

2002

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Recommended Citation

Onuma Yasuaki, *Japanese War Guilt and Postwar Responsibilities of Japan*, 20 BERKELEY J. INT'L LAW. 600 (2003).
Available at: <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/bjil/vol20/iss3/4>

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Japanese War Guilt and Postwar Responsibilities of Japan†*

By
Onuma Yasuaki**

I. INTRODUCTION

The problem of Japanese war guilt and responsibilities¹ has been one of the major issues between Japan and its neighbors, notably Korea and China, for the last two decades. It is also a domestic issue involving, *inter alia*, the treatment of the Korean minority in Japan, high school textbooks, and the prime minister's visit to Yasukuni Shrine. It is also an international issue involving the human rights problems of the victims of Japanese aggression and colonial rule. Although a number of politicians, diplomats, scholars, journalists and NGOs made serious efforts to "solve" the problem by the end of the 20th century, they did not succeed. On the contrary, the beginning of the 21st century rekindled the issue as Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi wanted to visit Yasukuni Shrine. To make the matter worse, a textbook written by the *Atarashii rekishi kyokasho wo tsukuru kai* (hereinafter *Tsukuru kai*), a leading group of reactionary revisionist scholars and activists, passed the text authorization system (*kentei*) of the Ministry of Education in the summer of 2001. Together with other textbooks that passed the authorization, it was put before educational committees of local com-

† The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect views endorsed or held by the Berkeley Journal of International Law. Any idiosyncracies in word choice, tone, grammar, and citation are the author's choice.

* This paper is based on the lecture given on March 8, 2002, when the author received the Stefan A. Riesenfeld Award at the University of California, Boalt School of Law. The author is grateful to Professor Harry Scheiber, Mr. Damir Arnaut, anonymous proofreaders both at Boalt Hall and Harvard University U.S.-Japan Program, and all others for providing him with many useful comments on the earlier version of the paper. In this paper, the author expresses the order of the name given according to the proper way respective of culture. Thus, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese names appear with the family name preceding the given name.

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1. The concept of Japanese war guilt and responsibilities used in this article corresponds to a single Japanese term "senso sekinin" and signifies various responsibilities which Japan and its members should acknowledge relating to World War II and colonial rule over Taiwan and Korea. The guilt and responsibilities in this sense vary according to authors who use the term "senso sekinin" as well as the time and context in which the term is used. See ONUMA YASUAKI, *TOKYO SAIBAN KARA SENGO SEKININ NO SHISO HE* [FROM THE TOKYO WAR CRIMES TRIAL TO THE POST-WAR RESPONSIBILITY OF JAPAN] (Toshindo, 4th ed. 1997). In this article, for the sake of economy of words, the term "war guilt" will be used to mean all aspects of guilt and responsibilities relating not only to World War II, but also to Japanese colonial rule. For the same reason, only issues relating to China and Korea will be discussed.

munities. One of the mandates of these committees is to choose one of these textbooks to be used in high schools in the communities under their jurisdiction. Because campaigns of *Tsukuru kai* were vocal and influential, there was a fear that a considerable number of the educational committees would choose this textbook. A large number of Koreans and Chinese became angry when they read reports by journalists that such a textbook, reportedly containing a number of distortions of historical facts, might be chosen for use in high schools. The incorrect image of the only one national textbook to be used in all high schools reinforced their anger.

There is no doubt that Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine, coupled with the textbook issue, were direct causes of tensions between Japan, China and Korea, as well as harsh controversies and political struggles in Japan. However, there are other factors at work, and they will continue to exert an influence even though specific cases are resolved or toned down. Among them, three basic concerns should be cited.

First, China suffered the largest number of casualties from Japan's wartime aggression. However, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai claimed that it was a limited number of militarists, not the Japanese people, who should be held responsible for Japanese aggression. This posture was maintained until recently. A considerable number of Chinese, however, began to doubt this generous attitude. They claim that the Chinese leadership should take harsher policies towards Japan on the issue of Japanese war guilt. With the foreseeable democratization in China in the future, a more general criticism of the earlier Chinese leadership for waiving the claim for war reparation in 1972 is likely to arise. In South Korea too, the Park Chung-hee administration achieved normalization of relations with Japan by suppressing the opposition in 1965. Along with the democratization of South Korea in recent years, those who are critical of this have become more and more influential.

Second, the problem of Japanese war guilt has become an issue of international concern as the protection of human rights has gained more and more attention in global politics. When the Carter administration was engaged in human rights diplomacy in the 1970s, not a few experts were critical and cynical of its naïveté. In only twenty years, the situation has radically changed. Today, the problem of human rights is one of the hottest issues in global politics. With this change, the problem of Japanese war guilt has come to be characterized as a problem of human rights violations by the Japanese government and military forces during the war and colonial period. The widespread concern with the former "comfort women" is indicative of the increased significance of human rights in global politics.

Third, on the Japanese side, a kind of "apology fatigue" or smoldering discontent increased during the late 1990s. During the postwar period, Japan largely avoided confronting the problem of war guilt. However, starting in the early 1980s, when the text authorization policy for history textbooks came under severe criticism, Japan gradually tackled the issue. Since then, most textbook writers have sought to incorporate the negative aspects of modern Japanese his-

tory more seriously than in the past. Successive prime ministers, beginning with Hosokawa Morihiro, have admitted that the wars Japan waged were acts of aggression and have expressed deep remorse and heartfelt apologies for the tremendous damage to and suffering of the victims. Japan has also adopted policies improving the legal and societal situation of Koreans in Japan, making possible the repatriation of Koreans left in Sakhalin, and realizing atonement for the former "comfort women" by means of letters of apology and remorse signed by the prime minister, medical and welfare programs provided by the government, and atonement money donated by the Japanese people to the victims.² One of the major reasons why the members of *Tsukuru kai* decided to write a textbook is that, because of these policies, they had felt a deep sense of crisis since the 1980s. To them, such policies and the public atmosphere seemed to be "masochistic" and jeopardizing national pride. From the side of the victims, however, the policies have been regarded as insufficient. Although these policies were not particularly inferior to the actions pursued by other nations,³ they have failed to gain a positive reception from international society. Japan has almost always been regarded as the only nation that avoided the responsibility for its imperialistic wars and colonial rule, although most developed countries such as the UK, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and Belgium committed similar transgressions. Many ordinary Japanese began to ask: Why only Japan? How many times and how long must we apologize?⁴

Members of the *Tsukuru kai* capitalized on the smoldering discontent and grievance held by many ordinary people in Japan. They had tremendous success in their propaganda activities. Their arguments have common features in: (1) criticizing the Tokyo war crimes trial as victors' justice; (2) under-assessing the number of victims of the Nanjing Massacre; (3) displaying cynicism towards the problem of former "comfort women;" and (4) opposing any form of apology or remorse for war guilt being expressed by the Japanese government.⁵ The mem-

2. See ONUMA YASUAKI, *TANITSU MINZOKU SHAKAI NO SHINWA WO KOETE* [BEYOND THE MYTH OF MONO-ETHNIC SOCIETY] 373-496 (rev. ed., Toshindo, 1997); ONUMA YASUAKI, *SAHARIN KIMIN* [KOREANS LEFT IN SAKHALIN] (Chuo koron sha, 1992); "IANFU" MONDAI TO AJIA JOSEI KIKIN [THE PROBLEM OF "COMFORT WOMEN" AND THE ASIAN WOMEN'S FUND] (Onuma Yasuaki et al. eds., Toshindo, 2000) [hereinafter *THE PROBLEM OF COMFORT WOMEN*].

