

Japanese Apologies for World War II

A rhetorical study

Jane W. Yamazaki



Routledge Contemporary Japan Series

Japanese Apologies for World War II

For nations as well as individuals, apologizing for past wrongdoing is not easy. Apologies are even harder to make when the events they refer to happened in the far past and time has clouded or erased human memory. Nations and their political representatives are in the business of justifying government actions and looking to the past for inspiration and identity. They do not want to admit errors of judgment, let alone egregious abuse of human rights.

So why do nations decide to apologize for long ago wrongdoing? What is apology supposed to accomplish? Why the demand of verbal acknowledgment and regret? What makes a “successful” apology?

Postwar Japan offers a compelling case study of national apologies for historical wrongs. Actions of the Japanese army and government during World War II caused enormous suffering and distress throughout Asia, leaving a legacy of resentment and distrust. Repeated calls for apology and Japanese attempts to respond to these demands provide a rich source for the study of national apology and the development of apology discourse over time.

This study combines rhetorical, sociological, and historical approaches to address multiple examples of Japanese apology in the postwar period, with a particular emphasis on apologies between 1984 and 1995. Unlike most rhetorical studies that focus on *apologia* in the broad sense, this study focuses on the “true apology,” that is, acknowledgment of wrongdoing and regret. The author suggests that motive is more complex than the theory of “image restoration” that is prevalent in rhetorical theories of *apologia*. More specifically, this study suggests several motives, including repair of relationship, national self-reflection leading to a new improved identity, and affirmation of moral principle as espoused by the larger community.

Written for scholars, this study is relevant for those interested in peace and conflict studies, public rhetoric and political discourse as well as those primarily interested in Japan studies.

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Preface

We're all experts in the art of apology. We know how it feels and how it works in our personal life and in public rhetoric as well. This analysis of Japan's apologies for World War II builds on our personal understanding of apology, providing an in-depth look at a particular case. My hope would be that we gain more understanding and perhaps some sympathy for the difficulty of making an apology and making it well.

The choice of this subject for my dissertation was a somewhat reluctant one. I knew from an earlier paper on Murayama's 1995 speech that the subject had possibilities but I did not welcome the idea of dealing with the "darker side of history" and I was aware of the strong feelings of those who had suffered at the hands of the Japanese war machine and their supporters/advocates for justice and redress. The subject inspires much emotion and controversy. People have strong feelings about atrocities—and rightly so—but the intellectual environment produced by such feelings is not one that appeals to me. I have visions of angry PoWs and women picketing my office with slogans proclaiming that I'm anti-Chinese, anti-babies, anti-women, etc.

Even to discuss these subjects at the most factual, rational level requires emotional and moral choice. The choice of words—"comfort women" versus "sex slaves," Nanking Massacre versus Nanking Incident—implies a Burkean "attitude" and a moral choice. There is no escaping the moral judgment involved in language. But there is an even more basic problem. Academics observe, analyze, and try to explain human behavior. In so doing, as some critics of modern academic practices have noted, we exploit the experience, and even perhaps, the suffering of others. Moreover, in our attempts to "explain," we distance ourselves and the reader from truly recognizing the suffering and wrongdoing of our subjects. In explaining, we somehow explain away.

My study is, I would argue, of much more limited scope. I take a fairly simplistic view of apology in that I take the words seriously and at face value, asking the questions of what the choice in words implies, how it compares to other choices. Thus, my work tends to avoid the issues of "justice" and the associated issues of "who is/are the culprits here?" or "what can we do to bring these bad guys to justice?" The study does not seek to change society

nor the past. I just want to understand how public rhetoric works and develops. Thus, this is not a study of the “comfort women”/“sex slaves” nor of other Japanese wartime atrocities. Nevertheless, to the extent that this study exploits victims’ experience without acknowledging the centrality of their suffering and the injustice of that experience, if this study of apology seems insensitive to or unappreciative of their concerns, I am truly sorry.

This study may also offend those who feel that the subject of Japan’s wartime crimes has received more than sufficient attention. I am somewhat sympathetic to that view. Outsiders’ fascination with Japanese war crimes seems limitless at times. The interest says more perhaps about us as outsiders than about the Japanese. As an outsider, then, I acknowledge the limitations of my perspective.

Nevertheless, in a world where historical injustices have caused and continue to cause dissension and conflict, where feelings of antagonism proliferate with new outbreaks of violence and conflict, the potential of words, that is, words of apology, to provide some solace and healing is worth exploring; indeed, words may be our best hope for “overcoming the past.” For the most part, the past cannot be undone. We can only try to lighten the scars, understand and reflect on how they came to be, and try to come to grips with the new situation.

Historians will wish that I had covered more of the political landscape in postwar Japan, the Occupation, the Cold War, Hirohito, etc. I have assumed a degree of familiarity among my readers of the basic historical and political landscape. I include many references to other reading throughout the text. Similarly, in the interests of space, I have reduced the discussions of the rhetorical literature to a bare minimum. In my dissertation I have a much more detailed review of the field and would refer readers there if so inclined.

I also have some misgivings concerning the comparative dimensions of this study. In the past I have resisted the attempt to compare Germany and Japan because of the overly simplistic tendency to equate their situations; moreover, the subject deserves much more attention than can be allowed in the scope of this study. I have also resisted a comparative focus because of the large number of international apologies and the difficulties in speaking from expertise in multiple languages and historical situations. I don’t want to present myself as an expert on German apologies. Thus, although I address German apologies briefly in Chapter 9, I focus mainly on the influence of these apologies on Japanese apologies. I feel more comfortable talking about the 1998 US apology to Japanese Americans, but even here, I would refer the reader to other sources for more in-depth treatments.

Let me end my remarks with a true story. In the spring of 2000, I attended a conference in Washington, DC on Japanese American redress. During a panel discussion, one of the participants made an offhand remark to the effect that the “Japanese had never apologized for World War II.” Now this was a person who was a member of the US Congress, who was intelligent, educated, and sensitive to the issues of injustice, apology, and redress. After

the panel discussion was over, I went up to the person and said, “By the way, my research is on Japanese apologies for World War II and there are many.” He replied, “Well, but they aren’t REAL apologies.”

Well, now. Why is it that we, as outside observers, feel licensed, even obligated to dismiss the actions of Japanese government in this way? As rhetorical critic Roderick Hart (1994) once said, “I am a critic because I often do not like the language my contemporaries speak” (72). If this book does nothing but challenge the common simplistic view that Japan has “never” apologized, I will be satisfied.

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And of course, how can one do these things without the support of a good husband? Russell encouraged me all the way and we celebrated together when the dissertation and book were finally complete.

Abbreviations

<i>AS</i>	<i>Asahi Shimbun</i>
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea/North Korea
<i>KH</i>	<i>Korea Herald</i>
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROK	Republic of Korea/South Korea

1 Introduction

National public apology for historic wrongs is a type of discourse that attempts to repair and rebuild damaged international relationships, often characterized by long histories of animosity, conflict, and suffering. Apologies have the potential for rebuilding trust or at least for ameliorating anger and distrust between erstwhile enemies. They provide a mechanism for reconciliation and symbolize new beginnings. At the same time, apologies encourage reconsideration of the past in the context of contemporary values, thus offering opportunity for affirmation of moral principle. However, apologies are a two-edged sword; they can antagonize and reopen old wounds. They can remind parties of continuing differences in perspective and raise new questions as to intent and sincerity. In a world often fraught with antagonisms left over from the past, it behooves us, as communication scholars, to understand the dynamics and motive force of such discourse.

Public apologies of national governments for historical misdeeds have become a familiar, if not commonplace, phenomenon of public life. The phenomenon may have begun in the aftermath of World War II as Germany repeatedly apologized for crimes associated with the Nazi regime and the Holocaust (see Chapter 8 for discussion of German apologies). More recent examples include the US apology in 1988 to Japanese Americans interned during World War II (US Public Law 100–383 1988) and an apology in 1993 to Native Hawaiians for the role of US Marines in overthrowing the Hawaiian government in the 1890s (US Public Law 103–150 1993). Internationally, Taiwan President Li Teng-hui apologized in 1995 for the Nationalist Chinese government massacre of local Taiwanese in a 1947 revolt (Baum 1995). Queen Elizabeth signed a New Zealand statement of apology in 1995 for confiscation of Maori land (*Guardian* November 2, 1995: 13). There is even a joint Czechoslovakia/Germany apology in 1996 as Czechoslovakia apologized for mistreatment of German inhabitants of the Sudetenland and Germany apologized for having taken the Sudetenland in World War II in the same document (Caryl 1996). These examples can be multiplied many times.

2 Introduction

Rhetorical scholars have long studied *apologia* as a genre of public speech. The term *apologia* refers to a rhetorical response to an accusation of wrongdoing, usually moral in nature (Ware and Linkugel 1973). *Apologia* may include an apology—that is, an admission of responsibility and regret—but it may also include denial, justification, and counterattack. What is essential is the defensive nature of the rhetoric, in response to accusations of wrongdoing or attack on reputation.

In some contrast to *apologia* studies, this study concentrates on the strategy of the “true apology,” what Benoit (1995) terms “mortification” and Tavuchis (1991) calls “*mea culpa*.” Unlike other *apologia* strategies, apology is self-denigrating and does not attempt to deny or mitigate responsibility. In Tavuchis’ words, “To apologize is to declare one has no excuse, defense, justification or explanation, for an action (or non-action) that has insulted, failed, or injured another” (17).

Most rhetorical studies examine instances of individual *apologia* of political figures for personal misdeeds.¹ Some rhetoricians have extended *apologia* to include corporate *apologia* (Benoit and Brinson 1994; Hearit 1995a,b; Huxman and Bruce 1996; Schultz and Seeger 1991; Suzuki 1999c). In these studies, *apologia* are often treated as instances of public relations, damage control and “image restoration” (Benoit 1995b). The phenomenon of historic apology by governments for acts of state, however, has not been adequately studied by rhetorical scholars.²

Despite what seems like an outpouring of national apologies in the 1990s, it is still rare for nations to admit serious wrongdoing. Why do nations decide to apologize for something that happened a long time ago? What is the compelling force that brings forth the belated and, in some cases, repeated acknowledgment of wrongdoing? Since the perpetrators as well as the victims are mostly gone, who is apologizing and to whom and for what purpose? What is the apology supposed to accomplish? How “successful” are these attempts at apology?

Postwar Japan offers a compelling case study of national apologies for past wrongdoing. Actions of the Japanese Army and government during World War II caused great suffering and distress, especially in neighboring Asian countries, leaving a legacy of resentment and distrust. Beginning in the mid-1980s, apology for wartime actions became a recurring issue for Japan. Repeated calls for apology from various quarters as well as repeated apologies on Japan’s part provide a rich source for the study of national apology and how public apology discourse develops over time.

Study objectives

This is a study of rhetoric, the words of apology. Language as action—that is, having function and force, causing effects—is an accepted truism in both rhetoric and linguistics. More recently, communication as ritual with its expressive dimensions has also become commonplace in our understanding

of rhetoric, along with consideration of the potential beneficial effects for community and relationships.

National apology for past wrongs clearly reflects both views of language. Apology is supposed to “accomplish” something, for example, perhaps to achieve reconciliation with the offended party. However, apology also contains ritual and expressive elements as well. Indeed, whether or not an apology achieves the desired reconciliation is often determined by the perception of “sincerity” and “feelings” expressed in the apology. Thus, the key issues of what language is for and how it works are at the heart of this inquiry into apology.

The question of motive is central to this study. What visible purposes drive repeated attempts at apology? In this study, motive is visible in the text. How do apologizing nations justify the belated and beleaguered apologies they make? I argue that motive/function is more complex than the motive of “image restoration” that is prevalent in rhetorical theory. In particular, I examine the idea of multiple motives for national apology, including repair of relationships, political advantage, self-reflection leading to a “new” improved self, and affirmation of moral principle.

National apologies are political statements made by politicians in a particular political environment with political repercussions. Political legitimacy—the perceived right to govern—plays a critical role in the process of apology, the process being constrained by or even perhaps motivated by, the need to maintain political legitimacy both at home and abroad. Another key political issue concerns representation. Who has the right and responsibility for apologizing? What makes an apology “official”?

History and national identity are also political. National apology for past wrongdoing requires a coming to terms with history in a way that often conflicts with preferred images of national identity. These images must be reconciled with contrary images held by other nations. National apology thus shows how attempts are made to reconcile competing and conflicting images of one’s past (and one’s identity) through the language of apology. The apology discourse thus sheds light on our understanding of how “history” is made in the public domain.

As international discourse, the study of national apology requires us to consider the complexities of the global communication environment. Issues of translation are sometimes irreconcilable. What was originally said in the speaker’s language may not be as important as the translated text in the international press. The personal and immediate motivations of the “speaker” may not be as important as the milieu and the response. Who is the audience? How do we address the interaction between global and local audiences? These issues, all relating to the nature of the global communication environment, require us to rethink many of our approaches to public rhetoric.

Finally, national apology offers insights into the nature of reconciliation. How successful is apology in removing the antagonisms of the past?

4 Introduction

What does it take to make a successful apology? Apology, emphasizing rhetoric as a solution, offers a potential for reconciliation based on understanding rather than mere truce. As conflicts based on past antagonisms and injustice continue to proliferate, the ability of nations to repair relationships fractured by past conflicts and historical wrongs becomes increasingly important to world peace and amicable relationships. As our global world shrinks, the ability to communicate across cultures becomes ever more critical.

Theoretical framework

This study lies at the intersection of several academic disciplines, notably rhetorical criticism, sociology, socio-linguistics, and history. Let me first review briefly how apology is treated in rhetorical and sociological literature. I also review the historical treatment of Japanese apologies. Then, drawing from these studies, I develop a working model of apology, outlining a basic theoretical and methodological framework.

Apology as genre

This study is first of all a study of genre, which is repeated and formulaic speech that is recognizable as a particular “type.” The nature of genre means that our expectations and evaluation of a particular speech are driven by previous instances of the genre as well as its immediate context.³ The genre under consideration here is apology, or “true apology,” that is, the acceptance of responsibility for wrongdoing and expression of regret.

Rhetorical genre of apologia

In rhetorical studies, apology is most often studied within the broader category of *apologia*. In their seminal work, B. L. Ware and Wil Linkugel (1973) define *apologia* as “public speech of self-defense” made “in response to an attack upon a person’s character, upon his worth as a human being” (274). Thus focusing on the situation of “self-defense,” they establish a taxonomy and framework for analysis, outlining four “factors” common in much apologetic discourse—denial, bolstering, differentiation and transcendence (275)—and four “postures” or objectives of *apologia*: abso-lution, vindication, explanation, and justification (282). The four factors are strategies of response: “denial” needs no explanation (“I didn’t do it”); “bolstering” is the association of positive information (in the view of the recipient/audience) with the apologizer (“He’s such a nice guy at home”); “differentiation” means reduction or particularization of the charge (“What I did wasn’t so bad”); “transcendence” means association with some higher purpose (“I had good reasons”). For our purposes, it should be noted that Ware and Linkugel’s classifications ignore what I call the “true apology” altogether.⁴

William Benoit's (1995b) theory of "image restoration" has become perhaps the standard framework for *apologia* studies. As indicated by the title of his book, *Accounts, Excuses and Apologies: A Theory of Image Restoration*, Benoit focuses on restoring one's good name and standing in the community by using various rhetorical strategies. Although the terminology of "image restoration" implies the situation of accusation and self-defense, the terminology shifts attention away from situation to the rhetor's "goal" (image restoration), thus recasting the genre into a more proactive, goal-oriented discourse.

In his five basic strategies of image restoration, Benoit includes mortification along with denial, evasion of responsibility, reduction of offensiveness, and correction. The term mortification, drawn from Burke ([1941]/1973, [1961]/1970) and defined by Benoit as "admitting responsibility and asking for forgiveness" (79), corresponds closely to "true apology." However, in this scheme, mortification/apology is only one strategy and gets little attention in its own right. Benoit does suggest that if one is guilty, that one should apologize forthrightly sooner rather than later, as denials followed by apology are not good for one's image (160). Nevertheless, with image as the primary consideration, apology/mortification is not often a preferred strategy. To paraphrase Simons (2000) in an essay rating various *apologia* strategies for their efficacy, one should deny if possible, minimize as much as possible, blame others, explain away, and only if unavoidable, actually admit wrongdoing and attempt to make amends (441).⁵

Rhetorical scholars have also studied corporate *apologia*, often under the rubric of "crisis communications" (Benoit 1995b, 1997; Benoit and Brinson 1994; Benoit and Czerwinski 1997; Benoit and Lindsey 1987; Hearit 1995a,b; Hearit and Courtright 2003; Huxman and Bruce 1995; Schultz and Seeger 1991). Again, although apology is included as an available strategy when corporations come under attack, corporations are perhaps even less likely than individuals to apologize. Nevertheless, certain observations concerning corporate *apologia* situation are relevant to our study of national apologies. Especially pertinent are the ideas of social legitimacy (Hearit 1995a,b), diffusion of responsibility for wrongdoing, and multiple constituencies (audiences) with divergent views (e.g. Benoit and Brinson 1994; Cheney 1992; Schultz and Seeger 1991; Sellnow and Ulmer 1995).

Apology by nation-states has received some attention in rhetorical studies with M. Lane Bruner's (2000) study of two 1985 German apologies and studies of Takeshi Suzuki (1999a,b) and Duane Olson (1991, 1996) who explicitly address Japanese apologies for World War II. Olson (1996) analyzes Japanese postwar apologies from the perspective of communication ethics, seeing the communication problem as one of how to negotiate or reconcile different national views. Japanese scholar Suzuki (1999a) uses Ware and Linkugel's scheme to analyze Emperor Akihito's apology in 1990; he argues for a particular "Japanese" tradition of apology. I will discuss these articles further.

6 Introduction

Sociological approaches

Although I draw from a number of communication studies, rhetorical studies of *apologia* do not give sufficient recognition to the specific strategy of apology and its particular characteristics. This is not the case in sociological and sociolinguistic studies where apology has long been a focus. Erving Goffman (1971) and Nicholas Tavuchis (1991) have been especially influential.

Erving Goffman

Perhaps the first to focus on apology as a social ritual was sociologist Erving Goffman (1971) who wrote briefly but cogently on apology as a “remedial” strategy for repairing social ruptures. Goffman emphasizes the wrongful act as a transgression of the rules of society, seeing remedial interaction in the context of societal norms and the process of social control whereby infractions are discouraged.

Goffman’s theoretical approach, still influential, suggests that apologies work by effecting a separation of the self into two parts, “the part that is guilty of an offense, and the part that dissociates himself from the delict and affirms a belief in the offended rule” (113). Goffman distinguishes apologies from other forms of *apologia* such as accounts, excuses, and pretexts:

[In apology,] there is usually an admission that the offense was a serious or real act. This provides a contrast to another type of splitting, one that supports an account, not an apology, in which the actor projects the offensive act as something not to be taken literally, that is seriously.
(1971: 114)

Nicholas Tavuchis

In *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation*, sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis (1991) provides an extensive treatment of apology that recognizes the moral and regenerative values of the apology beyond that of the self-serving and manipulative discourse implied by most rhetorical scholars and, to a lesser extent, Goffman. Like Goffman, Tavuchis emphasizes the societal dimensions of apology, relating it to the concept of membership in society (12). In Tavuchis’ view, apology attests to the “moral legitimacy” of principles that were “assumed to be mutually binding” among members of society (6). Moreover, Tavuchis goes beyond the pragmatic effects of apology, that is, beyond the benefits to the apologizing party, to emphasize moral and transcendental aspects: “Apology speaks to something larger than any particular offense and...cannot be contained or understood merely in terms of expediency or the desire to achieve reconciliation” (7).

Tavuchis also follows Goffman in seeing apology as significantly different from other kinds of *apologia*. In contrast to Goffman's theory of separation from the offense, however, Tavuchis argues for the importance of the apologizer's having "attached" himself/herself to the offense, that is, the importance of embracing the validity of the accusation as a prerequisite for true apology (19, see also fn 41: 136).

Although Tavuchis concentrates on individual, what he calls "one-to-one" apologies, he also considers collective apologies (96–117). Tavuchis distinguishes corporate or organizational apologies from collective groups such as nations, ethnic groups and communities of individuals. Although corporations are legal entities that may be considered responsible and held accountable for misdeeds, it is difficult to associate corporations with "feelings" of sorrow or regret. For nations and ethnic groups, however, the degree of identification of individuals with the collective entity makes personification of the collective reasonable (96–97).

In contrast with personal apologies, Tavuchis emphasizes the official, for-the-record nature of the collective apology that takes place in "a formal, official, and public discursive world" (100). This "for-the-record" nature leads to apologies with certain stylistic characteristics: "[T]he collective apology has the strong tendency to be more or less formal, indirect, allusive and...[it is] addressed to a wider audience as much as to the offended person[s]" (97). Thus, for Tavuchis, the collective apology has a distinct underlying dynamic, with special characteristics and limitations, even as it retains generic similarities with the personal apology (69).

Apology as speech act: a pragmatic approach

Speech act theory has contributed to genre studies and the study of apology in particular in the development of a schematic approach to identifying and characterizing language as action or intended action. What words have to be said in order to bring about the desired effect? Under what conditions? What actions are required; what are optional; what assumptions are made? To illustrate the speech act approach, here is a sample definition of apology:

Propositional Act: S expresses regret for past act A of S
 Preparatory Condition: S believes A was not in B's best interest
 Sincerity Condition: S regrets A
 Essential Condition: Counts as an apology of A
 (Thomas 1995: 99–100)

The "propositional" act refers to the specific content and form of the speech act, that is, the statement itself. "Preparatory" conditions concern assumptions or actions that precede the statement. "Sincerity" conditions refer to congruency between the internal or "real" feelings of the speaker

and the words. “Felicity” conditions, not illustrated in this example, are those that require the statement to be made by someone with the proper authority or in certain surroundings. For example, “I sentence you to five years in prison” would only have effect if spoken in a courtroom setting by an authorized judge. (For interpersonal apologies, there are no felicity conditions involved; an apology can be said anywhere and by anyone. For national apologies, however, this issue will be significant.)

In speech act theory, apology is sometimes categorized as an expressive statement, that is, one that is not judged on its “truth value” but on its emotional content in expressing feelings. Moreover, scholars have described the apology as both self-referential and self-verifying, thus “undeniable.” That is, to say “I apologize” *is* an apology. (See discussion in Thomas 1995: 196.) As we shall see with national apologies, however, apology statements can be and, indeed, are often judged on their “truth value” in representing the wrongdoing as well as on their sincerity.

In speech act theory, apology is often seen as having the purpose of restoring relationships (Leech 1983). As Janet Holmes (1990) puts it, “An apology is primarily and essentially a social act...aimed at maintaining good relations between participants” (159). Moreover, apology is often considered in the context of politeness theory (Holmes 1990; Levinson and Brown [1978]/1987; Sugimoto 1997, 1999) and face (Goffman 1955; Holmes 1990; Levinson and Brown [1978]/1987).⁶ Politeness and face primarily concern social and affective needs, again emphasizing relationship between participants. In politeness theory, apology is a strategy to minimize loss of face for the other party.

Culture and apology

As Swales (1990) describes the nature of genre, he points to its cultural dimension: “Genres belong to discourse communities, not to individuals” (9). Generic rhetorical criticism assumes that common expectations as to form and content, appropriateness, and efficacy are shared between speaker and listener. Indeed, the commonality of such shared definitions and expectations is what determines a genre. Genre theorists and speech act scholars have questioned the commonality of apology across cultures (e.g. Wolfson *et al.* 1989). For example, in a cross-cultural study of apologies and thanks, Coulmas (1981) says:

Apologies...as defined against the background of a given sociocultural system are not the same thing as when seen in another cultural context. While...apologies may exist as generic types of activities across cultures, it is obvious that the pragmatic considerations of their implementation are culturally defined.

Tavuchis (1991) also acknowledges differences in cultural predisposition to apology. In particular he cites the example of “contentious and proud Greek-speaking Sarakatsani shepherds [for whom] apologies are recognized but rare for settling disputes, dealing with insults, and remedying other conflicts” (35). Tavuchis posits a connection between values of self-regard, pride, and honor, suggesting that “self regard inhibits any conduct [such as apology] on which interpretation of weakness may be placed” (35).

Tavuchis considers Japanese apology at some length, labeling Japan “the apologetic society par excellence” (37). Numerous sociolinguistic and speech act studies of apology, support the view that Japanese apologize frequently and easily (e.g. Barnlund and Yoshioka 1990; Ikeda 1993; Ohbuchi *et al.* 1989; Sugimoto 1999; Wagatsuma and Rossett 1986). For example, empirical research indicates that individual Japanese are more prone to apologize than US Americans and that Americans more frequently use explanation (accounts) when accused of blameworthy behavior than will Japanese (Ikeda 1993). Instances of Japanese corporate apologies for accidents and other misfortunes also suggest a society where apology is common.⁷

After considering these arguments, in the end Tavuchis suggests that the Japanese apologetic reputation is perhaps exaggerated by definition of what constitutes an apology and situations where apology is called for. Japanese people often “apologize” in situations where Westerners would use other forms of politeness.⁸ For example, Japanese often use what Kotani (1999) calls the “feel-good” apology, apologizing for things even when they were not at fault. The apology smoothes over uncomfortable situations; the recipient is, of course, expected to object, saying “Oh no, it was nothing” or “Oh no, it was my fault.” These kinds of apologies are of course not unknown in Western social life but they are perhaps less common. Consequently, as apology seems to play a more important social role, at the same time it is less onerous. When apology is common and expected, it is not so significant as a measure of inherent moral worth.

Japanese rhetorical scholars too have asserted that Japanese attitudes toward apology are different from those of Americans. For example, Suzuki (1999a) states, citing Okabe (1992) in support:

Japanese have written little about apologetic discourse chiefly because they have no rhetorical tradition of *apologia*, or the speech of self-defense. Rather, public penitence for transgressions is the more commonly required form in Japan; people expect leaders to admit responsibility when things go wrong.

(155–156)

Suzuki sees “Occidental” *apologia* as “the speakers’ endeavor to ‘repair their *ethos*’” whereas in Japanese apology “speakers endeavor to ‘shoulder the full responsibility’ by showing sincerity and regret” (178). It should be noted again here that Suzuki is following Ware and Linkugel’s model of

apologia in which the true apology does not appear. Although I would argue that Western *apologia* includes apology, Suzuki's interpretation of Western *apologia* reflects the lack of attention given to the "true apology" in rhetorical theory.

Suzuki also argues that the *ethos* of the speaker is the most important factor in the persuasiveness of the apology: "In Japan the standing of the speaker is virtually the absolute determinant of the validity of an argument" (178). In other words, who is speaking is more important than the argument.⁹

As will become apparent in this study, I am skeptical of these assertions of Japanese exceptionalism as relevant for the international discourse of apology we are considering in this work. I will return to this issue.

Japan studies

The subject of Japanese war guilt, apology, and memory has received much attention from Japanese historians, particularly since the death of Emperor Hirohito in 1989 and during preparations for the fifty-year anniversary of the end of World War II in 1995. Among Japan scholars, apologies for World War II are usually considered in the larger context of Japanese attitudes toward its wartime past, in Japan identified as *sensou sekinin* (war responsibility), or in relation to a particular issue such as the "comfort women" or textbooks (see Chapters 2, 4, and 8 for further discussion). Japanese apologies have also received attention in what might be called the "politics of human rights" and international relations.¹⁰

Two scholars who have focused specifically on Japanese apology for World War II are historians Norma Field (1995, 1997) and Alexis Dudden (1999, 2002). Beginning with early attempts at apology immediately following the war, Norma Field follows the discourse up to and including the Diet resolution and Murayama's speech in the summer of 1995. She struggles with the linguistic, philosophical, and ultimately moral issues of apology as a linguistic remedy for past injustice. For Field, apology must be judged first on its frank and full acknowledgement of facts. Thus, Field, like Tavuchis, argues that a primary function of the national apology should be that of "testifying" to the memories of the past (33–34). Moreover, like many critics of Japanese apologies, Field defines the "ideal" apology as including not only "acknowledgment of wrongdoing" and "expression of regret," but also "compensation or request for forgiveness" (6). In general, she criticizes Japanese government apologies as inadequate and insincere.

Alexis Dudden (2002) is also dissatisfied with Japanese government words of apology. She focuses on the legal issues associated with apology and its relationship to historical discourse, generally in the context of the comfort women and Japan–Korea relations. Although she sees apology as offering a legal avenue to remedy past injustices, she also sees it as offering a way for governments to "narrate themselves as legitimate in international

terms” (88), that is, to co-opt the apology situation in order to portray themselves as moral states.

A new approach

Apology is a separate and distinct category of *apologia*, a genre based primarily on situation, the situation of accusation of wrongdoing or threat to reputation. Apology, in contrast to other *apologia* strategies such as denial, minimization, and excuses, accepts responsibility for wrongdoing and expresses regret. Although I draw from a number of *apologia* genre studies, I rely considerably on sociological approaches—particularly work by Erving Goffman (1971) and Nicholas Tavuchis (1991) as well as speech act theory—to supplement rhetorical theories of *apologia*. Having reviewed current literature on apology, let me now develop my approach as it incorporates and in some sense differs from these previous treatments. I start with some basic assumptions or hypotheses that underlie my approach.

Apology as dialogue/process

Apology is a process. The process begins with an act, some alleged wrongdoing that causes damage/offense. This is followed by a call to apology. The accused person must defend him/herself. The offender decides to take responsibility and apologize. The offended party accepts or rejects the apology. This is then followed by reconciliation.¹¹ Our interest in rhetoric focuses on the middle trio: accusation, apology, and acceptance/rejection.

Goffman (1971) was the first to consider the apology process as both dialogic and interactional. Apology requires a response, some comment from the offended party to indicate that the apology has been received and understood, if not accepted (118–122). This ritual exchange often takes place in a ceremonial setting. Often one exchange is not enough. Reply may require a counter-reply. Goffman terms the sequence of exchanges a “remedial interchange.” The exchange ends when both parties are satisfied that the appropriate levels of remorse and acceptance have occurred and that the situation has been restored to normal (120).

On another level, apology can be seen as dialogue in the public realm, that is, dialogue with other instances of public speech. In his theory of “utterances,” Bakhtin (1986) sees specific utterances as arising from existing discourse, copied from previous models. We learn to speak and what to say in specific circumstances by copying patterns of speech from the available milieu; we create and interpret larger bodies of discourse according to patterns as well. For example, a mystery novel or a PhD dissertation has a particular form that frames the message content, driving our expectation and expected response.

Bakhtin’s view of rhetoric emphasizes genre—that is, patterned speech—as a fundamental unit of discourse. Although a text copies from the cultural

milieu and the past, Bakhtin insists that each utterance is unique, creating meaning anew in the artful and perhaps idiosyncratic expression of ideas in language. In other words, specific utterances are always original when stated in a new context. Thus, although Bakhtin's theoretical approach recognizes the importance of generic expectation and conventionality in shaping rhetoric and its effects, at the same time the approach recognizes and explains changes in genre over time. The pattern changes as it is used.

The implications for our understanding of public rhetoric are significant. The individual is constrained not only by what has been said before and the patterns available but also by the realization that what one says will constrain future speakers. As a consequence, rhetoric can be seen as "having a life of its own" with words developing associations and meaning with each repetition and with different meanings for different audiences at different times. In a Bakhtinian approach, a single speech by a single person does not depend so much on individual motivation; instead, it organically arises from the milieu of contemporary discourse. Context and intertextuality—meaning the connection to prior, simultaneous and future text—are highly significant.

Apology as moral performance

Kenneth Burke's dramaturgical view of rhetoric focuses on process as well. In this view, a recurring theme of the human condition is the sequence of order, disorder, guilt, repentance, and redemption ([1961]/1970: 183–196).¹² When a rupture occurs in the social fabric, it can be repaired by mortification/penance (blaming oneself) or scapegoating (finding someone else to blame). The apology then, in Burkean terms, is about setting things right and restoring the natural order of things.

Burke thus recognizes the prevalence of estrangement and the need for reconciliation; and he also emphasizes the role of rhetoric in the process: "Rhetoric remains the mode of appeal essential for bridging the conditions of estrangement 'natural' to society as we know it" ([1961]/1970: 211–212). The power of words to "act" implies a moral dimension to apology. The choice of words, or in Burkean terms, the "naming" of an action is highly significant ([1941]/1973: 1). By giving names to things, we indicate not simply our understanding of what something is, but what it means and what we should do about it. As we shall see in our discussion of apology—in particular our understanding of wrongdoing and regret—the moral weight of words is critical.

Sociological approaches to apology often emphasize the ritual and performance aspects of apology. In an early classic, Harold Garfinkel (1956) defines a "status degradation ceremony" as "any communicative work between persons whereby the public identity of a person is transformed into something looked upon as lower in the local scheme of social types" (420). He goes on to say, "The identities referred to must be 'total' identities."

By this, he means that the accusation does not simply refer to the behavior of the offending party, but to the underlying reasons for behavior: “Taken together, the grounds as well as the behavior that the grounds make explicable as the other person’s conduct, constitute a person’s identity.”

If we restate the definition for nation-states, a status degradation ceremony is “communicative work of nations whereby the public identity of a state is transformed into something looked upon as lower in the eyes of the world.” This lowering of the status of the state affects both citizens of the state as well as standing in the international arena.

Not all apologies fit Garfinkel’s definition of “status degradation ceremony” in that not all apologies affect the “total” identity of the individual or the state. If the apology is for something that is trivial or of short duration or minor consequence, or even more importantly, if the apology is for acts that are seen as an aberration, contrary to core values, then the apology may be limited to acknowledging the act without condemning the whole entity. Nevertheless, for many apologies and the ones that we are considering in this study of Japanese apologies, the ritual constitutes an attack on or a diminution of the essential worthiness of the person or state and is painful to those who must undergo the ritual.

Apology as universal

Starting from a definition of rhetoric as the use of symbols to persuade or gain cooperation, I assume that Japan, like all cultures, has a rhetorical tradition with local standards and warrants that govern how effective public speaking works in a particular setting and situation. At the same time, I expect certain rhetorical principles such as, for example, credibility and identification with the audience, to transcend cultural differences. In other words, universal rhetorical principles provide insights and a vocabulary for understanding what may be a particular, local phenomenon.

More radically, perhaps, I assume the universality of *apologia* situations. In all societies people offend one another—sometimes intentionally, sometimes not—and are thus required to answer their accusers and make amends. Human fallibility and the rupture of relationships based on “bad” behavior are common to all people. Apology as a strategy is available to all cultures although the propensity for apology may vary.

This is not to deny the cultural dimensions of rhetoric in general and Japanese apology in particular. Nor does it minimize the importance of local history and local politics. However, in this study I want to emphasize the transnational nature of national apology based on the concept of “rhetorical community.” As defined by Carolyn Miller (1994), a rhetorical community is “constituted by attributions of characteristic joint rhetorical actions, genres of interaction, ways of getting things done, including reproducing itself” (73). That is, a rhetorical community is a kind of “virtual” community that arises out of rhetorical interaction. Rhetorical interaction

leads to the development of genre. What to expect, how to interpret, how to predict effect, how to get things done—genre develops, thus creating community and culture. The concept of rhetorical community allows us to imagine an international community of voices, speaking different languages with different cultural (national/ethnic) experience but with generic traditions of discourse specific to the international community and its concerns. Thus, I consider national apologies as international or global discourse, as statements performed on an international stage and with international expectations, comparisons, and evaluation.¹³

Apology as politics

National apologies for historical wrongdoing are political statements. As political statements, they can be expected to reflect political divisions of society. They can also be expected to reflect the need to reconcile diverse views and interests and to display concern for future political viability (Bennett 1975).

The concept of political legitimacy,¹⁴ defined by Alan Kluver (1997) as “the perceived convergence of legal and moral authority to govern” (49), is useful here. In order to maintain support as the “legitimate” ruling authority, governments must appear competent, rational, and consistent with the norms and values of society (49). This is especially true in a democratic society where consent of the governed is necessary for continued office. Externally as well, governments must exhibit “legitimate” positions consistent with the values of the international community in order to be accepted as a participant in world affairs.

Political communication plays a key role in developing and maintaining political legitimacy. Public ritual and official pronouncements are often devoted to reaffirming common bonds and understandings so that governments (and individuals in those governments) seem to represent and embody the national will. In a summary of the rhetorical requirements of political legitimacy, Robert Francesconi (1986) argues that public rhetoric must “justify” government actions in terms that are consistent with the “collective social identity,” “in the general (or public) interest” and in ways that encourage the development of “consensus” (20).

The historical narrative—how the nation sees its own past, its values, and its nature—provides one of the major underpinnings of legitimacy (Kluver 1997: 53–54). In order to maintain popular support, the government supports a historical narrative that claims a good and principled past. Acknowledgment of historical wrongdoing undermines the “goodness” of the historical narrative, thereby threatening the basis for national identity, pride, and loyalty and weakening the state’s ability to function.

Another rhetorical scholar of political communication W. Lance Bennett (1975) reminds us that politics is the art of reconciling “insatiable demands” or irreconcilable positions. The way to achieve this, according to Bennett, is the development and use of political rhetoric that articulates

higher values and legitimizing constructs. When a government is found to be immoral or incompetent, there is a problem:

[Political] institutions are founded upon, and claim to represent, the highest principles of morality and reason. The problem facing any organized political process is to resolve the contradiction inherent in principled and reasonable institutions committing or condoning “unprincipled” or “unreasoned” activities.

(Bennett 1975: 24–25)

Thus, when accused of “bad” acts, the state couches its response in the moralistic value-laden terminology of its own national principles. Bennett notes that these high principles must be “sufficiently flexible” and abstract to be used by all sides in a conflict (25).

Similarly, political statements must also be able “to accommodate new information and events without contradicting previous [statements]” (30). Past statements are “renegotiable” but they must be reconcilable with current statements so as not to appear “false, unprincipled, contradictory, or implausible,” all of which lead, in our terms, to loss of political legitimacy. What kind of statement may I want to make in the future? How can I be consistent with what I said last week? Political statements must look ahead as well as to the past in order to maintain consistency, morality, and ultimately, political legitimacy. As we shall see with apologies, the “flexible” use of higher moral principles and ambiguity in order to appeal to various constituencies as well as to incorporate wrongdoing into a framework of principled political rhetoric is a key strategy in constructing political statements of apology.

Apology as dilemma

Most rhetorical studies of *apologia* treat *apologia* as a way to restore public image.¹⁵ This assumes that the judicious use of *apologia* strategies will enhance image or save face. Thus denial, blaming others, and counter-attack, as long as they are not too far from reality, are typical strategies to promote image. In contrast, I propose to consider these strategies and indeed all *apologia* as inherently “dilemmatic.”¹⁶ That is to say, all *apologia*, whether admitting responsibility, blaming others, making excuses, or justifying one’s actions, contain an element of threat to face and image. One’s image is not improved by public association with wrongdoing, no matter how well one manages the rhetoric. Often, the best one can do is minimize the damage. Indeed, if one’s image is all that is to be considered, the best apology may often be to say nothing, as suggested by the apocryphal dictum to “never complain, never explain.” Silence is always an attractive option.¹⁷ In the case of historical apologies such as the one we are considering, the fact that the wrongdoing occurred a long time ago means that silence is

even more of an option than when some particularly egregious wrong is discovered yesterday and the public is outraged.

The dilemmatic approach assumes that the choices available to participants are not totally good or totally bad; that the apologizer must somehow reconcile “contrary impulses” and that a middle ground must be sought. The apologizer must balance the benefit of full disclosure with the benefit of circumspection. Another example of dilemma is timing. If too quick to say one is sorry, the apology seems facile and unconsidered. If too slow to apologize, then one seems reluctant, forced, pressured. What took you so long? In other words, this may be a no-win situation. There may be no “good” strategy. Moreover, even when the best strategy is followed, the results may be less than satisfactory. You may be misunderstood; you may be considered insincere. Even worse, if deemed inadequate or insincere, apologies may stir up further animosity and criticism. Thus, a corollary to the assertion of the dilemmatic nature of apology is the proposition that apology is difficult and difficult to do well.¹⁸

The dilemma and difficulties of national apology are particularly compelling when the issues of political legitimacy and history are considered. For nations, the quest for an understanding of the past is frequently driven by competing or contrary impulses. Nations need to maintain the illusion of a great and glorious past and at the same time they are responsible for upholding the “correct” historical record. How does the government reconcile the need to maintain continuity and “faith” with one’s forefathers as well as the need and desire to maintain its image as a just and moral state? Whose needs should the government be responsive to? The mainstream and traditional publics or the victims of that establishment? How does one adjust one’s rhetoric and understanding to reflect current values and needs when they are contrary to past values and needs? Apology contains inherent difficulties for nations (or persons), threatening identity and moral integrity in their own as well as others’ eyes.

The question of motivation

Motivation is a central concern of this research and has received much attention from rhetorical scholars of *apologia*. In addition to Ware and Linkugel’s four “objectives,” Ryan (1982, 1988) sees *apologia* as “purification” (from Fisher’s (1970) four basic motives of communication) and Kruse (1977) suggests a Maslovian motivational scheme of “survival,” “social,” and “self-actualization” for “non-denial *apologia*.” Downey (1993) outlines five evolving “functions” or “purposes” of *apologia* associated with political and legal environments of different historical periods. Benoit’s (1995a) “image restoration” of course, sees *apologia* as a rhetorical attempt to restore or improve public reputation and/or face. Hearit (1995a,b) and Harrell *et al.* (1975) have suggested social and political legitimacy respectively, as motives for *apologia*.

In contrast to rhetorical approaches, sociological theorists such as Goffman and Tavuchis emphasize the societal functions of apology. In their view, the purpose of apology is to repair the social fabric when a member of society has failed to conform to societal norms. As previously noted, the speech act and sociolinguistic approach often views the purpose of apology as the repair of relationships (e.g. Holmes 1990; Leech 1983).

Each of these approaches to motivation provides insight into the genre of *apologia* and makes a valuable contribution in highlighting certain aspects of motive. However, with a focus on apology rather than *apologia*, with a focus on nations as the agents/rhetors of apology, none of these approaches alone is sufficient to account fully for the motivations evidenced in our collection of Japanese apologies. For example, at the level of linguistic function, Ryan's "purification of an image" works fine. But when we drop down to a less abstract level to answer the more specific question of why nations apologize at this particular time and place and why apologize for these particular wrongdoings or using these words, the motivation schemes of rhetorical theory are less satisfactory. Similarly, although Kruse's hierarchical motives of survival, social needs, and self-actualization seem to fit individual actors, it is difficult to apply them to nations. What examples do we have of nations' apologizing for "survival" or what does "self-actualization" mean for nations?¹⁹

The question of motivation in apology is complicated by the variety of situations under consideration as well overlapping terminology. In normal conversation, we use words such as "motive," "goal," "purpose," "aim," and "justification" interchangeably and the words actually overlap a great deal in practical use. For example, when I say that "the function of a statement is to console the victim," how is that different from "the purpose of the statement is to console the victim"? Thus, purpose and function coincide in many cases; nevertheless, we can also think of situations where "purpose" (intent) before the act was one thing, but it "functioned" differently. That is, its outcome was different. For some, the term "motive" seems to imply a hidden or psychological motivation. For example, Gorrell (1997) distinguishes "aim," which she defines as "visible" in the exigency as opposed to "motives" in the minds of participants.

In order to avoid these arguments over terminology, I make two assumptions. First I accept the view that motive is multi-faceted and depends a great deal on the level of analysis. At the generic level of *apologia*, motive refers to the exigency of accusation and the desire of the apologist to repair the situation. This is a very broad and general motive. But at our level, the words "motive," "justification," "purpose," and "aim" are largely interchangeable²⁰ although "justification" probably best captures the idea of public reasons for making an apology, given its politically damaging potential.

Second, I use "motive" in the Burkean ([1935]/1954) sense that "motives are distinctly linguistic products" (35) and that "motives are shorthand terms for situations" (29). That is, motives are *words*, words that justify

actions based on our “sizing up” of the situation. Moreover, although motives are personal they are not entirely idiosyncratic. They are based on interpretation of the situation according to experience and values taken from the social milieu. They are justified in terms that society approves. Indeed, in some sense, all motive is rationalization.

As words, then, motive is discernible in the text. We may not always be aware of our own motivation, but motive is visible in the language we use to describe the situation. How do we recognize motive? Again, I turn to Burke, this time for the concept of “appetite.” Discussing the art of persuasive communication, Burke says: “Form is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the audience, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite” (31). In other words, motivation is indicated in the text by how the apology is framed, how it is introduced, how identification with the audience is made, and how the text draws out implications of the apology for the future. By motivation I do not mean what the speaker himself/herself was thinking or what the government’s agenda was—unless it is indicated in the text (and it often is)—but how the apology statement is enveloped in arguments that reveal its intent. This approach does not deny, of course, the importance of occasion and audience. Indeed, the content of the speech almost always references the situational context.

A working model of apology

In this section I develop a definition of apology drawn from speech act concepts, modifying them to accommodate apologies by nation-states rather than individuals.

Although it is possible (and sometimes useful) to define apology simply as “saying you’re sorry,” we start with a more rigorous and harder-to-achieve definition offered by Tavuchis (1991): “Minimally, [an apology requires] acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the violated rule, admission of fault and responsibility for its violation, and the expression of genuine regret and remorse for the harm done” (3).

Note the word “minimally” in Tavuchis’ definition. This refers to the relative and provisional nature of apology. Although speech act approaches sometimes consider apology sufficient in itself, everyday usage often refers to a “full apology” or a “partial” or “incomplete” or “insincere” apology. Apologies can be considered along a continuum from minimal to ideal.

For this study, I suggest an elaborated definition of apology to include five areas of analysis: (1) naming the offense; (2) indicating regret; (3) representation; (4) sincerity; and (5) receptivity of audience. The first two categories, naming the offense and indicating regret, relate to the content of apology, that is, the words of apology. These categories address Tavuchis’ basic definition. The third category, representation, has special significance for collective apologies. Who speaks for the nation? What gives authority to the apology? The other two categories lie outside the actual

performance of the apology itself and may be considered the context of the apology. For sincerity, accompanying actions of the government and lack of contradicting actions and/or statements must support the sentiments expressed in the apology. Finally, audience receptivity refers to the readiness of the audience to accept the apology. Let us examine each of these areas in turn.

Naming the offense

Naming the offense is the first requirement of apology. Although it is not always necessary to be brutally frank—does the wife want to hear all the details of the errant husband’s affairs? Probably not—but there must be some degree of common understanding of the nature of the wrongdoing.

Although interpersonal apologies may be able to assume that all parties know (without having to say) what the wrongdoing is, for nation-states this is not so. Tavuchis argues that the most important function of collective apologies is to provide an official record (101). This would seem to require some specificity outlining the nature of the wrongdoing and seems especially pertinent in the case of historical apologies. It is not good enough to say simply “For whatever we did, we’re sorry.”

Moreover, the choice of words to describe the wrongdoing is important. The apology, “I’m sorry you’re upset” is quite different from “I’m sorry I was late,” in which the apologizer recognizes fault in him/herself. The apologizer may choose to say “I committed an error” or “I committed a crime” or perhaps “I caused pain and sorrow”—each represents a different evaluation of the nature of the wrong committed. Taking responsibility then means not simply admitting the act itself, but demonstrating that one understands the seriousness of the moral offense that one has violated. The degree of explicitness is a major dilemma for makers of apology.

