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國際學碩士學位論文

**Civil Origins of Diverse/Different Apologies  
in Japan and Germany**

일본과 독일의 전후처리 비교연구  
: 시민사회/사회운동을 중심으로

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國際學科 國際地域學專攻  
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**Civil Origins of Diverse/Different Apologies  
in Japan and Germany**

A thesis presented by

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# Abstract

## Civil Origins of Diverse/Different Apologies in Japan and Germany

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In recent years, the continuous political and diplomatic unrest between Japan and Korea has worsened the relationship and never allowed peaceful cooperation to have a stable status in the region. In Northeast Asia today, what mainly block the future oriented relationship are the unresolved historical issues that continue to arise blocking the cooperative measures. When apology issues are put on the table, many often compare the case of Japan from that of Germany. Korea obstinately claims for Japan to apologize in similar ways as Germany did. However, the reality is far from the expectation and the gap of misunderstanding between Japan and Korea has widened as years went by. Therefore, this thesis seeks to compare the difference between Japan and Germany in their apologies. This thesis is a historical comparative analysis that aims to scrutinize (1) the core essences that compose Germany and Japan's apologies and (2) the influence of civil societies in the two countries in terms of developing mainstream perception and find out what has led to the two very different attitudes about the past war atrocities. Germany and Japan's apologies are listed in chronological order and the contributions of the two civil societies are analyzed from a structural point of view. To achieve this, Germany's "history from below" concept is thoroughly analyzed and interpreted in this paper. It specifically focused on the lengthy process of Germany's development of self-critical view within the society and how it eventually developed as a tool to prevent conservative/revisionist ideologies to arise whereas any similar efforts are lacking in Japanese society which naturally created an open door for right wing conservatism to revive. The findings indicate that the difference in the level of civic involvement in the two countries has shaped today's two very different perceptions of Germany and Japan.

Keywords : Japan and Germany, Apology, 68 movement, National-Socialism, Civil society, Japan-Korea relations, Legacies of the war

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# 1. Introduction

## 1-1. Introduction

The Nobel Prize in 2012 was awarded to European Union (EU) for contributing to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe for over six decades. The Nobel Foundation pointed out the “cooperation between countries” to be the key driving factor for this honor, mentioning that reconciliation between Germany and France, after the decimation of the Second World War, was an important step towards fostering peace in Europe.<sup>1</sup> When observing the case of European countries’ integration from a third party perspective, reconciliation between countries seems to be a fairly easy task and many might assume it to be the next process that naturally comes after the end of the war as long as there is a will to do so. On the other side of the globe, countries that also went through similar stages of war and have once faced similar situation also concluded diplomatic normalization, dealt with financial compensation, undergone numerous communications and agreements. Surprisingly, the outcome today shown by these two regions outstandingly run counter

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<sup>1</sup> "European Union (EU) - Facts". *Nobelprize.org*. Nobel Media 2013. 22 May 2014.

<[http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2012/eu-facts.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2012/eu-facts.html)>

to each other. Current situation for example, there is ever-growing anti-Korean wave movement in Tokyo, former Korean President provoked a sensitive problem by visiting an island under territorial dispute, Japanese politicians try to deny and justify the past war atrocities. All these problems continue to deepen the crack of the already fragile relationship. As can be seen from these listed troubles, it is not hard to imagine that continuous diplomatic unrest, strongly influencing the civilians, never allowed peaceful cooperation to have a stable status in the region. In Northeast Asia today, what mainly blocks the future oriented relationship is the unresolved issues about history that continuously arise and disrupt the two countries to work towards further/deeper cooperation. Whenever there is any attempt to make a positive progress in the relationship, history matters always come up and the attempt often ends up in disagreements and invisible hatred.

Undeniable fact is that many observers point out the relationship between Japan and Korea to be difficult to understand when considering that it has been already four decades since the colonial era and it still continues to cast a long shadow over the two countries. Feffer writes a sharp phrase, “*More than 65 years after the end of World War II, Japan and South Korea still remain prisoners of their history.*”<sup>2</sup> As many point

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<sup>2</sup> *Global Issues*. July 12 2012. <<http://www.globalissues.org/news/2012/07/12/14224>>

out, history surely is blocking the cooperative measures in the region. Spitzer says keen observers know that Japan's ugly territorial disputes with its neighbors are not really about grounds or oil and gas reserves or ancient historical claims. What they are really about is that the Japanese still won't admit they did anything wrong during the Second World War or during their long colonial rule in Asia.<sup>3</sup> This may be a quite extreme expression but indeed it is a keen observation in the sense that this view is how the neighbors see the problem. Nevertheless, Japan's previous efforts to offer apology in an attempt to improve the relationship should not be undermined. This well summarizes the current situation and shows that there is a clear lack of understanding between each other.

Why is this the case in Asia Pacific? Just pointing out the diplomatic stagnation fails to fully explain. In explaining today's bad relations between Japan and Korea, one factor that needs to be considered is the two countries' lack of willingness to narrow the gap of expectation and perception. Korea obstinately expects Japan to apologize and show the same apologetic attitude as Germany did. On the other hand, Japan claims to be tired of apologizing and talking about the issue when the topic has already been brought up and been taken care of in the 1960s during the normalization.

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<sup>3</sup> "Why Japan Is Still Not Sorry Enough". *Time*. 11 Dec 2012.  
<<http://nation.time.com/2012/12/11/why-japan-is-still-not-sorry-enough/>>

As a result, the gap of perception and expectation has been widened with the lapse of time which eventually leads to nowhere but only invites a bigger blockade. In order to analyze why Japan cannot deliver sincere apology as Germany did, a thorough understanding of Japanese civil society is required. Therefore, this thesis aims to do so by scrutinizing (1) the core essences that compose apologies in Germany and Japan and (2) the role of civil society in the two countries from a structural point of view in order to analyze what has led to the two very different attitudes about the past war atrocities.

## **1-2. Research Question**

1. Why couldn't Japan stick with its stance since the official apology whereas Germany has been showing consistent apologetic attitude?
2. How was it possible for Germany to have a unified voice against conservatism?

## **1-3. Hypothesis**

H1. Active participation and contribution of German civil society in building/developing a common perception has led to a firm and consistent apology that easily prevents any backlashes and conservative/revisionist opinions from rising.

H2. Japanese civil society's passive participation in shaping a shared perception has created an open door for conservative groups to make problematic remarks with no hesitation.