3. Compare, for example, the letter of apology from the Japanese prime minister to individual "comfort women" victims with that of the U.S. president to the Japanese American victims forcefully interned in camps during World War II. See *THE PROBLEM OF COMFORT WOMEN*, *supra* note 2, at 140-41.

4. Moreover, the overall image of China sharply declined during the 1990s in Japan due to the following factors: the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989; the increase of crimes committed by Chinese criminals illegally entering Japan; the rapid increase of China's military budget; and the resumption of nuclear weapons tests. Because Japan seriously suffered from a depression during the 1990s, the Japanese began to pay keen attention to how their economic assistance was used. In this context, the Japanese people were particularly concerned with the rapid increase of military budget by the Chinese government, being suspicious that part of the huge economic assistance from Japan was used for that purpose. The fact that the Chinese government did not inform their people of the huge amount of economic assistance from Japan and failed to express appreciation for it further frustrated many Japanese.

5. See, e.g., KOBAYASHI YOSHINORI, *SHIN GOMANIZUMU SENGEN* [NEW DECLARATION OF ARROGANCE] (Gento sha, 1998); NISHIO KANJI, *KOKUMIN NO REKISHI* [HISTORY OF THE JAPANESE NA-

bers of the *Tsukuru kai* do not represent a majority of the Japanese. Many Japanese knit their brows upon hearing the vocal and aggressive assertions of those revisionists. Not a few ordinary Japanese, however, at least feel sympathy with some of their arguments and find them as persuasive to some extent. Why? Because, I think, many Japanese share the following sentiment: Japan certainly did wrong in World War II and in colonial rule. If criticized by China and Korea, we could hardly rebut the criticism. However, in recent years Japan has made considerable efforts towards China and Korea. Our prime ministers and emperors have expressed remorse and made a number of apologies. In addition, it is because we have felt sorry that we have continued to provide huge amounts of economic cooperation and assistance to China and Korea. Yet, you still argue that it is not enough?

The most difficult problem involving the Japanese war guilt lies in the huge gap between the judgment and feelings held by ordinary Japanese and those held by ordinary Chinese and Koreans. Ordinary Chinese and Koreans would certainly respond to the Japanese: do you really argue that Japanese prime ministers have made apologies? Stop joking! Both Korea and China have been far inferior to Japan in terms of economics. Therefore, many Koreans and Chinese have been frustrated that even if Japan did something offensive, such as some minister's making a remark that World War II was a defensive war for Japan, they could not take effective measures to have Japan rectify such offensive behavior sufficiently. This sense of impotence exacerbates their frustration.

It is difficult to fill this huge gap within a short period of time. I, myself, have made serious efforts for more than thirty years as a Japanese scholar and an activist, and believe that it takes time. People often talk about reconciling the differences in perception or recognition of history held by the Japanese with those of the victimized nations, particularly Chinese and Koreans. However, we should not expect that much at this stage. What is most important today is to acknowledge calmly that there are huge differences and seek to understand the causes underlying them. If each side can understand why the other side has such grossly different views on history, each could at least listen to the other's views calmly, even if it is difficult for them to agree. If each side can listen to the other side calmly, both could refrain from making excessively one-sided assertions in an excessively offensive manner. They could thus take a steady step towards a better future, even if they could not immediately reach agreement in their recognition or assessment of history.

So, let us explore what has brought such huge gaps between Japan on one hand, and Korea and China on the other.

TION] (Sankei News Service, 1999); NISHIO KANJI ET AL., ATARASHII REKISHI KYOKASHO [NEW TEXTBOOK OF HISTORY] (Fuso sha, 2001).

II.

GAPS BETWEEN JAPAN, KOREA, AND CHINA

A. *Japanese Sense of Victimization during the Post-War Period*

Most Japanese have failed to understand the extent of the damage and suffering Japan imposed upon its neighbors through its colonial rule and World War II. They have been unable to fully understand the depth of resentment and grudges held by many Chinese and Koreans. There are a number of reasons why this is so. First, the Japanese themselves seriously suffered from the war. Some three million Japanese died out of a total population of seventy-four million. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were attacked with atomic bombs. For ordinary Japanese, the war was nothing other than a great evil, which destroyed their lives and imposed great suffering on them. They were too much occupied with their own sufferings to consider the fate of others on whom their soldiers had killed, hurt and imposed huge sufferings.⁶

Second, governments of major Allied Powers took lenient policies towards postwar Japan and settled the problem of war reparations in extremely generous terms. The occupation forces were the savior for postwar Japan and its starving population. They were the protector of Japan, which was trying to recover from a life of bare subsistence. They did prosecute the leaders of Japan for its aggressive wars, but those prosecuted and judged were few in number. Ordinary Japanese did not regard the trial and punishment of Tojo Hideki and other leaders as a condemnation of all Japanese people. They were just bystanders, regarding themselves as victims rather than perpetrators of war. They were also somewhat cynical of the trials. The unfair composition of the tribunal, the neglect of the violation of the Japan-Soviet Neutrality Pact by the Soviet Union, the atomic bombings by the U.S., and many other unfair factors strengthened the perception that the trials were victors' justice. In short, the Tokyo Trial was not perceived as legitimate among many ordinary Japanese people. They did not think that their own guilt was at issue. The fact that the U.S. took a tremendously lenient policy towards Japan at the conclusion of the San Francisco Peace Treaty reinforced this judgment and sentiment.⁷

The posture of the Chinese government was even more lenient than that of the U.S. government. Chinese people were the hardest-hit victims of Japanese aggression from 1931 to 1945. Yet, the Chinese leadership maintained the principle that the responsibility for the Japanese aggressions lay with a limited number of militarist leaders, not with the Japanese people.⁸ When China normalized its relationship with Japan in 1972, it waived its claim for war reparations,

6. ONUMA, *supra* note 1, at 118-20.

7. *Id.* at 170-71; Kitaoka Shin-ichi, *Baisho mondai no seiji rikigaku*, in SENSO, FUKKO, HATTEN [WAR, RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT] 173-74 (Kitaoka Shin-ichi & Mikuriya Tooru, eds., Tokyo Univ. Press, 2000).

