right to diplomatic protection became null and void" (Paekeun Park 2008, 177).

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4 During the 1990s, ROK foreign ministers periodically confirmed that this is indeed the official position of the ROK government. Former minister Gong Ro-Myung and minister Lee Jungbin reiterated this point in press conferences on September 20, 1995, and on June 24, 2000, respectively. On August 30, 2011, the ROK Constitutional Court ruled that it is the constitutional duty of the South Korean government to support private persons' claims to compensation from a foreign state (Case 2006 Heonma, 788).
5 See the statement issued by Kazuhiko Togo, then director-general of the Treaties Bureau and of the European Affairs Department, at the 140th session of the Diet on March 4, 1997. Article 29, Section 1 of the Constitution of Japan concerns the protection of property rights (Yoo 2010).
6 am grateful to Kazuhiko Togo for informing me of these examples.
7 The Asan Monthly Opinion Survey (2012) conducted by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies employed the random digit dialing method for mobile phones and elicited responses from 1,000 South Koreans over the age of 19. It is a nationwide survey. The poll results have a 95 percent confidence level and a ±3.1 percent margin of error.
8 It should be noted that the Dokdo issue has been the most popular indicator for measuring the sincerity of Japan's intention to settle the past. The South Korean public and government tend to tie historical and territorial issues together when measuring Japan's denial of history. For instance, in protest over Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi's repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine and the passage of an ordinance in March 2005 by the Shimane prefecture designating February 22 "Takeshima Day," the Roh Moo Hyun government in South Korea declared the "New Doctrine," which later guided Korea's Japan policy in its official announcement by the National Security Council Standing Committee on March 15, 2005 (Bong 2010, 1).
9 As of mid-November 2011, the death toll from the Triple Crises stands at nearly 16,000, with more than 3,600 missing, and nearly 6,000 injured (Kubota 2012). The World Bank (*The Economist* 2011) estimates that the total damage caused by the crises could be as high as US$235 billion, or approximately 4 percent of Japan's GDP.

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# 4

# Redeeming the Pariah, Redeeming the Past: Some Taiwanese Reflections on the Murayama Statement

*Rwei-Ren Wu*

**Abstract:** *This chapter interprets the Murayama Statement from the perspective of the Taiwanese as a pariah in international politics. The geopolitical vulnerability of Taiwan brought about successive and multiple victimizations in its modern history and eventually locked it into diplomatic isolation. However, the vulnerable position of the pariah enables the Taiwanese to recognize that historical injustice is inherently repeatable—especially to the weak—and that building universally effective preventive mechanisms is no less important than reparations in specific cases. The author offers a Kantian reading of the Statement by praising and emphasizing its universalistic commitment to democratic peace and proposes that Japan pursue a progressive project of democracy promotion centered on civil society aid in East Asia, especially China, as a meaningful way to repay its historical debt and achieve true reconciliation.*

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> No, we do not want to catch up with anyone. What we want to do is to go forward all the time, night and day, in the company of Man, in the company of all men.
>
> —Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

## The problematique: who is afraid of the pariah?

The question of how Japan should atone for its past wrongdoings is an international dimension of the unfinished business of the country's decolonization and transitional justice in the postwar era. As a case of decolonization and transitional justice, the question is both moral and political: it stemmed from a global moral reevaluation of colonialism, aggressive wars, and nondemocratic regimes, and yet its unfolding was deeply shaped and constrained by politics domestic and international. The whole process of Japan's postwar decolonization and transitional justice was, from the very beginning, constrained, thwarted, and suspended by the contemporaneous Cold War, and it took a political sea change (the end of the Cold War and the brief rise to power of the Japanese Socialist Party) for the so-called Murayama Statement, a historic document emblematic of a much belated yet indigenous process of transitional justice and decolonization in Japan, to finally come into being in 1995.

How should one read the Murayama Statement, and what can one hope from it? The answer depends in part on one's relative position as perpetrator or victim. And since there are plural victims the interpretation further varies with one's respective experience of victimhood—with the kinds of atrocities one suffered at Japanese hands. In addition, it clearly depends on one's agenda and strategic interests at the present time. It may even depend on one's moral conviction—on whether one is a Hobbesian realist, a Kantian moralist, or an Archimedean observer. Last but not least, it always has something to do with one's relative strength in international politics. Actors different in position, experience, moral conviction, interest, and bargaining power, and thus driven by various motives, are bound to read and react to the text differently. This inevitable plurality of readings reflects not the hermeneutic indeterminacy of the text but the complexity of modern East Asian history. But how does an official document that generates divergent readings by concerned parties go about pursuing reconciliation among them? A useful strategy

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is to read it *collectively and dialogically*: all parties concerned are invited to read the Statement and tease out its implications on the basis of their individual position without losing sight of the positions of others, and then to engage in dialogue among these (so to speak) "partisan" readings, out of which hopefully some common meanings will emerge.

Having been under Japanese colonial rule for more than half a century, during which time its people faced severe discrimination, forced assimilation, and intensive wartime mobilization, Taiwan is beyond any doubt a legitimate concerned party to Japan's project of historical atonement and reconciliation. Nevertheless, Taiwanese voices on this matter have thus far received much less attention in Japan and elsewhere than their Korean and Chinese counterparts. Indeed in the contemporary discourse on East Asian historical reconciliation Taiwan has been marginalized and has often existed as a mere footnote to the much publicized Korean and Chinese claims. Without the participation of one key concerned party, even a well-meaning dialogue could end up producing just another *modus vivendi* among powers rather than true and just reconciliation. This chapter seeks to redress the aporia of contemporary discourse on East Asian historical reconciliation by bringing Taiwan back into the dialogue.

As a humble contribution to the dialogue, this chapter offers one possible reading of the Murayama Statement from a Taiwanese point of view. A Taiwanese point of view is one articulated on the basis of the Taiwanese people's historical experiences of constant victimization as a result of the geopolitics of East Asia since the late nineteenth century. More specifically, this chapter proposes a *structural* position for Taiwan, as a pariah, to voice its view on international transitional justice and reconciliation. Taiwan is what John Rawls describes in his antirealist treatise *The Law of Peoples* (1999, 23–43) as a *well-ordered liberal people*, that is, an independent, democratically self-governing, and reasonably acting political community with a distinct identity of its own, but it is also excluded by the current UN-dominated sovereign-state system and therefore diplomatically fragile. As a former colony of Japan, Taiwan has every reason and right to participate in Japan's project of historical reconciliation, and yet the project has an official dimension as a formal diplomatic process from which Taiwan has been largely excluded. "Actually existing," interested, and relevant, but ultimately excluded: this is the structural position of what we call the pariah. Structurally caught in a pariah situation, Taiwan is, on the matter of historical reconciliation, forced to voice as a Kantian

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against the realist grain in the international anarchy and thus to hope for the best from Japan. By purposely moralizing the political and reaching for the tantalizing, moreover, the inconvenient Taiwanese voice reveals the irony of global justice, thereby reminding well-intentioned actors of the inevitable cost one has to pay to be truly just in international politics.

## The background: the worldly silence of the pariah

Despite the country's traumatic experiences of discrimination, forced assimilation, and wartime mobilization under the fifty-one-year Japanese colonial rule, Taiwanese claims of victimhood against the Japanese have been fewer and less noticed than the much-publicized claims of Korea and China.[1] Not only have the Taiwanese people felt much less resentful about the Japanese colonial rule; many of them actually regard the former metropole as their favorite country, one with which they have a close affinity.[2] After the disastrous March 11, 2011, earthquake in eastern Japan, Taiwan donated more money to Japan than any other country in the world. How can one account for the relative silence of the Taiwanese people on the issue of historical injustice perpetrated by the Japanese against them? How can one explain the pro-Japanese sentiments that have long prevailed among the Taiwanese people since the Japanese left the island? One might be tempted to conclude mockingly that the Taiwanese people are simply enslaved masochists or victims of Stockholm syndrome, or complacently that this friendly nation testifies to the moral success of Japanese colonialism. But if one looks deeper into the people's protracted unhappy history for answers, one will soon realize that the Taiwanese silence is neither masochism nor connivance, but a *worldly* silence born of their perplexing experiences of victimhood.

### Historical contexts of territorial transfer

That the general Taiwanese perception of the Japanese rule is different from that of Koreans and Chinese must be explained historically. Let us first look at the general historical contexts in which the territory of Taiwan has been repeatedly at the mercy of geopolitics since the late nineteenth century.

First, Taiwan was incorporated into Japan in 1895, not as a politically mobilized kingdom like Korea but as an island frontier or settlement

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colony of the Qing Empire. In consequence there were no well-defined national sentiments among the Taiwanese people at the time of cession comparable to those of the Koreans on the eve of the 1910 annexation. Psychologically it was easier for the Taiwanese to adapt to the new regime since the cession took place before the rise of either Chinese or Taiwanese nationalism.