## 2. Analytical Framework

Many often compare Germany and Japan when the apology issue is put on the table. Germany has its reputation for its sincere and heartfelt apologetic attitude towards the victims of Germany's past war atrocities. The German case is a good example that proves the importance of why a perception of history should start from below and it also suggests implications on why the same movement is unlikely to be seen in Japan. The famous former chancellor Willy Brandt kneeled down before the memorial monument and delivered a sincere apology: *"I had to do something to express the particularity of the commemoration at the ghetto monument. On the abyss of German history and carrying the burden of the millions who were murdered, I did what people do when words fail them"*. Followed by several other official apologies made at the political level, Germany's apology was repeatedly expressed in public. What infused sincerity to its apology was the action and attitude that came along. In recent years, twelve countries designated January 27 as a holocaust remembrance day and continue to commemorate the victims on an annual basis. In 2013, Chancellor Angela Merkel has expressed her condolence through her speech: *"Naturally, we have an everlasting responsibility for the crimes of national-socialism, for the victims of World War II, and above all, for the Holocaust. We must clearly say, generation after generation, and say it again: with courage, civil courage, each individual can help ensure that racism and anti-Semitism have no chance. We're facing our history, we are not hiding anything, we*

*are not repressing anything. We must confront this to make sure we are a good and trustworthy partner in the future, as we already are today, thankfully*". Germany's apology and the meanings that are contained in it have been consistent until today. It is clearly well known that since its first apology, there was no change in the stance of Germany. Other countries, with their position as a third party, highly evaluate the sincerity and consistency of Germany's heartfelt apology and admit that Germany has shown a proper example of how countries with war crimes should confront their past. On the other hand, Japan's apology towards neighboring countries about the past war atrocities is clearly differentiated from that of Germany. In the 1990s, former Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi has expressed deep remorse about Japan's undeniable past crimes and showed his pity on the victims through his official apology: *"On the occasion of the fifteenth 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 reflection upon many instances of colonial rule and aggressive acts in the modern history of the world, and recognizing that Japan carried out such acts in the past, inflicting pain and suffering upon the people of other countries, especially in Asia, the members of this house express a sense of deep remorse. We must transcend the differences over historical view of the post war and learn humbly the lessons of history so as to build a peaceful international society."* Considering that it was one of the first majorly remembered official apologies and it publicly admitted Japan's past aggression and the improper national policies during the

war time, this apology was meaningful in the Korea-Japan relations. The relationship between the two countries seemed as if it was going to the right direction for creating a positive new era in the bilateral ties which unfortunately failed to turn out as expected. Japan today, after a decade of straying the line, repeatedly gives shock to not only the neighboring countries, the very victims, but also to the international community with several problematic remarks from some important figures in Japan. In May 2013, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo verbally surprised Asian countries by making a nationalistic comment: *“I want to say that the term ‘invasion’ was not defined internationally or academically. In a relationship between two countries, it depends on which one defines it.”*<sup>4</sup> This comment caused anxiety of the neighbors and made them wonder whether today’s Japan is taking back to the imperial past. In addition to that, Abe administration not only denies the involvement of force in the mobilization of the sex slaves, but also keeps on pursuing their desire to revise the Peace Constitution. Continuous denial and justification of the war crimes send dubious signs and cause other countries to raise doubts about the Japanese ideology and their intention. Korea and Japan repeatedly witnessed how some of the problematic remarks can seriously trouble the relationship. In order to analyze the underlying problem of this fragile relationship, postwar apology issue needs to be studied. Before hastily comparing the postwar efforts of Japan and Germany, one needs to dig into the core essences that

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<sup>4</sup> The Korea Times, May 15, 2013

compose the two different apologies. Why does the German apology still continue to have the same characteristic in terms of perception and attitude whereas there were continuous domestic backlashes in Japan? Why does Japan let these provocative right wing remarks seriously trouble the bilateral relations?

The purpose of this thesis is to delve further into the difference between these two very different apologies and apologetic attitudes that come along.

## **2-1. Existing explanations**

Various existing explanations based on different aspects try to explain why Japan fails to deliver a sincere apology and maintain the apologetic attitude.

First, there is an explanation based on cultural understanding. Before the findings of Ruth Benedict, it was an unfamiliar approach to draw distinction between cultures that put more weight on shame and cultures that value guilt. Ruth Benedict refers to these cultures as guilt culture and shame culture. She defines guilt culture to be a society that inculcates absolute standards of morality and relies on men's conscience whereas in a culture of shame, people are chagrined about acts which we expect people to feel guilty about. The chagrin can be very intense and it cannot be relieved by confession and atonement. Thus, a man who has sinned can get relief by

unburdening himself.<sup>5</sup> She analyzed the reason for Japan's reluctance to talk about its shameful past. According to Benedict, in a culture where shame is the major sanction, a man does not experience relief when he makes his fault public even to a confessor. Thus, based on its shame culture, Japan refuses to express confessions. On the other hand, in a nation where honor means living up to one's own picture for oneself, a man may suffer from guilt though no man knows of his misdeed. In this case, a sense of guilt may actually be relieved by confessing to his sin and this explanation accounts for the culture of Christians, whom Benedict mainly means Americans. While this view was positively evaluated among scholars, there are also contending views on this explanation. Second explanation has its base on a historical aspect. Horvat says that Japan's sense of victimization became an obstacle to feel the guilt. It is a complicating factor that Japan was not only an aggressor, but also a victim. Critics of Japan's historical record often point to how "easy" it was for Japanese after the World War II to forget about their nation's aggressive past "thanks to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki".<sup>6</sup> This factor caused Japan to have an ambiguous identity in terms of its role in the war. Third existing explanation is based on an environmental aspect. According to Schlant, because Japan was not divided into zones of influence or geography as Germany has been, the uniform administration of U.S. policies under General MacArthur, as well as the retention of the emperor system, provided certain

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<sup>5</sup> Benedict, R. (1967).

<sup>6</sup> Horvat, A. (2007)

continuity.<sup>7</sup> Even after the defeat of the war, besides the fact that Japan lost and that the devastating war has ended, the changes were not as dramatic as in Germany. Thus, strong support for monarchical government has continued to characterize Japan after 1945. The same conservative party has stayed in power with only one short interruption. A poll conducted in 1946 found that 86 percent of the Japanese people favored the monarchy; two years later the figure had even increased to 90 percent. What Baring points out is that the disjunction between postwar and prewar Japan was not so great whereas the discontinuity in Germany was clearly remarkable.<sup>8</sup>

These existing explanations have been playing their roles in accounting for Japan's inability to deliver a sincere apology. It is difficult for single explanation to fully interpret this fundamental problem. Berger says a complex web of culture, politics, geography and shifting notion of justice have made it more difficult for the Japanese to apologize for past transgressions than other societies.<sup>9</sup> Although each of the arguments has a reasonable point, there are few explanations that focus on the influence of civil society in developing a country's shared perception. Therefore, this paper aims to delve further into the influence of civil society participation and evaluate the efficiency of outcomes.

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<sup>7</sup> Schlant, E. and J. T. Rimer (1991).

<sup>8</sup> Baring, A. (1991)

<sup>9</sup> Berger, T. U. (2012).

## 2-2. The Essence of Apology

One essence that well explains the characteristic of Japan's public apology is the **inconsistency**. Jennifer Lind argues that Japan's official expressions of contrition often prompt a backlash. Conservatives in particular are likely to offer a competing narrative that celebrates the past and justifies or denies its atrocities. Thus contrition can be counterproductive. She adds that foreign observers will be angered and alarmed by what the backlash suggests about the country's intentions. Confused about Japan's intention due to its inconsistency, neighboring countries often compare Japan's apology with the German apology. However, some argue that comparing Japan and Germany on how they dealt with the past is an absurd approach because they view the level of the harm and the underlying logics of those two crimes are fundamentally different.

