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AICGS POLICY REPORT

DIFFERENT BEDS, SAME NIGHTMARE: THE POLITICS OF HISTORY IN GERMANY AND JAPAN

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY GERMAN STUDIES THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

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FOREWORD

In 2008 and 2009, a series of historical issues once again defined the public space of Japanese-South Korean and Japanese-Chinese relations: the revisionist essay of General Toshio Tamogami; Prime Minister Taro Aso's acknowledgement of the use of slave labor in his family's wartime mine; new flare-ups in the longstanding territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu and Takeshima/Dokdo islets; ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine; and Japanese government approval of another amnesiac history textbook whitewashing Japan's World War II aggression. As scholars and practitioners have sought to understand the power of history issues in Asia and the possibilities for ending the logjam over reconciliation, in the last decade they have looked increasingly to Germany's experience with a foreign policy of reconciliation.

The search for comparative examples has extended to the new government in Japan. During a June 2009 visit to the Republic of Korea as the president of the Democratic Party, Yukio Hatoyama elaborated on his vision for an East Asian or Asian-Pacific Community by drawing on the Franco-German experience of creating a regional organization to embed their relationship of permanent peace. As Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada develops his idea for a common textbook among Japan, China, and South Korea, the obvious candidate for best practices is the government-supported German experience with bilateral textbook commissions with its former enemies, and with the common Franco-German textbook that is used routinely in German and French schools.

In light of these academic and policy trends toward comparison with Germany, in 2009 AICGS launched a project on "Resentment or Reconciliation? A Comparison of Japanese and German Foreign Policies in Their Neighborhoods," which analyzes the policies of Germany and Japan in their regions by comparing the nature, format, and motives of action and inaction by both countries. The project aims to offer missing perspectives on German and Japanese reconciliation, and enrich the American debate about the implications for U.S.-Japanese relations of sustained or limited reconciliation in Japanese foreign policy. The first initiative in this project was the May 2009 workshop that provided the jumping-off point for the following analysis by Professor Thomas Berger.

Professor Berger was one of the first scholars to recognize the benefits of comparing Germany and Japan. His work demonstrates that even when inevitable systemic and political culture differences exist, comparison can sharpen the contours of debate and illuminate policy choices. Professor Berger alerts us to three key differences between the two countries: in historical experiences, in allied involvement in shaping new narratives, and in the international/regional settings in which the two countries evolved from pariah status after World War II. Yet, as he points out, the two countries face the same challenge of confronting the indelibility of the past at a time when history issues are high on the global agenda. As Japan shows now the political will and commitment to grapple with the past, Germany can provide an important guide for the opportunities and hurdles etched in the long, arduous, and necessary process of reconciliation.

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01 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Germany and Japan are typically presented as polar opposites with respect to how they deal with the past. The Federal Republic is usually portrayed as a country that has faced up to the horrors of its history and accepted moral responsibility for them. As a result, it is commonly argued, Germany has managed to achieve reconciliation with its neighbors and paved the path to building a more peaceful and just Europe.[1] Japan, in contrast, is commonly seen as being the exact opposite: as a country that has refused to acknowledge or apologize for the terrible crimes it has committed.[2]

As a result of its "historical amnesia," Japan has earned the enmity of much of the Asian region, heightening suspicions regarding its intentions and undermining efforts to create a more peaceful, integrated region.[3] When it comes to the politics of history, if Germany is the "model student" (*Musterknabe*), Japan is the perpetual dunce.

Critics of this point of view are many. One common objection—frequently offered by conservative Japanese—is that while Imperial Japan may have been guilty of many things, it did not commit crimes on the same order of magnitude as those committed by the Nazis, and that moreover it was acting under extenuating circumstances that differed dramatically from those that obtained in Europe. Therefore it is hardly surprising that the Japanese should not be as apologetic as Germany.

A second, related argument—albeit one more commonly made by critics of Japan—suggests that the American pursuit of Japanese war crimes was far more flawed than what was done in Europe.[4] Consequently, Japan has been allowed not to confront the realities of the past in the same way as the Europeans have.

A third and final criticism—made most recently by American scholar Jennifer Lind, but also espoused by many Japanese—argues that the political realities in Europe are very different from those that obtain in Asia. Most countries find it difficult to admit to historical wrong doing, and when leaders do so, they tend to trigger a nationalist backlash in their own societies that undermines their efforts. Germany chose to confront its guilt because it was faced with overwhelming pressure to do so.[5] In contrast, Japan has been under much less pressure to do so, and to the extent that it has done so, it is responding to pressures coming from non-democratic regimes seeking to exploit the history issue to serve their own domestic and international political agendas.[6] In this sense, it is hardly surprising that Japan does not apologize as much as Germany, nor would it be productive for it to do so.

The arguments of those who challenge the standard view of Japan as a moral dunce can be summed up in three, apparently straightforward observations. First, the Japanese were not Germans (and the Militarists were not Nazis). Second, Tokyo is not Nuremberg. And third, Asia is not Europe.

Paradoxically, even though they seem to contradict

one another, there is much to each of these arguments. Japan has done far less than Germany to make amends for the past, and this omission in fact has contributed significantly to tensions in the region. At the same time, the history for which Japan is expected to apologize is very different from Germany's, and the domestic and international political contexts within which the question of Japanese responsibility for that history has been pursued differ fundamentally from those of Europe. Yet, each of these positions exaggerates the degree to which the Japanese case differs from the German.

While Japanese efforts to atone for the past pale in comparison with those of the Federal Republic, it is not as if they have done nothing. Nor is it correct to accuse the Japanese of "historical amnesia." The past has been very much present in Japanese politics and political discourse.

Imperial Japanese atrocities differed fundamentally from those of the Nazis, both in terms of size and the circumstances under which they occurred. They were horrific nonetheless, and the deep feelings of remorse they stirred within Japanese society are far more profound than are commonly realized. The Allied campaign to instill a sense of guilt in Japan was a highly flawed enterprise, but it is often overlooked how poorly it went in the German case as well.

Finally, there is little doubt that the domestic and international political contexts in which Japan operates are very different from those of the Federal Republic. The primary reason that Germany has done so much more than Japan in making amends for the past lies in the very different political circumstances it has found itself in. At the same time, the dynamics that drive the evolution of the politics of history in both Europe and Asia are remarkably similar. Both countries find themselves confronted with a broader, global phenomenon that has slowly but surely pushed issues of historical justice up the international political agenda, and which is likely to make the past a difficult political topic not only for Germany and Japan, but for the world as a whole for a long time to come. "To sleep in the same bed, but to dream different dreams" (*dosho imu*) is an old Japanese saying that is used to describe a situation where two people find themselves bound together in the same place, but have different understandings of what they are doing and what they should hope for. In the case of Germany and Japan we have almost the opposite situation, two countries that find themselves in positions that in terms of their history and geopolitics are vastly separated from one another, but who are confronted with a very similar nightmare—how to deal with the political legacies of a difficult past. In this sense, they are countries that find themselves in different beds, but dreaming the same nightmare.

In the following, this essay will examine each one of the sets of issues described above: how have Germany and Japan dealt with their difficult pasts; the differences in their pre-1945 histories; in how the issue of war guilt pursued in the immediate postwar years; and in the domestic and international political circumstances under which their approach to dealing with the past have evolved. In the conclusions, some final thoughts about the possible future of the politics of the past and their practical implications will be offered.

02

DIFFERENT APOLOGIES, DIFFERENT CONSEQUENCES

DIFFERENT APOLOGIES, DIFFERENT CONSEQUENCES

How to Measure Contrition: Official Narratives and Collective Memory

To date there has been little systematic, scholarly effort to find ways to gauge the extent to which a country is penitent or impenitent about the past.[7] All too often, the tendency has been to refer to a single statement by a political leader, or to a single set of survey data, and from that try to extrapolate what is often a very complex and variegated set of attitudes and practices regarding the past. Measuring—or better, gauging—contrition is no easy task, and can be done only through a multilayered approach. First, it is necessary to distinguish between two levels of contrition: the official historical narrative created by the state and the collective memory that exists at the level of society.

The official historical narrative is the set of actions taken by the state that define a version of history. It is possible to identify here at least five policy domains: 1) political rhetoric, 2) commemorative policies, 3) educational policies, 4) policies pertaining to compensation and reparations, and 5) the way in which criminal justice is used to deal with historical injustices. Political rhetoric refers to the way in which the past is invoked by political leaders, especially heads of government and heads of state, as well as official opinions offered by legislative bodies. Commemorative practices include national holidays, commemorative ceremonies, monuments, and publicly run museums and exhibitions. The way in which the past is dealt with in public education is obviously another central aspect of the official historical narrative. Officially sponsored cultural and academic exchanges that involve history may also come under this rubric. Compensation and reparations is another critical dimension of the official historical narrative. Finally, there is criminal justice and the punishment of perpetrators of historical injustices. Laws limiting freedom of speech for certain kinds of historical views falls into this category as well.

Obviously, this list is not exhaustive and there is a certain amount of overlap between the different domains. There may also exist contradictions and tensions between them—one version of history may be conveyed in political rhetoric, another in school textbooks, and so forth. There may also be a lack of consistency within a single policy domain, especially over time. The state might, for instance, issue textbooks with contradictory views on history. There are also many other policies through which the state may express a particular view of the past, but arguably these five areas give a fair overview of the way in which the state defines the past. Taken together, with their inconsistencies and contradictions, they provide a far more accurate portrayal of the official narrative of the state than looking at any one dimension in isolation.

Analyzing the official historical narrative of the state is obviously a huge task, but even more daunting is assessing the broader collective memory of a society. Two sets of indicators are of some use in this endeavor. The first is tracking developments at the level of public discourse: the way in which the past is portrayed in art, film, and literature, as well as in popular histories and debates over history produced by non-state actors. The second is to analyze surveys of public opinion regarding history, which despite all the well known shortcomings of surveys in general, provide important insight on attitudes toward history as held at the broadest level.[8]

These two levels—the official narrative and collective

memory—are necessarily closely related, and they influence one another in complex ways. For present purposes, however, it is not necessary to go too far in exploring this issue. The main point here is merely to establish a framework for analysis. Obviously, a thorough analysis of these issues would go far beyond the scope of this essay. Only the briefest of overviews is offered here in order to give some measure of the relative magnitude of contrition in the German and Japanese cases.