Second, no matter how the Beijing government might have justified its decision, from the local point of view Taiwan was unambiguously ceded by the Qing Empire as a scapegoat for its diplomatic and military debacle in northern China. As a result there was strong and widespread *ressentiment*, directed against Beijing, among the Taiwanese people for being unjustly abandoned at the time of cession. From the very beginning the motherland had had a part as perpetrator in their tragedy.

Third, the Japanese rule, stringent, oppressive, and discriminatory as it was, did eventually bring about order, modernization, and material wellbeing in Taiwan. The Kuomintang (KMT, or Chinese Nationalist Party) rule that succeeded that of Japan in 1945 soon proved to be not only oppressive and discriminatory but also corrupt and inefficient. The outbreak of an island-wide riot by Taiwanese in quest of political reform and autonomy in February 1947 illustrated the initial disenchantment of the island people, but the regime's bloody military suppression of the riot and subsequent ruthless reign of terror under martial law (later known as the White Terror) constituted the real rude awakening of the Taiwanese to the reality of Chinese politics. Many Taiwanese people's evaluation of the departed Japanese was more positive, post facto, after comparing the two regimes from without. For more radical and ideologically articulated dissidents such as Taiwanese nationalists in exile, positive interpretation of the colonial period even became a conscious discursive strategy to undermine the legitimacy of the current KMT émigré regime (Ō 1988, 26–27).

The most crucial and relevant political effects of the KMT rule of Taiwan were the creation of long-lasting ethnic tension between mainlanders and native Taiwanese on the one hand, and traumatic experiences of state violence shared by the whole population regardless of ethnic origin on the other. Domestic ethnic tension diluted the image of the Japanese as the Other, and the general experience of state violence turned Taiwanese thinking about transitional justice inward and focused it on the issue of historical injustice perpetrated by the KMT in Taiwan. If weak and small peoples have always suffered layer upon layer of injustice

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historically, then the most recent layer of memory of injustice is often the most vivid and thus arouses the strongest emotions.

Fourth, the postwar geopolitical situation of Taiwan also shaped its people's perception of Japan. Under the structure of the Cold War, it is China, not Japan, that has been Taiwan's most significant Other since 1949. South Korea has not hesitated in recent years to follow *realpolitik* logic with the rising China and join the game of marginalizing Taiwan.[3] Since the 1990s, Japan has remained the single most friendly nation to Taiwan in this region. The two most vociferous victims of the prewar Japanese imperialism, China and South Korea, have now practically joined hands to victimize the even weaker Taiwan in the contemporary geopolitical game.

## Structure of victimhood experiences

In terms of the specific structure of victimhood experiences of the Taiwanese people since the late nineteenth century, two characteristics stand out. First, there have always been *plural perpetrators* involved in each crucial victimhood experience of the Taiwanese related to Japan.

Examples are numerous. To begin with, the cession of 1895, which put Taiwan under Japanese colonial domination, was based on an agreement between Japan and China. The transfer of Taiwan to the KMT in 1945 was a political deal among a few Allied powers leaders, and the decision to deprive the Taiwanese of the right to choose postwar nationality was made jointly by Japan, the US government, and the KMT. The arbitrary territorial transfer eventually brought about the February 28 massacre in 1947 and the subsequent long-term authoritarian rule on the island, and the deprival of the right to choose nationality partially contributed to the Taiwanese people's loss of the right to claim compensation for having served or suffered for Japan as its citizens. In 1952, the exiled Republic of China government signed the Taipei Treaty with Japan and renounced all war-related claims. In the same treaty, there was no mention of the Taiwanese people's right to claim compensation for damages suffered under the Japanese colonial rule. What is more, the émigré regime had remained silent on this issue throughout the period between 1952 and 1972, during which it maintained formal diplomatic relations with Japan. The problem of Taiwanese claims related to the Japanese rule had thus remained unsolved until the 1990s (Hatano 2011, 80–82, 98–99). In contrast, the government of the Republic of Korea, while compromising on the Korean people's individual right to claim, at least managed to secure US$500 million of aid and loans from

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Japan in its 1965 Agreement on the Settlement of Problem (Hatano 2011, 77–80). There was no similar official request or negotiation for any compensation or aid by the Republic of China government on behalf of the Taiwanese people while it was still recognized by Japan. The émigré regime silenced the Taiwanese people with its silence.

The double silencing of the people did not stop in 1972. The ROC's breakoff of diplomatic relations with Japan in 1972, one of a series of diplomatic crises beginning with Taiwan's loss of UN membership to the People's Republic of China in 1971 and culminating in the US breakoff of formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1979, has proven to be disastrous for the Taiwanese people in terms of their prewar claims vis-à-vis Japan even to this day. Deprived of official channels and unrepresented by their own government, individual claimants have been forced to resort to protracted litigation and social movements to voice their causes since the 1970s. In the late 1990s the Japanese government pursued a series of meaningful reconciliatory diplomatic processes with South Korea and China, which resulted in joint declarations on historical controversies and government-sponsored joint historical research projects with both countries. As the diplomatic dimension of Japan's project of historical reconciliation, these processes, while mostly symbolic, were extremely important. And yet Taiwan was totally excluded, as if it had never existed, simply because it was not officially recognized by Japan. There have been many theories as to who was to blame for Taiwan's diplomatic debacle in the 1970s, but Chiang Kai-shek's ridiculous insistence on representing the whole of China no doubt played an important part.

*But after all who was to blame that I should have become an orphan, a pariah?* For the doubly, triply, and oftentimes multiply victimized Taiwanese people, who had never had a say in these life-shattering historical events, this is indeed a perplexing question.

The second characteristic of Taiwanese victimhood, as one might infer from the history of territorial transfer discussed above, is that these experiences *came successively*, one after another, and often caused by different perpetrators. The territory of Taiwan had been repeatedly transferred among various imperial centers without consulting the people since the seventeenth century. The postwar KMT dictatorship in Taiwan, which was in many aspects similar to colonial domination, came immediately after the Japanese colonial rule. One of the most telling examples of successive victimization caused by successive involuntary territorial transfer and colonial domination was the tragic fate of some ten thousand

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Taiwanese youths who had been drafted as soldiers successively by the Japanese, the Chinese Nationalists, and the Chinese Communists within a period of ten years between 1940 and 1950 and were thereby forced to experience the Pacific War, the Chinese Civil War, and the Korean War. Those who managed to survive the Korean War ended up stranded in China, and still a series of no less cruel ordeals awaited them: the anti-rightist campaign in 1957 and the Cultural Revolution between 1966 and 1976, in which many Taiwanese were branded "regional nationalists" with dubious loyalty and heavily persecuted (Kyo 2002).

Let us now review briefly Taiwan's balance sheet of historical justice. The experiential structure of multiple and successive victimizations itself may not be unique, for many geopolitically fragile states or peoples, including Koreans and Chinese, have suffered similarly, but it did produce certain political and psychological effects in the specific Taiwanese context that greatly diluted if not erased the popular perception of Japan as the perpetrator of their misfortune. The crucial difference is that the Taiwanese people were not just multiply and successively victimized; they were multiply and successively victimized by both the original perpetrators and the once-fellow-victims-cum-perpetrators. Originating in Taiwan's deepening isolation since the 1970s from the UN-centered international system in which China has been increasingly influential, this unfortunate situation, which may well be called a *pariah's predicament*, is by and large structurally determined by international politics. It is the recognition of the multilayered complexity in the perpetrator–victim relationship by a Taiwan trapped in a pariah's predicament that has mitigated the Taiwanese *ressentiment* of the Japanese.

All in all, the historical and contemporary experience of being victimized or smeared by the former fellow-victims of Japan, be they Chinese Nationalists, Chinese Communists, or Koreans, or even Filipinos, Singaporeans, and Indonesians for that matter, taught the Taiwanese people that the real world was morally more ambiguous than the clear-cut logic of good and evil, and from this lesson—this pariah's epiphany, if you will—they developed a more sophisticated and worldly attitude toward the issue of Japanese apology: *what the true pariah demands is not apology from the strong but its own moral strength, for only moral strength brings about recognition and dignity*. Thus we see the moral relevance of the Murayama Statement for the truly weak because it clearly holds, among other things, that right precedes might even in international politics. We elaborate on this point in the following section.

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## The text: the pariah imagines a just world

In light of the previous analysis, what might the gentle, somewhat cynical, and indeed very *worldly* silence of the Taiwanese people signify to the contemporary Japanese project of historical reconciliation at whose center is the Murayama Statement? On the premise that the Taiwanese constitute a well-ordered liberal people with a distinct identity, values, and interests, and that Taiwan is an independent and reasonable actor in international relations, we propose that the significance of Taiwan's pariah experience for historical reconciliation can be summed up in the following two statements. First, there are wounds that can be healed only by a justice higher than retribution. Second, reconciliation must reach beyond the realm of politics and become truly moral. These two statements in fact point to a Kantian/Rawlsian reading of the Murayama Statement.

