

**Looking into the Past for Future Peace:  
The Sino-Japan Reconciliation on Historical Memories**

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## Introduction

Those with a discerning eye know that the current tensions between China and Japan, set in the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, a rocky island group in the East China Sea, are not merely about competing claims over fishing grounds, natural resources, or territory.<sup>1</sup> What they are about is intractable disputes over historical memories, with China arguing that Japan has generally denied or offered only half-hearted, if any, apologies for waging aggressive war and committing atrocities during World War II. According to a Pew Research Center survey in spring 2013, when the Chinese were asked whether Japan has “sufficiently apologized” for its military actions during the 1930s and 1940s, up to 78 percent of them answered negatively.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it is easy to find facts that point to an unrepentant Japan: Numerous prime ministers of Japan have visited the Yasukuni Shrine, a memorial whose purpose is to honor and deify Japanese war dead from 1867 to 1951, including war criminals from World War II. Up to the present day there are no nationally sponsored museums or monuments that acknowledge Japan’s aggressions and atrocities. To China, without an apologetic move from Japan that is acceptable to China, the reconciliation process seems to portend a dead end.

This paper seeks to answer four sequential questions on Sino-Japan reconciliation. The paper first explores what has made the reconciliation of the Sino-Japan wartime memories elusive. It addresses questions concerning Japan: How is the war remembered in Japan? What has Japan done in the past to deal with its wartime history? Is war responsibility acknowledged at

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<sup>1</sup> To prevent confusion and for reading convenience, in this paper, “China” means the “People’s Republic of China,” while the “Republic of China” is indicated as “Taiwan.”

<sup>2</sup> Bruce Drake, “Decades after War’s End, Some of Japan’s Neighbors Still See Need for Atonement,” Pew Research Center, August 3, 2013, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/08/15/decades-after-wars-end-some-of-japans-neighbors-still-see-need-for-atonement/>. Accessed May 7, 2014.

both official and individual levels? Next, the paper will turn to examine China's willingness to engage in the reconciliation process. Southeast Asians have been generally willing to drop the issue of Japanese war guilt. Why does China's animosity seem to persist? The paper finds that both Japan and China have failed to perform in the Sino-Japan reconciliation. Whether it is Japan's inability to resolve its domestic lack of consensus on the wartime past, or it is China's unwillingness to reconcile with Japan, the paper finds that the failure of Sino-Japan reconciliation boils down to politics.<sup>3</sup>

After establishing that politics is a deal breaker in the reconciliation process, the paper turns to ask whether politics can be a deal *maker* in Sino-Japan reconciliation. The section demonstrates that politics is indispensable in the reconciliation process between two former adversaries by using the normalization of diplomatic ties between Japan and China in the 1970s as an illustrative case study. Based on a theory of stable peace proposed by Charles Kupchan, a professor of International Affairs at Georgetown University, the section first seeks to reveal along with pathway the Sino-Japan rapprochement broke out in the 1970s. Did politics play a role in the onset of reconciliation? The research also discovers what drove Japan and China to construct a zone of peace. Was politics involved in the decision-making process in both countries? If so, what were they?

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<sup>3</sup> This paper defines politics as the decisions and behaviors associated with the governance of a country primarily performed by authorities, which in interstate relations includes anyone who has leverage in the decision-making process of a state's foreign policy. This definition of politics is formed through two levels. First, it draws on two commonly accepted definitions of politics from distinguished political scientists Robert Dahl and David Easton. While Dahl defines politics as "any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves (to a significant extent) power, rule, or authority" and Easton as "the authoritative allocation of values for a society," they both point out the significance of "authorities" in their descriptions. Second, considering the focus of this paper is on an interstate reconciliation process, "authorities" is further defined as anyone who has impact in the decision-making process of a state's foreign policy.

Because the normalization of the Sino-Japan relations shows that politics can potentially facilitate the rapprochement process between two former rivals, a third question soon follows: Are politics alone sufficient to sustain the reconciliation? Various forms of disruption can erupt in the post-normalization period, either stalling or degrading a warming relationship between two countries. To avoid such disturbances, countries in question often seek to establish a mechanism designed for building peace – often it is a peace treaty. In the case of Japan and China, however, their peace treaty that was concluded in 1978 turned out to be defective. With a faulty mechanism, no implementation could further be done effectively to consolidate the bilateral relationship. The third section discovers flaws of the “1972 system,” again largely driven by political factors, which made the peace between Japan and China unsustainable.

The last part hopes to learn from the past to succeed in the future reconciliation. Three findings offer a glimpse into a sustainable reconciliation in the future. First, the key to rapprochement between these two rivals lies not in societal or economic interdependence, as some have argued, but rather in politics. Second, the disparity of regime type – the incompatibility between a democratic regime and an autocratic regime – does not adumbrate failure of reconciliation between two countries. What really matters is the strategic restraint – the constraint of power to reassure potential partners of its benign intent – which can be performed adequately by the authorities. Third, a sustainable reconciliation entails the deliberate construction of political and institutional processes as well as a thorough implementation. The conclusion points to an emerging factor that could have a strong impact on the reconciliation process: public opinion. The paper argues that both countries—not only a democratic Japan but

also an authoritarian China—are susceptible to public opinion, and both would feel the strain to manage the opinions of its public.

### **What has made the reconciliation of the Sino-Japan wartime memories elusive?**

Reconciliation is a mutual process: it takes two to tango. On the part of perpetrators, reconciliation cannot be achieved if the different mechanisms of transitional justice they subject themselves to – whether they are judicial or non-judicial – are not well coordinated with each other and not treated equally as priorities in the peace-building agenda.<sup>4</sup> On the part of victims, a willingness to help the perpetrators in finding ways of reconciling when the perpetrators attempt to do so is equally essential to facilitate reconciliation process. This section seeks to build on the concept of mutuality to examine what has made the reconciliation of the Sino-Japan wartime memories elusive.

#### **An impenitent Japan?**

We often hear the argument that Japan has never apologized for its wartime crimes during the World War II and only offered little compensation to the victims. Depicted as an impenitent perpetrator, Japan is blamed for the failure of Sino-Japan reconciliation. However, this only tells the half of the story. In fact, what makes Japan an obstructionist in the peace-building process is not the lack of apology – in reality, Japan has done much more apologizing

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<sup>4</sup> “Transitional justice refers to the set of judicial and non-judicial measures that have been implemented by different countries in order to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses. These measures include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs, and various kinds of institutional reforms.” See more details on the International Center for Transitional Justice website: <http://ictj.org/about/transitional-justice>.

than most Chinese citizens think. Instead, the reconciliation process is complicated by the on-again, off-again discourse over war guilt that is highly linked with political polarization in Japan, as well as the ambiguous gestures of atonement – the ineffectiveness of the Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA).

*How is the war remembered in Japan?*

Japanese political polarization, which features competing political parties respectively advocating alternative narratives of the wartime history in Japan, account for the existence of a dual interpretation of the war. According to Takashi Inoguchi of the University of Tokyo, most Japanese tend to define World War II as a two-level war – one against other imperial powers and the other against the Pacific Asians. In the former, Japan was no more “guilty of aggression and exploitation” than Western imperialist countries, differing only its “entering the imperialist game quite late” and in being “the only non-Western player.”<sup>5</sup> Some have even argued that Japan helped free Asian countries from “the yoke of Western imperialism.”<sup>6</sup> As for the latter, Japan admits its guilt in causing great suffering to Pacific Asians. Due to this two-level interpretation of the war, there is a popular belief among the Japanese that Japan was not totally in the wrong in World War II.

This “two-war” mindset has long been a foundation of the Japanese war memory.

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<sup>5</sup> Takashi Inoguchi, “Japan and Pacific Asia: Reflections on The Fiftieth Anniversary of The End of World War II,” *United Nations University Reports (1995): Memories of War: The Second World War and Japanese Historical Memory in Comparative Perspective*, <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/m-war.html#japan>. Accessed May 8, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Jeff Kingston, “Unlike Germany, Japan’s Right Still Wrong on Wartime History,” *The Japan Times*, June 9, 2013, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2013/06/09/books/book-reviews/unlike-germany-japans-right-still-wrong-on-wartime-history/>. Accessed May 6, 2014.

However, in recent years, the single two-level narrative has been split into two competing narratives as the two dominant political parties in Japan have each embraced one version of events and taken it to extremes. Those who tend to look at World War II as a war among other imperialist nations – a conservative narrative, including revisionists – deny Japan’s aggressive intent and defend its wartime record.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, a progressive narrative that highlights the guilt of causing great suffering for Pacific Asians “embrace[s] Japan’s responsibility as the aggressor in both the Asian and Pacific theaters of the war, as well its record of war crimes.”<sup>8</sup> After World War II, the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which voiced the revisionist narrative of the war memory, enjoyed a half-century of near monopoly of political power. Under the rule of the LDP, the revisionist narrative developed from the initial “two-war” concept, strengthened by three elements: the justification of victimhood, the structural elements of post-war arrangements, and the conscious ignorance of war responsibilities. In the process, it has created a widespread perception of Japan as a nation in denial of its wartime past.

First, the revisionist narrative was characterized by a mentality of claiming Japanese victimhood in World War II. There is a common perception that the Japanese have taken on the role of victims of World War II rather than the perpetrators of aggression. Japan’s perception of victimhood started with the situation prior to the war, when national interests were being thwarted by the West, the U.S. in particular. The sense of victimhood later culminated in the

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<sup>7</sup> However, there is still a fair number in this camp who acknowledges that Japan’s conduct was reprehensible, even if Japan’s war action was justified.

<sup>8</sup> There is a third narrative, which does not fall under the framework of the “two-war” mindset, the pacifist narrative. The pacifists in Japan see war itself as crime, “holding both Japanese militarism and the Allied invaders responsible for the destruction wrought by the war.” The pacifist narrative overlaps to some extent with both the conservative and progressive narratives. See more on Daniel Sneider, “Textbooks and Patriotic Education: Wartime Memory Formation in China and Japan,” *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 20, no.1 (2013), p. 50.

horrific atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, along with the subsequent American occupation of Japan. Furthermore, this identity as a victim rather than a perpetrator has been strengthened by the fact that the Japanese military undertook its campaigns outside of Japan, away from the view of Japanese civilians “who had remained on the mainland and were not aware of its overseas atrocities,”<sup>9</sup> thus allowing them to focus on their roles as the victims of atomic bombing.