Kosaka writes that frontal comparison of Japan and Germany can easily seem outlandish, irrelevant, or worse, trivial. He lists his reasons: the Holocaust was singular; there were other divided countries, but Japan was not one of them; Nazism was politically structured and supported differently from Japanese fascism; Europe and Asia differed in both their regional and international relations; Japanese imperialism and racism originated in and operated on different historical grounds; the Allied occupations of the two defeated nations were neither institutionally nor functionally similar; and the cold war, postwar, and post-postwar international contexts were not the

same for Germany and Japan. The list of contrasts is endless, seeming to confirm that each country was inclined to think in the first place: that its postwar history could properly be recounted only in its own terms.<sup>10</sup> As Kosaka stated, Holocaust was clearly a singular historical event. With no doubt, it was one of the most brutal crimes ever done to humanity in history. Comparing the Holocaust to other crimes in terms of the number of victims, size of the crime, involvement of assailant, the means of crime may be absurd and focusing the academic scopes in this direction is highly inappropriate. Nonetheless, what was done by both Germany and Japan in times of war are clearly defined as crimes which should never be repeated in a new history. In that sense, both countries had to go through an era when they had to pay for the consequences of the crimes. They also shared another common point that both countries were in need of solutions to recover the relations with neighboring countries at some point.

While granting these differences, great and small, Gluck argues that in the twentieth-century histories of Japan and West Germany, the meanings attached to those histories were sometimes so alike as to seem uncanny. She further added that however different in form and function, they occupied a similar structure position in the national discourse that related the past to the present.<sup>11</sup> Thus, it seems equally clear that the

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<sup>10</sup> Kosaka, M. and E. Reischauer (1972)

<sup>11</sup> Gluck, C. (1991)

Japanese will surely, at one point or another, find themselves as a people forced to examine these burdening aspects of their past and to face in turn the implications of that past in their historical relationships with their neighbors in Asia.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Schlant, E. and J. T. Rimer (1991).

### **3. The Case of Germany**

In Germany, when conservatives regained power in the 1980s, they sought to restore what they viewed as an upset balance in West German memory. Although no mainstream leaders or intellectuals denied or glorified Nazi crimes, they criticized the Left for emphasizing negative memories of World War II and sought to “draw a line under the past”. Out of these national debates eventually emerged a greater national commitment to remembrance and atonement.<sup>13</sup> This example is impressive in the sense that a greater national commitment emerged in the midst of rising conservative influence whereas in Japan, the completely opposite outcome has emerged. In order to understand this difference, this paper aims to analyze the fundamental elements that compose the German apology.

#### **3-1. Vergangenheitsbewältigung**

Borneman argues that democratic states require the reiteration of principles of accountability to reestablish themselves as moral authorities that can claim to represent entire communities.

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<sup>13</sup> Lind, J. (2011).

Then this statement may lead to the following two questions:

(1) How should postwar German effort be evaluated?

(2) How did Germany practice the principles of accountability and how democratically did it take place?

The concept of “Vergangenheitsbewältigung” catches attention while being an important notion in understanding how postwar self-reconciliation within the country as well as within the people was a big deal in Germany. This term directly translates into “struggle to come to terms with the past”. The term deals with the concrete responsibility of the German state and of individual Germans for what took place under Hitler and questions about the roots of legitimacy in a society. Today’s German attitude and apologies that are built up throughout the last couple of decades are evaluated positively in general. Thanks to the rebuilt reputation, Germany was able to facilitate the ground to regain trust and credibility from neighboring countries and from the international society. When this whole process is scrutinized in detail, the findings show that Germans have faced struggles, including both inner and outer struggles, and needed a considerable amount of time to confront and come to terms with the past in order to become a normal nation. Leaving out this terminology in studying German postwar literature and culture is as if missing the center piece of a puzzle. German sociologist Theodor Adorno’s work is important to trace back to where this terminology was originated. Adorno argued in his work in 1970 that “collective

identification and collective narcissism were not destroyed at all, but continue to exist.” Germany, in Adorno’s view, only “coming to terms with the past as enlightenment” would lead to the maturity of the autonomous self and to a personal, independent self-identity.<sup>14</sup> Today, Germany’s continuous effort to fulfill this duty is positively evaluated and became an example to other countries.

### **3-2. Germany’s Lengthy Process of Developing Self-critical View**

Public attention to ways of coping with the Nazi past in Germany tends to focus on gestures or speeches by representatives of the state and society. However, this view “from above” ascribes nothing but a passive role to the audiences of such representational politics. The sentiments, opinions, and practices of “the masses” play no active role in these accounts. Therefore, the range and impact of messages from the seeming centers of the polity are not explored but assumed.<sup>15</sup> Official opinions “from above” have limit to represent the masses and do not necessarily link to what the majority of the people agree. In other words, in developing a self-critical view, top down form of infusion may not be sufficient. What it truly requires is a bottom up form

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<sup>14</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit,” in his *Erziehung zur Mündigkeit: Vorträge und Gespräche mit Hellmut Becher* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 20.

<sup>15</sup> Ludtke A, 1993.

of shift.

When Germany's postwar apologetic attitude and repentance about the past atrocities are considered and referred to, one may think that this perception turnover might have happened suddenly over one night and thus may lead one to obstinately think that every country embracing national disgrace should take the same action. This assumption being far from the truth, it is highly necessary to thoroughly look into the lengthy process of Germany's perception development. The slow but steady process of how Germany changed and developed their perception deserves recognition. It might come as a shock to learn that Germany has taken a considerably long time to transform the country from a war criminal nation into what it is today. In order to delve further into this development, this paper tries to focus on the national atmosphere in Germany starting from "zero hour" to the transition period with a time scope on the 1960s until the 1990s.

Tracing back to the years right after the WWII, Germany was facing a big challenge to restore the economy and its entirely devastated nation. They had to start everything from beginning including economic recovery as well as restoration of devastated German cities. At the same time, they also wished to reset their memory to restart from the terrible memories from the war. A memoir of German who lived through that period describes the zero hour in Germany:

*It was beginning of a new era as at the outset of the world, when the earth lay waste and empty. But then God brought light and planted shrubs and animals and finally men. Back then we all suddenly felt newly created, newly reborn- finally free. Those who have never experienced this will hardly be able to comprehend it; and those who have will never be able to forget it. They will always feel the glow of gratitude for those things which succeeding generations regard as simply given. Never to be hungry! And always to have a roof over one's head. To be able to dress warmly in the winter and enjoy a heated home: A peaceful night of sleep, and security.<sup>16</sup>*

While clearly describing the brutal reality of hunger and poverty, what this memoir implicitly shows is how the Germans were newly reborn, finally being free from the unpleasant war memories and responsibilities. Germans who in 1945 were old enough to understand the meaning of the end of the war, the collapse of everything, were shaken and converted, regardless of whether they were eight or eighty years old. As a consequence, all generations tacitly agreed on a generational pact. No discussion was needed for the lesson from that experience.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, people were able to naturally disassociate themselves from the dark history and from the prior collaboration. People from this era are called the '45 generation. What made them the '45 generation was the

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<sup>16</sup> Arnulf Baring, "8. May 1945," in Hermann Glaser, ed. Bundesrepublikanisches Lesebuch. Drei Jahrzehnte geistiger Auseinandersetzung (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1980)

<sup>17</sup> Baring, A. (1991)

common experience; young and old, men and women, realized that the old German Reich was gone; turning back had become impossible. In 1945 Germany no longer existed. It was dissolved.<sup>18</sup> This may have greatly motivated and empowered the Germans to cover what they did not wish to remember and thus move on to a new chapter of history. For nearly two decades, Germany's past war atrocities were kept silent and been barely discussed not only in public but also at an individual level. The 45 generation was a "quiet generation," a skeptical generation, which, during the Nuremberg trials, had watched the eradication of its former leaders, who did not speak about what had happened, who had gone through too much.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it was fairly simple for many Germans to quickly disassociate themselves from the war responsibility.

