Shame and Vulnerability in South Korea-Japan Relations

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Abstract

Memory can be a particularly contentious issue between states in their relations, and can stymie attempts to foster interstate cooperation. In the case of Japan and South Korea, memory has created a divide which has not yet adequately been bridged despite extensive diplomatic and economic interaction during the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. By examining the societal and political factors that have influenced each nation's perceptions of itself and the other nation, and analyzing feelings of shame and vulnerability that emerge when discussing memory, it may be possible to construct a framework for reconciliation based around empathy and understanding. Reconciliation between South Korea and Japan, nations with both large populations and strong economies, could help ensure security and regional cooperation within Asia, as well as provide an example for other instances of interstate memory disputes.

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Note: Citations for He are given in chapter-and-location format due to the absence of page numbers in the Kindle edition of *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German Relations Since World War.*

Table of Contents

Introduction

Perceptions of South Koreans regarding Japan's influence in world politics have maintained a consistently negative slant throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. South Koreans hold an especially negative view of Japan's influence, with 67% of South Koreans believing that Japan has a negative influence in world politics, according to a poll carried out by the BBC World Service in 2013.[1] Meanwhile, only 19% of Japanese citizens hold a negative opinion towards South Korea, while 28% believe that South Korea plays a positive role in the world. This perception is rooted largely in the complex history between the two nations, particularly issues of contention which occurred during the twentieth century, such as the abuse of Korean women during World War II. The examination of these issues falls under the study of collective memory, given that the state of the relationship between the two countries is not particularly affected by recent policy, but rather historical ills committed against the Korean people. Though attempts have been made towards rapprochement, often accompanied by efforts from the United States, negative perceptions between Japan and South Korea still prove a contentious issue in relations between the two nations. Clearly, previous approaches towards reconciliation have proved ineffective, given that two-thirds of South Koreans continue to view Japan negatively. By examining what methods have proved effective in redress attempts regarding collective memory in other nations, as well as what steps have and have not been taken towards reconciliation, it is possible to examine why such perceptions remain.

In light of novel social research that has recently become popular in the United States written by psychologist and social worker Brené Brown, it is possible that issues of collective

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[1] "Views of China and India Slide While UK's Ratings Climb: Global Poll," BBC World Service (22 May 2013):
http://www.globescan.com/images/images/pressreleases/bbc2013_country_ratings/2013_country_rating_poll_bbc_globescan.pdf.

memory between Japan and South Korea might be framed in terms of "vulnerability" and "shame." Brown's research proposes that shame is a perpetuating factor in negative behavior and that, by addressing shame as a universal concept and acknowledging one's own vulnerabilities as well as the vulnerabilities of others, more effective, positive communication is likely to result. With this approach in mind, this work will examine the questions "Why do negative opinions persist in South Korea towards Japan, despite decades of change and numerous attempts at rapprochement? Do the Brené Brown's concepts of vulnerability and shame provide a framework for contentious issues of collective memory between South Korea and Japan that might better address conflicts that have not yet been resolved? How can we adapt a practice acknowledgment of shame and communicating to a state-wide level, to build an acceptance of national identity vulnerability in order to improve perceptions of the public of one nation towards the other nations?"

An examination of literature on the subject of South Korea-Japan relations during the twentieth century, and why these relations are still tense, requires an understanding of the subject of reconciliation and how it has been used in diplomatic relations. Yinan He's analysis of reconciliation between Japan and China, detailed in *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German-Polish Relations since World War II*, provides an analysis of reconciliation that differs from traditional realist interpretations of reconciliation, which rely on structural conditions which define states' actions. Following the examination of theoretical concepts in reconciliation studies, preexisting works on collective memory in East Asia are necessary to provide explanation as two why reconciliation is desirable, as well as why it has been so difficult to achieve. This will require delving into individual events and provide greater analysis, which I will then apply to Brown's framework. Researchers Barry Schwartz and Mikyoung Kim have compiled an anthology entitled Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory. This text includes essays on collective memory in South

Korea and Japan, which will serve as preexisting research on particular issues and points of contention in collective memory. In addition, *The Search for Reconciliation* also provides an examination of Japan's political history throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, which sheds light on how internal conditions have affected Japan's history of itself, as well as how it has addressed its actions in Korea.

Given the approach of this thesis through the perspective of "vulnerability" and "shame" as defined and explored by Brené Brown, her contributions will naturally figure prominently into the literature I will use. In particular, I plan to draw upon her work *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead,* though I will also include definitions from *I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't): Making the Journey from "What Will People Think?" to "I Am Enough"* which help to clarify the emotional concepts most critical to this work. Brown's work focuses alternately on issues of personal growth as well as more general societal approaches to shame and vulnerability. She defines shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance belonging."[2] Further, the experience of shame has an isolating effect that leads those being shamed to react by shutting down and removing themselves from the situation causing them shame, attempting to please and demonstrate perfection, or taking a hostile approach to the person or entity that is using shame. She proposes that by acknowledging shame as a feeling that occurs in everyone at some point, recognizing what triggers shame on an individual level, and engaging with others from a point of vulnerability, shame may be used as a uniting, rather than dividing force. However, given her background as a sociologist, and the fact that her books are directed towards individuals, Brown's works do not shed much light on how these concepts may be applied to the collective memory of a nation. Therefore, applying these approaches to shame

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[2] Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't): Making the Journey from "What Will People Think?" to "I Am Enough"* (New York: Penguin Group, 2007).

and vulnerability to diplomatic relations might provide a new framework by which to deal with issues of collective memory.

Some might feel that examining concepts like "shame" and "vulnerability" within the field of international relations- a field that devotes most of its attention to such high-caliber issues as war, environmental catastrophe, and the delicate economic balance of the world- might yield little practical application, and should therefore not be particularly high-priority. However, such a mindset neglects the benefits that such research might contribute. Certainly, a constructive approach to reconciliation, based upon socio-psychological principles, between South Korea and Japan could very well increase the quality of life of the societies of the respective countries, due to increased cultural and economic exchange. However, the advantages of an amiable relationship between these two nations does not end there. Facing the dilemma of a shrinking, aging population, as well as the economic stagnation Japan has faced in recent years, Japan would be well-served to create a strong ally in South Korea. On the other side of the coin, South Korea's precarious geographic position provides an impetus for increased cooperation with Japan. Ultimately, it is not complete fantasy to propose that reconciliation based on expressions of vulnerability could succeed, particularly given the similarities in culture, economy, and governance between the two nations. Indeed, moving the rapprochement discourse from an aggressive stance to one of greater empathy between South Korea and Japan might allow this approach to succeed where others have failed.

Methodology

This thesis seeks to provide answers, or at the very least, explore and analyze the questions "Why do negative opinions persist in South Korea towards Japan, despite decades of change and numerous attempts at rapprochement? Do the Brené Brown's concepts of vulnerability and shame provide a framework for contentious issues of collective memory between South Korea, Japan, and China that might better address conflicts that have not yet been resolved? To what degree could acknowledgment of shame and communicating with an acceptance of national identity vulnerability improve perceptions of the public of one nation towards the other nations?" The constraints of time, funding, and my personal lack of knowledge of either the Korean or Japanese language on this thesis restrict my ability to engage in any sort of field research or widespread interviewing.

Some of the most complicated and loaded issues at hand in my research are perceptions of bias. In exploring reconciliation between South Korea and Japan, in which South Korea has predominantly taken the role of the aggrieved, it will be extremely important not to take a bias toward their interest and their perceptions of why Japan has failed any efforts at rapprochement. This might also prove difficult, given my own personal experiences living within South Korea. Equally possible is that my background as an American provides a number of cultural assumptions that I will have to suspend in order to properly assess the topics of rapprochement and collective memory, and where I do apply these assumptions, to apply them judiciously and provide ample explanation for applying them. The issue of bias is also tied into the risk of reducing examination of cultural factors in the study of shame within collective memory to traits of "national character."[3] However, cultural study is one of the only ways of adequately studying questions like those my thesis proposes, as it aims to provide an explanation of why cultural differences affect the outcome of diplomatic relations,

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[3] Michael Keating, "Culture and Social Science," in *Approaches and Methodologies in Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008),100.

rather than placing responsibility for diplomatic reconciliation on the sort of structural conditions that dominate realist explanations. Structural conditions are a factor, and are explored in Yinan He's *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German Relations Since World War II*. However, they only provide a small portion of the explanation of state interaction.

I aim to examine factors beyond the structural conditions that influence the relations between Japan and South Korea. I will use He's work predominantly to explain the internal political situations which continue to dictate how Japan deals with its collective memory disputes with South Korea. To a lesser degree, I will examine similar cases within South Korean history, such as the normalization period under the Park Chung Hee administration. However, because the diplomatic discourse between Japan and South Korea hinges predominantly on Japan has reacted to South Korean criticism toward Japan, I will focus more on the factors influencing Japan's approach toward reconciliation, while giving more attention in South Korea's case to the consistent use of shame to promote its interests vis-à-vis Japan. In examining the specific issues that South Korea and Japan most frequently debate within their shared history, as well as their individual histories, I will utilize the essays of *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory,* which have been compiled by Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz and offer a number of perspectives on particular historical problems. While this anthology includes accounts of Chinese history that also play a large role in the relations of the region, I have chosen to omit them, as Chinese memory is not my particular area of focus. Similarly, although *The Search For Reconciliation* focuses primarily on Sino-Japanese relations, I do not give much mention to China's experiences in particular, instead using He's work to explore Japan's political climate.

