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The politics of memory in journalistic representations of human rights abuses during the Asia-Pacific War: discursive constructions of controversial "sites of memory" in three East Asian newspapers

Choong Hee Han
University of Iowa

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THE POLITICS OF MEMORY IN JOURNALISTIC REPRESENTATIONS OF
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES DURING THE ASIA-PACIFIC WAR:
DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS OF CONTROVERSIAL “SITES OF MEMORY”
IN THREE EAST ASIAN NEWSPAPERS

by

Choong Hee Han

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree
in Mass Communications in
the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

December 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Lyombe Eko

ABSTRACT

This study investigates journalistic representations and discursive constructions of memories of the Asia-Pacific War (1931-45) in three newspapers from three East Asian countries: Japan, China, and South Korea. These three countries have been having decades-long debates over how to interpret and recount what happened in East Asia during the war. Numerous people perished during the wars Japan waged in pursuit of its ambition to be a great Asian empire. The debates over war memories intensified during the past decade due to “memory politics” in the region. Among the many atrocities that have been the subject of international disputes, this study explores media discourses of three of the most heated controversies associated with the Asia-Pacific War: the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, the “Comfort Women” controversy, and the Japanese textbooks revisionism controversy.

There are two theoretical groundings that support this study: “memory and politics,” and “journalistic discourses of memory.” Regarding memory and politics, this study approaches the topic from a collective/cultural memory perspective. In this regard, the three controversies over war memories were theoretically identified as *sites of memory* by which war memories were articulated and reinvented. As for the journalistic aspect, this study focuses on the cultural meanings of journalism and news. The cultural approach in journalistic study views texts as cultural artifacts that represent key values and meanings. Journalism plays a major role in creating, transmitting, and articulating memories. A critical discourse analysis was the primary method that was employed to investigate the discursive constructions of memory through news texts. An interpretive

policy analysis was also conducted to examine official stances of the three countries with respect to war memories.

The analysis has found that the three newspapers were agents of collective memory. They articulated the meanings of national memory based upon what they believed to be the most appropriate interpretations of their nations' past. Political circumstances and ideological stances greatly influenced their coverage of war memories. Their coverage has shown that East Asia still lives under the shadow of the Asia-Pacific War that ended more than a half-century ago. Memory has not been forgotten because it has been reinterpreted and reconstructed mirroring the national, social, political, and international climate. Situated at the center of such reproduction of memory, the three newspapers were also sites of memory.

The three newspapers' active involvement in the historical controversies exceeded what scholars described as common features of commemorative journalism. The controversies surrounding war memories and the newspapers' construction of memory have shown that journalism is a cultural practice and that a cultural approach is necessary in journalism studies to gain a more holistic understanding of the representation of social events in the news.

Abstract Approved: _____

Thesis Advisor

Title and Department

Date

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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has been approved by the Examining Committee
for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy
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To my parents

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My only sister Inkyung has always been in my mind. I have not seen her for the past eight years and miss her so much. She and I have tried to live our lives to the fullest potential, both living outside our home country and away from our parents. I pray for her and trust that she will succeed in finding the right place for her talent and education.

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CHAPTER I

WAR MEMORY, NATIONALISM, AND THE MEDIA

Introduction: Entangled Memories in East Asia

This study examines journalistic representations and discursive constructions of war memory in the Asia-Pacific War (1931-45) in three newspapers from three East Asian countries: Japan, China, and South Korea. These three countries have been having decades-long debates over how to interpret and recount what happened in East Asia during the war. These debates intensified during the past decade due to “memory politics” (Carrier, 2005; Kattago, 2001) in the region. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s visits to the Yasukuni Shrine have been the prime example of memory politics which have triggered domestic and international disputes over memories. Before discussing the politics of memory in East Asia, it seems necessary to introduce a symptomatic “politics of memory” event that came to the attention of the international community recently.

It was as strange and odd as the weather of the scenic west coast of British Columbia was during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. While watching various event on TV, audiences listened to play-by-play sportscasters and commentators discuss the fervor of nationalism in East Asian countries, specifically China, Japan, and South Korea. Not only TV broadcasters but also news agencies and newspapers in the US and other countries repeatedly mentioned the nationalistic sentiments of those three countries during the Olympics. A number of news outlets provided their own interpretations that could be summarized as follows: the Olympics were the chance for those three countries to reaffirm and reclaim their national pride by earning many Olympic gold medals in front of the global public in the most prominent winter sports competition in the world. Nationalistic fervor was one of the major focal points of the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics as the three countries took part in a variety of competitions, such as figure

skating, curling, bobsledding, and other winter sports that had long been considered the monopoly of the Western world.

While the goal of the athletes from the three rival countries was to earn as many gold medals as possible, the nationalistic objective behind the medal race might have been different for each country. For Japan, success in the Olympics would signify a continuation of its excellence and pride. As the dominant power in Asia in almost every domain (Dudden, 2005), Japan had participated in the Winter Olympics for a long period of time as a major competitor and, in many winter Olympics sports, had been the sole Asian participant. No other Asian country had enough information and resources to train and send athletes to the international sporting event. For this reason, the increasing presence of other Asian countries, particularly China, in the winter sports world could have made some Japanese uncomfortable (Glionna & Nagano, 2010b). For example, Tokyo Governor, Shintaro Ishihara, a prominent conservative politician in the country, was quoted as saying Japan was “about the only country stupid enough to go wild with joy over a bronze medal,” and “there is no way that people who do not bear a heavy burden on their backs, in the form of a nation, will be able to perform well” (“Since Ice,” 2010). Ishihara has in the past been the target of caustic criticism from inside and outside of the country for his revisionist views on history, including his comment that the story of the Nanking Massacre was made up by the Chinese (“Group Plans,” 2007).

For China, the Winter Olympics was probably just another chance for the country to emerge into prominence, as the country had already been seeking an influential position in world politics and in the global economy. China’s tendency to express its patriotic pride through sports events has been extensively documented, particularly during the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. At that time, the nationalistic drive by the Chinese national media outlets accomplished the country’s aim as evidenced by numerous online discussions at many Chinese Internet websites. The Olympics drew much positive attention as the country tried to reemerge from the 2008 tragic earthquake

in the Sichuan province and the deadly outbreak of riots in Tibet. As a scholar and Chinese culture critic notes, Chinese interest in international sporting events has more to do with the Chinese desire to appear rich, strong, and superior to other nations, than with a love of sports (Xu, 2008).

While sports and Chinese nationalism are difficult to separate, China's uncomfortable history with Japan in recent centuries gives one more twist to its already strong nationalistic drive in the international sports arena. An anecdote by Zhuang Zedong, the famous Chinese Ping-Pong player provides a glimpse into Chinese animosity against Japan. In 1961 as he was competing in the Twenty-sixth World Table Tennis Championship held in Beijing, a senior Chinese official told him that if he defeated the Japanese, he would be celebrated as a national hero. He remembered that he considered his "every shot against the Japanese players revenge for the Chinese, who had suffered from the Japanese invasion" (Xu, 2008, p. 72). Whereas Zhuang's story seems distant in time since it happened decades ago, there seems to be no evidence that such anti-Japanese sentiments have since subsided. In fact, recent anti-Japanese demonstrations tell another story. In April 2005, Chinese demonstrators damaged the premises of the Japanese Embassy in Beijing and consular offices in different parts of China. There were also attacks against Japanese citizens and a boycott of Japanese products (Higashi, 2005; Ikebe, 2005). The issue at that time was Japan's controversial history textbooks that "beautified" Japan's aggression against China during the Asia-Pacific War (Kishimoto, 2004).

Last, there were South Korean athletes in Vancouver. Sandwiched between Japan and China geographically and politically, Korea experienced Japanese colonialism from 1910 to 1945. Liberation from perceived national humiliation, however, was followed by the Korean War (1950-1953), in which the Chinese Communist Army played an influential role in splitting the Korean Peninsula into two countries at the 38th parallel. As is widely known, Mao Tse Tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, received a

plea for direct military aid from Kim Il-sung and dispatched the Chinese Communist Army to the Korean Peninsula. With such a history of subjugation, South Koreans view any athletic events against Japan and China as occasions to vanquish former oppressors and recover their pride and self-respect (Glionna & Nagano, 2010a; J. Longman, 2010). The *New York Times* described the heat of nationalism in women's figure skating in Vancouver:

No South Korean figure skater has won an Olympic medal, much less gold, as is expected from the willowy Kim, 19. So not only does she have to shoulder enormous athletic expectations, but also Kim's main rivals, Mao Asada and Miki Ando, are from Japan, which occupied the Korean peninsula for 35 years through the end of World War II. More than a half-century later, South Korea's nationalistic fervor and sense of victimhood still inform sporting rivalries between the two nations. (J. Longman, 2010)

The question of whether or not this journalistic portrayal by the *Times* was necessary or pertinent, and why it covered the story in such a way is another topic for academic exploration. The reason for quoting that particular part of the article is that the *Times* writer seemed to succinctly summarize the ongoing social, political, and diplomatic relationships between Japan and South Korea.

Like any other regions of the world, East Asia endured a tumultuous period from the late nineteenth century to the end of the first half of the twentieth century. It was a period of time when the world experienced multiple revolutionary changes in technology and society. Also, the world was ravaged by a number of wars, including World Wars I and II, which brought untold suffering to all involved.

The extremely complicated political and historical period in East Asia started with Japanese revolutionary modernization in 1868, the Meiji Restoration, and the belated responses of China and Korea to the Western powers that demanded that they open their countries to political negotiations and international trade. Equipped with modern technology and military strategies before other Asian countries, Japan began invading neighboring countries in the late nineteenth century, in an attempt to build an empire

modeled after European colonial empires. In 1894, the Japanese oligarchy declared war on China, the first Sino-Japanese war, for purposes of occupying and controlling Korea. China lost, and the next year, ceded Taiwan. China also agreed to pay a huge indemnity, and later signed an unequal commercial treaty. Japan's military power grew continuously thanks to its modernization and preparation for repeated warfare. Japan also waged war against Russia over its dominance in the Greater Manchuria area and northern Korea. By the end of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), in which Japan defeated Russia, Japan became a first-class military power. In 1910, Japan signed a treaty with Korea and annexed it. Japanese colonial aspirations did not stop there. Japan began its aggression in Manchuria in 1931 and was engaged in total war against China from 1937 to 1945 (Bix, 2000; Kosaka, 1992). Along with the war against China, Japan also expanded its warfare to the then-ongoing World War II.

Japan's militaristic empire building and warfare tragically resulted in the loss of many lives. According to the official estimate published after 1945, more than three million Japanese, nearly twenty million Asians, and more than sixty thousand Western Allied personnel perished during the wars Japan had waged in pursuit of its ambition to be a great Asian empire (Bix, 2000). Human rights issues have since dominated the political and international relations of the region as memories of the losses, traumas, and atrocities of the war surface. In almost every single meeting in politics, sports, or cultural exchanges among the countries, the historical tragedies of war serve as the contextual backdrop. The people of each country are constantly reminded of atrocities that have been inflicted on them or on others close to them.

As a number of news articles as well as broadcasts pointed out during the Vancouver Winter Olympics, the strong motivation of athletes from the three countries, particularly in competitions among themselves, was due, to a large extent, to the history of East Asia and the recent memory of World War II in the region. The three countries share a long history, which has been enmeshed in numerous cultural exchanges,

invasions, occupations, and wars. It is the result of such memory that not just sports events but almost all aspects of the social and cultural lives of citizens in the three countries have been subjected to such nationalistic fervor.

The Three Sites of Memory (The Three Controversies):

The Guided Entries to Explore Representation and
Construction in the News

Among the many atrocities that have been the subject of international disputes, this study will explore media discourses of three of the most heated controversies associated with World War II in East Asia: the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, the “Comfort Women” issue, and the Japanese textbooks revisionism controversy. They are guided entries (Nord, 1989; Smith, 1989; Stempel & Westley, 1989) that will enable the researcher to immerse and explore representations and construction of memory.

The Yasukuni Shrine controversy has made headlines frequently in international politics during the past decade. The Yasukuni Shrine is a shrine for Shintō, the native religion of Japan, and is located in Tokyo, the capital of Japan. It was built at the beginning of the Meiji era (1868-1912) as a state institution to officially commemorate soldiers and other military personnel who died in the campaigns to reestablish Japanese imperial rule. After World War II, the shrine's status was redefined as an independent religious institution. Politicians of Japan have since visited the shrine. The most prominent case of a politician visiting the shrine was the former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (2001-2006), who visited the shrine every year during his incumbency. While politicians said that they visited the shrine to pay their respects to people who died for the country in general, opponents in Japan, China, South Korea, and other Asian countries viewed those visits as a symbol of Japanese militarism, historical revisionism, and political populism (Bass, 2006; Kristof, 1998a; Kristof, 1998b; Shibuichi, 2005). The point of contention is that among the Japanese war dead commemorated in the shrine are

wartime Prime Minister Hideki Tōjō and thirteen other men who were sentenced to death by the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), also called the Tokyo Tribunal, in 1948, for their roles in human rights violations during the war.

The term “Comfort Women” is a Japanese euphemism for an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 Asian women, from mostly Korea and China, who were forced to provide sex for Japanese soldiers during World War II (Eckert, 2007). These women have long sought a government level apology from Japan, to no avail. Having been considered an unresolved and volatile topic for a long time, the “Comfort Women” issue became an international controversy in 2007 when the legislative bodies of a number of countries, including the US, Canada, and the Netherlands, sought to pass resolutions that were aimed at asking the Japanese government to deliver an official apology and compensation to former “Comfort Women.”

Finally, there have been continuing controversies surrounding revisionist Japanese history textbooks that were considered by opponents in Japanese society and people in China and Korea as “glossing over Japan's wartime aggression in China and its annexation of the Korean Peninsula” (“Koizumi Risks,” 2001). Japanese conservative groups, including, most prominently, the “Society for Creation of New History Textbooks,” have demanded that the government approve the new history textbooks they published. Although those revisionist textbooks had been available for schools to use, only a very small number of schools selected them for use. These revisionist textbooks triggered vehement denunciations by many Asian countries, which judged them to be attempts by the Japanese government to revive militarism, and evade its war responsibilities (Hicks, 1995; Tanaka, 2002; Yoshimi, 2000).

These three controversies are what Nora (Nora, 1996; Nora, 1998) called *lieux de mémoire*, or “sites of memory.” “Sites of memory” are the places where memory crystallizes and shrouds itself: these include monuments, commemoration rites, symbols, activities, manuals, mottos, and all rituals (Nora, 1989, p. 9). Through sites of memory

the past is reconstructed to serve the needs of the present. Sometimes sites of memory are artificially fabricated. Given the fact that the three controversies have become a perpetual source of political debate in East Asia, and that different constructions of memory have appeared based upon the same historical incidents, it can be said that the three controversies are ‘sites of memory’ (Jeans, 2005; Shibuichi, 2008).

Journalistic Representation of War Memories in East Asia:

Goal of the Study

This study investigates journalistic representations and discursive constructions of memories of World War II in three East Asian English language newspapers: *China Daily* of China, *The Daily Yomiuri* of Japan, and *The Chosun Ilbo* of South Korea. These three newspapers are either English language editions of mainstream print newspapers (*The Daily Yomiuri* is the English language edition of *Yomiuri Shimbun*. It reprints the English translations of articles published in *Yomiuri Shimbun* (A. Fukumoto & Meares, 2005; Rix, 1993; Seaton, 2006; Shiraishi, 2004); *The Chosun Ilbo* publishes its English language edition articles on the Web. English language articles are the translations of original Korean language articles), or the lone state-run English newspaper in the country (the case of *China Daily*).

Japan, China, and South Korea have been having seemingly endless exchanges over how to represent and interpret what happened in the past. War always involves atrocity and suffering. Afterwards, what typically occurs is a debate over responsibilities, apologies, and exonerations. In this paper, these debates will be called the “war of memories.” The war of memories appears to have taken center stage in political debates and social discourses, as accountability and vindication issues revolve around politics. In that sense, the war of memory is the politics of memory. The war of memories has been a struggle to define one’s identity against others identities, to direct and divert blame, and to take a position of moral superiority.

This study proposes that nationalism in the three countries has grown over time, particularly in recent years, because of the politics of memory. This study also suggests that journalistic institutions have contributed to the political uses of memory by invoking national memories, which helped to foster national unity in each country. Scholars have found that media outlets are agents of social, national, and cultural memory (Edy, 1999; Zelizer, 1990; Zelizer, 2004). Regarding the role of journalism in memory, Zelizer (2008) notes:

Memory and journalism resemble two distant cousins. They know of each other's existence, acknowledge their shared environment from time to time and proceed apace as autonomous phenomena without seeming to depend on the other. And yet neither reaches optimum functioning without the other occupying a backdrop. Just as journalism needs memory work to position its recounting of public events in context, so too does memory need journalism to provide one of the most public drafts of the past. (p. 79)

Media representations many times become media-spectacles, in which politics occupies the realm of memory. In the media, memory often becomes a usable past rather than reflexive deliberation of the past occurrences: “the act of representation makes history the phantom signifier of endlessly interchangeable referents” (Elsaesser, 1985, p. 40). This study therefore investigates the discursive construction and representation of war memories in the three newspapers. After the war, refractions of war memories persistently appeared in media outlets in the region, and influenced East Asian domestic/international relations and politics.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on two theoretical pillars: “memory and politics,” and “journalistic discourses of memory.” Regarding memory and politics, this study approaches the topic from a collective/cultural memory perspective. Popularized by French sociologist Halbwachs (1992a), collective memory is socially imagined, constructed, and shared memory. Halbwachs insisted on the social constructedness of memory; that people acquire or construct memory not as isolated individuals but as

members of a society, and they recall their memories in social contexts (Halbwachs, 1980a, 1992b; Ben-Amos & Weissberg, 1999). Cultural memory is similar to collective memory in terms of focusing on the social and collective nature of memory rather than on individual and psychological memory. Social traditions and customs, in which imaginative and unconscious aspects of memory are often emphasized (Assmann, 2006), became the main research areas of cultural memory. It is true, however, that the term collective memory has been used broadly, and many studies under the theory of collective memory subsume aspects of cultural memory. This study will use the term collective memory henceforth to refer to the social, cultural, and constructive nature of memory.

“Sites of memory” is an important concept in collective memory studies. For Nora (1996, 1998), memory becomes a tool to regain and reconstruct both the past and history. “Sites of memory” are sometimes artificial and deliberate inventions. They are devised to serve the needs of the present. In a socio-political context, “sites of memory” are politicized. For example, in order to emphasize national unity and patriotism, political organizations may try to reinvigorate national memory. For that purpose, they attempt to have a national site of memory, such as a national memorial, appear in the mass media often and discussed by the public.

The reason that the theory of collective memory is suitable for this study is that the issue dealt with in this study originated from history and memory. Japanese modernization and its invasion of two neighboring countries are now history and memory. They are “living history and memory”, however, because they are continuously remembered by people and referred to by the mass media. At the heart of such remembering is the politics of war memory, or the political uses of war memory. The politics of war memory has been one of the most productive areas in academic research on international politics because it involves contestation as well as celebration of memories (Ashplant, Dawson, & Roper, 2000; Fujitani et al., 2001). The politics of

memory shows that memories are volatile and precarious since they provoke different interpretations over time, as memory holders deal with new social and political situations that occur in various phases of their lives. The three sites of memory demonstrate such social construction of memory. It is not unusual for the same memory to become a subject of reverence for one group or society, while it becomes a subject of shame and abhorrence in another.

As for the journalistic aspect, this study focuses on the cultural meanings of journalism and news. As Berkowitz (2011) notes, the cultural approach in journalistic study views texts as cultural artifacts that represent key values and meanings. In this framework, journalism is a “human phenomenon like any other” and “a particular study produces one of several possible answers shaped by the conceptual premise guiding that inquiry” (p. xii). Collective memory and the representation of war memories fit this framework. People live in the social environment that is formed by personal, social, and cultural memory. Memory is the subject of active interpretation and crystallization. There are a variety of ways to interpret a single memory. Although “the notion of collective/cultural memory directly contradicts the professional journalistic paradigm’s core tenet of objectivity” (Berkowitz, 2011, p. 301), since journalists live in the same society and breathe the same social cultural memory, they also become subjected to memory.

Journalism plays a major role in creating, transmitting, and sharing memories. By doing so, journalists and journalistic organizations make particular memories resonate with their audiences more than others. In this sense, the mass media are arenas in which memory-based constructions of reality are performed and perpetuated (Edy, 1999; Kitch, 2002; Kitch, 2008; Zelizer, 1990). Given this nature of memory and journalism, describing and analyzing war memories in this study means that the researcher probes the ways in which war memories are discursively construed, constructed, and represented through the mass media.

Methodology of the Study

To analyze news texts, this study employs a modified critical discourse analysis that allows the researcher to find and interpret larger thematic discourses in news texts. In general, critical discourse analysis provides an analytical method to explore discursive practices, events, and texts to develop an understanding of wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes. It also ascertains how communicative events (including texts) are ideologically shaped by relations of power (Fairclough, 1993b). Newspaper representations of war memories are texts produced through discursive practices of journalism, which in turn are reflections of the social, cultural, and political conditions of each country. The critical discourse analysis in this study, thus, endeavors to capture the richest possible meanings in news texts, in order to provide “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) of those texts and the cultural contexts.

The analysis in this study also incorporates a literature review on historical contexts and an interpretive policy analysis of government stances concerning the three historical controversies. Chapter II provides a broad historical survey of Japanese modernization and subsequent invasion of neighboring Asian countries. The chapter also details the developments of the controversies over time. The interpretive policy analysis looks at the three governments’ official statements found in news texts and through the websites of the foreign ministries of the three countries.

This study is a comparative analysis. Analysis of memory construction requires comparative analysis when a study investigates differences in interpretations carried out by different countries and newspapers, which is the case with this study. Interpretations of a particular memory can differ from others interpretations of the same memory based upon social and political identities (Conrad, 2003). In that sense, this study aims to analyze different discursive interpretations of the same historical incidents by the three newspapers, and dissects the ways in which memories of historic incidents are constructed into new meanings by governments and the media for the present time.

Academic Research on War Memories

War memory has been one of the most productive areas of memory studies, that has garnered scholarly as well as public attention. As for the Asia-Pacific War, memories of the war between the US and Japan have been widely researched, especially memories associated with prominent historical events such as Pearl Harbor and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Gallicchio, 2007; Nelson, 2000). In addition, feminist scholars from East Asian countries have produced a wealth of research on the “Comfort Women” (Hicks, 1995; Min, 2003; Soh, 1996; Tanaka, 2001; Thoma, 2000).

There is an existing body of scholarship that examines war memory and its representations by the media. Here, the media would refer to broad representations including newspapers, images, books, films, interviews, and documents. For example, Sjølyst-Jackson (2000) compares the representation of war memories within the British and Norwegian post-war national culture. Loshitzky (2000) explores the “subversive” potential of art by analyzing the films made by second-generation filmmakers in Israel.

Regarding East Asian post-war politics, scholars have investigated a wide range of issues including the Yasukuni controversies (Nelson, 2003; Okazaki, 2006; Shibuichi, 2005), the textbook revisionism debate (Jeans, 2005; Kibata, 1999), the “Comfort Women” issue (Min, 2003; Soh, 1996; Thoma, 2000), the debate over the Japanese government’s responsibility for reparation (Selden, 2001; Weyeneth, 2001), and the traumas of the war in general (Dower, 1995; Jeans, 2005; Reilly, 2004).

Scholarly studies of war memories in East Asia, however, have primarily come from history, feminist studies, and anthropology. Not much scholarly research has been carried out from a communication studies perspective. Continuous social interest and media attention to history-related issues in East Asia call for academic investigations into the vicarious discursive construction of memory in the mass media.

The Journalistic Cultures of the Countries under Study

It will be productive to discuss briefly the journalistic cultures of the three countries that are the subject of this study, because the ways journalism operates can help explain how and why certain types of representations of memory occur more often than others. Journalism is a process of writing stories that satisfy the emotional and spiritual needs of a society. Journalists are expected to address the feelings of the public. It is almost impossible to determine who is constructing memory and who is receiving it, because audiences, journalists, and critics in a society are not clearly separated. This is true especially when members of a given society share the same cultural institutions that have shaped their collective identity (Kitch, 2008). Despite the importance of examining a journalistic culture to understand its practices, it can be said that Western scholarship on press systems tends to disregard the cultures, philosophies and traditions that distinguish the Asian press system from its counterparts in other regions (Winfield, Mizuno, & Beaudoin, 2000).

In general, the three East Asian countries under study are regarded as having some distinctive journalistic cultures in common due to their intellectual and cultural traditions. Confucianism, a relatively authoritarian structure of society, and collective thinking is evident in East Asian intellectual and cultural traditions (Kristof, 1998; Rao & Seow, 2005; Wilson & Dirlik, 1994; Youm & Salwen, 1990). Confucianism is primarily an East Asian tradition that originated from China. It has an important role in East Asian philosophy, religion, politics, ethics, and culture. It revolves around family relationships between parents and children, between elder and younger brothers, and between husband and wife. In these relationships, the primary emphasis is on fulfilling responsibilities to each other with a sincere and conscientious heart (Yao, 2000). Referring to the culture of Confucianism, Merrill (1994) argues that Confucianism for journalists in Asia would be an alternative to Western values of individualism, sacrifice, and self-promotion.

Despite this common historical and cultural background, it is also true that each country has developed its own distinctive forms of journalistic culture. The recent history of East Asia has led each country to take a slightly different path of social and political development from the others as a result of modernization and post-war social restructuring. Addressing the journalistic ecology will be helpful to understand the reification and naturalization of memory carried out by journalists in each country. First of all, the term *interpretive community* is a good theoretical framework to explain the ways in which social and cultural meanings are produced in East Asian journalistic institutions. Zelizer (1993) introduces the theory of interpretive community which explains how the “cultural authority” of journalists is asserted and maintained. According to her, journalism is a discursive practice learned and authorized in several ways. This concept is closely connected to the credibility of journalism, because it is credibility that enables journalists to earn status as authoritative interpreters and reliable “retellers” of social events (Zelizer, 1990). Journalistic authority also guarantees the economic stability of journalistic institutions, and protects their reputations in their daily operations. The sociopolitical and cultural resonance of news stories becomes crucial once journalistic institutions gain their authoritative status in society. Resonant stories are rhetorically effective stories that model the existing dominant master narratives of society. In order for journalists to produce such stories, cultural objects and storylines must be relevant to and resonate with the mindsets of the audiences. In that regard, one can say that Confucianism is one of the master narratives in East Asia, and that it influences the ways in which journalists interpret social incidents. At the same time, the strong expectation of cohesiveness and conformity in Confucianism reinforces the communal culture of the journalistic community. The journalistic culture in East Asian countries, therefore, can be regarded as exemplifying the role of journalism as an interpretive community.

Communist Party Journalism in China

In China, the role of journalism has been to support the government by spreading propaganda and suppressing news that contradicts policies of the Chinese Communist Party and its administration. Regardless of the adoption of a Western style capitalist system and the increased freedom of individuals in social life, China remains a communist country. In other words, the state system itself and other subsidiary bodies of the state are designed to follow the directives of the Communist Party. For example, in 2001 the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party urged Chinese media and journalism schools to adopt the concept of “Marxist journalism.” The term was broadly interpreted to mean journalism that the government views as improving society and taking account of Chinese realities, including censorship under one-party rule (Cody, 2007). China’s media system is often described as “Party Journalism”, since the Communist Party dominates the collection and distribution of news and social discourse through media outlets. Zhao (2008) observes that there have been important changes in the control of the media system during the past two decades:

Based on lessons learned from the outbreak of the pro-democracy movement in 1989 in China and the collapse of Eastern European communism and the Soviet Union the Party set out to reassert media control and upgrade its ruling technologies... The party’s central Propaganda Department (PD) is the omnipresent body, exerting its formidable power in sustaining the party’s dominance in the area of ideology and culture. China’s General Agency of Press and Publication (GAPP), State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT), Ministry of Information Industry (MII), and the Ministry of Culture are government departments subject to PD directives... Instead of passing legislation about the media, the party has opted to authorize relevant government departments to legitimate its preferred media structure by administrative regulations, which only require approval by the State Council. The most comprehensive government regulations in media are issued by the GAPP and the SARFT. The GAPP is responsible for the implementation of basic regulations covering four industrial sections in the printing and electronic publications field (pp. 22-26).

The central concept that underlies the Party’s domination is the “Party Principle.” Under this principle, the news media must not only accept the Party’s guiding ideology as

their own, they must propagate the Party's programs. In addition, they must accept the Party's leadership and stick to the Party's organizational principles and press policies. The Communist Party has exercised strict control over its publications from the very beginning. For example, the first resolution of the Party's founding congress in 1921 stipulated that "journals and daily publications, books, and booklets must be managed by the Party's executive committee" and "no central or local publications should carry any article that opposed the Party's principles, policies, and decisions" (Zhao, 1998, pp. 19-25).

The Party also sets specific guidelines on news reporting. For example, a 1987 document provided by the Party's Central Secretariat detailed that the deaths of leaders and important personalities should be reported domestically and internationally on the same day. Although press freedom has advanced in recent years, various forms of censorship, including self-censorship, and other control remain extremely prevalent. Party leaders' speeches and remarks are treated with particular attention because they are considered important for transmitting the Party's ideas. Party leaders' remarks on the role of the press are also carefully studied by journalists and interpreted by media theoreticians, as the Party's task is to educate the people, to win mass support for and active participation in carrying out its policies. For that reason, journalism is an integral part of Party work. Journalism provides the means of communication through which the Party implements the "mass line," the purported link between the leadership and the masses (Donald, Keane, & Hong, 2002). Although newspapers facilitate communication with the public, the Party decides what experiences are to be exchanged and which are to be promoted or condemned. The Party also publishes the *People's Daily* (人民日报, Renmin Ribao), the official newspaper and the organ of the Central Committee. *The People's Daily* has an estimated circulation of four million. Important editorials in *People's Daily* are frequently transmitted by the official Xinhua News Agency,

summarized on the national radio and television broadcasts, and sometimes reprinted by provincial party organs (Zhao, 1998, p. 18).

In terms of administrative control of the Chinese media, the Chinese government relies on a series of regulations and directives which are found in the constitution, standing rules of the Party, and governmental statutes. Party and government officials also control the flow of information through the power of appointment, promotion and assignment of journalists. Editors must submit to the Party bureau's detailed plans of major news and feature material, and the media must gather news from official statements. In other words, although editors are theoretically free and even encouraged to initiate story ideas, they as government bureaucrats know in advance what will be approved. The government also controls the mass media through ownership, permitting authorities "to control, limit, and restrict information, as well as to diffuse new ideas and values." This kind of control persists in a largely internal and indirect way, and usually goes unnoticed by western news media. The characteristics of the mass media in China at any given time are largely defined by the tone of politics in the nation. Yet the goal of Chinese media still is to further the aims of the state (Winfield et al., 2000).

The Japanese Press Club System

The press club in Japan, the "*Kisha's* (reporter's) Club," is the exclusive community of journalists in Japan. Many social theorists and journalists have argued that while Japan has the second largest number of newspapers per capita in the world, news content in general suffers from an extreme uniformity (Gamble & Watanabe, 2004; Taketoshi, 1989). Japan's press club system is the foundation of the country's mass media. In theory, press clubs are supposed to be strictly social clubs for journalists who cover certain government agencies or business organizations. In practice, however, press clubs are established professional organizations which are given exclusive access to the most "delicious news sources" (Taketoshi, 1989). The former BBC Tokyo correspondent

and President of the Association of Foreign Correspondents in Japan, William Horsley, once said that “The press club system is the prime symbol of Japanese clannishness...Not only Japanese reporters use the press clubs to monopolize the ‘official news’ coming from the government and ministries, but out of the glare of the camera lights they cultivate personal relationships with the men who are their news sources” (De Lange, 1998, p. 194).

The origin of the press clubs system goes back to the Meiji Restoration and early Meiji years. The new Meiji government promoted the birth and growth of newspapers, since it planned to use the newspapers as a medium through which to promote its prime agenda: Japanese civilization and enlightenment. Subsequently, reporters were provided with a room and were permitted to gather news at important government assemblies such as the Assembly of Provincial Governors. From then on, the government has been the largest source of news in the country. Due to special treatment and improved facilities, a club-like atmosphere developed among the reporters working for the same ministries.