In historical apologies, finding the right words often requires significant negotiation and compromise, in order to accommodate different historical perspectives. To the colonized, an uprising may be a “freedom movement,” to the colonial power, “insurrection” or even “terrorism.” Even within nations, consensus concerning historical interpretation is often difficult and contested. In any case, the first hurdle for both nations and individuals is to choose words that describe the wrongdoing for which one is apologizing.

Expression of regret

Most definitions of apology would accept the expressions “I’m sorry” or “I apologize” or their equivalents as the required language of regret, but it is not always so simple. Consider the following statements:

- 1 “I’m sorry, but I do not apologize.”
- 2 “I apologize, but I’m not sorry.”

In the first case, the speaker expresses regret, but insists that it was not his fault or that the act was not “wrong.” For example, in April 2001 US President George W. Bush made a statement to the Chinese government expressing regret for a midair collision between an American and a Chinese plane (Diamond and Lev April 5, 2001). In this statement Bush insisted that he was not apologizing. His contention was that US plane had a right to be where it was and that it was an accident (probably caused by the Chinese plane in his rendition). He was “sorry” for the accident and the damage caused, but he insisted he would not “apologize.” Thus, simple regret is not the same as apology, which requires that the speaker admit responsibility and culpability.

In the second situation—“I apologize but I’m not sorry”—the speaker admits guilt and “wrongness” of the action but would do it again. For example, one might imagine the case of a teenager joyriding, “It was really fun. I knew it was wrong and I am ready to accept punishment but it was worth it.” Or as in the case of a terrorist bombing, “I know it’s wrong but it was done in a good cause/it accomplished my purpose/the outcome was desirable.” Or, after avenging a wrong, “I admit what I did was wrong, but he deserved it.”

For the true apology in the sense that we use it, then, the apologizing party must both take responsibility for wrongdoing *and* express sincere regret. The challenge for apologizing nations is how detailed and explicit should articulation of wrongdoing and expression of regret be.

Another dimension of regret concerns the expression of emotion in apologies. Although Tavuchis argues that collective apologies cannot be expected to express emotion, since the speaker is most often not the actual protagonist of the wrongdoing (108), the evidence suggests that the emotional and performative dimensions are significant for national as well as personal apologies. For example, Willy Brandt falling to his knees to express German remorse for Nazi crimes is still a potent image of contrition.

Representation

As Norma Field (1997) aptly notes: “The worth of a national apology...[is] in part a question of representational quality” (7). The issue of representation is a key one for national apologies. Who has the right and responsibility to represent the body politic in such actions? Is it the Emperor? the Prime Minister? The Diet? What is the relationship between government representatives and the people? Is there public support for government statements? How much consensus is required and how should it be expressed?²¹ What kind of “public” and “formal” occasion must surround the apology?

Sincerity

For individuals, sincerity can be defined as congruency between “inward” thoughts and outward expression. How is sincerity to be defined for governments that are without personal identity and one might presume,

without internal “feelings” of sorrow and remorse? How can one be “sincerely” sorry about what others have done in the past?²²

Sincerity is often not addressed by scholars since sincerity seems to indicate an attempt to “read minds” or a search for “hidden motives.” Benoit makes a conscious decision to ignore sincerity as well as considerations of evidence and adaptation to audience as elements of “generally competent discourse” (160). However, in this study, the issue of sincerity will be addressed and addressed repeatedly as audiences focus directly on this issue.

I propose to consider sincerity for national apologies as consistency and consensus as visible in the public record. First, as I have discussed above, apology must be representative, supported by public opinion and elected officials. But beyond that, government representatives must avoid actions or statements that seem to contradict the apologetic stance. Moreover, for many, words may not be all that important, as summed up in the expression “actions speak louder than words.” This often means compensation for victims. Another indication of sincerity is institutional consistency—that is, legal and governmental structures that support the rhetoric of apology. Examples might be the educational system, the constitution, citizenship rules, or the political process.

Audience/the offended other

Apology must not only be made for something, it must be made to someone. An apology made in the privacy of one’s bathroom is not an apology. Apology requires an audience, an offended other. Moreover, the successful apology requires an audience that is willing to accept the apology. Without receptivity, the apology falls on deaf ears.

Apology frequently concerns not only the direct participants, the offender and the offended, but the larger community as well. When rules of moral or social codes of behavior have been broken, the acknowledgment of wrongdoing becomes a ritual of reinforcement of community norms.

In national apologies, the role of the audience is more complex than in interpersonal apologies. Multiple publics, remote audiences, and an enhanced role of the media in voicing objections and response—this is the milieu of the national apology. In this research, the audience is an active participant in the apology process. The media probably enhances this participation.

Methodological considerations

How does the process of rhetorical analysis differ with cultural awareness in the forefront of our attention? The first issue to be faced is the problem of translation. Ironically, the problem of the foreign text, the fact that one needs to translate it, also offers opportunities for rhetorical analysis that might not be immediately apparent. The very difficulty in finding the right words for

translation requires a focus on various alternatives with assumptions and associations attached with one's choice of translation. Thus, a degree of "close reading" is required that may reveal underlying meanings that are either taken for granted or overlooked in one's own native language.

In general, I agree with Xing Lu and David Frank (1993) that cross-cultural rhetorical analyses should involve a native speaker to explicate the nuances and suggestive power of words. In the case of international apologies, however, translation problems are mitigated by the international nature of the discourse, discourse that is largely conducted in English. Whatever may have been intended in the Japanese version, the English version may be more important than the original. The Japanese government frequently provides an official English translation for government pronouncements on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs web page.²³

Furthermore, the Japanese nuances of words of apology have received much attention. For example, the difficulty in translation of the apology term *hansei* has been well documented. Usually translated as "reflection" or "remorse," George Hicks (1997) argues that these translations are respectively too weak and too strong, suggesting "self-criticism" as a better choice (92). The fundamental problem is that there really is no equivalent. How you choose to render this word into English determines to a great extent how one judges the strength or sincerity of the apologetic statement. The argument over "words" to describe how one acknowledges wrongdoing is not simply a matter of translation, of course, but translation adds another dimension to that difficulty.

The problem of translation is mitigated here by the nature of genre. In other words, the general form and content of apology provide an expectation of what an apology should include. Moreover, multiple readings of the same material with attention given to the reaction of the audience give ample evidence of nuance as opposition parties and the Japanese press analyze the latest version of apology. Repetition and expectation are characteristic of genre, allowing the translator evidence of expectation through repetition.

Another methodological issue concerns the inflammatory and political nature of the issue of wartime responsibility. The researcher must carefully balance the dilemma of seeming to "apologize" for the Japanese view, if one sees Japanese apology attempts as sincere and sufficient or, on the other hand, of "Japan bashing" if one is critical of those same attempts.

How does the researcher negotiate the difficulties of "naming"? For example, does one call the actions of the Japanese army "atrocities" or "wartime excesses"? If we use the word "aggression" to describe Japanese military actions in China, have we not accepted the historical view that accusations are true as well as the interpretation that these actions were criminal in some sense? The dilemma, of course, is not resolvable; there are no "good" words that will satisfy all parties. In general, I try to err on the side of less flamboyant, less sensationalist, less exaggerated terms.

This research is not intended to affirm or deny what Japan did during the war or to urge stronger apologies. Rather, it is to look at how apology is used in international discourse, how it has become an accepted and expected (indeed, demanded) ritual of international discourse for Japan and how this discourse functions in today's world.

Preview

The study presents a number of Japanese government apologies from 1984 to 1995 in roughly chronological order. Although a few apologies were made before 1984 and many after 1995, this period demonstrates evolution of the apologies under changing conditions. In particular, there have been many apologies after Murayama's apology in 1995, but all are modeled on his speech. Sources for these speeches and the response to them are public documents and public newspapers (mostly *Asahi Shimbun* and *Korea Herald* in addition to Western news sources).²⁴

A preliminary chapter considers the nature of alleged wrongdoing and how accusations of wartime wrongdoing have changed over time. Another chapter discusses opposition to apology as represented in a number of "anti-apologies" during this period. Finally, a chapter discusses the international environment for apology and its effect on Japanese apology.

2 Accusations, accusers, and audience

Our understanding of apology begins with accusation, that is, with the nature of the wrongdoing that the apology addresses (Ryan 1982, 1988). Are the charges major or minor, multiple or single, unprecedented or not? How reliable and verifiable are the charges? We must also consider the accusers, what their objectives might be and where the accusations come from. Finally, who is the audience for an apology and what is the relationship between victim, apologist, and audience? This chapter reviews the background and context of Japanese apologies for World War II.

The accusations

The Japanese government has long been criticized in the international community for its actions during World War II. Accusations of wrongdoing occur on two levels: first, specific atrocities—for example, the “rape of Nanking,” inhumane treatment of prisoners of war (PoWs) (including the Bataan death march), the forced sexual services of “comfort women”¹ for Japanese soldiers, and medical experimentation in Manchuria; and second, on a more general level, Japanese aggression and colonial rule in Asia.² Part of the difficulty in developing a consensus of apology or understanding of wartime responsibility comes from the multiplicity of accusations and the confusion and intertwining of these two different levels of accusation.

Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal

Immediately following World War II, evidence supporting large-scale abuses of human rights was accumulated in postwar military tribunals held throughout Asia. Thousands of Japanese were charged with crimes and punished for violating the established rules and conventions governing wartime conduct. In addition to the usual category of war crimes for atrocities, the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal³ indicted some twenty-five top civilian and military officials with “conspiracy to wage aggressive war” under a new category of “crimes against peace.”

As has been discussed at length elsewhere (Buruma 1994; Dower 1999; Minear 1971), there are many problems with the results of the postwar trials and especially with the Tokyo tribunal. The judgments and consideration of crimes were compromised by serious flaws in the proceedings and the general atmosphere of “victor’s justice” (Minear 1971). Particularly problematic for our purpose in studying apology was the complete inattention to crimes/actions taken against Koreans who had been colonial subjects, especially the comfort women. It is perhaps not surprising that “crimes” of colonialism should be ignored considering that 4 of the 11 countries—Great Britain, United States, France, and the Netherlands—sitting in judgment during the trial were themselves heavily implicated in colonial ventures in Asia.

Whatever the justification for the decisions of authorities at the time, the decision not to charge Emperor Hirohito (certainly the most visible of Japanese wartime and prewar leadership) and the reemergence of ex-defendants in postwar political circles led to a general cynicism in Japan concerning the Tokyo Tribunal view of war crimes. While providing much evidence of serious misconduct by the Japanese military (and even some civilians), the obvious biases and lack of attention to particular aspects of the war have left the Japanese public with unfinished business concerning the past.

Changes over time

Although many atrocities of Japan’s wartime machine were well known and well documented during the military trials, some crimes have gained visibility over time. In part, this is a matter of new revelations from military personnel and victims as well as energetic research from academic scholars, but it also comes from a re-thinking of the evidence. Organized activist human rights movements around the world have brought past injustices to public attention. In addition, a number of incidents in postwar Japan have themselves fanned the flames of outrage and demand for apology, requiring apology after apology. Examples are a number of statements concerning the war by prominent government officials that seem to weaken or contradict the apology statements as well as periodic visits of Cabinet members to Yasukuni Shrine, a symbol of Japanese militarism for many. These acts and statements become evidence of further and continuing “wrongdoing” on the part of the Japanese government and require apology themselves. I discuss these actions and statements in Chapter 6 as examples of non-apology *apologia*.

Two controversies in the 1980s and 1990s particularly affected the apology discourse. The first was a textbook controversy, first occurring in 1982 and reappearing periodically, most recently in 2005. In 1982, it was reported that the Japanese government had advocated a softening of wording concerning Japanese “aggression” in social studies textbooks.⁴ Although

later evidence seemed to indicate that this report was exaggerated, even incorrect, the question of sincerity and institutional consistency concerning the apologetic stance was raised.

The second controversy concerned the “military comfort women,” women who were forcibly recruited to provide sexual services for the Japanese army. The revelations of official military involvement in the management of these practices transformed the environment for apologies in the 1990s (see Chapter 4). The comfort women illustrate the degree to which historical crimes are often connected to “cover-up” issues. In the 1990s, the Japanese government was on the defensive not just for the original crimes of fifty years earlier but for the lack of contemporary attention to and acknowledgment of the treatment of these women even as late as 1990.

Selectivity of accusation

Not all sins of the past are recognized as equally deserving of attention. Although calls for Japan to acknowledge its “war of aggression” and “colonial rule” have been made by its Asian neighbors, and although the clamor on behalf of the comfort women has received worldwide attention, the atrocities of, say, the “Rape of Manila” and biological experimentation have not been afforded the same treatment. For historical apologies, a champion to maintain interest and bring specific issues to world attention is necessary.

Validity of accusation

One of the tendencies in a discourse concerning life and death, suffering, and wrongdoing, is the escalation of rhetoric, the exaggeration of claims, the polarization of accusers versus accused. This happens as a matter of course when wrongdoing and suffering occurred a long time ago amid chaotic conditions and written materials have disappeared, or have perhaps been destroyed, or at the very least open to different interpretations. Thus, accusers claim a large number of victims, and the defendants place a strict limitation on how those victims are to be counted in order to minimize the wrongdoing. Our information is often sketchy. The comfort women accusations depend largely on personal memories of the victims and of soldiers on the scene.⁵ Accusations concerning Nanking are even more contested. For the purposes of this study, I assume basic accusations are true although the details may be disputed. See the following sections for more discussion as to the responsibility for these actions.

The accusers/victims

Who are the accusers who demand that Japan apologize for its wartime past? Where do accusations come from? Who brings attention concerning

long-ago crimes to the public arena? We consider two major sources of demands for apology: (1) demands from other nation-states, that is, from Japan's Asian neighbors and (2) demands that arise in the public arena, led by special interest groups representing victims, usually focused on a particular atrocity.

Asian neighbors

Japanese colonial and wartime behavior has special significance for Japan's Asian neighbors. Although many Asian countries and peoples have overcome their distrust of Japan and developed cooperative, if not cordial, relations with postwar Japan, lingering suspicion and resentment often lie under the surface of active economic relations (Burns 2000; Kristof 1998).

Repeated calls for Japanese apology have come from China and the two Koreas.⁶ Korea has been most interested in Japanese wrongdoing as a colonial power. Both Koreas and China focus on issues relating to Japanese "historical consciousness" and the concern for militarism rather than compensation for individual victims or a particular atrocity.

For the two Koreas and China, the vehemence of anti-Japanese sentiments and the importance they attach to the questions of history and its interpretation must be seen in the context of their own history and national identity. Official ceremonies in these countries regularly celebrate the victory against Japan in 1945 as the origin of modern statehood. Moreover, Communist rhetoric in North Korea and China emphasizes the "hegemonic capitalism" and "aggression" of the imperialist states, epitomized by Japan then and now (as well as the United States). Thus, Japan as "enemy" is closely linked with national and ideological identities. The reemergence of Japan as an economic power allied with the United States has reinvigorated the specter of Japan as a threat. The inequity in economic power despite Japan's having lost the war feeds the sense of anger and frustration (and jealousy?).

Fear of contemporary Japanese economic power and military potential no doubt underlies much of Korean and Chinese antagonism. It also seems clear that internal political pressures have at times encouraged the focus on external threat as a way of diverting popular unrest or for gaining political advantage (Buruma 1995: 126–127; Hicks 1997: 46; Shimokoji 2003: 17, 31). Public opinion in China and the two Koreas is even more anti-Japanese than the official government positions.⁷ Indeed, while governments have attempted to rebuild and smooth over relations with Japan, at times they have been prevented from doing this by their own anti-Japanese publics. For governments then, despite the professed intent to improve relations, Japan-bashing may provide a convenient diversion from local problems. Some cynics have even suggested that China and Korea may be exploiting the past to induce Japanese guilt, thereby enhancing the argument for significant economic aid from a wealthy postwar Japan (Burns 2000; Johnson 1986; Kristof 1998).

Not all Asian countries share the feeling that Japan should continue to feel guilty or apologize. Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Burma, and Indonesia have taken a fairly neutral attitude toward Japanese apologies for World War II (“Japan’s ambiguous,” 1995). On Prime Minister Murayama’s visit to Southeast Asia in 1994, Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia said he “could not understand why Japan kept apologizing for a fifty-year-old past” (Field 1997: 37). On the same trip, Thailand rejected the suggestion of individual compensation to comfort women, suggesting it would “produce an endless string of bereaved families seeking compensation,” and that it was “preferable to pay the state [!]” (ibid.).

Taiwan is an interesting case. Despite the long history of Japanese colonialism in Taiwan dating from 1894 until 1945, and despite the Nationalist leadership experience as wartime enemies of Japan, Taiwan has been relatively silent in demanding apologies. Perhaps this reflects Taiwan’s close economic ties with Japan as well as Taiwan’s dependence on Japan as an ally in the campaign for recognition as the legitimate government of China. It probably also reflects a more benign experience as a Japanese colony. Perhaps most important, as allies in the free world alliance with Japan and the United States, Taiwan has not encouraged the memory of Japan as enemy. Even after Japan recognized the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as legitimate, ties between Taiwan and Japan have remained close and Taiwan has not joined in the chorus of criticism from PRC and Korea.

Special interest groups

In the 1990s, the clamor for Japanese apology (and compensation) came not from official government channels but from publicity campaigns designed and led by special interest groups in support of victims of particular atrocities. Examples are the PoWs, the comfort women, and Nanking/Nanjing Incident, each of whom built an international constituency to apply pressure on the Japanese government.

PoWs

Perhaps the most vociferous critics of the Japanese government have been PoWs in various Western countries. As survivors of Japanese prison camps during the war, they are highly motivated in their quest for Japanese apology and acknowledgment of their inhumane treatment; their argument is that Japanese PoW treatment went beyond that allowed under the Geneva convention and therefore should be treated as war crimes. Although they have long lobbied for recognition of their position from Japan and their own governments, the official position of Japan continues to be that the postwar peace settlements settled all claims for war-related damages. PoW claims have been generally ignored until recently when, in combination with the publicity of the comfort women issue, legal campaigns, and the

fiftieth year anniversary of the end of the war, they have received increased public attention and support.⁸

The comfort women

As a class of victims, the comfort women are more complicated. Although there are reports of thousands of women who were allegedly forcibly recruited into the prostitution (sexual slaves) system, only several hundred have appeared to accuse the Japanese government.⁹ The shame of the crime makes it difficult for women to come forth publicly. The comfort women and PoW's share the situation that their own governments have been reluctant to support their claims.

The accusers in the case of the comfort women, thus, are not simply the victims. Instead, the people who have organized lawsuits and publicity campaigns are women's groups, beginning with Christian women's groups in Korea with support from certain Japanese individuals who have devoted their time and energy to the cause. Organized in 1990 to pursue women's issues, the Korean Comfort Women Problem Resolution Council (Korean Council)¹⁰ has been instrumental in raising public awareness of comfort women issues. They have mounted an impressive campaign to force both Korean and Japanese governments to take the issue seriously. Public meetings in Japan and Korea, telephone answering services to collect independent data from self-identified comfort women, and constant lobbying to both Japanese and Korean governments—they picket the Japanese Embassy in Seoul every Wednesday—these are the efforts of a savvy public relations campaign to keep the issue alive in the media. They took their case to the United Nations Human Rights subcommittee and, in February 1996, the United Nations condemned Japanese actions (“Report on the mission,” 1996). Human rights activists took up their cause. Thus, starting as a local Korean and women's issue, the issue has gathered support throughout Asia and the world.

Nanking (Nanjing)

The case of the Nanking Massacre deserves mention as another example of an international constituency demanding Japanese apology and compensation. Iris Chang's controversial book entitled *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (1997) has garnered worldwide recognition for this incident. Although this book has been criticized by scholars (e.g. Coox 2000; Fogel 2000), the public uproar has been substantial. Overseas Chinese and American academic circles have supported efforts to publicize and lobby both the American and the Japanese governments on this issue (Burruss 2003).

Interestingly, the Chinese governments (PRC and Taiwan both) have not asked Japan to apologize for Nanking specifically, although China has developed Nanking as a memorial site for commemoration and has encouraged

the use of Nanking as a symbol of Japanese aggression. When asked recently to respond directly to charges associated with the Nanking Massacre, the Japanese Foreign Ministry replied that the 1972 Joint Communique between China and Japan and Prime Minister Murayama's apology in 1995 represent Japan's apology (Brooks 1999: 109–110).

The international dimensions of accusation and advocacy can also be seen in several attempts at American legislative resolutions calling for Japan (and Japanese businesses) to admit wartime crimes and compensate victims. An example is the Lipinski Resolution (1997) in the US House of Representatives. This resolution called on Japan to apologize and pay reparations for: (1) the Nanking Incident; (2) the Bataan March; and (3) comfort women as well as PoWs (House Concurrent Resolution, 105th Congress 1997, in Brooks 1999: 149–150). Litigation in American courts has supplemented that in Japan demanding compensation from Japanese businesses for forced labor. These examples suggest that worldwide interest and pressure on Japan is not diminishing and indeed is increasing (Burrell 2003).

The audience(s)

In national historic apologies the original perpetrators and victims are, in general, no longer available. Therefore, the target audience of the apology is often the descendants of those who were victims or, sometimes, representatives of the victims. The apology may be directed toward another nation or it may be directed toward an internal ethnic group or toward individual victims. In the case of the Japanese apologies, nations, ethnic groups and the international community are all targeted audiences. Apologies are made specifically to South Korea, for example, but it is also clear from Japanese newspapers' attention to the opinions of Koreans living in Japan that ethnic Koreans in Japan are another significant audience for the apologies.

As political rhetoric with implications for political legitimacy, the audience for national apology is often internal. Indeed, for many Japanese apologies, the Japanese people themselves are the primary audience. This dimension of apology is a much larger consideration for collective and national apology than it is for personal apology although individuals too must reconcile competing instincts within themselves. Still, the nation-state, especially in modern democratic settings, must deal extensively with internal public opinion and the development of consensus. Self-reflection, one's identity as Japanese, national purpose, and goals for the future—all of these concerns are reflected in internal dialogue.

The international community is another audience for national apologies. If status and international prestige are significant aspects of the apology—as in theories emphasizing “image restoration” or external political legitimacy as the primary motives of apology would suggest—the international community may well be the most significant audience. Victims or their representatives have an increasing ability to reach out to a larger audience

through Internet or other global networks. In Japanese apologies, the World Council of Churches, United Nations organizations, and international women's organizations have played influential roles. Moreover, minority or extremist views have a forum to voice individual opinions and judgments in modern communication channels. For example, China-related activists have created international web sites to publicize the Nanking atrocity.¹¹

Responsibility and guilt

As we have seen, then, accusations of Japanese wrongdoing range from serious charges of war crimes against humanity—that is, incidents of military atrocity—to those of general aggression and colonialism. These crimes are often characterized as war-related although the Korean perspective focuses on the crimes associated with colonial rule.

Charges of Japanese wrongdoing can be seen as basically true, basically reprehensible, and certainly tragic. Japanese military atrocities were perhaps not unprecedented, but they were significant.¹² Evidence is plentiful to support the allegations; few would dispute the basic facts although interpretation of intent and magnitude may differ.

Responsibility for Japanese wartime wrongdoing is hard to affix. For national historic apologies, assignment of guilt and responsibility is both collective and retroactive. In any corporate or collective body, responsibility is diffuse (Schultz and Seeger 1991: 52) but the problem is magnified when the wrongdoing occurred long ago. After fifty years, the “guilty” individuals have long since disappeared; physical and documentary evidence is often missing or compromised; memories are suspect.

Some would say that the most likely culprit for assignation of blame for Japanese wartime actions is Emperor Hirohito, who was removed from official responsibility by the decision of the American Occupation authorities. Beyond Hirohito, of course, is the military. The military has been a convenient postwar scapegoat since the military were thoroughly discredited—by losing the war, some would argue—following the war and are no longer a factor in Japanese national life. Still, it is difficult for government officials today or for the Japanese people to lay all the blame on the military, who, after all, were the defenders of the nation. It is especially difficult to criticize the military when it means criticism of ordinary soldiers who fought for Japan, who may have suffered the most during the war years. In Japan the Bereaved Families Association (*Izoku Kai*), perhaps equivalent to American Veterans associations, regularly object to the characterization of the actions of the Japanese military as uniformly or even generally “criminal.”

Moreover, despite the overwhelming evidence of military culpability in many of the charges of Japanese wrongdoing, the involvement, cooperation, and indeed enthusiasm of the average Japanese citizen in the war effort is difficult to dispute. There is little evidence of underground opposition to militarism in prewar and wartime Japan except for Communist agitators

who spent the war years in jail. As a result, guilt is everywhere and nowhere. Unlike Germany where the Nazi party label distinguishes the “bad” German from everyday Germans and official lists of Nazi affiliation allow a focus on individuals, Japan has no easily identifiable “criminal.”¹³

Thus, responsibility for wartime wrongdoing must be generalized and symbolic for the most part. In practical terms, for these apologies, the question of who is “really” responsible is generally not addressed, with general guilt for “Japan” and “our country” being accepted by all parties.

Nevertheless, there are those who would argue that the Japanese government should try harder to assign culpability. The 1996 United Nations report condemning Japan called for Japan to “identify and punish those responsible for the sex slavery” (“Report on the mission,” 1996). This is a new demand and it is not clear exactly how guilt would be determined here. Are the old soldiers who participated, thinking these women were prostitutes, to be charged? Are there individuals in the military establishment who can be deemed responsible?

In this study, I do not focus on the actual nature of the alleged crimes, on their validity, or on whether the crimes deserve our condemnation. The basic facts concerning allegations of Japanese behavior are not generally contested; it is the interpretation of these facts and the official acknowledgment of guilt that has been disputed and is a matter of political debate. In any case, for our purposes, we accept the allegations as valid, as requiring, justifying or at least providing a basis for apology. It is the response of the Japanese, and especially the Japanese government, to these charges that we turn to now.

3 The early apologies

Repairing relationships

One of the most compelling reasons for national apologies is to repair relationships with those who have been harmed or offended by past actions. This can be especially important if the aggrieved parties are neighbors with whom one maintains regular business and social relationships or if they are internal constituencies whose good will, participation, and support in the political order is to be encouraged. Early apologies of the Japanese government concerning its militaristic past—in particular, those aimed at Korea and China in the 1980s—are clearly motivated by the desire to rebuild fractured relationships.

Although all apologies are directed utterances—that is, they have an intended audience—relationship apologies are directed toward a specific “other,” the victim or representative of the victim of wrongdoing. When apologies are directed to a more general audience such as “the public,” “posterity,” or “society,” the relationship between the wronged party and the apologizer is not so direct.

Relationship apologies are routinely associated with what has been called “visit diplomacy” (Edstrom 1999: 44), that is, face-to-face meetings of high-level representatives of the two parties of the relationship. Whenever a high-ranking dignitary from Korea or China made an official visit to Japan, or when a Japanese dignitary visited abroad, an apology from Japan was requested and forthcoming. The apology was expected to reaffirm the notion of Japan’s history as “aggressor nation” and reassure Asian nations that Japan would not become a threat again.

Japan–Korea: a legacy of colonialism

Another characteristic of relationship apologies is the tailoring of the apology to the specific grievances of the receiving party. Korea’s view on apology was different from that of China or other Asian nations. Japan had annexed Korea in 1910, initiating a stormy colonial relationship marked by recalcitrance and rebellion on the side of the Koreans and by harsh repressive rule by the Japanese. Korea’s view of the past and the focus of the apology thus centered not on wartime atrocities but on Japanese

colonial rule from 1910 to 1945, covering a much longer period of time, most of which would be considered prewar Japan. Koreans wanted recognition of Japan's wrongful annexation and associated depredations of the Korean people.

In the mid 1980s, a number of contemporary issues in postwar Japan–Korea relations encouraged the sense that Japan had not fully resolved its prewar and wartime past. These issues included the legal status and treatment of resident Koreans in Japan, compensation for Korean victims of the atomic bomb and the repatriation of Koreans who had been stranded in Sakhalin since 1945. These issues had been the subject of public protest and media attention in both Japan and Korea.

Although Japan made a number of apologies to China and North Korea as well as other Asian neighbors in the 1980s, in this chapter I focus on several apologies directed toward South Korea.¹ In particular, I examine the imperial apologies of 1984 and 1990 along with the accompanying apology statements of Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki in 1990. I also look at the Korean response to apology and how the apology process developed in the public press.

Previous apologies

Japan had officially expressed a certain degree of apology or regret at the time of postwar settlement treaties with its Asian neighbors. At the signing ceremony normalizing relations between the Republic of Korea (ROK, South Korea) and Japan in 1965, Japanese Foreign Minister Shiina expressed “true regret (*makoto ni ikan*)” and “deep remorse (*fukaku hansei*)” concerning an “unfortunate period in our countries’... history” (AS March 31, 1989: 5).² The terms “remorse (*hansei*)” and “regret (*ikan*)” as well as “unfortunate past” in these early statements establish the basic vocabulary for apologies that follow. The treaty with South Korea also provided one-time funds for claims against Japan by Korean residents. These funds were intended to settle all claims of Korean residents although legal interpretation has allowed individuals to sue the government for specific offenses, that is, the comfort women and forced labor suits of the 1990s.³

In a joint written communiqué that established the basis for renewed relations with China in 1972, Japan was more explicit: “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 (*fukaku hansei*)” (“Joint communique,” 1972).

Beginning in the mid-1980s, apology emerged repeatedly in the diplomatic dialogue between Japan and its nearest neighbors China and Korea. In general, these apologies grew out of the increasing recognition on all sides of the importance of Asian relationships as the Cold War began to thaw. Japan was attempting to develop a broader base of international relationships to balance what some thought was an over-dependence on the

United States. Stable governments in China and Korea seemed ready to “bury the hatchet” as well. Economically, both China and Korea depended or wanted to depend on Japanese largesse and partnership in developing their economic capabilities.

A more immediate and dramatic cause for the increased demand for apology in the 1980s was the textbook controversy that erupted in the summer of 1982.⁴ The controversy arose as a result of a reported change in textbook guidelines. It was reported incorrectly in the Japanese media that the Education Ministry had changed its policy by removing the word “invade”⁵ replacing it with a less negative word “advance” to describe the escalation of the Japan–China conflict in 1937 into full-scale war. Although the Education Ministry had only “suggested” a milder tone and later newspaper statements retracted the original story, there was no way to retract the strongly negative reaction in China and in Korea. To China, this seemed contrary to previous diplomatic understandings of 1972 and 1978 when Japanese diplomats had seemed to apologize for Japanese aggression in China. Despite repeated denials by Education Ministry officials, in the end Japanese Cabinet Secretary Miyazawa Kiichi (1982) apologized for the misunderstanding and reassured both China and Korea that no significant change in the way the war was represented was intended.

Despite the exaggerated reports of changes in Japanese textbooks and the supersensitive reaction to nuances in wording by Chinese and Korean observers, the controversy previews the heightened concern with words and how history is to be interpreted that attend later apologies. The textbook controversy brought historical issues to the forefront of diplomatic and public attention, reviving a volatile and inflammatory issue for Japan–Asia relations and drawing attention to the underlying lack of trust and suspicion concerning Japan that remained in China and Korea. Although both China and Korea seemed satisfied with the resolution of the textbook issue, the specter of the past had reemerged; history had become a major issue in Japanese foreign relations.

1984: Emperor Hirohito to ROK President Chun Doo Hwan

On September 6, 1984, President Chun Doo Hwan of South Korea made the first official postwar visit of a Korean head of state to Japan since Korean independence in 1948. As condition for his visit, Korea insisted on an imperial apology. Under the postwar Japanese constitution, the Emperor’s role is “symbolic”; in that role he regularly acts as head of state and representative of Japan and the Japanese people on ceremonial occasions. From the Korean perspective, because the annexation of Korea had been carried out in the name of the Emperor, the Emperor was the appropriate, and the only appropriate person, to make the apology (*KH* May 17, 1990: 1; *KH* May 22, 1990: 8). As we shall see, the imperial role as

“chief apologizer” will be challenged during the 1990 apology and will diminish in significance thereafter although it does not completely disappear.⁶

Hirohito's words

In the official setting of a dinner party at the Imperial palace on the evening of September 6, Emperor Hirohito (Showa) made the following remarks:

Your country and ours are neighboring countries across a narrow strait; from olden times there has been significant cultural exchange in many areas. Our country learned many things from your country. For example, it is an important fact to say that in the early imperial era, in the 6th and 7th century, many Korean people came to Japan and taught us such things as learning, culture and technology. With such a long history, a deep relationship of neighbors existed. Notwithstanding that relationship, *there was for a brief period in this century an unfortunate past between our two countries. This is truly regrettable; and it will not be repeated again.*

(AS May 25, 1990: 4, emphasis added)

If we look first at the apology statement itself (italics), Emperor Hirohito expressed “regret” for “an unfortunate past” during “a brief period in this century.” Although this statement meets the minimum requirements of apology by offering regret for past actions, the naming of the offense is extremely vague and nonspecific. Although it is not always necessary to be explicit when both sides are fully aware of the offense, the national (collective) apology probably depends much on a clear statement of wrongdoing. If, as Tavuchis (1991) suggests, one of the primary functions of public apology is to acknowledge the nature of the wrongdoing “for the record” so to speak (109, 115–117), then the lack of specificity is fairly serious. In Hirohito’s apology even the basic details of who, when, where, and what are lacking. Who is responsible for this “unfortunate past”?

Ambiguity and lofty euphemism were typical of imperial statements. Partly, this is a matter of dignity. But more than that, part of the traditional mystique associated with the Emperor was that he used special language, speaking in ways unlike ordinary people. Perhaps the best and most famous example of imperial rhetoric is Hirohito’s words in 1945 announcing the end of World War II to the Japanese people that “the war has developed not necessarily to our advantage.” Hirohito had made similarly vague comments on other occasions with foreign dignitaries since the war. Once, on a visit to the United States in 1975, Hirohito described World War II to President Ford as follows: “We endured a brief, unfortunate ordeal as storms raged in the usually quiet Pacific.” During that same visit Hirohito expressed his thanks to the American people for their help in Japanese recovery “immediately following that unfortunate war for which I feel deep

sadness.”⁷ When Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiao Peng visited Japan in 1978, Hirohito referred to the past with the statement: “At one time, there were unfortunate events” (AS May 11, 1990: 29).

In comparison with these prior statements, then, and with the Korean audience in mind, Hirohito’s 1984 apology to President Chun does seem to have attempted to be more explicit and more responsive. For example, he did not refer to the “war,” instead using the phrase “sometime in the last century.” This was broad enough to include the longer period of Japanese colonial rule of Korea.

As for the expression of regret, the distanced “it is regrettable” rather than “I regret” or “Japan regrets” indicates again the fairly weak nature of this apology. “Truly regrettable” (*makoto ni ikan*) is a bureaucratic expression of official regret, fairly perfunctory and formal in tone. It did not indicate a great deal of responsibility on the part of Japan.

Hirohito’s reassurance that “this will not happen again” illustrates a strategy of forbearance. Such reassurances are a common component of apology statements and have been shown to enhance the apologetic value of the statement (Scher and Darley 1997). These assurances were of particular concern for Asian victims of Japanese militarism.

Introductory remarks: audience and appetite

If we apply our Burkean method of looking at how the apology is introduced, that is, the “appetite” of the apology (see Chapter 1), we can see that the preliminary statements introducing Hirohito’s apology reveal relationship and particular relationship—that is, the relationship between Korea and Japan—as the underlying motivation of the apology. Face to face with the visiting President of South Korea, Hirohito refers to “your country” (Korea) and our neighbor “across a narrow strait,” thus clearly specifying the target audience. Close geographical and historical ties with Korea are stressed. These are the incontrovertible and unchanging aspects of the relationship.

This introduction then prepares the audience for the apology that is to follow by reminding the audience of a long (and positive) relationship; the appetite being created is the desire for it to continue. To paraphrase: “We have had a long and important relationship; there has been a brief bad period...”. The unstated but assumed attitude being encouraged is “Wouldn’t you like to continue?... Isn’t it too bad that things have come to this?” The stage is thus set for the apology that follows. (This tactic in selling one’s apology is familiar in personal apologies as the wayward husband reminds the wife of their long and heretofore happy relationship before he asks forgiveness for current peccadilloes.)

Hirohito’s introductory remarks also acknowledge the cultural debt to Korean immigrants of the sixth and seventh century. Although Japanese regularly acknowledge their cultural debt to Chinese culture, it is less

common to refer to Koreans as transmitters and teachers of civilization. If humility—humiliation, lowering of oneself, self-abnegation—is a necessary aspect of apology, then already in the introduction a humble (lower) position of Japan as student and beneficiary of ancient Korea had been asserted. This is consistent with, anticipates, and prepares for the humble stance of apology that follows.

Korean response/acceptance of apology

Despite what would later be considered limitations as a forthright apology, President Chun Doo Hwan and the Korean government at the time accepted Emperor Hirohito's apology. The Korean press hailed it as a positive step in establishing a new relationship with headlines of "Emperor apologizes" (AS May 13, 1990: 2). But this was not to last. On reflection, the inadequacies of the apology soon became apparent. More specifics, less genteel euphemism, and a more heartfelt expression of regret were required.

1990: Emperor Akihito to ROK President Roh Tae Woo

When President Roh Tae Woo visited Japan six years later in May 1990, Korean authorities again asked the emperor to apologize. Although it had only been six years since the previous visit and apology, a number of things had changed. Emperor Hirohito had died in 1989; his son Akihito now occupied the Japanese throne. The new President of South Korea Roh Tae Woo faced social and political unrest in Korea as he tried to move toward "democratization," away from the authoritarian nature and corruption of previous military governments. Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki was new as well; thus, all three primary players in the ritual of remorse represented a younger generation.

Criticism of Emperor Hirohito's remarks had arisen soon after the 1984 speech. Criticism focused primarily on the insufficient acknowledgment of Japanese wrongdoing. Instead of a broad general statement of regret for past wrongs, Korea wanted an explicit recognition of "colonial rule" that Japan had imposed upon Korea and the consequent sufferings this had caused. Koreans wanted Japan recognized as the "wrongdoer." Recent remarks of Japanese Foreign Minister Nakayama Taro in March 1990 apologizing for Japan's abandoning of Korean soldiers in Sakhalin at the end of the war and recognizing Japanese responsibility, had suggested that the Japanese government attitudes were changing (Nakayama 1990).

Who speaks for the nation?

At the time of Emperor Hirohito's remarks in 1984 the Emperor's role in providing the apology had not been a major issue. By the time of Akihito's

speech six years later, the imperial role had become a major issue of contention. Japanese government officials resisted the Korean request for a second imperial apology for several reasons. First, apology was demeaning to the imperial institution. Conservatives wanted to maintain the Emperor's dignity and to keep the Emperor separate from controversial political issues. Besides, Emperor Hirohito had already apologized; a second apology that was significantly different suggested that the first had not been good enough.

Second, government authorities as well as academic scholars agreed that the postwar Constitution's assignment of a "symbolic" role to the Emperor prohibited the Emperor from making political statements. What was "political" was, of course, difficult to define. The fact that the Emperor's words of greeting had become a diplomatic issue with international implications meant, to conservative and cautious government authorities, that the apology was "political." However, whatever cautious conservatives might wish, for the Emperor *not* to apologize was also political.

Akihito's words of apology

The visit, the itinerary, and the requisite apology in 1990 follow the pattern of the 1984 visit in many respects. Like President Chun before him, President Roh Tae Woo arrived with his wife and entourage with much fanfare at Haneda airport and was taken to greet the Emperor. Emperor Akihito's apology at the welcoming banquet was also similar to his father's six years earlier, including a direct quote of Hirohito's apology:

In the old days, the Korean peninsula and our country enjoyed very close interaction as nearest neighbors. Even in the Edo period, when our country was closed, both officials and people together never stopped welcoming envoys from your country.... However, despite such a long history of fruitful relations between our country and the Korean peninsula, I am reminded of the words of the Showa emperor [Hirohito] that "There was a brief period in this century an unfortunate past between our two countries. This is truly regrettable and it will not happen again." *When I think about the sufferings of the people in your country caused by our country in this unfortunate period, I cannot help but feel intense sorrow (tsuuseki).*

(Akihito May 24, 1990, emphasis added)

Like the previous emperor's remarks, the apology statement was not very explicit as to wrongdoing although Akihito did acknowledge the "suffering" of the Korean people "caused by our country." The acceptance of Japanese responsibility as the "cause" of the "unfortunate past" addressed one of the major criticisms of the previous apology.

Continuity with the previous apology was emphasized by the direct quote of Emperor Hirohito's remarks embedded in the apology. The echo of the previous imperial remarks serves also to emphasize the position of the government that Emperor Akihito was only reiterating what Emperor Hirohito had said before. Substantive change in the content was to be avoided in order that the speech would not be political. Including Emperor Hirohito's statement also emphasized the repetitive nature of the demand as well as the apology. It's as if to say, "As we have said before..."

In communicating regret, Akihito's style was more personal. "When I think about the sufferings of the people in your country" suggests personal engagement and emotional reaction to the offense in question. The explicit use of the personal pronoun "I" (*watakushi*)—often unstated in Japanese—in contrast to the more typical "our country" (*wa ga kuni*) as the subject, also indicates a more personal statement.

Critics focused on the term *tsuuseki* (intense sorrow) as the "*kii waado*" (keyword) of the apology. The word *tsuuseki* is written with two Chinese characters meaning "pain" and "regret" and can be translated as "intense regret." It is not a common word and has been criticized as somewhat archaic and obscure (Suzuki 1999a: 165). Despite the efforts to present Akihito's regret in a more personal way, some were unsatisfied with the expression as a substitute for "true" apology, that is, words such as *shazai*, *owabi*, or *sumimasen* (Hamada June 6, 1990: 17).

Audience and appetite

When we compare the introductory remarks of Akihito's speech with those of his father, Akihito similarly reminded the audience of geographical proximity and historical connections, following the strategy and theme of relationship of the previous imperial statement. The reference to the "Korean peninsula" instead of "your country" (South Korea) broadened the target audience to include both North and South Korea, thus reflecting Japanese interest in reestablishing diplomatic relations with North Korea.

Statements immediately following the apology also stressed relationship as Akihito moved away from the prewar and wartime past to the postwar past and present: "After this period passed, enthusiastic people... in both countries who wished for the rebirth of Japanese-Korean friendship have restored a relationship of friendship and cooperation between the two countries."

As examples of positive improvement in contemporary relations, Akihito noted the importance of exchange programs for young people in particular and other programs of cultural exchange. Contemporary goals of prosperity and peace are cited, offering common ground for building the relationship. The imperial statement closed with the confident assertion, common to most ceremonial visits, that President Roh's visit represented "the

cornerstone of a new Japan–Korea relationship as we approach the 21st century.” Thus, throughout the speech, the importance of relationship as the underlying purpose of the apology is reaffirmed.

“The past”

Akihito’s speech provides a good opportunity to examine the representation of “the past” in apology. By definition, apology is (usually) about the past; but the past is not a simple one-time event or even series of events but rather several “pasts,” selected, arranged, and presented to the audience. There are three different “pasts” in this speech: (1) the long-ago past including the example of the pre-modern Edo past as a time of “good” relations; (2) the “unfortunate past” of “this century,” which in this case means from 1910 to 1945, the period of Japan’s colonial rule of Korea; and (3) the postwar past, that is, the immediate past of Hirohito’s apology, student exchange programs, and restored relationships. Note that two of these “pasts” are represented as “good” pasts, when Japan’s relationship with Korea was friendly and “fruitful.” By surrounding the “bad” past of “this century” with the earlier and later “good” pasts, the “bad past” is swallowed up or contained. The diverse pasts are folded into a single entity, in which the overriding unity is that of relationship and timelessness. Indirectly, the action or attitude promoted is contextualization and minimalization of the “bad times”; it’s as if to say, “however bad it was, it was but a brief episode in the long term of relationship.”

The strategy of juxtaposing good and bad pasts can be seen as an example of “bolstering” (Benoit 1995b; Ware and Linkugel 1973), the strategy of enhancing the image of the apologizer with the use of testimony such as character witness or “good behavior.” Good pasts are mentioned to offset the negative effects of the wrongdoing with positive evidence.

This strategy can also be seen as Burkean “perspective by incongruity,” in which contradictions in the terminology—that is, the contradictory aspects of these different pasts (the good/bad, the old/new)—are juxtaposed and lumped together as “the past.” The ambiguities thus created unsettle and reshape the understanding of the past encouraging a new orientation to the past. The “search for a usable past” becomes a process of finding “good pasts” that can be accumulated and used to overwhelm the “bad pasts” that are the focus of the apology.

Prime Minister Kaifu to President Roh

Many people thought that Prime Minister Kaifu, as the highest elected official in Japan, was the appropriate person to apologize to President Roh in 1990. Prime Minister Kaifu announced his intent to apologize shortly after President Roh’s visit was announced. On May 9 at a Diet budget meeting in answer to questions from the press, he stated that he intended to

make “a frank apology” (*sotchoku no hansei*) for the “fact(s) of colonial rule” during President Roh’s visit (AS May 10, 1990: 1). This seems to be very close to what the Koreans wanted. He repeated his intent several times before the visit occurred, but all eyes were on Emperor Akihito and his remarks scheduled for the banquet on May 24. Unlike the imperial remarks, Prime Minister Kaifu’s remarks to President Roh took the form of a dialogue in private meetings. These remarks did not have the same formal or dramatic force of the ceremonial occasion of Emperor Akihito’s remarks.

Kaifu’s words of apology: owabi

Prime Minister Kaifu made the following statement to President Roh in their first meeting on May 24 and repeated it the next day:

During a period in the past, the people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable grief and suffering because of the actions of our country. (We) are humbly remorseful (*kenkyo ni hansei*) and wish to note our frank feelings of apology (*owabi*).

(Kaifu 1990)

The most significant thing in this apology is the use of the word *owabi* which specifically means “apology,” thus going beyond the “regrets” and “remorse” of previous statements. “Humbly remorseful” (*kenkyo ni hansei*) is familiar from previous apologies but “frank feelings of apology” (*sotchoku no owabi no kimochi*) was new. The path-breaking use of the word *owabi* (apology) was largely ignored by the press and Korean audiences.

In terms of specificity of wrongdoing, Prime Minister Kaifu’s statement was only slightly more explicit than the emperor’s remarks. Prime Minister Kaifu referred to the “actions” (*koui*) of Japan (sometimes translated as “conduct”) and he acknowledged the “unbearable grief and suffering” (*taegatai kanashimi to kurushimi*) of the Korean people caused by Japan, but these characterizations were not remarkably different from Emperor Akihito’s “suffering caused by our country.” Prime Minister Kaifu did not refer to “colonial rule” despite his earlier declaration of intent to do so.

Note that in these remarks, as in the imperial remarks, the “people of the Korean peninsula” were identified as the victim of Japanese wrongdoing, thus including both North Korea and South Korea as the target audience of the statement.

“Appetite”: relationship in international context

Although Prime Minister Kaifu’s apology statement was not so different in meaning or scope from that of Emperor Akihito, the framing of those remarks in a dialogue with President Roh demonstrates a different understanding of relationship and motivation for apology. In the exchange

between Prime Minister Kaifu and President Roh, Prime Minister Kaifu began by describing a trip to Eastern Europe earlier in 1990 and the great changes he saw there:

Amid these world upheavals, the building of a new world order is beginning. Japan and Korea are both being asked to cooperate actively in this new world order. We must make the effort to clear a path for a better way, untrodden by those before us. It is essential to strengthen even more the friendly cooperative relationship between Japan and Korea, to exchange opinions frankly and closely concerning those issues that impact the relationship of the two closest neighbors.