As I've mentioned, my lack of proximity to the nations involved in this research limit the kinds of survey methods I may use, although public opinion polls and accounts by

6

individuals are available in order to provide some degree of survey. In this case, a macro-level analysis is more useful than micro-level analysis, as while individual perceptions make up the whole of the collective, the issue at hand is ultimately how relations between Japan and South Korea as states can improve, not how their individuals might better interact- such a study would likely be more appropriately undertaken by a sociologist or anthropologist. Taking the limitations of this thesis into account, a true ethnological approach cannot be undertaken, and I will therefore have to create an understanding of the cultures of the two nations involved by engaging in a thorough examination of literature and accounts given throughout the twentieth century in order to create an understanding of the cultural aspects of "shame." Within the context of case work, I shall look into accounts of the events and occurrences which stand out most strongly in the collective memory of these countries in constructing an image of the other. For the purpose of examining shame in particular, I have chosen to examine textbook publication in Japan and how it is used to propagate certain historical narratives while often attempting to avoid responsibility for crimes committed against South Korea, and the internal emotional conflict caused by the Park Chung Hee administration in accepting both modernization that occurred during periods of oppression in South Korea and the association of normalization with Japan within the memory of the Park's rule.

Once I have detailed as many factors that affect relations between Japan and South Korea as possible, I shall then move onto the issue of finding a possible solution, creating a new framework toward reconciliation. Examining the factors contributing to poor relations between these two nations, I will try to fit them within a perspective the different approaches proposed by Brené Brown in using acknowledgment of shame in order to find common ground and create closer ties. This will require some flexibility in interpretation, attributing human emotions and approaches to unpleasant experiences to entire societies and

governments. This could very well prove the most contentious section of my research, as such an approach requires a shift away from more realist-based interpretations of government interaction toward a construction of behavior that treats states as occasionally irrational, temperamental actors.

I do not aim for some sort of unequivocal answer to the question of how to permanently fix negative perceptions between South Korea and Japan. Perhaps it goes without saying that one is unlikely, if not impossible, to find. Nevertheless, the approach I propose that utilizes methods of communication and self-analysis might prove somewhat more palatable than typical power-relations approaches to diplomacy. However, this sort of self-analysis is also inevitably painful, and requires political groups to relinquish a certain amount of control over historical narratives in order to create the possibility for friendlier, more understanding interaction both within the country and within its neighbors. I am not naïve enough to assume that this is particularly likely to happen. That such an approach might fail is not a judgment of which culture is right or wrong or good or bad, merely that power politics are at play that could easily derail such attempts.

Literature Review

In order to answer the question of why so much animosity still exists between South Korea and Japan, despite numerous attempts at reconciliation, it is necessary to analyze each aspect of the equation, and thereafter it will become far easier to construct a solution. It is therefore useful to create an understanding of what the end goal, reconciliation, actually entails. Yinan He's *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German Relations Since World War II* provides an in-depth explanation of interstate reconciliation, analyzing the paths that nations inevitably follow towards the end goal of "deep reconciliation," and how some states have been successful in fostering reconciliations, while others have failed to do so. Deep reconciliation most frequently occurs when beneficial structural conditions combine with bilateral efforts to create as thoroughly-examined, fair, and accurate a history as possible between the two nations.

The issue of reconciliation between South Korea and Japan also requires an understanding of the political climate and historical events that have shaped each nation's respective feelings towards one another, and how these perceptions of the other have dominated the process of creating strong interstate relations. In the case of Japan, He's research includes detailed descriptions of the development of Japan's collective memory, and how this memory has been used by elites in order to set political agendas. While *The Search for Reconciliation* focuses on Sino-Japanese relations, not relations between South Korea and Japan, it nevertheless provides key insights on how Japan has interacted with other nations since the end of the Second World War. *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory,* an anthology compiled by Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz, also highlights many particular instances that have shaped the Japanese approach to reconciliation. This anthology as also useful for understanding trends in South Korean collective memory and how their particular interpretation of events has hindered the nation's relations with Japan.

9

Both *The Search for Reconciliation* and *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past* also address another critical factor in shaping relations between South Korea and Japan: the influence of the United States and its attempts to curry favor and influence in East Asia, and how these efforts both supported and hindered reconciliation between the nations of the region.

Beyond understanding the process of reconciliation, as well as the issues caused continued friction between Japan and South Korea, I will attempt to create a framework within which these nations might move closer to reconciliation. Taking into account previous failed attempts, I will build the proposed reconciliation framework around the work of American social researcher and psychologist Brené Brown. In contrast to previous reconciliation attempts, which follow established patterns of diplomatic relations, this framework toward reconciliation will utilize concepts which were originally developed for individuals, in order to see if such an approach, based on empathy and connection, might be more successful than more formal and impersonal attempts to foster reconciliation.

Understanding Reconciliation

Yinan He's *The Search for Reconciliation* provides numerous perspectives on the issue of collective memory, while examining two particular cases: Sino-Japanese reconciliation and German-Polish reconciliation. He proposes that reconciliation functions not in a black-and-white manner, but rather goes through stages, from nonreconciliation, moving toward shallow reconciliation in an atmosphere of friction, then shallow reconciliation characterized by rapprochement, ending, ideally, in deep reconciliation.[4] The stages of reconciliation take into account the factors of "(1) mutual expectation of war, (2) national recognition, and (3) economic interaction," with mutual expectation of war taking

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[4] Yinan He, *The Search for Reconciliation: Sino-Japanese and German Relations Since World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Kindle Electronic Edition: Chapter 1, Location 542-612.

precedence above the other two factors in determining where states are along the reconciliation continuum.[5] Taking these three factors to their furthest point, deep reconciliation between two nations entails a complete lack of expectation of war, often to the point that war is seen as repugnant; national recognition to the degree that territorial disputes are permanently settled; and high levels of economic interaction that are largely divorced from political influence.[6] Beyond these criteria, in order for states to reach deep reconciliation, they must have a "harmonious mutual feeling" toward each other.[7]

He looks at interstate reconciliation through what he describes as "national mythmaking," although his analysis also features realist explanations of bilateral state relations and reconciliation. He primarily uses realist theory as a counterpoint to national mythmaking, ultimately explaining why realist theory is generally inadequate to explain how and why states work towards reconciliation. While He gives fair respect to structural conditions and their effect on interstate relations, He also argues throughout *The Search for Reconciliation* that structural conditions, and further the realist theory that uses these conditions to determine where states should stand with regards to their reconciliation, must be considered in tandem with public opinion and domestic political struggles.[8]

National mythmaking, in contrast to realism, takes into account structural issues, but situates these in relation to how structural conditions affect the political agendas of elites, who then utilize memory and perceptions of the nation to advance these agendas and cement the elites' influence.[9] These "myths" are then reinforced throughout the populace through such means as journalism, visual media, textbooks, and sites of commemoration.[10] In dealing with other nations, contentious issues within collective memory remain difficult to reach

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[5] He: Chapter 1, Location 521.
[6] He: Chapter 1, Location 588.
[7] He: Chapter 1, Location 612.
[8] He: Introduction, Location 289.
[9] He: Chapter 1, Location 695.
[10] He: Chapter 1, Location 764.

consensus on over time, as widespread emotions predominate the diplomatic landscape, often breeding feelings of "disgust and frustration" on the side of the perpetrator and "entitlement" among the victims.[11] He also highlights the importance of intention in memory disputes, noting that perceptions of intention change over time and can serve to further impede reconciliation.[12] In order to move concretely to deep reconciliation, He puts particular emphasis on joint history research and formal restitution.[13]

Understanding Japan's Approach to Collective Memory and Reconciliation

In *The Search for Reconciliation,* He breaks down trends in Japan's approach to collective memory into periods which generally last one to two decades. He notes that the first period, which occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, unlike later years, is best explained through realist views of state relations, as structural relations played a dominant role in Japan's interpretation of its recent history.[14] During this time, the conservative wing of Japanese politicians, whose approach to memory emphasized Japanese victimhood, gained a significant amount of power and authority compared to their progressive counterparts, largely due to their political platform of working with the United States and its occupying forces.[15] It was also during this time that textbook writing and the perspectives portrayed within them became a hotly contested political issue, which remains divisive to this day.[16] Government visits to the Yasukuni shrine also began to take place, although this did not become a problem in international memory until later. Overall, relations during this period existed in a climate in which few nations of the world held any desire to put strong political pressure on Japan to force them to deal with the memory of war, as the power struggle of the Cold War and

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[11] He: Chapter 1, Location 813
[12] He: Chapter 1, Location 813.
[13] He: Chapter 1, Location 891.
[14] He: Chapter 3, Location 3066.
[15] He: Chapter 3, Location 3236.
[16] He: Chapter 3, Location 3280.