The more the system of the government and the Diet, the Japanese legislature, became sophisticated, the more the role of the press was recognized by ministries and political parties. In order to elicit favorable news coverage from the press, government officials and politicians tried to keep a cozy relationship with journalists. For example, the ministers, bureau chiefs, and other key officials of the administration started offering lavish entertainment to the club members several times a year. Journalists, in exchange for such lavish treatment, had to give up pursuing individuality in their journalistic endeavors. Rather, the reporters formulated club pacts to promote mutual interests, and practiced self-censorship. News releases were given equally to all members of a press club covering a ministry. In many cases reporters wrote stories together, then shared the product of their collective news gathering and reporting. The press clubs made it easy for everybody. The reporters didn’t have to worry about being scooped, and the ministries and the parties didn’t have to worry about undesirable reports reaching the public.

The most conspicuous characteristic of the Japanese press club system, according to many researchers, is the press clubs' exclusion of other journalists. The press club system is often described as an information cartel (McCargo, 2003). The clubs in general limit membership to employees of major newspapers that are member institutions of the Japan Newspaper Publishers' and Editors' Association (NSK), consequently excluding small and medium-sized newspapers, industrial newspapers, news magazines, and freelance journalists. This exclusive membership in the clubs has been the main target of criticisms directed at the press club system. Supporters of the club system, mostly Japanese journalists, editors, and newspaper managers, say that the clubs are beneficial because they create a stable, convenient environment in which to work, limit control by sources; reduce "excessive" competition; and provide a quick, efficient, and economical way to get information to the public. However, by limiting the access of other journalists to the news sources and by monopolizing news sources, press clubs violate the most respected principle of journalism: the free market place of ideas. Dave Butts, the former Bloomberg Business News Tokyo Bureau Chief once made this critical remark: "This isn't a matter of government officials not inviting certain reporters to a briefing... It's a matter of journalists deciding to exclude fellow journalists" (Freeman, 2000, p. 161). The exact number of press clubs in Japan is not known. Kawai Ryosuke, a media scholar, has estimated that there were as many as 1,000 clubs nationwide in the late 1990s, while Japan Newspaper Publishers' and Editors' Association (NSK) documents generally use the considerably lower figure of 400. The exclusive Press Club System has been accused of acting like an "information cartel," and of making journalism a "lapdog" instead of a watchdog (Krauss, 1998, p. 689). This is one of the reasons for the widespread public distrust of the media in Japanese society in general (Abe, 2004). With respect to the distinctive journalistic culture, Merrill (1994) notes that because of the Confucian tradition, the emphasis in journalistic culture in Japan is not on individualistic values but rather on social conformity, group cooperation, and "soft authoritarianism."

The South Korean Press System

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the journalistic culture of South Korea is no more than a reflection of the recent history of the country. South Korea has gone through multiple historic social and political changes, which subsequently spawned numerous tensions and turmoil. Journalism has been both a major player and an agent of these tensions, and its culture has mirrored the recent history of the country. Briefly speaking, Korea was annexed as a Japanese "protectorate" from 1910 to 1945. Japanese surrender to Allied Forces on August 15, 1945 brought Korea back to independence. The jubilee of liberation didn't last long, as the ideological tension between the north and the south became apparent. At the end of World War II, Korea was split in two; the south was in the hands of the US military administration under the direction of General Douglas MacArthur, while, in the North, the Soviet Union backed a Stalinist regime and created the North Korean Peoples' Army, equipped with Russian tanks and artillery. The Soviet Union and China played an important role in the preparation of North Korea for the war. The two parts of the country fought a war in 1950 that became a harbinger of the cold war era. South Korea was supported by the US and UN forces. China intervened the war by sending its troops to help North Korea. The country was divided on the 30th parallel in 1953 as a result of an armistice between the UN forces and North Korea (Hickey, 1999; Sandler, 1999).

In South Korea, a 1961 *coup d'état* replaced a short-lived libertarian administration with a military regime led by General Park Jung-hee, who was the dictator of the country until 1989, when he was assassinated by the Head of the Korea Central Intelligence Agency. Another *coup d'état* by General Chun Doo-hwan filled the political leadership void caused by the death of Park Jung-Hee. Chun and Roh Tae-Woo, a protégé of Chun, took turns in the presidency until 1993. Since then, South Korea has seen peaceful democratic political transitions. Helped by economic growth, South Korea has since become a relatively stable nation, while the presence of North Korea and its

potential threat is still a lingering issue. Divisions between political conservatives and liberals, a remnant of the decades-old ideological confrontation between the North and the South, is another contentious issue in the politics of the country.

The journalistic culture has been greatly influenced by the authoritarian social culture that has dominated South Korea. Military regimes put restrictions on the press to suppress questions about the political legitimacy of their regimes. For example, during Chun's presidency, it was common practice that journalistic institutions had to follow press guidelines issued by the Ministry of Culture and Information on how events should or should not be reported. Additionally, secret agents visited newsrooms in an attempt to keep certain news coverage from being published. Not only can an authoritarian culture be found in politics, but the exclusive authority of the owners of journalistic institutions over the content of news is an issue. Scholars have argued that more efforts should be concentrated on strengthening the professional freedom and independence of journalists from company executives' attempts to influence the news (Lee, 1997; Youm, 1994).

Authoritarian culture coupled with the relatively privileged status of journalists in South Korea can explain the dominant role of the Korean version of the press club system in South Korea. The South Korean press clubs, or *Kijadan* in Korean, are very similar to the Japanese counterparts and functions in the South Korean press system as the main conduit of news gathering and pooling. A press club can decide, "sometimes through a senior member acting as a liaison with the government, what news to focus on, what to play down or, in some cases, what to suppress" (Onish, 2004). The long presence of authoritarian regimes in the recent decades and the press club system explain why there appear relatively monotonous representations of news in South Korean news media (Choi, 2003).

One commonality can be found in the three countries' press ecologies: their socio-cultural systems tend to prioritize journalism and journalists over other institutions of society, with the result that journalistic institutions have a greater influence in these

countries than in other Western countries. It can be said that the culture of Confucianism, collective thinking, authoritarian cultural traditions, and strong governmental control of the social system have contributed to the shaping of the collective cultures of the journalistic community. The cohesion of the journalistic community, in turn, helped maintain the influence of journalism in each society.

Constitutional Guarantees of Press Freedom

Japan, China, and South Korea protect the rights to press freedom based upon the constitutions of their own countries. Article twenty-one of the Japanese constitution guarantees to all citizens “freedom of assembly and association as well as speech, press and all other forms of expression.” In addition, it provides that “no censorship shall be maintained, nor shall the secrecy of any means of communication be violated” (Prime Minister of Japan and his Cabinet, 1947). Japan adopted the current constitution in 1947 with the support of General Headquarters (GHQ), the governing body of Japan during the occupation by Allied Forces. This constitution has been criticized by many as having been “imposed” on Japan by occupation forces. Therefore, the various rights granted to citizens under this constitution are not generally seen as having been actively won from the State by the people as the result of a democratic revolution (Ward, 2008). Japanese citizens did not enjoy a right of freedom of expression before 1947. From the Meiji Restoration in 1868 to the unconditional surrender in World War II in 1945, constitutional rights under the Meiji Constitution were subject to legislative abrogation.

Chinese citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech and freedom of the press under the “Constitution of The People’s Republic of China.” Article thirty-five of Chapter two, “The Rights of Citizens,” broadly provides for free expression: “Citizens of the People’s Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration” (The People's Republic of China, 1982). The Constitution was originally adopted in 1949 in the wake of the Chinese communists’ rise

to power. It has since been revised five times. Although freedom of speech continues to expand in practice in China, many have pointed out limitations of freedom of speech clearly visible in the Chinese political system and society. In the Constitution, for example, it is made clear that the state maintains a strong role in controlling all kinds of public expression. Chapter one, Article twenty-two states: “The state promotes the development of art and literature, the press, radio and television broadcasting, publishing and distribution services, libraries, museums, cultural centers and other cultural undertakings that serve the people and socialism, and it sponsors mass cultural activities” (The People's Republic of China, 1982).

The Constitution of South Korea guarantees freedom of speech and of the press as a right. Article twenty-one states “All citizens shall enjoy freedom of speech and the press and freedom of assembly and association” (Constitutional Court of Korea, 1987). The Constitution was promulgated in 1948 and has since been amended nine times. The history of relatively frequent revisions is a sign of political instability the South Korean society had to endure. As for constitutional rights, *coup d'etat* regimes severely restricted basic human rights. The 1972 amendment, for example, did not guarantee personal liberty. It denied freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, publication, and assembly (Sohn, 1989). Press freedom in South Korea made a great improvement in 1980s as the result of democratization movements. Youm (2002) notes that “South Korea’s consolidation as a functioning democracy since 1987 is epitomized by the remarkable change of its news media from an authoritarian press to a libertarian system” (p. 123).

Significance and Contribution of the Study

This study discusses collective memory and journalism, and analyzes the discursive representation and construction of memories of World War II carried out by three mainstream English language newspapers in East Asia. The examination of news texts will reveal the ways in which memories are transmitted, reified, and constructed in

social and political discourses. The most devastating aspect of memory has been its political use. It is said in the three countries that politicians have taken advantage of war memories to win over public support and legitimize their political interests (Dower, 1995; Kristof, 1998a; Seraphim, 2006).

Media discourse of memory is particularly problematic considering the powerful influence the news media exert. The impact of the mass media in East Asian countries is even more powerful than it is in other countries. The fact that the *The Yomiuri Shimbun* boasts the largest circulation in the world symbolizes its reach in Japanese society (Cho & Lacy, 2002). The situation is the same in South Korea. The mass media have repeatedly reminded audiences of the importance of national unity and identity. China, as is widely known, maintains a strong, state-governed media system. In addition, the three countries have been known for their strong nationalism and for animosity towards each other in international politics (Matthews, 2003).

Analyzing the historical origins of the three sites of memory and the discourse practices of memory in the mass media could contribute to understanding how and why memory is a continuous source of confrontation in Asia. This study can also make a contribution to memory scholarship, especially media representations of memory and news media as sites of memory. From a journalism studies perspective, this is a study with a culturological approach (Schudson, 1989). Schudson (1989) argues that all societies contain within them belief system and cultural frameworks that guide journalistic judgements. Overall, this study is a case study that compares different countries and their prominent newspapers. Although academic research might not be able to suggest solutions to problems that have existed for a long time, this study can enhance public understanding of the dynamics of war memory in national and international politics.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized in six chapters. Chapter I contains a brief discussion of nationalistic fervor in East Asia and its historical origins. The recent media coverage on Japan, China, and South Korea sets up the social and political context of the study. The chapter also introduces the three historical controversies (the three sites of memory), the theoretical framework, methodology, and journalistic cultures of the three East Asian countries. Each of the three countries has developed a unique journalistic culture closely connected to its modernization and formation of its political ideology as well as structure. The unique culture of the journalism in each country has much to do with the representation and construction of war memories in each country.

Chapter II focuses on the detailed historical backgrounds of the three sites of memory. Since this study discusses collective/cultural memory, it is crucial to understand the cultural and historical background of the “war of memory.” Whereas the animosities among the three countries have existed for a long time, the relatively recent history of Japanese modernization and invasion of the two neighboring countries is what has spawned the continuing controversies over historical issues. Based upon that premise, Chapter II provides a detailed summary of Japanese modernization, its spiritual customs, and its invasion of the two countries. The three sites of memory and surrounding controversies are another focus in Chapter II. In preparation for an effective analysis, it is necessary to examine the origins and developments of the three sites of memory.

Chapter III is an explication of the theoretical grounding. The theories of collective memory and cultural memory are explained in the framework of media representation and construction. Memories are the product of active interpretation and construction in a particular time and space. Memory is a reservoir in which not only historical facts but also a variety of interests and desires are stored. What activates discursive remembering is usually political interest. The politics of memory is the struggle for identity. According to memory studies scholars, media outlets are agents of

memory. Media outlets articulate and clarify memories to serve the interests of the present. The theory of witness and testimony, representation, and the active contribution of the media in interpretation of memory are discussed. At the end of Chapter III, four research questions are presented based on the theoretical framework and socio-cultural context of the three sites of memory.

Chapter IV describes two closely connected methodological approaches: 1) An interpretive policy analysis that examines official stances, and 2) A modified critical discourse analysis grounded in theories of collective memory and informed by historical understanding of the three sites of memory. The interpretive policy analysis is incorporated in the modified critical discourse analysis. The chapter explains the necessity for examining the policy statements of governments. The critical discourse analysis in this study is aimed at scrutinizing media texts to discern meaningful discourses and extract themes from those results of communicative events (news articles). Through this method, the meanings of texts and the role of media communication in shaping the socio-political climate of a society can be explored, for they influence media representations. This chapter also explains the process of text retrieval and the objective details of texts. The rationale for selecting a certain period of time for the analysis is provided.

Chapter V, the analysis chapter, is organized under four thematic discourses based upon the theories of collective memory: Reconstruction and Remembrance; Memory and Identity; National Unity and Newspapers; Remembering to Forget. News texts from the three newspapers are organized and analyzed under each thematic discourse. There are also subsets of the larger themes. They are, to name a few: Politics of Stigmatizing, Normalization of Traumatic Memory, and National Memorial and Soul Searching. At the end of the chapter, the analysis is reorganized to specifically answer the four research questions of the study.

Chapter VI concludes this study and focuses on the politics of memory and the important role of journalism as an agent of memory. The three controversies discussed have been continuous topics of domestic and international disputes for many years. The reason for such prolonged debate seemingly without any exit is that the three historical issues are used as political leverage through which different political groups and countries either secure public support or take a dominant position in politics. Ironically, actual war memories and the potentiality of reflexive remembering have been lost in the midst of political debates over memory. Memory is constructed because people believe that memory is lost, and that they are threatened (Nora, 1989, p. 24). People construct memories to remain secure and protected at the present time. When a certain memory does not serve the present political situation, that memory can be lost from public discourse. Limitations of this study, and directions for future research follow the discussion.

CHAPTER II
THE ASIA-PACIFIC WAR: THE SOURCE OF
MEMORIES

The Nomenclature of War

The history of war is always a contested field with a multiplicity of interpretations and viewpoints because it is remembering the dead. This is true of World War II in Asia and the Pacific. For example, even naming what many scholars have called the Asia and Pacific Theater of World War II has not been an easy task for historians, because the nomenclature of war itself is political (L. E. Lee, 1998; Murray & Millett, 2000). In fact, the World War II battles that took place in Asia and the Pacific at large have been called several different names. The term “World War II” encompasses multiple wars that occurred between 1939 and 1945. It was a global military conflict that involved most of the world. In contrast, the term “Asia-Pacific War” is a relatively recent formulation largely proposed by scholars from a range of academic domains. Some Japanese scholars use the term “Fifteen-Year War” to emphasize Japan’s aggression in Asian countries and the Pacific (Gallicchio, 2007, pp. 6-7). The crux of this designation is its focus on Japan’s attack on China. It downgrades the naval conflict and instead follows the soldiers on the ground. “Fifteen years” refers to the period between the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and the end of World War II in 1945. The Manchurian Incident of 1931 was the beginning of the Japanese invasion of China (Jansen, 2000).

Japanese nationalists have persistently used the term “Greater East Asia War.” This was chosen by the Japanese cabinet in 1941 to refer to both the war with the Western Allies and the ongoing war in China. The term “Greater East Asia War,” as the word “great” suggests, was a valorization of the war, and was used as a propaganda slogan by the Japanese. This term, consequently, has been a major point of severe criticism from neighboring Asian countries every time the term has appeared in public

discourse or media reports. The politically charged “Greater East Asia War” was prohibited in official documents during the period of Allied Occupation and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE). A new term, the “Pacific War,” replaced it officially (Coox, 1988; Shillony, 1981). However, critics have also pointed out that there is an attempt in the label, “Pacific War”, to justify Japanese actions by implying that Japan’s real battle was against Western imperialism, including the United States and multiple European countries that had earlier occupied South Asian regions.

In contrast, official Chinese media tend to use several titles for the conflict. “The Anti-Japanese War” is a term used to focus on Chinese struggles against Japanese atrocities. In the US the title, “World War II,” is commonly used to call the larger war, which also included the war against Japan. Americans tend to view the war against Japan as part of the larger war against fascism (Gallicchio, 2007, pp. 6-7). After careful consideration, it was decided in this study to use the term “Asia-Pacific War,” because it reflects the most recent trend in academic research, and it is politically neutral. It is assumed that national nomenclatures for the Asia-Pacific War will be reflected in newspapers of the three countries. Whereas most scholars generally agree that the beginning of the Asia-Pacific war was the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in September 18, 1931, it is crucial to understand that there existed a social, political context that drove East Asia into the decades of war. As in many wars, the origin of the Asia-Pacific war is ingrained in the nineteenth and twentieth century history of modernization in the region.

Historical Context of the Asia-Pacific War

Japan’s Modernization and Empire Building

Before it opened its harbors to the Western powers, Japanese feudal society was maintained by a series of Bakufus, hereditary military dictatorships. The Bakufu system depended upon the peasantry for its revenue and looked to its samurai for protection. This late feudalism was one of the most conscious attempts to freeze society in a rigid

hierarchical order (Norman, 1940). During the nineteenth century, Tokugawa Bakufu, the last Bakufu regime that had ruled the country since 1603, was facing an enormous pressure inside and outside the country. Domestically, it was faced with a number of natural calamities and social unrest that exposed the ineptitude of the regime. From the outside, Tokugawa Bakufu's isolationist foreign policy was repeatedly tested by Western empires, which were looking for harbors and commercial footholds in the western Pacific. They forced the country to open its door. Japanese ports at that time were closed to all but a few Dutch and Chinese traders. On July 8, 1853 a fleet of American warships, commanded by Commodore Perry, arrived at Uraga harbor near Edo (modern Tokyo), forcibly opening up Japan. While France and Britain were most active in maintaining the newly established unequal treaty system in China, the United States, after opening Japan in 1853-4, pressed its demands on the Bakufu and was finally rewarded in 1858, when Townsend Harris negotiated the first commercial treaty between Japan and a Western power. Other Western empires later imposed unfair treaties on Japan and obtained special privileges from them (Duus, 1988; Norman, 1940).

The Tokugawa Bakufu fell a decade after Townsend Harris had his treaty. Its fall meant the end of seven hundred years of warrior rule in Japan. When the Tokugawa Bakufu lost its power in 1868, the emperor was restored to the supreme position. The emperor took the name "Meiji" as his reign name. Oligarchic leaders who led the restoration decided to modernize the nation by introducing a capitalist economy, and by striving to obtain foreign markets and colonies. The struggle to regain its sovereignty forced Japan to embark on policies of centralization and institutional innovation in order to build a modern nation-state. This involved the basic restructuring of domestic society. Historians have grouped these developments under the term "Meiji Restoration" (Jansen, 2000, p. 294).

In 1894, nearly a decade after having decided to catch up with the advanced Western nations by joining them in the competition for Asian colonies, the oligarchic

leaders declared war on China for the purpose of occupying and controlling Korea, the nearest less-developed country. This move brought Japan into conflict with China, which had traditionally treated Korea as its tributary state. This led to the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895. Japan's military, now equipped with imported arms and ships, defeated the Chinese army in Korea and invaded parts of China. China lost and ceded Taiwan (then Formosa), along with Liaotung Peninsula of southern Manchuria and the Pescadores Islands. China agreed to pay a huge sum of indemnity and later signed an unequal commercial treaty that allowed Japanese ships to navigate the Yangtze River and Japanese businessmen to operate factories in the inland and coastal treaty ports (Bix, 2000; Gluck & Graubard, 1992). Japan declared Korea its "protectorate" in 1905, successfully taking away sovereignty and independence from the country, before annexing it in 1910. This process of Japan's colonizing Korea did not meet any serious opposition from the international community. Japan also engaged in a war against Russia in 1904-1905 that ended as a stunning win for Japan. After this war, Japan extended its colonial presence, gaining control over parts of Manchuria and the southern half of the Sakhalin Islands (Dudden, 2005).

World War I afforded Japan the opportunity to take German-controlled territory in Asia. As a latecomer great power, Germany had acquired several island groups in the Pacific that it could no longer defend. Treaty-allied Britain and Japan determined that Japan would inherit control of the former German-held islands north of the equator – the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana Islands (Roy, 2009). Within Japan there was opposition to Japanese expansion, but this was quickly repressed. Many thought that Japan had to emulate the Euro-American powers and build its own empire. Although there were emerging liberal and democratic trends during the period 1912-1925, including the expansion of the right of most males to vote, the Emperor system, patriotism, and anti-communism prevented any serious internal resistance to Japan's imperial expansion. Japan faced serious problems both at home and abroad in the late 1920s. Chiang Kai-

shek's Chinese Nationalist Party troops began to move north, threatening Japan's control in parts of Manchuria and in Korea. Also, the worldwide depression that began in 1929 severely affected Japan's economy, particularly its exports. In spite of these factors, however, the Japanese military became even more aggressive in pursuit of territorial acquisitions.

Japan's Aggression against Asian Countries (1931-1941)

During the night of September 18, 1931, Japanese Kwantung Army officers detonated an explosion near the Japanese-controlled South Manchurian Railway line at Liut'iaokou (north of Mukden) and blamed it on the soldiers of Chang Hsueh-liang, the warlord of Manchuria, and armed Chinese bandits (Bix, 2000). The Japanese Kwantung Army was an army group of the Imperial Japanese Army that controlled the Kwantung Leased Territory, which was located in the southern part of the Liaodong Peninsula in Inner Manchuria (northeast China). After accusing Chinese soldiers of the explosion, the Japanese Kwantung Army invaded Manchuria, then went on to establish a "puppet state," Manchukuo ("State of Manchuria"), in Manchuria in 1932. Manchuria was used as a testing ground for imperialistic industrialization and economic development (Young, 1998). The League of Nations subsequently criticized Japan for its aggression. Japan responded by withdrawing from the League in 1933, and the Japanese Army expanded its control in northern China.

In July 1937, all-out war finally began between Japan and China. It began with a small military clash at the Marco Polo Bridge in the southern suburbs of Beijing. The truth behind the incident, especially the question of who fired the first shot at the Japanese troops engaged in night maneuvers there, is one of the biggest remaining controversies of the 1930s (Bix, 2000; Hata, 1988). Despite stiff Chinese resistance, Japanese forces took Shanghai and, in early December, Nanking, China's capital at that time. Japanese occupation and the war subsequently led to a range of war crimes. During

its occupation of Nanking, Japanese soldiers reportedly killed tens of thousands of captured soldiers and civilians (Chang, 1997). Women and young girls were raped, and children were otherwise brutally treated. “The “Rape of Nanking,” as it was called in 1937-38, became known the world over because of the magnitude of the atrocities committed against civilians” (Wakabayashi, 2007, p. 47). By 1938, the major cities and railways of northern, central, and southern China came under occupation by the Japanese army.

In 1936, Japan allied with Germany and Italy in the Anti-Comintern Pact, which brought in Nazi ideologues who gained many Japanese supporters and injected Nazi-style anti-Semitic arguments into mainstream public discussions. Thereafter, all Japanese governments manipulated the popular image of the Jews, not so much to persecute them as to strengthen domestic ideological conformity. Japan’s Anti-Comintern alliance and its invasion of the rest of China in 1937 set it on a collision course with other imperial powers, especially Great Britain and the United States.

In 1939, with Germany at the height of its power relative to Britain, France, and Poland, Hitler invaded Poland, starting a new European war in an attempt to seize control of the European continent. Two days later, Britain and France intervened, declaring war on Germany, and on September 8, President Roosevelt, Hitler’s implacable enemy, proclaimed a state of limited national emergency. In Asia, Japan began to look to the rest of Asia to secure an independent supply of natural resources, particularly oil from the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). Japan rationalized its expansion by propagating the idea of liberating peoples in Asia from the domination of Western imperialism and by creating a “Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.” On September 27, 1940, Japanese representatives in Berlin signed the Tripartite Pact with their counterparts in Germany and Italy. Under the terms of pact, Japan recognized the leadership of Germany and Italy in “the new order in Europe” while they recognized Japan’s dominance in “Greater East Asia.” The three powers pledged “to assist one another with all political, economic, and

military means” if “attacked by a power at present not involved in the European War or in the Sino-Japanese conflict.” This last article was intended to check Britain and keep the United States out of the war (Bix, 2000, P. 380)

The Pacific Offensive (1941-1945)

The German attack on Russia in June 1941 served as something of a catalyst for affairs in East Asia. With commitments to both countries, Japan decided to do nothing. Distressed as it was with the German action, it was relieved that Russia could no longer threaten it in Asia. Now Japan was free to move south to obtain the coveted resources in Indochina and to threaten the British position in Singapore. When the Imperial Japanese forces began to move into northern Indochina in 1940-41, other countries began to act. The United States imposed economic sanctions against Japan. When the Japanese high command insisted on the occupation of the rest of Indochina, the United States froze all Japanese assets. War in the Pacific came after the Japanese army had virtually assumed control of the Japanese nation. General Hideki Tōjō, who was also the War Minister, was in control of the army. Having served in the Kwantung Army, Tōjō was the epitome of the Japanese militarist to Western observers (Bix, 2000; Duus, 1988; Jansen, 2000).

Once Japan decided to win control over Asia, it would have to confront the United States. On December 7, 1941, Imperial Japanese forces attacked US bases at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and the Philippines. At the same time, Japanese forces also began a massive assault against Commonwealth forces in Hong Kong and Malaya. Subsequently, Japan succeeded in establishing control throughout most of Southeast Asia. This continued until Emperor Hirohito announced an unconditional surrender to Allied Forces on August 15, 1945, following the American use of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9.

War Crimes and The International Military Tribunal for the
Far East (Tokyo Tribunal)

The Asia-Pacific War left many grim memories in the region. It was Japanese colonialism and militarism in the early to mid-twentieth century that brought about the Japanese occupation of Asian countries, including parts of China and the Korean peninsula. Japanese occupation and the wartime atrocities subsequently led to a range of war crimes. Included in those war crimes was the Japanese military's system of sex slaves (also euphemistically called "Comfort Women"). This was the forcible conscription of women from the occupied territories of Korea, China, Taiwan, the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and other Asian nations, to serve the sexual needs of Japanese soldiers and officials. Some of these "Comfort Women" were girls as young as twelve years old. Of the approximately 200,000 victims, about 150,000 perished during or immediately after the war. The Japanese government and military administration reportedly established a system of so-called "comfort stations," although the Japanese government never acknowledged the existence of such a system during the war. Additionally, there was the Rape of Nanking. The Rape of Nanking is considered among the worst atrocities in history (Jeans, 2005; Wakabayashi, 2007). These notorious offenses against humanity took center stage at the International Military Tribunal for the Far East where Chinese victims and foreign witnesses testified. China continues to emphasize this issue today by seeking out more and more victims and witnesses.

War crimes which Imperial Japan committed also included conducting medical experiments on humans for purposes of perfecting chemical and biological weapons (Selden, 1995). The Japanese government sponsored the development and experimentation of biological and chemical warfare agents. Under the leadership of Ishii Shiro, Unit 731 began to test and produce biological weapons at Pingfang, Manchuria. Many POWs and civilians were murdered in experiments. Bacteria-filled and chemical bombs were used against Chinese civilians. It is estimated that between 600,000

and two million shells filled with poisonous chemicals still remain buried in China (Togo, 2008).

Forced conscriptions of people from the occupied territories affected the stability of those regions tremendously. People were forced into Japanese military service and slave labor for private corporations. Japan's treatment of prisoners of war was atrocious. The number of American and Commonwealth POWs who died in captivity under the Nazi and Italian regimes was four percent, compared to twenty-seven percent of those held by Japan. Many POWs were forced to toil under inhumane conditions. They were often beaten and denied medical care, and many were executed or died from diseases or malnutrition. In all, nearly twenty million people in China and other Asian countries died during the war (Preston, 1998).

After World War II, the Allied Forces prosecuted Japanese and Nazi military personnel and civilian collaborators who were alleged to have committed war crimes against Allied soldiers and noncombatants. In Japan, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE), henceforth referred to as Tokyo Tribunal, was held between 1946 and 1948 (Jørgensen, 2003). Below is a description of the three categories of war crimes established by the Allied Forces and the United Nations War Crimes Commission in 1945, and applied by both the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals:

A: Crimes against Peace: namely, planning, preparation, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment...

B: War Crimes: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations include, but not limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labor or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity:

C: Crimes against Humanity: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution

of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal...(United Nations, 1945).

The C category was specially created in order to prosecute Nazi war criminals who had committed crimes against their own citizens, most notably Jews (Tanaka, 1996). On November 12, 1948, of the twenty-eight Japanese military leaders charged with Class-A war crimes, twenty-five were found guilty. Among these twenty-five, seven, including General Hideki Tōjō, the commander in chief of Japanese imperial forces, were sentenced to death and hanged on December 23, 1948. The Tokyo Tribunal fell far short of effectively investigating and punishing Japanese war crimes, however. As Seraphim (2006) notes, the Tribunal was “riddled with legal, political, and procedural problems from the beginning...and an extraordinary show of power and politics that smacked of victor’s justice” (p. 6). Moreover, the Allied trials did not investigate some major Japanese war crimes, such as the production and use of biological weapons in Manchuria and the government operated “Comfort Women” system (Seraphim, 2006).

War of Memories

Decades later, China, Korea, and Japan developed a long-running war of memory. This war was triggered by historical revisionism and political opportunism: the use of the memories of the Asia-Pacific War for domestic and international political ends. The issue at stake has been whether each country accepts the veracity of historical information, and how they interpret the past in terms of the current socio-political situation. Japanese victimization of other Asian countries has remained controversial among different groups and countries. In Japan, questions of war memory and postwar responsibility have been a part of public life in Japan from the end of the war into the twenty-first century. Seraphim (2006) observes:

It is certainly not true that Japanese have no sense of guilt, that there is a culture of amnesia, or that they are politically immature. Rather war memory developed together with – and as a part of – particular and divergent approaches to postwar democracy in the aftermath of war...War memory remained fragmented and

contested on the political map of democracy for decades, yet it was closely woven into the political culture (p. 4).

Politically liberal groups in Japan, including political parties, have engaged in advancing critical perspectives on Japan's aggression during the Asia-Pacific war. In contrast, critical approaches have been constantly imperiled by the reactionary responses of conservative political forces, especially those seeking to preserve various kinds of nationalistic nostalgia. For example, some conservative groups in Japan argue that Japan was a victim of World War II because it suffered from the American atomic bombing. At the same time, the Japanese people have become gradually accustomed to seeing war memory argued by special interests through representative politics (Conrad, 2003; Fujitani et al., 2001; Seraphim, 2006).

In Korea, the memory of occupation and perceived humiliation is still a very active component in social politics. Although less fragmented than Japan's social landscape of war memory, war memories have been a recurring theme in social discourses. For example, the former Roh Moo-hyun administration, which was considered the most liberal administration in modern South Korean history, established the "Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea," in an attempt to investigate and reconcile human rights violation cases that remained unresolved for decades. "The Special Law to Redeem Pro-Japanese Collaborators' Property" was passed in the National Assembly under the same administration, paving the way for the "Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborator's Property," which has been put into place. As for China, over the past decade, there has been a dramatic surge of interest in Nanking and other atrocities committed by the Japanese in wartime China. This has taken place both in China and in Chinese diaspora communities, especially in North America (Fogel, 2007).

Such remembrances are signs that war memories, historical revisionism, and attempts to redress problematic interpretations of the past have shaped what Pierre Nora called "sites of memory" (*lieux de mémoire*) in the social discourses of each country and

East Asia as a whole. As Halbwachs (1992b) argued, institutions such as families, local communities, academic institutions, and nation-states are the contexts within which we make sense of the past. Contemporary historians also increasingly find that histories of nations are also histories of nations engaged in acts of remembering (and forgetting). In other words, how they think about themselves through time defines their past (Fujitani et al., 2001, pp. 16-17).

Shintō and the Spiritual Tradition of Japan

To understand the social and cultural context of historical issues in Japanese domestic politics, it is important to address the symbolic presence of the Yasukuni Shrine and Shintō in modern Japanese society. The Yasukuni Shrine is a Shintō shrine, and Shintō was once called “State Shintō,” a concept that describes the affiliation of Shintō with the Japanese nation-state after the Meiji Restoration in 1868. The status of Shintō in Japanese social politics and its contribution to the building of imperial Japan is particularly important since it provides important information about the cultural dimension of the politics of memory. The Yasukuni Shrine has been a central but very controversial site of Japanese social memory (Saaler & Schwentker, 2008), and the significance of the shrine should be examined through the lens of Shintō and the Japanese religious tradition.