Two structural elements of post-war arrangements further rationalized Japan’s escape from its war responsibilities. First, most officials, apart from military leaders and war criminals, continued to “permeate the power structure” after the war.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, based on the decision of the American occupational forces in Japan, the Emperor remained as the symbol of the state and of the unity of the people. Thus, Japan never experienced any clear break with the pre-war regime. By solely blaming the military or ultra-nationalists for the war, Japan as a nation could be effectively free from taking the full responsibilities of the war. As Ian Buruma pointed out, Japan “lost only admirals and generals.”<sup>11</sup> Second, Japan lost a chance to reconcile with China soon after war due to China’s absence from the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951.<sup>12</sup> It was

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<sup>9</sup> Daizaburo Yui, “Between VE Day and VJ Day: A Contrast in American Perceptions of World War II,” *United Nations University Reports (1995): Memories of War: The Second World War and Japanese Historical Memory in Comparative Perspective*, <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/m-war.html#japan>. Accessed May 8, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Kirk Spitzer, “Why Japan Is Still Not Sorry Enough,” *Time*, December 11, 2012, <http://nation.time.com/2012/12/11/why-japan-is-still-not-sorry-enough/>. Accessed May 6, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Helene Thelle, “In The Shadows of The Atomic Holocaust – Japan’s War-Time Memories,” *Consilience. Interdisciplinary Communications (2005/2006)* (Oslo: Centre for Advanced Study 2007), [http://www.cas.uio.no/Publications/Seminar/Consilience\\_Thelle.pdf](http://www.cas.uio.no/Publications/Seminar/Consilience_Thelle.pdf). Accessed May 6, 2014; Ian Buruma, *The Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan* (London: Phoenix, 2002), p. 63.

<sup>12</sup> Japan did not pay reparations to China right after World War II because of the outcome of the civil war in China. For the issue of Japanese war reparations to China, “the Chiang Kai-shek government in Taiwan later renounced its rights for war reparations from Japan when concluding a peace treaty with Japan in 1952 as the government representing China. The People’s Republic of China also formally relinquished its right to demand war reparations in the 1972 Japan-China joint communiqué when the two countries normalized relations.” See more on



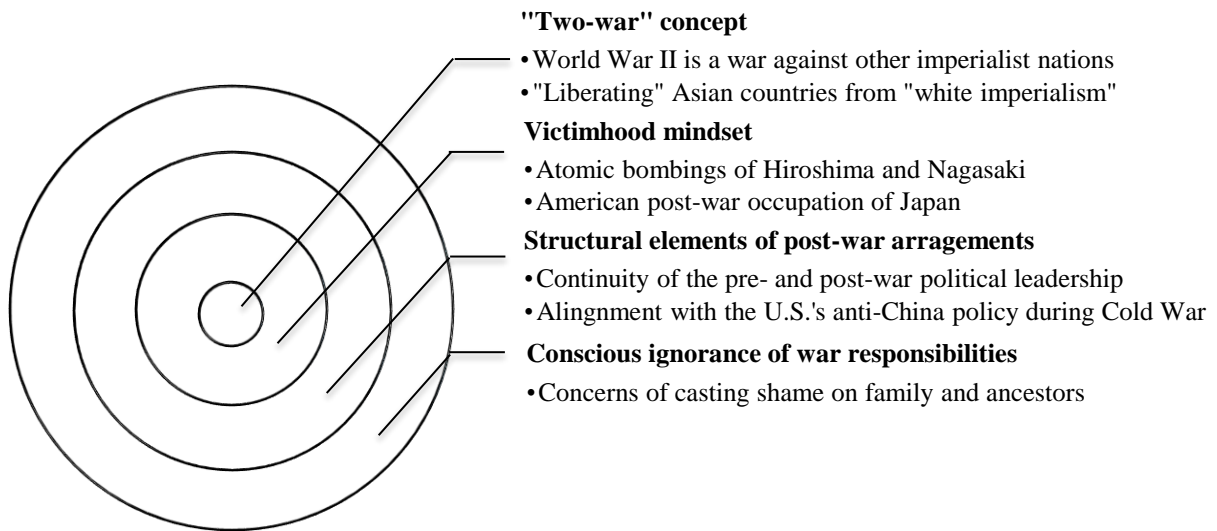
later positioned in a prolonged Cold War confrontation with China, as it was urged by the U.S. to support an anti-Communist policy that prevailed after the Chinese Communists assumed power in 1949.

Finally, a conscious ignorance of war responsibilities provides the finishing touch to the formation of the current revisionist narrative of war. As the word “conscious” suggests, the idea here is that deep down the Japanese are aware of and guilty about the wartime aggression and atrocities, but they deliberately turn a deaf ear to the fact for other purposes. For example, some Japanese believe that apologizing for their wartime past would “cast shame on family members and ancestors”<sup>13</sup> who died fighting for Japan during World War II. Avoiding making apologies, if not admitting the wartime crimes, would thus not only free themselves from war responsibilities but also pay homage to their predecessors. Figure 1 summarizes the formation of the revisionist narrative.

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“EDITORIAL: Japan and China Need Fresh Dialogue over War Reparations Issue,” *The Asahi Shimbun*, March 20, 2014, <http://ajw.asahi.com/article/views/editorial/AJ201403200023>. Accessed May 8, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Jeffrey Hays, “Apologies, Lack of Apologies, Japanese Textbooks and World War II,” *Facts and Details*, November 2012, <http://factsanddetails.com/asian/ca67/sub429/item2512.html>. Accessed May 5, 2014.



**Figure 1 The Formation of the Revisionist Narrative**

However, the revisionist narrative just described has not been the only dominant war memory. The progressive narrative has been equally noticeable in Japanese discourse and behaviors. Consumed by guilt over Japan’s actions in Asia, progressives in Japan describe Japan as an imperialist aggressor in Asia, stressing its responsibility for aggression. The well-known official apology, the “Murayama statement” expressed by Socialist Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second World War in 1995, has been reaffirmed by subsequent governments. In that statement, Murayama expressed his “deep remorse” and “heartfelt apology” by specifying that Japan’s “colonial rule and aggression” had caused “tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries,” and he conveyed “the hope that no such mistake be made in the future.”<sup>14</sup> Even before Muryama’s statement, in August

<sup>14</sup> “Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama ‘On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end’ (August 15, 1995),”Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan,

1986, controversial visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and other state officials were canceled. In his explanation, Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda specified that, while it was a natural responsibility of Japanese politicians to respect the feelings of the people and the bereaved families, who “wish for the implementation of official visits,” Japan should be more responsible for “the peace and prosperity of the international community” and “give due consideration to national sentiments of neighboring countries.”<sup>15</sup>

This progressive narrative also has considerable traction among the public: a recent public opinion survey shows that most Japanese feel their country should apologize for what it did in World War II – a strong majority of Japanese (76 percent) feels that Japan has a need to apologize for its wartime aggression, while only 15 percent rejects the need.<sup>16</sup>

The recurring changes of attitude by the Japanese government toward wartime history reflect the polarization of Japanese politics. They also indicate the co-existence of the competing interpretations of the wartime memories, which is rooted in a “two-war” mindset. Moreover, this “two-war” concept has been engraved in the mind of Japanese people to the present. When the Japanese were asked, in the same survey cited above, whether Japan has sufficiently apologized for its military actions during World War II, the answer was diverse – 28 percent of Japanese answered negatively, 48 percent of Japanese answered positively, while another 15 percent

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<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>. Accessed May 10, 2014.

<sup>15</sup> “Statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda on Official Visits to Yasukuni Shrine by the Prime Minister and Other State Ministers on August 15 of this year (August 14, 1986),” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/state8608.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

<sup>16</sup> Bruce Drake, “Decades After War’s End, Some of Japan’s Neighbors Still See Need for Atonement,” Pew Research Center, August 3, 2013, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/08/15/decades-after-wars-end-some-of-japans-neighbors-still-see-need-for-atonement/>. Accessed May 7, 2014.

answered “no apology necessary.”<sup>17</sup> The “two-war” concept, revealed in this survey as a common belief in the Japanese society, confuses China with an ambiguous attitude toward its wartime past.

*What has Japan done in the past to deal with its wartime history?*

#### Official apologies

In accusing Japan of being impenitent, neighboring countries have mostly pointed to Japan’s half-hearted official apologies. Indeed, offering official apologies between states is a common mechanism of transitional justice to address past wrongdoings; such apologies are intended to transform inter-state relations by “marking an end-point to a history of wrongdoing” and “providing the means for political and social relations to start anew.”<sup>18</sup> To achieve Sino-Japanese reconciliation of the wartime history, the question of whether the Japanese government has indeed turned a blind eye to its country’s misdeeds in the World War II – as China has insisted – requires careful examination. This section focuses on the language that Japan has used to apologize for its wartime history. Because the apologetic rhetoric that Japan has made to China and South Korea regarding its wartime conducts is correlated, this section examines Japanese apologies not only to China but also to South Korea. In this manner, one would have a general review of whether Japan has come to terms with its past by making successful apologies. Based on the official statements, Japan has apologized several times in ways that range from

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Jeff Corntassel and Cindy Holder, “Who’s Sorry Now? Government Apologies, Truth Commissions, and Indigenous Self-Determination in Australia, Canada, Guatemala, and Peru,” *Human Rights Review*, vol. 9, no. 4 (December 2008), p. 465.

half-hearted to sincere since the 1965 normalization of relations with South Korea.<sup>19</sup>

Specifically, Japan's apologetic language to South Korea and China has evolved through three stages, including the initial lightweight expression of "*hansei*" (self-reflection/remorse), the use of a stronger word of "*owabi*" (sorry/apology), and the consolidation of an official Japanese position on wartime apologies based on the well-known "Murayama Statement."