restructuring the area in order to gain the optimum amount of power and influence took precedence over coming to agreement over memory.[17]

The next period He covers, which he dubs the "Honeymoon" period, from 1972 until 1981, were characterized by increased communication in nearly all areas, from communication between Japan and China, to communication within Japan regarding the war experiences to the general public.[18] This "Honeymoon" period is so called because of the warmer relations fostered not only between China and Japan, but between a number of Asian countries and Japan as well, one of which being South Korea.[19] At this time, the Japanese body that governed the writing of textbooks, the Ministry of Education, allowed its writers to include more information regarding Japan's victimization of other countries, although this was limited and generally relegated to the footnote sections of textbooks.[20] Japanese military buildup during this period was cause for concern among many nations in Asia. These nations feared that Japan would fall back into its more militaristic mindset, although these fears were as yet seldom verbalized, as China wished to move closer in relationships to Japan and the US in the face of cooling relations with the Soviet Union, while the US openly supported the growth of the military.[21] Despite a lack of confrontation, neither side proved willing to come to agreement regarding collective memory and national myths, but rather that all nations involved chose to shelve the issue in order to foster greater economic and political cooperation.[22]

The effect of Japanese war memory on diplomatic relations became far more visible during the 1980s in Japan's relations with its Asian neighbors, and China in particular. Though the rhetoric of glorifying Japan and emphasizing its own victimhood maintained

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[17] He: Chapter 3, Location 4059.
[18] He: Chapter 4, Location 4598.
[19] He: Chapter 4, Location 4644.
[20] He: Chapter 4, Location 4598.
[21] He: Chapter 4, Location 4871.
[22] He: Chapter 4, Location 4914.

dominance in history and memory discourse, as it had since the end of the war, more and more voices among the liberal and progressive political elites came out in support of a new approach, which would afford more attention to Japanese war crimes and acts of aggression.[23] This movement emphasized exploring the war experiences of the common Japanese citizenry, as well as some of the victims of Japanese aggression.[24] Taking a broader, more inclusive approach to history, however, did not fit within the goals of the conservatives who controlled the government, and their attempts to force out such narratives from textbooks became controversial, particularly abroad, during this time.[25] Japan's economic dominance in the region further fueled beliefs among other Asian countries, particularly China and, to a lesser extent, Korea, that Japan was engaging in a sort of economic bullying, and had an obligation to provide economic aid to its former victims.[26] This sentiment, combined with outrage over Japan's renewed efforts to avoid war responsibility in its textbooks, bred a deepening sense of outrage in the Asian nations that experienced violence at the hands of Japan.[27]

The last period that He examines, the 1990s to the present, experienced a structural shift in which the collapse of the USSR removed a shared threat from Japan and its erstwhile allies.[28] In addition, more evidence came forth of Japanese atrocities during World War II, including the traumatic memory of "comfort women," to which neither the Japanese populace nor political elites could come up with a means of addressing.[29] Although Japanese citizens who supported reconciliation and apology towards victims of Japanese aggression grew louder and more prominent, particularly as the conservative grip on the government began to slip, even some progressive and liberal politicians generally rejected the idea of some sort of

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[23] He: Chapter 5, Location 5349.
[24] He: Chapter 5, Location 5373.
[25] He: Chapter 5, Location 5373.
[26] He: Chapter 5, Location 5418, 5704.
[27] He: Chapter 5, Location 5769.
[28] He: Chapter 6, Location 5999.
[29] He: Chapter 6, Location 6068.

economic reparations.[30] Abroad, the expanding legal rights of citizens in both China and South Korea allowed them to express their views regarding Japan's failure to offer a meaningful apology, which remained critical and became perhaps even more negative as official visits to the Yasukuni shrine increased, and textbook debates remained unsettled.[31]

He concludes his analysis of reconciliation by detailing the differences between German-Polish relations and Sino-Japanese relations. He notes that while structural conditions immediately after the war were quite similar in both cases, the larger degree of political plurality in Germany soon allowed parties who were more inclined to examine atrocities committed by the Nazi regime to create majority coalitions in government.[32] A lack of centralized national control over textbook writing in Germany also encouraged conditions in which whitewashing narratives were less likely to become mainstream, while in Japan, the nationalized approach to textbook writing included very little input from educators, and thus became a much larger point of contention in inter-state relations.[33] The explosion in prominence in regional institutions provided Germany further incentive to explore its past aggressions, so that they might cement their role within the European Union and foster cooperation against its former enemies.[34] Although regional institutions are gaining traction in Asia, these organizations focus almost entirely on issues of economic growth and defense, and frequently experience difficulty when issues of memory that have not yet been dealt with surface.[35]

Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory, compiled and edited by Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz, contains a number of essays, each dealing with particular events and concepts that have caused controversy within the region. In the

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[30] He: Chapter 6, Location 6091.
[31] He: Chapter 6, Location 6074.
[32] He: Conclusion, Location 7460.
[33] He: Conclusion, Location 7505.
[34] He: Conclusion, Location 7546.
[35] He: Conclusion, Loaction 7567.

introduction to this anthology, Kim and Schwartz categorize the Asian approach to collective memory in terms of culture, in which grievances are considered "violations of honour," characterized by shame, while Western cultures, which have dominated memory studies, frame memory disputes as "violations of dignity," ascribing guilt to the perpetrator.[36] The editors also place emphasis on *presentist* versus *cultural* interpretations of memory, the former describing interpretations that are analyzed with a specific point of time in mind, scrutinizing events and concepts only within the framework of the political, social, and economic climate at that time; the latter assuming certain values which provide a continued rubric by which memories are assessed.[37] These concepts are visible throughout the various essays of *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past.*

The first essay in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past,* Mike M. Mochizuki's "The Yasukuni Shrine Conundrum: Japan's Contested Identity and Memory," explains the problems surrounding the Yasukuni Shrine that have proved controversial both internationally and within Japan. The Shrine's status as a religious institution has caused it to walk a fine-line, given the official policy in Japan of separation between church and state.[38] Serving as a site of memorial for Japan's war dead, the Yasukuni Shrine became a sort of political rallying point, with the Japan Association for War-Bereaved Families (Izokukai) most fervently advocating a government-sanctioned role for the shrine, though groups involved with State Shintō often threw their support behind keeping the shrine a religious institute.[39] These groups most commonly allied with the Liberal Democratic Party to Japan (which, despite its name, is the largest conservative party in Japan). Other groups, including progressives, Christians, and Buddhists, protested the role of a State Shintō shrine playing

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[36] Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz, eds. "Introduction: Northeast Asia's Memory Problem," in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory* (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 6.
[37] Kim and Schwartz, 7.
[38] Mike M. Mochizuki, "The Yasukuni Shrine Conundrum: Japan's Contested Identity and Memory," in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory* (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 32.
[39] Mochizuki, 35-36.

such a prominent role in secular politics, and advocated for the creation of a secular war memorial.[40] Outside of Japan, however, Yasukuni was of limited importance or interest until 1979, when shrine officials admitted that 14 Class A war criminals had been enshrined at Yasukuni.[41] This was after the Yasukuni Shrine became a *cause célèbre* in Asia in 1975, when Prime Minister Miki Takeo made a pilgrimage to the shrine on 15 August, the anniversary of the end of the Pacific War.[42] Miki justified this pilgrimage by describing it as a "private" visit, rather than an "official" one, setting a sort of precedent for legal and rhetorical maneuvering used to placate other nations while still fulfilling the Japanese desire to remember and mourn their war dead.[43] Visits to the Yasukuni Shrine experienced a significant increase from the 1980s until 2006, those not in favor of Shrine visits requesting they not be carried out in deference to Japan's Asian allies, while those who support the role of the Yasukuni Shrine argue that Japan should not kowtow to outside pressure on an issue of such national and personal importance.[44] Mochizuki offers two solutions to the issue of the Yasukuni Shrine- changing the nature of it, by de-enshrining the Class A war criminals and relocating the Yūshūkan museum, which presents a perspective on Japan's war history that has been seen as whitewashing their aggression; and creating a secular memorial, although this has been challenged at great length, particularly by Izokukai, a group which represents the families of the soldiers enshrined at Yasukuni.[45]

Mikyoung Kim's *Japanese Pacifism: Problematic Memory* presents the claim of an "empty center" within cultural conceptions of the Japanese mind, within which judgments are made from a relativist, ever-shifting beliefs about what is correct and appropriate for a given

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[40] Mochizuki, 36.
[41] Mochizuki, 39.
[42] Mochizuki, 39.
[43] Mochizuki, 39.
[44] Mochizuki, 45.
[45] Mochizuki, 50.