(Ibid.)

At this point President Roh chimed in, giving examples of Gorbachev and “perestroika” plus the breakdown of Communist regimes in Europe. He went on to note, however, with a hint of jocularly, that the winds of change “have not reached Asia, having been unable to cross over the high Himalayas.” Pointing to uneasy relations between North and South Korea and changes in China, President Roh expressed his hopes for a new era of peace in Asia.

Prime Minister Kaifu then connected his main point to the apology that followed: “It is important that Japan and Korea cooperate in Asia-Pacific and world organizations. In order to build this new relationship, the first thing we must do is deal seriously with the unfortunate past between our countries.”

In terms of the motivation and logic of apology, then, these prefatory remarks indicated a new emphasis. Relationship was still the primary concern. However, relationship was not seen here as a bilateral relationship based on geographical and historical ties; instead it is presented in an international and regional context. There was only a brief mention of geography (“two closest neighbors”) and there was no reference to the long historical relationship described in the imperial statements. Rather than resurrecting memories of a long-ago past, Prime Minister Kaifu pointed to the “untrodden” path of the future. Thus, in Kaifu’s logic, “The world is changing; we must develop our relationship. In order to build a relationship [for the future,] we must deal with the past.”

Japan’s reaching out to Korea and Asia can be seen simply as a realistic appraisal of security and alliance needs after the retreat of Russia and the United States from Cold War confrontation. Yoshida Yutaka (1994) goes further, asserting that Japanese apologies grew out of Japanese ambition to assert leadership in Asia. This ambition, according to Yoshida, led Japanese leadership to attempt reconciliation with Asian neighbors using apologies and other conciliatory strategies. In Yoshida’s view, the underlying motive of the immediate benefits of improved relationship prevented or forestalled real engagement with the issues of the past. Yoshida may be correct that

there were hidden agendas here; but in any case, the text clearly indicates the desire to “rebuild the relationship” in a post-Cold War world.

Most importantly, the complementary statements by President Roh in the text demonstrate the joint or mutual interests of improved relationship. While Japanese self-interest was unquestionably inherent in the quest for improved relationship, President Roh had reasons of his own for supporting an improved relationship, as his repeated requests for economic “generosity” in technological transfers and reduction of the trade imbalance were a feature of the three-day visit (*AS* May 26, 1990: 3). President Roh and Prime Minister Kaifu are thus singing a duet, complementing and echoing each other in building the common theme of relationship.

After Prime Minister Kaifu stated the apology, he moved to more contemporary interests, reassuring President Roh of progress on various issues. As he ended his remarks, Prime Minister Kaifu again affirmed the connection between apology and relationship as he noted the intent of the Japanese government to “put aside issues that have their origins in the past and from now on, to start moving toward a new relationship.” This desire to “put the past behind us,” a primary function of apology, will surface again as a focus of apologies of the 1990s.

Crafting the apology in public⁸

To say that national apologies are motivated by the desire to restore relationships suggests the intersubjective nature of such apologies. That is, both parties create the apology. Apology-making is a process that must reconcile different perspectives on the wrongdoing under consideration as well as different views as to the appropriate level of regret. The process of arriving at mutually agreeable language to both parties is not a trivial task, especially when matters of historical interpretation are involved.

In the case of the 1990 apologies to President Roh, to a remarkable extent the negotiation of wording took place in public, in full view of all audiences, giving multiple opportunities for revision and tailoring of the apology. The news media in both Japan and Korea played an important role. Thus, Burke’s concept of the “appetite,” creation of anticipation and expectation, applies in a larger sense over weeks, covering extensive news coverage before, during, and after the actual apology. Media coverage provided a “buildup” of dramatic tension that greatly affected the performance of the apology and its reception. In this section and the following sections I trace the chronology of newspaper coverage of Roh’s visit and the upcoming apology, demonstrating the development of expectation and the emergent quality of the apology.

Announcement of President Roh’s visit

Speculation concerning the Emperor’s remarks began immediately with the announcement on May 8 of President Roh’s upcoming visit to Japan.

In a front-page article, the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* discussed the visit and the request for a new apology (May 9, 1990: 2). In general the article was sympathetic to Korean demands for apology, recognizing the shortcomings of Hirohito's speech to President Chun in 1984 and presenting the text of previous apology statements for comparison. The article also noted the increase in anti-Japanese feelings among younger Koreans.

The news article also reported that Japanese government officials had raised concerns about the constitutionality of the Emperor's speech. On the next day, Prime Minister Kaifu offered to apologize for Japan's "colonial rule" to President Roh. Thus, the issues of who should give the apology as well as its content were introduced for public consideration. The stage was set in Japan for public dialogue and anticipation of the new apology.

Korean requests/demands

Following the initial announcement, during the two weeks leading up to President Roh's visit, Korean authorities issued several public statements as to their expectations of the upcoming apology. On May 10, the Korean Foreign Minister spoke to a visiting Japanese delegation saying that Korea expected the Emperor to make a statement "concerning Japan's colonial rule consistent with [Japanese] Foreign Minister Nakayama's earlier statement in the Diet" (AS May 11, 1990: 3). Nakayama had indicated a "heartfelt apology" for stranded Koreans in Sakhalin.

On May 14, President Roh himself met with Japanese reporters in Seoul to discuss the apology. Addressing news reports of Japanese government reluctance to go beyond Hirohito's statement of 1984 and again recalling Foreign Minister Nakayama's admission of wartime responsibility, President Roh emphasized his expectation of apology in the Emperor's remarks, "Isn't it customary for the aggressor/perpetrator to apologize to the victim?" (AS May 15, 1990: 1). On May 15, after news reports of internal Japanese government discussions concerning the imperial statement, the Korean government made an official request to the Japanese government saying that a "clear apology (*meikaku na shazai*) is needed" (AS (Evening) May 15, 1990: 1).

Japanese concerns

On the Japanese side, initial reports indicated that the government was reluctant to expand on what Emperor Hirohito had said six years earlier, citing concerns for Constitutional issues. The word *fumikomu* which means "to step into" was used over and over again to mean the Emperor's remarks should not go "too far," they should not "break new ground." As long as the Emperor did not "step into," as long as he did not stray too far from what had already been said, it would be okay. This, of course, was completely contrary to what the Koreans wanted in a new apology.

When Prime Minister Kaifu indicated immediately that he would make an apology to the Korean president, it may have been with the hope that the controversy could be avoided with his taking responsibility. He repeated his offer throughout the weeks before President Roh's arrival to no avail.

“Will we have to prostrate ourselves again after this?”

Internal discussions of the Japanese government became public on May 14 with an inopportune comment by Chief Cabinet Secretary Ozawa: “Will we have to prostrate/humiliate (*dogeza*) ourselves again after this?” (*AS* (Evening) May 16, 1990: 1). The word *dogeza* does not have an exact English equivalent; it refers to the practice of “kowtowing” or prostrating oneself on the ground in front of superior beings. Ozawa's full quote included a preliminary phrase that meant “to crawl on the ground” or “grovel” (*jibeta ni haitsukubau*). To the Korean press and public, the *dogeza* statement indicated a lack of enthusiasm and/or sincerity among the highest government circles for the apology. “We are not asking the Japanese to grovel, merely to acknowledge the truth,” responded one exasperated Korean (Hamada and Suzuki 1990: 14). In response to the uproar in Korean press, Secretary Ozawa met with the Korean ambassador in Tokyo the next day to make a public apology for his remarks.

Ozawa's statement was a political gaffe. The statement nevertheless reflects, I think, a certain frustration and irritation within the conservative Japanese government at the repeated Korean demands for apology. Why was it necessary to apologize again (and again)? Another comment that was reported at the same time also displayed a certain cynicism concerning Korean motives: “We're giving them all this economic aid and support, isn't that enough?”

On a more abstract level, the *dogeza* statement illustrates the painful and demeaning dimensions of apology that are sometimes overlooked or underrated. Although Koreans may not have thought that they were asking the Japanese to “grovel,” an underlying assumption of apology is self-abasement, an acknowledgment of moral weaknesses, a bowing to the other person as a superior moral being. From a historical perspective, as Korea's nemesis under colonial occupation, Japan had been defeated and humbled at the end of the war. In the postwar period, however, Japan had regained a certain prominence in the world. To insist that Japan apologize and thus bow before Korea had psychological and nationalistic overtones not just for Japan, but for Korea as well. For our understanding of apology, the reciprocal gratification and costs of apology in hierarchical terms (pride and loss of face) are illustrated in this comment and are not insignificant. These implications, especially when exercised repeatedly, would suggest that Japan's superior economic position *vis-à-vis* other Asian nations in the world may have provided particular gratification to Korea.

Drafts of the Emperor's speech

Perhaps the most significant evidence of the intersubjective nature of relationship apologies was the publication of two preliminary drafts of the imperial speech. Government advisors from the Prime Minister's office, the Foreign Ministry and the Imperial Household staff who were in charge of writing the imperial statement provided a first draft to the press and to the Korean government on May 15, over a week before the President's arrival. This version differs from the final statement in the statement of regret: "When I think about the suffering our country caused the people of the Korean peninsula, my heart aches (*kokoro ni itamu*)" (AS May 16, 1990: 1).

The phrase *kokoro ni itamu* to express "heartache" is an interesting attempt of the drafters of the speech to insert plain speaking and personality into the speech. As one advisor noted afterward, "The emperor is a very simple and innocent person and we wanted language that would reflect that" (Hamada 1990: 17). In Japanese, the use of "native Japanese words" (*yamato kotoba*) rather than the more formal Chinese compounds is a way to effect a more personal and "homespun" flavor. Thus *kokoro* meaning "heart" and *owabi* meaning apology sound more personal, the kind of thing one would say in private to close friends, and thus more sincere perhaps, than the more formal words such as *ikan* (regret), *hansei* (remorse/apology), or *shazai* (apology/crime).

Unfortunately, the phrase "my heart aches" of the first draft was translated into a Korean phrase (*kamabuge*) commonly used in karaoke (popular singalong genre) to express one's feelings when one's lover has left (!) To make matters worse, a cartoon appeared in a major Korean newspaper with musical notes coming from what looked like Mt Fuji. The cartoon character wonders about the sound of singing that he can hear in the distance, "oh, my heart aches." The final frame says "oh that, that's the Emperor practicing his apology." Needless to say, when the Japanese Foreign Ministry became aware of the connotations of the translation and its representation in the Korean media, they had to make a better choice of words (Hamada 1990: 16). On May 22, the government released a second version of the proposed apology. In this version, instead of "heartache," Akihito "feels keenly" (*tsuuseitsu ni kanjiru*). This version was dropped when one of the advisors suggested that this expression was used primarily at funerals.

The changes in these drafts largely revolved around the degree of emotion and feeling of regret. For Emperor Hirohito in 1984, the "unfortunate past" was "truly regrettable." On May 15, 1990, Emperor Akihito's "heart aches." In the May 22 version, he "feels keenly" (*tsuuseitsu ni kanjiru*); the final version of May 24 was "I cannot help but feel intense regret" (*tsuuseiki no nen wo kinjiemasen*). Unfortunately, Korean audiences wanted the word *shazai*, although Kaifu's less formal *owabi* might have sufficed.

These changes also reflect, I think, one aspect of the dilemma of national apology. The apology must seem sincere and must apologize, but the dignity

of the issuing country and the person giving the apology must be maintained. Face must be saved. The combination of words that manages the balancing act required is not easy to achieve.

Whatever the reasons for government reluctance to use certain specific words of regret and apology, namely *shazai*, the words specifying wrongdoing are still missing in apologies of both Prime Minister Kaifu and Emperor Akihito. Just to say one regrets the pain and suffering one has caused still seems weak as acknowledgment of the wrongness of the action. “I’m sorry I caused you distress” may be an apology, but it is significantly different from “I’m sorry I beat you up” in the acknowledgment of the actions that are wrong. Akihito’s statement did acknowledge that Japan caused pain and suffering, but it allowed and indeed encouraged the interpretation that this result was inadvertent or unintended.

Although the final version missed the mark, it is clear that much attention was given to the expression of emotion and “sincere” regret. This is a dilemma for all apologies and one that has continued to be a key issue for the Japanese government. We will revisit this issue during later apologies.

Public opinion and media

The Japanese public was given multiple opportunities to understand and appreciate and even participate to some extent in the upcoming apology. In the weeks between the announcement of President Roh’s visit on May 8 and his departure from Japan on May 26, the newspapers carried articles concerning the upcoming visit every day. The May 15 first draft of Akihito’s remarks occasioned a full-scale discussion of the proposed speech in the Japanese news media. A full-page article in the *Asahi Shimbun* enlisted comments from constitutional and other scholars as well as Koreans living in Japan and ordinary citizens.

At this point the discussion in Japanese newspapers centered on the emperor’s role and the Constitution rather than on the words of the apology. In general, the Japanese public agreed that Japan should apologize more fully and sensitively to the Koreans. Koreans living in Japan were generally skeptical and cynical concerning the government’s reluctance to apologize more forthrightly. When President Roh arrived in Japan on May 24 the entire front page of the *Asahi Shimbun* was devoted to the visit, plus a full page of pictures and three pages of details concerning the visit. Government pronouncements and opposition party opinions, both in Japan and Korea, the response of Korean and other Asian countries, the opinions of Koreans living in Japan, academic scholars and ordinary Japanese, two editorials—the Japanese media was intensely interested in Roh’s visit and Akihito’s apology. Thus, by the time the apology was actually delivered on May 24, the various audiences had had plenty of advance warning and chances to air their opinions. Expectations had been set on both sides. Issues had been debated. After the apology, coverage continued with discussions of the response abroad and the next steps in improving the relationship.

Korean response

In relationship apologies, the response of the offended party is all-important. Typically on these ceremonial occasions attending relationship apology, the recipient government and its representatives responded favorably to the apologies offered. This was especially true of President Roh in 1990. His remarks are notable for their generosity in meeting Akihito's apology halfway. There are three examples of his response, the first immediately following the Emperor's remarks the evening Roh arrived in Japan, the second in a speech to the Japanese Diet the next day, and third, in remarks to a delegation of Koreans living in Japan just before President Roh returned to Korea.

President Roh's dinner greeting

Immediately after the Emperor's speech at the welcoming dinner, President Roh rose to greet the assembled dignitaries. After preliminary statements of thanks for Japanese hospitality and congratulations on Emperor Akihito's new reign, President Roh declared:

From olden days until today, Japan and Korea have been close neighbors. The people of both countries have been linked by a narrow body of water and have mutually influenced each other's cultural institutions However, as my people entered contemporary times, we experienced a period of suffering. Looking at the long history of friendly neighbor relations, the dark period was relatively short. The facts of history cannot be erased or forgotten. [However,] the Korean people cannot remain bound up (*sokubaku*) forever in the past. Based on the truly correct understanding of history by both countries, we can wash away (*arainagasu*) the errors (*ayamari*) of the past and we must begin a new age of friendship and cooperation.

(AS (Evening) May 25, 1990: 3)

These remarks are notable for Roh's efforts to find common ground with Akihito's apology. The first sentences echo Akihito's opening remarks almost word for word, repeating the emphasis on geography and historical closeness. Again following the pattern of Akihito's speech, President Roh then gave his version of the "unfortunate past," that is, "a period of suffering." It was not only Emperor Akihito who spoke in euphemisms. President Roh politely did not mention any specifics about the "dark period" or even that Japan was the villain who caused the "period of suffering." In fact, Roh even went beyond the imperial remarks in minimizing Japan's wrongdoing by emphasizing that the "dark" past was a "relatively short" period and by referring to the wrongdoing as "errors."

The next section was even more conciliatory. First, Roh's suggestion that Korea cannot remain "bound up forever in the past" implied that Korean

people have a responsibility for getting beyond the past. Next, we note the juxtaposition of two contradictory ideas: “The facts of history cannot be erased”; but “we can wash away the errors of the past.” The “eraseability” and the “uneraseability” of history and more particularly, of past wrongdoing, capture one of the essential contradictions of apology and its magic power, to “overcome the past.”⁹ The past of course can never be overcome. Nevertheless, Roh affirmed the power of words to bring about change as well as the importance of historical interpretation. The key to this magical transformation, Roh argued, is “the truly correct understanding of history.”

In the next sentence, Roh commented directly on the Emperor’s apology that he has just heard, “The fact that His Majesty, who is the symbol of new Japan and Japanese history, has expressed deep concern in this matter is very significant (*kiwamete imi fukai*).” Can we call this acceptance of Akihito’s apology? Perhaps not, although President Roh clearly indicated appreciation for Akihito’s remarks, noting in particular the importance of Akihito as symbol. This vague approval—he did not say, “we accept your apology”—can perhaps best be characterized as a positive reaction short of acceptance. It was interpreted as a favorable reaction by the Japanese press (*AS* May 25, 1990: 4).

Roh ended his greeting remarks by expressing his hope that Japan and Korea will become “close [in geography] close [in spirit]” (*chikakute, chikai kuni ni*).¹⁰ He reminded the audience of the changing world situation and the common interests of Japan and Korea as countries promoting “freedom and democracy” (presumably in contrast to the regimes of China and North Korea). He also suggested that Korea and Japan should take leading roles in promoting the “harmonious blending of East and West” in the Asia-Pacific region.

Roh’s Diet speech

President Roh had another opportunity to respond to the apology in a speech to the Japanese Diet the next day. Although President Roh had nothing specific to say about Akihito’s and Prime Minister Kaifu’s apologies in this forty-minute speech, he talked a great deal about his hopes for a “close [in geography] close [in spirit] relationship” between Korea and Japan. He also noted the lingering bad feelings of the Korean public toward Japan: “Although many things have changed [in the forty-five years since the end of the war], the walls of the heart that prevent friendship between our two peoples still remain.” He followed with examples of Korean grievances:

No one can understand the pain which caused school children just entering elementary school to rebel against teachers so that they could use their own names and not Japanese style names at school and to use our own mother tongue when being taught.

(*AS* May 25, 1990: 3)

Although President Roh went on to say “it is not necessary to mention today in this place the unimaginable lament, the trials and hardships our people experienced,” Roh was giving the Japanese Diet audience a clear indication that more specificity—that is, more “naming of the wrongdoing”—was needed.

Finally, in a refrain from the previous evening, President Roh reemphasized the importance of historical interpretation and how history could be overcome:

We cannot change the past, even the gods cannot do that. However the problem is history, how we today think of the past, how we explain it... By our actions we can sever the bonds of the past; we can loosen our stiff shoulders.

(Ibid.)

Roh's meeting with Koreans in Japan

A meeting with a representative group of Koreans living in Japan just before returning home provided President Roh a final opportunity for evaluating Akihito's apology more directly. In reviewing the events of the three-day trip, he indicated that he was “satisfied with the emperor's apology” and that the visit had “achieved what he had expected it to achieve” (AS May 26, 1990: 1). When questioned as to the exact words of the apology, President Roh insisted that it was not just Akihito's one speech that mattered, but the overall atmosphere of apology that had been expressed on his visit. He explained:

In the first summit meeting, PM Kaifu repeatedly apologized frankly. The emperor too, in comparison with the apology to President Chun in 1984, apologized clearly, to the extent that he may have gone beyond internal government limitations. Based on these things, the basic problem has been resolved.

(Ibid.)

In President Roh's evaluation, then, Prime Minister Kaifu's speech had mattered and he judged Akihito's speech favorably in comparison with the 1984 speech. Thus, “the basic problem has been resolved.” This would seem to be acceptance. Later in a joint press conference as President Roh was returning to Korea, he and Prime Minister Kaifu together declared that the problems of the past were resolved and that the issue of apology and the past would not be on the agenda in future meetings.

President Roh's acceptance of the apology seems based on an appreciation of Emperor Akihito's role, both in Korean eyes and in the Japanese political world. President Roh was willing to accept the limited nature of those remarks although his emphasis throughout his visit on “correct

historical understanding” suggested the weakness of both Emperor Akihito’s and Prime Minister Kaifu’s remarks in not specifying the wrongdoing more clearly.

Public opinion/multiple audiences

Although President Roh was willing to accept Emperor Akihito’s “understanding of history,” the Korean public was not. Typical was the headline of one Korean newspaper: “Japan’s apology and remorse is insufficient” (AS May 26, 1990: 3). According to a Korean public opinion poll taken shortly after President Roh’s visit to Japan, “only 8 percent were satisfied with the statement as an apology, while 79 percent were dissatisfied” (Hicks 1997: 77). A more ominous sign for the future of the relationship was that “dissatisfaction was highest in the twenties age group, who were furthest from having experienced Japanese rule.” Hicks interprets this negative reaction as arising from the internal Korean political environment:

[T]his generation...had also long been bitterly hostile to their own military-dominated regime, to the extent of frequent bloody rioting and even insurrection...[thus,] it seems that resentment of Japan may have fused with that of their own government, in view of the latter’s reliance on Japanese aid.

(Ibid.)

Sincerity: actions to support apology

According to a Japanese news report on reactions in Korea (AS May 26, 1990: 3), Korean newspapers focused on the remarks of Emperor Akihito, ignoring the accompanying statements of Prime Minister Kaifu and others. Moreover, newspapers focused on the words “deep regret” (*tsuuseki no nen*). “Instead of rhetorical flourishes like ‘deep regret’, what we want is evidence of apology (*shazai*)”. Although most newspapers recognized that Akihito’s apology was better than Hirohito’s apology of 1984, many discounted the words of the apology, withholding their final judgment of Japan’s apology until Japanese actions on related issues. “We are requesting compensation for wartime victims¹¹ and full rights for Koreans in Japan.” In other words, the sincerity of the Japanese government would be judged on later actions, not just on the words of apology.

Indeed, both the Korean and Japanese governments had recognized the importance of settling outstanding war-related issues. Aware of their potential to jeopardize the new relationship that they were attempting to fashion, the Japanese government had, in preparation for and during the meetings, made great efforts to settle several of the more pressing cases. On May 8 a joint meeting of Korea–Japan foreign ministries announced that they had reached an agreement on the long-awaited reform of the legal

status of third-generation Koreans living in Japan. Then, on May 17, the Japanese government announced the establishment of a fund for A-bomb victims living in Korea to be administered by the Korean government (AS May 17, 1990: 1). The repatriation of Sakhalin Koreans to Korea was also nearing resolution; on May 22 Prime Minister Kaifu announced an exchange plan that they hoped would be accomplished by August (AS May 25, 1990: 22). It looked as if the things of the past really were behind them. As Roh returned to Korea, the question of Japan's apology seemed to have been settled.

Summary: relationship apologies

Relationship apologies have as their purpose the restoration or strengthening of relationship. As part of a process of reconciliation, the relationship apology usually requires a personal, face-to-face meeting between representatives of the offended and the apologizing party. In the case of Japanese apologies to Korea, these occur amid much fanfare on highly publicized visits between Japanese and Korean officials.

Relationship apologies are jointly constructed and interactive. The call for apology (accusation) comes from the offended party, the apologizing party makes the apology and the offended party must either accept or reject (or something in between) the apology. When all goes well, the dialogue leads to reconciliation and "putting the past behind."

In actual practice, the process is more complex. Both parties must agree at some basic level as to the nature of the wrongdoing. The wording of the apology must often undergo some kind of negotiation, requiring perhaps multiple iterations until the words are agreeable to both sides. We see clear evidence of this process in the Korean apologies. Apologies may be repeated, sometimes to make up for inadequacies of the original apology (as in the case of the Akihito's apology to improve on that of Emperor Hirohito) but repeated apologies may also serve to reaffirm the basic principles of the original apology, as in Prime Minister Kaifu's multiple apologies to President Roh.

Apology is a ritual of submission, thus representing a significant face threat to the apologizing nation. How is this attribute of apology reflected in the relational dimensions of apology? In Japanese apologies to Korea, the economically powerful Japan acknowledged its moral failings to a morally superior Korea. The humiliating dimensions of national apology, particularly when repeated, were attested to by the Japanese government official who noted, "are we going to have to prostrate ourselves again?" We will deal with this issue again when we talk of the domestic implications for political legitimacy.

For relational apologies, the face-threat/humiliating dimensions of the apology provide a central dilemma to the participants. How are the dignity and political honor of the apologizing nation to be maintained while

admitting the undignified (not to mention horrific) crimes of the past? Although the apology may be undertaken to improve the relationship, if it is too punitive, the apology may instead damage the relationship. Reminding audiences of past wrongdoing may have the wrong effect of rekindling the feelings of affront and hurt. Squabbling over the words of a bygone wrongdoing may make the situation worse. Although it may be exaggerated and overly sentimental to say that being friends “means never having to say you’re sorry,” being friends does seem to require a certain willingness to overlook the imperfections of the other party. That is, the offended party may be willing to accept an apology that glosses over the original misdeeds, as long as the sense of regret and trust is evident. Perhaps the insistence on detailed reiteration of past wrongdoing is unnecessary “between friends.”

Methods/strategies of style

Relationship apologies display certain characteristics of style and argumentative structure. First, the relationship apology is tailored to the particular grievances of the offended party. Korea wanted Japan’s acknowledgment of wrongs associated with Japan’s colonial rule from 1910 to 1945. Korea was not interested in, say, issues related to PoWs or Nanking. The argument strategy of the relationship apology attempts to address the relevant concerns of the other party.

In a relationship apology, the apology is not only tailored to the particular complaints of the offended party, it also emphasizes commonalities and connections with the offending party. The long time period of the relationship, geographical proximity, positive experiences of the past, future expectations, benefits of the relationship—these are the elements of the relationship apology. By emphasizing the longer time frame of the relationship, the relationship apology envelops the wrongdoing within the good past and the good future, thus “containing” the wrongdoing without denying or minimizing the offense.

Another visible strategy in relationship apologies is the use of ambiguity, useful both as a method of reconciling differences in perspective and interpretation, as well as a way to save face. Developing a mutual understanding of the wrongdoing in terms acceptable to both sides can be difficult, especially when historical interpretation is at issue as it was in the Korean apologies. National perspectives cannot help but see things differently. Lack of specificity allows both sides to remember as much (or as little) as they wish. The use of euphemism and “officialese,” as is deemed appropriate for the public ceremonies in which these official statements occur, allows a certain amount of face to be saved by all.

Representation

One clear problem for national apologies, in general, concerns representation. In the case of the apologies to Korea, controversy arose concerning the

legality and appropriateness of Emperor Akihito giving the apology, based on the limitations on his role as symbol under the Japanese constitution. Although Prime Minister Kaifu volunteered to apologize and did apologize more profusely than Akihito, he did not have the same representative power that Emperor Akihito had. Who or what gives the apology authority?¹² This issue will recur in later apologies.

Multiple audiences

Japan's apologies to Korea illustrate vividly the challenge of multiple audiences or constituencies in national apologies. The audience for the apology was not simply the face-to-face representatives of the Korean government, but the Korean public as well. These two audiences did not agree on the adequacy of Akihito's apologies. The issue of public opinion is one that all national apologies must take seriously.

The Japanese public is, of course, another audience to be considered. In the case of the 1990 apologies to South Korea, they remained generally acquiescent and supportive of government apologies. Indeed, the public was even more willing to apologize than the Japanese government. The primary controversy in Japanese eyes concerned the role of the Emperor himself and the elevation of his role in political matters.

Success of relationship apologies

How successful were these relationship apologies? What does it take to make a relationship apology a success? On one level, the Japanese apologies to Korea were quite successful. The Korean government declared itself satisfied and agreed not to request further apologies. For several years, there was no demand for apology. The negotiation of wording, the resolution of a number of conflicts related to the past, and President Roh's tactful response indicate how the process can work. However, popular opinion in Korea was not mollified. A continuing sense of grievance fueled by internal political upheavals made it difficult. The Korean public was not ready to forgive and forget.

Wording of the apology

The Korean popular response to Japan's attempt to deal with Korean grievances suggests several problems for Japanese apology. The words of regret were insufficient to be considered an apology, at least by the Korean press. They wanted *shazai* (apology) or *sumimasen* (sorry) rather than *tsuuseki* (deep regret). Similarly, specificity in the words describing wrongdoing was minimal. Prime Minister Kaifu mentioned "the actions of our country" but that is as far as the Japanese government would go. Nevertheless, there was little criticism on this at the time; one has the feeling that the understanding of what was being apologized for was understood by both parties

and did not need to be spelled out in great detail. If Emperor Akihito had used the word *shazai*, or even *owabi* as used by Prime Minister Kaifu, the Korean public might have been appeased and the issue of apology could have receded into the background as both governments seem to have intended.

The dilemma of face

This brings us back to the central dilemma concerning the need to give careful attention to face needs of both parties. The Koreans needed to have their humiliation and sufferings as a Japanese colony validated and atoned for; the Japanese needed to acknowledge those actions without wallowing in the ugly details. The use of vague and euphemistic expressions and the avoidance of explicit language describing wartime “crimes” allowed both parties to maintain dignity and decorum. Efforts to minimize face loss can be seen in the Japanese reluctance concerning Akihito’s participation, the choice of words to express the nature of wrongdoing and sorrow, and in President Roh’s tactful responses. However, this strategy presents a problem in providing evidence of the sense of contrition of apology. In other words, a desire to preserve the relationship by upholding dignity and honor can leave those who wish for stronger acknowledgment of wrongdoing unsatisfied.

Sincerity

Finally, there must be a genuine mutual desire of all parties to address the grievances of the past in a constructive manner, in such a way as to “put the past behind us.” At a minimum, both sides must want to strengthen the relationship and must actively work to find common ground, using flexibility to create a satisfactory apology. Sincerity for the apologizing party means actions that demonstrate repentance and a desire to rectify wrongs when possible. In order to demonstrate its sincerity, Japan had resolved issues of compensation for A-bomb victims, for refugees in Sakhalin, and had removed legal restrictions on Koreans living in Japan.

The apologizing party must also demonstrate sincerity by avoiding the appearance of reluctance and lack of consensus. At this time, there was little display of contrasting views in Japanese public opinion or among Japanese politicians concerning the apologies themselves although Japanese authorities were visibly reluctant to allow Emperor Akihito to apologize. Intemperate remarks also offer some evidence of impatience with repeated requests for apology. Perhaps they were apologizing as necessary for the relationship (or in Yoshida’s view, as necessary for asserting Asian leadership) without any deep consideration of wartime guilt or contrition. As for the Koreans, the continuing festering of anti-Japanese sentiments in conjunction with rising Korean nationalism provided an unreceptive audience and environment that was not conducive to acceptance of an apology. This too may be seen as a lack of sincerity on their part.

4 The comfort women apologies

Towards a new morality

Most national apologies occur as a result of some immediate crisis,¹ usually an accident or unintended consequence of state policy. Recent examples are US apologies in 2001 for a naval submarine's collision with a Japanese fishing vessel near Hawaii and the apology (or non-apology) to China for the collision of a US spy plane and a Chinese fighter plane off the coast of China.² In a crisis situation, the nation is in some sense forced to reply, usually sooner rather than later. The motivation for such apologies is to defuse the immediate public outcry. This differentiates the crisis apology from most historical apologies. This kind of apology often reflects the same considerations as corporate apologies in crisis situations. Although a country does not expect to go bankrupt or lose sales from a poorly handled crisis, the price in lost elections and political legitimacy is just as swift.

In the “comfort women” apologies that we consider in this chapter,³ the immediacy of the scandal caused by the dramatic lawsuit, the discovery of incriminating documents and the attending media attention precipitated a crisis environment. Moreover, although the government was apologizing for wartime wrongdoing, the crisis resulted not simply from the historical wrongdoing itself but from the government's previous denials of involvement. Also, except for apologies surrounding textbook-related issues in 1982—which can also be seen as crisis apologies—this was the first time that Japan had apologized for a specific wrongdoing or atrocity.

The comfort women apologies also demonstrate what I call the “transcendent”⁴ or moral motive of apology. Unlike relationship apologies and apologies directed primarily to a domestic constituency, the call for transcendent apology comes from the larger society, often instigated by advocacy groups demanding acquiescence to moral principles. When the transcendent apology is successful, the apologizer regains moral standing and acceptance in the community. For nations, the apology provides an opportunity to reestablish its moral credibility.

What makes the comfort women apologies particularly compelling is that the morality being espoused is new. In the past such crimes against women

were ignored or even condoned by military circumstances as a normal, if admittedly sordid accompaniment of the military scene; in today's world, human rights activists and women's groups have raised public awareness of violence against women as reprehensible and criminal. Thus, we can see apology here as a mechanism for affirming public moral standards and, indeed, for establishing new standards of morality.⁵

The crisis

On December 6, 1991, thirty-five South Koreans filed suit in a Japanese court asking the Japanese government for an apology and damages arising from Japan's wartime actions. Included in this group were three (later ten) elderly Korean women, the so-called comfort women who had been forcibly recruited to provide sexual services for the Japanese army.

Despite government denials—the government maintained that these were privately operated establishments—the existence of government-supported brothels in war zones was well known. Several of these women's stories had been published in the 1970s although the rather obscure publications had received little notice.⁶ Women's groups in Korea had been trying for years to bring the case of the comfort women to the attention of the Korean as well as the Japanese government, but they had had little success (Hicks 1994: 185).

The slowness with which the comfort women's cause was addressed may be attributed to sparse documentation. However, the lack of interest in pursuing the type of war crime was (and is) also related to attitudes toward women and especially toward prostitutes. This subject is an unsavory one and the women who are engaged in such activities have difficulty gaining the moral standing with which to claim sympathy and/or redress. The governments of the comfort women victims were reluctant to champion the cause of these women (Hicks 1994: 185, 210–211; Soh 1996: 1230).⁷ Dower (1999) comments that even Japanese women who knew of this considered these women prostitutes (504).

A major difficulty was finding comfort women who would come forward and admit their wartime experience in public. By the 1990s, the remaining comfort women, of course, were elderly and no one wanted to admit to having been a comfort woman, especially if there was family. Once women came forward who were willing to "go public" in a lawsuit against Japan, the comfort women issue quickly became a major scandal. The reaction in the Japanese press, as well as in Korea and other Asian countries, was dramatic. The fact that real women had come forward to accuse the government lent a dramatic and human-interest dimension to the story. Here were real people who had been greatly mistreated by the wartime regime.

Soon after the initiation of the lawsuit and the government's perfunctory denial of the charges, Japanese researcher Yoshimi Yoshiaki uncovered

Defense Agency records that demonstrated the official nature of military prostitution. When his findings were made public on January 11, the government was forced to change its story.

The comfort women apologies

Cabinet Secretary Kato, January 13

With considerable embarrassment, Cabinet Secretary Kato Koichi publicly acknowledged in a press conference on January 11 that the Japanese military had been “involved” in maintaining “comfort stations” (AS January 12, 1992: 3). Two days later after consultation with Prime Minister Miyazawa and the Foreign Ministry, Secretary Kato issued an official cabinet memorandum:

- 1 When we consider the suffering experienced by the so-called comfort women from the Korean peninsula, it is heartbreaking (*mune ga tsumaru*).
- 2 Materials in the Defense Agency support the fact that military authorities were involved (*kan'you*) in the comfort women stations.
- 3 Various forms of participation of the military... cannot be denied.
- 4 The Japanese government has expressed deep regret and apologies before concerning the past acts of Japan that caused unbearable suffering for the people of the Korean peninsula, but in this case, *we want to again express our sincere apology and regret to those who endured suffering beyond description (hitsuzetsu ni tsukashigatai)*. The Japanese government is resolved that this should never happen again.
- 5 We have been conducting an investigation since the end of last year and will pursue vigorously the facts of the situation.

(AS January 14, 1992: 3, emphasis added)

We should note that, perhaps typical of most crisis apologies, the memorandum opens with sympathy for the victims and ends with promise of investigation. Second, although this was a press release (not directly addressed to South Korea), references to Korea in the statement indicate that Korea was the focus of the statement. This reflects the fact that the lawsuit plaintiffs were Korean and that indeed most of the comfort women were Korean. This focus also reflects the upcoming trip of Prime Minister Miyazawa to Korea.

After acknowledging the new documentation that indicated the “involvement/participation” of Japanese authorities, the memorandum then offers an official apology (in italics). The memorandum echoed many of Prime Minister Kaifu’s words in 1990: “remorse,” “apology,” and “unbearable suffering.” But the memorandum also uses some new characterizations of wrongdoing with strong emotional language “suffering beyond

description” and “heartbreaking.”⁸ These emotional words emphasize the heinousness of the wrongdoing.

The memorandum does not mention compensation. In response to questions from the press, Secretary Kato was careful; he remarked that a lawsuit was pending and he reiterated the Japanese government position that all monetary reparations concerning wartime issues had been decided at the time of the ROK–Japan normalization treaty in 1965.

Secretary Kato also commented, in a perceptive aside, that the issue was not simply a legal one but one that involved “wounds to the heart” (AS January 14, 1992: 1). Although this can be interpreted as an attempt to avoid legal responsibility, it also suggests the significance of government apology when legal remedies are not available or are impractical. Many historical wrongs were not illegal at the time they occurred nor did they seem illegal to those involved. Times and morals change.⁹ Thus, Secretary Kato recognizes the wrongdoing at the same time he reiterates the government position of no legal responsibility. Secretary Kato’s phrase “wounds of the heart” also points to the nature of the wrongdoing, recognizing the emotional offense and the trauma and feelings involved.

In his press conference, Secretary Kato also promised that an apology to South Korea would be forthcoming on Prime Minister Miyazawa’s upcoming visit on January 16, only three days hence.

Prime Minister Miyazawa’s apology(s)

Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi’s visit to Seoul, the first overseas travel of his new administration, had been intended to inaugurate a new Asia focus of his cabinet (AS January 17, 1992: 3). The reemergence of wartime scandal into the forefront of public attention was not welcome. During his visit, amid much public uproar, Prime Minister Miyazawa was forced to repeat his apologies several times.

In a major policy speech delivered to the South Korean legislature on January 17, Prime Minister Miyazawa inserted this apology near the end of the speech:

At one time in a history reaching back thousands of years, our country was the victimizer/assailant (*kagaisha*) and your country was the victim (*higaisha*). During this period, people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable suffering and grief caused by the acts of our country. For this, I express feelings of remorse (*hansei*) and apology (*owabi*).

Recently the issue of so-called military comfort women has been raised; this is truly painful to the heart (*kokoro ni itamu*) and is inexcusable (*mooshiwake ga naku*).

To the next generation . . . we must teach the errors of our generation as errors and convey a correct view of history so that these errors will not be repeated a second time.

(Miyazawa January 17, 1992)

Like Secretary Kato's earlier cabinet memorandum, Prime Minister Miyazawa was unequivocal in his condemnation of the wrongdoing as "inexcusable" and "painful to the heart." He repeated Prime Minister Kaifu's 1990 characterization of "unbearable suffering" and the apology words of *owabi* and *hansei* but the explicit references of use of the terms "victim" and "victimizer" was new, as was the promise to educate the next generation.

A question of victimage

Japan has often been criticized for its "victim" mentality (Field 1997; Lie 1991; Yamaguchi 1994) and the word victim resonates with meaning in Japanese historical consciousness, arising from Japan's own experience of war.¹⁰ Lie points out that a strong pacifist movement in Japan that views all wars as bad and people on both sides as victims probably encourages this tendency (1991: 308–310). Nevertheless, in this apology, Prime Minister Miyazawa clearly identified Korea as the victim and Japan as the victimizer. In Japanese, the terms *higaisha* and *kagaisha* refer specifically to violence, that is, the recipient of violence and the perpetrator. Other translations of *kagaisha* might be "violinist," "perpetrator," "aggressor," or "assailant." This is the same word President Roh used in 1990 when he said that "aggressors should apologize to their victims" (AS May 15, 1990: 1). These terms are not vague or euphemistic. In labeling Japan clearly as the wrongdoer and Korea as the wronged party, Prime Minister Miyazawa had gone considerably beyond the "unfortunate past" of previous apologies and memoranda.

Apology and education

Prime Minister Miyazawa's experience with the first textbook crisis as the Cabinet Secretary who apologized to China for any misunderstanding may explain another distinctive aspect of this apology, a pledge to educate the Japanese in the "errors" of the past. Although the issue of education may seem somewhat extraneous to the comfort women crisis that precipitated the apology, this is an apology in which affirmation of public morality is the primary concern. Prevention of future occurrence is important to society.¹¹ Thus the education of future generations becomes a key supporting strategy for indicating sincerity. Prime Minister Miyazawa's promise to "convey a correct view of history" is one that addresses many of the deepest resentments and fears of Koreans (and Chinese). The emphasis on historical "correctness" will be a continuing theme for Japanese apologies and Prime Minister Miyazawa's statement will be quoted often by Koreans in later disputes over textbook contents.

Appetite and audience

The occasion and setting of Prime Minister Miyazawa's apology on his trip to Korea as well as the opening phrases—"at one time in a history

reaching thousands of years,” “your country” and “my country”—may sound like yet another relationship apology. Indeed, the earlier comments of Secretary Kato and the cabinet memorandum indicate that the relationship with South Korea was prominent in their thinking. However, it was not the Korean government that was clamoring for Japanese apology. Quite the contrary. Despite repeated requests to the South Korean government from various women’s groups to pursue the issue, the Korean government had shown little interest (Hicks 1994: 185). More to the point is the sentence “Recently the issue of the...comfort women has been raised.” Indeed. An aroused public opinion, in Japan as well as in Korea and international circles, was the motivating force of this apology. The motive will become even stronger as the public uproar continues.

As for audience, Miyazawa’s speech is notable for the absence of victims and/or their representatives. Of course, many of the original victims are dead and those remaining are not easily identifiable. However, even those who had come forth to accuse the Japanese government were not present during Miyazawa’s speech in the Korean legislature. Shouldn’t an apology be directed toward the victims? Where were the comfort women to whom the apology was supposedly directed?

Response to Miyazawa’s apology

Although some interpreted Prime Minister Miyazawa’s apologies as exceedingly humble (Hicks 1994: 198), the apologies were not well received. Indeed, the arrival of Prime Minister Miyazawa in Korea and the attempted apology seems to have had little effect other than to fuel the flames of Korean outrage. Crowds of angry Koreans stormed the streets. Everywhere he went in Korea, Prime Minister Miyazawa was met with crowds of loud angry demonstrators objecting to his visit and demanding further apology (Minn 1992). Headlines in Korean newspapers called for “Compensation, not mere words” (*AS* January 18, 1992: 3).

Perhaps the most significant rejection of Prime Minister Miyazawa’s apology was that of the Korean Women’s Council who had become the center of comfort women advocacy and opposition to the Japanese government on this issue. In 1991 the council had sent a public letter with six demands including acknowledgment of government responsibility, full disclosure, compensation, a memorial, and inclusion of the facts in educational material in addition to apology. The government response had been to deny government involvement (Hicks 1994: 185–186). Now with new evidence, Miyazawa’s apology was deemed insufficient:

We opposed the visit to South Korea by Prime Minister Miyazawa... However, having visited South Korea, he has left, still avoiding the issue of substantive compensation, merely reiterating specious expressions

of deceitful apology. We sternly admonish Japan that such an attitude, unchanged from the past, desecrates our nation in its demand for the liquidation of colonialism, and the souls of those who have been sacrificed. . . . *We declare again that we cannot accept an apology unaccompanied by the disclosure of all the barbarities and the willingness to pay compensation.*

(Korean Council, January 20, 1992,
from Hicks 1994: 207, emphasis added)

Despite Prime Minister Miyazawa's effort at apology, these advocates rejected the apology as "specious" and "deceitful," that is, as insincere, as a mere effort to deflect public criticism. Note here that the ante for apology has gone up. A simple apology is not enough; it must include full disclosure of wrongdoing plus compensation. Let us consider both of these further.

Full disclosure: investigation and apology

The call for apology often leads to a call for investigation, especially in crisis situations where the sudden and unexpected nature of the crisis often leaves officials with a less than complete understanding of what happened. Full disclosure is also important when the facts have been hidden or suppressed, that is, in cases where there has been significant "cover-up." We have already noted the importance of public documentation of the facts in a collective apology.

In transcendent apologies, full disclosure is important for other reasons as well. Full disclosure—that is, the "naming of the wrongdoing" in explicit detail, in no uncertain terms—is required to demonstrate thorough understanding of the wrongdoing and to publicize the wrongness of the actions. For society, this means prevention of the wrongdoing for the future. For the victim, the public record acknowledging their unjust treatment can be profoundly healing as well (Brooks 1999; Dudden 2001; Gill 2000). In any case what matters is the moral principle. This is at the heart of the transcendent apology.

Government investigation and apology

Following the crisis of lawsuits and public censure of 1991, Japan carried out several consecutive investigations into the comfort women allegations, each investigation followed by a public report and apology. These apologies provide perhaps the most eloquent and detailed official apologies for Japanese wrongdoing.

In August 1993, announcing the results of the second investigation (during which investigators had traveled to Korea to interview actual comfort women), Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei acknowledged Japanese

wrongdoing as follows:

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 (soujite)* they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitment. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere...

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 sincerest apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.*

(Kono 1993, emphasis added)

In this apology, the government of Japan itself is named as the apologizing agent and apology is directed to individuals, the comfort women themselves rather than to a specific country. The expression “irrespective of place of origin” is responding to earlier criticism that apologies did not include North Korea (AS January 17, 1992: 2). It has the effect of making the apology more universal in its appeal as well as more targeted for individual victims.

The expressions “immeasurable pain,” “incurable physical and psychological wounds” do not downplay or soften the magnitude of the wrongdoing and again, are quite specific to the nature of the wrongdoing itself. However, the apology was criticized for its use of the qualifiers of “in general” and “in many cases.” These weaken the apology by suggesting that the abuse was only for “some” (not all) of the comfort women (AS August 5, 1993: 3).

The introductory remarks of Kono’s statement—the “appetite” of the apology—also attest to the moral and transcendent nature of the apology. By 1993 the larger implications and significance of the international repercussions had been realized by the Japanese government; all references to Korea have been dropped. By spelling out unpleasant details, admitting recruitment and coercion and miserable conditions including words that indicate understanding of the significance of the wrongdoing—causing “injury” to the “honor and dignity of many women”—the beginning of the apology focuses on the nature of the wrongdoing rather than relationship or self image. With this approach, the argument of the apology is: “I understand how bad this wrongdoing was and I reject it as bad. You should accept my apology because I have admitted everything: I’ve been so frank.”

As the focus on moral principle is key for transcendent apology, then the promise of forbearance is also important. The government apology ends with the pledge “never to repeat” such mistakes and the promise to include the facts of the comfort women in the teaching of history.

The importance of investigation and the public record is characteristic of the transcendent apology (as well as perhaps all collective apology). With some prodding and over time to be sure, the Japanese government had made significant efforts to satisfy the critics in this regard. The issue of compensation is another story.

The question of compensation

Strictly speaking, apology and compensation are two separate issues. Apology is words, a public admission of responsibility and regret. In Japanese apology discourse of the 1990s, however, there was a growing awareness that compensation was a necessary accompaniment to apology.¹² In Japan, the words of Tanabe Makoto of the Japan Socialist Party are often quoted to express this sentiment: “Apology without compensation is insincere; compensation without apology is bribery.” An *Asahi Shimbun* editorial immediately following the comfort women revelations said much the same thing: “Self-criticism and apology can only be accepted when accompanied by positive evidence of redress” (AS January 12, 1992: 2). Thus, we have the growing sense that sincerity and compensation are linked. If governments are sincere, they will make restitution, even if only a token amount.