8. Zhang, *Cho Ko Zan kaikoroku (Memoirs of Zhang, II)*, RONZA, Dec. 1997, at 217-22; Liu, *Nihon to chugoku no wakai wo mezashite (In Quest of Reconciliation between Japan and China)*, IMA, REKISHI MONDAI NI DO TORIKUMUKA? [How to Tackle the Problem of History Now?] 106-7 (Funabashi Yoichi ed., Iwanami shoten, 2001).

which, if claimed, would have been a tremendous figure. Given that the Chinese leaders were shrewd politicians, they must have had a number of political calculations in mind when taking such an attitude.⁹ Yet, the fact remains that their approach was heroically generous and lenient. For the Chinese victims, whose husbands or fathers were killed, whose wives and daughters were raped, and whose houses were burnt by the Japanese army, such generous attitudes must have been beyond comprehension. Yet, the Chinese government, under a paramount power and charismatic leadership of Mao and Zhou, suppressed the opposition of the Chinese masses and maintained the principle of not pursuing the guilt of the Japanese people.¹⁰

The fact that the U.S., the preeminently important nation for postwar Japan, and China, the nation most victimized by Japanese aggression, took extremely lenient approaches reinforced self-indulgence on the part of Japanese people.¹¹ This is in sharp contrast with the case of West Germany. This contrast may be explained in part as a consequence of the magnitude of the evil of the Holocaust, an evil in all likelihood more widely appreciated within the United States than any corresponding atrocities in the Asian theater. It may also be explained as a consequence of a more coherent and organized claimant community in the United States and elsewhere concerning the atrocities in the European theater. This is demonstrated by a series of controversies on Japanese war guilt. In the first and second of these controversies in 1945-47 and 1955-56, respectively, the very idea of the responsibility to be borne by the Japanese as a whole towards victimized peoples in Asia hardly existed. What was heatedly discussed was the problem of who should (domestically) bear responsibility: the emperor, the military, political parties, men of letters, intellectuals, and so on.¹²

9. The following factors may be enumerated to explain why the Chinese leadership took and maintained the extremely generous posture towards Japan. (1) It was practically impossible to have Japan pay a huge amount of reparations, because Japan had been completely defeated and was at bare subsistence level. Under these circumstances, it was better to take a lenient attitude and to earn gratitude from Japan. (2) It was strategically important for China to have a friendly Japan from the perspective of Chinese policies against the U.S. up to the 1960s, and against the Soviet Union since the 1970s. (3) The Chinese leadership had some hope for the socialist revolution in Japan. (4) Because the young Chinese leaders were strongly preoccupied with the socialist ideology, they tended to draw a sharp line between the "evil militarist leaders" and the "innocent ordinary people." (5) Due to the deeply rooted Sinocentrism, they might have unconsciously been influenced by the idea of lenient peace with neighboring "uncivilized" nations. (6) In 1972, the Chinese leadership might have thought that they also had to concede in order for Japan to server its relationship with Taiwan, which Japan had already had for 20 years. (7) Like the U.S. leadership, the Chinese leadership may have been aware of the failure of the excessively harsh Versailles Treaty, and may have wanted to avoid a repetition.

10. Zhang, who was deeply engaged in the normalization as an advisor to the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that Mao enjoyed a paramount prestige among Chinese people, and that it was unthinkable for the Chinese people to criticize what Mao had decided. Zhang, *supra* note 8, at 222. It is likely that Mao enjoyed an extremely high prestige among Chinese people. One of the major reasons why there was no apparent criticism, however, was that Chinese government did not allow it. See Liu, *supra* note 8, at 107.

11. There were some nations which took harsher attitudes towards Japan. The Philippines, South Korea and North Korea were prime examples. However, neither government officials nor intellectuals in Japan paid attention to the voices of such "small nations" until the 1970s.

12. ONUMA, *supra* note 1, at 169-71.

From the 1970s to the 1980s, the perception of the war on the part of Japanese society gradually changed. In 1972, when Japan normalized its relationship with China, it stated that "[t]he Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself."¹³ A number of books revealing and describing atrocities by the Japanese military forces in China during the period between 1931 and 1945 were published.¹⁴ They invited a large number of Japanese citizens to think about the problem of war guilt. Guilt, not only on the part of Japanese leaders, but also on the part of ordinary people, began to be perceived. In 1982, the policy of the Ministry of Education that discouraged textbook writers from addressing the negative aspects of modern Japanese history, such as aggressive wars and colonial rule, was severely criticized both from within and from outside Japan. Research and citizens' movements dealing with Japanese war guilt and postwar responsibility were gradually accepted by major media institutions and ordinary citizens. As Japan rapidly became a leading economic power and its policies came under greater scrutiny by international society than ever before, even the government, which had sought to avoid the issue of Japanese war guilt, had to deal with it. In 1993, Prime Minister Hosokawa of the non-LDP coalition government acknowledged that the wars Japan waged were acts of aggression.¹⁵ In 1995, Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi, a socialist prime minister of the coalition government that included the LDP, issued a statement in which he acknowledged that Japan, "through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and sufferings to the people of many countries, particularly those of Asian nations," expressed his "feeling of deep remorse" and stated his "heartfelt apology."¹⁶ All subsequent cabinets have reconfirmed the position taken in the Murayama statement.

B. Acceptance of the Perception of Japan as an Aggressor by the Majority and Reactions Against It

The perception and recognition of history as exemplified in the Murayama statement was widely accepted. A number of policies based on such recognition, although in an insufficient manner, were undertaken. These facts gave rise to a strong sense of crisis among extremely vocal, though not very large, groups of reactionary revisionists. During the 1980s, a large number of Japanese enjoyed economic prosperity and so-called "internationalization" of their society. They enjoyed the status of the second largest economic power with a sense of pride and satisfaction. Thus, they could accept the new self-image of their nation's past as an aggressor with a relatively high degree of composure. In the 1990s, however, when many Japanese suffered from a long depression and lost

13. Joint Declaration, Sept. 29, 1972, Japan-China, at para. 5.

14. See, e.g., HONDA KATSUICHI, CHUGOKU NO TABI [JOURNEY IN CHINA] (Asahi shinbun sha, 1972).

15. Press Conference, YOMIURI SHINBUN, Aug. 23, 1993.

16. Statement by Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi "On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End," YOMIURI SHINBUN, Aug. 15, 1995.

their self-confidence, the atmosphere subtly changed. The problem of "comfort women" was a central issue at this time. With the international trends towards the increasing significance of human rights in general and the rights of women in particular, the problem of "comfort women" was regarded as a symbolic issue of the violation of the rights of women. As a result, it attracted wide attention from various sectors of society. Anger at the evasive attitude of the Japanese government in the early 1990s resulted in widespread criticisms.