The first apology that Japan made for its wartime history to South Korea was expressed in 1965 when South Korea and Japan normalized their diplomatic relations. When the Japanese Foreign Minister Etsusaburo Shiina traveled in February 1965 to South Korea for treaty negotiations, he stated, "We feel great regret [*iikan*] and deep remorse [*hansei*] over the unfortunate phase [*fukou jiki*] in the long history of relations."<sup>20</sup> Although apologies were given as demanded by South Korea, the terms "regret" (*iikan*), "remorse" (*hansei*) and "unfortunate phase" (*fukou jiki*) phase were too weak to satisfy the South Koreans. Critics also commented the vague definition of the subject, "we," and an expression of "regret," "remorse," and "unhappy phase" did not say much about what had occurred or who was responsible.<sup>21</sup> However, the ambiguity of the sentence fulfilled both Japanese and Korean interests, allowing both countries to enter into a treaty of normalization. The first apology from Japan to China transpired in September 1972 at a time of the normalization of Sino-Japan relations. In the joint communiqué, Japan stated that it was "keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches [*hansei*] itself."

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<sup>19</sup> Jane Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge 2006).

<sup>20</sup> Shigeru Oda, "The Normalization of Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea," *The American Journal of International Law*, vol. 61, no. 1 (January 1967), p. 35.

<sup>21</sup> Jennifer Lind, "Apologies in International Politics," *Security Studies*, vol. 18, no. 3 (July 2009), p. 530.

Here again, Japan utilized the word, “*hansei*” (remorse/self-reflection), which was alternatively translated into “self-reproach” in the English version.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout the 1980s, the Japanese government technically followed the terms of “*hansei*” (remorse/self-reflection) to address the wartime past to China and South Korea. However, some of the language of apologies did become clearer in pointing to what Japan has done during the War World II or during the colonization period in the past. For example, the “Nakasone Statement” in September 1984 clearly indicated the fact that “there was a period in this century when Japan brought to bear great sufferings upon your country and its people,” and “the government and people of Japan feel a deep regret [*hansei*] for this error.”<sup>23</sup>

The stronger “*owabi*” (sorry/apology) made its first appearance in May 1990 in a statement by Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu during a meeting with South Korea’s President Roh Tae Woo. In his talk, Kaifu explicitly stated, “I would like to take the opportunity here to humbly express remorse [*hansei*] upon how the people of the Korean Peninsula went through unbearable pain and sorrow as a result of our country’s actions during a certain period in the past and to express that we are sorry [*owabi*].”<sup>24</sup> The emergence of the word “*owabi*” (sorry/apology) alongside the often-employed apologetic word “*hansei*” (remorse/self-reflection) showed a

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<sup>22</sup> “Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China (September 29, 1972),” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint72.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014. See also the Japanese version: [http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/china/nc\\_seimei.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/china/nc_seimei.html).

<sup>23</sup> “Nakasone Statement, September 1984,” Memory & Reconciliation in the Asia-Pacific Program, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, George Washington University, <http://www.gwu.edu/~memory/data/government/nakasone84.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

<sup>24</sup> 「大韓民国大統領盧泰愚閣下ご夫妻歓迎晩餐会での海部内閣総理大臣の挨拶」(May 25, 1990), Memory & Reconciliation in the Asia-Pacific Program, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, George Washington University, <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPKR/19900525.SIJ.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

progress in Japan's moves to "come to terms" with its wartime history. In January 1992, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa increased the intensity of apology in a policy speech during his visit to South Korea, where he not only reiterated the word, "*owabi*" (sorry/apology) but also specified Japan as a "*kagaisha*" (assailant) and South Korea as a "*higaisha*" (victim).<sup>25</sup> Later, the apologetic language was further connected to Japan's determination to "contribut[e] more than ever before to world peace," which could be seen in a Diet speech from Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa in August 1993.<sup>26</sup>

However, it was only when a statement from Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama was delivered in August 1995 on the 50th anniversary of the end of the World War II that the official apology fully broadcast to the rest of the world. Although the language of this apology was not different from that of preceding prime ministers, such as Kaifu, Miyazawa and Hosokawa, the "Murayama Statement" was based on unanimous approval from the Cabinet members. Specific elements in the statement include an admission that Japan's "colonial rule and aggression" had caused "tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations;" an expression of a "deep remorse and heartfelt apology;" and a responsibility as a member of international community to advance "the principles of peace and democracy."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> 「宮澤喜一内閣総理大臣の大韓民国訪問における政策演説（アジアのなか、世界のなかの日韓関係）」 ("Policy Speech by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa during Official Visit to ROK (Japan-ROK relations in the Asian and global context)", "The World and Japan" Database Project, Database of Japanese Politics and International Relations, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, University of Tokyo, <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/exdpm/19920117.S1E.html>. See also the Japanese version: <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/exdpm/19920117.S1J.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

<sup>26</sup> "Policy Speech by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa to the 127th Session of the National Diet (August 23, 1993)," Memory & Reconciliation in the Asia-Pacific Program, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, George Washington University, <http://japan.kantei.go.jp/127.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> "Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama' On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end'(15 August 1995)", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan,

This statement was later frequently restated by subsequent prime ministers and was regarded as the official position of the Japanese government on the issue of Japan’s wartime aggression and atrocity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Table 1 summarizes the evolution of official apologies from the Japanese government to China and South Korea.

**Table 1 The Evolution of Official Apologies from the Japanese Government to China and South Korea**

Stage	Highlights	Statements
<b>The Expression of “<i>hansei</i>” (remorse/self-reflection)</b>	The first apology – the use of “ <i>hansei</i> ”	The statement from Foreign Minister Etsusaburo Shiina (February 1965); The joint communiqué of Japan and China (September 1972)
	The increasing clarity in stating Japanese wartime crimes	The statement by Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone (September 1984)
<b>The Expression of “<i>owabi</i>” (sorry/apology)</b>	The first use of “ <i>owabi</i> ”	The statement by Prime Minister Tohiki Kaifu (May 1990)

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<http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/pm/murayama/9508.html>. Accessed May 11, 2014.



	The first description of Japan as a “ <i>kagaisha</i> ”(assailant) and South Korea as a “ <i>higaisha</i> ” (victim)	The statement by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa (January 1992)
	The connection to a new determination of “contributing to world peace”	The statement by Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa (August 1993)
<b>The Consolidation of the Official Position</b>	The official position of the Japanese government on the issue of Japan’s wartime past	The statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama (August 1995)

To mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the World War II, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has announced a statement on August 14, 2015. While falling short of a renewed apology requested by Beijing and the left-wing parties within Japan, Abe followed the wording of the 1995 Murayama statement, expressing Japan’s “feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology” for Japan’s “aggressive” war and “colonization” in Asia. The statement also dedicated a paragraph to describe the “emotional struggle” of the Chinese people who underwent the suffering brought by the Japanese military.

Seeing the development of the official apologetic rhetoric – from feeble expressions of “remorse/self-reflection” to sincere apologies, it is reasonable to expect that official apologies from Japan would be conducive to the Sino-Japan reconciliation process. However, the apologies

have failed to address wartime disputes. The official apologies from Japan may be sufficient to help the reconciliation process, but the interference of domestic political polarization has sent an equivocal message to the outside world regarding the genuineness of Japan's regret for its wartime crimes.

Usually, inter-state political apologies are controversial domestically, prompting domestic opposition parties to "stand up and protest."<sup>28</sup> As Jennifer Lind, an associate professor of government at Dartmouth College, has observed, in Japan, when a leader apologizes or initiates moves that symbolize the admission of guilt and remorse from Japan for its wartime past, such penitent attempts are frequently "undermined by the steady revisionist drumbeat emanating from the right" that proposes a different narrative about the country's history<sup>29</sup> Specifically, the divided political narratives – conservative versus progressive – can be seen in the choice of language to describe wartime facts: "comfort women" versus "sex slaves," Japanese "advance" versus Japanese "invasion," "Nanking incident" versus "Nanking massacre," "China Incident" versus "China War."<sup>30</sup> Thus, the problem for Japan is "not the absence of apologies, but the backlash they often provoked," thereby leaving the outside world's impression that Japan had never truly apologized.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Jennifer Lind, "Can East Asia Move Past Its History Problem?" *The National Interest*, May 7, 2014, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-east-asia-move-past-its-history-problem-10390?page=show>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Jane Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge 2006).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Jennifer Lind, "Can East Asia Move Past Its History Problem?" *The National Interest*, May 7, 2014, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-east-asia-move-past-its-history-problem-10390?page=show>. Accessed May 11, 2014.

## War reparations and Official Development Aid (ODA)

Besides the apology, war reparations can be another path to reconciliation. For the Sino-Japan reconciliation, it is a common belief that Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) program, established in 1954, was created as a way of making indirect war reparations to Asian countries, a practice that Japan continues to undertake even after an agreed termination of the reparation. While the Japanese ODA to China began in 1979 and has contributed substantially to China's economic development for more than thirty years, the financial assistance – or as some have argued the war reparation in disguise – has had a limited function as a means of transitional justice to facilitate the current Sino-Japan reconciliation of wartime history. Three characteristics of the Japanese ODA have made it ineffective in promoting historical reconciliations. First, at the time the Japanese ODA was established, China had renounced demanding war reparations; therefore, one could reason that the purpose of Japan's ODA was technically unassociated with the wartime history. Second, it is often said that the Japanese ODA, in fact, served its own political and economic interests rather than conferring benefits to China. Finally, even if Japan itself had regarded the Japanese ODA as a means of war reparation, or if there was a tacit understanding between the two countries to that effect, it tended to lose its effect over time due to China's remarkable economic development and Japan's economic stagnation, which prompted an overall decrease of amount in Japanese ODA to China.