They were the generation who transformed the destroyed and devastated Germany into a developed, wealthy nation. With the goal of achieving this long awaited economic miracle, they needed to stay hardworking and energetic to survive in order to escape from the trap called poverty and devastation brought by the World War II. The German society during the economic recovery period needed harmony and balance in order to reach this goal. Baring says bitter discussions, condemnations, and executions about the war crimes would have led to a new fragmentation of society.

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<sup>18</sup> Baring, A. (1991)

<sup>19</sup> Baring, A. (1991)

Apparently, balance in the society may have played a considerably important role that helped Germany stay away from confusion in order to accomplish the economic achievement. This has led to the creation of collective silence in the society and with no doubt, one of the elements that formed the harmony was the prevalence of this trend. While this acted as a base for the drastic economic development, it also brought about severe side effects. As can be deduced from the accounts of the Nuremberg trials after 1945, in addition to opting for unburdening strategies, the Germans suffered from a “severe lack of a historical ability to imagine.”<sup>20</sup> Liberal groups who claimed for the necessity to look back on history to regret the war atrocities were small minorities in the German society at that time.

In comparative perspective, the replacement of living memories of a domestic majority by synthetic recollections of an externalized minority was an astounding development that still begs a fuller explanation.<sup>21</sup> If the 1950s represent the prevalence of collective silence, the 1960s became a turning point for a change in Germany which caused the birth of generational conflict. It was the beginning of when the young generations became curious and started to question about the justification of the war and the responsibility of the older generations. The early 60s remained at the mercy of

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<sup>20</sup> Klaus R. Scherpe, “Erzwungener Alltag: Wahrgenommene und gedachte Wirklichkeit in der Reportageliteratur der Nachkriegszeit,” in *Nachkriegsliteratur in Westdeutschland 1945-49*, J. Hermand, H. Peitsch, K. R. Scherpe, eds. (Berlin: Argument, 1982), 68-74

<sup>21</sup> Buruma, I. (1994).

contending memories, serving as an autobiographical marker for individual life stories and as a reference point for literary debates in the feuilletons.<sup>22</sup> The generational revolt did not happen over one night out of nothing. In the early years, people were still far from being aware of war responsibility. This trend was proven in an opinion poll. Well into the 1960s, many West German respondents were of the opinion that National Socialism was basically a good idea that had been badly implemented. Most of the Germans were still not aware of the fundamental fallacy of the fascism and neglected about the war responsibility.

German journalist Horst Kruger engaged in the topic of criticizing passive attitude of the young generation and their neglect of the older generation's responsibility. He wrote in the monthly magazine *Der Monat* in 1964:

*“There are good, hopeful faces, lots of youth, students and pupils who watch with perplexity a show which their parents should have staged. Their parents? Well, no, certainly not theirs, but certainly others parents. My parents? Well, no, certainly not mine, but certainly other parents. What is missing here is my generation, the middle generation, which is concerned here, which took part. But they don't want to know anything about it, they know everything already. They have to work, to earn money at this time now shortly before noon, they have to keep the Wirtschaftwunder(economic*

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<sup>22</sup> Jaraus, K. (2007).

*miracle) going. Who looks back is lost.*”<sup>23</sup>

This sarcastically criticizes about the young generation’s passive tendency to engage in dealing with the legacies of war and bringing up the topics of unresolved dark phase of history. Although public criticisms started to slowly emerge, there were still strong minorities who considered Hitler as an important leader. Moreover, there was an increasing proportion of respondents also favored a moratorium on looking into the unsavory past, preferring instead to move ahead to a more promising future.<sup>24</sup>

However, the generational revolt ultimately broke the collective silence regarding the participation of ordinary Germans in Nazi crimes. Youths in West Germany started to question about the fundamental systems and culture that were shaping the society. Young generations began to raise their voice against the traditional and parliamentary decision making process, unjust hierarchical system, social injustice and inequality of wealth. Before the movement evolved to be more active, the youths used to fail to unite in their opposition to political dictates. The split was rather inner-directed. However, the 1960s mark the progressive stages of a generational conflict that erupted in full force in 1968.<sup>25</sup> It was the first flame of civic movements and became a turning point in the German social history. This next generation, which was

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<sup>23</sup> Hermann Glaser, ed., “Gerichtstag,” in Bundesrepublikanisches Lesebuch, 251.

<sup>24</sup> Gassert, P. and A. E. Steinweis (2006).

<sup>25</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

no longer implicated in the war, came of age. Political activism, spiced liberally with interpretations of Marx and Freud, fueled the young generation's militancy and hoped to provoke their elders to respond.<sup>26</sup> Young West Germans had one common goal: to differentiate themselves from the older generation who try to evade from the war responsibility. They aimed to do by building a more ethical society with self-critical view. They saw leftist ideology as the tool with which to battle the older generation. Sensitized to the cover-ups and the denials of their elders, and by now better equipped with knowledge about the crimes committed during the war, they went for the jugular.<sup>27</sup> Schlant says in this confrontation, it became clear that the Holocaust was of the greatest importance in any relation between the generations and it clearly had the farthest-reaching consequences for the self-perception of young West Germans in their search for identity. Leftists like the Green Bundestag deputy Antje Vollmer have praised the spirit of rebellion for "civilizing the Germans," and considered the late 1960s to be "a social refoundation of the republic" that turned an authoritarian postfascist state into a Western democracy.<sup>28</sup> There were several impulses that have accelerated to break the prevalent collective silence in the society. Condemnation, self-reflection, and apology became a ritual thing under this influence and the 68 generation popularized these issues. In this respect, one of the most salient differences between

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<sup>26</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

<sup>27</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

<sup>28</sup> Gassert, P. and A. E. Steinweis (2006)

Japan and West Germany bears on the attitudes of the successor generations.<sup>29</sup>

### **3-3. Germany in the 1990s**

After the generational revolt, various efforts have continuously been made. The National Socialist past has been more broadly informed. West Germany broadcasted several episodes of TV series on the Third Reich, viewed by approximately one-quarter of the entire population of the Federal Republic shifting the media attitudes in a more critical direction.<sup>30</sup> The medium of television and the serial presentation of the Holocaust, replete with sentimental appeal, created the large audience.<sup>31</sup> Scholarly efforts should also be highly evaluated. Contemporary historians provided scholarly authority for the critical view of the past. These scholarly efforts include foundation of institutions such as Institute für Zeitgeschichte (IFZ), organizations that devote to more research. These impulses surely facilitated discussions which provided opportunities to people to have a better understanding on history. How Germany has managed to implement the astounding transition and became a conscientious nation is worth the

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<sup>29</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

<sup>30</sup> Jaraus, K. (2007).

<sup>31</sup> Huyssen, A. (1980).

recognition. The changed Germany today proves the change in every means by blocking the smallest possibility of the conservative roots to regain influence in the country. In 1985, the continuous effort paid off in the form of law. Germany legislated articles to outlaw the Holocaust denial or any element that is related to the National Socialism. Followings are the articles of the German criminal law.