In 1995, the Murayama cabinet decided to establish the Asian Women's Fund (AWF). As to the concrete policies, which were overdue, the Murayama cabinet decided on four measures: (1) to hand each victim a letter of apology from the prime minister; (2) to carry out medical and welfare programs by providing 1,200,000 yen (to each Filipino victim) to 3,000,000 yen (to each Korean and Taiwanese victim) by the Japanese government; (3) to hand each victim the atonement money of 2,000,000 yen¹⁷ donated by Japanese citizens, and (4) to conduct historical research concerning the "comfort women."¹⁸ One of the reasons why the Murayama cabinet decided to undertake these policies was that, from a legal viewpoint, it was difficult to argue that Japan was legally obligated to pay reparations to the victims because all claims resulting from the war and colonial rule had been already settled by peace treaties or normalization treaties with the nations concerned. The fundamental meaning of the Asian Women's Fund, however, did not end there. It was based on the idea that it was not only the Japanese government but also the Japanese people that gave birth to the abominable institution of "comfort women"; that it was not only the Japanese government but also Japanese people that failed to confront the problem for almost half a century after the war; and that, therefore, both the Japanese people and the government should take responsibility. Theoretically speaking, it was an attempt for the Japanese nation as a whole, partly the government and partly the citizens, to take responsibility for the wrong which the Japanese nation as a whole had committed.¹⁹ As such, its significance should have been more appreciated, and its advantages and flaws should have been discussed in a far calmer manner. Although no amount of money could compensate for the atrocities the Comfort Women endured, from a substantive perspective, the total amount of 3,200,000 to 5,000,000 yen provided to the victims was not an insubstantial amount in the Philippines, Taiwan, or Korea.²⁰ Further, the letter of apology

17. One U.S. dollar was approximately 110 to 130 Japanese yen during the 1990s.

18. Press Conference of Chief Cabinet Secretary Igarashi Kozo, June 14, 1995.

19. Asian Women's Fund, Appeal to the Japanese People, YOMIURI SHINBUN, Aug. 15, 1995; *THE PROBLEM OF COMFORT WOMEN*, *supra* note 2, at 249; *see also* ONUMA, *supra* note 1, at 340-42, 354-57.

20. The atonement money for the victim is 2,000,000 yen regardless of her residence, but the medical welfare programs provided by the Japanese government vary from 1,200,000 yen to the Filipino victim to 3,000,000 yen to Taiwanese and Korean victims. This differentiation is due to the consideration of differences in prices and cost of living in the respective nation. In the case of Filipino victims, many of those who received the atonement money and benefits from the medical and welfare programs built houses for themselves and/or for their families. *See THE PROBLEM OF COMFORT WOMEN*, *supra* note 2, at 148; Hearings from Filipino former "comfort women," by the author, Mar. 19 and 20, 2001.

from the prime minister addressed to each victim gave a sense of satisfaction, at least to some of the victims.²¹

However, because the problem of “comfort women” was so shocking, many reactions were rather one-sided, based on the claims of some NGOs that were associated with a certain portion of the victims. Many of the more hard-line NGOs claimed that, unless the money were paid by the Japanese government as a form of state compensation, the victims should not accept the money. They also demanded the prosecution of those who were responsible for the wrongs. These “righteous” claims of the tougher NGOs were far more influential than the voice of a certain number of victims who confessed that they wanted money instead. In an atmosphere where such “righteous” claims were predominant, the positive aspects of the AWF were hardly appreciated. Every succeeding prime minister, i.e., Hashimoto, Obuchi and Mori, had to make repeated apologies to China and Korea. They could not obtain a substantial level of appreciation. The writings by former president Weizsacker of Germany were widely read, and the image of an honest Germany that acknowledged its historical guilt versus a cunning Japan that failed to do so prevailed.

As the Japanese economy and the overall mood of the Japanese people deteriorated during the late 1990s, a nuanced change to the perception of the Japanese concerning the war and colonial guilt occurred. During the 1980s and the early 1990s, the perception regarding Japan as the author of aggression came to be fairly widely accepted. There was substantial support for the policies of Hosokawa, Murayama, Hashimoto and Obuchi administrations to make apologies and express deep remorse to China and Korea. However, such support was not necessarily based on the sufficient knowledge of the huge scale of misconduct that the Japanese military had committed during the war and colonial periods. Few of them knew how reluctantly many Chinese and Koreans accepted the “normalization” of relations with Japan, swallowing the sense of bitterness and resentment due to the insufficient admission of guilt by the Japanese government. To make the matter worse, some of the criticism of Japan regarding the “comfort women” and the Nanjing Massacre were based on false facts, distortions, and were often hypocritical. Because many of those who died during World War II were enshrined in Yasukuni Shrine, not a few ordinary Japanese felt uneasy about the fact that their prime minister did not visit Yasukuni Shrine because of the fear of criticism coming from China and Korea. With the steady worsening of economic conditions, when they saw their prime ministers making repeated apologies that were not appreciated by Korea and China, smoldering discontents grew: “Come on. Are you not too demanding? How often and how long should we make apologies?”

C. Chinese and Korean Situations

On the part of China and Korea, a paradoxical problem has existed since the 1980s: With the advance of democratization, aggressive assertions based on

21. THE PROBLEM OF COMFORT WOMEN, *supra* note 2, at 147, 244-47.

heightened nationalistic feelings or emotions have become more vocal. As noted earlier, the policy of the Chinese leadership differentiating the limited number of Japanese militarists from the Japanese people and absolving the latter from responsibility did not necessarily represent the deep resentment of the ordinary Chinese, who had severely suffered from Japanese aggression. A major reason that the Chinese leadership could adopt the critical policy of waiving their claims for war reparations in 1972 was that the Communist Party suppressed the opposition and dissatisfaction of the ordinary Chinese people. In Korea too, the Park administration normalized relations with Japan in 1965 by suppressing widespread resistance and opposition. With the democratization in Korea, such "settlements" realized by means of suppressive policies by the authoritarian government came under criticism, because of the lack of democratic legitimacy. In China, opinions that are openly critical of Mao's policies are still restricted. However, because the leadership itself has been emphasizing patriotism instead of socialism since the 1980s, when the liberation policy started, the Chinese government has found it difficult to maintain lenient policies taken by Mao and Zhou. As long as patriotism is emphasized, its main target should be Japan. It is difficult to encourage patriotism on the one hand and to suppress voices harshly criticizing Japan on the other.