Contrition in Germany and Japan

Even more so than in soccer, Germany is the world master (*Weltmeister*) when it comes to contrition. On every dimension of its official historical narrative, the Federal Republic has gone to great lengths to express profound contrition for the transgressions of the Nazi past. In terms of political rhetoric, German political leaders from Chancellor Konrad Adenauer on have acknowledged the horrible crimes that were committed by the Third Reich and underlined that the Federal Republic has a duty to atone for them. To be sure, especially in the 1940s, 1950s, and well into the 1960s, there was a tendency to use language such as "deeds done in Germany's name," implying that a relatively small group of leaders had been responsible for the actions of the Third Reich and avoiding the emotionally charged question of the extent to which all Germans bore a responsibility. The concept of "collective guilt" was anathema to most Germans and was actively rejected by political leaders of the time.[9] Chancellor Willy Brandt was the first German head of government to adopt a clearly contrite stance, arguing that "no German is free of history"[10] and making an ongoing confrontation with Germany's past a central part of his administration even though at the time his stance was much criticized.[11] A broader consensus crossing the left-right spectrum of German public opinion did not fall into place until 1985, when President Richard von Weizsäcker made a much celebrated speech on the fortieth anniversary of the German surrender in World War II in which he called on his nation to look upon that date as a day of liberation rather than defeat.[12] Expressions of contrition for the Nazi past became *de rigueur* for German politicians of all political stripes only in the 1980s, and it was not until then that Germany's so-called "culture of contrition"[13] was fully established.

Just as importantly, since at least the 1990s, there has been a marked intolerance for remarks by politicians that seem to challenge Germany's penitent official historical narrative. For instance, in 1988, when Bundestag President Philip Jenninger seemed to justify the anti-Semitic mindset of Germans fifty years earlier, his political career was essentially over.[14] More recently, in 2003, when the prominent FDP leader Jürgen Möllemann, in a series of comments and campaign leaflets, appeared to cater to anti-Semitic sentiments for electoral purposes, he triggered a backlash within his own party that helped topple him from his leadership position.[15]

In contrast, Japanese political rhetoric regarding the past has been far less contrite. While from early on West German leaders openly acknowledged that WWII had been a war of aggression and that the Third Reich was guilty of terrible atrocities, the Japanese government tended to avoid the issue of Japanese misdeeds altogether. In the 1951 Treaty of San Francisco, which ended the state of war between Japan and the Western allies, the Japanese government only agreed to accept the verdict of the Tokyo war crimes tribunal. In 1954, Japanese negotiations with the Republic of Korea (South Korea) broke down entirely because the Japanese government refused to retract statements by its lead negotiator that the annexation of Korea had been agreed to voluntarily by the Koreans and Korea should forgo reparations in light of the great investments that Imperial Japan had made in its economy.[16] While only a few years later the Japanese government rejected this openly affirmative view of the past, Japanese leaders during this period restricted themselves to vague statements of "sincere regret" over "the difficult period in the recent past."[17]

It was not until the 1980s that Japanese leaders began to acknowledge that Japan had been guilty of aggression in Asia in the 1930s, and it was not until the 1990s that the Japanese government began to routinely acknowledge that their nation had been responsible for the great suffering that had been inflicted on the nations of Asia during the Imperial era.[18] Even then, its efforts were constantly undermined by determined efforts by conservative politicians and intellectuals who offered a revisionist, distinctly unapologetic view of Japan's past. While, as

in Germany, officials were frequently punished for expressing such views,[19] the consensus on what are the boundaries of permissible rhetoric about the past is far weaker in Japan than it is in the Federal Republic.

In short, political rhetoric in Germany began by being far more contrite than was true of Japan and has remained so to this day. At the same time, it is clear that Japan's official historical narrative has moved toward expressing far more contrition and remorse than it has in the past, and it is quite possible that Japan may move further in this direction in the future.[20] At the same time, Japan's willingness to move further has been constrained not only by pressures from the political right, but also by a sense of disappointment that past efforts by Japanese leaders to offer apologies for the past have had no lasting effect on what they perceive as more or less unremitting hostility toward Japan on the part of Chinese and Koreans. A mood of what has been called "apology fatigue" has fallen over Tokyo.

Other dimensions of the Japanese official narrative are even less contrite than Germany's. For instance, in the case of Japan there is no monument or museum sponsored by the national government that deals with the history of Japanese aggression or atrocity in Asia. Whereas in Berlin one can scarcely avoid running into constant reminders of the horrors of the Third Reich—from the huge and somber Holocaust memorial in the heart of the city to the plaques commemorating the transport of prisoners to the concentration camps at the *Hauptbahnhof*[21]—in Tokyo there is not a single permanent reminder of the brutalities committed by Imperial Japan in Asia. Instead, there are several museums, including the Showa museum in Tokyo as well as the Peace Museums in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that chiefly commemorate Japanese civilian suffering during the Pacific War, with only passing or no reference to the broader historical context which brought about that suffering.[22] While Peace Osaka and a few other left-leaning institutions began linking Japanese civilian suffering to Japanese aggression in Asia in the late 1980s, they came under almost immediate attack from the political right.[23]

Perhaps the most difficult and controversial aspect of Japanese commemorative policies has revolved around the Yasukuni Shrine, which is dedicated to the spirits of the two and a half million soldiers and sailors who have died in Japan's wars since the time of the Meiji restoration. Managed by an independent Shrine Association and financed exclusively from private sources, the shrine is not under Japanese government control.[24] At the same time, in the pre-war period it had been state run and supported and was of central symbolic importance to the military regime. Legend has it that when they marched off to war, soldiers would fatalistically swear to "meet again at Yasukuni"—i.e., after they died fighting. Since according to traditional Japanese belief, this is meant quite literally that after death the soldiers would become "heroic spirits" (*eirei*) who dwell at the shrine, this oath carries a significance that goes well beyond mere soldierly bravado.

Since the early 1950s, Japanese prime ministers and politicians have visited the shrine in order to pay their respects to the dead and to comfort their spirits. This practice became the focus of considerable controversy after 1978 because the shrine authorities chose to include in the lists of those enshrined at Yasukuni the names of the men who had been convicted as Class A war criminals by the Allies after WWII. When in 1985 Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro chose to go to the shrine to pay his respects, critics both in Japan and abroad felt that this suggested that the government implicitly was vindicating Japan's wars of aggression. For the sake of relations with China, Nakasone desisted from making any further trips, but from 2001-2006 Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro insisted on repeatedly visiting the shrine despite mounting protests from China and South Korea. Koizumi and other conservatives argued strongly that at a time Japan once again was sending its forces abroad—this time on peacekeeping missions to Iraq and elsewhere around the world—it was important to remember those who in the past sacrificed their lives for the nation. Koizumi insisted that the decision to visit the shrine was a domestic political matter, and he worked hard to distance his visits to the shrine from any hint of historical revisionism. For instance, in 2001, Koizumi stressed he only meant to mourn the dead and added that Japan had been guilty of waging a war of aggression that caused great suffering to the people of Asia.[25]

Chinese and Korean opinion, however, was utterly un-assuaged by the prime minister's words, and Japanese relations with its closest and most important Asian neighbors went into a state of crisis for five years. High level meetings were suspended almost completely, and repeated riots and demonstrations in Beijing, Seoul, and elsewhere soured relations for close to five years. Since Koizumi stepped down in 2006, his successors have chosen not to make official visits to the shrine and have worked together with their Chinese and Korean counterparts to keep relations on an even keel. Yet, beneath the surface, tensions simmer on and the potential for future clashes over the issue remains.[26]

It is possible to find certain parallels between Yasukuni and aspects of German policies regarding commemorating the past. The shrine first became the focus of international controversy in 1985, just a few months after a broadly similar dispute erupted over the joint visit by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Ronald Reagan to the military cemetery at Bitburg.[27] Similarly, there is concern that Germany is guilty of relativizing Nazi crimes through monuments such as the Neue Wache in Berlin, which commemorates the victims of the Third Reich together with those of communism, and exhibitions regarding ethnic cleansing and expulsions, which recall the persecution of the Jews together with other incidents of ethnic-based violence.[28] The exhibition over the ethnic expulsions in Berlin, "Erzwungene Wege," in particular bears comparison with Yasukuni in that it provoked outrage in Germany's eastern neighbors—particularly the Czech Republic and Poland—and had serious repercussions for German diplomacy within the European Union.[29] However, there is no commemorative site in Germany that has provoked as much controversy for as long as Yasukuni has, and the institutions of the European Union were helpful in containing the diplomatic fallout from the crisis (a point this essay will return to later). Moreover, in the German context, efforts have been made to underline the unique character of the Holocaust while at the same time recognizing the suffering of other victims of ethnic persecution. A comparison of the German and Japanese experiences in this respect ultimately underlines the extent to which disputes over history have plagued regional relations far more in Asia than in Europe.

Japanese textbooks, in relative terms, have been forthright in tackling the issue of Imperial aggression and colonial domination. Beginning in the early 1970s, Japanese textbook writers began to refer to Imperial atrocities in Asia, although they tended to do so at first in footnotes and without going into much detail.[30] Ministry of Education screening procedures, which had previously been used to discourage a negative portrayal of the past in textbooks, were struck down in 1975 by the Japanese equivalent of the Supreme Court for overstepping the boundaries of the Ministry's authority.[31] Since then, the debate has focused on efforts by right-wing groups to win Ministry approval for textbooks that provide either an affirmative view of the Imperial period and/or ignore Japanese atrocities. Their success in doing so has provoked crises with Japan's Asian neighbors on several occasions, particularly in 1984, 2001, and 2006. While at times German school texts have ignored or glossed over the darker sides of its history, especially during the 1950s and 1960s, there have been no comparable controversies that spilled over to influence Germany's foreign relations.[32]

Perhaps the areas in which we see the greatest discrepancy between the German and Japanese official narratives are in reparations policy and with respect to criminal justice issues. Japan was forced to provide one billion dollars in reparations to Asian countries as part of the Treaty of San Francisco in 1951, and gave up all further claims to reparations for the value of Japanese overseas assets (valued at approximately $25 billion at the time). An additional $16 million was given to the International Red Cross to help compensate former Allied prisoners of war. Thereafter Japan assiduously avoided paying any other forms of compensation, offering instead substantial sums in foreign aid as part of a series of bilateral treaties between itself and Asian countries, beginning with the Republic of Taiwan in 1952. In return, the Asian countries—including South Korea in 1965 and the People's Republic of China in 1978—agreed to relinquish any claims for further reparations or compensation for the hardships they had endured.[33] The only, very limited exception to this pattern came in 1995 with the establishment of an Asian Women's Fund (AWF) set up to compensate and assist the surviving "Comfort Women" who had been pressed into sexual slavery during the war.