In her study of Japanese apologies, Norma Field (1997) defines the “ideal” apology as “acknowledgement of facts, penitent regret, and compensation” (10). Moreover she sees compensation as justified “punishment,” saying that apology should “cost the apologizer” (8). Here we see, I think, compensation as punishment or deterrent or perhaps even revenge to satisfy the grievance felt by those who suffered. It is necessary to “pay” for the crime. The perpetrator must *do* something to atone. Words are insufficient. Apology is too easy.

Arguments against compensation, on the other hand, are largely based on practical concerns. Primarily, these relate to cost and lack of feasibility. The difficulty of determining who the victims are and the validity of individual claims, the possibility of ever increasing numbers of claimants, and the problem of setting a precedent that will bring repeated calls for redress in other, perhaps unrelated areas—these scenarios provide compelling barriers to apology cum compensation.

Others have argued that compensation is inappropriate for other reasons. First, it can be said that compensation cheapens the moral issues by assigning a monetary value to irreparable loss. Benoit (1995b) sees compensation functioning as a “bribe” (78). If enough money is given, then one’s debt is paid. A related argument is that using “money” to settle accounts is a capitalist

approach, reducing all problems to a question of money. Second, is it right to expect children to “pay” for the sins of their fathers? Being sorry is one thing, but should we bankrupt this (blameless?) generation to provide a windfall for (deserving?) grandchildren of victims? Where would it end?

Moreover, the suggestion of compensation as “humanitarian” can be offensive to victims. Ice (1991) describes the ineffectiveness of compensation donations, given voluntarily by Union Carbide in conjunction with the Bhopal disaster. A contribution “out of the goodness of their hearts” seems to deny responsibility. The negative connotations of accepting compensation as “payment” or “reimbursement” for pain is particularly strong in the case of the comfort women, where compensation (= payment for services) carries unpleasant connotations of prostitution.¹³

Finally, the promise of compensation may encourage an unprincipled motivation underlying the demand for apology. In other words, if apology is seen as prelude to paying out sums of money, the clamor for apology may become a mere ploy for economic gain. To ask for economic aid or technology transfer in the same breath as a demand for apology casts some doubt on the sincerity of the demand for apology. Hicks (1994) suggests that there is concern that this happened in Indonesia (246–247). Monetary compensation thus tarnishes the moral purity that apology seems to offer.

Despite these difficulties and contradictions concerning compensation, Field (1997) opts for pragmatism: “Life being short and remedies for ravage being hard to come by, words seem gnawingly inadequate, especially when the offender has, on the whole, done much better than the offended” (8). In other words, the argument for compensation gains force because of Japan’s postwar economic success. Japan and the Japanese people have recovered from wartime deprivations and have become an economic power. What has happened to the comfort women? Or the PoWs?

Compensation for the comfort women

Although compensation had been provided previously for Korean A-bomb victims and Taiwanese ex-soldiers and their bereaved families before this crisis (Hicks 1994: 219), compensation had been a minor theme with regard to apology before 1990. Now, however, expectations had changed. In October 1990, the Korean Women’s Council included in its demands to the Japanese (and Korean) government the demand that “survivors or their bereaved families be compensated” (Hicks 1994: 185). The lawsuit initiated in December 1991 was asking ¥20 million per person as compensation (201). From this time on, questioning in press conferences focused on the question of whether and how the Japanese government would compensate victims of Japanese wrongdoing.

Immediately following the lawsuit and disclosures concerning the comfort women in 1991, the Japanese government tried to avoid talking about compensation by referring to “ongoing” lawsuits and investigations

(AS January 14, 1992: 1). By July 1992, when results of the first investigation were revealed amid continuing protests and international exposure, the Japanese government announced that they were studying some method of compensation in accordance with “feelings of apology.” The government said that a plan was being put together “in lieu of” compensation to provide “livelihood support” (*seikatsu houkan*) (AS July 6, 1992: 1).

This plan was immediately rejected by the Korean Council who objected to funds being provided “in lieu of” legitimate government compensation funds and demanded “atonement” or “apology” compensation, not “relief” (Hicks 1994: 231–232).

The Asian Women’s Fund

In 1995, as part of the fifty-year anniversary of the end of the war, the Japanese government established the Asian Women’s Fund to provide funds for comfort women. The appeal for funds included this statement:

Fifty years have elapsed since the war came to an end. The war caused enormous horror and ravaged the people of Japan and many other nations, especially those in Asia. Particularly brutal was the act of forcing women, including teenagers, to serve the Japanese armed forces as “comfort women,” a practice that violated the fundamental dignity of women. *No manner of apology can ever completely heal the deep wound inflicted on these women both emotionally and physically.* Yet we should, by whatever means, do our best to appreciate their pain and make the greatest possible effort to salve their suffering in any way we can. We believe the obligation to do so today hangs heavy over Japan, the country that inflicted the suffering...

Support will be given to the establishment of a fund that (1) invites the people of Japan to atone for the institution of “comfort women.” (2) The Government will contribute funds to the welfare and medical care of these women. (3) The Government will express remorse and apologize. (4) Historical documents and materials will be collated that will help make this a lesson to be drawn on.

(“An appeal,” 1995, emphasis added)

In this appeal for funds, the government reiterated the admission of wrongdoing as noted in official investigations and previous apologies, admitting even teenage recruitment. Moreover, although this statement is not exactly an apology—a forthcoming apology from the government is promised—it provides perhaps the most emotional and explicit of the Japanese apology statements by recognizing the inadequacy of apology: “No manner of apology” can suffice.

By July 1996, the plan allowed any woman who could document her status as a comfort woman to receive ¥20 million (~US\$18,000) as well as

a letter of apology from Prime Minister Hashimoto. In response to criticism that the government should itself be providing money (rather than soliciting money from the public), the Japanese government agreed to pay for medical expenses and other expenses of the fund.

Response to Japanese government apologies and compensation

In general, comfort women, following the advice of the Korean Council, have chosen not to accept these apologies and offers of compensation under the terms the Japanese government has offered.¹⁴ Comfort women advocates have insisted that payments come directly from the government and be designated as compensation for *legal* crimes against humanity. They want the government to admit culpability in a criminal policy that included rape and forced abduction of young girls. They want punitive damages applied. They want punishment, not reconciliation. They are not going to be satisfied by a simple apology. Indeed, they welcome the opportunity to take their case to the public and to the higher court of the United Nations.¹⁵

Summary: the transcendent apology

The comfort women apologies, especially in early manifestations, can be considered “crisis” apologies, that is, ones that are responding to immediate public outrage and demand. Rather than a reasoned and thoughtful (or calculated?) consideration of long-ago historical events or how apology might be used to improve relations with an estranged country and standing in international circles, this is a public relations disaster that requires an immediate response.

The comfort women apologies also illustrate the degree to which historical crimes may be connected to the issues of “cover-up.” In the 1990s, Japan was on the defensive not just for the original crimes of fifty years earlier but also for its lack of contemporary attention to and acknowledgment of the treatment of these women. The scandal concerning the comfort women is not a case of secret wrongdoing suddenly coming to light. True, there was a certain amount of denial and disclaimers attached to the practice of comfort women. There was certainly no pride in such activity and plenty of euphemism in the record to mask the nature of the “comfort stations.” But the existence of comfort stations was well known to all who had been in the military theatre.

What had changed was public consciousness of women’s rights. By 1990, the women’s liberation movement had provided a new environment for interpretation of the abuse of women. Thus, the comfort women are an example of how changing standards of morality provide one of the underlying motivations for historical apology. As moral standards change,

contemporary perspectives require rejection and condemnation of behavior that in earlier times may have been common practice. The apology is especially suitable when legal remedies and restoration are not possible.

Finally, the comfort women apologies illustrate the significance of a “champion” with resources and public relations savvy to marshal political support in bringing past injustices to the attention of the public. Many injustices never receive public acknowledgment simply because there is no one with the interest and resources to accuse, to insist, to remember—in other words, to apply pressure on contemporary governments. In today’s world, sophisticated use of the media, Internet, and public demonstrations can organize and develop international support for apology and other forms of redress.

Strategies for transcendent apologies

The comfort women apologies are perhaps the most satisfactory of Japanese apologies in acknowledging wrongdoing in explicit terms. The comfort women are an embarrassing and sordid kind of wrongdoing; the response of the government, when pushed to acknowledge these actions, was emotional and sorrowful. Conservatives may wish that such activities could be kept quiet, that the furor would die down, but when faced with documentation, government spokesmen condemned the practices without equivocation.

In crisis and transcendent apologies both, the investigative dimension is frequently necessary, not simply to find out the facts, but to educate society and to publicize moral principles that have been breached. Investigation demonstrates desire on the part of the apologizer to understand the wrongdoing in order to prevent its recurrence. For victims, too, the investigation often provides a forum for their stories to be heard. In any case, investigation adds credibility to the apology.

Transcendent apologists often affirm their adherence in no uncertain terms to the very principles that they are accused of breaking. In so doing, they often clothe themselves in the mantle of lofty words. In this kind of apology, it is not enough simply to agree begrudgingly that “Yes, maybe I should not have done that.” Instead, the apology must strongly condemn previous actions, “Those were terrible things I did” and extol the moral principle. There can be no mistake as to what is right and wrong.

Success/failure of the comfort women apologies

Prime Minister Miyazawa’s apology was, by all measures, a rousing failure. The ensuing investigations and multiple apologies associated with them followed by the attempt to compensate victims through the Asian Women’s Fund were increasingly explicit in their recognition of wrongdoing and expression of remorse. But even after the larger dimensions of the issue were recognized, the attempts at apology were not successful.

The comfort women have become a symbol for women's rights in Asia. As such, the leaders of this activist movement have an agenda that goes beyond the immediate needs of the victims, as the refusal to accept the Japanese offer of compensation and apology illustrates. Principle is more important than practical benefits to victims. Thus, the accusation of wrongdoing is not simply an exercise in attempts to gain apology and compensation for the victims of past wrongdoing, but rather a *cause celebre* in the struggle against women's oppression. Moreover, resolution of the issue is not desirable for the activists as the continued conflict keeps women's issues in the public eye.

The comfort women apologies have also been criticized for their representative quality. In other words, the dispute over the Asian Women's Fund—whether it is a private or governmental fund or, as McCormack (1997) describes it, a “nominally private but with strong official backing” (3)—is all about legitimacy and representative quality of the apology statements and compensation. By declaring the fund private and voluntary, the government may have intended to distance themselves from legal responsibility; nevertheless, in fact, the government planned the program, established the fund, advertised it and keeps records of its activities on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs web site. The prime minister sends out apology letters as part of the program. In a separate plan, the Japanese government has even provided money to Filipina comfort women, asking the Philippine government not to tax the money it disbursed (Hicks 1999: 124).

The issue of the comfort women continues throughout the 1990s and even today has not been resolved. The remaining comfort women are probably relatively few in number and their case might seem to be unusual enough to warrant special consideration. There seems to be little chance of resolution as long as the issue provides a strong rallying point for feminist and anti-Japanese nationalist movements.

To follow the comfort women story as it unfolds in the 1990s is beyond the scope of this investigation. Comfort women appear only one more time in the apologies that we consider in the 1990s, in Hosokawa's apology of November 1993.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the comfort women scandals continue as a backdrop of all later apologies.

5 Hosokawa apologies

Politics and history

In August of 1993, Hosokawa Morihiro, an ex-Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) politician who had recently created a minority party, formed a coalition government consisting of eight minority parties including the Socialist Party. For the first time since 1955, the LDP conservative party had lost its majority in the Diet and was out of power. The air was infused with a sense of excitement and expectation that the political scene had changed. No more politics as usual. This changed the environment for apology.

In a brief nine-month tenure, Prime Minister Hosokawa made apology-related statements no less than four times, apologizing for Japan's "aggressive acts" and "colonial rule" causing "intolerable pain and suffering" to people around the world. These statements modified the discourse by making the nature of the wrongdoing more explicit, by expanding the audience for the apology and by including leftist participants in the official rituals of remorse. These statements were hailed by many as representing a clear break with previous government statements.¹

Unlike previous apologies that are narrowly focused on Japan's specific Asian neighbors Korea and China, Hosokawa's apologies clearly reflect the internal political situation and are targeted for an internal audience. This is not to say that the underlying motivation to improve relationships with Asian countries disappeared; indeed, Hosokawa traveled to South Korea in November to proffer his updated message of apology. Nevertheless, the Hosokawa apologies provide an opportunity to focus on the political dimensions, largely internal, surrounding national apology.

Apology and politics

In this chapter I highlight the political aspects of apology-making. By political, I do not mean simply party politics or the wheeling and dealing usually associated with politics, although party and personal advantage were certainly factors in the Hosokawa statements. More specifically, the willingness of the Hosokawa government to apologize more directly and with more substance suggests the importance of change in political power

in providing impetus for apology. The relationship of apology to the past makes it an attractive strategy for new governments if they wish to distance themselves from previous regimes. Moreover, the presence of the Socialist Party in the new coalition government brought people into official positions whose political outlooks contained radically different perspectives on World War II from those of the conservative LDP. The coalition nature of the new government also limited the freedom of action and degree of consensus that was possible.

By political, I also refer to political legitimacy and the related issues of national identity, pride, and the deeply held political beliefs of community. In order to maintain political legitimacy, a nation must justify its actions as competent and moral. It is the job of the government to explain its actions, not criticize them.

In all countries, historical interpretation is a contested political arena. The narrative of the past provides the cornerstone of national identity and values. What to remember, what to forget, who is included, who is not—these issues form a large part of national identity. Identity and history often give motivation and meaning to contemporary actions and future directions. Thus, they become subjects of considerable debate. Also, because individual identities and values are often closely associated with national identities, the debate is often personal and emotional. People feel deeply about such issues.² How then does a government justify to its own constituency the highly unpleasant and demeaning exercise of apology?

I argue that one of the primary justifications of apology, evidenced strongly in Hosokawa's apologies, is "to learn from the past." This refers to the belief that errors of the past, if recognized and "reflected upon," can provide opportunity for internal growth that will lead to a stronger and better future. In other words, self-reflection and understanding along with public denunciation of the "wrongs" of the past, help prevent the recurrence of the "bad" past.

The political context

In postwar Japan, interpretation of World War II has been intertwined with political alignments.³ Many conservatives feel that Japan, like many advanced European nations, had colonies, that war is always brutal and aggressive, and that the Pacific war was no more "criminal" than any other war. Even the most diehard among them would probably agree that the war was a mistake and a tragedy; most would admit that the war, as fought in Asia, caused great suffering to other Asians. However, even if the military misled Japan down the road to war, the conservative position has been that Japan nevertheless owes its veterans and wartime leaders gratitude and honor for their sacrifices. To admit that the war was unjust is to dishonor and deny the validity of those sacrifices. Japan of course is not alone in this attitude.⁴

Japanese conservatives also often argue against what they call a “masochistic view of history” (McCormack 2000: 59). They believe that the nation requires a positive and uplifting historical narrative. To “wallow” in the bad things of the past just encourages a lack of respect for the nation and for oneself. All nations have “bad” pasts; is it necessary to dwell on the “dark side?” Instead of agonizing over the past, we should look to the future and resolve not to repeat the errors of the past.⁵

Japanese conservatives are also concerned about the position of the Emperor. To apologize for wartime and prewar Japanese actions implies, at a certain basic level, Emperor Hirohito’s responsibility if not culpability. As “symbol” of the state in postwar Japanese polity, conservatives insist that the imperial institution is off-limits to criticism.

Left-wing groups, on the other hand, have been strongly antimilitarist and have seen the war as an instance of imperialism—that is, *Japanese* imperialism. Advocating closer ties with China and Korea and other Asian countries, they have consistently advocated a more apologetic stance and compensation for victims of Japanese aggression.

Popular opinion has largely supported the leftist position as numerous opinion polls regarding Prime Minister Hosokawa’s apology statements attest (see below). Although there is a wide range of opinion in Japan—see sampling in Dower (1995)—public opinion polls have consistently demonstrated the public’s radical pacifism and rejection of militarist wartime behavior, going beyond the cautious official positions (Yoshida 1994).

Thus, evaluation and interpretation of the war and, by extension, the issues of accountability and apology are closely tied to political positions in Japan. Postwar leftist parties regularly criticize the militaristic actions of the past—and the contemporary conservative inheritors of that tradition—as a major part of their political rhetoric. Unlike Germany and other instances where a postwar or post-revolutionary government can dissociate itself from its past, Japanese conservatives with strong prewar associations have remained in political power throughout the postwar period and are frequently seen as the heirs to the prewar system.⁶

A new era

The new administration of Prime Minister Hosokawa marked a significant break with the past. The defeat of the LDP political machine occurred amid other significant changes. In the international arena, the end of the Cold War cast a new light on Japan’s international position. Moreover, in 1993, Japan found itself in protracted economic difficulties that seemed to be getting worse as the 1990s proceeded. This too was a new situation, one that called for reform of both political and economic structures.

As for issues specifically relating to wartime and apology, additional “comfort women” lawsuits and attending publicity continued to plague the

Japanese government. Despite apologies by Prime Minister Miyazawa in January 1992 and several investigations by the Japanese government in 1992 and 1993, the comfort women issue continued to gain momentum. The Korean Council had succeeded in getting the comfort women on the agenda of the United Nations Subcommission for Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland in August 1993. Perhaps in response to that challenge, just before Hosokawa's taking office in August 1993, the Japanese government issued the results of a second investigation, another apology, and committed the Japanese government to some type of compensation. Although the issue of the comfort women seemed to be approaching resolution, continuing pressure in the form of meetings, marches, and public events kept the issue in Japanese and world public view.

Apologies of 1993

Prime Minister Hosokawa made apology-related statements on four occasions in 1993. These occasions are Hosokawa's first press conference on August 10, the War End Commemoration Day ceremony on August 15, Hosokawa's first policy speech in the Diet on August 23, and finally, Hosokawa's visit to South Korea to meet with President Kim Young Sam on November 7. The first two statements are technically not apologies, but they make significant statements concerning Japan's past and thus influence later apology statements. We will also consider Speaker of the House Doi Takako's speech at the August 15 Commemoration ceremony as an example of emotion in apologies.

August 10, press conference: "war of aggression"

The first evidence of the Hosokawa administration's new approach to apology and Japan's wartime past came in a press conference of August 10, the day after Hosokawa's inauguration as prime minister. When asked to characterize his view of "the war," Hosokawa replied, "My [own personal] understanding is that it was a war of aggression, a mistaken/wrong war" (AS August 11, 1993: 1).⁷

Although this statement does not express regret and was not intended as an apology, Hosokawa's use of the word "aggression" altered the discourse field for apology. Up to this time, although the word aggression had been used both within and without Japan to characterize Japan's past (usually associated with Tokyo War Crimes judgment), previous prime ministers had carefully avoided the term in official statements.

This is also the first time a prime minister had acknowledged the "mistaken" or "wrong" nature of the war. Although Japanese commonly consider the war a disaster for Japan, it is one thing for individuals to rue a disastrous course of action and another for a government to publicly and officially criticize that same action. As representatives of the government, current administrations generally consider it their duty to honor those

decisions of past governments even when they turn out to have been wrong. Respect for those that have carried the burdens of the past is a strong moral imperative in most countries perhaps, and no less so in Japan.

Hosokawa's statement made front-page headlines in Japan and the statement was hailed in Korea and China. Hosokawa's statement, however, was strongly criticized by LDP representatives as well as conservative interest groups such as the Japan Bereaved Families Association, a politically powerful conservative organization.⁸ Even within Hosokawa's cabinet, Foreign Minister Hata said, "I had no idea he would go so far" (Yoshida 1994: 23). In later statements, perhaps in response to this criticism, Hosokawa modified his phrase to "acts of aggression."

August 15, War End Commemoration Day

Only five days later, Prime Minister Hosokawa was called upon to speak in honor of Japan's war dead at the annual War End Commemoration Day Ceremony. August 15 is Japan's "Memorial Day," an official day to honor the war dead, a day to remember the sadness, suffering, and sacrifices of another time. On that day, in 1945, Emperor Hirohito announced to the Japanese people over the radio that the Japanese people must "bear the unbearable," that is, that the war was lost. In its origins, then, this is a day representing defeat and ignominy. Ends, however, are also beginnings. This day became a day to proclaim Japan's rebirth as a new nation, as a "peace state," and as such, it has been transformed into a day celebrating patriotism. Since 1963, August 15 has been celebrated with annual ceremonies in honor of war veterans and their families. Every year official ceremonies are held at the Budokan with speeches from the Emperor and the Prime Minister, to assembled families of war veterans. Media coverage is high.

The occasion has also become a stage for dramatizing the political chasm between the left and the right. Conservatives use the occasion to promote patriotism; for example, Prime Minister Nakasone tried, in 1985, to establish the practice of visiting Yasukuni Shrine on this day as an official act of the cabinet. On the other hand, in opposition to the nationalist overtones of the official ceremonies, the Socialist Party established its own commemoration in 1965 at a separate location. In the Socialist ceremony, the war victims to be commemorated were Asian victims of Japanese aggression rather than the Japanese war dead honored by the official ceremony.

In 1993, Prime Minister Hosokawa appropriated the occasion of the August 15 War End Commemoration ceremony for a new approach to war responsibility. Following a brief statement from Emperor Akihito, Prime Minister Hosokawa offered the following condolences:

Learning from the lessons of history, the Japanese people have proclaimed as our highest national principle the renunciation of war forever as an instrument of settling of international disputes and have

followed without wavering from the postwar path of rebirth as a peace nation. Thus, we take this opportunity *to go beyond our national boundaries in stating our feelings of sincere sympathy toward all victims of war, starting with Asian nations and their families.*

(AS (Evening) August 16, 1993: 2, emphasis added)

Again, although this is not an explicit apology—there is no admission of wrongdoing—the condolence statement illustrates an attitude toward Japan’s past that affected later apologies. Two aspects are significant: (1) the extension of the word “victim” to include non-Japanese and (2) the framing of the remarks within the context of postwar Japanese identity.

“All war victims”

In 1992, Prime Minister Miyazawa had referred to Korea as “victim” and Japan as the “aggressor/perpetrator” in his apology at the time of the original comfort women crisis. By extending the word to include non-Japanese individuals in this patriotic setting, Prime Minister Hosokawa altered the meaning of “victim” yet again. Previous August 15 ceremonies had focused on the Japanese soldier and his family as victim. In Hosokawa’s usage, this was no longer an inward, “feeling-sorry-for-oneself” word, but one that engendered sympathy toward others outside Japan and indeed toward ex-enemies in war. Thus, Prime Minister Hosokawa appropriated a national ceremony expressly designed to honor Japan’s military fallen heroes and used it to broaden the public perception, to “go beyond our national boundaries.”

We should also note the privileging of Asian victims in this text. The Japanese sense of wartime responsibility and wrongdoing has consistently been focused on Asian victims of Japanese aggression rather than, say, British and American victims of Japanese militarism.

Learning from history

The setting of Hosokawa’s remarks at a national commemoration ceremony clearly indicates a domestic political audience. His introductory remarks also point to an internal audience. Hosokawa opens with the phrase “learning from the lessons of history,” thereby justifying what he is about to say. “What is my purpose in making this statement? To learn from history. Who is it that learns (benefits) from this study of history? The Japanese people.” Again, this rests on the common belief that studying the past provides lessons for contemporary life. The value of facing unpleasant facts of history had been earlier recognized by Prime Minister Miyazawa in his focus on education in his 1992 apology when he said “we must teach the errors of our history as errors.” For people who have lived through

particularly difficult times, who remember the suffering at that time, “learning from the past” may be the most compelling justification for apology.⁹

A new identity: rebirth as a peace nation

Another theme of these apologies is the assertion of a new identity. By acknowledging past wrongdoing, the body politic purges its guilt and can start afresh with a new sense of identity and self-worth. For Japan, this new postwar identity is that of a “peace nation.” The words “renunciation of war forever as an instrument of settling of international disputes” are a direct quote of Article 9 of the 1947 Constitution, thus reminding the audience of the institutional foundations of postwar identity. Again, these statements are clearly intended for a Japanese audience and they frame the apology/condolence statement in a new identity for postwar Japan. Thus, the “appetite”—expectation and anticipation, the momentum of the rhetoric—engages the Japanese audience in reflecting on the past and their new postwar identity. The logically consequent attitude is that, consistent with the values of “peace,” the Japanese people must be sympathetic toward all victims of war.

Hosokawa continued the focus on internal audience and postwar identity with his next statements. He praised the efforts of “every single citizen” for “overcoming numerous difficulties” in the postwar period and achieving “rapid development” and “affluence.” And then, following the script for the official purpose of the commemoration, Hosokawa praised the “honorable sacrifices of those who died in the war” and pledged “never to repeat the horrors of war.” With this formula, Hosokawa juxtaposed anti-war sentiments with those that honor and value the military men of the past. (As we shall see, Speaker of the House Doi Takako will take a different approach.) These remarks were clearly not for victims of wrongdoing, but for a Japanese citizenry that must find meaning for the past and cultivate a new identity.

Finally, Hosokawa related Japan’s new identity to the international scene and provided national purpose as he talks about Japan’s role in the world today:

International society remains even today a world where disputes based on military power are unceasing. However, the end of the Cold War marks a major trend, a trend toward realization of peace. We are aware of our grave responsibility to build a peaceful order appropriate to the new age, based on the realization of trends toward peace.

(AS (Evening) August 16, 1993: 2)

These remarks echo Prime Minister Kaifu’s reasoning for apology in his remarks to President Roh in 1990, emphasizing the importance of the end of the Cold War and the responsibility for building a peaceful new order. The themes of peace and Japan’s role in international affairs will reemerge even stronger in later Hosokawa apologies and will be echoed in Murayama’s 1995 speech.

Speaker of the House Doi Takako

On the platform at the August 15 ceremony with Prime Minister Hosokawa was the Speaker of the House of Representatives Doi Takako. This too was a major departure for the government since Doi Takako had been the head of the Socialist Party and was strongly associated with anti-war positions. There were three members of the Socialist Party in the cabinet who also attended the official ceremonies rather than attending the usual Socialist August 15 commemoration. Doi Takako's brief but impassioned remarks provide an example of how emotional content is expressed, in some contrast to Hosokawa's remarks.

Sincerity and emotion

Speech act theorists note that apologies are not simply informational statements, but expressive statements that seek an emotional response, intending to arouse sympathy and understanding. Appropriate emotion is expected and evaluated by the audience. On the other hand, Tavuchis (1991) asserts that collective apologies can never attain the emotional levels of individual apology simply because the speaker, as representative for the group, is not speaking for his/her own wrongdoing (102–103). It is indeed a challenge for representatives of governments to demonstrate emotional involvement in apologizing for acts that they did not personally commit. Nevertheless, it can be done. Perhaps the most famous and most effective example of emotional impact in apology discourse is that of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt on his knees in Warsaw, Poland.¹⁰ Japanese apologies also demonstrate that apologies are expected to display, and are held accountable for, eloquence and emotional attachment to the sentiments expressed. Furthermore, all apologies are not equal in this regard.

Doi's words

The nature of the August 15 commemoration ceremonies encouraged emotional expressions of sadness and sentimentality as speakers expressed condolences and appreciation of wartime sacrifice standing in front of the families of those who had died. Here are Doi's words:

The people on both sides who were made wretched (*itamashii*) victims in the last war are numbered in the thousands of ten thousands. This tragedy, almost half a century ago, weighs heavily on our hearts even today.... Those who fleeing bombs lost their lives in terror, those who perished on the battlefield amid hostility and hunger—when we think of their pain and unfulfilled longings, despair and the deep sadness of those who were left behind, I cannot find solemn words to express my feelings.

(AS (Evening) August 16, 1993: 2)

Notice the emotional timbre of word choice. The “miserable/wretched” victims of the last war number in the “thousands of ten thousands.” The adjective *itamashii* is a particularly emotional (even feminine) word and the “thousands of ten thousands” dramatizes the limitless and inexpressible reality of their suffering. The description of specific images of suffering brings forth the desired emotional response. One newspaper reported that Doi also referred to “people who had been subjected to various atrocities” thereby bringing to mind people who had been massacred by the Japanese army and forced recruitment of, for example, the comfort women.¹¹

Moreover, Doi makes her remarks seem personal as she uses “I” and “we” in the familiar *watakushi* and *watakushi tachi* rather than the more typical and formal *wa ga kuni* (“our country”). The expression “weighs heavily on our hearts” or “heart-wrenching”—literally, “squeezes the chest”—again gives personal and physical meaning to her remarks.

Although Doi’s remarks describe specific scenes of suffering during the war and evoke emotional response, specificity is limited to imagined scenes, not historical places and times. Thus, although she lists firebombing, hunger, worry, and despair, and even, perhaps, “various atrocities,” she does not list real events such as the Manchurian Incident, the invasion of Indochina, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, or the Rape of Nanking, for example. Everything she mentions is applicable to war victims in general, both Japanese and non-Japanese, identifying with Japanese memories of their own suffering in war.

Japanese identity: who is responsible for the past?

Doi, like Hosokawa, was addressing her remarks to a Japanese audience, but she approached the Japanese relationship with the past in a different way. After mentioning “our country’s” “spectacular” economic performance following the war, she explained this success as follows:

After the war, our country pursued spectacular economic development and today, we have reached an important position in international society. This was because every single Japanese citizen, thinking earnestly of a certain tragic war, regrets (*hansei*) the errors of our own history.

And based on the determination that these errors will not be repeated a second time, each has made extended efforts to achieve rebirth as a peace state.

(Ibid.)

Unlike Hosokawa’s appreciation of the sacrifices of the wartime generation (and particularly the military), Doi specifically repudiates the notion of continuity with the prewar tradition. The reason we have been successful in the postwar period, she asserts, is because we *reject* the military/wartime past. The explicit mention of “war” here, surprisingly rather infrequent in

Japanese apologies, is consistent with the Japan Socialist anti-war rhetoric. For Doi the “past” was not some vague and unspecified time period but “the war.”¹²

Doi also emphasizes the role and responsibility of the ordinary citizen. “Every single Japanese citizen...feels remorse for the errors of our own history.” “Every...Japanese” may be a rhetorical exaggeration, but Doi recognizes that the responsibility for remorse and “making it right” lies with the contemporary Japanese citizen. She does not lay the blame solely on the military leadership of the past.

For Doi, the implications of responsibility were clear. Tying the expression of remorse to relationship and, in particular, to the need to repair relationships with Asian neighbors, she said, “We have not achieved reconciliation with the Asian people who were forced to be wretched victims because of our errors.” Note again the repetition of the emotion-laden “wretched victims” characterization and the clear attribution of blame to “our errors.”

Response

The remarks of both Prime Minister Hosokawa and House leader Doi received a great deal of attention from the press, both in Japan and Asia. Doi’s remarks with their emotional appeal and the Socialist point of view were especially praised as marking a new approach to the past. The fact that both of these speeches were performed at a patriotic, even militantly patriotic, ceremony with the Emperor in attendance as well as the large audience of Japan Bereaved Families Association made the expressions of official remorse directed outwardly to all victims all the more remarkable.

August 23, Prime Minister Hosokawa’s policy speech to the Japanese Diet

One week later, on August 23, Prime Minister Hosokawa made another apology, this time in his first policy speech to the Japanese Diet, explaining the principles and goals of his reform government.¹³ Like the August 15 speech, this speech was a highly public and formal occasion. Again, the audience was primarily domestic rather than international. The apology statement is embedded in the section on foreign policy near the end of the speech:

August, when my Cabinet was formed, is a month that Japan will never forget. Going back just four turns of the twelve-year cycle, it was with the end of the war in August 1945 that we realized the great mistake we had made and vowed to start anew, resolutely determined never to repeat the wrongs of the past.

I would thus like to take this opportunity to express anew our profound remorse (*hansei*) and apologies (*owabi*) for the fact that past

Japanese actions, including *aggression* [acts] and *colonial rule*, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people and to state that we will demonstrate our new determination by contributing more than ever before to world peace.

(Hosokawa 1993: 3, emphasis added)

Although this text received much more attention than what was given to Prime Minister Kaifu's apologies of 1990, the wording was not very different. "Past Japanese actions" that caused "unbearable suffering and sorrow," "profound remorse" and "apologies"—these were all found in Kaifu's remarks to the Korean president three years earlier. What was new here are the two characterizations of wartime wrongs as "aggression" and "colonial rule."

"Acts of aggression"

At first glance the text seems to be reaffirming the August 10 press conference reference to "aggression." However, although the official English version of this speech says "aggression," the Japanese language version says "acts of aggression." The difference may be subtle but the use of "aggression" and its various forms has been an object of intense scrutiny and controversy. In the Diet in May 1994 an opposition legislator explained the difference in terminology to Prime Minister Hata (who followed Hosokawa) as follows:

When you say "acts of aggression," you are indicating individual or regimental actions, acts that were against policy, specific instances of wrongdoing that can be considered "illegal," whereas when you say "war of aggression," you are criticizing the war as a whole. It's a completely different dimension.

(Yoshida 1994: 24)

The characterization of the "war as a whole" as "aggression," that the entire enterprise of Imperial Japan was (criminal) "aggression," was indeed the conclusion of the Tokyo War Crimes Trial. To a large extent, this is the view of Korea and China as well. By saying "acts of aggression," one admits that there were "aggressive" acts of individuals or groups in the Japanese army, but it does not condemn the motives or actions of the war itself as inherently and consistently "bad." It also maintains the stance that the war and the Japanese government and people had good intentions, however wrongly it might have turned out.

When Hosokawa said "war of aggression" in the press conference of August 10, the response from conservative circles had been highly critical. It seems that Hosokawa had not discussed this terminology with others

either in his own party or in other parties of the coalition government (Yoshida 1994). In any case, Hosokawa moderated his terminology, as indicated in this Diet address, probably in response to this criticism.

Still, the use of “aggression,” even in its somewhat weaker form of “acts of aggression” in an apology statement was major news. Moreover, Hosokawa went considerably beyond previous apologies, by repeating the apology term *owabi* first used by Prime Minister Kaifu and by apologizing for the offense of “colonial rule.”

“Colonial rule”

Apology for “colonial rule” was a major departure not just for Japan but for the world. Although this is obviously directed to Korean feelings, the wording is a broad rejection of colonialism.¹⁴ There have been some statements by imperialist powers that attempt to address wrongs of the past. Britain’s Queen Elizabeth signed a New Zealand legislative memorandum that apologized “unreservedly” for the “loss of life” and confiscation of Maori lands and attempted to restore the situation by returning land and providing a fund for re-purchase (*Guardian* February 12, 1998: 2). British Prime Minister Tony Blair apologized in 1997 for British actions during the potato famine (*NYT* June 3, 1997: A3). However, these were not apologies for colonialism or for the broad policy of imperialism. Similarly, the US Congress apologized in 1993 for the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii. Here again, “colonialism” itself was not the issue; instead, the United States apologized for the role of US marines in that incident.

Appetite: apology and national identity

Prime Minister Hosokawa’s apology statement in the Diet speech goes beyond previous statements in its use of the terminology “aggression” and “colonial rule,” but this apology is embedded in a major policy speech and the surrounding statements of Hosokawa’s Diet speech suggest that apology was playing a different role. Let us look at the broader objectives outlined in the speech as they frame and provide the context and motive for the apology.

As Hosokawa opens his address to the Diet, he establishes his claim to political legitimacy:

I see this Cabinet not simply as marking a historical way station but rather as marking a *new starting point* in our history. Thus I have characterized this Cabinet as a Cabinet that will initiate *changes for the new era*, and I am determined to devote myself heart and soul to meeting these responsibilities under the banner of *responsible change*...

The long era of East–West conflict with the two superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union at its poles is *now over*... [Consequently], the bipolar era in Japanese politics grounded upon the Cold War structure *has come to a close* with the *end* of the Cold War. I see the results of the last general election as indicating that many people have rejected the politics of conservative-progressive confrontation...

Joining the people in affirming the *end of the old era*, I would like to say clearly that the *curtain is going up* on the *start of a new era* looking ahead to the 21st century.

(Hosokawa 1993, emphasis added)

If we look at the words that indicate change (italicized), we can see that the themes of the speech are ends and beginnings. Times have changed: first, in the new political alignment resulting in the defeat of the LDP and Hosokawa's new coalition, second, in the international situation, that is, the end of the Cold War.¹⁵ Using the new situation to claim political legitimacy for his new government, Hosokawa interprets his election as a desire for non-confrontational politics between the left and right. Thus, the context established for persuasion, the argument for apology, is that change has occurred and that further change is coming and is justified.

Hosokawa repeats the litany of new beginnings in the words immediately preceding the apology:

August, when my Cabinet was formed, is a month that Japan will never forget. Going back just four turns of the twelve-year cycle, it was with the *end of the war* in August 1945 that we realized the great mistake we had made and vowed to *start anew*, resolutely determined never to repeat the wrongs of the past.

(Ibid.)

The reference to August here has a double meaning as the beginning of Hosokawa's government and also as the beginning of the postwar period. The theme again is Japan's rebirth and how Japan's rebirth was based on a realization of a "great mistake" and a decision "never to repeat the wrongs of the past."

The political agenda for apology

How does this emphasis on new beginnings and rebirth relate to apology? We have already discussed the ability of the apology to restructure our understanding of the past through rhetorical means of juxtaposing multiple views of the past. Here we are interested in the way that apology, while being about the past, can be a mechanism for distancing oneself from the past.

As Goffman (1971) theorized for individual apology, apology divides the self into two parts, the “bad” self of the past and the “good” self of the present (and the future). For nations too, the apology provides a mechanism for re-making one’s identity, for rejecting the “old” self and presenting a “new, improved” version. Rejecting the “old self” is also rejection of the past. In the case of Japan, affirmations of “good guy” status in the international community can be seen as the foundation of political legitimacy for a postwar Japan that has forsworn the militaristic, colonialist and aggressive policies of its past. Japan’s moral position is crucial to its postwar identity.¹⁶

For Hosokawa’s government, then, the strong emphasis on “new beginnings” and a new Japan provided a rhetorical and political environment that was hospitable to apology. Since apologies are a way to separate oneself from the past, they are especially attractive to new governments or new regimes. A new government or new personnel has the opportunity to say, through apology, “We are different from our predecessors.” Hosokawa was eager to separate his cabinet from previous administrations. Apology was a key strategy in that political agenda.¹⁷

Throughout the speech Hosokawa emphasizes the new environment facing Japan in the wake of the end of the Cold War. “Newness” is presented in contrast to “oldness.” The contrast must be drawn between the previous administration and this one, between Showa and Heisei (Hirohito and Akihito), between the economic policies of the past now bankrupt and the need for reform of the system on all fronts.

November 7, Prime Minister Hosokawa visits South Korea

The final example of apologetic statements for Prime Minister Hosokawa came on his trip to South Korea to meet with new President Kim Young Sam on November 7. During this two-day visit, Hosokawa repeatedly offered his message of “deep remorse” and “apology.” The apology statements were not made in a formal setting but rather are reported from private meetings between President Kim and Prime Minister Hosokawa. This reduced the sense of ritual and formality and instead emphasized the heart-to-heart and dialogic nature of the apology.

According to news reports, Prime Minister Hosokawa’s words began the dialogue as follows:

Because of our country’s past colonial rule, residents of the Korean peninsula experienced various forms of unbearable pain and grief, including such things as not being allowed to use their own language in school, being forced to change their names to Japanese style names, and the requisitioning (*chouyou*) of military comfort women. As the perpetrator (*kagaisha*) of these actions, from the heart we want to express our deep remorse (*fukaku hansei*) and apologize (*chinsha*).

(AS November 8, 1993: 2)

The words of apology used here echo what has been said before by previous Japanese administrations, although the use of *chinsha* for apology is a variant. (*Chinsha* is a fairly formal word, not used in everyday speech.) Prime Minister Hosokawa uses the word “perpetrator,” originally used by Prime Minister Miyazawa in his apology in 1992, and “aggression” was not new either. Nevertheless, the combination of all these elements together in a face-to-face apology produced a stronger apology than before.

Prime Minister Hosokawa departs from previous remarks in his explicit reference to the details of Japanese occupation of Korea. Hosokawa mentions the colonial policy that forced Koreans to use Japanese language and names. The reference to the comfort women is interesting because the Foreign Ministry had announced prior to the visit that this issue would not be on the agenda because “specific measures in lieu of compensation” were under discussion (AS November 5, 1993: 2). The Foreign Ministry even contradicted early newspaper reports of Hosokawa’s remarks concerning comfort women; later they had to retract their denials (AS November 8, 1993: 3). It seems that Prime Minister Hosokawa had again gone beyond the official government position.

President Kim responded to Prime Minister Hosokawa positively, especially in relation to the issue of comfort women:

I want to commend PM Hosokawa’s understanding of history. Previous [Korean] administrations have requested compensation for the former military comfort women. We have decided that, although looking to the past and keeping alive the lessons of history is important, it is more important to build a relationship [for the future]. As for the comfort women issue, although previous administrations have pursued compensation, [we find it] unnecessary.

(Ibid.: 2)

In his praise of Prime Minister Hosokawa’s statements, President Roh states that the Korean government was no longer going to pursue compensation for the comfort women. One wonders how acceptable this was to the comfort women themselves, not to mention to the activists who were at that very moment protesting on the streets in Korea and Japan, demanding Japanese compensation and recognition of Japanese criminal behavior toward the comfort women. This is yet another example of the tepid support given to the comfort women by government officials.¹⁸

As a relationship apology, Hosokawa’s framing of his remarks was much the same as that of Prime Minister Kaifu, setting the context of the new relationship within the changed world situation. Emphasizing the importance of the Korea–Japan relationship in maintaining Northeast Asia stability, Prime Minister Hosokawa and President Kim talked about North Korea and economic issues, in particular the trade imbalance between Japan and South Korea. Like Prime Minister Kaifu before him, the reasons

for apology were not sentimental and not based on long history of good relations, but rather on the immediate needs of cooperation in strategic and economic issues.

A final press conference before returning to Japan allowed Prime Minister Hosokawa a more public forum for repeating his apology, but it was again informal. Wearing “no ties,” the two men joked about going back to work after their pleasant weekend. Like the dialogue between Prime Minister Kaifu and President Roh in 1990, the two leaders took turns in developing the argument for apology (*AS* November 8, 1993: 1).

President Kim started by noting the common ideological grounds of “market economy and democracy.” He stated that the two leaders have decided to handle the issues of the past “rationally,” and states the desire for a “close/close” relationship.

Prime Minister Hosokawa added to the theme of commonality, noting that they were both facing the challenge of reform. Prime Minister Hosokawa then pointed out their agreement on the problem of North Korean development of atomic weapons and their commonality as Asian nations. At this point, he repeats the apology as reported in the previous meetings with President Kim. This time he did not mention the comfort women.

Prime Minister Hosokawa continued, noting his previous justification of apology: “I want to make every effort to be resolute in facing history frankly, keeping alive the lessons of history, looking ahead to a Japan–Korea ‘*paatonaashiipu*’” (*AS* November 8, 1993: 1). Hosokawa demonstrated here a fairly sophisticated understanding of history, recognizing that “facing history” requires continuous effort. Here the internal justification of apology, “learning from history” is put to the use of the relationship apology. In this relationship setting, this leads to “partnership.”

Apology response and reply

The response to Prime Minister Hosokawa’s visit and apology statements was positive. President Kim praised Hosokawa: “I have been impressed with Prime Minister Hosokawa’s frankness. Many former LDP Prime Ministers have come and gone but it hasn’t been like this” (*AS* November 8, 1993: 1). Other Korean officials agreed. Foreign Minister Chong gushed, “The summit was 110 out of 100. The issue of past history is closed” (*Yomiuri News* November 10, 1993). This time we believe you, the Koreans seem to be saying. This time we will put the past behind us.

President Kim had said exactly the right things for Prime Minister Hosokawa’s political agenda at home when he distinguished Prime Minister Hosokawa from former administrations. Differentiation from the past is key to Hosokawa’s internal political message and his political identity. For Hosokawa, differentiation from the past was not simply the past of “colonial rule” or the past of “wartime atrocities” or war itself, but

differentiation from LDP governments that had not acknowledged sufficiently the pre-1945 past.

Japanese public opinion

Japanese public opinion concerning Hosokawa's breakthrough usage of "aggression" and "colonial rule" was positive. In a *Mainichi Shimbun* public opinion survey in September 1993, 59 percent of 1,000 respondents agreed with Hosokawa's characterization of the war as a "war of aggression" and 9 percent believed it was "largely so" (cited in Yoshida 1994: 23). Only 16 percent were in disagreement: 8 percent said "not aggression" and 8 percent that "not much so". The remaining 24 percent had no opinion. Even more interesting are the opinions concerning monetary compensation. Fifty-five percent thought "it was necessary" or "necessary to some extent." A later study of 3,000 people published by the *Asahi Shimbun* in November 13, 1993, found that 76 percent approved Hosokawa's Diet speech while only 18 percent opposed it. Support was especially high among women (86 percent) and among Japanese in their twenties and thirties (86 percent women, 82 percent men). As for postwar compensation, 55 percent answered "should respond appropriate to the circumstances" in contrast to 37 percent who thought there was "no need to meet demands." (Other or no answer comprised 12 percent.) A survey of over 13,000 people compiled in July of 1994, almost a year later, found a similar number of 75 percent who agreed with the "war of aggression" characterization (*AS* July 6, 1994: 1).

On the other hand, response from conservative circles was negative. After the "war of aggression" statement, the Prime Minister's office was flooded with objections from conservative politicians and patriotic organizations.¹⁹ Having gone beyond what fellow politicians in his own party and his own coalition government were willing to go, Prime Minister Hosokawa was forced to backtrack at times, as the use of "acts of aggression" in his later speeches demonstrates. Nevertheless, popular opinion in Japan clearly indicated that the public was ahead of politicians on this issue. They appreciated the need for apology as well as compensation to victims of Japanese aggression.

Summary: apology, identity, and domestic politics

Prime Minister Hosokawa's statements of apology and historical interpretation moved the apology discourse along in several key ways. First, the use of the term "aggression" was repeatedly invoked as well as the recognition of "colonial rule" as causing damage to "many people." This terminology was considerably more explicit in admitting wrongdoing and broadened the scope of "victims" in Japanese thinking. In Prime Minister Hosokawa's remarks in Korea, he went even further, specifically naming the colonial policies and practices that were so offensive to Koreans.

Second, the inclusion of the Socialist Party in the government and the participation of prominent Socialists such as Doi Takako in official commemoration ceremonies and their participation in the official dialogue put Japan on the road to developing consensual, rather than antagonistic views on war. Socialist views were considerably more amenable to the idea of apology.

Third, the importance of political factors in providing the environment for apology is clearly visible. Hosokawa was a “new” government, the first non-LDP government in thirty-seven years, and as such, apology was a convenient mechanism for distinguishing his government from previous administrations and “old” Japan. Moreover, the new apologetic stance helped in developing a coalition with the Socialists. Nevertheless, the political environment continued to provide a deterrent to the frank admission of culpability in the war. The lack of consensus among more conservative members of his own coalition promised trouble for Hosokawa’s political future.

Some things remained as before. First, the text built on previous apologies; the content of Hosokawa’s apologies owed much to the previous example of Prime Ministers Kaifu and Miyazawa. Second, the importance of ceremony and occasion continued. In particular, Hosokawa (and Doi) transformed the August 15 national commemoration, a patriotic occasion to honor the Japanese war dead, into a ceremony that expressed condolences to war victims everywhere; this ceremony will become the focus for further apology declarations from this time on. And finally, the importance of relationship, especially with Korea, continued to drive apology.