When President Jiang Zemin made an official visit to Japan in 1998, he repeatedly demanded an explicit form of apology from the Japanese government. Japanese public opinion showed strong opposition to this demand. This was a symbolic clash between the Chinese leadership's change from a more lenient to a tougher policy regarding the problem of Japanese war guilt and the general mood of "apology fatigue" on the part of many Japanese in the late 1990s. Even at that time, many Japanese did have a vague sense of guilt towards China. Yet, Japanese reaction to Jiang's claim was extremely harsh. Why? First, President Kim Dae Jung of South Korea had visited just before Jiang, and showed an impressive posture of generosity on the issue of colonial guilt. This was in sharp contrast with the persistent demand by Jiang. However, there was an underlying psychology which, I believe, is held by most Japanese. This mindset reveals a major reason for the harsh reaction by the Japanese: Certainly Japan did wrong to China. Nevertheless, China waived its claims for war reparations when relations between two nations were normalized. We were extremely impressed. We all admired the Chinese leaders for being magnanimous figures informed by the wisdom of several thousand years. It is because of our gratitude for such magnanimity that we have provided a huge amount of economic assistance over a long period of time. Although Japan may not have acknowledged its war guilt in explicit terms, we have aided Chinese economic development with this tacit sense of guilt and thankfulness. The Chinese should have understood this, although they have not dared to say so. Yet, today, out of the air, you demand again and again an explicit apology in most plain and uncivilized terms. For such Japanese, the statements of the Chinese thus appear petty and not the response of a great nation with a long and distinguished history.

Astonished by the unexpectedly harsh reactions of the Japanese, the Chinese leadership changed its policy at least for the moment. When Prime Minister Zhu Rongji visited Japan in 2000, he tried to appear lenient and appeasing to the Japanese public. When this posture was reported to China, however, it came in for harsh criticism. This demonstrates the dilemma of the Chinese leadership, caught between the official ideology of patriotism and the actual necessity to maintain good relations with Japan. At present, the criticism of such an appeasement policy cannot change it fundamentally. In Korea, too, even if the Korean government is angered by Japan's text authorization of the textbook by *Tsukurukai* and tries to persuade the Japanese government to refute this authorization, it can only take limited measures against Japan. This is because Japan is a huge economic power, if seen from China and Korea. However offended their people are, neither Chinese nor Korean governments can abandon their economic, social and cultural relations with Japan. Such a policy would hurt their nations far more than Japan. Both the Chinese and Korean governments, while requesting Japan to behave in a wise and prudential manner, must continue to placate grudges and animosities held by their own people.

III.

BASIC POSTURES AND SPECIFIC POLICIES TO BE ADOPTED

A. *Critical Choice from Various Views*

In Japan, there are diverse opinions on how to deal with the problem of war guilt and colonial guilt. Some argue that Japan should just wait for the lapse of time to "solve" the problem by being forgotten. This policy of letting sleeping dogs lie has been a basic approach of the Japanese government, especially the mainstream in the Foreign Ministry. It is true that some aspects of this problem can only be settled by the passage of time. A major reason why the Japanese government has basically followed this policy, however, is that the problem of war guilt is the kind of problem which the government officials are most incapable of solving. In actuality, this policy has not proven to be successful. Even though government officials tried to take a low profile on this issue, other players, such as victims of the Japanese aggression or colonial rule, cabinet members who want to glorify the Greater East Asian War, influential NGOs, activists, scholars, lawyers, and journalists, have repeatedly raised various issues relating to it, although their reasons for doing so have differed. Fundamentally, even though the Japanese government, with the tacit approval of the Chinese and Korean governments, tried to placate the victims and to maintain a low profile, the victims were dissatisfied with the "settlements" made by these governments. Only a very limited portion of the money provided by Japan to the victimized nations as "economic cooperation" in the settlements of war reparations was actually used for the individual victims. Although the overall standard of living might be improved, the victims could not feel that their sufferings were adequately addressed by the "economic cooperation" of Japan.

Among a number of problems relating to the Japanese war guilt, many of those whose settlements brought about at least some form of improvement were not initially deliberated and supported by government officials. They were generally initiated by citizen movement activists and realized by strong support of public opinion, overcoming the resistance of government officials. The improvement of the legal and social status of Koreans in Japan; the repatriation of Koreans left in Sakhalin; the improvement of history textbooks in the 1980s and the 1990s; and the atonement project for the former "comfort women" are some of these examples. In 2001, the problem of the *Tsukuru kai* textbook was the subject of heated discussion. As the dust settled, however, an extremely small number of educational committees chose it as the textbook to be used in the schools under their jurisdiction. In the final analysis, less than 0.1% of the high schools adopted the *Tsukuru kai's* textbook. This result was made possible because there was a strong citizens' movement and campaign by influential media institutions which were highly critical of the reactionary and excessively nationalistic character of this textbook.

Second, there are those who argue that because neither China nor Korea possess the power to change the government policy of Japan, the Japanese should simply ignore the "intervention" of these countries. According to them, the major reason that problems of Japanese war guilt have been raised and become issues between Japan and China or Korea is that some leftist activists and/or journalists incited the Chinese and Koreans. Even when such problems become the focus of heated controversy, they argue, the Japanese government should take a tough posture. The Chinese people know well that if they continue their tough posture it will hurt the overall relations between China and Japan. They would thus stop criticizing Japan. After more than fifty years, Japanese misconduct should be dealt with by historians, not by governments. Mr. Okazaki Hisahiko made this argument in a most explicit and clear manner.²²

I believe that this view is unsound, unwise, superficial and lacking insight into how the perceptions and feelings of ordinary people affect foreign policy. I also believe that this view, together with the attitude favoring letting sleeping dogs lie, is morally wrong. In the following, I would like to elaborate my own idea about the attitudes and policies to be taken by the Japanese, criticizing this view. I will put forth my argument not only from a moralistic perspective, but also from that of enlightened self-interest on the part of Japan. A major reason for this approach is that I believe that one of the serious flaws of the controversy over Japanese war guilt is its excessive emphasis on the moralistic aspect of the problem.

It is true that the problem of Japanese war guilt has moralistic aspects. The judgment that the Japanese military did wrong is a moral judgment. Few people deny this judgment. Yet, many Japanese are reluctant to acknowledge this judgment without reservations. Why? Is it because the Japanese are morally inferior

22. Okazaki Hisahiko, *Kako wo hikizuru gu*, YOMIURI SHINBUN, Apr. 17, 2001.

people? Logically, the answer should be yes, as long as you grasp this problem from a purely moralistic perspective. But I believe that this answer is wrong, not because I am a Japanese, but because I am critical of any kind of essentialist argument connoting racism. To argue that the Japanese are morally inferior is an argument based on racism. It is simply wrong. There are a number of reasons why the Japanese have been reluctant to admit their past wrongs. I have already referred to a major reason: The Japanese have been spoiled by the incredible generosity of China and the U.S. There are other major reasons. One is the smoldering discontent based on the sense of unfairness: Why only Japan? Many Japanese have thought that it is not only Japan that waged imperialistic wars and colonized other nations. Major Western powers did the same thing, sometimes on a larger scale. They have asked: Aren't those Western people who criticize Japan hypocritical? Don't they use a double standard in their moral judgments? Second, many Japanese have murmured to themselves the following words: Certainly we did wrong if judged from today's standard. But it was war, essentially. Would not the Chinese or Koreans have done the same thing had they been in our position? Are they such a morally superior people?