**§130 Public Incitement**

*(3) Whoever publicly or in a meeting approves of, denies or belittles an act committed under the rule of National Socialism of the type indicated in Section 6 subsection (1) of the Code of Crimes against the International Law, in a manner capable of disturbing the public peace shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than five years or a fine.*

*(4) Whoever publicly or in a meeting disturbs the public peace in a manner that assaults the human dignity of the victims by approving of, denying or rendering harmless the violent and arbitrary National Socialist rule shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than three years or a fine.<sup>32</sup>*

The intention of these articles is to set a limit to the freedom of speech and to prevent far conservative ideology that crosses the line or contains the possibility of gaining public influence from emerging. Also in December 2012, the Bundesrat (equivalent to upper house of Parliament) voted to ban the extreme-right National Democratic Party for trying to undermine the country's constitutional order with its anti-Semitic, racist

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<sup>32</sup> "130 Volksverhetzung". Bundesministerium der Justiz.

and xenophobic stance.<sup>33</sup> The NDP, with almost 6,000 members with two seats in the state assemblies, regrets Germany's defeat in the WWII and insists on extreme conservative policies. Thanks to the continuous effort of mainstream politicians to ban the party for their ideology that threatens the German democracy, the National Democratic Party has little chance of entering into the Parliament. In an interview with the Justice Minister Schnarrenberger, she mentioned that "it's not enough to prove that the N.P.D criticizes Germany's constitutional order. In order to be banned, the parliament would have to be actively and aggressively fighting it." This well shows the mainstream politicians' willingness to fight against the conservative ideology. Putting aside the efficiency of the legal effects, what should be evaluated herein is the mainstream politicians' effort. The young generation who actively participated in the civic movement in the 1960s has gained prominent influence in the country over time. Yet, even after the advancement into the politics, the 68ers never stopped continuing the effort in strengthening the will and carrying out the practices in reality. In this respect, Germany's case is a good example that proves the importance/influence of civil society and their involvement in the process of developing a commonly shared aspect. This entire process became a foundation for Germany's consistent self-critical view. This development in the form of "bottom up" process may be referred to as "history from below".

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<sup>33</sup> "Hands Off Germany's Neo-Nazi Party", *The New York Times*. 18 December 2012. <<http://www.nytimes.com>>

One of the virtues that come along with the outcomes is the chance for the new generation to learn undistorted history both inside and outside of school. It has been emphasized enough in general that teaching the subject of the Holocaust and the National Socialism is mandatory in German education with compulsory visits to museums, memorials or concentration camps, in-class education and so on. In addition to that, what attracts attention is the methodology or the tone of how the history education is delivered. Some scholars are surprised to see how far a country can become self-critical and objective when teaching their own history. Dachau concentration camp was built in Germany's southern region called Bavaria and the place actively contributed to carrying out the plans of the Nazi regime. The camp is now preserved as a memorial site being the symbol of the National Socialist crimes. It has been visited by more than 20 million people from worldwide until today. In one section of the museum where the history after 1945 is explained, the following is written. "Repress and forget: is how the majority attitude in West German society can be described in dealing with the legacy of the concentration camps." This clearly admits the neglect and indifference of the German people about the country's war crimes right after the war and indirectly conveys the "fallacy" of this. In the final section of the memorial site located near the exit, somewhat impressive quotation is cited on the wall.

*“Dachau- the significance of this name will never be erased from German history. It stands for all concentration camps which the Nazis established in their territory”*  
*(Eugen Kogon)*<sup>34</sup>

The tone of the description, the way how it depicts and admits the disgraceful history, is truly impressive. Even those who walk into the memorial site without any deep knowledge in the beginning will naturally finish the visit with an impression that this historical event that took place at the site was a crime that excessively went against the humanity. Museums or memorial sites with legacy of Nazi crimes implicitly educate the visitors by encouraging the understanding of history. They teach people that those who live today should make every effort to prevent even the slightest possibility that may repeat the same mistake and violate the human rights. They also implicitly teach why it is vital to secure the collective memory. They induce people not just to understand but comprehend, and not just to conclude but to know.

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<sup>34</sup> KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau (Dachau Concentration Camp). Dachau, Germany. 2 January 2014.

### **3-4. The Prevention of Domestic Backlashes**

Germans adopted a solution to come to terms with the past by remembering, repeating and working through instead of hiding, refusing to about it. Through this process, the German society actively participated in developing a common social perception. The outcome from this practice was the replacement of the pessimistic majority with the liberal minority. The change of perception and shift to the left has brought an important difference in the German society. Germany was able to silence the small conservative minorities by building a unified Germany and by sharing the common social perception with a self-critical view. Although this major change required Germany to go through various stages of social changes and sacrifice, it proves the effectiveness of “history from below”. As a result, on the national level, the critical attitudes proved strong enough to withstand the backlash against accusations of German guilt and the accompanying rise of the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party(NPD). Furthermore, on the international level, the new spirit of contrition allowed the inauguration of an Ostpolitik designed to reconcile Germans with their former victims in Eastern Europe.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Jaraus, K. (2007).

## 4. The Case of Japan

German philosopher Hannah Arendt writes in her famous book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* about the “banality of evil”. After watching the trial of Eichmann in Jerusalem, one of the major organizers of the Holocaust, it came to a great shock to her that despite all the efforts of the prosecution, everybody could see that the man was not a “monster”. Hannah pointed that except for an extraordinary diligence in looking out for his personal advancement, he had no motives in the crime at all. The problem was that he never realized what he was doing. She added that it was “sheer thoughtlessness- something by no means identical with stupidity- that predisposed him to become one of the greatest criminals of that period.<sup>36</sup> She refers to it as “the banality of evil” that great evils in history were not executed by fanatics or sociopaths but rather by ordinary people who accepted the premises of their state and therefore participated with the view that their actions were normal. Her work is special since this was one of the first studies that alerts about the danger of what consequences there can be when one refuses to think and discriminate between good and bad. Learning from history, to think/decide for themselves whether something is good or bad and thus take part in major actions in a society is highly necessary in order to never let any wrong ideology to repeat the same mistake again. This argument leaves an important question. How

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<sup>36</sup> Arendt, H. and J. Kroh (1964).

should Japan’s current silent majority in the midst of rising conservatism be explained? Inspired by Arendt’s interpretation, this paper attempts find the level of civil society participation in Japan and the consequences that came along.

Asahi Shimbun, one of the five national newspapers in Japan, raised a question whether the past wars started by Japan in neighboring countries are regarded as invasion or not and conducted a survey of 5500 Japanese people regarding this question in 2013. Following is the survey result.

	<b>Yes (Invasion)</b>	<b>No (Not invasion)</b>
<b>20s</b>	45%	33%
<b>30s</b>	47%	28%
<b>40s</b>	57%	24%
<b>50s</b>	60%	

(Asahi Shimbun : <http://ajw.asahi.com/>)

To neighboring countries, two factors might come as a surprise. Firstly, the rate of Japanese in their 40-50s who perceive the past wars as invasion is quite high, more than half at least. When solely considering that the overall image of Japan in the neighboring countries is pictured as a country that would never admit the past wrong deeds as a fault/invasion, this may be an unexpected number. Secondly, surprisingly enough, the highest rate of those who answered “No” to the question is the 20s. This well shows where the young generation’s perception is tilting towards and proves how

the lack of education of history has gradually shaped the current young Japanese. Some pundits express their concern over the possibility that when the young generation, with inadequate understanding of history, becomes more influential in the society, the conflict and tension between Japan and the neighboring countries may deteriorate even more. However, there are also contending views. Kitada argued that Japanese young generation's trend of conservative swing or patriotism may be just a temporary phenomenon affected by mainly mass media.