Shintō as a Cultural Property

Shintō (神道) is the native religion of Japan. As the official translation of Shintō, “the Ways of the Gods,” suggests, Shintō is a religion in which many gods, as well as the spirits of revered ancestors and national heroes are enshrined together, and worshipped in specific locations (Thal, 2005). Hardacre (1989) provides a conventional definition of Shintō: “it is an ancient cult directed to native deities called *kami*, or gods, and included among these are deified emperors and heroes, spirits of nature, and deities of Japanese mythology” (p. 10). Kasulis (2004) points out that even Japanese experience difficulty

when they need to explain Shintō and *kami* to foreigners. According to him, the Japanese word for “religion” (*shūkyō*) is not an old one. Until a little over a century ago, there was no established word for expressing or even thinking of the notion of “religion” as it is used in the Western world. Thal (2005) expresses the same observation. To her, the Japanese word *kami* is “notoriously difficult to define” (p. 2). Thal points out that Shintō’s basic values and patterns of behavior have filtered into Japanese culture and that Shintō deity that applies to some of Japanese’s typical ideas, values, and practices.

Shintō and Buddhism

Understanding Shintō in the framework of Japanese culture and tradition requires a discussion about its relation to Buddhism and other religious practices. Scholars have found that until the end of the nineteenth century, people in Japan generally did not worry about whether they were practicing Buddhism or Shintō “since their syncretistic union had made them so interdependent in their worldviews” (Kasulis, 2004, p. 137). At the same time, there was no comprehensive organizational structure of Shintō. Hadacre (1989) observes that there were three conceptual and existential “layers” of Shintō during the Tokugawa Bakufu Era (1603-1868). Shintō’s first layer was constituted by the ritual practices of the imperial court, which maintained a formal schedule of rituals for both Buddha and *kami*. For example, the Imperial family, helped by Shintō and Buddhist priests, performed many Shintō as well as Buddhist rites. In addition, Masters of Yin and Yang were also employed at court to supervise other imperial rites.

Secondly, there were great shrines, which were large enough to constitute an autonomous system to maintain their financial and organizational structure. Also extensive pilgrimages popularized the cult of *kami*. As Thal (2005) shows in her book about the pilgrimage to Konpira, increasing popularity of pilgrimages meant increased political and economic power for larger shrines. Similalry, Reader (2005) suggests that the pilgrimage was a kind of cult in which multiple rituals were affiliated with various

religious institutions. Buddhist priests participated widely in shrine rites and sometimes led villagers on pilgrimages. It is notable that many Japanese politicians have called their visits to Yasukuni Shrine “pilgrimages.”

The third layer was the widespread small shrines throughout the country. Even a small village had a small shrine and usually seniors of the village took responsibility to maintain rituals performed in those shrines. In those highly localized forms of the cult, there was no clear distinction between Shintō, Buddhism, and territorial tutelary deities. In summary, Shintō before Meiji Restoration can be considered a traditional religious act in which various types of spiritual deities and *kami* are included and worshipped.

Meiji Restoration and Shintō: An Invented Tradition

The modern shrine system assumed its basic form in the early Meiji period. Meiji Restoration (1868) brought unification to the landscape of Japanese politics. The Restoration also ended the era of hereditary social status, and gave the people freedom of residence and occupation. Japan opened the door wider to the Western world, expediting its economic and social development to become a modernized and westernized society. From an economic perspective, the Restoration was a catalyst toward industrialization and social transformation. As factories were built in urban areas, peasant class people had to migrate from the rural to urban areas seeking jobs. The country also began public education and military conscription similar to Western countries. The Restoration was a repressive modernization, a type of modernization that can be found in histories of many other nations such as Italy, Turkey, Germany, and, later, South Korea.

Meiji Restoration was a significant historic era in terms not only of political unification and social structure but also of Japanese religious life as a whole. As an example, the introduction of the Gregorian calendar system symbolized the change driven by the Restoration. As a result of its adoption, the cycle of annual rites, which had been based on the lunar calendar system, began slowly to undergo consequential changes. In

addition, the decline in the rural population caused the gradual disappearance of communal celebrations, where peasants sought the blessing of the *kami* for abundant crops and harvests (Inoue, 2003)

The most important impact of Meiji Restoration on Shintō and the landscape of the religious lives of Japanese was the establishment of “State Shintō.” The term “State Shintō” signifies “the relationship of state patronage and advocacy existing between the Japanese state and the religious practice known as Shintō between 1868 and 1945” (Hardacre, 1989, p. 4). During this period, Shintō acquired stability of structure as it developed in parallel with, and in the closest possible connection to, the emerging modern emperor state (p. 159). Shintō of this period showed another dimension of Shintō; “the Shintō of nationalism, imperial reverence, and ethnocentricity” (Kasulis, 2004). In that sense, Shintō is an “invented tradition” (Hardacre, 1989; Hobsbawm, 1990b). Shintō is a clear example of state sponsorship of a religion, and in some respects, the Japanese state can be said to have created Shintō as its official tradition. How was this invented tradition created?

Creation of the Shintō Tradition

The Meiji era was the period of change. Meiji Restoration constituted a pivotal point in Japanese history. The new government overhauled the bureaucratic system, established a constitution and an elected parliament, produced a highly educated population free of feudal class restrictions, and built a powerful army and navy. In addition, the newly established regime wanted to create political authenticity and harmony by directing people to a new tradition of spirituality. Inventing a religious tradition was their choice. Nelson (2000) summarizes this point clearly:

[A]fter the revolution in 1868, which ended centuries of feudal rule, the new Meiji government saw this ancient topomantic tradition as another means to help legitimate its authenticity and further centralize its power. In an effort to systematize widely practiced land divination and land-calming rites, it wrested sect-specific rituals away from Buddhist and Shintō organizations alike.

The Meiji social architects were following the lead of Aizawa Yasushi, who in 1824 proposed in somewhat Machiavellian terms that the best way for the government to clarify the national essence (*kokutai*) to the people (and make them respectively submit without asking why) was to devise government-sponsored religious rituals that played upon their awe of the *kami* (p. 65).

State Shintō technically never existed as an institution independent. However it drove the abolition and creation of institutions (Kasulis, 2004). When it comes to abolition, the most symbolic move of the Meiji government was the separation between Shintō and Buddhism. To set up Shintō as a pseudo-government outlet that performed new state rituals, the new government wanted to dissolve the institutional overlaps between Shintō and Buddhism. As a result, every Buddhist symbol was removed from shrines. On the other hand, the resurrection of Jingikan was a good example of the creation of institutions. Jingikan was the ancient office in charge of all state affairs relating to the *kami*. By reestablishing Jingikan, the government aimed to centralize control over shrines. It was this government outlet that carried out the separation between Shintō and Buddhism. By contrast, Shrines were declared as “sites for the performance of state ritual” (Inoue, 2003, p. 163). By this declaration, state patronage of Shintō was officiated.

State patronage of Shintō was not always consistent. Rather, there were misgivings and negotiations in government and among Shintō priests. For example, in the early Meiji period, government officials used Shintō priests to preach the ideology of the new state. Shrines and their priests were frequently called upon to play an active part in a variety of propaganda campaigns. Accordingly, Shintō priests enjoyed social and financial privileges as they occupied high bureaucratic offices. However, Shintō priests experienced a decline in state support from 1880 to 1905, because there was not as much need for Shintō’s help from government as there had been during the Great Promulgation Campaign. Shintō later bounced back from this declining stage to a new period marked by expansion and increased influence. This recovery was possible because the state needed Shintō’s help to produce “a heightened mood of patriotism that the (Shintō)

priesthood enthusiastically supported,” and “the state proved willing to pay for their services” during the military and colonial expansion (Hardacre, 1989, p. 23). Newspapers played a significant role in helping Shintō solidify its status during the era of Shrine Shintō. The increasing circulation of newspapers made various rites of empire known to the public, and promoted public discussion regarding the importance of Shintō and its role for national unity (Hardacre, 1989; Hardacre, 2001). Shintō, as an invented tradition, negotiated its role with the state and was asked to serve the nation when the state needed support and patriotism from its populace.

The Three “Sites of Memory” in East Asia

As mentioned previously, this study aims to explore media representations of the three most controversial sites of memory that have caused disputes in the social and international relations of the three countries: controversies surrounding Japanese politicians’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, disputes over the “Comfort Women” controversy, and international rows over so-called historical revisionism in Japanese textbooks. This section will provide a detailed survey of the origins and developments of the three controversial sites of memory.

Japanese Prime Ministerial Visits to Yasukuni Shrine

The Yasukuni Shrine, located in Tokyo, the capital of Japan, is a Shintō shrine. The Yasukuni Shrine is an un-official national memorial of sorts. In conformity with Shintō practice, the “spirits” of Japanese war criminals (represented by either their ashes, personal articles, or name plates) are enshrined together with the souls of other people who perished during the Asia-Pacific War. The enshrinement was carried out in 1978 by the Yasukuni Shrine administration, which decided to enshrine fourteen of the twenty-five Class A Japanese war criminals convicted by the Tokyo Tribunal (Shibuichi, 2005).

The Yasukuni Shrine thereafter became a center of domestic and international controversy as politicians visited it. Politicians have argued that their visits are purely

intended to pay respects to their ancestors and the war dead. By contrast, people in China, South Korea, and other Asian countries viewed those visits as symbols of Japanese militarism, historical revisionism, and political populism (Bass, 2006; Kristof, 1998a, 1998b; Shibuichi, 2005). Another issue at stake was the legitimacy of the visit in the light of the Japanese constitution and Japan's culpability with regard to atrocities during the Asia-Pacific War. Japan's Peace Constitution, which was established after Japan's surrender to Allied Forces in 1945, mandated the separation of religion from the administrative body of the country (Seraphim, 2006).

A Brief History of the Shrine Visits after the War

As mentioned earlier, shrine visits have long been a volatile topic in international diplomacy, public debate, and media coverage in the three countries. Prime ministers' visits have been more explosive than other politicians' since the prime minister is the head of the government. In Japan, where the system of government is a constitutional monarchy, a prime minister is designated by the Diet before being appointed by the Emperor. Junichiro Koizumi was not the first prime minister to visit Yasukuni Shrine. Rather, prime ministerial visits to the shrine have been a decades-old tradition in Japanese politics. In October 1945, the year World War II ended, then Prime Minister Kijuro Shidehara visited Yasukuni Shrine to mourn those servicemen who had died during the war. The General Headquarters of the Allied Forces subsequently placed a ban on government involvement in any shrine-sponsored memorial services for the war dead.

Shortly after the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed in 1951, but before it was ratified, then Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida paid an official visit to the shrine, asking the occupation forces to issue permissions to Japanese government leaders to pay their respects at the shrine's memorial services for the war dead. Yoshida subsequently paid his respects at the shrine three more times in his official capacity as prime minister. His successors, Nobusuke Kishi, Hayato Ikeda, Eisaku Sato and Kakuei Tanaka also visited

the shrine two times, five times, eleven times, and five times, respectively in their official capacities as prime minister. It was during the 1974-1976 administration of Prime Minister Takeo Miki that the issue came up concerning the distinction between Cabinet members visiting the shrine in an official capacity and those doing so in a private capacity. The visits to the Yasukuni Shrine by Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira in 1979, as well as ones by Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki in 1980 and 1981 did not cause any problems.

The last prime minister who visited the Yasukuni Shrine during his incumbency was Yasuhiro Nakasone, who was in office from November 1982 to November 1987. As part of his political project to “overhaul postwar systems of Japan,” he set up an advisory council concerning matters relating to the Yasukuni Shrine in 1984. Based on recommendations by the advisory council, the prime minister paid a visit to the shrine in his official capacity on Aug. 15, 1985 (H. Okazaki, 2001). Nakasone, however, canceled a scheduled visit to worship at the shrine in 1986 out of consideration for China’s feelings. He afterwards became a symbol of national unity (Kristof, 1998b; Nelson, 2003; Shibuichi 2005). Nakasone and his successors did not visit the shrine in an official capacity until Ryutaro Hashimoto resumed the prime ministerial worship in 1996. Hashimoto’s visit, however, coincided with his birthday, and he said it was his “personal wish,” and thus did not cause international controversy. Although he did not pay tamagushi, a form of Shintō offering made from a particular tree, he prayed in the traditional style, bowing twice and clapping, finishing off with a single bow (“Koizumi Now,” 2001).

As this survey shows, prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine have been a hot button issue on the Japanese political scene. One thing worthy of attention is that Japanese politicians always tried to avoid criticism inside and outside the country by stating that their visits were purely based upon national tradition, and their visits had

nothing to do with imperialism or militarism. They also argued that paying respect to “victims” of wars should not be interpreted as a political action.

Koizumi’s Shrine Visits and Controversy

Immediately after his appointment as Prime Minister of Japan in 2001, Junichiro Koizumi announced his plan to visit the Yasukuni Shrine. Upon hearing of Koizumi’s intention to visit the shrine, The Japanese society and the international community reacted with both caution and outrage. First, the international community was cautious because of the possible stalemate Koizumi’s planned visit would create in international diplomacy and Japanese domestic politics. Modern East Asian history has shown that every time Japanese prime ministers visited the shrine, their visits resulted in frozen international relationships between Japan and its neighboring countries. On occasion, diplomatic deadlocks in Asia caused a ripple effect on Japan’s diplomatic relationships with other countries. With China rapidly increasing its political and economic power in the world, the diplomatic stalemate with China became detrimental to Japan. It was not clear to some people, therefore, whether Koizumi would actually carry out his plan, thereby ignoring the possibly vehement anti-visit demonstrations. Second, there was outrage from inside and outside Japan because no prime minister had overtly announced such intentions since former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone visited the shrine in 1985.

No matter what predictions and concerns were raised, he fulfilled his promise throughout this tenure, visiting the shrine six times. His visits fast became the crux of the politics of memory in East Asia. There arose massive demonstrations not just in neighboring Asian countries but also inside Japan, followed by diplomatic crises. For example, in April 2005, anti-Japanese rallies and riots in China made international news headlines. Demonstrators in almost every major Chinese city marched, chanting anti-Japan slogans, while some of them attempted to enter Japanese diplomatic offices to

express their resentment (Xinhua General News Service, 2005). The situation in South Korea was the same, if not more serious. Koizumi's remarks on history and his visit were quickly broadcast in Korea. The Japanese embassy in Seoul became the target of angry demonstrators when he visited the shrine. In addition, anti-Japanese rallies became fixtures of downtown Seoul every summer as the 15th of August, the anniversary of the country's Liberation Day, approached. Koizumi's unrelenting determination to visit the shrine and his straightforward talking stoked even more angry reactions from other countries. He was quoted in *Yomiuri* as saying:

“I wish to pay my respects to the war dead out of my conviction that we should never again cause or take part in a war,” Koizumi said... to pay my respects to the souls of the war dead and to show my determination not to take this country into war constitutes a violation of the Constitution,” Koizumi said. (“Koizumi's Yasukuni,” 2001)

“It is a matter of course that I will express my sincere respect and mourning for war victims who lost their lives,” Koizumi said in the campaign speech” (“Koizumi To,” 2001)

One thing was clear with Koizumi's nationalistic political action: he tried to take advantage of the symbolic meaning of the Yasukuni Shrine and Shintō, which are socially and culturally ingrained in Japanese society and thus easily accessible to the Japanese public. This dissertation will analyze how the three newspapers from Japan, China, and South Korea discursively constructed the Yasukuni Shrine as a site of memory and controversy.

The “Comfort Women”: A Tragic Memory

The term “Comfort Women” is a euphemism for Asian sex slaves who were coerced to serve Japanese soldiers during the Asia-Pacific War. While the issue of “Comfort Women” had been an important topic among scholars and human rights advocates, the issue drew enthusiastic attention and made international headlines in 2007, when members of the US House of Representatives pushed for the passage of a “Comfort Women” resolution. House Resolution 121, which called on the Japanese government to

deliver an apology for its sexual enslavement of “Comfort Women”, garnered 168 bipartisan cosponsors and passed unanimously in the House on July 30, 2007. The passage of the resolution was followed by two other international resolutions, by the Dutch Lower Chamber of Parliament and by the European Parliament (European Parliament, 2007; United States House of Representatives, 2007).

A 1996 UN report written by special investigator Radhika Coomaraswamy (1996) defined “Comfort Women” as “the case of women forced to render sexual services in wartime by and/or for the use of armed forces, a practice of military sexual slavery” (p. 4). The report also concluded that Japan must admit its legal responsibility, identify and punish those responsible for the sex slavery during the war, compensate the victims, apologize to the survivors in writing, and teach its students this hidden chapter in Japanese history (Coomaraswamy, 1996; Soh, 1996). Later, in her another report to UN, Coomaraswamy noted that the term “Comfort Women” was in actuality a euphemistic expression for sex slaves mobilized by the Japanese during World War II. (Coomaraswamy, 2001). The term “Comfort Women” has also been widely used by the media and academicians to refer to the system of assembling and providing sex slaves for the military. Anthropologist Soh (1996) noted that sex slavery was broadly mobilized by the Japanese imperial army in many occupied countries in Asia. According to her,

Coerced sexual labor, that is, sexual slavery, was inflicted primarily upon lower class young females of colonial Korea by imperial Japan during the Pacific War, but Japanese women and women of other occupied territories such as Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Burma, and Thailand were also used as “Comfort Women.” There is no way to determine precisely how many women were forced to serve in this way but estimates range from 70,000 to 200,000, about 80% of whom were Korean. (pp. 1226-1227)

Some Dutch women also became sex slaves after the Dutch East Indies were occupied by the Japanese military in 1942. In addition, some records have detailed

evidence that Chinese and Eurasian women were also forced into military prostitution (Tanaka, 2001).

Involvement of the Japanese Administration and Military

It is important to note, however, that the existence of “Comfort Women” as a practice promoted by official bodies of the Japanese imperial system has never been acknowledged by the Japanese government. The Japanese government has instead repeatedly argued that there were instances of commercial prostitution in Japanese occupied territories, that had no affiliation with either government or military administrations. Tanaka (2002) remarked that few documents remain to provide a clearer picture of “Comfort Women”, due in part to the fact that vast numbers of relevant official records were destroyed immediately after Japan’s surrender. This has been one of the reasons for the difficulty in documenting sexual slavery. Contrary to the Japanese government’s claim, a number of wartime government and military documents, which became available in recent years as the result of academic research, have shown that military “comfort stations” (*ianjo* in Japanese), or military brothels were mobilized by the Japanese military and the government during the Asia-Pacific War (Tanaka, 2002). A general consensus in the international community and academic circles has been that sex slavery was licensed and actively regulated by the state in imperial Japan, and that the provision of “Comfort Women” for the military was an instance of state control over soldiers’ sexual behavior (Garon, 1993).

The Role of Civic Organizations in Exposing the “Comfort Women” Issue

It was during the late 1980s in South Korea that the “Comfort Women” started drawing attention from the public. Feminist scholars, independent researchers, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the UN Commission for Human Rights have contributed to raising awareness about the “Comfort Women” issue. In addition, several

hundred former “Comfort Women” broke a half-century of silence and came forward in the early 1990s. While this movement has occurred in several Asian countries, it has been most active in South Korea and Japan. Korean feminist and human rights organizations have made broad coalitions with their Japanese counterparts to press the Japanese government to acknowledge the crime and compensate the victims (Min, 2003). Civic organizations from numerous countries have joined these coalitions, and a growing awareness of the issue in the international community has developed into a condemnation of Japan for the war crime as well as for not apologizing for it at the governmental level. The US House Resolution 121 and the resolutions in the Dutch and European parliaments were part of this increased awareness.

The Japanese Government’s Official Stance

The Japanese government has so far neither accepted legal liability nor expressed a governmental level apology, although some officials have acknowledged moral responsibility as private individuals. Japan’s high court has also dismissed an appeal for compensation by former Korean “Comfort Women” (Douglas, McCauley, Ostrow, & Wimbrow, 2003). A UN report criticized the Japanese government and pointed out “there had been no attempt (in Japan) to implement the set of recommendations made by UN special investigations” (U.N. & Coomaraswamy, 2001). As the tensions surrounding the “Comfort Women” controversy have continued to rise, there have been scholarly attempts to examine the case in the framework of domestic and international politics. They have found that nationalism, political populism, and latent emotional conflict between nations have played significant roles in this issue (Kristof, 1998a, 1998b; Min, 2003; Nelson, 2003; Matthews, 2003). This study will analyze how three newspapers in Japan, China, and South Korea discursively constructed the “Comfort Women” controversy as a site of memory.

Japanese History Textbooks Controversy and Historical Revisionism

Japanese history textbooks have been a thorny topic in East Asian international politics. Unlike the two other issues discussed above, history textbooks are regarded as a clear announcement of the official interpretation of the nation's past, because under the current system, history textbooks have to be screened and authorized by the Ministry of Education before they are used in classrooms. China and South Korea have government-compiled textbooks in addition to those compiled by private companies and screened by the government (Nakamura, 2007).

Historical Revisionism

The so-called Textbook Issue revolved around the alleged “distortion and beautification” (C. Rose, 2005) of the terminology used in government-approved textbooks to describe Japanese invasion of Asian countries. In Japan, textbooks are “screened” (i.e., censored) by the Ministry of Education to ensure that the subject matters is “suitable” to be taught in elementary, junior high, and high schools. However, during that process, some historical facts can be “tweaked” (Kishimoto, 2004, p. 34).

The summer of 1982 marked the first time that a Japanese domestic controversy over historical narratives of the Asia-Pacific War became a serious problem in international diplomacy. In that year, the education ministry ordered that history texts should use “advance” rather than “invasion” to describe Japan's expansion into Asia during the war.

A group of politicians called the “education tribe” (*bunkyo-zoku*), who were members of the then-ruling Liberal Democratic Party's Education Affairs Division (*bunkyo-bukai*), worked closely with the Ministry of Education in this process. The specific problems of textbooks were first reported in the Japanese press in June, and then eagerly taken up by China, Korea, and other South Asian countries. In August 1982, the

Japanese government finally announced a measure in response to Korean and Chinese criticism (Rose 1998). The Japanese government proposal comprised on two points. First, it promised to revise the official guidelines for textbook manuscripts. Second, current history textbooks would be revised through the next round of textbook authorization under the amended guidelines. The Japanese government managed to persuade Korea and China to accept this proposal, and the dispute was settled, at least on the diplomatic front. Later, the education ministry added a new authorization criterion to its screening process: textbooks had to show understanding and international harmony in their treatment of modern and contemporary historical events involving neighboring Asian countries (C. Rose, 1998; Seraphim, 2006; Shibuichi, 2008).

However, a series of inflammatory statements disturbed Japan's critics inside and outside the country. In 1986, when another textbook authorization process was underway, the education minister remarked that the Rape of Nanking was no worse than the atrocities committed by other nations. In 1988 another cabinet official pronounced the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937, which started the Second Sino-Japanese War, "an accident." He argued that Japan had waged war only to defend itself against the colonizing white races. Yet the Marco Polo Bridge Incident was known to have occurred in the midst of much confusion between the Chinese and Japanese armies. The actual cause of the incident remains disputed. Although both officials lost their jobs and the revisionist textbooks were not accepted, the textbook controversy did not stop there. It rather became an enormous social, political, and diplomatic issue after 2001 (Jeans, 1999).

It became clear that conservative groups in Japanese society were gaining more public support in their efforts to revise history. Behind the increased support was a conservative civic group called the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform or *Altarashii rekishi-kyokasho wo Tsukuru kai*. The Society was formed in 1996 by people who were displeased to learn that seven newly authorized junior high school history

textbooks included information about the issue of “Comfort Women” (Shibuichi, 2008). Among the Society’s founding members were intellectuals such as Nobukatsu Jujioka, a professor of education at Tokyo University, and Kanji Nishio, a scholar of German literature and education at the University of Electro-Communications (Lawrance, 2004). In April 2001, the Society submitted textbooks they had compiled for authorization. According to an analysis of eight new middle-school social studies textbook submitted to the Ministry of Education, the Rape of Nanking was described as an abnormal happening that resulted from Chinese resistance, and deportation of hundreds of thousands of Koreans to do forced wartime labor was described as “implementation of the national mobilization order for Koreans.” In addition, the issue of “Comfort Women” was watered down (with only one of the texts using the term) and references to Japan’s wartime use of the “Three-Alls” policy (kill all, burn all, destroy all) in China were also reduced. The textbook debate took another round in 2005 when the government authorized textbooks prepared by the right-wing group. In Japan, the authorization of textbooks takes place every four years. On April 5, 2005, the Japanese Education Ministry approved a controversial textbook published by Fusso Publishing as one of eight to be used to teach students aged thirteen to fifteen the following year. The book included historically debatable content such as “since the opening of Korea, Japan assisted its modernization” and “it was important for Japan’s security that Korea should not be invaded by other countries” (“The Fusosha,” 2005). The controversial textbook also referred to the 1937 Nanjing Massacre as an “incident” in which “many Chinese were slain,” while, in many historians’ accounts, at least 300,000 civilians and poorly armed soldiers were killed by Japanese invading troops (“Distorted Japanese,” 2005).

As Gluck (1992) notes, when it comes to war, national history is clearly an international affair. Revising one’s own history is one thing; revising another country’s history is something else altogether. For example, “The Rape of Nanking, after all, belongs at least as much to China as to Japan” (Gluck, 1992, p. 15). The “Comfort

Women” issue described in Japanese textbooks is equally important to educators and citizens of South Korea.

Japanese Internal Politics over Textbooks

Although the depiction of history in school textbooks became a subject of international dispute relatively late, the issue had long been an important subject of social debate in the Japanese society. According to Shibuichi (2008).

Japanese conservatives, especially intellectuals, have regarded this issue as an ideological struggle against Japanese progressives who – according to the conservative view – are trying to use public education to mold students into leftist cosmopolitans who feel no affection for their country, traditions or history. The conservatives have also opposed Korea and China for presuming to ‘interfere’ with Japanese sovereignty by pressuring the Japanese government to modify the contents of school textbooks. Conversely, Japanese progressives have perceived this issue as a struggle against conservatives who - in their eyes - wish to make the students reactionary chauvinists oblivious of Japan's modern history of oppression.

For example, the Japan Teachers’ Union (JTU), a prominent social group on the political left, sought to diminish the power of the bureaucracy, which it saw as a continuation of wartime militarism, and opposed the Ministry of Education over its system of textbook approval and curricula decisions (Seraphim, 2006). Around the mid 1980s, conservative intellectuals started counter-movement to publish series of textbooks. Their goal was to publish textbooks that could show that “a Japanese nationalist identity had coalesced to become a substantial entity” in Japanese society (Shibuichi, 2008). However, those conservative groups’ attempts were not successful because the progressive groups strongly criticized such conservative moves in Japanese society.

Reaction of China and Korea

In the Japanese textbook disputes of 1982 and onwards, both the Korean and Chinese governments participated as important actors in the debate. They were vigilant about how Japanese imperialism and invasions are depicted in Japanese textbooks. They

also strongly protested to the Japanese government when controversial content was found in approved Japanese textbooks. The primary tool they used to protest Japan's revisionism was the diplomatic gesture. The Korean government usually recalled its ambassador to Japan. In Beijing, Foreign ministry officials frequently summoned Japanese ambassadors to express their strong regrets, dissatisfaction, and concern. Nevertheless, conservative groups that took part in the production of such textbooks were adamant in their conviction. Fujioka Nobukatsu, one of the members of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform once said that the Korean protests were "blatant interference by a foreign country... and all nations have a right to interpret their history in their own way and pass down that interpretation" (Jean, 1999, p. 190). His remark was later well received and echoed by politicians and conservative media outlets. The deep contrast between the reactions of the Chinese and South Korean governments and the remarks made by the leaders of the rightist groups and conservative politicians in Japan manifest the gap between different interpretations of memory.

The Politics of War Memories in East Asia

The general understanding among scholars and the international community is that the three controversial issues are propelled by Japanese domestic politics (Bass, 2006; Kristof, 1998a; Kristof, 1998b; Nelson, 2003; Shibuichi, 2005). For example, public approval rating of the Koizumi cabinet was higher than any other administration in modern Japanese history, hitting 80 percent at its peak thanks to his "reformist" agenda and "populist" moves ("Wary At," 2001). The situation was not much different in China and South Korea. South Korean politicians seemed to score political points by criticizing Japanese nationalism and playing to Korean nationalist sentiments. It has been known that political leaders in China have been forced to take a more hard-line political stance towards Japan because of widespread popular anger (Onishi, 2006a, 2006b).

The Japanese government has taken a stance that it is exempt from any legal responsibilities for wartime atrocities, and any demand by China and South Korea regarding its interpretation of its own national history amounts to interference by foreign countries. The official stance of the Japanese government over the issue of “Comfort Women” is such an example. The government repeatedly affirmed that the Japanese government and military were not involved in recruiting women and operating “comfort stations.” The Japanese government also ignored international demands for an official apology. The government’s denial has been at odds with the demands of numerous Japanese civic organizations, political parties on the left, and the liberal media, which have urged the government to accept responsibility for the “Comfort Women” and deliver an official apology. Needless to say, there is another line of civic activism led by conservative groups, which have made counterarguments that Japan is not responsible for war crimes because either those atrocities did not occur or that Japan has provided enough compensation to the former colonies and their victims over the past decades (Gallicchio, 2007; Nelson, 2003; Noble, 2006; Pharr & Krauss, 1996; Seraphim, 2006). The official stance of the Japanese government, with respect to the two other issues, have been as consistent as its approach to the “Comfort Women” issue. On April 3, 2001, the Japanese government declared that it would not yield to foreign demands, and would authorize “nationalist” history textbooks. Below is an excerpt from the official comments by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda:

Japan's textbook authorization system is founded on the basic principle that a diverse range of textbooks employing the creativity and originality of private sector authors and editors will be published, and without the Government defining specific historical perspectives or outlooks. Historical perspectives or outlooks represented in textbooks should not be identified as those of the Japanese Government. The standards to be applied are, first and foremost, whether the book to be authorized is appropriate as a textbook in accordance with the Regulations of Textbook Authorization. (MOFA of Japan, 2001)

The Ministry of Education subsequently approved those revisionist textbooks. Similarly, Japanese politicians have tried to justify their visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, citing the responsibility of national leaders to bow to the war dead.

The Chinese government sought to downplay discussions of Japanese atrocities in state-sponsored academic research and public education venues from 1949 through early 1980s. There were political reasons for such intentional disregard for wartime atrocities. Beijing's geopolitical concerns against the Soviet Union were more important than raising the history issue with Japan. In the 1970s, China renewed diplomatic ties with the US and Japan as part of its effort to counter balance a perceived Soviet threat. In establishing formal diplomatic relations with Japan, Chinese leaders not only formally relinquished claims of reparations but also generally welcomed Japanese military expansion as a balance to the growing influence of Soviet Union in the region. Also there have been fears among Chinese local officials and businessmen that raising issues of wartime atrocities might dissuade potential Japanese investors. As a result, Chinese history books gave little attention to wartime atrocities committed by the Japanese army during its invasion and occupation of China.

Since the early 1980s, a new trend emerged in China in terms of remembering wartime atrocities. Most importantly, the Chinese government occasionally issued vehement criticism against Japan in reaction to publicized accounts by Japanese revisionist historians and rightwing politicians. Although it frequently retreated to a politically moderate position and tried to rein in anti-Japanese movements in its society in an attempt not to disrupt the political relationship with Japan, the Chinese government seems to have realized its growing power in world politics. Along with the changing attitude of the government, the Chinese populace continues to develop a deep resentment against Japan for its wartime atrocities. In the late 1970s, more information and opportunities for anti-Japanese activism became available in China, sparking rounds of protests in the early 1980s and again in the 1990s. From then on, anti-Japan

demonstrations have emerged in response to Japanese incursions into islands claimed by China, perceived Japanese economic imperialism, and, in particular, historical revisionism (Fogel, 2007; Reilly, 2004; Wakabayashi, 2007).

China has firmly opposed Japanese prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, and such visits usually provoked expressions of concern and displeasure from the Beijing government. For example, in May 2005, when then Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Koizumi visited the shrine, the Chinese government postponed a planned visit by the Japanese Foreign Minister as an expression of its anger, and declared that the Chinese people felt “deeply indignant.” At a meeting in Beijing with Japanese parliamentary leaders, President Hu Jintao said that visits to the shrine by Koizumi and other Japanese leaders were the most obvious irritant in Chinese-Japanese ties and must be stopped before relations could improve. Regarding the “Comfort Women” issue, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing told a press conference in 2005 that the treatment of “so-called Comfort Women” is an “historical fact” and “is one of the serious crimes committed by the Japanese militarists in World War II.” The minister’s criticism came after former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s remark that there was no evidence of Japanese government’s involvement in the operations of military brothels during the war (BBC News, 2007; Cody, 2005; Xinhua News Agency, 2005b). The Chinese government has also expressed strong criticism against Japanese revisionist textbooks. In April 2005, when the Japanese government authorized history books compiled by conservative groups, a high-ranking official at the foreign ministry was quoted in news reports as saying “the textbooks will be vehemently condemned by people from all Asian countries that were victimized by Japan, including the Chinese” (Xinhua News Agency, 2005a).

