

CHARLES UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Institute of Political Studies
Department of Political Science

Bachelor's Thesis

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Considering Japanese political apologies to China

Bachelor's Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis is inspired by the finding that Japan had offered lots of political apologies but did not achieve the expected effects and aims to investigate the sincerity of Japanese political apologies and the contradicting attitude towards it between China and Japan. In this thesis, I am trying to use a dual-lens perspective to discover the reason behind these contradicted attitudes. For the Japanese side, I have collected data from the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of Columbia University as resources to collect and analyze the sincerity of Japanese political apologies and use a self-created survey to analyze the Chinese New Generation's attitude towards Japanese political apologies. Finally using the theory of SDO and political memory try to solve the puzzle of controversial attitudes between China and Japan toward Japanese political apologies. The finding of this thesis is that the sincerity of Japanese political apologies is constantly changing. However, besides the sincerity of Japanese political apologies, the different ways of interpreting the history of World War II between China and Japan and the revision of this historical story have created the most crucial reason why the two sides are unable to unite their views on Japan's political apology. In this day of unpeaceful events and wars, this essay plays an important role in reminding people of the importance of sincerity in political apologies and the crucial part of reconciliation between warring nations.

Abstrakt

Tato práce je inspirována zjištěním, že Japonsko nabídlo mnoho politických omluv, ale nedosáhlo očekávaných účinků, a klade si za cíl prozkoumat upřímnost japonských politických omluv a rozporuplný postoj k nim mezi Čínou a Japonskem. V této práci se snažím pomocí dvojí perspektivy odhalit příčinu těchto rozporuplných postojů. Pro japonskou stranu jsem shromáždil údaje z Institutu pro studium lidských práv Kolumbijské univerzity jako zdroje pro sběr a analýzu upřímnosti japonských politických omluv a použil jsem vlastní vytvořený průzkum pro analýzu postoje čínské nové generace k japonským politickým omluvám. Nakonec se s využitím teorie SDO a politické paměti pokusit vyřešit hádanku kontroverzních postojů mezi Čínou a Japonskem k japonským politickým omluvám. Zjištění této práce je, že upřímnost japonských politických omluv se neustále mění. Kromě upřímnosti japonských politických omluv však rozdílné způsoby interpretace historie druhé světové války mezi Čínou a Japonskem a revize tohoto historického příběhu vytvořily nejzásadnější důvod, proč obě strany nejsou schopny sjednotit své názory na japonské politické omluvy. V dnešní době nemírových událostí a válek hraje tato esej důležitou roli při připomínání důležitosti upřímnosti v politických omluvách a zásadní části usmíření mezi válčícími národy.

Keywords

Political apology; Japan; China; WWII; Sincerity

Klíčová slova

Politická omluva; Japonsko; Čína; druhá světová válka; upřímnost

Title

Considering Japanese Political apologies to China

Název práce

Japonské politické omluvy směrem k Číně

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Introduction

I want to use this thesis to document and analyze the divergence of views between China and Japan on the issue of Japan's political apology for wartime transgressions committed during the Second World War. My inquiry is motivated by the fact that the frequency of Japanese political apologies has yet to yield the anticipated outcomes. Between 1972 and 2019, Japan issued 57 political apologies, the highest number from 329 expressions of remorse issued by 74 countries.¹ According to the data that I collected from the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of Columbia University; Japan had offered 14 political apologies towards China in connection to the Second World War.² The anti-Japanese activism observed in China in 1996 constituted a response towards Japanese political apologies extended during that period. Over time, this initial reaction has evolved into a complex socio-political phenomenon, manifesting as widespread online antagonism and tangible real-world protests.³ This attitude of China, compared to the number of Japanese political apologies, raises the question of why Japanese political apologies do not seem to affect the reconciliation of the relationship with China.

Another reason I think this topic is worth exploring is that a comparative analysis of the political apologies made by Germany and Japan concluded that the consistent part of political apologies is irrelevant to their success. The consensus here seems to be that Japan offered more political apologies, but they were implicit; on the other side, Germany offered fewer political apologies, but they were explicit.⁴ However, the researchers of this comparative analysis do not take political ideology into

1 Marieke Zoodsma and Juliette Schaafsma, 'Examining the "Age of Apology": Insights from the Political Apology Database', *Journal of Peace Research* 59, no. 3 (May 2022): 436–48.

2 'Political Apologies | Institute for the Study of Human Rights', accessed 12 April 2024.

3 Leo Ching, "'Japanese Devils'", *Cultural Studies* 26, no. 5 (1 September 2012): 710–22.

4 Juliane House and Dániel Z. Kádár, 'German and Japanese War Crime Apologies: A Contrastive Pragmatic Study', *Journal of Pragmatics* 177 (1 May 2021): 109–21,

consideration, which makes the conclusions seem very questionable. I believe that one of the crucial parts for the victim countries to accept the political apology is for them to feel safe and without further threats from the countries that have done wrong. There is a simple phenomenon that I have observed that shows the difference between the German government and the Japanese government in dealing with the crimes they committed during WWII. In Germany, even the political rallies of Nazi Germany are forbidden and illegal.⁵ On the other side, in Japan, war criminals from WWII were whitewashed and worshipped by the Prime Minister.⁶ In other research on the acceptance from victims of El Salvador, the Republic of Korea and the UK have shown that even with the different historical backgrounds when it comes to the behavior of violating human rights, the victims' community would still highly value the apology, especially the apology with sincerity. It can be vital for building further connections.⁷ As the phenomenon mentioned above, it is obvious that Japanese political apologies are very complex. On the one side, they have offered the most political apologies; on the other side, there is a sense that the Japanese government is disrespecting the victims' group. This thesis's deliberate focus is intended to eschew comparative analyses involving political apologies extended by Japan in contrast to other nations because the historical background of WWII for Europe and Asia is different. However, it is vital to solve the puzzle between the contradicting views of Japan and China on the Japanese political apology. More literature on the issue needs to be provided, and my research will attempt to fill this gap in scholarship.

5 'German gig shut down by police after crowd chants Nazi slogan "sieg heil"', Sky News, accessed 20 December 2023.

6 Amrita Jash, 'Politics of Memories: The Yasukuni Shrine Issue', in *China's Japan Policy: Learning from the Past*, ed. Amrita Jash (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2023), 175–244.

7 Thia Sagherian-Dickey et al., 'Meaningless Gestures or Pathway to Healing and Reconciliation? Comparing the Perspectives on Political Apologies in Victim and Non-Victim Communities in El Salvador, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom', *British Journal of Social Psychology* 62, no. 1 (2023): 414–30.