### A redemptive universalism

The most relevant messages of the Statement are contained in the fifth and sixth paragraphs:

> During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heart-felt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.
>
> Building from our deep remorse on this occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, Japan must eliminate self-righteous nationalism, promote international coordination as a responsible member of the international community and, thereby, advance the principles of peace and democracy. At the same time, as the only country to have experienced devastation of atomic bombing, Japan, with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, must actively strive to further global disarmament in areas such as the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is my conviction that in this way alone can Japan atone for its past and lay to rest the spirits of those who perished.[4]

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A pariah well experienced in the hubris and hypocrisy of the strong soon recognizes the merits of these paragraphs and refuses to write them off. Let us elaborate.

To begin with, as much as the rather elusive tone may irritate some, these paragraphs are commendable at least for one reason: they express an apology, albeit belatedly, for both Japan's aggressive wars *and* its colonialism in Asia. To be fair, Japan was the first former colonial power to issue an official apology for its colonialism in the past, and is the only one to have done so. To date no other former or current colonial empires have ever officially apologized to the peoples of their former colonies.[5] Even Germany, the model student of historical reconciliation and the oft-quoted contrast to the Japanese lack of repentance, is yet to face up to its infamous colonial past in Namibia as it did so honorably in the Nazi case (Jamfa 2008). What is more, in the official report of the UN-sponsored World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, which is by far the most explicit official international reflection on the relevant issues, references to colonialism were greatly reduced or toned down as a result of pressure from former Western empires.[6] In echoing the global moral reevaluation of colonialism, Japan's apology does take on some quality of being universal, whereas the hesitancy of the West in admitting its colonial guilt cannot help but look very provincial.

It should also be noted that the Statement expressed apology for Japan's colonialism in general, without specifying the victims. This *literal* universalism, so to speak, actually opens up a space for possible new courses of interpretive and political actions, especially for those victims excluded from formal diplomatic processes, such as Taiwan. In other words, the universalistic framing of apology in the text produced an intended or unintended political consequence of *inclusion*—even if it was a symbolic one.

A spirit of universalism—this is the crucial merit of the Murayama Statement as seen from the pariah's position. In addition to apology for colonialism, we notice that the values embedded in the four commitments made in the two paragraphs quoted above (non-self-righteousness, international coordination based on a sense of responsibility, peace, and democracy) are all universalistic rather than particularistic, which means that they are inclusive rather than exclusive. What is the significance of this reference to lofty universalistic values in the Statement?

We are inclined to believe that it reveals an awareness on the part of the drafters of the often overlooked yet important fact that historical

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injustices taking place between states and peoples in the past, such as aggressive wars, colonial domination, and genocides, are never simply historically specific events but rather embody an evil that humans have proven to be capable of and thus could happen to any other states and peoples in the future. To prevent the recurrence of such injustice, it is not enough just to sort out and deal with the wrongful past between the concerned parties of a specific case. One also needs to recognize that as an outcome of a *universal human evil* it could be reproduced elsewhere and at other times. Even an injustice as grave as the Holocaust, as Hannah Arendt (1964) reminded us in her calmly thoughtful observations of the 1963 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, was never simply a crime against the Jewish people but a *crime against humanity*. Failing to recognize this, one would not be able to reflect deeply enough on past wrongs and prevent effectively their future recurrence. Hence one must endeavor not only to prevent specific past perpetrators from repeating their mistakes but also to stop the evil from happening altogether to any other states and peoples in the future.

This point is of crucial importance to the concerned parties in all projects of historical reconciliation, including Japan's Murayama Statement. For the repenting perpetrator states, this recognition is essential in that particularistic historical understanding often leads to particularistic political exchanges and *modus vivendi* instead of forming universally effective preventive mechanisms. It should be noted, nonetheless, that recognizing the universal nature of historical injustice does not absolve the perpetrator state of its substantive responsibilities concerning its specific wrongdoings, such as reparations and truth-seeking. Rather, it imposes upon the perpetrator state, aside from its original responsibilities, an *additional* moral duty to commit itself to a cause transcending specific individual cases.

The victimized states and peoples often interpret historical injustices perpetrated against them through the lens of nationalism. This is perfectly understandable, since the nationalism of the colonial world, including that of China, Korea, and Taiwan, was formed in the cauldron of resistance against imperial domination in the first place. And yet it should not remain a problem of nationalism, for over-nationalizing one's own victimhood experiences invariably leads to "self-righteous" visions that could easily escalate—or degenerate—into an exclusive and even aggressive form of nationalism. If historical injustice were understood as nothing but a matter of nationalistic resentment or hurt national

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pride, instead of a matter of universal human values, the victimized states or peoples would not be able to, or simply would not, transform their experiences as victims into moral resources that could help prevent the same tragedy from happening to others in the future, since their victimhood experiences would be so unique and exceptional that they were irreproducible. Furthermore, they would not be able to, or simply would not, learn to understand their own victimhood experiences as sources for *self*-reflection, and because of this they would not be able to truly promise not to, or to pre-commit themselves so that they would not, become perpetrators themselves against those even weaker in the future.[7] Let us not forget this fact: since the "self-righteous nationalism" of the victim always leads it to imagine its own sufferings as unique, it has great difficulty empathizing with the sufferings of others, especially the sufferings of those even weaker and more fragile. Cliché it is, and yet a very sad cliché.

For the most fragile victimized states or peoples, the importance of universalizing principles of global justice such as peace, democracy, and nonproliferation can never be overemphasized, for they are not only victims of past injustice but also the most likely potential victims and easiest prey of future injustice, especially injustice imposed by geopolitical dealings. More often than not, morality is for the weak a matter of practical necessity.

Perpetrators or victims, we must act together to make sure that all the universalistic values advocated in the Statement are realized on a truly universal basis. That is, we must make sure that these values no longer serve as the moral disguise of *realpolitik* deals among states that not only exclude but also seek to dominate the weak. We must make sure that all well-ordered peoples, especially all well-ordered *liberal* peoples (i.e., constitutionally organized and democratically self-governing peoples) are included in the realization of these values.

At any rate, Japan should make every effort to honor the commitments in the Statement on a truly nonexclusive and universal basis, in addition to issuing apologies and making reparations to individual and collective victims and continuing to unearth the historical truth about past wrongdoings. This, we believe, is the most morally meaningful way for today's Japan to inherit its national responsibility for its past wrongdoings, for there is no more honorable gesture in the anarchic jungle of international politics than to elevate a particular historical debt to a responsibility to all humanity and, above all, to assume it as one's own national cause.

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## A proposal for action: Japan Foundation for Democratic Peace

But what exactly is to be done? Actually the clues for thinking about actions are contained in the very document of the Murayama Statement itself. The curious fact that democracy should be listed and juxtaposed with non-self-righteousness, international coordination, and peace as one of the crucial commitments Japan makes to the world to ensure that the past wrongs are never repeated is significant enough, for it suggests a *causal* relationship between democracy and effective tragedy prevention, which practically means peace. In other words, one is able to read from these paragraphs of the Statement a classical Kantian thesis of democratic peace as its theoretical underpinning. This is a deliberately well-intentioned interpretation of the document, but it is by no means an unreasonable one, since the authoritarian political institutions and culture of prewar Japan have long been considered by thoughtful observers as the main causes of Japanese militarism (Maruyama 1977 [1964]). On the basis of this interpretation, we suggest that Japan honor its commitments to democratic peace through a long-term, if not permanent, project of international democracy promotion by creating a Japan Foundation for Democratic Peace (JFDP) similar to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) of the US or the Westminster Foundation for Democracy of the UK.

The idea of a JFDP was inspired by former Belgian foreign minister Louis Michel's declaration in the parliament in 2002 that it would establish a Patrice Lumumba Foundation to work for the sustained democratic development of Congo.[8] Conceived as an ingenious form of reparation for Belgium's involvement in the killing of Congo's democratically elected prime minister in 1961, the proposed foundation actually reminds us of the more fundamental fact that historical reconciliation is not only reparative but restorative, and it is rooted in the past but oriented toward the future. What the perpetrator destroyed it must help both restore and foster. We believe a democratic and peaceful East Asia is what Japan owes to the world, and Japan should go to the roots to help restore the lost possibilities and cultivate the future.

There are several other reasons for making this suggestion. First, the development of contemporary democratic theory has substantially strengthened the validity of the thesis of democratic peace. The traditional Kantian thesis of democratic peace was based on a thin argument of personal interests: that is, a republic is less prone to war because everybody's interests are at stake (Kant 1991 [1795]). The contemporary democratic theory places at its center a civil society autonomous from

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both state and market and therefore oriented toward forging consensus on public interests through rational deliberation (Cohen and Arato 1994; Linz and Stepan 1996). Domestically, a public-spirited and rational civil society constitutes in fact the best guardian of democracy from the rise of either dictatorship or populism, which could easily degenerate into the kind of war-prone "self-righteous nationalism" described in the Murayama Statement. Internationally, an emergent but active global civil society network has also proven to be an effective force in constraining, if not taming, self-righteous nationalisms across borders. Since the 1990s, the central task of international democracy promotion projects has been fostering, aiding, and strengthening civil society in nondemocratic countries (Carothers 1999; Ottaway and Carothers 2000).

