

# UNDERSTANDING HISTORY IN ASIA

What Diplomatic Documents Reveal



## HATTORI RYUJI

Translated by Tara Cannon

UNDERSTANDING  
**HISTORY**  
<sup>IN</sup> **ASIA**

JAPAN LIBRARY

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TRANSLATION NOTE

All Japanese, Chinese, and Korean names appearing in this book are written with surname first and given name last. In addition, all Japanese words and names have been romanized in accordance with the Hepburn system, and macrons have been applied to indicate long vowels wherever deemed appropriate.

Some words critical to the discussion have been included in Japanese alongside their English translations. These are intended to assist readers familiar with Japanese in discerning the nuances of the original Japanese phraseology.

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Hattori Ryūji. Translated by Tara Cannon.

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## Preface

I am extremely gratified to have this opportunity to release my book in English as part of the Japan Library, an undertaking of the Japan Publishing Industry Foundation for Culture (JPIC).

The issue of the perception of history has arisen in a variety of contexts, including politics and society, education, culture, and the media. This book analyzes the issue of the perception of history from the diplomatic aspect, primarily within the postwar relations among Japan, China, and South Korea. It makes use not only of publicly disclosed documents but also internal documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan released under Japan's Information Disclosure Law. The book is entitled *Understanding History in Asia: What Diplomatic Documents Reveal* because it devotes a considerable amount of space to diplomatic documents. In addition, I met with and interviewed as many of the people directly involved as possible.

The matter of the perception of history that is taken up within these pages includes, in concrete terms, issues regarding Japanese history textbooks, visits to Yasukuni Shrine, and comfort women. Alongside these, it analyzes in chronological order statements that successive administrations have released as issues arose regarding how history should be perceived, including the Miyazawa Statement, the Katō Statement, the Kōno

Statement, the Murayama Statement, the Koizumi Statement, and the Kan Statement. This work also argues that efforts by Japan, China, and South Korea to improve relations have resulted in periods of favorable relations; it does not focus only on deteriorating relations between Japan and its two neighbors.

I myself have been involved with the Japan–China Joint History Research initiative in the past. My findings were compiled in the book *Nitchū rekishi ninshiki: “Tanaka jōsōbun” o meguru sōkoku 1927–2010* (Understanding Sino-Japanese history: Conflict over the “Tanaka Memorial,” 1927–2010; University of Tokyo Press, 2010).

Books I have written on related topics include *Nitchū kokkō seijōka* (Normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China; Chuokoron-Shinsha, 2011), which had a Korean translation released in 2017 with an English version now being contemplated; and *Ōhira Masayoshi rinen to gaikō* (Ōhira Masayoshi’s ideas and diplomacy; Iwanami Shoten, 2014), which had a Chinese-language version released in 2017. I would be pleased if these books might also serve as references for my readers.

I wish to extend my deep appreciation to all those involved in getting this book published, including the translator and JPIC, and of course Iwanami Shoten, the publisher of the original Japanese version of this book.

## Introduction

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# From the Tokyo Military Tribunal to the Normalization of Japan–South Korea and Japan–China relations



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Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei (left) during a visit to China for negotiations on the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, with Premier Zhou Enlai (September 30, 1972).



### **Six Dimensions**

Historical issues came to the surface in a variety of ways after the end of the Cold War; it was not a phenomenon unique to Japan. Journalist Funabashi Yōichi has analyzed factors that would cause such a phenomenon to reoccur. Funabashi argues that in the backdrop to historical issues one finds the spread of legal systems that push human rights to the fore, the heightening of a longing for identity as old ideologies collapse, oral history that hands down memories in their raw form becoming mainstream within popular culture, and the rise of individual empowerment through the development of the Internet, among other factors (Funabashi 2001).

Historical issues have multiple dimensions to them. Bu Ping, the director of the Institute of Modern History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences who served as the chair of the Chinese side of the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee, identifies the three levels of such issues: political judgment, emotions felt by the general public, and academic research. He argues that each of these affects the others. More detail on Japan–China joint history research can be found in the chart on page 191 (Shōji 2002; Iechika et al. 2007; Bu 2011).

Here, I wish to assert the six dimensions of policies, image, knowledge, education, memories, and emotions, each broken down by actor and by the medium through which actions are taken.

While it is not possible to draw sharp distinctions, an attempt to schematize these dimensions would result in something like this chart.

**Chart:** The six dimensions of historical issues, by actor and medium

	<b>ACTORS</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>
POLICIES	Politicians, bureaucrats	Parliament, diplomacy, public relations
IMAGE	Reporters, journalists	Newspapers/magazines, television, radio
KNOWLEDGE	Intellectuals	Books and other writings
EDUCATION	Teachers, students	Textbooks
MEMORIES	Persons directly and indirectly involved, bereaved family members	Experiences, hearsay, exhibitions
EMOTIONS	Citizenry	Assemblies, the Internet

At times these are linked together, and at others they are separate from one another. This book will primarily take up policies, with a focus on diplomatic policy from the Japanese side. It focuses on analyzing Japan–China and Japan–South Korea relations. It leaves the matter of relations with Southeast Asia and the West and theories regarding them in the hands of other scholars (Kurosawa et al. 2011; Kosuge et al. 2011; Fukushima 2012).

Conflicts between Japan and China regarding textbooks existed even before World War II. I myself have conducted analyses between Japan and China and Japan and Russia regarding the contentious “Tanaka Memorial,” a fabricated document purported to be a memorandum from Prime Minister Tanaka Giichi to Emperor Hirohito. This book does not address the situation before World War II (Takada 2004; Namiki et al. 2010; Hattori 2010).

The arguments in this book cover the postwar period, particularly after the 1980s. This is because historical issues that connect to the present day have their origin in the textbook screening of 1982 (Zhang et al. 2002; Hatano 2011; Kawashima 2012; Shōji 2012).

## **The Tokyo Military Tribunal and the San Francisco Peace Treaty**

Paying attention first of all to apologies and compensation, I would like to consider the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (the Tokyo Military Tribunal), the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea, and the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China.

Upon its defeat in the Pacific War, Japan entered a period of occupation, and on September 11, 1945, orders were issued for the arrest of wartime Premier Tōjō Hideki and others. Although the following day the cabinet of Prince Higashikuni Naruhiko decided to establish a voluntary tribunal, the cabinet members resigned en masse on October 5 without issuing a government statement. The Imperial Japanese Army attempted to settle matters by dispensing only light punishments, such as putting a stop to honorable treatment toward Lieutenant General Honma Masaharu, commander of the Japanese Fourteenth Army in the Philippines, after establishing an investigation committee on prisoners of war. Honma was tried in the Manila war crimes tribunals and executed by firing squad (Shibata 1995; Hayashi 2005; Awaya 2006; Nagai 2010).

The next cabinet, under Shidehara Kijūrō, took the decision to establish a department for investigating the causes of Japan's defeat in the war, announcing it in late November as the Greater East Asia War Investigation Committee. Shidehara himself took on the role of committee head, but the committee's purpose was to clarify the causes and actual circumstances surrounding Japan's defeat, not to investigate responsibility. As there was also interference in the committee from the Soviet Union, it was abolished.

On May 3, 1946, the Tokyo Military Tribunal began. "Crimes against peace" and "crimes against humanity" were applications of ex-post facto law, and actions by the Allies such as dropping atomic bombs were left unquestioned. The verdicts included the clear error of claiming that former Prime Minister Hirota Kōki had served as a member of the Supreme War



council, and the Japanese in the courtroom were unable to fight back their irritation.

The Tokyo Military Tribunal has also been called “victor’s justice”; there is even a phrase in Japanese characterizing “a Tokyo Military Tribunal view of history.” Even if there is no denying the aspect of “victor’s justice,” it is not the case that the verdicts of the Tokyo Military Tribunal are a complete denial of modern Japanese history. The United States’ view of Japan, which served as one of the keynote themes in the trials, was comprised of the dualism of good and evil. Moderates and militarists confronted each other, and ultimately the moderates succumbed to the militarists.

If there were a perception of history that denies modern Japan completely, that would be the one expressed in the official view of history of the former Soviet Union. The Soviet Union placed importance on the responsibility of the *zaibatsu*, Japan’s enormous industrial and financial conglomerates, which were not put on trial at the Tokyo Military Tribunal (Hattori 2006; Hattori 2008).

Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru and others concluded the San Francisco Peace Treaty on September 8, 1951, of which Article 11 stipulates that Japan “accepts the judgments” of the Tokyo Military Tribunal and other war-crimes courts. This was the result of the British proposal, which was more punitive than the American proposal, and it was not the case that Japan actively demonstrated its own value judgment toward the trials (Sakamoto 2005; Higurashi 2008).

In the speech he gave when accepting the treaty, Yoshida spoke of repentance, saying, “It is not a treaty of vengeance, but an instrument of reconciliation.”

We have listened here to the delegates who have recalled the terrible human suffering, and the great material destruction of the late war in the Pacific. It is with feelings of sorrow that we recall the part played in that catastrophic human experience by the old Japan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [MOFA] 2002).

There was at that time a separate movement in Japan, and through amendments on August 7, 1953, to the Law for the Relief of War Victims and Survivors, pensions and condolence money came to be paid also to the bereaved family members of those who had been executed or who died in prison. This is because, in the government's view, war crimes were deemed not to result in a criminal record under domestic law. Class-B and class-C war criminals were enshrined alongside other war dead at Yasukuni Shrine from 1959 to 1968, with class-A war criminals also enshrined there in 1978.

### **The Normalization of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and South Korea**

Negotiations on the establishment of diplomatic relations with South Korea took a great deal of time. On October 15, 1953, Japanese representative Kubota Kan'ichirō stated that Japan's annexation of Korea also had positive aspects, causing negotiations to break down. Kubota retorted that if South Korea were to demand reparations, the Japanese side would offset it by "suggesting as a counterproposal that Japan had greened the country's denuded mountains and cultivated the South Korean economy by building its railroads, constructing its ports, developing its rice paddies, and providing an enormous amount of assistance year in and year out" (Asano et al. 2010A; Asano et al. 2010B; Asano et al. 2012A).

The Japanese side withdrew Kubota's remarks and relinquished its claims on Japanese assets in South Korea on December 31, 1957, during the Kishi Nobusuke administration. On September 6, 1960, during the Ikeda Hayato cabinet, Foreign Minister Kosaka Zentarō visited South Korea, a first for any cabinet member after the war. Kosaka released a statement saying, "The thing I find most regrettable is that [Japan and South Korea] have strayed from their natural state of affairs." Although Ikeda had also had a hand in writing that statement, the South Korean side was unhappy with the statement's failure to mention remorse for the past (Asano et al. 2011A).

On November 12, 1962, Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi met with

the director of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, Kim Jong-pil, and agreed regarding the issue of the right to claim reparations that Japan would provide three hundred million US dollars as grants, two hundred million US dollars as long-term, low-interest loans, and a minimum of one hundred million US dollars as private credit accommodation. This was called the Ōhira-Kim memorandum.

The Satō Eisaku cabinet dispatched Foreign Minister Shiina Etsusaburō to South Korea on February 17, 1965. Upon touching down at Gimpo International Airport, Shiina shook hands with Foreign Minister Lee Tong-won and read a statement aloud:

In our two countries' long history, there have been unfortunate times (*fukō na kikan* 不幸な期間). It is truly regrettable (*makoto ni ikan* まことに遺憾) and we are deeply remorseful (*fukaku hansei* 深く反省).

However, this year, against a backdrop of historical relations stretching back several thousand years, and taking a forward-looking posture, we will establish lasting neighborly and friendly relations, and, through these relations, create a starting point for a new history in which our two nations will prosper by working together. I believe that this is something that we mutually hope for.

His voice was low and clear. Special Coordinator Maeda Toshikazu of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs interpreted the statement into Korean. This scene was broadcast all across South Korea by both television and radio. The wording "deeply remorseful" created a favorable impression. It was wording that Shiina had incorporated upon the suggestion of Ushiroku Torao, director-general of the Foreign Ministry's Asian Affairs Bureau. Foreign Minister Lee said, "That was very welcome indeed" (*Shiina Etsusaburō tsuitō-roku kankō-kai* [The society to publish the memorial books of Shiina Etsusaburō] 1982; Maeda et al. 1985; Kim 1986; Fujita 1997; Asano et al. 2011A).

As Shiina's statement was announced immediately after touching

down at the airport, it is remembered as the “landing statement.” It was the first official apology by anyone at the cabinet level. Seen from present-day sensibilities, it may be considered insufficient, but at that time it was rare to talk about responsibility for colonial rule, even in the West (Nagahara 2009).

This author interviewed Nakae Yōsuke, who accompanied Shiina as the director of the Legal Affairs Division of the Treaties Bureau at that time. Nakae had not been informed of the landing statement, and he was surprised at its straightforward content. Nakae said, “Shiina thought that unless he issued such a statement, Japan–South Korea relations were not going to get any better” (Kim 1986; Nakae 2010).

The recollections on the South Korean side had a different nuance. According to South Korean Foreign Minister Lee and Ambassador to Japan Kim Dong-jo, Shiina’s visit to South Korea was also a response to the plan of an “apology envoy” put forth by Lee and others. Lee had said to President Park Chung-hee,

Your Excellency, our people have a complex toward Japan and a victim mentality intertwined in a complex way.... Therefore at this juncture I intend to call the Japanese foreign minister to Seoul and hold talks with him here. And of course I intend to have Japan, as the past perpetrator, make an apology.

With this, he received Park’s approval (Takasaki 1996; Lee 1997; Yoshizawa 2005).

Moreover, Kim Dong-jo claims that Kim had urged Shiina to visit South Korea, saying, “Stating the official view of the Japanese government on the unfortunate past will ease the feelings of the South Korean people significantly and also be greatly useful in normalizing South Korea–Japan diplomatic relations” (Kim 1986).

At this time, Shiina had already prepared the initial draft of the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. After multiple

rounds of negotiations with Lee and others, Shiina managed to achieve an initialing of the treaty on February 20 (Shiina 1970).

Both “regret” and “remorse” were incorporated into the joint statement that was released.

Foreign Minister Lee explained the feelings of the South Korean people toward Japan that had arisen because of the unfortunate relations between the people of Japan and South Korea at one time in the past. Keeping Foreign Minister Lee’s remarks firmly in mind, Minister of Foreign Affairs Shiina stated such past relations were regrettable and [that he] was deeply remorseful (Kajima Institute of International Peace 1984).

In addition, Lee visited Japan from March into April and requested from Shiina an increase in the amount of private credit accommodation and other matters. The Ōhira-Kim memorandum was revised and the two sides agreed on the new figures of three hundred million US dollars as grants, two hundred million US dollars as long-term, low-interest loans, and a minimum of three hundred million US dollars as private credit accommodation (Kimiya 2011; Asano 2013).

South Korea called these monies “funds from claims against Japan.” Article Two of the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea, signed on June 22 together with the Treaty on Basic Relations, states that the problem concerning claims “is settled completely and finally.” That day, the two sides also concluded an agreement on fisheries and an agreement on cultural cooperation, and exchanged notes concerning the settlement of disputes.

The South Korean government, thinking that the introduction of funds from claims against Japan would be useful in achieving its second five-year economic plan, allocated the funds to such projects as the Pohang Iron and Steel Company, the Soyang Dam, the Seoul–Busan highway, an expansion of the water supply and sewage systems, and an expansion of long-distance telephone facilities.

As for individuals claiming compensation from Japan, the South Korean government was to compensate them through the use of the funds from claims against Japan. Moreover, South Korea concluded arrangements with Japan after requesting additional loans for modernizing its agriculture and fishery industries, expanding its medical facilities, electrifying its national railways, building subways, and other such activities (Nagano 2008).

### **Individual Compensation Provided by the South Korean Government**

In May 2012, the Supreme Court of South Korea returned cases on civilians used as forced labor by Japanese companies during World War II to lower courts, saying that “the right of individuals to seek compensation has not been relinquished.” Japanese courts, recognizing that the claims had been “settled completely and finally” through the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea, had decided against the plaintiffs, but the Supreme Court of South Korea criticized this as a legitimization of Japan’s colonial rule.

In July 2013, the cases that had been remanded to the Seoul High Court and Busan High Court were decided in favor of wartime forced laborers and the families of deceased forced laborers, recognizing their right to seek compensation as individuals. The courts ordered Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to pay them compensation. The South Korean government had also recognized that compensation for requisitioned civilians was included in the grant of 300 million US dollars given under the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea, so this ruling overturned the Claims Agreement.\*<sup>1</sup>

Park Cheol-hee, director of the Institute for Japanese Studies at the University of Seoul, has expressed his opinion as follows:

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\*1 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 10, 2013.

The fundamental principle regarding the issue of requisitioned civilians is that the South Korean government would take it upon itself to proceed with compensation. The issue of forced labor by civilians is included in the eight-point list of demands against Japan that the South Korean side submitted during negotiations on the normalization of diplomatic relations. This is something already settled under the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea, so [overturning it] also affects the matter of international trust.\*<sup>2</sup>

That is to say, in point five of the eight-point list of demands South Korea submitted on November 18, 1960, at the subcommittee on the right to make general claims, it is written that South Korea “claims the return of Japanese sovereign bonds, Japanese municipal bonds, banknotes issued by the Bank of Japan, uncollected funds owed to South Korean victims of forced labor, reparations, and other claims.”

As for the uncollected funds owed to South Korean victims of forced labor, at the subcommittee meetings on the right to make general claims that were held on April 28 and May 10, 1961, “The Japanese side repeatedly suggested settling the matter on an individual basis, but the South Korean side indicated its desire that the South Korean government receive payment of the total amount and conduct the payment to each individual through domestic measures set up by the South Korean side.” That is to say, when Japan brought up individual compensation, South Korea rejected the Japanese proposal, petitioning that the South Korean government would receive the entire amount, including compensation for individuals, and then pay the victims compensation out of that total amount received (Asano et al. 2010A; Asano et al. 2011B; Asano et al. 2011C; Asano et al. 2012B).

The subcommittee later worked out the details of other matters in the fifth point. Although the South Korean government paid out roughly 5.8 billion yen in individual compensation to victims and also deceased victims’

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\*2 *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, December 16, 2013.

surviving family members, this amounted to no more than approximately 5.4 percent of the 300 million US dollars it received in grants (Takasaki 1996; Ōta 2003; Yoshizawa 2005).

### **Taiwan and China**

On April 28, 1952, the Yoshida cabinet concluded the Sino-Japanese Peace Treaty (Treaty of Taipei) with the Republic of China—that is, Taiwan. The recognition of Taiwan instead of China was established policy, and Taiwan relinquished its claims to reparations. The signing of the Treaty of Taipei took place a few hours before the San Francisco Peace Treaty entered into force.

Taiwan placed emphasis on the “returning virtue for malice” speech that Chiang Kai-shek had delivered at the end of the war, which symbolized Taiwan’s broad-minded policies. The government of the Republic of China, in the era when it still held the reins of power on the mainland, was determined to seek reparations and had actually received, as reparation payments in kind, all the industrial equipment and other infrastructure Japan had left behind (Kawashima 2000; Baba 2014).

When Chiang Kai-shek was driven off the mainland, the Taiwanese government, not having been invited to the San Francisco Peace Conference, engaged in direct negotiations with Japan, leading to the Treaty of Taipei. In private talks held during the negotiations, Taiwan set forth four major principles: that the Treaty of Taipei would be a peace treaty; that Taiwan would have the position of the legitimate government of the entirety of China; that all unequal treaties would be abolished in their entirety; and that Taiwan would claim reparations.

During the private talks, the representative of Taiwan forgot to include the claim for reparations, which was added some time later. For Taiwan, the highest priority was being recognized as the legitimate government of all of China, including the mainland, and the reparation claims appeared to have been positioned as a bargaining chip. Japan saw through this, and in



the Treaty of Taipei, Taiwan relinquished its claims for reparations (Hattori 2013).<sup>\*3</sup>

With the conclusion of the Treaty of Taipei, mainland China and Japan had no diplomatic relations for decades. On March 1, 1955, China surveyed the prospects for Japan–China relations by means of a document entitled “On the principles and plans for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China’s policies toward Japan and actions toward Japan.” These were drafted by Wang Jiaxiang, the minister of the External Communication Department of the Communist Party of China, and Zhang Wentian, deputy minister of foreign affairs, with the permission of Premier Zhou Enlai, and were approved later by Chairman Mao Zedong and others as China’s principles.

Those principles were to promote friendly relations between Japan and China while calling for the withdrawal of US forces in Japan and to plot the estrangement of Japan and the United States. Furthermore, Japan was to be made neutral by China exercising its influence over Japan’s anti-US movement, which opposed what was considered a lack of independence from the US. Seven points were offered as concrete policies, specifically trade between Japan and China, the resolution of fisheries issues, cultural and friendship exchanges, exchanges among legislators, the treatment of war criminals and of Japanese remaining in China, the restoration of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, and maneuvering regarding public opinion in Japan toward China. These were an expression of “the people moving the government to act,” promoting Japan’s neutrality through private-sector diplomacy while advocating friendship between Japan and China.

There is another explanation; namely, at this time, China had already decided to relinquish claims for reparations (Zhang 1997A; Zhang 1997B;

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\*3 Ushiroku Torao [director of the Second Division, Asian Affairs Bureau, MOFA] 1952, *Nikka heiwa jōyaku kōshō keii* [The course of negotiations on the Treaty of Taipei], June 25 lecture; *Nitchū kokkō seijōka* [Normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China] 2012-768, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

Zhang 1997C; Zhang 2002; Mōri 2006; Liu 2009A; Liu 2009B; Liu 2010; Ōsawa 2012; Ōsawa 2013).

On April 22, 1955, Takasaki Tatsunosuke, the director of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry's Economic Planning Agency, met with Zhou Enlai in Bandung, Indonesia. This was the first ministerial-level meeting between Japan and China. Takasaki apologized, saying "During the war, Japan caused a lot of trouble (*gomeiwaku* 御迷惑) for China, and I wish to apologize sincerely." This word *gomeiwaku* is the same expression that Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei used seventeen years later in Beijing and which was seen as problematic.

Zhou did not reproach Takasaki for the *gomeiwaku* statement.

Let us each forget about what happened during the war. Over the fifty years after the First Sino-Japanese War, Japan, because of militarists, mistakenly caused various kinds of damage to China, but Japan itself also suffered various kinds of damage. I feel this was extremely unfortunate for both of our countries.

Takasaki suggested promoting trade between them. In response, Zhou emphasized,

The normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan is something that both China and Japan must make efforts toward.... The fact that Japan treats Taiwan as its partner instead of us, supported by such an enormous number of Chinese citizens, is a matter of regret for all Chinese (Okada 1983; Miyagi 2001; Makimura 2013).<sup>\*4</sup>

This was China showing its flexible side, but its official position was unyielding. On August 16, 1955, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared

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\*4 Okada Akira, *Takasaki-Shū kaidanroku* [Minutes of the Takasaki-Zhou meeting], April 22, 1995; *Nitchū kokkō seijōka (Chūkyō yōjin no hatsugen)* [The normalization of Japan-China relations (statements of dignitaries from the Communist Party of China)], MOFA documents disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2011-717, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

to an international audience a claim for reparations, saying that Japan had “slaughtered more than ten million Chinese citizens and caused damages to China’s public and private assets amounting to tens of billions of US dollars” (Kazankai Foundation 1998).

Takasaki visited China from October into November 1962 and engaged in trade negotiations with Chinese representative Liao Chengzhi. Takasaki and Liao had already met at the Bandung Conference. The Memorandum Concerning Sino-Japanese Long-Term Comprehensive Trade signed on November 9 came to be called the LT Trade Agreement, after Liao and Takasaki’s initials.

The day before, Zhao Anbo, head of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Communist Party of China, had suggested to Takasaki that claims for reparations be relinquished.

China has the right to make claims for reparations against Japan. It is said the amount may be as high as fifty billion US dollars....

While it is certainly true that China has the right to claim reparations, even when we restore diplomatic relations with Japan, we have no intention of vigorously pushing the issue of that sort of claim into the forefront. The reason for that is that, as the example of Germany after World War I clearly shows, if a country forcefully pushes that kind of claim to the fore, it will give rise to fascists inside Japan.\*<sup>5</sup>

### **The Joint Communiqué between Japan and China**

Once the Tanaka Kakuei cabinet was inaugurated on July 7, 1972, China-Japan Friendship Association Deputy Secretary-General Sun Pinghua

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\*5 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, “*Takasaki Tatsunosuke giin no hōchū ni kansuru ken* [Regarding the visit of National Diet member Takasaki Tatsunosuke to China], December 20, 1962; *Honpō tai chūkyō bōeki kankei, minkan bōeki kyōtei kankei, Takasaki-Ryō oboegaki kōkan (1962)* [Japan’s trade relations with the Communist Party of China: Nongovernmental trade agreement: Exchange of memoranda between Takasaki and Liao (1962)], E’ 2.5.2.2-1-2, Reel E’-0212, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

visited Japan. Together with Xiao Xiangqian, the Sino-Japanese Memorandum Trade Office chief representative in Tokyo, Sun called on Foreign Minister Ōhira Masayoshi.

At this time Sun conveyed to Ōhira, “According to press reports, Prime Minister Tanaka is saying that if he went to Beijing, he’d first have to make an apology. I don’t think an apology is necessary. There is no need to bring up again things that have already finished.” Xiao continued, “Premier Zhou has been saying this for quite some time. It is not necessary for Prime Minister Tanaka to make an apology even if he comes to Beijing. It will be enough to talk together about friendly relations. We need to be looking ahead; there is no need to look behind us” (Wang 2012).

Tanaka and Ōhira landed in Beijing on September 25. At the third bilateral foreign ministers’ meeting held on September 27, the wording of an apology became a topic of discussion. The initial draft prepared by the Chinese side used the expression “Japanese militarism,” whereas Japan’s initial draft said, “we express our deep remorse for the suffering and damage that came about because of the war.” Tanaka had told Ōhira to avoid the word “militarism.”

After the negotiations had finished, the sentence, “The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious damage that Japan caused in the past to the Chinese people through war, and deeply reproaches itself” had come to be incorporated into the preamble of the Japan–China Joint Communiqué. China relinquished the right to seek reparations (Hattori 2011; Hattori 2012; Hattori 2014).<sup>\*6</sup>

The reason China wanted to incorporate “militarism” into the wording was to make a distinction from average Japanese citizens. That dichotomy is becoming blurred in present-day China, and some point out that the

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\*6 Morita Hajime, *Hōchū nikki* [Journal of a visit to China], September 26, 1972. Cabinet Intelligence and Research Office, *Nitchū kankei ni kansuru Ōhira daijin no naiwa (memo) (kokusai mondai kenkyūjo ni oite)* [Minister Ōhara’s private comments regarding Japan–China relations (at the Japan Institute of International Affairs) (memo)], February 1, 1973; *Nitchū kokkō seijōka (jūyō shiryō)* [Normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China (important document)] 2011-720, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China sacrificed the interests of general Chinese citizens (Lu 2007; Kawashima et al. 2009; Wang 2013).

Recently, the question of what exactly was relinquished through the agreement in the Joint Communiqué on the relinquishment of the right to seek compensation has become fluid. On April 19, 2014, China's Shanghai Maritime Affairs Court impounded a vessel belonging to Mitsui O.S.K. Lines at a port in Zhejiang province. This was because, although a Chinese company had rented vessels to the Japanese company Daidō Kaiun in 1936, the lease had not been paid on them. Daidō Kaiun was the predecessor of a company that had merged with Mitsui O.S.K. Lines.

From Japan's perspective, claims for compensation had been settled under the Japan–China Joint Communiqué. At a press conference, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide stated the matter was “entirely capable of undermining the spirit of the normalization of relations at its very foundations.” China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that the matter was entirely unrelated to wartime compensation.\*7

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines paid several billion yen as a deposit. Tong Zeng, chairman of the Chinese Association for Claiming Compensation from Japan, revealed that in Tianjin as well there was a trend in the association toward filing lawsuits over vessel charter contracts concluded during the Second Sino-Japanese War era. Tong also concurrently holds the position of president of the China Federation for Defending the Senkaku Islands. This federation, an anti-Japanese group that asserts China's territorial rights over the Senkaku Islands, receives assistance from a number of lawyers in Japan.\*8

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\*7 *Asahi Shimbun*, April 22, 2014.

\*8 *Mainichi Shimbun*, April 24, 2014.

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# The Japanese History Textbook Issue and “Mutual Trust”



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At a state dinner at the Imperial Palace welcoming President Chun Doo-hwan of South Korea (left), Emperor Hirohito states, “It is truly regrettable that there was an unfortunate past between our two nations.” (September 6, 1984)



# 1. The Meeting between Emperor Hirohito and Deng Xiaoping

## Deng Xiaoping Visits Japan

Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping visited Japan on October 22, 1978. On October 23, he exchanged the instruments of ratification for the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China and met with Emperor Hirohito. Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo met with Deng on October 23 and 25 (Li 2005; Wakatsuki 2006; Shiroyama 2009).

The response to my request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to disclose the recorded proceedings of the meeting between Emperor Hirohito and Deng was, “As the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not in possession of the documents requested, the items will not be disclosed (due to non-existence).” Although minutes of their meeting may not exist, a portion of the meeting’s content is recorded in a report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ Asian Affairs Bureau.



Emperor Hirohito of Japan (right) welcomes Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping of China to the Imperial Palace in Tokyo (October 23, 1978).

The emperor granted an audience to Vice-Premier Deng. [Official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China] the *People’s Daily* carried this prominently, including photographs, and it appeared that Vice-Premier Deng was deeply impressed by the various statements made by the emperor. The audience with the emperor seems to have had the effect of making a symbolic impression upon both the Japanese and the Chinese people, that the occasion had



put an end to the past between Japan and China both in name and in substance, and that Japan–China relations are now in a new era and a new stage.\*9

According to the official annals of Emperor Shōwa compiled by the Imperial Household Agency, the emperor stated that “there had been some unfortunate events at one time.”

From 12:10 in the afternoon in the Takenoma chamber of the Main Hall, Mr. Deng Xiaoping, Vice-Premier of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), a state guest visiting Japan as the first state leader of the PRC to do so since its founding, along with his wife, had an audience with the emperor. At that time, the emperor conveyed to Vice-Premier Deng, who in the morning had at the Prime Minister’s Office completed the ceremony for exchanging the instruments of ratification for the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China, his wishes that despite the fact that in the long history between the two nations, there had been some unfortunate events at one time, goodwill between the two nations would be advanced in the future....

In response to this welcome, on the 25th, Vice-Premier Deng asked MOFA’s chief of protocol to convey his appreciation to the emperor and empress, and the emperor received this message on November 1.\*10

The visit to Japan by Deng was the first by a high-ranking Chinese official since diplomatic relations had been normalized. Fukuda used the words “regrettable” (*ikan* 遺憾) and “remorse” (*hansei* 反省) at the beginning of their meeting.

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\*9 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan [MOFA], Asian Affairs Bureau, *Tōshōhei fuku-sōri no hōnichi to sono hyōka* [Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping’s visit to Japan and an appraisal of it], October 30, 1978, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-851

\*10 *Shōwa Ten’nō jitsuroku* [The official annals of Emperor Shōwa], vol. 55, October 23, 1978.

Although Japan and China have a history of friendly cooperation stretching back 2,000 years, I am filled with remorse that in this century multiple unfortunate events occurred that were deeply regrettable. On the basis of this remorse, I believe that such events must never be repeated, and, as we open this meeting, on behalf of the Government of Japan and the Japanese people, I state my wishes for Japan and China to move forward for all time in a relationship of good will and friendship, both in name and in substance.

Deng responded, “The unfortunate decades are nothing more than unfortunate episodes in the course of history” (MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Fukuda sōri/Tō fuku-sōri kaidan kiroku (Dai 1 kaimē)* [Record of the talks between Prime Minister Fukuda and Vice-Premier Deng (First meeting)], October 23, 1978, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-851).

Deng is said to have confided to Nakasone Yasuhiro, chairperson of the general council of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), “I was astonished listening to the various things the emperor said. I never imagined those words would be said to me” (Nakasone 2012).

### **The Enshrinement of Class-A War Criminals**

On October 17, 1978, five days before Deng Xiaoping made his visit to Japan, class-A war criminals were enshrined at Yasukuni Shrine during one of its grand festivals. It was the chief priest of the shrine, Matsudaira Nagayoshi, who pressed for their enshrinement. Matsudaira’s grandfather was Matsudaira Yoshinaga, the local lord of Fukui, and his father Yoshitami was engaged in reforms prescribed by the General Headquarters of the Allied Powers as the Minister of the Imperial Household. The previous chief priest, Tsukuba Fujimaro, who had been unenthusiastic about their enshrinement, had died suddenly the previous March.

Having been influenced by Hiraizumi Kiyoshi, who advocated the view

that the history of Japan centered around the emperor and that fidelity to the emperor was a virtue, Matsudaira Nagayoshi said, “I think it will be impossible for Japan to be rehabilitated spiritually unless we reject the Tokyo Military Tribunal, so we should also enshrine the so-called class-A war criminals.” Matsudaira was aware that Emperor Hirohito was opposed to their enshrinement. Kyodo News reported on their enshrinement on April 14, 1979, as an exclusive scoop.\*<sup>11</sup>

Prime Ministers Ōhira Masayoshi and Suzuki Zenkō visited Yasukuni Shrine even after this enshrinement became known, but on those occasions neither China nor South Korea criticized the visits.

Ōhira visited China on December 5, 1979, and at talks with Premier Hua Guofeng and Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, he announced the start of yen-denominated loans backed by the Japanese government. Ōhira had been the foreign minister when Japan and China normalized their diplomatic relations and was mindful of the fact that China had renounced its claims to war reparations. Regarding the renunciation of reparation claims and the soft yen loans, Morita Hajime, a close aide to Ōhira, noted, “In Ōhira’s mind, the two were connected” (2010).

## 2. The First History Textbook Issue and the Miyazawa Statement

### From Inaccurate Reporting to Making Corrections

In 1970s Japan, a friendly mood toward China emerged as the underlying tone. In contrast, the 1980s can be called a period in which historical issues became manifest. Emblematic of these were the history textbook issue and the matter of Yasukuni Shrine.

The history textbook issue had its origins in inaccurate reporting by

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\*11 *Mainichi Shimbun* “Yasukuni” news crew 2007.

newspapers and TV regarding the screening process for textbooks. On June 26, 1982, it was reported that the Ministry of Education had, during the process of screening senior high school history textbooks, forced a publisher to rewrite a passage stating that Japan had “invaded” (*shinryaku* 侵略) China to instead say that Japan had “advanced into” (*shinshutsu* 進出) China.

This issue was raised on July 29 and 30 in the House of Representatives Committee on the Cabinet, Committee on Education, and Committee on Foreign Affairs, as well as in the House of Councillors Committee on Education and Committee on Judicial Affairs. Suzuki Isao, director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau, and Fujimura Kazuo, head of the bureau’s Textbook Authorization Division, attended these on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

According to the minutes of the July 30 meeting of the House of Representatives Committee on Education, Suzuki responded during questioning that while there had been no instances of wording being modified to “advanced into” because of compulsory correction orders (*shūsei iken* 修正意見) given to publishers during the screening process, there had been a case in which “non-binding suggestions for improvements” (*kaizen iken* 改善意見) had resulted in a textbook using the word “entered” (*shinnyū* 進入). He reported that this was because that same textbook had used the wording “advanced into” in a passage on the West’s policies toward Asia, so that suggestion was calling for consistency among expressions used for similar factual events.

This response by Suzuki meant that the news report of June 26 was inaccurate. However, Suzuki and others did not explicitly argue it had been incorrect, and awareness that the original reporting had been erroneous did not become widespread. On July 31, the *Asahi Shimbun* criticized the explanation of “non-binding suggestions for improvements” provided by the Ministry of Education bureaucrats as being inconsistent with the actual situation. While this was by no means limited to the *Asahi*, more than a full month after the news first broke in June, people still failed to realize that the initial reporting had been erroneous.

The ministers in the Suzuki Zenkō cabinet related to the matter were Foreign Minister Sakurauchi Yoshio and Education Minister Ogawa Heiji. The mere involvement of both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education meant that a complex policy process ensued. Sakurauchi had himself served in the field during the Second Sino-Japanese War, and he had said he had “a special attachment to peace and friendship exchanges between Japan and China” (Sakurauchi 1994).

On August 1, a visit by Ogawa to China was refused by China’s Education Ministry. On August 6, a proposal to dispatch the relevant bureau chiefs from both the Foreign Ministry and the Education Ministry was rejected by the government of South Korea, and in their stead, Mitsuzuka Hiroshi, the chair of the Liberal Democratic Party’s subcommittee on the textbook issue, and others visited South Korea on August 22.

On August 12, Sakurauchi announced his remarks as foreign minister, recognizing the need for further revision of the passage. Prime Minister Suzuki, at a press conference on August 23, stated, “We will work to make improvements during textbook authorization so that textbooks are even more appropriate,” and “It is a fact that there is criticism that Japan’s actions before the war were, internationally, an ‘invasion,’ and the government’s view is that this should be adequately recognized.” This press conference will be given deeper consideration on pages 44 and 45.

On August 26, Chief Cabinet Secretary Miyazawa Kiichi released a statement saying,

[The] spirit in the Japan–ROK Joint Communique and the Japan–China Joint Communique naturally should also be respected in Japan’s school education and textbook authorization. Recently, however, the Republic of Korea, China, and others have been criticizing some descriptions in Japanese textbooks. From the perspective of building friendship and goodwill with neighboring countries, Japan will pay due attention to these criticisms and make corrections at the Government’s responsibility.

In other words, the Miyazawa statement indicated that in school education and textbook authorization, Japan would make corrections giving due consideration to its relations with neighboring Asian countries.<sup>\*12</sup>

### **Reactions from Foreign Countries and Apologies for Inaccurate Reporting**

China and South Korea had different reactions to the matter. Whereas on August 27 the government of South Korea accepted the Miyazawa Statement, on August 28 China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs conveyed to Katori Yasue, Japan’s ambassador to China, its inability to accept the Miyazawa Statement. For this reason, Japan explained the situation to China once again using diplomatic routes, which was characterized as “a step forward compared to the other explanations thus far” by Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian.

Through the Interchange Association, a quasi-official Japanese body serving as Japan’s representative office in Japan–Taiwan relations, Taiwan also called for “appropriate examination and management” of the matter. The Taipei Office of the Interchange Association responded to this by saying,

(i) Japan is remorseful for its past actions and is determined never to repeat them, with this fundamental position also reflected in school education and in textbook screening and authorization; (ii) Japan pays due attention to criticism leveled by neighboring Asian nations regarding descriptions in textbooks and will make corrections at the Government of Japan’s responsibility.

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\*12 MOFA, *Kyōkasho kentei mondai (keii)* [Issues in textbook authorization (the course of events thus far)], September 10, 1982, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1206; MOFA, *Iwayuru dai-ichiji kyōkasho mondai (tōji no hōdō nado ni motozuku jijitsu kankei)* [The so-called first textbook issue (facts based on news coverage, etc. at the time)], July 2, 2002, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1206.

While the Ministry of Education placed importance on the textbook authorization system and approached repeated revisions very cautiously, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made allowances for relations with China and South Korea. Suzuki and Miyazawa demonstrated a stance close to that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As the textbook issue involved both ministries, coordination and decision-making by the Prime Minister's Office was critically important.