Between 1996 and 2006, however, the fund was able to identify only 285 eligible survivors (out of an estimated 100,000) and paid out less than $20 million in compensation and support.[34]

In contrast, the Federal Republic made paying compensation to the victims of the Third Reich a central part of its foreign policy. In addition to the large sums that were extracted during the occupation period, the West German government paid out tens of billions of dollars in compensation, beginning with an initial payment of DM 3 billion paid to the state of Israel as part of the Luxemburg Agreement of 1952.[35] Initially, those residing in Communist countries—where the majority of victims of Nazism resided—were largely ineligible to receive any compensation. Yet, over time, the restrictions were loosened, and after the Cold War ended the claims of the long neglected victims in eastern Europe were finally fully addressed, most importantly with the establishment in 2000 of a $6.3 billion fund to help surviving former slave laborers.[36]

An even more dramatic contrast is provided by a comparison of how the two countries dealt with the criminal justice implications of the past. In the case of Japan, after the Allied war crimes tribunals ended, there was no effort to continue them. Instead, there was a massive campaign to pardon or purge those who had already been imprisoned that began already before the Occupation ended. In Germany as well, there was a step-by-step roll back of the purges and the pardoning of war criminals convicted of lesser categories of offenses already in the early 1950s.[37] Nonetheless, after the Occupation ended the Federal Republic chose to continue to pursue Nazi-era war criminals to the extent allowable under German law. To be sure, there was a certain amount of foot dragging, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. Nonetheless, the trials continued and gained growing political support, until in the late 1970s, when the Bundestag voted to extend the statute of limitations indefinitely for crimes of the Third Reich.[38] The wheels of German justice would continue to grind on into the twenty-first century, with the deportation of Ivan Demjanjuk to face trial for actions committed while serving as a concentration camp guard. In comparison, there had been no war crime tribunal held in Japan in more than half a century.

Also of considerable importance in this context is the German tradition of "militant democracy" in which the state clamps down on groups defined as "hostile to the constitutional order." Among other things, this has led to a ban on the dissemination of Nazi propaganda and the use of Nazi-era symbols. There are no comparable limitations in Japan on the freedom of speech and assembly, and it is thus far easier to espouse blatantly revisionist views regarding the past in Japan than it is in Germany.

While it is impossible here to give an in depth analysis of the collective memory of atrocity in the two societies, a few basic points can be offered. First, in the 1940s and 1950s, both German and Japanese societies showed relatively little guilt regarding the horrors of the pre-1945 period. In both nations, overwhelmingly the first order of the day was reconstruction and ensuring basic survival. Japan had lost over 3 million soldiers and civilians. In Germany over 6.5 million perished during the war (not counting the hundreds of thousands who were liquidated by their own government). The Pacific War and the collapse of the Japanese empire had generated approximately 6 million refugees. In West Germany alone there were over 12 million refugees, and millions more would trickle in from the Communist East thereafter. Virtually every major city in both countries had been reduced to rubble, and food shortages and malnutrition would plague both countries for several years after the conflict had ended. Under such conditions, it is not surprising that the public in both countries was preoccupied with their own suffering. In both countries, knowledge of the crimes of the previous regime was widespread thanks to determined Allied efforts to publicize them.[39] However, after an initial outburst of horror and outrage public willingness to deal with the questions of historical justice declined considerably as the Occupations continued. By the early 1950s, the public in both countries seemed to show little interest in the past, although in Japan at least public awareness of atrocities committed by Imperial forces was kept alive in part by a left-leaning Japanese publishing industry that produced a stream of books and films on the topic.

In the late 1950s, the ongoing war crimes tribunals and a limited resurgence of the far right sparked a new awareness of the Nazi war crimes while raising

troubling questions about the complicity of German society as a whole in the horrors of the Third Reich. The student movement contributed further to the trend, so that by the late 1960s Germany was engulfed in a furious debate over history. There was fierce resistance to this trend, particularly from conservative sectors of German society, which accused the left of instrumentalizing the Holocaust to pursue its own agenda.[40] A broad-based popular consensus making the grappling with the Nazi past a fixed feature of Germany's political culture really came into being only in the late 1970s and 1980s, buoyed by a growing international consensus on the importance of the Holocaust as a defining event in modern history.[41]

In Japan as well, there was renewed public interest in war crimes and Imperial atrocities, but it came relatively later—in the 1970s—and was even more fiercely contested than in Germany. Nonetheless, beginning in the 1970s, there was a long series of best sellers documenting Japanese atrocities in Asia, including the Nanjing massacre and activities of Unit 731. At the same time, however, a growing number of revisionist historians and politicians argued that accounts of Japanese atrocities were exaggerated and that Japanese Imperial expansion was justifiable in light of the geopolitical circumstances of the time. These arguments enjoyed a great deal of currency among the public. According to a 1994 poll conducted by the Japanese public broadcasting company, NHK, 52 percent of those surveyed thought that the war had been one of aggression. At the same time, a clear plurality—32 percent—thought that expansion had been unavoidable for an impoverished nation with few natural resources, versus 27 percent who thought that the war had been both aggressive and avoidable.[42]

The late 1990s saw significant shifts in German and Japanese public attitudes toward the past. In the case of Germany, there was a growing tendency to interpret the Holocaust in the broader context of the German and European experiences with atrocity and totalitarianism, even while the Holocaust was recognized as a singularly evil event. Thus, by the beginning of the century, many observers became concerned that a disturbing "fusing of history" (*Verschmelzung der Vergangenheit*) was taking place[43] that could lead to a relativization of the Holocaust. The increased participation of German forces in international peacekeeping operations in the name of defending human rights—beginning with the War in Kosovo in 1999—may have contributed to this trend, and opened the door to a new public willingness to focus on the long-repressed (or at least down-played) memory of German civilian suffering during the Second World War.[44]

In Japan, the trend toward openly discussing Imperial atrocities and recognizing Japanese responsibility for them was balanced by a growing grass roots conservative movement that aggressively challenged the progressive view of history that seemed in the ascendant from the 1970s on. Reinforcing this trend was a certain "apology fatigue" that set in by the late 1990s at what the Japanese public perceived as a string of Japanese apologies that had failed to translate into any significant moderation in Chinese and Korean antagonism toward Japan.[45] Yet, despite this growing weariness with the politics of history, Japanese public opinion showed a general preference for avoiding confrontations with Japan's neighbors over history, as well as a continued growth in the view that Japan's military expansion had been an avoidable act of aggression.[46]

In sum, far more than is often realized, there are certain broad similarities between the German and Japanese approach to dealing with history. In both countries there was an initial period of impenitence during which the public largely avoided addressing the issue of their role as perpetrators of atrocity in favor of concentration on the political and economic reconstruction of their war torn nations. This approach was greatly encouraged by the American occupation, which first tended to narrow the blame for war-time atrocities to relatively small ruling cliques—the Nazis and the Militarists—and which subsequently deemphasized the pursuit of historical justice as tensions with the Soviet Union mounted and American strategists became preoccupied with turning Germany and Japan into powerful, anti-Communist bastions. In subsequent decades there was a slow but steady increase in the willingness of the two countries to confront the darker sides of their histories, even as the 1990s saw a certain dilution in this trend—a very limited relativization of the Holocaust in the German

case, a growing weariness with apology in the Japanese.

Despite this basic similarity, there are nonetheless some very significant differences between the two cases. Contrary to the popular view of Japan as a "model impenitent," the Japanese government has in fact apologized for a history of colonial domination and military aggression and has sought to make amends for its actions. Nonetheless, Japanese actions on this score pale in comparison with the Federal Republic's sustained campaign of apologies and reparations. Moreover, the consensus on German guilt for the crimes of the Nazi era is far broader and stronger than in Japan, making for an official historical narrative and a collective societal memory of the past that are far more penitent than Japan's. The question that needs to be asked next is: what accounts for this striking contrast between the two cases?

03 DIFFERENT HISTORIES

DIFFERENT HISTORIES: THE MILITARISTS WERE NOT NAZIS

Perhaps the most common answer to the question why Germany is more penitent than Japan is because what Germany did was so much more terrible. Certainly this is one of the first arguments one encounters when talking to Japanese—especially conservative ones—and it cannot be lightly dismissed. There are indeed major differences between the crimes of the Third Reich and those committed by Imperial Japan, both in their size and scope as well as with respect to the circumstances under which they were committed. Hence, it is not unreasonable to assume that these historical differences may have translated into a very different readiness to feel contrite on the part of the Japanese population, as well as in the depth of the anger felt by their victims.

The damage inflicted by the Second World War in both Europe and Asia was simply staggering. However, the magnitude of the material destruction in Europe was much greater. While there remains considerable controversy over the numbers, it is commonly estimated that approximately 45 million people were killed in Europe between 1939 and 1945 and over 20 million in Asia between 1937 and 1945.[47] Of these, as many as 20 million were killed as a result of deliberate German policies aimed at eliminating certain undesirable groups (above all, Europe's Jewish population), as well as resulting from the mistreatment of prisoners and savage counter insurgency operations. In the case of Japan, there was no deliberate targeting of groups based on their putative racial characteristics, and thus no equivalent to Auschwitz and the Holocaust (although Japanese atrocities were grisly enough). In addition, because large quantities of German records survived the war and fell into Allied hands, whereas in Japan such records were largely destroyed, is also more difficult to determine to what extent Japanese actions were a result of deliberate government policy or the product of circumstances that developed on the ground. Nonetheless, it is possible to estimate that approximately 6 million or so people perished as a result of Japanese policies, including exceedingly brutal counter insurgency operations and the systematic starvation and abuse of prisoners.[48]

Millions more suffered as slave laborers or were expelled from their homes as a result of bombings, forced expulsions, or merely because they were seeking to escape the fighting. In China alone, as many as 100 million refugees were generated by the war.[49] Once the fighting stopped, there was often little for them to return to. Much of Asia, like Europe, lay in ruins. There are no reliable estimates of the overall magnitude of these losses in terms of property.[50] All that can be said with certainty is that the material deprivation that resulted from the war was horrific in its size and effects.

The circumstances that led up to the war and wartime atrocities were in many respects more complicated in the Japanese case than was true in Europe. First, Japan's military expansion into Asia can only be understood against the larger background of Japanese Imperialism, which was both a reaction to and an emulation of Western Imperialism. Japan's colonial domination of Taiwan and Korea was welcomed in many Western nations at the time as a progressive development that would spread the benefits of civilization to what was widely seen as hopelessly backward and corrupt regions. Japan's expansion of its influence into China was comparable to similar moves on the part of Britain, France, Germany, and the other major colonial powers, both in Asia and elsewhere. In addition, many Japanese

leaders saw the empire as a vital strategic asset, one whose value increased in the 1930s as the world economy slipped into depression and Japan was unable to assure itself of the access to the markets and resources it needed to survive and prosper as a major industrial power.[51] Western resistance to Japan's continued expansion in East Asia thus seemed both hypocritical—especially as the Western powers retained large colonial possessions—and hostile to Japan's vital security interests. In contrast, Germany's expansion into Eastern Europe in the 1930s—the proximate cause of the Second World War—was a more recent development with far less international legitimacy.