As for representation, after the controversies over Emperor Akihito in 1990, the issue seems to have disappeared. The prime minister had become the designated apologizer. And as for audience response, Hosokawa’s and Doi’s speeches seemed remarkably in tune both with domestic and foreign audiences. The only cloud on the horizon was the continuing dissatisfaction of comfort women supporters and the conservative right wing of the LDP.

The internal politics of apology

National apologies for past wrongdoing must gain acceptance from the domestic audience and with its demeaning dimensions, the threat to identity, pride, and heroic historical myths that apology represents, this is not easy. The requirements of political legitimacy mean that apologies must be justified to this audience in a way that addresses issues of national identity and pride.

“Learning from the past” is one such justification. National leaders own up to past wrongdoing so that the nation can avoid the mistakes of the past. When national policy has obviously led to disaster and ruin, this argument can be persuasive as the nation seeks to understand its new role in the world.

A variation on this theme is that the wrongdoing is unworthy of the true nature of the nation. If we behaved badly in the past, we are not that nation today. Thus, the apology becomes a mechanism for questioning who we are (or were), for re-fashioning that identity, and for changing direction.

In *apologia* situations, political legitimacy is always at risk. When one cannot trust the government to do the right thing, the government loses credibility and support. After a certain time, distance from the original wrongdoers may reduce that threat, but the threat to political legitimacy through damaging the nation's reputation remains. Too much castigation of the old self and there is little left to rebuild with. Too little rejection of the old and the old identity remains paramount.

If an apology is to be successful with internal audiences, it must balance the rejection of the past with the promise of the future and balance the face threat of apology with face-saving strategies, that is, praise of progress in other ways. The main themes are those of self-reflection and change. A new identity must be created and sold, the new identity must be attractive and seem appropriate for the future. The audience is frequently reminded of difficulties in the past and how they have overcome them. The audience is exhorted not to be prisoners of the past, that is, to embrace the new identity. A new identity with new honor and values must be presented at the same time that the old identity is being shed. Thus, the apology will contain reminders of what they share in common as a nation, what their accomplishments of the past and present have been, and the challenges of the future that require the new direction and approach.

The "learn-from-the-past" apology is most often accomplished by a "new" person, one who is less tainted by the old identity. The apology allows the new person to criticize and at the same time claim high moral ground. Prime Minister Hosokawa's personal political strategy was to differentiate himself from the LDP political establishment. In hindsight, perhaps Hosokawa's remarks were premature in political circles as opposition to apology and negative characterizations of Japan's past began to organize and become even more vocal in the next year as Japan approached the fifty-year anniversary of the end of the war. These conflicting voices are about to be heard.

6 The anti-apologies/ conservative *apologia*

By 1994, it seemed that Japan was moving resolutely in the direction of full acknowledgment and settlement of wartime issues. Prime Minister Kaifu had resolved many of the outstanding contemporary issues with the Korean government—Sakhalin refugees, the status of Koreans living in Japan, and A-bomb victims. Following the disclosures concerning the “comfort women,” Prime Minister Miyazawa had apologized to Korea in early 1992 and Japan had made two additional apologies after investigation. In 1993, Prime Minister Hosokawa had acknowledged Japanese aggression and colonial rule in several apology statements. Plans for some kind of compensation for the comfort women were under discussion.

There are several reasons why the wartime issues did not go away. The escalation of international attention given to the comfort women scandal resulted in more and more lawsuits with attendant international publicity. The alliance of women’s groups to publicize the comfort women issue continued to maintain pressure on the Japanese government as they refused to accept the proffered government apologies and compensation.

Another reason was the increasing resistance and organization in Japan, of conservative opposition to apology and to representations of Japanese wartime past in “demeaning” and “derogatory” ways. These views were clearly in the minority of Japanese public opinion in 1993 as indicated by public opinion polls. Nevertheless, in the wake of Hosokawa’s path-breaking apologies of 1993, there was a definite backlash. Opposition to apology grew among conservative constituencies both in the government and in the public sector.

Perhaps nothing was more damaging to the persuasive impact of Japanese apologies than the frequency with which high-level government officials behaved or made statements that seem to contradict the basic premises of apology, that is, condemnation of Japanese militarism and war. At one level, these actions represent a revisionist view of Japanese history that interprets the wartime experience in a more positive or a less negative light. They reflect conservative approaches and dissatisfaction with the leftist and Tokyo War Crimes Trial essentialist view of Japan as an “aggressor” nation. It was perhaps only natural as the war began to recede in memory, with time to reconsider, that revisionist approaches to history would emerge.¹

I characterize these politicians' statements as "anti-apologies" because of their effect in undermining the apology strategy. Nevertheless, from a rhetorical point of view, these statements are clear examples of standard defensive strategies of *apologia*: that is, denial of wrongdoing, minimization of the offense, explanation/excuse/rationalization, justification for a larger purpose, and counterattack (Benoit 1995b). Moreover, they are not official statements. This chapter examines how these public statements have worked against the effect of the Japanese official apologies before considering the more general issue of opposition to national apology.

Conservative politicians "mis-speak"

In an interview in July 1986, Education Minister Fujio Masayuki outlined his views on Japanese wartime history:

War means killing people; world history is a history of aggression and war. The erroneous view that only Japan committed aggression must be corrected...

The verdict that [General] Tojo was a A-class war criminal was wrong.

(Dirlik 1993: 65)

The assimilation of Korea in 1910 [into the Japanese Empire] had been by perfectly proper joint agreement between the representatives of the then states.

(McCormack 1996: 233)

There are three assertions here. The first assertion challenges the use of the term "aggression" to characterize Japan's war effort. The statement uses the typical *apologia* defense strategy of differentiation/minimization, that is, minimization of the "wrongness" of the wrongdoing. Fujio's argument is: "Everyone else does it and has done it in the past. What we did was no worse than what many others have done." He is not exactly denying that Japan committed "aggression," just that Japan was not the "only" one, that Japan was not *uniquely* an aggressor. Minimization also occurs by renaming the wrongdoing. You say "aggression," I say "war." By equating the two, Fujio draws on the pacifist orientation that "war is hell" and thus, that all war is the same.

There is also the implication of unfairness here since Japan is the "only" country being criticized when "world history" contains many such examples. Why is everyone picking on us? In *apologia* terminology, this is "attacking the attacker," an attempt to divert attention to the motivations of accusers.

In the second statement, Fujio disputes the Tokyo War Crimes verdict of General Tojo as an "A-class war criminal." This is denial based on renaming the offense: Tojo was not a "criminal," he was a military leader. The underlying subtext here is that the war crime judgments were biased,

based on “victors’ justice.” Thus, in addition to minimizing the offense by challenging the terminology of “criminal,” the text also criticizes the source of the accusation, questioning the motivation and right of the accuser to make accusations.

In the final statement, Fujio defends Japanese colonization of Korea by saying that “assimilation” of Korea in 1910 had followed standard international protocols of the time and was the result of a joint agreement between Japan and Korea. This is a legalistic argument, one that defends the action by technicality. To restate, “Technically speaking, the Korean King signed an agreement giving us control over his country.” This interpretation, of course, conveniently ignores the coercive nature of military presence as well as the strong resistance and objection of the Korean public. In rhetorical terms, the technical argument differentiates Japanese colonialism from other (bad) colonial regimes and distinguishes colonial expansion from military invasion.

Thus, Fujio’s statements are classic examples of *apologia* strategies designed to justify and defend oneself against accusation of wrongdoing: minimization, redefinition of terms, differentiation from similar wrong-doing, and questioning of the accusers’ motives.

To say that these statements epitomize standard strategies of *apologia* is not to deny the validity of such a defense. Whether Fujio’s interpretation of history deserves consideration or not, his remarks constitute a rejection of the basic premises of apology. Moreover, these remarks were made in 1986 after the considerable public relations disaster of the textbook crisis of 1982 concerning the use of the term “aggression” in textbooks. It was bound to cause strong Chinese and Korean reaction. Chinese headlines announced: “Japan’s Fujio again ‘whitewashes’² war crimes” (Dirlik 1993: 65). The Chinese Foreign Office complained that the statements violated the agreements of 1972 and 1978 in which Japan accepted responsibility for the war. Fujio was forced to apologize and resign.

In 1987, the Minister of Lands Okuno Seisuke made a similar attempt to defend Japanese history against the term “aggression”: “Japan is the only country with the resolve to resist the colonization of Asia by the white races, so should not be accused of aggressive intent” (McCormack 1996: 233). This statement uses another standard strategy of *apologia*, that of higher purpose or motivation. In other words, “we had good intentions and our wrongdoing should be considered in light of our ultimate purpose.” In conservative circles, this argument is strengthened by the reality of postwar Asian liberation from colonial powers. Japan’s invasion did indeed bring about the expulsion of European powers from Asia. So if what Japan did was wrong, it turned out okay.

In 1990, prominent and flamboyant LDP politician Ishihara Shintaro, who co-authored the bestseller *Japan that can Say No* and later became mayor of Tokyo, became the next prominent politician to defend Japan’s honor. In a *Playboy* magazine interview, Ishihara said that the Nanking Massacre was a “fabrication” (*detchiage*). When questioned later by

Japanese reporters, Ishihara suggested that the translation was at fault. Later publications in Japanese repeated the characterization. Basically, his argument was that the uproar over Nanking in the 1980s was manufactured for political reasons.³ As an *apologia* strategy, this can be seen as minimization or even denial although again, it is not denial of the facts themselves, but rather denial of the magnitude of moral turpitude.

In May of 1994, Justice Minister Nagano Shigeto repeated objections to the terminology of Nanking “Massacre,” again calling it “a fabrication.” He did not deny that killing, rape, and pillage occurred, but he argued that the term “massacre” was too strong. In the context of war, he argued, the proper term was perhaps “war crime,” or “atrocities,” but not “massacre” (McCormack 1996: 227). Nagano also repeated the old argument that “the war should not be called aggression since Japan’s intent was to liberate colonies and establish a Co-Prosperty Sphere.” In the uproar that followed these statements, Nagano was forced to resign and apologize.

Shortly thereafter in August 1994, government official Sakurai Shin, Director-General of the Environmental Agency declared that “Japan had not gone to war out of any aggressive intent” and that “it was thanks to Japan that Asia had been freed of European colonial control and most had gained their independence.” He too was forced to resign.

Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru used a different *apologia* strategy in 1989 when questioned in a press briefing as to whether he would characterize the Asia-Pacific war as a “war of aggression” (AS August 11, 1989: 1). His answer, “History’s judgment is a problem for future historians,” seems an innocuous statement, but in the context of demands for Japanese apology this suggested a lack of acceptance of the war’s “aggressive” nature. In *apologia* terminology, this defense may be seen as a form of denial, but it probably deserves a category all its own, that is, one of delay and evasion, by asserting the need for more study and lack of sufficient information to support the accusations. This strategy of avoiding confrontation is very popular among apologists and may be characteristic of Japanese politicians, as some have suggested.⁴ When Prime Minister Takeshita was challenged on this statement, he admitted that the “aggressive nature of the war cannot be denied.”

Diet resolution 1995

Perhaps the culmination of opposition to apology was the Diet resolution of 1995, a failed attempt at a legislative apology.⁵ Originally entitled “Diet Resolution of Remorse and Apology,” the Diet resolution became embroiled in political wrangling, resulting in a document that did not even contain the word “apology.” Its new title reflected its reduced aims: “Resolution to Renew the Determination for Peace on the Basis of Lessons Learned from History” (1995). This (non-)apology is significant for our study for two reasons: first, because it is frequently used as evidence of the unrepentant attitude of the Japanese—that is, “Japan has never apologized”—and

second, because it represents the one attempt to produce a legislative apology in Japan.

The idea of a Diet resolution to express apology was not new. As the popularly elected representatives of the people, the Diet was an obvious representative institution to provide apology. In 1988, Doi Takako, then chairman of the Socialist Party, had drafted a proposal for a parliamentary resolution that apologized for Japan's colonial rule and war of aggression. In 1990, Doi again called for a Diet resolution. Without the support of the majority party, these resolutions never came to a vote. By 1991, even the LDP was considering a Diet resolution but had dropped the idea because of strong opposition from rightist factions within the party (Wada 1995).

When Murayama became prime minister in 1994, he made it a condition of the coalition that there should be a Diet resolution expressing remorse in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war. When the Diet resolution was proposed, a well-organized campaign to stop the apology was mounted both within and outside the Diet. For months in the spring of 1995, the Murayama coalition tried unsuccessfully to reconcile opposing views. Because it was thought that a unanimous resolution was necessary, much effort was made in constructing a statement that everyone could agree to. Originally introduced as a relatively strong resolution, in the end, after much wrangling, public as well as private, after striking out any language that anyone objected to, the resolution was passed on June 9. It was a watered-down statement, satisfying no one; in the end only 230 out of 511 Diet members voted for it.⁶

The text of the Diet resolution is brief, consisting of three rather disjointed paragraphs. An introductory sentence refers to the "occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II" and offers sincere condolences to those who fell in action and victims of war and similar actions all over the world. The heart of the statement is the next statement, which contains the well-worn expression "deep remorse," but not the word "apology":

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.

("Resolution to renew," June 9, 1995)

The resolution acknowledged that Japan had exercised "colonial rule" and "acts of aggression," but this admission was framed in the context of "modern history of the world" in which there were "many instances of colonial rule and acts of aggression." In other words, by enlarging the scope, by introducing the much larger scene of international wrongdoing, the resolution attempts to dwarf the wrongdoing of Japan. Moreover, aggression and colonialism are presented as normal or at least common activities of the

modern period. Thus, the sequential argument leads the audience as follows, “If we consider [first] the many cases of aggression and colonialism... [Then] Japan’s actions are not so bad. (Or perhaps, not unique. Or understandable.)” This is a classic case of the *apologia* strategy of minimization. It can also be seen as a strategy of blaming others. Other countries too—who these countries were was left unsaid—should be apologizing for their actions. “Who are my accusers” is an implicit defense here.

Few people considered this statement an apology, despite the declaration of remorse for past actions and despite the acknowledgment of colonial rule and aggression. The *apologia* strategy of justifying or excusing one’s actions because of the actions of others disqualifies this as an apology. If apology is the intent, it must not be combined with excuses or explanations. In this case, apology was probably not even intended. Without the self-serving phrase concerning the “modern history of the world” at the beginning, the statement might have seemed like a weak apology; with it the resulting statement cannot be considered an apology.

Nevertheless, even in this non-apology, conservative factions have accepted the terminology of “colonial rule” and “aggression.” What was unspeakable as wrongdoing only two years ago when Hosokawa first used these words had become accepted and commonplace in 1995.

As for the expression of regret, the old standby of “deep remorse” is as far as the conservatives will go in this Diet resolution; by now this sounds weak in comparison with the term “apology” (*owabi*), previously used by Prime Ministers Kaifu, Miyazawa, and Hosokawa. As in previous apologies, the statement focuses its “deep remorse” on Asian countries.

The apology is followed by a statement referring to the difficulties in coming to a consensus: “We must transcend differences over historical views of the past war and learn humbly the lessons of history so as to build a peaceful international society.” Although the statement does not expand on what differences in historical views are being referred to—differences within Japan? differences between national perspectives?—it seems to be suggesting that differences of interpretation of history are to be expected and should be accepted. As Dower (1995) notes, this is perhaps an unexpected argument from conservatives, arguing for tolerance of multiple viewpoints and that differences in opinion and freedom of expression cannot simply be legislated away.

Conservative *apologia*

Thus we see that the defensive rhetoric of Japanese officials can be understood as standard *apologia* strategies. Contrary to Suzuki’s (1999a) assertion that Japan has no tradition of *apologia* rhetoric, these statements clearly demonstrate typical defensive strategies. Although individual Japanese apologists may be constrained not to explain or justify their own actions, when arguing on behalf of Japan, these conservative apologists had no such

constraint. They were concerned with interpretations/explanations of Japanese wartime history; they focused on defending the larger purposes of the war or disputing what they saw as exaggerations of the negative aspects of the war. They did not, however, either deny or acknowledge specific atrocities (although the Nanking Incident/Massacre was seen as exaggerated).

Whatever these statements represent in terms of Japanese attitudes toward their own history or of political alignments in Japan, they undermined the effects of apology. By offering explanations and justifications, these statements contradict the acknowledgment of “aggression” that forms the foundation of apology. These statements are quoted repeatedly by those who would deny Japanese sincerity in apology-making as well as those who are simply reviewing the history of Japanese apology.

In a more general sense, the negative effect of these statements demonstrates that if apology is the intent, certain other *apologia* strategies may not be used or must be used with caution. At the most obvious level, one cannot at the same time deny the wrongdoing and apologize.⁷ Minimization, differentiation, and even transcendent strategies also seriously weaken the apology strategy.

In contrast to other strategies of defense, the apology works in a different way. As President Roh put it in his rejoinder to Emperor Akihito in 1990, “The past cannot be forgotten or erased, but [by means of] correct historical understanding/awareness”—that is, by recalling the past as it was, by “testifying” to and for the past—we can “wash away the past” (*AS* (Evening) May 25, 1990: 1). Thus, apology has a magical and paradoxical quality. One defends oneself by *not* defending oneself; instead one recalls and remembers the transgression, invoking a kind of self-punishment. Recognizing the “magic” quality of apology—that is its ability to transcend the limitations of reality by changing attitude—means that one must avoid, one must resist with all energy, the temptation to try to explain, to excuse, to deny, or to justify.

M. Lane Bruner’s (2000) study of German discourse on World War II suggests that German leaders have learned this lesson as both the left and right in Germany avoid any explanation or discussion of how the Nazi regime gained power (92). There is a fine line between explanation and justification; and in the context of presenting an apologetic and reformed stance in the world of international affairs, one cannot afford the luxury of “explaining” one’s history if one wants to appear penitent. This represents thus another dilemma for national apology: how to study/understand the past without “explaining” or “excusing” it.

It can be argued, of course, that these politicians were not speaking officially for the Japanese government but rather as individuals. These were off-the-cuff remarks in press conferences. Moreover, each was forced to retract these statements, apologize and, when in office, to resign. Thus, the official government position rejected these statements. It can also be argued that these statements represent only one segment of Japanese opinion, a minority view. Nevertheless, by demonstrating a lack of consistency and lack of consensus within highest political circles, the statements provide evidence of incompatible views and perhaps lack of sincerity among Japanese officials.

These statements by Japanese conservative “apologists” for history represent only one kind of objection to apology, the rejection of the validity of the accusation. In the next section, I consider more generally the question of opposition to apology.

Why do nations refuse to apologize?

An accusation is made, an apology is called for, the accused party refuses to make an apology. What are the objections made to apology? I suggest two kinds of opposition to apology for historical wrongdoing (1) rejection of the accusations as valid; (2) opposition to apology even when the accusation of wrongdoing is well-documented and accepted as “true.”

Objections when accusations are invalid

Perhaps the most common objection to apology is simply that the accused party does not agree that he/she is guilty of any wrongdoing, or that the wrongdoing was as “bad” as the accusations imply. This can often happen when accusations become exaggerated or sensationalized. Or the apologist may feel that the wrongdoing was justified in the context of choice between two evils or in pursuit of a higher purpose. President Bush insisted, no doubt sincerely, that when an American plane collided with a Chinese plane over international waters, the plane had done no wrong and he refused to apologize despite repeated requests of the Chinese government who held the American plane and servicemen as hostage.

Sometimes, though perhaps not often, people and countries apologize even when they are not convinced that the accusations are valid. Although this may be seen as insincere, one might justify such an apology for the sake of harmony in relationships. It might just be easier to apologize in deference to the feelings of grievance of the offended parties. However, in the case of nation-states an apology recognizing wrongdoing is an official admission of guilt, an official record that sets precedents and can ruin reputations for years to come.⁸

Objections to apology when accusations are valid

Even when a particular wrongdoing is non-deniable, sometimes objections to the validity of the accusations may still occur at the level of interpretation and intent. It’s one thing to say you’re sorry you stepped on someone’s foot, quite another to admit that you stomped on his/her foot on purpose. Even when wrongdoing is acknowledged, one regrets the wrongdoing and there is no ready explanation or excuses, it is still difficult for nations to admit historical wrongs publicly. I suggest three reasons for difficulty: (1) concern for political legitimacy; (2) respect for predecessors; and (3) practical considerations of litigation and compensation.

Concern for political legitimacy

As we have discussed, apology for past wrongdoings, especially if they are serious, cannot help but damage the nation's political legitimacy. If apology is repeated over and over again, the servile implications of lowering oneself to the righteous offended party further damages the legitimacy of the state. Not only is the nation seen as "bad," but weak and inferior as well.

In Japan, the comfort women issue reflects this problem. Whether or not the charges are true, the idea that Japan would be charged with providing "military prostitutes," let alone the forced abduction of young girls against their will, is so vulgar and shameful that public acknowledgment is especially painful. A typical reaction might be "This is like airing the worst dirty linen. Is it really necessary to discuss bodily functions in public?" It's not so much that Japanese think this did not happen or that it is reprehensible; but some things should not need to be shouted about.

Tavuchis' (1991) suggestion that apology may be more difficult for cultures with proud traditions of "self-regard" may be relevant here (35).⁹ In the case of Japan, it can be argued that military traditions and national pride have been a crucial part of Japanese identity as a nation and that Japanese patriots are therefore particularly averse to apology. This argument seems valid perhaps for certain individuals, in particular those with connections to the military. However, the overwhelming rejection of military hubris in the aftermath of the disastrous loss of World War II would argue against such an explanation. And this would not be consistent with the many studies that give evidence for Japan as an "apologizing" nation. Of course, conservative "pride" and "honor" causing reluctance to apologize for past actions is hardly unique to Japan.

Respect for the past and for sacrifices of others

The issues of political legitimacy and apology are linked with the second reason for opposition to apologies, respect for one's predecessors. Leaders act on behalf of the collective and unless there is clear evidence of fraud, self-aggrandizement, or egregious flouting of moral standards, we tend to honor their good intentions and efforts. How can we judge harshly today the actions and decisions of yesterday? Condemning your elders is especially difficult if one feels beholden to them for their sacrifices.

The Confucian ideas of respect for elders and a sense of duty toward those who have gone before you may be a cultural factor that makes it more difficult for Japanese to castigate the past acts of forefathers. In Japan, even though there is little overt praise of the military past, the strongly patriotic Bereaved Families Association has insisted throughout the debates on apology that apology dishonors the sacrifices of the soldiers whose memories they hold dear. A full-page advertisement in the conservative *Sankei Shimbun* insisted: "Japan is not an aggressor. Our fallen heroes were not accomplices in aggressive war" (quoted in Hicks 1997: 88).

Reluctance to criticize and judge past leadership, especially when the current leaders were themselves associated with the previous government and especially in military matters, is hardly unique to Japan. For example, the opposition of American veterans' groups to the Smithsonian display of the Enola Gay exhibit demonstrates very similar sentiments, the desire to honor the memory of those who gave their lives for American war efforts. Criticism of the decision to drop the atomic bomb is seen as damaging veterans' honor and sacrifices. Historical accuracy must sometimes be sacrificed for patriotism.

Germany provides an instructive comparison. The sharp discontinuities of the Nazi government, both in its inception in 1933 when the Nazis took over and in 1945 when the leaders committed suicide en masse, provided the postwar German leadership with a better standpoint from which to criticize the wartime behavior. There is little continuity between prewar, wartime, and postwar Germany. And what continuity there is, is not mentioned (Bruner 2000).

Practical considerations

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, governments find it difficult to apologize for practical reasons. Since the early 1990s, apology from governments has been seen as a justification for claims for remuneration. Indeed, the comfort women lawsuits of the 1990s regularly cite the apologies by Emperor Akihito and various prime ministers as evidence of legal guilt (Hicks 1994: 201).

The Japanese government continues to insist that postwar treaties have taken care of all issues concerning wartime reparations. Postwar settlements were supposed to finalize wartime obligations so that relations could begin anew. The reawakening of old issues with new claims for remuneration could cause a never-ending stream of compensation issues, especially if compensation is extended to include descendants.

Apologies can have other unforeseen consequences. The US apology in 1993, for the invasion of Hawaii in 1898 has been used in arguments for Hawaiian sovereignty movements. The apology has raised expectations among native Hawaiians that sovereignty is a possibility with United Nations' support for indigenous populations (Barkan 2000: 216–231).

Japanese war crimes were already dealt with in the Tokyo War Crimes trial. The criticisms of that trial notwithstanding, the victors had their chance to demand retribution and punishment for those actions that went beyond the normal wartime damages. However, the idea of “no statute of limitations” on war crimes has gained legitimacy in the continuing search for war criminals. The question in the case of Japan is whether the “crimes” being discussed are those attributable to individuals who can be identified and brought to justice. If the entire state is criminal, what is the remedy other than reparations—which have already been “legally” completed?

7 Murayama apology

On the international stage

The fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II provides the setting for the last apology in our series. On August 15, 1995, Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi apologized for “aggression” and “colonial rule” in a televised press conference called especially for the purpose of apologizing. Murayama’s apology is perhaps the most successful of all postwar Japanese apologies and the Japanese government considers it even today as the official Japanese apology.¹

The Murayama apology continues and combines previous trends in Japanese apology, using elements of the relationship apology, the internally directed apology that emphasizes learning from history, and the transcendent apology that affirms the moral principles of larger society. Moreover, occurring on the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II the apology demonstrates again the importance of occasion in the exercise of national apology.

Although Murayama’s apology thus shares many features with previous apologies, what distinguishes it from earlier apologies is prominence on the international stage. Targeted for an international audience, it received significant attention from the international press. Thus, Murayama’s apology provides an opportunity to focus on the international dimensions and motivations of national apology. In this chapter, I focus on Murayama’s apology, saving a broader discussion of international apology discourse for the next chapter.

Prime Minister Nakasone’s United Nations Commemoration apology

Actually, Murayama’s apology was not the first official Japanese apology to an international audience. Speaking in New York City ten years earlier, on October 23, 1985, on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro apologized for Japan’s wartime actions. At the beginning of a short speech discussing prospects for peace in the world, Nakasone noted that at the time of the original United Nations charter (May 1945), Japan was still at war. Continuing, he said: “since the end of the war, Japan has profoundly regretted

(*kibishiku hansei*) the unleashing of rampant ultra nationalism and militarism and the war that brought great devastation to the people of many countries around the world and to our country as well” (Nakasone October 23, 1985).

Despite the strong statement of regret and the characterization of wartime wrongdoing as “ultra nationalism” and “militarism,” this apology seems to have had little effect on the international perception of Japanese apology.² Nor did it have much effect on Japanese audiences. The words “ultranationalism” and “militarism” do not appear in later apologies. Nevertheless, the focus on “war” as the source of the problem and characterization of Japanese people as both victims and perpetrators preview the themes of later speeches, particularly Murayama’s speech ten years later.

Political background

Beginning with the non-LDP government of Prime Minister Hosokawa in 1993, Japanese politics had been in a state of flux, not to say turmoil. In June 1994, after being out of office for a year, the conservative LDP, still the single largest party, had formed a coalition government that included the Japan Socialist Party. It is hard to imagine a less likely alliance than the Socialists and the LDP, longtime bitter opponents with seemingly irreconcilable policy positions. By joining up with the LDP, the Socialists had been required to disavow certain traditional Socialist positions, notably opposition to the United States–Japan Security Alliance and the Japanese Self Defense Forces (which the Socialists had argued was contrary to the Constitution). As their price for joining the coalition, the Socialists were able to demand the position of prime minister and Murayama Tomiichi, leader of the Socialist Party, became the first Socialist prime minister since the late 1940s. The LDP got most of the other seats in the cabinet.

By the summer of 1995, to everyone’s surprise, Prime Minister Murayama and the coalition had lasted for over a year. However, Murayama’s tenure as prime minister was almost certainly coming to an end. The failure of the Diet Resolution in June had weakened the Socialist position and in July, just one month before his fiftieth year anniversary speech, the Socialist Party had suffered an embarrassing defeat in the upper house elections. Political observers judged that Murayama would stay on as prime minister only as long as it took for the LDP to choose a successor.

The occasion: the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war

Countries around the world celebrated 1995 as the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. In the spring, commemorations of D-day in Europe and the Okinawa campaign commanded public attention; in the early summer, the news reported the failure of the apology resolution in the Diet. In early August the usual commemorations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were featured.

August 15 had symbolic and ceremonial associations for both Japan and the outside world. This is the day the war ended in the Pacific. In Japan, as previously discussed, this is a day for honoring Japanese war veterans. In 1995, however, the day was being celebrated all over the world as “defeat of Japan” day.³ The international attention focused on Japan on that day was sure to draw attention to any public statements.

The exigency requiring apology in 1995 was not apparent or immediate. There was no particular accusation, no set of victims, no new revelations of wrongdoing, no particular country that was clamoring for apology. Rather, the call for apology came from the general sense that the world expected a statement. Exactly to whom and for what the apology was required was not spelled out. Here was an opportunity for an unsolicited, freely given Japanese apology.

Nevertheless, many felt that an apology was needed. There was a growing realization in Japan that bad feelings concerning Japan’s wartime past, instead of dying down as the past receded in time, were becoming ever more intense and vociferous. The comfort women issue continued to plague the Japanese government. In 1994, the International Commission of Jurists issued a report condemning Japan (McCormack 2000; Soh 1996) and an investigation of the comfort women by the United Nation Subcommission on Human Rights was under way. No longer was it sufficient for Japan to apologize and negotiate with individual victims or other Asian countries concerning wartime wrongdoing; now they had to contend with an aroused international public opinion.

The anniversary of the war’s end prompted reflection and remembrance in other distressing ways. Korea, China, and other Asian countries planned celebrations of liberation from Japan, encouraging already volatile anti-Japanese feelings among the public (Reid 1995). In Western news reports around the world, PoWs recalled their inhumane treatment from their Japanese captors, insisting on apology and compensation from the current Japanese government (e.g. Posner 1995).

International pressure on Japan to make a general apology was expressed explicitly by former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on a visit to Tokyo in May 1995. Chancellor Schmidt advised Japan that “if the present generation of Japanese recognize and repent those crimes Japan committed on the Korean Peninsula, in China and other places during World War II, this would promote trust...in neighboring countries and would be beneficial to peace” (Li 1995).

Thus, unlike previous situations calling for apology, during diplomatic exchanges or in domestic policy speeches, in 1995 the spotlight was international. It was not a diplomatic issue between South Korea and Japan, nor was it a matter of internal political debates concerning Japan’s historical past. Japanese conservatives and liberals alike were feeling the pressure from abroad. The fifty-year anniversary was both a challenge and an opportunity.

Government initiatives related to the anniversary

As part of the anniversary activities, the Murayama cabinet put forth several initiatives intended to put wartime issues to rest. Those who had thought that the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary provided an opportune time to resolve the issues of Japan's war responsibility were deeply disappointed with the outcome of the Diet resolution. Despite the promise that the LDP would support the Socialist call for an apology, the Diet resolution was passed in June in a greatly watered-down version amid much public strife, consternation, and criticism of the Japanese government. Then, in July 1995 the Diet established the Asian Women's Fund to "atone for" (and provide compensation) the comfort women.⁴ As discussed previously, this was met with a negative response as the Korean Council quickly condemned the plan as inadequate.

As August 15 neared, Prime Minister Murayama was determined to salvage the situation with a personal initiative. A pacifist and a Socialist, Prime Minister Murayama had long opposed conservative interpretations of the war. Moreover, advocating non-alignment and neutrality, the Socialists argued for closer relationships with Asian countries as opposed to the United States. Thus, Murayama was uniquely positioned to present a sincere and penitent apology.

Like Hosokawa two years earlier, Murayama recognized the appropriateness of the August 15 ceremonies for his purpose. By issuing his own apology statement, he hoped to achieve what he and the coalition had been unable to achieve in the Diet. This seemed Murayama's and the Socialists' last chance to achieve a national apology and restore some of the lost luster of the Murayama cabinet.

Japan's official apology

On the morning of August 15, Prime Minister Murayama called a press conference at his home before leaving for the official ceremony honoring war veterans. On live television, he read a statement in which he apologized for Japan's wartime conduct. In this brief speech, lasting only about ten minutes, the words of apology occur about halfway through the speech:

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 (*tsuusetsu na hansei*) and state my heartfelt apology (*kokoro kara no owabi*).

(Murayama 1995)⁵

Note again the vague and indirect language that critics have long railed against: “During a certain period in the not too distant past,” a “mistaken national policy,” “advanced along the road to war,” “ensnare the Japanese people.” These phrases hardly seem to represent a clear-cut admission of wrongdoing. Where are the comfort women? How about the (mis)treatment of PoWs?

Finally, however, we hear the phrases “colonial rule and aggression,” causing “tremendous damage and suffering.” Although still not specific, this is the kind of direct acknowledgment of Japanese actions that critics want to hear. The key words “colonial rule” and “aggression” are quite familiar to us by now—Murayama says “aggression,” not the lesser sounding “aggressive acts.” The words “mistaken national policy” echo Hosokawa’s previous characterization of the war as “a mistaken war.” Although Murayama refers vaguely to “the war,” his words clearly criticize the war in its entirety and government policy in waging war. The phrase “irrefutable facts of history” rejects conservative revisionist historical views, reflecting the recent controversies in the Diet.

For the words of regret, Murayama uses the word *owabi* for apology, as well as the oft-repeated *hansei* (remorse). “Heartfelt” and “in a spirit of humility” reinforce and strengthen the basic apologetic stance. Murayama later repeats the feelings of sorrow near the end of the speech, again emphasizing the strength of his personal feelings: “Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.”

Appetite, audience, and argument

If we look now at how the apology is introduced, we can compare it with previous apologies. Murayama begins by referring to the occasion: “Fifty years have elapsed since the war came to an end.” “Fifty years” not only refers to the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary, but it highlights the (long) period of time since the war and Japanese militarism, the subjects of the upcoming apology. Our attention is focused on recent history, that is, the last fifty years rather than the older history of wartime and prewar Japan. The implication is, “It was a long time ago” or perhaps, “we’ve come a long way since then.”

Following a brief expression of sorrow appropriate to the occasion, Murayama next reviews the last fifty years, expressing appreciation for the blessings of “peace and prosperity.” He praises the Japanese public for their achievements in rebuilding Japan, he expresses gratitude “for the indispensable support and assistance extended to Japan by the countries of the world, beginning with the United States of America”; and he extends his appreciation for the “friendly relations that we enjoy today with the neighboring countries of the Asia-Pacific region, the United States and the countries of Europe.” Thus, unlike earlier apologies, Murayama quite explicitly appeals to multiple audiences, that is, to the United States, even to Europe, as well as to domestic audiences.

As he describes the postwar achievements of Japan, Prime Minister Murayama incorporates Hosokawa's identity themes of the new Japan, a new Japan that has recovered from the devastation of war, enjoying peace and prosperity, and basking in the warmth of close international relationships. Like Hosokawa, Murayama presents Japan in positive terms, as a peaceful participant in world affairs, a good and prosperous citizen. He lists various projects of education and cultural exchange as evidence that Japan has changed its ways and is promoting relations with neighbors; its new mission is to be a good member of the world community.

By emphasizing Japan's good behavior and good citizenship, Murayama claims identification with his international audience and with the progressive forces in the world. In the international context of this speech, the "new Japan" demonstrates that Japan can now be trusted. "See what good citizens we have become," he says; "Why should you, the international community, accept this apology? Because we have reformed, with a proven track record."

Murayama's next statement is directed toward the internal audience. He asks the Japanese people to reflect on the lessons of the last fifty years:

We tend to overlook the pricelessness and blessings of peace... [We must] convey to younger generations the horrors of war, so that we never repeat the *errors in our history*. Now, upon this *historic* occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end, we should bear in mind that *we must look into the past to learn from the lessons of history*, and ensure that we do not stray from the path to peace and prosperity of human society in the future.

(Ibid., emphasis added)

Here, we can see again the strategy of justifying apology by focusing on internal issues of history, political identity, and future mission. But in this case, in the setting of the fiftieth year anniversary, the statement—to "ensure that we do not stray from the path to peace and prosperity of human society in the future"—becomes a promise to the international audience as well. If this is a world that fears Japanese economic and military power, then the apology reassures the outside world. The emphasis on learning from the past becomes a pledge to the international community.

In case the message is unclear, further reassurance to the international community comes next as Murayama asserts that, as evidence of remorse, Japan must eliminate "self-righteous nationalism" and promote "peace and democracy." "Self-righteous nationalism" is again a rebuke to the right wing opponents of apology, gathering meaning from the recent Diet resolution debate.

As he nears the end of his statement Prime Minister Murayama turns to a theme near and dear to the hearts of pacifists and the Socialist Party: "[A]s the only country to have experienced the devastation of atomic bombing, Japan, with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, must actively

strive to further global disarmament [and]...nuclear non-proliferation.” Some might criticize the reference to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in a Japanese apology for wartime aggression. Murayama makes no attempt, however, to blame the United States or to try to equate Japanese suffering with that of Asian victims. He simply says that Japan’s interest in and responsibility for peace is magnified as a survivor of the A-bomb. What this does for the speech is to include both representations of Japan as “aggressor” and Japan as “victim.” The issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation also provide an opportunity for a distinctively Japanese contribution to international peace, allowing Murayama to claim a high moral position.

The strong affirmation of higher principle is characteristic of transcendent apology. In this apology, the moral principles center on the larger issues of war and peace. The acknowledged wrongdoing consists of “aggression” and “colonial rule” but the underlying culprit is “war” and the moral values breached by the wrongdoing are peace and international friendship. In this brief speech of ten minutes, Murayama mentions “peace” seven times and “war” six times, rejecting militaristic values and lauding the pacifist position.

In some contrast to recent government apologies, Prime Minister Murayama does not mention specific atrocities such as the comfort women. While affirming Japanese commitment to peace, Murayama thus avoids addressing the difficult issues of Japanese brutality and treatment of women, as well as the difficult moral issues of what constitutes acceptable behavior in military situations or colonial rule. Are all colonial ventures equally bad? Are all wars equally bad? Prime Minister Murayama seems to say so.

Synthesis

One of the strengths of this apology is Prime Minister Murayama’s development of consensus or, perhaps more precisely, synthesis. Although most apologies (and political rhetoric in general) commonly use euphemism and ambiguity to gloss over controversial areas and achieve consensus, Murayama incorporates the words and feelings of both sides of the polarized controversy concerning Japan’s past and apology into the same speech.

First, Murayama combines apology and self-criticism of the past with praise for the Japanese people and their efforts in rebuilding Japan in the recent past. Using the ever-popular “peace and prosperity” of the new Japan, he paints a positive picture of Japan’s people rather than wallowing in negativity as deplored by conservatives.

Second, Murayama incorporates two concepts of “victim.” He refers to victims “at home and abroad” in his opening statement and later he repeats his “feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad.” Then, by including reference to the atomic bombing, Murayama acknowledges the particular Japanese experience as “victim.” Thus, Murayama connects with all audiences under the umbrella that “we have all suffered.”

The synthesis of appeals to various audiences is especially visible in the last sentence: “It is my conviction that in this way alone can Japan atone/pay for (*tsugunai*) its past and lay to rest the spirits (*mitama*) of those who perished.” Japan’s responsibility to “atone for its past” represents the leftist and critical attitude toward the war. The “spirits of those who perished” refers both to the Japanese war veterans whose “spirits” are honored on this day (rightist concern) as well as to all other victims of the war, including Japanese victims of atomic bombing (pacifist and popular Japanese view.) “Lay[ing] . . . to rest/quieting departed spirits” adds a quasi-religious and particularly Japanese flavor to the statement, referring to the rather quaint idea that the dissatisfied dead can come back to haunt you. (Perhaps it also refers to the need to quiet the current uproar from the ghosts of the past as brought about by the fiftieth year anniversary!)

Murayama also combines the appeal to various audiences in his explanation of why apology is necessary and desirable, that is, the motive for apology. We have noted the repetition of Hosokawa themes and the appeal to domestic audience in this speech with the emphasis on the “new” Japan and the educational purposes of apology. Moreover, although the relationship themes of apology are not paramount here, Murayama’s concern for reconciliation with Japan’s Asian neighbors is evident as he refers explicitly four times to “friendly relations . . . with neighboring countries of the Asia-Pacific region” and once to the relationship with the United States. The transcendent aspects of the speech focus on the values of peace and anti-militarism. These themes are carried over from previous apologies. Where Murayama’s apology charts are concerned, new ground comes from the combination of strategies and the performance on the international stage.

Style/emotion and charisma

Finally, the stylistic dimensions of the speech. Prime Minister Murayama was an imposing presence; his white hair, bushy eyebrows, and good looks made him a memorable subject. The speech was televised and although the words are not much different from those of Prime Minister Hosokawa two years earlier, Murayama’s presentation was more emotional.

Murayama’s opening statement goes straight for the emotional jugular: “Now, when I remember the many people at home and abroad who fell victim to the war, my heart is overwhelmed by a flood of emotions.” He uses the personal term for “I.” “My heart is overwhelmed” in the official translation literally means “a heavy weight presses on my chest.” Later in the speech, he modifies apology with the adjective “heartfelt” and he repeats his “feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad.” “Heartfelt apology” was repeated in headlines around the world.

Murayama’s apology also demonstrates the importance of personal credentials and character, that is, *ethos*.⁶ Murayama’s past record as Socialist

and activist for social justice gave him more credibility than previous prime ministers. When Murayama said he was sorry for what Japan had done in bringing suffering to Asia, people both in Asia and Japan believed him.

Finally, we should note too that this apology was, to a much larger degree than previous apologies, voluntary, taken on the initiative of Murayama himself (with cabinet approval). Moreover, the press conference was called for the sole purpose of apology, giving focus and significance to the statement. The voluntary nature added to the apology's credibility as well as to its visibility. On the other hand, of course, the spontaneity and personal nature of Murayama's apology can also suggest that the apology did not represent the will of the Japanese government or Japanese people.

Response

Reactions to Murayama's speech were generally positive. "Finally, an apology" was the headline for a *Time* magazine article (Desmond August 28, 1995). *U.S. News and World Report* gushed, "Tomiichi Murayama has ended five decades of collective amnesia with the strongest official acknowledgment of wrongdoing yet: an unambiguous apology" (Lord September 4, 1995). Cheryl WuDunn of the *New York Times* wrote that "Prime Minister Murayama of Japan today did what no other Japanese leader has dared to do: he extended his 'heartfelt apology' for atrocities his country committed in World War II" (August 20, 1995: 4). Although the general impressions given by these journalists that Japan had not apologized previously can be challenged, these responses offer evidence of international acceptance.

In Asia, official responses generally applauded the statement, although the responses of China, Korea, and Singapore were somewhat reserved. Philippines President Fidel Ramos thanked Murayama and said his apology "will be welcomed by the entire world." China gave a mixed assessment: "The Japanese government's gesture is positive," said the Foreign Ministry in Beijing, "but...in Japanese society, and in political circles, there are still some people who are not able to take a correct attitude." South Korea's reaction again emphasized the importance of history, "We want the Japanese government...to make serious efforts to thoroughly reveal the truth of history and have a proper understanding of history" (Desmond August 28, 1995).

Within Japan too the reaction was positive. According to observers in Japan, "Most Japanese believed their country should express contrition for their actions" (*ibid.*). A CNN reporter even quoted conversations with war veterans in Tokyo who agreed with Japan's making an apology and said that "too much time has gone by and it is time to face up to the actions of the past" ("Japanese apparently," August 15, 1995). Opposition to the use of terms such as "apology" and "aggression" was limited largely to veterans groups and Japanese right wing politicians, as one would expect.

Veterans groups and representatives of the comfort women were not satisfied. Words were not enough. "If it was an apology accompanied by reparations, then that would be an end to the matter," said a representative of British PoWs ("British veterans," August 15, 1995).

Long-term effects: a successful apology?

Murayama accomplished the task of public apology for Japan's wartime actions of "aggression" and "colonial rule." His personal integrity and his longtime association with leftist politics gave his speech credibility and the sincerity and emotional content of his speech was persuasive in indicating true repentance. Worldwide reaction demonstrated the success of his speech.

The long-term effects of the speech were even more successful than initially realized. A year later, on the occasion of the August 15, 1996 commemoration, the new Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro, past chairman of the Japan Bereaved Families Association and a strong LDP conservative, restated Prime Minister Murayama's apology almost verbatim. At every occasion where an official apology has been needed in the years following 1995, the model of Murayama's apology has been used. In 1998, the Japanese government agreed to provide a written apology to the South Korean government stating, as usual, that Japan feels "deep remorse" and "apologizes" for "aggression" and "colonialism."⁷ The Japanese Foreign Ministry has repeatedly affirmed this speech as the official government statement on apology. What had been impossible to achieve in June as a Diet resolution, saying *owabi* or apology, after August became the standard expression of Japanese apology. Once stated, the apology became public domain and lost its controversial quality.

The success of Murayama's apology owed much to his synthesis of Japanese thinking about their wartime experience. He incorporated Japan's experience as both aggressor and victim as legitimate views of that experience. What held these contrary views together was the common understanding that peace was better than war. "Peace and Prosperity" is the slogan of both right and left in Japan. Pride in accomplishments since the war, the rebuilding of a shattered economy and a new responsibility in international circles are goals shared by all Japanese and provide new identity and moral purpose for the future. On the other hand, Murayama's personal associations with the Socialist position and the knowledge that his political clout was waning may have weakened the effect of the speech. Some felt that Murayama's speech was a personal gesture, rather than an official position. They point to the fact that the statement was given at Murayama's home, rather than at the official ceremony with the Emperor later in the day and the official designation of the speech as *danwa* (remarks).⁸ The visit to Yasukuni Shrine on August 15 by more than half of Murayama's LDP cabinet in the afternoon seemed to indicate the lack of

official support for the statement despite the fact that Murayama had secured prior cabinet approval.

Summary: international exigency

It would be difficult to explain many of the national apologies in recent times if it were not for the driving force of transcendent moral authority and international public opinion. Why does the international world care about the words of an apology? Because when wrongdoing and injustice occur, the social order is compromised. The national apology restores and affirms the moral universe.

As Tavuchis (1991) notes, “Genuine apologies . . . serve to recall and confirm allegiance to codes of behavior and belief whose integrity has been tested and challenged by transgression” (13). Without the confirmation of the legitimacy of the rules, the rules themselves become compromised. In other words, Japan’s wartime behavior is not simply a matter of victimization of various peoples of Asia; it calls into question the very “codes of behavior and belief” of civilized warfare and international standards. Thus, the larger community insists on apology.

From the point of view of the apologizing nation, the transcendent apology attempts to restore the nation’s political legitimacy abroad. The apology is a key ritual in the process of reconciliation for errant states, requiring the wrongdoer to reject past behavior and embrace a reformed identity and law-abiding future.

The immediate occasion for the transcendent apology is often some commemorative event or international forum. The visibility of the occasion matters. For Japan, the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the war provided both incentive and opportunity. The audience is the larger world, the higher court of world opinion.

The argument strategy of the transcendent apology focuses on the wrongdoing itself. In Murayama’s apology, apologizing for “aggression” and “colonial rule”—accusations that could well be leveled against many countries—allowed Japan to take the high moral road of having rejected militarism and colonialism when others had not. Strong condemnation of the wrongdoing is the hallmark of this kind of apology.

In transcendent apologies, the apologizing party must also build the case for reformed character. Long rehabilitation and evidence of suffering and/or punishment are good arguments. Prime Minister Murayama was able to point to fifty years of law-abiding, peaceful, and progressive behavior. The atomic bomb provided evidence of punishment. In other words, Japan had “paid” for its crimes.