In 1972, while negotiating the establishment of Sino-Japanese relations, China declared that it was renouncing demands of war reparations from Japan based on principles of morality and justice. This morality, as explained by Premier Zhou Enlai during a meeting with the

Japanese Foreign Minister Miki Takeo in April 1972, was based on a view that the Japanese people, unlike the Japanese wartime military or ultra-nationalists, were also the victims of war. This moral reasoning was believed by some to have led to a Japanese guilt over the aggressive war, which then drove Japan to offer financial support for China's economic development. That offer was not accepted by China until China started to implement the "reform and opening policies" in 1979.

Some argue that, rather than serving as covert war reparations, the Japanese ODA to China served Japan's own political and economic interests.<sup>32</sup> In terms of politics, Japan took the ODA achievements as "concrete manifestation of Chinese and Japanese friendly relations" and "a way to support the Reform and Opening Up Policy of China."<sup>33</sup> As for the economy, Japan hoped to improve Sino-Japanese economic and trade relations, and specifically, it hoped the ODA could promote China's energy development as a means to serve Japan's energy import needs.<sup>34</sup>

In light of China's significant economic development in recent years and Japan's own economic stagnation, Japan stopped initiating new ODA loans to China in December 2007. While China overtook Japan as the world's second largest economy in 2010, Japan has the developed world's highest debt to gross domestic product ratio, nearing 200%.<sup>35</sup> This prompted

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<sup>32</sup> Although it is true of virtually every country's aid program because it is easier to justify if domestic interests benefit.

<sup>33</sup> The assistance intended to provide a steady development of the Chinese economy, including aspects such as the development of infrastructure in coastal areas, environmental issues, improvement in medical care and the development of human resources. See more on "Japan's Official Development Assistance White Paper 2012," *Japan's International Cooperation*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2012/html/index.html>. Accessed May 12, 2014.

<sup>34</sup> Zhigang Wu, "Research on Japan's ODA to China and Its Contribution to China's Development," paper presented at the 9th Workshop held by the Project on the Chinese Economy, ORC, Kyoto Sangyo University (March 21, 2008), p.4.

<sup>35</sup> Kyung Lah, "Japan To Review Aid for Booming China," CNN, March 4, 2011,

Japan to conduct an official review of Japan’s ODA policy toward China in 2011. As Japanese Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara stated in 2011, with China overtaking Japan in terms of gross domestic product, it is “completely inconceivable for Japan, which has been outranked, to increase its ODA.”<sup>36</sup> As Table 2 shows, Japan’s ODA disbursements to China come in three main categories, including loan aid, grant aid and technical cooperation. Since 2008, the overall ODA disbursement to China has shrunk. Along with the termination of the fresh loans to China in 2007, the amount of grant aid to China gradually decreased from \$18.21 million in 2008 to \$9.99 million in 2012; the technical cooperation also diminished from \$265.22 million in 2008 to \$131.68 million.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 2 Japan’s ODA Disbursements to China**

(Net disbursements, \$million)

Year	Loan Aid	Grant Aid	Technical Cooperation	Total
2008	-5.18	18.21	265.22	278.25
2009	-155.09	14.02	283.03	141.96
2010	-552.87	13.00	347.21	-192.66
2011	-781.70	13.42	286.67	-481.32
2012	-980.04	9.99	131.68	-838.37

Source: Japan’s ODA Data by Country – China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2012,

<http://edition.cnn.com/2011/BUSINESS/03/04/japan.china.aid/>. Accessed May 8, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> “Japan’s ODA Data by Country – China (2012),” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/data/index.html>. Accessed May 12, 2014.

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<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/data/index.html>.

Note:

1. The annual figures for *Loan Aid* and *Grant Aid* indicate the sums of funds actually disbursed within the calendar year out of the amount committed with exchanged notes. The figures of *Loan Aid* show the balances after subtracting repayments from recipients.
2. Accumulated totals of *Loan Aid* may be minus figures depending on fluctuations in exchange rates.
3. *Technical Cooperation* includes projects implemented by relevant ministries and local governments in addition to those by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
4. Totals may not always add up due to rounding.

To evaluate the practice of Japan's ODA disbursements to China on a broader scale, in a comparison with other members in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), while Japan was the largest provider of the ODA disbursements to China in 2007, it fell to third place in 2009 and fell out of the top three ranking in 2011, as Table 3 displays.

**Table 3 Amount of DAC Countries' ODA Disbursements to China**

(Net disbursements, \$ million)

Year	1		2		3	
2007	Japan	435.66	Germany	289.28	U.K.	162.43
2008	Germany	411.87	Japan	278.25	France	207.51
2009	France	364.35	Germany	340.88	Japan	141.96
2010	Germany	321.50	France	316.69	U.K.	86.72
2011	Germany	485.55	France	290.97	U.K.	64.86

Source: Japan's ODA Data by Country – China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 2012, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/data/index.html>.

Note: The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is an OECD forum where the governments of the donor countries and multilateral organizations like the World Bank and United Nations are joined in helping the developing countries to reduce poverty and reach the Millennium Development Goals.

These three factors – the technical meaning of the Japanese ODA to China, the practice of ODA serving Japan's own interests, and the shrinking amount of ODA due to China's remarkable economic growth – make hopes of facilitating historical reconciliation on the providing of ODA to be “too much to expect.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Xianfen Xu, “Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) Policy toward China: The Role of Emotional Factors,” *The Journal of Contemporary China Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2013), p. 91.

## An innocent China?

Clearly, Japan has failed to make consistent efforts to “come to terms” with its wartime past; however, whether China is as innocent as it has asserted also requires additional scrutiny. There has always been an intriguing question concerning Japanese reconciliation of the wartime past with Asian countries: Why have most Southeast Asians and Taiwanese appeared to be willing to forgive the Japanese, when China still has a hard time moving on? In the survey (previously mentioned) when Southeast Asians were asked about whether Japan has sufficiently apologized for its military actions during the World War II, the number of people who answered positively taken together with those who thought “no apology necessary” is nearly equal to the number of those who answered negatively. By contrast, in China there is a stark contrast – 78 percent of people surveyed think Japan has not apologized enough, with only 4 percent expressing satisfaction with Japanese apologies and 2 percent thinking no apology needed.<sup>39</sup> To understand the reason for the attitude difference between Chinese and other Asians, we need to consider not only the possibility that the Japanese may have committed more atrocities in China than in other regions but also the existence of intrinsic motivation for Chinese leadership to cultivate that view. It may be that Chinese leaders are not genuinely, or at least not completely, interested in reconciliation, but are “wielding the history weapon to score domestic political points at Japan’s expense”<sup>40</sup> and seeking to gain leverage over Japan. Certainly, such a view is

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<sup>39</sup> Bruce Drake, “Decades After War’s End, Some of Japan’s Neighbors Still See Need for Atonement,” Pew Research Center, August 3, 2013, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/08/15/decades-after-wars-end-some-of-japans-neighbors-still-see-need-for-atonement/>. Accessed May 7, 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Jennifer Lind, “Can East Asia Move Past Its History Problem?” *The National Interest*, May 7, 2014, <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/can-east-asia-move-past-its-history-problem-10390?page=show>. Accessed May 11, 2014.



upheld by the right wing in Japan; however, an evaluation of how China's treatment of wartime history has changed during the post-war period suggests that there is some basis in fact for this view.

There was a significant change in the Chinese construction of historical memory before and after the mid-1980s when the two museums – the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the Nanjing Memorial – were erected. Before the mid-1980s, the Chinese communist leadership paid little attention to the anti-Japanese struggle or to Japanese wartime crimes. Rather, it was preoccupied by a historical narrative of the war that emphasized the civil war against the Kuomintang (KMT), the Chinese nationalists, in which the Chinese Communists particularly stressed its role in “leading the struggle” and “the Nationalist failure to fight the Japanese invader.”<sup>41</sup> As Daniel C. Sneider, director of Stanford University's Divided Memories and Reconciliation project, points out that the narratives served three types of need for Chinese leaderships: to compete for the “legitimacy with the defeated KMT,” to strive for “leadership within the Communist world,” and to normalize relations with Japan to “open up the flow of Japanese economic aid.”<sup>42</sup> However, over the last three decades, there has been a shift in Chinese construction of historical memory due to an increasing priority for the Chinese leadership: national unity. Challenged by both domestic and international forces, including the domestic unrest caused by Tiananmen incident of 1989, the overwhelming flow of foreign information coming with the Reform and Opening Policy since 1979, and the revision of

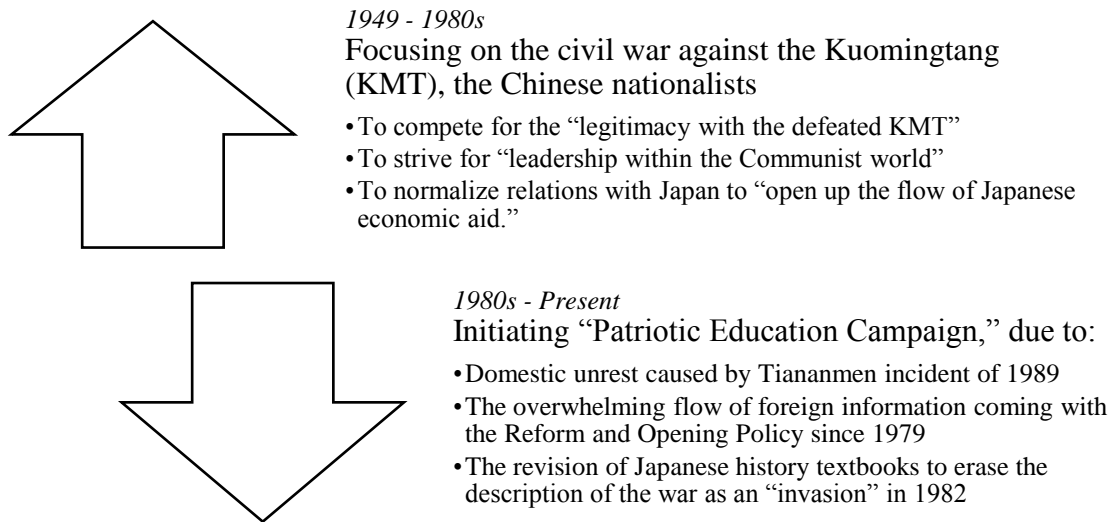
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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 43-44.