The South Korean government has applied pressure in much the same way as China has done: summoning the Japanese ambassador or boycotting diplomatic events between Japan and South Korea. The Korean government’s interpretation and stance in terms of those controversies have been very similar to those of the Chinese government.

One thing worthy of note is that the South Korean government has been showing a keen interest in the development of the “Comfort Women” issue because the majority of “Comfort Women” were forcefully recruited from the Korean peninsula, and civic organizations of South Korea have been instrumental in publicizing the issue in the international community. One example of such an effort was Korea’s objection to the attempt of the Japanese government in 2005 to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The South Korean government openly objected to Japan becoming a permanent member because “Japan failed to address its historical issue in a clear, precise, and responsible manner.” South Korea’s representative to the UN also said Japan was not qualified to become a member of the Council, and stressed that the South Korean government would block Japan’s bid for a seat on the council (“Korea Says,” 2005). Japan’s pursuit was aborted later in the same year when members of the council failed to reach an agreement to expand the council. Memories of the Asia-Pacific War have been and continue to be as well a major source of controversy at the societal level and a political leverage in East Asian countries domestically and internationally.

CHAPTER III
COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND JOURNALISTIC
REPRESENTATIONS OF HISTORICAL
CONTROVERSIES

Collective Memory

Scholars have noted that memory has become a major topic of discussion both in the public sphere and in specialized academic disciplines such as psychology, neuroscience, sociology, political science, communications, rhetoric, and history. Given that collective memory emerged as an object of scholarly inquiry only in the early twentieth century (Olick & Robbins, 1998), the recent upsurge of interest in memory is truly remarkable (Nora, 2002). Regarding the general interest of the public, Klein (2000) notes that what he calls “the memory industry” includes the museum trade, the legal battles over repressed memory, and the market for academic books and articles that invoke memory as a key word. In scholarly research, theorizing memory as a social phenomenon has expanded in scope.

Memory research has developed a wealth of concepts to describe memory beyond the personal level or individual faculty (Connerton, 1989). Terms including ‘collective,’ ‘cultural,’ ‘public,’ and ‘social’ have been added to memory to further investigations into the complexities of past and present relations as they are mediated through the materialities and processes of public, social and cultural institutions and practices (Radstone, 2000). Relatively recent developments in memory studies, which date back to the 1980s, consider memory a social phenomenon. The term “collective memory” signals such an understanding of memory. Popularized by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1980b, 1992a), collective memory is a theory and concept, and means a dynamic discursive process of construction and representation of the past, which is developed through social interaction among people. This is why collective memory is

particularly susceptible to politicized forms of remembering (A. Assmann, 2006). Media scholar Schwartz (1991) defines collective memory as “a metaphor that formulates society’s retention and loss of information about its past in the familiar terms of individual remembering and forgetting” (p. 302). In religious and Judaic studies scholar Stier’s (1996) terms, collective memory refers to the “common shared awareness of the presence of the past in contemporary consciousness” (p. 1). While the concept of collective memory centers on the “constructive” and functional aspects of memory such as “bonding memory” in society, the concept of cultural memory focuses on the amorphous and unconscious memory (J. Assmann, 2006). German cultural studies scholar and egyptologist Jan Assmann and his wife Aleida have developed a theory of cultural memory that they think is different from the theory of collective memory because cultural memory “has cultural basis not just a social one” (J. Assmann, 2006, p. 21). He (2006) notes that cultural memory is stored memory in culture. More specifically, cultural memory means “a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation” (J. Assmann, 1995, p. 126). Assman (2006) argues, cultural memory enables imagination and dynamism of thoughts, and, unlike collective memory, includes “noninstrumentalizable, heretical, subversive, and disowned” memories (p. 27).

The discussion of memory in this study centers on the two characteristics of memory: the social and cultural aspects. As mentioned in Chapter I, however, the term collective memory has been used broadly, and many scholars think the theory of collective memory subsumes aspects of cultural memory (Connerton, 1989; Kattago, 2001; Schwartz, 1996; Zelizer, 2008). This study will use the term collective memory to refer to the social, cultural, and constructive nature of memory, although the term “cultural memory” will appear when that particular term seems to be more relevant.

Scholars in memory studies have analyzed a number of ways by which memories are changed, resurrected, generated, and connected (Ashplant, Dawson, & Roper, 2000; Edy, 1999; Schwartz, 1996; Zelizer, 1998). For example, in Zelizer's (1998) theorization,

the authority of collective memories increases over time, while personal memory fades with time. In the process memories take on new complications, rearrangement, elaboration, and omission of details about the past, often pushing aside accuracy and authenticity so as to accommodate broader issues of identity formation, power and authority, and political affiliation. (p. 3)

The substances of memory do not remain the same over time. Memory is always unstable and subject to change. If a particular memory is adopted by a dominant group that holds a particular ideology, the memory will soon be the authentic interpretation of the past in the society. Memory does not exist by itself, nor does it hold a significance if left alone. It has to be connected with social and political circumstances that recreate its value. In this perspective, memory is often understood as "usable past" (Zamora, 1997). Zamora (1997) explains that the word "usable" "signals the ambivalence (often ironic) of history, and implies the active engagement of users, through whose agency collective and personal histories are continued" (p. ix). The term "usable past" therefore "obviates" the possibility of innocent pasts. This is why the ways memories are constructed explain how and why "one construction of memories has more power than its rivals" (p. 5).

The issues raised in post-World War II international politics show the ways in which memory works in the present. The Holocaust, for example, has left a lingering effect not only on the victims and the Jewish community but also on identity politics in Germany and Europe overall. The US Pearl Harbor and battles in the Asia Pacific have drawn much attention recently as evidenced by the production of Hollywood movies and the adoption of "Comfort Women" resolutions by multiple legislative bodies in different countries. These are examples of how memory is interpreted, represented, and shared. As Halbwachs (1992b) noted, memory is the sense of belonging to a group or community. It awakens both collective consciousness and individual self-awareness (Nora, 1996a,

1998a). Members of each society share common experiences, desires, and identities. They remember things from the past to identify themselves as part of the same community. For example, commemoration is a critical method in social politics when cohesive action is needed. For example, Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, and Independence Day provide a nation-state with an opportunity to remind its public of the national unity.

One prominent example of the role of memory in society was the Bitburg controversy in Germany. At issue was the planned visit by US President Ronald W. Reagan, in the company of West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, to the Bitburg Military Cemetery, which contained the graves of 49 members of the Waffen-SS, the armed wing of the SS (*Schutzstaffel*) in Nazi Germany. Kohl invited Reagan to accompany him to the German military cemetery during Reagan's state visit to celebrate the normalization of relations between the two countries on the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. The visit, however, was considered by many critics as Kohl's attempt to rewrite recent German history and seek support from conservative constituents. In fact, during his tenure beginning in 1982 the conservative Kohl administration had tried to rehabilitate Germans who had served Nazi Germany. In 1983, for example, his government removed the veterans' organizations of the Waffen-SS from a list of extremist right-wing groups on which the West German Ministry of Interior was required to make annual reports to Parliament. Kohl had also repeatedly blocked demands by the opposition Social Democrats to ban the highly controversial reunions of former Waffen-SS members. In the US, the plan was endorsed by social and political conservatives including former President Richard Nixon (Elsaesser, 1985; Jensen, 2007; Levkov, 1987).

On April 11, the White House announced that the Bitburg cemetery was on Reagan's itinerary, and that Reagan and Kohl would lay a wreath there "in a spirit of reconciliation, in a spirit of forty years of peace, in a spirit of economic and military

compatibility” (Miller, 1990, p. 47). At a press conference on April 18, Reagan made a controversial remark in which he said the soldiers buried at Bitburg were “just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps” (Jensen, 2007, p. 62). Reagan's comments drew angry responses from the Jewish community and social and political liberals. As a result, the Reagan administration included its Nazi concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen in his itinerary. This action offended the Jewish community even further since it was seen as equating dead German soldiers with the victims of the Holocaust. Reagan and Kohl visited the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and Bitburg Military Cemetery on May 5, 1985. Their visit caused a great deal of debate among people in many countries (Elsaesser, 1985; Jensen, 2007; Levkov, 1987).

Regarding this controversy, Habermas (1988) accused the historians and media, which supported Reagan’s visit, of promoting a “new revisionism.” In the German context, according to Biro (2003), the revisionism in the Bitburg controversy was seen as “a form of memory interpretation that identified with the German participants and represented them as victims, that relativized the Holocaust by comparing it to other events of genocide, and that partially excused it by suggesting that German crimes were reactions to earlier “Bolshevist” threats of annihilation (p. 127). Habermas (1988) wrote the following about the Bitburg controversy:

In the scenario of Bitburg...the aura of the military cemetery was supposed to awaken national sentiment and thereby historical consciousness: the juxtaposition of the mass-grave mounds in the concentration camp and the SS-graves in the memorial cemetery...implicitly denied the singularity of Nazi crimes: and the handshake of the veteran generals in the presence of the American president was finally a confirmation of the fact that we had always been on the right side in the struggle against Bolshevism. (p. 42)

Habermas saw that Kohl’s arrangement for the Reagan visit to the controversial site of memory was designed to justify what his country did in the past. Further, the acts were aimed at constructing a new German national identity through a new interpretation of the past. Habermas (1988) argued “Our form of existence is connected with the form

of existence of our parents and grandparents by a mesh of family, local, political and intellectual traditions.” Because this connection is very hard to disentangle “no one among us can escape unnoticed from this milieu” (pp. 43-44). The Bitburg controversy was an example which showed how politically propelled historical revisionism can interfere with reflexive remembering of the public (Torpey, 1988). Habermas (1988) concluded his article by saying that:

There is a simple criterion according to which the spirits are divided; some proceed from the view that the task of understanding based on a distanced analysis...others would like to place a revisionist history at the service of national-historical refurbishment of a conventional identity. (p. 16)

The Bitburg controversy suggests that remembering the past takes two forms: 1) reflexive remembering with critical thinking and 2) construction of a national “conventional identity that works for the citizens of a particular state that has to maintain itself against other states” (Habermas, 1979). As the Bitburg controversy exemplified, remembering the past is aimed at constructing the collective memory, identity, and unity of a nation-state.

The Politics of Memory and Agencies of Articulation

Since memories are used, structured, and deployed by people in power in order to create an “appropriate” history, the process of remembering is intrinsically political. In other words, there exists a separation between the dominator and the dominated in the making of “official memory.” The representation of memory and its conversion to history always depends on who gets to play a greater role in the process. There can be multiple versions of memory, but since a community is always seeking cohesion and unity, there should be only limited ways of seeing memory. The term “official memory” refers to those dominant or hegemonic narratives, which underpin and help to organize remembrance and commemorations at the level of the nation-state (Ashplant et al., 2000). The imbalance between competing memories reaffirms the fact that memories are lived

history at the present time, but at the same time “memories have a strong bias toward the present” (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 183).

Memories are crystallized by a variety of “agencies of articulation.” Agencies are individuals, groups, or institutions that participate in the process of interpreting and advancing certain memories over other memories (Ashplant et al., 2000). In the case of the Vietnam War Memorial in the US, both governmental institutions and non-governmental civic groups, such as the Reserve Officers Association, participated in the negotiation process that led to a compromise over Vietnam War memories. It has become increasingly difficult in mass democratic societies to construct a unified public memory, especially when the subject of articulation is a contested one (Ashplant et al., 2000, p. 26). In Japan, the struggle over cleansing the remnants of imperialism has been one of the most debated social discourses in post-war social politics. As Seraphim (2006) notes, Japanese war memory “remained fragmented and contested on the political map of democracy for decades, yet it was closely woven into the political structure” (p. 4).

Scholars have suggested that there are significant agencies, or contributors, to the process of memory articulations. The nation-state, both liberal democratic and authoritarian, exerts a dominant power in the construction of memory. Various components of civil society are also memory articulators. Churches, victims’ and veterans’ organizations, the cultural community, and artistic movements also play a great role in shaping cultural memories (Ashplant et al., 2000; Forty & Küchler, 1999; Kansteiner, 2002). In post-World War II Japanese politics, the “Association of Shintō Shrines” influenced Japanese public memory by encouraging an ethnographic, apolitical, and ahistorical view of the war while discouraging criticisms of the emperor. On the opposing side, the Japanese Teachers’ Union has objected to the public use of Japan’s national flag and anthem, the revival of prewar national holidays, and the Yasukuni Shrine as a site of national mourning (Seraphim, 2006). Japan’s case shows an example of the politics of memory played by the agencies of articulation.

Imagined Communities and Commemorations

The concept of a nation-state as an entity that constructs and enforces certain national identities has been explored by a number of scholars. Benedict Anderson (1983), in particular, articulated the confluence of national identity and the role of the media. In his book, *Imagined Community*, he explains how the media make people share the same experience and eventually imagine themselves as a national community. He uses the concept of mass ceremony to explain the “mass consumption of the newspaper-as-fiction” (p. 35). According to him, each person is well aware that a national ceremony is being shared by millions of others. By observing that millions of others consume the same media content, people are “continuously assured that the imagined world is visibly rooted in everyday life” (pp. 35-36). Commemoration is a mode of remembering and the practice of representation that enacts and gives social substance to the discourse of collective memory (Gillis, 1994; Sherman, 1994). Commemorations can be private and public in form. National commemorations use certain rhetoric and craft to make commemorations readily available to a larger audience. For example, witnesses of historical events are constructed under the rule of arbitrariness of the inclusion and exclusion of certain historical facts and social discourses. Also, arbitrary juxtaposition and the linkage between those historical facts and social discourses are displayed to promote the sense of commemoration (Anderson, 1983).

The existence of national media institutions and the dissemination of stories are significant in the formation of an imagined community (a national community) and its identity. Through commemorations and their transmissions via the media, “nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles” (Anderson, 1983, p. 141). When they are part of war memories, commemorative rituals and the patriotic rhetoric of the nation-state help

to construct particular meanings about death in war: the “noble sacrifice” of “dying for your country” (Ashplant et al., 2000, p. 9).

Hobsbawm’s (1990a, 1990b) notion of invented tradition, while it sounds similar to, and shares the basic concept of “imagined unity” with the notion of imagined community, explains further how problematic the use of memory in social discourses can get. Invented tradition explains how constructed versions of the past are used to establish social cohesion, to legitimize authority, and to socialize populations into a common culture (Ashplant, Dawson, & Roper, 2000). Basically, invented traditions involve the selection of particular memories over other memories. Social elites, including media institutions (Edy & Daradanova, 2006; Zelizer, 2008) write, popularize, and institutionalize new versions of cultural memories which can dominate other competing memories. Vlastos (1998) notes that traditions, like customs, are embedded in larger social structures that are continuously reshaped in relation to social power in specific historical contexts. The use of history by the elites of a society is a discursive and sometime problematic process because invented traditions, which have been developed through social and cultural memories have little to do with reality. Therefore, invented tradition can be a constructed reality to enforce certain political and cultural systems with the public. It is not surprising that many scholars have found similar uses and trajectories of war memories in the memories of the Asia-Pacific War. Fujitani et al. (2001) observed,

As the past become valorized as a locus for imagining and feeling national identity, history is often transmuted into tradition, a set of apparently timeless symbols and ritual acts that functions as markers of shared (national) identity. As the past becomes an object of veneration, to be awakened in moments of memorialization, it more easily takes on the properties of shared essence, to be guarded and reproduced as sacred memory (p. 17).

The theory of invented tradition is relevant to the study of national unity and media representation both of which are often based on collective cultural memories.

Memory and Collective Identity

Hobsbawm's (1990a, 1990b) perspective on the construction of memory, or invented traditions, subsequently raises a question: What provokes the construction and utilization of social and cultural memory in certain ways?

An attempt to define and consolidate cohesive identity would be the answer. Identity provides the meaning of existence and is needed to distinguish oneself from others, while it requires a sense of continuity and sameness over time and space. When identity formation takes place in the concept of a group, society, or nation, the identity becomes a collective identity. Collective identity formation is either constructed through an external identification with other identities or ideology or through an internal identification with one's own past history. Internal identification can either displace or constitute the past; people either affirm their past cultural traditions or distance themselves from certain aspects of their collective past (Kattago, 2001). Assmann (1995) notes that humans must find a means by which they can maintain their nature across generations. He argues that the solution to this problem is offered by cultural memory, which constructs, forms, and cements the culturally institutionalized heritage of a society. Cultural memory also organizes social customs under a specialized practice, and obligates by engendering a clear system of values and differentiations in importance. It also opens the door to reflexivity by allowing people to explain, distinguish, reinterpret, criticize, censure, and control their self-images. These functions of cultural memory coalesce to contribute to shaping cultural identity.

Assmann's concept of cultural memory and collective memory explains the role of memory in identity formation. Halbwachs (1992b) suggests that our memory rests on lived history and mediated history. He argues that "memory gives us the illusion of living in the midst of groups that do not imprison us, that impose themselves on us only so far and so long as we accept them" (p. 50). For him, memory is constructed under the pressures of society. Further, memories are coded in language that is ultimately a part of

the social environment. Presentations of collective memory in the mass media are based on historical mood, which always provides the texture of lived experience, the structure of feeling, and the climate of the times (Nora, 1989). Collective identity is formed, reminded, and reinforced in the social context. The media play an important role in maintaining collective identity through memory. As Scannell (2000) explains with respect to the role of the national media, “history is relocated: it is no longer ‘then’ but ‘now,’ no longer ‘there’ but ‘here’” (p. 21).

Memory and History

Unlike history, which is a rational and organized representation of the past, memory is everyday practice that is sometimes irrational, impromptu, and emotional. Memory rests not on learned history but on lived and mediated history. Therefore, memory does not stay in the past but is relocated to the present time. (Halbwachs, 1980c; Nora, 1996a; J. Assmann, 1995; Schwartz, 1996). In contrast, according to Nora (1989), history “conquers and eradicates” memory, and is “perpetually suspicious of memory.” Nora (1989) insists:

Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond trying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past. (P. 8)

Nora (1998b) focuses on the juncture where memory transforms into history. The transformation is a discursive and constructive process in which certain ideologies are embedded or certain meanings of memory are applied. The everyday process of remembering therefore does not remain apolitical and insensitive to the socio-cultural context. Collective remembering reminds people of ideology and their collective identity.

Certain values and desires are constantly perpetuated over time and space by the use of collective memory.

The fact that memory is an everyday practice suggests that collective memory works not only in the social sphere but also in the cultural sphere. Assmann (1995) notes that Halbwachs's theory of collective memory remains at the societal level such as a bonding and communicative memory. He argues that individual or small-group collective memories have to be transformed into cultural memory to be maintained by a society. When the focus is only on groups and societies, it might be difficult to understand the processes by which individuals reckon with memories, and then memories are developed into cultural memories. Jan Assmann (2006) presents Jewish cultural memory as a good example of cultural memory, which has helped Jewish people retain their religious and social traditions. As seen in their ceremonial calendar system, memories are rooted in their lives. The utility of cultural memory can also be applied to the uses of memory in national unity, too.

From the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century the Japanese invented cultural customs based on their cultural memories and traditions. Such cultural traditions have since provided the Japanese society with another version of cultural memory, or backgrounds upon which current memory-related social behaviors can be understood and on which Japanese modern politics have been built. The strong nationalism of China and South Korea can be understood in the same vein. Some scholars argue that each country developed its own nationalism during the early twentieth century when suffering through the Japanese occupation and its different cultural experience (Jeans, 2005; Reilly, 2004). These observations suggest that discussions of cultural memory are necessary when examining the politics of memory.

Sites of Memory

In order to be shared by members of a community, memory has to be represented in certain forms. As discussed above, a calendar system, monuments, memorial days, and many other cultural forms are considered ways of representing memory. Nora (1996b) writes:

Memory is realized through the imaginary representations and historical realities that occupy the symbolic sites that form social and cultural identity...Memory also includes forgetting. Realm of memory is a polyreferential entity that can draw on a multiplicity of cultural myths that are appropriated for different ideological or political purposes. (p. ix)

The venues for representation of memory are called in Nora's (1989) theorization *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory). Nora's study of sites of memory has become so popular that "site of memory" appeared in the 1993 edition of *Le Grand Robert Dictionnaire*. It defined sites of memory as "meaningful entity of a real or imagined kind, which has become a symbolic element of a given community as a result of human will or the effect of time" (Kattago, 2001, pp. 16-17). Sites of memory are location where memory is crystallized and articulated. They can be either material, symbolic, or functional. There are innumerable sites of memory in the daily lives of ordinary people: geographical places such as museums, archives, cathedrals, palaces, cemeteries, and memorials; concepts and practices such as commemorations, generations, mottos, and all rituals; and concepts and objects such as objects such as inherited property, commemorative monuments, manuals, emblems, basic texts, and symbols (Nora, 1989, p. 7).

According to Nora (1989), sites of memory "originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally" (p. 12). In his view, memory is the "gigantic and breathtaking storehouse of a material stock of what it would be impossible for us to

remember,” and sites of memory are materialistic and metaphysical signs that help people recall relevant information to reconstruct a meaningful present.

The Bitburg Military Cemetery in Germany and the controversy it caused in 1985 was a prominent example of a site of memory. As introduced before, the Bitburg controversy ignited social and political debates over who deserved remembering in a particular context. It was a symbolic incident through which a number of social tensions were revealed at once: tensions between political liberals and conservatives, German identity and Jewish identity, and the exoneration of German guilt and the recognition of Jewish victims. Once you throw a stone into water, it creates waves. By throwing a stone in the big reservoir of memory of World War II, the Bitburg controversy created waves of collective remembering and active articulation of memory. By doing so, both the Bitburg Military Cemetery and the controversy became a site of memory.

The memory-related issues in this study, the Yasukuni Shrine, the “Comfort Women,” and history textbooks, are also sites of memory. While the Asia-Pacific war is long-gone, people in China, Japan, and South Korea still live with its consequences. Whether they be the memories of a heroic war, personal achievement, humiliation, tragedy, or collective victimization, those memories are usually scattered and unorganized. Media representation comes into play at this juncture. The media organize, criticize, validate, and explain. They also give their own versions of memory back to the people. In that sense, the media are also sites of memory. Sites of memory, therefore, are not inactive social realms of memory. Rather they are active playgrounds of social discourse where different political and social players flex their muscles, proclaim their presence, and seek the support of the public.

Negative Memory and Remembering to Forget

Memories are not always celebratory, and at times all members of society do not share the significance of a particular commemoration. Memories are sometimes the

subjects of national healing. There are also continuous negotiations between meanings and groups of people in a given society (Dower, 1995; Kansteiner, 2002; Serpahim, 2006). The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the US, for example, is a subject that is “less than glorious and whose memory induces controversy instead of consensus,” because the war a negative event and a moral trauma, not only because the US lost the war but also because it was considered immoral and needless (Wagner-Pacifici & Schwartz, 1991, p. 377). The biggest dilemma that the American society faced following the end of the Vietnam War was that “defeat cannot be forgotten and a nation’s people must find ways to redeem those who died for their country to make defeat honorable” (p. 380).

Separation of people from a detrimental historic event is a strategy that is often employed. When Ronald Reagan visited the Bitburg Cemetery in Germany, his supporters tried to downplay the meaning of the visit, and instead separate him from the image of the Nazi Holocaust. The Soviet Union declared after the Afghanistan War that “forgiveness toward POWs who succumbed to enemy pressure is a necessary part of the national healing process” (Wagner-Pacifici & Schwartz, 1991, p. 380). By doing so, the Soviet Union tried to block the negative image of being defeated from entering the realm of holy war.

The concept of handling negative memory is relevant to this study since the Japanese struggled for decades to redeem their national dignity after painful defeat in World War II. Separation of the emperor from war criminals, the national homage paid to *Kamikaze* pilots, and the political struggles of a number of conservative political organizations were seen during the post-war era as all out efforts to promote national healing and redemption. The modern symbol of negative healing and memory in Japan is the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, which was established as a national site of remembrance in the early Meiji period, and then has been continuously visited by heavyweight politicians.

All the possible dramaturgy of remembering introduced above is suggestive of the paradoxical phrase “remembering to forget” (Forty & Küchler, 1999; Zelizer, 1998). Huyssen (1994) notes that the simply remembered past may turn into a mythic memory that becomes a stumbling block to the needs of the present rather than an opening in the continuum of history. If remembering is one side of a coin, then forgetting is the other side. Separation, exclusion, and destruction are modes of forgetting, yet there always exists a tension between memory and forgetfulness. Much of the debate on memory has been shaped by the commonly held view that remembering is usually a virtue and that forgetting is necessarily a failing. But this assumption is not necessarily true. Both remembering and forgetting are deliberative processes, and can be problematic.

The memory sanctions of the Roman Empire are an example of deliberative remembering and forgetting. According to Flower (2006), citizens subject to memory sanctions were denied honorific commemoration within the city’s own memory space. The function of the memory sanction was analogous to that of exile, which drove the unworthy citizen outside the territory of the city, into a place that was not Roman. In that sense,

Memory sanctions are deliberately designed strategies that aim to change the picture of the past, whether through erasure or redefinition, or by means of both. Deliberately imposed modifications resulting from memory sanctions do not impede a perfect view, as if of a landscape on a cloudless and sunny day. Rather they contribute to and interact with many other factors that shape human memory, causing it to produce its own, very particular narrative of the past, (which can be called) “*The Puppet Show of Memory*.” (p. 2)

Memory sanctions explain the processes carried out by the successors of perceived traitors in the history of the Roman Empire. A new person in power tried either to obliterate or take advantage of the legacy of his predecessors in the building of his own power. Strategies of memory sanctions such as stigmatizing, valorizing, or forceful forgetting occurred during the transition between regimes (Flower, 2006).

Connerton (2008) proposes seven different types of forgetting: repressive erasure; prescriptive forgetting; forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity; structural amnesia; forgetting as annulment; forgetting as planned obsolescence; and forgetting as humiliated silence. These different types also suggest that forgetting is as political and intentional as remembering. In that sense, it is possible to posit that forgetting has been the problem of the modern era, while modern society concurrently “witnesses its colossal investment in museums, in heritage, in memorials to the dead of its many wars, in information technology, and its passion for ever-larger and expanding archives” (Forty & Küchler, 1999, p. 7). Remembering is as problematic as forgetting. Zelizer (1998) points out the possibility of “inadvertent creation” of a false image of the past by journalists when they use irrelevant photographs in news articles about history. She argues that the application of “less grounded images to unrelated circumstances” can be considered a breach of journalistic responsibility. On the other hand, someone might argue that the misuse of memory is implemented on purpose, not inadvertently. A number of studies have shown ample examples of the deliberate misuse of memory. For example, Hirschowitz & Neyman (2007) argue that there has been the concealment of certain “shameful” events by well-informed individuals such as witnesses, politicians, and journalists in the name of personal interest or the interest of a broader collectivity. Kiewe’s (2004) exploration of Reagan’s speeches reveals that they represented Reagan’s (and his administration’s) attempt to create his own eulogy, and in turn, to determine the social lesson of his public life. Researching memory is thus a process of finding out what is missing in remembering, as well as how and why forgetting occurs.

Journalistic Transmission, Reification, and Naturalization of Memory

Scholars have theorized the modes of communication to examine its processes, efficiency, and veracity. Advertisement is a form of communication intended to persuade

audiences to purchase products, ideas, or services. Television dramas and films employ artistic presentations to provide entertainment and information while they try to attract large audiences. Journalism, distinctive yet similar to other forms of communication, focuses on the responsibility for precision, specificity from the author to the reader, and its role in supporting democracy (Glasser, 1999).

Berkowitz (2011) notes that there are three vantage points of journalism: journalistic, sociological organization, and cultural vantage points. The cultural approach in journalism, in particular, views texts as artifacts of the culture that represent key values and meanings (Berkowitz, 2010, p. xii). As previously mentioned, this study follows the relatively new trend in journalism studies, a cultural studies approach in journalism, because collective memory and the representation of war memories fit this framework. In fact, “journalism is full of pasts” and journalism’s “eyewitness relationship to real events enables it to make truth claims about the past, present, and future” (Edy, 1999, p. 312).

Journalism witnesses and conveys its observation to the public. Witnessing is both a distinct mode of perception (Krauss, 1998; Peters, 2001) and “the discursive act of stating one’s experience for the benefit of an audience” (Peters, 2001, p. 709). However, witnessing cannot be neutral because each individual and society uses its own psychological and societal constructs to experience events and later bear witness to them (Kelly & Maher, 1979). Peters (2001) notes that in witnessing, there must be some kind of judgment. Sending a message to an audience not only means sending a factual text but also suggests sending a structure along with it. Frosh (2006) uses the concept of “conjecture” to explain this context. According to him, upon receiving a text, audiences create “not just an imaginative experience regarding the subject of its discourse but also the conjecture that this text is a witnessing text, that the event described really happened and that the text was designed to report it” (p. 276). In other words, witnessing is a type of construction of meaning, not just a testimonial of what is seen. The presence of the news media becomes significant at this point because a witness is the paradigm case of a

medium, and the mass media in general produce a plethora of witnessing every day. It is not a coincidence that a number of television news outlets bill their news programs as “eyewitness news.”

As such, in modern society news institutions can be witness organizations because “something needs to assemble this testimonial apparatus in order to bring together all the separate utterance of witnesses” (Frosh, 2006, p. 277). Understanding the media as agents of witnessing suggests a corollary of witnessing, which is responsibility. When watching television news, audiences see what a journalistic institution reports happened in the past. Audiences watch only what the camera decided to show. Thus, we watch and read only the processed past. What the news media do, therefore, is reconstruct and interpret the past. Peters (2001) points out that we have to keep up with the world because we are responsible to act in it, and we can only act in the present. A witnessing can be a private and past incident once finished, but when the witnessing is published in a newspaper or broadcast on television, among others, it becomes public and present.

Memory is important because we use the memory of witnessing to create a meaningful representation of the past. Memory is thus a type of constructive activity, the enunciation of claims about the past through shared frames for understanding (Bartlett, 1932). Memory often takes the form of schemata that provides a mental framework for understanding and remembering information. Halbwachs (1992a) suggests that memory is a social activity accomplished not in the privacy of one’s own gray matter but via shared consciousness with others. Thus, our memory truly rests not only on learned history but also on lived history and mediated history in the present. Journalism works at this crucial juncture of mediation of memory and history. To Zelizer (1995), a scholar of journalism, collective memory through journalism is an active sense-making process:

...the collective memory comprises recollections of the past that are determined and shaped by the group...collective memory thereby presumes activities of sharing, discussion, negotiation, and, often, contestation. Remembering becomes implicated in a range of other activities having as much to do with identity

formation, power and authority, cultural norms, and social interaction as with the simple act of recall. (p. 215)

Witnessing in the news media is particularly important when it involves memories of the past because the originality of the subject of witnessing relies on the mediated witness and thus cannot be verified immediately. Scannell (2000) explains how mass media messages produce a pervasive social and historical mood in what he called as “for-anyone-as-someone structure.” By a “for-anyone-as-someone structure,” he means the powerful effect of the mass media that works not only on an individual level but also on the social level. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the experience of the public is shared and believed to be true in the historical mood. This is the reason Scannell notes that “when I turn on the news I am spoken to while knowing that millions of others are watching at exactly the same time and seeing and hearing exactly the same things” (p. 11). He argues that the historical mood is always manifested as what it is and provides the texture of lived experience, the structure of feeling, and the climate of the times. Thus, in the mass media “history is relocated: it is no longer ‘then’ but ‘now’, no longer ‘there’ but ‘here’. As such, historical mood in the mass media brings the past to the present. The representation of the shrine controversy falls in this context. Although witnessing and remembering in the media may lack originality due to artistic rendition of history, it can be always felt as true “without necessarily being articulated as what it is” (pp. 15-21).

There are numerous examples of historical representation in the mass media. Stratton (2008) observes that the 1990s saw a growing stream of fictionalized accounts of the Holocaust. The movie *Schindler's List* was an example. The movie signaled a “shift in Holocaust tropes and generational sensibilities by focusing on survival rather than annihilation” (p. 101). Ken Burn's documentary films such as *Civil War* and *Baseball* became cultural phenomena in the US when aired on PBS. The TV series *Shogun* in the 1980s portrayed Japanese feudal society in the early 1600s, making itself the second-highest-rated miniseries ever broadcast on TV (Donovan, 2008). The two back to back

Clint Eastwood films based upon stories of Asia Pacific War, *Letters from Iwo Jima* and *Flags of Our Fathers*, brought the Battle of Iwo Jima, a long forgotten battle in a remote island in the South Pacific, to life as the two movies attracted much public attention.