The first part of this thesis will introduce the historical background of Japan and China before, during, and after WWII. I will start with the reason Japan invaded China to have a more comprehensive view of the historical background at that special time. Then, I would like to mention the crimes committed by Japan during WWII to make sure that, understandably, Japan needs to offer political apologies. After that, I think it is necessary also to have a clear view of the after-war reconciliations starting from the Tokyo Trial to the treaties signed between the People's Republic of China and Japan. Lastly, I would like to discuss the attitudes of China and Japan regarding the issue of war compensation according to the treaties signed by both countries and explain these contracted attitudes.

Moving to the second part, I will mainly discuss the political apologies offered by Japan. I would use the research in 2021 by Yohsuke Ohtsubo et al. as a way of measurement. This research has set the foundation for six elements when it comes to the analysis of political apology, including (a) admission of injustice/wrongdoing, (b) acknowledgment of harm and victim suffering, (c) expression of remorse, (d) acceptance of responsibility, (e) offer of repair, and (f) forbearance. However, political apologies would often meet opposition from the constituency of the apologizing government. The research of Yohsuke Ohtsubo et al. has also shown that the Japanese interviewees are mostly not satisfied with the government having (a), (b), and (c) as a part of the political apology.⁸

For the third part, I will analyze the acceptance and opinions of the Chinese New Generation because the most important measurement for the political apology is to achieve forgiveness from the victim's side. The reason that I am focusing on the Chinese New Generation is because Japanese political apology has underwent

⁸ Yohsuke Ohtsubo et al., 'Resistance to the Six Elements of Political Apologies: Who Opposes Which Elements?', *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 27, no. 3 (2021): 449–58.

significant changes in the 21st century, so it is worth exploring whether the Chinese New Generation is informed on this issue. Another reason is that Guo H. argued in 2021 that the 72-year agreement signed between China and Japan, whereby the Chinese side waived compensation from Japan but required an apology from the Japanese side. In the article, the author points out that the decision to refuse compensation to Japan led to the intensification of Sino-Japanese conflicts and the subsequent failure of the Japanese government to pay compensation and explains the problem.⁹ However, from my perspective this article is not comprehensive enough. Firstly, from this paper, there is a strong implication that China was not satisfied with the Japanese political apologies because China regretted refusing the compensation but this paper does not mention that in the 21st century, Japan had tried to offer compensation again towards the victims country. I would like to involve a thorough and systematic analysis of the measures the Japanese government employs in extending apologies, encompassing a comprehensive exploration of the historical context and linguistic nuances in this thesis to avoid having a blurred conclusion. Lastly, this thesis will use a dual-lens approach, mainly focusing on the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) between China and Japan and ultimately trying to solve the puzzle of different attitudes toward Japanese political apologies using the conclusion which has been achieved from the research of the Japanese political apologies and the research of Chinese New Generation's attitude. The reason that I would like to involve SDO is according to the most recent research on Japan's political apology published in 2023, in terms of boycotting the government, it does not depend on the individual's political knowledge, but on SDO, so I believe that it is

9 Hai Guo, 'Sorry Seems to Be the Hardest Word: The 1972 System, the Reparation Issue, and the History Problem in Sino-Japanese Relations', *Critical Asian Studies* 54, no. 1 (2 January 2022): 22–46.

worth digging up further reasons of Japanese attitude towards the political apology of their government and overview the Japanese SDO.¹⁰

¹⁰ Ryu Takahashi, Hirotaka Imada, and Nobuhiro Mifune, 'Cross-Temporal Replication of the Relationship between SDO and Political Attitudes in Japan: SDO and Attitudes Shifted but the Relationship Holds.', 2023.

Japan-China Relation in Context

(a) WWII and Japanese crimes

To attain a more comprehensive understanding of Japanese political apologies, I believe it is necessary to overview the history and explain why expressions of remorse regarding the issue of Japan and China are necessary.

According to Richard J. Smethurst, the early 20th century witnessed Japan, alongside broader Asia, grappling with a palpable sense of inequity vis-à-vis Western colonial powers.¹¹ This pervasive sentiment, stemming from a historical legacy of subjugation, instilled in Japan a proactive determination to avert a fate akin to late 19th-century China, which succumbed to widespread colonization. In response to this looming specter, Japan has strategically planned to strengthen its military capabilities in anticipation of a strong defense mechanism against external aggression.¹²

The Great Depression of the 1930s cast a profound shadow over the global economic landscape, and Japan, in its pursuit of financial resilience, found itself compelled to seek self-sufficiency. Richard J Smethurst argued that the imperative to insulate the nation from the vicissitudes of external economic forces drove Japan to explore avenues for territorial expansion and resource acquisition. This economic imperative, intertwined with a geopolitical calculus, fueled Japan's desperation to forge a new strategic path that would elevate it to prominence and insulate it from the predations of Western powers.¹³

According to this analysis, with the situation stated before, Japan was desperate to find a solution to avoid the result of being colonized by the Western powers, which

11 Richard J Smethurst, 'Japan, the United States, and the Road to World War II in the Pacific 日本、合衆国、および第二次世界大戦太平洋戦局への道', n.d.

12 Smethurst.

13 Smethurst.

led to the desire to expand territories and acquire more resources. China's status as a resource-rich and chronically vulnerable country led Japan to the idea of trying to seize China's territory and resources.¹⁴

From a geopolitical lens, Japan strategically aligned itself with Germany in this period, forming a potent alliance rooted in anti-communist sentiments. This collaboration bolstered Japan's strategic position and facilitated synchronized efforts to exert influence over the Soviet Union. The shared ideological opposition to communism knit together Japan and Germany as formidable allies, amplifying their collective geopolitical sway.

To sum up, Japan's decision to launch hostilities against China was a complex mix of historical grievances, economic difficulties, imperialist ambitions, geopolitical ambitions and geopolitical considerations. These intricate factors show the depth and complexity of the relationship between China and Japan.¹⁵

In 1937, a missing Japanese soldier became the catalyst for hostilities between Japan and China. Historians have scrutinized this incident, suggesting it might have been a calculated move by Japan, a conspiracy to provide a seemingly justifiable reason for a full-scale invasion. The disappearance of the soldier was used as a pretext, allowing Japan to assert its military might and territorial ambitions under the guise of responding to a perceived provocation.¹⁶

Through the lens of eyewitness accounts, a harrowing account of Japan's atrocities in China during World War II comes to light. Rabe, as a German businessman in China, took advantage of his status as a German and protected over 250,000 Chinese people

14 Smethurst.

15 Smethurst.

16 James B. Crowley, 'A Reconsideration of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident', *Journal of Asian Studies* 22, no. 3 (1 May 1963): 277–91.

from the Nanjing Massacre.¹⁷ Rabe, stationed in Nanjing, witnessed and documented thousands of cases, encompassing victims ranging from twelve-year-old girls to women in the advanced stages of pregnancy. The aftermath of these assaults was marked by brutality, with instances of rape followed by murder. According to historical sources, the rapes that have taken place in Nanking count from tens of thousands.¹⁸ Unfortunately, the current record of the number of rapes in Nanking is based on conjecture.

