

Rising Tensions in East Asia?  
A Transatlantic Perspective

**Toward East Asian Historical  
Reconciliation**

**- How can Europe/Germany help us?-**

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# Asia's rise : Opportunities? Or Threats for transatlantic relations?

- Opportunities?

Asian Development Bank, *Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century* (2011):

With innovative policies and effective cooperation, Asia can continue **economic development**, and more people would be **part of the rich world**, with per capita income levels equal to that of Europe today . . .

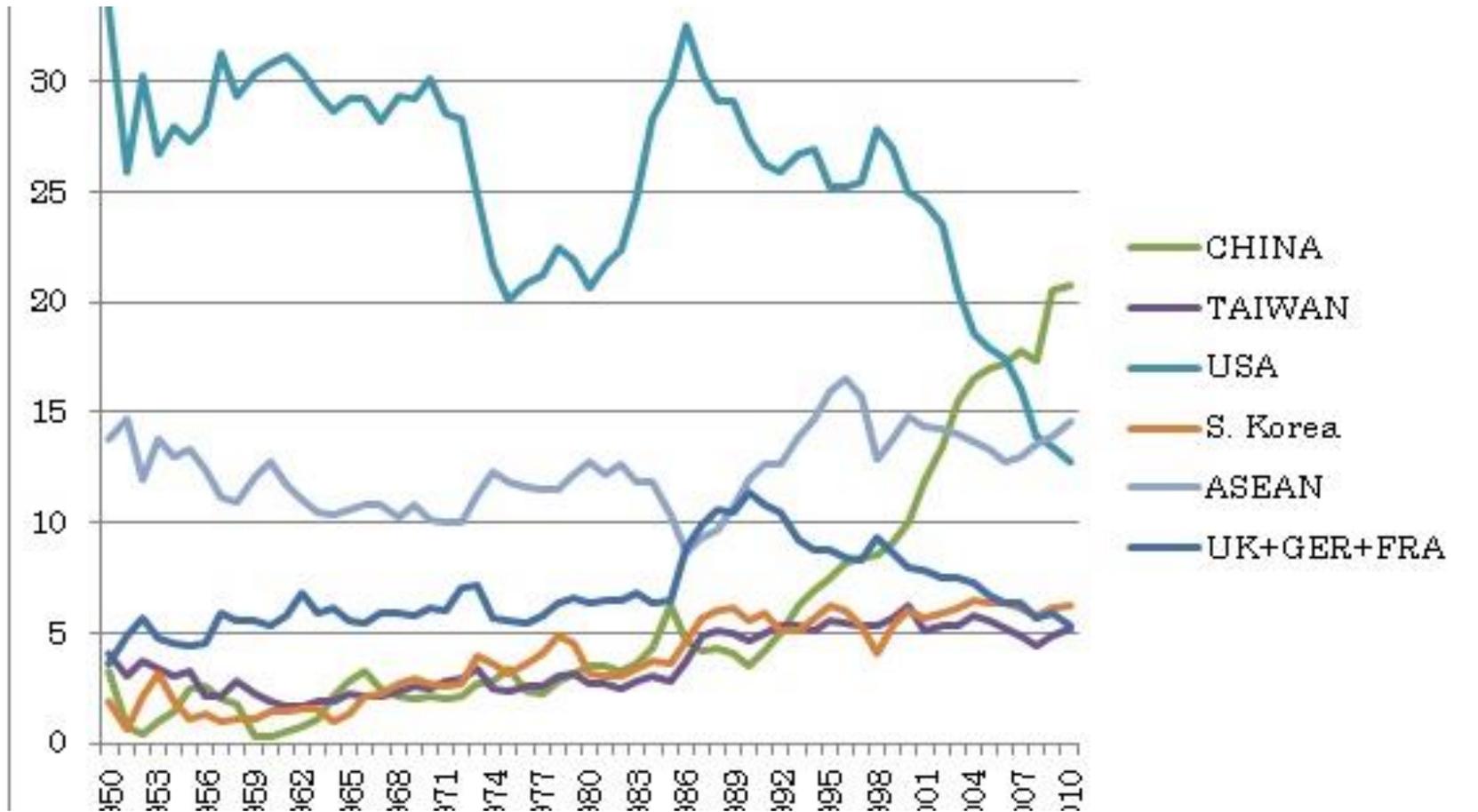
**Economically**, Asia is promising,  
However, will there be enough  
**stability and peace**  
as a basis for economic development?

-Especially in **East Asia**  
tensions are rising

# Deepening Economic Ties

## Coexists with political tensions

Japan's trade by country



# **Asian Paradox** situations in East Asia

“Asia suffers from ‘Asian paradox,’ the **disconnect between growing economic interdependence** on one hand, and **backward political, security cooperation** on the other,” especially, “**differences stemming from history** are widening.”

South Korean President  
Park Geun-hye at joint session of the  
Congress, May 2013.