situation, and rejects any concrete set of morals.[46] She argues that, within the context of an "empty center," pacifism in Japan does not take the form of a strict ideology, but rather a political tactic.[47] In her view, the decision to adopt a pacifistic identity helped to instill in many Japanese a feeling of victimhood.[48] This sense of victimhood has become a prevalent theme in the remembrance of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and therefore has sparked heated debate, in which opponents of the victimhood-only portrayals initially apparent at museums and sites of remembrance.[49] These critiques have not only been levied by progressive groups and members of society, who seek to maintain awareness that these sites were targeted for their military significance, but also by Koreans living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, whose suffering only began to gain some modicum of widespread acknowledgement since the early 1990s.[50] In 1994, after almost four decades of existence riddled with heated debate regarding the interpretation of memories presented there, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum installed a wing in which Hiroshima's status as a site of military production, as well as the victimhood of Koreans living in Hiroshima, was acknowledged.[51] Kim attributes this to the "empty center," and the political calculations that led politicians and museum curators to curtail their rhetoric regarding pacifism in favor of fostering goodwill with Korean victims of the atomic bombs, as well as those sections of society who refused to allow Hiroshima to be portrayed purely as a site of victimhood.[52]

Of the essays in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past,* perhaps the most useful for this particular paper is Kazuya Fukuoka and Barry Schwartz's "Responsibility, Regret and Nationalism in Japanese Memory." Fukuoka and Schwartz present research, carried out

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[46] Mikyoung Kim, "Japanese Pacifism: Problematic Memory," in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory* (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 54.
[47] Mikyoung Kim, 56.
[48] Mikyoung Kim, 57.
[49] Mikyoung Kim, 59.
[50] Mikyoung Kim, 63.
[51] Mikyoung Kim, 65.
[52] Mikyoung Kim, 66.

through surveying and interviewing Japanese and American university students, regarding their views of their past and whether or not, and to what degree, they feel responsible for their nation's actions.[53] The results of this study indicated a staggering difference between the American and Japanese students, with almost half of Japanese participants stating that they felt a personal sense of responsibility for crimes committed by Japan during the twentieth century, while only around 10 percent of American students feeling similar responsibility for crimes committed by the United States.[54] The events that the Japanese students felt most strongly responsible for are the Japanese colonization of Korea, the Nanking Incident, and the use of "comfort women" by the Japanese army.[55] However, the Japanese participants whose beliefs are explored in detail by Fukuoka and Schwartz highlight a peculiar trend in modern Japanese memory- namely, that many Japanese feel responsible, but this is largely because they believe they are expected to feel responsible, and that ultimately, they feel that attempts to apologize will never suffice because the victims of their aggression frequently refuse to accept such apologies.[56] Fukuoka and Schwartz also examine nationalism in Japan, proposing that nationalism has been reinforced by the "de-Asianization" that Japan underwent in order to align itself with the West, and in the process of doing so, has alienated itself from other Asian nations, which has further complicated reconciliation.[57]

Understanding South Korea's Approach to Collective Memory and Reconciliation

Don Baker's "Exacerbated Politics: The Legacy of Political Trauma in South Korea" details the events in modern South Korean history that are seen as having the deepest impact

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[53] Kazuya Fukuoka and Barry Schwartz, "Responsibility, Regret and Nationalism in Japanese Memory" in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective* Memory (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 74.
[54] Fukuoka and Schwartz, 75.
[55] Fukuoka and Schwartz, 75-76.
[56] Fukuoka and Schwartz, 78-79.
[57] Fukuoka and Schwartz, 81.

on South Korean society, providing insight into how these events have henceforth influenced inter-state relations in the region. Unsurprisingly, the first period Baker examines is Korea's colonial occupation. Baker pays particular attention to Korean collaboration with the Japanese occupying forces, and the subsequent widespread amnesia regarding this collaboration, noting that while the term "collaborator" has subsequently been used to a great degree by politicians looking to discredit their competitors, South Korea has recently become more willing to objectively evaluate modernization efforts brought to Korea by the Japanese government.[58] Baker then discusses the Korean War, explaining that while narratives in the decades immediately following the war portrayed participation in extreme terms of "good" (non-Communist) and bad (Communist), this trend has softened somewhat, as memory has shifted from an ideological base to recognizing the experiences of individuals and families who were torn apart by the war.[59] Also subject to fierce debate in South Korea is the regime of Park Chung Hee, under whose dictatorship (1961-1979) South Korea experienced massive economic growth, which is often viewed as a major factor in Korea's meteoric rise from impoverished nation to one of the richest in Asia in a few short decades.[60] Nevertheless, South Koreans still debate whether or not Park's rule was truly necessary for economic expansion, and further, many continue to mourn the oppression suffered under his regime, and thus, Park's influence is a divisive issue among many Koreans today.[61] The last event in Baker's analysis is what he chooses to call the Kwangju Tragedy of May 1980, although Baker acknowledges that even the name of the incident is a subject of debate, as some describe it as a "movement" or "uprising," others a "tragedy," and still others a "massacre."[62] The incident at Kwangju occurred when citizens of Kwangju, in support of politician Kim

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[58] Don Baker, "Exacerbated Politics: The Legacy of Political Trauma in South Korea," in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective* Memory (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 196-198.
[59] Baker, 198-201.
[60] Baker, 201.
[61] Baker, 202-203.
[62] Baker, 205.

Dae Jung as an alternative to the military dictatorship ruling South Korea at the time, engaged

in protest, temporarily forcing troops out of Kwangju, only for them to return and kill a high,

yet also disputed, number of civilians.[63] This event is viewed with pride by some, who argue

that Kwangju serves as a site of memory in the fight for democracy, while others maintain

that the military forces engaged in conflict at Kwangju were simply responding to the

aggressive behavior of the protesters.[64] Baker concludes by explaining that the main issues

plaguing South Korean memory are, in many respects, as much an issue of domestic memory

disputes as they are international, and that these perspectives play an integral role in how

South Korea approaches relations with other nations.[65]

"The Chosŏn Monarchy in Republican Korea, 1945-1965," Christine's contribution to

Northeast Asia's Difficult Past, explores the shift in the role of Korea's monarchy from 1905

to 1965. The transition of power following the agreement of the Korean monarchy to become

a subject of Japan marked the permanent decline of the monarchy, although the Chosŏn royal

family continued to exist for another six decades.[66] However, given that the royal family was

relocated to Japan soon after the annexation of Korea, any degree of autonomy that might

have been assumed in Korea's willingness to be governed by Japan was swiftly subverted,

the most well-known members of the royal family becoming little more than figureheads.[67]

Following the end of Korea's period as a colony of Japan, movements to restore the

monarchy gained some traction, though this support faded significantly amid the political

landscape of the Korean War, as many South Koreans came to recognize that reinstating the

monarchy would be counterproductive to the creation of a republican government.[68] The

legacy of the Chosŏn dynasty, ending with the lost not only of prestige but also of the wealth

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[63] Baker, 203-204.
[64] Baker, 205.
[65] Baker, 205-208.
[66] Christine Kim, "The Chosŏn Monarchy in Republican Korea, 1945-1965," in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective* Memory (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 215.
[67] Christine Kim, 215- 218.
[68] Christine Kim, 218-225.

of its last revered figure, Prince Yŏng, fanned anti-Japanese sentiment, but also helped to cement the identity of South Koreans, who have sense undertaken many measures to memorialize and glorify its final royal family.[69]

The final country-specific case featured in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past* is that of the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute, a lingering thorn in relations between Japan and South Korea. At the center of this dispute is a series of rock outcroppings located in the sea between South Korea and Japan, referred to as Dokdo and Takeshima by South Korea and Japan, respectively. While these outcroppings, which were considered Korean territory prior to Japanese colonization, serve little strategic function, as Heonik Kwon notes, their ambiguous territorial status is a "memory problem" between the two nations.[70] Kwon situates the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute within the framework of what he calls "parallax visions," which he states "entails a change in the appearance of an object resulting from a change in the position of the viewer."[71] In this case, the viewer in question is predominantly the United States, which had initially designated the islands as belonging to Korea in the years immediately following the Second World War, changed its official position, intentionally using ambiguous language and leaving the outcroppings in a state of legal limbo.[72] This decision was a calculated move to gain favor with Japan, who the US had deemed of particular diplomatic significance in the region, and was therefore a projection of America's manipulation of laws in order to maintain dominance during the Cold War.[73] Though the international political climate has since changed significantly, the Dokdo/Takeshima question has remained

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[69] Christine Kim, 225.
[70] Heonik Kwon, "Parallax Visions in the Dokdo/Takeshima Disputes," in Northeast Asia's Difficult Past: Essays in Collective Memory (Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 230.
[71] Kwon, 233.
[72] Kwon, 234.
[73] Kwon, 235.

unanswered, and while Japan tends to approach the issue from a legal perspective, to South Korea, Dokdo is a reminder of their colonial history and Japan's refusal engage in redress.[74]

Addressing Shame and Vulnerability

Although scholars of collective memory frequently make use of the term "shame" in their work, it is seldom defined or elaborated upon. Within these contexts, the word "shame" appears to imply a negative memory that affects a state's perception, either of itself or how its citizens believe the state is perceived by others. Shame is an extremely powerful, weighty term that is not put to its best use when it refers simply to any negative issue of perception. Shame can, and should, be put to better use as a defined concept upon which nations might address issues of collective memory. Some of the most in-depth, detailed examinations of shame have been provided not by researchers of collective memory or historians, but by psychologists and sociologists. In particular, American researcher Brené Brown's work on shame sheds light on how shame is felt and used in interaction, though her work focuses on interactions between individuals, rather than on an intercultural scale. Brown defines shame as "the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing we are flawed and therefore unworthy of acceptance and belonging."[75]Another crucial term for understanding reconciliation within the realm of collective memory between states is "vulnerability." Brown explains that vulnerability is "uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure."[76] Though this definition is much vaguer than that of shame, Brown's work provides extensive study on vulnerability and its role in human interaction.