The targets of German aggression were also rather different. Germany invaded the sovereign, more or less stable states of Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Japan imposed its control on first the corrupt and autocratic regimes in China (the Qing dynasty, various warlords, and later the Nationalist government under Chiang Kai Shek) and the Yi dynasty in Korea, before it invaded the colonial possessions of the Western powers in China, French Indochina, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. While the Nazi government legitimated its eastward expansion in nationalist terms—as unifying the German speaking peoples of central Europe ("Heim ins Reich" was the slogan) and rectifying what was widely seen in Germany as the unjust peace settlement imposed at Versailles—its efforts probably had only limited support in the Austrian case[52] or benefited only the relatively small ethnic German populations in Czechoslovakia and Poland. In comparison, Japan could more plausibly depict its efforts as a war of liberation aimed at spreading the benefits of civilization while throwing off the yoke of the racist white imperialism of the West. Even after the defeat in 1945, many Japanese felt that the empire had made significant contributions in this regard. Those areas that had been colonized by Japan the longest enjoyed a significant head start in terms of economic and social development compared to the rest of Asia,[53] and the old Western colonial order in Asia had been dealt a death blow by the Japanese invasion from which it was not to recover.

Finally, it needs to be recognized that the character of the pre-war German and Japanese regimes differed significantly. Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany on the basis of a free and open election. While he won only a plurality of the vote, it was clear that he had substantial popular support.[54] While the Japanese Militarists also enjoyed considerable popular support,[55] no one had ever elected Tojo or the other Militarists into power. Instead, the military clique and its allies in business and the bureaucracy slowly consolidated their control over the Japanese political system through a series of assassinations, coup attempts, and staged military emergencies in a process that spanned a decade before the attack on Pearl Harbor. As a result, ordinary Japanese had good reason to believe that they had far less connection to the regime and its misdeeds than was true in the German case. The Militarist takeover was another revolution from above, one of a long series of such stretching back to at least the Meiji restoration of 1868, imposed on them by the elites, and in which the Japanese people had little or no say.

To sum up, the material destruction wrought by the Nazis—measured in terms of the number of lives lost—was greater than that inflicted by the Japanese empire.[56] While unspeakable atrocities were committed by the Imperial forces, they were not genocidal in character in the way that the Holocaust was. While Japan was guilty of aggression, its aggression could be viewed as more legitimate than the Nazi invasion of Europe because it had been directed against largely autocratic or colonial regimes and could be seen as a response to Western Imperialism. And finally, ordinary Japanese felt far less complicit in the crimes of the Militarist period insofar as they had less influence on the politics and policies of their country. All of these factors, taken collectively, might suggest that postwar Japan should be less contrite than Germany.

Yet, it is important not to take such arguments too far. While the atrocities of the Third Reich were unique in their brutality and scale,[57] the suffering and loss of life attributable to the Japanese Empire were absolutely horrific by any measure. Even after 1945, while still preoccupied with the reconstruction of their country, many Japanese did feel profound remorse over what had happened, and in the decades since there have been numerous private expressions of revulsion and sorrow.[58] Notwithstanding various cultural theories to

the effect that the Japanese do not feel guilt, it is evident that regret over past transgressions can have strong effects. One of the main reasons that Japanese revisionist historians have sought to deny or belittle the Nanjing massacre or the sexual exploitation of the Comfort Women is because of the powerful emotions that accounts of such atrocities provoke in Japan.

While it is possible to interpret the Japanese military expansion in Asia as a defensive reaction to the threat posed by Western Imperialism, it is impossible to ignore that the yoke of Japanese Imperialism chafed at least as much as did that of the West. Certainly those countries that bore the brunt of the Japanese aggression—China and Korea—show little sign of being grateful for Japan's efforts.[59] And while Japanese Imperialism had been acceptable to the international community until around the time of the First World War, its actions became decreasingly acceptable thereafter with the emergence of an indigenous, modernizing nationalist Chinese government in the1920s and a general decline in the norms supporting colonialism internationally.[60] Many Japanese political leaders, not only liberals like Shidehara Kijuro and Ishibashi Tanzan, but even some military men such as Ishiwara Kanji, deplored Japanese policies in China as politically ill advised and morally indefensible.

Nor should it be forgotten that the Germans had their reasons for adopting a belligerent stance vis-à-vis the West. The peace settlement imposed at Versailles had been profoundly humiliating, had forced a crushing burden of reparations on the German economy, and imposed a territorial settlement that had left millions of former German citizens stranded as ethnic minorities in newly created Central European nation states. The French attitude on the reparations issue reflected a deep animosity toward Germany and helped destabilize the German (and ultimately the world) economy. Finally, the rise of Bolshevism created a serious threat to Germany's East.[61] While none of these factors excused German aggression in the 1930s, much less the utter brutality of the German occupation and the Holocaust, at a minimum they make German actions more understandable.

Finally, while the influence of public opinion on Japanese policymaking was decidedly limited, it is important not to underestimate it either. Ultra-nationalist propaganda fell on fertile soil in pre-war Japan, and popular sentiment was often more aggressive and jingoistic than was the Japanese government. Conversely, while Weimar Germany was more sensitive to public opinion than was Imperial Japan (even during the relatively liberal Taisho period preceding the Militarist takeover), once the Nazis came into power all opposition to the regime was ruthlessly crushed. Even minor infractions of the regime's dictates were severely punished, and political controls in the Third Reich were more rigid and more all-encompassing than was true in Japan under the Militarists. The ability of ordinary Germans to question, much less to challenge government policies was terribly limited.

In sum, the elements for a much more penitent Japanese stance on the past were readily available from early on. By the same token, it was possible to construct a much less penitent interpretation of the past in the German case. Indeed, for much of the early postwar period, while not officially sanctioned, many Germans appear to have had held such views.

Comparison with other cases raises further doubts about the degree to which the facts of history determine the historical narratives that societies and governments adopt. Other countries that were arguably guilty of atrocities on a much smaller scale and under more extenuating circumstances have been at least as tortured over their past as Japan has—France, for example, has been wracked since the 1970s by an intense debate over Vichy and the Holocaust.[62] Conversely, there are countries that have been responsible for even greater crimes that have remained blithely impenitent for decades—take for instance Austria until the 1990s[63] and Russia today.[64] While history may make a difference, history alone does not seem to offer an adequate account for why Germany adopted a more contrite historical narrative than Japan did.

04 DIFFERENT RECKONINGS

DIFFERENT RECKONINGS: TOKYO WAS NOT NUREMBERG

Another common explanation for why Japan has exhibited less guilt than Germany lies in the immediate postwar period and the flawed American handling of the issue of Japanese war crimes.[65] Again, as with the arguments presented in the previous section on the impact of history, at first brush these arguments appear quite plausible. There were significant differences between the occupations of Germany and Japan, and those differences have figured prominently in how history has been discussed in these two nations ever since. The particular approach to history that emerged in the early years after 1945 can be said to have conditioned subsequent debates.[66]

As in Germany, the American occupation authorities in Japan were determined to demonstrate to the Japanese people that theirs had been not only a military defeat, but a moral one as well. To this end, the United States used the same array of instruments it had employed in Europe to impress on the Japanese people their guilt, including war crimes tribunals, purges, and reeducation policies. The implementation of these policies, however, was seriously flawed on multiple levels.

The war crimes tribunals—especially the show-case International Military Tribunal in the Far East (IMTFE) in Tokyo—have been the object of particular criticism. The selection of charges and defendants were left to the victorious allied powers, opening them up to charges of "victor's justice." They were based on shaky legal arguments, as many of the crimes with which the defendants were charged were not crimes at the time they were committed.[67] Moreover, many of these crimes—such as the systematic abuse of the civilian population in occupied areas—could just as easily have been leveled against the countries which were sitting in judgment (especially the Soviet Union).[68]

Of course, many of the same criticisms could have been made with regard to the Nuremberg and other war crimes tribunals held in Europe. The Japanese trials, however, suffered from a number of additional problems. First, the conduct of the trial itself was unusually sloppy. The chief prosecutor, Joseph B. Keenan, mishandled evidence and cross examination in ways that undermined the case that he was trying to make. The lawyers for the defendants were placed under undue restrictions, and the stage management of the trials as a whole was flawed and much criticized at the time.[69]

Second, there was considerable dissension on the bench, with three of the judges dissenting with the final verdict. One—Judge Radhabinod Pal representing India—issued a mammoth 1,200 page opinion in which he accused the proceedings of being a trial of the vanquished by the victors and suggesting that if the defendants were to be considered guilty, then the colonialism of the Western powers as well as the American use of the atomic bomb should also be condemned. Not surprisingly, Judge Pal's critical stand would make him a hero of Japanese conservatives.[70]

Third, and perhaps most damagingly, was the American decision not to indict Emperor Hirohito or any other member of the royal family, despite the fact that the Emperor had been the head of state and his approval was required for every major decision taken by the Japanese government during the war. The United States chose not to do so because it feared indicting the Emperor would provoke fanatical resistance to the Occupation. Yet, the decision not to indict

underlined the political nature of the trials and garnered the defendants a great deal of public sympathy. While at the start of the trials there had been considerable public anger directed against the military leadership that had led the country into a catastrophic war, as the trials went on the perception grew that the defendants were being sacrificed to protect the Imperial family.[71]

The purges in Japan were equally flawed. As in Germany, the purges were indiscriminate in character, embracing entire categories of people based on their membership in certain organizations, such as the Imperial Army or Navy and various auxiliary organizations. Over 2 million questionnaires were distributed to people at all levels of government, which were then scanned by review boards to determine whether a specific individual would be purged from public office or not. There was no review and no room for appeal. Over 220,000 were purged through this procedure (as compared to over 418,000 in Western Germany alone).[72]

Inevitably, there were many miscarriages of justice. Many of those purged had been well known opponents of the Militarist regime, and many of those who were spared had been supporters. More importantly, the purges proved both impractical and unsustainable. Within a few years, the United States began to reverse itself as the onset of the Cold War made the speedy reconstruction of Japan as an anti-Communist ally a more pressing priority.[73]

Of course, many of these same problems afflicted the purge process in Germany.[74] In the Japanese case, however, the character of the pre-war regime considerably hampered Allied efforts. To begin with, there was no Nazi party or other comparable mass movement[75] associated with the Militarist regime. As a result the purge focused overwhelmingly on the members of the Imperial Army and Navy, leaving much of the bureaucracy and political leadership unscathed. Second, the wartime leadership of Imperial Japan was much more closely integrated with the leadership of Japan before the Militarists became ascendant. There was no Japanese *Machtergreifung*, and on the whole the boundaries between opponents and supporters of the war-time political leadership were far more vague and porous than in Germany.