In the time remaining before his visit to China from September 26 to October 1, Suzuki took great pains not to have the textbook issue negatively impact Japan–China relations as a whole. The Prime Minister's Office scrambled to reach a decision (Hattori 2009; Hattori 2010).

It was not until September, after the release of the Miyazawa Statement, that the various newspapers acknowledged the inaccuracy of their reporting on June 26. As the Miyazawa Statement was being formulated, neither the Suzuki cabinet nor Japan's overseas diplomatic establishments had sufficient understanding of the fact that the original reporting had been inaccurate.

The newspaper that acknowledged the erroneous reporting most clearly was the *Sankei Shimbun*, which prominently carried an article correcting the error, stating, “We apologize deeply to our readers.” The *Asahi Shimbun*, in its page 5 column “Readers and the *Asahi Shimbun*,” used the format of responding to contributions from readers to state, “We must apologize to our readers for having committed errors in a portion of our reporting.”\*<sup>13</sup>

### **The Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Next let us trace Japan–China negotiations and the Miyazawa Statement from the perspective of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The China Division of its Asian Affairs Bureau regarded the matter in this way:

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\*13 *Sankei Shimbun*, September 7, 8, 1982; *Mainichi Shimbun*, September 10, 1982; *Asahi Shimbun*, September 19, 1982; *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, September 27, 1982.

In light of the fact that, during textbook screening, the Ministry of Education has for over a decade given “non-binding suggestions for improvements” to change the wording “invaded” to the expression “advanced into” and so on, inaccuracies in reporting and the like are irrelevant to the essential nature of the issue.

According to the China Division, China regarded “the textbook authorization posture of the Ministry of Education, and by extension the Japanese government, to be problematic in and of itself” and viewed the inaccurate reporting as not being central to the issue at hand. From that standpoint, the Miyazawa Statement was a necessary measure.<sup>\*14</sup>

It was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that drafted the Miyazawa Statement, with the Asian Affairs Bureau supervising the matter. Kiuchi Akitane, director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau, together with a bureaucrat from the Ministry of Education, called on Miyazawa and briefed him on the situation. Kiuchi asked Hashimoto Hiroshi, director-general of the Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau, for assistance, making what he called a “tag team.”<sup>\*15</sup>

When Japan–China diplomatic relations were normalized, Kiuchi was serving as private secretary to Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei; Hashimoto was heading the China Division of the Asian Affairs Bureau. From August 8 to 13, 1982, Hashimoto visited China together with Ōsaki Hitoshi, director-general of the Science and International Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Education, but South Korea rejected their request to make such a visit (Xiao 1997).

I interviewed Hashimoto Hiroshi; the important points related in that interview are summarized below.

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\*14 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Shōwa 57 nen kyōkasho mondai shiryō* [Materials concerning the 1982 textbook issue], September 10, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2003-644, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

\*15 Kiuchi 2010, interview with the author, June 19.



- While the Japanese history textbook issue is domestically under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, that ministry is not authorized to negotiate directly with China or South Korea, so the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stepped in to bridge that gap.
- At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while strictly speaking the Asian Affairs Bureau supervised this issue, Asian Affairs Bureau Director-General Kiuchi Akitane, Administrative Vice-Minister Sunobe Ryōzō, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Miyazawa entrusted the diplomatic negotiations to Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau Director-General Hashimoto Hiroshi. The Chinese side had also communicated to Japan that they wanted Hashimoto to be their negotiating counterpart. For that reason, at the Foreign Ministry headquarters Hashimoto played the central role, and Hashimoto visited China and set about persuading China.
- The two bureau directors-general who were refused entry into South Korea were Hashimoto Hiroshi of the Foreign Ministry and Ōsaki Hitoshi of the Education Ministry.
- It was neither Miyazawa himself nor Prime Minister Suzuki who had pressed forward with the Miyazawa Statement. Rather, the entirety of the statement from start to finish had been written by Hashimoto. Miyazawa and Suzuki accepted the draft of the statement formulated by Hashimoto without making any changes to it.
- Prime Minister Suzuki had hastened to resolve the textbook issue before he visited China.
- Although Hashimoto explained the Miyazawa Statement to Foreign Minister Sakurauchi Yoshio, Sakurauchi had merely listened to him without giving Hashimoto any special instructions.

- The South Korea situation notwithstanding, at least the Chinese side was satisfied in particular with the “make corrections at the government’s responsibility” part of the Miyazawa Statement and accepted it, and halted the anti-Japan campaign. The Chinese side did not intend to cause extensive trouble with Japan because of this issue.
- When Miyazawa later became prime minister, he sounded out with Hashimoto, then serving as ambassador to China, whether or not a visit to Yasukuni Shrine would be acceptable, because a good deal of time had passed since diplomatic relations between Japan and China had been normalized. Hashimoto advised him that it would be absolutely out of the question until the emperor had completed his visit to China. As a result, Miyazawa dropped the idea of visiting Yasukuni Shrine.

Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, normally the Japanese history textbook issue would have been handled not by a functional bureau such as the Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau, but rather by the Asian Affairs Bureau, a regional bureau. However, Administrative Vice-Minister Sunobe Ryōzō and Asian Affairs Bureau Director-General Kiuchi Akitane requested that Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau Director-General Hashimoto Hiroshi, who was highly knowledgeable about China, deal with the matter. Hashimoto, being thoroughly trusted by both Sunobe and Kiuchi, took on this issue and visited China; then, upon returning to Japan, he wrote the Miyazawa Statement by himself. He received approval for the statement at the draft stage from not only Sunobe and Kiuchi, but also Miyazawa, Sakurauchi, China Division head Hatakenaka Atsushi, and the Ministry of Education (see the postscript beginning on page 231 for further information).

It seems that the reason China communicated its wish for Hashimoto to be the negotiating counterpart may have been that Hashimoto was the head of the China Division when diplomatic relations between Japan and

China were normalized. Hashimoto played a crucial role within the first Japanese history textbook issue.<sup>\*16</sup>

It was Watanabe Kōji who was in charge of the textbook issue at the Ministry's local diplomatic office—namely, the Japanese embassy in Beijing. Watanabe, who was deputy chief of mission at the time (in 1982), relates his experiences as follows.

- The striking thing one notices looking back at Japan's relations with China is that, in my experience, China does not make an issue of things that are not reported on by the media. What hardened China's attitude was, to a large extent, Japan's extensive newspaper reporting. Had Japan's newspapers not made such an enormous commotion over the matter, it is entirely possible that the textbook issue would not have erupted.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs took China into consideration more than the Ministry of Education did, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Miyazawa indicated a stance that was close to the Foreign Ministry's. Miyazawa trusted Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau Director-General Hashimoto Hiroshi tremendously.
- China was given prior notice regarding the Miyazawa Statement only one or two hours before the statement was released. Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian and others were angry at this, as they did not have adequate time to inform the higher-ranking leaders. China's rejection of the Miyazawa Statement for a time can likely be attributed to this. That is, from China's standpoint it was short notice.
- Wu Xueqian's stating to Ambassador Katori on September 8 that China would accept Japan's explanation was likely because they wanted to have this issue fully laid to rest before Suzuki visited China.

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\*16 Hashimoto 2008, interview with the author, November 1, November 8; Hashimoto 2008, personal communication to the author, December 15.

- It was in September, after the Miyazawa Statement was released, that I [Watanabe] learned that the initial reporting that “invade” had been forcibly redrafted as “advanced into” had been erroneous. Even then, I learned it through the articles in the newspapers correcting the error, and never received an explanation of the inaccurate reporting from the Ministry of Education.<sup>\*17</sup>

According to Miyamoto Yūji, first secretary at the Japanese embassy in China at the time, Hashimoto showed China the gist of the draft that would become the Miyazawa Statement during his visit to China that began August 8, and received China’s understanding on it in substance. Ōsaki Hitoshi of the Ministry of Education accepted Hashimoto’s envisioned draft in principle.<sup>\*18</sup>

At the same time, domestically, at the direction of Kiuchi, Hasegawa Kazutoshi, deputy director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau, paid a visit to Suzuki Isao, director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau at the Ministry of Education. Hasegawa proposed to the Education Ministry that a Japan–China joint committee be established to examine not only Japan’s textbooks, but also China’s. The Ministry of Education made no mention to Hasegawa of the fact that the reporting had been erroneous, and ultimately the Japan–China joint committee proposal was terminated by Miyazawa. It seems that Miyazawa did not want to impose any unpleasant tasks upon Education Minister Ogawa Heiji.<sup>\*19</sup>

Excessive and inaccurate news reporting, “short notice,” the delicate relationship between the Foreign Ministry and the Education Ministry, and other elements were all complexly linked within the textbook issue. According to the diary of Grand Chamberlain Irie Sukemasa, Emperor Hirohito said that “China objecting to changes made to the wording in Japan’s textbooks” weighed on his mind “because Japan did truly horrible things to Korea as well” (Irie 1991; Takahashi 2008).

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\*17 Watanabe 2009, interview with the author, May 16.

\*18 Miyamoto 2014, interview with the author, April 18.

\*19 Hasegawa 2012, interview with the author, May 1; Hasegawa 2014.

### **Prime Minister Suzuki and His Cabinet Members**

As noted earlier, China rejected a visit by Education Minister Ogawa Heiji. Ogawa was pro-China, and his younger brother Ogawa Heishirō had been the first Japanese ambassador to China after the war. Ogawa had wanted to have a look at education in China before Prime Minister Suzuki's visit, and the Chinese government had issued an invitation letter. It was a shock not only to Ogawa, but also to Suzuki and the Foreign Ministry, when China rescinded the letter.

Suzuki felt a sense of affinity with China, and as the chairperson of the general council of the LDP he had supported the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China. With the situation as it was, a visit to China during the tenth anniversary of this diplomatic achievement, which was something to be commemorated, would instead become something to be anxious over. This gave a reason for Suzuki to bring Chief Cabinet Secretary Miyazawa and Foreign Minister Sakurauchi together and press forward with the statement.

The following episode is an example of an exchange between Suzuki and newspaper reporters.

Uji Toshihiko, a reporter for the *Tokyo Shimbun*, asked at a press conference on August 23, 1982, "When responding to questions in the Diet, the Minister of Education said that if he were asked his opinion, his impression was that it was an 'invasion.' Mr. Prime Minister, how do you yourself perceive this history?"

Suzuki read his reply from prepared notes, saying,

I think we should wait for conclusions to be drawn by future generations of historians, but it is also a fact that internationally speaking, including in China, there is a severe evaluation, or criticism, or perception of history, that prewar Japan's actions were an invasion. I think that it is necessary for the government, too, to have a sufficient recognition of this.

Suzuki was evasive.

In fact, Suzuki had received the content of the question from Uji in advance. Suzuki had a good relationship with Uji, and when Suzuki became prime minister, he asked Uji to be his secretary, but Uji declined. With this question, Uji allowed Suzuki to assert clearly that it had been an "invasion," making it the first step to improving relations with China. But the answer fell short of expectations. Later, Suzuki confided to Uji, "The 'future historians' bit really should have been left out."

Uji was also close to House of Representatives Vice-Speaker Okada Haruo of the Japan Socialist Party. Okada was pro-China; Okada Akira, the consul general to Hong Kong, was his younger brother. According to what Vice-Speaker Okada told Uji, Education Minister Ogawa thought it was fine to revise what was written in the textbook, but his comments to this effect were kept in check by Ministry of Education bureaucrats. When Okada tried to convey that as his personal view to Song Zhiguang, China's ambassador to Japan, it did not go well.

Ogawa was a relative of Miyazawa's, and it seems that they had been in contact with each other (Uji 1983; Okada 1987).<sup>\*20</sup>

The man who visited China in lieu of Ogawa was Kaifu Toshiki, chair of the LDP's Research Commission on the Educational System. Through talks with Education Minister He Dongchang and others, Kaifu explained Japan's textbook screening and authorization system. Kaifu regarded education as a matter of sovereignty and thought it important to follow the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs (National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies 2005).

Displeasure with the Miyazawa Statement could also be found within the cabinet. One dissatisfied cabinet member was Nakasone Yasuhiro, director-general of the Administrative Management Agency. Nakasone related, "The Miyazawa Statement is filled with apologies, although I can understand inserting those kinds of elements to some extent while clearly

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\*20 Uji 2011, interview with the author, August 10, September 9, October 6.

setting forth Japan's standpoint and way of thinking." However, he said, "we didn't particularly discuss the matter" in the cabinet.

According to Nakasone, Foreign Minister Sakurauchi also remarked, "In my heart I didn't agree with this way of lowering our heads to ask for pardon, but I didn't have the political power to put it right by counteracting Prime Minister Suzuki." This means that while the Foreign Ministry moved ahead with the Miyazawa Statement, it wasn't necessarily the case that the foreign minister, Sakurauchi, agreed with it in his own inner thoughts.

Before his trip to China, Suzuki met with Nakasone, commenting, "I won't be doing this for much longer. I'd like to step down this autumn." Suzuki hinted to those around him about his intention to resign even when he was in Shanghai. It may have been necessary to hasten the release of the Miyazawa Statement before Suzuki's visit to China if the purpose of the visit was to build solid Japan-China relations; however, was it necessary if, before the trip, he had been harboring an intention to resign? I cannot help but have doubts about this (Nakasone 2012).<sup>\*21</sup>

### **Suzuki Heads to China**

The Communist Party of China held its Twelfth National Congress from September 1 to 11, 1982, and declared its "independent foreign policy." The country retreated from its policy of opposing the Soviet Union that had been in place until then and corrected the path that had been inclined toward the United States and Japan (Tanaka 1983; Rose 1998; Besshi 2002; Masuo 2010; Etō 2014).

Some have pointed out that China demonstrated a strong position regarding the textbook issue in order to give consideration to domestic critics just before the party congress.

Japan's ambassador to China, Katori Yasue, recollected that "among the Chinese Communist Party elders were some who supported reforms

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\*21 Nakasone 2009, interview with the author, August 20, September 8.

and opening but were critical of the speed and breadth of such changes.... The leadership was also criticized by those who questioned whether it was appropriate to leave Japan's militarism unquestioned in order to advance economic relations with Japan." As discussed on page 37, Katori explained to Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian how the matter would be put right so as to settle the issue (Katori 1997).

Asai Motofumi, political counselor at the Japanese embassy in Beijing at the time, asserts that there were some in Japan's Foreign Ministry who thought that China's anti-mainstream faction had been trying to destabilize the improvements in relations with Japan being advanced by the troika of Chairman of the Central Military Commission Deng Xiaoping, Chairman of the Communist Party of China Hu Yaobang, and Premier of China's State Council Zhao Ziyang.

Asai takes a negative view of that analysis, saying that Deng himself had been critical of the textbook issue and that there was no sense of any destabilizing elements coming into play. Asai concluded that the withdrawal of anti-Soviet policies in China and the anti-Japan posture taken over the textbook issue were not related.\*<sup>22</sup>

It was on September 26, one month after the Miyazawa Statement, that Suzuki visited China. Suzuki broached the textbook issue during talks with Zhao, saying,

The Japanese government is paying due attention to China's criticisms and will make corrections at the government's responsibility. We will carry out in good faith the measures made clear in the statement by the chief cabinet secretary and in the explanation of the statement.

Zhao responded that he appreciated Suzuki's efforts in this area, saying,

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\*22 Asai 2013, interview with the author, February 6.



Today I look at this issue delighted that it has already been pared down significantly. Consequently we have been able to welcome Prime Minister Suzuki's visit to China in this positive atmosphere. We also appreciate the efforts that Prime Minister Suzuki has expended to resolve the textbook issue.\*<sup>23</sup>

After Suzuki returned to Japan, the “provision concerning neighboring countries,” whereby textbooks must show consideration for neighboring Asian countries when addressing modern issues involving them, was added to the standards used in textbook authorization. In South Korea, the textbook issue affected the economy as well, with a movement to boycott Japanese products springing up; the textbook issue also became mixed in with trade disputes (Ōyane 2012).

### 3. The Meeting between Emperor Hirohito and Chun Doo-hwan

#### Nakasone Arrives on the Scene

The Suzuki cabinet resigned in November 1982, whereupon Nakasone assumed the prime ministership. The Nakasone cabinet, which promoted the “complete reassessment of postwar politics,” was a long-serving one, holding office until November 1987. Although Nakasone was regarded as a hawk, he was pragmatic in his foreign policy. Nakasone was the first Japanese prime minister to acknowledge the Pacific War as a war of aggression, and his way of acknowledging it became clearer over time (Yoshida 2005).

Nakasone chose South Korea as his first overseas destination after taking office. This was the first visit to the country by a sitting Japanese prime

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\*23 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Suzuki sōri hōchū kaidan kiroku* [Record of talks during Prime Minister Suzuki's visit to China], October 9, 1982, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-852.

minister. Nakasone met with President Chun Doo-hwan on January 11, 1983, telling him, “I decided that in order for Japan to improve its relations with our nearest neighbor, South Korea, I first wanted to visit South Korea and resolve the outstanding issues between us. I am pleased that this has become a reality.”

Chun responded by saying,

Those who have been harmed never forget that they have been harmed, while those who inflicted the harm soon forget. I think there is a need to take advantage of your visit in order to close this gap. I would like to create a spirit of tolerance going forward and have a relationship in which we can consider each other as big brother and little brother.\*24

The South Korean ambassador to Japan, Choi Kyung-nok, who had temporarily returned to his home country, expressed concern, saying, “With so many Rising Sun flags hanging here and there around Seoul, I hope nothing happens.”\*25

### “Insert ‘Regret’”

Chun Doo-hwan visited Japan on September 6, 1984. This marked the first time a sitting South Korean president had ever visited Japan, and the remarks to be made by Emperor Hirohito drew a great deal of attention. Park Chung-hee had met with Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato years earlier in Tokyo, but at that time Park had been the Chairman of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction.

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\*24 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Nakasone sōridaijin Kan-koku hōmon (Kaidan kiroku)* [Visit by Prime Minister Nakasone to the Republic of Korea (Record of talks)], January 1983, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-544.

\*25 Kanayama Masahide [former Japanese ambassador to South Korea] 1984, memo written on his talks with Choi, in author’s private collection, September 3.

At the state dinner at the Imperial Palace, Emperor Hirohito used the words, “It was truly regrettable” (*ikan* 遺憾). He said,

Japan has learned many things through its exchanges with South Korea. There is, for example, the important fact that in the sixth and seventh centuries, when Japan was just taking shape as a nation, a number of people from South Korea came over and taught scholarship, culture, technology, and more to the Japanese people. Over our long history, our two countries have had profound neighborly relations. It is truly regrettable that despite such a relationship, at one time this century there was an unfortunate past between our two nations, and this must never be repeated.\*26

Chun responded by saying, “I believe the unfortunate past that occurred between our two nations must become a valuable cornerstone as we now cultivate a brighter and friendlier future.”\*27

According to the official annals of Emperor Shōwa compiled by the Imperial Household Agency,

After quoting a proverb common to both countries—“Rain makes the ground more solid” [meaning, “After rain comes fair weather”]—President Chun responded by saying he believed the unfortunate past must become a valuable cornerstone for opening up the future between the two countries, then raised his glass.\*28

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\*26 *Kyūchū bansan okotoba* [Remarks by the emperor at the state dinner at the Imperial Palace], September 6, 1984, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-543.

\*27 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Chon daitōryō hōnichi no hyōka (Taigai setsumei no pointo)* [Evaluation of President Chun’s visit to Japan (Points for the explanation to be aimed at an international audience)], September 10, 1984, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-543.

\*28 *Shōwa Ten’nō jitsuroku* [The official annals of Emperor Shōwa], vol. 58, September 6, 1984.

At the summit talks held on September 7, Chun, deeply impressed, related, “The emperor spoke about the past history of our two countries, and I listened solemnly as the representative of the South Korean people.”

Nakasone emphasized, “My diplomacy is hand-crafted and values people and people’s hearts. Although our dealings are between two nations, our mutual friendship as political leaders is important.”\*29

An editorial writer for the *Korea Times* informed Japanese embassy staff in Seoul,

This visit to Japan is a major historical event and achieved success thanks to the gracious response Japan provided. It can be given a score of 90 points without any resort to flattery. However, the moment of truth is still to come.... If Japan displays an insincere attitude, then the people of South Korea will wonder what the emperor’s apology was, and their distrust toward Japan may become decisive and irreversible in our relationship.\*30

As for the emperor’s remarks, Nakasone had given instructions to Tomita Tomihiko, chief of the Imperial Household Agency, as follows.

1. In consideration of the lasting future of Japan–South Korea relations, it is thought to be necessary and appropriate for the current emperor to express feelings of regret, even if it is about events that took place in the Meiji era....
2. Looking at instances until now, during the visits to Japan by President Ford of the US, President Sukarno of Indonesia, President

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\*29 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Nikkan shunō kaidan (9-gatsu 6-nichi oyobi 7-nichi)* [Japan–ROK summit talks (September 6 and 7)], September 10, 1984, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-543.

\*30 Tanino Sakutarō [chargé d’affaires at the Japanese embassy in South Korea] 1984, to Abe Shintarō [foreign minister], September 8, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-543.

Garcia of the Philippines, and others, the emperor has expressed feelings of regret at state dinners, and it would be inappropriate to make an exception for the president of South Korea....

5. Japan, as a nation within the international community, should have an attitude of fairness, grounded in international standards.

Nakasone told Tomita to “insert ‘regret,’” overriding opposition from the reluctant Imperial Household Agency and the Foreign Ministry. After Chun had returned home, Nakasone wrote in his diary,

Our meetings marked a new period of clearing up the grudges that have existed since the colonial era. The remarks delivered by the emperor were the climax. While it was difficult to know the boundary between going too far and not far enough, in Japan there has been no criticism of his remarks.

In this way, Nakasone advanced reconciliation with South Korea (Nakasone Peace Institute 1995; Nakasone Peace Institute 1997; Gotōda 2006; Nakasone 2012; Hasegawa 2014).

## **4. “Mutual Trust” between Nakasone and Hu Yaobang**

### **Toward a Change for the Better in Japan–China Relations**

In China, Hu Yaobang took over the position of general secretary of the Communist Party of China in September 1982. Hu had already successively held the positions of member of the Politburo of the Communist Party, member of the Politburo Standing Committee, and chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Transitioning from the chairman

system to the general secretary system, he became the first general secretary under the new system, and together with Premier Zhao Ziyang supported the Deng Xiaoping regime.

Nakasone had talks with Hu in 1983, 1984, and 1986, and the interchanges between the two of them are symbolic of Japan–China relations in the 1980s. In particular, it was said that 1983 and 1984 were the very pinnacle of two thousand years of Japan–China relations (Tanaka 1991; Yokoyama 1994; Besshi 1995; Xu 2002; Zheng 2005; Sun 2006; Chen et al. 2009; Shiroyama 2009).

Nakasone had visited China in 1973 and 1980 before becoming prime minister. As the minister of international trade and industry in Tanaka Kakuei’s cabinet, he had visited China beginning on January 17, 1973, together with Inayama Yoshihiro, Japan–China Economic Association chairman and president of Nippon Steel Corporation, and others; on January 18 and 19 he had talks with Premier Zhou Enlai (Nakasone 1996; Nakasone 2012).<sup>\*31</sup>

Furthermore, Nakasone visited China from April 27 to May 9, 1980, and held talks with Premier Hua Guofeng and others. He also held talks with Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, where Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, both in attendance as well, were introduced.

According to a memorandum written by Nakasone,

Hu Yaobang is an unrefined, nonintellectual type, quick and efficient with superb energy, and he excels at moving the public. He is shorter than Deng and there is a strong feeling of him being a “Little Deng.” In contrast, Zhao Ziyang, the highest-ranking among the Vice-Premier’s group other than Deng himself, is an intellectual technocrat, although how much power he actually has is not clear to me.

We can say that this was the beginning of the favorable relationship enjoyed

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\*31 MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-303; Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Minister’s Secretariat, Information Disclosure Promotion Office, 2010, written communication to the author, September 6.

by Nakasone and Hu Yaobang. Nakasone also had talks with Wu Xiuquan, deputy chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army (Nakasone 1996; Nakasone 2012).<sup>\*32</sup>

Hu Yaobang, who had become general secretary of the Communist Party, welcomed to Beijing the tenth Japan Socialist Party delegation visiting China. Party Chairman Ishibashi Masashi and others arrived in China on September 26, 1983. On September 28, the delegation met with Hu Qili, secretary of the Secretariat of the Communist Party, and Qiao Shi, alternate secretary of the Secretariat of the Communist Party.

On the Chinese side it was primarily Qiao Shi who addressed the delegation. He said, "There are an extraordinarily large number of areas in which the views of the Japan Socialist Party and the Chinese Communist Party coincide. In particular, they coincide regarding independence through the self-determination of peoples, world peace, and disarmament." He also remarked that "China always makes its own independent decisions from a sovereign standpoint," making no reference to the Japan-US security arrangements.<sup>\*33</sup>

The next day, September 29, Hu Yaobang met with the Japan Socialist Party delegation. At this time, Ishibashi made the following argument:

In Japan there is currently a tide of regressing to prewar conditions.... If even the Japan Socialist Party were to approve of military strength, the transition of Japan, already an economic power, into a military power would be unstoppable.

However Hu paid no attention to this, responding, "I will refrain from giving any opinions about the assertions of the various political factions in Japan. Japan is governed by a Liberal Democratic Party administration, and

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\*32 MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-304.

\*33 Katori 1983, to Abe, September 28, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-302.

China has friendly relations with the Japanese government.” Ishibashi took up the “regression to prewar conditions” as a topic for discussion, but Hu indicated he understood the position of the Nakasone cabinet.<sup>\*34</sup>

Ishibashi and the others repeatedly criticized the Nakasone cabinet during their talks with high-ranking Chinese leaders. They made comments such as, “The Nakasone cabinet is walking the road to transition into a military power in the name of a complete reassessment of postwar politics, stepping outside the framework of the Constitution and security arrangements that successive Liberal Democratic Party governments have upheld,” and “The picture of [the Nakasone administration] cooperating with the United States’ global strategy and nuclear strategy and of heading straight down the path toward transitioning into a military power is now strikingly obvious.”

Despite this, Hu’s moderate view of Japan did not waver in the slightest.<sup>\*35</sup>

According to Ishibashi, Ishibashi and Hu pledged to develop friendly relations.

It was only at this time that Japan and China went forward in an amicable mood. That was because the Deng Xiaoping/Hu Yaobang regime had begun the previous year, and China had adopted a policy of strengthening friendly ties with the political parties of foreign nations on the basis of the four principles of mutual nonintervention. On September 29 I met with General Secretary Hu, and we agreed to develop friendly relations by going beyond differences in our views (1999).

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\*34 Katori 1983, to Abe, September 29, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-302.

\*35 *Shakaitō hatsugen no yōshi* [Summary of the remarks made by the Japan Socialist Party], September 1983; *Ishibashi Masashi kankei bunsho* [Documents related to Ishibashi Masashi] 1055, National Diet Library, Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room collection; *Nihon Shakaitō daihyōdan danchō supūchi genkō* [Text of the speech by the Japan Socialist Party delegation leader], September 1983, *Ishibashi Masashi kankei bunsho* [Documents related to Ishibashi Masashi], 1059.



### **“Mutual Trust”: The Four Principles of Japan–China Relations**

Hu Yaobang visited Japan from November 23 to 30, 1983, to hold talks with Nakasone and others. At the beginning of his meeting with Hu on November 24, Nakasone put forth a forward-looking discussion point: “Taking advantage of the visit to Japan by Your Excellency General Secretary Hu, I wish to promote further the peaceful friendship, equality and reciprocity, and long-term stable relations between Japan and China,” and proposed the establishment of the Twenty-First Century Committee for Japan–China Friendship as an eminent persons’ meeting. Nakasone also expressed some worry regarding “whether or not China’s policy of openness to the outside would remain unchanged over a long period” and “whether or not it was safe to provide economic cooperation to or engage in investment in China.”

Hu responded by saying that while “some” in Japan were “hoping to revive militarism,” he “believe[d] that successive prime ministers, including Prime Minister Nakasone, along with Japanese leaders, all had a great desire for eternal peaceful and friendly relations between Japan and China.” He also said, “China wishes for Japan to become a major power that prospers economically and, politically speaking, a peace-loving country with self-defense capabilities, and China supports Japan moving forward toward this goal.” Hu addressed the concerns of Nakasone mentioned above, saying, “I affirm unmistakably that there will be no problems whatsoever,” and agreed with the establishment of the Twenty-First Century Committee for Japan–China Friendship.

Adding “mutual trust” to “peaceful friendship, equality and reciprocity, and long-term stability,” Nakasone proposed making these the four principles of Japan–China relations. With a nod, Hu consented, explaining that, “In China the number four is said to be a number for everything going smoothly. With that lucky omen, I agree to this.”

Nakasone also indicated his enthusiasm, saying, “I attach importance to youth exchanges, and in the future I would like to expand considerably

the program for inviting youth from China and other projects,” adding, “The second round of yen loans is still being examined at the junior administrative level, but I hope to reach a conclusion as soon as possible.”<sup>\*36</sup>

According to Asai Motofumi, head of the China Division at the time, when Hashimoto Hiroshi, director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau, and Asai conceived of the inclusion of “mutual trust” at the so-called “study session” held to help the prime minister prepare for the meeting, Nakasone incorporated it as a special feature.<sup>\*37</sup>

The biggest factor in Japan and China coming closer to each other was the common interest they had in advantageously conducting strategies against the Soviet Union. Part of Nakasone’s desire to strengthen Japan–China relations was in order to emerge on the winning side of the Cold War. That was made clear at an expanded meeting also attended by Foreign Ministers Abe Shintarō and Wu Xueqian, where both Nakasone and Hu shared a wariness toward the Soviet Union.

That is to say, Nakasone stressed, “I harbor serious concerns that the Soviet Union is carrying out a buildup of its SS-20 missiles in Asia and the Far East,” and asserted, “It is important for Japan and China to exchange information and views with each other on the issue of SS-20 missiles and to together consider countermeasures.”

Hu expressed his understanding by stating,

The abnormal relations between China and the Soviet Union are not merely disadvantageous for both nations, but are also not in the interests of the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region and the world. For the last several years, we have been negotiating with the Soviet Union for normalized relations.

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\*36 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nitchū shunō kaidan kiroku (Sono 1. Teta tēto kaidan)* [Record of the Japan–China summit talks (1. Tête-à-tête meeting)], November 24, 1983, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-171; Hattori, 2011.

\*37 Asai 2013, interview with the author, February 6.

Nakasone also added, “South Korea has requested that I convey to you its hopes to have friendly relations with China, so I hereby pass that message on.”

At the end, Nakasone addressed Hu, saying, “I am deeply moved at how candidly you spoke. Your Excellency is most certainly truly frank. You can be my big brother.” Hu resonated with this, responding, “No, no, we are good friends. We came to know one another only in the first year of the eighties, but I want us to be friends throughout the nineties and even until our very last days alive.”

Nakasone ended the talks by saying, “In the year 2000, Your Excellency will be eighty-five, and I will be eighty-two. Let us live until then.... Let the two of us keep watch to ensure friendship between Japan and China.”<sup>\*38</sup>

At the welcome luncheon hosted by Nakasone, Hu offered a proposal, saying, “We would like to invite 3,000 Japanese youth to China next year from September to October, with China bearing the costs.” Hu, who had given speeches at informal gatherings with economic organizations, at the National Diet, at youth gatherings, at the Japan Press Club, and so on, also visited Kyoto and Nagasaki.

Just before departing Japan, Hu said, at a press conference in Nagasaki, “This trip was an extremely memorable overseas visit having historical significance within my own life.”<sup>\*39</sup>

Hu had made his emphasis on relations with Japan unwavering through his experiences in Japan, and his relationship with Nakasone was about to develop into something very close, going beyond the two leaders themselves to even include their entire families.

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\*38 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nitchū shunō kaidan kiroku (Sono 2 zentai kaigi)* [Record of the Japan–China summit talks (Part two: Plenary meeting)], November 24, 1983, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-171.

\*39 *Nihon no Kokkai ni okeru Ko Yōhō sōshoki no enzetsu* [General Secretary Hu Yaobang’s speech to the National Diet of Japan], November 25, 1983, MOFA

### Nakasone’s Visit to China

Nakasone visited China from March 23 to 26, 1984, accompanied by Foreign Minister Abe. He met with Zhao Ziyang on March 23, stating, “When General Secretary Hu visited Japan, the Japanese people were deeply impressed by his unpretentious character. I believe that thanks to General Secretary Hu’s visit, the close relations we enjoy between Japan and China have become even deeper.”

Moreover, Nakasone expressed his gratitude for the consideration that had been given to Japanese war orphans left in China, after which he explained that Japan had no militaristic thinking.

Zhao accepted this, saying, “We understand the defense policies of the Nakasone cabinet. This is especially true now that General Secretary Hu has visited Japan. We do not regard the policies of the Nakasone cabinet as militaristic policies.”<sup>\*40</sup>

On March 24, Hu conveyed to Nakasone the principles of China’s foreign policy:

China’s foreign policy has already been determined. The diplomatic principle of an independent foreign policy is something we decided after several years of careful deliberation, and its essence is nonalignment. There are two reasons that nonalignment is essential. The first is that, considered from China’s circumstances, concluding alliances will get in the way of China having a broad range of friends, or at a minimum will have an impact on it. The second is that it will be impossible to restrain aberrant actions that could be taken by nations we are allied with.

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document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-171; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Ko Yōhō sōshoki hōnichi (Ko Yōhō hatsugen bassui)* [The visit of General Secretary Hu Yaobang to Japan (Excerpts from Hu Yaobang’s statements)], December 3, 1983, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-171.

\*40 Katori 1984, to Abe, March 24, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-172.

Hu said regarding Sino-Russia relations that “the other side lacks sincerity,” and argued that “even if Sino-Russia relations were to improve, China would not renounce friendly cooperative relations with Japan. If an important change were to occur in Sino-Russia relations, we would immediately inform our friends”—meaning Japan. Regarding Japanese economic cooperation, Hu minced no words, saying, “We are extremely appreciative of Japan’s economic and technical assistance,” and “China will never forget your wholehearted friendship.”

Nakasone responded by saying, “Developing friendly cooperative relations between Japan and China is helpful toward the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. For me, as long as I’m alive, I want to work to develop those relations.” He added, “While gratitude was expressed for Japan providing economic cooperation to China, on the contrary, we are grateful to you, and the cooperation provided to China is an expression of our remorse for the great trouble we caused in the war, so such cooperation is only natural.”

Soft yen loans officially have no relation to the Second Sino-Japanese War, so Nakasone’s remark that the loans are “an expression of our remorse for the trouble we caused” was both candid and bold. There is no evidence that China felt antipathy toward the word “trouble” (*meiwaku* 迷惑).

Nakasone announced an increase in the amount of soft loans.

As for new yen loans, Japan will provide 470 billion yen in new loans over seven years beginning in fiscal year 1984, centered on transportation, ports, and electricity generating stations. Compared to the time of Prime Minister Ōhira’s visit to China, when 300 billion yen in loans were provided over five years, Japan’s financial situation has become extremely severe, and yet five years has become seven, and 300 billion yen has become 470 billion yen. This is the result of Nakasone himself instructing that the amount be increased.\*<sup>41</sup>

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\*41 Katori 1984, to Abe, March 25, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-172.

On March 25, Deng Xiaoping, chairman of the Central Advisory Commission, welcomed Nakasone to the Great Hall of the People, laying stress on the fact that "[t]here are currently no pressing issues between Japan and China. Developing Japan-China relations toward the twenty-first century is more important than all other issues."

Nakasone asked, "What do you think of General Secretary Chernenko?"

Hu clarified his stance by saying,

In order for China to advance its relations with the Soviet Union, we insist on the removal of "three obstacles" that hinder us. Of the "three obstacles," the particularly important one is the Cambodia issue. At the fourth Sino-Soviet Talks, very involved discussions were held concerning Soviet forces at the Sino-Soviet border area and Soviet forces stationed in Mongolia.

The "three obstacles" referred to were the Soviet forces stationed at the Sino-Soviet border area and in Mongolia, the invasion of Afghanistan, and the Vietnamese forces stationed in Cambodia.

To this, Nakasone pointed out, "Japan, too, has a strong interest in the Soviet Union's military buildup in Asia, and we are particularly opposed to the SS-20 missiles deployed in the Far East."

Deng agreed, noting,

The expansion of the Soviet Union's naval and air military capacity throughout Asia is something in which both Japan and China share common interests. At the recent Sino-Soviet Talks, this issue was the heart of the discussions from start to finish.

For China, the Soviet Union was a cause of unease, making it easy for Japan to find common interests with China.<sup>\*42</sup>

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<sup>\*42</sup> Katori 1984, to Abe, March 25, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-172; Deng 1993.

## The Pinnacle of Postwar Japan–China Relations

In September 1984 Hu Yaobang made good on his promise to invite 3,000 young Japanese to China in commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China.

Okazaki Kaheita, senior advisor to All Nippon Airways and the most senior participant, sent a postcard to a friend which read,

I have been determined to work for friendly relations between Japan and China since I was in senior high school, so accompanying the 3,000 Japanese young people on this friendly exchange trip to China is something that really makes me feel I can die in peace. I’m giving it my all.<sup>\*43</sup>

On September 30, the Japan–China Youth Friendship Exchange Welcome Gathering was held in Beijing. Hu addressed the conference participants in a loud voice, saying, “It is on the shoulders of you, the young people, to determine if the situation carved out by our two countries’ older generations will be able to continue over the long term, and if you develop those aspects into something better” (Kazankai Foundation 2008).

Nakae Yōsuke, then the Japanese ambassador to China, reminisced on those days, recalling, “The commemoration of the anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China on October 1, 1984, is said to be the pinnacle of postwar Japan–China relations.” Later, he stated, “A huge exchange gathering was held at Tiananmen Square on October 1; it was really something else.” He went on to say, “It was the grandest event since the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, with both sides pledging to engage in friendly Japan–China cooperation in the future” (Nakae 1997; Nakae 2001; Nakae 2002).

While that was the highest point for Japan–China relations, Nakasone

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\*43 1984, to Sugiyama Hisao, September 18, *Okazaki Kaheita kankei bunsho* [Documents related to Okazaki Kaheita], Kaheita Okazaki Memorial Hall collection.

threw cold water on those ties by paying an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine in August 1985. Nakasone said he was “thinking [he] had to express some appreciation to the souls of the war dead by making an official visit once as prime minister.” His visit had major repercussions, however. Chapter 2 will explore that visit and its impact (Nakasone 1996).





## Official Visits to Yasukuni Shrine



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Nakasone Yasuhiro, prime minister of Japan (left), and Hu Yaobang, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (right), react to applause welcoming them at the ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the Japan Foundation China Center (November 8, 1986).



# 1. Nakasone's Miscalculation

## The Origins of the Yasukuni Issue

On August 15, 1985, the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro was attired in a tailcoat. Once he was surrounded by the press corps on the grounds of Yasukuni Shrine, Nakasone, who had just completed his visit to the shrine, proudly proclaimed, "This is an official visit." As his visit had avoided following Shintō rituals, Nakasone regarded it as being in compliance with the Constitution. Articles 20 and 89 of the Japanese Constitution provide for the separation of state and religion.\*<sup>44</sup>

Nakasone had prepared for his official visit through consultations with the Liberal Democratic Party's subcommittee on the Yasukuni issue and Chief Cabinet Secretary Fujinami Takao's private advisory body, called the "Colloquium to Discuss the Issue of Cabinet Members Visiting Yasukuni Shrine" (Okuno 2002).