Based on Rabe's specific description of the events that took place at that time, we can tell that the plight of Japanese-captured women stands out as particularly tragic.

Survivors who managed to escape recounted the horrifying ordeal, revealing that these women were subjected to an appalling average of five to seven rapes per day.

Older women faced an even more brutal frequency of sexual violence. The consequence of these atrocities was that even though these women survived, they still suffered from STDs.¹⁹

In the brutal narrative presented in this book, looting is a relatively minor transgression compared to the relentless and widespread acts of killing and raping committed by the Japanese forces. The reality painted by Rabe's observations underscores the profound human suffering endured by the Chinese population during this dark chapter of history.²⁰

Beyond the Nanjing Massacre, other horrifying incidents during World War II cast a grim shadow on Japan's actions, notably exemplified by Unit 731. This covert unit conducted reprehensible bacteriological experiments on living human beings, using them as the primary subjects for inhumane tests. The brutality reached appalling

17 'John RABE Curriculum Vitae', 10 June 2009.

18 'Rape of Nanjing: Massacre, Facts & Aftermath', HISTORY, 11 August 2023.

19 John Rabe, *The Good Man of Nanking: The Diaries of John Rabe* (A.A. Knopf, 1998).

20 Rabe.

depths, including live disembowelment performed on unanesthetized patients.

Historical assessments suggest that approximately 25,000 Chinese individuals were subjected to these inhumane human experiments orchestrated by Japan's Unit 731. As the history of Japanese "experiments" during WWII surfaces, it helps us to further understand the extent and cruelty of the human rights abuses committed by the Japanese army on the battlefields of China.²¹

Japan's unprecedented victories on the battlefield in China led to a determination to expand its imperial domination. It was mentioned earlier that Japan's reasons for going to war, apart from its direct territorial ambitions in China, were also its strong displeasure with the Western world. As a result, Japan began an offensive against the West, as exemplified by the infamous Pearl Harbor attack in 1941. In this operation, Japan sent two waves of planes to attack the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, and as a result, more than 2,000 people were killed and 1,000 injured in the sneak attack on the United States. Japan's attack on Pearl Island forced the United States to enter World War II, and the exchange of fire between the United States and Japan marked the first shot fired in the Pacific Theatre of World War II.²²

As the war intensified, the U.S. took its means of revenge against Japan, dropping two atomic bombs on Japan in 1945, killing around 100,000 Japanese civilians.²³ In the same year, the United States, Britain and China issued the Potsdam Proclamation, which demanded the unconditional surrender of Japan, sought to eliminate Japan's authority and influence in conquering the world, and defined Japan's sovereign territory as Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku, as well as several small islands.

21 Justin McCurry, 'Japan Unearths Site Linked to Human Experiments', *The Guardian*, 21 February 2011, sec. World news.

22 Kevin Foster, 'The Decision to Attack Pearl Harbour', *Journal of the Australian Institute of Professional Intelligence Officers* 3, no. 3 (January 1994): 13–27.

23 Michael Shermer, 'Fat Man and Little Boy: On the 75th Anniversary of Nuclear Weapons, a Moral Case for Their Use in Ending WWII and the Deterrence of Great Power Wars Since, and a Call to Eventually Eliminate Them', *Skeptic* (Altadena, CA) 25, no. 4 (22 September 2020): 7–16.

Japanese troops were allowed to return home after the surrender.²⁴ The battle eventually ended in 1945 with Japan's unconditional surrender.²⁵

According to World War II websites, the total death toll for all countries, including civilians and soldiers, was, in order, 20,000,000 for China, 2,600,000 to 3,100,000 for Japan, 340,700 for Britain, and 418,500 for the United States.²⁶

(b) Postwar Retribution and Reconciliation

After the end of World War II, General MacArthur of the United States, after discussions with the Allied countries, decided to establish mechanisms to ensure long-lasting peace and uphold the principles of international law. These mechanisms included the trials to punish criminals and, based on the result of the trials, to have a fairer treaty between Japan and allied countries.²⁷

The Tokyo Trial was a trial of Japanese Class A war criminals for their actions during World War II. This trial lasted for two years, from 1946 to 1948. However, over the years, this trial has been criticized for its fairness issue. One significant criticism against the Tokyo Trial is the lack of representation for certain victim countries, including Taiwan and Korea. As victim countries, these nations have not had the opportunity to have a judge present who can effectively advocate for their rights and present their case. This absence of representation raises questions about the fairness and impartiality of the trial's proceedings. Additionally, it is worth noting that the Soviet Union, despite being responsible for the deaths of approximately 250,000 Japanese captives after Japan's surrender, sent a Red Army major general as a judge to the Trial.²⁸

24 'Potsdam Declaration | Birth of the Constitution of Japan', accessed 10 January 2024.

25 Robert A. Pape, 'Why Japan Surrendered', *International Security* 18, no. 2 (1993): 154–201.

26 'Second World War: deaths per country 1939-1945', Statista, accessed 9 January 2024.

27 Gary J. Bass, *Judgment at Tokyo: World War II on Trial and the Making of Modern Asia* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2023).

28 Bass.

According to Mei Ju-ao's first-person account of the Tokyo Trial, this judicial proceeding involved the trial of 28 war criminals by eleven nations, including China, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The accused were charged with various offenses, encompassing the War of Aggression, leadership roles in the Pacific war, and advocacy for Japanese fascism. Convictions were secured for breaches of peace, homicide, and crimes against humanity.²⁹

Notably, in the indictments filed by the eleven nations against Japan, while other countries primarily focused on military actions or precisely planned raids, China consistently emphasised the substantial impact on its populace. References were made to tens of thousands of civilians, underscoring the distinct gravity of the offences committed against China.

The Tokyo Trial unfolded as a complex and protracted legal undertaking, compounded by the intricacies inherent in the war itself. Complications stemming from systemic issues, such as the process of obtaining evidence, cross-examining witnesses, re-examining evidence, and re-cross-examining witnesses, further extended the duration of the proceedings. Relative matters within the court process also surfaced.

According to Mei Ju-ao's book, the defendants were entitled to retain an American lawyer. Still, there was no restriction on the number of Japanese lawyers they could employ. This resulted in instances where a defendant had as many as eight defense lawyers. While intended to ensure a comprehensive defense, this practice prolonged the trial and gradually eroded the court's patience. The leniency exhibited by the court toward the war criminals was also evident in the fact that the prosecution's witnesses

²⁹ Mei Ju-ao, *The Tokyo Trial and War Crimes in Asia* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2020).

constituted only one-third of those presented by the defense.³⁰

From Mei Ju-ao's perspective as the Chinese representative, the trial fell short of being sufficiently fair and calls for improvements in its conduct and procedures.³¹

There is other evidence that the trials for Japanese criminals are not fair. Unit 713, consisting of Japanese scientists, conducted live human bacteriological experiments in China, even on individuals without anesthesia. Regrettably, none of the individuals survived the harrowing conditions at the test site. At the same time, the consequences of these experiments gave rise to a devastating plague that claimed the lives of tens of thousands of people.