Certainly these are not sound arguments from a moralistic perspective. I have criticized such views for more than twenty years.²³ Yet, an overwhelming majority of any society consists of ordinary people who do not necessarily possess a high standard of morality. I myself always felt uneasy whenever I made an argument holding others to a high standard of morality. Why? Because I am not sure whether I can pass such a high standard. I have come to think that one of the most serious failures of those who have criticized the inability of Japan to come to terms with its past is this excessively moralistic approach. From the very beginning, many of those who try to take up this kind of issue tend to consider the problem in terms of right or wrong. Those who tend to consider things in terms of profits hardly dare to take up this kind of problem. Thus, the whole tenor of the argument tends to be moralistic. However, even those who consider the problem in terms of right or wrong do not always behave according to their own pronouncements. On many occasions, even they behave immorally, tacitly or unconsciously basing their judgment on whether something they are going to do is profitable or not. This is all the more true with those who do not dare to take up this kind of problem. When one considers the standard of morality which should be required for a society as a whole, one should take these aspects into consideration. We should not expect the members of a society to be heroes. This is why I view the problem of the basic attitude and specific policies to be taken not only in terms of morality, but also in terms of self-interest.

I basically deal with the attitude and policies that should be taken by the Japanese. I do not believe that all of the criticisms coming from Korea and China are correct. I believe that some of the basic postures of the Chinese and Koreans should be rectified. Yet, the major responsibility for prolonging this

23. See, e.g., Onuma, *supra* note 1, at 37-49; Onuma Yasuaki, *Beyond Victors' Justice*, 11 *Japan Echo* 63, 66-72 (1984); Onuma Yasuaki, *The Tokyo Trial—Between Law and Politics*, in *THE TOKYO WAR CRIMES TRIAL* 45-52 (Hosoya Chihiro et al. eds., 1986).

problem for such an extended period of time lies with the Japanese side. In addition, I, myself am a Japanese citizen who shares what I call the postwar responsibility. I deal with the problem of our posture by responding to two major arguments, the one taken by mainstream government officials, and the other represented by Mr. Okazaki, from four perspectives.

First, if Japan ignores the criticisms and reproaches coming from China and Korea, as suggested by Okazaki, Japan will constantly face the resistance of both nations, if not explicitly, but implicitly and secretly, in a number of matters that Japan, as well as international society as a whole, regard as important. These matters include: (1) a more positive role of Japan in the creation of East Asian regional order which should comprise, *inter alia*, peaceful relations between nations, a high economic standard of living, enhanced standards of human rights, and the preservation of regional ecological system; (2) a more positive role for Japan in the maintenance of international peace and security including the active participation of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces in the United Nations Peace Keeping Operations; and (3) the maintenance of ecologically desirable maritime order in East Asia. In addition, if Japan does not admit that it did wrong in initiating and waging the aggressive wars, the victimized nations will naturally harbor suspicions that Japan might do the same thing in the future. This would provide a good excuse for China to increase its military forces, which would menace not only its neighboring nations, but, given its huge potential power, international society as well.

Second, as long as Japan does not admit its past wrongs, it will be difficult for Japan to be trusted and respected in international society. The reputation that, while Germany squarely admitted its guilt, Japan did not is firmly established in international society. It is true that some leaders have said that Japan no longer needs to apologize. Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia is a prime example. But he is an exception, not the rule. Not only in China and Korea, but also in many countries in Southeast Asia, as well as in the U.S. and many parts of Europe, the reputation of Japan as a nation incapable of admitting its past guilt has been well established. Even those who generally admire contemporary Japan's good traits and remarkable achievements, such as its socially safe, economically advanced and yet egalitarian society, the huge amount of economic assistance to a great number of developing countries, and a peaceful diplomacy with the record of no dispatch of military forces abroad for national purposes, many have wondered why Japan has been unable to come to terms with its past. This negative reputation will certainly continue to jeopardize Japan's overall interests in the future.

Third, the Japanese government has claimed that problems relating to reparations and compensation of the victims of war and colonial rule have already been settled by treaties with relevant nations except for North Korea. This argument must seriously be reconsidered. As an international lawyer, I am ready to admit that this argument is basically valid. However, both the Japanese government and the people should deliberate most seriously how far-reaching and wise this argument can be. It is one thing to settle a problem legally by a treaty. It is

quite another whether this legal “settlement” can bring about a peaceful and stable relationship between the former conflicting parties. Take the Treaty of Versailles, for example. It certainly “settled” the problems between Germany and the Allied Powers in the legal sense. However, the treaty was too harsh on Germany, and, as a result, could not secure the peaceful relations during the interwar period.

The leaders of the Allied Powers who designed relations between the former Axis Powers and the Allied Powers after World War II were determined not to repeat the failure of Versailles. This was a major reason why they were so generous in reestablishing relations between the victors and the vanquished. They knew very well that a harsh policy based on the sense of revenge would not secure long-lasting peaceful relations between these parties. This approach proved to be tremendously successful both as an anti-communist policy and as a policy to reestablish peaceful and prosperous relations between the victors and the vanquished. Both Germany and Japan recovered miraculously from the defeat and became important components of U.S.-centered anti-communist alliances. They also quickly started providing economic assistance to poorer nations, thereby repaying such a generous policy of the Allied Powers to international society as a whole. However, this success was made possible at the expense of the victims of German and Japanese aggression. The U.S. exerted strong pressure on the Philippines and other Asian nations that had seriously suffered from the Japanese aggression not to demand a large amount of reparations from Japan. Accordingly, resentment and grudges of the victimized people lasted long, even after the settlements of war issues were made. They have naturally surfaced from time to time.

The resentment of the Germans, on whom the harsh and unfair peace terms were dictated after World War I, was one of the important factors that led to the Nazis’ rise to power and finally brought about World War II. Through the legal “settlements” between Japan and the victimized nations after World War II, Japan paid a very small amount of money to the latter. It might be said that Japan was also poor when such settlements were reached in the 1950s and 1960s and that the Japanese made serious efforts to pay. Still, the paucity of the total amount of reparations is impressive. It is only natural that the victimized have regarded them as unjust. To say that the problem was settled in the legal sense means that Japan is not *obligated* to pay reparations or compensation. It does not mean at all that Japan is *prohibited* from paying compensation from a moralistic or self-enlightened long-term perspective. Substantial settlements of specific issues of compensation for the victims of war and colonial rule by means of specific legislation constitute an indispensable measure to supplement and enhance the legitimacy of the fundamental framework of postwar international relations in East Asia, the basic structure of which was provided by the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951, the Japan-Korea Normalization Treaty of 1965 and the China-Japan Joint Declaration of 1972. Through such supplementary measures, the whole structure of postwar East Asian international relations can

continue to function smoothly by responding to specific issues which can and do arise after the initial settlements.