One of the main aims of this paper is to determine whether or not relations between South Korea and Japan are affected by such sentiments, particularly with regards to Japan.

[74] Kwon, 236-240.
[75]Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't),* 5; Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* (New York: Gotham, 2012), 69.
[76] Brown, *Daring Greatly*: 34.

23

Further, in order to gauge the utility of this definition of shame, I will look at other examples of reconciliation, particularly that between Germany and Poland. I shall also use Brown's studies of vulnerability to construct an approach that might allow Japan and South Korea to move toward reconciliation, although this will likely hinge on Japan's ability to acknowledge its actions in the past from a stand-point of shame and vulnerability.

Because interstate reconciliation deals with issues of memory and perception, it is a process that relies heavily on emotion rather than logic. Indeed, in exploring the role that collective memory plays in reconciliation, Yinan He employs terms more typical to psychology than international relations, such as "emotion" and "intention."[77] He even goes so far as to note that "deep reconciliation is also characterized by an amicable people-to-people relationship," highlighting the extension of reconciliation beyond relationships between states and into the realm of personal interaction.[78] With this emotional, yet also sociological, basis in mind, creating a process by which reconciliation might be achieved would appear far more suited to an approach based in social research, rather than standard diplomatic practice. In order to express the advantages of such an approach within Japan-South Korea relations, it is perhaps useful to consider using the term "positive health regimen," as is mentioned in Brown's explanation of the importance of vulnerability:

> From the field of health psychology, studies show that perceived vulnerability, meaning the ability to acknowledge our risks and exposure, greatly increases our chances of adhering to some kind of positive health regimen. In order to get patients to comply with prevention routines, they must work on perceived vulnerability. And what makes this really interesting is that the critical issue is not about our actual level of vulnerability, but the level at which we *acknowledge* our vulnerabilities around a certain illness or threat.[79]

Brown's research and proposed ways of using shame and vulnerability in order to move forward in relationships details not only steps for how this can be done, but also how people

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[77] He: Chapter 1, Location 804, 826.
[78] He: Chapter 1, Location 517.
[79] Brown, *Daring Greatly*: 39.

instinctively react to and avoid shame. These gut reactions to shame, initially proposed by Dr. Linda Hartling, include moving toward, against, or away from shame.[80] Moving toward shame entails attempting to please the person attempting to utilize shame against another, moving against shame involves reacting aggressively and fighting back against the shamer, and moving away often means disengaging; all three reactions actively avoid dealing with the feelings of shame itself.[81] It is important to note that in these situations, the title of "shamer" carries with it a negative connotation, highlighting the complex dynamics of victimhood at play when dealing with shame, as neither side is completely innocent in the interactions. In the case of relations between Japan and South Korea, Japan has most often used tactics reflecting movements against or away from shame, almost to the complete exclusion of moving toward it.

In order to combat shame and move past it, both parties must utilize empathy, a term used by both Brown and He.[82] It is necessary for both sides to display empathy- for Japan, reconciliation requires empathizing with the trauma experienced by South Korea, while South Korea could use empathy to create an identity for Japan that is no longer that of "the other." To express shame is to open oneself, to be vulnerable, and Brown presents steps to use shame as a positive starting point. She gives outlines steps within the context of building "shame resilience," techniques that one should use on a frequent basis in order to accept shame, as well as foster healthy communication. They are:

1. Recognizing Shame and Understanding Its Triggers

2. Practicing Critical Awareness

3. Reaching Out

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[80] Linda Hartling, "A Relational Conceptualization of Shame and Humiliation," *Shame and Humiliation: From Isolation to Relational Transformation* (Wellesley, Massachusetts: Wellesley Centers for Women Publications, 2000), 4.
[81] Hartling, 4.
[82] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 74; He: Chapter 1, Location 952.

4. Speaking Shame[83]

These steps, though created with interpersonal relations in mind, can also be used in diplomatic communication between states. The first step will require examination of shame by both countries, by dealing with the particular issues that continue to dominate the reconciliation discourse. Such a process includes examining what factors within the cultures of South Korea and Japan have contributed to how they approach shame, how these cultural approaches to shame have affected their views towards specific events in their history, and the particular emotional reactions that lead the nations to diverge on how these issues should be addressed. Critical awareness involves using the origins of feelings of shame to create goals within communication while keeping in mind whether or not these goals are realistic, as well as if they are motivated by a desire to be perceived, either by the other or by one's own self, in a particular way.[84] The third step, "Reaching Out," requires little explanation, although Brown's instructions include the very important detail that to do so requires "owning and sharing your story".[85]It is the last step, "Speaking Shame," that could very well make or break reconciliation attempts between Japan and South Korea. However, if these nations put in the effort to engage in thorough examination of their shame triggers, it would seem likely that they would be able to move forward in communicating from a standpoint of vulnerability. Emotionally, addressing shame is not an easy process, whether it be on an individual level or state level. However, the motivation to do so can be found in a phrase that Brown encourages as a means of confronting shame: "If you own this story you get to write the ending."[86]

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[83] Brown, *Daring Greatly*, 74.
[84] Brown, *Daring Greatly*: 74.
[85] Brown, *Daring Greatly*: 74.
[86] Brown, *Daring Greatly*: 80.

In the discussion portion of this thesis, I will situate continued issues of contention between South Korea and Japan's relationship within the framework of Brown's research, attempting to discern whether or not such an approach would be appropriate for state relations. I would be remiss to neglect to mention that Brown's work is particularly popular in America and other Western nations, and perhaps takes for granted general Western mentalities towards relationships as well as toward self-perception and value. First, however, I will present two case studies, which, when taken into the political context detailed in *The Search For Reconciliation* and included among the issues presented in *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past*, explain the internal conflicts that keep South Korea and Japan in a state of uncertainty regarding their own interpretations of their pasts, which thus prevent them from achieving reconciliation.

Generational Divides in National Memory: Case Studies

Relations between Japan and South Korea are complicated by numerous factors and events, many of which have been detailed in the literature review. It is, however, useful to examine particular cases to see how the variance in memory and perception within these nations affects the diplomatic relations between these nations. Presented are case studies on textbook publication in Japan and generational contention regarding the Park Chung Hee administration in South Korea. Both cases highlight the need for cohesion regarding national memory in order to move forward towards reconciliation. Without a substantial degree of internal agreement about their collective memories, South Korea and Japan are hindered in their ability to make any sort of worthwhile progress toward reconciliation.

Case Study: Textbook Publication in Japan

As a major medium through which memory is passed on, textbooks are frequently the subject of controversy regarding perceptions of one's history, and textbooks produced and used in Japan have come under a great degree of scrutiny numerous times during the post-war era. Although textbooks have been an issue of debate between the political parties of Japan throughout the on-going process of creating a widespread view of the nation's collective history, the use of text to propagate specific historical narratives in Japan did not gain much attention abroad until the textbook controversy of 1982.[87] However, in order to understand how Japan's textbook controversies arose, it is necessary to examine the nation's textbook industry in the years preceding these controversies. During the period of American occupation, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers designated a branch responsible for education and media, known as the Civil Information and Education Section, though

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[87] Claudia Schneider, "The Japanese History Textbook Controversy in East Asian Perspective," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617 (May 2008): 109.

oversight of education was soon given to the Ministry of Education.[88] This oversight was cemented into law in 1950, and six years later, local governments were allowed to choose members of their school boards.[89] Educational standards were thus removed from non-governmental influence, from which point the conservative-leaning Ministry of Education and right-wing politicians were able to dictate which viewpoints entered the education system.[90] The following decade saw little structural change within the Japanese textbook industry, although 1965 marked the beginning of historian Saburo Ienaga's legal battles against the Ministry of Education regarding textbook censorship.[91] However, by the late 1970s, textbook writers in Japan had begun to include more passages about the victimization of other nations, though these accounts were often brief, even to the point of being relegated to footnotes.[92] Nevertheless, enough progress was made in adding newer, more critical narratives to textbooks that by 1982, the right wing begun to feel threatened by the possible leftward movement of the textbooks industry.[93]

The first international incidence of controversy regarding Japan's textbooks occurred in 1982, following the decision of the Ministry of Education to institute greater censorship of textbooks. Among the authors whose work came under scrutiny at this time, historian Yoichi Kibata recollects in "History Textbooks: Continuing Controversies" the particular changes which initiated international outrage. In particular, the Ministry of Education required that usage of the word "shinryaku," meaning "aggression" or "invasion," in regards to Japan's actions would be banned, and that terms like "advancement" or "intrusion" would be used instead.[94] Information about these changes soon became known in other Asian countries,