The prime ministers who had visited Yasukuni Shrine from the occupation period to the early 1980s were Prince Higashikuni Naruhiko, Shidehara Kijūrō, Yoshida Shigeru, Kishi Nobusuke, Ikeda Hayato, Satō Eisaku, Tanaka Kakuei, Miki Takeo, Fukuda Takeo, Ōhira Masayoshi, and Suzuki Zenkō. Emperor Hirohito also visited the shrine eight times. In 1975, Miki Takeo was the first sitting prime minister to visit on the anniversary of the end of World War II, yet at the same time he attempted to fend off criticism that the visit was in violation of the Constitution by positioning it as one made in his private capacity. A visit to Yasukuni Shrine was regarded as potentially problematic from a constitutional standpoint because of the separation of state and religion.

As mentioned on pages 17 and 33, it was in 1978 that class-A war criminals were enshrined at Yasukuni, and the enshrinement itself was reported

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\*44 *Kanagawa Shimbun*, October 26, 2005; *Kanagawa Shimbun*, October 27, 2005.

in the newspapers the following year. Ōhira and Suzuki visited the shrine despite this, and neither China nor South Korea voiced any objections.

Although Nakasone had also visited the shrine on several occasions since taking office as prime minister, it was his official visit on August 15, 1985, that drew protests from China and South Korea. Nakasone had tried to open up a path for an official visit by resolving constitutional issues, but the visit instead became the starting point of the contemporary Yasukuni Shrine issue (Whiting 1989; Whiting 2000; Hatano 2004; Akazawa 2005; Murai 2006; Ichitani 2007; Hata 2010; Kosuge 2010).

### **Attempting to Persuade China**

It was not the case that Nakasone took bilateral relations with China lightly. In July 1985, before the official visit took place, Nakasone had sent Noda Takeshi, president of the Japan–China Society, who belonged to Nakasone’s own faction, to Beijing in an attempt to obtain China’s understanding. Noda had talks with Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian and also with China–Japan Friendship Association Vice-President Sun Pinghua, and discussed the matter at particular depth with Sun. Here I would like to reproduce these discussions based on the interviews I conducted with Noda Takeshi.

When Noda brought up Nakasone’s intended official visit to Yasukuni Shrine, Sun responded adamantly, “It is impossible to support that. Class-A war criminals are enshrined there.”

Noda persisted in trying to persuade Sun to approve the visit.

Of the more than two million spirits [enshrined at Yasukuni], a mere fourteen are class-A war criminals, you know. It is clear that the major part is the ordinary public. If Nakasone cannot make a visit to the shrine, he will be unable to avoid backlash from the public. It would be bad if opposition from China made it impossible to pay respects to those who died in the war. Can you not close your eyes to this?

Sun lost no time in countering this.

I understand what you are saying. But just as in Japan the Japanese people have their own feelings, in China, too, the Chinese people have their own feelings toward the matter. While it is true that no more than a handful of class-A war criminals are enshrined at Yasukuni, the Chinese public would become uncontrollable if an official visit were to take place.

Above all, Sun saw the enshrinement of Tōjō Hideki as problematic. Noda appealed to Sun by saying, “It may be that I cannot ask you to support the official visit, but would you at least restrain the tone of your opposition, even if only a little?” and with that request he ended the meeting. Noda also engaged in discussions with Foreign Minister Wu, but Wu was not all that knowledgeable about Yasukuni Shrine.

Noda, who had briefed Nakasone upon his return to Japan, again conveyed in advance to the Chinese side that Nakasone would be making an official visit. At the same time, on the basis of Nakasone’s wishes, Noda, together with House of Representatives member Sakurachi Yoshio and others, had from before the official visit attempted to arrange a behind-the-scenes compromise by which the enshrined spirits of the class-A war criminals would be transferred to another shrine, but ultimately those attempts did not work out.<sup>\*45</sup>

At a press conference held on August 14, immediately before the visit to Yasukuni Shrine, a spokesperson for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs tried to dissuade Nakasone from making the visit, saying,

If Prime Minister Nakasone and other members of the Japanese cabinet were to visit Yasukuni Shrine, it would injure the feelings of peoples

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\*45 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 11, 2005, evening edition; *Kanagawa Shimbun*, October 28, 2005; Noda 2010, interview with the author, August 4, September 28.

in countries throughout the world, particularly the feelings of peoples in Asia, including both the Chinese and Japanese peoples, who suffered tremendous harm from militarism.\*<sup>46</sup>

On August 15, Yang Zhenya, director-general of the Department of Asian Affairs of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, lodged a protest with Matano Kagechika, Japan's minister to China. That said, it was not that Noda's visit to China had been futile; it has been noted that China's response "was restrained" early on (National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies [GRIPS] 2005B; Yang 2007).<sup>\*47</sup>

On August 28, Hu Yaobang met with Tanabe Makoto, secretary-general of the Japan Socialist Party, in Beijing. Hu asked, "I wish to hear frankly whether the majority of people support the visit to Yasukuni Shrine, or if it is a small number that support it."

Tanabe responded, "The majority of the Japanese people believe we must not repeat history, a stance indicated in concrete terms in our peace Constitution," and further said, "The Japan Socialist Party will bring this up with harsh disapproval in the National Diet in the near future."

Hu, while saying, "I will refrain from making any comments on that point as it falls within Japan's internal affairs," also stated, "In China, although we do visit the graves of the war dead, including Kuomintang soldiers, it is impossible for us to visit the grave of Wang Jingwei," thereby calling on Japan to demonstrate self-restraint.\*<sup>48</sup>

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\*46 *Sōri/kakuryō no Yasukuni Jinja kōshiki sanpai ni taisuru Chūgoku gaikōbu supōkuman hatsugen* [Statement by China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson on the official visit to Yasukuni Shrine by the prime minister and members of the cabinet], August 14, 1985, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1207.

\*47 Noda 2010, interview with the author, September 28.

\*48 Matano Kagechika [charge d'affaires ad interim in China] 1985, to Abe Shintarō [foreign minister], August 29, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-606.

## 2. China's View of Yasukuni

### Seeking to Mend Relations

According to Yanagiya Kensuke, administrative vice-minister for foreign affairs, “until early September [1985] ... we could see that the Chinese side was moving to somehow straighten the situation out.” He continued, “However, on September 18, the anniversary of the Mukden Incident”—also known as the Manchurian Incident or the Liutiaohu Incident—“students at Peking University were raising quite a fuss. Wall posters emblazoned with ‘Down with the Nakasone administration!’ also appeared. And demonstrations began in Tiananmen Square.” He added, “We had foreign ministry trainees attending classes at Peking University and others inform us of the situation on the ground, and our conclusion for the time being was that these did not seem to be government-instigated demonstrations” (GRIPS 2004).

In response to the anti-Japan demonstrations of September 18, the spokesperson of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement that read,

We hope that the leaders of the Japanese government strictly fulfill the pledges Japan has made to never again walk a path of militarism, and that they contribute of their own accord to strengthening and developing the friendship between China and Japan to thereby maintain peace in Asia and the world.

Nakasone, concerned about negatively affecting Hu Yaobang's political position, shelved a visit to Yasukuni during its autumn grand festival and, through the efforts of Sakurauchi, House of Councillors member Itagaki Tadashi, and others, started pursuing the possibility of having the enshrined spirits of the class-A war criminals transferred elsewhere. In



Singapore there had not been any notable reaction to the official visit.<sup>\*49</sup>

Intending to repair bilateral relations, Nakasone directed Foreign Minister Abe to “reach a political settlement with the Chinese side concerning the Yasukuni issue” during Abe’s visit to China beginning October 10. Nakasone indicated he “intend[ed] to strike a gentlemen’s agreement on this occasion with the Chinese side by setting the line at [the Japanese side] not attending Yasukuni’s grand festivals, while [the Chinese side] would not lodge any protests at us attending a memorial service for the war dead once a year.” However, Deng Xiaoping instead told Abe, “We want him to continue to forgo his visits to Yasukuni Shrine” (GRIPS 2004).

On October 18, Hu Yaobang met with the members of the Twenty-First Century Committee for Japan–China Friendship at Zhongnanhai, where he spoke of the “four views.” The first of these was that the development of friendly relations between China and Japan was a fundamental interest for the people of both nations; the second, that it was imperative to treat correctly the history of China and Japan clashing; the third, that fostering friendly China–Japan relations would require tireless efforts on the part of both countries; and the fourth, that the ultimate goal of Sino-Japanese friendship was to realize lasting friendship between future generations. Even while making a special appeal regarding the issue of history, Hu’s stance of placing importance on relations with Japan did not waver (Zheng 2005; Kazankai Foundation 2008).

Nakasone also took the bull by the horns. From October 19 to 26 he visited the United States, attending a ceremony commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and an extraordinary summit. On October 23, Nakasone held talks with Premier Zhao Ziyang in New York, emphasizing, “My firm standpoint is to promote

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\*49 9/18 Jihen [*Ryūjyōko Jiken*] ni kansuru Chūgoku gaikōbu supōkusuman danwa [Statement by a spokesperson for China’s Foreign Ministry about the September 18 Incident (the Liutiaohu Incident)], September 19, 1985, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law 2006-1207; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 11, 2005, evening edition; *Kanagawa Shimbun*, October 28, 2005; Hashimoto Hiroshi 2008, interview with the author, November 8.

cooperation between Japan and China with an unwavering spirit on the basis of the Japan–China Joint Communiqué, the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China, and the four principles of Japan–China relations.”

Zhao responded by saying, “I appreciate your words, which are so full of friendship. I am moved to have been able to meet you at the United Nations. Our bilateral relations are developing still further in a number of areas, including politics, the economy, and culture, and this is surely connected to the efforts you have been making, Mr. Prime Minister.”

Changing the subject, Nakasone told Zhao, “The Japanese side, too, will work to eliminate the trade imbalance. I have also directed the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to do so.” The Yasukuni issue was not discussed.<sup>\*50</sup>

### **Yasukuni as Seen by the Chinese Leadership**

As mentioned on pages 69 and 71, even before he made his official visit to Yasukuni, Nakasone had investigated the possibility of getting the enshrined spirits of the class-A war criminals transferred elsewhere. That is what Noda stated during an interview I conducted with him. If that was the case, did the Chinese leadership draw a sharp distinction between class-A war criminals and class-B and class-C war criminals?

Previously, as diplomatic relations between Japan and China were being normalized, Premier Zhou Enlai and Foreign Minister Ji Pengfei said they “made a distinction between the militarist forces comprising one part of Japan and the great numbers of the general Japanese public,” and that China renounced its claims to war reparations on the assumption of Japan having remorse for its actions (Ishii et al. 2003).

For Zhou to be able to explain domestically China’s renunciation of

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\*50 Kuroda Mizuo [Japan’s ambassador to the United Nations] 1985, to Abe, October 24, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-305.

its claims to war reparations, it would be critically important to employ the rationale that it had been “the militarist forces comprising one part of Japan” that had caused the war. From that perspective, it was precisely the class-A war criminals who were the prime examples of “the militarist forces comprising one part of Japan.” China’s opposition to the prime minister’s visit to Yasukuni was because it would be “inflaming the feelings of the Chinese people, who had accepted the renunciation of claims to war reparations” (Nakae 2001B).

Here, a question arises. Do “the militarist forces comprising one part of Japan” that are one part of the dichotomy China created refer to only class-A war criminals, or do these “militarist forces” also include class-B and class-C war criminals? The enshrinement of class-A war criminals took place in 1978, and the matter of what level or levels of war criminals were regarded as “militarist forces” had not been clarified since bilateral relations between Japan and China had been normalized. As Yanagiya Kensuke, administrative vice-minister for foreign affairs, had feared, even if the enshrined spirits of class-A war criminals were able to be transferred elsewhere, it would still be possible for Japan to be criticized with claims such as, “It was in fact the class-B and class-C war criminals who actually committed various heinous acts in China” (GRIPS 2004).

Some clues concerning the Chinese leadership’s view of Yasukuni are found in unexpected places. In December 1985 Hu Yaobang met with author Yamasaki Toyoko, at which time he referred to the Yasukuni issue. Yamasaki was visiting China to gather material for her novel *Daichi no ko* (Children of the land), and she was granted a meeting with Hu. Meeting Hu for the first time in November 1984, she found he was “a man of small build, but he had an elegant and muscular physique and was brimming with energy. I was overwhelmed by his quick-wittedness and his astounding frankness” (Yamasaki 1999).

The next time Hu and Yamasaki met was December 7, 1985. Yamasaki had been staying in Beijing, which had become rowdy with anti-Japan demonstrations, and was granted this meeting quite suddenly. “That day

a clear blue sky with not a single cloud spread out before me, but I was lost in a feeling of gloom when I entered the Zhongnanhai gates, which the Liberation Army soldiers were guarding assiduously,” Yamasaki recalled. Also attending this meeting between Hu and Yamasaki were Japan’s ambassador to China Nakae Yōsuke and his wife, as well as Yang Zhenya, director-general of the Department of Asian Affairs of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and others from the ministry.

When Yamasaki asked about “how severe China’s criticism of Yasukuni was,” Hu spoke in a much more reserved manner than usual, saying:

We will not interfere in Japan’s internal affairs, but we would like for Japan not to hurt the feelings of the Chinese people. Eighty-five years have passed since China was invaded by eight countries<sup>\*51</sup> and now at long last those memories have begun to fade. But it has been only forty years since the Second Sino-Japanese War. We would like you to think of it as something impossible for us to become dispassionate about until another four or five decades pass.”

In response, Nakae explained, “If we set aside the matter of class-A war criminals, there is a view in Japan that among the class-B and class-C war criminals are those who were in some sense the victims of the orders of their senior commanders or were quite close to being innocent.”

Hu then leaned forward and proposed “redeeming people’s honor.”

People who endured false accusations during China’s Cultural Revolution are having their honor redeemed, even if only posthumously. I myself have engaged in such work. Class-B and class-C war criminals should be examined, and if the accusations against them prove false, then their honor should be restored, should it not? (Yamasaki 2009)

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\*51 Referring to the Boxer Rebellion of June 1900. The eight invading nations were the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Japan, and Austria-Hungary.

Yamasaki's recollection appears to be accurate. A cable from Nakae claimed that Hu had confided in Yamasaki and the others the difficult situation he was facing, saying, "Eighty-five years have passed since the invasion of Beijing [in 1900] by eight nations' armies, while only forty years have passed since the Second Sino-Japanese War, and it will take time until those feelings become muted," and, "Among university students there are those who criticize me for being pro-Japan."

Hu mentioned "among university students" probably because the fiftieth anniversary of the December Ninth Movement was approaching. (The December Ninth Movement was an anti-Japan protest by students in Beijing on December 9, 1935.)<sup>\*52</sup>

I once asked Nakae about the particulars of this. According to Nakae, Hu said at the beginning of the meeting,

If there is another visit to the shrine, it is really going to be a problem. My position as leader of the nation is going to become intensely difficult.... With two thousand war criminals at Yasukuni Shrine, it won't be possible to persuade the Chinese people that we can just leave the issue of visiting there unchallenged."

When Yamasaki asked, "Is it a problem if class-B and class-C war criminals are enshrined, not just class-A war criminals?" Hu replied, "It certainly is."

When Nakae pointed out, "There are also many among the class-B and class-C war criminals who were victims of the class-A war criminals," Hu revealed his understanding of Nakae's view by stating, "While I do think the Yasukuni issue would vanish if all class-A, -B, and -C criminals were removed, I imagine the way the international community thinks about the issue would change dramatically even by just removing class-A ones."

Moreover, Yamasaki responded in support of Nakae, affirming, "The

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\*52 Nakae 1985, to Abe, December 8, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2009-250.

class-B and class-C war criminals are victims of the war, just as the Chinese people were.” Hu agreed, voicing his personal opinion, “Just like when we picked up the pieces after the Cultural Revolution, it would be good to redeem the honor of those individuals who are class-B or class-C war criminals, I think” (Nakae 2010).

Hu had not distinguished between class-A war criminals and class-B and class-C war criminals. However, he implicitly urged that at least the class-A war criminals be transferred elsewhere once it was pointed out by Nakae and Yamasaki that class-B and class-C war criminals were victims. Even though there had previously been a dichotomy between “the militarist forces comprising one part of Japan” on one hand and innocent civilians on the other, it was at this time that China indicated a clear demarcation line between the two in terms of the Yasukuni issue.

Nakae gave this very same testimony regarding how the situation appeared on April 12, 2000, at the House of Councillors.<sup>\*53</sup>

When Nakae returned briefly to Japan in the spring of 1986, he conveyed Hu’s view to Nakasone and emphasized the particular importance of transferring the enshrinement of the class-A war criminals, a matter for which Nakasone had already been trying to find a solution. Years later, Nakae stated, “For them, the problem was not visits to Yasukuni Shrine per se. The problem was that class-A war criminals were enshrined there” (Nakae 1997; Nakae 2001A).<sup>\*54</sup>

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\*53 House of Councillors Research Committee on International Affairs, No. 5, April 12, 2000, available through *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.

\*54 *Kyoto Shimbun*, September 28, 2005.

### 3. Calling Off Visits

#### **Behind-the-Scenes Maneuvers by Inayama and Kōyama**

Nakasone was victorious in the simultaneous elections for the upper and lower houses of the Diet on July 6, 1986, and he formed his third cabinet on July 22. Even though the transfer of the enshrined class-A war criminals to another location was not seeing much progress, Nakasone demonstrated his persistence regarding visiting Yasukuni by sending messengers—namely Inayama Yoshihiro, the previous Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) chairman, and Kōyama Ken'ichi, a professor at Gakushūin University—to Beijing. This arrangement can properly be termed “behind-the-scenes maneuvers” by Inayama and by Kōyama (Nakasone 1996; Gotōda 1989; Gotōda 2006).

It was through Inayama, who was close to Deng Xiaoping, that Nakasone hoped to gain China's understanding. Inayama visited China in the middle of July. Nakasone said, “If China says, ‘Only once a year on August 15 will we agree to visits to Yasukuni,’ that will be fine.”

However, Hu Yaobang asked Nakasone through Inayama to exercise self-restraint, stating, “If there is a visit to Yasukuni this year, we will not be able to restrain the Chinese public” (GRIPS 2004; Nakasone Peace Institute 1997).

When the behind-the-scenes maneuvering by Inayama came to a standstill, Nakasone, who was leaning toward refraining from visiting Yasukuni, had a discussion on July 25 with Kuranari Tadashi, his foreign minister, and Gotōda Masaharu, his chief cabinet secretary. There he said, “It is necessary to take international responses into sufficient consideration.” Kuranari was on the side of Nakasone refraining from the visit, noting, “Because China has become extremely sensitive to visits to Yasukuni regardless of whether the visits are official or private, it would be better not to make any visits whatsoever.” Gotōda concurred, commenting, “It is important to consider international relations.”

Yet despite all this, Nakasone held on to a glimmer of hope that maneuvering by Kōyama might result in some possibility of his going after all. Kōyama, a member of the Ad Hoc Council on Education under the Nakasone cabinet, was also a member of the Twenty-First Century Committee for Japan–China Friendship. Kōyama visited China in late July and contacted fellow committee member Zhang Xiangshan, former ambassador to Japan Fu Hao, Permanent Secretary of the Secretariat of the Communist Party Hu Qili, Secretary Wang Zhaoguo, and Yang Zhenya, who was director-general of the Department of Asian Affairs of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At this time, as will be discussed beginning on page 85, the second Japanese history textbook issue had also erupted between Japan and China.

On July 27, Hu Qili relayed to Kōyama a message from Hu Yaobang. The message extended “profound respect to Prime Minister Nakasone for his efforts, which give careful consideration to the feelings of the Chinese people regarding the recent textbook issue,” and “respect and expectations toward Prime Minister Nakasone’s prudent position regarding the issue of making an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine.”

In a written communication dated July 29, Kōyama conveyed to Nakasone, “In their every word I find expectations toward you held by General Secretary Hu Yaobang and the current Chinese leadership, along with a little bit of unease—or perhaps a frame of mind in which they hold their breath as they watch and see what happens—regarding your final decision on the Yasukuni issue.”

At this time, Kōyama had an exchange of views with Zhang Xiangshan and the Japan section of the Chinese Foreign Ministry regarding the issue of the statement made by Japan’s Education Minister Fujio Masayuki (this will be discussed later in the book). Kōyama requested the understanding of Zhang and the others, stating, “This must be handled in the most careful way possible until the exact situation becomes clear. If not, it might adversely affect the Yasukuni Shrine situation, and that would be unbearable.”



Having no alternative, Nakasone had Nakae, his ambassador to China, convey to Liu Shuqing, China's vice-minister of foreign affairs, "This year I will not visit Yasukuni Shrine on the anniversary of the end of the war." Nakasone also had Nakae add, "Domestically there are some who are extremely passionate in urging me to visit Yasukuni Shrine, and it is a tense situation, so until immediately before the anniversary, outwardly I will maintain the posture of still carefully considering whether or not to go," and also, "I ask that you not make any statements about this issue and instead keep an eye on it without commenting."

At the suggestion of Kōyama, Nakasone wrote a personal letter to Hu Yaobang, dated August 15. Writing, "My own younger brother, a naval officer, died in the world war now long past and is enshrined at Yasukuni Shrine," he continued, "Considering it imperative not to hurt the feelings of the peoples of China and other neighboring Asian countries by making an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine, where particular leaders having responsibility for the war of aggression are enshrined, I have made the bold political decision to refrain from making an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine this year."

On August 14, Kōyama, again visiting China, delivered the personal letter to Hu Yaobang through Hu Qili. Hu Yaobang, truly delighted at having been informed that the visit would not take place, met Kōyama on August 15 at the Great Hall of the People and told him, "This letter is filled with the feelings of Prime Minister Nakasone. Please convey to him that upon reading this heartfelt letter I, too, have been deeply moved" (NPI 1997; Hasegawa 2014).

According to Asai Motofumi, who was at the time the head of the China Division of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hu Qili had had various interchanges with Kōyama from long before, was deeply trusted by Hu Yaobang, and was seen as roughly the successor to the successor of Hu Yaobang.<sup>\*55</sup>

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\*55 Asai 2013, interview with the author, April 4.

Hu Yaobang penned a response to Nakasone dated August 18.

I greatly applaud the decision you took not to pay a visit to Yasukuni Shrine. This decision respects the feelings of the peoples of the countries that were victims of the war and demonstrates fully Your Excellency's style as a politician of placing importance on Sino-Japan friendship, which is not easily achieved. It is also beneficial in improving Japan's peaceful image within the international community. Looking back on history, decisions taking a long-term view frequently cannot be understood immediately by all people, but with the passage of time, they gradually come to show their true value. The fact that Your Excellency's decision at this juncture is entirely consistent with the long-term interests of the Japanese people will be proven through history.

It has been my consistent belief that the Japanese people are also victims of a war of aggression caused by militarism, and I moreover feel profound sympathy for the innocent war dead.

Hu's reply was delivered to Nakasone by Kōyama. It can be said that the relationship of trust built up between Nakasone and Hu had prevailed despite the Yasukuni issue. As for canceling the Yasukuni visits, Nakasone said he took the movement to oust Hu into consideration:

It seemed that the ouster of Hu Yaobang was being plotted by a conservative faction. I think it was in fact the conservatives led by Chen Yun that were planning something.

As this was going on, I told Hu that I would not be going to Yasukuni for its autumn grand festival<sup>\*56</sup> and left the situation as it was. I had no intention from the very beginning to force another visit in succession. It was only that I thought I needed to uphold my pledge to pay respects to the souls of the war dead, fulfilling a duty of the nation

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\*56 Refers to the 1985 autumn grand festival.

toward the war dead that needed to be carried out once on the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war (1996).

### **“There Is No Gentlemen’s Agreement Whatsoever”**

Later, the Chinese side claimed that an arrangement had been made between Japan and China when the visit to Yasukuni was called off. This was a rumor first started and spread by Wang Yi, China’s ambassador to Japan, during an address at the Liberal Democratic Party’s Research Commission on Foreign Affairs, on April 27, 2005, during the administration of Koizumi Jun’ichirō, an era in which there was a great deal of talk about the Yasukuni issue.

In his address, Wang argued that there had been a “gentlemen’s agreement” between the governments of Japan and China, and he advanced the idea that “the prime minister, the foreign minister, and the chief cabinet secretary—the three people who are the face of the government—should not go.” He stated that around 1986, after the official visit made by Nakasone, China had called on the prime minister, the foreign minister, and the chief cabinet secretary not to visit Yasukuni Shrine, and Japan had made an oral pledge in line with this request. Wang also stated that visits by other politicians would “not be a problem.”<sup>\*57</sup>

However, Koizumi refuted this vehemently to the press corps, saying, “There is no gentlemen’s agreement, secret agreement with regard to visiting Yasukuni, or any other such agreement whatsoever.” Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda Hiroyuki also denied it at a press conference.<sup>\*58</sup>

At a meeting of the House of Councillors Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense the following day, legislator Yamatani Eriko inquired about the matter.

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<sup>\*57</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, April 27, 2005, evening edition.

<sup>\*58</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, April 28, 2005.

Yesterday, at the Liberal Democratic Party's Research Commission on Foreign Affairs, China's ambassador Wang Yi said that Japan and China had an oral agreement that the prime minister, chief cabinet secretary, and foreign minister would not visit Yasukuni Shrine while they are in office. I was there when Ambassador Wang made that statement. Foreign Minister Machimura, is this factually correct?

Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka responded, "I have no knowledge whatsoever of any such gentlemen's agreement between Japan and China."<sup>59</sup>

Former Prime Minister Nakasone, who had already retired from the Diet, emphatically asserted at a press conference, "That statement is in direct contradiction to reality. We absolutely did not forge such an agreement," and through his secretary lodged an objection with the Chinese embassy. Nakasone concluded, "I've also asked my sources at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and they say no such thing happened."

Despite this, Wang told reporters, "A gentlemen's agreement is by definition not concluded on paper. To borrow the words of a Japanese friend, it is an unspoken agreement."<sup>60</sup>

In Nakasone's interviews with me as well, he again denied any such deal, saying, "Never did we have any such discussions with the China side or reach any such agreement"<sup>61</sup> (Nakasone 2012).

Nakae's testimony is exactly the same. According to Nakae,

I believe there was never an unspoken agreement, nor was there at any time such things as "visits would be unacceptable down to the chief cabinet secretary" or that certain ministers would be allowed. I think

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<sup>59</sup> House of Councillors Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense, no. 11, April 28, 2005, available through *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.

<sup>60</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, April 29, 2005; *Asahi Shimbun*, November 16, 2005.

<sup>61</sup> Nakasone 2009, interview with the author, November 24.

all of that is nothing more than the person wanting to say it simply speaking arbitrarily (2010).

As Nakasone and Nakae have flatly denied the existence of any “gentlemen’s agreement,” it is difficult to think that such an arrangement was made between Japan and China.

Here another question arises. Is it the case that, as Wang Yi stated, as long as the prime minister, foreign minister, and chief cabinet secretary did not visit Yasukuni, China would not take the visits of other politicians as problematic? This point is also doubtful.

Let us examine the anniversary of the end of the war in August 1987 as an example. Although Prime Minister Nakasone did not visit Yasukuni, sixteen members of the cabinet did, including Chief Cabinet Secretary Gotōda Masaharu, Transport Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō, and Finance Minister Miyazawa Kiichi.

At this time a spokesperson for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated it was “regrettable” that “a portion of the cabinet made an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine in their official capacities.” In saying so, criticism was being leveled at more than just Chief Cabinet Secretary Gotōda. Xinhua News Agency and the *People’s Daily* also made no distinctions regarding the prime minister, foreign minister, and chief cabinet secretary; they considered the visits by other cabinet members and politicians to be problematic. So from the words and actions of the China side, too, it would be difficult to argue that any “gentlemen’s agreement” existed.\*<sup>62</sup>

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\*62 MOFA, *Yasukuni Jinja sanpai mondai* [The issue of official visits to Yasukuni Shrine], approx. August 1990; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-127; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 15, 1987, evening edition; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 1987.

## 4. The Second History Textbook Issue

### An “Extralegal Emergency Measure”

Let us turn the clock back to 1986. At the end of May that year, a second history textbook issue arose. The National Conference to Defend Japan, chaired by Kase Toshikazu, former Japanese ambassador to the United Nations, compiled a senior high school textbook published by Hara Shobō entitled *Shinpen Nihonshi* (New edition Japanese history) that became the target of criticism by China and South Korea.\*63

At a regular press conference on June 4, a spokesperson for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated, “This textbook contains a large number of descriptions that are contrary to historical facts, so we were compelled to take notice of it.”

On June 7, Yang Zhenya, director-general of the Department of Asian Affairs of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, delivered a note verbale to Matano Kagechika, charge d’affaires ad interim in China, which stated, “A large number of accounts in the textbook misrepresent historical facts. We ask the Japanese government to observe the spirit of the China–Japan Joint Communiqué and the content of the August 26, 1982, statement by Japan’s chief cabinet secretary” (Yang 2006A; Yang 2006B).\*64

According to press reports, Nakasone told Education Minister Kaifu Toshiki to take the Miyazawa Statement into consideration, and also directed Chief Cabinet Secretary Gotōda to respond to the matter. The Ministry of Education ordered the publisher to make corrections four times, including to correct the wording “young ruffian An Jung-geun” to “leader

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\*63 *Shōwa 61-nen kyōkasho mondai kanren shiryō* [Materials related to the 1986 textbook issue], September 12, 1986; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2003-644-1, MOFA Diplomatic Archives collection.

\*64 Matano 1986, to Abe, June 4, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-318; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Kyōkasho Mondai* [The textbook issue], June 10, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-318.

An Jung-geun” and to restore the word “massacre” in the section about the Nanjing Incident. The book had already passed the ministry’s examination of its second draft, which incorporated revisions that reflected comments received on the initial draft and was to be the final screening in terms of content. Regardless, the Ministry of Education took extralegal measures to require revisions to forty places, centered on sections related to China and South Korea, and rewrites in thirty-eight places. There was reportedly also a point at which Fujita Kimio, director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, asked the president of Hara Shobō to abandon publication of the textbook.\*<sup>65</sup>

I asked Fujita about these events. He told me people related to the Education Ministry suggested that he urge Hara Shobō to cancel the publication of the textbook. Later, since the owner of Hara Shobō, Kase, and others came to the office of the director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau, Fujita said, on the basis of the Education Ministry’s views, that it would also be fine if Hara Shobō were to withdraw its publication of the textbook. As no one from the Education Ministry was there at the time, Hara Shobō and Kase thought that the request to halt publication had originated with Fujita, a point that was used as negative publicity.

Fujita consulted with Nishizaki Kiyohisa, director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau at the Ministry of Education, and explained the situation to Nakasone, Abe, and Gotōda, whereupon Nakasone put importance on relations with China and South Korea. Besides Fujita, members of the China Division and Northeast Asia Division of the Asian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were involved in revising the textbook. Since Fujita and the others had no authority to make revisions, they took their revisions to Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Fujimori Shōichi to handle, making it appear as if Fujimori was the one making the revisions. Kamei Shizuka, Hiranuma Takeo, and others in the Liberal

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\*65 *Asahi Shimbun*, June 18, 1986; *Asahi Shimbun*, July 10, 1986, evening edition.

Democratic Party called Fujita in and criticized him for the revisions he had led.<sup>\*66</sup>

While this was happening, on June 13, Nakasone, Abe, Kaifu, and Gotōda had a meeting. While Kaifu was opposed to the revisions, arguing, “The textbook authorization system is the only bulwark that exists against left-wing educational control,” he ultimately agreed to “have the authors of the textbook, or the publisher, withdraw the book.” At the same time, Nakasone said on June 22, “It is all right to have a single right-leaning book available among all Japan’s history textbooks, is it not?” (GRIPS 2004).

The one who requested revisions most assertively was Gotōda. Kaifu testified that the “extralegal emergency measure” was Gotōda’s idea.

I imagine that it was Gotōda [Masaharu] who came up with the idea for extralegal emergency measures. I can’t imagine that Nakasone would use that kind of wording in responding to the textbook issue. It is my hunch that Gotōda did it using a bureaucratic approach, but I suspect that officially they announced it as being what the prime minister wished (GRIPS 2005A).

On July 7, Nakae, Japan’s ambassador to China, visited Liu Shuqing, China’s vice-minister of foreign affairs, and

... explained without preparing anything in writing that as a result of the revisions, significant improvements could be seen in the three main points regarding which China had expressed concerns (the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Nanjing Incident, and the “Greater East Asia War”).

Nakae asserted, “Prime Minister Nakasone; the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for textbook authorization; and the Ministry of Foreign

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\*66 Fujita 2013, interview with the author, May 17, June 27.



Affairs have all made their greatest possible efforts regarding this matter,” to which Liu responded, in a forward-looking manner,

We commend Prime Minister Nakasone and the others under him involved with this matter on the Japanese side for having made their greatest possible efforts.... We would like to examine the picture in full once the textbook is published.

In the same way, in Seoul, Ambassador Mikanagi Kiyohisa explained the situation to South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.\*67

Because Nakasone reacted quickly and Hu Yaobang also placed importance on relations with Japan, it did not take long for the second history textbook issue to be put to rest. Unlike in 1982 when the first history textbook issue arose, this time the Chinese mass media did not conduct a campaign to stir up antipathy toward Japan. Each newspaper had been notified by the Chinese government that extensive coverage of the matter was forbidden (Whiting 1989; Whiting 2000).

### **Statement by Minister of Education Fujio Masayuki**

As mentioned on page 78, Nakasone emerged victorious in the simultaneous elections for the upper and lower houses of the Diet on July 6, 1986. Upon organizing his third cabinet on July 22, he put Fujio Masayuki, a senior member of the Abe faction, into the post of education minister, replacing Kaifu Toshiki (Hattori 2011).

Fujio, born in 1917, won his first election as a member of the House of Representatives in 1963 after having worked as a reporter for the *Yomiuri*

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\*67 Mikanagi 1986, to Abe, July 7, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-318; Nakae 1986, to Abe, July 8, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-318; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Kyōkasho mondai sōtei mondō (Tsuika)* [Anticipated questions and answers on the textbook issue (Additional)] July 8, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-318.

*Shimbun* newspaper and as the secretary of Kōno Ichirō. He won eleven elections and left politics in 1996, then passed away in 2006. During this time Fujio first served in a ministerial position in the cabinet of Suzuki Zenkō, as minister of labor; he also headed the Liberal Democratic Party's Policy Research Council, among other party positions. In the past he had also been pro-Taiwan, and belonged to the Seirankai, a right-wing group within the Liberal Democratic Party.

At a press conference on July 25, 1986, Fujio, upon being asked about the second history textbook issue which had arisen in June, stated, "People complaining about the textbooks should have a good look to see if the same kinds of things haven't also happened elsewhere in world history." Fujio also said, "Did the Tokyo Military Tribunal have any objectivity? Who gave the victors the right to try the losers?" South Korea and China indicated they were uncomfortable with these remarks.\*68

Moreover, in the October issue of the magazine *Bungei Shunjū*, which went on sale September 10, Fujio made arguments about the Tokyo Military Tribunal and the Yasukuni issue; on the topic of Japan's annexation of Korea, he stated, "I think there is some responsibility also on the Korean side and there are some points for them to search their souls on" (Fujio 1986A).

The article in *Bungei Shunjū* had become known to the major newspapers in advance, and on September 6 they carried stories about it prominently, titled "Education Minister Fujio makes problematic remarks" and "Korea bears some responsibility for Japanese annexation." On September 8, Foreign Minister Choi Kwang-soo of South Korea filed a formal objection with Japan's ambassador to South Korea, Mikanagi Kiyohisa, and demanded a temporary postponement of a meeting of the two countries' foreign ministers.

While China's reaction was restrained, references to Fujio's statements were made by, for example, *Pekin Hōsō* (China Radio International's

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\*68 *Asahi Shimbun*, July 27, 1986; *Asahi Shimbun*, July 30, 1986 evening edition.

Japanese language broadcast), the overseas edition of the *People's Daily*, and *China Daily* (Kuranari 1988).<sup>\*69</sup>

### The First Dismissal in Thirty-Three Years

Nakasone and Gotōda got hold of the proofs of the *Bungei Shunjū* article early. Gotōda then sent Director-General Fujita of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Asian Affairs Bureau to the publisher, Bungeishunju, where he requested deletions and corrections in two places.

Fujita stated that he had received a telephone call from Gotōda on the night of September 2. On September 3, Fujita visited Bungeishunju, and attempted to convince the editor-in-chief, Tsutsumi Gyō, that the article could have an impact on the Japan–South Korea foreign ministers' meeting and Nakasone's visit to South Korea, the editor took the view that there were no problems with the content. When Fujita reported this to Gotōda, Gotōda requested that at least the title “education minister” be deleted. Fujita communicated this to Tsutsumi, but by that time the magazine had already been printed.<sup>\*70</sup>

Resisting this, Bungeishunju, under the name of corporate president Kanbayashi Gorō, sent a written protest to Nakasone and Gotōda, saying the matter “violated freedom of speech and freedom of the press, as well as the prohibition of censorship guaranteed in Article 21 of the Constitution.”

On September 4, Nakasone and Gotōda called Fujio to the prime minister's office. According to Fujio, when Nakasone said, “Were I in your position, I would have the good grace to step down,” Fujio, furious at this, replied, “Don't speak so rudely to me.” Even when Nakasone asked, “Is

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\*69 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Fujio hatsugen [Bungei Shunjū intābyū] mondai (Gaiyō to kuronorōji)* [The issue of the statement made by Fujio: Overview and chronology (Interview with [monthly magazine] *Bungei Shunjū*)] September 17, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-319.

\*70 Fujita 2013, interview with the author, May 17, June 27.

there no way I can ask you to reconsider?” Fujio flatly refused, saying, “My decision will not change” (Fujio 1986B; Fujio 1987).

However, according to Hasegawa Kazutoshi, executive secretary to Prime Minister Nakasone, at this time Fujio spoke of his own responsibility. Fujio, lowering his head, said, “I have caused trouble for you because of this matter. The responsibility for the issue lies with me alone and I will take care of it, holding myself accountable.” Nakasone advised Fujio, “I want you to discuss this in depth with Deputy Prime Minister Kanemaru [Shin],” and, “If I were in your position, that is what I would do,” indirectly requesting his resignation (2014).

Although Fujio spoke of taking responsibility, he did not in fact resign. Nakasone had Tamaki Kazuo, director-general of the Management and Coordination Agency, demand Fujio’s resignation. This was because Tamaki, who did not belong to any political faction, had a relationship with the Abe faction to which Fujio belonged (Higuchi 1987).

After listening to his explanation, Nakasone dismissed Fujio on September 8. At the meeting of government and ruling party leaders held that day, Nakasone addressed the room as follows.

There are inappropriate points within a portion of the comments by Education Minister Fujio appearing in the magazine *Bungei Shunjū*, and it is extremely regrettable that this situation has caused difficulties in Japan’s diplomatic relations.