To make matters worse, the relatively small numbers of those who clearly had been staunch opponents of the regime were mostly on the socialist and communist left, and even more so than in the German case the left in Japan was strongly opposed to America's Cold War policies.[76] While the Social Democratic Party in Germany rejected German rearmament and favored German neutrality—at least until 1959—they cooperated with the conservative Christian Democratic government in shaping German foreign and defense policy.[77] Later (after the 1959 party conference at Bad Godesberg), the Social Democrats switched their stance on NATO and rearmament and joined the political mainstream, opening the way for their eventual participation in government. In contrast, in Japan a deep and unbridgeable divide between the left and the right on foreign and defense policy issues lasted throughout the Cold War, making it virtually impossible for the Socialists to come into power.

As a result, far more of Japan's postwar governing elite were conservatives who had their roots in prewar politics. For instance, Kishi Nobosuke had been a high official in the Manchurian Railroad system in the 1930s and munitions minister in the Cabinet of Tojo Hideki in 1941 when Japan declared war on the United States. Arrested as a possible Class A war criminal, and purged until 1952, Kishi nonetheless emerged as a political power broker after the occupation and became prime minister in 1957—ironically, one who was seen as being overly pro-American. In the German context, this would have been as if Albert Speer had sauntered out of prison at Spandau and become chancellor—in short, an unthinkable scenario. Men like Kishi had little reason to promote an official historical narrative that would have questioned their own legitimacy.

Given these failings of the American occupation—whether avoidable or not—it is often argued that the effort to convince Japan to adopt a contrite historical narrative was doomed to failure. Certainly, combined with the historical facts mentioned earlier, it made it even more unlikely that Japan would adopt a penitent stance on history in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet, such a path-dependent understanding of the development of official historical narratives suffers from at least two major problems. First, it tends to overlook the extent

to which efforts in the immediate postwar period to pursue historical justice issues had also been terribly compromised in the German context as well. Many of the same fundamental problems that afflicted the trials and the purges in Japan were present in Germany, and German popular support for Allied policies in these areas diminished rapidly as the Occupation of Germany went on. Already in late 1946, Adenauer claimed that through their policies the Allies were promoting nationalism and militarism among the German people as Hitler never had been able to.[78] Survey data from the time period show that support for the purges goes from approximately 50 percent soon after the start of the Occupation to well under 20 percent by early 1949, and as has already been noted, in the 1950s there was a striking absence of expressions of guilt on the societal level in Germany.[79] While in retrospect, the Allied effort to pursue historical justice and promote a new, contrite historical narrative may appear to have been a great success story, the verdict at the time was far less sanguine.

Second, while differences in history and the character of their Occupations help explain why Germany was more penitent in terms of its official historical narrative in the 1950s, comparison with a broader range of cases suggests once again that this alone does not explain why this should remain true into the twenty-first century. Austria, for instance, was deeply implicated in the crimes of the Third Reich.[80] Nonetheless, if anything, the Austrian official historical narrative was even less penitent than Japan's through the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and into the 1980s, in part because of a similarly flawed approach to trials and purges during the Allied Occupation of Austria. The official narrative was dominated by the myth—conveniently supplied by the Allied powers themselves at the Cairo Summit in 1942—that Austria had been the "first victim of Nazism." As a result, the Austrian themselves had been put largely in charge of pursuing the issue of historical justice in their own country. Only in the late 1980s, following the Waldheim affair, did Austria begin to move toward an increasingly penitent stance on history, and by the early twenty-first century, by almost any measure—in terms of reparations, commemorative practices, public opinion, and so forth—Austria had become far more penitent than Japan.[81] While history and the handling of historical issues during the Occupation period explain some of the variation between the German and Japanese approaches to history, we are forced to look further afield for a more complete and adequate account, especially of the later developments.

05

DIFFERENT INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXTS

DIFFERENT INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL CONTEXTS: ASIA IS NOT EUROPE

Of critical importance to the development of the German and Japanese official historical narratives have been the very different political contexts in which they have unfolded. While at the end of World War II both countries were pariah states, regarded with suspicion by their neighbors and heavily dependent on the United States for their security and the global trading regime for their prosperity, they were confronted with very different environments that have had a profound influence on how they would approach the historical issue. To put it simply, Asia is not Europe.

During the Cold War, Germany found itself in a particularly difficult and complex geo-strategic position. A continental state on the front lines of the East-West conflict, it was confronted with the threat of invasion by a seemingly overwhelmingly powerful Red Army. At the same time, as a divided nation, with nearly one-third of its population and a huge portion of its territory under Soviet control, Germany was also vulnerable to enormous political pressure not only from Moscow, but also from other leading Western powers (particularly France) whose diplomatic support it needed to keep the hope of eventual reunification alive. Further complicating Germany's strategic position was the need to restore trading relations with the other European nations, especially in Western Europe, in order to rebuild its economy.[82] To cope with these challenges, the Federal Government was compelled to rely not only on the United States, but to also reach out to the other Western nations and try to bind itself to them. While many on the left played with the idea of adopting a neutral position between East and West, in the end Germany chose to integrate itself into the West through an elaborate system of multilateral international institutions, the most important of which were NATO and the European Economic Community.[83]

The Federal Republic's integration into the West made it highly susceptible to political pressures from groups in Western aligned countries who sought to pursue historical justice issues. While Adenauer and many other influential Germans were aware of what had been done to the Jews under the Third Reich and may have been genuinely sympathetic to them, pragmatic considerations were of decisive importance in the Federal Republic's decision to pay compensation to the State of Israel in 1952.[84] Similarly, West Germany was highly responsive to demands for compensation from the citizens of twelve Western allied nations who claimed to have been harmed by German actions during the war.[85] In contrast, the claims from the far more numerous victims of the Third Reich who lived in communist Eastern Europe were largely ignored. Likewise, the suffering of other groups who were less well organized and less influential at the time—such as the Roma-Sinti and homosexuals—received little or no attention in the 1950s and 1960s. While the Federal Republic had adopted a clearly penitent historical narrative, it was highly selective in terms of whom it was penitent to.

The comparison with Japan is highly instructive in this regard. Whereas Germany is a continental state, Japan is an island nation. Whereas Germany faced the threat of a Soviet invasion, there was relatively little danger that the Soviets would try to launch a direct, conventional military attack on Japan. Although the Soviet Union did occupy territory that Japan regarded as its own (the Southern Kurile Islands, or Northern Territories as they are referred to in Japan), these were sparsely populated islands of only limited geo-strategic and economic importance. And while Germany's economic future mandated a revival of

trading relations with its European neighbors, Japan had cut its ties with its Empire and Asia and increasingly looked to the lucrative markets of the West to help fuel economic growth.

The institutional structures that developed in Asia also differed sharply from those of Europe. The Cold War period in Europe was, for the most part, genuinely cold. In contrast, Asia for the first thirty years of the Cold War was exceedingly hot, with several major inter-state military wars (including the Korean, Vietnamese, Sino-Indian, and Indian-Pakistan Wars), numerous destructive mid- to low-level interstate clashes (including the extremely dangerous Sino-Soviet clashes of 1969-1970), as well as countless insurgencies and civil wars. As a result, Asian nations were highly reluctant to allow themselves to be integrated into multilateral institutional structures for fear that they might be dragged into dangerous military conflicts in which they had no direct interest. This was particularly true of Japan, which dreaded the possibility of being dragged once again into a land war in Asia. Despite some abortive efforts by the United States to create an Asian equivalent of NATO, security relations in the region became characterized by what is called a "hub and spokes" structure in which the United States—the "hub"—entered into bilateral security pacts with several key Asian nations—"the spokes"—but the Asian nations had no direct connection between them.[86]

Economically as well, the extreme differences between the levels of development of Asian countries, the early adoption of protectionist or autarkic trade policies by most of the countries of the region, and the widespread fear that economic integration could lead to Japanese political hegemony, made for low levels of Asian regional institutionalization. Instead, Japan and the other industrializing Asian nations depended mainly on the global trading regime centered on the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT, the precursor to today's WTO) to gain access to the markets and resources that their economies required. The handful of regional institutions that emerged, such as the Asian Development Bank and the Pacific Economic Coordination Council (PECC) were weak and poorly developed.[87]

As a result, Japan was far more insulated than the Federal Republic was from political pressures from its neighbors. Some nations, notably the Philippines and Taiwan under Chiang Kai Chek, actively sought to extract reparations from Japan. With help from the United States, however, the Japanese government was able to ignore these demands and instead force them to settle for large dollops of foreign aid instead.[88] While the Asian governments may not have been happy with the outcome, they had little choice but to accept it. The fact that they were authoritarian or (in the case of China) totalitarian regimes allowed them to stymie whatever domestic political opposition there might have been to their decision to do so. Japanese impenitence in the 1950s through 1970s may have been in part a matter of inclination, but it was also a reflection of the realities of power in the region. Had Japan's victims been as influential as Germany's, it is likely that it would have had no choice but to be more forthcoming in offering apologies and compensation. One of the key questions that must be asked in any analysis of the politics of history thus becomes: to what extent do those who would press for apologies, reparations, etc. have influence or not? In the case of Germany, former victims, at least those in nations aligned with the West, had considerable leverage, whereas in Asia they did not.

Over time the geo-strategic environment in both Europe and Asia began to shift, and with it the dynamics that drove the politics of history. The Federal Republic's opening to the East during the high point of détente in the 1960s and 1970s (*Ostpolitik*) made it more sensitive to the question of justice for the victims of Nazism in the East, at least at the level of political rhetoric and commemoration. The end of the Cold War removed the remaining barriers to the full extension of German reparation policies to the East and set the stage for the agreement on compensating former slave laborers and the intensification of German dialog on the past with its eastern neighbors, especially Poland and the Czech Republic. Not coincidentally, the end of the Cold War and the induction of Austria into the structures of the European Union helped promote a shift in the Austrian official historical narrative as well, from one in which it insisted that it had been Nazism's "first victim" to an increased acceptance that Austria bore co-responsibility for the Holocaust.[89]

In a similar way, the 1970s and 1980s saw a deepening of Japanese economic and political ties with its Asian neighbors. As Japanese companies began building heavily in factories and production facilities in Asian countries, Japanese business leaders increasingly came to see their economic future in the burgeoning markets of a rapidly industrializing Asia. The Japanese government sought to promote and support these trends by building closer political relations with its neighbors in East and Southeast Asia. As it did so, it became more susceptible to political pressures from the region, including on historical justice issues.

At the same time, the increasing pluralization and democratization of politics in Asian countries allowed societal groups that had long been suppressed to make their voices heard. In Korea, civil society organizations took up the cause of long forgotten groups of victims, such as the Comfort Women. In China, the government sought to bolster its legitimacy by promoting a form of nationalism based on a strong sense of victimization at the hands of outside powers—especially Japan. One unexpected outcome of this process was the emergence of a host of small civil-society groups—"history activists" as James E. Reilly has called them—who documented long-repressed stories of Japanese atrocities and who were often highly critical of the PRC's unwillingness to press demands for apologies and compensation.[90]

This process was further accelerated by the development of what can be described as a nascent "historical justice regime," an off-shoot of the global human rights regime which promoted a proliferation of apologies, truth commissions, war crimes tribunals, and so forth beginning in the 1980s.[91] The changing international and domestic political opportunity structures thus gave victim groups increased material leverage to pursue historical justice claims against Japan, while the emergence of the historical justice regime helped legitimate the exercise of that leverage.