We believe that the contemporary practice of civil-society-centered international democracy promotion provides a perfect model of action for the Murayama Statement. In fact, Taiwan and South Korea, the two key concerned parties to the Murayama project of reconciliation, happen to be the two best examples of the contemporary thesis of democratic peace: both countries first became democratized owing to a vibrant civil society, and both are now engaged in democracy promotion projects in the manner of NED.[9] It is almost imperative that a repenting Japan join the common effort of East Asian democratic promotion to honor its commitments.

Second, this proposal is fully in keeping with the spirit of Japan's post-war constitution. Allow us to quote two remarkable passages from the Preface of the Constitution of Japan:

> We, the Japanese people, desire peace for all time and are deeply conscious of the high ideals controlling human relationship, and we have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. We desire to occupy an honored place in an international society striving for the preservation of peace, and the banishment of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth. We recognize that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want.
>
> We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone, but that laws of political morality are universal; and that obedience to such laws is incumbent upon all nations who would sustain their own sovereignty and justify their sovereign relationship with other nations.[10]

These passages, inevitably reminding one of the *shoshin*, the original intention, of a guilt-ridden people to make their nation morally anew, read like a commentary on the Murayama Statement—or is it actually the other way

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round? At any rate the constitutional resonance of the Statement testifies to the possibility of a Japanese tradition of progressive internationalism. The words are already there, but the issue now is to honor them—to make the words time-honored through imaginative deeds.

Third, the proposal is also *feasible*, because the Japanese government has in fact been practicing democracy promotion through the framework of the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF) and has even been one of its largest donors since the body's inception in 2005. It is within this context that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan organized an international Symposium on Japan's Foreign Policy for the Promotion of Human Rights and Democracy: Challenges and Prospects, in 2008, at which scholars and diplomats exchanged views on the topic in general and Japan's role in particular.[11] However, Japan's involvement in international democracy promotion thus far has been largely responding to the calls of UNDEF rather than acting on its own initiatives. Moreover, as one of the invited speakers at the symposium, Professor Izumi Nakamitsu-Lennartsson, criticized, the UN framework has largely limited Japan's freedom of action to less politically oriented, and thus less relevant, issues. She went on to urge the Japanese government to embark on its own project of democracy promotion and engage more freely in politically sensitive situations.[12] These rare and precious experiences, tentative and limited as they may be, have prepared Japan in some ways for more active engagement in this field. The deeds are after all not so far from the words.

## A China impasse?

Some may object to this proposal as naïve and self-defeating, claiming that a Japan-sponsored democracy promotion project would only produce perverse effects of stimulating further conflicts instead of repairing relations with the neighboring authoritarian China, since such a project would inevitably be seen by the Chinese government as highly provocative and an intervention into domestic affairs. While admitting that the concern of this critique is legitimate and that the difficulties it raises are true and grave, we believe they are not insurmountable.

First, what we propose here is certainly not reckless and self-righteous intrusion into the state affairs of another country by the Japanese government, but a well-thought-out, delicately handled, low-profile, and above all long-term engagement with the *society* of the country by way of Japan's civil society network. This is why we suggest the creation of a

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Japan Foundation for Democratic Peace, on the model of NED, a form of nonprofit organization (NPO) established by the US Congress sponsored by governmental budget but managed by nongovernmental staff. The now defunct Asian Women's Fund, the semi-official body created by Prime Minister Murayama to redress the problem of Asian comfort women, is another plausible model. This society-centered approach is especially important when it comes to engaging with China, where a strong authoritarian state has long proven to be a resilient obstacle to democratization. But is there a Chinese civil society with which the Japanese, or the Koreans and the Taiwanese for that matter, could engage?

This question leads to our second point: in recent years a small yet vibrant civil society has emerged in China, and this emergent civil society constitutes the most crucial, if not the only, entry point for international society to engage with China on the matter of democracy. The April 2012 updated nongovernmental organization (NGO) directories compiled by the China Development Brief (CDB), an internet information platform for civil society in China, listed 473 Chinese and 291 international NGOs and NPOs specializing in a wide range of public issues currently active in China.[13] Understandably, organizations specializing in politically sensitive areas are relatively few owing to severe governmental control, but organizations working on less sensitive issues such as environmental and animal protection, refugee aid, public health, gender, poverty relief, agricultural education, and community development have been developing rapidly. The mushrooming of grassroots relief organizations after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake is a good illustration of this trend (Shieh and Deng 2011, 185–86).

Emergent under authoritarian conditions, the Chinese civil society is struggling for autonomy from the state. Many organizations are in fact so-called GONGOs (government-organized NGOs). Be that as it may, civil society in China as a whole has managed to exercise some influence on local governance in many policy areas (Shieh and Deng 2011, 187–94; Cooper 2006; Ling et al. 2007).

Moreover, one should not overlook the fact that this emergent civil society in China consists of both indigenous and international actors. Among the 270 international NGOs and NPOs active in China explicitly named in the CDB directories, 68 were local chapters of transnational organizations, 97 came from the United States, 41 from Hong Kong, 19 from the United Kingdom, 7 each from France and Germany, 5 from Taiwan, 4 from Australia, and 3 each from Canada, the Netherlands, and Singapore (Figure 4.1). The neighboring Japan has only 2 groups working in China.[14]

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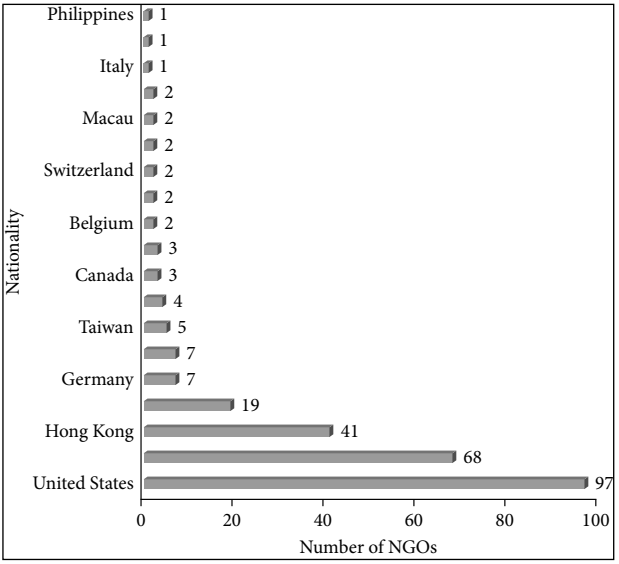


**FIGURE 4.1** *International NGOs in China, April 2012*

*Source*: based on the directories of the China Development Brief.

It should be noted that despite the severe political control in China, NGOs with explicit political affiliations such as NED (US Congress), the National Democratic Institute of International Affairs (Democratic Party), and the International Republican Institute (Republican Party) of the United States, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (Christian Democratic Union), Heinrich Böll Stiftung (Green Party), and Hans Seidel Stiftung (Christian Social Union) of Germany, are on the list. Like their Chinese counterparts, most international organizations in China work in areas with low political sensitivity such as the environment, education, and health, but there are some that specialize in human rights, political and legal reforms, and even labor issues.[15]

What does this picture tell us? For one thing, we should not underestimate the long-term political potential of the rapidly developing civil society network in China, which is as of now specializing mostly in socioeconomic issues. As Ottaway and Carothers (2000, 302, 309) observed, organizations of this kind are at times more efficient in bringing about pressure for democratization than more directly democracy-advocating groups because they speak better to people's mundane needs and therefore are better at mobilizing popular support. For another, the

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Americans, including government officials, party politicians, and social activists, have been actively and intensively engaging with the emergent Chinese civil society despite the structural strategic animosity between China and the United States, which suggests that realism is far from the only game in international affairs.

Third, there are international organizations that, for all the risks and difficulties involved, do not shy away from addressing politically sensitive issues while engaging in China. Many of them are working patiently, piecemeal, on issues such as institutional reform in legal, legislative, and electoral processes, civic education, legal aid, and even labor rights. Fourth, Japan's role in this emergent Chinese civil society, in contrast to the immense diplomatic and economic resources it has dedicated to China since the 1980s, has been insignificant at best. This means that Japan has been associating with China in the past three decades largely in the realms of state and market, with civil society little engaged. No wonder historical controversies between the two countries have time and again been hijacked by opportunistic geopolitical dealings: a relationship that hinges mostly on strategic and market interests is bound to fluctuate as the situation or market changes.

The emergence of a civil society in China, due to the efforts of both indigenous and international civic-minded actors, has opened up a new channel for Japan to engage with China other than through state and market. We believe this new channel—this emergent civil society—provides a better and more meaningful way to achieve a lasting reconciliation between the two countries than any *modus vivendi* reached between state leaders. Only by providing aid for and working with the Chinese people to build an autonomous civil society through sincere, solid, and patient public projects that helps and heals those victimized by both state and market in a fast-changing country can Japan begin to expect to come by the kind of *trust* that the deeply traumatized Chinese people have long refused them. Trust lost politically can be reborn only socially, with humility and civility. This logic also applies to Taiwan and China, to Korea and Japan, to East Asia in general, and to other parts of the world torn by historical hatred. Democracy in China is a far-off dream, but it is a dream worth pursuing collectively because it is one indispensable building block of a truly meaningful East Asian community. East Asian community—it is not a euphemized repackaging for the clichéd regional geopolitical bloc but the ultimate manifestation of an East Asian civil society. It is high time that Japan took its first step.