8 Apology as international discourse

Although national apology was not unknown before World War II,¹ the number of apologies dramatically increased in the postwar period and especially during the 1990s following the end of the Cold War.² By the mid-1990s everyone was apologizing for historic wrongs. In 1995 alone there were apologies from Swedish Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson who regretted Sweden's silence as a neutral country during the Holocaust (April 26); President Thomas Klestil urged Austrians to acknowledge Austrian participation in the war on the side of Hitler (May 3); the Vatican asked forgiveness for wrongs committed by the Catholic Church against Protestants and people of other faiths (May 22); Southern Baptists apologized to African-Americans for condoning racism (June 21); President Chirac said that France's complicity with the Nazis was a "stain" on the nation (July 17).³ The list of apologies is long; some can be characterized in our terms as "relationship" apologies, some as "transcendent," and some as "self-reflective" and politically motivated. But, for whatever reasons and in varying circumstances, increasingly the apologies were performed on the world stage and they influenced each other.

As we have seen in discussing the "comfort women" and Murayama apologies, the international imperative was a significant factor for Japanese apologies. International pressure on nations to conform to international norms, especially in regard to principles of nonaggression and human rights had increased greatly. But it was not just as international pressure that Japanese apologies were affected. The international environment influenced Japanese apologies in other ways as well. More specifically, I argue that international apologies affected Japanese apologies in two ways: first, directly by providing models of other apologies and second, indirectly by providing models against which to judge Japanese apologies.

Several apologies were especially influential. Because of similarities in their postwar status as defeated powers and because of (West) German efforts in apologizing and offering compensation for the atrocities of the Nazi regime, Japanese apologies and attitudes toward the war are often compared with those of Germany. The US apology to Japanese Americans in 1988 was also influential in Japan as well as in international apology discourse. Let me reemphasize that these examples are not meant to be exhaustive or comprehensive

in a comparative sense; they are chosen to highlight and provide context for Japanese apologies that are the main focus of this study.

Influence of international apologies on Japanese discourse

Japanese are avid consumers of international news and thus it should not be surprising that as the Japanese people tried to deal with the past and fashion an apology, they should look to other examples of national apology for inspiration and comparison. What others in the world were doing was explicitly discussed at the time of President Roh's visit and Akihito's apology in 1990. An *Asahi Shimbun* article saw the upcoming visit and attempts to "settle the past" in the larger context of world-wide trends: "Reconciliation of the past is proceeding globally as evidenced by the Soviet Union's apology for the Katyn Forest massacre of Polish soldiers during World War II" (*AS* May 9, 1990: 2).

Another article several days later, entitled "Settling the past: differences with Europe and the United States," presented the Japanese reader with several examples for comparison (*AS* May 13, 1990: 2). In addition to the recent Russian apology for the Katyn Forest massacre, the article points to the 1988 US apology to Japanese Americans and apologies from East and West Germany. Excerpts from the Soviet apology as well as the statements of (West) German President Richard von Weizsacker in 1985 and the East German legislature in 1990 are featured. According to the article, these prominent apologies suggest that Japan should take "responsibility for history and the future" (quoting from the East German declaration). President Weizsacker's speech was praised for its detailed listing of wrongs as well as the voluntary nature of his remarks. The article pointed out that the same year that President Weizsacker was making his speech, Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone was trying to reinstate official visits to Yasukuni Shrine, causing an uproar in Asia. In the end, the article concluded that, in comparison with other nations, "Japanese prime ministers and cabinets have only been interested in foreign policy and concern for the emperor's position." Thus, comparison with other national apologies provided both criticism and specific strategies to Japanese observers.

Around the same time, in an article written for a news magazine, Socialist Party Chairman Doi Takako (1990) called for a Diet resolution of apology, citing the examples of both East and West Germany. Again, in January 1992, following the comfort women revelations, the *Asahi Shimbun* presented an editorial that used the US apology to Japanese Americans as a model, noting in particular the importance of the investigation leading up to the apology and compensation (*AS* January 23, 1992: 2). It also noted that Canada was in the process of providing similar redress. Closer to home, in October 1993, President Boris Yeltsin visited Japan and apologized for the Soviet treatment of Japanese prisoners following World War II (*AS* October 15, 1993: 1).

Even Japanese spokesmen defending Japanese apologies use external apologies as reference. Okazaki Hisahiro (2000), a Japanese diplomat, quoted Gorbachev's comments that "the atrocity in Manchuria was committed by Russians of a different generation" to suggest a more understanding and practical attitude toward the past. Okazaki also criticized Weiszacker's apology in 1985 as less straightforward than Japanese apologies.

The examples of other countries apologizing for historic injustices, and especially ones concerning World War II, no doubt encouraged further apologies. It was easier to admit historical wrongdoing when others were doing it. Looking at the frequency of apology, governments began to see apologies as a logical and perhaps necessary step in the development of new relationships between formerly antagonistic neighbors. It seemed that apologies might even increase one's moral standing in world opinion.

There are two national apologies that had particular significance for the Japanese as well as the international community. The first was the 1988 US apology to Japanese Americans for incarceration during World War II. The second, even more influential in Japan, was the May 8, 1985 speech of West German President Richard von Weizsacker at the German Diet speech on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. Weizsacker's speech occurs in the context of general comparison of Japanese and German postwar treatment of war-related issues. I consider these apologies in more detail, in addition to several other German apologies that have been significant in international discourse.

Apology to Japanese Americans

The successful case of Japanese American redress for incarceration during World War II significantly altered the moral landscape for restitution of historical wrongs, suggesting to victims around the world that governments could be prevailed upon to right historical wrongs.⁴ The Civil Liberties Act passed by the American Congress in 1988 provided apology and compensation of US\$20,000 to living Japanese Americans who had been incarcerated in World War II relocation camps.

Here are the words of President Bush's apology in 1990:⁵

A monetary sum and words alone cannot restore lost years or erase painful memories; neither can they fully convey our Nation's resolve to rectify injustices and to uphold the rights of individuals. We... recognize that serious injustices were done to Japanese Americans during World War II. In enacting a law calling for restitution and offering a sincere apology, your fellow Americans have, in a very real sense, renewed their traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice.

(Maki *et al.* 1999: 214)

This apology may well be the most successful apology of modern times. Japanese American recipients, who had remained loyal throughout years of prejudice, suspicion, and incarceration, were intensely pleased with the public recognition of the injustice of their treatment. Their faith in the American government system was vindicated. It reinvigorated pride in their ethnic heritage as well. Politically, the apology affirmed American principles of due process and “innocent until proven guilty,” as well as the principle that being American was not about race.

The process of Japanese American redress included public hearings that gave internees a chance to tell their story and the Civil Liberties bill provided funding for educational programs. Media attention was almost entirely positive. Thus, the apology worked on all levels, as affirmation of relationship, as a mechanism for “learning from history,” and as affirmation of society’s best moral principles. It also went a long way in healing the “wounds of the heart” for older Japanese Americans. The apology also demonstrated the efficacy of political solution—that is, a Congressional act—in contrast to legal actions.⁶

The successful case of Japanese American redress is often cited by those who advocate compensation for victims of government injustice. The Japanese American case is unusual, however, in the identifiably small numbers of Japanese Americans who received payments.⁷ Specific individuals who had been incarcerated were easy to identify from government records. Moreover, there was little concern for setting a precedent. Who else would be able to claim that they were forced into detention camps at government command, based only on racial inheritance, with no legal hearing?

There were other special considerations that made the redress movement successful. The government had never denied the government action; the question had always been whether the action was justified for military reasons. Despite the injustice of incarceration, the wrongdoing is not of the same character as, say, war atrocities or genocide. Loss of property and years of freedom are not equivalent to torture and mass killing of women and children. It may be easier for governments to admit wrongs that contradict basic political principles than to admit responsibility for inhuman acts of brutality.

Moreover, the political environment surrounding the redress movement was unusual.⁸ Maki *et al.* (1999) view the name of the bill, Civil Liberties Act, as a master stroke as it framed the wrongdoing in the rhetoric of the rights of individuals, not in their suffering, their loss of property, or incarceration. The entire process of redress was an internal affair; no outside critics (such as the United Nations or human rights’ organizations) were involved in this redress effort. Thus, the political atmosphere was unemotional; and patriotic sentiments that often resist apologies as an attack on national honor were subdued.

Japanese American Nisei veterans, made famous by the highly decorated 442nd battalion in World War II, were also instrumental in garnering the

support of veterans' organizations who often object to apology, especially when associated with military action. Moreover, the importance of Japanese American Congressmen who testified eloquently to their colleagues in Congress as to the injustice of the incarceration should not be underestimated. When Senator Dan Inouye stood up and asked for support, with his one arm lost in combat during World War II, it was difficult for conservatives to say no.

Despite the special circumstances of the redress situation, Japanese American success influenced similar campaigns around the world. The organization of the Korean Council in 1989 and the renewed energy of comfort women activities demanding compensation are probably not coincidental. Indeed, the amount of compensation offered by the Asian Women's Fund (¥2 million = ~US\$20,000) may also reflect the Japanese American settlement. Similarly, PoWs have tried to draw parallels between Japanese Americans as a kind of "prisoner of war."⁹

The German comparison

Comparisons of postwar German and Japanese apology, reparations, and attitudes concerning the past are common among journalists as well as scholars.¹⁰ Japan comes out unfavorably in such comparisons. In a comparative study, Barkan (2000) judges Japan's efforts as "completely different [from those of Germany]. Japan completely denies responsibility" (60). Another example is the Lipinski Resolution (1997) in the US Senate asking Japan to apologize and compensate wartime victims that begins with this phrase: "Whereas, Germany has repeatedly apologized and made restitution and Japan has not." In 1995, during fiftieth anniversary war-end commemoration ceremonies in England, Queen Elizabeth drew a distinction between Japan and Germany in 1995 "when she said that Germany had joined with Great Britain in celebrating the end of war, whereas in Japan's case, we can only remember those who suffered" (*Daily Telegraph Mirror* August 22, 1995: 1). Chang (1999) says "In the years since World War II, Germany has paid reparations to Holocaust victims, apologized to them, and even sent its leaders into the Warsaw Ghetto to apologize. We have not seen comparable actions by the Japanese government" (105). As Hashimoto (1999) succinctly notes, "there is now a clear international consensus that the Germans have accomplished more by far than the Japanese in facing up to their war legacy" (6).

Most comparisons take a broad view, considering the more general question of "facing the past" rather than the words of apology. Thus, German contrition is marked by compensation, commemoration, and prosecution of war criminals by German courts. Japan has little to show in any of these areas. Nevertheless, I argue here that comparison with Germany often misses the mark, missing both the similarities in German and Japanese discourse about the past as well as the differences in accusations, and in the circumstances of the postwar environment for apology.

There are several assumptions underlying the comparison with Germany. The first is that Germany has somehow adequately apologized for its crimes; the second is that the apology situations are sufficiently similar to warrant comparison; and third is that the evaluation or receptivity to contrition is similar.¹¹ On the first assumption, Germany's record of apology and contrition has been criticized and historical treatments of German attempts to deal with the past reveal internal struggles that are very similar to struggles in Japan. For example, similarities include German "rhetorics of victimization" (Moeller 1996: 1013), conservative and liberal disagreements over how the war should be remembered, that is, "competing pasts" in public debate (Herf 1997; Maier 1999; Moeller 1996: 1016–1017), and the significance of the international imperative for apology (Herf 1997: 280–288; Moeller 1996: 1017). Both countries have had their "revisionist" historical moments; both have privileged their own war veterans and families over external victims;¹² both resisted the wholesale purge of prewar and wartime elites. Both have continuing problems with wartime issues, with controversies over public memory re-emerging periodically. Thus, textbook controversies in Japan and the statements of government officials have their counterparts in German postwar experience, for example, the Bitburg controversy (Hartman 1986), the famous so-called historian's debate (Maier 1999) and a controversy over a Jewish Museum in Berlin (Planck 1997). While German scholars point to major differences between East and West Germany's sense of responsibility for Jewish crimes, to significant differences among domestic political constituencies, to a lack of consensus, and to major shifts over time in the degree of official remorse for World War II (Herf 1997; Moeller 1996), those comparing Japanese apologies and attitudes toward the past often see the German response as unequivocal, monolithic, and consistent.

The second assumption—that the situations of Germany and Japan are similar enough to warrant comparison—deserves further consideration as well. On the surface, the comparison seems apt. Both defeated in World War II, Germany and Japan faced similar challenges in the postwar period, including the task of "moral recovery" (Hashimoto 1999). Both countries had significant wartime actions to atone for. Both had caused unimaginable loss and suffering to many people. Both had espoused militarism and ideologies of racial superiority in wartime rhetoric (Dower 1986). As defeated powers they were expected to show appropriate penance. Apologies were a way to rebuild tattered moral reputations.

Nevertheless, there were significant differences in their apology situations. Japan depended totally on its relationship with the United States for its postwar economic development. In Asia, Japan was able to delay—indeed, Japan had no choice but to delay—coming to terms with neighboring countries because of the Cold War. Japan's largest neighbor China was Communist, as was North Korea. Germany, on the other hand, had to make peace with and rebuild relationships with its European neighbors

immediately in order to recover. Thus, the postwar environment allowing and encouraging the restoration of good relations was significantly different. In Japan, the process of reconciliation and remorse was delayed at best.

Second, in the German case, Jewish victims had powerful advocates. The Allies and their client state Israel lobbied for restitution and remorse on part of Germany as the price for reentry into international good graces. Where that pressure was not present (as in East Germany), there was little expression of remorse or restitution for the Jews. The victims in Japan's case—Asian victims in particular—had no such advocates. There was no pressure on Japan to make restitution beyond what had been required in the Tokyo War Crimes Trial and the postwar treaties.

Third, the nature of the accusations was significantly different. In Germany, the crimes against humanity were those of genocide, supported by legal and governmental action, in addition to aggression against its neighbors. In Asia, Japan was accused of crimes of brutality and military rampage, but not of genocide.¹³ On the other hand, Japanese treatment of PoWs, Japanese colonial rule, as well as the particularly infamous comfort women have no clear counterpart in German wartime atrocities.

Another difference in the situations of Germany and Japan that had particular relevance for apologies was the role of National Socialism in Germany and the sharp discontinuity in political leadership at the end of the war. Postwar German governments were free to focus blame on Hitler and the Nazi Party as the guilty parties. In Japan, on the other hand, there was nothing comparable to the Nazi Party and the Japanese military received much of the blame although, as we have noted before, it is difficult for any country to accuse those who defend their country with their lives. Moreover, Japan's postwar government was largely a continuation of the prewar government both in its monarchical structure and bureaucracy, even in personnel. Continuity was symbolized in the imperial system with Emperor Hirohito remaining at the top of government, albeit in a reduced role as symbol. Thus, unlike contemporary or postwar German governments, the current Japanese government is often considered culpable by victims and victims' advocates. For example, an unofficial international tribunal for comfort women crimes in Tokyo in 2000 rendered a "verdict" of guilty not only for the wartime government but for the current government as well (Dudden 2001: 596).

In the area of compensation, Germany has outperformed Japan.¹⁴ Even here, there are interesting comparisons. For example, although there have been several different plans for compensation of Holocaust victims, under the current plan established in 1990, the recipients of German funds must demonstrate that they were victims—6 months or longer in a concentration camp or 18 months or longer in a ghetto or 18 months or longer in hiding—and they must "currently live under difficult financial circumstances" (Brooks 1999: 63; "Conference on Jewish," 2004).

The provisions of the Asian Women's Fund would seem to compare well. The comfort women must demonstrate that they were comfort women, but

this is largely based on self-identification since there are no government records. Moreover, despite its “relief fund” associations, there is no stipulation as to financial circumstances of the women. Thus, the Korean Council’s objections to any suggestion of “relief” or “sympathy” funds from the Japanese government would have rejected the German provisions of funding as well (Hicks 1999: 124; “History,” 2001).

Another area of comparison is the German prosecution of war crimes, especially since the 1996 report of the United Nations on the comfort women specifically recommended the identification and prosecution of those responsible (“Report on the mission,” 1996). Here too there are similarities. Although German courts have prosecuted Nazi war criminals throughout the postwar period, extending the statute of limitations in order to allow further prosecutions, Germany was not eager to prosecute “ordinary” German citizens, especially former officials of the government, and limited prosecutions to clearly identified *legal* crimes perpetrated by individuals (Moeller 1996: 288–303). Thus, both countries have relied on legal approaches to culpability. In Japan, legal arguments make it difficult to prosecute crimes against those responsible for the comfort women as well as the PoWs.¹⁵

A final difference between Germany and Japan deals with the responsiveness of the recipients of apology. In general, Israel and the Jewish community as well as Germany’s European neighbors have been willing to accept the professions of apology and compensation that Germany has offered. In Asia, Japan’s accusers have been much less receptive, perhaps because of the lack of compensation, and/or perhaps because of the delay in addressing these issues.

German apologies

Since our focus is on the words of apology, let me briefly consider four prominent German apologies: (1) the apology of West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer’s acknowledgement of German wrongdoing in September 1951; (2) the famous expression of remorse by Willy Brandt in Poland in December 1970; (3) the Bundestadt address by President Richard Von Weiszacker in 1985; and (4) the expression of remorse by the East German Parliament in 1990.

Konrad Adenauer: September 1951

In September 1951, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer responded to a demand for restitution of Jewish losses from the newly established state of Israel with a statement and a pledge to provide restitution to Jewish victims, both to individuals and to the new Israeli state. These are his words:

The government of the Federal Republic of Germany, and with it the great majority of German people are aware of the immeasurable

suffering brought to the Jews in Germany and the occupied territories in the era of National Socialism. *In an overwhelming majority, the German people abhorred the crimes committed against the Jews and did not participate in them.* During the period of National Socialism there were many Germans, acting on the basis of religious belief, the call of conscience, and shame at the disgrace of Germany's name, who at their own risk were willing to assist their Jewish fellow citizens. *In the name of the German people,* however, unspeakable crimes were committed which require moral and material restitution.

(Herf 1997: 282, emphasis added)

Surprisingly, the words themselves contain no explicit apology statement. Perhaps "moral restitution" means apology? Perhaps recognition of "unspeakable crimes" implies guilt and regret? Indeed, to the contrary. According to the statement, the overwhelming majority of Germans "abhorred" the crimes committed against the Jews. The passive expression of guilt several sentences later—crimes were committed "in the name of" Germany—neglects to mention who the guilty parties were and, indeed, distances Germany from the acts committed "in its name." Moreover, the reference to the "time of National Socialism" circumscribes the bad behavior to a particular time and by implication to the Nazis. This does not sound like much of an admission of guilt. Like the (not so) early Japanese apologies, this apology focuses on "suffering" of victims as opposed to the "guilt" of Germans, supporting the view that German "restitution was conceived... not as an admission of guilt but as a goodwill measure" (Barkan 2000: 15).

What makes this statement significant, however, especially in comparison with Japanese apologies, is its timing. According to German historians, Adenauer realized early in the postwar period that the acceptance of Germany into the postwar international community depended on restitution to Jewish victims (Barkan 2000: 10–16; Herf 1997: 286–288; Moeller 1996: 1016–1020). Responding to the clear direction of the international community, German leaders gave early attention to the issues of national reputation and rehabilitation.

Willy Brandt in Warsaw: December 1970

Perhaps the most famous German "apology" is Willy Brandt's falling to his knees on a visit to the Warsaw Ghetto in December 1970. For German historians, Willy Brandt's coming to political power in 1968 represented a major shift in German postwar politics, signaling a change to a more liberal and critical attitude toward the Nazi past and German guilt (Herf 1997: 344–346; Moeller 1996: 1035). This included a focus on Jewish victims instead of German victims—that is, German PoWs and displaced refugees from Communist countries—as well as a focus on East European countries such as Poland who had been invaded by Germany.

Hashimoto sees the political victory of liberalism in Germany as key to understanding the differences in the way the past was approached in the two countries: “Both Japan and Germany have had major struggles between conservatives and liberals; but the difference is that in Germany the liberals won, and in Japan, the conservatives won” (Hashimoto 1999: 17).

Coming after a change in party leadership, Brandt’s difference in attitude toward the past can be compared to Hosokawa’s openness regarding the wartime past in 1993, more than twenty years later. Since Brandt had spent the war years as a member of the anti-Nazi resistance in Norway, his willingness to denounce Nazi crimes was certainly sincere; his experience lent authenticity to the gesture.

Nevertheless, this is a very strange apology. Not only are there no words of apology, there was no decision from any authority to offer an apology, no ceremony, and no recipient to the apology. How can it be considered an apology at all, and how can it be considered “official”?

Still, the emotional impact of the gesture was powerful, reminding us of the importance of the symbolic and emotional dimension in apology; Brandt’s falling to his knees is mentioned over and over again as indicating the “true” feelings of the German government and people. Japanese prime ministers have attempted to make similar gestures by visiting sites in China and Korea—Prime Minister Kaifu placed a wreath at the memorial in Seoul that honors South Korean patriots who fought against Japan; Prime Minister Murayama visited Nanking, and Prime Minister Hashimoto visited the Marco Polo Bridge site where the China War began in 1937. However, these gestures have not received the media attention of Brandt’s action.¹⁶

Richard von Weizsacker’s speech to the German Bundestag: May 8, 1985

President Richard von Weizsacker’s speech to the German Bundestag in May 1985 is a highly praised statement of German contrition.¹⁷ Like Murayama’s speech, Weizsacker’s speech is often referred to as “the” German apology; and like Murayama’s speech it occurred on the occasion of commemoration of the end of the war (the fortieth anniversary of D-Day). Both speeches thus received international attention.¹⁸ However, Weizsacker’s speech was an hour-long address to the Diet in contrast to Murayama’s short ten-minute speech in a press conference. In that respect, Weizsacker’s speech has more in common with Hosokawa’s speech to the Diet in 1993.¹⁹

Weizsacker’s speech has been praised for its detailed focus on the crimes of the German past and his forthright acceptance of responsibility. In addition to detail concerning victims, it gives much consideration to issues of collective guilt and philosophical and psychological burdens of the German past. Nevertheless, despite the frequent characterization of Weizsacker’s

speech as an apology, it lacks any apology statement; that is, it contains no “I/we apologize;” no words of “regret” or “remorse.” Partly this reflects the domestic audience. But it also represents a different strategy for dealing with historical wrongdoing. Let us look at the apology in more detail.

Occasion and audience

The speech begins by focusing on the occasion, the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war, immediately targeting an internal German audience.

We Germans are commemorating that date amongst ourselves, as is indeed necessary. We must find our own standards. We are not assisted in this task if we or others spare our feelings. We need and we have the strength to look truth straight in the eye—without embellishment and without distortion.

(Hartman 1986: 262)

Thus, the speech begins by emphasizing the value to Germans of direct acknowledgment of truth—of “look[ing] truth straight in the eye.” This is the “learn from history” motivation. The tone is one of self-reflection, self-knowledge, and growth.

Guilt and memory

The next section begins with the statement “May 8 is a day of remembrance” and then proceeds to list the many victims of Nazi Germany:

Today we mourn all the dead of the war and the tyranny. In particular we commemorate the six million Jews who were murdered in German concentration camps. We commemorate all nations who suffered in the war, especially the countless citizens of the Soviet Union and Poland who lost their lives. As Germans, we mourn our own compatriots who perished as soldiers, during air raids at home, in captivity or during expulsion.

(Ibid.: 263)

This is just the beginning. Not just Jewish men, women, and children but gypsies, political prisoners, mentally retarded, even women of the world—each gets a mention in Weiszacker’s remembrance. Like Murayama, Weiszacker includes German “compatriots” as victims in his litany. He explicitly refers to every possible wrongdoing, including “rape and pillage,” “forced labor,” and “barbarous compulsory sterilization.” This one-by-one listing of victims and crimes of the Nazi regime is distinctive in Weiszacker’s speech, not only when compared with Japanese apologies, but with other German speeches as well.

Nevertheless, we note that this elegy again focuses on suffering and sadness. Moreover, the emphasis here is on remembering rather than guilt: “We commemorate...,” “We recall the victims...,” “We pay homage to...,” “Today we sorrowfully recall all this human suffering.”

In the next section Weiszacker turns to the question of Jewish crimes and guilt. He begins by rejecting collective guilt: “There is no such thing as the guilt or innocence of an entire nation. Guilt is, like innocence, not collective, but personal” (Hartman 1986: 265). On the other hand, he continues:

All of us, whether guilty or not, whether young or old, must accept the past. We are all affected by its consequences and are liable for it. The young and old generations must and can help each other to understand why it is vital to keep alive the memories. It is not a case of coming to terms with the past. That is not possible. The past cannot be subsequently modified or undone. However, anyone who closes his eyes to the past is blind to the present. Whoever refuses to remember the inhumanity is prone to new risks of infection.

(Ibid.)

Thus, Weiszacker accepts collective responsibility if not guilt: “All of us, whether guilty or not” suggests indeed that at least some of us—many of us? most of us?—are not guilty. Here is something novel—taking responsibility for crimes that one did not commit. But of course this is precisely the situation in historical crimes. Weiszacker underscores this notion with the additional phrase “whether young or old.” According to this argument, whether we are guilty or not is besides the point; we “must accept the past...[and] its consequences.” And why should we do this? “Whoever refuses to remember... is prone to new risks of infection.”

Memorializing the victim

The focus on “memory” and “commemoration” is an interesting shift in recent apologetic discourse. In the past, some have argued that we should “forget” the past, in order to move on to the future. As Churchill stated in 1949 in reference to the discontinuation of war crimes trials, “Our policy should be henceforth to draw the sponge across the crimes and horrors of the past...and look...towards the future” (Hicks 1994: 168). However, in the wake of the Holocaust, this notion of “forgetting” seems out of step with contemporary attitudes. Today we feel that wrongdoing should be remembered, not forgotten, as in the rallying cry of Holocaust memorialization, “lest we forget.”

The focus on memory also represents, I think, a victim-centered focus. Victims are frequently more interested in “remembering” injustice and their mistreatment than they are in promises of future forbearance or moral principles.²⁰ Psychologists, students of trauma, and human rights activists have also emphasized the importance of “healing” and “restoring dignity”

to victims. This often means to provide a forum for victims to recount tales of injustice in a sympathetic environment (Dudden 2001: 593). Thus, Weiszacker's listing of victims and remembering their suffering resonates with contemporary views that privilege the victim's suffering and memory over the perpetrator's guilt and reinstatement into society.

Nevertheless, remembering is not the same as apologizing. Apology admits wrongdoing, it focuses on the perpetrator and his/her understanding of wrongdoing and remorse. While the focus on memory and the victim's desire to be memorialized may be understandable and even beneficial for victims, it removes a great deal of the onus of apology. It is much easier to remember suffering than to admit guilt and take responsibility. Remembering may be, paradoxically, a way to "forget" guilt, or at least a way to distance oneself from guilt.

German aggression?

In the next section, Weiszacker provides a brief recapitulation of twentieth-century European history and Germany's role in World War II:

Hitler became the driving force. He whipped up and exploited mass hysteria. A weak democracy was not capable of stopping him. And even the powers of Western Europe...contributed through their weakness to this fateful trend.... Hitler wanted to dominate Europe and to do so through war.... Germany and Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact...[that provided] for the impending partition of Poland.... In the course of that war, the Nazi regime tormented and defiled many nations.... At the end of it all...we became the victims of our own war.

(Hartman 1986: 266–267)

This section is the only reference to the issues of aggression so prominent in Japanese apologies. In this version of history, Hitler is guilty of wanting to "dominate Europe" and leading Germany into what is a disastrous war, for which Germany was still paying the price in terms of a divided Germany. In comparison with Japanese apologies, Weiszacker does not extol peace, nor does he claim any major change in direction for a "new Germany" except for "liberation from tyranny" of the Nazi regime. Without Hitler, the problem is over. There is no explicit argument here that "we are a changed people" or "we have learned our lesson."

Influence of Weiszacker's speech in Japan

Translated into Japanese, Weiszacker's speech was very influential in Japan. An article in the *Asahi Jaanaru* (December 27, 1985: 24–30) printed the full

text of Weizsacker's speech alongside a speech of the then Prime Minister Nakasone at about the same time. With a subtitle "Those who remember and those who forget," the magazine drew a sharp contrast between the attitudes of the two leaders toward the war.

Weizsacker's speech seems to have been especially popular among Socialist party members. Doi Takako (1990) quoted Weizsacker in an article advocating a Diet apology resolution and she mentioned Weizsacker's apology in an interview after her speech at August 15, 1993 ceremonies (*AS* August 16, 1993). In May 1990, a Socialist member of the Diet entered the entire speech into the Diet record along with a speech of the head of the East German parliament at the time of German unification in 1990 (*AS* May 13, 1990). For Japanese audiences, it is the explicit referencing to the long list of victims as well as certain quotations about the relationship between the present and the past. Most often quoted by the Japanese is "Those who do not remember the past are blind to today."

East German Parliament

An even more eloquent apology is this statement from the East German Parliament on the occasion of the German unification in 1990:

Immeasurable suffering was inflicted on the peoples of the world by Germans during the time of National Socialism. Nationalism and racial madness led to genocide, particularly of the Jews in all of the European countries, of the people of the Soviet Union, the Polish people, and the Gypsy people.

Parliament admits joint responsibility on behalf of the people for the humiliation, expulsion, and murder of Jewish women, men, and children. We feel sad and ashamed and acknowledge this burden of German history.

We ask the Jews of the world to forgive us for the hypocrisy and hostility of the official East German policies toward Israel and also for the persecution and degradation of Jewish citizens after 1945 in our country. We declare our willingness to contribute as much as possible to the healing of mental and physical sufferings of survivors and to provide just compensation for material losses.

(*NYT* April 13, 1990: A7)

This apology is comprehensive and satisfies on many levels the requirements of a good apology. Especially interesting here is the apology for postwar actions and the belated postwar recognition of responsibility and the explicit criticism of the previous postwar governments. Throughout the postwar period East Germany (under Communist leadership) had focused on the crimes of the Nazis against Communists rather than on

Nazi/German responsibility for what happened to the Jews (Herf 1997). Again, apology seems to accompany a political change in regime.

In summary, then, German apologies for wartime crimes indicate a clear acceptance of responsibility to make restitution for the crimes of the Nazi past; and like Japanese apologies, the expression of this remorse and responsibility becomes ever more explicit through the years. In comparison with Japanese apologies, however, there is little emphasis on “aggression” or the war itself in these apologies. Germany has caused suffering to the Jews in particular and in Weiszacker’s speech, to other groups as well. Therefore, Germany will make restitution.²¹

It seems clear that Germany and Japan have not been apologizing for the same thing. German apologies focus on the crimes against the Jews, crimes clearly prosecutable as murder, stolen property, etc. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two countries is the timing of the apologies. Germany made its apologies and decided to pay restitution early in the postwar period. If the apology of Adenauer seems weak in its admission of culpability, well, it was accompanied by funds and it was negotiated and agreed to by both Israel and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany, a committee organized to represent and distribute funds for Jewish victims. At the time, apologies (and restitution) seemed satisfactory and indeed, they removed the issue of German guilt and contrition from international criticism. By the time Japan began to deal with these issues, expectations had changed.

In summary, then, although comparison of Germany and Japan is perhaps natural, many comparisons exaggerate differences in postwar contrition and at the same time, fail to appreciate differences in the *apologia* situations that would render the comparison invalid. In the particular instances of apology statements themselves, in my view, the differences are not significant. Although coming much later than German apologies, Japanese apologies at least have consistently said they (Japan) were responsible for aggression and colonial rule. And they expressed sorrow and apology. In German apologies (except for the East German apology of 1990), it is the Nazis who are responsible and we Germans must “remember.” One other difference that is significant here is that German apologies, however minimal they were, seemed to have been initiated by the German government. Japanese apologies on the other hand, except for Murayama’s 1995 apology, seem forced out of the Japanese government by vociferous voices seeking to embarrass the government.

Summary

In this section we have looked at apology discourse as international dialogue, paying special attention to the influence of other national apologies on Japanese apologies. Comparison with other apologies has been

particularly important for evaluation of Japanese apologies in international opinion.

One more point needs to be made concerning the international dimensions of apology. That is the role of the media, and in particular, the media's role in selecting and highlighting the news and the interpretation of apologies that journalists and scholars make. In the apocryphal saying, "if a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, did it make noise?" The media must take notice of the event or, as far as international discourse is concerned, it did not happen. Moreover, the particular judgments, words, used to describe Japan's apologies are, in Bakhtinian fashion, re-presented and re-presented around the world. Translations, characterizations in words of journalists and scholars become a part of the dialogue and discourse. One reporter describes the Japanese government as "reluctant" (WuDunn August 16, 1995); this characterization gets repeated (Barkan 2000: 57). Soon everyone describes Japan as "reluctant" and repetition supplies legitimacy. This is not just a characteristic of international discourse, but the fact that foreign language documents and newspapers are frequently not accessible to the general public means that the public and journalists as well are dependent on a small number of interpreters and translators. The information gets filtered through a very small channel. The media role is all-important.²²

9 Conclusions

Why do nations apologize?

No government wants to apologize for wrongdoing, especially when the wrongdoing is significant. Without strong motivation, governments generally prefer to ignore and deny wrongdoing. So when they do apologize, their reasons for doing so must be made explicit. Although there may be other motivations, this study focuses on the public justification of apology.

There are three general motivations/functions/justifications of historical apology evident in Japanese state apologies: (1) repair of relationship (relationship); (2) learning from history/self-reflection (political); and (3) affirmation of moral principle (transcendent). We have also noted crisis apologies as having a different motivation from that of historical apologies that are the subject of this study, of being motivated by a public outcry that requires immediate attention.

Repair of relationship

Multiple Japanese apologies to South Korea demonstrate the desire on the part of Japan to repair relationships, to put the past behind them, and to build a relationship of trust. Both Japanese and Korean governments saw apology as a key component of reconciliation. The relationship apology is highly interactional in nature, displaying active participation in the process of apology from accusers and audience. The relationship apology is directed to a specific “other” and is tailored to the particular grievances and situation of that party. There is often a strong sense that such apologies are for the future as much or more than they are about the past.

In the Japanese apologies to Korea we examined, success was complicated by multiple audiences and media participation giving voice to skeptics and critics. Although the South Korean government seemed ready to accept the apologies, the general Korean public was not.

Learning from history/self-reflection

The second motive for national apologies is the desire to “learn from the past and by so doing, create a new identity.” By facing the past squarely and understanding its “darker” chapters, the nation can immunize and inoculate itself against repeating the mistakes that led to the “bad past.” Thus, apology is a mechanism for claiming a new identity and new direction. Although our forefathers did bad things, we are different today and we claim a new moral identity.

This is largely an argument directed toward an internal audience and is often executed by new administrations for political reasons. Apologies allow new administrations to criticize previous ones on moral grounds and to differentiate themselves from the “bad guys of the past.” This only works when the apologizing party is not closely identified with the regimes of the past.

This kind of apology often includes an education component and documentation of wrongdoing as associated government actions. Hosokawa’s apologies in 1993 most clearly demonstrate this kind of apology.

Affirmation of moral principle

The third reason for national apology is the affirmation of moral principle. The transcendent motive is especially prevalent in apologies for historical wrongs where the victims and perpetrators are, in a sense, long gone. It may be too late to rectify the wrongdoing for the original participants—indeed, we may not even be able to identify who they were—but the moral principle can be made clear. New moral principles can be established as well. This kind of apology is especially appropriate when legal remedies are insufficient or unworkable.

The target audience for the transcendent apology is the larger community. In order for society to function with agreed-upon standards of conduct, society requires that wrongdoing be acknowledged publicly. Apology is the price for readmission into society’s good graces, the price for restoring legitimacy. Thus, the transcendent apology for moral principle is more or less coerced and can be seen as a ritual of submission to outside or societal authority.

Still, by apologizing for past wrongdoing, especially long-ago wrongdoing, the modern state is able to claim a certain moral high ground. By recognizing the legitimacy of moral principle, the state shows itself to be trustworthy and worthy of continued support both internally and externally. Acquiescence, indeed enthusiastic embrace, of the moral principles that it is accused of breaking is the hallmark of this apology.¹

“Comfort women” apologies are a good example of the transcendent apology and they also illustrate the use of apology to establish new moral standards.

Other functions

There are several other functions or purposes of national apology that are perhaps more logically seen as results or consequences rather than motivating forces. One of these is to provide the official record of the past. We want it on the record that wrongdoing occurred so that we can learn from the past and we want an “on-record” affirmation of the moral principle involved. This function can be meaningful in relationship apologies as well as the victim gets satisfaction from hearing his suffering vindicated as “wrong.”

This brings us to another function of apology, frequently mentioned by human rights advocates, the “healing” of the victims’ sense of trauma and grievance and validation of identity (e.g. Barkan 2000: 323–324; Brooks 1999: 3–4; Orr 2001). This, I think, is a motive that resides in the victim’s demand for apology; from the victims’ perspective, the apology is necessary to “make me feel better” or “safer.” That is, the apology attends to the emotional needs of victims. In Japanese apologies, the evidence of this kind of thinking is implicit in the emotional response of government representatives to the suffering of, say, the comfort women or the Korean population under Japanese rule. This motivation seems to explain why governments may be willing to apologize even if they are unwilling to admit legal responsibility. In other words, they want to do the “right thing” for the victims, knowing that they were responsible; they respond to the suffering with sympathy, but they must protect their legal position, especially when costs and other consequences of apology are not known.

The failure of Japanese apologies²

Despite the many Japanese apologies over the past twenty years, the view is widespread that Japan has not apologized for its war record. Repeated requests from the two Koreas and China are the most obvious evidence of the failure of Japanese apologies. Condemnation concerning the comfort women from international bodies such as the United Nations Human Rights Subcommission in 1996 and the International Commission of Jurists (Dolgopol and Paranjape 1994) assume a lack of contrition on Japan’s part.

International journalists have been perhaps even more critical. Here is a recent example of a prominent journalist. In a 1999 *Foreign Affairs* article, the former *New York Times* Bureau Chief in Tokyo Nicholas Kristof wrote that “Japan’s failure to apologize meaningfully for its wartime brutality” (1998: 38) was responsible for tensions in Asia. He criticized “Japan’s stubborn failure to show contrition for its behavior.” And again, “Japan has never adequately apologized for the war.”³ What does “apologize meaningfully” mean? What is an “adequate” apology? In evaluating Japanese apologies, let us look again at the five dimensions of our apology

model: (1) specificity in naming the offense; (2) degree of regret/remorse; (3) representation; (4) sincerity/compensation; and (5) acceptance/audience.

Naming the offense

Most of Japan's apologies in this study have apologized at a highly general level, that is, for "aggression" and "colonial rule." Japan has also, in several instances, apologized for more specific offenses, for example, for the comfort women. However, Japan has not apologized explicitly for the Nanjing Massacre/Incident, or for Unit 731, or for the Bataan March. What is needed perhaps is more specifics along the line of Hosokawa's mention in 1993 of Japan's forcing Koreans to use Japanese language in schools and to adopt Japanese-style names under Japanese colonial rule. The model of President Weizsacker's speech to the German legislature in May 1985 that lists all the victims of German aggression has appealed to many Japanese.

The Lipinski Resolution (1997) introduced in the US House of Representatives illustrates the same need for specifics. The resolution calls for Japan to "formally issue a clear and unambiguous apology for the atrocious war crimes committed by the Japanese military during World War II; and immediately pay reparations to the victims of those crimes." The resolution lists specifically the "Rape of Nanjing," "biochemical warfare" in Manchuria (Unit 731), "women forced into sexual slavery" (comfort women), and "United States military and civilian prisoners of war." The resolution does not mention "aggression" or "colonial rule."

Specificity is also related to one of the major functions of national apology, the official record of the truth of the wrongdoing. One way to accomplish this is through extended public hearings or government investigation and report. The six-month investigation of the Japanese government into the comfort women issue was a step in the right direction, but Japan has yet to investigate thoroughly and officially other charges of brutality. It is one thing to apologize for the "incurable scar[s]" left on former PoWs as Foreign Minister Tanaka Makiko did in 2002; but if that treatment has never been examined, if there is no official record of that wrongdoing, compiled by Japanese for Japanese, with some clear prescriptions for why it happened and how to prevent it, the apology sounds hollow.

The issues of brutality are the issues that remain the most intractable. Apology for "aggression" may satisfy the Chinese government for correct historical interpretation, but it is the image of young girls being abducted and raped repeatedly or bayoneting babies in the air that grabs the attention of sensationalist hungry media and public.

Showing regret

The degree of regret, that is, whether one says "sorry" or "apology" or "deepest remorse," for example, is closely related to the naming of the offense. In the case of Japanese apologies, the frequent use of the word *hansei*

(remorse or reflection) has been unfortunate. Despite its common use for apology in Japan, it gets no respect in the press—for example, “a vague term meaning remorse and reflection” (Kristof 1998: 40). The term *owabi* (apology) has been used regularly since Prime Minister Kaifu first used it in 1990, but the more official word *shazai*, considered necessary by some has not been used.⁴ Avoiding this term may be related to concerns of the Japanese government for legal liability and compensation.

Another dimension of regret concerns the expression of emotion in apologies. Japanese apologies carefully attend to the emotional and performative quality of apologies. Multiple drafts of Emperor Akihito’s apology in 1990 demonstrate effort to choose words that express “painful” contrition. The success of Murayama’s speech as well owes much to his “heartfelt” apology as he speaks of “memories pressing on his chest.” Interestingly, too much expression of emotion can backfire as Hicks (1999) comments that Prime Minister Miyazawa “expressed his regret [in 1992] in terms so strong that an attempt at an English translation sounds too exaggerated to be convincing” (118). Once again we see the dilemma of apology performance. The words are *too* regretful??

Representation/performance

Who has the right and responsibility to make an apology? In Japan, three different approaches have been tried. As the elected head of state, the prime minister might seem to be the appropriate choice. However, in Japan the situation is complicated by the role of the emperor, who often represents the Japanese people on ceremonial occasions but whose Constitutional role as “symbol” seems to preclude any substantive political role. At various times, the emperor, the prime minister, the foreign minister, the cabinet secretary, and official investigative representatives have all made public statements of apology. In the early apologies, Korea insisted on the emperor as the only legitimate person to apologize but later apologies were made by prime ministers and now the demand seems to be that only a Diet resolution will do.

Many who state that Japan “has never apologized” focus on the lack of a parliamentary resolution of apology. The failure to pass a Diet apology resolution in 1995, along with the public wrangling over words amid vociferous Japanese right-wing views, greatly weakened the official apologetic stance of the Japanese government at the time; the lack of a formal Diet apology continues to undermine the official government policy of apology and to offset the impact of numerous cabinet, prime minister, and imperial apologies.

The issue of representation can also be seen in the dissatisfaction with the comfort women apologies.⁵ Hicks summarizes the argument as follows:

To this day the Diet has not issued an official apology to the former comfort women. The latter do not consider Emperor Akihito’s or Prime Minister Miyazawa’s apologies, issued in 1990 [*sic*], official

government apologies—statements that speak for the people of Japan. Rather, they are viewed as personal expressions of remorse, however deeply felt.... The governments of South Korea and North Korea do not see Japan as having issued an official apology to the former comfort women.

(1999: 123–124)

Prime Minister Murayama's speech is similarly criticized as a "personal" expression that does not represent the Japanese people ("Murayama's," 1995) despite frequent government reference to Murayama's statement as the official Japanese government position (e.g. Brooks 1999: 109, 126–127).⁵ Ironically, Murayama's stature as a Socialist who had long advocated an apology worked against the recognition of his apology as official rather than personal. As leader of the long-suffering leftist opposition, he could not "represent" more conservative government leaders. Thus, Kristof praised Prime Minister Obuchi's 1998 apology as a "good start" (1998: 46), ignoring Murayama's earlier apology. Obuchi was a LDP regular whereas Prime Minister Murayama, as a Socialist, was seen as outside the mainstream.

Sincerity

Sincerity requires the appearance of consistency and consensus in government statements, actions, and institutions. In the 1980s, the actions needed to indicate sincerity on the part of the Japanese government concerned discrimination against Koreans living in Japan, Sakhalin refugees (Koreans working for Japan in the war abandoned there), and medical help for Korean A-bomb victims. These issues were largely settled to the satisfaction of the South Korean government at the time of President Roh's visit in 1990. Since then, the comfort women and, to a lesser extent, forced labor, have become the bellwether issues indicating sincerity in the 1990s.

As evidence of insincerity, many point to the steady stream of cabinet officials visiting Yasukuni Shrine and a number of statements from conservative politicians explaining/minimizing/justifying the Japanese wartime effort. Revisionist historical approaches threaten to provide even more evidence of insincerity. Textbook issues are another area where critics see insincerity on the part of the government although during the time covered in this study, textbook issues had receded from public attention.⁶

Perhaps most damaging to Japanese apology has been Japan's steadfast refusal to consider, or as the Japanese government would say, reconsider the issue of wartime reparations or compensation for war crimes that proponents would say were never contemplated in the original treaties. Although the Japanese government has arranged for payments to the comfort women through the Asian Women's Fund and through payments to Filipina comfort women (Hicks 1999: 124), they have publicly insisted

on the finality of postwar treaty settlements. They have been supported in this by other governments, none of whom wish to open the Pandora's box of redress for historical crimes. In general, other nations have supported the original intent of treaties to finalize war claims and thus prevent lawsuits. Although the legal case may be good for Japan—and the courts have generally upheld the Japanese government position—the public relations result has been very negative.⁷

As for public opinion, polls as well as interviews in the street have indicated that Japanese public is strongly in favor of apology even to the point of compensation. They feel strongly about the need for reconciliation with Asian neighbors. Nevertheless, the backlash of opposition to apology as represented by the anti-apology movement during the debates on the Diet Resolution in 1995 cannot be discounted. Even if statistics show public support for contrition and compensation, the vocal right wing has been able to summon political clout as well as capture the attention of journalists and the international community. Every visit to Yasukuni Shrine by a standing prime minister receives media attention. How many journalists write about Prime Minister Kaifu's placing of a wreath at the Korean memorial in Seoul in 1992 or the visits of prime ministers to Nanjing?

Response to apology

The successful apology in the final analysis requires an audience that is willing to accept the apology. Without receptivity, the apology falls on deaf ears, so to speak. Perhaps nothing has been more damaging to the Japanese reputation than the repeated demands for apology from the same people often for the same offense. On the one hand, apologies to China and Korea have been accepted by the recipients at the time. And yet, public opinion is not satisfied. Some new revelation or a public expression of a historical interpretation puts us back in the apology cycle. In 1998, when Japan gave a written apology to South Korea, China demanded the same on a visit to Japan that same year—yet another call for apology.

Perhaps the situation is just not ready for reconciliation. For some victims, no apology will ever be sufficient. For others, the only appropriate apology is one that includes material compensation. Even with compensation and apology, the comfort women supporters are not satisfied because it is not "official" compensation and "official" apology. We must keep in mind that the comfort women have become an international cause; advocates are interested in principle and public awareness. There is little reason for reconciliation with the Japanese government. Quite the contrary. The issue of women's rights (and Asian women's rights in particular) has greatly benefited from the prominence of this sensational issue in the international media.

For the Chinese and Korean governments who continue to call for repeated apology, the issue is different. While Prime Minister Murayama

was apologizing in Tokyo on August 15, 1995, the day that Japan surrendered to the Allies and the end of the war, the South Korean government was sponsoring, in the words of journalist T. R. Reid (1995), a “pageant of vengeance” to commemorate their liberation from Japan: “With floats, banners, and marching bands creating a festive mood, Kim and 50,000 people cheered uproariously a wrecking crew began the demolition of the stately domed building that housed Japan’s government...from 1910 to Aug. 15 1945.” Similarly, on that same day, Chinese leaders commemorated the *beginning* of the war with Japan, thus keeping alive the memory of Japanese aggression, rather than celebrating a new age of peace.