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[88] He: Chapter 3, Location 3279.
[89] He: Chapter 3, Location 3273.
[90] He: Chapter 3, Location 3297.
[91] He: Chapter 3, Location 3297; Yoichi Kibata, "History Textbooks: Continuing Controversies," *Economic and Political Weekly* 34, no. 44 (30 October 1999): 3108.
[92] He: Chapter 4, Location 4618.
[93] He: Chapter 5, Location 5390.
[94] Kibata, 3108; Schneider, 109.

which perceived the refusal to allow the word "shinryaku" as a symptom of Japan's unwillingness to see itself as having committed aggression.[95] In an effort to appease nations in which protest had broken out because of the Ministry of Education's decree, the Ministry of Education created the "Neighboring Countries Clause," which stipulated that Japanese textbooks must be required to include the experiences of neighboring countries in its textbooks.[96] Furthermore, the ban on the use of "shinryaku" in textbook rhetoric was overturned.[97] Although this decision helped to placate international critics as well as members of the Japanese left, conservatives believed that the Ministry of Education's response to the controversy showed instead that Japan was kowtowing to outside demands.[98]

Following the 1982, the Japanese textbook industry experienced a period of few foreign complaints, as textbooks started to feature more accounts of suffering experienced by foreigners. This change, however, did not change the previous tendency to depict the victimization of the Japanese people that pervaded most textbooks. Alexander Bukh's exploration of textbooks from the 1980s details that passages about the experiences of Japan's neighbors were highly limited in comparison to the number of accounts which spoke of the suffering of Japanese civilians during World War II.[99] In addition to this focus on Japanese suffering, the textbooks of the 1980s took great care to attribute acts of aggression and oppression towards foreign citizens to the Japanese people or military, but in doing so avoided attributing responsibility to the Japanese state.[100] This avoidance of officially allocating blame to the Japanese government briefly let up during the 1990s, as the LDP lost control of the government for the first time during the post-war era. In the mid-1990s, both

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[95] Kibata, 3109; Schneider, 109.
[96] Schneider, 109.
[97] Yoshiko Nozaki and Mark Selden, "Japanese Textbook Controversies, Nationalism, and Historical Memory: Intra- and Inter-national Conflicts," in *The Asia-Pacific Journal, Japan Focus* 24 (15 June 2009): 6.
[98] Schneider, 110.
[99] Alexander Bukh, "Japan's History Textbooks Debate: National Identity in Narratives of Victimhood and Victimization," *Asian Survey* 47, no. 5 (September/October 2007): 692, 694.
[100] Bukh, 695.

Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and his successor Tomiichi Murayama took official steps to recognize Japan's aggression and the suffering it inflicted on other Asian nations.[101] Although the conservative Liberal Democratic Party has since regained power, Hosokawa and Murayama's sentiments of regret have not yet fallen out of government parlance in diplomatic relations.[102]

The 2000s have seen an overall movement to include more narratives of victimhood in Japan's neighbors, as well as greater support for joint history writing committees.[103] For example, such an organization set out in 2002 to create greater cooperation between South Korean and Japanese historians, though these efforts made little headway, with most recent attempts to create such committees being put forward in 2013 by South Korean President Park Geun-hye.[104] While a cohesive bilateral history writing organization has not yet materialized, minority groups have begun to permeate the textbook market, including authors of textbooks written to emphasize gender perspectives.[105] However, these groups cannot claim any semblance of dominance of the market, as textbooks written by the Japanese group Tokyo Shoseki still comprise more than one half of all textbooks used in Japan.[106] Furthermore, narratives of Japanese suffering continue to be far more common in textbooks than similar narratives from victims of Japanese aggression, although it is important to note that accounts of Asian experiences of Japanese oppression frequently follow Japanese accounts immediately within text.[107] In addition, the language used to describe Japanese aggression has shifted from passive descriptions to phrases that carry an implication of condemnation towards Japan, and Japan's attempts to compensate victims have become more

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[101] Schneider, 110.
[102] Schneider, 110.
[103] Schneider, 117.
[104] "Joint History Textbook," *The Korea Times,* 15 November 2013, accessed 26 May 2014, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinon/2013/11/202_146324.html.
[105] Schneider, 117.
[106] Bukh, 696.
[107] Bukh, 697.

prominent in textbooks.[108] Perhaps most poignant within this shift, however, is the inclusion

of exercises in textbooks which attempt to foster empathy towards other Asian nations by

encouraging students to view Japan's actions from the viewpoints of its victims.[109]

Case Study: Remembering the Park Chung Hee Administration

As evidenced by Fukuoka and Schwartz's surveys of university students in Japan,

examined previously in the literature review, as well as the slow movement towards greater

inclusion of foreign narratives in Japanese textbooks, there seems to be a clear generational

progression in Japan's perceptions of its neighbors and their experiences of victimization. In

comparison, South Korean opinion, which remains consistently anti-Japanese, appears far

more monolithic in comparison. However, generational differences in memory exist in South

Korea as well, and understanding these differences sheds light on why reconciliation

continues to remain elusive. Although it certainly does not explain all feelings of distrust

towards Japan, I believe that South Korea's relations with its neighbor suffer from a sense of

ambivalence within Korea to their experiences of modernization, of which the most extreme

periods came during periods of oppression- first under Japanese occupation, then later during

the Park Chung Hee administration. While it is fairly easy to understand why the

modernization that Korea underwent during Japanese occupation might prove emotionally

difficult to except as a positive, the modernization of the Park Chung Hee era seems, at first

glance, quite unrelated to Korea's relationship with Japan. Indeed, interaction with Japan

played a much less direct role in Korean modernization under Park Chung Hee, but it is

notable that South Korea-Japan relations underwent a drastic shift during this era, which

many authors attribute to Park's pro-Japanese sentiments. It is thus entirely possible that

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[108] Bukh, 700.
[109] Bukh, 701.

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those who have strongly negative feelings and recollections of the Park Chung Hee administration also associate movement towards reconciliation, or at the very least rapprochement, with a dark time in South Korean history.

Within the international sphere, South Korea's standing during the Park Chung Hee administration was characterized by South Korea's strategic location for American counterbalancing against the Soviet Union and China. Given Japan's status as one of the United State's strongest allies in the region and its bulwark against communist incursion across the Pacific, it is not surprising that the United States would view healthy relations between South Korea and Japan as a safeguard towards its interests.[110] While Park Chung Hee himself was not particularly pro-United States, his background, which included military education and employment under the Japanese occupying forces, gave him a greater natural affinity towards Japan than many of his contemporaries.[111] Thus, in 1965, the Park Chung Hee administration and the Japanese government under Eisaku Sato initiated diplomatic normalization, which entailed $800 million in various forms of economic aid and investment from Japan over a five year period.[112] However, while this agreement brought much-needed funds into South Korea, the vast difference in technological and production capabilities led to a massive trade imbalance in favor of Japan, and this, as well as a sense of indebtedness to its former enemy, left many Koreans unsettled by the prospect of economic growth through deep economic relations with Japan.[113] Notification that such arrangements were to occur led to the outbreak of student protests, which Park responded to by putting South Korea under martial law.[114] Although Park's approach of responding to dissent with force was by no means a policy that the following government rejected, by the 1980 outbreak of violence between the

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[110] Kil J. Yi, "In Search of a Panacea: Japan-Korea Rapprochement and America's 'Far Eastern Problems,'" *Pacific Historical Review* 71, no. 4 (November 2002): 635.
[111] Yi, 650.
[112] Seung K. Ko, "South Korean-Japanese Relations since the 1965 Normalization Pacts," *Modern Asian Studies* 6, no. 1 (1972): 52.
[113] Ko, 54-56
[114] Yi, 651.

military and protesters at Kwangju, South Korea was beginning to experience a slow but steady sea change towards democracy, though this would not fully emerge until the end of the decade.[115] As well, the monumental economic growth South Korea experienced during the Park Chung Hee administration ensured that portions of society would remain that had a positive memory of his rule.