These developments led to a sharp increase in pressures over historical issues, beginning in 1982 when a storm of protests broke out in Chinese and South Korean protests over proposed changes in Japanese textbooks.[92] In response to these pressures, Japan slowly but surely began to shift toward a more penitent historical narrative. Japanese leaders, beginning with Nakasone Yasuhiro, admitted that Japan was guilty of having waged a war of aggression against its Asian neighbors and offered increasingly strong apologies for their country's actions. This stance was strongly supported by the Japanese business community,[93] but also enjoyed a perhaps surprising degree of acceptance on the level of public opinion. According to a 1995 poll taken by NHK, only 7 percent of those surveyed felt that Japan had apologized enough to its neighbors for the past, as opposed to 45 percent who thought it had apologized to some extent, 35 percent who felt that it had not apologized enough, and 6 percent who felt that it had not apologized at all.[94] In short, by the early to mid-1990s, it might have appeared that Japan was heading in an Austrian direction.

As already pointed out, however, Asia is not Europe. While Japan became relatively more ready to apologize for the past, forty years of evading responsibility for the past and the development of a deeply rooted culture of limited contrition had an impact. Even as some Japanese leaders began to grope toward reconciliation with Japan's neighbors over history, others saw such efforts as a continuation of a debilitating attack on Japan's sense of national pride. As a result a backlash developed that severely hampered Japanese diplomatic efforts to reach out to its neighbors. When Japanese political leaders such as Prime Ministers Murayama Tomiichi and Obuchi Keizo sought to adopt a more contrite official narrative, they were constantly challenged, often by senior political leaders inside their own government. For instance, in 1995, when Prime Minister Murayama sought to push through the Japanese Diet a resolution that acknowledged Japanese responsibility for waging an aggressive war, conservatives watered down the language so much that it had little internal or external impact.[95]

These domestic-level factors were reinforced by regional dynamics that further frustrated the reconciliation process in Asia. The willingness—or even ability—of Japan's neighbors to accept Japan's tentative efforts to apologize was decidedly limited. This was particularly true of China, where moderate pro-Japanese leaders such as Hu Yaobang and Zhu Rongji risked being accused of being unpatriotic if they took an overly lenient approach toward Japan,

and where the Chinese government was engaged in trying to revive a strong sense of nationalism to bolster its own legitimacy.[96] In South Korea as well, anti-Japanese sentiments were deeply rooted in the nation's psyche and were ready to reemerge with relatively little provocation.

Despite these obstacles, some progress was made in the context of Korean-Japanese relations during the 1990s, especially after a historic summit between Prime Minister Obuchi Keizo and President Kim Dae Jung of Korea in 1998. After Obuchi apologized for Japan's history of colonial domination and oppression, and Kim Dae Jung accepted that apology, the two countries appeared to put aside their differences over the past. Public opinion polls showed a substantial improvement in attitudes, and the two countries successfully managed a number of potentially difficult symbolic and practical issues, including the joint management of the 2002 World Soccer championships and the handling of fishing rights around the disputed Dokdo/Takeshima islands.

These gains, however, proved ephemeral. In 2001 Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro began a series of yearly visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, despite bitter protests from both China and Korea. Koizumi was motivated by domestic political considerations, especially the need to shore up political support on the right-wing of the Liberal Democratic Party and may not have been aware of the foreign policy implications of his decision. Once he had committed himself, however, it became a signature issue for him, and a way of underlining his status as a maverick in Japanese politics. At the same time, the Ministry of Education approved textbooks that had been proposed by conservative civil society groups and that presented a highly revisionist account of modern Japanese history.

Provoked by the Yasukuni visits and the new textbooks, popular Korean anger toward Japan re-emerged with a vengeance, and diplomatic tensions between the two countries mounted quickly. By 2006 the Korean government under President Roh Moo Hyun had declared "diplomat war" on Japan and the dispute over the Dokdo/Takeshima islands had mounted to the point where Korean gunboats were dispatched with the order to drive away Japanese survey ships, by force if necessary.[97]

At the same time, anti-Japanese sentiments in China reached a fever pitch. Beginning in 2002, Chinese officials became increasingly critical of Japan's stance over history and China's new leader, Hu Jintao took a tough stance on Koizumi's trips to Yasukuni.[98] Anti-Japanese sentiments soon took off on the popular level, leading to mass letter writing campaigns and demonstrations. By 2005 China was rocked by widespread riots involving thousands of protestors who pelted Japanese stores and diplomatic outposts with rocks.[99] As with Korea, territorial disputes—this time centered on the contested Diaoyutai/Senkaku islands—added a dangerous dimension to the conflict, as the two governments sent warships and planes to the area while diplomatic talks aimed at creating a framework for joint development of oil and gas resources in the surrounding waters were bogged down by a stubborn reluctance to compromise on sovereignty.[100]

The relative weakness of international institutions in the Asian region made it difficult to contain these bilateral tensions. At the same time the continued tensions between the different Asian powers over geo-strategic issues such as how to handle North Korea[101] and arms spending constantly undermined the efforts of political leaders to find common ground. These geo-strategic difficulties made the history issue more difficult to handle, feeding virulent forms of nationalism in Japan, Korea, and China which in turn exacerbated geo-strategic tensions.[102] In the end, the basic pragmatism of the political leadership of all three countries won out, allowing them to avoid a complete breakdown of relations between the Asian powers. After Koizumi's retirement in 2006, his successors sought to defuse tensions over history by avoiding making public trips to Yasukuni. In China, the government clamped down on public protests in the name of maintaining "public order."[103] And the conservative Lee Myun Bak government, which took over from the Roh Moo Hyun in 2008, sought to restabilize Korea's ties with Japan by downplaying the history issue.[104] Beneath the surface, however, tensions simmer on. Compared to Europe, history continues to cast a large shadow over regional politics in Asia.

During this time period, Germany as well faced an unexpected re-emergence of tensions over history. In particular, differences between the Federal Republic and its eastern neighbors Poland and the Czech Republic over the history of the millions of ethnic Germans who had been expelled from their homes after 1945 became the center of a rancorous diplomatic debate. As in Asia, differences over other issues—such as the construction of a gas pipeline between Germany and Russia that would circumvent Poland—added fuel to the flames.[105] And as in Asia, conservative groups in both societies created constituencies for confrontational policies over the past. In Germany, organizations representing ethnic Germans who had been expelled from their homes renewed their demands for restitution and apologies from Prague and Warsaw. In Poland, the highly nationalistic Jaroslaw Kaczynski, who came into office in 2005, violently rejected German claims while demanding increased German restitution for the destruction suffered by Poland during the war. The resulting tensions between Warsaw and Berlin reached the point where they began to seriously impede diplomatic relations. At the 2007 EU summit on a new constitution for Europe, nationalistic sentiments rooted in historical grievances—in particular Polish demands that it be given voting rights in the European Council of Ministers based not on its actual population but on what it estimated its population would have been if it had not been for the slaughter of its citizens during World War II—threatened to bring negotiations to the point of collapse.[106] However, other European leaders opposed the Polish effort to play the history card,[107] and the institutional structures of the EU helped dampen the tensions between the two sides. In the end, European leaders were able to work out a compromise that satisfied all parties. Just as importantly, despite diplomatic skirmishing, Czech and Polish public opinion never turned as anti-German—unlike public opinion in China and South Korea, which turned violently anti-Japanese during the same time period.[108]

In sum, the different international political contexts in which Germany and Japan have found themselves have had a decisive impact on the development of their official historical narratives, even as those narratives simultaneously have shaped the international context in which the two countries find themselves. Germany's integration in the economic and political institutions of the West encouraged it to progressively adopt a more contrite stance on the Nazi past. At the same time, the Federal Republic's contrite stance on the past enabled Europe to strengthen and build its institutions. Had the Federal Republic not adopted it, it is difficult to imagine that de Gaulle or any other European leader would have managed to muster the political support needed for the massive sacrifice of national sovereignty that the European project entailed. In contrast, Japan's relative isolation in Asia encouraged it to develop an impenitent historical narrative that in turn would undermine efforts in the 1990s and early twenty-first century to build a stronger East Asian community.

06

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS: THE FUTURE OF THE POLITICS OF THE PAST

As we have seen, a variety of factors explain the differences between the German and Japanese historical narratives. The historical experiences of the two countries have been very different. The postwar efforts of the Allied powers to instill new historical narratives were very different. Most importantly, the international political contexts in which the two countries operate differed—and continue to differ—from one another decisively.

At the same time, these differences should not mask an underlying similarity between the two countries and the two regions. While embedded very differently in terms of both history and in politics, both Germany and Japan face a common nightmare as countries with difficult pasts who find themselves in a world where increasing interdependence and strengthening human rights norms have made historical justice issues more salient. The Federal Republic has been better able to manage the resulting tensions because it was compelled to confront these issues earlier and it benefited from an international environment that rewarded it for doing so. Japan, in contrast, has been hampered by a political culture and an historical narrative that were relatively less contrite, as well as by an international environment that did not reliably support its efforts to reconcile with its neighbors.

In the future, history is likely to remain a central variable in international relations in both Europe and Asia. The suggestion that Japan is best advised to avoid the issue because its efforts to achieve success are unlikely to succeed overlooks this fundamental reality.[109] In the long run, Japan has no choice but to confront the issue of its responsibility for the past because regional and global trends are pushing it in that direction. Japan's leadership appears to be well aware of the problem and considerable thought and effort is going into trying to find ways to navigate the treacherous rip tides that the history issue creates in the region.[110] Whether they will succeed will depend both on their sustained commitment to reconciliation as well as on a readiness to reciprocate on the part of Japan's neighbors.

NOTES

1 Lily Gardner Feldman, "The Principle of 'Reconciliation' in German Foreign Policy: Relations with France, Israel, Poland and the Czech Republic," *International Affairs* 75:2 (December 2002), 333-356.

2 George Hicks, *Japan's War Memories: Amnesia or Concealment?* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997); Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanjing: the Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (London and New York: Penguin, 1997).