According to Sheldon Harris, these scientists sought refuge in Japan. Subsequently, negotiations between the United States and Japan transpired, where an agreement was reached stipulating that, in exchange for turning over the experimental data to the U.S., the Japanese scientists would be immune from prosecution as war criminals. Notably, the outcome of these negotiations manifested in the absence of any prosecutions of Japanese scientists, a fact that remains conspicuously absent from both Harris' scholarly work and the roster of war criminals compiled during the Tokyo trial.³²

(c) The treaties between China and Japan

The historical trajectory of the treaties concluded between China and Japan after the Second World War is complex. Initially, Japan signed the Treaty of San Francisco in 1951 with 48 countries involved in the war, including Argentina, Australia, The Kingdom of Belgium, Canada, Chile, France and so on. The Treaty of San Francisco was a conclusion after the Tokyo Trials. It was meant to be a peace agreement between Japan and the countries involved in the war with Japan, a sign of the official

30 Ju-ao.

31 Ju-ao.

32 Sheldon Harris, 'Japanese Biological Warfare Experiments and Other Atrocities in Manchuria, 1932–1945, and the Subsequent United States Cover up: A Preliminary Assessment', *Crime, Law and Social Change* 15, no. 3 (1 May 1991): 171–99.

end of the Asian theatre of World War II. In the Treaty of San Francisco, Japan's compensation has been assigned, but only to countries that have signed the treaties. It is worth noting that China did not participate in this conference due to its involvement in the civil war during this period and its inability to participate in the treaty negotiations. It must be emphasized that in August and September 1951, the Chinese Communist Party issued two official statements condemning the San Francisco Treaty. The People's Republic of China resisted the Treaty of San Francisco so much because it was lenient about the content of Japan's claims. However, an agreement was signed between the Republic of China and Japan in 1952. There was no mention of any reparations; on the contrary, what was mentioned most was the territorial sovereignty of the island of Taiwan, that is to say, in the regulations signed between the Republic of China and Japan, the Republic of China did not attach any importance to war reparations, but rather hoped to be able to preserve its territorial rights.³³

In 1972, signing the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration became pivotal in Sino-Japanese relations. This agreement contained an important message of the formal resumption and the normalization of diplomatic relations between the People's Republic of China and Japan. This marked a significant diplomatic development and heralded a new chapter in bilateral interaction between the two countries.

Equally important is Japan's explicit recognition in the Joint Declaration that the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legitimate authority representing China. In addition, the declaration also explicitly recognizes Taiwan as an inseparable part of the Chinese nation, consolidating Japan's position on the complex issue of cross-strait relations.

As a conciliatory gesture, the Joint Declaration also emphasized China's renunciation

³³ 'Treaty of Taipei', 28 April 1952.

of its claim for war reparations from Japan. This renunciation is a crucial step in promoting an environment of reconciliation and cooperation between China and Japan, ushering in a new era of diplomatic relations between the two countries.³⁴

Finally, the interpretation of the above treaty can be divided into several parts. First of all, neither the Republic of China nor the People's Republic of China signed the Treaty of San Francisco, which means that the treaties signed with Japan by either China were based on the will of both countries. After the end of the Civil War, the ROC failed and fled to Taiwan, and in order to protect Taiwan as their only territory, the ROC stopped making other offers to Japan as long as Japan recognized Taiwan's autonomy. Soon after, the People's Republic of China and Japan signed the Sino-Japanese Joint Communiqué, and the reasons behind the signing of this treaty are even more complicated. The biggest benefits the PRC gained from the treaty were Japan's recognition of Taiwan as part of the PRC, and the fact that the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration represented the nullification of previous agreements signed between the ROC and Japan. Secondly, regarding the issue of reparations, there are also complex causes behind the People's Republic of China's renunciation of its claims against Japan.

Concerning the issue of war reparations, from China's perspective, the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration stated that China had given up compensation for the war as a country. However, individuals can still file lawsuits with the Japanese government asking for civil compensation.³⁵

On the contrary, Japan's interpretation of China's renunciation of war reparations precluded the possibility of civil litigation. Between 1995 and 1999, four legal actions

34 'MOFA: Joint Communiqué of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China', accessed 11 January 2024

35 闫立光 and Liguang Y. a. N., '1949—1972 年中国共产党处理对二战后遗留问题研究', 重庆交通大学学报(社会科学版) 22, no. 3 (18 May 2022): 1.

were initiated by Chinese comfort women against Japan. Japanese courts subsequently dismissed all four cases, with two of them being rejected based on the grounds of the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration. Notably, in the instance involving comfort women in Taiwan, the dismissal occurred despite the annulment of the agreement between the Republic of China and Japan. In another case, where nine Chinese women from Shanxi, China, filed a lawsuit against Japan, the court conceded the veracity of the women's claims. However, it contended that the right to seek compensation had lapsed under the Civil Code, consequently rejecting the plea for an apology and compensation.³⁶

³⁶ 'Lawsuits Brought against Japan by Women of Asian Nations Other than Korea, Including The Netherlands | Korean Legal Studies', accessed 16 January 2024.

Japanese Political Apologies

(a) Explanation of measurements

In my measurement, I am building on Yohsuke Ohtsubo's research as mentioned in the introduction, including (a) admission of injustice/wrongdoings, (b) acknowledgement of harm and victim suffering, (c) expression of remorse, (d) acceptance of responsibility, (e) offer of repair, and (f) forbearance.³⁷ Regarding the fact that Japan and China have contradicted views of the compensation of war on the Treaty which was signed by both, the part of the offer of repair and forbearance would be taken out of the assessment of the political apologies. In comparative research of the acceptance from victims of El Salvador, the Republic of Korea and the UK have shown that even with the different historical backgrounds when it comes to the behavior of violating human rights the victims' community would still highly value the apology, especially the apology with sincerity and it can be vital for building further connection. In the study, the sincerity of the political apology points specifically to the level of trust that the victim group has in the apologizing government.³⁸

The resource for Japanese political apologies would be the political apology database of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of Columbia University.