While there may be various viewpoints within a given nation regarding certain historical incidents, at the same time, we must know that within other nations that suffered harm, and among their people, there are different interpretations, feelings of humiliation, and points of national honor regarding that history. It is a mistake to think that only one assertion regarding such matters can be allowed. In domestic and international politics, policies should be undertaken in accordance with international public opinion and internationally accepted ideas (Hasegawa 2014).

It was after 10 PM that Gotōda announced Fujio's dismissal from office.

The statements made by Minister Fujio caused needless doubts regarding the fundamental policies of Japan's diplomacy, namely to maintain and strengthen our friendly and favorable relations with neighboring countries, in addition to our remorse regarding the war that occurred some time ago and our determination to work toward peace built atop that remorse, which Japan has clearly expressed on various occasions. This matter is extremely regrettable.

From this standpoint, today we have taken measures for the dismissal of Minister Fujio, after ascertaining his true intentions.

I wish to express my feelings of profound regret to South Korea and China at this state of affairs having come to pass.<sup>\*71</sup>

That same day, Nakae Yōsuke, Japan's ambassador to China, informed Liu Shuqing, China's vice-minister of foreign affairs, that Fujio had been removed from office; he also delivered a statement from Gotōda. Liu stated, "I consider the measures taken to dismiss Minister Fujio seen in the chief cabinet secretary's statement to have been wise measures that Prime Minister Nakasone and the Japanese government took resolutely," and, "However, China is determined to take a stern approach to thought, speech, and writing that is erroneous in the way the remarks made by Mr. Fujio were."<sup>\*72</sup>

Fujio was dismissed from his post on September 8, two days before *Bungei Shunjū* was released. The following day, September 9, Shiokawa Masajūrō took up the post of education minister as Fujio's successor. This

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\*71 *Naikaku kanbō chōkan danwa* [Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary], September 8, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-319.

\*72 Nakae 1986, to Kuranari, September 9, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-319.

was the first dismissal of a cabinet member in thirty-three years—the last was of Hirokawa Kōzen, the minister for agriculture in the fourth Shigeru Yoshida administration—and it was the result of Nakasone’s determination to give consideration to relations with South Korea and China.

Compared to the position of South Korea, which did not hesitate to postpone the foreign ministers’ meeting, China’s criticism toward Japan was restrained and there was no major shift in its position of placing importance on relations with Japan.

### **“Relations between Countries that are Intimate as well as Nearby”**

On September 20, 1986, Nakasone attended the opening ceremony of the Asian Games in Seoul. Nakasone spoke to Chun Doo-hwan as a “close friend”:

I consider it regrettable that one of my cabinet members made remarks that lacked validity. I dismissed him, as I regarded his remarks as a serious and important matter... You are a close friend and I came to South Korea today looking forward to seeing you.

Chun welcomed Nakasone, saying:

I too consider you a close friend, and I welcome your visit to South Korea wholeheartedly... I remember very clearly that in 1983, upon becoming prime minister, you visited South Korea for the first time, as your first trip overseas. I express my respect for your courage and your determination as a politician for that. Thanks to your visit, I was able to visit Japan for the first time the following year.

Chun also advocated for “nearby and intimate relations.”

While it is not the case that our bilateral relations will improve overnight, prospects have emerged for us to develop from “close but distant relations” to “nearby and intimate relations.” We are about to start a new chapter in Japan–South Korea relations.

Nakasone recalled Chun’s visit to Japan.

I remember three things you said during your visit to Japan. The first was, “Let us open up a new era between Japan and South Korea”; the second, “Let us foster a friendship that lasts a thousand years”; and the third, “Let us cultivate the seeds of friendly Japan–South Korea relations into large trees.” I am truly delighted that these three things are starting to be realized one by one.

It was possible to overcome the historical issue as long as the prime minister demonstrated leadership and trust had been established between the national leaders.<sup>\*73</sup>

### **The Final Meeting between Nakasone and Hu Yaobang**

Nakasone visited China on November 8, 1986, and immediately held talks with Hu Yaobang. Hu welcomed the visit, stating, “I am satisfied with our bilateral relations. We applaud the fact that you have made new contributions to developing the Japan–China bilateral relationship.” Nakasone replied, “Although our histories and our systems are different, if Japan and China continue to cooperate going forward, we will contribute significantly to the peace and stability of Asia and by extension the world as a whole.”

At these talks, “Never did the topics of the Fujio statement, the textbook issue, or the issue of visiting Yasukuni arise.”<sup>\*74</sup>

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\*73 Mikanagi 1986, to Kuranari, September 21, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-542.

\*74 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nakasone sōri hōchū no gaiyō*



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Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro of Japan (far left) meets with President Hu Yaobang of China (far right) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing (November 8, 1986).

Nakasone and Hu went to the Great Wall Hotel Beijing and attended the ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the Japan Foundation China Center. From atop the platform, Nakasone first addressed his counterpart with “Your Excellency General Secretary Hu Yaobang,” and then addressed the Chinese youth.

Thinking about it now, two years ago in the spring when I visited China and had talks with His Excellency General Secretary Hu regarding friendly cooperative relations between Japan and China, we unexpectedly concurred in the recognition that the future of both our nations, and of our bilateral relationship, rested on the shoulders of our nations’ youth. At that time I made a proposal that we should create a venue for exchanges where the young people of our countries can learn together, talk together, and enjoy themselves together, a proposal to which His

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[Sono 1]: *Ko Yōhō sōshoki to no kaidan* [Overview of Prime Minister Nakasone’s visit to China (Part 1): Talks with General Secretary Hu Yaobang], November 8, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-173.



Excellency General Secretary Hu immediately indicated his strong approval. This was the starting point of the Japan Foundation China Center. Through the discussions of the Twenty-First Century Committee for Japan–China Friendship, whose inauguration I also saw during my visit to China, a proposal to realize this concept in concrete terms was made in the autumn of 1984, and today we are here at the ceremony to lay the center’s cornerstone. I am truly overwhelmed with emotion....

[Addressing the gathering in Chinese] Péngyǒumen, wǒ yě shì qīngnián! (Friends, I too am a young person!)

[*Returning to Japanese*] With the heart of a young person, I also am determined to devote all my energy toward the success of this meaningful undertaking, which will promote friendly Japan–China relations and maintain the peace and prosperity of the international community....

I wish to kick off the Japan–China Youth Friendship Program, through which our goal will be to newly invite one hundred Chinese youth to Japan annually over the next five years. We can be certain that young people who see another country with their own eyes and explore it using their own feet will be active as the very core of efforts to promote friendship between Japan and China in the twenty-first century.\*75

Nakasone delivered an impassioned speech indeed, but it was his last meeting with Hu, who would be ousted from his post two months later.

On November 9, Nakasone, meeting with Zhao Ziyang and Deng Xiaoping, confirmed the four principles of Japan–China relations and pledged to examine the possibility of a third yen loan package to China.\*76

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\*75 *Nakasone sōri no Nitchū Kōryū Sentā Teiso-shiki ni okeru aisatsu* [Remarks by Prime Minister Nakasone at the ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the Japan Foundation China Center], November 8, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-173.

\*76 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nakasone sōri hōchū no gaiyō [Sono 2]: Chō Shiyō sōri to no kaidan* [Overview of Prime Minister Nakasone’s

In contrast to Hu being forced out of the post of general secretary in January 1987, Nakasone stepped down in a calm, untroubled manner in November 1987 after choosing Takeshita Noboru to succeed him. Nakasone and Hu had built a generation, with their fates largely determined during the very final phase. Since then, no friendship that compares with theirs has ever been built between Japan and China.

There were three major causes of Japan–China relations being so favorable at that time: first, both countries shared an approach of pursuing an anti–Soviet Union strategy; second, Japan’s assistance to China was increasing and had gotten onto the right track; and third, Nakasone and Hu were connected by a strong sense of affinity.

Even in the face of historical issues, the relationship between Nakasone and Hu did not waver, and even seemed to get stronger and stronger. This caused Nakasone to become all the more profoundly distressed upon seeing Hu criticized and then ousted from power. Hu comes to Nakasone’s mind even today.

Nakasone recalled,

I had heard in Tokyo at that time that Hu was being criticized in China for going too far, although pro-Japanese policies are necessary to a certain extent. The conservative faction had instigated some talk within public opinion, saying Hu Yaobang was flirting with Japan by inviting so many young Japanese to China. Hu Yaobang’s downfall was a result of such propaganda as well (Nakasone 2010).<sup>\*77</sup>

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visit to China (Part 2): Talks with Premier Zhao Ziyang] November 9, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-173; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nakasone sōri hōchū no gaiyō [Sono 3]: Tō Shōhei shunin to no kaidan* [Overview of Prime Minister Nakasone’s visit to China (Part 3): Talks with Chairman Deng Xiaoping], November 9, 1986, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2010-173.

\*77 Nakasone 2010, interview with the author, January 12.



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# The Comfort Women Issue



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Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno Yōhei announces the results of the study conducted on the comfort women issue (August 4, 1993).



## 1. Kaifu and Roh Tae-woo

### “Feelings of Deepest Regret”

The Tiananmen Square incident, which occurred in Beijing on June 4, 1989, was triggered by memorial services for Hu Yaobang. When armed force was used to suppress the democratization movement, Japan suspended its yen loans to China. At the Group of Seven Summit of the Arch held in France, a declaration condemning China’s suppression of human rights was adopted on July 15. Although the cabinet of Uno Sōsuke made efforts not to isolate China, his administration was short-lived, with Kaifu Toshiki assuming the post of prime minister on August 10.

In contrast to Japan’s bilateral relations with China, which were at a standstill, bilateral relations with South Korea progressed under the Kaifu cabinet. During President Roh Tae-woo’s visit to Japan on May 24, 1990, Kaifu told Roh, “I wish to express my feelings of humble (*kenkyo* 謙虛) remorse and sincere (*sotchoku* 率直) apology about the fact that there was a period in our history in which the people of the Korean Peninsula experienced unbearable suffering and sorrow because of Japan’s actions.” Kaifu also stated that he wished to resolve the issue of Koreans forced to stay in Sakhalin after World War II and other issues.

Roh, stating, “I wish to express my respect for the fact that Japan recognizes the unfortunate history that took place with South Korea and feels remorse over it,” used the words “future-oriented” for the first time. While there remained issues such as the fingerprinting of resident foreigners for registration purposes, Roh and Kaifu interacted in a congenial spirit, with Roh mixing Japanese into his Korean when the conversation touched on difficult topics.

Emperor Akihito spoke of “feel[ing] the deepest regret” when addressing President Roh and his wife at a state dinner at the Imperial Palace.

I recall that Emperor Shōwa said, “It is truly regrettable that at one time this century there was an unfortunate past between our two nations, and this must never be repeated.” I think of the sufferings your people underwent during this unfortunate period, caused by my country, and cannot but feel the deepest regret.

This wording went farther than that used during the visit of Chun Doo-hwan. Kaifu had dispatched Owada Hisashi, senior deputy minister for foreign affairs, to South Korea to work out the details of the emperor’s words beforehand.

On May 25, Roh addressed Japan’s National Diet, becoming the first South Korean president to do so. He referred to the colonial period, saying, “We only feel regret regarding ourselves, as we were unable to defend our nation. We do not look back on the past thinking about whom we should blame or bear a grudge against.”<sup>\*78</sup>

Kaifu visited South Korea from January 9 to 10, 1991, and reconfirmed a “future-oriented” new era in Japan–South Korea relations during a summit meeting with Roh. An agreement was reached to abolish the fingerprint registration system within two years for all ethnic Koreans who had immigrated to Japan while Korea was under Japanese rule, as well as their descendants.

According to Kaifu’s recollection, Roh proposed that, “What has hindered Japan–South Korea relations until now has been a backward-looking stance. From now on, let us go forward in a future-oriented way, entirely disregarding issues that stem from history.” They also discussed the issue

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\*78 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Gokaiken no naiyō (Shikibu kanchō no kisha burifū)* [Contents of the meeting with the emperor (Briefing by the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, Board of the Ceremonies, Imperial Household Agency of Japan)], May 24, 1990, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-843; *No Teu daitōryō rainichi no sai no heika okotoba* [His Majesty’s remarks on the occasion of President Roh Tae-woo’s visit to Japan], May 24, 1990, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-843; *Yomiuri Shimbum*, May 25, 1990; *Yomiuri Shimbum*, May 25, 1990, evening edition; National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies [GRIPS], 2005.

of “comfort women.” However, the content of their discussions is unknown because substantial portions of the summit meeting records obtained from Japan’s Foreign Ministry were blacked out (GRIPS 2005; Kaifu 2010).<sup>\*79</sup>

### **North Korea and Compensation for “the Ensuing Forty-Five Years after the War”**

Toward the end of September 1990, Kanemaru Shin, chairman of the Keiseikai faction within the Liberal Democratic Party, and Tanabe Makoto, vice-chairman of the Japan Socialist Party’s Central Executive Committee, visited North Korea, where they met with Chairman Kim Il-sung, general secretary of the central committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea, and Kim Yong-sun, the secretary (Takasaki 2004).

Kaifu, writing not in his capacity as prime minister but rather in his concurrent role as president of the Liberal Democratic Party, had entrusted to Kanemaru a personal letter to Kim Il-sung that read in part as follows.

The Korean Peninsula and Japan, separated by only a narrow strip of water, have engaged in an abundance of exchanges ever since ancient times, and have a long and amicable history in which outstanding culture flowed into Japan. However, regrettably, after that, during a period leading up to this century, an unfortunate past has existed between Japan and the Korean Peninsula.

Former Prime Minister Takeshita expressed deep remorse and regret over such an unfortunate past at the Diet in March last year. I, as prime minister, share his view, as I express clearly from time to time. In addition, the Japanese government recognizes that the issue of the right of claims for compensation remains unresolved between our countries.

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\*79 MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-844.



At the welcome banquet, Kanemaru said in a speech, “I express our sincere remorse and apology for Japanese past actions that inflicted unbearable pain and difficulties upon the people of your country during a period this century.” North Korea, after showing the Japanese delegation mass gymnastics at Kim Il-sung Stadium, took Kanemaru, Tanabe, and the others on a steam train late at night to Myohyangsan, roughly three hours away. It was there that Kanemaru and Tanabe had talks with Kim Il-sung. Moreover, Kanemaru stayed in the room and continued talks with Kim on his own, without even the Japanese interpreter present.

The joint declaration issued by the Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and the Workers’ Party of Korea stated that Japan “acknowledges that it should officially apologize and fully compensate” North Korea for not only Japan’s colonial rule but also “the ensuing forty-five years after the war.” This phraseology is nothing other than what North Korea put forth and Kanemaru accepted.

The Japanese side had not prepared a draft of the joint declaration (Ishii 1991; Takemura 2006; Iokibe et al. 2008; Mikuriya et al. 2011; Mikuriya et al. 2012; Hasegawa 2014).<sup>\*80</sup>

Later, Kim Yong-sun visited Japan, where he was in contact with Kanemaru and Tanino Sakutarō, director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau at the foreign ministry. In preliminary negotiations, Japan stated it could not accept offering compensation for “the ensuing forty-five years after the war,” and North Korea withdrew its resistance.<sup>\*81</sup>

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\*80 *Nitchō kankei ni kansuru Nihon no Jiyū Minshutō, Nihon Shakaitō, Chōsen Rōdōtō no kyōdō sengen* [Joint statement by the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, the Japan Socialist Party, and the Workers’ Party of Korea on Japan–North Korea relations], September 28, 1990, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2014-81; Nakayama Tarō [foreign minister] 1990, to Yanagi Ken’ichi [ambassador to South Korea], October 1, 1990, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2014-81; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Kanemaru moto fuku-sōri no hōchō kiroku* [Record of the visit by former Deputy Prime Minister Kanemaru to North Korea], October 1990, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2014-81.

\*81 Tanino 2012, interview with the author, July 3.

## The Speech in Singapore

From April 27 to May 6, 1991, Kaifu made a round of visits to countries across Asia, with stops in Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines. On May 3 he delivered a policy speech in Singapore.

As Japan goes on to play a more active political role, we should remind ourselves of how we perceive our past history.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Pacific War. At this juncture, looking back upon the first half of this century, I express our sincere contrition at Japanese past actions which inflicted unbearable sufferings and sorrows upon a great many people of the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>\*82</sup>

Kaifu, known as a skillful orator, made considerable efforts to hone the text of that speech (Orita 2013).

Kaifu also said to President Corazon Aquino of the Philippines,

In the policy speech I delivered in Singapore, I said that, in approaching the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Pacific War, Japan, looking back on its past history and feeling sincere contrition over its past actions that inflicted unbearable sufferings and sorrows upon a great many people of the Asia-Pacific region, has renewed its vow that this must never be repeated, and will therefore make appropriate contributions as a peace-loving nation, for peaceful purposes only.

Aquino responded, “Having heard your assurance that Japan will continue to be a peace-loving nation, grounded in its contrition over the past, I commend this, as the other ASEAN nations do.”<sup>\*83</sup>

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\*82 Kaifu, *Nihon to ASEAN: Shinjidai no seijuku shita pātonāshippu o motomete*, [Japan and ASEAN: Seeking a Mature Partnership for the New Age], May 3, 1991, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-841.

\*83 Gotō Toshio [ambassador to the Philippines] 1991, to Nakayama, May 6, 1991, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-841.

## 2. The Miyazawa Visit to South Korea and the Katō Statement

### A Trip for Making an Apology

When the Miyazawa Kiichi cabinet was launched on November 5, 1991, Japan–South Korea relations took a turn for the worse, centered on the “comfort women” issue. This was an issue that had been raised in Japan’s National Diet a number of times in 1990, and in December 1991 three South Korean former comfort women filed suit against the Japanese government. The suit also caused ripples in Southeast Asia (Gotō 1995).

Miyazawa selected South Korea to be the first foreign country he would visit as prime minister. On January 11, 1992, just before his visit was to begin, the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper reported as front-page news that historical documents had been discovered indicating the involvement of the Imperial Japanese Army in the comfort women system. Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō Kōichi acknowledged the involvement of the military and released a statement of apology on January 13. This was the first Katō Statement (Yoshimi 1995; Hata 1999; Kimura 2013A; Kumagai 2014).

On January 17, during a visit to Seoul, Miyazawa addressed the South Korean parliament in a speech entitled “Japan–ROK relations in the Asian and global context,” stating as follows.

Never should we allow ourselves to forget the fact that, at certain moments in the history of our relations with your country for the past couple of millennia, Japan was the assailant and Korea was the victim. Allow me to take this opportunity to express our sincere remorse and apology for Japanese past actions which inflicted unbearable suffering and sorrow on the people of the Korean Peninsula. Recently, the issue of “comfort women” in the service of the Imperial Japanese Army has come into light. I cannot help feeling acutely distressed over this, and I express my sincerest apology.

The first speech by a Japanese prime minister to the South Korean parliament became an apology for Japan's colonial rule and for the comfort women issue.\*84

Miyazawa also apologized during a summit meeting with Roh Tae-woo. Although substantial portions of the records of this apology obtained through an information disclosure request have been blacked out, according to a briefing prepared by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Miyazawa spoke of "profound apology" to Roh.



Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi of Japan (left) meets with President Roh Tae-woo of South Korea (November 8, 1992).

It is heartbreaking (*mune ga tsumaru* 胸が詰まる) when we consider the bitter suffering experienced by the comfort women from the Korean Peninsula upon hearing the stories of those concerned.

Considering the testimony of those concerned, what has already been reported, and materials that have been released, regarding the recruitment of comfort women and the management of comfort stations, some form of involvement (*kan'yo* 関与) by the Imperial Japanese Army cannot be denied.

On various successive occasions I have expressed profound remorse and regret regarding the past acts of Japan that caused people from the Korean Peninsula to experience unbearable suffering and sadness. I wish to express once again my sincere apology and remorse for the indescribable hardships suffered by the comfort women.

\*84 *Miyazawa sōri no Daikanminkoku hōmon ni okeru seisaku enzetsu* [Policy speech by Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi during his visit to the Republic of Korea], January 17, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-727.

With profound remorse and determination that such a mistake must never be repeated, Japan will maintain its stance as a pacifist nation. We will also endeavor to build up new future-oriented relations with the Republic of Korea.

Since the end of 1991, the government has been conducting further inquiries into relevant ministries and agencies as to whether it had been involved in the issue of the so-called wartime comfort women from the Korean Peninsula. We will continue to conduct this inquiry in all sincerity. I wish to express my deep apology to Your Excellency as well regarding this matter.

Miyazawa's visit to South Korea thus became a trip for making an apology, in sharp contrast to the visit made by Nakasone, whose visit to South Korea was the first by a Japanese prime minister (Yoshimi 1995).<sup>\*85</sup>

On January 21, after Miyazawa returned to Japan, the Roh administration changed the policy it had maintained until then and demanded compensation from Japan for the comfort women. Kim Jong-pil of South Korea's ruling party, the Democratic Liberal Party, was a key player in the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea. Although he was aware of the comfort women issue during negotiations on normalization, he did not discuss the matter during talks with Japan. When South Korea's newspapers and others criticized the government for its failure to discuss the matter, it was found that the government of South Korea had had second thoughts and had reversed its position on the matter. South Korea had never laid out a concrete proposal regarding compensation, so there had never been any cooperation with Japan to work out a strategy to resolve the matter (Kimura 2013B; Kimura 2013C; Yoshizawa 2013).

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\*85 *Dai 2 kai Nikkan shunō kaidan Tanino Ajia kyokuchō burifu* [Briefing by MOFA Asian Affairs Bureau Director-General Tanino regarding the Second Japan-South Korea summit meeting], January 17, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738; Yanagi 1992, to Watanabe Michio [foreign minister], January 17, 18, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-727.

## The Katō Statement

From December 1991 to June 1992, the Japanese government conducted an inquiry into documents held by each ministry and agency. On July 6, Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō released another statement regarding the comfort women. While this was the second of two statements he released on the matter, generally speaking, when people mention “the Katō Statement,” this is the one they are referring to.

[T]he inquiry has revealed that the government had been involved in the establishment of comfort stations, the control of those who recruited comfort women, the construction and reinforcement of comfort facilities, the management and surveillance of comfort stations, the hygiene maintenance in comfort stations and among comfort women, and the issuance of identification as well as other documents to those who were related to comfort stations....

The government again would like to express its sincere apology and remorse to all those who have suffered indescribable hardship as so-called wartime comfort women, irrespective of their nationality or place of birth. With profound remorse and determination that such a mistake must never be repeated, Japan will maintain its stance as a pacifist nation and will endeavor to build up new future-oriented relations with the Republic of Korea and with other countries and regions in Asia.

As I listen to many people, I feel truly grieved for this issue. By listening to the opinions of people from various directions, I would like to consider sincerely in what way we can express our feelings to those who suffered such hardship.<sup>\*86</sup>

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\*86 *Naikaku kanbō chōkan kisha kaiken gohatsugen* [Statement by the chief cabinet secretary at his regular press conference], July 6, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738.

The Katō Statement recognized that “the government had been involved” and “express[ed] sincere apology and remorse” and said that remedial measures would be examined. Although 127 documents in the possession of Japan’s Defense Agency and Foreign Ministry were publicly released, none of the materials indicated coercion. The compensation of comfort women came to fruition through the establishment of the Asian Women’s Fund (Yoshimi 1992).

I asked Katō himself about the series of events related to the comfort women issue. According to Katō, Miyazawa had entrusted the matter to Katō and Ishihara Nobuo, one of the deputy chief cabinet secretaries. Katō had lived in Yamagata Prefecture until the eighth grade, and his father Seizō had been a politician whose posts included serving as the mayor of Tsuruoka and as a member of the House of Representatives in the National Diet. Many of his father’s supporters paid visits to the Katō family house, and through these visits the younger Katō came to hear about the situation at the front lines in China, with stories of the comfort women among the topics. With that sort of background, once the historical documentation had emerged, Katō concluded that the involvement of the military could not be denied.\*<sup>87</sup>

On July 6, 1992, the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs released to the public the results of their investigation, compiled into seven points, namely:

1. regarding the establishment of comfort stations, that a notice had been issued that it was necessary to strictly control the behavior of individual servicemen because anti-Japanese sentiment arose and public order would not improve because of rape and other illegal acts against local residents by Japanese soldiers within the army-occupied territory at what was then the front lines, and that internally, the army sent out supplemental educational materials

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\*87 Katō 2012, interview with the author, June 27.

stating it was necessary to pay attention to various kinds of comfort facilities, because comfort facilities had a major impact on promoting the fighting spirit, maintaining military discipline, preventing crime and venereal diseases, and so on;

2. regarding the control of those who recruited comfort women, that internally, the army issued a notice to select appropriately those people who would be involved in the recruitment of comfort women so as to maintain the dignity of the army and to avoid giving rise to social issues;
3. regarding the construction and reinforcement of comfort facilities, that an order had been issued to supply soldiers in order to construct and reinforce comfort facilities;
4. regarding the management and surveillance of comfort stations, that “regulations for comfort stations” had been created, specifying opening days and hours of comfort stations that were particular to each military unit, and stipulating the usage fees and important points of note and other matters related to using the comfort stations;
5. regarding the hygiene maintenance in comfort stations and among comfort women, that within the “regulations for comfort stations” was a requirement to utilize contraceptive devices when using the comfort stations, and that there were measures such as medical officers and others conducting venereal disease checks on the women working at the comfort stations regularly and prohibiting unhealthy women from working;
6. regarding the issuance of identification and other documents to those related to comfort stations, that documents were issued stating it was necessary that those traveling for the purpose of



establishing comfort stations be allowed passage through the use of military identification; and

7. regarding other matters, that a cable had been sent out stating women who had been prepared by recruiters in their home countries were scheduled to be transported by ship.

The Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs concluded, "We acknowledge that the Government had been involved in the so-called war-time comfort women issue as stated above."<sup>88</sup>

### Reactions from Other Countries

The press secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea commented, "The investigation has not reached a point of clarifying the total picture, but we look forward to the Japanese government continuing its efforts to probe thoroughly into the real facts of the matter," and "We hope that concrete good-faith measures will be taken." Formal comments were not made on the matter by the governments of China, Taiwan, or the Philippines.<sup>89</sup>

On July 13, Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement saying, "The Government of Indonesia welcomes the Government of Japan recognizing and apologizing for having conscripted women of several

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\*88 Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs, *Chōsen hantō shushin no iwayuru jūgun ianfu mondai ni tsuite* [About the issue of the so-called comfort women born on the Korean Peninsula], July 6, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738.

\*89 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, *Nihon seifu no teishintai mondai chōsa kekka happyō ni kansuru gaimubu supōkusuman ronpyō* [Comment by the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson regarding the release of the results of the study by the Japanese government on the issue of women's volunteer labor corps], July 6, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738; MOFA, *Jūgun ianfu mondai Nihon-gawa kekka happyō ni taisuru kankei shokoku no hannō* [Reactions of relevant countries about the release of results of the study undertaken by Japan regarding the comfort women issue], July 9, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738.

ethnic groups around Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, as ‘comfort women,’ which was forced prostitution in actuality,” and, “Since the dignity of these women will not find comfort no matter what the Government of Japan tries to do, it is impossible for them to forget completely and put all of their hardships behind them.”<sup>\*90</sup>

The next day, July 14, Hayashi Keiichi, director of the Second Southeast Asia Division of Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, approached Deputy Chief of Mission Rahardjo of the Indonesian embassy in Japan with a request that, although the right to claim compensation had expired and it would be impossible for Indonesia to request compensation for individual comfort women, Japan “very much hopes to have Indonesia’s understanding that the statement by the chief cabinet secretary reflects that, going forward, Japan wishes to consider how to express our feelings.”

Rahardjo replied, “I consider the intention of the release of the statement by Indonesia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be to mollify public opinion.”<sup>\*91</sup>

In the Philippines, Japanese Ambassador Arai Kōichi told the Philippine government, “Although Japan is deeply remorseful for its past actions, at the same time it does not want this issue to affect the favorable relations that Japan and the Philippines now have.” Peter Garrucho, executive secretary of the Philippines, responded, “The Philippines also considers this matter as something that must not affect the good relations enjoyed by the Philippines and Japan, just as you have stated.”<sup>\*92</sup>

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\*90 *Jūgun ianfu mondai ni kansuru kakkoku no tachiba (Firipin, Indonesia, Marēshia)* [Countries’ positions regarding the comfort women issue (The Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia)], September 16, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738; *Puresu ririsu (7 gatsu 13 nichi, Indonesia Gaimushō happyō)* [Press release (July 13, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia)], n.d., MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738.

\*91 Watanabe 1992, to Kunihiro Michihiko [ambassador to Indonesia], July 14, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738; The Japanese Modern Historical Manuscripts Association, 2008.

\*92 Arai 1992, to Watanabe, July 22; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-738; Arai, 2000.

### 3. The Kōno Statement

#### Emperor Akihito Visits China

As this was taking place, plans for Emperor Akihito to visit China were also moving forward through cooperation between Japan and China. Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Communist Party, visited Japan in April 1992, and through Prime Minister Miyazawa invited the emperor to visit China. The emperor visited on October 23, 1992 (Shiroyama 2009; Sugiura 2012).

Emperor Akihito made an address in reply to one from the Chinese side at a state banquet hosted by President Yang Shangkun, stating:

During the long history of relations between our two countries, there was an unfortunate period in which my country imposed great suffering and hardship on the Chinese people. This is a matter of deep sorrow for me. When the war ended, the people of Japan, with deep remorse that this kind of war must not be repeated again, and firmly determined to walk the path of a peace-loving nation, engaged themselves in rebuilding the nation (Kazankai Foundation 2008).

It was bureaucrats at the Foreign Ministry who drafted the first version of the emperor's remarks. Once the draft was approved internally at the ministry, it was sent to the Prime Minister's Office, where Miyazawa and Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō agreed to it; it was subsequently presented to the emperor.

Emperor Akihito then drafted the remarks himself based on his own thoughts, referring not only to the initial draft that had been presented to him but also to statements that had been made by past prime ministers and statements of the government's view (Hattori 2010).

According to Nakamura Jun'ichi, chief of protocol, the Chinese side did not intervene in the preparation of the remarks in any way, and took them in an extremely level-headed manner at the state dinner (Nakamura 1999).<sup>\*93</sup>

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\*93 Nakamura 2014, interview with the author, January 23.

Foreign Minister Watanabe Michio, who headed the personnel accompanying the emperor on this visit, summarized the impact of the visit by saying:

The candid feelings of Their Imperial Majesties, strongly desiring mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of Japan and China, were widely and deeply accepted by the Chinese people, and the exchanges of the heart between the peoples of both countries came to be deepened further.<sup>\*94</sup>

In contrast to the emphasis Foreign Minister Watanabe placed on “exchanges of the heart,” China’s standpoint differed. The memoirs of Foreign Minister Qian Qichen underscored the visit “breaking down the West’s sanctions against China.”

While Emperor Akihito, in contrast to Japanese leaders to date, did not use the word “apology” when he stated during his visit his attitude regarding historical issues, he had a relatively strong feeling of remorse, resulting in clear progress forward....

The emperor visiting China at this juncture demonstrated a positive effect in breaking down the West’s sanctions against China, with significance going beyond the sphere of bilateral Sino-Japan relations (Qian 2003; Qian 2006).

Western nations had applied sanctions against China in the wake of the Tiananmen Square Incident, and China positioned the visit to China by the emperor within a strategy of “going beyond the sphere of bilateral relations.”

While Watanabe was positive about the emperor’s visit to China, within the Liberal Democratic Party, there was also a deep-seated inclination to insist on playing it safe. The background to this cautious approach

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\*94 *Watanabe shuseki zuiin shokan* [Impression held by Watanabe, head of accompanying personnel] October 28, 1992; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1213.

was that in South Korea the comfort women issue was becoming a major problem, and the thinking was that it was entirely possible for the emperor's visit to provide the opportunity for arguments to arise in China about the emperor's responsibility for the war (Tanaka 2007).

In fact, Tarui Sumio, head of the China Division in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and diplomats at China's embassy in Japan, reached agreement on February 19, 1992, before Jiang Zemin arrived in Japan, that it would "not be desirable to play up" the comfort women issue.<sup>\*95</sup>

### The Kōno Statement

A reshuffling of the Miyazawa cabinet took place on December 12, 1992, through which Kōno Yōhei assumed the post of chief cabinet secretary. In South Korea, Kim Young-sam took office as president on February 25, 1993.

On March 15, Kim stated that South Korea would not demand compensation from Japan regarding the comfort women issue. Although Kim regarded Japan's investigation into the facts of the matter as important, he stated that assistance for the victims would be provided from South Korea's budget. This statement was also consistent with the standpoint of the Japanese government that the matter had been settled completely and finally through the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. A law to provide assistance to former comfort women was enacted by South Korea's National Assembly (Kimura 2013D).

Regarding the comfort women issue, Kim said in an interview, "I think we put an end to this issue through the normalization of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Japan. Therefore I created a system for compensation, as it is the South Korean government that has responsibility for it."<sup>\*96</sup>

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\*95 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Jūgun ianfu mondai ni kansuru Chūgoku no hannō* [China's response regarding the comfort women issue], March 10, 1992, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-813; *Asahi Shimbun*, December 10, 2013.

\*96 *Asahi Shimbun*, January 27, 2010.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno released a statement on August 4, 1993. This is known as the Kōno Statement.

As a result of the study which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.

As to the origin of those comfort women who were transferred to the war areas, excluding those from Japan, those from the Korean Peninsula accounted for a large part. The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule in those days, and their recruitment, transfer, control, etc., were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.

Undeniably, this was an act, with the involvement of the military authorities of the day, that severely injured the honor and dignity of many women. The Government of Japan would like to take this opportunity once again to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

It is incumbent upon us, the Government of Japan, to continue to consider seriously, while listening to the views of learned circles, how best we can express this sentiment.

The parts of this statement addressing the issue of coercion are, first:

The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments.

and also, “The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule in those days, and their recruitment, transfer, control, etc., were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.”\*97

### The Aspect of Coercion

What the Kōno Statement recognized was “coercion in a broad sense.” However, South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, interpreting the statement as recognizing “coercion overall,” announced it would consider evaluating the Kōno Statement positively.

The South Korean government intended to positively appraise the fact that the Japanese government, through this statement, recognized overall coercion in the recruitment, transfer, control, etc. of the comfort women and expressed feelings of apology and remorse toward the victims of the comfort women system, along with the determination to, among other things, face up to this as a lesson of history.\*98

The negative tone of the coverage in South Korean newspapers was restrained compared with that in previous years, although some pointed out that the recognition of coercion was inadequate.\*99

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\*97 *Ianfu kankei chōsa kekka happyō ni kansuru naikaku kanbō chōkan danwa* [Statement by the chief cabinet secretary on the release of the results of the investigation concerning comfort women], August 4, 1993; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law 2013-737.

\*98 Gotō Toshio [ambassador to South Korea] to Mutō Kabun [foreign minister], August 4, 1993; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-727.

\*99 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Jūgun ianfu mondai*

The day after the Kōno Statement was released—namely on August 5, 1993—the *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported:

It has been learned that when the word “coercion” is used, interpretations are different in Japan and South Korea. The actual conditions of conscripts can be broken down according to degree, such as, (1) being taken away by brute force, (2) being tricked through honeyed words, (3) having some degree of free will, but complying reluctantly. In Japan, former servicemen want to regard only people in group (1) as having been conscripted, but in contrast, in South Korea the meaning is broader, with (2) and (3) also, as a matter of course, indicated as coercion.

The *Asahi Shimbun* also reported that, in drafting the Kōno Statement, “A senior person in the Asian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has acknowledged that consultations were held while working on the text to determine what kinds of phraseology would be acceptable to the South Korean side.”

Before the Kōno Statement was released, hearings were held in Seoul with sixteen former comfort women. These hearings took place from July 26 to 30 and were conducted through the cooperation of the Association of Pacific War Victims and Bereaved Families, a South Korean organization. The Kōno Statement was released five days after those hearings concluded.<sup>\*100</sup>

Tanaka Kōtarō, the person in charge of the hearings, said, “I felt my heart ache and I got all choked up learning about the agony inflicted on” the elderly women. Tanaka, a councillor in the Cabinet Councillors’ Office

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*ni kansuru chōsa kekka no happyō (Kankoku/Kitachōsen no hannō)* [Release of the results of the investigation into the comfort women issue (Reactions from South Korea and North Korea)], August 6, 1993, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1208.

\*100 Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs, *Iwayuru jūgun ianfu mondai ni tsuite* [Regarding the comfort women issue], August 4, 1993; MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737.



on External Affairs, had originally been a bureaucrat at the Ministry of Health and Welfare.<sup>\*101</sup>

The Miyazawa cabinet resigned en masse on August 5, the day after the Kōno Statement was released, and on August 9 the cabinet of Hosokawa Morihiro was inaugurated. In the general election of July 18, the Liberal Democratic Party had lost its overall majority. Miyazawa said about the Kōno Statement, “I had Kōno do that. It was a pledge made to South Korea. I considered it something I had to do while I was in office” (Iokibe et al. 2006).

According to Kōno, “I think we couldn’t have said things to such depth if it hadn’t been the Miyazawa cabinet. Mr. Miyazawa treated Japan’s history toward other Asian nations properly, squarely facing the facts” (Kōno et al. 2007).

### **Talk of a Secret Agreement between Japan and South Korea**

There is also talk of a secret agreement existing between Japan and South Korea regarding the Kōno Statement. Murata Ryōhei, Japan’s ambassador to Germany at the time, recollected,

It is said that out of the public eye there was a promise made from the South Korean side even before the Kōno Statement that “if Japan will only recognize the role of coercion, henceforth South Korea will not demand compensation,” but there is no way that South Korea would stick to that kind of pledge and agree to close the case (2008).

What spread this rumor of a secret agreement was an essay authored by Sakurai Yoshiko. Entitled *Mitsuyaku gaikō no daishō: Ianfu mondai wa naze kojireta ka* [The price of “secret agreement” diplomacy: Why the comfort women issue has gotten so out of hand], it appeared in the April 1997 issue of *Bungei Shunjū* magazine.

The essay included claims that the hearings with the sixteen former

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\*101 *Mainichi Shimbun*, August 5, 1993.

comfort women had been the decisive factor in recognizing coercion; that Gong Ro-myung, South Korea's ambassador to Japan, and others had pressed Japan to recognize the coercive nature of comfort women recruitment more than anything else; that the office of the prime minister, rather than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the focus for this issue in Japan; and that Japan had had an exchange of views with South Korea regarding the wording used in the Kōno Statement.

Moreover, the essay explained that the reason Japan had recognized coercion was that Korea promised it would not demand individual compensation, and that, therefore, a secret agreement had existed between Japan and South Korea. The grounds for this were interviews conducted with Katō Kōichi, Kōno Yōhei, Ishihara Nobuo, Mutō Kabun, Tanino Sakutarō, and others. When the Kōno Statement was drafted, Ishihara, Mutō, and Tanino were serving as deputy chief cabinet secretary, foreign minister, and head of the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs, respectively. Ishihara's testimony was regarded as the most meaningful grounds for the article's claims (Sakurai 1997).

However, in a different interview, Ishihara refuted this theory of a secret agreement.