The portion of South Koreans who view the Park Chung Hee administration as an overall positive period in the nation's history falls along increasingly generational lines, although those who experienced his rule themselves and have vivid memories of it are still divided in their views. It is the generation that follows them, those who are currently in their 40s and 50s, who tend to have the most overall positive impressions of Park Chung Hee's government, as they came of age during the period when the effects of Park's economic policies became apparent.[116] Members of South Korea's older generations have more mixed feelings because they saw most clearly the extreme growth of South Korea's economy and standard of life, but also experienced the oppression that accompanied it.[117] Shim Jae Hoon, a Seoul-based journalist, argues in favor of remembering Park's administration as unique and capable of creating economic growth that would not otherwise have happened because a lack of economic planning by Park's opponents.[118] In contrast, Hong Yun-gi criticizes the generation of South Koreans, particularly those who have entered into politics, who created what he calls "Park Chung Hee syndrome" around 1997.[119] Koreans who encourage a positive view of Park Chung Hee and spread this "syndrome," Hong argues, were not old

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[115] Baker, 203-205.
[116] Hans Schattle, "South Korea's Generation Gap," *New York Times*, 21 December 2012, accessed 30 May 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/22/opinion/south-koreas-generation-gap.html?_r=0.
[117] Schattle, "South Korea's Generation Gap."
[118] Shim Jae Hoon, "Park Chung Hee: An Enigma," http://people.duke.edu/~myhan/kaf0604.pdf.
[119] Hong Yun-gi, "Park Chung Hee in the Age of Democratization," in *Developmental Dictatorship and the Park Chung Hee Era: The Shaping of Modernity in the Republic of Korea,* ed. Lee Byeong-cheon (South Korea: Changbi Publishers, 2006): 311.

enough to correctly recall the oppressive nature of the regime.[120] Hong further believes that to hold Park Chung Hee in high esteem:

> …mocks consistently the fragile democratic modernity of Korean society. The political immorality here is the denial of the identity of South Korea as a democratic republic and the portrayal of the trans-democratic political behaviors of a violent and anti-moral kind in Park's era as an unavoidable necessity.[121]

For the younger generations of South Koreans, who neither have personal memories of the violent, oppressive aspects of Park's administration, nor viewed firsthand the economic changes that catapulted South Korea from an impoverished nation to its spot among some of the richest in the world, it is often Park's dictatorial style of rule that is most associated with the period.[122] Thus, the generation of South Koreans who recently voted Park's daughter, Park Geun-hye, to the position of president, have created unease amongst the younger generation, who associate both Park and his daughter with legacy, even dynastic politics.[123]

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[120] Hong, 321.
[121] Hong, 320.
[122] Schattle, "South Korea's Generation Gap."
[123] Schattle, "South Korea's Generation Gap."

Discussion

The policy of some LDP government officials and supporters of white-washing narratives of Japanese history to avoid negatives portrayal of Japanese history has proven extremely self-serving in recent years, though it does little to actually benefit Japanese society. The majority of Japanese society has clearly experienced a shift in mentality, although that shift has not extended to the government, who still use issues such as textbook publication and visits to the Yasukuni shrine as a means of gaining political clout. Given the willingness of many Japanese citizens to take responsibility for problems that cause negative memories in other nations, it seems that the Japanese government must simply catch up with the public opinion of its people in order to tackle these issues, although the likelihood that this will happen anytime soon seems quite remote. Within the composition of the Japanese government, supporters of white-washing, self-glorifying narratives are present to a much greater degree than in the public. This can likely be attributed in part to the nature of governments, which are generally composed of older members of society. Though the life cycle of politics ensures that particular members of government who adhere to such positions will leave office, either through retirement or death, creating a large cohort willing to acknowledge issues of collective memory in a way that is conducive towards reconciliation could prove challenging. Japan is currently experiencing a massive decline in growth rate, creating a demographic situation in which pulling a new generation of politicians from society could become difficult, simply by virtue of having a smaller, older population from which to draw.[124] Though future generations of politicians may be more willing to approach issues of collective memory from a standpoint more reverent to other nations, Japan would be

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[124] "The Incredible Shrinking Country," *The Economist*, 25 March 2014, accessed 30 May 2014, http://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2014/03/japans-demography; "Japan's Population Falls 'by Record 244,000' in 2013," BBC, 1 January 2014, accessed 30 May 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-25566868.

well served to make haste to do so, as the victims of actual acts of aggression, particularly "comfort women," will no longer be around to consider these apologies.

Upon starting this research, I had anticipated finding a wealth of accounts detailing widespread Japanese amnesia regarding its oppression of Korea. Instead, I have found far more evidence of a general sense of acceptance in Japan of crimes and acts of aggression carried out by its military over the last century. Although these views focus their critiques on the Japanese military, many of the forms through which a wider Japanese consciousness is communicated, such as surveys and textbooks, display a belief that the nation as a whole was complicit in these acts. With such evidence pointing towards widespread feelings of responsibility, it becomes apparent that memory has been used far more by the political and, to a lesser degree, military establishments in Japan to garner support for conservative causes and worldviews. However, these attempts become magnified in other countries, particularly South Korea and China, because such attempts are usually carried out in highly institutionalized settings- mainly visits to the Yasukuni shrine and textbook publications, It is therefore quite easy for foreign press and other critics of Japan to seize upon such opportunities to foster distrust and anger toward Japan.

This is not to say that Japan has abandoned its tendency towards narratives of victimhood regarding its own experiences. Indeed, the integration of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have become a crucial part of post-war Japanese identity.[125]

While South Korea argues that its experience as a victim of Japanese aggression has not been adequately addressed by Japan, and this is indeed true, it is difficult for anyone to refute the fact that South Korea experienced extremely dark periods throughout the twentieth century. The problem with Japan's historical amnesia is not that it does not view Korean history as somehow easier or less brutal than it was in general- instead, the common

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[125] Mikyoung Kim, 59.

whitewashing narrative chooses to advance Japan's own victimhood rather than of examining the experiences of other nations. While I do not dispute that South Korea has a legitimate grievance against Japan for not paying adequate attention to how its actions affected the Korean peninsula, I also believe that South Korea has not been wholly sincere in its approaches to reconciliation, and has used the history argument as continued leverage in diplomatic relations with Japan. As in the case of the controversy over Japanese textbooks, this is hardly the fault of the public, but rather used for political gains. It is also similar to the Japanese case in that by using such rhetoric in political or semi-political venue, the views of those using it for such means become further reinforced within society, who might have moved closer to a more accurate narrative of history and closer relations had such historical issues not been used for political gains. The continued political use of history, as well as the lack of substantial movement toward reconciliation because of these historical issues, indicate that the approaches taken by both countries have not been productive, but because of the slow shift in public perception, particularly in the case of Japan, gives hope to the possibility of meeting some point of cohesion in the future. In the following section, I will outline how this could be done if a more empathic approach is adopted, although the entrenchment of political parties in both nations that perpetuate the narratives that glorify their countries will inevitably make such an approach difficult. Nevertheless, it is not beyond hope that such an approach might be successful, as it hinges mostly on a change in mindset toward interaction.

Creating a New Framework for Reconciliation

> *When the culture of an organization mandates that it is more important to protect the reputation of a system and those in power that it is to protect the basic human dignity of individuals and communities, you can be certain that shame is systemic, money drives ethics, and accountability is dead. This is true in all systems, from*

*corporations, nonprofits, universities, and governments, to churches, schools, families, and sports programs.[126] –*Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly*

Shame is apparent in South Korea and Japan's views toward their shared history. Shame is visible in Japan's feelings towards its actions in the Korean peninsula, in the efforts of the LDP promote the view that Japan's victimhood is more important than that of the nations it has victimized, and in the continued disagreement over whether and how to acknowledge the suffering of its neighbors. Shame is also present in South Korea's views of its own history, as well as how it has dealt with its relations with Japan, although in the latter case, shame has been used as a tool rather than as an emotion felt and expressed. To create the sort of cultural bonds needed to reach a deep state of reconciliation, Japan and South Korea would be extremely well-served to acknowledge this shame, which serves as a toxic influence and prevents the sort of deep introspective analysis that can be used not only to improve diplomatic relations, but to instill a more concrete sense of acceptance towards their own national memories. By using Brené Brown's approach to "wholehearted living" as a basis by which Japan and South Korea might communicate with each other, shame can instead be used as a source of empathy and understanding.

In *Daring Greatly,* Brown proposes a number of ways by which people avoid shame, rather than tackling it and utilizing it as a unifying emotion. South Korea and Japan have their own particular ways in which they have demonstrated shame avoidance, which fit into a number of the categories of Brown's "vulnerability armory."[127] One of the most commonly-used shame avoidance mechanisms, both in individuals and, in this case, on a larger scale, is perfectionism, which Brown argues is not a productive habit but instead is a constant attempt

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[126] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 195.
[127] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 112.

to garner approval.[128] This desire to portray a flawless image of oneself is one that can be

seen in Japan's whitewashing of its history and emphasis on its own victimhood. This tactic,

however, is less used to portray an inaccurately positive view of Japan to the world but is

more useful in cushioning Japan's perception of itself. Brown offers remedies for the shield

of perfectionism, of which the most useful for Japan would be practicing self-kindness and

recognizing that their nation is not the only nation to have inflicted suffering on another

group; and embracing a sense of common humanity, which would entail examining the

similarities in experiences of suffering with its neighbors, acknowledging their particular,

unique experiences *without* giving greater emphasis to one's own experiences.[129] In contrast,

South Korea has used what Brown calls a "smash-and-grab" method of avoiding shame, in

which South Korea strategically expresses its feelings of vulnerability in order to use them as

a tool to target Japan, rather than discussing these vulnerabilities and working from them to

create understanding.[130] To correct this, it is necessary for South Korea to examine why they

engage in such behavior, although it would seem that such an approach is viewed as a

bargaining chip that South Korea might lose if it were to actually address their grievances and

work towards mutual understanding.[131] In addition, both nations are guilty of "serpentining,"

which Brown defines as "trying to control a situation, backing out of it, pretending it's not

happening, or maybe even pretending you don't care," as well as using criticism and

cynicism.[132] Brown emphasizes that while criticism is damaging for its target, it is more

reflective of the mentality of the one doing the critiquing, who Brown notes "were

consistently harder on themselves than they were on other people."[133] By understanding how

Japan and South Korea have avoided shame, practices which have become habitual and have

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128 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 128.
129 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 131.
130 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 162.
131 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 162.
132 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 165, 167.
133 Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 169.

kept relations stagnant because of both sides' refusal to broach the topic of their own shame, it is easier to come up with a means by which these habits can be reformed.