More importantly, what needs to be questioned here is where the opinions of the Japanese in 40-50s have been reflected in Japan's current political mainstream. It is highly questionable in what form and where the public opinions are reflected in the Japanese society if there exist 60% of population with liberal views.

#### **4-1. The Absence of Coherence in Apology**

As some of the major and official apologies by Japanese public figures are listed in the beginning of this paper, there have been several official apologies and attempts to improve the relations to bring deeper ties. Despite those efforts, why does the problem still remain as a poison and continue to cause diplomatic problems? As what Feffer questioned, why do Japan and Korea still remain prisoners of history? Although there may be several arguments from various points of views, this paper tries to focus on two

elements that Japan lack in its apology.

First, what causes problem and lessens the sincerity of the Japanese apologies is the absence of consistency. As Lind argued, Japan's official expressions of contrition often prompt a backlash. Ever since the official apologies were delivered, the conservatives never stopped challenging the idea and fought for the conservative ideology both at political and societal level. One point that differentiates the Japanese apology from that of German is the presence of backlash. Germany, by contrast, pursued far more contrition than did Japan, yet domestic backlash to contrition was rare and far more muted. German conservatives did not deny or glorify Nazi violence.<sup>37</sup> As mentioned in the earlier chapters on Germany's development of self-critical views, what Germany actually developed is not only the perception but also a strong ground for that perception to firmly stand so that it could work as an instrument that would prevent any possible backlashes. The backlashes and denials of the past violence may well bring domestic instability as well as distrust from neighbors. Koreans have expressed alarm about Japan's intentions when they observed denials; they expressed cautious optimism after apologetic gestures. But the recurring pattern of apology-then-backlash led South Koreans to conclude that Japanese contrition was insincere and that Tokyo continued to harbor hostile intentions.<sup>38</sup> Japan's denials of past aggression and

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<sup>37</sup> Lind, J. (2011).

<sup>38</sup> Lind, J. (2011).

atrocities do fuel distrust and elevate fears among former adversaries. Japan's unapologetic remembrance continues to poison relations with South Korea and China. By contrast, Bonn's willingness to accept responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi era, and the absence of denials or glorifications among mainstream West Germans, reassured Germany's World War II adversaries.<sup>39</sup> Doing so encouraged and helped Germany to be acknowledged as a normal nation.

Second point that lacks in the Japanese apology is the apologetic attitude that is expected to come along with words. What it means by apologetic attitude herein is not a grand, awe-inspiring action. It rather refers to small steps that can arouse people's attention and show the meanings attached to the apology. As there is a saying "action speaks louder than words", words without action is merely empty words. What actually fulfills an apology is actions/attitude that comes along. Good examples could be Germany designating a Holocaust remembrance day to commemorate the victims, making effort to educate the young people about the holocaust in order to alert them to any possible future crimes and to not repeat the same mistake, erecting monuments in almost all major cities in Germany where the legacy of the dark history can be found. The fact that in Japan there are no national sponsored museums or monuments that acknowledge Japanese aggression or atrocities to this day well sums up the reality.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Lind, J. (2011).

<sup>40</sup> "Why Japan Is Still Not Sorry Enough". *Time*. 11 Dec 2012.  
<<http://nation.time.com/2012/12/11/why-japan-is-still-not-sorry-enough/>>

Japan's behavior of expressing apology one day and visiting the Yasukuni Shrine the next day, announcing to make efforts to improve the relationship with Korea and on the very same day, denying the involvement of force in mobilizing the sex slaves send a dubious sign in conveying the sincerity. As Germany also experienced, what needs to come first before their apologetic activities is the peoples' understanding of the history and the ability to make discrimination between right and wrong. For these German examples to take roots also in Japan, what needs to come first is the self-critical view. It would not be a problem if it was as easy as written. In Japan, a sense of victimization far exceeds the self-critical view. "The war" does not represent a euphemism for crimes committed against humanity nor does it raise questions as to what made it possible. Instead, it provides a context for sufferings experienced.<sup>41</sup> Thus, under these circumstances, it is natural that the reality in Japan is far different from the ideal expectation. The Japanese arguments seem couched in altogether internal, contextual terms; issues relating to Japan's role in a larger world are seldom put at the core of the dispute, where common sense would suggest they surely belong. The arguments involve the need for a more positive assessment of Japan's twentieth century past. The official position wished to institute a more positive assessment of this past, in which specific incidents of the war and the defeat are minimized, while the teachings of "traditional values" and "moral education" moves to the foreground.<sup>42</sup> These

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<sup>41</sup> Hijjiya-Kirschner, I. (1991)

<sup>42</sup> James Reston, Jr., "How Japan Teaches Its Own History," New York Times Sunday

circumstances naturally leave an open door for right wing remarks and the backlashes to freely arise whenever. Lind points if leaders seek to reconcile with past adversaries, they should encourage remembrance in ways that reduce the risk of domestic backlash.<sup>43</sup>

#### **4-2. Japan in the 1970s**

Japan, with its title as the third largest economy in the world, has gone through a dramatic economic development after the war and later provided its economic model as an example for other Asian countries. Japan's economic recovery and development started in the 1960s. Hosting the Olympic Games in 1964 was a significant national event and became a turning point for a miraculous economic development after the devastation from the war. With the economic boost, Japan marked an annual growth of 11% GNP in the 1960s. A network of expressways was built across the nation and the country welcomed the arrival of a mass-consumption society and technological innovations.<sup>44</sup> The nation appeared to have regained national confidence. With the

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Megazine (17 October 1985)

<sup>43</sup> Lind, J. (2011).

<sup>44</sup> "Expore Japan". *Web Japan*. < <http://web-japan.org/> >

emergence of economic development, Japan also saw the emergence of rising voice of civil society. The 1960s and early 1970s represented a phase of sociopolitical activism in the form of mass demonstrations and citizen movements.<sup>45</sup> Simply put, the 60-70s was a turning point for the economy and the start of social awakening. One of the major civic movements during this era was the ANPO struggle. This indicates a peace movement mainly composed of students, scholars and activists in order to oppose to the signing of the “Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan”. The tension was accelerated when the death of a female student Michiko Kamba was reported. This movement involved participation of 16 million people. Many viewed this movement would serve as a formative stage for Japanese civic movement. Another major movement was the mass protest against the signing of the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty in May and June 1960 was supported by a majority of intellectuals, as were the protests against the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and the support of that involvement by the Japanese government between 1965 and 1973.<sup>46</sup> Initiated by ordinary citizens including writers, professors, workers, students and housewives, and without any political and ideological affiliation, without any guidance and financial assistance from outside, the movement was politically and ideologically free. Indeed, people joined the movement in great numbers, eventually to

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<sup>45</sup> Hijjiya-Kirschner, I. (1991)

<sup>46</sup> Hijjiya-Kirschner, I. (1991)

make it a national one.<sup>47</sup> This movement was called Beheiren. All these activities were possible because the Japanese economy had recovered from the war, and, perhaps even more fundamentally, because the question of Japan's future course remained open.<sup>48</sup> The protests especially focused on the notion of anti-war, spreading the peace based on the perception that Japan is also a victim country. Although the issue of war responsibility was not actively dealt in Japan as it did in Germany, it is meaningful just by the fact that 1960s brought the emergence of liberal civic movements in the form of demonstrations. Oda describes about the realization back then:

*“To see ourselves in such a perspective helped us to reexamine Japan, both its past and its present, in the fundamental ways I have tried to describe. It gave me a new insight into war, society, human life, and many other matters I faced as a human being and a citizen”.*

Furthermore, this was the period when the minority issues attracted attention in the Japanese society. The period seemed as if it could serve as the start of a new civil-oriented era.