Scannell's (2000) explication of what appears to be the lopsided power relationship between the media and its audiences in modern society seems to rearticulate the nature of refraction that is frequently done in the media. He argues that the idea of getting a message across successfully suggests three things simultaneously: "that the communicative process was essentially manipulative, that the communicator was powerful...and that those on the receiving end were powerless" (pp. 6-7).

It is clear that memory work in a society depends in part on journalism because journalism provides a wide range of records and interpretations of practices, issues, and events of the present time. Journalists have traditionally placed a high value on being the first to publicize new information, as it is billed as "history's first draft." The aegis of journalism symbolizes journalistic respect for truth, facts, and reality (Zelizer, 2008). Journalism also is an agent of memory, as it is a discourse itself and an agent of discourse. As a vehicle of memory, journalism should be a subject of academic exploration since it is important that certain memory stories are told in journalistic format and are received by audiences as authentic (or reliable) news (Edy, 2006; Kitch, 2008).

Despite such theorization of the role of journalism in memory representation, scholars generally agree that there has not been much academic research on the roles of journalism in constructing memory. Zelizer (2008) notes that there are reasons for academic disinterest in subjects in which memory and journalism intersect. Her diagnosis is that the relevance of journalists' work to understanding the past is not necessarily admitted by journalists, who neither explicitly speak of the past nor consider the past as part of their obvious purview. Assuming they are purveyors of the present, she argues, journalists tend instead to display both obliviousness and disregard for what is in effect their unstated role as agents of memory. Her observation is critical to understanding the

discursive role of journalism in memory reconstruction. Invoking memory cannot be neutral or objective despite the fact that journalists argue they make every effort to defend their role as objective descriptors of social occurrences. Acknowledging their active involvement in memory construction, therefore, can be seen as jeopardizing the sacred realm of journalistic authoritativeness. As a result of such an ambivalent attitude towards social and cultural memory, Zelizer (2008) observes:

Many of the key theorists of collective memory...did not include journalism in their surveys of what matters in the work of memory. Even Pierre Nora who devoted volumes to the study of unusual sites of memory, did not include journalism among his list of street signs, recipes, and holiday rituals. And more recent work on memory...implied the recognition of journalists but did not parcel out which attributes of their treatment of the past qualified as the journalistic work of memory. (p. 80)

In fact, Halbwachs has never directly identified the role of journalism in the work of memory. Nora did not include journalism in his concept of “sites of memory.” Zelizer (2008) further notes that “in many places in the academy, the ‘it’s just journalism’ rejoinder persists whenever journalistic voices are heard” (p. 81).

However, as many scholars agree, journalism is a form of ritual process of identity formation/affirmation; examination of repeated narratives shaped by memory and myth has become an important research area. It is important, therefore, to understand that journalism works in association with other socio-cultural memory forms, and that journalism constructs memory not just with regard to discrete events, but across time and place (Carey, 1989; Kitch, 2008). Furthermore, journalism itself is full of the past. As Kitch (2008) summarizes, journalism researchers have found:

[r]eporters tell stories about current events by using culturally resonant archetypes and narratives; News organizations re-use the journalism of previous eras to contextualize present-day events and to produce retrospective ‘special reports’; Journalism’s eyewitness relationship to real events enables it to make truth claims about the past, present and future. (p. 312)

In other words, journalistic outlets interpret social events based upon the past, and they are one of the vital and critical agents of collective memory. As Zelizer (2008)

remarks: “journalistic form necessitates memory; journalistic form invites memory; and journalistic form indulges memory” (pp. 83-85).

With respect to the controversies surrounding the memories of the Asia-Pacific War, it seems logical to assume that the national news media might have applied their own cultural and political frame of interpreting the past because they seemed to reflect their nations’ congruent perspective on the issue. Extremely different views on the same historic incident have appeared in the national media of the different countries involved. In regards to the “Comfort Women” controversy, the Japanese government has insisted that there was no involvement of the Japanese army administrations while China and South Korea have continuously demanded that the Japanese government offer an official apology because there existed enough evidence of the involvement of the Japanese army.

Memories always need to be “crystallized” for the present situation, and mass media play a crucial role in that crystallization. National commemorations are such an example. National commemorations are used for purposes of transmitting the legacies of the past to the present and future generations. Whether it is about a war, a massacre, a celebration, or something else, the transmission of memory is one of the most important tasks in terms of preserving national culture. The transmission of authoritative memory of a society is usually carried out by the mass media, and this transmitted content of memory is easily accepted and shared. The selection of particular memories over other memories is intrinsically political, and the transmission from a particular account of a historic moment to the cultural memory of its successors demonstrates the complexity of subjective relations to memory (Ashplant et al., 2000, p. 43). Mass media play a role in selecting a particular memory out of diverse accounts of the same historic incident. Consequently, the transmission necessitates the “art” of transmission, which involves the art of reification and naturalization. More specifically, rhetorical style such as a total denial, a comparison between different historical incidents, and a claim for mutual

responsibility appear in the reification and naturalization of memory (Ashplant et al., 2000; Forty & Küchler, 1999; Nora, 1989; Zelizer, 1998).

The reification of memory means a consolidation of memory into a certain version that excludes other possible interpretations. It is a mechanism of representation of memory that helps certain memory dominate over other memories. Reification takes a form of familiar and repetitive narrative to tell a story. When a nation-state, influential organizations, and the mass media engage in the reification of memory, subjective views are constituted through the narratives and practices of remembrance (Silberstein & Cohn, 1994). For example, “the memory of a heroic victory or suffering endured in a previous war may act as the template through which later conflicts are understood” (Ashplant et al., 2000, p. 34). Witnessing, testimonials, memories of trauma, and mourning are sources of reification, which frequently appear in the media with pre-existing narratives that consolidate dominant readings of memories. Reification requires the active participation of memory sharers, and is reinforced by mutual support between memory sharers (Long, 1997). This process of repeated reifications explains why there seem to be “habituations of memory” (Zelizer, 1998).

The naturalization of memory is the normalization of past incidents. It is the result of repeated and habitual reifications. A reconstruction of war memories is an example of naturalization of memory. It is the rhetoric that something tragic can always happen, and it did happen during the war, therefore it should be understood as part of the normal life of humans. When war memories become naturalized, victims and victimizers lose particular meanings of past incidents in which they were involved; the meanings are reduced to the dead just like other people in the cemetery. With naturalization, a version of memory becomes authentic history. So that, once the naturalization is completed, there is little room left for different and divisive memories to take place. When it comes to people who died in historical incidents, naturalization of memory makes those dead

people “exemplifications of past virtue rather than as persons with whom any kind of continuing relationship is envisaged” (Marshall, 2002).

Appropriation of memory is a way by which the naturalization of memory is carried out. Gronbeck (1998), in his article “The Rhetorics of the Past,” suggests that appropriation of memory is the use of the past for present purposes. Appropriation of memory does more than construct a history. He notes that “the past is not being reconstructed around the truth-conditions that propel the professional historian's culling of the past for significant information; rather, it is explicitly for guidance of present-day concerns or problems.” Analogical and contextual comparisons are routinely employed in the naturalization of memory, since an attempt of naturalization should show that a particular incident is acceptable and understandable as well based upon the shared experience of humans.

It is imperative to address the role of the media in the process of crystallization of memory. Communication is critical in representing and sharing memories. The role of communication and the media is what transcends the psychological aspects of memory and makes the concept sociological (Edy, 1999, p. 72). Individual memories need to be transformed into larger collective memories for them to be shared by the public. The members of the public conceive their unity and shared peculiarity through common interpretations of their past. It is the media that transmit commemorative messages over time and space. Given that the mass media have dramatically transformed the means of transmission and persuasion, the role of the mass media in the process of memory representation is more powerful than ever.

This study analyzes journalistic discursive constructions of war memories, especially of Asia-Pacific War memories. Journalism is one of the primary sense-making practices in modern society (Hartley, 1996). A common understanding upon which journalism scholars largely agree is that journalistic practices produce meanings of social events. That is, news is not a collection of facts, nor is it reality. Rather, news is

processed and constructed quasi-reality (Lippmann, 1949). Sense making is carried out through various journalistic practices that are performed by news institutions: objectivity, typifying, framing, and authoritative interpretation.

Objectivity in journalism means fairness and factuality in conveying information from the source to the readers. According to Schudson (2001), “the objectivity norm guides journalists to separate facts from values and to report only the facts without commenting on it, slanting it, or shaping its formulation in any way” (p. 150).

Typification is the application of certain stereotypes and story lines by journalists to cope “what-a-story,” or unexpected events (Tuchman, 1997). Typifications are embedded in and take their meaning from the settings in which they are used and the occasions that prompt their use (p. 178). Media framing signifies “selecting and highlighting some facets of events or issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution” (Entman, 2003). The concept of authoritative interpretation was suggested by Zelizer (1992) when she discusses the ways in which journalists covered President Kennedy’s assassination. She argues that journalists use constructions of reality to mold external events (unexpected and unusual events) into preferred forms. In her theorization, journalists try to maintain their cultural authority in society, so they can be authoritative and credible observers of the real world.

In sum, the mass media are crucial in collective and cultural memory, because they are one of what Nora (1989) calls *sites of memory*, the places where collective memories are explained, practiced, and tested. The media encourage commemorations by invoking remembrance of certain events. Representation of collective memory takes place primarily by strategic highlighting, selective sampling, and multiplying of examples (Nora, 1989). This observation is similar to what media theorists argue is how journalism works. Framing, strategized news production, and typifying news all can create the selective inclusion and representation of collective memory (Berkowitz, 1997; Entman, 1993; Tuchman, 1997; Zelizer, 1992).

The true importance of memory in the mass media comes from the powerful influence the mass media have. Edy (1999) emphasizes the role of media as a powerful agent of collective memory:

The stories of the past presented in the media are far more visceral than those presented in the classroom. Further, whereas the classroom teaches history with careful attention to objectively presented facts, the media may encourage the personal and emotional connections with the past that are associated with collective memory....The stories told by reporters may affect whether we see ourselves as one community or many groups, whether we think critically about our past or just accept it as “the way it was” and whether and how we see the past as relevant to the present and the future. (pp. 72-73)

Edy (1999) classifies memories in news stories into three categories: commemorations, historical analogies, and historical contexts. Commemorations in journalism frequently occur when media institutions try to remind audiences of important social events. Historical analogies and contexts frequently appear when the news media want to claim status as the most reliable source of social events (Bantz, 1997; Zelizer, 1997). By employing routines in newsmaking, journalists can maintain their status as authoritative interpreters in society (Zelizer, 1993). Strategizing and using of collective memory in turn draws positive responses from audiences because, as Lowenthal (1989) notes, “the security of an experienced or idealized past provides a great deal of comfort” and this quest for a “simple and stable past” acts as a refuge “from the turbulent and chaotic present” (p. 21). Seeking national unity via invocation of national memory is an example of the use of memory at a nation-state level. In Israel, Zionist views of the past have been the master narrative of Israeli collective memory that has helped shape a strong national unity (Schwartz, Zerubavel, Barnett, & Steiner, 1986; Zerubavel, 1995). Schwartz’s (1991) study of Abraham Lincoln and American national memory shows that the common view of Lincoln changed over time depending on changes in national interests and priorities. For example, while Lincoln was lauded in the Progressive era as a

common man who became president despite all personal difficulties, he was known as the Great Emancipator during the civil rights movements in the 1960s (Schwartz, 1991).

In sum, memories contribute to shaping social discourses and collective identities. The representation of memory cements the cohesive identity of individuals and groups. Journalism creates and reinforces social discourses by representing collective memory in ways that are resonant within a society. Therefore, journalistic outlets are one of the best places to observe the discursive practices of memory.

Research Questions

History has always been a field where different discourses compete. History is never a purely neutral account of events. When it comes to collective memory, the picture becomes more complicated. Collective memory is the product of a process that is influenced by political, social, historical, geographical, and psychological contexts. Discursive constructions of memory by groups in different socio-cultural and political circumstances end up, quite naturally, with contested interpretations of the past. Memory is always discursively reconstructed to serve the present condition. The politics of memory originates from this arbitrary reconstruction of memory. Journalism plays a role in this process as the authoritative interpreter of social discourses.

War memories in China, Japan, and South Korea are prime examples of the complexity of memory. These countries are geographically close, and share similar cultures and customs. They have however fought against each other. Older generations in each country still vividly remember the unforgettable tragedies they had to endure. Memory is always present tense, and so is East Asian war memory. Media representations of East Asian war memories provide rich pools of texts, from which an analysis can identify the discourse practices and examine the implications of collective memory in the formation of national identities, politics, and diplomacy.

The three sites of memory – the Yasukuni Shrine issue, the “Comfort Women” issue, and the Japanese revisionist history textbooks issue – have been continuous sources of domestic and international tensions in East Asia. Three English language newspapers in East Asia (*The China Daily* of China, *The Daily Yomiuri* of Japan, and *The Chosun Ilbo* of South Korea) have extensively covered disputes surrounding the three sites of memory. Building upon discourse about memory, journalism, and the three sites of memory in the three countries in East Asia, this study proposes four research questions.

News is social and cultural construction. News is itself a site of memory. News institutions try to make sense of memory in a manner that they think is the most resonant with their readers. The following questions guided the study:

1. What was the thematic focus of the three newspapers in their coverage of the three controversies involving the three “sites of memory”?

The three sites of memory are where the constructions of war memories took place. Given that the discursive journalistic practices surrounding memory are influenced by social, cultural, and political contexts, their representations and interpretations of the same historic events are going to be diverse and controversial. The question then is:

2. How did the three newspapers discursively construct the Yasukuni Shrine, the “Comfort Women,” and the history textbooks as sites of memory?

Memories are not always celebratory, and there are continuous negotiations between different interpretations of the same past. Remembering includes forgetting because remembering necessitates the selection of certain memories. As Zelizer (2000) notes, “forgetting reflects a choice to put aside what no longer matters” (p. 3). If

remembering is one side of a coin, then forgetting is the other side. Researching memory is thus a process of finding out what is missing in remembering, as well as how and why forgetting occurs (Connerton, 1989; Edy, 2006). Forgetting or ignoring has been a major point of contestations in East Asian social and international politics of memory. The question then is:

3. What did the three newspapers “remember” and “forget” in their coverage of the three sites of memory and why?

Memory is an inevitable element in discussions of identity formation, and our memory rests on lived history and mediated history. Presentations of collective memory in the mass media provide the texture of lived experience, the structure of feeling, and the climate of the times. Presentations of collective memory in journalism are based on historical mood, which always provides the sense of collective identity (Halbwachs, 1992a; Nora, 1989). Collective identity is formed, recollected, and reinforced by journalistic representations of memory. The three sites of memory are symbolic representations of the national identities of the three countries. Also, they are where the discursive construction of national identity occurred. For example, the three countries have struggled to define the victims and the victimizers in regard to war memories. Defining the aggressor of the war and demonizing war criminals is directly connected to constructing national identities. The question then is:

4. How did the three newspapers discursively link memory and identity?

CHAPTER IV
METHODOLOGY: POLICY AND CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Conceptual Framework of Analysis

This study has two closely connected methodological approaches: 1) An interpretive policy analysis examines official stances of the three countries with respect to war memory, as well as their respective postures toward the three sites of memory; 2) A modified critical discourse analysis that is grounded in theories of collective memory and informed by historical understanding of the three sites of memory in East Asia. The interpretive policy analysis supports the modified critical discourse analysis by providing necessary information, and is incorporated in the modified discourse analysis.

The critical discourse analysis in this study is an interpretive approach that probes news texts to find thematic discourses presented by the three newspapers through their construction of war memories. A modification was made to the second dimension of Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse analysis, which attends to the production and consumption of text. The consumption aspect of communication, such as audience reception of news texts, is not an area of investigation in this study.

However, the production of texts can be traced by examining normative use of discourse types (Fairclough, 1995) and "the processes in which texts are framed, that is, the context in which statements are made and feed into other debates" (Jacobs, 2006). It is important to note that qualitative studies focus on social practices and meanings of communicative events in specific historical and cultural contexts (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 122), and it examines how various levels of meanings are expressed – intentional meanings as well as the hidden and often unintended meanings (Bettig & Hall, 2003). Such premises of qualitative studies necessitate a look at the production and consumption aspect. To compensate for the stated limitation of the second dimension, this study has

provided an examination of cultural, historical contexts of the sites of memory and a discussion of journalistic cultures of the three countries. This modification can ensure the reliability of interpretation this study makes out of news texts.

In media communication, meanings of messages are made rather than given as raw data for audiences to interpret. Scholars have theorized about the intentions and procedures through which meanings are constructed. Social scientific approaches, including cognitive and structuralist models, have been used in many scholarly domains to explain how meanings are shaped through interactions between groups and individuals. A relatively new change in this tradition has been the realization that meanings are products of both social and cultural constructions. Culture is the product of human behaviors and activities, whose boundary and depth are virtually immeasurable. Desires, feelings, memories, daily experiences, and many more elements of life are intertwined in culture.

Construction of meanings is directly connected to the process by which power is created, taken, and maintained. Ideology and hegemony are always present in the construction of social and cultural meanings. In that sense, culture is a manifestation of ideology (Cormack, 1992). This conceptual postulate departs from what many people see as the mainstream trend in academics: positivism in philosophy and empiricism in methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Lindlof & Taylor (2002) observed that this change invites a different model for understanding humans, which they term an interpretive paradigm. An interpretive paradigm opens up a variety of ways of researching human behaviors. This principle penetrates below observable behavior to access inherent bias found in human acts. Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) note that “any text can be understood in different ways,” and “a text does not uniquely determine a meaning, and different understandings of the text result from different combinations of the properties (social positioning, knowledge, values, etc) of the interpreter” (pp. 67-68). This new way of understanding human behavior can be applied to media studies too.

The construction of war memories in the news media can be explored through the interpretive paradigm. Memory is fragile and fluid. Memory is sometimes a subject of celebration, while at other times it is an indelible source of trauma. Such volatility and instability complicate the social practices that involve collective memory. When applied to certain events at the socio-political level, memory becomes a political problem. Memory also influences every stratum of identity formation. When memory is represented through the media, the representation is a practice of social and cultural discourse. The combination of two analytical approaches that will be undertaken is necessary in this study because the subject matter is historical, cultural, and international. To discover the socio-political impetus that promotes certain memory discourses over others, it is crucial to understand historical context, policy changes, and the ways in which the media represent issues.

Media Discourse

Discourse generally means spoken and written language use representative of social action and interaction. This view of discourse differs from the view popularized by social theorists such as Foucault and Fraser, to whom a discourse is a practice of constructing social reality and a form of knowledge (Fairclough, 1995b). Fraser (1990) contends that a theory of discourse helps us “understand how people’s social identities are fashioned and altered over time” (p. 83). Fairclough (1993a) notes:

Foucault’s work makes an important contribution to a social theory of discourse in such areas as the relationship of discourse and power, the discursive construction of social subjects and knowledge, and the functioning of discourse in social change...these are areas where linguistically-oriented approaches are weak and undeveloped...For Foucault, discourse analysis is not to be equated with linguistic analysis, nor discourse with language. Discourse analysis is concerned not with specifying what sentences are possible or ‘grammatical,’ but with specifying sociohistorically variable ‘discursive formations’ (sometimes referred to as ‘discourse’), systems of rules which make it possible for certain statements but not others to occur at particular times, places, and institutional locations (pp. 38-40)

This study takes the definition of discourse proposed by Norman Fairclough, who came from a linguistics background. He has tried to incorporate history and Foucauldian social theories into his concept of discourse and discourse analysis. According to Fairclough (2008), discourse is:

an element of social life which is dialectically interconnected with other elements, and may have constructive and transformative effects on other elements. Discourse has in many ways become a more salient and potent element of social life in the contemporary world, and that more general processes of current social change often seem to be initiated and driven by changes in discourse.
(Fairclough, 2008)

It is important to note that social practices do not occur in a vacuum. Every social practice occurs in a socio-cultural context, which means, in Foucault's (1972) term, social practices always "obey certain rules." Discourse is therefore "no more than the repressive presence of what it does not say; and this 'not-said' is a hollow that undermines from within all that is said" (p. 25). Media practice is also a discourse. As van Dijk (1988a) notes, discourse might best be captured under the notion of a communicative event or act. The media are where the most prominent communicative events take place. The content of the media is comprised of texts. Therefore, an analysis of media texts can explain the discourse practices of the media that bring about social and cultural changes.

Understanding the media from the discourse practice framework broadens the scope of their role. As Fairclough (1995b) states, the impact of the media is not just about how workers in the media institutions selectively represent the world, it is also about "what sorts of social identities, what versions of self they project and what cultural values (be it consumerism, individualism or a cult of personality) these entail" (p. 17). It can be said that media discourses are where innate cultural values such as social and cultural memory are constructed and represented.

Methodology and The Texts

The main methodology of this study is a critical discourse analysis that investigates the constructions and representations of war memory in three Asian newspapers. It aims to investigate the discursive construction and representation of memory under the political contexts of each country, as well as the international relationships of the three countries. This critical discourse analysis incorporates an interpretive policy analysis. The interpretive policy analysis examines each government's official policies regarding the three controversies under study, as they have been articulated through the official statements of foreign ministries.

Interpretive Policy Analysis of Government Stances on the Three Controversies

Policy analysis generally concerns analysis of policies put in place by authorities to achieve certain goals. Just as with history and memory, policies are not transparent or neutral. Policies and remarks of politicians tend to include certain meanings that are designed, sometimes intentionally, to be equivocal and ambiguous. Policies are pronouncements of certain intentions of authorities regarding a permissible range of interpretations of certain topics. Policies change as people in power try to implement certain practices that are designed to achieve their goals. Whether or not a particular policy can be put into place, therefore, is a political and ideological decision. Policies are also the product of political negotiations and compromises. A policy analysis therefore should reveal the "architecture of meanings" by investigating policy categories and labels, metaphors and narratives, programs and institutional places within an interpretive paradigm. Rather than asking the question, "What are the costs of a policy?" an interpretive policy analysis asks instead "What are the meanings of a policy?" (Yanow, 1999). Documents of various kinds are sources of policy analysis. They can be

legislative records, bills and their marked-up drafts, annual reports, and so on. Yanow (2007) also notes that newspaper texts can be sources of policy analysis:

[T]he researcher might also read newspapers; editorial columns might constitute data alongside reportage. Rather than reading these as event evidence, they might be read for a sense of the times – of how people responded at that time to particular events or ideas. The focus is on meaning-making. (p. 411)

When it comes to traditional governmental policies and stances on the three controversies, it is reasonable to think that the official stances and the remarks of influential politicians were propelled by the dominant political interests of a particular time and space. An analysis of policies can effectively show how war memories have been a subject of negotiations and compromises in post-war East Asian politics. For example, the construction of each government's stance on the historical issues has been a battle over the definition of war and of identities. There are multiple complex codes that define the nature of war and the different roles of countries in war. There has been victim and victimizer; invader and liberator; slave labor and voluntary participation; forced sex and paid prostitution. Similarly, acknowledging the existence of atrocities has been the result of policy decision, and politician's remarks were taken seriously as if those politicians were authoritative historians. Indeed, governmental decisions and remarks of important politicians greatly influence the ways in which war memories have been interpreted and accepted. All of these are signs of the politics of memory.

East Asian politics has been riddled with numerous confrontations surrounding different governments' attempts to redefine the Asia-Pacific War. Numerous compromises were made and abandoned, depending on political, economic, and diplomatic climate. During the 1970s China tried to rebuild its diplomatic relations with Japan, the Chinese government formally repudiated its citizens' claims of reparation against the Japanese government. The Chinese government also avoided documenting Chinese wartime suffering in its academic and public histories. The reason for such political sidestepping was economic aid. Japan at that time was an emerging power in the

world economy, and was the beneficiary of the strong patronage of the US. Due to the strong American/Japanese political coalition across the Pacific, China was cautious about voicing its dissatisfaction over Japanese treatment of war memories (Reilly, 2004). The South Korean government in the 1980s avoided the “Comfort Women” issue until it was criticized by civic organizations and NGOs. The government overlooked the trauma of its own citizens for political reasons. An amicable partnership with Japan and economic aid from the country were more important to the South Korean government than recognizing the personal pains of aging former Comfort Women (Min, 2003; Soh, 1996).

Researchers of modern Japanese politics point out that the reactions of the Japanese government to Chinese and South Korean criticism have always hinged upon domestic politics. Records show that when the political leadership of the incumbent prime minister was weak, the Japanese government’s reactions to accusations from other countries (particularly in the history textbook issue) were intentionally vague. The government was also overtly hesitant in whatever move it eventually took. By contrast, Koizumi aggressively ignored mounting criticisms of his visit to the Yasukuni Shrine due to strong support from rightist groups. Additionally, Japan’s economy was booming for the first time in ten years (Jean, 2005; Shibuichi, 2008).

Policy analysis inevitably relates to political analysis. Policies are reflections of political circumstances. Examining governmental policies and stances toward war memories would enable the researcher to connect politicians’ remarks to the domestic and international political climates, and to investigate the politics of memory. Recent international polemics over the three controversies have forced governments and politicians to issue numerous statements, which mirrored each country’s interpretation of the politics of memory for domestic and international political reasons.

For this study, the policy analysis looks at statements issued by the foreign ministry of each country. Those statements are available on the websites of the foreign ministry of each government. Since this study concerns the development of the

controversies in the recent past, those websites are very effective sources; in fact, the websites contain policy statements made by spokespersons or ministers of each country. In addition, news texts are used as sources of analysis. As the most widely circulated English language newspapers in each country, the three newspapers have published a profusion of articles that contain policy information and remarks of government officials. The use of policy documents and newspapers is consistent with Yanow's (2007) interpretive policy analysis framework.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Journalistic representations are discourses. They cover what happened in society, then construct and transmit discourses. Journalistic institutions actively engage in developing public discourses with their own framesets of the world. Journalism at large performs discourse practices, and journalism institutions function as agents of public discourses in a particular social context or social logic, also called the "orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 1995; Foucault, 1981; Jansen, 2000; van Dijk, 1988b). Journalism, a kind of communicative event, works as a form of social practice in reproducing or challenging the order of discourse. To put it differently, journalistic practices shape, and are also shaped by, the wider social practice through their relationship to the order of discourse. When a journalist draws on a discourse, which might have already been routinely used and popular in the media, the journalist contributes to the reproduction of the order of system. The term "orders of discourse" is the sum of all the genres and discourses, which are in use within a specific social domain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 72).

In this study, a modified Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be applied to media texts. CDA is a type of analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted in written and spoken texts in social and political contexts (van Dijk, 1985; Fairclough, 1995a).

CDA on journalistic coverage investigates not only public discourse that appear in news texts, but also the ways in which journalistic coverage captures, creates, develops, and enforces certain discourse on the audience. In other words, it analyzes news texts in the framework of social context or social logic, or “orders of discourse.” In so doing, a CDA, according to Fairclough (1995b),

can illuminate three sets of questions about media output: 1. How is the world (events, relationships, etc.) represented? 2. What identities are set up for those involved in the program or story (reporters, audiences, third parties, referred to or interviewed)? 3. What relationships are set up between those involved (e.g. reporter-audience, expert-audience or politician-audience relationships)? (pp. 3-5)

Analyzing texts enables researchers to map out the ways in which media representations occur. CDA helps investigate the struggle for identity among different groups and institutions. Furthermore, it enables a researcher to explore the relationship between journalists (or journalistic institutions) and other players who contribute to forming certain worldviews or ideologies which news articles express. Therefore CDA can provide insights into the relationships between various social positions and identities represented in the text (Fairclough, 2003). CDA is a good method to investigate the politics of memory; it is particularly effective and informative in investigating newspaper articles and editorials (Fairclough, 1995b; Fowler, 1991; van Dijk, 1988a; van Dijk, 1988c).

CDA is a multidisciplinary endeavor that does not adhere to one specific mode of analysis (van Dijk, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2001). van Dijk (2001) asserted that researchers doing CDA should not just follow the theories and methods of prior studies. In order to meet the needs of their own situations, researchers should “integrate the best work of many people, famous or not, from different disciplines, countries, cultures, and directions of research” (pp. 95-96).

This study’s CDA is based on a modified form of Fairclough’s *three-dimensional CDA framework*: text (the linguistic features of the text), discourse practice (processes

relating to the production and consumption of the text), and sociocultural practice (the wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs) (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). When graphically depicted, text is situated at the center, surrounded by discursive practice, which in turn is surrounded by social practices. Fairclough's method is different from other discourse analyses employed by other scholars who seem to be more concerned about the linguistic tradition than the social and ideological aspects of text. Unlike linguists, Fairclough moves his analytical focus from the grammar and structures of text to the intertextuality of discourse. By intertextuality Fairclough (1995) meant the links among the three different dimensions of communicative events: text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice.

The text dimension attends to language analysis of texts. At this level, the main analytical point is what is represented in the text. The researcher looks at vocabulary, wording, metaphor, semantics, utterances, and grammar to identify "representations, categories of participant, constructions of participant identity or participant relations" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 58). The text level analysis also includes "collocations, patterns of co-occurrences of words in text; that is, simply looking at which other words most frequently precede and follow any word which is in focus" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 131). In this study, a text-level analysis is similar to the methods frequently used in interpretive textual analysis of media texts, in which a researcher identifies certain patterns in texts. For example, in their research on the portrayal of Native Americans in the media, Perkins & Starosta (2001) focused on selection, emphasis, and exclusion in texts. Similarly, Fairclough (1993a) and Tonkiss (1998) paid attention to recurrent themes, key words, lexical items, metaphors, and variations. These strategies "enable researchers to grapple with the complexity and contradictions of media artifacts" (Lentz, 1991, p. 12). In this study, text refers to the news texts that represent historical facts, governmental policies, war memories, and the three controversies over all.

The second dimension of CDA is discourse practice, the processes relating to the production and consumption (interpretation) of the text. Discourse practice is about how social institutions process information in their works to produce meanings. It also involves consumption (interpretation) of text, which, however, is not the main interest of this study. This process mediates texts to sociocultural practice. Fairclough (1995) noted that the analysis of discourse practice involves either normative use of discourse types (genres and discourses) or a creative mixture of both, “for example which types of discourse are drawn upon and how they are combined” (Fairclough, 1993, p. 4). This process is what journalism scholars describe as the process of constructing meanings. The ways in which the media represent memory - such as collective remembering, forgetting, reification, and naturalization – show that those representations are ceaseless negotiations among different norms. For example, journalists are constantly challenged by two contradicting norms; the journalistic norms of objectivity and the social norms of conformity and resonance in their news making. In this study, the focus will be to identify themes and narratives that are products of negotiation and compromise for journalists to employ in confounding situations.

Finally, sociocultural practice is the realm of superstructure where a researcher can find the practices of ideology and power. It involves different levels of abstraction from a particular event, such as the wider context of institutional practices, bigger framework of the society, and the culture. In this study, the politics of memory is going to be the key word at this level. National unity, commemoration, exoneration, national identity, power, victimhood, trauma, remembering to forget, and other larger sociocultural practices of memory discourses are intertwined in political and social practice. This process also corresponds to qualitative methods employed by journalism scholars. As Fair (1996) states, “the goal of textual analysis is not to find truth in a pristine or unadulterated form hiding in the text, but to understand how particular systems of representation define and shape the cultural contexts in which they operate” (p. 8).

This study will employ a modified framework of CDA, since the nature of the subject requires an adapted approach. A historical examination and an interpretive policy analysis will be incorporated in a CDA, and will provide a detailed context for the three dimensions. The analysis of texts will be based on the understanding obtained by the historical examination provided in Chapter I and II. In other words, CDA in this study will not explore texts from scratch without any contextual information. Furthermore, an understanding of historical background and policy analyses will enable the researcher to navigate across different dimensions. As van Dijk (2001) asserted, researchers should be creative in order to meet the needs of their own situations. Wodak & Meyer (2001) also noted that CDA does not adhere to one specific mode of analysis.

The Three Newspapers

This study analyzes news texts published by three English language newspapers from China, Japan, and South Korea: *China Daily* of China, *The Daily Yomiuri* (henceforth referred to as *Yomiuri*) of Japan, and the English edition of *The Chosun Ilbo* (朝鮮日報, henceforth *Chosun*) of South Korea. These three newspapers are the mainstream news institutions of the three countries. *China Daily* is an English newspaper published by the Chinese Communist Party. *Yomiuri* is published in print in both Japanese and English. Its English edition is called the *Daily Yomiuri*. *Chosun* does not print an English edition but publishes articles in English on its online website, *Chosun.com*.