<sup>42</sup> Daniel Sneider, “Textbooks and Patriotic Education: Wartime Memory Formation in China and Japan,” *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2013), pp. 41-42.

Japanese history textbooks to erase the description of the war as an “invasion” in 1982, the Chinese leadership was prompted to initiate the “Patriotic Education Campaign” in 1991, providing young Chinese with a version of history describing, as Sneider puts it, “China’s victimization at the hands of a brutal and criminal invader” (see figure 2).<sup>43</sup>

**Figure 2 The Shift of the Chinese construction of historical memory**



A comparative study of high school history textbooks by Stanford’s Divided Memories and Reconciliation project compares the treatment of the wartime phase in the textbooks of China and Japan. Contrary to widespread belief, although there has always been a revisionist account of wartime history promoted by the conservatives in Japan, the pacifist narrative, which sees the war itself as a crime, has always dominated Japanese history textbooks. History textbooks in Japan thus contain few patriotic statements, instead offering “dry chronology of

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 41, 45.

events without much interpretive or analytical narrative.”<sup>44</sup> The textbooks even include more information about controversial wartime incidents, including the Nanjing Massacre. By contrast, as a part of the patriotic education campaigns, Chinese history textbooks are imbued with “didactic themes of the patriotic education campaign,” which, as Sneider argues, promotes nationalism to retain legitimacy for the Chinese Communist regime.<sup>45</sup>

So far, the patriotic education campaign in China seems to produce desirable outcomes for the Chinese leadership. In a survey of Chinese people led by the Japanese think tank Genron NPO and China Daily in August 2013, when asked about their impressions of Japan, 92.8 percent expressed an unfavorable impression of Japan. The two predominant reasons offered by respondents for their “unfavorable impressions” of Japan were related to historical disputes: the largest percentage, 77.6 percent stated that “Japan has caused a territorial dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, taking a hard stance toward China;” and the second largest, 63.8 percent mentioned “Japan’s lack of a proper apology and remorse about its invasion of China.”<sup>46</sup>

It is all about politics

Whether it is Japan’s inability to resolve its domestic lack of consensus on the wartime past or China’s unwillingness to reconcile with Japan, the failure of Sino-Japan reconciliation boils down to politics. It is generally believed that transitional justice should be detached from

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p.39

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p.47.

<sup>46</sup> “The 9<sup>th</sup> Japan-China Public Opinion Poll,” The Genron NPO, August 13, 2013, [http://www.genron-npo.net/english/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=59:the-9th-japan-china-public-opinion-poll&catid=2:research&Itemid=4](http://www.genron-npo.net/english/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59:the-9th-japan-china-public-opinion-poll&catid=2:research&Itemid=4). Accessed May 12, 2014.

politics to achieve reconciliation. Political calculations are regarded as an obstruction to a sincere pursuit of a mutual understanding. Indeed, some types of politics could impede the process of reconciliation – transitional justice cannot be a political tool for politicians who support the reconciliation process by paying lip service; international tribunals and truth commissions should not work at the behest of particular governments' interests.

In Japan, the political polarization that is reflected in and reinforced by competing narratives of the wartime history is to a larger degree a function of politics rather than a genuine result of engagement with China. While the progressives in Japan often argue that official apologies to China are needed to repair relations with Asian countries, to stimulate national self-reflection and “a learning process leading to a new, improved identity,” and to affirm moral principles, it is reasonable to think that the apologies would also serve political ends. For instance, as when a new progressive administrations in Japan criticized the previous conservative administrations for lacking self-reflection and causing instability in Sino-Japan relations.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Japanese conservatives also contend with their aversion to apology to China – out of a fear that “apologizing would imply the culpability of the Emperor,” and a fear of inviting demands for further compensation.<sup>48</sup> In China, cultivating the patriotic narrative – the instigation of nationalism – can serve as a necessary substitute for communist ideology, which can no longer serve as a source of legitimacy for the Chinese Communist Party regime. At the same time, nationalist sloganeering can also be a convenient tool to “shift attention away from corruption

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<sup>47</sup> Jane Yamazaki, *Japanese Apologies for World War II: A Rhetorical Study* (London: Routledge 2006).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

scandals and economic growth slowdowns,” which endanger the Communist government’s legitimacy.<sup>49</sup>

### **Can politics also be a “deal maker” in promoting the Sino-Japan reconciliation?**

Since it would be hard, if not impossible, to divorce politics from transitional justice entirely, does that mean that reconciliation between two countries is doomed to fail in most cases? Recognizing the negative effects that politics can bring to the reconciliation process, one should not overlook the fact that politics can also assist or dominate the process of promoting mutual understanding between two countries. According to Kara Apland, a researcher in the field of human rights at Coram Children’s Legal Centre, transitional justice should be “a negotiation between normative and political forces; the mixture of moral (and legal) considerations into what is an inherently political project.”<sup>50</sup> In other words, politics are indispensable in the facilitation of the reconciliation process. To some extent, it is when political actors are capable of and willing to commit to the mechanisms and goals of certain forms of justice and accountability that reconciliation will be realized. Significantly, how governments treat each other can have a strong impact on their people’s impression toward each other. This section demonstrates that politics may be indispensable in the reconciliation process between two former adversaries, using the normalization of diplomatic ties between Japan and China in the 1970s as an illustrative study.

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<sup>49</sup> Daniel Sneider, “Drinking from The Poisoned Well,” *International Economy* (Winter 2013), p.76.

<sup>50</sup> Kara Apland, “The Power and Politics of Transitional Justice,” *Justice in Conflict*, January 16, 2012, <http://justiceinconflict.org/2012/01/16/the-power-and-politics-of-transitional-justice/>. Accessed May 13, 2014.

China and Japan have sought a degree of reconciliation in the recent past. With Japan's devastating war on China and the following Cold War framework that locked the two countries into opposing camps, the two countries still cleared the way to formally establish diplomatic relations in 1972. This section examines the development of the Sino-Japan reconciliation in the 1970s, during which two historic official documents were produced – the joint communiqué on the establishment of the Sino-Japan diplomatic relations in 1972, and the subsequent Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1978. Employing Charles Kupchan's theory of stable peace, this section first answers two questions: Through what pathway did the Sino-Japan rapprochement break out in the 1970s? Did politics play a role in the onset of the reconciliation process? Later, this section turns to discover what drove Japan and China to construct a zone of peace. Were politics involved in the decision-making process in both countries? If so, what were they?

#### Four phases in the onset of rapprochement

After studying twenty different cases of stable peace, Charles Kupchan in his book, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace*, describes a four-phase process through which stable peace can emerge. While each case of rapprochement has its own unique path, those paths share some common qualities: *unilateral accommodation* builds a foundation for *reciprocal restraint*, which later sets the stage for *societal integration*, and the final *generation of new narratives and identities* forms a sense of solidarity and communal identities between two countries.<sup>51</sup> These four phases are differentiated by the state's behavior initiating transformation

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<sup>51</sup> Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 6.

in interstate relations, the political features being assessed by the partner states, and the resulting effect of the parties toward each other. The process is explicated in this section, alongside an examination of the rapprochement between Japan and China in the 1970s.

### *Unilateral accommodation and reciprocal restraint*

According to Kupchan, an act of *unilateral accommodation* opens the road to reconciliation. When confronted with an array of threats, a state inundated with multiple sources of insecurity seeks to improve its strategic environments through befriending one of its adversaries. By exercising strategic restraint and making unmistakable concessions, a state sends a signal of benign intent as a gesture of peace offering. The state which offers an initial concession deliberately “makes itself vulnerable to exploitation,” attempting to hint at the target state that it “rejects predatory intent” and “entertain hope” to deal with a potential partner.<sup>52</sup>

Phase two entails the practice of *reciprocal restraint*. The target state reciprocates with its own act of accommodation by trading concessions. During the mutual concessions, the parties evaluate on not merely each other’s intent associated with specific concessional behaviors, but on broader motivations with respect to overall interstate relations. Hope transforms into confidence through repeated mutual accommodations, and expectations of future “programmatic cooperation” then rise.<sup>53</sup>

In the case of Japan and China, their diplomatic breakthrough occurred in the 1970s. The first explicit concession was made by Japan in October 1971 when Japanese Prime Minister

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

Eisaku Sato delivered a policy speech, in which unprecedentedly “accepted People’s Republic as the legitimate representative of China,”<sup>54</sup> and hoped to see the fate of Taiwan be settled “through negotiations between the parties concerned.”<sup>55</sup> Reciprocal concessions were later encapsulated in the 1972 joint communiqué announced by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai and Japan’s Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka. In the joint communiqué, an important concession was made by China as it “renounce[d] its demand for war reparation from Japan” (Article 5), which exempted Japan from war indemnities estimated at over \$50,000 million by the President of the Chinese Supreme People’s Court in 1951.<sup>56</sup> In return, Japan made three major concessions. On the wartime issue, Japan pronounced that it was “keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war,” and “deeply reproache[d] itself.” On the political status of Taiwan, Japan changed its China policy from “two Chinas” to “one China,” a stance that was acceptable to the People’s Republic of China. The joint communiqué denoted Japan’s recognition of the People’s Republic of China as “the sole legal Government of China” (Article 2), its “full understanding and respect” on China’s stance on Taiwan as “an inalienable part of the territory of the People’s Republic of China,” and its firm stance on following Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation (Article 3). The inclusion of Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation in the communiqué implied that Japan agreed to the restoration of Taiwan to China.<sup>57</sup> Japan made another concession in the peace treaty. Prior to the

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<sup>54</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, “The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence,” *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 106.

<sup>55</sup> Richard Halloran, “Japanese to seek closer China ties,” *the New York Times*, October 20, 1971, pp. 1, 14.

<sup>56</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, “The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence,” *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 105.