(b) The political apologies offered by Japan from 1971 to 2015

Table 1 Political Apologies Offered by Japan

Year	Name	Position	Sincerity (0-6)
1971	Hirohito	Emperor	0
1972	Kakueir Tanaka	Prime Minister	6

37 Ohtsubo et al., 'Resistance to the Six Elements of Political Apologies'.

38 Sagherian-Dickey et al., 'Meaningless Gestures or Pathway to Healing and Reconciliation?'

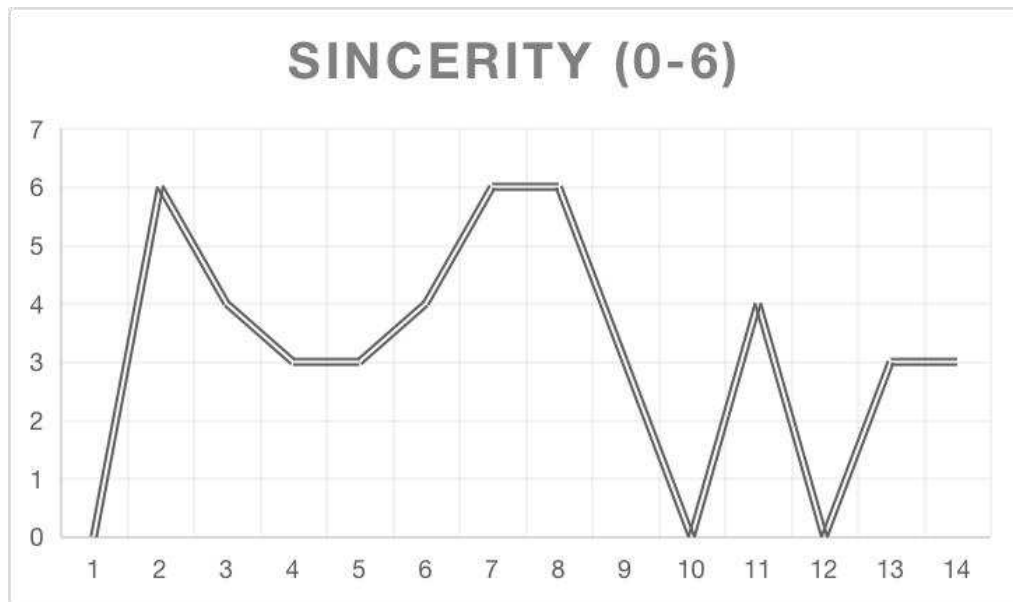
1985	Tasuhiro Nakasone	Prime Minister	4
1992	Akhito	Emperor	3
1993	Morihiro Hosokawa	Prime Minister	3
1994	Tomiichi Murayama	Prime Minister	4
1995	Tomiichi Murayama	Prime Minister	6
1996	Ryutaro Hashimoto	Prime Minister	6
2001	Jinichiro Koizumi	Prime Minister	3
2002	Jinichiro Koizumi	Prime Minister	0
2005	Jinichiro Koizumi	Prime Minister	4
2007	Shinzo Abe	Prime Minister	0
2007	Shinzo Abe	Prime Minister	3
2015	Shinzo Abe	Prime Minister	3

Source: My own, dwelling on data from the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of Columbia University,

This table is made by me and the sincerity of the political apology I was using the measurement mentioned above and gave the score. The sincerity measured as 0 means either they have represented regret instead of apology or they have mentioned the denial of the history. The reason regret does not count as an apology is that according to the research of Chizuken's four forms of Japanese apologies, Japan's political apologies are often transformed into expressions of regret, which are unacceptable to the victims' community. While the expression of apology represents an attitude of responsibility for past mistakes, the expression of regret reflect³⁹s an attitude of shirking responsibility and not intending to take responsibility for them.

Table 2 Sincerity Scale of Political Apologies

39 Ja-hyun Chun, 'Beyond "Dissatisfaction" and "Apology Fatigue": Four Types of Japanese Official Apology', *Pacific Focus* 30, no. 2 (2015): 249–69.



Source: My own calculation,

Table 2 draws from Table 1, in order to have a more direct and clearer view of the changes in the sincerity of Japanese political apologies. From Table 2, it is obvious that the sincerity of Japanese political apologies could be more stable, from the apology that is seen as lowest on the sincerity scale, meaning Koizumi's apology given in 2002, the sincerity of political apologies never went back to the status of sincere. In order to have a more comprehensive view of these political apologies, I would like to introduce the details of these political apologies now.

Concerning Japan's political apology to China, mention must be made of Japan's apology for the whole of the Second World War, starting with an interview with Emperor Hirohito in 1971, in which he expressed regret for what had happened. Still, this apology did not represent a sincere apology, and, in conjunction with the elements of a political apology referred to above, it did not mention the responsibility that needed to be borne by the Japanese side.

The second political apology was the sincerest of all the political apologies made by Japan to China and the one that fulfilled the conditions for a sincere political apology

mentioned above. In 1972, Japanese Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka, during the visit of the then Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai to Japan, expressed a sincere apology, which included an acknowledgement of the crimes he had committed in the past and a desire to make amends to the Chinese people. The same year, the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration was signed, as described above.

In 1985, Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone also made a relatively sincere political apology when he participated in a United Nations meeting, in which he acknowledged that Japan's role in the Second World War was also tantamount to admitting that Japan had committed crimes in the Second World War.

During his visit to China in 1992, Emperor Akihito of Japan firstly acknowledged the crimes committed by Japan against China and secondly expressed his apology for the crimes committed by Japan, which can also be regarded as a sincere political apology.

In 1993, Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa admitted Japan's acts of aggression in the Second World War and expressed his apology. In the same year, he also apologised for the crimes committed by Japan in the colonies in the past.

In 1994, Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama also made a political apology, but the subject of the apology changed from Japan to Japanese imperialism, and still, the Prime Minister raised the crimes committed by Japanese imperialism in the Asian theatre of war and expressed his apologies. In 1995, the Prime Minister also established the "Asian Women's Fund" as a way to solve the problem of the 200,000 comfort women in Japan and expressed his apology. In 1996, this so-called foundation, to which Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto had written a letter of apology to 500 victims, was accepted by only six of them. It is noteworthy that the following year, 1998, South Korea offered Japan compensation for comfort women but was rejected by Japan.

As mentioned above, China filed four lawsuits against Japan for compensation for comfort women between 1995 and 1999, all of which were rejected. Therefore, the Chinese Premier, Zhu Rongji, stated in 2000 that Japan did not seem to have properly apologised for the Second World War and said that it was Japan's problem how to atone for its sins.

In 2001, the Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, expressed his apologies and condolences to the Chinese who lost their lives in the Second World War, without mentioning the crimes committed by Japan, and in 2002, the Prime Minister referred to the acts of aggression committed by Japan, but changed the tone of his speech from apology to regret. However, in 2005, on the 60th anniversary of Japan's surrender, the Prime Minister apologised for the acts of aggression committed by Japan, particularly the Pearl Harbour incident.

A key turnaround came in 2007, when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe denied that Japan had military brothels during the Second World War, a denial of the crimes of the past that Japan had admitted to in 1993. In the same year, after weeks of criticism, Abe turned the tables and admitted Japan's crimes against the 200,000 Korean and Chinese women who served as comfort women and apologised for it.

A series of confusing situations ensued, and in 2014, first affected by the previous issue, former Prime Minister Nakasone considered repairing Japan's reputation on the comfort women issue and apologised for calling them sex slaves that same year.