There was no secret agreement or anything of the sort. In short, it was a matter of wanting the element of coercion recognized for the sake of the women's honor. The [South Korean] ambassador at the time was Gong Ro-myung. Ambassador Gong had stressed that South Korea had no intention of bringing up the issue of the right to compensation because the right to seek reparations had been relinquished under the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. I introduced that fact to Ms. Sakurai, and she took that to mean that Japan recognized the element of coercion in return for Japan not giving [the comfort women] any money (Asian Women's Fund 2007).

However, in writing this book, the author asked Katō, Kōno, and

Tanino about this, and no testimony emerged to corroborate the argument that a secret agreement ever existed.

Mutō is now deceased, and the matter of the comfort women does not appear at all in books written based on interviews with him. In April 1993, Mutō had still only newly assumed the role of foreign minister (Gifu Shimbunsha 2008).

Documents received through information disclosure requests also fail to indicate any secret agreement. In the beginning, South Korea took the stance that it would not seek any reparations from Japan, and from the history of events leading to the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea, the Miyazawa cabinet regarded it as only natural that South Korea would not seek reparations.

### **In the Narrow Gap between Administrations**

According to Kōno's memoirs, the roughest time he faced was in the hearings held with the former comfort women.

The greatest difficulty was with the conflict seen among the former comfort women who had come forward. The group insisting that the Japanese government first apologize and then pay compensation denounced as “traitors” women who, because of poverty, thought it was all right to respond positively as long as compensation was paid. The sixteen women who gradually opened up their hearts in the face of the cautious stance of the inquiry commission from the Japanese government spoke under the promise that “the sources and the contents would not be made public.” ...

According to the testimonies, which were obtained under trying circumstances, Japanese soldiers threatened and took them away, with some tricked into thinking they would be working as assistants in factories, and on some days they were made to serve more than twenty soldiers. They spoke of pitiful experiences in which, when Japan was

routed, they were left behind. In circumstances in which no one can go against what the military says, we determined that their stories should generally speaking be recognized as “coercion.” ...

Mr. Miyazawa was left in shock upon reading the testimonies. The statement that I released was the “will of the cabinet,” decided upon under the responsibility of the Miyazawa cabinet after careful examination of materials obtained not only in Japan and South Korea but also from the National Archives and Records Administration in the United States and elsewhere. Although we did not take a formal cabinet decision on the statement, all succeeding administrations, whether led by the Liberal Democratic Party or the Democratic Party of Japan, have followed it.

Kōno also wrote, “I feel nothing but pure sadness upon hearing claims implying that women who suffer hardships even today, more than a half century after the end of the war, do not exist simply because there is no evidence on paper, or that wartime tragedies did not exist.”\*102

The *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* ran a serialized column authored by Kōno entitled *Watashi no rirekisho* [My résumé]. The following summarizes the situation in July and August 1993, based on that column.

The Liberal Democratic Party lost its majority in the July 18 general election, and Miyazawa and the three leading figures of the party announced their intention to resign. Kōno and Mitsuzuka Hiroshi, policy research council chairman for the party, tried to bring Gotōda Masaharu on as party president, but Gotōda declined, citing poor health. Kōno decided to throw his own hat into the ring after being persuaded by Asō Tarō.

The election for party president pitted Kōno against Watanabe Michio, and at a general meeting of Liberal Democratic Party Diet members on July 30, Kōno was elected as the sixteenth party president.

Kōno recalled the period saying:

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\*102 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 8, 2012.

Despite taking office as Liberal Democratic Party president, from the beginning, I had a terrible time trying to fill the party's top three positions. I intended to ask Shiokawa Masajūrō, who had become a Diet member the same year I did, to serve as the secretary-general of the party, but he declined, saying, "I won't do it."

Kōno tapped Mori Yoshirō to be secretary-general, passing over Mitsuzuka and Hashimoto Ryūtarō, both of whom had shown eagerness for the position. He appointed Hashimoto as the party's policy research council chairperson.

"Before I decided on Kibe Yoshiaki for chairman of the general council, I had to listen at length to demands from Watanabe Michio," he related. It was on August 2 that the three major party positions were decided.

Kōno wrote,

My final task as chief cabinet secretary was to announce the statement by the chief cabinet secretary concerning the comfort women, which I did at a press conference on August 4. We conducted hearings with a number of people, where we were given accounts of experiences that only people directly involved in the matter would know. We then compiled the statement with great care on the basis of that information.

The following day the members of the Miyazawa cabinet resigned en masse, and the Liberal Democratic Party dropped to the status of an opposition party.\*103

The following is a summary of the events during that period.

JULY 18: The Liberal Democratic Party loses its majority in the general election; Miyazawa and the top three party leaders announce their intention to resign

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\*103 *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, December 24 to December 26, 2004.

- JULY 26: Hearings are conducted in Seoul with former comfort women (until July 30)
- JULY 28: Kōno and Watanabe stand as candidates for party president
- JULY 30: Kōno is elected the sixteenth president of the Liberal Democratic Party
- AUGUST 2: The top three party positions are decided upon (Mori as secretary-general, Kibe as general council chairman, Hashimoto as policy research council chairman)
- AUGUST 4: Kōno Statement is released
- AUGUST 5: The Miyazawa cabinet resigns en masse
- AUGUST 9: The Hosokawa cabinet is inaugurated

For Kōno, the weeks leading up to the announcement of his statement were extraordinarily busy, including, among other things, a general election, a party presidential election, and the appointment of party officers.

### **Tanino Sakutarō, Head of the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs**

On August 9, 1993, five days after the Kōno Statement was released, Tanino Sakutarō, the head of the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs, who had authored the initial draft of the statement, conducted a press briefing at the Prime Minister's Office.

Tanino stated,

It is a fact that both the prime minister [Miyazawa] and the chief cabinet secretary [Kōno] wanted to settle the matter under the administration then in office, rather than push it back to the next administration. However, it is not the case that we will no longer do anything now that the statement has been released. I imagine it is entirely possible that various documents will emerge in the future as well, and we intend to respond to those in a sincere manner each time that occurs.... The

South Korean government has continued to argue that this is not an issue of money, but rather that the investigation be conducted with integrity.

Reporters asked about coercion, to which Tanino replied, “Generally speaking, these actions were taken against the will of the people involved.”

*Question:* Did any official documents corroborate that coercion was involved?

*Answer:* As for how “coercion” is understood, the statement by the chief cabinet secretary includes some information about that point. Within the documents and other materials from the United States’ National Archives, a sizable amount of corroboration exists to indicate coercion, particularly within daily life at the comfort stations.

Moreover, in terms of the places of origin of the comfort women who were transferred to the front, the Korean Peninsula accounted for a large part. The statement includes a section focused specifically on this. The three stages of their recruitment, transfer, and control were conducted generally against their will.

You can interpret the fact that this was conducted against their will to mean, in other words, that these acts were accompanied by coercion. In particular, their transfer was conducted by military trucks, ships, and so on, with a large number of documents indicating this.

[ ... ]

*Question:* As for the lines concerning the use of military trucks and so on, is the use of such trucks equal to something indicating coercion?

*Answer:* There is no mistaking the fact that this was conducted generally against their will. It was not a situation in which they could have escaped and returned home, and if one went to where the

comfort stations were located, they were at the front and therefore moved together with the Japanese soldiers, so it was a life which was a long way from having any freedom.

As for people who say they were tricked, even if they protested that the reality they encountered was different from the initial story they had been told and thus tried to escape, the location was the front lines and so they were not in circumstances that would make escape possible.

Their day-to-day actions were also, generally speaking, severely restricted.<sup>\*104</sup>

This author also asked Tanino about this matter. Tanino said that councillors from the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs conducted the hearings in Seoul only after interviewing within Japan former imperial military personnel, as well as people who operated the comfort stations, and reading through historical documents quite extensively, at the United States' National Archives and elsewhere. It was through that process that the Kōno Statement came to be released.

The main points of the Kōno Statement are that the military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women, and that the recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters acting in response to the request of the military. Regarding the recruitment of the comfort women, it states that, "in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments." It does not say that the military forcibly took women away.

The Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs did not conduct

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\*104 Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs, *Tanino shitsuchō ni yoru burifingu [gaiyō]: Iwayuru jūgun ianfu mondai no chōsa kekka ni tsuite* [Summary of briefing by Tanino (office head) regarding the results of the investigation into the comfort women issue], August 9, 1993, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737.



a check of the draft of the Kōno Statement with the South Korean government. There had been no promise that if Japan would recognize coercion, then the South Korean side would not seek compensation. Upon being shown the report of the hearings, Prime Minister Miyazawa was profoundly taken aback at what it contained. While Miyazawa may have understood this issue well, Kōno understood the seriousness of the issue even better, and wanted to respond.<sup>\*105</sup>

### **Covert Japan–South Korea Collaboration on the Text**

On August 3, 1993, the day before the Kōno Statement was released, Japan informed the Philippines, Indonesia, and other relevant countries of the content of the statement in each country.<sup>\*106</sup>

While it was kept secret at the time, South Korea participated in the preparation of the Kōno Statement. In mid-October 1992, nearing the end of the Roh Tae-woo administration, during Japan–South Korea working-level consultations, the South Korean side asserted, “It is essential for the Japanese government to conduct hearings on the situation with both the victims and the perpetrators and recognize that the comfort women were subject to coercion.”

On the Japanese side, the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held consultations under Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Ishihara. In late October, Japan conveyed to South

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\*105 Tanino 2012, interview with the author, September 5.

\*106 Arai 1993, to Mutō, August 3, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737; Fujita Kimio [ambassador to Indonesia], to Mutō, August 3, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737; Kojima Mitsuaki [charge d’affaires ad interim in Malaysia] to Mutō, August 3, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Second Southeast Asian Division, *Iwayuru jūgun ianfu mondai ni kansuru chōsa kekka no happyō: Firipin, Indonēshia, Marēshia, Shingapōru no hannō* [Release of the results of the investigation into the comfort women issue: Reactions from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore], August 6, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737.

Korea its recognition that, while it would be difficult to clearly acknowledge coercion, “it cannot be denied that there were also elements of coercion in some cases.”

In December, the Japanese side explained, “We are now considering that, when we reach the final stages [of compiling the statement], people from the Japanese government should meet with representatives of the comfort women, listen to them speak, and refer to the results of investigations performed by the South Korean government, and then state in some way, as the recognition of the Japanese government, that there had been elements of coercion.” The South Korean side replied, “It is important that the Japanese government recognize that those who became comfort women did so against their will.”

In mid-March 1993, when the Kim Young-sam administration was in its very early stages, the South Korean side said during bilateral working-level consultations that, when stating the recognition that coercion had taken place, preliminary remarks such as “although no documents have been found indicating the direct involvement of the military in recruitment” should be avoided.

On April 1, Foreign Minister Watanabe conveyed to Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo that, “It is difficult to say that all cases were coercive,” but that he had “instructed bureaucrats to examine expressions that come very close to that in meaning.” On April 7, Mutō Kabun became Japan’s foreign minister.

The South Korean side argued during the bilateral working-level consultations that “people [in South Korea] will not accept that only some of the comfort women experienced coercion,” and that “if a limited expression such as ‘there was coercion in some cases’ is used, a considerable uproar will ensue.”

When Foreign Minister Mutō visited South Korea on June 29 and 30, the South Korean foreign minister underscored “recognition of coercion, first and foremost.” At this time, the South Korean side’s position was that it “will not demand monetary compensation from Japan.” On July 28 at a foreign ministers’ meeting, Mutō conveyed that Japan “would like to consult

in advance privately with your government regarding the wording to be used in the announcement.”

Although the hearings with the former comfort women took place from July 26 through 30, a draft of the statement had been formulated by July 29 at the latest, before the hearings were over. In that sense, the hearings were a formality, so to speak.

Adjustment of the wording in the statement took place until August 3, the day before it was released, and was conducted between the Foreign Ministry of Japan and the South Korean embassy in Japan, and the Foreign Ministry of South Korea and the Japanese embassy in South Korea. There were three points of discussion: the involvement of the military in the establishment of the comfort stations, the involvement of the military in recruiting comfort women, and the element of coercion in recruiting comfort women.

As for the involvement of the military in the establishment of the comfort stations, the original draft on the Japanese side used the word *ikō* (意向 intended, wished), against which the South Korean side requested *shiji* (指示 directed, instructed); the Japanese responded with *yōbō* (要望 requested, wished), which was then countered by the South Korean side with *sashizu* (指図 ordered, commanded). The phraseology ultimately settled upon was *gun tōkyoku no yōsei* (軍当局の要請 the request of the military authorities).

With regard to the recruitment of comfort women, the South Korean side proposed the wording *gun mata wa gun no shiji o uketa gyōsha* (軍又は軍の指示を受けた業者 the military or private recruiters who were directed by the military), to which the Japanese side responded with the proposal *yōbō* (要望 requested, wished). Again, here the South Korean side countered with the proposal *sashizu* (指図 ordered, commanded), which the Japanese side would not accept. The wording finally agreed upon was *gun no yōsei o uketa gyōsha* (軍の要請を受けた業者 private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military).

Regarding coercion, the original Japanese draft stated: (*gyōsha no kangen, kyōatsu ni yoru nado, honnin no ishi ni hanshite atsumerareta jirei*

*ga kazuōku ari* ([業者の]甘言、強圧による等、本人の意思に反して集められた事例が数多くあり there were many cases in which they were brought together against their will, through coaxing [by private recruiters], coercion, etc.). The South Korean side insisted on deleting *jirei ga kazuōku ari* (事例が数多くあり there were many cases in which). The Japanese side rejected this, but in the paragraph limited to discussing the Korean Peninsula, the wording was changed to *sono boshū, isō, kanri nado mo, kangen, kyōatsu ni yoru nado, sōjite honnin-tachi no ishi ni han shite okonawareta* (その募集、移送、管理等も、甘言、強圧による等、総じて本人たちの意思に反して行われた their recruitment, transfer, control, etc. were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.).

As for apologies, the Japanese side put forth *kokoro kara owabi mōshiageru* (心からお詫び申し上げる extend sincere apologies), to which the South Korean side wanted to add *hansei no kimochi* (反省の気持ち remorse), a proposal that Japan accepted.

In this way the Japanese and South Korea diplomatic authorities reconciled the wording in a careful way. Yet despite this, in the manual for responding to anticipated reporters' questions prepared by the Japanese bureaucracy prior to the release of the statement, it was claimed that "prior consultation was not conducted; the results of the investigation were communicated immediately before [the statement was released]."

The issuing of the Kōno Statement came even closer to the end of an administration's term in office than the Miyazawa Statement had previously. The fact that the Kōno Statement was the product of collaborative drafting between Japan and South Korea was kept hidden for twenty-one years, until 2014.<sup>\*107</sup>

According to the May 20, 2014 *Sankei Shimbun*, the Cabinet Councilors' Office on External Affairs held hearings with a total of twenty-six

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\*107 Team examining the Kōno Statement drafting process and related matters, *Ianfu mondai o meguru Nikkan-kan no yaritori no keii: Kōno danwa sakusei kara Ajia Josei Kikin made* [Course of exchanges between Japan and South Korea regarding the comfort women issue: From the drafting of the Kōno Statement to the Asian Women's Fund], June 20, 2014, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737.

Japanese between January and May 1993, specifically twelve formerly related to the imperial army, five formerly related to the government-general of Korea, one who formerly managed a former comfort station, two formerly related to the Ministry of Health and Welfare, three researchers, and three book authors. The researchers included Hata Ikuhiko and Yoshimi Yoshiaki, while the book authors were Yoshida Seiji, Senda Kakō, and Yamada Meiko. I requested that information be disclosed concerning the hearings conducted in Japan and South Korea, but the requested information was not released.

#### **4. The Transition from the Hosokawa Cabinet to the Murayama Cabinet**

##### **“A War of Aggression”**

The Hosokawa Morihiro cabinet was launched on August 9, 1993, five days after the Kōno Statement was released. The ruling coalition included eight parties and factions, including Hosokawa’s own Japan New Party as well as the Japan Socialist Party, the Japan Renewal Party, Kōmeitō, the Democratic Socialist Party, and New Party Sakigake. The coalition government agreed, “Having remorse regarding the past war, we will indicate clearly both domestically and internationally that we will cooperate for the peace and development of the world and of Asia.” The Liberal Democratic Party handed over the reins of power, and the “1955 system” (the term used to describe how the party had dominated Japanese politics since its formation in 1955) came to an end (Hattori 2014).

At a press conference on August 10, Hosokawa declared, “Even if there were various circumstances leading up to the Pacific War, it is a fact that there were aggressive aspects. I myself believe it was a war of aggression, a mistaken war” (Kasahara 2010; Hosokawa 2010).<sup>\*108</sup>

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\*108 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 11, 1993.

When I asked Hosokawa about it, he said the question had come entirely out of the blue at a press conference. “I hadn’t prepared for that question, so I just said exactly what I thought.”<sup>\*109</sup>

In his general policy speech delivered to the National Diet on August 23, the phrase “war of aggression” had been toned down to “actions, including aggression and colonial rule.” Because of opposition from families of the war dead and others, the word “aggression” did not appear in the initial draft of this speech. It was included only because of Hosokawa’s insistent instructions. Of all the prime ministers who had stated “profound remorse and apologies,” Hosokawa was the first to do so in the general policy speech to the Diet made by each prime minister immediately after coming into office.<sup>\*110</sup>

According to Hosokawa, “If I had failed to face this issue squarely, there would be no way to explain that to other Asian countries. I had the thinking that it would be appropriate for me as prime minister to say something briefly.”<sup>\*111</sup>

Foreign Minister Hata Tsutomu, in his capacity as head of the Japan Renewal Party, made a request of Hosokawa that he serve as prime minister. At around that time he gave Hosokawa this advice: “Japan has caused harm psychologically or physically to people in various nations, including China. It is necessary to apologize appropriately for those things” (Yokoyama 1994).

Fukaya Takashi, Etō Takami, Ishihara Shintarō, and others in the right-wing faction of the Liberal Democratic Party grilled Hosokawa over his statement. Hosokawa wrote in his diary, “Just as Ishihara and some others say, it is not that various criticisms of the Tokyo Military Tribunal don’t exist. But now that we have accepted the outcomes of the trials, if we are going to voice an objection to them now, it is inevitable that the trust we enjoy from the international community will crumble.”

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\*109 Hosokawa 2013, interview with the author, March 14.

\*110 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 23, 1993, evening edition.

\*111 Hosokawa 2013, interview with the author, March 14.

On October 12 and 13, Hosokawa held summit talks in Tokyo with Russian president Boris Yeltsin. According to Hosokawa's diary, "regarding the internment [of Japanese World War II prisoners of war] in Siberia," Yeltsin "regards it as the evil residue of totalitarianism and apologized for the inhumane conduct." At a lunch meeting, Yeltsin disclosed his inner thoughts, saying, "Since Prime Minister Hosokawa made the statement regarding aggression, I too was able to say such a thing undaunted" (Hosokawa 2010).

In the Tokyo Declaration on Japan–Russia Relations agreed upon by Hosokawa and Yeltsin, "the issue of where Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the Habomai Islands belong" appears explicitly in the text, and a declaration on science and technology was also released. The concessions regarding each side's understanding of history provided support for progress in resolving the territorial issue.

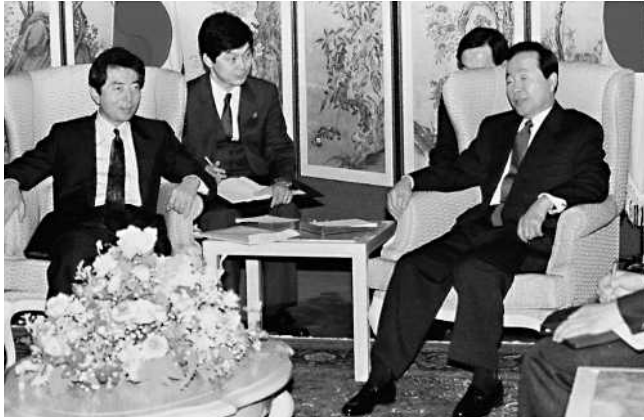
When this author requested access to the document *Nichi-Ro shunō kaigi kiroku (1993-nen 10-gatsu 12-13-nichi)* [Record of the Japan–Russia summit meeting (October 12–13, 1993)], the request for disclosure was denied for the reason that it "includes information related to exchanges concerning territorial and other issues which were not premised on future public disclosure."<sup>\*112</sup>

### **“The Most Candid and Sincere Approach” While at Gyeongju**

Hosokawa visited Gyeongju, South Korea on November 6, 1993, and had summit talks with President Kim Young-sam on November 7. He told Kim, "Because of Japan's colonial rule, the people of the Korean Peninsula were deprived of the opportunity to receive education through their native language, had their names changed to Japanese-style names, and experienced unbearable suffering and sorrow in various forms, including as comfort women and through the conscription of forced laborers. As those who

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\*112 MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-856.



Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro of Japan (left) and President Kim Young-sam of South Korea (right) talk at their summit meeting in Kyongju, South Korea (November 6, 1993).

caused this harm, we feel deep remorse and heartfelt apology (*chinsha* 陳謝) for this inhuman conduct.”

The clause about education not being provided in the Korean language and forced changes from Korean to Japanese names did not appear in the draft made by the bureaucrats in charge of the meeting; it was added by Hosokawa himself at a preparatory meeting held before he left for South Korea. Moreover, while on the airplane to South Korea, Hosokawa also modified the word choice from “apology” (*owabi* お詫び) to “inhuman conduct” and “heartfelt apology” (*chinsha* 陳謝). Kim responded, “Mr. Prime Minister, I evaluate highly your perception of history.”

Questions and answers with the press reveal that Kim said, “South Korea’s previous administration sought compensation regarding the comfort women, but I stated that this was unnecessary.”<sup>\*113</sup>

Improvements were also seen in Japan–China bilateral relations. Hosokawa met with President Jiang Zemin in Seattle on November 19. Jiang

\*113 Machida Mitsugu [consul general to Busan] 1993, to Hata, November 7, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-845; Hosokawa 2010; Hosokawa 2013, interview with the author, March 14.



said, “Prime Minister Hosokawa, I commend your attitude toward past history,” to which Hosokawa replied, “For Japan, it is imperative to build future-oriented relations solidly grounded in [its remorse for] the past.”

Seattle became the venue for the Japan–China talks because an informal gathering of Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum leaders was taking place there.<sup>\*114</sup>

On March 20, 1994, Hosokawa met with Premier Li Peng in Beijing and stated, “In the policy speech I delivered to the National Diet last August, I expressed anew our profound remorse and apologies for the fact that past Japanese actions, including aggression and colonial rule, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people. Based on this remorse toward our past history, we wish to further cultivate future-oriented and mature bilateral relations with China.”

Li appreciated this, replying, “Prime Minister Hosokawa, your attitude regarding the Second World War is the most candid and sincere approach I have heard thus far among the statements made by leaders on the Japanese side.”<sup>\*115</sup>

Before Hosokawa visited China, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Saitō Kunihiko had urged him to make a statement on China’s human rights issues. The day before the summit took place, Hosokawa was told by Ambassador Kunihiro that, should Japan raise the human rights issue, China might counter by raising the history issue. China’s Foreign Ministry had also requested that Japan not bring up human rights during the summit talks. For that reason, it was at a dinner party, rather than at the summit meeting, that Hosokawa referred to human rights, quoting the Vienna Convention (Japanese Modern Historical Manuscripts Association 2008; Hosokawa 2010).

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\*114 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *Nitchū shunō kaidan* [Hosokawa sōri to Kō Takumin kokka shuseki] gaiyō [Summary of the Japan–China summit meeting (between Prime Minister Hosokawa and President Jiang Zemin)], November 22, 1993, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-861.

\*115 Kunihiro Michihiko [ambassador to China] 1994, to Hata, March 20, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-853.

On March 24, President Kim Young-sam of South Korea visited Japan. When Kim spoke of how Japan and South Korea “should not adhere to the past but rather bring their relationship into a future-oriented direction,” Hosokawa told him that Japan was “currently earnestly examining measures to address the comfort women issue.”

At a meeting with Emperor Akihito, Kim invited the emperor to visit South Korea, saying, “It is imperative for us to build congenial relations. In order to do so, a correct perception of history is essential.” At a state dinner, the emperor expressed “profound sorrow” regarding issues of the past (Hosokawa 2010).<sup>\*116</sup>

In this way, the Hosokawa cabinet was successful in maintaining favorable relations with all countries in terms of historical issues, particularly in the area of Japan–South Korea relations. One factor was that, in addition to Hosokawa’s candid attitude, the Kōno Statement had been released during the cabinet of the previous prime minister, Miyazawa, when concrete measures to follow up on the statement had not yet been devised.

Under the Hata Tsutomu cabinet that followed, Justice Minister Nagano Shigeto stated the Nanjing Incident was “a fabrication” and was subsequently forced to resign. Hata looked back on it saying, “In a short-lived cabinet of only two months, that was the thorniest incident of all” (Hata 1996).

### **The Murayama Cabinet and the Asian Women’s Fund**

The Murayama Tomiichi cabinet came into being on June 30, 1994. Murayama was the president of the Japan Socialist Party, and his administration was a coalition with the Liberal Democratic Party and New Party Sakigake. Kōno, the president of the Liberal Democratic Party, joined the

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\*116 Hata 1994, to Gotō, March 25, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-846; MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Kimu Yon-samu daitōryō hōnichi (Tennō Heika to no gokaiken)* [President Kim Young-sam’s visit to Japan (meeting with the emperor)], March 28, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-846.

cabinet as the deputy prime minister and simultaneously as foreign minister, while New Party Sakigake leader Takemura Masayoshi took up the position of finance minister.

The three parties—the Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party, and New Party Sakigake—concluded an agreement as the coalition government was launched. Included in it was the statement, “On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, we will reflect on past wars and work actively to get a Diet resolution adopted that indicates our determination to have peace in the future.” The Japan Socialist Party placed significant weight on the inclusion of this statement (Igarashi 1997).

But in August, Sakurai Shin of the Liberal Democratic Party resigned his ministerial position as director-general of the Environment Agency after denying that the Pacific War had aggressive intent. When in October the organizers of the Asian Games to be held in Hiroshima sent an invitation to President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan, President Jiang Zemin of China called on Japan to develop friendly relations grounded in remorse over history (Kojima 1995; Japanese Modern Historical Manuscripts Association 2008).

In December, the three parties in the ruling coalition reached agreement among themselves regarding the comfort women issue. Through government cooperation, they set up an undertaking that would provide assistance to former comfort women through the Asian Women’s Fund, which would have wide-reaching public participation.<sup>\*117</sup>

Chief Cabinet Secretary Igarashi Kōzō of the Japan Socialist Party and Minister of Construction Nosaka Kōken argued for the provision of individual compensation to former comfort women, but the standpoint of Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs was that all claims had already been settled through the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of Korea Concerning the Settlement of Problems in Regard to Property and Claims

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\*117 Subcommittee to Address the Wartime Comfort Women Issue [Ruling Parties’ Project to Deal with Issues Fifty Years after the War], *Iwayuru jūgun ianfu mondai ni tsuite no dai 1-ji hōkoku* [The first report on the so-called wartime comfort women issue], December 7, 1994, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-855.

and Economic Cooperation, signed in 1965. That agreement stipulates that all issues over the right to make claims “have been settled completely and finally.” The agreed minutes to the accord state that the two sides confirmed that the agreement “includes any claim.... and that, therefore, no contention can be made” (Iokibe et al. 2007; Tanaka 2009; Yakushiji 2012).

It was in that context that, in July 1995, the Asian Women’s Fund was launched as a private-sector organization through governmental cooperation and began collecting donations from the public. The fund would provide one-time assistance of two million Japanese yen as compensation to each individual, while the prime minister would give every former comfort woman a letter of apology. The government of Japan contributed funds for personnel and other expenses of the fund’s secretariat so that all funds contributed by the public would go to the victims. Because medical and welfare support, which was provided in addition to the compensation, was a government expenditure, it was accounted for as state reparations. Medical and welfare support, taking local pricing into account, was provided at the level of three million yen to each former comfort woman in South Korea and Taiwan, and 1.2 million yen to each in the Philippines.

In South Korea, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan opposed the Asian Women’s Fund and instead called for state compensation. When seven former comfort women accepted the letter from the prime minister, the compensation, and the medical and welfare support, South Korean news media and NGOs reacted with strong hostility.

While the South Korean government initially took a neutral attitude, it became critical of the fund once negative domestic public opinion was voiced. When the Kim Dae-jung administration was formed, the country began paying former comfort women livelihood support from the national budget—provided, however, that they refused to accept compensation from the Asian Women’s Fund. The South Korean government refused to provide government assistance to the seven who had accepted compensation from the Japanese fund or to another four who accepted compensation

from the fund later. The eleven women were greatly shocked at this discriminatory treatment by their government. In contrast, the governments of the Philippines and the Netherlands cooperated with this initiative.

In present-day South Korea, the Asian Women's Fund and the letters of apology from Japan's prime ministers are largely unknown. This is because of a lack of publicity, including the fact that South Korea's major newspapers refused to carry advertisements informing the public of the Asian Women's Fund (Ōnuma 2007; Asaba et al. 2012; Asaba 2013).

The comfort women issue came to the fore once more after the turn of the century, but before taking that up it would be useful to examine the Murayama Statement of August 1995. The Murayama Statement should have served as the culmination of reconciliation policies.

Chapter

# 4

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## The Murayama Statement



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Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi delivers his statement at a press conference (August 15, 1995).



# 1. Murayama and the Surrounding Political Environment

## A Highly Unusual Diet Resolution

In the summer of 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II was approaching. At this time, the ruling parties within Murayama Tomiichi's cabinet lacked unity regarding a Diet resolution to be released marking the fiftieth anniversary. The Japan Socialist Party and New Party Sakigake tried to incorporate remorse over acts of aggression and colonial rule into the resolution, an inclusion the Liberal Democratic Party strongly opposed, resulting in hardly any progress when the draft was being coordinated (Kitaoka 2000; Iokibe et al. 2007).

Although compilation of the draft by a group of ruling party project team chairpersons had ground to a halt, on June 6 the Liberal Democratic Party offered to make concessions. This was in order to maintain the framework of the coalition government.

On June 9, the plenary session of the House of Representatives adopted the Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace on the Basis of Lessons Learned from History.

The House of Representatives resolves as follows:

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, this House offers its sincere condolences to those who fell in action and victims of wars and similar actions all over the world.

Solemnly reflecting upon many instances of colonial rule and acts of aggression in the modern history of the world, and recognizing that Japan carried out those acts in the past, inflicting pain and suffering upon the peoples of other countries, especially in Asia, the members of this House express a sense of deep remorse.

We must transcend the differences over historical views of the past war and learn humbly the lessons of history so as to build a peaceful international society.



This House expresses its resolve, under the banner of eternal peace enshrined in the Constitution of Japan, to join hands with other nations of the world and to pave the way to a future that allows all human beings to live together.\*<sup>118</sup>

Coordination between the ruling and opposition camps regarding a revised draft resolution ended in failure, and among the opposition parties, all legislators from the New Frontier Party absented themselves from the vote. There were also numerous absences by members of the ruling parties, including Abe Shinzō, Asō Tarō, Takeshita Noboru, Miyazawa Kiichi, Takemura Masayoshi, and Genba Kōichirō. Legislators from the Japanese Communist Party were present but opposed the resolution. Supporters of the resolution amounted to only 230, less than half the number of legislators.

Diet resolutions are customarily passed with unanimous consent. It had been twenty-four years since the last time a resolution had been adopted with the largest opposition party absent. That was a resolution on maintaining the three non-nuclear principles in Okinawa and reducing US military bases in Okinawa, passed when the Diet ratified the Okinawa Reversion Agreement. Although the substance of the 1995 resolution was only four sentences long, it was difficult to work out a final agreement that closed the gaps among the various perceptions of history.

On June 14, the vote on the resolution in the House of Councillors was shelved, never to be taken up again.\*<sup>119</sup>

To express remorse for the war, Prime Minister Murayama had planned a gathering to mark the passing of fifty years since the end of the war, making it a separate occasion from the annual August 15 memorial ceremony for the war dead. However, the gathering had to be postponed because of opposition from the Liberal Democratic Party. When it came to views on history, the Murayama cabinet was a case of strange bedfellows indeed.

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\*118 *Dai 132 kai Kokkai Shūgiin kaigiroku* [Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the 132nd Session of the Diet], volume 35, June 9, 1995.

\*119 *Asahi Shimbun*, June 7, 1995; *Asahi Shimbun*, June 10, 1995; *Asahi Shimbun*, June 15, 1995.

## A Cabinet Decision

Finally August 15 arrived, and the skies over Tokyo were as clear as a bell from early morning on. Just before 9 a.m., members of the Murayama cabinet appeared at Yasukuni Shrine. The eight ministers were all from the Liberal Democratic Party and included Minister of International Trade and Industry Hashimoto Ryūtarō, Minister of Construction Mori Yoshirō, Minister of Transport Hiranuma Takeo, and Director General of the Management and Coordination Agency Etō Takami. It was just before the cabinet meeting was to begin.<sup>\*120</sup>

At 10 a.m. the cabinet meeting got underway, and the draft of the prime minister's statement was presented. Reading the draft of the statement aloud was the role of the deputy chief cabinet secretary for administrative affairs. That post was held by Furukawa Teijirō, who had assumed it in February. Before that, Furukawa had served as an administrative vice-minister for health and welfare. The deputy chief cabinet secretary for policy affairs was Sonoda Hiroyuki of New Party Sakigake.

Furukawa was nervous. In front of him was a line of ministers who had just completed a visit to Yasukuni Shrine.

Were the cabinet to be thrown into confusion over the statement, the impact would be enormous both domestically and internationally. Chief Cabinet Secretary Nosaka Kōken had been the main person trying to get a consensus among the ministers in advance, but there was no way of knowing how successful his efforts had been. While this may sound conceited, my goal was to move the statement toward approval solemnly and silently by reading it aloud with finesse.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Nosaka said, "The deputy chief cabinet secretary will now read the prime minister's statement, so please listen respectfully." In normal circumstances, the word "respectfully" would not have

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<sup>\*120</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, August 15, 1995, evening edition.

been uttered. Taking the statement draft in hand, Furukawa “read the text compellingly” (Furukawa 2011).

The section that might potentially be disputed by the ministers was the following.

During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.<sup>\*121</sup>

In this way, the draft statement expressed “deep remorse” and “heartfelt apology” regarding “colonial rule and aggression” in a straightforward manner. Upon hearing this, the Liberal Democratic Party ministers must have felt resistance to no small degree in their innermost thoughts. Nevertheless, they remained silent throughout the meeting. “The cabinet meeting room was completely quiet—you could have heard a pin drop. No one said a word.” The draft statement was adopted as a cabinet decision without any modifications to the text (Furukawa 2011).

At the press conference held after the cabinet meeting, Etō and others known as hawks avoided criticizing the statement. At 11 a.m., Murayama appeared in the press conference room. What was released there was only the Murayama Statement.

Newspaper reports at the time stated, “The Office of the Cabinet Secretariat Counsellor formulated the draft one month ago, after which time

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\*121 *Naikaku Sōri danwa* [Statement by the Prime Minister], August 15, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

the views of Chief Cabinet Secretary Nosaka Kōken, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Sonoda Hiroyuki, and others were also incorporated. Finally, the prime minister himself put pen to paper to make modifications.” They continued, “The parts of the statement in which you can find the prime minister’s thinking in particular are ‘in the not too distant past ... following a mistaken national policy’ and ‘building from our deep remorse ... Japan must eliminate self-righteous nationalism.’”

Because of such press reports, the Murayama Statement has been regarded as having been led by the Prime Minister’s Office (Kanno 2000).<sup>\*122</sup>

### **Murayama’s Principles**

In 1996, after stepping down as prime minister, Murayama looked back on the statement as a way of taking responsibility.

The fact is that within the ruling coalition, and particularly within the Liberal Democratic Party, there were various opinions about the words “colonial rule” and “aggression.” But you know, I argued strongly that we should get the matter properly settled, so that is the statement that resulted. In addition, that statement was not simply my personal statement of belief. It was the view of the cabinet that I announced, and it received approval at a cabinet meeting. As such it carried a corresponding amount of weight and significance (Kanamori 1996).

Murayama emphasized that the statement expressed his own principles. This point remained unchanged in his later recollections (Murayama 1998).

In interviews with Murayama in recent years, he acknowledged that the role of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs was quite substantial.

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<sup>\*122</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 1995.

Going through the chief cabinet secretary (Igarashi Kōzō), I asked the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs to come up with something else, so they brought together some academics and drafted something. Those scholars examined a possible statement draft using the content of press conferences held during the visit I had made to countries around Southeast Asia the previous year. I felt they did an outstanding job....

I confirmed the draft directly with Hashimoto Ryūtarō. His only comment on the draft was that the word *shūsen* (終戦 “end of the war”) should be changed to *haisen* (敗戦 “defeat in the war”) (Murayama et al. 2009).

Igarashi Kōzō served as chief cabinet secretary until August 8; as mentioned on page 145, Nosaka Kōken became the next chief cabinet secretary, succeeding Igarashi. In addition, in oral history interviews, Murayama detailed how the statement had been made.

*Murayama:* We drafted the statement with the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs serving at the core, with assistance from the chief cabinet secretary and the deputy chief cabinet secretary. A number of historians also seem to have joined the drafting process. That was then revised and I amended it myself, bringing us to the final version. The head of the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs at that time was Tanino Sakutarō, who had previously served as a diplomat with the Foreign Ministry. He was a specialist in Chinese affairs and later he served as ambassador to China.

*Question:* Did you modify considerably the draft made by Tanino and the others?

*Murayama:* Oh, well, I seem to recall we revised it a number of times. For example, I recall that for the word “aggression” (*shinryaku* 侵略), some thought we should instead use the wording “aggressive acts”

or “a war of aggression.” That was the part that had the most discussion....

A substantial number of people were involved in formulating the draft, including the chief cabinet secretary, the deputy chief cabinet secretary, the head of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs, and the senior deputy minister for foreign affairs and bureau heads from the Foreign Ministry (Yakushiji 2012).

Besides the chief cabinet secretary and the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs, a number of people from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also involved in the drafting process.

### **The Recollections of Igarashi Kōzō**

Igarashi Kōzō, who stepped down from the chief cabinet secretary position just before the statement was released, wrote as follows.

Thinking that we had to get the government’s August 15 statement just right, I decided to take a determined attitude in preparing the draft of the prime minister’s statement. I called in Tanino Sakutarō, head of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs, and gave him strict instructions, saying, “I think at this juncture, Japan should indicate its firm perception [of history], also to serve as a basic principle for its Asian diplomacy in the twenty-first century. I want to make this a statement by the prime minister that is sufficiently able to withstand criticism from both historical and international perspectives. So I want you to put together a draft, taking into account the views of authoritative scholars.”

Tanino responded, “I agree completely. I will draft something with that purpose in mind,” and presented me with the first draft after about a week. Tanino, who was later tapped to be ambassador to India, was the most reliable bureaucrat in the Foreign Ministry, in my eyes.

The draft text was something altogether different from the normal drafts made by the Foreign Ministry or other government agencies. I revised it, naturally adding my own views regarding several points, and we succeeded in getting a draft finalized over the course of about two weeks, with deputy chief cabinet secretaries Sonoda and Furukawa also assisting in the revision. With that in hand I consulted with the prime minister.