China Daily was launched in 1981. Its target audience is composed of members of the diplomatic community and the international business community. It is also read by many Chinese citizens. The daily paper is government backed and sometimes construed as an official voice (Polumbaum & Xiong, 2008). *China Daily* is the only state-run English-language newspaper. According to its website, the average daily circulation is more than 300,000 copies in about 150 countries and regions. *China Daily* is considered

the English version of the *People's Daily* (人民日报, Renmin Ribao), the official newspaper and the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. As an English language newspaper, *China Daily* plays an important role in projecting China's national image and articulating the government's policies, and foreign policy positions to the international community (Li, 2009; Lihua, 2009).

Yomiuri is the English edition of *The Yomiuri Shimbun* (読売新聞), the largest circulating privately owned general interest national daily newspaper in Japan (Saft & Ohara, 2006). With a circulation of ten million copies everyday, *The Yomiuri Shimbun* is also the largest circulating newspaper in the world. In Japan, five major newspapers with nation-wide distribution account for more than a half of the total circulation. *Yomiuri* has the largest circulation among English language newspapers in the country. It reprints the English translations of articles published in *Yomiuri Shimbun*. It is considered a conservative publication because *The Yomiuri Shimbun* takes pro-government, and nationalistic stances (A. Fukumoto & Meares, 2005; Rix, 1993; Sakai, 2003; Seaton, 2006; Shiraishi, 2004).

Chosun has the largest circulation (approximately 3.9 million readership in 2000) in South Korea, although circulation figures are hard to ascertain with certainty due to the inaccuracy in the Audit Bureau of Circulation system in the country. *The Chosun Ilbo* publishes its English language edition articles on the Web. English language articles are the translations of original Korean language articles. *Chosun* is a daily general interest newspaper that is regarded as a conservative news institution in the Korean society. It is also the most influential in its impact on Korean society (Baker, 1998; Lee, Jeon, & Choi, 2003; Min, 2004).

These three newspapers are comparable because they are English language newspapers, they each have the largest circulation in their respective countries, and are considered the conservative defenders of the political, social and economic status quo in each country. The rationale for analyzing English language newspapers is that English

language newspapers published in non-English-speaking countries are considered to represent the government's official views on foreign policy, and as communicating with the world in general (Ke, 2010; Messner & Garrison, 2006). In East Asia, with smaller readerships and fewer newspapers than native-language newspapers, the journalistic scope and coverage of English language newspapers is relatively narrow. However, the fact that their primary readers are composed of resident expatriates, readers in foreign countries, and intellectuals in their own countries lets English language newspapers occupy a significant segment of the public sphere (O'Conner, 2009; Polunbaum & Xiong, 2008). They represent their countries journalistically. In addition, the three newspapers under study are either English editions of native-language newspapers that stand for right-of-center social opinions (in the cases of *Yomiuri* and *Chosun*) or the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist state-owned newspaper (in the case of *China Daily*). Considering that the controversies discussed in this study involve international diplomacy and national public diplomacy, these national English language newspapers are efficient sites of investigation.

Texts Analyzed

News texts for this study were retrieved through two methods of online search: database search at two online academic news databases (LexisNexis Academic and Access World News operated by NewsBank Inc.), and the Internet websites of the three newspapers. Three sets of relevant search words were used for each different historical controversy (site of memory). For the Yasukuni Shrine controversy the search words were *Yasukuni, shrine, visit, and Koizumi*; for the "Comfort Women" controversy, the search terms were *comfort women and war*; for the history textbook issue, the search terms were *Japanese, history, and textbooks*. Microfilms were also used in cases where the retrieved texts did not provide information about the nature of the journalistic texts; for example, whether particular articles were columns or straight news.

After the search, there were 219 articles on the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, 94 articles on the Textbook Issue, and 48 articles on the “Comfort Women” controversy found in *China Daily*. There were 429 articles on the Yasukuni Shrine visit controversy, 205 articles on the textbook issue, and 54 articles on the “Comfort Women” controversy in *Yomiuri*. *Chosun* published 212 articles on the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, 259 articles on the Textbook Issue, and 120 articles on the “Comfort Women” controversy. A number of articles appeared in more than one topic category for a newspaper. For example, *China Daily*’s August 15, 2005 opinion column, “Japan should face up to wartime aggression” appeared in all of the searches for the three controversies. *Yomiuri*’s March 2, 2001 article, “Editorial: Textbook tempest off-course” was retrieved in both searches for the “Comfort Women” controversy and the textbook issue. This finding suggests that the three topics were not separated from each other, but treated together in the construction of memory in media discourses. For example, when a member of the editorial board wrote about the “Comfort Women” controversy, he referred to the Yasukuni Shrine controversy to set up the socio-political context of his editorial piece. This finding is also suggestive of the social/cultural construction of collective memory. By reminding readers of a different memory, a news article can clarify or refract the important subject matter regarding collective memory.

The texts included not only news articles written by staff reporters, but also other articles produced by news agencies, columns contributed by independent columnists and experts as well as editorials. This decision to include more than news articles was made because those other types of news articles can also be considered part of the representation of reality in journalism. Editorials, in particular, usually show the broader ideological stance of the newspaper’s owners and managers (Henry & Tator, 2002, p. 93), and also take an authoritative role in attempting to lead the public (Fowler, 1991). Editorials are also seen to be representative of the views and stances of particular newspapers in Japanese society, and they are regarded as the face of the newspapers (Saft

& Ohara, 2006). This view of editorials is almost identical in the South Korean journalistic context (Choi, 2003). *China Daily* reflects the official view of the Communist Party of China (Zhao, 1998). A more detailed discussion of media ecology is included in Chapter I of this study. As such, the uniqueness of the journalism cultures of the three countries legitimizes the inclusion of editorials and columns in the analysis.

In fact, the analysis of this study was enriched by reading editorials, columns, op-ed style columns, and opinion pieces, as they tended to stand for certain interpretations of memory rather than merely convey bare facts. In the case of *China Daily*, identifying editorials and opinion pieces was difficult. *China Daily* did not publish editorials until recently, while it published commentary pieces on the opinion pages (Polumbaum & Xiong, 2008). Microfilms were used to identify editorials and columns that were normally published on pages four or six. As for *Yomiuri* and *Chosun*, identifying editorials and opinion pieces was a simple process, as they published editorials under the distinctive title “editorials” and specific titles for columns.

Time Period of the Analysis

The time frame of the news texts analyzed covers the period of 2000 to 2007. Controversies over war memories in East Asia have existed since Japan’s surrender in World War II in 1945, yet the intensity of disputes that began in 2000 surpassed past disputes because of a series of successive historical controversies that made the headlines. In April 2000 the right-leaning group the “Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform,” submitted the drafts of history and social science textbooks for junior high school students to the Ministry of Education for authorization. According to *Asahi Shimbun*, a left-leaning Japanese newspaper that revealed the controversial contents of those textbooks, the textbooks submitted by the Society contained controversial content, including a statement that the Japanese annexation of Korea in 1910 was necessary for Japan, given the international circumstances of the day. The revelation instantly restarted

domestic as well as international disputes over the content of textbooks. The Chinese and the South Korean governments officially requested that the Japanese government take measures to prevent publication of the conservative history textbook. The debate captured the intense attention of the media, the public, and the governments of the three countries for over a year, as the drafts went through the authorization process.

In April 2001, the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology gave the nod to eight history textbooks submitted to it for screening. The books, which were slated for the use in schools the following year, were reportedly justifying Japan's invasion of many parts of Asia in the early twentieth century. The revelation of the content of the textbooks aroused strong protests from other Asian countries which had suffered from Japan's aggression. While Japanese society and the three countries were still caught up in the prolonged textbook debate, the Japanese ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) confirmed that Congressman Yasuhiro Koizumi would become the next Prime Minister of Japan. Koizumi's installation was followed by an acceptance speech in which he resolutely announced that he was planning to visit the Yasukuni Shrine. The year 2001 was also significant in modern Japanese history because it marked the end of what is known as the "lost decade," a decade-long economic recession that greatly affected Japan. With its campaign slogan "Change and reform the LDP and the nation," the Koizumi administration attempted to implement neoliberal change in Japanese society. Koizumi's premiership hinged upon his success in presenting his new administration and neoliberal movement as the only solution to stagnation and corruption (Noble, 2006). Socio-economic circumstances and the advent of a new administration that widely solicited public support signaled a turn to conservatism in Japanese society. Based on the fact that domestic and international disputes over war memories intensified during his incumbency, scholars have attributed many controversies over historical revisionism to Koizumi's political positions (Seraphim, 2006; Shibuichi, 2005).

Textbook controversies made a comeback in 2005 when the Japanese government once again authorized the textbooks submitted by the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, while Prime Minister Koizumi continued to visit the Yasukuni Shrine during his premiership. Koizumi ignored the mounting criticism against him. His visits to the shrine as the Prime Minister ended in 2006 when he stepped down as the Prime Minister. Japan's strained relationship with China and South Korea, however, did not end with his resignation. In 2007, the heightened tensions over controversial memories were discharged again as swirling news hit the newsstand. The US House of Representatives and the legislative bodies of several different countries worked on the passage of "Comfort Women" resolutions in their respective countries, making the "Comfort Women" issue an international issue. As such, the period between 2000 and 2007 was the most sizzling period in the post-war era in the politics of memory of the region.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS

This study examines the discursive construction and journalistic representations of memories of the Asia-Pacific War in three East Asian English language newspapers: *China Daily* of China, *The Daily Yomiuri* of Japan, and *The Chosun Ilbo* of South Korea. Among many war memories, this study took the three most heated controversies associated with war (the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, the “Comfort Women” issue, and the Japanese textbooks revisionism controversy) as guided entries (Nord, 1989; Smith, 1989; Stempel & Westley, 1989). They have been called in this study the three sites of memory.

The analysis began with a reading of the entire news article collection retrieved from two online academic news databases and the Internet websites of the three newspapers. There was a total of 1,640 news articles from the three newspapers (details in the previous chapter). This process focused on the textual dimension of CDA: selection, emphasis, exclusion, recurrent themes, conspicuous key words, metaphors, and variations found in news texts. As a result of this ‘immersion into texts’ process, a host of thematic categories of memory discourse emerged. The next process was to connect those thematic categories to theories and concepts based upon the literature review of collective memory studies. This “coding” process (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) enabled the researcher to identify meaningful thematic discourses that were used for arbitrary construction of memory such as appropriation and naturalization. This process also involved crosschecking of news events across the three newspapers. Historical facts and governmental policy statements were compared with the contents of news stories. The second step corresponded to the second dimension of CDA. Since the “coding” was carried out based upon “grounded theories” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), those theories guided the analysis. Attention was paid to understanding and explaining cultural and

political conditions that made certain memory discourses visible at particular times, in countries, and in their newspapers. In fact, the three historical controversies were not just historical issues. Rather they were intertwined with the political, economic, and diplomatic concerns of each country. This finding was congruent with theoretical explanations of the politics of memory. Applying sociocultural conditions to the historical controversies corresponded to the premises of the sociocultural dimension of CDA.

The analysis was an interpretive process of understanding and explaining social events based upon historical contexts and grounded theories. As Lindlof & Taylor (2002) note, “interpretation involves the translation of an object of analysis from one frame of meaning into another” (p. 232). Chouliaraki & Fairclough (1999) state that interpretation is a complex and layered process, and understanding and explaining are necessary parts of interpretation. As such, the analysis of this study was the result of repeated in-depth reading, understanding, and explaining news texts.

The Intertwined Controversies: An Overview

This study aimed to examine the construction of war memories in three newspapers within the concept of the post-war politics of East Asia. There were three main topics of war memory to explore: Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi’s visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, the “Comfort Women” controversy, and the Japanese history textbooks controversy. While they seemed to be three different topics at the beginning of this project, during the analysis it became clear that they were in fact closely intertwined, so that it was impossible to separate the three topics from one another. For instance, when international relationships came to a stalemate due to any of these issues, all three topics emerged at once in public discourse and related news articles. Newspapers normally referred to the other two issues when the third became a topic of social and international debate. Also, politicians and other people quoted in news articles tended to comment on

the three issues at once, and referred to the complexity of historical issues as well as their hard work to resolve them. Although there were periods in which one particular topic conspicuously stood out because of the timeliness of the topic, such as Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi's impending visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, which was extensively discussed when the anniversary of Japan's surrender approached, it can be said that those three historical issues were routinely bound together in newspaper articles.

The close interconnectivity of memory issues was a reminder that the three countries are very tightly linked in geography, economics, and politics. There were a number of different issues that involved the three countries, or two of them at least, beyond the three sites of memory. The 2002 FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football) World Cup was such example. The sports event took place in the midst of heated dispute over Koizumi's Yasukuni visit and the Japanese revisionist textbooks controversy. The co-hosting of the World Cup itself was unprecedented in the history of the World Cup. Such an arrangement was in fact a result of an "appropriate political decision" made by the FIFA. *The New York Times* reported that the fierce competition between Japan and South Korea to host soccer's international championship "ended with an uneasy solution," adding "the two countries had been traditional enemies and distant friends" (Longman, 1996).

The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center occurred in 2001, and this incident spurred the US to include Japan in a newly proposed anti-terrorism network. The proposed anti-terrorism alliance between the two world powers irritated China, which believed the alliance would possibly break the already fragile balance of politics and military power in the region. In particular, China and Korea were worried that the plan to use Japan's Self Defense Army for anti-terrorism efforts would allow Japan to expand its military capacity and justify its military action outside its territory ("Conservatives Urge," 2005; "Editorial: Final," 2001; "Japan's Political," 2007).

Japan and Korea were also at odds in 2001 over Korean vessels fishing for saury in waters around Southern Kuril Islands, also called the “four islands off Hokkaido” in *Yomiuri*. Newspapers in each country routinely connected the saury fishing dispute to controversies regarding Japanese history textbooks and Koizumi’s Yasukuni Shrine visits. *Yomiuri* reported that because of the saury dispute along with historical controversies “the bilateral relationship could deteriorate further” (“Editorial: Fishing,” 2001). *Chosun* noted that saury fishing had to remain peripheral and marginal issues because historical issues were more important (“Editorial: Diplomacy,” 2001).

There were also territorial disputes over islands between China and Japan, and Japan and South Korea. Both the Chinese and Japanese government claimed sovereignty over the *Diaoyutai* Islands, also known as the *Senkaku* Islands in Japan, in the East China Sea. The disputed islands and surrounding sea are known to be an oil-rich area (Ikebe & Jitsumori, 2005). *Dokdo* Island in East Sea, also called *Takesima* in Japan, was an age-old point of territorial contention between Japan and South Korea. Japan-South Korea Free Trade Agreement talks and Japan’s pursuit to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council also increased the already heightened tension among the three countries over historical issues. The three sites of memory were clearly intertwined with historical, territorial, diplomatic, and sports issues in the region.

This finding subsequently influenced the way in which the analysis was formulated. Instead of analyzing news texts topic by topic following each individual controversy, the interconnected nature of the three controversies required the researcher to look at them all together at a macro level. Given that a primary goal of critical discourse analysis is to describe, interpret, and explain how macro-level sociopolitical changes play out in micro-level spoken and written texts (Fairclough, 1989), this approach was valid for this study. To do this, thematic categories (Carter & Aulette, 2009; Pavlenko, 2006) were needed. In other words, rather than following each topic, the analysis followed the themes of discourse such as the politics of memory and

commemorative social discourse. In fact, these thematic categories were more appropriate to meet the goal of critical discourse analysis, which explicates the underlying political circumstances. In a critical discourse analysis, a researcher is expected to explore intertextuality to find out the meanings of texts in the social cultural level. In this analytical framework, texts do not remain at the linguistic level. A more active analytical approach, therefore, is needed to find out meanings that transcend microscopic meanings of texts. During the analysis, multiple themes were identified. They were Reconstruction and Remembrance; Memory and Identity; National Unity and Newspapers; Remembering to Forget. There were also sub categories that were identified as specific themes within each larger thematic category.

While diverse social discourses on memory were observed in the three newspapers, it has to be noted that the degree of diversity varied in each newspaper. *Yomiuri* showed that the war memory was a crucial topic in national politics, as war memory was the important element in the individual, social, and national identity of Japan. This observation was not much different from other prior academic observations, in which scholars have found there have been social and political struggles in Japan over tradition, custom, history, and memory. For example, Nelson (2000) finds that “in post war Japan, the fight has thus far been waged largely with images, words, and symbols instead of bullets and invasions, yet the persistence of a discourse about both recent and distant histories remains one with far-reaching economic, political, and social implication” (p. 87).

In comparison, *China Daily* and *Chosun* showed a lesser degree of diversity in social discourses on memory, at least in the representation of such social discourses in respective newspapers. For example, in *China Daily* there was virtually no evidence of internal political conflict in Chinese society or the government over historical issues. In *Chosun*, there were several occasions where the intensity and seriousness of the

government's reaction to Japan's "historical revisionism" were questioned. However, the social political tension in those cases did not seem as fierce as the one in Japan.

The difference in the degree of diversity in memory discourses seemed to originate from the difference between the aggressor and the victim in the Asia-Pacific War. Regardless of the question over whether Japan's occupation of other countries helped the 'liberation' of them, it is an irrefutable fact that Japan colonized a part of China and Korea. Afterwards, Japanese war criminals were convicted in the Tokyo Tribunal. This historical context left a complex situation with Japanese national politics. Accepting culpability in the war and issuing apologies to victims have been the subjects of social and political debates in Japanese society, as they have been summarized as the phenomena of the politics of memory. The politics of memory has been more complicated in Japan because of the presence of diverse interpretations of war memories. A prominent right-wing conservative intellectual and the president of a think-tank named after him, Hisahiko Okazaki, provided his own analysis in *Yomiuri* on the reason for the steep increase in historical disputes. He argued:

[T]he so-called historical issues concerning Japan's conduct before and during World War II ceased to be of international interest around 1980, one generation after the war's end, in a way similar to other incidents of world history. For example, in 1980, no newspapers, magazines or academic publications in Japan, China, South Korea or the United States featured any analyses or commentary pieces on Japan's wartime history. Scrutinizing the process through which historical issues were artificially dragged up has exposed that every one of them - say, the history textbook ruckus that flared up in 1982 and the argument over the enslavement of comfort women by the Imperial military - was initially fermented without exception by nasty trickery at the hands of antigovernment Japanese or scatterbrains swayed by leftist ideological fads. (Okazaki, 2005)

Okazaki's strong complaint about "leftist ideological fads" suggests there have been social and political debates over historical issues in Japan.

Unlike Japan, China and South Korea were left with a moral superiority given by the Tribunals. They were liberated by the Allied Forces during World War II, and

recovered their sovereignty. China and South Korea, however, could not develop full-fledged democratic cultures for many years as a result of their respective political situations. In China, the Cultural Revolution forced a uniform understanding of history on the public life, while the communist government did not intend to address historical issues in consideration of Japanese economic aid. South Korea also suffered political instability until the early 1990s, and different administrations each took dubious stances in terms of addressing historical issue and seeking for reparations (Fogel, 2007; Reilly, 2004; Wakabayashi, 2007). In fact, a number of *Yomiuri* articles either quoted politicians or argued themselves that there were not as many historical disputes in the past decades as there were in the 1990s and 2000s. For example, a *Yomiuri* article published in 2005 noted “since 1985, China has used historical issues between the two countries as diplomatic trump cards on a number of occasions” (“Yasukuni Visits,” 2005).

In addition to political and economic calculations, the relatively authoritarian social culture and the less democratic political systems of China and South Korea have suppressed the emergence of historical issues in social discourse. For example, until the 1970s Chinese historians could study the details of the war only under strict guidelines set by the state, which emphasized the role of the Communists but ignored such events as the Rape of Nanking. The unitary view of history favored by Mao Tse-tung gave way to a certain amount of pluralism, but limits were still imposed on how far historians could go, and the Communist Party still emphasized the need for “unity and stability” (Rose, 2005, pp. 40-41).

As for South Korea, the “Comfort Women” issue did not become an important social issue until 1980s. According to Yang (1998), there was virtually no research, investigation, or discussion of the “Comfort Women” issue in South Korea, and Korean government officials often referred to Korean colonial history as “matters of the past.” The term suggested that colonial history was unconnected to current relations between South Korea and Japan. Moon (2005) demonstrates that the pursuit of modernity in South

Korea treated men and women differently. Men were mobilized for mandatory military service and then, as conscripts, utilized as workers and researchers in the industrializing economy. Women, in contrast, were consigned to lesser factory jobs, and their roles as members of the modern nation were defined largely in terms of biological reproduction and household management. As a result, the “Comfort Women” issue was not considered a critical issue in Korean society.

In this study, Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi’s visits to the Yasukuni Shrine emerged as the main focus of analysis. There were several reasons that made the Shrine controversy the most intriguing topic. First, the Yasukuni Shrine itself is a shrine for Shintō, a system of Japanese indigenous religious tradition. Therefore, the enshrinement of the war dead in it created an extremely complicated context, which involved Japanese religion, customs, and tradition. Second, since the shrine visits involved the Japanese prime minister, the topic received more prominence. While the emperor of Japan is the spiritual symbol of the Japanese nation-state, a prime minister is the political face of the country. The presence of the prime minister at the controversial site therefore became a significant topic not only in Japanese domestic politics but also in international diplomacy. Third, Koizumi’s annual shrine visit provoked national and international attention. As a result of his annual visits, the Yasukuni Shrine controversy became the most significant topic in discussions of East Asian historical disputes in the past decade. In fact, when the keyword searches were performed to retrieve news articles, more articles about the Yasukuni Shrine controversy were found than those about the history textbooks controversy and the “Comfort Women” controversy. There were 860 articles on the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, 550 articles on the Textbook Issue, and 222 articles on the “Comfort Women” controversy in total (including *China Daily*, *Yomiuri*, and *Chosun*).

Memory Subject to Political and Economic Changes

The politics of memory analyzed in this study covers the years from 2000 to 2007. Growing political and economic tensions in the East Asia region added instability to the era and propelled historical issues to the forefront. News stories about historical issues frequently referred to political and economic relations among the three countries. When the newspapers covered stories about diplomatic relationships and trade among the countries, historical issues were treated as important variables.

During this period Japan went through political and economic transition, and a new nationalism took shape. After decades of remarkable economic success, Japan experienced in the 1990s a decade-long economic stagnancy, called the “lost decade.” After the turn of the twenty-first century, however, the political and economic situation changed. The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) had to form a ruling coalition with other smaller parties to sustain its power. It was a significant change in Japanese politics where the conservative LDP had monopolized political power for over fifty years after the end of World War II. In 2001, the incoming Prime Minister Koizumi adopted the mantra of “structural reform” to encapsulate his agenda and to signal his commitment to radical change in Japanese society (Mulgan, 2002). To energize its inert economy, Koizumi suggested structural reforms to include privatizing postal services, redirecting auto-related taxes away from road construction, and reducing central government tax grants to local governments (“Voters To,” 2001). Cultural news deputy editor for *Yomiuri*, Takahiko Tennichi (2001), wrote that Koizumi successfully drew support from both conservative and liberal intellectuals because he took the “initiative in bringing an end to factional influence in policymaking, and championed more cost-effective uses of taxpayers’ money.” Analyzing Koizumi’s popularity, Tennichi explicated what he believed was the reasons for his popularity among conservatives:

Typical of Koizumi’s right-leaning side is his unhesitating commitment to visit Yasukuni Shrine, which is dedicated to the spirits of the war dead. One of the LDP’s conservative

heavyweights, former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, praised Koizumi in the July issue of the monthly magazine *Shincho* 45. For Nakasone, pledges Koizumi made while campaigning in April for the LDP presidential election - including pledges to revise the Constitution, to affirm Japan's right to exercise collective self-defense, to enable the election of prime ministers through a popular vote and to pay a tribute to Yasukuni Shrine - are all in line with what Nakasone has said in the past. (Tennichi, 2001)

Another concern for Japan was China's expanding political and economic influence. Geographically close, separated by only a narrow strip of the East China Sea. China's military build-up made many Japanese uneasy. In addition, China had been a permanent member of UN Security Council from 1972, when China restored its diplomatic relations with the US and was admitted to the UN. With its veto-voting power as a permanent member, China could greatly influence the result of Japan's bid to become another permanent member of the Security Council. In economics, China had greatly expanded its internal market and opened it to the outside world. Its membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 accelerated the pace in opening its market. With the growth of its international trade, China was becoming a major trade partner of Japan. China replaced the US as Japan's largest trading partner in 2004. Since 2002, Japan's exports to China have maintained an average annual growth rate of around forty percent. Japan in 2007 imported more from China than from the US (Heazle & Knight, 2007). China's economic development was potentially beneficial not only to China itself, but also for Japan, and Japan's political leaders were all aware of the importance of cooperation between the two countries. For example, during his visit to China for the first annual conference of the Boao Forum for Asia, Koizumi declared that China's economic development was not a threat but a challenge and opportunity for Japan, and that economic relations between Japan and China were not confrontational but complementary (MOFA of Japan, 2002).

One important aspect in the economic relationship between Japan and China was that Japan had been one of the major foreign investors in China, and provided economic aid to the country. Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) to China was the

prime example of such aid. Japan started providing ODA to China in 1979, and assisted China's opening and economic reform policy. From 1980 to 2001, the total amount of Japan's ODA to China reached 3091.206 billion yen (roughly 3.3 billion US dollars) including long-term loans, grants, and technical cooperation (Liping, 2007). ODA later became an important subject of political negotiations between Japan and China when the countries debated over historical issues. In 2004 Koizumi and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao met at a summit meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. A *Yomiuri* article that covered the meeting indicated that Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni and China's diplomatic protest against the visits would be an important element of negotiation in the future of the ODA to China program.

“The yen loans have contributed greatly to China's economic development, and China wants this issue to be dealt with appropriately,” Wen said. Wen's reply is believed to be an expression of the country's intention to enter into discussions over the future of the ODA, in the wake of Koizumi's indication Sunday that ODA to China could be abolished in the near future, a topic Koizumi did not mention at the meeting... On Nov. 21, Koizumi met with Chinese President Hu Jintao in Santiago, where the president severely criticized Koizumi for repeatedly visiting Yasukuni Shrine. (Tsuda, 2004)

In fact, Japanese conservatives had complained about ODA to China, referring to the fact that China had increased its military power while it was receiving ODA, and that China had criticized Japan for Koizumi's Yasukuni visits (Akashi, 2002). A *Yomiuri* article expressed the newspaper's displeasure with ODA. The article argued that public criticism was growing in the Japanese society about ODA. The articles urged the government to reconsider ODA:

China has stepped up its military preparedness despite receiving yen loans from this country, while also criticizing visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi...it is reasonable for the government to call off yen loans to China as early as fiscal 2008, when Beijing hosts the Olympic Games. (“Editorial: End,” 2005)

China Daily, in comparison, recounted that Japan's economic development was possible because the country was “backed up by post-World War II assistance from the

United States.” The article argued the ODA issue was “being exploited by some Japanese officials, media, and right-wing forces to express their anti-China feelings” (“Keep Politics,” 2004). The article went on:

They blamed China's military power, claiming it menaces Japan. They ignore the fact that China is solely concerned with defending itself. They ignore the fact that it is the repeated visits by their government officials, including Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, to the Yasukuni Shrine, where Class-A war criminals are honoured, that has eroded the trust and good feelings that Asian countries, including China, may have towards Japan. It is important to look at the issue in its real economic context. Political clamouring will not contribute to a correct understanding of the programme. Worse still, it may risk undermining the friendship ODA helped to promote in the past few decades. (“Keep Politics,” 2004)

It was evident that while the title of the article read “Keep politics out of ODA,” the *China Daily* article mixed politics, Koizumi’s visits, and ODA all together in its argument.

With respect to Japanese and South Korean relationships, the countries had a mutual interest in economic cooperation and regional security. South Korea had been a major importer of Japanese industrial products since the Korean War. The Japanese government was also aware of the strategic importance of South Korea for its own security, given that North Korea was developing a nuclear program and that Japan was a possible target. To South Korea, Japan had been its major trade partner and an ally in the trilateral US-Japan-South Korea alliance. Although the alliance was made during the cold-war era, the threat of North Korea and the growing influence of China in the region had given South Korea reason to maintain a close relationship with Japan (Hook, Gilson, Hughes, & Dobson, 2005). In recent years, the territorial dispute over Dokdo (called Takesima in Japan), a group of small islets in the East Sea (called the Sea of Japan in Japan), flared up. This territorial dispute displayed how historical issues could be mingled with economic and diplomatic issues. Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun had a summit meeting in July 2004 in which the two

leaders agreed that the countries had “so many common interests in global problems” (T. Fukumoto, 2004). The *Yomiuri* article, however, noted that historical issues, including the territorial dispute, remained a roadblock in building a better relationship between the two countries:

However, there are still smoldering problems between the two nations such as Koizumi’s visits to Yasukuni Shrine and the question of Takeshima island, known as Tokdo in South Korea, over which both countries claim possession. (T. Fukumoto, 2004)

Chosun associated the territorial dispute with the textbook issue. With a screening process for new history textbooks gathering much attention in 2005, the newspaper severely criticized the Japanese government in an editorial:

Following inflammatory remarks from some Japanese Cabinet members about keeping the war guilt out of Japanese history textbooks, the country’s Shimane Prefecture last week submitted a bill calling for a national “Takeshima Day” - after the Japanese name for the Korean-administered Dokdo islands which Japan claims it owns. On the same day, Japanese Ambassador to Korea Toshiyuki Takano asserted in the heart of Seoul that the islands were Japanese territory “historically and legally.” Such behavior leaves no room for even a superficial greeting, let alone a hearty friendship. (“Editorial: An,” 2005).

The indeterminate status of the island following Korea’s liberalization, and the desire for both Japan and South Korea to acquire productive fisheries and possible mineral resources for economic development, have been the principal causes of the territorial dispute (Hughes, 2004). The three historical controversies of this study unfolded in the midst of these geopolitical and economic circumstances of the region.

Reconstruction and Remembrance

Memory is a tool both to regain and reconstruct the past. To serve the present condition of society, “sites of memory” are sometimes artificially imagined and deliberately invented. In the construction of memory “the past is not being reconstructed around the truth-conditions; rather, memory is explicitly for guidance of present-day concerns or problems” (Nora, 1996; Nora, 1998). The three sites of memory (historical

controversies) provided the three newspapers with an opportunity to reconstruct the past for their current circumstances. Memory construction in newspapers occurs in the form of interpretation, representation, and editorialization (Edy & Daradanova, 2006; Zelizer, 2008). While they claim to be objective organizers and transmitters of social discourses, they many times represent only certain opinions, discourses, and interests. The representation of war memories in the three newspapers demonstrated such effect.

Defining War: A Pivotal Task in the Reconstruction

Definition of a war in every military conflict is a contentions topic. Since each side involved in a war has its own legitimate reason to wage war, examining how each side defines the goal and the nature of a war can produce a meaningful understanding of how they memorialize the war. How one defines a past war is a political act because distinctions between the victim and aggressor, and the good and the bad must be made. The definition of war creates conflicts when there are different understandings of a war; it also creates unity if everybody agrees to share the same definition. The definition of war can give consolation to victims who seek emotional compensation from who they believe are the aggressors. The definition of a war, in some cases, is directly responsible for initiating punitive actions or monetary reparations. If the definition of a war is made in an international court, such as an international tribunal, the international community can try war criminals and convict them for crimes against humanity. In the Asia-Pacific War, after Japan offered an unconditional surrender to the Allied Forces, the Tokyo Tribunal convicted key government and military officials of war crimes. However, interpretations of the war and the results of the Tokyo Tribunal continued to be sources of historical debates (Conrad, 2003; Fujitani et al., 2001; Seraphim, 2006).

It was not surprising to see a multiplicity of definitions of the Asia-Pacific War in the newspapers. When the anniversary of Japan's surrender to Allied Forces, August 15, approached, newspapers produced a profusion of articles. According to a number of

China Daily's articles, the Asia-Pacific War started with the "invasion of Japan," and the anniversary of Marco Polo Bridge incident has been observed every year with loud sirens and mass rallies. *China Daily* wrote in 2004:

Sirens wailed across more than 100 Chinese cities and cars stopped and sounded their horns on Saturday to commemorate the 73rd anniversary of Japan's invasion of China 1931...Japanese militarists manufactured the "September 18 Incident" at Liutiaohu near Shenyang in 1931, and subsequently invaded and occupied Northeast China. The "September 18 Incident" marked the beginning of China's 14-year-long struggle against Japanese aggression. ("Invasion Anniversary," 2004)

It was clear that the Chinese public thought Japan began invading China in 1931, much before World War II began. The "manufactured" incident started their struggle against Japan. In an article about the Japanese history textbook issue, Wang Xinhua, the head of the Chinese People's Anti-Japanese Aggression War Memorial Hall, was quoted as saying "as the world in general is preparing to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the victory over fascism, Japan should consider its history and pursue the road of peace and development." The terms "Anti-Japanese Aggression" and "Anti-Fascist War" frequently appeared in *China Daily*. In *China Daily*, therefore, Japan's surrender to Allied Forces was not just surrender. It was "the victory over fascism" ("Experts Slam," 2005; "War Crime," 2005). In a different article titled "Japan should face up to wartime aggression," *China Daily* wrote that the war was "the triumph of justice over injustice and pacifism over fascism," which "must be commemorated by peace-loving people who made a joint contribution all over the world" ("Japan should," 2005).