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## Conclusion: justice as will

This is a deliberately moral reading of a political document, the Murayama Statement, based on the Taiwanese experience as a geopolitical pariah. In the previous sections, we offered a Kantian interpretation of repentant words and proposed a Kantian course of redemptive action. This is not naïveté but good will and a true belief in the necessity of a moral view on a political matter, for this chapter was written as a contribution to a sincere, balanced, open, and above all inclusive dialogue that seeks to truly understand and amend a difficult past. To truly understand, voices suppressed must be heard; to somehow amend, the paths less traveled must be remapped and measured. And in the end we are all Kantians in joining this dialogue, and realize that justice is not a matter of theory but a will to the goodness of Man:

> But if both benevolence and right speak out in loud tones, human nature will not prove too debased to listen to their voice with respect. *Tum pietate gravem meritisque si forte virum quem Conspexere, silent arrectisque auribus adstant* [If they catch sight of a man respected for his virtue and services, they are silent and stand close with ears alert] (Virgil). (Kant 1991 [1793])

Between power and plenty, there is an untrodden path of being just in the world—and this, we believe, is a path worth traveling for a truly repentant and reborn Japan.

## Notes

1 Among the eighty-nine lawsuits against the Japanese government concerning Japan's prewar atrocities until 2010, eight were filed by Taiwanese, thirty-eight by Koreans, and twenty-five by Chinese. Of the eight Taiwanese cases, six were claims for compensation for having fought and suffered as Japanese soldiers or military personnel during World War II. Only two were claims against Japan's state violence (i.e., those filed by the Taiwanese comfort women and the illegally isolated Hansen disease patients). This is in contrast to an overwhelming majority of claims against wartime mobilization and violent atrocities perpetrated by Japan in the Korean and Chinese cases (see Utsumi 2010).

2 According to a survey conducted in 2008 by the Interchange Association, Japan (IAJ, the de facto Japanese embassy in Taiwan), 38 percent of Taiwanese people listed Japan as their favorite country, whereas only 5 percent chose the United States, 3 percent Switzerland, and 2 percent China.

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In the same poll, 69 percent of Taiwanese people felt emotionally close to Japan (http://tw.money.yahoo.com/news_article/adbf/d_a_090421_1_1gfd3, accessed February 15, 2012). In a similar survey conducted by the IAJ in 2010, the percentage of Taiwanese respondents who listed Japan as their favorite country rose to 52 percent, compared to 8 percent for the United States and 5 percent for China (http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2010/new/mar/24/today-p3.htm, accessed February 15, 2012).

3 South Korea broke off diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1992 to establish official relations with China. With impressive efficiency the South Korean government expelled all the Taiwanese diplomatic personnel the day after it announced the decision, without prior warnings, and swiftly transferred all the real estate purchased by the Taiwanese government in Korea, including the Taiwanese embassy, to the PRC. In March 2007, the secretary general of the UN, Ban Ki-moon of South Korea, maintained that Taiwan was a part of the People's Republic of China when he turned down Taiwan's formal request to be a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. In July 2007, after turning down Taiwanese president Chen Shui-bian's letter of application for his country to join the body, he reiterated publicly to the media that Taiwan was a part of China. According to a cable released by WikiLeaks in September 2011, a number of Western governments, including the United States, protested to the UN to force it to drop these terms of reference (see "UN Told to Drop 'Taiwan Is Part of China': Cable," *Taipei Times*, September 6, 2011, http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2011/09/06/2003512568, accessed March 9, 2012).

4 http://www.mofa.go.jp/annouce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html, accessed July 26, 2011.

5 Colonialism here refers to the form of exploitative domination by overseas empires over the peoples in their colonies. However, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand did apologize for an *internal* form of colonial domination by the settlers over aborigines (see Mark Gibney et al. 2008, parts II and III; Nagahara, 2010).

6 Article 99 expresses only "regret" about human suffering caused by colonialism, and in Article 100 colonialism is removed from the list of crimes that call for official apology and reparation by the perpetrator states (see "The Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance," 47, http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/e06a5300f90fa0238025668700518ca4/cb95dc2388024cc7c1256b4f005369cb/$FILE/N0221543.pdf, accessed February 28, 2012; see also Nagahara 2010, 10).

7 What the state of Israel has been doing to the displaced Palestinian people and what the People's Republic of China has been doing to Tibetans, Uighurs, and inner Mongolians, if not Taiwanese, comes to mind.

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8 See Kersterns (2008). It is a pity that Belgium is yet to honor this commitment.
9 The Taiwan Foundation for Democracy was established in 2002, and the Korea Democracy Foundation was created in 2001.
10 Homepage of the National Diet Library, http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/etc/co1.html, accessed February 22, 2012.
11 The official report and related materials can be accessed at http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/jinken/minshu/sy_080201_hk.html.
12 Ibid., report, 81–84.
13 http://www.cdb.org.cn/ngo_infoindex.php, accessed April 8, 2012.
14 The two Japanese organizations are the Japan–China Civil Society Network (CSNet) and the Japan Water Guard (JWG) (see NGO directories of the CDB, http://www.cdb.org.cn/ngo_infoindex.php).
15 NGOs affiliated with parties, such as the National Democratic Institute of International Affairs, the International Republican Institute, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, work on issues such as broadening legislative participation and village-level electoral reform. The Carter Center also dedicates itself to local electoral reforms. The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Sweden specializes in China's legal reform, whereas International Bridges to Justice takes up the issue of legal aid for defendants. The US-based Fair Labor Association specializes in labor rights (see NGO directories of the CDB, http://www.cdb.org.cn/ngo_infoindex.php).

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# 5

# Neither Exemplary nor Irrelevant: Lessons for Asia from Europe's Struggle with Its Difficult Past

*Thomas U. Berger*

**Abstract:** *What lessons can Asian countries learn from the European experience of grappling with the past? The Asian debate over history has been polarized between those who believe the contrite German stance on history should serve as a model and those who argue that it is irrelevant. A careful analysis of the European record, however, reveals that both positions are overstated. The advocates of a "German model" overlook the extent to which the policies on history adopted by Germany and other European countries have been driven by practical necessity as well as a genuine, morally inspired effort to pursue reconciliation. To the extent that geopolitical circumstances differ between Europe and Asia, adopting a German approach might be inappropriate. At the same time, those who deny that Europe is relevant at all fail to recognize that many of the same general forces that have driven increased contrition in Germany, France, and Austria may be at work in Asia as well.*

Togo, Kazuhiko, ed. *Japan and Reconciliation in Post-war Asia: The Murayama Statement and Its Implications*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. DOI: 10.1057/9781137301239.

In debates over how Asia should deal with problems concerning history, Europe tends to be referenced in one of two ways: either as a model to be emulated or as completely irrelevant. The first view is prominently espoused by many critics of Japan, especially on the Japanese left as well as in neighboring countries. It is also the position of many Europeans, who point to their own experience with history—and in particular to Germany's decades-long efforts to pursue reconciliation with the victims of Nazi persecution—to argue that their willingness to confront the dark side of Europe's modern history has paved the way for the construction of an expanding zone of peace and cooperation centered on the European Union. By implication, if Japan and other Asian countries were to adopt a similar attitude toward the past it would be possible to overcome the host of nationalist passions that have bedeviled the region and usher in a new period of regional peace and cooperation (He 2009). From this perspective the Murayama Statement and associated policies do not go nearly far enough in addressing the historical misdeeds of Japan and the Japanese empire.

The second position, that Europe is largely irrelevant to Asia and that Germany in particular cannot serve as a model for Japan, is strongly argued by many at the conservative end of the Japanese political spectrum and enjoys some support from scholars of international relations, especially realists who argue that considerations of power, especially military power, are the main factors shaping relations between nations (Lind 2008). While coming to terms with the past may be desirable for other reasons—including ethical ones—efforts such as the Murayama apology are likely to have little independent impact on relations between Asian nations. Indeed, to the extent that they obscure the real factors that drive international politics and lead political leaders to pursue misguided policies in the belief that they are promoting some sort of chimerical "reconciliation" between nations, many adherents to this school of thought maintain that efforts to deal with the past can even be counterproductive (Okazaki 2006).

This chapter argues that neither of these positions is entirely accurate. It is certainly true that Asia differs fundamentally from Europe in many regards. A blind application of a "European approach" (typically one that is presented as whole-hearted apologizing for past misconduct, educating its population about the dark side of national history, and attempting to make amends to former victims) is likely to be ineffective, precisely as Japanese conservatives and the realists argue. At the same

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time, the emotional passions that are excited by history have far more of an independent impact on interstate relations than conservatives and Realists recognize. Moreover, the kinds of passions that disputes over history generate are likely to increase as a result of certain secular trends that were clearly visible in the European case and that are present in the Asian context as well—namely, growing economic and political interdependence and the growing impact of public opinion on foreign policy making in a wide array of countries, including China and South Korea.