Prime Minister Murayama approved of it, saying, “That’s quite different from a Diet resolution. Well done.” With the text finalized, I showed it privately to Kōno [Yōhei] and Takemura [Masayoshi], the heads of the other parties [in the ruling coalition], as well as to the most prominent ministers such as Minister of International Trade and Industry Hashimoto Ryūtarō, asking for their opinions, but there were no particular objections to the text. I was particularly focused on what Hashimoto Ryūtarō would say, but instead he pointed out, “This phrase ‘end of the war’ in the draft of the prime minister’s statement should instead be ‘defeat in the war.’...”

The section in the first half of the statement which, with regard to Japan overcoming great difficulty to arise from devastation, expresses gratitude for the efforts of the Japanese people and for the support that was extended by the United States and by people around the world, did not appear in the initial draft, but came to be incorporated based on my opinion....

This statement by the prime minister was adhered to even after the reins of power were subsequently transferred to Hashimoto Ryūtarō. Whenever the government’s perception of history became an issue, Prime Minister Hashimoto invariably officially cited the Murayama Statement, and declared the statement had been passed down to his administration.

In other words, according to Igarashi, Tanino, the head of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs, formulated the first draft, which had

its finishing touches put on by Sonoda, Furukawa, and others. Consultations were held with Murayama; it was also shown unofficially to president of the Liberal Democratic Party and Minister of Foreign Affairs Kōno Yōhei, to head of the New Party Sakigake and Minister of Finance Takemura Masayoshi, and to leading ministers such as Minister of International Trade and Industry Hashimoto Ryūtarō (Igarashi 1997).

Nosaka, who assumed the post of chief cabinet secretary on August 8, suggested that the statement should not be the prime minister's personal opinion, but should instead be made into the government's view by taking a cabinet decision on it. Nosaka sought to gain consensus from Minister of Education Shimamura Yoshinobu, Minister of Transportation Hiranuma Takeo, and Management and Coordination Agency Director General Etō Takami, and had Murayama speak to Hashimoto. "If anyone in the cabinet was going to lodge an objection, the plan was to dismiss him from office immediately, on the grounds that he was incompatible with the policy of the cabinet. Although that was not announced outright, all the members of the cabinet inferred that that was the policy in place" (Nosaka 1996).

Kōno said, "Clearly stating remorse for the war and offering an apology to Asia are extremely important for Japan and for the international community, and would not have been possible had it not been for the Murayama administration."<sup>\*123</sup>

Takemura claimed that a draft of the Murayama statement was distributed at a meeting of the leaders of the three ruling coalition parties, and "all three party chiefs agreed on the draft as-is" (Mikuriya et al. 2011).

An interview with Takemura revealed that, regarding the statement, two meetings of the leaders of the three ruling coalition parties were held at the Prime Minister's Office. The draft had already been completed, and while the party leaders gave their impressions, they did not make revisions. As Takemura had spoken about this matter only to Murayama, he was not thoroughly knowledgeable about how the draft had gotten to that point.

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\*123 *Asahi Shimbun* July 29, 2009.



Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro had in the past used the words “war of aggression” during his inaugural press conference, and Takemura suggested that “Hosokawa had made that statement earlier. That also might have helped Murayama.”<sup>\*124</sup>

Furukawa stated, “Prime Minister Murayama wanted to use the statement to again set forth clearly, both domestically and internationally, the cabinet’s view of history. Under directions from the prime minister, we threw ourselves heart and soul into the task, centered on the administrative side on Tanino Sakutarō, the head of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs (later ambassador to China)” (Furukawa 2011).

Murayama had for many years served as a director of the House of Representatives’ standing committee on social welfare and labor, and from years prior had a close relationship with Hashimoto, a former health and welfare minister who served as one of the Diet’s major coordinators regarding welfare matters. Murayama’s prior consultations with various people resulted in only the wording change by Hashimoto from “end of the war” to “defeat in the war”; other than that, Furukawa could remember no other revisions made at the Prime Minister’s Office.<sup>\*125</sup>

## 2. The Bureaucracy

### **The Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs**

The recollections of Murayama, Igarashi, and Furukawa are all in agreement that the person at the very core of the drafting process was Tanino Sakutarō, the head of the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs. I asked Tanino himself about how the drafting had progressed. Tanino told me that he had been tasked with the drafting by Murayama and therefore

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\*124 Takemura 2012, interview with the author, October 17.

\*125 Furukawa 2014, interview with the author, March 10.

started writing a preliminary version. The Japanese version of the statement uses a quote from the Chinese classics in the closing paragraph, specifically the part translated into English as “One can rely on good faith.” That quotation from Chinese classics was one that an official in the Cabinet Councillors’ Office on External Affairs had sought out in the National Diet Library.

When it was shown to Igarashi and later Nosaka, the succeeding chief cabinet secretary, Tanino’s draft was not subjected to any major revisions, and Murayama also gave his approval. He also consulted with Kōno, but Kōno, too, voiced no particular opinion. Tanino moreover received positive feedback from two or three researchers, including Hosoya Chihiro, professor emeritus of Hitotsubashi University.

In seeking out consensus among the cabinet ministers, Nosaka had the cabinet secretariat counsellor act as an intermediary, and he himself telephoned the heavyweights among the ministers.

The one expected to show the strongest resistance was Hashimoto, as he was the chairman of the Japan War-Bereaved Families Association. In light of that, Murayama himself placed a telephone call to Hashimoto, and when Hashimoto was presented with the text, he only asked that the phrase “end of the war” be revised to say “defeat in the war.” It was through these revisions being incorporated that the statement came to be adopted as a cabinet decision. As a result of this process, it was a statement by the prime minister of Japan, not a personal statement made by Murayama.

In discussions about the Murayama Statement, only the perception of history tends to be the focus, but forward-looking matters such as expanding exchanges are also mentioned.

The person charged with handling the matter at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was Tanaka Hitoshi, the director of the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau, but Tanaka was not, in fact, heavily involved in the drafting of the statement.<sup>\*126</sup>

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\*126 Tanino 2012, interview with the author, November 27.

## The Foreign Policy Bureau

The schedule for drafting the prime minister's statement, a document created by the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, indicates that the cabinet and the Foreign Ministry were working in cooperation, and within the ministry, it was the Foreign Policy Bureau that would carry out certain roles to some extent.<sup>\*127</sup>

The ones in the line of command under Foreign Minister Kōno were Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Saitō Kunihiko; Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Fukuda Hiroshi; Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi Sadayuki; Foreign Policy Bureau Director-General Yanai Shunji; Tanaka Hitoshi, director of the Policy Coordination Division within the Foreign Policy Bureau; and others. Yanai was the first person ever to serve as director-general of the bureau.

On August 4, Hayashi was promoted to vice-minister and Yanai to senior deputy minister for foreign affairs, and Kawashima Yutaka was appointed to be director-general of the bureau (Yanai 2006).

In light of that, what role did the Foreign Policy Bureau play in the Murayama Statement? Yanai said he was involved in the Murayama Statement as part of an effort to settle affairs after the war.

The Murayama Statement was drafted quite some time after I had taken up the post of director-general of the bureau. It was one of a variety of measures that the Foreign Policy Bureau had conceived, thinking we'd like to settle unresolved postwar affairs to the greatest extent possible, taking advantage of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war. It was a statement by the prime minister, so naturally the final stages involved crafting the statement at the Prime Minister's Office, centered on Prime Minister Murayama. I recall that it was Tanino Sakutarō of

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\*127 MOFA, Foreign Policy Bureau, Policy Coordination Division, *8-gatsu 15-nichi sōri danwa sagyō nittei* [Schedule for drafting the August 15 statement by the prime minister], MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs who played a major role in the process of formulating a concrete draft (Iokibe et al. 2007A).

I once asked Yanai about this same point. According to Yanai, when the Foreign Policy Bureau was established in 1993 as part of the Foreign Ministry's institutional reform, other bureaus viewed it with suspicion. As a result, it took care of settling postwar affairs, which other bureaus did not want to tackle. The Murayama Statement also reflected the views of the bureau. Even though the Foreign Policy Bureau had not been established with the primary purpose of settling matters that remained after the war, through the bureau's establishment, the ministry came to treat issues in settling affairs after the war in a comprehensive manner.\*<sup>128</sup>

Director-General Yanai's subordinate was Tanaka Hitoshi, director of the Policy Coordination Division. Tanaka has also spoken of his involvement in preparing the Murayama Statement.

I also participated in the formulation of the Murayama Statement of 1995. This was a government statement approved at a cabinet meeting.

At that time, there was also a move to get a Diet resolution approved simultaneously, and that was to use the same sort of wording as the Murayama Statement (Tanaka et al. 2005).

Tanaka's sense of "issue awareness" led him to embark on projects that other bureaus did not want to take on, which was in line with Yanai's thinking.

In advancing foreign policy, there will always arise some cross-cutting matters that cannot be fully handled by only one bureau. In addition to that, there are also issues that other bureaus are unwilling to take on,

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\*128 Yanai 2004, interview with the author, August 25; Yanai 2006, interview with the author, May 10.

and it is not uncommon for these to be rather troublesome situations that fall into the cracks between one bureau's area of responsibility and another's. I thought that if the Foreign Policy Bureau were to take on such cases proactively, we would be able to demonstrate initiative.

Tanaka conferred about the Murayama Statement with Tanino, the head of the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs, and with Makita Kunihiro, secretary to the prime minister.

I participated in the early stages of drafting the 1995 statement released by Prime Minister Murayama....

As the Murayama Statement was fundamentally a statement by the prime minister, the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs was the office central to drafting it. The person in charge of the Councillors' Office at that time was Tanino Sakutarō, who later served as ambassador to China.... As the key contact person at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I worked on a draft of the statement through various consultations with Tanino and with Makita Kunihiro, secretary to the prime minister, and others....

Prime Minister Murayama had very strongly held ideas concerning issues to do with the perception of history. What we considered most important was not concealing anything through the wording (Tanaka 2009A).

When the Cabinet Councillors' Office on External Affairs drafted the statement, Tanaka's division, the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau, served as the contact point at the Foreign Ministry.

This point agrees with the recollections of Tanino covered on pages 152 and 153 (Tanaka 2009B).

### 3. The Intent behind the Murayama Statement

#### **“Anticipated Questions and Answers at the Prime Minister’s Press Conference”**

Before the official announcement of the Murayama Statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened an internal meeting. Tanaka, under the title of division director, distributed a document within the ministry entitled “The August 15 statement by the prime minister (notification of a MOFA internal meeting).”

The recipients of the notification were the vice-minister for foreign affairs, the senior deputy minister for foreign affairs in charge of political affairs, the deputy vice-minister in the Minister’s Secretariat, and the directors-general of the Foreign Policy Bureau, the Asian Affairs Bureau, the North American Affairs Bureau, the European Affairs Bureau, and the Treaties Bureau.

At this time, the Policy Coordination Division in the Foreign Policy Bureau examined the general policy speeches made to the Diet and the statements made during overseas visits by prime ministers in recent history, namely by Kaifu Toshiki, Miyazawa Kiichi, Hosokawa Morihiro, Hata Tsutomu, and Murayama Tomiichi himself. Through this process it was noted that Murayama had said at a press conference on May 4, 1995, during his visit to China that he would “face up to ... history”:

In order to build mutual trust with neighboring Asian countries, I consider it essential for Japan to face up to the history of relations it has had with these countries and others and perceive that history correctly. With feelings of deep remorse over past acts of aggression, colonial rule, and so on, Japan has made efforts to build mutual understanding and mutual trust with the peoples of other Asian countries. Japan is resolved to continue making these efforts while also creating peace with a view to the future.

Based on these investigations, the internal meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was held in the office of the administrative vice-minister. Although what was covered at the meeting is unknown, it is likely that a discussion was held on the assumption that a statement having in-depth content would be released.<sup>\*129</sup>

What kind of intent was behind the Murayama Statement? On August 14, 1995, the day before the Murayama Statement was released, the Foreign Policy Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs scrambled to write up a telegram entitled “Release of the statement by the prime minister on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II.”

Supervising the drafting of the telegram was the Policy Coordination Division in the Foreign Policy Bureau. The telegram had a broad range of recipients, specifically the directors of the International Press Division, the Regional Policy Division, the Northeast Asia Division, the China Division, the First Southeast Asia Division, the Second Southeast Asia Division, the Southwest Asia Division, the First North America Division, the First Western Europe Division, the Second Western Europe Division, the Russian Division, and the Oceanian Affairs Division. In other words, the Minister’s Secretariat, the Asian Affairs Bureau, the North American Affairs Bureau, and the Eurasia Bureau were included in the consultations.

Regarding the Murayama Statement, the telegram stated, “You are requested to explain to the government of your assigned country this statement, taking into consideration your assigned country’s national circumstances, so as to obtain the understanding of its government.” About the time of the announcement of the Murayama Statement, multiple telegrams like this must have been sent out in Foreign Minister Kōno’s name.<sup>\*130</sup>

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\*129 Tanaka [Director, Policy Coordination Division, Foreign Policy Bureau, MOFA], *8-gatsu 15-nichi no naikaku sōri daijin danwa (shōnai kaigi no oshirase)* [The August 15 statement by the prime minister (Notification of a MOFA internal meeting)], n.d., MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*130 Telegram draft, *Sengo 50-nen ni saishite no naikaku sōri danwa no happyō* [Release of the statement by the prime minister on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II], August 14, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

Following these telegrams, the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau sent faxes to the Japanese embassies in China, South Korea, and so on. These were titled “Anticipated questions and answers at the prime minister’s August 15, 1995, press conference.” While the author of the document is not given, it is likely to have been planned by the Foreign Policy Bureau. From this list of potential questions and sample answers it is possible to discern the Foreign Ministry’s intentions in terms of policy. Of the fourteen question and answer sets given, five are worthy of particular attention, namely questions 1, 4, 8, 11, and 12.

First of all is question 1, which reads, “Why did you release a statement as prime minister? What is the meaning of it?” The sample answer provided is,

Upon this historic occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the war’s end, during a certain period in the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to many countries. I regard, in a spirit of humility, these facts, and express here my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. I also wish to state the government’s thinking regarding the path Japan should walk in the future and gain the understanding and cooperation of the public. For these reasons I issued a statement as prime minister.

Question 4 said, “What are postwar settlement issues Japan is now dealing with?” The sample response limited such issues to four, stating,

In addition to the comfort women issue, the issue of “determined debts” in Taiwan, and the issue of returning South Korean permanent residents in Sakhalin to their home country, I keep in mind the issue of abandoned chemical weapons in China, which we are tackling, also in light of the chemical weapons ban treaty.

The issue of “determined debts” in Taiwan refers to the matter of paying residents of Taiwan unpaid wartime wages and unpaid military postal savings.



Question 8 asks, “Isn’t this the first time that ‘remorse and apology’ toward colonial rule and aggression that occurred in the past have been expressed?” The reference answer states, “It is a statement of determination appropriate for the fiftieth anniversary of the war’s end that comprehensively compiles things I have stated thus far.”

Questions 11 and 12 were about personal compensation, to which the envisaged answers were, “With regard to the so-called comfort women issue, the ‘Asian Women’s Fund’ was established this July. The government intends to cooperate to the greatest possible extent so that this fund succeeds in attaining its intended objectives,” and, “As the issues of compensation, property, and the right to claim related to the war have already been legally resolved, including with regard to the issue of the so-called comfort women, the government has no intention of providing personal compensation.”

That is to say, even though these sample answers expressed “remorse and apology” in a straightforward way, they limited postwar issues awaiting settlement to four, and confirmed that personal compensation would not be paid out.

These sample responses also paint the Murayama Statement as a comprehensive compilation of statements and position it as “a statement of determination appropriate for the fiftieth anniversary of the war’s end.”<sup>\*131</sup>

The instruction earlier that stated, “You are requested to explain to the government of your assigned country this statement, taking into consideration your assigned country’s national circumstances, so as to obtain the understanding of its government” was made in this context. The Murayama Statement was not intended to be sufficient only for the time being; on the contrary, it had a long-term outlook.

Yanai, director-general of the Foreign Policy Bureau, considered the significance of the Murayama Statement to be enormous, as after it

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\*131 MOFA, *Sōri kisha kaiken-yō sōtei mondō* [Anticipated questions and answers at the prime minister’s press conference], August 15, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

was released, even if further apologies were demanded, adhering to the Murayama Statement put everything to rest. This has been the long-term strategy of the Foreign Policy Bureau, and it is not an accident that successive cabinets ever after have adhered to the Murayama Statement.<sup>\*132</sup>

### **Letters from the Prime Minister**

What countries did the Murayama Statement have in mind?

The Murayama Statement marked the fiftieth anniversary of the war's end, and, on the whole, the names of particular countries are not mentioned. The mention of individual countries goes no further than, "Let me also express once again my profound gratitude for the indispensable support and assistance extended to Japan by the countries of the world, beginning with the United States of America," and "... caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations."

Regardless, at roughly the same time that the Murayama Statement was released, the idea of issuing letters from the prime minister only to certain countries was examined. These specific countries were China, South Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Looking at the draft of the telegram addressed to the Japanese embassies in these four countries, we once again find it was the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that was in charge of this matter. The telegram draft included a list of anticipated questions, and suggested answers whose content was entirely different from that on the other list of questions and answers mentioned earlier.

The anticipated questions and answers indicate that the four countries "had shown strong interest concerning Japan's stance regarding the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war" and that "at the national leaders' level, there have been some exchanges of views for some time regarding issues

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<sup>\*132</sup> Yanai 2004, interview with the author, August 25; Yanai 2006, interview with the author, May 10.

concerning the past, so a letter from the prime minister has been attached, for use when the statement is delivered to these governments. The content of the letter is basically to inform the recipients that a statement will be issued.”<sup>\*133</sup>

It seems that even within these four countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was particularly conscious of China and South Korea. On August 11, the China Division of its Asian Affairs Bureau created a document entitled, “Draft letter from Prime Minister Murayama informing Premier Li Peng in advance.” It stated, “A letter has been issued with regard to the prime minister’s statement of August 15. Immediately after the cabinet decision is taken on this statement, we would like the ambassador stationed in China to inform China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in advance by personally delivering this letter as well as the statement itself (together with its courtesy translation into Chinese).

In the same way, sending a letter from the prime minister was also considered for President Kim Young-sam of South Korea.<sup>\*134</sup>

How, then, were Southeast Asian countries dealt with? There exists a draft report addressed to Southeast Asian nations, with the Regional Policy Division within the Foreign Ministry’s Asian Affairs Bureau in charge of the draft. In that draft report, comments written in by Tanaka Hitoshi, the director of the Policy Coordination Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau, can be seen, but there is no evidence that sending out letters from the prime minister to Southeast Asian countries had been considered.<sup>\*135</sup>

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\*133 Kōno 1995, to Japan’s ambassadors stationed in China, South Korea, US, UK, drafted August 15, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*134 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, China Division, *8-gatsu 15-nichi no naikaku sōri daijin danwa (Murayama sōri hatsu Ri Hō sōri ate jizen tsūhō shokan-an)* [The prime minister’s statement of August 15 (Draft of advance notification letter from Prime Minister Murayama to Premier Li Peng)], August 11, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313; Kōno 1995, to Yamashita Shintarō [ambassador to South Korea], telegram draft, drafted August 14, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*135 Telegram draft, drafted August 11, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

This sequence of events indicates that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarded Northeast Asia, the US, and the UK as the places the Murayama Statement was addressing particularly, with the ministry especially conscious of China and South Korea. Southeast Asia was not a high priority. Unfortunately, the actual letters from the prime minister have not been disclosed.

The morning editions of various newspapers on August 17 reported that letters from the prime minister had been sent to South Korea, China, the US, and the UK. While we know that letters were prepared for four countries, only in the case of South Korea was this author able to confirm that a letter was actually sent. The reply from President Kim Young-sam of South Korea is discussed on pages 167 and 168.

As for China, the US, and the UK, this author asked former ambassador to China Satō Yoshiyasu, former minister to China Anami Koreshige, former ambassador to the United States Kuriyama Takakazu, and former ambassador to the United Kingdom Fujii Hiroaki, all of whom were in service at that time, about these letters, but none of them had any recollection of a letter from the prime minister. It seems that letters were not sent to China, the US, or the UK after all, but no specific reason could be identified for not sending them as originally planned.<sup>\*136</sup>

### **The Spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

How did these countries react to the Murayama Statement? A report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicates:

Generally speaking, the reaction of these countries' governments has been one of commending and welcoming the frank expressions within the statement regarding Japan's colonial rule and aggression

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<sup>\*136</sup> Satō 2010, interview with the author, November 20; Anami 2013, interview with the author, December 16; Kuriyama 2008, interview with the author, September 17; Kuriyama 2010; Fujii 2012, interview with the author, August 20.

and feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology. However, China and South Korea have added the demand that now Japan must establish a correct perception of history.

Especially worrying was the reaction from China and South Korea. In the report entry entitled, “Examples of concrete reactions from various countries’ governments,” China and South Korea headed the list.<sup>\*137</sup>

As for the materials used to draw up this report, there are memos titled “China’s reaction to the prime minister’s statement.” While the author is unknown, it is likely to have been the China Division of the Foreign Ministry’s Asian Affairs Bureau. According to the memos, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson released a comment about the Murayama Statement that was broadcast August 15 at 6:30 p.m. Beijing time on China National Radio and 7:00 p.m. on China Central Television.

The comment released by the spokesperson of China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs had two points, as follows:

1. We have taken note of the statement regarding past history that Prime Minister Murayama announced on August 15 on behalf of the Japanese government. We consider the attitude by which the Japanese government expressed deep remorse regarding its history of past colonial rule and aggression and apologized to the people of Asian nations to be a positive one.
2. At the same time, we cannot but point out that within Japanese society, including its political circles, there are now, as before, those who do not embrace a correct attitude with regard to those historical issues of the past. Correctly perceiving history and

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<sup>\*137</sup> MOFA, Foreign Policy Bureau, Policy Coordination Division, *Sengo 50-shūnen ni saishite no naikaku sōri daijin danwa ni taisuru kakkoku seifu no hannō* [Reactions of the governments of various countries to the prime minister’s statement on the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war], August 16, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

responding to that perception and reviewing and then learning lessons from history are beneficial for Japan in walking a path of peace and development and also useful for Japan in developing good-neighborly cooperative relations with other Asian countries.

In this way, while China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs actively commended the Murayama Statement, it also "point[ed] out that ... there are ... those who do not embrace a correct attitude with regard to ... historical issues."<sup>\*138</sup>

### **The Spokesperson for South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

In South Korean newspapers, the content of the Murayama Statement was already a topic being covered even before the statement was released. On August 14, the Northeast Asia Division of the Asian Affairs Bureau at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out analyses of the coverage given by the *Chosun Ilbo*, *JoongAng Ilbo*, and *Dong-a Ilbo* newspapers and other media.

Memos made by the Northeast Asia Division indicate each of the newspapers reported that a preliminary draft of the Murayama Statement clearly stated that Japan, "following a mistaken national policy, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of Asian nations."<sup>\*139</sup>

On the afternoon of August 15, the spokesperson of South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a comment that was immediately sent to

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\*138 MOFA, *Sōri danwa ni taisuru Chūgoku no hannō* [China's reaction to the statement by the prime minister], n.d., MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*139 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Kankoku ni okeru, 15-nichi no Murayama sōri danwa ni kansuru hōdō (13, 14-nichi)* [News coverage in South Korea on August 13 and 14 regarding the statement by Prime Minister Murayama of August 15], MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

Foreign Minister Kōno by Japan's ambassador in South Korea, Yamashita Shintarō.

1. Today, August 15, Prime Minister Murayama of Japan released a statement on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the war's end that expressed feelings of apology and remorse toward Japan's colonial rule and aggression. We wish to pay attention to Japan's attitude in the future.
2. We ardently hope that the Japanese government will actively make efforts so that, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the war's end, it thoroughly makes clear historical truths through an authentic settling of past history, and a correct perception of history is able to be established.
3. We believe that future-oriented and friendly cooperative relations between South Korea and Japan can only come to be established on such a foundation.

South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it will pay attention to "Japan's attitude in the future" and called on Japan to make efforts toward establishing a "correct perception of history."<sup>\*140</sup>

While media reports in South Korea commended to some degree the fact that the word "aggression" was specified in the Murayama Statement, they argued that the government of Japan's rejection of personal compensation claims was proof of the limitations of what Japan was willing to do.<sup>\*141</sup>

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\*140 Yamashita 1995, to Kōno, August 15, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*141 MOFA, *16-nichi-zuke Kankoku chōkan kakushi (hayaban) no hōdō buri* [News coverage in South Korea's various morning newspapers (early editions) on August 16], n.d., MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

### **The Reply from President Kim Young-sam and the Situations in the US and UK**

On August 21, a letter was delivered to the Northeast Asia Division of the Asian Affairs Bureau at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs from the embassy of South Korea in Tokyo. The sender was President Kim Young-sam; it was addressed to Murayama, sent in response to the prime minister's letter of August 15. It indicated it was a reply not intended to be disclosed publicly within South Korea.

The Northeast Asia Division has stated that the content of the reply is consistent with the following.

With regard to the letter from the prime minister, President Kim Young-sam stated that the announcement of the prime minister's statement was of great significance, and that he was firmly convinced that the building of future-oriented relations between Japan and South Korea should be advanced on the foundation of a correct perception of history. In light of that, he stated that he commended the recent statement by the prime minister and that he held high expectations that the recent statement would not only constitute an important foundation for establishing a correct perception of history within Japan, but also contribute to the building of future-oriented cooperative relations between Japan and South Korea and, by extension, Japan and neighboring Asian countries.

In other words, the reply conveyed that the Murayama Statement was "an important foundation for establishing a correct perception of history within Japan" and that the president of South Korea "held high expectations that the recent statement would contribute to the building of future-oriented cooperative relations between Japan and South Korea and, by extension, Japan and neighboring Asian countries." In this way, the Kim administration commended the Murayama Statement in greater



depth than either its Foreign Ministry spokesperson or the South Korean newspapers.<sup>\*142</sup>

It was the United States that commended the Murayama Statement most highly. President Bill Clinton read the statement immediately and commented that it was a “very courageous statement.” Ambassador to the United States Kuriyama Takakazu said, “I felt we had succeeded in clearing the ‘fiftieth anniversary’ hurdle” (Kuriyama 1997; Kuriyama 2006; Kuriyama 2010; National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies 2002).

In London, Ambassador to the United Kingdom Fujii Hiroaki was in close contact with the UK government. When it was erroneously reported that the Murayama Statement was not an official statement, Fujii appeared on television to declare definitively that a cabinet decision had been taken on the Murayama Statement and it was indeed official.<sup>\*143</sup>

## 4. The Murayama Statement as a Common Language within Japanese Politics

### Diplomacy for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the End of the War

To sum up all of the above, the Murayama Statement is generally understood to have been an initiative led by the Prime Minister’s Office, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also played a role that was by no means insignificant. In the background to that was the establishment of the Foreign Policy Bureau, through which the settlement of postwar issues came to be handled comprehensively. The Foreign Policy Bureau also received cooperation from the various divisions within the Asian Affairs Bureau.

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\*142 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Kimu Yonsamu Kankoku daitōryō kara Murayama sōri ate no henkan no hasshutsu ni tsuite* [On the sending of the reply letter from President Kim Young-sam of South Korea to Prime Minister Murayama], August 22, 1995, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2005-313.

\*143 Fujii 2012, interview with the author, August 20.

The Murayama Statement is one part of foreign policy, and can be called diplomacy for the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war, as it were. Taking into account the content, the long-term view it embraced, the cooperation between the Prime Minister's Office and bureaucratic institutions, the reactions of various countries, and the like, it was a statement with a high degree of perfection as a reconciliation policy. The Murayama Statement was not a stopgap measure, but rather something that took a long-term perspective, in that those involved were careful to ensure it could be followed in years to come. In particular, China and South Korea were kept in mind, and Kim Young-sam sent Murayama a favorable reply.

Needless to say, it is not the case that various perceptions of history came to be put together into one final form through the Murayama Statement. After the Murayama Statement, discussions surrounding historical issues were polarized by discussions about history textbooks and visits to Yasukuni Shrine. This will be analyzed in chapter 5. It is also a matter of course that some viewed the Murayama Statement itself critically, since its existence invites demands for further apologies and compensation. The fact that the Murayama Statement was drawn up primarily by the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also means that Japan's political parties, especially the Liberal Democratic Party, were unable to shore up sufficient consensus on the matter (Green 2001; Kawashima 2003). Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the Murayama Statement was meaningless. Its importance is evident in the fact that it has been adhered to by successive cabinets. During the Hashimoto Ryūtarō administration, Murayama himself said, "Now, if Mr. Hashimoto goes to China, no matter what may happen, he can always put any trouble to rest by saying, 'I adhere to the Murayama Statement'.... It is something that no one can reject completely" (Murayama 1998).

### The Murayama Statement as Something to Adhere to

In April 2005, Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō made a speech at an international conference in Indonesia held to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Bandung Conference.

In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. And with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has resolutely maintained, consistently since the end of World War II, turning into not a military power but an economic power, its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means, without recourse to use of force. Japan once again states its resolve to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world in the future as well, prizing the relationship of trust it enjoys with the nations of the world.

This speech by Koizumi was often considered an apology, as Japan's relations with China and South Korea had worsened acutely as a result of the Yasukuni issue and other matters. However, the expressions "... through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations" and "Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. And with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind ..." that appear in the Koizumi speech were quotes from the Murayama Statement of ten years prior.



© Cabinet Public Affairs Office

Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō delivers a speech at the Asian-African Summit 2005 in Bandung, Indonesia (April 22, 2005).

It can be said that the content of the speech is part of established policy.<sup>\*144</sup>

On August 15, 2005, Koizumi spoke of “deep remorse and heartfelt apology” on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war as well.

In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Sincerely facing these facts of history, I once again express my feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology, and also express the feelings of mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, in the war. I am determined not to allow the lessons of that horrible war to erode, and to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world without ever again waging a war.

This, too, followed what had been set out in the Murayama Statement.<sup>\*145</sup>

Abe Shinzō, viewed as right-wing, also adhered to the Murayama Statement upon becoming prime minister in September 2006.

Abe fielded a question from Kan Naoto, acting president of Democratic Party of Japan, to which he responded, “The Murayama Statement states that, if I recall correctly, people in South Korea and China in particular were subject to aggression and colonial rule. It was set forth by Japan as a statement on which a cabinet decision was taken at that time, and I am in agreement with it.”

Abe thus accepted the Murayama Statement speaking not only as the representative of the Japanese government, but also as an individual.

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\*144 Speech by Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō at the Asian-African Summit, April 22, 2005, retrieved from Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet web page: [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumispeech/2005/04/22speech\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumispeech/2005/04/22speech_e.html).

\*145 Statement by Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō, August 15, 2005, retrieved from Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet web page: [https://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumispeech/2005/08/15danwa\\_e.html](https://japan.kantei.go.jp/koizumispeech/2005/08/15danwa_e.html).

Several days later, Abe visited China and South Korea and carried out summit talks, which had been cut off for some time.<sup>\*146</sup>

The Murayama Statement has been handed down for twenty years, shared in common by a sizable number of cabinets. It can be said to have become a lingua franca within Japanese politics. The Murayama Statement was a rare case in which the weight held by words within international relations was utilized in policy. Nevertheless, historical issues recurred from the late 1990s, and in the early years of the current century these historical issues showed new developments. Historical conflicts and the search for reconciliation go beyond the century of war.

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\*146 Budget Committee of the House of Representatives, October 5, 2006, available through *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>; *Asahi Shimbun*, October 6, 2006.

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## **Going beyond the Century of War**



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Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō of Japan (left) and President Hu Jintao of China shake hands at the Japan–China summit meeting in Jakarta (April 23, 2005).



# 1. Kim Dae-jung and Jiang Zemin Visit Japan

## The Japan–South Korea Joint Declaration of 1998

Chapters 1 through 4 presented analyses of the history textbook issues, visits to Yasukuni Shrine, the comfort women issue and the Kōno Statement, and the Murayama Statement, covering from the 1980s through the mid-1990s. Chapter 5 will cover the period from the Hashimoto Ryūtarō cabinet to the Democratic Party of Japan-led administrations; the epilogue takes up the term of the second Abe Shinzō cabinet.

In the 1990s, the Yasukuni Shrine issue hardly arose at all. Exceptions to this were a top-secret personal visit made by Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi around October of 1992 and a single visit paid by Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō on July 29, 1996.

Even though Hashimoto had not used public money for the cash offering made during his visit, saying it was “a personal visit,” he participated in the Shintō ritual practice of performing two bows, two hand claps, and then another bow, and signed the register as “Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryūtarō.” In response to backlash from China and elsewhere, Hashimoto emphasized that he was not targeting the spirits of deceased class-A war criminals in his visit.<sup>\*147</sup>

During the term of the Obuchi Keizō cabinet, President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and President Jiang Zemin of China visited Japan in close succession in October and November 1998 and met with Obuchi. The two leaders’ different attitudes toward the perception of history determined the outcomes of both the Japan–South Korea summit meeting and the Japan–China summit meeting.

Kim Dae-jung recalled, “President Kim Young-sam (Kim Dae-jung’s predecessor) didn’t hesitate to go so far as to say to Japan, ‘I will correct your bad habits’ when the territorial issue of Dokdo (Takeshima) was

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<sup>\*147</sup> *Yomiuri Shimbun*, July 29, 1996, evening edition; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, July 30, 1996; Iokibe et al. 2013.



raised.” Kim Dae-jung sought to improve ties with Japan, saying, “Some in the media claimed I should call the emperor of Japan ‘the king of Japan,’” but “I used the title ‘emperor,’” and “In his remarks at the state dinner at the Imperial Palace, the emperor referred to the historical relationship between South Korea and Japan. He then apologized for colonial rule.... While I was at the dinner, not once did I make reference to things in the past” (Kim 2011).

The Japan–South Korea Joint Declaration of 1998 agreed on October 8 states that Prime Minister Obuchi “expressed his deep remorse and heartfelt apology” for colonial rule. The declaration also includes the statement,

President Kim highly appreciated the role that Japan has played for the peace and prosperity of the international community through its security policies, foremost its exclusively defense-oriented policy and three non-nuclear principles under the postwar Japanese Peace Constitution, its contributions to the global economy and its economic assistance to developing countries, and other means.

Kim Dae-jung stated, during discussions on the Japan–South Korea Joint Declaration of 1998, “The South Korean government will not put forth issues regarding past history.”

The president stated that (1) he sincerely accepts the feelings of the prime minister (Obuchi) toward bringing the past to an end and opening up the future; (2) he wishes to settle matters as we head toward the twenty-first century by bringing to a conclusion within this century things that happened in this century; (3) he wishes to confirm that South Korea and Japan will start as new partners, and from now wants the South Korean government not to bring up issues regarding past history; and (4) he wishes to receive the understanding of the people of both nations regarding this way of thinking.<sup>\*148</sup>

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<sup>\*148</sup> MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Nikkan shunō kaidan (Gaiyō)* [Japan–ROK Summit Meeting (Summary)], October 8, 1998, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1210.

That is to say, at the time of the joint declaration, Kim actively commended the path taken by postwar Japan and declared that South Korea would no longer raise historical issues. Obuchi had received an explanation from Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yanai Shunji that South Korea had made a request in advance that it “wanted Japan to apologize one more time, and that is going to be the last time” (Iokibe et al. 2007; Hattori 2010).

Kim saying that South Korea would no longer raise historical issues indicated the potential for reconciliation. South Korea allowed Japanese culture to be enjoyed freely again and a new Japan–South Korea Fisheries Agreement was concluded. However, his successor, President Roh Moo-hyun, voiced objections regarding visits to Yasukuni, history textbooks, and the comfort women issue, and the Lee Myung-bak administration also requested compensation regarding the comfort women issue, indicating that the declaration not to raise historical issues was not adhered to by later administrations.

### **Ripples Created by Jiang Zemin’s Visit to Japan**

In November 1998, President Jiang Zemin visited Japan. Jiang’s visit had originally been scheduled for September, but was delayed because of flooding in China; as a result, it took place after the visit by Kim Dae-jung. Jiang had for some time concentrated his efforts on history education that would bear fruit in patriotic education, and had stated in a speech before China’s overseas ambassadors who were brought together in Beijing, “We must consistently emphasize historical issues and talk about them without end” (Lu 2000; Jiang 2006; Wang 2014).



President Jiang Zemin of China (left) and Prime Minister Obuchi Keizō of Japan shake hands at a meeting during Jiang’s visit to Japan (November 27, 1998).

Jiang's visit to Japan took place from November 25 to 30. Jiang held a summit meeting with Obuchi on November 26, during which he spent a great deal of time on historical issues and the issue of Taiwan. Obuchi expressed the word "apology" only orally. Although Japan and China announced that same day the Japan–China Joint Declaration on Building a Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation for Peace and Development, Jiang was unhappy that the word "apology" was not incorporated in the joint declaration. Neither Obuchi nor Jiang signed the joint declaration.

From the perspective of the Japanese side, at the time diplomatic relations between Japan and China were normalized, the resulting joint communiqué stated, "The Japanese side is keenly conscious ... and deeply reproaches itself," and the emperor had also spoken of apology during his visit to China, so historical issues had thereby been resolved. To continue to apologize to China was difficult for domestic reasons, and Japan refused to include the word "apology" in the declaration.

Regardless, the Japan–China Joint Declaration does include the following:

The Japanese side observes the 1972 Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China and the August 15, 1995 Statement by former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi. The Japanese side is keenly conscious of the responsibility for the serious distress and damage that Japan caused to the Chinese people through its aggression against China during a certain period in the past and expressed deep remorse for this.

This is the first time that China alone is specified as the target of Japan's "aggression."

It took four tries for the diplomatic bodies of Japan and China to finalize the wording of the 1998 joint declaration. In the wording that was agreed upon by Japan and China originally, when a visit in September had been assumed, there had been no expressions like the phrase "deep

remorse and heartfelt apology” that appeared in the Japan–South Korea Joint Declaration of 1998, causing Obuchi to show his displeasure all the more at China’s sudden demand (Tanba 2011).<sup>\*149</sup>

Jiang also referred to historical issues at a state dinner at the Imperial Palace on November 26, declaring in a speech, “Japanese militarism followed a mistaken path of aggressive expansion overseas,” and, “We must draw eternally on the lessons of this miserable history.”<sup>\*150</sup>

The dinner had an overwhelmingly somber atmosphere. No one applauded. In many cases, the texts of remarks to be delivered by those at the head of state level are distributed and shown in advance, but that also did not happen on this occasion.<sup>\*151</sup>

Moreover, on November 28, Jiang delivered a speech before an audience of a thousand people at Waseda University in Tokyo. He preached to the university students, saying, “Japanese militarism caused an all-out war of aggression against China. The result was thirty-five million military and civilian casualties and more than six hundred billion US dollars of economic damage suffered,” and “Japan should walk consistently on the path of peace and development and lead the Japanese people and the young generation under a correct view of history.”<sup>\*152</sup>

Until then, “historical issues” tended to be things arising from the Japanese side through history textbooks or visits to Yasukuni Shrine. This time, it can be said that Jiang’s side brought up the argument, despite the fact that Obuchi had not visited Yasukuni and that he adhered to the Murayama Statement. Obuchi was a member of the Takeshita offshoot of the Tanaka faction, both of which placed importance on relations with China (Iokibe et al. 2008).

In part because the state dinner at the Imperial Palace was televised, Jiang’s visit to China gave an unfavorable impression to Japanese people.