China took the opportunity to demand a formal apology for the 1937 massacre.

In 2015, Prime Minister Abe pledged to apologise for Japan's actions in World War II and then expressed deep regret for the Japanese Americans who lost their lives in World War II. And for those countries and people harmed by World War II, Abe did not offer a sincere apology, but merely offered a non-denial of the apologies made by

previous prime ministers on the issue.

With every political apology of the Japanese government listed above, the reason why the political apology is not sincere has 3 main reasons.

First of all, as far as the wording of Japan's apology itself is concerned, according to the logic mentioned above, the language of apology is an art for the victims, and under no circumstances can they shirk their responsibilities, and it is necessary for the Government to admit its mistakes and acknowledge history. However, Japan has turned its apology firstly into an expression of regret and secondly into a denial of history, giving the impression that the Japanese government does not want to take responsibility for the crimes made during WWII. Also as mentioned above, the most important thing for the victims to consider in the sincerity of the apology is the need for the Government to win the trust of the victims. However, this trust was undermined by Japan's constantly changing attitude and incorrect language of apology. In this regard, China has always had the impression that Japan's political apology was insincere and not worth trusting.

Secondly, there is the issue of compensation for damages to victims. In light of the above, it was in 1995 that Japan first began to express its regret over the issue of the comfort women of the Second World War, and established a foundation to express its intention to make reparations. However, there were two unexpected events. Firstly, out of the 200,000 comfort women, Japan chose 500 to receive the apology and compensation, but only six accepted. Secondly, after Japan expressed its intention when both China and South Korea started to file lawsuits against Japan for the actions of the comfort women, expecting compensation and apology, the Japanese government decided to dismiss the lawsuits, not because it denied the facts but because it considered that the cases had exceeded the period for pursuing the lawsuits.

Such behaviour would greatly undermine the Government's credibility with the victims' community and could even push the two sides into a state of hostility.

The third major reason comes from Japan's image-building of itself as a victim. According to Rotem Kowner's article on Japan's portrayal of history, we can summarise the following points. At the end of the war, Japan, an initiator of World War II, compared its victims to the victims of Auschwitz, and some believe that the Japanese victims of World War II received more harm than the Jewish victims. However, in a changing trend of thought, mainstream Japanese books began to deny the Jewish victims and called it a Jewish hoax. Before the 1980s Japan recognised the mistakes of the past, whether it was the Rape of Nanking or Unit 731. However, after the 1980s Japan became conservative and tried to play down the history in textbooks, and in 1998 a book on the Nanking Massacre was published, which was immediately denied by Japanese scholars. In 1998, a book on the Nanking Massacre was published, which was immediately denied by Japanese scholars, and a film was made to reinforce the image of the heroism of Japan's murderous World War II officers. As a result, many uninformed Japanese have come to believe that the Nanking Massacre was a hoax fabricated by China.⁴⁰

40 Rotem Kowner, 'Tokyo Recognizes Auschwitz: The Rise and Fall of Holocaust Denial in Japan, 1989-1999', *Journal of Genocide Research* 3, no. 2 (June 2001): 257-72.

Generational Turn in Accepting Political Apologies?

According to the research by Minzhou and Hanning Wang, there is a significant connection between the Chinese patriotic education and the anti-Japan sentiment. Every valid resource in China including the textbook, library and memorial hall, provides anti-Japan sentiment within the content by recording the history.⁴¹ This part is to discover the SDO in China over the issue of Japanese political apology. However, the SDO related to the Japanese political apology in China is mainly connected with Chinese nationalism and patriotism. Take the case of the Nanking Massacre as an instance, the research in 2019 has stated that the Chinese government intentionally built the horrible history of WWII as a method to build the collective memory and root for Chinese nationalism.⁴² Also, the research in 2021 has overviewed the current Chinese government's series of actions as building a memorial hall for the Nanjing Massacre and concluded that the Chinese government seems to use this Massacre to contribute to sustaining the hegemonic state culture rooted in nationalism and further consolidates the rule of CCP.⁴³

To dig up this problem, it is necessary to overview the Chinese attitude after the political apology of Japan to China. The key turning point of the Chinese attitude towards Japanese political apology is its interconnection with Japanese political ideology. As mentioned in the second part, after the conservative party is the main leader of Japan, the sincerity of Japanese political apology has decreased year by year.

According to the research by Daqing Yang regarding the reception of the Japanese

41 Min Zhou and Hanning Wang, 'Anti-Japanese Sentiment among Chinese University Students: The Influence of Contemporary Nationalist Propaganda', *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 46, no. 1 (1 April 2017): 167–85.

42 'Remembrance of the Nanjing Massacre in the Globalised Era: The Memory of Victimisation, Emotions and the Rise of China - Fengqi Qian, Guo-Qiang Liu, 2019', accessed 14 March 2024.

43 Kailing Xie, 'The Affective Life of the Nanjing Massacre: Reactivating Historical Trauma in Governing Contemporary China', *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 11, no. 3 (December 2021): 1000–1015.

political apology in China, the political apology made by Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 received a high compliment in China. From the perspective of China, they believed that Murayama would be the turning point for fixing the relationship between both countries after WWII. However, as mentioned above, after Murayama, the political ideology in Japan transformed into a more conservative party. With that, the consequence is that not only China does not receive the expected formal political apology and compensation, but the Japanese side is denying the history and trauma caused by them during WWII.⁴⁴

(a) Results of this research

The controversy of Chinese attitude towards the Japanese political apology is mainly about whether the Chinese government has locked the information about the Japanese political apology and only revealed the part for building the hateful image of Japan, or whether Chinese people are fully aware of the history of Japanese political apology. Therefore, I have launched research on random 109 Chinese people aged from 18 to 60 on their information, attitude and thoughts on the political apology of Japan to have a relatively comprehensive view on this issue.

The questions including the age, “Do you know about Japanese political apologies to China?”, “Do you think Japan must make political apologies to China?”, “Do you know about the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration?”, “If you already knew about the Japanese political apologies to China, do you think they are sincere enough?”, “Why do you think Japanese political apologies are or are not sincere enough?”.

On the first question “Do you think Japan must make political apologies to China”, there is only one person in the age 18-23 who chose No, which made this question

44 Daqing Yang, 'Political Apology in Sino-Japanese Relations: The Murayama Statement and Its Receptions in China', in *Japan and Reconciliation in Post-War Asia: The Murayama Statement and Its Implications*, ed. Kazuhiko Togo (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2013), 23–45.

lack the necessity of inquiry. Therefore for this question, almost 100 per cent of the respondents agreed that it was necessary for Japan to make a political apology to China.

Regarding the question of knowledge of the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration, out of 109 responses, 72 people (66%) knew about it, while 37 people (34%) did not know about it. This survey responds to the above-mentioned article about the Chinese government's deliberate guidance, which has led to people's prejudice against the Japanese government. Some people were dissatisfied with Japan's political apology even though they knew about the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration.