<sup>57</sup> Article 8 of the Potsdam Proclamation reads, “The terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and such minor islands



announcement of the communiqué, Premier Zhou had insisted on concluding a “treaty of peace and friendship” which would invalidate Japan’s peace treaty with Taiwan in 1952, whereas Japan had maintained that their “state of war with China had ended with the signing of the 1952 treaty with the Nationalist Government in Taiwan” and that the People’s Republic of China should assume the extant treaty rather than creating a new one.<sup>58</sup> In the joint communiqué, however, Japan agreed to “terminate” the “abnormal state of affairs that has hitherto existed between Japan and China” (Article 1) and to “enter into negotiations for the purpose of concluding a treaty of peace and friendship” (Article 8).

Japan’s recognition of the People’s Republic of China and its abrogation of the peace treaty with Taiwan disrupted its own interests. Setting aside questions of moral obligations, diplomatically, Japan endangered its proper legal protection in Taiwan. Economically, it sacrificed a highly profitable trade with Taiwan, with a Japanese export surplus of \$500 million in 1971. At the same time, a diplomatic clash with Taiwan jeopardized Japanese investments in the island – an amount added up to 19 percent of the total foreign investment in Taiwan – endangering assets and the interests of the 3,000 Japanese residents.<sup>59</sup>

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as we [the Allied powers] determine.” Its reference of the Cairo Declaration partly reads, “Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914, and that all the territories Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa [Taiwan], and the Pescadores [Penghu] shall be restored to the Republic of China...”

<sup>58</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, “The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence,” *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), pp. 114-115.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

### *Societal integration and the generation of new political narratives*

In the third phase of *societal integration*, the onset of stable peace broadens its social base as regular contacts between parties come to involve “bureaucrats, private-sector elites, and ordinary citizens.”<sup>60</sup> Interest groups that benefit from closer relations begin to lobby for enhancing economic and political interactions. This increasing exchange between multiple parties in the states in question causes them to “attribute benign qualities to each other’s political character,” and mutual confidence soon forms a trust foundation for the interstate relationship.<sup>61</sup> The final phase is *the generation of new political narratives*. The creation of new narratives starts with elite statements in which officials shift the language they use to characterize the partner states, and are followed by “popular culture (media, literature, theater), and items loaded with political symbolism such as charters, flags and anthems.”<sup>62</sup> The content of the narrative informs “compatible, shared or common identities” which indicate different zones of stable peace, from a rudimentary rapprochement to a security community to a mature union.<sup>63</sup> Through the changing discourse of community, a sense of solidarity is produced and expectations for peaceful relations are formed. Figure 3 summarizes the four-phase process that leads to stable peace.

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<sup>60</sup> Charles Kupchan, “Enmity into Amity: How Peace Breaks Out,” *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) International Policy Analysis*, April 2011, <http://www.fesdc.org/content/analysis.htm>, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 36.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50. In his book, Charles Kupchan reveals three types of stable peace. The evolution of stable peace is a sequential process. After states have crossed the four phases of onset, they first reach the status of peaceful coexistence – the concept of “rapprochement.” Peaceful coexistence then evolves into a rules-based “security community.” The process culminates when the states in question merge into a new polity, eliminating their individual sovereignties to form a “union.” See more on *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 29-35, 36.

Creating a path to the third phase on social integration between states in question, Article 9 of the Sino-Japanese joint communiqué denotes that the two countries have agreed to further promote relations to “expand interchanges of people,” and will “enter into negotiations for the purpose of concluding agreements concerning such matters as trade, shipping, aviation, and

**Figure 3 Four-phase process that leads to stable peace**

Phase	Behaviors	Qualities Evaluated	Resulting Effect
I	Unilateral Accommodation	Intent	Hope
II	Reciprocal Restraint	Motivation	Confidence
III	Societal Integration	Character	Trust
IV	Narrative Generation	Identity	Solidarity

Source: Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 36.

fisheries.” As for the final phase of narrative generation, the language included in Article 6 and the Preamble of the joint communiqué – the mentioning of “establishing relations of perpetual peace and friendship” in spite of the differences in the social systems, the “normalization of relations between Japan and China” and the “termination of the state of war” – exemplifies an official statement which seeks to embrace a new domestic discourse that modifies the identity that possess of the other.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> “Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People’s Republic of China,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, September 29, 1972, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint72.html>.

By examining the joint communiqué in 1972, we find that the development of the Sino-Japan rapprochement dovetails with Kupchan’s four-phase process through which stable peace breaks out (see figure 4).

**Figure 4 Four-phase framework: The Onset of the Sino-Japan Rapprochement**

Phase	Behaviors	The 1972 Sino-Japan Joint Communiqué
I	Unilateral Accommodation	Japanese Prime Minister Sato’s recognition of the People’s Republic as the legitimate representative of China in October 1971.
II	Reciprocal Restraint	<u>China</u> : renouncing war reparations (Article 5) <u>Japan</u> : terminating the abnormal state of affairs between the two countries (Article 1); recognizing the People’s Republic and expressing a full understanding and respect in China’s stance on Taiwan’s political status (Article 2&3); negotiating a peace treaty (Article 8)
III	Social Integration	Expanding people exchanges; negotiating bilateral agreements concerning trade, shipping, aviation, and fisheries. (Article 9)
IV	Narrative Generation	The “normalization of relations between Japan and China” and the “termination of the state of war” (Preamble); “establishing relations of perpetual peace and friendship” (Article 6).

It is worth noting that the four-phase sequence suggests a “top-down” feature at the onset of reconciliation; the rapprochement unfolds through political behaviors – reciprocal concessions from countries in question – based on political decisions. These early phases of reconciliations are predominantly “elite-driven,” confined to people in the decision-making circle of a country’s foreign policy, such people as political leaders, diplomats, and military personnel “engaged in statecraft and the pursuit of reconciliation.”<sup>65</sup> Only when it enters into the third phase, social integration, does the reconciliation process start to perform at multiple levels, including the participation of bureaucracies, private firms, and mobilized citizens. But even so, politics still plays a principal role in governing the whole process. Phase four of the onset of stable peace makes a good example. The generation of new narratives starts at the elite level (as Kupchan observes, often an official change of discourse involves a new accounting of the past that downplays conflict and highlights historic ties and common values.) This suggests how influential the language of government officials can be, which may be especially true for China, an authoritarian regime that holds more power than its democratic counterparts.<sup>66</sup> For China, it is relatively easy to breed enmity toward Japan in the Chinese society by initiating patriotic campaigns.

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<sup>65</sup> Charles Kupchan, “Enmity into Amity: How Peace Breaks Out,” *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) International Policy Analysis*, April 2011, <http://www.fesdc.org/content/analysis.htm>, p. 5.

<sup>66</sup> Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 50-51.

## Causes of the Sino-Japan Rapprochement

Understanding what drove the countries to engage in a reconciliation process is as important as understanding how the rapprochement was achieved. The last section established that politics weighed significantly in the process of the Sino-Japan rapprochement. Particularly, an “elite phenomenon” which prevailed in early phases of the rapprochement had a strong impact on the overall development of reconciliation. To study what a country calculates to push forward a reconciliation process can help us understand the internal politics and differentiate elements of politics in different states. This section explores what stimulated Japan and China to seek certain form of reconciliation within the Cold War framework in the 1970s, and what types of politics were involved in the reconciliation process in both countries.

### *What's in China's mind?*

As an authoritarian regime, the Chinese government faced no opposition party to keep it in check and dominated public opinion in the 1970s. The Chinese leadership thus predominately led the reconciliation process with Japan, carefully calculating for the interests of the Chinese Communist Party and the nation as a whole. Through an examination of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship concluded by Japan and China in 1978, this section discovers the security and strategic calculations which motivated China to pursue rapprochement with Japan. In particular, China's security and strategic calculations were targeted at three countries: Soviet Union, Japan and the United States.

In the context of the Sino-Soviet split, in which China and the Soviet Union experienced a gradual worsening of relations from an ideological split in the 1950s to a military conflict across their common border in 1969, China seemed to seek ways to counter the Soviet Union. Therefore, in January 1975, before the conclusion of the Peace Treaty with Japan, China indicated that the territorial problem on the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands should be shelved and would not be discussed in the treaty negotiations. By shelving its territorial dispute, China would facilitate the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan; implicitly, China could prove that it was the Soviet Union – which had failed to conclude a peace treaty with Japan because of its inability to resolve its disputes with Japan concerning the four southernmost islands of the Kuriles – that had made an agreement elusive with its “illegal claims and expansionist character”.<sup>67</sup> However, because it did not address the territorial issue, the Treaty was different from a traditional peace treaty, functioning more as a political document that emphasized the development of peaceful and friendly relations. Also, China’s desired to include in the Peace Treaty a “hegemony clause” aimed at an “expansionist” Soviet Union. The second part of Article 2 of the Peace Treaty specifies that the two countries opposed “any other country or group of countries” to establish hegemony. The “hegemony clause” is, in principle, directed against the United States as well.

In addition, China’s decision to engage in Japan in the 1970s was motivated by its long-range security considerations regarding Japan. The first part of Article 2 of the Peace Treaty declares that “neither of the two countries should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region or in any other region.” As Joachim Glaubitz, a professor of the Institut für Wissenschaft und

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<sup>67</sup> Joachim Glaubitz, “Anti-Hegemony Formulas in Chinese Foreign Policy,” *Asian Survey*, vol. 16, no. 3 (March, 1976), p. 207, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2643540.pdf?&acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true>.

Politik, Munich, the inclusion of this clause would serve two purposes for China. First, by creating a friendly atmosphere between the two countries, China would leave little room for Japan to adopt a different position on significant political issues in Asia. To some extent, China could “commit Japan to a pro-China policy,” making China a step forward to emerge in the Asia Pacific region.<sup>68</sup> Second, China could use the “hegemony clause” to condemn Japan’s expansion of economic activities in East and South East Asia by “labeling them as hegemonic.”<sup>69</sup>

### *What’s in Japan’s mind?*

While political leaders steered the Sino-Japan reconciliation process in China, Japan as a democratic regime was more susceptible to a variety of voices domestically and internationally. Three factors are believed to have promoted the onset of Sino-Japan diplomatic relations in Japan, Japan’s economic interests, the impact of Nixon’s overture to Beijing, and domestic politics in Japan. The last of these, domestic politics, overshadowed the others to lead Japan to the onset of the Sino-Japan rapprochement.