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\*149 MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2006-1212.

\*150 *Asahi Shimbun*, November 27, 1998.

\*151 Satō 2010, interview with the author, November 20.

\*152 *Asahi Shimbun*, November 28, 1998, evening edition.

The first visit to Japan by China's head of state left bitter memories on both sides. Perhaps because he took this well to heart, Jiang did not hammer historical issues hard during Obuchi's visit to China in July of 1999. The next cabinet, of Mori Yoshirō, ended after only a relatively brief time.

## 2. Koizumi's Visit to Yasukuni

### **Anti-Japan Demonstrations and the Koizumi Statement**

Historical issues again rose to the surface at the turn of the century. In 2001 and 2005, a textbook titled *New History Textbook* (*Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho* 新しい歴史教科書), published by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (*Atarashii Rekishi Kyōkasho o Tsukuru Kai* 新しい歴史教科書をつくる会), passed the textbook screening and authorization process, and from 2001 to 2006, Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō made multiple visits to Yasukuni Shrine. The series of events related to Japan-China relations can be found in a chart appearing on the following pages. Historical issues had jumped the boundary from the century in which the war took place.

What was attracting attention at this time was Japan potentially becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. China's news reporting took a negative tone regarding this, saying that because of historical issues, Japan was causing concern among Asian countries.

From February to April 2005, alongside the development of a gas field in the East China Sea, protest demonstrations were staged in front of, among other places, the Japanese embassy in Beijing, the Japanese consulate general in Shanghai, and the Japanese consulate general in Hong Kong. Chinese threw rocks and paint at the Japanese embassy and elsewhere, but the police did not stop them and no one was arrested. Anti-Japan demonstrations in which the crowds shouted the slogan "We should not be punished for deeds done out of patriotism" spread to Chengdu, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Hangzhou. Many of the demonstrations were objecting to

Japan potentially becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, claiming that Japan did not reflect on history.

The Chinese government, fearing that excessive patriotic education would cause an upsurge in anti-Japan sentiment and destabilize the political situation, made efforts not to over-incite anti-Japan sentiment. Nevertheless, it seems that the general public got information through the Internet and acted in ways beyond what the Chinese government had anticipated (Shimizu 2008; Liu 2008).

As quoted on page 171, on August 15 of that same year, marking the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war, Koizumi had spoken of “deep remorse and heartfelt apology” regarding “colonial rule and aggression.” At that time, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hosoda Hiroyuki had entrusted responses to Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Futahashi Masahiro and others, in addition to Koizumi.

Koizumi had said that it was unnecessary to change the perception of history appearing in the Murayama Statement, so Director-General of the Cabinet Affairs Office Shibata Masato began writing Koizumi’s statement based on the Murayama Statement. Koizumi accepted this and revised it by himself, without consulting even Iijima Isao, executive secretary to the prime minister responsible for political affairs. After having a cabinet decision taken on it, the Koizumi Statement on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war was released. Separately from this, Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka had ordered Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yachi Shōtarō to prepare a Ministry of Foreign Affairs draft, but Koizumi did not use the Foreign Ministry’s version.<sup>\*153</sup>

### **“It Wasn’t for the Class-A War Criminals That I Made the Visit”**

With what view of history in mind did Koizumi continue to visit Yasukuni Shrine? This section seeks to look back on his words and deeds after he took office as prime minister.

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\*153 2013, interview with an anonymous relevant person, October 18.

**Chart:** Japan–China Historical Issues during the Koizumi Administration

APRIL 3, 2001	A junior high school history textbook published by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform passes screening and authorization; the spokesperson of China's Foreign Ministry criticizes the matter
MAY 16, 2001	The Asian Affairs Bureau of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs requests a minister at the Japanese embassy to revise some history textbooks in eight places
AUGUST 13, 2001	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine
OCTOBER 8, 2001	Prime Minister Koizumi visits the Marco Polo Bridge in China and visits the Museum of the War of the Chinese People's Resistance against Japanese Aggression
APRIL 21, 2002	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine during its spring grand festival
SEPTEMBER 5, 2002	Japan–China joint excavation and recovery operations for chemical weapons abandoned in China by the former imperial Japanese army begin in Sunwu county, Heilongjiang province
SEPTEMBER 22, 2002	Premier Zhu Rongji meets with Prime Minister Koizumi in Copenhagen and urges understanding of the importance of historical issues
OCTOBER 27, 2002	President Jiang Zemin meets with Prime Minister Koizumi in Mexico and requests that he not visit Yasukuni Shrine
JANUARY 14, 2003	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine
MAY 31, 2003	President Hu Jintao meets with Prime Minister Koizumi in Saint Petersburg and states the two countries should settle historical issues and the Taiwan issue in a careful manner
OCTOBER 7, 2003	Prime Minister Koizumi and Premier Wen Jiabao meet in Bali, engaging in consultations on the disposal of abandoned chemical weapons and other issues
JANUARY 1, 2004	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine
AUGUST 7, 2004	After the AFC Asian Cup 2004 final soccer match in Beijing, some Chinese fans attack the car of the Japanese minister, breaking the window glass

NOVEMBER 21, 2004	President Hu Jintao meets with Prime Minister Koizumi in Chile and requests that he stop visiting Yasukuni Shrine
APRIL 5, 2005	A junior high school history textbook published by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform passes screening and authorization
APRIL 9, 2005	A crowd of around ten thousand people hurls rocks and engages in other problematic behavior in front of the Japanese embassy and ambassador's official residence in Beijing
APRIL 16, 2005	Protest activities erupt in Shanghai by a crowd tens of thousands of people in size; the Japanese consulate general in Shanghai suffers damage from hurled rocks and other causes
APRIL 17, 2005	Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka visits Beijing and engages in consultations with Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan regarding the anti-Japan demonstrations and historical issues
APRIL 23, 2005	President Hu Jintao meets with Prime Minister Koizumi in Jakarta and raises "five propositions," including historical issues
MAY 7, 2005	Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing meet in Kyoto and engage in consultations regarding the anti-Japan demonstrations and historical issues
MAY 10, 2005	Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Aisawa Ichirō visits China and meets with Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing; the Chinese side states it will take it upon itself to repair Japan's diplomatic establishments in Beijing and Shanghai that suffered damage because of the anti-Japan demonstrations
OCTOBER 17, 2005	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine; the Chinese side cancels the bilateral foreign ministers' meeting scheduled to begin on October 23 in Beijing
AUGUST 4, 2006	Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe Shinzō publicly discloses that he visited Yasukuni Shrine on April 15
AUGUST 15, 2006	Prime Minister Koizumi visits Yasukuni Shrine

Source: Hattori Ryūji, *Nitchū rekishi ninshiki: "Tanaka jōsōbun" o meguru sōkoku 1927-2010* [Understanding Sino-Japanese history: Conflict over the "Tanaka Memorial," 1927-2010], Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press (2010), 285.



Koizumi visited Yasukuni Shrine on August 13, 2001. Amid raging arguments for and against making a visit, the decision was taken to carry out the visit two days early. This was the first visit by a sitting prime minister since the cabinet of Hashimoto Ryūtarō. After completing his visit, Koizumi spoke to the press corps as follows.

Offering heartfelt respect and appreciation to the war dead, I renewed my vow never to wage war, that never again would we wage a war like that. I do not care about distinguishing between an official visit and a private visit. Koizumi Jun'ichirō, who is the prime minister, paid a wholehearted visit....

(As for China and South Korea) we will hold exchanges of views and see if there isn't a way to achieve friendship and goodwill, and if there are any misunderstandings I intend to dispel them. It is not the case that I visited to honor the spirits of class-A war criminals or of any other specific individuals.

Koizumi released a statement through Chief Cabinet Secretary Fukuda Yasuo:

During the war, Japan caused tremendous sufferings to many people of the world including its own people. Following a mistaken national policy during a certain period in the past, Japan imposed, through its colonial rule and aggression, immeasurable ravages and suffering particularly to the people of the neighboring countries in Asia. This has left a still-incurable scar to many people in the region.\*<sup>154</sup>

Before he made the visit, Koizumi sent an emissary to China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Tang Jiaxuan, but he was unable to get Tang's understanding. Tang instructed Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi and requested that the Japanese ambassador to China, Anami Koreshige, handle the

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\*154 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 14, 2001.

matter with care. On the day of the visit, Fukuda called Wang by telephone to inform him of it (Tang 2011).<sup>\*155</sup>

When Koizumi met with President Jiang Zemin and Premier Zhu Rongji in Beijing on October 8, China warned him against visiting Yasukuni. In response to China's request, before the meeting began, Koizumi visited the Marco Polo Bridge and the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance against Japanese Aggression.

Koizumi visited South Korea on October 15, whereupon he headed for Seodaemun Independence Park, the location of the remains of the prison where anti-Japan independence activists used to be held during Japan's colonial rule. This was the first visit there by a Japanese prime minister. Addressing a press corps that included Japanese and South Korean reporters, Koizumi stated, "I visited the facilities with feelings of sincere remorse and apology for the serious damage and suffering that Japan caused to the South Korean people through its colonial rule." During a meeting with Koizumi later, President Kim Dae-jung said, "I highly commend the remarks you made at Seodaemun."<sup>\*156</sup>

China and South Korea expected that Koizumi would not visit Yasukuni any longer, but Koizumi continued to visit the shrine, with visits on April 21, 2002, January 14, 2003, January 1, 2004, January 17, 2005, and August 15, 2006. The result of this was Japan being unable to hold summit meetings with either China or South Korea.

It is worth noting that Koizumi recognized class-A war criminals as "war criminals."<sup>\*157</sup> Statements he made at the Budget Committee of

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\*155 Anami 2013, interview with the author, December 16.

\*156 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 10, 2001, evening edition; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, October 15, 2001, evening edition.

\*157 Translator's note: The international military tribunals set three categories of war crimes. "Class A" crimes were crimes of conspiracy to start and wage war ("crimes against peace"), "class B" crimes were conventional war crimes, and "class C" crimes were "crimes against humanity." In the case of class A and class C crimes, there have been criticisms that the accused were tried under *ex post facto* laws (laws which criminalize or impose punishment for acts that were not criminal or punishable when the acts were committed). Some therefore hold the position that those tried and convicted of committing class A and class C acts are not in fact war criminals.

the House of Representatives on June 2, 2005, make this plain.

In response to questions from Okada Katsuya, president of the Democratic Party of Japan, Koizumi said, “[Japan] accepts the outcome of the [Tokyo] Military Tribunal. I recognize that they are war criminals and we must never again wage war,” and “It isn’t for the class-A war criminals that I make the visits. I wish to express my feelings of respect and appreciation to a large number of war dead. That is the feeling out of which I make the visits. I am not making the visits for the sake of any particular individuals.”<sup>\*158</sup>

On September 17, 2002, Koizumi met with Kim Jong-il in North Korea. Koizumi expressed “deep remorse and heartfelt apology” regarding Japan’s past colonial rule over Korea, and together they released the Pyongyang Declaration, in which it was pledged that Japan would provide economic cooperation to North Korea after the normalization of diplomatic relations. Kim acknowledged the abduction of Japanese citizens and apologized and pledged to stop dispatching spy ships. Of the thirteen abductees, eight were said to have already passed away, hardening public opinion in Japan (Taka-saki 2004).

### **A Split in Public Opinion and a Study Group within the Liberal Democratic Party**

Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni split public opinion in two. What is important is the rationale. The reason for opposing his visits was that responsibility for the war would become ambiguous, and also that it would harm relations with other nations.

There are three reasons we can imagine for supporting his visits. The first is that people wanted him purely to remember the war dead. The second is that not visiting Yasukuni Shrine because of criticisms by China and South Korea would jeopardize Japan’s dignity as a nation. The third is that

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\*158 *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.

people wanted to negate the thinking that there were class-A war criminals and negate the Tokyo Military Tribunal itself, and by extension criticize the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

The supporting arguments based on this third way of thinking lead to the opinion that Japan should be freed from the spell of a “Tokyo Military Tribunal view of history” or a “masochistic view of history.” This “Tokyo Military Tribunal view of history,” which one often hears, presents a view of history in which modern Japan as a whole is regarded as evil. For this reason, it can also be claimed that, unless Japan overcomes the “Tokyo Military Tribunal view of history,” there will be no recovery of the Japanese spirit. This idea can be viewed as an extension of the motive the chief priest of Yasukuni Shrine, Matsudaira Nagayoshi, had for enshrining the class-A war criminals with the other war dead.

In fact, as touched upon on page 16, the view of history at the very root of the Tokyo Military Tribunal is thought to have been closer to the dualism of good and evil than the complete denial of modern Japan. That is, its view is that after militarists and moderates confronted each other, the militarists overpowered the moderates.

Investigating the Yasukuni issue thoroughly brings one to the Tokyo Military Tribunal and the San Francisco Peace Treaty. From the perspective of opposing the visits, the Yasukuni issue may even affect not only Asia but also relations with Europe and the US. Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, after consenting to the San Francisco Peace Treaty, stated in a speech that it was “not a treaty of vengeance, but an instrument of reconciliation.”

If we consider relations with other nations, it is unwise to have words and deeds surrounding the perception of history take on an amplitude that varies with whoever happens to be prime minister. This aspect goes beyond the dimension of whether or not prime ministers should visit Yasukuni Shrine and involves the essence of Japan. This is not an area in which other countries should tell one country what to do. There was a need to heighten the degree of consensus among the public, or at a minimum, within the ruling parties.

In July 2005, before the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war, former Minister of Home Affairs Noda Takeshi, former Foreign Minister Kōmura Masahiko, former Liberal Democratic Party Secretary-General Katō Kōichi and others established a study group on the Yasukuni issue within the Liberal Democratic Party. It took the form of a match against Acting Secretary-General Abe Shinzō and others who called for visits to Yasukuni by the prime minister, with Noda serving as the representative manager.

The first meeting of the party's study group on the Yasukuni issue, on July 12, invited Gotōda Masaharu, a former deputy prime minister, and had twenty-seven legislators attending. Its second session, on July 21, invited Itagaki Tadashi, a former member of the House of Councillors. Its third meeting took place on July 28, and this author gave a report.

The letter of request stated,

Regarding Yasukuni Shrine, which has become a major topic within Japan–China and Japan–South Korea relations, [we, Liberal Democratic Party Diet members, have] established a study group on the Yasukuni issue from the perspective of the necessity of reverifying the matter once more, holding discussions on it starting with an entirely clean slate, and gaining public agreement going forward, including international standpoints.

Eighty-two Diet members from both the upper and lower houses added their names to the list appearing in the materials distributed at this time.

Meanwhile, Abe and other advocates of visiting Yasukuni launched the Young Diet Members' Association Praying for Peace and Thinking of the National Interest in Supporting Visits to Yasukuni Shrine. Thirty-four legislators attended its first meeting on July 13; it took the form of a means for restraining the study group on the Yasukuni issue.<sup>\*159</sup>

Within the Liberal Democratic Party, members split off into two camps and study groups were convened, but their different approaches to visiting

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\*159 *Asahi Shimbun*, July 14, 2005.

Yasukuni were not integrated into a single approach. When on August 8 the postal privatization bill was voted down by the House of Councillors, Koizumi dissolved the House of Representatives; as a result, the study groups were unable to continue. Even had there not been a snap general election, consensus-building would have been difficult. Within the study groups, there was no assumption that the party would agree on a single policy.<sup>\*160</sup>

After Koizumi and President Hu Jintao met in Jakarta in April 2005, China stopped holding summit meetings with Koizumi. During her visit to Japan in May, Vice-Premier of China Wu Yi canceled her meeting scheduled with Koizumi and returned to China. Japan–China relations, which were called “politically cool, but economically hot” had to wait until the birth of the first Abe cabinet for any improvement to take place.

### **3. Within a “Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests”**

#### **The First Abe Cabinet**

In May 2005, Abe Shinzō visited the United States as the acting secretary-general of the Liberal Democratic Party and explained the historical issues between Japan and China to high-ranking government officials in Washington. Abe pointed to patriotic education in China as a factor behind the anti-Japan demonstrations there. In his best-selling book *Utsukushii kuni e* (Toward a beautiful country), Abe argues that Japan has apologized to China more than twenty times, and that assistance to China has surpassed three trillion Japanese yen (Abe 2006).

Abe, who had become chief cabinet secretary, visited Yasukuni in April 2006. Because of that and other factors, he was viewed as more conservative than Koizumi. Abe’s grandfather is class-A war criminal suspect Kishi

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\*160 Noda 2010, interview with the author, October 5.

Nobusuke, and he showed a negative reaction to Koizumi's resolute statement that class-A war criminals were "war criminals." Nevertheless, once he set his sights on the prime ministership, he was noncommittal in his attitude about whether or not he would visit Yasukuni Shrine.<sup>\*161</sup>

After Abe became prime minister on September 26, he declared that he would adhere to the Murayama Statement and the Kōno Statement. Abe had heard from officials in charge that the Murayama Statement was quoted in the Japan–China Joint Declaration of 1998 and should therefore be regarded as Japan's commitment to China. As the quotation on page 178 indicates, observance of the Murayama Statement was incorporated into the Japan–China Joint Declaration (Murata 2010).

Abe visited China on October 8 and met with President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao, and others. Abe had selected China to be his first foreign destination as prime minister. Looking at prime ministers historically, Abe was the first to visit China as his initial destination, and it was the first visit to China by a Japanese prime minister in five years. North Korea's statement that it would conduct a nuclear test in the near future provided a favorable wind for Abe's visit, and Japan and China agreed to pursue a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests" regarding North Korea, the environment, energy issues, and so on.

When Hu referred to Yasukuni Shrine, Abe said, "I won't say whether I will go or not, or whether I went or not," an approach called the "noncommittal strategy."

Abe said, "Japan has walked a path for sixty years since the end of the war with deep remorse for causing in the past tremendous damage and suffering to the people of Asian nations and leaving scars." Hu responded, "I hope Japan continues to follow the path of peace and development. I believe this will happen, and the Chinese side positively evaluates this."

In the joint press release, China expressed appreciation of postwar Japan for following the path of a "peaceful country," the first time it had

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\*161 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 2006.

done so in writing. The two sides also agreed on the launch of Japan–China joint history research, and both countries’ national flags fluttered over the main street in Beijing.<sup>\*162</sup>

Abe’s visit to China, called an “ice-breaking trip,” was something that Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yachi Shōtarō and Executive Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Dai Bingguo had worked out patiently and gradually through the Japan–China Strategic Dialogue. The phrase “mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests” had been a suggestion from the Japanese side. Premier Wen Jiabao’s “trip to melt the ice,” Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo’s “welcoming the spring” trip, and President Hu Jintao’s “warm spring trip” were the beginning of mutual visits by the leaders (Yachi et al. 2009; Miyamoto 2011).

**Chart:** Japan–China Joint History Research

APRIL 17, 2005	Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka meets with Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in Beijing and proposes history research to be conducted jointly by Japan and China
MAY 7, 2005	Foreign Minister Machimura Nobutaka meets Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in Kyoto; they agree to discuss joint history research in greater detail at the administrative level before the end of 2005
OCTOBER 8, 2006	Prime Minister Abe Shinzō holds talks with President Hu Jintao and others in Beijing; they agree to launch Japan–China joint history research by eminent persons within 2006
NOVEMBER 16, 2006	Foreign Minister Asō and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing hold a meeting at an APEC ministerial meeting; they agree on the implementation framework for Japan–China joint history research
DECEMBER 26, 2006	The first plenary meeting of the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee is held in Beijing, ending on December 27
MARCH 19, 2007	The second plenary meeting of the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee is held in Tokyo, ending on March 20

\*162 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 9, 2006.



DECEMBER 1, 2007	Foreign Minister Kōmura Masahiko, on a visit to Beijing, along with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, expresses high expectations for Japan–China joint history research
DECEMBER 28, 2007	Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo holds talks with Premier Wen Jiabao in Beijing and expresses his high expectations for the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee meeting that will convene the following week
JANUARY 1, 2008	The <i>Tokyo Shimbun</i> newspaper reports on its front page: “The ‘Tanaka Memorial’: Theories it was faked gather strength even in China”
JANUARY 5, 2008	The third plenary meeting of the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee is held in Beijing, until January 6
MAY 7, 2008	President Hu Jintao, on a visit to Japan, holds talks with Prime Minister Fukuda and evaluates the role of Japan–China joint history research highly; they agree to continue it into the future
DECEMBER 24, 2009	The fourth plenary meeting of the Japan–China Joint History Research Committee is held in Tokyo
JANUARY 31, 2010	The Japan–China Joint History Research Report is released (except for part three of the section on modern and contemporary history)

Source: Hattori Ryūji, *Nitchū rekishi ninshiki: “Tanaka jōsōbun” o meguru sōkoku 1927–2010* [Understanding Sino-Japanese history: Conflict over the “Tanaka Memorial,” 1927–2010], Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press (2010), 301.

As Abe was heading from Beijing to Seoul, North Korea carried out its nuclear test. At the Japan–South Korea summit meeting on October 9, President Roh Moo-hyun raised the topics of Yasukuni Shrine, history textbooks, and the comfort women; as a result, there was little improvement in Japan–South Korea relations (Tanaka 2007).<sup>\*163</sup>

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\*163 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 10, 2006, evening edition.

### Wen Jiabao's Speech to the National Diet of Japan

In Japan–China relations, bright signs continued to emerge. On April 12, 2007, Wen Jiabao, during a visit to Japan, delivered the first speech by a Chinese premier to Japan's National Diet.

[T]he Japanese government and leaders have on many occasions stated their position on the historical issue, admitted that Japan had committed aggression and expressed deep remorse and apology to the victimized countries. The Chinese government and people appreciate the position they have taken....

China has received support and assistance from the Japanese government and people in its reform, opening-up, and modernization drive. This is something the Chinese people will never forget.

Wen praised the apologies and the official development assistance of the Japanese government, and said, "I hope my visit this time will be an ice-melting journey." (Kazankai Foundation 2008).

However, Wen skipped right over a passage commending postwar Japan. Evaluating postwar Japan positively could lead to a denial of the revival of Japanese militarism, which China has repeated over the years, so it seems Wen was acting with caution (Shimizu 2008).

Abe stumbled over the comfort women issue. When Roh Moo-hyun referred to the comfort women in a South Korean memorial ceremony on March 1, 2007, during a press conference Abe denied "coercion in the narrow sense of the word." Criticism erupted from the United States as well. Even though Abe had expressed an apology during his visit to the US at the end of April, on July 30 the US House of Representatives passed a resolution calling on Japan to apologize.

Interested Diet members in Japan ran a full-page advertisement on the comfort women issue in the *Washington Post*, which had the opposite effect of promoting the resolution within the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee.

Abe reconfirmed that he adhered to the Kōno Statement, and at the National Memorial Ceremony for the War Dead on August 15, he expressed “deep remorse” to the people of Asian nations.\*<sup>164</sup>

Even as Abe was shaken by the comfort women issue, Japan–China joint history research was still underway, and Japan–South Korea joint history research entered its second phase (Kasahara 2010; Kitaoka 2010; Hattori 2010; Hatano 2011).

### **Comprehensive Promotion of a “Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests”**

The next prime minister, Fukuda Yasuo, had for quite some time placed importance on relations with China. He stated in a speech, “We must not allow the gulf in Japan–China relations to become deeper as a result of reinforcing the Japan–US alliance. I believe that faithfully maintaining both Japan–US relations and Japan–China relations will lead to the stability of the Asian region” (Fukuda 2007).

Fukuda visited China starting December 27, 2007, and sought to bring the “mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests” further into the realm of the concrete. On May 7, 2008, Fukuda and Hu Jintao, who was visiting Japan, signed the Joint Statement between Japan and China on the Comprehensive Promotion of a “Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests” and agreed to continue Japan–China joint history research. This joint statement also talks about postwar Japan, saying:

The Chinese side expressed its positive evaluation of Japan’s consistent pursuit of the path of a peaceful country and Japan’s contribution to the peace and stability of the world through peaceful means over the more than sixty years since World War II.

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\*164 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 15, 2007, evening edition.

That is to say, the Japan–China joint statement of 2008 goes beyond what appeared in the 2006 press release to incorporate the statement that Japan has “contribut[ed] to the peace and stability of the world” as “a peaceful country.” This content indicates a rejection of the “revival of Japanese militarism” theory, and it can even be called a document of reconciliation. Fukuda took great pains to engage in confidence-building with China, and Japan–China relations contributing to the development of the Asia-Pacific region became a commonly held understanding. When Hu made a speech at Waseda University in Tokyo, he did not talk about historical issues at length (Miyamoto 2011).

Fukuda was followed as prime minister by Asō Tarō. During the era in which he was foreign minister in Koizumi’s third reshuffled cabinet, Asō had argued for making Yasukuni Shrine a nationalized memorial facility and for the resumption of visits by the emperor. Ever since he visited Yasukuni together with his grandfather, Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru, Asō had paid a visit to the shrine annually for more than half a century, but he refrained from making visits as foreign minister and prime minister.

According to Asano Katsuhito, who had served in positions that included parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs, chief executive of the House of Councillors Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense, and vice-minister for foreign affairs, Asano, in expectation of a presidential election within the Liberal Democratic Party, had advised Foreign Minister Asō not to visit the shrine and had gotten the feeling that Asō would in fact refrain from going. Vice-President of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Li Xiaolin was visiting Japan, and when Asano conveyed to her that Asō would not visit the shrine, it led to a foreign ministers’ meeting between Asō and Li Zhaoxing. Asano claims that, “It was a powerful route for restarting Japan–China Foreign Ministers’ Meetings, which had been cut off.” Li Xiaolin was the daughter of former President Li Xiannian.\*<sup>165</sup>

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\*165 Asano 2013; Asano 2014, interview with the author, June 1.

Although Asō as prime minister adhered to the Murayama Statement, he also dedicated *masakaki* (decorated wooden ceremonial articles) during the Yasukuni Shrine spring grand festival. This was the first sending of a *masakaki* offering by a prime minister since Abe had done so. On April 29, during summit talks with Wen Jiabao in Beijing, Asō was reminded of the Yasukuni issue (Asō 2007).<sup>\*166</sup>

## 4. From the Kan Statement to a Proposed Solution to the Comfort Women Issue

### The Hundredth Anniversary of Japan's Annexation of Korea

When the Asō cabinet also turned out to be short-lived, a Democratic Party of Japan-led administration was formed. Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio held a summit meeting with Hu Jintao in New York on September 21, 2009. Hatoyama stated he would adhere to the Murayama Statement, thereby putting historical issues essentially to rest without any difficulty.

This is where the Murayama Statement has an effect. If, for discussion's sake, the Murayama Statement had never existed, then every time there was a change of administration, the new Japanese prime minister would have to make a statement on history in his own words, opening up the possibility of it being considered somehow problematic. The Murayama Statement has made it possible to avoid this.

The year 2010 was the hundredth anniversary of Japan's annexation of Korea. Lee Sang-deuk, older brother of President Lee Myung-bak and chairman of the Korea-Japan Parliamentarians' Union, had appealed to Chairman of the Japan-Korea Parliamentarians' Union Watanabe Kōzō and others during a visit to South Korea in July, saying, "If a forward-looking prime minister's statement were to be released, my younger brother

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\*166 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 3, 2008; *Asahi Shimbun*, April 22, 2009; *Asahi Shimbun*, April 30, 2009.

is willing to close the books on the issues concerning how to perceive history.”<sup>\*167</sup>

On August 10, Prime Minister Kan Naoto released a statement to mark the hundredth anniversary of Japan’s annexation of Korea.

[T]he Korean people ... were deprived of their country and culture, and their ethnic pride was deeply scarred by the colonial rule which was imposed against their will.... I express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and my heartfelt apology.... I will continue in all sincerity conducting such humanitarian cooperation as assistance to ethnic Koreans left in Sakhalin and assistance in returning the remains of people from the Korean Peninsula.

The Kan Statement was based on the Murayama Statement; at the same time, it announced the policy of transferring over important items, including the Royal Protocols, which are ancient royal archives of the Joseon dynasty.

When Kan called President Lee on the telephone, Lee stated, “The statement you released will be a superb and tremendous opportunity for developing South Korea–Japan relations toward the future.” A noteworthy evaluation in the South Korean media was that the statement is “a symbol of historical reconciliation.”

Before the statement was released, South Korea had been calling for Japan to acknowledge, even indirectly, the forceful nature of its annexation of Korea, and to release the statement earlier than August 15, which is the National Liberation Day of Korea, an occasion on which the president delivers a speech. The Kan cabinet complied with both of those requests, and in his National Liberation Day address, President Lee commended the Kan Statement and appealed for future-oriented Japan–South Korea relations.<sup>\*168</sup>

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\*167 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 11, 2010.

\*168 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Nikkan shunō denwa kaidan ni tsuite* [Regarding the Japan–ROK summit telephone talk], August 10,

August 29 marked the centennial of the Japan–Korea Annexation Treaty of 1910 coming into effect. In South Korea, August 29 is known as “National Humiliation Day.” All around South Korea, people assembled in gatherings demanding a “straightforward apology” and the like.

Several hundred people braved heavy rain to gather in Seoul’s Tapgol Park, best known as an important site during the March First (Sam-il) Movement for Korean independence. On a platform, two high school students read a resolution aloud. The resolution said, “We call on the Japanese king (the emperor) for a candid and concrete apology, to be delivered before the casualties and victims of colonial rule, rather than the deceptive apologies of recent Japanese prime ministers.”\*169

### China–South Korea Movement

On September 27, 2010, Hu Jintao of China held summit talks with President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia in Beijing, where they signed a Joint Statement on the Sixty-Fifth Anniversary of the End of the Second World War. The two leaders indicated a similar standpoint on territorial issues between their countries and Japan and claimed the correctness of their perception of history (Tanba 2011).<sup>\*170</sup>

China had begun to position the Senkaku Islands as a historical issue. South Korea, too, had



President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia (left) shakes hands with President Hu Jintao of China at the China–Russia summit meeting in Beijing (September 27, 2010).

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2010, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-842; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 10, 2010, evening edition; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 11, 2010, evening edition; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 2010.

\*169 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 30, 2010.

\*170 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 28, 2010.

a tendency to criticize the matter as a historical issue every time it lodged an objection to textbooks or to the annual white paper *Defense of Japan*, in which the island of Takeshima is indicated as Japanese territory.

Furthermore, South Korea made a claim to the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) to include the name “East Sea” as an additional term for the Sea of Japan. South Korea regards the name “Sea of Japan” as having taken root only in the colonial period, and therefore treats this matter, too, as a historical issue.

On August 8, 2011, when it became known that the US government had submitted to the IHO a memorandum stating that the single name of “Sea of Japan” was appropriate, South Korean newspapers across the board lambasted the South Korean government for not making sufficient efforts in this area.<sup>\*171</sup>

On August 30, the Constitutional Court of Korea accepted the claims of former comfort women and ruled that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade’s omission of action on the comfort women issue was unconstitutional. On September 15, South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade requested consultations with the Japanese embassy in South Korea.<sup>\*172</sup>

In Japan, the cabinet of Noda Yoshihiko was established on September 2. South Korea’s minister of foreign affairs and trade, Kim Sung-hwan, met with Foreign Minister Genba Kōichirō and requested that Japan respond to the comfort women issue. Genba replied, “All claims have already been settled completely and finally through the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea.”<sup>\*173</sup>

On October 11, South Korea’s deputy ambassador to the United Nations

\*171 *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 10, 2011; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, August 16, 2011.

\*172 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Iwayuru jūgun’ianfu mondai oyobi genbaku higaisha mondai ni kansuru Kankoku kenpō saibansho no kettei (Gaiyō)* [Decision of the Constitutional Court of Korea regarding so-called wartime comfort women and atomic bomb victim issues (Summary)], n.d., MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-847.

\*173 *Asahi Shimbun*, September 25, 2011.



raised the comfort women issue at the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs) of the UN General Assembly, which handles human rights issues. Japan's deputy ambassador to the United Nations explained that Japan had "apologized with sincerity" over the years and refuted the matter by explaining that compensation had "already been settled legally."<sup>\*174</sup>

### **The Summit Meeting between Noda and Lee Myung-bak**

On October 19, 2011, Noda had a summit meeting with Lee Myung-bak in Seoul. They held consultations over the North Korea nuclear issue and a Japan-South Korea Economic Partnership Agreement, and Noda transferred over the Royal Protocols to South Korea.<sup>\*175</sup>

According to Noda, the atmosphere at this time was quite good.

Looking at past history, successive presidents have, at the beginning of their terms, said they want to make Japan-South Korea relations future-oriented, but when their public approval rating drops and it gets toward the end of their administration, they have repeatedly pulled out the anti-Japan card or the history card to try to bolster their popularity. [President Lee] stated very clearly that he thinks that kind of thing is entirely unacceptable. I felt sincerely that he was a highly respectable person.

During this summit meeting, Lee did not refer to the comfort women issue.<sup>\*176</sup>

When the statue of a young girl symbolizing comfort women was set up on December 14, 2011, in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, however, Lee's attitude hardened. Lee had a summit meeting with Noda in Kyoto

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\*174 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 12, 2011, evening edition.

\*175 *Yomiuri Shinbun*, October 19, 2011, evening edition.

\*176 Noda 2013, interview with the author, November 11.

on December 18, at which time he argued, “It is first of all necessary to have the sheer courage to actively resolve the comfort women issue that shackles us.”

In addition, Lee emphasized that the comfort women issue was “an issue that should be resolved as a priority matter between our two countries.” Noda’s position was that the issue of claims for compensation had been “settled completely and finally” under the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and South Korea.

Noda stated, “We, too, have made a wide range of efforts. We wish to continue to exercise wisdom from a humanitarian point of view.” At this point Noda requested that the statue of the young girl in front of the Japanese embassy “be removed at an early time.” Lee did not consent, instead countering, “in the absence of good faith measures, a second or third statue will be erected, I expect.”

The Japanese government viewed this tacit permission for the installation of the statue as being in breach of the 1961 Vienna Convention, under which host states must prevent disturbances of the peace of the diplomatic mission.<sup>\*177</sup>

According to Noda, although Lee spent a great deal of time on the comfort women issue, he did not present any concrete measures, making it difficult to understand what he wanted to do.

Noda said that, based on the premise that the matter had been settled legally under the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and South Korea, he was not sure what could be done, but that he would give it consideration. What he had in mind was whether or not something could be done in the form of a follow-up to the Asian Women’s Fund.<sup>\*178</sup>

Chief Cabinet Secretary Fujimura Osamu said that, in the meetings between the Japanese and South Korean diplomatic authorities held in

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\*177 *Genba to Mutō Masatoshi* [ambassador to South Korea], December 19, 2011, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-725; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 19, 2011.

\*178 Noda 2013, interview with the author, November 11.

advance of the summit, the comfort women issue was hardly mentioned at all. He suggested that Lee made this issue into a major one because he needed to engage in some sort of performance for the public as his administration approached the end of its term.<sup>\*179</sup>

### **A Proposal to Resolve the Comfort Women Issue**

Noda also held summit talks with Lee Myung-bak in Beijing on May 13, 2012. At that time Noda said, “I wish for Japan and South Korea to cooperate in order to build multilayered and future-oriented Japan–South Korea relations.”

To this, Lee made the request, “I ask that you constructively examine the matters that were brought up during our summit talks in Kyoto.” Noda limited his reply to, “We wish to exercise wisdom on this matter, together with you.”<sup>\*180</sup>

Some on the Japanese side had crafted a plan to resolve the comfort women issue. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Saitō Tsuyoshi claimed that Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Sasae Ken’ichirō visited South Korea in March 2012 and was in touch with both Lee Myung-bak’s older brother Lee Sang-deuk, who was very knowledgeable about Japan, as well as a vice-minister of South Korea’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, proposing three points to them.

These three points were, firstly, that the Japanese ambassador to South Korea would, as the representative of the Japanese government, apologize to the former comfort women; secondly, that Noda would explain humanitarian measures to Lee Myung-bak; and thirdly, that the Japanese government would make expenditures on atonement funds and other humanitarian measures. The Japanese government took the position that, under the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea, all

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\*179 Fujimura 2013, interview with the author, April 23.

\*180 *Asahi Shimbun*, May 14, 2012; *Genba to Mutō*, May 16, 2012, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-726.

claims had been settled, so this was a means of exploring humanitarian assistance while maintaining that stance.

The South Korean government at first rejected the Japanese proposal out of fear of a backlash from support groups. But Lee sent his aides to Japan when Japan–South Korea relations turned sour because of his August visit to Takeshima. Negotiations to resolve the comfort women issue took the Japanese proposal as their basis and had progressed to the point where only the wording of the letters from the prime minister to the former comfort women was yet to be agreed on, but immediately before a settlement was reached, the House of Representatives was dissolved in Japan for an election. Saitō remarked that, “We would have reached an agreement if only we had had a little more time.”<sup>\*181</sup>

When Noda was asked to confirm this point, he assessed the situation differently than Saitō had. Noda claimed that, even though Sasae and others had visited South Korea, because the South Korean government had failed to get a handle on the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, “no matter what proposals were made, the Korean Council seemed determined to oppose it, so it seemed that no response was even possible.” As South Korea intensified its demands on Japan, it didn’t consider possible areas of compromise, resulting in little progress.

The proposal by Saitō and others had not been agreed to by Noda, so it had not been government policy, but rather just some individuals informally trying to sound out a solution. While some reported that the two sides came right up to the point of reaching an agreement, it was not the government claiming this. Nowhere along the line did those in the Japanese government have the impression that the South Korean government had a firm grip on the Korean Council or was trying in earnest to bring the matter to a conclusion.<sup>\*182</sup>

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\*181 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 8, 2013.

\*182 Noda 2013, interview with the author, November 11.

### **Demands for an Apology from the Emperor**

In June 2012, Japanese men affixed onto the comfort women statue a signpost that read, “Takeshima is Japanese territory.” On July 9, a truck driven by a South Korean man rammed the gate of the Japanese embassy in Seoul. The truck had “Dokdo is South Korean territory” written on its side. Upon his arrest, the man said he had done it “in order to protest.”<sup>\*183</sup>

On August 14, Lee addressed a meeting of educators about the emperor’s visit to South Korea, saying, “If only he would apologize sincerely to those who perished in the independence movement [while under colonial rule]! But if he is just going to claim ‘feelings of deepest regret’ or make some other one-word apology, then he really needn’t come at all.” In other words, he set an apology to those in the independence movement as a condition for the emperor to visit South Korea. This was four days after Lee had landed on Takeshima, chilling Japan–South Korea relations even further.

As quoted on page 101, “feelings of deepest regret” was the expression Emperor Akihito had used when Roh Tae-woo visited Japan on May 24, 1990. Ever since Chun Doo-hwan visited Japan in 1984, each successive president has invited the emperor to visit South Korea, and Lee, too, during his 2008 visit to Japan, had asked the emperor to visit.<sup>\*184</sup>

Under the Japanese Constitution, the emperor holds no functions related to state administration, so visits abroad aim at fostering international goodwill. It is the government that decides where the emperor will visit; it is not the case that the emperor would directly indicate a desire to visit South Korea.

Regardless, the emperor spoke of his feelings toward South Korea, and he conveyed his “profound sorrow” to President Kim Dae-jung, who visited Japan in 1998. At a 2001 press conference, Emperor Akihito said, “It is written in the [classical Japanese history text] *Shoku Nihongi* that Emperor

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\*183 *Asahi Shimbun*, July 9, 2012, evening edition.