Fourth, the problem of war guilt is closely related to the question of the future ideal of Japan. After World War II, the Japanese people felt that the Japanese Empire had imposed great sufferings upon them by waging a series of wars. Thus, they concentrated their energy on economic prosperity. They shied away from everything associated with the "state" or the "nation." With the globalization of the 1990s, however, the Japanese economy with which they had associated themselves for years lost its paramount meaning. Being threatened by a prolonged depression and a fear of unemployment, they expected the state to ease their sufferings and to protect them. What was provided to them as the alleged answer, however, was a reactionary theory of a state or a nation that sought to rationalize totally the past deeds of Japan. On the other hand, those who criticized this theory of a nation tended to avoid the concept of state or nation. They told a story almost exclusively about individuals and citizens, criticizing the fictitious nature of the story of a nation. In a word, they argued that there was no sound theory of a nation to be located between the two.

Let us consider the latter side first. Suppose that a Japanese citizen starts to have a certain relationship with a Chinese as an "individual." The Chinese happens to be a person whose father was killed brutally by the Japanese army during the war. Can the Japanese say that this fact has nothing to do with them because they have started to have relations as individuals, not as nationals of their respective countries? I think that few Japanese would say such a thing. This is only natural; as human beings, we cannot say such a thing. We cannot free ourselves from a nation by characterizing ourselves as individuals. Our identity is not only characterized by ourselves but by others as well.²⁴ In addition, the state or nation of Japan, which characterizes and influences the very existence and life of the Japanese, is a democratic nation whose shape can be designed and realized according to the will of the Japanese. It is certainly a nation that has failed to confront the problem of war guilt for a long period of time. At the same time, however, it is a nation that has achieved a miraculous economic prosperity and a safe and economically egalitarian society. It is a nation that has maintained an extremely peaceful diplomacy and has provided a huge scale of economic and technological assistance to a great number of developing countries. Many liberals and leftists who criticize the reactionary theory of a nation tend to ignore these positive aspects of postwar Japan. This is not fair.

Let us consider the other side. Those who vocally argued that the Japanese people should recover the pride in their own nation in the 1990s claimed that it was masochistic for Japan to acknowledge that the wars Japan waged from 1931

24. Many intellectuals talk about the decline of nation states and the fictitious nature of a nation. However, one of the reasons why they can do so is that they take for granted the activities of states, which basically characterize and influence the existence and daily life of contemporary people. However conspicuous global financial and informational activities appear to be, we cannot live without such activities of states that are built in our very lives, although they may be unseen.

to 1945 were aggressive wars and to apologize to the victims and the victimized nations. They have argued that it was not only Japan that colonized and invaded Asian nations. Western powers did the same thing, and Japan fought the war to liberate Asian people from Western domination. They further argued that it is not fair to judge past behavior according to the present standard of law and morality.

Does such an attitude really reflect a proper pride in one's own nation? It is true that the major Western powers, except Germany, have not come to terms with their own ugly past. It is also true that when Japan colonized Taiwan and Korea the standard of law and morality was different that it is today. Whether in Japan or in any other country, those who live today and enjoy the advantage of hindsight should not easily criticize what their predecessors did in the past. Yet, the fact that the Western powers committed the same wrongs does not absolve Japan of guilt. A number of Japanese acts, such as killing Empress Min of the Li Dynasty of Korea, launching the "Manchurian Incident," and the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor and the Malayan Peninsula are those that should have been condemned according to the law and morality of those days. Finally, it is an undeniable fact that the Japanese Army committed a huge number of war crimes in the conduct of war against China from 1931 to 1945.

We cannot change the past. For this very reason, it is important to acknowledge the past wrongs that Japan committed, and to pile up one by one concrete efforts not to repeat such wrongs. This is not masochistic behavior. Rather, only those who can be proud of themselves can acknowledge the wrongs they committed. To avoid guilt and responsibility for unjust wars has not only hurt the national interests of Japan, but disgraced the Japanese themselves. Japanese political leaders, media institutions, and ordinary citizens should, in their respective positions, squarely admit their guilt and express this admission in a clear and unequivocal manner. Especially, symbolic acts on the part of a political leader can have a particularly strong impact on international society. This is demonstrated by the fact that when German Prime Minister Willy Brandt fell to his knee at the Warsaw Ghetto, this was perceived all over the world as an admission of guilt by Germany and has been highly appreciated.

B. A Quest for a Better Future

To acknowledge past wrongs of Japan does not deny the nation's various merits and virtues. It is a society where peace prevails with very few crimes, when compared with other societies. It is an economically prosperous and at the same time egalitarian society. It is a society where one can enjoy an extremely high quality of social services, including medical care for the poor, pleasant and gentle treatment at shops, restaurants, hotels and offices, and very reliable public services. It is a society that enjoys the lowest infant mortality rate in the world. Even though Japan has been suffering from a depression for more than a decade, still it is a safe, sound, clean, and prosperous society, when compared with most other societies around the world. The Japanese people have created this society only half a century after the total destruction brought by World War II.

It may be argued that one can find merits of Japan in its cultural achievements based on delicate sensitivity to natural surroundings represented by the temples in Kyoto and their gardens. I myself highly regard such cultural achievements. But I believe that the points of excellence of postwar Japanese society were produced by the sincere efforts of the Japanese people. They are certainly what they should be proud of. What the Japanese should be critical of is their excessively West-centric attitude and discourse that asserts that Japan is inferior to the West in this point or that point, by ignoring the merits of Japan and only referring to the merits of Western societies in a highly selective manner. Such an excessively West-centric attitude is based on an inferiority complex towards the West which has existed since the 19th century. Failure to recognize the merits and virtues of Japan, coupled with this persistent inferiority complex towards the West, underlies the failure to admit past wrongs and the stiff posture towards the modern history of Japan.

This observation can provide a clue as to why later generations of the Japanese, who themselves did not engage in the aggression and atrocities of the Japanese military in the past, should also assume responsibilities for the past. Most of today's Japanese citizens were not engaged in those abominable acts in China and other parts of Asia. However, the postwar generations have spent their lives in far better conditions than their predecessors by greatly benefiting from the postwar achievements mentioned earlier. Precisely because they have inherited the positive assets from earlier generations, the postwar generations should also inherit the negative assets. Social undertakings become possible only through such inheritance between generations. It is through such a process that the human being can survive, develop, and make progress. Each individual is a mortal being. He or she can, however, imprint his or her existence on future generations through a succession of generations. If a certain generation asserts that it inherits the positive assets of its forebearers but not the negative ones, this would destroy this very process of imprinting. This would deny the very concept of the human being as a historical existential concept.