As a practical consequence, nations such as Japan should—when possible—try to defuse tensions over history. To do so, however, requires that a number of conditions be met. Given the current political realities in Asia, this means that in all likelihood Japan can pursue reconciliation only in a piecemeal fashion—with some countries (notably South Korea)—while limiting itself to damage control with others (most importantly the People's Republic of China).

The following sections briefly review the development of Europe's struggles with the past in order to draw some essential lessons for Japan and Asia. By necessity this is a cursory sketch that highlights only general developments. On the basis of this analysis, the chapter draws some general lessons about the factors that drive tensions over history in the European context before attempting to suggest, on a very practical level, how to evaluate Japan's efforts to deal with the past so far and whether the Murayama Statement is merely a necessary first step or a counterproductive distraction.

## Europe's struggle with history

World War II and the events surrounding it deeply traumatized Europe. On a profound level, they reshaped the ways in which Europeans think about themselves and about international relations, and they have continued to influence European affairs ever since. Yet the ways in which different European nations have dealt with their past, and the way in which those efforts have influenced interstate relations, have varied greatly over time. For the sake of analysis, the history of the battle over history can be broken up, somewhat arbitrarily, into four periods: (1) the immediate aftermath of World War II, (2) the Cold War period, (3) the post-Cold War period, and (4) the twenty-first century.

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## The aftermath of World War II: partial penance and a certain "silence"

World War II in Europe was an immensely destructive event, one in which over fifty million people lost their lives, nearly twice as many as were killed in Asia. These included over twelve million who were killed as a result of deliberate German policies aimed at exterminating certain categories of people (Jews, but also the Roma-Sinti people, homosexuals, and others). Tens of millions more were enslaved, driven from their homes, or otherwise brutalized. Of course, the crimes of the Third Reich were not inflicted by the Germans alone. Millions of non-Germans served in the German armed forces, including the feared Waffen SS. Millions more cooperated with the Nazi government, not only in Austria or other occupied regions, but even in neutral countries such as Sweden and Switzerland, which indirectly played an important role in supporting the Nazi war effort. Nor were the Allied powers innocent of crimes against humanity. The Soviet Union in particular had aided and abetted the German invasion of Poland, and the Red Army was guilty of atrocities that rivaled those of the Third Reich (Snyder 2010). The Americans and the British, for their part, had prosecuted the war with considerable brutality, and the aerial bombardment of Germany is estimated to have killed approximately 200,000 civilians.

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the primary concern was with preventing a recurrence of the disaster, and the Allied powers—in particular the United States—was determined to pursue the issue of German guilt for the war. Allied leaders came to believe that only by impressing on the Germans that theirs had been not only a military, but also a moral defeat would it be possible to prevent the reemergence of German militarism and to plant the seeds of democracy in German soil (Olick 2005).

Western efforts to pursue German war guilt, however, were far from successful. The Western war crimes tribunals, beginning with the Nuremberg trials of the top German military and political leadership, were plagued by numerous difficulties, not least the fact that many of those who sat in judgment—especially the Soviet Union—had been guilty of comparable deeds. In addition, the crimes with which the defendants were charged had not been crimes at the time that they had been committed, thus opening up the trials to the criticism that they were exercises in post hoc justice aimed at indulging the victors' appetite for revenge. The mass purges of those who had been associated with the

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Nazi and Quisling regimes were often grossly unfair in their effects and impractical because of their social and economic consequences. Many of those who were persecuted belonged to the most capable segments of German society, and their skills and abilities were desperately needed to rebuild a shattered economy and prevent the spread of social and political chaos. Moreover, it seemed that the German population in general were too brutalized and too preoccupied with the task of rebuilding their ruined country to spend much time reflecting on their past misdeeds. Instead of a sense of guilt, a general feeling of having been victimized pervaded the nation. As the Cold War progressed, the quest for historical justice was abandoned in favor of reconstruction and guarding against the growing menace posed by the Soviet Union.

The conservative government of Konrad Adenauer did commit itself to a rhetorical stance of regretting the crimes that had been committed "in Germany's name" during the Nazi regime. Moreover, it provided substantial amounts of aid to the victims of Nazism who lived in Israel and in Western-aligned countries. A careful analysis of Adenauer's motives for doing so, however, strongly suggests that practical necessity—that is, satisfying aggrieved public opinion in key Western-allied countries, as well as a somewhat unfortunate belief that the Federal Republic's financial rehabilitation required appeasing the worldwide Jewish community (*Judentum*)—was far more of a factor than any sense of moral contrition. Once German independence had been reestablished in 1955, the active pursuit of German guilt—in terms of exploring and commemorating the crimes of the Third Reich through the educational system and cultural institutions such as monuments and museums—was largely discontinued. Although war crimes tribunals continued, there was a noticeable lack of enthusiasm for the project and a general expectation that they would soon end once the statute of limitations had been reached (Frei 2002).

In other parts of Western Europe, a broadly similar process unfolded (there was no debate at all in the Communist East on these issues). Initially, in 1945 and the early years thereafter, there was an often savage pursuit of Nazi collaborators. Sometimes, these pursuits took a brutal form, such as the death march of German auxiliaries in Yugoslavia or the public humiliation of French women who had taken German lovers (Deák, Gross, and Judt 2000). In other cases, more constrained but nonetheless harsh measures were taken, such as the purges and suspension of the civil liberties (*la morte civile* as it was called in France) of hundreds of thousands of Austrians and Frenchmen and women who had supported

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the Third Reich. As in Germany, however, these efforts soon ran aground on various practical limitations. Those who were being persecuted often came from elite sectors of society and their assistance was viewed as desperately needed in the task of reconstruction. Moreover, it was generally feared that unless these large groups were successfully reintegrated into the political system, their alienation would serve as a continuing source of political instability that could undermine the newly won and still fragile political orders that were being created. As a result, national reconciliation between the left and the right, between the former collaborators and the new governments, was pursued—typically at the expense of pursuing reconciliation between the perpetrators of Nazi-era atrocities and their victims (Art 2006; Rousso 1991; Conan and Rousso 1998).

Thus, after an initial period of intense preoccupation with issues of historical justice, lasting from a few months to a few years, the issue of history disappeared from the top of the political agenda. What German federal president Heinrich Lübbe called "a certain silence" (*eine gewisse Stille*) fell across Europe in the 1940s and 1950s (Lübbe 1983, 334–35). At the time, most Europeans probably thought that it was a necessary silence.

## The Cold War

The silence over history, however, was never complete, and eventually it would be broken. It would be broken with particular violence during the 1960s and 1970s in France and Germany, where a young generation of student protestors, artists, and intellectuals took up the issue of their nations' responsibility for past atrocities. There was nothing inevitable about this process. In Austria, in contrast, this movement was quickly squelched by an alliance of left- and right-wing political leaders who resisted opening up these issues in large measure because they did not want to alienate the still sizeable number of former Nazis who were politically well organized in the shape of the Austrian Freedom Party (ÖVP) (Art 2006, 114–16). In France and Germany, however, the political left took up the issue to harness the energy of the younger generation and to attack their political opponents.

In the German context, this development had major diplomatic consequences. A core part of the political agenda of the new left-wing Social Democratic government of Chancellor Willi Brandt was to develop political ties with the Communist countries of Eastern Europe. Symbolically confronting the dark chapters of the Nazi past was a central

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part of Brandt's diplomatic campaign, leading to the dramatic apology at the monument to the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. These gestures, however, were not backed by a significant increase in the payment of compensation to the victims of Nazism living in Eastern Europe, for fear that doing so would strengthen economically countries who were viewed in the context of the Cold War as a security threat to Germany. Moreover, these measures were at first deeply controversial politically, and were initially strongly rejected by the political right and a broad segment of the German public (Wolffsohn and Brechenmacher 2005).

By the mid-1980s, however, a consensus in favor of adopting a penitent stance on history spread across the left–right political divide. Following a dramatic and much-praised speech in 1985 by German federal president Richard von Weizsäcker, mainstream German conservatives as well as left-wing Social Democrats came out in favor of confronting Germany's Nazi past through the educational system as well as through the erection of public monuments (Art 2006, 73–74). The Federal Republic continued to avoid paying large amounts of compensation to the East, where the majority of surviving victims of the Third Reich resided, largely for geopolitical reasons. While the Cold War continued, Germany obviously had reasons to avoid providing aid to potential enemies. Nonetheless, a consensus on the need to confront the past had been created across the German political spectrum and, for the first time, the Federal Republic adopted a consistently penitent stance on the past.

In other parts of Europe, however, there was far less readiness to adopt a public stance of contrition. In France, the large Jewish community—alarmed by General Charles De Gaulle's overtures to Arab governments at the expense of ties to Israel—pressed the issue for greater public awareness of the crimes of the collaborationist Vichy government (Wolf 2004, ch. 2). A fierce and at times almost obsessive debate about the crimes of the collaborationist Vichy government took off in the 1970s, yet neither conservative nor left-wing governments were willing to challenge the post-1945 myth that France had been united in its opposition to German rule. As a result, there was no public apology from government leaders and no provisions were made for compensation for victims of French misdeeds during the war.