\*184 *Mainichi Shimbun*, August 15, 2012.

Kanmu's biological mother was a descendant of King Muryeong of Baekje. Through this, I feel a connection with South Korea." In 2005, during a visit to Saipan, the emperor offered prayers at a memorial monument to residents of Korean lineage.

It was the South Korean side that requested a visit by the emperor. In response to Lee setting the condition of an imperial apology, voices of confusion rose from Imperial Household Agency officials and others, that Lee setting such a condition was "impossible to understand" and "setting back a visit to South Korea by the emperor by a hundred years through that remark." Noda conveyed "feelings of deepest regret" in an official letter he wrote as prime minister, but the South Korean side refused to accept the letter and sent it back. To return an official letter from a president or prime minister is a truly exceptional thing to do.<sup>\*185</sup>

Noda said, "To send out a letter from the prime minister only to have it returned shows how aberrant from accepted norms the situation had become."<sup>\*186</sup>

On October 8, at a meeting with former Prime Minister Asō Tarō, Lee explained, "I have never said that the emperor should come to South Korea, nor that he should apologize."<sup>\*187</sup>

As Japan–South Korea and Japan–China relations went astray because of historical issues and other reasons, between December 2012 and March 2013, new administrations were successively inaugurated in Japan, South Korea, and China, one after the other. Does a leadership change make it possible to find a way to make historical issues a thing of the past? The epilogue will explore that very question.

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\*185 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 2012; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 23, 2012; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Political Department, 2012.

\*186 Noda 2013, interview with the author, November 11.

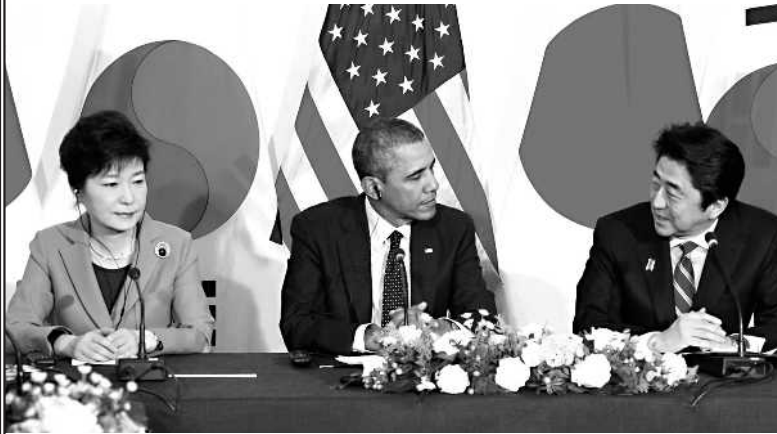
\*187 *Asahi Shimbun*, October 9, 2012.



## Epilogue

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# Is There a Way to Make Historical Issues a Thing of the Past?



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Japan-US-South Korea Trilateral Summit Meeting at The Hague, the Netherlands. From left, President Park Geun-hye, President Barack Obama, and Prime Minister Abe Shinzō (March 26, 2014).





### **Links to Territorial Issues**

One of the reasons that Japan–China and Japan–South Korea relations are so knotty is that historical issues are also associated with territorial issues. In that sense, August 10, 2012, became a memorable day.

On that day, when the South Korean soccer team had just defeated the Japanese team in a match at the London Olympics, a South Korean player held aloft a signboard with the message, “Dokdo is our territory.”

The International Olympic Committee, regarding it as political advocacy prohibited under the Olympic Charter, suspended the awarding of a medal to the player. The Japan Football Association claimed that the Korea Football Association sent the Japan Football Association a letter of apology, but the Korea Football Association explained that while it expressed feelings of regret, it did not apologize.

Earlier that same day, President Lee Myung-bak visited the island of Takeshima. As for his reason for landing on Takeshima, he had said to the speaker of the Korean National Assembly and others that since Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko had not been very receptive regarding the comfort women issue, he “felt it necessary to show [the Japanese government] through actions.” He thus regarded the territorial issue and the comfort women issue as historical problems derived from the same root, and considered them linked with each other.

Lee also argued, “Japan’s influence within the international community

is not what it used to be.” A public opinion poll conducted by the South Korean government found that 84.7 percent of South Koreans supported Lee’s visit to Takeshima.<sup>\*188</sup>

The Democratic Party of Japan suffered a crushing defeat in the general election of December 2012, and the second Abe Shinzō cabinet, a coalition of the Liberal Democratic Party and Kōmeitō, was inaugurated. In February 2013, Park Geun-hye took office as the president of South Korea, and in March Xi Jinping assumed the presidency of China. Despite high expectations for an improvement in relations, Japan remained unable to hold summit meetings with either China or South Korea. Abe did not, in fact, refuse to hold meetings at the summit level; moreover, the worsening of Japan–China and Japan–South Korea relations had started during the Noda administration, but Abe’s perception of history was regarded as an obstructive factor from the perspective of China and South Korea.

### **The Formation of the Xi Jinping Regime and Japan–China–South Korea Relations**

On September 19, 2012, when Xi Jinping’s rise to the presidency was expected, Xi met with US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta in China and said, “Japanese militarism imparted serious damage to all Asia-Pacific nations, including the United States.”

Xi criticized the nationalization of the Senkaku Islands, arguing, “There are some political forces within Japan that have no remorse [over history], and they have turned it into a complete farce.” He tried to restrain the US by saying, “We ask that the US be careful in its words and actions and not intervene in the sovereignty dispute concerning the Diaoyu Islands.” This was an attempt to estrange Japan and the United States by making an association between historical issues and the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands.<sup>\*189</sup>

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\*188 *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, August 13, 2012.

\*189 *Asahi Shimbun*, September 20, 2012.

Around this time, even in summit meetings with Papua New Guinea and Poland, China was censuring the nationalization of the Senkaku Islands, superimposing the matter upon wartime history.<sup>\*190</sup>

In January 2013 an incident occurred that exemplified the worsening of Japan's relations with both China and South Korea. South Korea allowed a Chinese man who had committed arson at Yasukuni Shrine to return to China.

Specifically, the Chinese national Liu Qiang had set fire to the shrine gate at Yasukuni on December 26, 2011, damaging a portion of the gate's columnar support. Liu traveled to Seoul, and on January 8, 2012, he was arrested after hurling four bottle bombs at the Japanese embassy in South Korea. He served a sentence in South Korea until November of that year.

During his trial, Liu had admitted to committing arson against Yasukuni Shrine; the Japanese government therefore requested that Liu be extradited to Japan on the basis of the Japan-South Korea extradition treaty. However, the South Korean High Court refused to grant this, saying that Liu was a type of political offender and political offenses were not subject to the treaty. The Chinese government also strongly requested Liu's extradition to China, and he returned to China on January 4, 2013.

Liu had said in the South Korean courtroom, "My grandmother is a former comfort woman for the Imperial Japanese Army, and I was infuriated at the Japanese government's responses to the issue of former comfort women and other historical issues." This was the first time that South Korea had denied an extradition request on the grounds that someone was a political offender. The Japanese government lodged a protest with South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.<sup>\*191</sup>

In March 2013, the Xi Jinping regime was formally inaugurated, and

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\*190 *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, October 18, 2012.

\*191 MOFA, *Saikin no Kankoku ni yoru jōhō hasshin* [Recent information dissemination by South Korea], October 31, 2013, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-830; *Asahi Shimbun*, January 4, 2013; *Asahi Shimbun*, January 5, 2013; *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, January 4, 2013; *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, January 5, 2013.

Yang Jiechi became a state councilor, a deputy prime minister-level position. At a press conference held just before he rose in position from foreign minister to state councilor, Yang stated, “Japan has unlawfully stolen away China’s territory and occupied it. The current situation is one that the Japanese side has created unilaterally,” and “The future will open up only through Japan respecting its history of imparting distress upon the peoples of Asia,” thereby emphasizing the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands as a historical issue.<sup>\*192</sup>

### **Sealing Off Any Reconsideration: The Second Abe Shinzō Cabinet**

So what exactly is Prime Minister Abe’s perception of history? At a plenary session of the House of Representatives on January 31, 2013, he spoke about the Kōno Statement.

There was a question about the Kōno Statement.

There have been a great many wars throughout history up to this point, and during those wars, women’s human rights have been violated. It is imperative that we make the twenty-first century a century free of violations of human rights, and I intend for Japan to make every possible effort toward that end.

With regard to the comfort women issue as well, it is extraordinarily heartbreaking to think of those who suffered hardships that are beyond description. My thinking with regard to this matter is no different from that of successive prime ministers.

Moreover, I think that this issue should not be made into a political or a diplomatic issue.

The declaration known as the Kōno Statement was announced by then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno. As prime minister, I will refrain

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\*192 *Asahi Shimbun*, March 10, 2013.

from making any statement beyond that. I consider a response by my chief cabinet secretary to be appropriate.

This statement was made in response to a question from the chairman of the Japanese Communist Party, Shii Kazuo. Through it, Abe sealed off any possibility of reconsidering the Kōno Statement.<sup>\*193</sup>

Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga Yoshihide also said in a press conference held later the same day, “Insofar as eminent persons and historians are currently researching the matter, at the present time, our way of thinking is that it is desirable to accumulate further examinations of the issue from academic viewpoints.”<sup>\*194</sup>

At the budget committee of the House of Representatives on February 7, Abe argued his stance on visiting Yasukuni in response to a question by Maehara Seiji of the Democratic Party of Japan.

My fundamental approach is that it is entirely a matter of course that the leader of a nation should honor the souls of those who gave their lives for their country, and I imagine that the leader of every nation does as much. In light of that, I find it most regrettable that I was unable to visit [Yasukuni Shrine] during my first term as prime minister.

As for the next time, regarding when I will make a visit or not, I have been saying this all along, but at this stage I would like to refrain from saying whether I will go or not.

Here he responded that it was “most regrettable” that he had been unable to make a visit to Yasukuni Shrine during his first administration, but would not say whether or not he would make any future visits.<sup>\*195</sup>

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\*193 *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.

\*194 *Asahi Shimbun*, February 1, 2013.

\*195 *Kokkai kaigiroku kensaku shisutemu* [National Diet Proceedings Search System] <http://kokkai.ndl.go.jp/>.

### Abe and Park Geun-hye

Abe and Park Geun-hye spoke by telephone on March 6, 2013. Abe said, “I want to engage in close cooperation with you in order to develop future-oriented Japan–South Korea relations that are appropriate for the twenty-first century.”

Park touched upon her memory of having had an exchange of views with Abe during a trip to Japan years earlier when he was chief cabinet secretary. Grounded in that, Park emphasized, “The matter of how history is perceived is important in building future-oriented South Korea–Japan relations.”

Abe responded saying, “Even as we perceive the past properly, I wish to cooperate in order for us to build future-oriented relations.” Park then expressed her wishes, saying, “I would like to meet you at the Japan–South Korea–China Trilateral Summit Meeting to be held this year in South Korea.”<sup>\*196</sup>

In April, Minister of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications Shindō Yoshitaka, Deputy Prime Minister Asō Tarō, and others visited Yasukuni Shrine in succession, prompting the South Korean National Assembly to pass a resolution censuring the visits. During a meeting of the budget committee of the House of Councillors, Abe stated that the meaning of the word *shinryaku* (侵略 invasion, aggression) had not been unequivocally defined. This resulted in the postponement of the Japan–South Korea foreign ministers’ meeting, as well as the cancellation of the bilateral finance ministers’ meeting.

During a meeting with US President Barack Obama on May 7, Park is said to have stated, “For the sake of peace in the Northeast Asia region, Japan must take a correct view of history.” Park made a speech to a joint session of the United States Congress on May 8, during which she leveled

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\*196 MOFA, Asian Affairs Bureau, Northeast Asia Division, *Nikkan shunō denwa kaidan ni tsuite (Gaiyō)* [Regarding the Japan–ROK summit telephone talk (Summary)], March 6, 2013, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-827.

criticism at Japan while avoiding naming the country per se. She stated, “[W]here there is failure to acknowledge honestly what happened yesterday, there can be no tomorrow.”<sup>\*197</sup>

Park repeated these same kinds of remarks to other countries as well—so much so that her statements were characterized as “tattletale diplomacy.”

In one interview, Abe opined,

President Park Geun-hye stated to the US Congress that those who shut their eyes to the past are unable to see the future, and I am in complete agreement with that. I sincerely wish to build up new Japan–South Korea relations together with South Korea’s new leader. (Abe et al. 2013)

On July 1, Foreign Minister Kishida Fumio held talks with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se in Brunei on the sidelines of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers’ Meeting. It was the first time the foreign ministers had held talks since the change of administration in both countries.

Yun argued,

I would like you to recall that a certain historian said that the history of a nation is the spirit of that nation. If you do not respect history or treat it carefully, you will harm the spirits of individuals and, indeed, entire peoples.

Kishida explained that the stance of the Abe cabinet had been clarified at the National Diet and elsewhere.<sup>\*198</sup>

At around the same time, the South Korean high court recognized the

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<sup>\*197</sup> Asahi Shimbun, May 9, 2013; Nihon Keizai Shimbun, May 9, 2013.

<sup>\*198</sup> Suganuma Ken’ichi [Japanese ambassador to Brunei] to Kishida, July 2, 2013, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-826; Kishida to Bessho Kōrō [Japanese ambassador to South Korea], July 3, 2013, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-826.



right of individuals to claim compensation for having been requisitioned civilians during the war, and ordered Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries to pay compensation.

The South Korean government also acknowledged that compensation for requisitioned civilians was included in the US\$300 million grant provided under the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea at the time diplomatic relations were normalized, so this ruling overturned past agreements between Japan and South Korea. At the same time, while on August 15 Abe shelved a visit to Yasukuni, he made a cash offering to the shrine in his capacity as president of the Liberal Democratic Party.<sup>\*199</sup>

When the Japan–South Korea foreign ministers’ meeting was held in New York on September 26, Kishida stated that any response to the suit on requisitioned civilians should be based on the 1965 Claims Agreement between Japan and South Korea. Yun would not provide a detailed explanation, since the court case on requisitioning was still ongoing, and called for the resolution of the comfort women issue. Kishida explained that the comfort women issue had been settled completely through the 1965 Claims Agreement and conveyed that Abe had experienced a lot of heartache over this issue.<sup>\*200</sup>

### **The United States’ “Disappointment”; China and South Korea Present a United Front**

On October 17, 2013, Abe dedicated *masakaki* (decorated wooden ceremonial articles) during the Yasukuni Shrine autumn grand festival, and on December 26 he himself paid a visit to Yasukuni. Abe released a “Pledge for Everlasting Peace” as a statement on the day of his visit, and although he maintained, “It is not my intention at all to hurt the feelings of the Chinese

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\*199 *Asahi Shimbun*, August 10, 2013; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 15, 2013; *Asahi Shimbun*, August 16, 2013.

\*200 Yoshikawa Motohide to Kishida, September 26, 2013, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-829.

and Korean people,” both China and South Korea lodged an objection to his visit.

The Obama administration in the US released a statement saying, “[T]he United States is disappointed that Japan’s leadership has taken an action that will exacerbate tensions with Japan’s neighbors.” This was an unusual criticism in that, until that time, the United States had not officially opposed visits to the shrine by Koizumi Jun’ichirō or other prime ministers.\*<sup>201</sup>

China and South Korea reinforced their tendency to present a united front regarding historical issues. Symbolic of this is An Jung-geun Memorial Hall, which opened its doors in January 2014 inside the train station in Harbin in China’s Heilongjiang Province. Harbin train station is where An assassinated Itō Hirobumi, the first resident-general of Korea, Japan’s top representative in Korea when it was a protectorate of the Japanese Empire.

Xi Jinping held a summit meeting with Park on March 23 at The Hague, the Netherlands. There he stated, “I gave direct instructions for the construction of the An Jung-geun Memorial Hall in Harbin,” mounting a joint campaign against Japan. Park welcomed the construction of the hall as a “good symbol of friendly and cooperative South Korea–China relations.”\*<sup>202</sup>

On March 30, in the German capital of Berlin, Xi delivered a speech in which he criticized Japan for the Nanjing Incident and the Second Sino-Japanese War. Xi had asked about visiting the Holocaust Memorial, but Germany had turned the request down. It seems that Germany was distancing itself from the antagonism between Japan and China (Shōji 2014).\*<sup>203</sup>

### **Confusion within Japan–South Korea and Japan–China Relations**

It appears that historical issues will drag on for some time. Both China and South Korea connect historical issues with territorial issues; meanwhile,

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\*201 *Asahi Shimbun*, December 27, 2013; *Asahi Shimbun*, January 28, 2014.

\*202 *Asahi Shimbun*, March 25, 2014.

\*203 *Asahi Shimbun*, March 30, 2014.

on April 21, 2014, Abe again dedicated *masakaki* at Yasukuni Shrine. While both Japan–China and Japan–South Korea relations are poor, Japan–South Korea relations are considered acutely so.

The degree of confusion within Japan–South Korean relations under the Abe and Park administrations was striking even in comparison to past administrations. Because of historical issues and so on, Park adopted a policy of not holding bilateral meetings with Abe right from the very start of her administration; in contrast, Roh Moo-hyun and Lee Myung-bak had shown flexibility at the beginnings of their respective terms. On July 21, 2004, at a press conference held after Roh Moo-hyun held talks with Prime Minister Koizumi on the island of Jeju, Roh said,

If the South Korean government repeats its demands, it is entirely possible that the Japanese people will react intensely negatively as they ask how many more times they need to apologize, having already apologized multiple times. A chasm exists between the atmospheres found in our two countries. Against that backdrop, I have adopted a policy of not officially raising these matters while I am in office.<sup>\*204</sup>

At a press conference he held just before taking office as president, Lee Myung-bak stated,

For the sake of new South Korea-Japan relations, I don't want to say, "You should apologize [to South Korea]" or "You should feel remorse." The Japan of the present day is capable of mature diplomacy in which we are able to talk to each other without demanding those things.

He indicated an eagerness to improve relations with Japan, which had stagnated under the progressive Roh Moo-hyun administration.<sup>\*205</sup>

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<sup>\*204</sup> Okamoto Tsuyoshi [consulate-general of Japan in Jeju, South Korea] to Kawaguchi Yoriko [foreign minister], July 22, 2004, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-828.

<sup>\*205</sup> *Asahi Shimbun*, January 18, 2008.

On February 26, 2014, a lawsuit was filed in China against Nippon Coke & Engineering Company and Mitsubishi Materials Corporation by Chinese who claimed they had been conscripted into harsh forced labor during the Second Sino-Japanese War, and by family members of forced laborers who had already passed away. It was the first time Chinese courts had accepted such a lawsuit. The Japanese government took the position that the issue of claims had been completely settled under the joint communiqué released upon the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China.<sup>\*206</sup>

### Verification of the Kōno Statement

On February 20, 2014, former deputy chief cabinet secretary Ishihara Nobuo gave testimony regarding the Kōno Statement at the House of Representatives Budget Committee. Ishihara stated that no post-facto investigations had been undertaken to corroborate the results of the hearings held with former comfort women, and that he presumed that some coordination had naturally been conducted with South Korea.

In an interview with the magazine *Bungei Shunjū*, Ishihara also said,

Judging from the materials from the time used in the investigation, it is clear that there were a considerable number of cases in which women became comfort women on the basis of consent. Because the wages were five times as high as those received by the average laborer, women from impoverished households became comfort women through consent. These kinds of women were not few in number (Ishihara 2014).

Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga indicated that while the process of drafting the Kōno Statement would be looked into, the statement itself would

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<sup>\*206</sup> *Mainichi Shimbun*, February 27, 2014; *Asahi Shimbun*, March 17, 2014.

not be revised and would continue to be adhered to. Abe also stated definitively on March 14 at a meeting of the House of Councillors Budget Committee that the Kōno Statement was not subject to review. Park evaluated the continued adherence to the statement positively, albeit without great enthusiasm. At a trilateral summit held on March 25 with Abe, President Obama of the United States, and Park, Park did not touch on historical issues.

Although director-general-level consultations were held in both Seoul and Tokyo from April 16, the chasm in Japan–South Korea relations over the comfort women issue was wide, and the two sides failed to narrow their differences.

On June 20, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Katō Katsunobu announced to the budget committee of the House of Representatives the results of the investigation into the process leading to the drafting of the Kōno Statement.

The study team was chaired by Tadaki Keiichi, a former prosecutor-general. The investigation clarified that the statement had been drafted collaboratively by Japan and South Korea, as laid out on pages 128 through 132. The outcome of the investigation was as follows.

According to the results of the study, Foreign Minister Mutō Kabun stated to Foreign Minister Han Sung Joo, “we want to consult in advance with members of your government on the wording of the announcement”; Japan and South Korea “held detailed discussions” over the wording of the Kōno Statement and engaged in coordination “within the limits of not distorting the facts.”

Regarding the recruitment of comfort women, while South Korea proposed the wording, “the military or recruiters who were instructed by the military,” Japan rejected this on the grounds that recruitment had been carried out not by the military but mainly by recruiters who did this based on the “intentions” of the military. Ultimately the two sides settled on the wording, “private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military.”

South Korea requested the addition of the word “remorse” to the original wording of “would like to ... extend its sincere apologies,” which the Japanese side accepted. While coerciveness could not be confirmed, Japan communicated to South Korea, “Although reaching a definite recognition would be difficult with regards to the issue of the involvement of ‘coerciveness,’” Japan had “a degree of recognition ... that it cannot be denied that some elements of coerciveness also existed.” The South Korean side stated the public “would not accept any suggestion that some women became comfort women voluntarily,” and this was adjusted to the expression, “generally against their will.” This is what was called “coercion in a broad sense.”

President Kim Young-sam stated, “We do not plan to demand material compensation from the government of Japan. Compensation will be undertaken using the budget of the [South Korean] government from next year. Doing so will undoubtedly make it possible to pursue a new Japan-[South Korea] relationship by claiming the moral high ground.” The day before the statement was released, the South Korean embassy in Japan notified the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs that President Kim had “appreciated” the final draft of the Kōno Statement and that the government of South Korea “accepted the wording of the draft.”

At a press conference held by Chief Cabinet Secretary Kōno Yōhei soon after the release of his statement, Kōno was questioned about whether the women had been forcefully taken away. He answered, “We accept that to be the case.” This went beyond what was written in his statement.

The contents of the hearings with the sixteen former comfort women were not publicly disclosed. As for the status of the hearings, “rather than a clarification of the facts, the intention was to show the sincere attitude of the government of Japan in clarifying the facts ... and stand with the former comfort women to deeply understand their feelings, and hence the results of it were not compared to post-facto corroborating investigations or other testimonies.” The relevant ministries “had already prepared the original draft of the Kōno Statement prior to the completion of the hearings.”

Based on the results of the study as indicated above, Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga stated at a press conference, “We will not review the Kōno Statement. The government’s position of adhering to the statement will not change in any way.” The press secretary of South Korea’s Foreign Ministry expressed “deep regret” over the investigation, explaining, “The government of South Korea only presented its views unofficially, in response to the request of the Japanese side.”

At roughly the same time, in South Korea, 122 former comfort women who had catered to US troops near US military bases filed a lawsuit against the South Korean government, demanding state compensation.\*<sup>207</sup>

### **Toward a Summit Meeting between Abe and Xi**

As of the second half of 2014, as this book is being written, there are no indications that historical issues will settle down. Tracing the main trajectory, on July 3, in the public service advertising space within the Chinese weekly newspaper *Chongqing Youth News*, an illustration was published in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki were being attacked with atomic bombs, with the caption, “Japan wants a war again.” This was carried by the paper as a criticism of the Abe cabinet allowing the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. At a press conference on July 9, Suga stated that the Japanese embassy in China had lodged a protest with China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On July 7, Xi Jinping criticized Japan at the anniversary ceremony of Marco Polo Bridge Incident.

At the Lotte Hotel in Seoul, a memorial event marking the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces had been

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\*207 Kōno danwa sakusei katei-tō ni kansuru kentō chīmu, “Ianfu mondai o meguru Nikkan-kan no yaritori no keii: Kōno danwa sakusei kara Ajia josei kikin made” [Study Team on the Details Leading to the Drafting of the Kōno Statement etc., “Details of Exchanges Between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Regarding the Comfort Women Issue: From the Drafting of the Kōno Statement to the Asian Women’s Fund”], June 20, 2014, MOFA document disclosed under the Information Disclosure Law, 2013-737; Asahi Shimbun, June 21, 2014; Sankei Shimbun, June 21, 2014; Sankei Shimbun, June 26, 2014.

scheduled to open on July 11, but the day before the event was to begin, the hotel notified the organizer that it would no longer be able to provide space for the event. The hotel had taken into consideration public opinion in South Korea regarding the study conducted on the Kōno Statement drafting process and the Abe administration's allowing of the exercise of the right of collective self-defense. At the Japan–South Korea director-general-level consultations that took place in Seoul on July 23, the South Korean side expressed regret that the drafting process of the Kōno Statement had been examined. On July 25, during talks with Masuzoe Yōichi, the governor of Tokyo, Park Geun-hye spoke about having a shared perception of history and resolving the comfort women issue.

On August 5, the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper, having determined that the testimony by Yoshida Seiji stating that he had forcefully taken away comfort women on the island of Jeju was fabricated, retracted its stories, acknowledging that it had confused women's volunteer labor corps for comfort women and that a portion of its reporting had been erroneous.

On August 9, during a meeting with Foreign Minister Kishida in Myanmar, Foreign Minister Yun of South Korea criticized the study of the Kōno Statement drafting process and other matters. In South Korea there was some movement to inaugurate a white paper on the comfort women, while China applied for the registration of historical documents concerning the Nanjing Incident and comfort women with UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

Abe made a cash offering to Yasukuni Shrine on August 15 as the president of the Liberal Democratic Party, and three members of his cabinet paid a visit to the shrine, with China and South Korea voicing opposition as a result. At the National Liberation Day of Korea ceremony that same day, Park criticized Japan, calling for a response to the comfort women issue. While the Policy Research Council of the Liberal Democratic Party took the decision on August 21 to call on the government to release a new statement by the chief cabinet secretary in 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the end of the war, Suga stated that the administration would adhere to the Kōno Statement.



On September 11, 2014, Asahi Shimbun Company president Kimura Tadakazu and others held a press conference at which they apologized for erroneous reporting over the nuclear accident and the comfort women issue. That same day, TV Asahi also verified that Yoshida Seiji's testimony and other claims had been false. On September 15, the Association of Pacific War Victims and Bereaved Families in South Korea publicly released a portion of the video of hearings with former comfort women recorded in Seoul that had been one of the grounds for the Kōno Statement.

South Korea's foreign minister, Yun, met with Kishida on September 26 and argued, regarding the comfort women issue, that Japan should first make efforts to resolve it.<sup>\*208</sup>

While the details are not clear, it may have been that, if the South Korean government did not have control over domestic groups and a call was made to resolve the matter without a concrete way forward being proposed first, the competence of those involved would have been called into question.

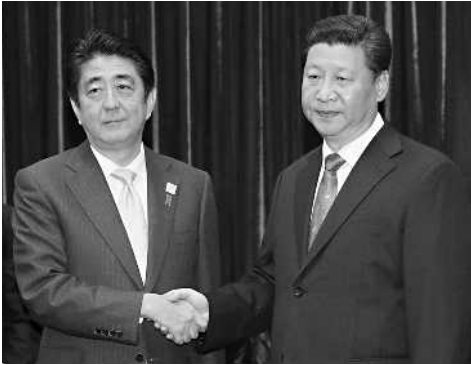
On November 7, just before the APEC leaders' meeting convened in Beijing, Japan and China agreed on a statement saying, "following the spirit of squarely facing history and advancing toward the future,"

[b]oth sides recognized that they had different views as to the emergence of tense situations in recent years in the waters of the East China Sea, including those around the Senkaku Islands, and shared the view that, through dialogue and consultation, they would prevent the deterioration of the situation, establish a crisis management mechanism, and avert the rise of unforeseen circumstances.

Abe and Xi met on November 10 for the first bilateral summit between the countries in two and a half years, since May 2012.

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\*208 *Asahi Shimbun*, September 26, 2014, evening edition.



Prime Minister Abe Shinzō of Japan (left) shakes hands with President Xi Jinping of China at a meeting ahead of the 2014 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders' meeting (November 10, 2014).

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### **Is There a Way Out?**

A characteristic in recent years of historical issues is that there is a tendency for China and South Korea to go so far as to break off summit talks after their distrust toward Japan intensifies. This was routine during Koizumi's term in office, but that same characteristic can be said of the Noda cabinet, insofar as it failed to find any ways to begin repairing relations until the final stages of the administration. The second Abe Shinzō cabinet also, as of December 2014, as this book is being written, has not had a summit meeting with Park, other than in the form of trilateral Japan-US-South Korea summit meetings. Historical issues have a tendency to be linked to territorial nationalism.

As stated in the preface to this book, historical issues are multifaceted, and while they are domestic political matters, at the same time they have arisen as diplomatic matters.

If, with each change of administration, calls are made to the other country for an apology that goes beyond all previous apologies and criticisms are leveled that remorse is not being shown over history while linking the matter with territorial issues, it is possible that the only result will be an amplification of ill will between the countries.

Diplomacy is the act of adjusting the interests of relevant countries.

When another country is involved, it is difficult, and indeed risky, to demand a complete diplomatic victory. Should one country attempt to win a complete victory, it will leave pent-up passions within the other country that may well keep reconciliation with the other country at quite a distance over the long term. That sort of attitude will put off reconciliation permanently and may allow history to be regarded as a trump card to be played.

There are things that Japan can do. One method is to advance the sharing of historical documents through digital archives such as the Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR). As for visits to Yasukuni, during the Koizumi era, while groups of both advocates and cautious types formed separate study groups within the Liberal Democratic Party, they were not formed with the intention of drawing up a party conclusion.

Conflicts and the search for reconciliation regarding the perception of history will continue not only between governments, but also at the level of the media and the general public. True reconciliation requires sustained dialogue across a wide spectrum of fields. It will also be necessary to build up trust through persistent people-to-people exchanges and joint research. Demands toward the other country and reviews of the way history is perceived must be moderate and grounded in what has happened along the path to the present. Reconciliation will be difficult if a country thinks only about what it alone is persuaded of. Reconciliation involves giving careful consideration to the other party and demonstrating mutual respect.

## Afterword

It was 2001 when I began investigating the perception of history. I began writing about it little by little, and although I had intended to compile my findings when the issue had been settled, in fact, frictions did not die down so easily. As new issues cropped up, I spent a substantial amount of time conducting interviews and requesting the disclosure of information. Despite my focus on the Japanese perspective, it took more than a decade for me to finally send this manuscript to my publisher.

In university classes, I often listen to reports compiled by my students. While the themes are left entirely up to the students themselves, some students have an interest in relations between Japan and China or Japan and South Korea, and take up the perception of history in their research. I imagine they regard it as an important issue close to their lives. The students employ a variety of approaches, with some taking up Japanese history textbooks as their topic, while others explore the issue from the aspect of the media.

I also interact with foreign students from China, Taiwan, and South Korea. Foreign students with a high degree of interest in Japan become adamant regarding the issue of the perception of history. It is not at all uncommon to encounter students who believe in all earnestness that Japan has never once apologized regarding its colonial rule or the Second

Sino-Japanese War. The sentiment toward Japan in these students' home countries must surely be all the more unforgiving. There are cases in which Japanese university students who study abroad or travel in China or South Korea come to feel this very acutely.

A similar situation may occur even among adults. It is not unheard of for historical issues to become barriers to exchanges, and many Japanese are at a loss for words regarding this issue. As Japan deepens its relations with Asia, it will be difficult to avoid this area.

The year 2015 is the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Pacific War, and it is also for China the seventieth anniversary of its victory in the war of resistance against Japan; for South Korea it is the seventieth anniversary of its national liberation and the fiftieth anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations with Japan. What should be avoided most with regard to historical issues both domestically and internationally is for the situation to turn into an emotional exchange. It is easy for historical issues to be interpreted as a dichotomy of "conservatives" vs. "anti-Japanese." In this arrangement, "conservatives," who worry about their country and value national prestige, censure "anti-Japanese" people as traitorous, while "anti-Japanese" people shun "conservatives" as right-wing, government-puppet scholars.

When complex phenomena are simplified, it is easy for public opinion to slip into the sensation of being bifurcated into "conservatism" on one hand and "anti-Japanese" sentiment on the other. When that sort of notion becomes established in society, the more deliberate and careful one is, the more one fears becoming labeled and refrains from social discourse.

While the dichotomy is convenient, it is also barren. Worrying about the nation is not inconsistent with rethinking the path one's nation is following. Reflecting on the past is not the same as assimilating the unilateral claims of relevant countries. In every country's past there are both good traditions and areas for reflection. It is precisely because one is considering the future of the nation in earnest that it is natural to look squarely at the future while learning from the past.

I interviewed a great many people when writing this book. Professor Yakushiji Katsuyuki of Toyo University graciously accommodated me by allowing me to participate in interviews. Dr. Etō Naoko of Keio University kindly provided comments on the initial draft of this book. Nakayama Hideki of Iwanami Shoten gave me exactly the right guidance for bringing this manuscript into publication.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all those involved in making this book a reality.

Hattori Ryūji

January 2015



## Postscript

After this book was originally published in Japanese, I received a letter dated March 1, 2015, from Hishimura Yukihiro, a former bureaucrat with the Ministry of Education, pointing out various matters regarding the first and second history textbook issues. I conducted an interview with him on March 20. A summary of the contents of the letter and the interview appear below.

### 1. Hishimura's Managerial Post

Mr. Hishimura served as deputy director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of the Ministry of Education from April 1982 to July 1986, where he was responsible for handling both the first and second history textbook issues. Mr. Hishimura had until then been involved in the Ienaga textbook trial.<sup>\*209</sup>

### 2. The First History Textbook Issue (1982)

There were at this time two types of comments given to publishers during the textbook screening process: compulsory correction orders (*shūsei iken*

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<sup>\*209</sup> Hishimura Yukihiro, *Sengo kyōiku wa naze funkyū shita no ka* [Why post-war education became confused], Tokyo: Kyouikukaihatsu Kenkyusyo, 2010.



修正意見) and non-binding suggestions for improvements (*kaizen iken* 改善意見). Whereas compulsory correction orders are backed by coercive force, there is no such compelling force in the case of non-binding suggestions for improvements. With regard to the word “invaded” (*shinryaku* 侵略), there had been a non-binding suggestion for improvement, so revision was not obligatory, and moreover the way in concrete terms in which the wording was to be improved upon was not indicated by the ministry. The suggestion for improvement regarding the use of the word “invaded” was to point out a lack of internal consistency within the text, as “advanced into” (*shinshutsu* 進出) was used in the case of Western powers, whereas “invaded” was used in the case of Japan. Nowhere was any instruction or recommendation given to revise the wording to “advanced into” (*shinshutsu* 進出).

Of the nine senior high school history textbooks for which non-binding suggestions for improvements had been given for the word “invaded,” six went to press with the word “invaded” remaining in the text as originally written. The other three changed the wording to “incursion” (*shinkō* 侵攻) or other expressions. The *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper and others reported that publishers had been forced by the ministry to rewrite “invaded China” as “advanced into China,” but in fact, there were no textbooks that revised “invaded” into “advanced into.”

As for the media reports being false, bureaucrats from the Education Ministry responded to questions at the Diet on three occasions, specifically at the House of Councillors Committee on Education on July 29, the House of Representatives Committee on the Cabinet also on July 29, and the House of Representatives Committee on Education on July 30. Even with the head of the Textbook Authorization Division explaining the situation at the press club, the media did nothing to correct the reporting errors until the *Sankei Shimbun* newspaper carried its apology article. It may be attributed in part to the fact that the bureaucrats from the Education Ministry did not use the expression “erroneous reporting” when answering questions at the Diet or on other occasions, but it seems that the media was slow to catch on to the fact that the reporting was in fact erroneous.

The Education Ministry also reported to the Foreign Ministry from early on that the case appearing in news reports could not be found anywhere.

As for drafts of government statements leading up to the Miyazawa Statement, the ministries of education and foreign affairs held consultations at the director-general level on August 17 and 20. In attendance from the Ministry of Education were Suzuki Isao, director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau; Ōsaki Hitoshi, director-general of the Science and International Affairs Bureau; and Hishimura Yukihiro, deputy director-general of the Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau; attending from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were Kiuchi Akitane, director-general of the Asian Affairs Bureau and Hashimoto Hiroshi, director-general of the Public Information and Cultural Affairs Bureau.

At the meeting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs side proposed a draft of the statement that “takes concrete measures promptly, under the principle of correcting what should be corrected and supplementing what should not be left incomplete.” In response to this, the Ministry of Education side proposed a draft that would “deal with the matter properly at the government’s responsibility.” The Foreign Ministry side countered that neither China nor South Korea would find the Education Ministry’s draft satisfactory, so agreement could not be reached.

After the meeting, the Foreign Ministry conveyed to the Education Ministry that it would be impossible to gain understanding from China and South Korea unless the statement said Japan would “make corrections” (*zesei* 是正), but the Education Ministry was adamant in opposing this wording and refused to comply, arguing that the wording should instead be “improve” (*kaizen* 改善). At a joint meeting of the Liberal Democratic Party’s Education Division and the party’s Research Commission on the Education System, and also at a meeting of the party’s Foreign Affairs Division, views were split concerning the right and wrong of making modifications.

The Education Ministry’s thinking was explained to Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkō at an early stage by Administrative Vice-Minister Misumi Tetsuo, but the prime minister did not indicate his decision on the

matter immediately. Regarding the Miyazawa Statement, on the morning of August 26, Miyazawa notified Misumi unilaterally on the decision to use “make corrections,” taken in accordance with Prime Minister Suzuki’s judgment, and also informed him of the fact that China and South Korea would be notified of this statement that same day, August 26. Neither the Prime Minister’s Office nor the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had contacted the Ministry of Education in advance in order to get a consensus.

The ministries of education and foreign affairs also held different positions regarding the timing for making textbook revisions. The Foreign Ministry argued that Japan should “make corrections” immediately, whereas the Education Ministry had always carried out textbook screening across a three-year cycle in which it examined texts for elementary schools, then junior high schools, and finally senior high schools. It argued that it would be difficult to bring about improvements immediately, but ultimately it added to the screening standards the stipulation of giving due consideration to friendly relations with neighboring countries and improved the textbooks by moving up the screening cycle a year.

### **3. The Second History Textbook Issue (1986)**

While the Ministry of Education did order compulsory corrections in the case of *Shinpen Nihonshi* (“New edition Japanese history”), the ministry did not consider it to be a case of taking extralegal measures, since the screening process was not yet completely finished. The screening at the time involved three stages: a review of the initial draft text, a review of the second draft text, and a review of the printed final draft text. There had been cases in the past in which additional orders for corrections had been made after completion of the second draft text stage, during the printed final draft text stage.

However, it was unprecedented for there to be a few dozen orders for corrections after the second draft text stage had been completed. While legally the screening was still underway, the Ministry of Education viewed

orders for corrections to be undesirable at that point, and it communicated to the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the screening was essentially coming to completion and therefore orders for corrections would be difficult to incorporate.

Within the Ministry of Education at that time, there was no discussion of any kind that the publisher, Hara Shobō, should consider canceling publication of the textbook.



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