# **East Asia Still Haunted by “Past” -History Problems**

1. Yasukuni shrine controversy
2. Descriptions of WWII in Japanese history textbooks
3. “Comfort women” issue

# Yasukuni Controversy (Dec. 2013)



# Anti-Japanese movement in China (2005) as a response to **revisionists' textbook** in Japan



# “Comfort women” issues (Glendale, CA)



“comfort women” issue is increasingly  
recognized as **human right issue**

Korea's Foreign Minister  
Yun Byung-se at a UN  
human rights meeting in  
Geneva (March 5, 2014)



# Current Japan's Choice: **Look to the West**

## 1. **Panoramic perspective diplomacy**

- Abe has visited a total of **49 countries**, especially tried to strengthen ties with **European countries**

## 2. **Value-based Diplomacy**

- Emphasize that promoting “**liberal values**” such as **freedom, democracy, human rights** as its diplomatic goal.

**History problems are really messy.  
However, is it really possible  
for Japan to avoid facing them?**

# History problems even intrudes on **Security**

Ex.

Korea's failure in signing a **Korea-Japan General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** in May 2012, due to strong opposition from the public.

# Korean people's deep distrust toward "militaristic Japan."



**Abe cabinet is ready for more active security role in the region, yet the neighboring countries are not.**

# How **Europe /Germany** can help East Asian historical reconciliation

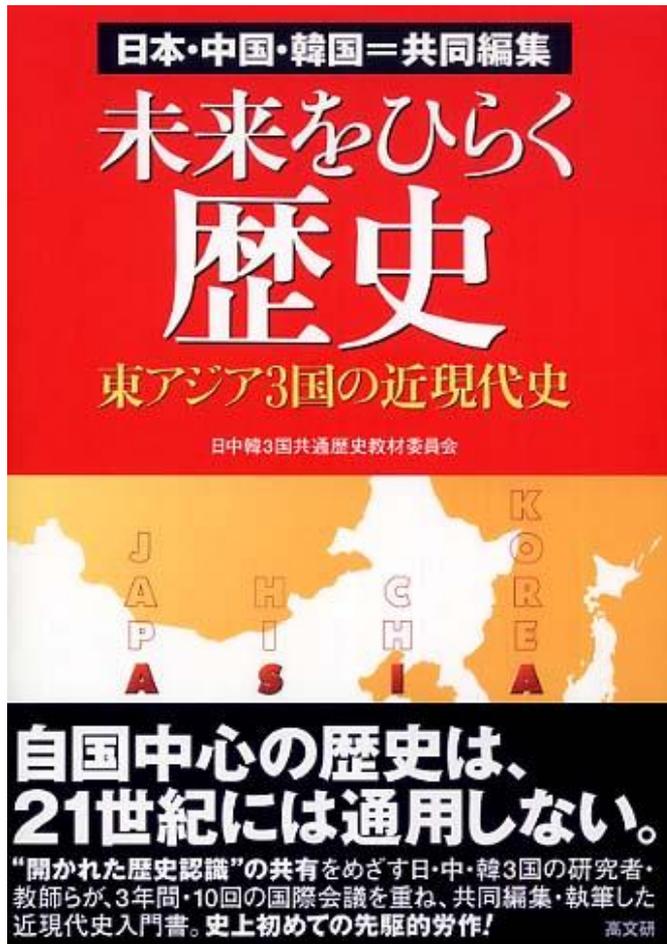
1. As a **Model** of Reconciliation
2. As an **Actor** involving East Asian reconciliation

:**informal**/ non-governmental level(ongoing)

:**formal**/government (future?)

# Germany as a **Model**

## - East Asian **textbook dialogues** (1990s~)-



*A History that Open the Future(2005)*

First **common teaching material** for Japan, China, and Korea.

The ideal of “common textbook” is now shared by **politicians**

“As Germany and France, and Germany and Poland did, we can publish **a joint history textbook for Northeast Asia** and build up practices of cooperation and dialogue.”

Park Geun-hye at the National Diplomatic Academy, November 14, 2013

Germany/Europe as an **Actor**  
of East Asian history dialogues

- **Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research**
- **European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO)**
  - Teach **European/German methods**  
to East Asian historians and educators

# Future: **Germany** as a **Mediator**?

- **US or Germany?**

US : more **reasons?** (strategic interests/history)

Germany: more **qualified?** (long experience of reconciliation, accumulated methods)

- History problem is becoming a **diplomatic issue**, but **not a purely diplomatic issue**

- In addition to settling disputes, mediator should help bringing **historical justice** for durable peace.

# Proposals for Future

1. Toward **East Asian** historical reconciliation
2. Toward better **EU-Asia** relations

# Key for future East Asian reconciliation: a wider range of societal actors

- Who should be **the actors** toward historical reconciliation?

**1. Political leaders?**

**2. Historians /experts?**

**3. Citizens**

# Historical Reconciliation **as a Continuous Process**- Roles of Citizens esp. **Youth**



De Gaulle' address, September 9, 1962, Ludwigsburg

# Future EU-Asia interregional relations

## Asia's Rise: “Yellow Peril” again?



Painting by H.Knackfuss (Germany)  
“Peoples of Europe, guard your dearest goods” (1895)

# Toward peaceful and mutually beneficial EU-Asia Relations

- Can Asia share **core values** with Europe?

**Freedom**

**Democracy**

**Equality**

**Rule of Law**

**Human Rights**

- East Asian history problem should be  
addressed according to **these core values**