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<sup>47</sup> Oda M. (1991)

<sup>48</sup> Kato, S. (1991)

According to Oguma, there were three major paradigm shifts in Japan during the 1960s along with increased number of demonstrations.

(1) Rising criticism towards “postwar democracy”

(戦後民主主義の肯定から批判へ)

(2) Rising criticism towards “modern rationalism”

(近代合理主義の肯定から批判へ)

(2) From “sense of victimization” to “sense of perpetrator”

(被害者意識から加害者意識へ)

The terminology “civic movement(shimin-undou)” first appeared during this era with the emergence of peace movement.. Japan seemed as if it was taking a similar path as Germany and other Western societies where most of them were experiencing liberal civil society movements. When the government sees the protests are really representing popular sentiment, the government reacts, changes policies, and follows with increased prudence its more long-range goals.<sup>49</sup> However, Japanese liberal movements failed to convince the government. Although the emergence of Japanese civic movements may have succeeded in bringing paradigm shifts, it eventually failed to become an impetus to bring an overall social change. The goal of the largest demonstration in the Japanese social history to stop the ratification of the security treaty failed to fulfill the

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<sup>49</sup> Kato, S. (1991)

expectation. Indeed, the Anpo struggle represents the first and last time that progressive forces would unite on such a large scale against the conservative establishment.<sup>50</sup>

#### **4-3. Japan in the 1990s**

Civic movements have emerged in Japan as it did in Germany. But why are the realities in the two countries so differing? Witnessing Japan expressing apologies and also showing continuous backlashes confused the neighboring countries of Japan's real intention. Then it also leads to a question "what made it so easy for Japan to make such right wing remarks and change its position so dramatically in a short term?". Japan's level of civic involvement in the process of developing a commonly shared perception may answer to this question. Japan failed in its succession of the liberal civil society involvement that erupted in the 1960s. In democratic societies, in general, civil society is known for holding the key to the political legitimization of governments. Thus, the absence of a vigorous civil society hinders sustained political reform, improved governance.<sup>51</sup> Since the vigorous participation of liberal civil society is absent in Japanese society, there was almost no concrete movement that could oppose

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<sup>50</sup> Avenell, S. A. (2010).

<sup>51</sup> Alagappa, M. (2004).

the conservative moments in the politics. Not only the liberal powers, even during the 1960s, rarely brought up the war responsibility issue, but also they failed to establish themselves as a majority mainstream in the society. The result is seen in the diminishing positions of the liberals both in the politics as well as in the civil society with the lapse of time. Because Japan failed to move to the next stage where they could build systematically organized basis to prevent backlashes and to silence the right wings, it rather caused a political confusion which provided opportunity for right wing politicians to make problematic remarks with no hesitation. In order to understand this reversal, a more thorough analysis of the process is necessary.

After the collapse of the Cold War order, Japan expressed apology several times and showed exertion to contribute for a brighter future between Japan and Korea. It is no exaggeration to say that the most political efforts were made from the both sides in the 1990s in contemporary history. Therefore, the relations between the two countries seemed as if it was going to the right direction to create a positive new era in the bilateral ties. All the majorly remembered official apologies such as Murayama declaration and Kono statement are delivered during this period. However, Park argues that although 1990s was the time when liberal powers succeeded in creating the environment to convey messages that guided to meaningful reconciliation, at the same time, this period also provided an opportunity for the conservative right wings to

unify.<sup>52</sup> This period in fact was the time when the conservative voices against the issues of comfort women, Yasukuni shrine visit, and education started to actively float on the surface. East Asian issues have been politicized further in the 1990s. Furthermore, the entire Japanese political stream has turned to be more conservative after the conservative rights across parties coalesced together.<sup>53</sup> Considering that there are rising voices and increasing remarks that contain right-wing tendencies, there are almost none well supported arguments that could stand against those streams and it proves that the opposing forces are not united because they failed to systematically organize themselves. Compared to the conservative force's aggressive movement in systematically organizing their agendas to realize through collective action, the dispersed liberal forces stay silent or at most, fight against the right wings only temporarily.<sup>54</sup> The reverse of the mainstream and the systematic unification of the conservative groups represent the characteristics Japanese politics in the late 1990s.

How did the strengthened conservative force affect the civil society and how can their influence be linked to the increasing emergence of the extreme right wings? States have strong impact on formation and development of civil society. The current state with its strong conservative tendency and the major politicians' continuous

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<sup>52</sup> Park, Cheol Hee. (2011)

<sup>53</sup> Park, Cheol Hee. (2011)

<sup>54</sup> Park, Cheol Hee. (2014)

denials and revisionist ideas, created a favorable environment for the extreme right wings to increase and raise their voice. In other words, the more the political stream tilts towards the right, the more the extremist right wing groups in the civil society are empowered. Anti-Korean demonstrations by the extremist right wing groups have increased by 10 times within three years since 2009.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, their propaganda has been much more extreme and arousing. Then the curiosity about opinions of the silent majority arouses. Now with liberal groups being the minorities in Japanese society, the lapse of time made it even harder for the country to realize the necessity to bring up the historical issue to remember. The Japanese liberal groups have lost the power and ability to lead the Japanese system. The chance for them to play a pivotal role in the society is slim.<sup>56</sup> As the historical distance from the war years lengthens and the interest of the public turns to more immediate contemporary issues, the dark phase of Japanese history is hardly addressed. Even if there are some who do speak about the issue treat it in a clearly affirmative, noncritical manner.<sup>57</sup> The passive manner of the Japanese civil society causes suspicion where the country's final destination is going to be if the silent majority maintains their silence. Kato stated that silence is a political statement, one that works for the conservative cause. He expresses his concern over the

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<sup>55</sup> "Increased Anti-Korean Demonstrations", *TV Chosun*,  
<[http://news.tvchosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2013/10/30/2013103090377.html](http://news.tvchosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2013/10/30/2013103090377.html)>

<sup>56</sup> Park, Cheol Hee, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Hijjiya-Kirschnereit, I. 1991.

current depoliticization of the citizenry as interest is diverted from political issues to trivial material things. It is perfectly clear that depoliticization of ordinary citizens, and particularly of the young people, actually works for the conservative political forces in the country concerned.

Some scholars tried to analyze the reason why the Japanese civil society is passive and the level of civic involvement in politics and decision making process is too low. They say cultural factors are surely involved. The society is seen as a large collective; within it, in order to maintain harmony, opinions must not be made too explicit and arguments must not be advanced with too much rigor. Confrontation must be avoided in Japanese society.<sup>58</sup> It is a basic manner in Japanese society to avoid standing out in a group when doing so is likely to break the harmony. In modern Western society, it is deemed perfectly acceptable for various people to have differing, even contradictory opinions. However in Japan, the existence of a minority opinion or dissident voice is looked on as an unhappy accident. Thus the unarticulated purpose of the discussion may well be to force those who hold a minority view to compromise, so that they will conform to at least the outlines of the majority view.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the topic of the dark phase of history is barely put on the table for discussions unlike the case in Germany where the topic led to numerous intense public discussions. Japan has

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<sup>58</sup> Kato, S. (1991)

<sup>59</sup> Kato, S. (1991)

missed the right timing to develop a self-critical view. With the lapse of time, the chance that Japan will take the same path as Germany is even more unlikely to happen.