In Austria as well, the government tried to keep the past in the past, despite mounting political costs associated with discoveries—beginning in the 1970s—that leading Austrian political figures had been deeply implicated in Nazi-era atrocities. The increasingly raucous controversies

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over Austria's Nazi past, and the continued refusal of the Austrian government to acknowledge it, reached a crescendo in the late 1980s after the election of former UN secretary general Kurt Waldheim to the Austrian presidency despite revelations in the press that Waldheim had served as an intelligence officer in the Balkans at a time when savage reprisals were being conducted against the local population because of guerilla activities and while hundreds of thousands of Jews were being rounded up and shipped off to the death camps (Botz and Sprengnagel 1994).

Yet, while governments remained unresponsive, on a societal level pressures for dealing with the past were mounting quickly. An international culture of contrition focused on historical misdeeds seemed to be coalescing, pushed onward by a new discourse on human rights and a new sensitivity to various groups demanding recognition for a history of marginalization and discrimination (Barkan 2001; Nobles 2008; Olick and Coughlin 2003). The impact of these groups on actual government policy, however, varied greatly according to local political and cultural circumstances. For the most part, their ability to influence actual government policy remained rather limited.

## The post-Cold War, 1991–2000

The end of the Cold War lent a major new impetus to the international search for justice in Europe and would trigger a significant increase in the number of apologies expressed by national governments for past injustices and in the number of compensation programs designed to aid the victims of wartime atrocities. The pace and scope of change varied considerably, however, and in different countries different factors played a driving role.

In the case of Germany, the end of the Cold War fundamentally changed the geopolitical framework as well as the cultural-discursive space within which the issue of historical justice has been handled. The fear that compensation to Eastern European victims of Nazism could be diverted to benefit the Communist adversary had vanished. At the same time, the necessity of forming stable relations with Germany's newly independent neighbors to the East—especially Poland and the Czech Republic—made German leaders more sensitive than ever to the importance of improving Germany's public image. These were concerns that were held not only in the German government, but also in the business world, which sensed that new opportunities might be emerging in Eastern and central Europe. At the time that the Wall fell, public opinion

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polls showed that substantial numbers of Eastern Europeans viewed the newly reunited Germany as a potential security threat, on par with or even greater than the threat posed by the defunct Soviet Union. In addition to these geopolitical considerations, there was also the fact that the new Eastern European governments were democracies led by men such as Vaclav Havel and Lech Wałęsa, whom many Germans admired and who could claim to speak for their people with a moral authority that their Communist predecessors had lacked.

As a result, in the first decade following the end of the Cold War there was a sharp intensification of German efforts to resolve the "left-over" historical issues. Domestically, there was a renewed emphasis on facing up to the Holocaust in the German educational system and through the erection of monuments and exhibits commemorating the horrors of the Third Reich. Berlin in particular became the center of new commemorative practices that carefully balanced the restoration and/or renovation of symbolically significant structures, such as the Bundestag, with a new historical sensitivity to the dark sides of the past (Young 1993; Reichel 1995). Externally, both senior governmental contacts and grassroots initiatives were launched in which German remorse for the events of the pre-1945 era was conveyed to the newly independent countries of Eastern Europe. Perhaps most importantly, a government public–private fund was established to compensate the millions of former slave laborers residing in Eastern European countries.

In Austria, the primary impetus came from the European Union, which made clear to the Austrian government that accession to the union would require Austria to face up to its Nazi past. As a result, from the early 1990s, Austrian leaders, beginning with socialist chancellor Franz Vranitzky in 1991, started to accept that Austria shared "co-responsibility" (*Mitverantwortung*) for the crimes of the Third Reich and to offer compensation to its victims, albeit at first on a limited scale (Uhl 2006). These early efforts triggered a backlash from the right, and helped fuel the rise of the Freedom Party of Austria under the leadership of Jörg Haider. Yet the success of the Freedom Party ironically would emphasize the power of the forces pushing for more contrition. When Haider's party joined the governing coalition in 2000, the backlash from other European governments was so fierce that the Austrian government—including its Freedom Party members—was forced to sign a declaration espousing the clearest official expression yet of Austria's shared responsibility for wartime atrocities. Soon thereafter, Austria significantly expanded

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its compensation program and—in an innovative new step—sought to return artworks that had been looted during the Nazi period to their rightful owners (Merling, Mudde, and Sedelmeier 2001).

In France and other European countries, the primary impetus for increased contrition came from domestic politics. In particular, the rise of the far right Front National party in France, under the leadership of the tough ex-paratrooper Jean Marie Le Pen, was perceived as a threat by both the political right and the left. The two sides joined forces to contain the far right. Against the background of rising global awareness of the Holocaust and increased French public sensitivity to the issue, Le Pen was soon prosecuted under new Holocaust denial laws (the Gayssot Law passed in 1990), a step that would help discredit his party and limit its growth (Art 2010, 10–11). At the same time, senior French leaders began to take up the language of French responsibility for the massacre of Jews during the Vichy period, culminating in an official apology by President Jacques Chirac in 1995. French educational and commemorative practices followed suit, even though French willingness to provide compensation lagged behind.

Other European governments—most notably Switzerland and Holland—joined in the general trend, sponsoring official inquiries into their country's role in the crimes of the Third Reich and offering official apologies and compensation to former victims. In some cases, the main impetus came from outside. For instance, Swiss banks feared that unless they looked into claims by family members on accounts left behind by deceased victims their overseas operations would be adversely affected. In other cases, a mixture of domestic political and international pressures played a decisive role. Nonetheless, by the end of the twentieth century, it appeared that a new culture of contrition had been established throughout Western Europe (Eizenstat 2003).

Not all historical crimes, however, were confronted. Despite some understated gestures of regret by the British government for the bombing of Dresden, there was no general willingness to confront the issue of Allied war crimes against the civilian populations of the Axis countries. Likewise, the issue of Western European responsibility for the legacies of imperialism and colonialism outside of Europe largely remained unaddressed, despite some international pressures to do so as well as fierce (but largely ineffectual) criticism from segments of the intelligentsia. Apparently, European governments felt that there were only so many apologies to go around.

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## The twenty-first century

At the end of the twentieth century, the confluence of the discourse on human rights and the Holocaust seemed to dovetail with geopolitical and domestic political interests in a way that promoted a new culture of contrition regarding the crimes of the Third Reich. At the start of the twenty-first century, however, geopolitical interests and international political discourse drifted apart in unexpected ways, so that interpreting the moral legacy of the war would become controversial once again, albeit in new and unexpected ways.

The impetus for this new discourse came above all from the new security threats posed by ethnic conflict and internal war. In particular, the outbreak of massive ethnically fueled violence in the former Yugoslavia impelled the government of the Federal Republic to join in an unprecedented fashion in the NATO-led military efforts to contain the conflict and end the fighting. In the past, the German government had argued strongly that although Germany possessed a right to defend itself militarily, the moral legacy of World War II forbade Germany from joining in any offensive military actions. *Nie wider Krieg* (never again war) was the overriding lesson drawn from the experiences of the first half of the twentieth century, and as a result the Federal Republic did not participate even in UN-sponsored peacekeeping missions. The campaign of ethnic cleansing and the destabilizing outflow of refugees from the Yugoslav conflict forced German leaders to reconsider their position. Instead of "never again war" the new lesson that was drawn was "never again Auschwitz." Indeed, it was argued that precisely because of its past, Germany bore an especially heavy moral duty to intervene when crimes against humanity were being committed virtually on its doorstep, in Bosnia and Kosovo. Ironically, these arguments were being made most eloquently by the foreign minister at the time, Joschka Fischer, who was the head of the pacifist Green Party and in his younger days had participated in violent demonstrations against what he saw then as a reactionary German government (Berger 2002).

While the case for a humanitarian intervention was strong, inadvertently the German government was placing the crime of ethnic cleaning in the same general moral category as Auschwitz and the crimes of the Third Reich. German leaders were well aware of the dangers of espousing moral equivalency, and argued strongly that Auschwitz was a special case that deserved special treatment as a uniquely evil event. Nonetheless, it

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soon became legitimate to voice the issue of German civilian suffering during and after World War II in a way that raised troubling new questions for the new culture of contrition that had settled into place in the 1980s and grown stronger over the course of the 1990s. Organizations representing the millions of Germans who had been driven out of their homes as a result of the redrawing of borders at the end of World War II argued that they too had been the victims of ethnic cleansing and that if it was permitted to condemn the crimes of the Serb government and militias in Bosnia and Kosovo, then their experiences also deserved recognition, commemoration, and compensation (Niven 2006).