Some argue that Japan’s moves toward ties with Beijing were almost exclusively “trade-driven.”<sup>70</sup> Sino-Japanese trade, which began as extra-governmental activities in the 1950s, had flourished over the years and was formally acknowledged and overseen by agencies of the two governments by 1962. Although normalizing Sino-Japan relations could further improve Japan’s

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>70</sup> Sadako Ogata, *Normalization with China: Comparative study of U.S. and Japanese process* (Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1988). Reviewed by John Bryan Starr, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 49, no.4 (November 1990), p. 914.



economic security and accelerate China's economic modernization, the economic exchanges themselves were nothing new in the 1970s. Attributing the onset of peace to economic interdependence alone cannot explain why Japan and China did not normalize their diplomatic relations earlier. As Kupchan indicated, the breakthrough that led to the Sino-Japan rapprochement seems to have occurred "after political elites have succeeded in taming geopolitical competition."<sup>71</sup>

In addition, it is in the opinion of many that the announcement in July 1971 of President Nixon's scheduled visit to Beijing marked a turning point in Japan's China policy, which, since the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty twenty years before, had been "within the framework of the Far East policy of the United States".<sup>72</sup> Undeniably, the "Nixon shock" did throw doubt on Japan's post-war foreign policy of prioritizing its relations with the United States, but it did not push then Prime Minister Eisaku Sato to immediately change Japan's China policy. In a speech after the Nixon announcement, Sato mentioned the importance for Japan to "maintain and to promote friendly and amicable relations with the Republic of Korea, the Republic of China [Taiwan] and other neighboring countries," to improve the relations with the United States "with care" based on the understanding that "the attitude of the People's Republic of China will have great influence on the easing of tensions in the Far East," and to respect each other's position with the United States.<sup>73</sup> It is only when Kakuei Tanaka became prime minister

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<sup>71</sup> Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 14.

<sup>72</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, "The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence," *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 105.

<sup>73</sup> "No new approach on China problem revealed in speech," *Japan Times* (Tokyo), July 18, 1971.

in 1972 that Japan set out to engage in a reconciliation process with China.

“The Nixon shock” and a concern for Japan’s economic security only catalyzed the onset of the reconciliation. What truly drove Japan to embark on a path toward the Sino-Japan reconciliation is domestic politics. The political will of leaders – in Japan’s case, the will of the Prime Minister – along with the existence of opposition parties are the key factors that pushed Japan toward normalization with China.

On the one hand, the resignation of pro-Taiwan Prime Minister Sato Eisaku and the ascent of powerful pro-PRC Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei in July 1972 opened an opportunity for Japan to engage in China. Despite tremendous domestic pressure for a reorientation of Japan’s China policy and the briskly worsening relationship with the United States after the Nixon shock, Sato was not prepared to drastically change its stance toward a “one China” policy.<sup>74</sup> It was not until the end of his time in office that Sato considered the feasibility of normalization with China – an implicit acceptance of a “one China” policy. In his farewell speech in June 1972, Sato stated that diplomatic relations with China “have to be restored and normalized in any case” but without sacrificing “the existing friendly and goodwill relations with the Nationalist government [Taiwan].”<sup>75</sup> Responding to Sato’s reluctance to engage, the Chinese Premier Chou repeatedly ignored Sato’s overture to visit China after the “Nixon shock,” stating that he would prefer a new Prime Minister of Japan who had “due respect for ‘Chinese principles.’”<sup>76</sup> Sato’s resignation,

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<sup>74</sup> Toward the end of 1971, the Sato government did soften its “two Chinas” stance to “one China and two governments,” as was shown in its support for the two American resolutions in the United Nations on the China issue in October 1971. The resolutions called for the seating of the People’s Republic and designed to preserve membership for Taiwan. See the text of Kiichi Aichi’s United Nations speech on the China issue, *Japan Times*, October 21, 1971, p.16.

<sup>75</sup> “Sato steps down,” *Peking Review*, No. 26 (June 30, 1972), p. 19.

<sup>76</sup> In *Britannica Book of the Year 1972* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1972), p, 397.

thus, was under intense pressure from Beijing. When Kakuei Tanaka took over the helm of the Japanese government in July 1972, he was ready to translate the “one China” stance into tangible actions. China’s return to a semblance of domestic normalcy after the damaging forces of the Chinese Cultural Revolution helped to create an atmosphere conducive to the Sino-Japan rapprochement. In an air favorable to the reconciliation process, Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka deftly dealt with a line of obstacles, including obtaining Beijing’s agreement that Japan would continue economic and other non-diplomatic relations with Taipei, reaching consensus on a new China policy within his own party, consulting with President Nixon to attain his understanding of the Japanese actions, and seeking an understanding with the Nationalist government in Taiwan. At last, Japan formally established diplomatic relations with China in September 1972.

On the other hand, the existence of an opposition in Japan pushing toward normalization boosted the process of the reconciliation. Shortly after Nixon announced his planned visit to Beijing in July 1971, dissidents within the ruling party, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and all opposition parties including the left wing of the Japan Communist Party (JCP) strengthened their attacks against the Sato’s “two China” policy, demanding his resignation and asking for Japan’s prompt recognition of the People’s Republic.<sup>77</sup> In fact, earlier the same month, a delegation of Japan’s opposition party, Komeito (Clean Government Party), had engaged with China, through which China had conveyed a conditional rapprochement with Japan. When the Komeito delegation later announced in a joint statement with the China-Japan Friendship Association that normalizing relations with China was preconditioned by “five principles;” the essence of these

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<sup>77</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, “The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence,” *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 103.

principles had already endorsed by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai.<sup>78</sup>

### **Are politics alone sufficient to sustain the reconciliation?**

The normalization of Sino-Japan relations shows that politics can facilitate as well as disrupt the rapprochement between two former adversaries. In the case of Japan and China, political leadership in both countries and the opposition parties in Japan that upheld the rapprochement initiated the necessary move for the onset of the Sino-Japan reconciliation. The reciprocal concessions, the government-led social integrations and the creation of new narratives toward partner countries that starts from elite statements create an institution of temporary peace. However, succeeding in the onset of the reconciliation does not guarantee a lasting peace; politics-induced moves alone cannot make the reconciliation endure. Various forms of disruption can erupt in the post-normalization period to stall or degrade a warming relationship between two countries. To avoid such disturbances and consolidate peace in the post-rapprochement period, countries often make continuous efforts to enforce a mechanism designed for building peace (oftentimes it is a peace treaty). However, in Sino-Japan relations, the mechanism turned out to be defective.

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<sup>78</sup> The five principles are as follows:

- 1) There is only one China, and the government of the People's Republic is the sole legitimate government representing the Chinese people;
- 2) Taiwan is a province of China and an inalienable part of Chinese territory;
- 3) The "Japan-Chiang [peace] Treaty" is illegal and must be abrogated;
- 4) The United States must withdraw all its armed forces from Taiwan and the Taiwan Straits area;
- 5) The legitimate rights of the People's Republic in all United Nations organizations must be restored and the representatives of Taiwan expelled. The text of the joint statement is in *Peking Review*, No. 28 (July 9, 1971), pp. 20-21. See also "Komeito group signs Peking communique," *Japan Times* (July 3, 1971), p. 1; Gene T. Hsiao, "The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence," *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 103.

Starting with the anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005 and the fishing trawler collision incident near the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands in 2010 and 2012, Sino-Japanese relations have deteriorated in the recent years.<sup>79</sup> The recent dispute between Japan and China is neither a new issue, nor is it a problem of implementation that shows a failed attempt in enforcing their peace treaty. Instead, the controversies point to flaws of the post-war arrangement between Japan and China. This section explores institutional flaws of the “1972 system” that make the peace between Japan and China unsustainable. It finds that the reasons for the fragility of the “1972 system” is caused by two disputes that were deliberately left unsolved at the time to hasten the process of restoring a symbolic political relationship of peace and friendship between the two countries. Once again, politics makes its way into the reconciliation process.

The fragility of the “1972 system” can be understood as a failure to resolve two issues, the territorial disputes over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands and the incompatibility of the co-existence of Sino-Japanese relations and Taiwan-Japanese relations. This does not mean that the two countries did not recognize these disputes that had impeded the reconciliation process; in fact, leaders in both countries identified the controversies at the time. However, rather than resolve the disputes by making concrete concessions based on the principle of reciprocity, they opted for a solution of ambiguity – they chose either to shelve a pending problem or to accept unwillingly a concession offered by their partner state. The vagueness of the solution has produced distrust between China and Japan, which has created a stage for debate in the domestic and international

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<sup>79</sup> The anti-Japanese demonstration in 2005 was fueled by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s visit to Yasukuni Shrine, and Japan’s bid for a permanent seat on the United Nation Security Council (UNSC). The UNSC is composed of 15 members, including five permanent members and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly. China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States are the five permanent members, which are the victors of the World War II.

politics.