Keane claims that the emergence of civil society is to occupy the center-ground of contemporary political thought. But the reality in today's Japan seems far from fulfilling this role. Regardless of how hard it is to express the minority liberal ideas in Japanese society, the efforts should never stop and the effects of doing so should never be underestimated. Jean-Paul Sartre once said "Politics is something you may or may not be interested in, but something from which you cannot escape". The given task for today's Japan to accomplish may be to shift the country from a state-centered society to a citizen-centered one in order to stay still with clear identity against political manipulation and confusion.

"From now on we require a new arrangement, one in which citizens, local governments, business, and the national bureaucracy face each other as equals around the table of public affairs. ... so as to create a locus of public interest values. This is an important part of what we mean by shifting from a state-centered society to citizen-centered society."

Yukio Hatoyama, co-equal chairman of the Democratic Party of Japan, 2002

## 5. Conclusion

The South Korea-Japan relationship has been trembling whenever the unresolved historical issues provoked nationalism in each side. This thesis tried to cast light upon the apology issue which is considered to be one of the fundamental problems that are blocking the cooperative measures in Northeast Asia. When comparing the trends in the two countries' civil societies in the 1960s, Japan and Germany seemed as if they were taking similar paths after the World War II. In Germany, there was the 68 movement which young generations actively initiated to change the old-fashioned rules and break the prevalence of older generation's collective silence regarding the past war atrocities. In Japan, there were peace movements like ANPO struggle, Beheiren and the emergence of liberal groups. However, the two countries show strikingly contrasted social perceptions in the 1990s. This paper tried to analyze why Japan failed to stick with its apologetic stance since its official apology whereas Germany has been showing consistent apologetic attitude for decades. It focused on the civil societies in Germany and Japan. Furthermore, the paper compared how the two civil societies influenced the development of the two very different apologetic attitudes.

The German case proved the first hypothesis of this thesis to hold true. German civil society's active participation in the process of developing a social perception has created a strong ground for that perception to firmly stand. Thus, it

naturally served as a tool to prevent any possible backlashes and helped Germany to maintain a consistent apologetic view when it comes to past war crimes. In this environment, conservative and revisionist ideologies failed to gain prominent position in the German society. The case of Germany illustrates the importance of “history from below”. Through the 68 movement, the young West Germans succeeded to unite and stand together in opposition to the older generation’s mistakes. The generational revolt ultimately broke the prevalent collective silence and avoidance of ordinary people’s war responsibility. The significant event made the 1960s a turning point for the German social history. Condemnation, self-reflection, and apology became a ritual thing under this influence and the 68 generation popularized these issues. Even after the impacts of the movement were reflected, Germany never stopped its effort to maintain the self-critical view as a majority perception and continued the remembrance. This effort corresponds to Ryan’s statement that the Nazi past is not an illness that can be cured but a historical fact that needs to be analyzed anew by each generation. In this regard, Germany’s example is important because it illustrates the effectiveness of “history from below” and proves the importance/influence of civic involvement. Germans adopted a solution to come to terms with the past by remembering, repeating and working through instead of hiding and overlooking. In this respect, one of the most salient differences between Japan and West Germany bears on the attitudes of the successor generations.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

The hypothesis of this paper can also be applied to the Japanese case. The passive participation of the Japanese civil society has created an open door for the conservative groups to make problematic remarks with no hesitation. Thus it naturally brings about backlashes which break the meanings contained in the apologies. As can be deduced from the comparison between Japan's 1960s and 1990s, the civic movements in the 1960s failed to become an impetus to bring an overall social change. Furthermore, the absence of vigorous participation of liberal civil society has left Japan with no concrete movement that could oppose the conservative mainstream. Increase in the emergence of extremist right wing civic groups along the expanding conservative influence in the politics illustrates the dynamic relations between politics and civil society. Lind argues that Japan, a country that has been a model global citizen for decades, should draw the clearest possible distinction between good behavior and bad.<sup>61</sup> However, on the contrary, the growing conservative tendency and the continuous domestic backlashes, created a better environment for the extreme right wings to increase and raise their voice.

In both Japan and Germany, the memories of their nationalistic and militaristic aspirations need to be kept alive, precisely because the momentum of the present could so easily obliterate what is painful and inconvenient. It is essential to work the insights gained and the memories retrieved from the past into a contemporary

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<sup>61</sup> "Japan Must Face the Past", The Washington Post, 25 January 2013.  
<<http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/>>

sense of national identities. This is an arduous, ongoing task, with no end in sight.<sup>62</sup>

Japan missed the right timing to develop a self-critical view like Germany did. With almost a slim chance that Japan will take the same path as Germany, the given task for both Korea and Japan now is to narrow the gap of expectation through understanding. Therefore, it is important for the two countries to work together to design a shared opinion to bring sincere apology and forgiveness from the both sides. Seeking for a new approach to reach the point of compromise is the only solution to quash the unresolved issues.

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<sup>62</sup> Schlant, E. (1991)

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## 초록

### 일본과 독일의 전후처리 비교연구 : 시민사회/사회운동을 중심으로

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최근 일본과 한국사이의 지속적인 정치적, 외교적 불안은 한-일 관계를 악화시키고 양국 간 평화로운 협력이 자리 잡는 데 있어 큰 장애물로 작용해 왔다. 오늘날 동북아시아의 미래 지향적인 관계를 방해하는 큰 요소들 중 하나는 해결되지 않은 역사적 잔해라고 볼 수 있다. 전후 처리와 사과문제가 거론될 때면 독일과 일본의 사례가 주로 비교되곤 하는데, 한국은 맹목적으로 일본이 독일과 비슷한 방법으로 사과하길 요구하고 있다. 그러나 현실은 한국의 기대에 부응하지 못했고 해가 지날수록 한-일 양국 간의 오해만 커져갔다. 그러한 오해의 원인을 분석하기 위해, 이 논문은 일본과 독일의 사과 본질의 차이를 비교해보았다. 이 논문은 (1) 독일과 일본의 사과가 어떠한 요소들로 구성되었는지 분석하며 (2) 두 나라 각각의 시민사회가 역사의 어두운 면을 대하는 사회적 인식을 형성하는 데 있어서 어떠한 영향을 미치고 기여하였는지, 어떠한 원인으로 일본과 독일의 사과의 결과가 그토록 다를 수 있었는지 비교 분석해 보았다. 연구목적 달성을 위해, 독일과 일본의 사례를 구조적인 관점에서 분석하였다. 독일의 경우 “아래로부터의 역사”를 통해 어떻게 국민들이 능동적으로 사과인식을 형성했는지, 그리고 그 인식이 어떻게 보수,우익/수정주의들의 반발을 막는 장치로 작용하였는지 살펴 보았으며, 일본의 경우, 의식형성 과정에 있어 능동적인 시민사회 참여의 부재가 상당히 대조되는 결과를 초래한 점이 관찰되었다. 결론적으로 본 논문을 통해, 능동적인 시민참여의 유무가 독일과 일본의 대조되는 사과의 인식을 형성하는데 크게 기여하였음을 알 수 있었다.

주제어 : 독일, 일본, 한일관계, 역사문제, 사과인식, 시민사회, 의식형성