The use of the term "Anti-Fascist War" was deliberate rhetoric and propaganda. It was an attempt to distinguish China from what it called "Fascist countries," which *China Daily* suggested included not just Japan but also other countries that invaded or colonized different countries. The term "fascism" also defined the nature of Japanese aggression. Fascism is an abhorrent political ideology which has been identified with totalitarianism, state terror, fanaticism, orchestrated violence, and blind obedience (Griffin, 1995). Some

scholars in fact theorized that fascism was a reality in the Japan of the 1930s and 1940s and was an important factor in the discussions of the distinctive and allegedly superior Japanese patterns of culture (Antoni, 2004). By aligning Japan's aggression with Fascism, *China Daily* seemed to endow its country and readers with moral superiority and emotional appeasement. In retrospect, many communist regimes in the past sought legitimacy this way. East Germany, USSR, and Tito's Yugoslavia constructed their political legitimacy by accusing counterparts of Fascism. The fact that "fascism" rhetoric was repeatedly employed in *China Daily* demonstrated that the rhetoric mirrored the country's official interpretation of the war. The "Anti-Fascism War" rhetoric prescribed potential interpretations of the War. Considering that leading newspapers, including *China Daily*, are under the control of the Chinese Communist Party, it was part of a unified effort to advance an official version of interpreting the war. In fact *China Daily's* fascism rhetoric was consistent with China's official standpoint of the war. In 2006, Tang Jiaxuan, a member of Communist Party of China Central Committee and state councilor, noted in his speech "in 1945, the World Anti-fascism War ended and the Chinese people won the great victory of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression" (MFA of China, 2006).

In contrast, in its description of the conclusion of the war, *Yomiuri* rarely used the word "surrender" or "defeat." It instead used the terms "end" more often to refer to Japan's unconditional surrender in the War. To *China Daily*, the Asia-Pacific War was a war China won, although their "victory" was awarded to China by the surrender of Japan to the Allied Forces. In comparison, in many *Yomiuri* articles, the war simply ended in 1945. Below are two cases of *Yomiuri* articles that used "end" instead of "defeat" or "surrender."

Immediately after being elected, Koizumi announced his plan to visit Yasukuni Shrine...on Aug. 15, the anniversary of the end of World War II. ("3 Wise Men," 2001)

Despite opposition from Beijing, Koizumi seems determined to pay his respects at Yasukuni Shrine on Aug. 15, the 56th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War. (G. Shibata, 2001)

“Surrender,” “defeat” and “end” mean different things. “Surrender” and “defeat” give an impression of humiliation and hopelessness, while “end” does not necessarily cause an emotional response. The word “end” is an objective expression. Out of 429 *Yomiuri* articles about the Yasukuni Shrine controversy, 102 used expressions such as “the end of WWII” and “the end of Pacific War.” In contrast, twenty-five articles used the word “surrender” and only seven articles used the word “defeat.” The fact that *Yomiuri* used “end” more often than “surrender” indicated that there was a journalistic attempt to relativize the surrender. Antoni (2004) notes, in his discussion of Japanese fascism, that the use of more “neutral” words could lead to relativization of the dimensions of guilt. In other words, employing a word that is more objective in meaning can restrict further scrutiny and discussions about the details of a war. The term “end” can be seen as more objective than “Anti-Fascist War” to define the past. It can be also considered an attempt to avoid unwanted emotional reactions of readers.

Yasuhiko Shibata (2001), a senior fellow at the Yomiuri Research Institute, a think tank affiliated with the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, wrote in *Yomiuri* about how the meanings of words “end,” “defeat,” and “surrender” had shaped the view of Japan as a nation in its public. Shibata argued:

Postwar Japan has been beaten down to the point where national morale is devastatingly low. Who is the enemy driving the nation into crisis?...More than 100 million Japanese are caught up in sentimental mood seen at the memorial ceremonies for the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and ceremonies on Aug. 15. For some peculiar reason, this date is remembered as the anniversary of “the end of the war” instead of “the defeat.” Japanese in the postwar era have poured energy into fulfilling their materialistic desires for personal benefit, while thinking lightly of or even denying their basic foundations, such as the concept of the nation and the Japanese ethnic group, on which they should have relied. (Y. Shibata, 2001)

Shibata reminded readers of the day Japan fell victim to atomic bombing at the beginning of his column, then went on to argue “Japan must restore its humanity.” It was not clear

what he meant by “humanity” when the word first appeared. It gradually became apparent, however, that his “humanity” meant the love of the nation. The writer alluded to the problem of the expression “the end of war”, suggesting the “peculiar” expression had contributed to “forgetting the existence of the nation and the people.” His argument went directly against the potential reason for using “end” instead of “surrender” or “defeat.” He wanted those emotional words in the public discourse, so that the public could be reminded of the painful defeat Japan had to endure.

Yomiuri is one of the rightist newspapers in Japan. Only *Sankei Shimbun*, which is often called an “ultra-conservative newspaper,” is considered more conservative than *Yomiuri* in the Japanese media industry (Rozman, 2009). The conservative bent of *Yomiuri* can explain how columns with a nationalistic hue could appear in the paper. It can be said that a newspaper should practice the principle of impartiality when dealing with the ideological left and right, particularly when it runs columns of contributors. In that sense, the writings of conservative columnists in *Yomiuri* are understandable. However, *Yomiuri* itself ran editorials, in which it strongly expressed its conservative approach to the definition of the war. It even provided a new definition of the war. An editorial published on August 16, 2006, just one day after the anniversary of Japan’s surrender, argued:

No single term adequately encapsulates the series of wars fought in this period. Names such as the Greater East Asia War, Pacific War, Asian-Pacific War or 15-Year War evoke historical emotions or fail to sate geographical deficiencies. The *Yomiuri Shimbun* has decided to collectively call these wars the “Showa War.”
 (“Editorial: Responsibilities,” 2006)

Showa was the reign name of Emperor Hirohito, who was the Emperor of Japan from 1926 to 1989. Emperor Hirohito’s reign covered the entire Asia-Pacific War and World War II. The term “Showa” is considered in Japan as having an auspicious meaning: at home, enlightened government; abroad, world peace (Irokawa, 1995). For *Yomiuri*, this new title for the period with which the controversial historical issues

became indelibly associated was “unrestrained by geographical limits or historical views.” *Yomiuri* ran an editorial that had very similar content to the 2006 editorial on the next anniversary of Japan’s surrender.

The *Yomiuri Shimbun* established an in-company committee to reexamine the war responsibility of Japanese political and military leaders in the Showa War, while avoiding the “war criminal” concept used at the Tokyo Trial... The *Yomiuri* coined the term “Showa War” in connection with its war responsibility series to describe the period of conflict lasting from the Manchurian Incident of 1931 [Showa 6] to the end of World War II in 1945 [Showa 20]. (“Editorial: Mark,” 2007)

The use of the term “Anti-Fascism War” in *China Daily* and the proposal for the new title “Showa War” showed that there was a war of memory underway. On the same day in 2006 when *Yomiuri* was advancing the self-coined term “Showa War,” a prominent liberal-leaning Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun* ran an editorial in which it stated that the question of the emperor's responsibility should be the subject of debate. It continued:

[T]he Tokyo tribunal never required the emperor's presence in the courtroom. This was because the United States considered the authority of the emperor as a necessary factor in reconstructing postwar Japan. And that is why, we assume, the emperor bound himself to the heavy task of existing as a symbol of a peaceful country under the new postwar Constitution. (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2006)

There was not a noticeable pattern in describing the war and the end of the war in *Chosun*’s articles. In *Chosun*, the anniversary of Japan’s surrender was described in multiple different ways such as: anniversary of the close of the Second World War, Korean Liberation Day, Japan's defeat in the Pacific War, Japan’s surrender in World War II. “Anti-Fascism War” rhetoric was not found in *Chosun*.

The Tokyo Tribunal Questioned

In post-World War II East Asian politics, the issue of the war responsibility of Japan has been one of the most difficult issues about which there is no answer, no consensus and even no direction (Jørgensen, 2003). At the heart of the debate over

Japan's war responsibility has been the Tokyo Tribunal. The Tribunal lasted between 1946 and 1948, and was presided over by eleven judges, one from each of the Allied countries involved in the Asia-Pacific War. Of the twenty-eight defendants accused of Class-A war crimes, seven were executed, sixteen sentenced to life in prison, and two to shorter terms. Five died in prison, but others were released between 1950 and 1958. Although the defendants had legal counsel, critics of the trials said the proceedings were biased in favor of the prosecution. For example, the Indian judge Radhabinod Pal acknowledged the culpability of Japan for war crimes, but questioned the legitimacy of the Tribunal. He argued that the Tribunal was an *ex post facto* legislation and an exercise in revenge, and Japan could not be blamed any more than the Western imperialist powers for the war. He also maintained that the American use of atomic bombs on Japan was comparable to the war crimes of which Japan was accused ("Editorial: Govt," 2005; Futamura, 2008).

Another important point of contention has been the exclusion of Emperor Hirohito from the trials. The Tribunal declined to indict the emperor, who was one of a handful of top wartime Japanese leaders during the Asia-Pacific War. Both prosecutors and defendants had an interest in deflecting responsibility from the emperor: the prosecution because US officials wanted to co-opt him in their project to reshape Japan, and the defendants because they saw protecting the emperor as their duty (Roy, 2009). In addition, the definition of Class-A war crimes, crimes against peace and humanity, was challenged. When the prosecution presented its case, the defense lawyers claimed that the Potsdam Declaration, which was issued by the US, United Kingdom, and China on July 26, 1945, and called for the surrender of Japan, referred only to the trial of war crimes but not to "crimes against peace" and "crimes against humanity" (Futamura, 2008). On the other hand, the Tribunal failed to address multiple important human rights issues such as "Comfort Women," slave labor, and the Rape of Nanking. Seraphim (2009) points out

that the Tribunal was flawed in many ways, and it suffered from too much memory and too little history.

The Tribunal left controversial legacies and continued to be the source of historical debates. *Yomiuri* took part in the discussion on the legitimacy of the Tribunal through its articles. Discussions about the Tribunal appeared mainly in editorials. One *Yomiuri* editorial provided detailed research on the legitimacy of the Tribunal:

Critics both at home and abroad have cast doubts as to whether the Tokyo Tribunal, held on the basis of a court regulation stipulated by the Occupation authorities was justifiable in light of international law. Moreover, following the 1952 San Francisco Peace Treaty, the death of Class-A war criminals by public execution has been treated as “death in the course of public duty.” (“Editorial: Govt,” 2005)

The editorial referred to former Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira who visited the Yasukuni Shrine after the enshrinement of the Class-A war criminals. Ohira was quoted as having said “I think that the judgment on Class-A war criminals or on the Greater East Asia War will be made by history.” Another editorial raised the question of the eligibility of the countries that accused and tried the defendants. The editorial argued:

The Soviet Union, whose representatives sat on the judge’s bench and at the prosecutor’s table during the tribunal, had been ejected from the League of Nations as an aggressor in December 1939, three months before World War II broke out... The Soviets sent 600,000 Japanese soldiers and others to Siberia as prisoners of war, and tens of thousands died in forced labor camps there. (“Editorial: War,” 2006)

The title of this editorial read “War responsibility must be clarified by ourselves,” suggesting that the Tribunal was unfair and Japan had not had its voice heard with respect to the Tokyo Tribunal.

Yomiuri also reminded readers that some defendants the Tribunal found guilty for Class-A war crimes actually served in the rebuilding of their country after the war. It explained that Mamoru Shigemitsu, one of the Class-A war criminals convicted in the trial, became deputy prime minister and foreign minister under the administration, and Okinori Kaya, another Class-A war criminal convict, became justice minister under the

administration of Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda. The article added, “Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi was himself a Class-A war crimes suspect” (“From War,” 2005). Reminiscing about the contributions of convicted war criminals in post-war Japan was a meaningful turn in the reconstruction of memory: instead of remaining defensive and evasive in terms of war memories, *Yomiuri* took a proactive role to reconstruct the collective memory of the war.

Yomiuri's reconstruction of the Tokyo Tribunal was the reflection of the conservative trend in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) regarding historical issues. Key political figures joined the reevaluation of the Tokyo Tribunal, and seemed to try and capitalize on such momentum. In 2005, China was pressing Japan hard over textbook issues and Koizumi's shrine visit. Bringing up the refreshed understanding of the Tokyo Tribunal was an effective means to garner public support for their stance. On May 28, 2005 *Yomiuri* reported:

Masahiro Morioka, parliamentary secretary of the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry criticized the Chinese government for demanding Koizumi stop visiting the shrine. “Class-A war criminals are treated as bad people because of fear of China,” Morioka said. (“Yasukuni Row,” 2005)

It did not take long for the revisionist understating of Japan's conservative leaders to reach the antenna of Chinese media. *China Daily*, as usual, reacted to the news from Japan with strong wording. *China Daily* wrote, “what Japanese “right-wing nationalists” were saying about the Tribunal was “absurd,” and the “nationalists” were refusing to face the country's past sins” (“Japan Should,” 2005). It pointed out in another article “flaws” of the Tokyo Tribunal which Japanese conservatives tried to evade. *China Daily* argued:

Scholars have pointed to what they say are flaws in the Tokyo trials, including the absence of the crime of conspiracy in international law before 1945, the failure to charge other key figures such as leaders of ultra-right groups or industrialists, and a decision by the Allies not to try the late Emperor Hirohito, in whose name the war was fought. (“Consensus Eludes,” 2006)

The article added that the controversial understanding of the Tokyo Tribunal had been the source of contention even in the Japanese “conservative camp.”

Futamura (2008) notes that the Tokyo Tribunal has been a source frustration for many Japanese, and such frustration has harmed Japanese national pride. According to her, Japan in the 1980s regained its self-confidence through its massive economic development which helped lessen its long-time inferiority complex towards the US. As the emphasis on Japanese pride grew stronger, the Tokyo Tribunal became the target of social and political conservatives. In other words, the Tokyo Tribunal was contested because Japanese culpability translated into the troubling question of Japanese identity. *Yomiuri*'s recognition of the role of war criminals in the rebuilding of Japan was an attempt to restore Japan's pride tainted by the label, “the country of war criminals.”

The Ambiguity of Memory

For Halbwachs (1992a), “depending on its circumstances and points in time, society represents the past to itself in different ways: it modifies its conventions” (pp. 172-173). Historical events can be recalled only if they fit within a framework of contemporary interests. Society, in turn, modifies recollections according to its present needs. Social beliefs are therefore collective recollections, and they relate to knowledge of the present. Collective memory adjusts to, and shapes, a system of present-day beliefs (Ben-Amos & Weissberg, 1999).

Whereas conservative political leaders in Japan were hawkish about historical controversies, they were extremely cautious not to irritate the feelings of people in neighboring countries or their own constituents. They were exceedingly hesitant to answer when asked their views of history. They did not answer clearly about what they were going to do or how they were going to go about those issues. Instead, what they did was to play on the ambiguity of memory. The ambiguity of memory is the absence of a clear contour of the past, or maybe it is too clear of a contour. It signals that there is the

prevalence of “contestation and debate about whose memory and whose past are remembered or forgotten” (Kattago, 2001, p. 29). Political leaders normally do not want to take sides in discussions of controversial pasts. They know that once they get involved in the discussion, every remark they make will be the source of political debate. The result: The ambiguity of memory leads to the ambiguous stance of political leaders over memory, and vice versa.

What is the “appropriate” action for memory?

The discussion on the ambiguity of memory subsequently raises a question: What is an appropriate memory, and can someone accuse another of holding an inappropriate memory, given that everyone has his/her own recollection of the past? What are appropriate actions to take in connection with war memories at the present time? Political leaders and newspapers wrestled with these questions, and the wording “appropriate memory” and “appropriate understanding” has appeared frequently in news texts. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has not been an exception when it comes to using ambiguous memory. Whereas he was seen as a hawkish conservative politician determined to visit the Yasukuni Shrine, he was always cautious to speak specifically about what he thought were historical facts and memories. Being under enormous political and diplomatic pressure, he deliberately created a grey area regarding historical controversies. When asked whether he would visit the Yasukuni Shrine, he routinely answered, “I will decide it appropriately” (Hidaka & Imai, 2005). There have been many instances where he used the “appropriately” rhetoric:

During his meeting in November with Koizumi in Santiago, Chinese President Hu Jintao urged the prime minister to stop visiting the shrine. Since then, Koizumi has not mentioned the matter directly, only saying he would deal with the issue appropriately. (“Koizumi Won’t,” 2005)

He said that the visits had been turned into “a diplomatic and political issue” and he “should not elaborate on it.” But he promised to “address the matter appropriately.” (“Invasions Caused,” 2006)

Koizumi never spoke about what specific actions he meant by the word “appropriately.” He preferred rather to calculate the political gains he would garner by visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, and carried out his visits. Despite the lack of public understanding of what “appropriate” action regarding history would mean, the ambiguous word kept appearing in discussions of historical controversies. In 2006, a group of ruling party and opposition lawmakers produced a draft proposal regarding the creation of a state-run memorial facility for war dead. The proposal also said:

Japan, as “an influential member of the international community,” needs to pay appropriate attention to neighboring countries when the government holds memorial services for war dead and prays for peace at state-organized events. (“Lawmakers Question,” 2006)

It was not only Japanese politicians but also Chinese leaders who spoke about “appropriate” understanding and actions about the past. In 2004 when Koizumi met Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at international summit talks in Laos, Koizumi was told to “act appropriately” regarding historical matters (“Japan, China,” 2004). Prior to the meeting between Koizumi and Wen, the foreign ministries of the two nations met and agreed that Koizumi would pledge to “take appropriate actions” on the Yasukuni Shrine dispute. However, the Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura refused to comment further on the issue in public after the talks.

The importance of the word “appropriate” or “appropriateness” in political negotiations lies in its ambiguity. The word “appropriate” opens up numerous possible ways of interpretation. What’s appropriate to one can be inappropriate to someone else. Something that was appropriate a decade ago cannot be appropriate at the present time. An appropriate historical understanding in one country would not be appropriate in a different country especially if confrontations between the two occurred in the past. Even the architecture of a memorial site can trigger a potential ambiguity of memory. According to Kattago (2001), the Vietnam Veterans Memorial reveals the ambiguous combination of loss and national shame. Unlike Neue Wache, a magnificent Berlin

building that highlights honorable death in the name of the nation, he argues that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is an open, somber space for reflection. Thus the Vietnam Veterans Memorial encourages ambiguity and multiple memories, rather than requiring visitors to accept certain versions of the war.

The real issue here is whether politicians triggered the ambiguity of memory intentionally for their political gains; or they tried to awaken the potential multiplicity of war memories, so as to encourage citizens in East Asia to delve reflexively into the meaning of war memories. So far, a number of studies have concluded that there were political calculations behind the ambiguous stance over historical controversies (Min, 2003; Saaler & Schwentker, 2008; Seraphim, 2006; Ueno, 2004). For example, Koizumi's ambiguous attitude was propelled by political populism that sought to win over Japan's social and political conservatives. He tried to take advantage of the nostalgia of the public for the glorious past, while he did not disrupt the nationalistic sentiments of China and South Korea. In addition, he had to take the political opponents in Japan into his consideration when dealing with historical controversies. The "appropriate" rhetoric was the result of such complex domestic and international politics.

The meaning of "respecting" the past

Another ambiguous word in news articles was the term "respect." The word "respect" generally means to consider someone or something worthy of high regard (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2010). An announcement of reverence becomes a political statement when the subject is a contested topic. Yet respecting the past is often a vague, disputable, and inconsistent act, and collective memory is certainly concerned with respecting the past (Dwyer & Alderman, 2008). Thompson (2006) notes that respect is the "mode of recognition, which has a particular institutional location" (p. 57). What he says is that respect and recognition are basically political and they can be dependent upon the political orientations of different groups. As a result, the act of respecting something

or someone creates a good impression, which politicians always seek. In that sense, making an announcement of personal reverence can be interpreted as a political and value-loaded act.

Respecting the past, therefore, can be reactionary, resonant, or reflexive, depending upon who observes the act of respect. If someone says he respects Hitler, his remark would be interpreted as reactionary because of the tragic consequences of the Nazi regime. The reverence given to Hitler, nevertheless, has been the tenet of neo-Nazi groups. Therefore, entering the discourse of “respecting the past” in the discussions of memory and the past is itself a precarious action. There were many newspaper articles in which the term “respect” appeared with respect to the historical controversies. A *Yomiuri* article published on June 9, 2005 was such a case. The newspaper wrote:

In an interview with reporters, the sources said, the prime minister will explain the purpose of his visit by saying he had visited Yasukuni Shrine “to pay respect and express gratitude to the war dead,” and “never to justify or glorify war.” (“Yasukuni Key,” 2005)

To Koizumi, paying “respect” meant going to Yasukuni to “mourn for victims who lost their lives” (“Koizumi To,” 2001). It was not clear, however, to what kinds of victims he was referring. He never clarified the nationality of the victims when he mentioned the war dead in his speech.

The word “respect” seemed to be used differently in the Chinese political context. On April 12, 2005, when he was asked about his country’s anti-Japan demonstrations, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao stated, “Only the country respecting history, with the courage to take responsibility for history and obtaining the trust of the people in Asia and the world could play greater role in international affairs” (MFA of China, 2005a). By saying so, Wen made it clear that China would oppose Japan’s bid to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Wen’s “respect” was interpreted by *China Daily* as indicating “accepting responsibility of war crimes and offering apology to victims inside and outside Japan” (“Building Mutual,” 2005). *China Daily* also quoted a

Chinese historian who demanded Japan be clear on its responsibility for war crimes. The historian said:

The Japanese should step out of historical shadows, show their respect for history and try to solve post war problems, scholars said. (“Invasion Anniversary,” 2004)

South Korean politicians use the word “respect” in the same way as Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. President Rho Moo-hyun quoted in a *Chosun* article mentioned Japanese government “respect for historical truth.” He raised the “Comfort women” issue, and noted “visits to the militarist Yasukuni Shrine” were signs that Japan did not show “enough respect for history” (“Roh Calls,” 2007).

Official Visit vs. Private Visit

When asked in 2001 whether he would visit the Yasukuni Shrine as the prime minister, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi rebuffed the question and said: “The question over whether (the visit) is private or public is nonsensical” (“Koizumi To,” 2001). Koizumi added, “I never oppose whatever kinds of ceremonies other countries may take to commemorate their wartime victims.” However, the “nonsensical” question about the distinction between an official visit and a private visit has been one of the most ambiguous yet contentious issues in the politics of memory in East Asia. The three newspapers covered extensively the forms of Koizumi and other Japanese key politicians’ visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. In an editorial published a week before Koizumi’s first visit as prime minister, *Yomiuri* concluded that Koizumi had no other choice but to go ahead with his planned visit to Yasukuni since if he decided not to go, it would mean backing down in the face of foreign pressure from the “belief” he had professed.

When the format of the visit became a topic of dispute in Japanese domestic politics, those disputes typically started with the question of the constitutionality of such visits. Articles 20 and 89 of Japan’s postwar Constitution mandated the clear separation

of religion and state. *Yomiuri*'s view on the constitutionality question mirrored the Japanese conservatives' thoughts: the Constitution did not make a clear distinction between an official visit and a private visit. A *Yomiuri*'s editorial called on the government to change its interpretation of the distinction:

Some argue that private visits are constitutional, but that visits in a public capacity are not. But a 1985 government statement said that an official visit to Yasukuni Shrine by cabinet ministers is constitutional if it does not involve Shintō-style rituals. Thus, this (anti-visit) argument is in effect demanding that the government change its official stance regarding prime ministerial visits to the shrine. ("Japan Sends," 2006)

In a different editorial *Yomiuri* argued that there was only a "thin line" between an official and a private visit because "it is extremely difficult to tell where the public persona ends and the private persona begins." It criticized the ambiguous attitude of the government, pointing out that lack of clarification of the visit of politicians had "caused the government to swing back and forth on its official stance on the private-or-official question" ("Editorial: Let's," 2001).

It was not just the government of Japan that could not clarify the definition of an official visit. Japanese courts ruled differently on the issue. For example, *China Daily* reported: while the Fukuoka District Court in southwestern Japan said the prime minister's visit to Yasukuni on August 13, 2001 violated the constitutional separation of religion and state ("Koizumi Vows," 2004), a Chiba District Court rejected a damages suit disputing the constitutionality of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine ("Koizumi Should," 2004). It was the "swinging" of Japanese society on the private-or-official question that encouraged Koizumi to say that "It's strange, I don't know why it violated the constitution" ("Koizumi Vows," 2004). *Yomiuri* did not cover the different rulings on the constitutionality question as extensively as *China Daily* did. In *Yomiuri*, the debate over the constitutionality and formats of visits appeared predominantly in editorials and columns, which referred mainly to political debates rather than the court rulings.

The constitutionality question was not as important a topic to *China Daily* and *Chosun* as it was to *Yomiuri*. Whether a visit was official or private and whether a visit followed the traditional Shintō tradition were mentioned but not discussed in details. To *Chosun*, the fact that Japanese prime ministers bowed to Class-A war criminals was more important than the constitutionality question. It always associated the visit with other ongoing historical controversies. A *Chosun*'s editorial stated when Koizumi visited the shrine on August 13, 2001, two days before the anniversary of the Japanese surrender:

Japanese imperialism and Japan's actions in events such as the Manchurian Incident, the invasion of China, and the War in the Pacific took the lives of 20 million people in Asia. The mortuary tablets of Hideki Tōjō and thirteen other war criminals, men who orchestrated the war that took so many lives, are enshrined at Yasukuni... Combine this with the issue of Japanese middle school textbooks that distort Japan's plundering of Asia, and the distrust and concerns are magnified. ("Editorial: Koizumi," 2001)

Similarly to *Chosun*'s viewpoint, *China Daily* reported on August 16, 2006, a day after Koizumi's visit, that China "condemned" Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, calling it a move that "challenges international justice" and "tramples upon the conscience of mankind" ("Koizumi's Provocation," 2006). It continued,

Koizumi's visit, the sixth since he took office in 2001, "has severely hurt the feelings of the people of the victim countries, and undermined the political foundation of China-Japan relations," (Foreign Minister) Li said. ("Koizumi's Provocation," 2006)

Despite the fact that Koizumi had taken an ambiguous stance over the question of whether he visited the shrine in a private capacity, and that Koizumi at some points claimed he visited the shrine as a private individual (Tennichi, 2001), the private-or-official question did not seem to matter to *China Daily*. It published an opinion piece in October 2005 after Koizumi's fifth visit to the shrine that "It is not acceptable to claim that Japanese government officials' visits to Yasukuni are all made in a private capacity. All of the Class-A war criminals honored at the shrine, such as Hideki Tōjō, are closely linked to Japan's history of aggression in Asian nations" ("There Is," 2005). The fact that

Koizumi's visits occurred in the midst of other historical controversies could explain why the constitutionality question did not get much attention by *China Daily* and *Chosun*. The two newspapers did not need clauses from Japan's Constitution to criticize the revisionist moves in Japan. They already had other historical issues to refer to such as textbooks, the Rape of Nanking, and the "Comfort Women."

The Koizumi administration and Koizumi himself were very cautious to define the nature of his visits. The ambiguous remarks of Koizumi can be understood based on such Japanese internal politics. The constitutionality question was also of interest to many other countries including the US. No matter how cautious the Koizumi administration was, however, it did not matter to *China Daily* and *Chosun*. They vehemently criticized Koizumi's visits regardless of the constitutionality question. A *China Daily* article ran China's Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing's remark regarding Koizumi's visit to the shrine. Li noted, "China is the biggest victim of Japanese militarists' aggression" ("There Is," 2005). *China Daily* and *Chosun* made it clear that their countries were victims in the Asia-Pacific War, while Japan was the aggressor.

Criticizing Ambiguity

The ambiguous stance of politicians over historical issues became the subject of criticism in the newspapers. They criticized political leaders of different countries for taking advantage of historical issues for their political gains. *Chosun* argued that "China is ambiguous in everything, particularly in foreign relations."

Take the diplomatic principle of a "peaceful rise (Heping jueqi)." The phrase itself contains an ambiguity. If China's diplomacy is criticized abroad for being aggressive, China stresses "peaceful"; if domestic criticism arises that its diplomacy is weak-kneed, China emphasizes "rise." The mother of ambiguity is the diplomatic principle of "bide our time, build our capacities (taoguang yanghui)," where appearance hides an altogether different reality. Thus when China opposes Japanese leaders' visits to Yasukuni Shrine, we had better think twice before breaking into applause. China, as a master of ambiguity, always deals with Japan with its

own national interests and the possibility of reconciliation for their sake firmly in mind. (“Editorial: China,” 2007)

What *Chosun* wanted to stress was that China could not be a reliable ally in dealing with Japan over historical issues. It recognized that politics and national interests influenced historical issues the most. Clearly *Chosun* thought China used “strategic ambiguity” as political leverage, as a way to push its own interest in international politics. In Japan, *Yomiuri* commented in an editorial that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who succeeded Koizumi, had adopted a policy of “strategic ambiguity” on the issue of visiting Yasukuni. Prime Minister Abe had assumed the position in the midst of multiple controversies over historical issues. Although he vowed to keep the same policies over historical issues, he could not afford to disregard the pressure from China and South Korea. Also, Japanese internal politics, involving other political parties in the ruling coalition and social liberals, forced Abe to take an ambiguous stance over historical issues. *Yomiuri* noted that Abe refused to say “whether he would or would not go, or whether or not he visited the shrine, in an attempt to blur the issue as a focus of political and diplomatic discord” (“Editorial: Mark,” 2007).

Memory and Identity

“Memory and identity are two of the most frequently used terms in contemporary public and private discourse” (Gillis, 1994, p. 3). The core meaning of any individual or group identity, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity. If memory has its politics, so too does identity. The relationship between memory and identity is historical; and the record of that relationship can be traced through various forms of commemorations. Commemorative activity is social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories (Gillis, 1994).

Discussions of collective identity, or unity, involve a distinction between “us” and “them” as well as a sense of continuity and sameness over time. Collective identity

formation is either constructed through an external identification with another country or ideology or through an internal identification with one's own past history. Such internal identification can either displace or constitute the past. A group either affirms its past cultural traditions or distances itself from certain aspects of its collective past (Kattago, 1996). What was seen in the three newspapers was the search for new identities for the each respective audience. The search took place not only among political leaders but also among individuals and groups in each society. The three newspapers were the place where those struggles were represented and played out.

National Memorial and Soul Searching

National memorial sites are prominent examples of sites of memory. They become symbols of national identity and the unity of a nation. Carrier (2005) cites the proliferation of Holocaust monuments and commemorations in France and Germany since 1970s. The two countries represent a process in which the national memories of war crimes were institutionalized in the form of central monuments and public debates about them. As such, public discussion about national memorials is symptomatic of societies that have been actively seeking a symbolic reinforcement of collective memories and identities.

The discussion and debate in Japanese society over the idea of a national memorial site can be understood within the framework of national memorial and collective identity. As the year 2001 marked a pinnacle of social debate over the controversial past in Japanese society, there were discussions in Japan's conservative groups regarding a national memorial site. The discussion about the memorial site emerged during social and political debates over whether Koizumi's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine would violate the constitutional principle of separation of religion and state. Article 20 of Japan's constitution forbade state involvement in any religious activity. The debates over the possible revision of the Constitution were not limited to Article 20.

Japanese conservatives and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) mulled over the revision of Article 9, which spelled out the country's renunciation of war. In fact, a *Yomiuri* article published in 2004 said that among LDP lawmakers who responded to its survey regarding their support for a possible revision of the constitution, ninety four percent of the respondents supported the revision of Article 9. In comparison, only thirty-three percent of New Komeito, a liberal party in the ruling coalition, supported the idea (“Ruling Parties,” 2004).