### The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands

At the time of the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations in 1972 and the conclusion of the Peace and Friendship Treaty in 1978, leaders from the two sides reached a tacit consensus on shelving the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute because they could not resolve it. The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands issue was first raised in the diplomatic normalization talks when on September 27, 1972, Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei suddenly mentioned the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands disputes during the third summit. In response, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai suggested that shelving the issue. “It is not good to discuss this at this time. This has become an issue because of (the discovery of) oil (in the region). Neither Taiwan nor the United States would pay any attention (to the issue) if it were not for oil.”<sup>80</sup> The slight reference to the territorial disputes indicates the importance of the issue and its pending status. It is not until August 10, 1978, when a Beijing meeting was held between Chinese first Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping and Japanese Foreign Minister Sunao Sonoda that the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute was brought up again. This time, both sides clearly agreed to “shelve the dispute.” In their conversation, Deng specifically said that the two countries “should not touch” the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands issue considering a failed attempt in achieving an agreement to settle the issue. Instead, Deng suggested that and it is better to “put it aside and discuss it without haste

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<sup>80</sup> “Normalization of relations: China claims it agreed with Japan to shelve the dispute in 1972, Japan denies,” *The Asahi Shimbun*, December 26, 2012, [http://ajw.asahi.com/article/special/Senkaku\\_History/AJ201212260103](http://ajw.asahi.com/article/special/Senkaku_History/AJ201212260103). Accessed October 6, 2014.

in coming years.” In response, Sonoda agreed to “put it aside,” adding that, “our generation won’t be able to sort it out. Let’s leave it to the next generation or our grandchildren. They will find a way out.”<sup>81</sup> As indicated in the second section of this paper, without resolving the territorial disputes between the two countries, the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty is less a mechanism for stabilizing relations and more a political gesture meant to demonstrate their symbolic “peaceful and friendly relations.” The avoidance of the territorial issue thus foreshadows a bumpy road of the Sino-Japanese reconciliation.

#### The incompatibility of the Sino-Japan relations and the Taiwan-Japan relations

As the Sino-Japanese normalization transpired in 1972, however, there seemed to be no drastic change in the substance of relations between Japan and Taiwan. Although Japan damaged its diplomatic relations with Taiwan by unilaterally terminating the Japan-Taiwanese peace treaty, cultural and economic ties between the two countries were not disrupted. Instead, trade between Japan and Taiwan in 1972 increased almost 50 percent over the previous year, reaching a record high of \$1,511 million; Taiwan was the third largest import market for Japan, following the United States (\$8,856 million) and Canada (\$1,105 million).<sup>82</sup> Apparently, an alternative had to be found to substitute for their informal diplomatic and consular relations. In December 1972, the Association of East Asia Relations (AEAR) replaced the Nationalist embassy in Tokyo and the Japanese embassy in Taipei was substituted with the Japan Interchange Association (JIA), an

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Trade figures cited can be found in *The Japan Economic Review* (Tokyo), No. 3 (March 15, 1973), p.9

arrangement that persists into the present.<sup>83</sup> The two associations enjoy the status of a “quasi-legation” and function as a regular consular.<sup>84</sup> This arrangement enables Japan to continue close relationship with Taiwan but creates an ambiguous position of Japan on Taiwan’s political status, which has inevitably sown the seeds of controversies between the two countries. In recent years, with the rise of regional and global issues and the trend of economic regionalization, Taiwan-Japanese relations have been even closer.<sup>85</sup> The continuous improvement of Taiwan-Japanese relations can be seen through various indicators: the increase of flight frequencies and the addition of destinations between the two countries, Japan’s exemption of visa for Taiwan, the conclusion of a Taiwan-Japanese fishing agreement in the midst of a deteriorating Sino-Japan relations due to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands dispute. To some degree, the lack of official diplomatic ties seems to decline in its importance in Japan-Taiwanese relations. While relations between Taiwan and Japan are warming, the Sino-Japanese relations are becoming tenser because of the territorial disputes and wartime memories. This may concern China because of Japan’s ambiguous stance on the political status of Taiwan’s sovereignty, and it may cause China to worry that Japan and Taiwan will form a united front against China based on their claims of territorial sovereignty to the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands.

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<sup>83</sup> In 1992, the name of the liaison office of Association of East Asia Relations (AEAR) was changed to Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office.

<sup>84</sup> Gene T. Hsiao, “The Sino-Japanese Rapprochement: A Relationship of Ambivalence,” *The China Quarterly*, vol. 57 (January-March, 1974), p. 119.

<sup>85</sup> Madoka Fukuda, “The Japan-Taiwan Relationship in the Post-Democratization Era: Enhancement and Institutionalization,” conference paper presented in the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), “Japanese Perspective on China, Taiwan, and Cross-Strait Relations,” September 15, 2014.



## **What can we learn from the past to succeed in the future reconciliation?**

The reconciliation process between China and Japan has been a bumpy road. In retrospect, political influences have been everywhere in the process, serving either as a deal breaker or a deal maker. The key to developing a sustainable reconciliation is not to eschew politics entirely – which is nigh on impossible and is not necessarily conducive to the process – but to recognize the existence of politics, to understand how politics both negatively and positively affect reconciliation, and to try to exert political power in a way that is beneficial to the reconciliation process. By examining the reconciliation process between China and Japan in the 1970s, the paper reveals three findings that can serve as a glimpse into a sustainable reconciliation in the future.

First, the key to rapprochement between two rivalries is about politics, not societal or economic interdependence. The reconciliation process is initiated by a series of political moves, including political reciprocal concessions between two countries and a change of discourse toward partner states starting from the official statements. These political moves are based on decisions primarily made by political leaderships and facilitated by opposition parties in a democratic country. Politics in the reconciliation process can thus be defined in two ways. One is related to the procedure through which the reconciliation unfolds, such as the Kupchan's "four-phase process" leading to the onset of stable peace; the other is about actors (namely, elites or government officials who are influential in the decision-making process) and their decisions in the reconciliation process. The state that announces an effort to improve interstate relations does not do so out of altruism. Instead, the decision is often triggered by several concerns: impact

from foreign countries (as the “Nixon shock” to Japan) or international community, geopolitics, economy, and security concerns. These concerns are alarming enough to prompt political leaders to back away from rivalries and to befriend existing adversaries. In most cases, what triggers an onset of rapprochement is often a critical geopolitical situation during which a country encounters a threatening environment where they find themselves lacking resources to deal adequately with the threat. As Kupchan noted, to befriend an extant adversary is not a “product of necessity, not opportunity.”<sup>86</sup>

Second, the disparity of regime type is not a major factor. Liberal democracy is not a necessary condition for the process to rapprochement as often argued with the “democratic peace theory.” Autocratic states, which “lack institutionalized checks on power,” can practice strategic restraint, and at times can be even more coordinated and forceful in pushing forward the reconciliation process if political leaders have strong will to do so.<sup>87</sup> By contrast, a democratic country is likely subject to the distribution of authority among separate institutions of governance, which can easily stall reconciliation when there is no strong consensus. Simply put, what really matters in the reconciliation process is the practice of strategic restraint – the constraint of power to reassure potential partners of its benign intent – no matter what form of regime type performs it.

Third, a sustainable reconciliation entails the deliberate construction of political and institutional processes as well as a thorough implementation. However, an implementation can

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<sup>86</sup> Charles Kupchan, *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 14.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

be conducive to the reconciliation process only when there is a complete institution. The Sino-Japan normalization process in the 1970s failed to address the territorial disputes in the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands and the Taiwan issue; rather, Japan and China decided to set the territorial disputes aside and leave ambiguity in Japan's relations with China and Taiwan. Although the choice not to resolve these issues helped clear the way for the reconciliation process, it guaranteed a rocky relationship in the future.

### The rise of people's voice

What are other elements influence the reconciliation process? While politics and governments primarily lead the process of reconciliation, sustainable reconciliation requires peace-building initiatives at all levels of society – individuals also play significant roles in the process of reconciliation recently. Public opinion, if strong enough, could counter the political calculations of officials and impede the peace-building process. For a democratic country such as Japan, public opinion would be effective in urging political leaders to change government policies due to the fact that a ruling political party is subject to regular elections. However, China, an authoritarian country, is also likely to feel the strain of managing the opinions of its public. In China, anti-Japanese popular nationalism has been rising high. Although little evidence hitherto proves that it is officially orchestrated, Chinese popular nationalism has deep roots in the state's history propaganda. For example, the "Patriotic Education Campaign" was promoted in 1991 to build national unity and to legitimize Chinese regime.

Noticeably in recent years, there has been an expansion of anti-Japanese sentiments. Decades of propaganda and “official tolerance” surely helped to create a solid foundation of popular distrust and hostility toward Japan.<sup>88</sup> Yet the broadened wave of the anti-Japanese nationalism is beyond government orchestration. As Jessica Chen Weiss, an assistant professor of political science at Yale University, indicated that activists have formed “horizontal support networks,” created personal ties with individual officials, and “gained public attention through publicity and innovative protest techniques,” such as online debates.<sup>89</sup> Commercial newspapers further strengthen the intensity of the public sentiments by providing sensationalist coverage in protest events and provocative incidents to survive in a crowded media market. This expanded wave of public mobilization has affected government’s actions and discourse.<sup>90</sup> The outrageous online and street protest in 2005 is a good example. In the spring of 2005, fueled by Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s annual visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, by Japanese efforts to win a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council, and by the Japanese history textbook that downplayed Japan’s wartime aggression, the Chinese anti-Japanese demonstrations were heightened and expanded to an extent that drove Chinese leaders to explicitly object to Japan’s bid for a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> China has selectively allowed street protests or protests on the Internet to serve for its diplomatic objectives. By tolerating the protests, China can make demands more credible and pressure to stand firm more visible vis-à-vis targeted foreign countries. See more on Jessica Chen Weiss’s presentation on the “‘Powerful Patriots’ Book Launch with Jessica Chen Weiss” at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 6, 2014.

<sup>89</sup> James Reilly, *Strong Society, Smart State: The Rise of Public Opinion in China's Japan Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), pp. 208-209.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

To date, Chinese foreign policy is neither hostage to nor completely insulated from popular pressure. Instead, leaders in China have been effective in bringing the wave of public mobilization to an end when they showed a strong will to do so. But the Chinese government should keep the nationalism that it has unleashed under control. If not, the anti-Japanese sentiments could become uncontrollable and impede the political calculations of officials, thus obstructing the peace-building process. Even worse, the sentiments would backfire on the Chinese government by creating incessant domestic unrest that is costly to tamp down, thus jeopardizing the legitimacy of China's regime.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> People might expand their dissatisfaction to unrelated domestic problems, including growing unrest in Xinjiang and Tibet, government corruption, and the stagnant growth of the economy, and attribute all the problems to the poor governance of Chinese authorities.