The internal uncertainty regarding a consensus on national memory indicates the fear that these nations have of addressing problems within their own history, which then determine their feelings of worthiness in their relations with others. While coming to consensus does require some amount of debate, both South Korea and Japan would benefit from a large degree of self-compassion. In South Korea, I believe that a large part of the historical conundrum that continues to stifle self-compassion is the difficulty accepting the positive, productive elements of modernity that developed during periods in which South Korea otherwise underwent oppression and abuse. Don Baker's account of the Park Chung Hee administration, in which he expresses a sentiment that has become a major question regarding Park's rule, is "was his dictatorship necessary" to put South Korea on a path to economic growth that allowed it to increase its per capita GDP by over 1000% in 18 years?[134] Although this question lingers as a point of debate, given the incredible economic growth that South Korea has continued to achieve since the Park administration, at it this point it seems that a more useful question would be "does it matter?" If South Korea were to simply accept that not all of the nation's experiences can be viewed in black-and-white, good-or-evil terms, and were to further simply embrace the fact that its prosperity has proved sustainable, whether under dictatorship or democracy, South Korea might take more pride in its own abilities, which could very well reduce the need for anti-Japanese rhetoric which it uses to create an identity for itself. Such a change in mindset would be indicative of the self-compassion needed to embrace one's vulnerability and use it as a means of connection.[135] Japan, too, could reach a much greater level of internal peace if it were to view its actions from a point of self-compassion. To do so, Japan must realize that although egregious were

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[134] Baker, 201-203.
[135] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 80.

committed- and that these crimes cannot simply be blamed on the military, or the people, or the state, but the combination of all three- that history does not relegate Japan to play the role of villain for the rest of its existence. Being known for such crimes is traumatic for Japan, and Brown's research has found that "the act of not discussing a traumatic event or confiding it to another person could be more damaging than the actual event."[136] Though Japan is guilty of inflicting trauma, it too has suffered trauma in knowing that its actions were extremely destructive, and the process of self-examination could aid in healing Japan's views of itself, rather than viewing its trauma as superseding that of another.

Within the bilateral relationship between South Korea and Japan, a key feeling that is largely absent and is necessary to create an environment in which forward movement can be made is trust. A sense of trust between these two nations has been consistently damaged by the unwillingness to deeply examine the historical issues at hand. Brown states "If I had to choose the form of betrayal that emerged most frequently from my research and was the most dangerous in terms of corroding the trust connection, I would say disengagement."[137] She explains that trust must be continually build upon and cannot come about immediately, which requires "full engagement."[138] South Korea and Japan must engage each other regarding the contentious issues of collective memory that still plague their relations in order to avoid finding themselves at a point where they are no longer able to address their problems. However, South Korea's tactic of frequently shaming Japan has encourage this environment of disengagement, as evidenced by the opinions expressed in Fukuoka and Schwartz's surveys- the feeling that Japanese youth feel a responsibility for Japan's past, but have also

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[136] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 82.
[137] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 51.
[138] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 51.

reached a point at which apologizing no longer seems to work, and they thus question the use of trying to connect.[139]

In addition to dealing with individual shame, Brown has researched shame in larger groups, and has proposed a set of steps to combat the growth of shame culture that can crop up in groups as large as governments. They are:

> 1. Supporting leaders who are willing to dare greatly and facilitate honest conversations about shame and cultivate shame-resistant cultures.
> 2. Facilitating a conscientious effort to see where shame might be functioning in the organization and how it might even be creeping into the way we engage with our co-workers and students.
> 3. Normalizing is a critical shame-resislience strategy. Leaders and managers can cultivate engagement by helping people know what to expect. What are the common struggles? How have other people dealt with them? What have your experiences been?
> 4. Training all employees on the differences between shame and guilt, and teaching them how to give and receive feedback in a way that fosters growth and engagement.[140]

Perhaps most important of these steps, and most applicable to South Korea and Japan, is the support for leaders who make a priority of looking into the shared experiences of the nation and adapting their approach to accommodate the feelings and needs of other nations. So far, this has not been the case, particularly in the case of the LDP, whose politicians frequently come under fire for their official visits to the Yasukuni shrine and politicians' "slips of the tongue" that disparage South Korea's worth and its culture.[141] Within Brown's process for combating shame in large groups, it is apparent that a trickle-down effect is expected to occur once officials and high-ranking members of society begin to combat shame, leading to an overall shift regarding how shameful issues are dealt with in a healthy manor.

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[139] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 192; Fukuoka and Schwartz, 78-79.
[140] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 196.
[141] He: Chapter 5, Location 5372.

Once Japan and South Korea have made sufficient progress in creating a cohesive

history that may then be used in diplomatic communication, they may adopt a diplomatic

approach that Brown describes as "sitting on the same side of the table."[142] This tactic

emphasizes creating an environment in which both participants feel like they are given equal

respect and value, and are working toward a common goal rather than simply expressing their

own opinions in an overly-official setting- in essence, speaking to each other rather than at

each other.[143] Brown also has established what she calls the "Engaged Feedback Checklist,"

which requires both parties to engage in discussion and negotiation only if they can adhere to

these rules:

> • I'm ready to sit next to you rather than across from you;
> • I'm willing to put the problem in front of us rather than between us (or sliding it toward you);
> • I'm ready to listen, ask questions, and accept that I may not fully understand the issue;
> • I want to acknowledge what you do well instead of picking apart your mistakes;
> • I recognize your strengths and how you can use them to address your challenges;
> • I can hold you accountable without shaming or blaming you;
> • I'm willing to own my part;
> • I can genuinely thank you for your efforts rather than criticize you for your failings;
> • I can talk about how resolving these challenges will lead to your growth and opportunity; and
> • I can model the vulnerability and openness that I can expect to see from you.[144]

In engaging with one another with the goal in mind of protecting their own particular

interests, and even their own personal perceptions, Japan and South Korea has not succeeded

in fostering communication that comes close to meeting this rubric. This is not to say that it

cannot be done. Myriad images are available of politicians from every sort of nation and

background coming together and physically sitting next to each other- Japan and South Korea

must truly internalize the sentiment of equality behind such an action in order to create an

environment of empathic, understanding communication. First, however, they must look

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[142] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 202.
[143] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 202.
[144] Brown, *Daring Greatly,* 204.

deeply at themselves and see their vulnerabilities so that they might communicate them in a productive, rather than manipulative, way.

Conclusion

The national memories within South Korea and Japan have long served as an impediment in their relations, and have not been adequately dealt with on either side in a way that could be used to create a sense of unity and friendship. Both countries have exhibited an unwillingness to examine their own memories, while the political establishment has used collective memories and sentiments to further their own political agendas. In Japan's case, acts of aggression committed against Korea and its other Asian neighbors have been de-emphasized, while Japan's own experience as a victim of aggression, particularly the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have been used in an attempt to absolve Japan of some sense of historical responsibility. South Korea, a nation that has unquestionably suffered periods of oppression and brutality, has been frustrated in their attempts to engage in diplomacy with Japan, as their desire to be given historical redress has not yet been met. However, South Korea has used its anti-Japanese rhetoric to a degree that no longer benefits its people, and keeps relations between itself and Japan at a point of stagnation. Both governments have approached these differences in memory that prove so contentious from standpoints that fail to take into account the deep-seated emotional associations that they hold toward one another. By entering into diplomatic communication from a space of vulnerability and empathizing with the other, it might be possible to warm relations in a way that feels more personal, in which both countries desires and needs are heard.

The process of understanding the lack of reconciliation between Japan and South Korea has required exploring the political conditions that have shaped bilateral interaction, as well as a few of the internal difficulties that affect how South Korea and Japan perceive themselves. I propose that through a process of introspection, coming to some cohesion regarding national memory, then relating to one another by "sitting on the same side of the table," Japan and South Korea might move forward in their reconciliation efforts. The

necessity of self-compassion in this introspective analysis must tackle such issues as how Japan can reconcile its experiences of victimhood with the reality that its aggressive behaviors do not have to define it, while South Korea must accept that it has experienced growth in some of the most unpleasant times in its recent history, and has therefore become stronger for it. Unfortunately, adopting an empathic stance in their diplomatic relations seems to be an unlikely route for Japan or South Korea, as memory is still an important weapon in the arsenals of political parties. To make such an approach work, both nations would have to set aside their priority on their own gains, and instead prioritize creating friendlier relations. However, should they choose to do so, these two nations can use their similar cultural backgrounds and strong economies to serve as a locus of stability within Asia. Further, such success could serve as an example of the possibilities for reconciliation in other similarly divided regions.

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