German efforts on this score touched off a fierce reaction in neighboring Poland and the Czech Republic, however, where many feared that the German expellees might be able to use this new discourse to demand the restitution of their former property. Conservative politicians, most notably the Kaczyński brothers in Poland, were able to capitalize on these fears and eventually win control of the government. There then ensued an approximately six-year period during which the German and Polish governments were locked in a fierce diplomatic battle over the past. These tensions culminated in the 2007 EU summit in Brussels at which the proposal for creating a European constitution was negotiated. Polish demands for increased voting rights were based on the proposition that Poland deserved special compensation for its wartime suffering at German hands, and efforts to water down these demands led to accusations of German revisionism and lack of contrition. At times, negotiations threatened to break down completely, and in the end a complete impasse was avoided only when other European countries together pressured Poland to back down from its maximalist positions (Bacia and Stabenau 2007; Hoischen, Bacia, and Stabenau 2007).

After 2007, German–Polish recriminations over the past subsided, especially after the conservative but more German-friendly Donald Tusk replaced Jarosław Kaczyński in the fall of 2007. Unlike the more or less contemporaneous battles over history between Japan and its neighbors in Asia, at no time did the tensions between Germany and Poland reach the point at which there were the sort of mass demonstrations and riots that took place in China and Korea. While some differences emerged over the drawing of maritime boundaries between Germany and Poland, these disputes were relatively mild, and there was never the remotest chance of escalation to the level of a militarized dispute, as occurred between Japan and Korea over Dokdo/Takeshima and between Japan and China

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over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands. Moreover, public opinion data showed that while the Poles and Czechs were critical of German views on their history, overall attitudes remained toward Germany positive throughout the crisis (Falkowski and Popko 2007). The framework of the European Union had helped contain the political scope of the crisis; more than a decade of intense efforts to pursue reconciliation over historical issues had helped quell the kind of nationalist passions that were so disruptive in the Asian context.

Nonetheless, the reemergence of tensions in the early years of the twenty-first century—even with reference to the supposedly settled issue of how to interpret Nazi war crimes—underscores the protean and unpredictable nature of the political discourse on the past. The potential for conflict over other historical issues that have not been subject to such intense political handling and sustained efforts to promote reconciliation remains large. These include such sensitive subjects as the legacy of Communism and the role of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe (Mendelson 2006; Sherlock 2011), as well as the European record of imperialism and colonialism in the developing world, especially in countries such as Algeria, India, and Pakistan, where large numbers of immigrants to Europe hail from. While these topics have been raised, most notably the atrocious behavior of French forces during the Algerian conflict, there have been no significant changes in the historical narrative promoted by the state comparable to those involving the Holocaust and the crimes of the Nazi period (Howe 2010).

## Conclusions: the dynamics of history in Europe and lessons for Japan and Asia

The foregoing, brief review of the history issue in Europe suggests a number of lessons for Asia and Japan. First and foremost, it shows that Japan has hardly been uniquely impenitent with regard to its past. All European countries—including Germany—have been reluctant to deal with the darker side of their history, in part because the issue has been so explosive emotionally and because it has tended to be trumped by other overriding domestic and international political priorities. Indeed, a good case can be made that Japan has been more penitent about its imperial past than was Austria until after the end of the Cold War, and Japan continues to be more penitent than any European country about

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their colonial histories. In this sense, Japanese conservatives who resist Japan's being singled out for its alleged failure to apologize are clearly right. The Murayama Statement represents a stronger and far more forthright acknowledgment of Japanese responsibility for the horrors of the World War II period than was offered by most European countries, with the exception of Germany, until the 1990s. It also goes far beyond anything that has been offered by any of the European countries for their imperial past, much less by Russia for the atrocities of the Soviet period.

Second, however, the European experience also suggests that there can be costs to maintaining an impenitent narrative and that these costs have increased over time. At a certain point in time, virtually all the European countries decided to confront their role in the atrocities of the Third Reich. For some countries, the tipping point toward penance came earlier than for others. The Federal Republic was forced to do so early on—at least in terms of offering official apologies and extensive compensation for former victims. Other countries, such as Austria and France, chose to do so only much later. The initial catalyst for contrition varied greatly as well. For Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, the stimulus clearly came from outside forces. In the case of France, political leaders were responding to domestic developments, above all the emergence of a far right element.

In all cases, however, at least two factors seem to have played a major role. The first was the emergence of a human rights discourse that sees addressing past injustices as a prerequisite for defending human rights in the present and in the future. From this perspective, unless past abuses are acknowledged and somehow atoned for, the surviving victims will be unable to find closure and animosity between different national and/or ethnic groups is likely to persist (Minow 2002; Edkins 2003). Moreover, it will be difficult if not impossible to delegitimate and discourage future abuses. This discourse on historical justice and human rights was still highly contentious and nascent in the 1940s, when the Federal Republic began to exhibit contrition for the past. It became stronger over time, providing a language and stronger claim to legitimacy for the advocates of apology in the 1990s, when other European countries became considerably more penitent about their pasts as well.

The second important factor has been the degree to which victims groups have been given political leverage. In the case of the Federal Republic, because of its occupied status, it had little choice but to address historical justice issues, especially those that involved groups in Allied

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Western countries. Eastern European concerns were dealt with only as the geopolitical circumstances changed after the end of the Cold War. In the case of France, the mobilization of the Jewish community provided the first stimulus on a societal level. A political consensus was achieved, however, only after mainstream elites became alarmed by the rise of the Front National. In the case of Austria and Switzerland, increased economic and political integration was the decisive trigger for greater contrition. Regardless of the timing or the triggering event, however, it is worth noting that sooner or later all the Western European countries expressed at least some degree of remorse. Eventually, a regional critical mass in favor of contrition was formed, as reflected by efforts by European political elites to draw up general guidelines regarding Holocaust denial.

On this score, Japanese conservatives are only partly correct in their assessment of the dynamics of the history issue. While other interests can and probably should trump the quest for historical justice, under certain circumstances dealing with historical issues can be in the national interest. Disagreements over the past can have a paralyzing impact on a country's external relations, as Austria found out on multiple occasions, most notably the crises surrounding the Waldheim presidency as well as the entry of the Freedom Party into the government in 2000. On the other hand, efforts to address the historical issue can, over time, help defuse dangerous nationalist passions, as can be seen in the case of the German–Polish crisis of 2000–2007. In considering whether to pursue the historical issue, political leaders have to exercise judgment case by case.

There are important differences between Europe and Asia that need to be recognized on this score. First, obviously the level of regional integration is much weaker in the Asian context than in the European. Despite some important steps, there is no regional body comparable to the European Union, nor is there anything like NATO, which binds together most of the European countries militarily as well as economically. To some extent, there is a chicken-and-egg problem here. Because there is no strong regional body, history issues become more difficult to handle. In turn, tensions over history have stunted the development of Asian regional institutions (Rozman 2004; Lincoln 2004; Tsunekawa 2006). To the extent that Japan and other Asian nations want to create comparably robust regional institutions, they may wish to address the history problem. To the extent that the history problem is deeply rooted

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in the political cultures of countries in the region, however, they are likely to face an uphill battle.

Second, as can be seen most clearly in the context of Germany's relations with its Eastern European neighbors, sharing a common democratic system clearly enhances the prospects for reconciliation over time, even though it offers no guarantee that tensions will not persist or reemerge. Democracies are far more likely to see demands for justice as legitimate if they come from democratically elected leaders. At the same time, democratically elected leaders may also be more willing to accept apologies, provided they feel that they have sufficient domestic political support to do so. Here, obviously Japan faces a serious problem, since some of the countries with whom it might seek reconciliation (i.e., the PRC and North Korea) are clearly not democratic.

Third and finally, when different European countries did decide to pursue historical reconciliation, they tended to do so across a broad range of policy domains. Not only were apologies offered on a rhetorical level by political leaders, but changes came in terms of educational policies, official commemorative practices, compensation to victims, and even criminal justice (i.e., Holocaust denial laws). Given the strength of entrenched political groups in Japan, each exercising veto or near-veto power over different policy domains, it may be very difficult for any Japanese government to implement an across-the-board shift in policy. In this sense, critics of the Murayama Statement and Japanese government policies on historical justice issues in general are correct in pointing to a major deficiency in Japan's efforts to tackle the so-called history problem. Here, the Austrian case is instructive. After decades of denial, the Austrian government decided in the early 1990s that rhetorical gestures alone would be not enough. Within a few years, a wide range of policies were implemented across the entire spectrum of relevant policy domains that made the official stance on history espoused by the Austrian government almost as contrite as that of Germany (Pick 2000, 197–98; Uhl 2006).

In conclusion, in light of these critical differences between the Asian and European positions, it may well be that Japanese leaders will conclude that they need to go beyond the Murayama Statement in addressing the history issue. They are likely to do so, however, in a more piecemeal fashion than we have seen in Europe. It is likely that Japan will be better able to address these issues on a bilateral, rather than multilateral, basis and will have greater success in pursuing the history issue with some

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countries than with others. Prospects for building closer relations are far better with South Korea, for instance, than with China, and doing so virtually mandates that some such effort be made if the relationship is to be placed on a more stable and enduring footing. Moreover, it may take more time and effort, given the nature of the Japanese political system, before a truly effective program can be put in place across policy domains (education, commemoration, etc.). The payoffs of such an effort, however, are likely to be great.

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