Of all the responses that Japan's political apology was sincere, the most frequently chosen reasons were because of the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration and the fact that World War II had been over for a long time, which accounted for 44 per cent of the total responses, followed by the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration, which accounted for 29 per cent of the total responses. Of those who thought Japan's political apology was insincere, the most frequently chosen reasons were the existence of the Yasukuni Shrine and the denial of the history of the Japanese government, which were the most frequently chosen reasons. This accounted for 31 per cent of the total responses, followed by Japan's denial of history and Japanese militarism, which accounted for 26 per cent of the total responses.

In order to have a deeper analysis of the relations between those answers of the Chinese New Generation, I have used the Jamovi application to test the relations between several different answers.

Table 3 Relation between age and attitude

One-Way ANOVA

One-Way ANOVA (Welch's)

	F	df1	df2	p
Do you know about the Japanese political apologies to China?	0.645	4	33.1	0.634
Do you think that is sincere enough	0.898	4	33.9	0.476
Do you know about the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration?	1.882	4	33.3	0.137

Resource: My own research

The first analysis is between the questions listed above and their relationship to the interviewee's age. We can assume that hypothesis 0 is that for these three questions, people from different ages have the same answer. Hypothesis 1 is that for these three questions, there would be at least people from two different age groups would have different ideas. From the form above, we can tell that the p-value for these three questions is all more than 0.05, so we would reject hypothesis 1 which means the answer for those questions people from different ages have similar answers. This also means that the age of the interviewees would not interfere with the answers to their questions.

Table 4 Relation between awareness of Sino-Japanese Joint declaration and attitude

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	p
χ^2	6.43	6	0.377
N	102		

Resource: My own research

The Form above is the X-square Tests of Contingency Tables for the analysis between the questions "Why do you think Japanese political apologies are sincere" and "Do you know about the Sino-Japanese Joint Declaration". The hypothesis 0 is that these two variables are independent and hypothesis 1 is that these two variables are dependent. The p-value is 0.377 which is more than 0.05, so we reject hypothesis 1

which means there is no relation between the people who think the political apologies are sincere with reason and people who know about the Japanese Joint Declaration.

Table 6 Relation between attitude and sincerity

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	p
χ^2	35.7	11	<.001
N	109		

Resource: My own research

The Form above is the X-square Test of Contingency Tables for the analysis between the questions “Why do you think Japanese political apologies are not sincere” and “Do you think it is necessary for Japan to make political apologies to China”. The hypothesis 0 is that these two variables are independent and hypothesis 1 is that these two variables are dependent. The p-value is less than 0.01 which is smaller than 0.05, so we reject the hypothesis 0 which means there is some relation between the people who think the political apologies are not sincere with reason and people’s thoughts on the necessity of Japanese political apologies.

(b) Analysis

According to the analysis of the answers, it is obvious that everyone held an attitude that Japan should apologize for WWII. From my perspective, the question about the Sino-Japan Joint Declaration is a measurement for the research about whether they are aware of the history of Japanese political apologies. The result shows that most people are aware of this part of history, however, they are still not satisfied with the political apologies of Japan. There are several reasons behind this but the most crucial one is the Yasukuni Shrine.

In the previous parts, I have mentioned that the Japanese Prime minister made the

pilgrimage to Yasukuni Shrine which bothered China a lot. One of the most important issues is that the rows of Japanese World War II war criminals are placed inside, and the fact that the highest-ranking figures in Japanese politics pay homage to Japanese World War II war criminals will make the invaded countries of World War II feel uneasy. Therefore, even if there are political apologies from Japan, it is difficult to feel sincerity from these apologies.

According to the further discovery of the connections between answers, there are three major factors to consider: (a) the age is irrelevant to the answer to all questions (b) awareness of the Sino-Japan Joint Declaration would not change researchers' attitude on Japanese political apologies. (c) there is a strong connection between people who believe that Japanese political apologies are not sincere and those who believe Japan still needs to apologize.

From this analysis, it is obvious that the Chinese New Generation's expectations of Japanese political apologies are high and this kind of thought that Japan needs to make more sincere political apologies is irrelevant to their age or awareness of the history. However, according to the discovery from part 2, we conclude that the sincerity of Japanese political apologies is constantly changing and would not meet the amendment from the Chinese victims' side.

Social Dominance Orientation and Political Memory

According to my findings, we can conclude that the Japanese political apologies' sincerity is not stable which is a reason that from China's perspective, it is hard to accept. However, the reason why the Chinese New Generation believe Japanese political apologies are not sincere has made this question more complex. It does not only involve the changing attitude toward the sincerity of Japanese political apologies but also the problem of Yasukuni Shrine. So, in this part, I will be using the SDO theory to try to explain the Japanese attitude towards Japanese political apologies, then use the theory of political memory to explain the problem between China and Japan

According to scholarship, the SDO market values the degree of human preference for inequality between social groups, which can give rise to different issues in different political contexts, such as racial prejudice, gender discrimination, nationalism, and so on.⁴⁵

However, according to the latest paper on Japan's political apology, it is mentioned that SDO is closely related to Japan's attitude towards political apology. From the perspective of Japanese individuals, the reason why they resist the government's political apology has nothing to do with their level of political knowledge, but rather with SDO.⁴⁶

The social dominance orientation is a crucial factor for having a deeper analysis of the attitude of Japanese citizens towards a political apology. In 2018, there was research about the SDO and the Japanese government's apology and the relation between them

45 Felicia Pratto et al., 'Social Dominance Orientation: A Personality Variable Predicting Social and Political Attitudes.', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67, no. 4 (October 1994): 741–63.

46 Inamasu Kazunori et al., 'The Association between ideology and resistance to governmental apology depends on political knowledge', *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 3 (September 2023): 348–67.

seems to be negatively correlated, since Japanese society is still rife with elements of conservatism and militarism.⁴⁷ In 2023, there has been research that replicated the study in 2018 and shows that even some subtle changes in the SDO have occurred but the negative correlation between SDO and political apology stays the same.⁴⁸

To compare these two analyses, the one in 2018 did more detailed reason tracking about the relationship between political apology and political ideology while the newest one shifted the purpose of the study from the relationship to solely the analysis of the SDO in Japanese society and lack of the comparison between citizens which believed in conservatism and militarism and those who do not. However, with both studies, we can tell the SDO has affections on the Japanese people's acceptance of political apologies made by Japan.

In 2021, there has been research on Japanese and American political apologies and their relation with public opinion, the research shows that nationalistic, highly socially dominant or conservative individuals are less likely to agree with a government's political apology, and citizens are more likely to weigh up whether the apology is likely to bring benefits to the country. If a government's political apology is not likely to bring any benefits, then they are likely to disagree with apologizing.⁴⁹

With the addition of the explanation about the SDO, the line about Japan's political apology to China became very clear. First of all, after the end of WWII, Japan made a sincere political apology to the victim groups, and indeed the Japanese leaders at that time admitted their mistakes and tried to make amends for what happened in WWII.