3 On the impact of Japanese impenitence on threat perceptions, see Thomas Christensen, "China, the U.S.-Japan Alliance and the Security Dilemma in East Asia," *International Security* 23:4 (Spring 1999); and Jennifer Lind, *Sorry States: Apologies in International Politics* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008). On how Japan's history problem has impeded regional integration, see Gilbert Rozman, *Northeast Asia's Stunted Regionalism: Bilateral Distrust in the Shadow of Globalism* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

4 Herbert Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000).

5 Jennifer Lind, *Sorry States*, op.cit.

6 Okazaki Hisahiko, *Kokka Senryaku kara mita Yasukuni Mondai: Nihon Gaikō no Shōnenba* (Tokyo: PHP Kenkyūjo, 2005).

7 Jennifer Lind's *Sorry States*, op.cit., is a partial exception, and is particularly good at looking at the consequences of perceived impenitence on threat perception in neighboring countries. It is somewhat weaker, however, at charting out the degree to which a country is penitent or not.

8 For an interesting discussion of the problems of dealing with collective memory, see James Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). There are other analytical tools that have been used, such as the collection of oral history. See for instance the work by Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories – The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

9 Jeffrey K. Olick, *In the House of the Hangman: The Agonies of German Defeat, 1943-1949* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory – The Nazi Past in Two Germanys* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

10 Of particular importance here is Brandt's speech in the Bundestag in May 1970, when he declared that "no one is free of history." On the speech and the debate at that time, see Dubiel, *Niemand ist Frei von der Gesichichte: die nationalsozialistische Herrscahft in den debatten des Deutschen Bundestages* (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2001), 133.

11 Opinion data at the time showed 48 percent of Germans thought Brandt's falling before the monument was "exaggerated," 41 percent thought it appropriate. Data cited in "Willy Brandt: Person of the Year," *Time*, 4 January 1971, available at <www.time.com/time/subscriber/personoftheyear/archive/stories/1970.html>, (11 July 2007). For a detailed retrospective look on the event, see Michael Wolffsohn and Thomas Brechenmacher, *Denkmalsturz? Brandt's Kniefall* (Munich: Olzog, 2005).

12 Richard von Weizäcker, "Der 8.Mai 1945: 40 Jahre danach," in Weizäcker, *Von Deutschland aus: Reden des Bundespräsidenten* (Munich: Deutscher Tascenbuch Verlag, 1987), English translation in Hartman, *Bitburg*, 262-273. On the impact of the speech on the German political debate of the time, see David Art, *The Politics of the Nazi Past in Germany and Austria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 73-74. The speech is also notable in its inclusion of a broader range of groups that are identified as victims, including the Roma-Sinti, homosexuals, and others who had been targeted by the Nazis but long overlooked in the post-1945 German discourse about the past.

13 The phrase comes from Karl Wilds, "Identity and the Culture of Contrition: Recasting Normality," *German Politics* Vol. 9, No. 1 (April 2000), 83-102.

14 David Art, *Politics of the Nazi Past*, op.cit.

15 For a detailed analysis, see Robert S. Westrich, "Contemporary Expressions of Judeophobia in Germany as elsewhere in Europe," ACTA paper, Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of anti-Semitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2004, available at <SICSA.hujl.ac.il/ACTA23.pdf>, (31 July 2009).

16 Yoshibumi Wakamiya, *The Postwar Conservative View of Asia: How the Political Right has Delayed Japan's Coming to Terms with its History of Aggression in Asia* (Tokyo: LTCB International Library Foundation, 1998), updated on the Japanese original published in 1995, 186-188.

17 In 1957 Prime Minister Kishi Nobosuke was the first Japanese prime minister to offer such veiled and ambiguous apologies during visits to Australia and Southeast Asia. Lind, *Sorry States*, op.cit., 168. Similar language was used in 1965 when Japan normalized relations with South Korea, and in 1972, at the start of its diplomatic rapprochement with the People's Republic of China. See Wakamiya, *The Postwar Conservative View of Asia*, op.cit., 194, 235-240, 250-253.

18 Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro, although an arch-conservative, was the first to do so during the trip to China in 1984. Wakamiya, *The Postwar Conservative View of Asia*, op.cit., 198-199, 243-246. The most extensive apology, using stronger language to express Japan's remorse for not only the war of aggression against China, but also Japanese colonial domination of much of the region, came only in 1995.

19 The first senior politician to lose his post because of his revisionist historical views was education minister Fujio Masayuki in 1986, and there have been a string of other cabinet level officials who likewise have been forced out for their views. More recently, the Chief of Staff of the Japanese Air Force, General Tamogami, was forced to resign for publishing essays justifying the Pacific War as a reaction against Western Imperialism. Unlike Germany, however, there is a marked reluctance to force officials to resign for their views on history, and generally they are removed only if they refuse to recant unambiguously revisionist statements that have been made in public.

20 At the time of this writing, Summer 2009, the Democratic Party in Japan, which appears posed to replace the conservative LDP as the dominant party in Japan, has set up a committee to look into demands from former POWs for compensation for their suffering, and the party opposes visiting the controversial Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo. See "Ozawa in his own Words," interview by Dan Sneider, *The Oriental Economist*, June 2009, 5-6. See also Sneider, "A Japan that can say maybe," same issue, 7-8.

21 The study of museums and monuments dealing with the Nazi era has become something of a cottage industry in recent years. For a seminal study, see James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); as well as Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (New York; Routledge, 2002).

22 Roger B. Jeans, "Victims or Victimizers Museums, Textbooks and the War Debate in Contemporary Japan," *The Journal of Military History* 69:1 (January 2005), 157

23 See also Sven Saaler, *Politics, Memory and Public Opinion The History Textbook Controversy and Japanese Society*, 2nd edition (Munich: Iudicum Verlag, 2006), especially 159-164. Also very instructive on the debates over war memorials into the 1990s is Tanaka Nobumasa, *"Sensō no Kioku": Sono Impei no Kōzō: Kokuritsu Sensō Memoriaru o Tsushite* (Tokyo, 1997).

24 In the pre-war period, the shrine had been run directly by the government, but was denationalized during the American occupation as part of the efforts to separate church and state. However, informal ties continued. For a long time the shrine authorities worked covertly with the Japanese government, specifically the Ministry of Health and Welfare, in drawing up lists of names of fallen soldiers to be enshrined at Yasukuni. The Ministry also subsidized trips to the shrine for veterans groups and the families of fallen soldiers.

25 Tanaka Akihiko, “The Yasukuni Issue in Japan’s Foreign Relations,” in Hasegawa and Togo, *East Asia’s Haunted Present: Historical Memories and the Resurgence of Nationalism* (New York: Praeger, 2008), 134-135.

26 A substantial literature has developed over the Yasukuni Shrine. For a good overview, see Tanaka Akihiko, ibid., and Shibuchi Daikichi. For greater detail see, James Breen. ed., *Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan’s Past* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008).

27 Ilya Levkov, ed., *Bitburg and Beyond: Encounters in American, German and Jewish History* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1987); see Theo Hallet, *Umstrittenen Versöhnung: Reagan und Kohl in Bitburg, 1985* (Erfurt: Sutton, 2005).

28 Bill Niven, “Introduction: German Victimhood at the Turn of the Millennium,” *Germans as Victims*, 5-6. It should be noted that German critics of the monument insisted on the addition of a plaque to the monument that differentiated between the victims and underlined the special character of the Holocaust. For an in depth discussion, see Jenny Wüstenberg, “Civil Society as a Power in Memorial Politics: Shaping Public Remembrance in the New Berlin,” paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, 30 August-1 September 2006.

29 “Scharfe Kritik an Vertreibenen- Ausstellung aus Polen,” *Deutsche Welle*, 8 October 2006, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2128915,00.html>.

30 Mikyoung Kim, “Myths, Milieu and Facts: History Textbook Controversies,” in Hasegawa and Togo, *East Asia’s Haunted Present*, op.cit.

31 Mitani Hiroshi, *Rekishi Kyokasho Mondai* (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentaa, 2007), 175.

32 Differences in the educational systems of the two countries need to be noted here. Japan has a highly centralized school system, and textbooks are screened at the national level. In the Federal Republic, on the other hand, education is handled at the state (*Land*) level. In the past there has been a considerable discrepancy between how different German states have handled history. Historically, SPD dominated states in the north have focused more on Nazi atrocities, conservative states in the south less so. These discrepancies are reported to have diminished over time and have never become the subject of national and international level controversy in the way that they have in Japan.

33 Kiyomizu Masayoshi, “Sengo Hoshō no Kokusaihikaku,” *Sekai* February, 1994.

34 Larry Niksch, *Japanese Military’s “Comfort Women” System* Congressional Research Service Memorandum, 3 April 2007, 12. The government paid only for the medical expenses and refused to pay direct compensation on the grounds that such claims had already been settled by the normalization treaties and the Treaty of San Francisco.

35 For a detailed discussion of German reparations, see Constantine Goschler, *Schuld und Schulden: die Politik der Wiedergutmachung für NS-verfolgte seit 1945* (Göttingen, Wallstein: 2005). For an excellent examination of the importance of reparations policy for German foreign policy, see Lily Gardner Feldman, “The Principle of ‘Reconciliation,’” op.cit.

36 For an overview of the development of the slave labor issue see Matthias Arning, *Späte Abrechnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2001). For detailed account of the negotiations by an insider, see Stuart E. Eizenstat, *Imperfect Justice: Looted Assets, Slave Labor and the Unfinished Business of World War II* (New York: Public Affairs, 2003), chapters 10 to 13.

37 Norbert Frei, *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: the Politics of Amnesty and Integration* transl. Joel Golb, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) orig. *Vergangenheitspolitik* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1997).

38 Peter Reichel, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland: Die Auseinandersetzung mit der NS-Diktatur von 1945 bis heute* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001), op.cit., chapter 9.

39 How much was known during the war, and how much of Allied efforts to publicize the crimes of the war-time regimes was believed, is a matter of some controversy.

40 For instance, in 1965 Chancellor Erhard warned against using the history of the Nazi past for political purposes. See Aleida Assmann und Ute Frevert, *Geschichtsvergessenheit, Geschichtsversessenheit: Von Umgang mit deutschen Vergangenheiten nach 1945* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999), 59.

41 The broadcast on German TV of the U.S. mini-series *Holocaust* marks a particularly important watershed in German public opinion on this issue and helped shift the Bundestag debate on extension of the statute of limitations for crimes committed during the Third Reich. See Susanne Brand, “Wenig Anschauung? Die Ausstrahlung des Films ‘Holocaust’ in westdeutschen Fernsehen (1978/79)” in Christoph Cronelißen, Lutz Klinkhammer, and Wolfgang Schwenker, eds., *Errinerungskulturen: Deutschland, Italien und Japan seit 1945*, 2nd edition (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2004).

42 Yoshida Yutaka, *Nihonjin no Sensōkan: Sengoshi no Naka no Henyō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1995), 216. At the same time, the proportion of those who argued that the war had been inevitable had declined during the 1980s, from 45 percent in 1982 to 32 percent in 1994.