Even Kristof (1998), in his highly critical (of Japan) essay, admits that it takes “two to tango” and that the bad feelings between China and Japan are not all Japan’s fault (42). For political reasons, Japan as the “bad guy” has value to both China and Korea, especially during times of popular unrest. Their national identities, their national origins as modern nations rest on their experience of liberation from the “tyranny” of Japan. Meanwhile, lobbying and publicity campaigns in the United States have reinvigorated interest in Japan’s wartime actions in China and Korea (Burruss 2003).

There are several other issues that have influenced the judgment of Japanese apologies. Perhaps most important have been the timing and pace of the apologies. Getting a late start in the 1980s, Japanese government seems to admit wrongdoing in small increments, only as necessary. Of course, this is true of other nations as well—German apologies show the same increase in explicit recognition of wrongdoing—but Japan seems to be following Simons’ (2000) prescription: deny as long as possible, then admit minimal amount and only accept responsibility as the last resort. This makes Japan look “reluctant” and forced into apology only at the insistence of others, not by any true understanding of the wrongdoing.

One might think that repeated apologies would reinforce the effect of the apology as evidence of sincerity and continuing sentiments of remorse. In the Japanese case, it seems not to work that way. As Barkan (2000) notes, “Yet if at first the novelty of these statements was significant, by 1997 the constant repetitions of these formulations had transformed them from apologies for the war crimes into failed excuses and an indication of submitting to right-wing sentiments” (62). Thus, repetition seemed to weaken the apology as if to indicate that the previous apology was not sufficient.

Summary

Japan has apologized multiple times for aggression and colonial rule. These are significant acknowledgments of wrongdoing. Nevertheless, certain areas of wrongdoing have not been acknowledged and the lack of specificity continues to be a problem for Japanese apologies. As for words of regret, although the term *owabi* means apology, the Japanese government

has generally avoided the word *shazai*. The omission has weakened the Japanese case for sincere apology. The most commonly used expression *hansei*, often translated as “reflection” has unsatisfactory connotations in English.

Thus, the Japanese case of apology illustrates clearly the dilemma of “words.” Differences in perspective and historical interpretation and the need to satisfy various constituencies lead to a certain generality and euphemism in order to gain consensus. The problem of legal liability and compensation, as well as the need for governments to maintain decorum and face, tend to limit the straightforward listing of wrongdoing in detail. Governments must balance the need for acknowledgment of wrongdoing with the demands of legitimacy and public support.

The problem of representation in Japanese apologies revolves largely around the lack of a Diet resolution (despite frequent apologies by two emperors and numerous prime ministers). Although it might not have been necessary to use legislative means to indicate collective authority, the failure of the Diet Resolution in 1995 brought political conflict over apology into sharp focus. The opportunity for such a Resolution may be past. Without the motivation of the fiftieth year anniversary of the end of the war, it seems unlikely that any administration will want to reopen the issue.

The fact that Japanese apologies are “never enough” must be understood in part at least as a lack of willingness on the part of the audience or the victims to be satisfied with apology. Are the advocates of comfort women ready to accept Japanese expressions of culpability and regret? Are the Korean and Chinese people ready to forego their sensitivity to “incorrect historical interpretation” for the sake of relationship? Perhaps not.

Apology and *apologia*: some theoretical implications

Apology, while clearly a type of *apologia*, differs from other strategies of *apologia* in key ways. First, by definition, apology accepts blame for wrongdoing and affirms moral responsibility. Apology cannot be called “self-defense” in the usual meaning of the term. To the contrary, as Tavuchis notes apology acknowledges the defenselessness of the wrongdoing, throwing itself on the mercy of the audience. An apology is not about justifying oneself, but re-connecting oneself with specific wronged others and restoring moral order in the world.

Second, the combination of apology with justification, excuse, or even explanation weakens, perhaps destroys, the apology. On the other hand, strategies of restitution if possible or compensation and reassurance that the wrongdoing will not be repeated seem to be highly desirable if not necessary co-strategies of the true apology. Thus, this study suggests that rhetorical schemes for “image restoration” consist of two contradictory sets of strategies. The first tries to reduce censure or blame by denial, minimization, explanation, excuses, and transcendence (higher purpose). In other words, how can I escape the weight of accusation? The other set of strategies accepts

the judgment of wrongdoing and seeks to repair and make atonement for that wrongdoing. Both sets of strategies can use the strategy of bolstering, which, for true apology often includes evidence that the offender has reformed. Both approaches may attempt to repair the damage done; both rely on ambiguity and euphemism; but at the heart of the apology is the public recognition of wrongdoing and/or harm done to others.

Third, the apology is ritualistic and performance-oriented in nature in a sense that other *apologia* strategies are not. The magic words “I apologize” or “I’m sorry” must be said and they must be said publicly, often in face-to-face meetings with representatives of the offended parties. For nations, the seriousness and formality of the occasion is often important. At the same time that occasion requires a certain formality, emotion and sincerity are key aspects of the ritual of remorse. Performance dimensions include offstage as well as on-stage behavior.

National apology as process

This study examines multiple instances of apology for essentially the same thing, that is, prewar and wartime Japanese actions of the Japanese government and Army. Rather than treat apology as a single instance of rhetoric, the study of repeated apologies over time highlights the consideration of apology as process, and apology as dialogue. Every apology is compared with its predecessor and to what others have said. This approach emphasizes the interactive and intersubjective aspects of apology. The audience plays a significant, indeed critical part in the process. If the audience, consisting of offended others or their representatives, is not ready and willing to accept an apology, if accusations and demand for apology are based on agendas that do not support resolution and reconciliation, the apology may not be effective no matter what words are used.

In this process, the role of the media is especially important. The media often plays a direct role in the dialogue attending the apology and the media’s response to the apology is perhaps the most important indicator of its success or failure.

These apologies also demonstrate an escalation in the demands and expectations of the audience. In early apologies, expectations were limited to a brief statement from the Emperor; later expectations, related in large measure to the comfort women revelations, included compensation, and that apology should come from the Diet; most recently, the United Nations Human Rights subcommittee called for investigation and indeed prosecution of guilty parties.

National apology as international discourse

Japanese national apologies are part of an international discourse; and external apologies have exerted considerable influence on Japanese apologies.

Human rights activists, feminists, churches, NGOs and special interest groups such as ethnic Chinese groups and PoWs, have all played a part in the dialogue of Japanese apologies. These groups have developed networks across national boundaries, adding to the intersubjective and interactive nature of apology discourse. Apologies encourage more apologies, causing a crescendo of voices cushioning the negative attributions associated with apology, providing repeated refrains. Thus, expectations are raised and new demands are created. Perhaps most importantly, the existence of other apologies provides a comparison for evaluation and criticism.

Apology as universal

Most studies of genre and pragmatics emphasize the cultural dimensions of apology. Japanese culture is often characterized as a culture that apologizes easily. However, so-called “cultural constraints” such as Japan’s “lack of *apologia* tradition” (Suzuki 1999a: 156) have not been borne out in this study. In contrast, this study concludes that Japanese national apologies and their approach to *apologia* are not significantly different from that of other nations. Our analysis of Japanese apologies owes much the concepts of political legitimacy, rhetorical theory concerning audience and appeal, and speech act theory. These approaches are not peculiar to Japan or to the West.

This is not to deny, of course, language and cultural issues. Japan’s modern history presents a unique constellation of accusations and victims within which the apology is situated and there are special issues regarding representation owing to the position of the Emperor. Nevertheless, although representation may have specific meaning in the Japanese context, representation itself is a general problem for all national apologies.

Some might also postulate vague and euphemistic language as characteristically Japanese, but ambiguity and euphemism are characteristic of much political rhetoric, especially political rhetoric that attempts to speak for an entire nation on controversial and contested issues. As Tavuchis (1991) notes more specifically in regard to collective apologies, the ceremonial and formal aspects of such apologies encourage vague and abstract language (97). Similarly, the reluctance of Japanese conservatives to apologize and their tendencies to protect Japanese history and image may be strong; but conservatives and patriotic sentiment in all countries are reluctant and even strongly opposed to apology of any kind.

Apology as dilemma

In this study, there are multiple examples of the dilemmatic nature of apology. First, there is the dilemma of trying to satisfy multiple audiences. The reconciliation of multiple points of view, internal and external, must find the correct degree of abstraction and high principle with which to

encompass the wrongdoing as understood by multiple parties. But the dilemma goes beyond conflict of interest and perspectives.

Does apology, indeed, any kind of talking about the past, put the past behind us or does apology stir up memories of the past and revive feelings of grievance? It does both. How can the state affirm moral principle at the same time it is admitting grievous wrongdoing? How much regret is “too much” to be believed? If a Japanese prime minister falls to his knees at Nanking, will that be an appropriate expression of regret?

Perhaps the best example is the case of comfort women apologies in which the government wishes to apologize and provide “money” without incurring the legal responsibility of compensation. Is “money” simply evidence of sincerity or is it a bribe to buy the reconciliation and an end to recrimination? These are not trivial matters and if apology is done poorly, it results in further recrimination and demands for stronger apology.

Postscript

Doing apology is difficult

One of the misconceptions about apology is that it is easy. All one has to do is recognize or own up to the bad things one did and say “sorry.” But the evidence of real life is that it is very difficult for individuals to “own up” to what others have deemed wrongdoing. Partly, it is a matter of perspective. We have strong tendencies to see our own behavior as motivated by good intention even if the outcome was “bad”; or we excuse our “bad” behavior as unimportant or as a minor incident in the totality of who we are. For others, of course, “bad” behavior shows us their true nature.

Apology is fundamentally a performance in humility and self-abasement, a lowering of the apologizing party’s position in relation to the offended person (and to society). Damaging to one’s sense of self and face, it is difficult psychologically and emotionally. Public apology often brings into question the intrinsic nature, the basic “goodness” of the apologizing entity, not simply the “badness” of the act. Thus words like “criminal” and “murderer” are words that attack the moral core of the whole entity, not simply the act of crime itself.

For nations, the damage to the historical narrative that apology for serious misconduct represents reduces the claim for loyalty and pride in one’s country; it also besmirches the reputation of those who have gone before us (and who are no longer here to defend themselves) as well the future generations of citizens. Not an easy undertaking.

Doing apology is rare

Although the number of apologies grew significantly in the late 1990s, if we consider the number of atrocities or wrongs that have been committed over

time and around the world, the number of apologies is very small. The United States, for example, has apologized to Japanese Americans, to Native Hawaiians, and to Tuskegee patients; but the United States has not apologized for slavery, for the wholesale destruction of the Native American culture as well as appropriation of their land, for colonial rule in the Philippines, or for dropping napalm on Viet Nam. Great Britain's Queen Elizabeth apologized to a Maori tribe in New Zealand for taking their land and Prime Minister Tony Blair apologized for England's role in the potato famine in Ireland; but no one has apologized to China for The Opium War, to South Africa, to India, or to Burma or other British colonial empires, despite many requests.

The fact is, apology is difficult for all nations and we need to explain why apologies occur rather than why they do not. Not making an apology is the norm. Nations must justify their actions, not admit moral ineptitude. If bad things were done, then explanations must be made. When that is not possible, then covering up or ignoring the wrong is typical. Even when the wrongdoing cannot be hidden or ignored, there are strong inhibitions against apologizing. It is dishonorable to admit wrongdoing and in some cases, of course, more dishonorable than others.

But not apologizing has risks too. In today's world, the disaffected victims of the past do not simply disappear. Their representatives can establish networks that keep alive the memory of past victimization. Without some way to "repair" the situation, to "remember" the past in a way that allows current generations to approach the future with trust and good will, the past continues to damage prospects for peace and cooperation.

The promise of apology

When we demand an apology or when we give one—or even when we don't—we acknowledge the power of words to make a difference. Apology—mere words—is called upon to perform a restorative action, to soothe wounds, to affirm societal values, and to rebuild image. The power of words to "act" implies a moral dimension as a significant aspect of apology. Thus, apology is a moral play; to a great extent, apology is scripted; we know the story; we know the words. We want to see it performed. It sounds so easy. But they have to be the "right" words and they have to be convincingly stated. For nations, attempting to deal with wrongdoing of the past, the apology has become a ritual of remorse that, for Japan, has yet to reach its potential in providing reconciliation with the past, with its neighbors and with the international community.

Appendix A

Key documents/apology statements

Early documents

1965: June 22, Foreign Minister Shiina Etsusabaro at the signing of The Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea

In our two countries' long history there have been unfortunate times (*fukou na jiki*), it is truly regrettable (*makoto ni ikan*) and we are deeply remorseful (*fukaku hansei*).

(AS March 31, 1989: 5; English, Shimokoji 2003: 7)

1972: September 29, Joint communique of the government of Japan and the government of the People's Republic of China

Japan and China are neighboring countries separated only by a strip of water with a long history of traditional friendship. The peoples of the two countries earnestly wish to put an end to the abnormal state of affairs that has hitherto existed between the two countries.

The realization of the aspiration of the two peoples for the termination of the state of war and the normalization of relations between Japan and China will add a new page to the annals of relations between the two countries.

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... In spite of the differences in their social systems existing between the two countries, the two countries should, and can establish relations of peace and friendship. The normalization of relations and development of good neighborly and friendly relations between the two countries are in the interests of the two peoples and will contribute to the relaxation of tension in Asia and peace in the world.

(“Joint communique,” 1972)

Emperor Hirohito statements

1975: meeting with President Ford in Washington, DC

The people of both countries endured a brief unfortunate ordeal as storms raged in the usually quiet Pacific Ocean. Today I want to build the foundations of a firm friendship.

(AS May 11, 1990: 29)

1978: visit of Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiao Peng to Tokyo

At one time, there were unfortunate events.

(Ibid.)

1984: September 6, Showa Emperor (Hirohito) on the occasion of South Korean President Chun Doo Hwan's visit to Japan

Korea and Japan are neighboring countries across a narrow strait; from olden times there has been significant cultural exchange in many areas. Our country learned many things from your country through cultural exchange. For example, it is an important fact to say that in the early imperial era, in the sixth and seventh century, many Korean people came to Japan and taught us such things as learning, culture, and technology. Because of such a long history, there was a deep relationship of neighbors. Notwithstanding that relationship, *the fact that there existed for a brief period in this century an unfortunate past between our two countries is truly regrettable; and it will not be repeated again.*

(AS May 16, 1990: 3, emphasis added)

1985: October 23, Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro at United Nations

On June 6, 1945, when the UN charter was signed in San Francisco, Japan was still fighting a senseless war with 40 nations. Since the end of the war, Japan has profoundly regretted (*kibishiku hansei*) the unleashing of rampant ultra nationalism and militarism and the war that brought great devastation to the people of many countries around the world and to our country as well.

In rebuilding our homeland, while continuing to value our native culture and traditions, we Japanese have decided on a national policy that values highly universal basic values for mankind, that is to say, peace and freedom, democracy and for that purpose have enacted a constitution. Our country, aims to be a "Peace state," defense only military power and have declared at home and abroad that never again will we become a great military power. As people who have experienced

the horrors of war and the atomic bomb, we renounce forever the rebirth of militarism. Our nation's aspirations are in complete accord with the realization and principles, purpose of the UN Charter.

(Nakasone 1985)

1989: Prime Minister Takeshita Noboru apology to North Korea in Japanese Diet

As we have made clear previously at repeated opportunities, the Japanese government and the Japanese people are deeply conscious of the fact that the actions of our country in the past caused suffering (*kutsuu*) and loss (*songai*) to many people in neighboring countries. Starting from our regret (*hansei*) and resolve not to repeat such things a second time, we have followed a course as a "Peace Nation" since then (until today).

This (self) awareness and regret should be emphasized especially in the relationship between our country and the Korean peninsula, our nearest neighbors both geographically and historically. At this opportunity as we face a new situation conditions in the Korean peninsula, again, to all peoples of the globe, concerning the relationship of past, we want to express our deep regret (*hansei*) and sorrow (*ikan*).

(AS March 30, 1989: 29)

1990: May 24, Emperor Akihito to ROK President Roh Tae Woo Japan visit

The Korean peninsula and Japan (*wagakuni*), in the old days enjoyed very close interaction as nearest neighbors. Even in the Edo period, when our country was closed, our government and people never stopped receiving and welcoming envoys from your country.

Nevertheless, looking back on such a long history of fruitful relations between our country and the Korean peninsula, I am reminded of the words of the Showa emperor that "In a period in this century there was an unfortunate past existed between our countries. This is truly regrettable and it must not happen again." When I think about the sufferings of the people in your country caused by our country in this unfortunate period, I cannot help but feel intense sorrow (*tsuuseki no nen wo kinjimasen*).

After this period passed, because of strong enthusiasm of people of all fields and class in both countries who wished for the rebirth of Japanese-Korean friendship, the relationship between both countries has been restored and we can see restored relationship of friendship and cooperation in this areas. I express our deep respect for these people.

Today, both countries are seeking to play a joint role in the interest of world peace and prosperity. From now on I hope that that the people of both countries will deepen further their mutual understanding and work

together for a mature relationship. In particular, I am confident in the development of exchange between young people of the next generation; it is here that a new friendship linking our countries will be born.

This new friendship from now on, both countries working together will provide the cornerstone for contributing to the future of mankind. I believe the visit of the honorable president at this time will be the cornerstone of new Japan–Korea relationship as we approach the 21st century.

(Akihito 1990)

**1990: May 24–25, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki and ROK
President Roh dialogue (excerpts)**

PM KAIFU: It is too bad that we had to postpone your visit to Japan twice in a short period. We appreciate the fact that you came to Japan despite opposition in Korea. We welcome you from the heart...

PRESIDENT ROH: It is true that there were several problems of national feelings concerning my coming to Japan, but I want very much to make this visit to Japan a success. I think of this as pain of childbirth, for the purpose of bearing wonderful children. I want to put an end to the bad feelings of the 20th century past and to build a new relationship of partners for the 21st century. This is our responsibility as politicians.

PM KAIFU: As a politician of the same generation as the president, I want to speak frankly concerning the Japan–Korea relationship. On Japan's part, we must apologize (*hansei*) appropriately for our past; I want to say this in front of the entire delegation.

PRESIDENT ROH: ...I was born in 1932; the Prime Minister in 1931, the Emperor in 1933. The fact that the Prime Minister is an orator is well known in our country. With the two of us working together, combining our strengths, I think it is possible to overcome the bad feelings of the unfortunate past. [Later, in front of the entire group]

PM KAIFU: Since last year, there have been sudden and violent changes in Russia and Eastern Europe. I have visited Eastern Europe and seen with my own eyes the changes there. I think a major change in the East–West confrontational structure is happening. These great changes in central Europe have global implications that express the superiority/predominance of democratization, freedom, a market economy; it is inevitable that these will extend their influence to the Asia–Pacific region. Amid these world upheavals, the building of a new world order is beginning. Japan and Korea are being asked to cooperate actively in this new world order. We must make the effort to clear a path for a better way, untrodden by those before us. It is essential to strengthen even more the friendly cooperative relationship between Japan and Korea, to exchange opinions frankly and closely concerning those issues that impact the relationship of the two closest neighbors. Taking the

opportunity of your visit to Japan, I want to build a new Japan–Korea relationship. I want to make a new departure point in Japan–Korea relations.

PRESIDENT ROH: I agree. We are approaching a time of the greatest change in the postwar period. The Cold War of the last 40 years has ended and it has become an age of reconciliation. Communism has become a relic of the 20th century. Revolutions in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe such as Gorbachev perestroika are many, we realize that this is a result of the solidarity of the Free World. I highly approve of the reconciliation between the Soviet Union and the United States and the efforts to work toward peace. We welcome the upcoming summit between American and Soviet leaders.

However, East Asia is not moving as Eastern Europe. The winds of change in Eastern Europe are kept out (of Asia) by the barrier of the high Himalayas. Korea (Republic of Korea) seeks peace and cooperation from North Korea (Peoples Democratic Republic of Korea). However, the North is not changing its Communist way of war based on military power toward the South. China as well, since the Tienanmen incident has had internal problems. China is extremely important for the Korean peninsula. I hope that the restoration of stability within China will contribute to the stability of the area. Both Japan and Korea should support China in this way.

PM KAIFU: It is important that both Japan and Korea cooperate in Asia-Pacific and world organizations. In order to build this new relationship, the first thing we must do is recognize the seriousness of the unfortunate past between our countries. At a period in the past, the people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable grief and suffering because of actions of our country. Concerning this (we/I) are humbly remorseful (*hansei*) on this and wish to note our frank feelings of apology (*sotchoku no owabi no kimochi*).

With this in mind, our country has many issues originating in the past. For example, the third generation Koreans in Japan, atomic bomb victims, Koreans living in Sakhalin—we have attempted to deal with these in good faith. This is the government's position. There are points still to be discussed in continuing meetings, but with this we wish to finalize issues that have their origins in the past and from now on, to start moving toward a new relationship.

(AS May 25, 1990: 2)

***1990: May 27, President Roh Tae Woo's
response to Emperor Akihito***

Since your enthronement we welcome the new age of Heisei. Having historical connection with the Emperor and with Japan, we pray for the

success of your new reign. I think it is greatly significant that we can communicate directly to you our best wishes.

Since the war, Japan has arisen from ruin, for building a new state that prospers in peace that is the envy of all the world; we congratulate you. Heisei is not just for Japan; I am confident that Heisei will be an age that promotes friendship, prosperity, and peace in world and in East Asia.

From olden days until today, Japan and Korea have been close neighbors. The people of both countries have been linked by a narrow body of water and have developed mutually with much mutual influence between cultural institutions. There are many more good things I should mention.

As our people entered modern times, we were made to experience a period of suffering. From the perspective of a long history of friendly neighbor relations, the dark period was a relatively short period. The facts of history cannot be erased or forgotten. However, the Korean people cannot remain shackled (*sokubaku*) by history forever. Based on the truly correct understanding of history by both countries, we can wash away (*arainagasu*) the errors (*ayamari*) of the past and we must begin a new age of friendship and cooperation. The fact that His Majesty, who is the symbol of new Japan and Japanese history, has expressed deep concern for this problem is very significant (*kiwamete imi fukai*).

In order to develop friendship and trust, as neighbors who are close in spirit as well as geography, (*chikakute chikai kuni ni naritai*) we must all work together to erase the shadow of past history and remove the remaining obstacles in developing a relationship of friendship and trust. In this way, we must bequeath to our grandchildren a desirable relationship.

Your Highness, amid epochal upheavals, we are approaching the 21st century. The hopes of humankind, directed toward freedom and prosperity, have caused the collapse of the Cold War system and the world map is continuing to change. The values of democracy and freedom, which both Japan and Korea pursue, have become (are becoming) common/(universal) values in the world. It has been predicted that it will be the Asia-Pacific age. The Japan–Korea relationship is not important only to Japan and Korea. We must take a leading role in advancing peace and prosperity in the region [as examples of] the Asia-Pacific region’s culture harmonious blend of East and West and a new age of enlightenment...

This is our responsibility to history and posterity.... A quote from a Chinese philosopher says “Between gentlemen, relations should be placid.”

(AS (Evening) May 25, 1990: 3)

Comfort women apologies

*1992: January 1, Prime Minister Miyazawa
Kiichi apology at press conference*

[Concerning the military comfort women,] I apologize (*owabi*) from the bottom of my heart and feel remorse for those people who suffered indescribable (*hitsuzetsu ni tsuzusu*) hardships.

(AS January 18, 1992: 2)

*1992: January 16, Prime Minister Miyazawa
and President Roh Tae Woo in Seoul*

PRESIDENT ROH: Without a doubt, we are proceeding with Japan–Korean relationship looking to the future. With this goal in mind, [however,] in our long past there have been short periods of unfortunate incidents. We want the Japanese people to have the correct interpretation of this unfortunate past history. For the Japan–Korea relationship, it is our destiny that close cooperation will contribute greatly to stability and peace of the region.

PRIME MINISTER: I agree completely with what you say. I myself have this impressed on my heart (*kimo ni mejite*) and I know it well. In the Diet as well, I will give a statement of regret and remorse concerning the trouble (*meiwaku wo kaketa*) we have brought to various neighboring countries. In tomorrow's speech (17th) I want to state this frankly. As Chief Secretary during Prime Minister Suzuki's cabinet, I made a speech (*danwa*) concerning history textbooks.

(AS January 17, 1992: 2, excerpt)

*1992: January 17, Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi
speech to Korean legislature (excerpt)*

At one time in history reaching back thousands of years, our country was an aggressor (*kagaisha*) and your country was the victim (*higaisha*). During this period, people of the Korean peninsula experienced unbearable suffering and grief caused by the acts of our country. Again, I express feelings of remorse (*hansei*) and apology (*owabi*).

Recently the issue of so-called military comfort women has been raised; this is truly painful to the heart and there is no excuse.

To following generations who carry the burden of the 21st century, we must teach the errors of our generation as errors and convey a correct view of history so that these errors will not be repeated a second time.

(AS January 18, 1992: 2)

1993: August 4, statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei on the result of the study on the issue of “comfort women”

The Government of Japan has been conducting a study on the issue of wartime “comfort women” since December 1991. I wish to announce the findings as a result of that study.

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.

We shall face squarely the historical facts as described above instead of evading them, and take them to heart as lessons of history. We hereby reiterate our firm determination never to repeat the same mistake by forever engraving such issues in our memories through the study and teaching of history.

As actions have been brought to court in Japan and interests have been shown in this issue outside Japan, the Government of Japan shall continue to pay full attention to this matter, including private researched related thereto.

(Kono 1993)

1993 Hosokawa/Doi statements

1993: August 10, Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro press conference

In response to a question concerning the “war”: My own personal understanding is that it was an aggressive war (*shinryaku sensou*), a mistaken war (*machigatta sensou*).

(AS August 11, 1993: 1)

1993: August 15, Prime Minister Hosokawa condolences on the anniversary of the end of the war

Learning from the lessons of history, the Japanese people have proclaimed as our highest national principles the renunciation of war forever as an instrument of settling of international disputes and have followed without wavering the postwar path of rebirth as a peace nation. Thus, we take this opportunity to go beyond our national boundaries in stating our feelings of sincere sympathy toward all victims of war, starting with Asian nations and their families.

During the postwar period, our country, desiring peace forever, has overcome numerous difficulties, and with the efforts of every single citizen, has achieved rapid development. Here today, in this peace, in today’s affluence, we have come to state anew our pledge never to repeat the horrors of war (*sensou no sanku*) again, as well as to witness to the younger generation the honorable sacrifices of those who died in the war.

International society remains even today a world where disputes based on military power are unceasing. However, the end of the Cold war marks a major trend, a trend toward realization of peace. We are aware of our grave responsibility to build a peaceful order appropriate to the new age, based on the realization of trends toward peace.

(AS (Evening) August 16, 1993 : 2)

1993: August 15, speaker of the House Doi Takako remarks

The people on both sides who were made wretched victims in the last war are numbered in the thousands of ten thousands. This tragedy, almost half a century ago, weighs heavily on our hearts (is heart-wrenching) even today. Those who fleeing bombs lost their lives in terror, those who perished on the battlefield, amid hostility and hunger—when we think of their pain and unfulfilled longings, despair and the deep sadness of those who were left behind, I cannot find solemn words.

After the war, our country pursued spectacular economic development and today, we have reached an important position in international society. This was because every single Japanese citizen, thinking earnestly

of a certain tragic war, regrets (*hansei suru*) the errors of our own history. And based on the determination that these errors will not be repeated a second time, each has made extended efforts to achieve rebirth as a peace state.

We have not achieved reconciliation with the Asian people who were forced to be wretched victims because of our errors. We do not see the day when war and violence in the world end.

What we the living should (must) do is clear.

(AS (Evening) August 16, 1993: 2)

*1993: August 23, Prime Minister Hosokawa policy speech
to the Japanese Diet/excerpts*

Ushering in a new era

Having recently been appointed Prime Minister, I am prepared to undertake the governmental responsibilities entrusted me.

These responsibilities are heavy indeed—all the more so in that I see this Cabinet not simply as navigating a single historical passage but rather as marking a new starting point in our history. Thus I have characterized this Cabinet as a Cabinet that will initiate changes for the new era, and I am determined to devote myself heart and soul to meeting these responsibilities under the banner of responsible change.

The long era of East–West conflict with the two superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union at its poles is now over, and a wide range of possibilities are being studied and earnest efforts are being made in the search for a new international order to replace the old system. There is no way that Japan alone could run counter to this historical current, and the bipolar era in Japanese politics grounded upon the Cold War structure has come to a close with the end of the Cold War. I see the results of the last general election as indicating that many people have rejected the politics of conservative–progressive confrontation and hope to achieve a new political structure of realistic policy options. Joining the people in affirming the end of the old era, I would like to say clearly that the curtain is going up on the start of a new era looking ahead to the 21st century....

*Self-awareness as an international state and contribution
to the international community*

August, when my Cabinet was formed, is a month that Japan will never forget. Going back just four turns of the twelve-year cycle, it was with the end of the war in August 1945 that we realized the great mistake we had made and vowed to start anew, resolutely determined never to repeat the wrongs of the past.

Forty-eight years later, Japan has now become one of the prime beneficiaries of world prosperity and peace. Yet we should never forget that this achievement rests upon the supreme sacrifices made during the war and is the result of the great efforts made by previous generations. I believe it is important at this juncture that we state clearly before all the world our remorse at our past history and our renewed determination to do better. I would thus like to take this opportunity to express 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 and to state that we will demonstrate our new determination by contributing more than ever before to world peace.

The world is now confronted with a host of global issues. Respecting the Constitutional spirit of peace and international concert, I am determined to play an even greater part than ever before for the resolution of these global issues in full awareness of Japan's position and responsibilities as an international state.

Earnest efforts are now being made in the United Nations and elsewhere to structure a new international order for peace. Seeking a world of greater peace and respect for human rights, I fully intend, with the support of the Japanese people, to contribute steadfastly in personnel terms to these international efforts by the United Nations and to take an active part in reforming and strengthening the United Nations so that it can respond to the demands of the post-Cold War world.

The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an urgent security imperative for Japan and the whole of the global community, and I intend to support the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. Going beyond that, I believe world peace depends upon the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons from the earth and global disarmament, and I intend to engage in more active foreign policy efforts to that end.

Close cooperation between Japan and the United States centered on the Security Treaty is indispensable to world peace and prosperity. I welcome the fact that the United States has indicated its determination to maintain a presence and to remain engaged in the Asia-Pacific region, and I intend to make every effort to continue to forge good, constructive relations with the United States as the cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy.

Recognizing Japan's important role as an Asia-Pacific nation, I would like, never forgetting to be modest of demeanor and always working to foster mutual trust, to make every possible contribution to the peace and prosperity of this region. Along with promoting even closer dialogue and cooperation with the countries of this region in the economic and political fields, I intend to work for even better relations

with China, the Republic of Korea, the ASEAN countries, and our other neighbors.

In our relations with Russia, I intend to work to achieve a resolution to the Northern Territories issue and the full normalization of the relationship and to provide all appropriate support for the reform efforts underway in Russia. Likewise, I also hope to continue to build even closer cooperative relations with the countries of Europe as they move toward integration and play an increasingly important role in the international community.

...

Conclusion: restoring popular trust

This Cabinet is a coalition government representing eight different groups. In forming our coalition, we have agreed to continue in principle the foreign, defense, economic, energy, and other key basic policies of previous governments. Indeed, I believe the very way that we have worked to overcome our differences so as to usher in a new era and to rejuvenate politics in response to the trust that the people have placed in us is itself of great historical significance.

Our most important task right now is that of restoring the popular trust in government. And while it goes without saying that this means we must promptly effect political reform, I believe it is also of crucial importance that we adopt a national reconciliation stance so as to heal the domestic political scars caused by the Cold War and that the relationship between the ruling and opposition parties be transformed from one of discord to one of dialogue, from one of mutual distrust to one of mutual trust, and from one of opposition for opposition's sake to one of constructive competition in ideas. Never forgetting the need to put aside our petty differences and our animosities and to join forces in politics mindful of the people, it is essential that we move forth boldly with the kind of policies that will contribute to the greater stability and enhancement of Japanese life....

Determined to steer the ship of state in such a way as will prove that the people of Japan made no mistake in their historic verdict, I sincerely hope all of the people and all members of the Diet will grant us their profound understanding and support in this effort.

(Hosokawa 1993b)

1993: November 6, Prime Minister Hosokawa and Kim Dae Jung summit in Kyongju, Korea

...[the past]

PRESIDENT KIM: The Korean people have listened closely to what PM Hosokawa has expressed clearly concerning history since he took office.

PM HOSOKAWA: Because of our country's colonial rule—for example, the use of the mother tongue in school was prohibited to the people of the Korean peninsula, people were forced to change their names to Japan-style names, and the requisitioning of comfort women—the Korean people suffered greatly. Concerning this, as the aggressor/perpetrator (*kagaisha*), we want to express remorse from the heart and apologize (*chinsha*).

PRESIDENT KIM: I want to highly commend PM Hosokawa's understanding of history. Previous administrations have requested compensation for the former military comfort women but my government is developing a policy, that says it is not necessary. Looking frankly at the past, keeping alive the lessons of history, it is more important to build a relationship...benefiting both countries for the future.

PRESIDENT KIM: In Sakhalin issue, even, we have received every cooperation from Japan, and we want to ask for even more cooperation from now on.

PM HOSOKAWA: Concerning the extent of those remaining in Sakhalin that wish to return to Korea, we are discussing with Russia and we want to investigate together with Korea.

(AS November 7, 1993: 2)

***1993: November 7, Prime Minister Hosokawa and
ROK President Kim press conference in Kyongju***

PRESIDENT KIM: As we face an era of peace in Asia that has come about in front of our eyes, Prime Minister Hosokawa and I have come to the same conclusion that it is important to develop a cooperative relationship to a new level, building on common values of a market economy and democracy. Concerning the fact that even today there are remaining feelings of unease that are a legacy of the Cold War in the Korean peninsula, we have a common perspective. In economic matters, both countries have agreed to work hard to improve trade imbalances.

The prime minister and I have dealt rationally with the problem of the past by establishing a correct historical interpretation and have decided to put our common efforts so that our countries relationship "being close, can be in fact that of close neighbors." These meetings have confirmed the fact that this is a new turning point in the development of a friendly, good neighbor relationship.

PM HOSOKAWA: Both President Kim and I are aiming at historic reform. We have confirmed a common consciousness concerning the problem of North Korean atomic weapons development.

In international society, focusing on the Asian Pacific area, we want to build a Japan-Korea relationship within international society, pushing forward all the more our efforts. Because of our country's past colonial rule, residents of the Korean peninsula experienced various forms of unbearable pain and grief such as not being given the opportunity of education in their own language in school, being forced to

change their names to Japanese style names, and the drafting (*chouyou*) of military comfort women. For the various actions, as the aggressor, we deeply deplore (*fukaku hansei*) these actions and apologize (*chinsha moushiageru*) from the heart.

Facing history frankly, while always bringing the lessons of history to life, looking ahead to Japan–Korea *paatonaashiipu*, I want to make every effort to be resolute in this. I have promised to make every effort to increase the programs for youth exchange, including increasing foreign students in Japan.

QUESTION: PM Hosokawa has expressed remorse and apology concerning the problem of the past. Does this resolve the problem?

PRESIDENT KIM: I have been very impressed by Prime Minister Hosokawa's frankness. Many former LDP prime ministers have come and gone, but they haven't been this way.

(AS November 8, 1993: 2)

**1994: May 10, Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu,
Diet policy speech**

We are aware that Japan's past actions have, in addition to causing great sacrifices among the people, left great scars that remain even today in the hearts of people in neighboring countries... I would like to take this opportunity to renew the recognition that Japan's past actions, including aggression and colonial rule, caused unbearable suffering and sorrow for many people.

(Olson 1996: 168)

I also recognize that aggressive acts occurred in relation to the war. Actually the significance of the term and usage "aggressive war" is not clearly established. However, when I reflect on it, aggressive acts certainly occurred as an effect of it... Reflecting on this, we are now facing fifty years since the war and frankly apologize to all who have suffered.

(Hicks 1997: 89)

Fiftieth anniversary World War II apologies

**1995: June 9, Diet resolution: "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 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, this House offers its sincere condolences to those who fell in action 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 people of other countries, especially in Asia, the Members of the House express a sense of deep remorse.

We must transcend 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.

(“Resolution to renew,” 1995)

*1995: July 18, an appeal for donations for
the Asian Women’s Fund*

Fifty years have elapsed since the war came to an end.

The war caused enormous horror and ravaged the people of Japan and many other nations, especially those in Asia. Particularly brutal was the act of forcing women, including teenagers, to serve the Japanese armed forces as “comfort women,” a practice that violated the fundamental dignity of women. No manner of apology can ever completely heal the deep wound inflicted on these women both emotionally and physically. Yet we should, by whatever means, do our best to appreciate their pain and make the greatest possible effort to salve their suffering in any way we can. We believe the obligation to do so today hangs heavy over Japan, the country that inflicted the suffering.

The Government of Japan has expressed its deep remorse, albeit belatedly, apologizing to the victims through the Chief Cabinet Secretary’s statement of August 4, 1993 and the Prime Minister’s statement of August 31, 1994. Further, on June 14 of this year, the Cabinet announced a concrete action plan, which is to be based upon four pillars. (1) Support will be given to the establishment of a fund that invites the people of Japan to atone for the institution of “comfort women.” (2) The Government will contribute funds to the welfare and medical care of these women. (3) The Government will express remorse and apologize. (4) Historical document and materials will be collated that will help make this a lesson to be drawn on...

It is the Japanese nation of the past that created the “comfort women.” But Japan is not the government alone. Like other, Japan is a nation in which each citizen must shoulder the legacy of the past, live in the present, and create the future. To make amends for the past, then, fifty years after the fact, is our responsibility—we, the present generation,

owe it to the victims, to the international community, and to future generations.

(“An appeal,” 1995)

1995: August 15, Prime Minister Murayama statement on the fiftieth anniversary of Japan’s defeat in World War II

The world has seen 50 years elapse since the war came to an end. Now, when I remember the many people both at home and abroad who fell victim to war, my heart is overwhelmed by a flood of emotions.

The peace and prosperity of today were built as Japan overcame great difficulty to arise from a devastated land after defeat in war. That achievement is something of which we are proud, and let me herein express my heartfelt admiration for the wisdom and untiring effort of each and every one of our citizens. 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.

I am also delighted that we have been able to build the friendly relations which we enjoy today with the neighboring countries of the Asia–Pacific region, the United States and the countries of Europe.

Now that Japan has come to enjoy peace and abundance, we tend to overlook the pricelessness and blessings of peace. Our task is to convey to younger generations the horrors of war, so that we never repeat the errors in our history. I believe that, as we join hands, especially with the peoples of neighboring countries, to ensure true peace in the Asia–Pacific region—indeed in the entire world—it is necessary, more than anything else, that we foster relations with all countries based on deep understanding and trust.

Guided by this conviction, the Government has launched the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative, which consists of two parts promoting: support for historical research into relations in the modern era between Japan and the neighboring countries of Asia and elsewhere; and rapid expansion of exchanges with those countries.

Furthermore, I will continue in all sincerity to do my utmost in efforts being made on the issues arisen from the war, in order to further strengthen the relations of trust between Japan and those countries.

Now, upon this historic occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war’s end, we should bear in mind that we must look into the past to learn from the lessons of history, and ensure that we do not stray from the path to the peace and prosperity of human society in the future.

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.

Building from our deep remorse on this occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, Japan must eliminate self-righteous nationalism, promote international coordination as a responsible member of the international community and thereby, advance the principles of peace and democracy.

At the same time, as the only country to have experienced the devastation of atomic bombing, Japan, with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, must actively strive to further global disarmament in areas such as the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

It is my conviction that in this way alone can Japan atone for its past and lay to rest the spirits of those who perished. It is said that one can rely on good faith. And so, at this time of remembrance, I declare to the people of Japan and abroad my intention to make good faith the foundation of our Government policy, and this is my vow.

(Murayama 1995)

Appendix B

The language of apology

The words of war

“The past (kako)”

In apology discourse wartime Japan is usually referred to simply as “the past,” as in the “unfortunate past,” “past actions,” “past history,” and “recent past in this century.” From a rhetorical perspective, this may be seen as enthymemic in nature, evoking the war and prewar past without needing to be explicit. Everyone knows what the “unfortunate past” refers to. However, ambiguity in referencing the past is both useful and perhaps necessary since, depending on one’s audience and perspective, there is considerable controversy over naming and periodization of the past. The use of the vague terms such as “past history” allows considerable difference in interpretation as to exactly what past is being referenced.

“Greater East Asia War,” “Pacific War,” “Asia-Pacific War,” World War II, “15-year war”

When “the war” is referred to explicitly in apology-related discourse, it is usually in very broad and vague terms, as in “the war” (*sensou*), “that war” (*ano sensou*), “earlier war” (*saki no sensou*), or “that conflict” (*ano tatakai*).¹ One reason for the vagueness of references is the controversial and ideological nature of more specific terminology. For the Japanese during the 1940s, the war in China and against the US and European allies was called the Greater East Asia War (*Dai TouA sensou*). During the Occupation the US authorities banned this term for its militaristic and expansionist associations. The standard term became the “Pacific War” reflecting the American emphasis on Pearl Harbor and the war effort against the Allied forces. In contrast, the designation “15-year war” preferred by leftist and academic critics focuses on the Asian theatre and the 1931 Manchurian incident as the beginning of “the war.” Recently the term “Asia-Pacific War” has become standard in an attempt to draw

away from the American and non-Asian connotations of the “Pacific War” designation. The terms “great war” as well as the longer “Second World War” are also used but are obviously focused on European perspective.

The terminology question is further complicated in apology discourse by the Korean perspective on “the past” which focuses on the period from 1910 to 1945, the years of Japanese colonial rule. Instead of “wartime” or World War II apologies, this period occurs mostly in what we would term prewar Japan. Terminology like “20th century past” or “unfortunate past in this century” usually reflects the inclusion of Japanese colonialism within its scope.

“Overcoming the past”

Apologies are frequently discussed in the media and in academic circles in the framework of “overcoming the past” (*kako no kokufuku*), for example, an *Asahi Shimbun* editorial (July 8, 1992: 2). The word *kokufuku* means to subjugate or overcome; it is frequently used in reference to illness or some obstacle or burden that must be overcome. This term does not necessarily imply any guilt or remorse; rather it suggests that one must get over and get on with it. It has nevertheless taken on the meaning of the responsibility to pay reparations or compensation. See Mochida (1994) for discussion of the expression’s German roots (5).

Two other terms that express similar but have a different connotation are “reconciling the past” (*kako no kessan*) and “clearing the past” (*kako no seisan*). These are both accounting terms that deal with the finalizing of debts and clearing the books for the next accounting period. “[K]essan” has more the sense of finalizing, wrapping up, closing the books while “seisan” makes everything right, to pay up one’s debts and to “clean up” the accounts.

War responsibility (*sensou sekinin*)

The term “war responsibility” (*sensou sekinin*) rather than “war guilt” or “war crimes” is the terminology with which Japanese refer to the issues of wartime culpability as well as responsibility. This term has a broad meaning and indeed, is frequently used to mean: Who is to blame for getting us into the war? Who is to blame for losing the war? Who is to blame for the disaster that was war? Or, Who is to blame for the terrible suffering we caused in the war? And What should we do in response to atone, to prevent this from happening again?

The term is also frequently applied to the responsibility of Emperor Hirohito. Whenever “wartime responsibility” is discussed, the question of the Emperor’s role and responsibility is never far from consideration.

Who are the victims? Higaisha, giseisha, kagaisha

Another set of words that are often used in referring to Japanese attitudes toward the war and their responsibility for the devastation of the war is the set of three words: *Higaisha*, *giseisha*, *kagaisha* (victim, victim, and victimizer). *Higaisha* means victim as in innocent victim, someone who has a grievance, who was “done to.” This term is used frequently in Japan to refer to the atomic bomb victims for example. *Giseisha* means victim as in martyr, someone who suffers for others, that is, self-sacrificing. In the apology discourse, this term is not used.

As we have noted in the main text, many have noted the prevalence of Japanese “victim” mentality concerning the war, deriving partly from the emphasis on being recipients of the atomic bomb blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also resulting from the devastation and suffering that all Japanese shared in during and following the war.

Nevertheless, the use of “victimizer” (*higaisha*) in the phrase “victimizer responsibility” appears often as the 1990s discourse progressed. This refers to the necessity of Japanese recognition of their responsibility for the war, its responsibility as “aggressor,” as the “doer of violence” the causing of damage and victimization. In the peace movement following the war, the approach taken was to consider both victim (*higaisha*) and victimizer (*kagaisha*) both as products of war and both united in the postwar anti-war ideology. Everyone is a victim (Lie 1991; Mochida 1994: 9).

The words of apology

Naming the offense: “colonial rule”

For Koreans, the wrongdoing for which Japan should apologize is the offense to Korean sovereignty and cultural traditions, summed up in the term “colonial rule” (*shokuminchi shibai*).

“Colonial rule” refers not only to the abrogation of Korean sovereignty and subjugation of Korean citizens into colonial subjects; it includes a cultural dimension as well, that is, suppression of the use of the Korean language by making Japanese the language of schooling and by pressuring Koreans to “Japanize” their names. The terminology also refers to harsh measures of forced induction into the Japanese army and forced labor during the Pacific War. The recruitment and use of Korean women as “comfort women” was one of the more gross violations of human rights that occurred.

Naming the offense: “war of aggression,” “acts of aggression,” “aggressive acts”

Perhaps the most contested and controversial terminology used in the apology discourse is “aggression” and its variants: “war of aggression”

(*shinryaku sensou*), “aggression acts” (*shinryaku kouji*), and “aggressive acts” (*shinryakuteki kouji*).²

According to Webster’s New Collegiate dictionary, aggression is: (1) “forceful action, . . . especially when intended to dominate or master or (2) the practice of making attacks or encroachments, especially unprovoked violation by one country of the territorial integrity of another.” The words “dominate,” “encroachments,” “unprovoked violation,” indicate the highly negative connotations of the word. Moreover, motivation is a key part of the definition—what was the intent of the action? In other words, aggression is action motivated by expansion or aggrandizement, taking what belongs to others, invading and encroaching on territorial or sovereign rights. It is not defensive action nor even a preemptive disciplinary action. In other words, by definition, aggression is unjustified and never legitimate.

Japanese government reluctance to use the term “aggression” as an overall assessment of prewar Japan’s war effort and colonial rule is thus largely a matter of perspective. Aggression is what other countries do. “We” may invade or attack (à la the Normandy invasion) but we are not aggressors. As the Japanese Education Ministry argued, “‘Aggression’ is a term implying a negative value judgment and it is not desirable for the education of the nation’s next generation” (*Nikkan Rekishi Kyokasho Kenkyuukai* 1993, quoted in Hicks 1997: 102).

In Japan, the term “aggression” is also unfavorably associated with the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal’s judgment of the war as a “conspiracy to achieve world domination.” Despite the negative nuances and conqueror’s-perspective connotations of the word, “aggression” is still commonly used in Japanese media and academic discourse as well as in Japanese textbooks. Of course, it is also frequently used by the many Asian (and Western) victims of the Japanese war machine.