After that, Japan's Conservative Party came to power and became more and more insincere in its attitude towards political apologies, which included denials and cover-

47 Mifune Nobuhiro et al., 'Social dominance orientation as an obstacle to intergroup apology', PLOS ONE 14, no. 1 (25 January 2019): e0211379.

48 Takahashi, Imada, and Mifune, 'Cross-Temporal Replication of the Relationship between SDO and Political Attitudes in Japan'.

49 Takahashi, Imada, and Mifune.

ups of history. I think a bigger factor is the way the SDO has shaped Japan's image. Except for the SDO, the political memory is a crucial part of both Japan and China when the government is telling the story of WWII. According to the research of Xiang Gu in 2022, it shows that in the textbooks of Japan and China, chose different methods to memorize the Nanjing Massacre. Japan intends to cover history while China trying to use passive ways to memory it and give people a negative image of Japan.⁵⁰ We can take two symbols of how Japan and China remember WWII history. In Japan, the symbol is the Yasukuni Shrine and in China, the symbol is the Memorial of victims of the Nanjing Massacre.

According to the research of Shaun O'Dwyer in 2010, it specifically described that China and Japan have different attitudes towards Yasukuni Shrine, where China tends to use Yasukuni Shrine as an object of confrontation to control the patriotic sentiments of its people better, whereas Japan itself has embellished the stories of those who died in the war in Yasukuni Shrine and in some cases even glorified the war.⁵¹ In this case, the Yasukuni Shrine is not only a place for the victims of the war but also it is a way to make Japanese people have a patriotic emotion even with the wrong-written story.

According to Mariya M. Yarlykova's article in 2022, we can learn that the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall established by the Chinese side has no problem in honouring the victims of the war, however, many of the photographs displayed in the hall are emotionally oriented, traumatic memories of the war, and coupled with the Japanese denial of this part of the history, the two sides have been able to reconcile.⁵² However,

50 Xiang Gu, 'Nanjing Massacre in Chinese and Japanese History Textbooks: Transitivity and Appraisal', *Critical Discourse Studies* 19, no. 4 (4 July 2022): 418–34.

51 Shaun O'Dwyer, 'The Yasukuni Shrine and the Competing Patriotic Pasts of East Asia', *History and Memory* 22, no. 2 (2010): 147–77.

52 Mariya M. Yarlykova, 'Site of Memory, Site of Trauma: The Memorial Hall of the Victims in Nanjing Massacre and China-Japan Reconciliation', *SSRN Scholarly Paper* (Rochester, NY, 9

another research by Kailing Xie, stated that the Japanese government are highly dissatisfied with the Memorial Hall of Nanjing because this memorial hall has its data and documents collected based on Chinese and some foreign resources which are different from the story told by Japan. This article has also argued that this memorial hall has a problem with raising anti-Japan emotions. ⁵³With the research, we can tell that the situation in the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre is a similar situation to the Japanese Yasukuni Shrine. Both of them are unsatisfied by either China or Japan, and both of them are telling different stories. The only difference is that Japan was trying to use the Yasukuni Shrine to glorify the war to raise patriotic emotions and China was trying to use the negative part of the war to raise patriotic emotions. From this, we can see that both China and Japan have been guided by opposing SDOs and political memories concerning World War II. I think this is why China and Japan have not been able to get the same opinion about Japan's political apologies.

March 2022).
53 Xie, 'The Affective Life of the Nanjing Massacre'.

Conclusion

This thesis investigated the issue of Japan and China having contradicting attitudes towards the Japanese political apologies regarding WWII through the time-line.

In the first chapter, I introduced the fact that the reason why Japan needs to apologise is for the crimes Japan committed on the battlefields of the Second World War by quoting the German Rabe's insights in Nanjing in the Second World War. With the post-war Tokyo trial not so fair to China, China and Japan still tend to mend their mutual relationship, and with a sincere political apology, both sides signed a treaty that could mend their relationship.

However, after the signing of the treaty, the attitudes of the two sides did not exactly move in the direction of reconciliation, and there was even a great deal of ambiguity about war reparations. Therefore, in the second paragraph, I launched an inquiry into the sincerity of Japan's political apologies, which found that Japan's political apologies began to deny history or make political apologies reluctantly after the 21st century, with the Conservative Party in power. This also indirectly affected Japan's SDO.

Since Japan's political apologies began to shift after the 21st century, I think it is necessary to investigate Chinese young people's views on Japan's political apologies and try to discover the reasons why Chinese young people are dissatisfied with these political apologies. Finally, I concluded that young Chinese people's understanding of history does not change their attitude towards Japan's political apologies, which they feel are insincere, and that the reason for this is Japan's Yasukuni Shrine.

Therefore, in the third paragraph, I am mainly discussing the most important reason that affected the sincerity of Japan's political apology, the fact that both the Chinese and Japanese sides have exaggerated and embellished the story of World War II to a certain extent in order to influence the SDOs and to inspire a kind of patriotism. The Japanese side

has chosen to cover up the crimes it committed and even to embellish the war. The Chinese side chose to document the brutal aspects of the war to channel a sense of hatred.

From the research and analysis done above, this paper would like to express that there are many reasons why Japan's political apology is not accepted, however, at the root of it, it explains that when both China and Japan were guiding the public on the path of patriotism propaganda, Japan's capricious attitude, and the way the Chinese portrayed the history of the Second World War, all contributed to the fact that this political apology is fundamentally unacceptable. Going back to the very beginning, that is, the beginning of the post-war trials, this unfairness has also somewhat led to the present inability of China and Japan to reach a state of reconciliation over the political apology as well as the contract at that time.

The reason why this thesis explores the sincerity of Japan's political apology to China for World War II and the reasons for the inability to reconcile is that the world is not in a state of peace today. I believe that revisiting the issue of China and Japan's inability to reconcile during this time period will help to remind countries that are currently at war that post-war trials and post-war reconciliation issues should avoid this conflict between China and Japan. A new reconciliation can begin with the opening of a fair post-war trial, the timely mending of relations between the two sides, and both countries objectively facing up to the history of the war.

Summary

In this paper, I have used the measurement regarding the standard concluded by Yohsuke Ohtsubo et al. to build a clear image of Japanese political apologies to China come to the conclusion that the sincerity Japanese political apologies are unstable. And I have use the questionnaire as a way to measure Chinese new generation attitude towards Japanese political apologies and realize that the main focus of Chinese new generation is the Yasukuni Shrine. However, the fundamental reason that Chinese and Japanese are holding different attitude towards those apologies is not only the unstable attitude of Japanese political apologies but also the contradicted way of describing WWII history.

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