43 The author is indebted here to observations made to him on this topic by Dan Diner.

44 Niven, ed., *Germans as Victims*.

45 On declining Japanese public willingness to compensate China for its suffering during the war, see Yinan He, *Overcoming Shadows of the Past: Post-Conflict Interstate Reconciliation in East Asia and Europe* Ph.D. dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004, 248.

46 By 2000, the percentage of those who thought Japan’s military expansion had been aggressive and avoidable outnumbered those who thought it had been inevitable by 35 percent to 30 percent. See Makita Tetsuo, “Nihonjin no Sensō to Heiwakan,” cited in Saaler, *Politics, War and Public Opinion*, op.cit., 138-143.

47 The numbers would be even higher if one included the millions of people who perished both in Europe and Asia as a result of the large scale famines that broke out as a result of war-time disruption of the food supply.

48 The most systematic and widely cited statistics on the number of civilian casualties during World War II as well the numbers of victims of government atrocities are the product of the comprehensive meta-analyses conducted by Rudolf Rummel. See in particular *Democide: Nazi Genocide and Mass Murder* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Press, 1992), *Statistics of Democide: Genocide and Mass Murder since 1900* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 1997). For his most recent estimated regarding numbers killed by Japanese policy in Asia, see <http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP3.HTM>, (16 May 2006).

49 Dennis Roy.

50 Commonly used estimates vary between $1 and 3 trillion for the overall cost of the war, however methodological uncertainties over what exchange rates to use, how to calculate the value of property, and so forth make such estimates highly suspect. Better figures are available for numbers of people left homeless in various countries, levels of production of commodities such as coal and steel before and after the war, and so forth.

51 On the development of the Japanese empire in general, see W.G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1895* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). On the strategic and economic motivations for the expansion of the empire in the 1930s and 1940s, see Michael Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

52 While the Nazis won the staged plebiscite of 1938 by an overwhelming margin, there is good reason to believe that they would have lost if a free and open election had been held, as two of the three major political forces in Austria at the time—the Socialists and the Conservative Catholics—were both opposed to unification with the Third Reich. For a good overview, see Barbara Jalevich, *Modern Austria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 216-224.

53 On Japanese contributions to the development of the region see Atul Kohli, “Where do High-Growth Economies Come From: The Japanese Lineage of Korea’s Developmental State,” in Meredith Woo-Cumings, *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

54 See Richard F. Hamilton, *Who Voted for Hitler* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982). On the debate over Hitler's political support base, see Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspective of Interpretation*, 4th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), chapter 3.

55 See Richard Smethurst, *A Social Basis for Prewar Japanese Militarism: The Army and the Rural Community* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974).

56 It is nearly impossible to adequately assess and/or compare other forms of damage. Property damage estimates are even less reliable than casualty figures, and there is a question of whether it is fair to compare them, since European countries were richer to begin with than the Asian countries. In dollar amounts, European losses might be greater. However, as a percentage of property, perhaps Asia might come off worse. And comparing the psychological damage is almost impossible. For instance, how should the impact of decades of colonial domination and forced assimilation in Taiwan or Korea be compared to the fear of extermination in Poland or other parts of eastern Europe?

57 The crimes of Stalinist Russia and Maoist China are probably more comparable, but an examination of this issue is not relevant here.

58 John Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York: Norton, 1999), 506 and 504-508. On the recent wave of former soldiers telling of war-time atrocities and the popular reception of their stories in Japan, see Daqing Yang, "'Living Soldiers, Relived Memories?'' Japanese Veterans and Postwar Testimony of War Atrocities," in Sheila Miyoshi Jaeger and Rana Mitter, eds., *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory and the Post-Cold War in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 78-98.

59 Anti-Japanese sentiments are much more muted in Southeast Asia, in part because Japanese rule lasted far shorter, but also because the memory of Western imperialism looms larger in the Southeast Asian context. See Bhubhindar Singh, "ASEAN's Perceptions of Japan: Change and Continuity," *Asian Survey* Vol 42, No. 2 (March-April, 2002); and Diana Wong, "Memory Suppression and Memory Production: The Japanese Occupation of Singapore," in Takashi Fujitani and Lisa Yoneyama, eds., *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), especially pages 231-235.

60 For an argument along these lines made by a relatively conservative Japanese thinker, see Inoki Masamichi. On the declining legitimacy of colonialism and imperialism in general, see Robert H. Jackson, "The Weight of Ideas in Decolonization: Normative Change in International Relations," in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, eds., *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 11-138.

61 Among the first, remarkably prescient critiques of the settlement was John Maynard Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of Peace*. In recent years, there has been a scholarly reassessment of the impact of the earlier generation of literature on the Versailles Treaty, which blamed the settlement for sowing the seeds of the Second World War. For a systematic and careful overview, see Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919* (Basingstoke and London: MacMillan, 1991). For a more outspoken, very well written view, see Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1991: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2002). Nonetheless, it is hard to deny that the conditions created by the treaty were viewed as highly provocative by the Germans and helped create the conditions for war. For a geo-political critique—couched in the language of IR Realism—see David Calleo, *The German Problem Reconsidered* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980). For a Liberal IR perspective, see G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

62 For a seminal account of the development of French efforts to come to terms with the crimes of the Vichy period, see Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991); and Eric Conan, Henry Rousso, Nathan Bracher, trans., *Vichy: An Ever-Present Past* (Hannover, NH: Dartmouth Press, 1998).

63 See David Art, *The Politics of the Nazi Past*, op.cit.

64 Kathleen E. Smith, *Mythmaking in the New Russia: Politics and Memory in the Yeltsin Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002)

65 Herbert Bix, *Hirohito*, op.cit.

66 In other words, to use the language of social science, there is a certain degree of path dependence to the Japanese discourse on history.

67 To put it another way, the charges were ex post facto in character. This is particularly problematic from the perspective of the positive legal tradition, but can still be justified on the basis of natural law—i.e., the position that there are fundamental laws that are binding whether they are codified or not.

68 Richard Minear, *Victor's Justice: The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971); Arnold C. Brackman, *The Other Nuremberg: The Untold Story of the Tokyo War Crimes Trials* (New York: Morrow, 1987); and Gwen and Meirion Harries, *Sheathing the Sword: The Demilitarization of Japan* (New York: MacMillan, 1987). On problems with Nuremberg, see Robert E. Conot, *Justice at Nuremberg* (New York: Basic Books, 1993) and Michael R. Marrus, *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, 1945-1946: A Documentary History* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997).

69 Harries, *Sheathing the Sword*, op.cit., chapters 15, 16, and 18.

70 In 2007, for instance, Prime Minister Abe Shinzō made a point of visiting Pal's home while on a visit to India. At the time, Abe was concerned with appeasing conservative members of his party who were critical of his decision to halt official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. On the visit and its background, see Purendra Jain, "New Roadmap for Japan-India Ties," *Japan Focus*, 4 September 2007, available at <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Purnendra-Jain/2514>, (18 August 2009).

71 The literature on the Tokyo tribunals has become quite voluminous. In addition to Minear, ibid., very useful are Neil Boster and Robert Cryer, *The Tokyo International Military Tribunal: A Reappraisal* (New York and Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2008) and Yuma Totani, *The Tokyo War Crimes Trials: The Pursuit of Justice in the Wake of World War II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008).

72 Richard B. Finn, *Winners in Peace: MacArthur, Yoshida and Postwar Japan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992); 82-86, Harries, *Sheathing the Sword*, op.cit., 44-49.

73 Kazuo Kawai, *Japan's American Interlude* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 94. See also Hans H. Baerwald, *The Purge of Japanese Leaders under the Occupation* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1959); and Masuda Hiroshi, *Seijika Tsuihō* (Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 2001).

74 *Die Mitläuferfabrik: Entnazifierung am Beispiel Bayerns* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1982).

75 The Imperial Rule Assistance Association (*Taisei Yokusankai*) bore some resemblance to the Nazi party and became the target of Allied investigation during the Occupation period. It was, however, more of a corporatist body in which various interest and organizations, including unions, women's groups, local government, etc. were forced to join.

76 On the idealistic character of the Japanese left at the time, see Kojima Ryō, *Hangarii Jiken to Nihon: 1956nen Shisōshiteki Kōsatsu* (Tokyo: Chuōkō Shinsho, 1987). Compared with their German counter-parts, the Japanese left had little direct experience with the character of the communist system under Stalin, nor did they have the example of what was taking place in Eastern Germany before their eyes the way the German left did. As a result, the Japanese left tended to accept Soviet propaganda far more uncritically.

77 For instance, the Social Democrats supported the introduction of military conscription on the condition that strict protections for the civil liberties of recruits (*Innere Führung*) be instituted.

78 Herf, *Divided Memory*, op.cit., 223-224.

79 See Reichel, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland*, 34 and Anna Merritt and Richard L. Merritt, eds., *Public Opinion in Occupied Germany* (Urbana, Ill., 1970), 307-308.

80 Not only was Hitler himself originally Austrian, but a disproportionate share of those involved in the "final solution" had been Austrian. While Austria comprised 8 percent of the Reich's population, 13 percent of the SS, 75 percent of the commanders of the death camps, and 40 percent

of the staff were Austrians. See Heidemarie Uhl, "From Victim Myth to Co-Responsibility Thesis," in Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, and Claudio Fugu, eds., *Politics and Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 47

81 For good overviews see Uhl, op.cit., and Art, op.cit.. For a good, journalistic account, see Hella Pick, *Guilty Victims: Austria from the Holocaust to Haidar* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000). For a very useful and detailed look at Austrian public opinion on the topic, see Heinz P. Wasserman, *Naziland Ősterreich!? Studien zu Antisemitismus, Nation und nationalsozialismus im öffentlichen Meinungsbild* (Innsbruck, Vienna, Munich and Bozen: Studien Verlag 2002).

82 Alan S. Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation State* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992)

83 The single best study of German foreign policy during the Cold War, and which gives a superb overview of the dilemmas that German foreign policy faced during this period, is Wolfram Hanrieder's magisterial *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

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96 Yinan He, *Overcoming the Shadows of the Past*, 274, 291

97 "Takeshima wa 'Rekshininshikimondai'" *Asahi satellite edition*, 26 March 2006, 1. For a detailed and insightful review of the Dokdo/Takeshima issue and the deterioration in Korea-Japanese relations in general, see Alexis Dudden, *Troubled Apologies among Japan, Korea and the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) especially chapter 1.

98 Peter Hays Gries, "China's 'new thinking' on Japan," *The China Quarterly* No.184 (December 2005); Yinan He, *Shadows of the Past*, 277.

99 *Asahi satellite edition*, 10 and 11 April 2005,1.

100 Reinhard Drifte, "Territorial Conflicts in the East China Sea: From Missed Opportunities to Negotiations Stalemate," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 22-3-09, 1 June 2009, available at <http://www.japanfocus.org/-Reinhard-Drifte/3156>, (19 August 2009).

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