The phrase “war of aggression” (*shinryaku sensou*) is the most condemnatory and all-encompassing expression, used by Prime Minister Hosokawa at a press conference in August 1993 for the first time. After strong objections to this characterization by rightist critics, notably the (War) Bereaved Families Association and conservative politicians, Hosokawa softened the expression to “acts of aggression” or “aggression acts” (*shinryaku kouji*) in following speeches/apologies. Translated sometimes as “aggression behavior,” this expression implies a more limited acceptance of Japanese brutality and actions in Asia and is generally seen as a retreat from Hosokawa’s “war of aggression” (Field 1997; Hicks 1997; Yoshida 1994).

Transforming the noun “aggression” into an adjective produces what some have said is an even more watered-down version, “aggressive acts” (*shinryaku-teki kouji*). (This expression is translated sometimes as “aggression-like acts.”) This expression was used by the Hosokawa’s successor Prime Minister Hata Tsutomu and in the Diet’s fifty-year anniversary

resolution of 1995 concerning Japan's wartime role. In answering questions from opposition parties in the Diet in May 1994, Prime Minister Hata explained his view of the terminology:

I recognize that there were aggressive acts (*shinryakuteki kouji*) in this war. Although exactly what is meant by the term "war of aggression" is not clear; nevertheless, ... the result [of the war] was indeed aggressive acts ... [that] caused unbearable suffering and grief to various countries. (Yoshida 1994: 24)

These slight differences in terminology may seem trivial but the nuances are significant in apology discourse. In one particularly telling exchange several days following the above statement, Prime Minister Hata was asked "Why don't/won't/can't you use the term 'war of aggression'?" Prime Minister Hata replied, "Why can't you say 'acts of aggression'?" The Diet member answered

When you say "aggressive acts," it means that individual units did terrible things on local assignments; they did lawless things; individual acts. Using this terminology allows evasion of the issue [of government responsibility] ... However, "war of aggression," recognizes the general nature of the war as a whole as aggression, with the purpose of "aggression." The dimension is totally different.

(Ibid.)

Hata's view of the relationship between "war" and "aggression" has been called the "aggression as effect" argument (Yoshida 1997: 26). The argument admits that the war resulted in suffering and sorrow, and that this suffering and sorrow was caused by Japan. While admitting specific instances of brutality or aggression, however, this view does not characterize the entire war effort as "aggression." "Acts" also implies that instances of aggression were not official policy, but rather indiscriminate and individual acts. Lawsuits against the government at that time may have given further incentive to the government's attempt to limit the scope of "aggression." Finally, this wording seems not to impugn the motives of prewar and wartime Japan and its wartime leaders; nor does it represent all Japanese soldiers as having been "accomplices" in crime, as one family member of a war veteran put it (*Sankei Shimbun* advertisement, quoted in Hicks 1997: 88).

Although explicit expressions of wrongdoing referring to "aggression" and "colonial rule" are frequently used in the 1990s, even more prevalent are the words "suffering" (*kurushimi*) and "sorrow" (*kanashimi*). Damages (*songai*) are also referred to by Doi Takako, thus associating the wrongdoing with monetary restitution. More specific words in the Japanese language such as wrongs/sins/transgressions (*tsumi* or *ihan*), inhuman (*hinin*) or immoral (*hijindou*) acts, or massacre (*gyakusatsu*) are not used in

the official expressions of apology. Even words such as “war” or “killing” or other more explicit words are not used.

Terms of apology/regret

There are numerous words for “apology” in Japanese, as there are in most languages. Perhaps the most general word is *shazai*, a noun that sounds official and serious. *Shazai* is a compound word made up of two Chinese characters, the first meaning “apologize,” the second “crime.” It is a term one might use in criminal situations to express contrition or as a legal response to guilt, and thus seems to provide evidence of guilt for lawsuits and compensation. This is the term usually used by those demanding an “apology.” Moreover, newspaper reports often use the term in referring to apologies in the past, as in “when Prime Minister Kaifu apologized (*shazai*) last year.” Despite its frequency in the public discourse, government officials have shied away from the term with one exception: Kanemaru Shin’s use of the term in an apology to North Koreans as part of the negotiations for restoring diplomatic relations in 1990 (Field 1995: 413).

The term *owabi*, also meaning apology, is more personal and less formal sounding. It has been used regularly in apologies since Prime Minister Kaifu first used it in the 1990 summit with President Roh of South Korea.

The most frequently used term to express apology in this discourse, *hansei*, is usually translated as “remorse” or “reflection.” Hicks (1997) argues that the term has no equivalent in English and is stronger than reflection and weaker than remorse. He suggests “self-criticism” or “self-reproach” (92); I have used “remorse” largely to remain consistent with most English translations even though this may give an overly positive appreciation of the apologetic nature of these statements; a translation of “reflection” indicates a more negative and critical evaluation. In any case, the term implies internal recognition and reflection, a taking to heart of the seriousness of the wrongdoing in question. The words *chinsha* and *ayamari* (meaning apology) have appeared as well, although not as frequently as the other terms.³ Other expressions that have appeared are *sumimasen* (simple apology, used for trivial as well as serious offense) and *mooshiwake arimasen* (inexcusable).

There are a number of words too that are less “apologetic” in that they do not admit wrongdoing, but simply express regret, condolence, or sorrow. Stronger words such as *kuiru*, a native Japanese word meaning “regret, repent,” and *zange* and *shokuzai* meaning “atone, repent” have not been used in apologies.⁴ The term “regret” (*ikan*) as in “truly regrettable” (*makoto ni ikan*) was the standard used by Emperor Hirohito and others in the earlier apologies. “Condolences” (*aitou*) and “mourn” (*tsuito*) are used to express sadness and sympathy.

Emperor Akihito’s remarks in 1990 suggest a more personal and “painful” contrition, with expressions such as “heartfelt regrets” (*kokoro*

ni itamu omoi), “keenly feel” (*tsuusetsu ni kanjiru*), and “intense feelings of sorrow” (*tsuuseki no nen*). The Chinese character for *tsuu* in the last two expressions means “painful, as does the verb *itamu*. Murayama speaks of memories “pressing on his chest” in his apology.

Other indicators of emotion are the degree of personal attachment to the sentiments, in other words, “it was regrettable” (distanced and no active agent identified) versus “I personally regret this” (personal attachment). Third party statements such as “pain and suffering caused by our country” is more detached than “Every single citizen . . . regrets this action” in which people, contemporary citizens (we today) are represented as the primary actors. The first person “I personally feel responsible for what happened” provides the strongest sense of regret. In the Japanese language these differences are reflected in the use of “Our country” (*wa ga kuni*), “we Japanese” (*ware ware wa nihonjin*) and the more personal “we” (*watakushitachi*) or “I” (*watakushi*). Other words that appear that offer emotional content are “unbearable” (*taegatai*) and Doi Takako’s adjective “wretched” (*itamashii*).

Translation

Translation is always an issue. In this study I try to follow a style that is as close as possible to the original Japanese. This does not always make for the smoothest translation. In a study of rhetoric, especially with a focus on “appetite” or lead in to the apology, it seems important to try to maintain the order of words and ideas presented. In Japanese, the verb and attitude of speaker is last in the sentence so the context, the circumstances, the setting and factual information are given first, followed by the key attitude, comment, or evaluation. I have tried to follow that order in order to show the “setting of the stage,” or the “appetite” as the apology is introduced.

Now let me briefly talk about some specific translation difficulties. I have already noted the problem of “reflection” or “remorse” in the term *hansei*. Perhaps the most ludicrous instance of this dimension in international communication occurred in 1990 when a first draft of Emperor Akihito’s speech used the expression “my heart aches,” which when translated into Korean came out as a popular love ballad refrain, subject to much humor and parody.

Another example of translation difficulty arose when Emperor Hirohito’s words “feelings of sadness” (*kanashimi no nen*), said to President Ford in 1984, were translated as “deplore.” In that case, the error was probably inadvertent, but when questioned as to the meaning of his remarks by journalists on his return to Japan, a spokesman for the Emperor said only, “I cannot speculate on what the Emperor meant. You must decide for yourself.” A less excusable case of “biased” translation is perhaps suggested by the translation of “acts of aggression” (*shinryaku kouji*) in Hosokawa’s

Diet policy speech translated officially by the Japanese government as “aggression.” The official translation thus emphasizes Japanese wrongdoing for the international public while minimizing the effect within the Japanese population. Finally, Akihito’s remarks “I feel intense regret” were not clear to an English-speaking journalist. He asked whether Akihito’s remarks were an apology, the spokesman said, he used the English word in his answer, “Yes, you can consider it an *aporogii*” (AS May 11, 1990: 29).

Glossary

Apology and regret

遺憾 *ikan* regret

まことに遺憾 *makoto ni ikan* sincerely regret (Emperor Hirohito 1984);
used commonly in formal situations; early apologies

謝る *ayamaru* to err, to apologize*¹

謝罪 *shazai* apology general use; formal admission of wrong

謝 *sha* to apologize (same as *ayamaru*)

罪 *zai* crime, wrong

お詫び *owabi* apology, more personal*

反省 *hansei* reflection, remorse, reconsideration, introspection, self-criticism

深く反省 *fukaku hansei* deep remorse

心に痛む思いがいたします。 *kokoro ni itamu omoi ga itashimasu* lit., “My thoughts hurt my heart” (Emperor Akihito in May 15, 1990 draft)

痛惜 *tsuuseki* intense regret (Emperor Akihito in May 26, 1990 speech)

痛切に感じます *tsuusetsu ni kanjimasu* feel painfully (Emperor Akihito in May 20, 1990 draft)

陳謝 *chinsha* apology, more formal; used by Hosokawa in visit to Seoul November, 1993

陳 *chin* state, explain

謝 *sha* apology, thanks (same as *ayamari* = apology, same as *shazai*)

申し訳ありません *mooshiwake arimasen* “there is no excuse... (I’m sorry)*”

懺悔 *zange* repentance, penitence, contrition, confession, not used in these apologies; urged on Japanese public by government statements at end of war

悔いる *kuiru* regret, repent [of one’s past error], very informal*, not used in apologies

済みません *sumimasen* regret, sorry, personal, informal

- 償う *tsugunau* to compensate, make amends for; used by Murayama in 1995 apology statement
 贖罪 *shokuzai* atonement, redemption, not used in apologies
 弁明 *benmei* explanation, defense, account, justification, vindication
 釈明 *shakumei* explanation, vindication, not used

Compensation

- 損害 *songai* damages
 補償 *hoshou* indemnity, compensation, reparations
 保障 *hoshou* guarantee, security
 賠償 *baishou* indemnity, compensation
 措置 *sochi* measures
 被害者/加害者 *higaisha/kagaisha* victim/victimizer

Consolation words

- 追悼 *tsuitou* mourning
 哀悼 *aitou* consolation, sympathy

The past

- 過去 *kako* the past
 過去の克服 *kako no kokufuku* conquest, subjugation, that is overcoming the past
 痛惜に片 *kako no seisan* clear up, clean up, settling of accounts; that is “Settle the past”
 過去の決算 *kako no kessan* close the books, pay debts
 戦後処理問題 *senjo shori mondai* postwar resolution of wartime issues
 不幸な過去 *fukou na kako* unfortunate past

Responses/emotional content

- 思いを馳せる *omoi wo haseru* remembering the past
 心に刻む *kokoro ni kizamu* etch on my heart
 胸に迫る *mune ni semaru* press on my heart
 胸が詰まる *mune ga tsumaru* lump in throat
 筆舌に尽くしがたい辛苦 *hitsuzetsu ni tsukushigatai shinku* indescribable suffering
 率直 *sotchoku* frank, candid, plain, honest, straight, downright, open-hearted, outspoken
 きちんと謝罪 *kichin to shazai* a proper/appropriate/exact/apology in this context, means a full and frank admission of wrongdoing
 土下座 *dogeza* to prostrate oneself, humble (humiliate) oneself (Ozawa 1990)

Special areas

植民地支配 *shokuminchi shibai* colonial rule

慰安婦 *ianfu* comfort women

強制労働 *kyousei roudou* forced labor

War

大東亜戦争 *Daitoua sensou* Greater East Asia War

太平洋戦争 *Taiheiyou sensou* Pacific War

十五年戦争 *Juugonen sensou* 15-year war

アジア太平洋戦争 *Ajia Taiheiyou sensou* Asia-Pacific War

Wrongdoing/responsibility

戦争責任 *sensou sekinin* war responsibility (war crimes?)

苦しみ *kurushimi* hardship, suffering

悲しみ *kanashimi* sadness, sorrow, grief

侵略 *shinryaku* aggression

侵略行為 *shinryaku koui* aggression acts or acts of aggression

侵略的行為 *shinryakuteki koui* aggressive acts

侵略戦争 *shinryaku sensou* aggression war or war of aggression

Notes

1 Introduction

- 1 Examples are numerous. A representative sample would certainly include studies of Senator Kennedy's Chappaquidick apology (Ling 1972), President Nixon (Harrell *et al.* 1975; Vartabedian 1985), and President Clinton (Gronbeck 1999; Harter *et al.* 2000; Kramer and Olsen 2002; Simons 2000). For reviews of *apologia* literature see Ryan (1982), Downey (1993), and Benoit (1995b).
- 2 Olson (1991, 1996), Suzuki (1999a,b), and Bruner (2000) are exceptions.
- 3 Genre is a focus of attention for several different academic disciplines, including folklore studies, literary studies, linguistics, and rhetoric. See Swales (1990: chapter 3). In the broad sense, genre is simply patterned speech; but in practice it usually refers to classification at a level somewhere between the sentence/statement level of speech acts and the higher level (universal?) patterns of "form of life" or "archetypes." See Miller (1984, 1994: 31–36) for discussion of these theoretical issues. In rhetorical studies, genre is defined by Campbell and Jamieson (1978) as bodies of text that share "substantive, stylistic and situational characteristics" (20).
- 4 It is possible to argue that "differentiation" could be construed to include apology. Ware and Linkugel (1973) suggest in a footnote that "regenerative" strategies may be considered differentiation in the sense that the old self is different from the new self (279). However, an acceptance of wrongdoing does not seem to fit very well with differentiation as usually used. It is even more difficult to see how Ware and Linkugel's postures fit apology. In their scheme, absolution combines denial and differentiation strategies, hardly what one would call apology.
- 5 I am paraphrasing here. Simons (2000) gives eleven steps/strategies rated in order as to effectiveness. Last is the suggestion that apologizer should ask that the audience to move on to more important (future) things. Admit guilt and make amends is number ten.
- 6 Goffman (1955) defines face as "an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (5). The concept of face overlaps considerably with "image" and "reputation," but it is perhaps more concerned with the emotional dimensions of "looking good" in a particular social interaction.
- 7 For example, the president of Japan Air Lines apologized to all the families of those killed in an airplane crash (Haley 1986: 500) and a representative of the Japanese Foreign Service apologized to the Israeli government for the Japanese participants in a terrorist bombing (Tavuchis 1991: 43–44).
- 8 In exploring the arguments of Japanese psychologist Takeo Doi (1983) who argues that Japanese are more apologetic than Westerners, Tavuchis notes that some Japanese apologies would not be considered apologies in Western thinking, for example, the Japanese who apologizes to the friend who comes to pick

- him/her up at the airport. This is not someone apologizing for having done something wrong. In this example, Westerners would probably say “thanks” (although it is not unheard of, even in Western social situations, to say, “I’m sorry to have caused you this trouble”). Doi also suggests a fear-motivated apology where the apologizer apologizes to mollify the possible or real anger of a stronger person. Again, the apology is not really apology for wrongdoing. See Tavuchis (1991: 37–44) for detailed discussion of these arguments of cultural difference.
- 9 Olson (1991, 1996), Okabe (1992), Beer (1975), and Palczewski (1989) support this view.
 - 10 The term is from the introduction to Mark Philip Bradley and Patrice Petro’s *Truth Claims: Representation and Human Rights* (2002: 1), an example of the growing academic field that focuses on human rights, trauma, and moral issues. Some that include a focus on Japan are Barkan (2000: 46–64), Brooks (1999: 95–151), Dudden (2002). In international relations, Shimokoji (2003) focuses on historical issues in postwar Japanese foreign relations with Asian neighbors; Lind (2003) compares apologetic stances of postwar Germany and Japan and their effects on France and South Korea respectively; sociologist Hashimoto (1999) compares postwar German and Japan strategies for “moral recovery”. For a stimulating approach to the importance of symbols in international relations combining speech act, game theory and linguistic insights, see political scientist O'Neill (1999).
 - 11 This view of apology as process is not original here. See Tavuchis (1991: 4). Ryan (1982) argues that accusation and *apologia* should be considered together as a “speech set.” My approach goes further in emphasizing the role of the accuser and responder as well as the existence of other audiences and the possibility of multiple iterations.
 - 12 Although Burke’s terminology can be criticized for its Western (even Christian) underpinnings, I use it here as suggestive of the cyclical and pervasiveness of social ruptures and wrongdoing and the need to recover. This does not seem to me to be a particularly Western idea.
 - 13 Another example of a “rhetorical community” that transcends national boundaries is that of human rights community (Bradley and Petro 2002: 2).
 - 14 Concepts of political legitimacy were originally developed by philosopher Jurgen Habermas (1979) and adapted for rhetorical criticism by Robert Francsesconi (1986) and Alan Kluver (1997). Harrell, Ware, and Linkugel (1975) have linked political legitimacy and apology in their analysis of Richard Nixon’s failure in Watergate *apologia*; however, their interest is on the political reputation of an individual not of political system or government.
 - 15 Benoit (1995b) has been principal proponent of the “image restoration” view of *apologia* rhetoric. Numerous studies of individual apologies as well as corporate ones illustrate this approach. See also Burns and Bruner (2000) for a recent critique.
 - 16 See Tracy (1997) for a good general discussion of “dilemma” as a framework for communicative inquiry. Simons (2000) also suggests a dilemmatic approach to *apologia*. Simons refers to the contradictory pressures of multiple motivations, for example, the difficulty of satisfying political needs versus family needs. My point is that apology is *inherently* dilemmatic, that its success depends on an ability to provide exactly the right balance between admitting guilt and maintaining one’s innocence, between apologizing too much and too little, and, in historical apologies, how to seem “sincere” even when you were not responsible. There are no easy strategies here.
 - 17 Benoit (1995b) makes the decision to omit silence as a strategy, concentrating on “proactive” strategies (79n).
 - 18 Philosophical dilemmas are discussed by Barkan (2000), Dudden (2002), Taft (2000), Gill (2000), and Thompson (2000) as well as Tavuchis.

- 19 There are of course ways to interpret “survival” and “self-actualization” to fit into national interests and national identity, but Maslovian schemes are intended for individual “self-interest” at all levels and even if applicable in some sense, the terms require stretching in order to apply to nations, especially in reference to apologies.
- 20 See Miller (1984) for theoretical discussion of motive and genre.
- 21 Representation here is similar to, but a somewhat broader concept than the traditional rhetorical construct of ethos which focuses on the reputation or symbolic position of the individual.
- 22 See Thompson (2000) for philosophical discussion of the impossibility of being sorry for the past.
- 23 See Ministry of Foreign Affairs web site (<http://www.mofa.go.jp>). For an interesting example of the importance of English, both Olsen (1996) and Suzuki’s (1999a,b) studies of the 1990 speech of Akihito to President Roh of South Korea, use the *Korea Herald*, an English-language Korean newspaper, as a source of “official” English and to gauge the reaction of Koreans.
- 24 See “List of war apology” (2005) for a brief list of apologies and their availability.

2 Accusations, accusers, and audience

- 1 The term “comfort women” is the literal translation of the Japanese term *ianfu*, used by the Japanese military. Another term often used is “military comfort women” or *jugun ianfu*. It is obviously a euphemism and some have refused to use the term for this reason. In my view, the alternative “sex slaves” seems sensational and misleading in its own way. “War-rape victims” is another term sometimes used. “Military prostitutes” is of course unsatisfactory as it assumes the normal associations of ordinary prostitution. I decided that comfort women was a well-known term; the ambiguity and suggestion in the designation covers a variety of situations represented. See Hicks (1994) and Tanaka (2002) for comprehensive treatment. See also Chapter 4.
- 2 Some would include the attack on Pearl Harbor as one of the deeds that Japan should apologize for; however, there has been little demand from the United States and little interest in Japan for apologies on this account. For Nanking Incident/Massacre see Honda (1999). See also highly controversial Chang (1997) and counter arguments Coox (2000), Fogel (2000). For PoWs, see Daws (1994). For medical unit 731 see Williams and Wallace (1989) and Harris (1994).
- 3 The trial’s official title is the International Military Tribunal for the Far East. The classic study is the highly critical Victor Minear (1971), *Victor’s Justice: The Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal*; for a more recent treatment, see John Dower (1999) *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, especially chapter 15.
- 4 See further discussion in Chapter 3, p. 35.
- 5 Historians, especially those interested in women’s history, have begun to see that focusing only on official documentation as basis for history is limiting. See Dudden (2002) for discussion of problems of evidence in comfort women situation. Problems of evidence exist concerning Nanking as well, with widely differing estimates of casualties (Burrell 2003; Honda 1999).
- 6 For economy of space, I use terms Korea and South Korea to refer to Republic of Korea (ROK), North Korea for Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and China for People’s Republic of China (PRC). North Korea and Japan have not normalized diplomatic relations in 2004. Prime Minister Koizumi apologized to President Kim of North Korea in 2002, following the model of Murayama’s 1995 apology, as one step in attempting to restore relations.
- 7 See Dirlík (1993), Johnson (1986), and Kristof (1998) for discussion of anti-Japanese sentiments in China and Korea. See Reid (1995) for Korean celebration of the fifty-year commemoration of the end of the war.

- 8 In 1998, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain visited Japan and requested attention to the case of British PoWs actions (*Guardian* January 7, 1998: 5). Efforts to satisfy PoWs with apologies, i.e., Prime Minister Hashimoto in 1998 and Foreign Minister Tanaka in 2002 have not been successful without compensation.
- 9 The number of these women is reputed to be several hundred thousand. The number 200,000 was acknowledged in a Japanese government report of 1993. Most, perhaps 80 percent (Soh 1996) were Korean although they came from all over the Pacific, including several Dutch women (Parker and Chew 1999: 97).
- 10 Later renamed Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. See Soh (1996: 1232–1234), Hicks (1994: 183) for history and activities. See also organization web pages (“History,” 2001).
- 11 On a recent search request for “Nanjing Massacre” from Google.com more than 8,600 entries were found. For example, see [www.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Nanjing Massacre/NM.html](http://www.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Nanjing%20Massacre/NM.html)
- 12 Tanaka (1997) argues that wartime violence is prevalent in all wars although certain aspects of the Japanese military ethic seem to have promoted brutality during World War II, although interestingly, not in previous wars. For a critical discussion of the issues of coming to terms with wartime responsibility, see Field (1995).
- 13 Interestingly, in 1996 a UN subcommittee “urged the Human Rights commission to pressure Japan to identify and punish” the guilty parties (“Report on the mission,” 1996). For philosophical discussions of the problem of group versus individual responsibility; the conflict between interests of the past and present, see Barkan (2000) and Gill (2000).

3 The early apologies: repairing relationships

- 1 In addition to many cases of apology to South Korea, there is an interesting case of Prime Minister Takeshita using a Diet budget meeting in 1989 to direct an apology to North Korea as part of a campaign to restore relations. There are a number of apologies directed at China as well as to other countries, including for example apologies to the people of Great Britain on Emperor Akihito’s visit in 1998 and an apology in 2001 in a meeting between Prime Minister Koizumi and President Kim of North Korea.
- 2 Foreign Minister Shiina had planned to say only “true regret”; but when he arrived in Seoul, anti-Japanese demonstrations convinced him to change his remarks to include “deep remorse” (*AS* March 31, 1989: 5). Appendix A contains translations of key documents in this study.
- 3 Interestingly, at the time of the treaty, Japan had wanted compensation for lost Japanese property in Korea but was unable to achieve this in the treaty (Hicks 1994: 170). See also Shimokoji (2003: 7).
- 4 See Hicks (1997) and Hein and Selden (2000). See also a special issue of *Japan Echo* (1982, Vol. IX, No. 4) for the Japanese government side of the argument. Other treatments are Beal *et al.* (2001), Shimokoji (2003: 11–20), Yoshida (2000), and Buruma (1994: 189–201). Oguma (2004), Gerow (2000), and McCormack (2000) discuss the new revisionism in textbooks. Dirlík (1993) focuses on the Chinese view of importance of history and their criticism of Japanese textbooks.
- 5 The word *shinryaku* means “invade” when used as a verb and “aggression” when used as a noun. See Appendix B for discussion.
- 6 For example, Emperor Akihito apologized on visits to China in 1992 and Great Britain in 1998. Still, after the 1990 speech, his apologies become perfunctory and repetitive in content.
- 7 This expression of “deep sadness” (*fukaku kanashimi tosuru*) was translated into English as “deeply deplore” and was considered an apology by many (*AS* May 11, 1990: 29). See also Hicks (1997: 43).

- 8 Much of this section have been previously published in Yamazaki (2004a).
- 9 This expression “overcoming the past” (*kako wo kokufuku*) became a common way to refer to apologies and other wartime issues. See Conrad (2003) and Appendix B. The transformational capability of apology is eloquently discussed by Tavuchis (1991: 5–7).
- 10 This expression refers to a well known Asian expression “close but not close” referring to poor relations between neighbors or family members.
- 11 At this time and in the Korean context “wartime victims” refers to the Korean atomic bomb victims and Korean refugees left behind in Sakhalin.
- 12 This roughly corresponds to *ethos*, as both Suzuki (1999b) and Olson (1996) have emphasized in their studies. However, I wish to emphasize the representative qualities of *ethos*, not simply the personal qualities of the speaker.

4 The comfort women apologies

- 1 Seeger (1986) identifies the characteristics of crisis as surprise, threat and allowing little time to reflect or respond.
- 2 The February 10 Ehime Maru incident brought forth apologies from President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and others. For news coverage of the China–US standoff in summer of 2001 and President Bush’s “regrets but no apology,” see Diamond and Lev (2001).
- 3 See Hicks (1994) and Tanaka (2002) for comprehensive studies of the comfort women. See also Soh (1996) for the activist movement. Also for comparative studies, see Brooks (1999: part 3) and Barkan (2000).
- 4 This is different from Ware and Linkugel’s (1973: 280) use of the term “transcendent” in reference to *apologia*. Ware and Linkugel present the “transcendent” strategy of *apologia* as a way to justify one’s bad actions by appealing to a higher principle that explains or justifies that action. “I did it for a higher purpose.” Here I emphasize the honoring of—or, if you will, the capitulation of the apologizing party to—the judgment of society, to the higher principles of international morality.
- 5 Changing moral values concerning rape in wartime is reflected in the prosecution of Bosnia rapes in 1996. This is the first instance of international prosecution for rape as a crime (Minow 1998: 6). See Gill (2000: 22–23) for example of changing attitudes toward imperialism in reference to apologies to Native Hawaiians in 1990 (by United States) and to Maoris (by New Zealand/Queen Elizabeth). Slavery of course is another example of evolving morality. See Brooks (1999: part 7).
- 6 See Barkan (2000: 50–53), Field (1997), and Hicks (1994: 194–197) for early reports of these women.
- 7 Prostitution and military procurement of sexual services were not crimes unknown to earlier critics of Japanese war behavior or for that matter unknown in many other military situations (Tanaka 1998, 2002). Indeed, the provision of “comfort facilities” for the American Occupation troops was accepted as a reasonable way to insure that troops away from home would not attack (other) local Japanese women. To be sure, General MacArthur, when he heard of these government-sponsored “comfort stations” in Japan, refused to authorize such services, following which these houses were privatized (Dower 1999: 124–132; McCormack 1996: 249). In any case, the comfort women’s existence was clearly known by the Allied troops but it was ignored as insignificant in the litany of war crimes. In the words of McCormack, “It seems most likely that crimes against women did not rank that high on the occupation forces’ scale of criminality” (248). McCormack argues that based on the legal principle of “complicity after the fact,” Western nations share complicity in these crimes.

Either they participated in the “cover-up” or they ignored the massive crimes of rape represented by comfort women.

- 8 The phrase *mune ga tsumaru* literally means constriction of the chest or heart. This is sometimes translated, “to be choked up” “to bring a lump to the throat” or “heart stopping.” The phrase *hitsuzetsu ni tsukashigatai*, translated here as “beyond description,” means literally “inexpressible with pen or tongue.”
- 9 Other examples include apologies of the Vatican for wrongs of the church over the ages, apologies to native peoples for “integration” into mainstream culture = destruction of culture, and, of course, (non)apologies to African Americans for slavery.
- 10 The juxtaposition of victim and victimizer in historical consciousness has also been noted in German discourse concerning their World War II past (Moeller 1996).
- 11 Gill (2000) suggests that society is interested in future behavior, whereas individual victims want the focus to be on past remembrance of their unjust treatment. I would however argue that even victims are interested in future behavior in accordance with Brooks (1999: 4) who argues that fear that injustice will be repeated is prevalent among victims.
- 12 For philosophical discussions concerning monetary compensation and apology, see Barkan (2000: 323), Field (1997: 25–28), Gill (2000: 15–17), Thompson (2000), and Taft (2000).
- 13 Some comfort women were “paid” for their services or at least the soldiers who used their services paid a fee (which may have gone to intermediaries) (Hicks 1994: 91–92, 138).
- 14 See reports of the Asian Women’s Fund (e.g. “Atonement,” 2003). Latest reports indicate that very few women had accepted the offers of money under the Japanese government arrangement (“An expression,” 2002). A Netherlands project was completed in 2001. The South Korean government and Taiwanese governments established funding to support these women. Several Filipina comfort women did accept money disbursed from the Japanese government to Philippine welfare agencies to distribute (Hicks 1999: 124).
- 15 The demands of the alliance of women’s groups as made to Japanese government in October 1990 and reiterated often are succinctly summarized in Hicks (1994: 184–185). See also “History” (2001).
- 16 Prime Minister Murayama (1994) apologized for the comfort women several times in anticipation of the establishment of the Asian Women’s Fund. His words repeat earlier apology statements.

5 Hosokawa apologies: politics and history

- 1 See, for example, Field (1995), Yoshida (1994), and Fukatsu (1995).
- 2 See Kluver (1997) for discussion of psychological bases of national myth and identity. See also Orr (2001) and Maier (1999).
- 3 I think we often exaggerate the differences between left and right in Japan. Both left and right share many political perspectives in Japan, including a focus on peace, economic growth, education, public security, for example. However, on this issue, criticism of imperial Japan, strong fissures in Japan have existed at least since the occupation. For an alternative view of political alignments in regard to historical issues see Benfell (2002). He calls the conservative position “revisionist,” the leftist view “progressive” and a third view that he calls the “renegade” view. In the renegade view, the war resulted from a few military men who led Japan into war. War is bad for all people. The Tokyo war crimes trials established guilt and the postwar treaties ended wartime considerations. He argues that the renegade view has dominated government statements in postwar Japan, no matter what personal opinions particular officials might have felt.

- 4 These arguments are not unlike the arguments of American veterans and politicians who objected strenuously to the Enola Gay exhibit in 1995. The facts are not the issue in such an argument. It is the national responsibility and loyalty to those who suffered on the collective national behalf. Any criticism of military policy or behavior sullies their memory.
- 5 See Hashimoto (1999) who argues that self-analysis and looking backward is not valued in Japanese cultural traditions. Rather, one should look to the future. See also Hicks (1994) chapter 2 entitled “The politics of sex” and on right wing attitudes, especially 214–219.
- 6 See McCormack (1996: 227–228) for the close connections of leading LDP politicians with the prewar and wartime government and military. Hashimoto (1999: 15) also argues that the political victory of conservatives in Japan was a key difference between Japan and Germany’s postwar handling of wartime atrocities. I discuss Germany’s apologies in more detail in Chapter 8.
- 7 In the Japanese language, the expressions are more parallel, that is, translated more literally “aggression war” (*shinryaku sensou*) and “mistaken war” (*machigatta sensou*). *Machigatta* can be translated as “mistaken” or “wrong.”
- 8 The Bereaved Families Association (*izoku kai*) reflects the same kind of constituency and political clout that veterans organizations have in many societies. See also Yoshida (1994) and Fukatsu (1995).
- 9 This is one of those phrases that can mean different things to different people, leaving aside the more difficult question of *what* we should learn from *what* history. The value of “facing the past” and its therapeutic benefits, using the illness metaphor was captured in a recent article in the *Wall Street Journal* encouraging Russia to apologize for the Communist era: “When a nation cannot face up to its history, it will live like a human being suffering from a permanent neurosis. Nations that cannot make peace with their past cannot build a future” (August 20, 2004: A12).
- 10 The photograph of this famous symbolic act can be seen in Herf (1997: 266) and on multiple websites, for example, <http://www.answers.com/topic/willy-brandt-at-warsaw-ghetto-jpg>
- 11 The reference to “various atrocities” is not in the official remarks published but in an interview with Doi, she remarked that she had changed her remarks from the script that had been provided to her (*AS* August 16, 1993: 2).
- 12 We might also note in passing the rather quaint, even obscure phrasing of “that tragic war” with no need to spell it out for the Japanese people. (See Appendix B.)
- 13 It is customary for Japanese Prime Ministers to make a “maiden speech” to the Diet, outlining their goals for the new administration. These speeches may be compared to the yearly State of the Union addresses in the United States.
- 14 Taiwan was also a Japanese colony from 1895–1945, but the Nationalist government on Taiwan has not been in the forefront of nations asking for apology.
- 15 The theme of “newness” is not unusual in political discourse and has been a very common theme of postwar and even prewar Japan. See Dower’s (1999) discussion of rhetoric during Occupation (177–180).
- 16 See Hashimoto (1999) for discussion of how “moral recovery” was important for both Germany and Japan and how their strategies differed in this regard. She argues that Japan’s strategy was to promise good behavior in the future, a reformed, peaceful Japan rather than to reflect on the past.
- 17 Examples from other national apology situations support the same interpretation of the dynamics of apology. Willy Brandt’s position was considerably more apologetic than that of Adenauer; President Li of Taiwan’s apology for Taiwanese massacre is surely consistent with the fact that his was the first non-Nationalist government.

- 18 Field (1997) notes the incongruity of two men deciding that comfort women issue is not worth pursuing (7). See also Hicks (1994: 185, 210–211).
- 19 For negative reactions to Hosokawa's statements, see for example *Christian Science Monitor* (August 13, 1993: 1). Prominent conservative politician Ishihara Shintaro was quoted as saying, in his colorful way, "those indecent remarks [of Hosokawa's] without a solid historical viewpoint, deserve death" (*Japan Times Weekly International Edition* October 18–24, 1993: 2).

6 The anti-apologies/conservative *apologia*

- 1 See Benfell (2002), Gerow (2000), Hicks (1997: 29–30, 80–96, chapter 8), McCormack (1996, 2000) and Nathan (2004: chapter 6). Revisionist tendencies occur, of course, in other countries as well. For comparison with Germany, see Maier (1999).
- 2 The English term "whitewash" occurs repeatedly in Chinese characterizations of Japanese war-related statements. Obviously a negative evaluation, its specific meaning seems unclear.
- 3 See Benfell (2000), Hicks (1997: chapter 8), McCormack (1996: 227–229), and Honda (1999) for a detailed discussion of the Nanking incident. There is much evidence that information concerning Nanking has been available since 1937 and had been given extensive coverage in the 1945 Tokyo trials. Furthermore, the data is ambiguous and contradictory. Chang (1997) has been criticized by scholars (e.g. Coox 2000; Fogel 2000). Burrell (2003) criticizes the American news media and political lobbying by Chinese American groups based on Chang's book. Even Kristof (1999: 46) is skeptical concerning numbers associated with the Nanking Massacre. On the particular word *detchiage* or "fabrication," Okazaki (2000) blames much of the uproar concerning Japan's past on left wing political opposition in Japan. In that sense, the incidents are "manufactured" by the opposition. He does not mean that there might not be historical issues worth pursuing, but that these feelings of the past are manipulated to criticize the government. The uproar over Nanking would seem a good example of an incident that was well-known but had receded from public concern only to be resurrected in the 1990s.
- 4 Fukatsu (1995) argues that the tendency of conservative politicians in Japan to avoid confrontation with the radical right wing of the party is a problem of Japanese politics.
- 5 For more detail on the failed Diet Resolution, see Fukatsu (1995), Mukae (1996), and Dower (1995).
- 6 Fukatsu (1995) explains the politics of voting and the campaign to defeat the apology bill. Both leftists and rightist voted against it or abstained. (For the left, it was too watered down; for the right, it was too critical of Japan.)
- 7 A good example of the incompatibility of saying "you're sorry" and denying responsibility is the Toshiba "apology" discussed by Suzuki (1999c).
- 8 I am reminded of the character John Proctor in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* who was accused of being a witch. In order to save his life he first agrees to admit "wrongdoing," but when he is told he had to sign his name and make public the paper admitting his crime, he refuses, saying "It's my name." He would rather die than have his name publicly associated with such a lie, there for his children to see. So it is for public apology for nations. Putting it on the public record means that posterity will judge them and that their "name" has been compromised for all time.
- 9 Perhaps this should be considered a "macho" trait. The reluctance of American males to apologize has been noted (Tannen 2001: chapter 4).

7 Murayama apology: on the international stage

- 1 See, for example, Umezu (2000) from Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (www.mofa.go.jp) and Brooks (1999: 126–127).
- 2 Tavuchis (1991) discusses Nakasone's apology in some depth (106–107). The *New York Times* (October 24, 1985) ran a picture of Prime Minister Nakasone giving his speech but the apologetic contents went unremarked.
- 3 Yui (1999) makes the interesting point that while European commemorations in 1995 stressed the reconciliation of previously warring states with joint multi-national ceremonies and speeches, in Japan the day was celebrated as usual with no foreign dignitaries and certainly no joint ceremonies with any of the antagonists of the war.
- 4 See “First report” (1994), “Atonement” (2003), and Asian Women's Fund web pages (www.awf.or.jp.english/index.html). Similar documents are available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan web site (www.mofa.co.jp).
- 5 All quotes in this chapter, unless otherwise noted come from the same source(s), Murayama (1995).
- 6 See Suzuki (1999a) and Olson (1991) for emphasis on this aspect of Japanese apologies.
- 7 It seems the South Koreans liked the specific targeting of apology to them and the written apology. The 1998 apology seemed to have resolved issues of history. This lasted only until 2001 when a new textbook crisis threatened to cause a complete disruption of diplomatic relations.
- 8 See, for example, Olson (1996: 170) as well as a number of PoW and Chinese Internet sites such as “Murayama's personal apology” (1995); “Has Japan offered an apology” (2001).

8 Apology as international discourse

- 1 An interesting example is that of the non-apology by the Chinese Nationalists at the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937. Chiang Kai Shek's refusal to apologize for a fairly trivial border incident can be seen as leading directly to the devastating war with China (McClain 2002: 465). See also Dudden's (1999) discussion of apology in diplomatic discourse of early Meiji Japanese state.
- 2 Irish (1998) sees Gorbachev's 1990 statements accepting Russian responsibility for murder of Polish soldiers as beginning an “era of apologies.” Others possible “starting points” for the proliferation of apologies for historical wrongs are Weiszacker's 1985 speech or the 1988 United States apology to Japanese Americans.
- 3 Thanks to Irish (1998) for this list. Throughout the 1990s the number of apologies for historical wrongdoing continued to increase. Michael Cunningham (1999) gives an even longer list for 1998. As interest in apology increases, a number of websites have compiled lists and sources for apology (e.g. “List of war apology,” 2005).
- 4 A good treatment of Japanese American redress is Maki *et al.* (1999). See also Barkan (2000: chapter 2), Hatamiya (1993), and Daniels *et al.* (1991).
- 5 There are several versions of apology, depending on who was President at the time checks were sent out. David Ikeda (2001) compares the words of the Bush apology with President Clinton's apology several years later. He criticizes the Bush apology for beginning with words about money, offensive to Japanese Americans.
- 6 The United States legal system has not been kind to Japanese Americans as courts have been reluctant to make judgments criticizing executive actions during

a national emergency. Every legal challenge has been defeated on the basis of precedence and legal technicalities, although in 1998 the courts did overturn convictions of those who disobeyed relocation orders. Barkan (2000) argues that political redress has been more effective than legal actions (37–38).

- 7 I should perhaps mention that not all Japanese Americans supported the call for compensation. Many were embarrassed, even a little insulted by the idea of monetary payment; some thought it would draw attention and criticism from certain elements of American society. See Daniels (1999) and Mineta (1999).
- 8 See Hatamiya (1993, 1999) for a review of the political process.
- 9 Of course the argument for Japanese American redress was not that they were prisoners of war, but they were US citizens who were incarcerated without due process, on the basis of ancestry alone.
- 10 For scholarly treatments comparing Japan and Germany, see for example, Awaya (1994), Buruma (1994), Barkan (2000), Hashimoto (1999), Lind (2003), Conrad (2003), Inoguchi and Jackson (1999), McCormack (1996), and Orr (2001). Hein and Selden (2000) focus on history and education. Kisa (2003) and Okazaki (2000) criticize the comparison, as does Burress (2003). Conrad argues for a more nuanced understanding of the comparisons.
- 11 Dudden (2002) makes a similar argument, including the first and third assumption.
- 12 Interestingly, in the early postwar period, German political rhetoric often focused on the return of German PoWs and the displacement of Germans from the East. The German military has long been shielded from blame for Nazi-like atrocities. Recent disclosures have destroyed that myth (Hashimoto 1999: 5).
- 13 Chang (1997), as suggested in the title *The Forgotten Holocaust: Nanking Massacre*, has made the argument for genocide; but this is not a generally accepted view.
- 14 See figures on German compensation (“State payments,” 2000; United States Department of Justice 1999). See comparison of compensation in Germany and Japan in Hirowatari (1994) and Tanaka (1994).
- 15 See Dudden (2002) for discussion of historical relationship between legal and moral responsibilities. See also Parker and Chew (1999) and Ito (1999) for discussions of legal issues in regard to the comfort women. Minow (1998) notes the changing legal status of rape in international law with the first prosecution of rape as a crime against humanity in 1996 in regard to Bosnian war crimes (6).
- 16 See Burress (2003: 129) who argues that journalists have ignored these symbolic attempts on part of Japanese prime ministers. In other words, everyone writes about Hashimoto’s visits to Yasukuni Shrine, but not the visit to Nanking.
- 17 An English translation of President Weizsacker’s speech is in Hartman (1986: 262–272). Also in Japanese translation see “Sengo” (1985). See Bruner (2000) for an analysis of Weizsacker’s speech in the context of identity/memory creation.
- 18 Weizsacker’s speech occurred in the aftermath of the controversy at Bitburg where just three days earlier President Reagan had participated in a commemoration at a cemetery where SS soldiers were buried. Thus, Weizsacker, like Murayama following the failed Diet Resolution in 1995, was attempting to salvage a situation in which Germany appeared to have “forgotten” its Nazi past. See Hartman (1986).
- 19 Although the *New York Times* reported that Prime Minister Murayama had been studying Weizsacker’s speech in preparation for his fiftieth anniversary apology (WuDunn August 16, 1995), there is little evidence of his having borrowed Weizsacker’s strategies.
- 20 Gill (2000) notes that victims and society have different expectations of apology, “The victim’s interest is backward-looking, requiring the offender to

- recognize the value of that which his act destroyed. The public's concern is more forward-looking, having a strong interest in the future behavior of the offender" (17).
- 21 There are other German apologies that perhaps deserve attention. Of some interest might be the bilateral agreements made between Germany and its European neighbors following the war. The Czech–German joint statement that included “regrets” from the Czech side and “apologies” for dismemberment from the Germans is especially interesting. This could be seen as Germany apologizing for “aggression” and it might be considered a relationship apology. There are no comparable mutual apologies in Japan–Asia apologies. In commenting on the nature of the Czech–German agreement, one journalist said “Reconciling competing definitions of victimhood required grueling negotiations with many false starts” (Caryl 1996).
 - 22 The subject of media representation of Japanese apologies deserves more attention. See Burrell (2003) and Hein (1998).

9 Conclusions

- 1 The transcendent apology with its aim of approval from the larger community can serve many purposes of course, some of which may be seen as “ulterior.” Does the apology reflect political ambition in Asia or the desire to gain new respect in international circles (a seat on the UN Security Council) or is it simply a ploy to divert the international uproar over women’s issues? One does not have to be cynical to note that, if successful, the approval of the international community could be very beneficial.
- 2 Portions of this section have been published (Yamazaki 2002a).
- 3 In an astonishing statement for which there is no support offered, he says in the next sentence, “Indeed, a sizable segment of the population feels little remorse and vehemently opposes any apology.” What he means by “sizable” is, I suppose, debatable but all surveys of public opinion on this issue have shown a majority of Japanese in favor of apology and even in favor of compensation.
- 4 PoW opinions concerning wording are captured in Cunningham (1999) and “Survivors’ ” (May 26, 1998). According to Field (1995) a written apology from then Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki, carried in a letter to North Korea in 1989 by Kanemaru Shin used the *shazai* term. The apology is not usually considered “official” since the Japanese government did not at that time have diplomatic relations with North Korea.
- 5 The dissatisfaction with the legitimacy of prime ministerial apologies has not prevented lawsuits on behalf of the comfort women referring to these apologies (invalid though they may be) as evidence of Japanese government’s guilt (Hicks 1994: 201).
- 6 1989 textbook guidelines not only allowed the free use of the term “aggression,” it allowed the “frank coverage of such topics as the comfort women; war compensation, colonialism; the Nanking massacre, allowing figures up to 160,000 for the number of victims; Unit 731; forced labor, the exploitation rather than liberation of Southeast Asia; the Emperor’s wartime role; and the battle of Okinawa” (Hicks 1997: 108) and again in 2005 in spite of textbooks becoming more conservative. See Beal *et al.* (2005) and Nathan (2004).
- 7 Not everyone agrees that the legal issues are resolved. Human rights activists have been attempting to justify legal action for redress within the legal framework of international law. See Boling (1995), Parker and Chew (1999), Dudden (2002), and Ito (1999).

Appendix B: the language of apology

- 1 For further discussion on the controversial nature of terminology related to wartime see Ito and Satou (1995), Dower (1999: 419), Field (1995: 408), and Hicks (1997: 7). Also for a fascinating historical view on broader issues of language and diplomacy and Japan see Dudden (1999).
- 2 Some have translated this as “aggressive-like” (see, e.g. Field 1997: 1 and Kristoff 1998: 40). However, from a translation perspective, when a noun such as *shinryaku* (aggression) has *teki* appended to it, it becomes an adjective, i.e. “aggressive.” The problem occurs when *shinryaku kouji*, literally “aggression acts,” is translated as “aggressive acts” or “aggressive behavior.” That leaves *shinryaku-teki kouji* to be translated as “aggressive-like acts.” Again, *shinryaku-teki kouji* should be, in my view, translated simply as “aggressive acts.”
- 3 Of these terms, those that are compound (of Chinese origin) words are generally considered by Japanese as having a more personal and emotional flavor. Of these discussed, *owabi* is a more personal term. Another Japanese term *ayamari*, an error, that is, we did wrong has the same personal, less formal flavor.
- 4 The term *zange* was used when Japanese people were encouraged to “say sorry” to the Emperor immediately following the war. *Shokuzai* is usually used in a religious context, with Christian connotations.

Glossary

- 1 Starred words, marked with * in this list are the words of native Japanese origins and not commonly used in government communication. The distinction between the native Japanese and Chinese-style compounds that are more formal and educated sounding might be compared to that of “arrive” and “get there” in English.

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