The problem of war guilt is a difficult and tiring one for a Japanese citizen. I, who have been engaged in the problem both from the theoretical and practical perspectives for thirty years, have often been tired of it. As a Japanese citizen who has an average sense of morality, I can well understand the sense of an ordinary Japanese who murmurs "How long must we make apologies, and how often?" Yet, this is a perfect problem through which the Japanese people can undertake self-reflection on serious past mistakes, even though they have generally been tremendously successful since the Meiji Restoration period.

Because I am a Japanese citizen, and because the most important thing to settle the problem of Japanese war guilt lies in serious self-reflection and efforts to be made upon such self-reflection, I have mainly dealt with the problem of what the Japanese should do. This does not mean, however, that the other side need not engage in self-reflection on their understanding of modern history and their attitude towards Japan. One of the serious flaws regarding the war guilt controversy has been the lack of sound mutual criticism based on solid facts.

Many of those who have dealt with the problem in Japan have taken this issue from an excessively moralistic perspective and accepted strictures from China or Korea even though they are not necessarily well founded. The other extreme, which is far more vocal, has reacted harshly against any criticism in an emotional manner from a reactionary perspective. This unfortunate divide must be overcome.

The Chinese and Korean sides have had problematic features as well. The Chinese government has used this issue in recent years apparently as a diplomatic trump card against Japan. In addition, many of its criticisms are exaggerated and inaccurate. The number of victims in the Nanjing Massacre is an example, but there are many others as well. These facts have discredited not only the claims of the Chinese, but also those of the Japanese who have accepted such criticisms based on inaccurate facts because of their excessively moralistic and guilt-ridden posture. Some of the Korean criticisms have tended to be based on their unconscious sense of moral superiority vis-à-vis the Japanese. According to the long-established, deeply rooted Sinocentric cosmology, many Koreans deemed that the standard of civilization was the highest in China, then Korea, and Japan. From the 17th to the 19th century, China was ruled by Manchurians, whom many Koreans regarded as northern nomad barbarians. Many Korean intellectuals thus regarded Korea as the middle kingdom in terms of civilization, because they thought that they had inherited the civilization of the Ming dynasty: the dynasty they regarded as legitimate. This discriminatory image of the world constituted one of the reasons why many Koreans were so humiliated by the annexation of their nation by Japan. The image still lingers, I am afraid, although unconsciously and coexisting with another image of Japan as an advanced society. This unconscious way of thinking may help many Koreans to think that the Japanese are morally inferior and unable to admit their guilt. If this is the case, this way of thinking is unsound, and should be rectified.

Let me finish my presentation with three encouraging episodes I have recently encountered. Recently, I met some of my old "comrades" in civil movements for the improvement of the status of the Korean minority in Japan. I discussed with the Korean activists why in recent years the civil movement for Koreans has been so inactive. Most of the activists there agreed that a major reason is that the status of Koreans in Japan has been improved, and that far less incentive remains to fight against discrimination. It is true that if one compares the present situation with that of the 1960s or 1970s, there has been definite improvement both legally and socially. In the late 1990s, 82.7% of the Koreans were married to Japanese, compared with 34.9% in 1965.²⁵ Almost all social security services are provided for permanent resident aliens, including Koreans. Although Japanese society may still be more closed when compared with the U.S. and many Western European societies, one cannot deny that the change is substantial and that there is a sense of far less discrimination against the Koreans in Japan than in the past.

25. STATISTICS & INFO. DEP'T, MINISTRY OF HEALTH & WELFARE, MARRIAGE STATISTICS: SPECIAL REPORT OF VITAL STATISTICS 58, 146 (1997).

Second, when I visited China in 2000, I had a meeting with professors from Beijing University on the subject of human rights and Japanese war guilt. One Chinese professor stated that Chinese intellectuals had been spoiled on the subject of modern history relating to Japan. Why? Because, he said, they had always assumed a moral superiority over the Japanese precisely because they had been the victims. This unconscious posture of moral superiority had spoiled them and constituted one of the reasons why Chinese scholars' arguments often failed to have a high academic standard. They were not seriously rebutted due to their moral superiority, he said, even though their arguments were not well founded. There was a Japanese diplomat attending the conference. He was very surprised and impressed that this Chinese professor made such a self-critical remark on the issue of Japanese war guilt in an open forum.

Third, I also attended a symposium organized by Tsinghua University in 2001. The symposium was held immediately after the problems of the *Tsukuru kai* textbook and Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine had been heatedly discussed. As a result, there were special sessions on these issues. As a Japanese scholar, I was asked about the attitude and policies of the Japanese government towards these issues. I tried to explain in a calm and objective manner, but found it a little difficult to do so because of the excited atmosphere in the symposium and the lack of understanding of the very concept of the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of expression on the part of Chinese students. Because of the constitutional guarantee, I argued, the publication of the textbook must not be prohibited, even though it is an awful textbook. However, many Chinese students found it difficult to understand this line of reasoning. At the height of the discussion, one South Korean scholar stood up. He said that he had compared Japanese textbooks and the Korean textbook in the field of history. He said that he had found the Japanese textbooks far less nationalistic, more balanced and less inaccurate, as compared with the Korean one. Then, another Korean scholar stood up. He argued vehemently about the importance of the constitutional freedoms, citing a great number of efforts that Koreans had made in order to have these freedoms fully guaranteed in Korea. He argued that even if the textbook in question were bad, the freedom of publishing it should be guaranteed. These two remarks apparently impressed the Chinese students. What is important was that these remarks were made by Korean scholars, whom the Chinese students had expected to join them in criticizing Japan. As a result, the whole atmosphere radically changed. We had wonderful discussions thereafter. As I told you earlier, the textbook was actually published, and less than 0.1% of the schools adopted it. Most Korean media institutions reported this fact on a large scale and appreciated the efforts made by Japanese NGOs, labor unions, media institutions, lawyers and scholars to bring about this result. This attitude of the Korean media institutions was also encouraging.

By citing these episodes, I am not claiming at all that the arguments by the Japanese side are correct. Some are, but others are not. What is important is to liberate our way of thinking from the assumptions, ideas and "facts" that we have taken for granted and from our deeply rooted emotions. This is what

scholarship can, and should, achieve. The more we have a mixture of Japanese, Chinese, and Korean scholars on the same side, and the same degree of mixture on the opposite side, when discussing the issue of Japanese war guilt, rather than a division of arguments according to the nationality of those who make an argument, the better the chance of understandings and reconciliation we will have.

Progress is slow. But it certainly is there. I can say this from my thirty-year experience. Let us continue to renew our efforts so that another thirty years can make the same, or even better progress.

Thank you.