Yasuhiko Shibata (2001), a senior fellow at the Yomiuri Research Institute, contributed a column in *Yomiuri* on August 18, 2001, just days after Koizumi’s controversial visit to the shrine on the symbolic date of August 15. Shibata called on Japanese society to restore its humanity by paying more attention to national memory:

Japanese in the postwar era have poured energy into fulfilling their materialistic desires for personal benefit, while thinking lightly of or even denying their basic foundations, such as the concept of the nation and the Japanese ethnic group, on which they should have relied. It was proof of a simple and clear historic truth: “Man cannot live by bread alone.” (Y. Shibata, 2001)

Shibata insisted, “A reform at the level of people’s consciousness to let empty-minded Japanese recover their sense of humanity is more important than economic structural reform.” He continued:

Japanese remember the surrender of the Pacific War as the end of the war rather than as a defeat. They have held ambiguous attitudes over the past 56 years with little self-examination over whether Japan’s decisions and actions in World War II were right or wrong. (Y. Shibata, 2001)

Shibata questioned the meaning of the war, and argued that whether Japan’s decisions and actions were right or wrong was still an open question. To him, “the postwar era never ended; indeed, it has just begun.” He argued the erection of a national memorial, which would not invite any diplomatic complaints from other countries, was an important national agenda.

Encouraged by the conservative mood in the society in 2001, a private panel to then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda was formed to discuss ways to mourn the war dead. Fukuda submitted a report in December 2002, proposing a national non-denominational facility for worshipping and praying for peace. The report, a *Yomiuri* report argued, lacked “concrete ideas as to what sort of facility should be built or how to mourn the war dead” (“Koizumi Silent,” 2004). Since 2001 the talks about building a new memorial have stagnated. On June 4, 2005, *Yomiuri* published an editorial titled “Govt must expedite new war memorial,” in which it reemphasized the necessity of a new memorial:

At Arlington National Cemetery in the United States, there are tombstones for unknown soldiers as a central memorial, at which visiting heads of foreign states often lay a wreath of flowers.
 (“Editorial: Govt,” 2005)

According to the wording of the editorial, once a new memorial was erected, politicians and Japanese citizens would not be questioned over whom they mourn and why they mourn. The new memorial solution was needed, the editorial argued, because “if political leaders pressure the shrine to enshrine Class-A war criminals separately, they would be violating the principle of the separation.” The editorial added “it is difficult for Yasukuni Shrine to enshrine Class-A war criminals separately in light of Shintō doctrine.” *Yomiuri*’s rationale for a new national memorial was two-fold. First, because it is impossible to separate Class-A war criminals from the Yasukuni Shrine due to Shintō doctrine, war criminals should remain in the Yasukuni Shrine. As long as politicians announced that they visited the shrine in a private capacity, there would not be any political debates. Second, if a new war memorial were put in place, politicians could go to the memorial to mourn “unknown soldiers” as US leaders do in Arlington National Cemetery.

Yomiuri and social and political conservative plans to push the idea of a new memorial site have not materialized due to a number of reasons. Right-wing groups’

opposition to the idea was one of the major huddles. The Japan War-Bereaved Association, one of the major conservative civic groups in Japan since the end of the war, opposed the idea saying, “the new facility will shake the foundations of Yasukuni Shrine” (“Planned Memorial,” 2002). LDP leaders were not enthusiastic about the idea either. They referred to diverse opinions surrounding the idea that they thought would be very difficult to merge into a possible solution. Shinzo Abe, a year before becoming Prime Minister, anticipated a very tough to impossible journey building an actual memorial site:

“If we ever build it, we must first create a situation in which most people support such a thing and everyone feels comfortable using such a facility,” Abe said in his Nov. 1 press conference. (Oda, 2005)

While LDP officials engaged in a tug-of-war with each other and with Japanese liberals for a possible memorial site, the idea of a memorial site remained an important topic in *Yomiuri*'s discussion of controversial memories. The attempt to build a new national memorial showed that Japanese society was still at a dilemma with regard to redefining its post-war identity. Facing vehement opposition from China and South Korea against the worshipping at the Yasukuni Shrine, Japanese society had to come up with a solution that could appease the anti-Japanese sentiments in these two neighboring countries. The international community at large was not supportive of Japan in its effort to divert criticisms regarding its leaders' revisionist moves. At the same time, the Constitution was a preeminent barrier to such revisionist moves. Therefore, the debate over a new national memorial can be regarded as a soul-searching effort for Japanese conservatives to escape the difficult political situation, and “construct a national conventional identity” (Habermas, 1979). A new national memorial was a less controversial solution to the redefinition of national identity.

Not everyone in Japanese society supported a new national memorial. Indeed, a public poll carried out by Nikkei, a nationwide business newspaper, showed forty-nine percent of respondents supported the idea as opposed to 31 percent who opposed the plan

(Konishi, 2006a). Yet forty-nine percent could not be seen as absolute support for LDP and the conservatives' rationale for the memorial. While business leaders of the country, long considered LDP supporters, backed the idea, they did so for a different reason. The Japan Association of Corporate Executives reportedly urged LDP officials to build a national memorial because they thought the deadlocked relationship with China and South Korea was detrimental to their business activities ("Business Body," 2006). From a business viewpoint, the soured relationship caused by historical controversies was taking a great toll on Japanese international trade.

Masochistic or Sadistic

The Merriam-Webster Online English Dictionary defines "masochism" as "1) A sexual perversion characterized by pleasure in being subjected to pain or humiliation especially by a love object and 2) pleasure in being abused or dominated: a taste for suffering" (2010). It was more than a coincidence that a number of *Yomiuri* articles, mainly opinion column pieces and editorials, talked about Japanese "masochistic" national identity. The writers for *Yomiuri* argued that the masochistic tendency stemmed from the Tokyo Tribunal and the condemnation of the international community against Japan after the war. Because of the condemnation, writers noted, many Japanese have developed "the masochistic attitude" regarding international relationships, and the Japanese public believed Japan still was guilty of the war and deserved further condemnation (Okazaki, 2001; Uemura, 2002).

On May 8, 2002, five North Koreans seeking to gain political asylum by taking refuge in foreign diplomatic compounds in China, were caught by Chinese guards as they rushed the open gate at the Japanese Consulate in the northeastern Chinese city of Shenyang. Japanese diplomats in Beijing subsequently lodged a protest with the Chinese Foreign Ministry. They asserted that the Chinese police had actually entered the Japanese compound to arrest two of the people, in violation of consular agreements. When

Koizumi told reporters that he had instructed the authorities to deal with the incident “cool-headedly and scrupulously in order not to mar Japan’s friendly relations with China”, a Beijing correspondent for *Yomiuri*, Takeshi Uemura (2002), seemed irate about what Koizumi said. In a column titled “It was Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi who made the first masochistic statement” the correspondent argued that “With China at fault in the incident, the Japanese government should have wasted no time in lodging a protest with the Chinese government in a determined manner worthy of a sovereign state.” He also referred to other liberal political parties and newspapers in Japan that, in his thought, “have put the cart before the horse in that they are more eager to blast the (Japanese Foreign) Ministry than to criticize China for its attitude toward the incident.”

A different writer mentioned right-wing groups’ complaint that many Japanese held “masochistic views” of their own country. What made the writer uncomfortable was the proposal for a new national memorial produced by an advisory board to the Cabinet Secretary. To the writer, the board’s opinion was “mealymouthed,” and disturbing” because it said “there is no reason to treat foreign soldiers and civilians differently from Japanese people in paying tribute to them at the new facility.” The writer opposed the inclusion of bodies and spirits of foreign people in a new national memorial. The writer introduced remarks by conservative commentators who stated “the council openly express a revisionist opinion about what could be called a masochistic view.” The article added, “many critics have said that this mind-set came to prevail among the Japanese public because of the judgments of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, also known as the Tokyo Trial”(“Editorial: Yasukuni,” 2002). Similarly, an independent contributor in the opinion page observed that the 1982 history textbook controversy between China and Japan was a significant moment in Japan’s modern history that led to a “masochistic view of Japan's history that has been haunting the nation for the past two decades (Okazaki, 2001).

One notable point regarding the “masochistic view” argument was that the editorial and opinion piece argument mirrored the claims of right-wing groups that were responsible for historical revisionism in Japan. Kanji Nishio, a German literature scholar and Chairman of the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, was quoted in a *Yomiuri* article as saying “the nation’s (Japan’s) conventional historical view was “masochistic.” The society was responsible for writing the middle school textbook that has so angered other Asian nations. The chairman called for the compilation of a history textbook that “can make the Japanese people proud of the nation’s history.” (Ukai, 2001).

What *Yomiuri* and right-wing groups call a “masochistic view,” however, was in stark contrast with the *China Daily* and *Chosun* view of Japan. To *China Daily*, Koizumi’s visit was similar to “rubbing salt into the unhealed war scars.” The *China Daily* article wrote:

You can be eccentric or you can be straightforward but, whatever approach you take, it is dangerous to play with the sensitive issue of history. (“Koizumi Risks,” 2001)

Chosun noted the Yasukuni Shrine is a militarist shrine, and Japan’s conservatives were trying to “whitewash Japan’s war time atrocities” (“Koizumi Vows,” 2006). A staff columnist argued regarding the 2005 Japanese middle-school textbook compiled by the Society for History Textbook Reform, that there had been “a growing tendency for Japanese textbooks to present a revisionist version of the nation’s troubled history, in particular excising Japanese wartime atrocities” (Ahn, 2005). *Chosun* also noted that the new version of the history textbook “excised all mention of ‘Comfort Women’ (*Chongshindae* in Korean) or Korean and Chinese resistance to the Japanese draft, while highlighting Japanese deaths during the Pacific War.” The article argued that the new textbook portrayed Japan as more victim than aggressor. To *China Daily* and *Chosun*, Japan’s image in regard to the war was that of an aggressor. It has always been that way in the two countries.

Victimhood and the Sense of Restoration

Claiming victimhood provides victims with a sense of restoration, and helps them recover their self-esteem. This seemingly psychological process is, in fact, political. This is possible because the “victim rhetoric” places blame on the victimizer. In a nation-state context, remembering victimhood enables a country to avoid division in the society by reminding the public that they shared the memory of national humiliation. In that sense, remembering victimhood is an act of an imagined community and of invented tradition (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1990b). Ironically, victimhood can displace negative memory with a constructive new version of nationhood. In China and South Korea, recalling victimization by the Japanese has been one of the most noticeable memory discourses.

The government of China has maintained that its country was the biggest victim of the “aggression war” and “paid the huge cost of 35 million injuries and deaths. In his speech at the National Defense Academy of Japan, Chinese Ambassador to Japan Wang Yi said that “almost every Chinese family had a miserable experience during that war” (MFA of China, 2005c). The stories of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the Rape of Nanking appeared frequently in *China Daily* every time historical controversies emerged. *China Daily* called China “a victim of Japanese aggression” (“Visit To,” 2003), and maintained that during the eight years of war (from 1937 to 1945) “35 million Chinese people lost their lives to invading Japanese forces” (“Plan To,” 2001). Officials of the Nanjing Massacre Research Association quoted in an article stressed that Koizumi’s revisionist moves “will inevitably foster the rightists’ outcry of denying Japanese war crimes and lead the country further on the road of militarism” (“Nanjingers Condemn,” 2003). In December 2004, China Central Television (CCTV) broadcast a series of commemorative documentaries about the Rape of Nanking, which occurred in 1937. *China Daily* ran a story about the TV documentaries:

A hit TV series titled “Evidence of the Memory”...brought out the agonizing recollections of the 82-year-old. “The story, which depicts the sufferings of a large number of Chinese after they were forced to work as slave laborers in Japan during World War II, is a reflection of my father’s painful experience,” Ma (an ordinary citizen) said. (“Massacre Survivors,” 2004)

If the Rape of Nanking was a major element of *China Daily*’s construction of victimhood, the “Comfort Women” issue played the same role in *Chosun*. *Chosun* referred to “historical facts,” which scholars and international coalitions had found. Those facts were concerned with the involvement of Japan’s Imperial Army and administration in the “Comfort Women” system. The appearances of “historical facts” in *Chosun*’s articles were seen as an effort to invalidate arguments by Japan’s right-wing groups and political leaders who insisted on the lack of evidence of such involvement by official bodies of Japan. The reports from the UN Commission on Human Rights and the International Labor Organization (ILO), were also introduced in *Chosun* in an attempt to connect the “Comfort Women” issue to human rights. A *Chosun* March 26, 2003 article wrote:

Victims of the comfort women system do not have much time left. They are old. ...These women want the Japanese government to admit its responsibility, apologize, and compensate them. It is not merely the money that matters: it is the problem of honor and dignity. (“Ignoring The,” 2003)

Chosun referred frequently to the international community’s criticism against Japan. *Chosun* used a number of expressions to describe the process of conscripting “Comfort Women” and how they were treated in “Comfort Stations.” Expressions such as “sex slavery,” “kidnapping,” and “military brothel” appeared along with testimonials of former “Comfort Women.” The newspaper wrote that victims “could not forget that these people (Japanese) had caused unimaginable suffering and terrible disasters to them under Japanese rule” (Chung, 2002). Those explicit expressions were not seen in either *Yomiuri* or *China Daily* as often as they were in *Chosun*. *Yomiuri*, unlike liberal newspapers in Japan, never acknowledged the existence of “Comfort Women.” *China Daily* did not provide specifics about “Comfort Women” as much as *Chosun* did.

Ehrenhaus (1999), in his discussion of the use of the “good war” rhetoric to analyze the Vietnam War, observes that when memory is traumatic, the past can be imbued with a continuing emotional salience. Traumatic memory need not even be taught: it infuses the rhetorical structuring of the past. He added that traumatic memory’s reach extends beyond lived experience since we convey to successive generations not only information about the past but appropriate emotional orientations to it” (p. 546). A general consensus about the “Comfort Women” issue in the international community has been that Japan owes an apology to Asian countries as well as to the international community. With the support of the international community, *Chosun* called on its compatriots to remember the “Comfort Women,” for helping former “Comfort Women” receive an official apology and some monetary compensation was not merely the concern of the aging women and their relatives. Rather, it was a national concern because it was directly related to national redemption and restored national identity. In 2007, the “Comfort Women” issue made international headlines, as members of the US House of Representatives pushed for the passage of a “Comfort Women” resolution. *Chosun*’s Tokyo correspondent expressed the sense of national redemption, criticizing the Japanese right-wing politicians and citizen groups:

The Japanese people, the aggressors, may enjoy their “national ecstasy” of looking back fondly on the time when they occupied Korea, oppressed her people and forced her women into sex slavery. But we Koreans can never do that. How could the victims of such crimes ever enjoy the memories of the past? (“Editorial: Japan,” 2007)

To make “Comfort Women” a national priority, *Chosun* emphasized the shared understanding of the issue in Korean society. One such example was national attention to the US House Resolution about the “Comfort Women,” which passed in 2007. *Chosun* suggested that people who volunteered to help passage of the US House Resolution deserved national praise. The August 2, 2007 editorial wrote:

The Korean American community also played a key role. A group fighting for the rights of the former sex slaves, the Korean

American Voter's Council in New York and New Jersey and other groups visited the House of Representatives to convince lawmakers and their aides, while Korean-American junior and senior high school students sent donations. (“Editorial: The,” 2007)

The fact that even Korean-Americans supported the passage of the resolution was significant to *Chosun*. Their participation was evidence of Korean solidarity. By including the story of Korean-Americans, *Chosun* wanted to show there was a clear understating of national identity among its compatriots.

Victimhood rhetoric was evident not only in *China Daily* and *Chosun*, but also in *Yomiuri*'s articles. *Yomiuri*'s construction of victimhood was based upon Japan's suffering from air raids, the atomic bombing, and battles in the South Pacific. *Yomiuri*'s rhetorical construction of “Japan as victim” was congruent with Koizumi's view of who the victims were in the war. He repeatedly, but vaguely, insisted victims were everywhere during the Asia-Pacific War. In a *Yomiuri* article titled “WWII's end remembered: Koizumi stresses Asian ties at milestone 60th anniversary,” he was quoted as saying “I heartily pray for the souls of the dead and victims of the war in and outside Japan” (“WWII's End,” 2005).

However, scholars have observed that the emphasis on Japanese victimhood rather than Japanese aggression signaled a downplaying of the atrocities Japan inflicted on Asian countries. Arguing that Japan was also victim can be seen as a normalization of atrocities, a process through which Japanese aggression is downplayed or forgotten. Therefore victimhood could replace aspects of Japanese militarism (Saaler & Schwentker, 2008; Oda, 2007; Ueno, 2004). The famous conservative columnist Okazaki (2001) advanced “Japan as victim” rhetoric even further in his July 29, 2001 column:

“The people who were sentenced to death or died in prison after being found guilty at the war tribunal should not be regarded as criminals in the eyes of domestic laws, but instead should be viewed as victims of the war.” (Okazaki, 2001)

His column tried to keep the Japanese identity from being tainted by aggressor or criminal rhetoric. To him, even war criminals should be understood as victims of war, at least among the Japanese public.

Reification of Memory through Personal Stories

One of the best ways to make collective trauma resonate with other members of the public is reification of traumatic memories through personal stories. Instead of saying simply ‘there was a trauma,’ newspapers can introduce individuals who have endured trauma. Witnessing and testimony are prime examples of reification of memory because they provide journalistic “facts” (Edy & Daradanova, 2006; Schudson, 2001; Zelizer, 2008). Schwartz, Zerubavel, & Barnett (1995) also suggest in their study of Jewish collective memory and the Zionist movement that “introducing testimonials and individual stories of victims is an inspirational device that amplified positive sentiments” (p. 158). Personal stories were particularly visible when *Chosun* covered the “Comfort Women” issue. Below are such cases:

The best-known testimony proving Tokyo’s role in forcibly mobilizing sex slaves comes from Yoshida Seiji, who was in charge of drafting women in the southern part of the Korean Peninsula from 1943 to August of 1945. (“Editorial: Abe,” 2007)

The first real-name record of a surviving former "comfort woman" has been discovered. Researcher Kang Jeong-suk of the Korea Chongshindae's Institute said Monday that she discovered the records of a surviving "comfort woman", 79-year-old Kim Bok-dong, while examining military records at the National Archives and Records Service...Eighty-eight of the 215 women listed with the Korean government as former "comfort women" have died. (Y. Kim, 2005)

In fact, testimonies of former “Comfort Women” have been an important topic in South Korea since the 1980s. “Comfort Women” stories have often emerged in news outlets as more former victims appeared in public to tell their stories. A number of non-fiction documentary films featuring stories of some former “Comfort Women” have been released. National suffering and trauma was the most apparent rhetoric in *Chosun*’s

coverage of the three sites of memory. Although the “Comfort Women” issue occupied a majority of public discussions of national trauma, there seemed to be numerous personal stories that could testify to the sufferings of Koreans during the occupation, the Asia-Pacific War, and the Korean War. A *Chosun* article introduced an aged man and his wife who planned to drive thorough the 38th Parallel in the United States in commemoration of the 55th Anniversary of the liberation of Korean peninsula. The August 14, 2000 article printed:

The purpose of the transcontinental journey is to wish for a peaceful unification of the two Koreas and to tell the people he meets along their trip of how the Japanese Empire imposed forced labor and enlistment into the Japanese Imperial Army of the Korean men and abused 200,000 Korean women to work as comfort women for its 2 million soldiers in foreign countries such as Manchuria, China... Yu lost his policeman father to a North Korean guerilla a year before the outbreak of the Korean War while his mother was still expecting him. Lee also has a family member sacrificed by the war. Her elder brother is an ex-serviceman who became disabled during the Korean War. The couple said that they planned this journey to attract the attention of other nationalities to the Korean people's desire for unification. (M. Kim, 2000)

As seen in the quote above, when *Chosun* described the suffering of Koreans the newspaper referred to not only the colonization period but it also included the Korean War and the reconstruction period in 1950s-70s. With a number of personal stories presented in its stories, *Chosun* repeatedly reminded its readers how difficult the nation’s past had been for all the people.

Reification of memory through personal stories was also visible in *China Daily*’s coverage of the three sites of memory. *China Daily* covered personal stories of victims of the Rape of Nanking, when it reported the national “fury” over Japanese history textbooks in 2005. An article was full of expressions that could invoke the tragic memories and personal sufferings. The newspaper wrote on April 7, 2005:

She Ziqing, whose mother died in the destruction, came to the Nanjing Memorial Hall early Tuesday morning to pay his respects. Tears flowed freely when the 76-year-old man stood in front of the

wall, nicknamed "the Crying Wall." It is engraved with the names of victims. ("Fury Erupts," 2005)

An article that covered the anniversary of the Rape of Nanking printed the story of Zhou Yufan, "a survivor of Japanese atrocities." Zhou said in the article "It was really terrible. Piles of corpses were lying around me." *China Daily* insisted that the atrocity "without doubt...will not be forgotten" ("Massacre Survivors," 2004).

Stigmatizing Japan and its Political Leaders

While the three newspapers were trying to redefine the war in the context of the present and to establish a positive national identity through their coverage of the historical controversies, they also engaged in stigmatizing, or labeling, other countries. If the interest of national identity can be called the newspapers' domestic concern in the war over memory, stigmatizing other countries and their political leaders was an international concern. Of course, it was clear that stigmatizing others was conceived to have an internal impact in each society. Stigmatizing in the context of the three historical controversies was carried out on two fronts: stigmatizing individuals (especially politicians) and the national identities of different countries.

Stigmatizing different countries' national identity has been observed in different case studies. Schmidtke (2005), in his analysis of German historical memories and collective identities vis-à-vis Poland, shows how German historical stereotypes of the Polish continue to be present on the mass level, rather than on the elite level. In addition, the impact of the stigmatized German national identity and the impetus to reconcile with its Eastern neighbors led to an increasing change in German-Polish attitudes. Fletcher & Weinstein (2004) note international criminal trials have the effect of stigmatizing groups despite the emphasis on individualizing guilt. As a result, the public condemns the political movement or policies for which the defendant is the symbol. Yet they found that trials alone could not accomplish condemnation of groups and nations. Rather, they revealed that each national group reinterpreted the "facts" according to the views held by

that group. Stigmatizing occurs at the level of individuals and institutions in a society. Lira's (1997) study on remembering and forgetting the 1973 Chilean military coup found that the Chilean military government's ideological discourse and its authority stigmatized various groups as enemies of the society and pretended to justify political repression and human rights violations. She finds political turmoil generally ignites stigmatization of opponents, with each side in a political confrontation calling the other traitor, hypocrite, or power-greedy villain.

Koizumi was a perpetual subject of personal stigmatization during his incumbency. While he was a very popular prime minister in Japanese modern history due to his political and economic "reforms" drive, Koizumi was always depicted in *China Daily* and *Chosun* as an "eccentric," "hawkish," and "stubborn" politician. Since he was adamant in his intention to visit the Yasukuni Shrine despite the diplomatic protest and street rallies in neighboring countries, Koizumi could not be considered a reliable counterpart in establishing a reconcilable diplomatic relationship. Quotes below show how *China Daily* and *Chosun* described him:

Once again the "eccentric" new Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi showed his obstinacy by reiterating his pledge to visit the Yasukuni Shrine, where convicted war criminals are enshrined. ("Plan To," 2001)

Otherwise, he will be remembered as a prime minister who, because of his pointless obstinacy, isolated Japan not only in Asia but in the international community as well. ("Editorial: Time's," 2006)

It was particularly interesting that sometimes *China Daily* and *Chosun* tried to separate Koizumi from the Japanese public, suggesting his visits were mainly staged as a political action, and while normal Japanese were thought to be rational. Similarly, Koizumi and other LDP members were called "right-wing" conservatives:

On early Friday, a large vehicle owned by a Japanese right-wing group rammed the front gate of the Chinese consulate general in Osaka, Japan, causing serious damage to the gate and part of the consulate buildings. ("Rise Of," 2004)

It is uncertain what will happen, as right wing organizations are bracing for a fight. They are calling films portraying the lives of Korean comfort women as “third rate pornography” and “prostitution films.” (“Editorial: A Brave,” 2001)

China Daily's strong expressions describing the wartime atrocities of the Japanese were of particular attention. For example, *China Daily* noted, “Japan’s warmongers inflicted untold sufferings (“Japan Should,” 2005). Yasukuni Shrine was frequently described as the place in which some “notorious WWII war criminals” are enshrined (“Japan’s Foreign,” 2001). A column that appeared in “To the Point” of the opinion page bore an expression that insulted Japan as a nation. The columnist wrote that a series of events in the “island country” were reminders that “justice does not necessarily win against evil” (Xian, 2000). The writer here used an old Chinese metaphor for ridiculing Japan: calling Japan a “small island country.” In the Chinese’ mindset, China is the mainland country that is the center of the world, as its Chinese name signifies. In contrast, Japan was traditionally considered in China as a small island country and a vassal state of China (Hane, 1991). Calling Japan an island country in fact was a subtle insult.

At times, the stigmatizing of Japan pushed the limit of diplomatic courtesy. On July 7, 2001, when the controversy over the shrine visit was intensifying, *China Daily* published an article in which it wrote what some could see was a diplomatic insult to Japan.

[G]eography has a strong influence on Japan’s domestic politics and foreign policies. Japan is facing the sharp contradiction of scarce resources and developed industry, which has led to a sense of living crisis...the Japanese people find it hard to grasp the aggressive nature of the war. On the contrary, they tend to accept the idea that “wars are of national interest.” These are the ideological and social roots which help explain why Japan is unwilling to make a full apology. (“Japan’s ‘No’,” 2001)

Reporting on the Textbook Issues, the article labeled the rightist textbooks as “whitewashing Japan’s heinous crime during World War II.” It added, “It has become a chronic disease in the postwar period that Japan is lenient with itself on the issue of recognizing the war.” The newspaper’s harsh criticism of the Japanese government was

attributed to what it described as “a ludicrous assertion totally counter to the facts” (“US Panel,” 2007). The newspaper wrote:

Japanese right-wing forces and some politicians have always blundered by trying to act too smart. But their attempts to hide a historical fact has made their misdeeds more obvious," said Jin Linbo, a senior researcher with the China Institute of International Studies. (“US House,” 2007)

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Koizumi’s successor, also became the target of *China Daily*’s strong name calling. It assailed the leader of Japan for denying “historical facts” regarding “Comfort Women.” *China Daily*’s own analysis of Abe’s political move was that Abe’s political power was based on patriotism: “Abe is stressing a ‘Beautiful Japan’ platform of promoting patriotism, overhauling the constitution so that the military can play a bigger role abroad and revising school textbooks - critics would say whitewashing history - to bolster national pride” (“Shinzo Abe,” 2007).

China Daily’s criticism against the Japanese government corresponded to the official stance of the Chinese government. In March 2007, when several Japanese government officials spoke about the “Comfort Women” insisting that Japan assumed no responsibility, the newspaper articulated the official standpoint of the Chinese government. *China Daily* relayed the remark made by an official:

Japan must face up to history and “earnestly and properly” handle the issue of “comfort women”, Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing told a news conference in Beijing yesterday. Li was speaking on the sidelines of the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature. “The forced use of so-called ‘comfort women’ was one of the most serious crimes committed by the Japanese militarists during World War II,” Li said. (“Face Up,” 2007)

As such, *China Daily* tried to make it clear that Japan should not ignore its responsibility for war atrocities. *China Daily*’s critique of Japanese revisionism and Japanese politicians was very caustic. It was a sign from China that there would not be any negotiation about historical matters, and Japan should accept everything China said about history.

Across the sea, *Yomiuri*'s articles put a tinge of nationalism on what the governments and citizen groups were doing in China and South Korea. Taro Aso, who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and later Prime Minister, countered the accusations of nationalism directed at Japan. He was quoted as saying "there is a fine line between patriotism, a healthy love for one's country and narrow-minded nationalism that breeds hatred towards others" ("Japan F.M. Vows," 2006).

National Unity and Newspapers

National unity in this study's context signifies national collective unity, or nationalism. Hobsbawm (1990b) asserts that after World War II "a sinister form of nationalism began to emerge centered on the notion of ethnicity and exclusive notions of communal self-determination." In his view, nationalism is primarily a principle which holds that political and national unity should be congruent. Nationalism implies political duty, which overrides all other public obligations, and in extreme cases (such as wars) to all obligations of whatever kind. The three sites of memory in East Asia were used to consolidate national unity in each country, and the newspapers contributed to rationalizing and disseminating the need for national unity.

Shrine Visit as Political Game in Japanese Politics

The Yasukuni Shrine controversy was the most important topic in discussions of national unity in the politics of Japan during the period analyzed. The shrine was the symbol of national unity in the right-wing circle of Japanese society, and anyone who did not follow the uniform understanding of the shrine controversy was considered an outcast. What the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Koizumi did in his inauguration in 2001 displayed the utility of memory in consolidating power and aligning party policies. Koizumi rose to the presidency of the LDP as a conservative politician. He knew that his power came from social and political conservatives. The LDP had been the ruling party of Japan from its formation in 1955, except for an 11-month period from 1993 to 1994. It

remained so until August 30, 2009, when it was defeated by the Democratic Party (民主党, *Minshuto*) in a general election. During his campaign, Koizumi's slogan was "change and reform." His campaign message worked well with the Japanese public, as the country was still struggling to overcome a decades-long economic depression. Koizumi's card to reinvigorate the inert economy and reshape national pride was a change in the understanding of national memory. Koizumi repeatedly said that he intended to end restrictions imposed on the government by the Constitution, including both the official visit to the Yasukuni Shrine by political leaders and Japan's right to practice collective self-defense.

In 2001, however, the LDP was able to remain the ruling party only by forming a broad coalition with two other political parties. Those two were the New Komeito (公明党), which was supported by the nation's biggest lay Buddhist organization, Soka Gakkai (創価学会) ("Coalition parties," 2001), and the New Conservative Party (保守新党, *Hoshuto*). Although they were participating in the ruling coalition for political benefits such as being able to seat their party members in the new cabinet, the two parties were not totally in favor of the idea of Koizumi's visit. Party officials of the New Komeito and the New Conservative Party had been saying "Embedded in Yasukuni Shrine is a history inseparable from Japan's militarism" and "We should refrain at all costs from doing anything that would further widen the gap between Japan and China" ("3 Wise Men," 2001). This situation made Koizumi and other hawkish LDP members to desperately seek a clear policy line in terms of historical issues. This was vital to accomplish its "reform" social political agenda.

After Koizumi made an announcement that he would visit the Yasukuni Shrine annually, many LDP members expressed their support. LDP Secretary General Taku Yamasaki said in 2001, "paying respect to those who have sacrificed their lives for their country is a global tradition" ("3 Wise Men," 2001). His remark rationalized the visit as a permitted action of individuals of any country, while giving a warning to fellow

representatives in the ruling coalition that they would have to follow Koizumi's view on the shrine visit.

One political voice, however, revealed the cacophony in the LDP. Among the "hand-picked" members of Koizumi's cabinet was Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka, also a member of the LDP. She was the daughter of Kakuei Tanaka, the late former prime minister who normalized diplomatic relations with China in 1972. Her father's political legacy as well as her liberal political stance put her and Koizumi on a collision course. She embarked on official visits to China, South Korea, and Vietnam after she was appointed Foreign Minister. When asked about whether Koizumi would carry out his promised visit to the shrine, Tanaka answered, "There will be a memorial service for the war dead at Nippon Budokan (a big arena in Tokyo). I think that (Koizumi) attending that service should be enough" ("Voices From," 2001). The political attack directed on her afterwards was enormous. *Yomiuri* not only covered the harsh criticism poured on her from her political opponents, but also published a number of articles to pinpoint her faults. On July 28, 2001 a *Yomiuri* article reported:

"Her visit raised much concerns about the well-aligned voice of the government. Another top LDP member said, "If she fails to persuade Koizumi, there will be voices in the party urging Tanaka to take responsibility." ("Tanaka Returns," 2001)

The title of an editorial published August 4 read "Koizumi should replace Tanaka" ("Editorial; Koizumi," 2001). Tanaka, who was the first female foreign minister of the country, was fired after a nine-month political battle against Koizumi.

The main reason for her departure was her view on historical issues. Dissatisfied with her liberal tendencies, hawkish LDP members pressed Koizumi to drop her. She was an ugly duckling in the new administration which attempted to use Koizumi's visit as a tool to boost public support. On July 29, 2001, when the political tug-of-war between Koizumi and Foreign Minister Tanaka were in full swing, an unusually long (2436 words) opinion column appeared in *Yomiuri*. The author of the column was the

conservative columnist Hisahiko Okazaki. He emphasized the significance of Koizumi's visit for the nation.

If Koizumi's own way of coping with the Yasukuni issue ends in overhauling the nation's systemic inertia that has existed since the war's end, historians in the future will surely rate it as one of the remarkable achievements of the Koizumi Cabinet. (Okazaki, 2001)

Despite the severe criticism from different political parties, civic organizations, and interest groups, LDP members worked hard to set a well-aligned policy line regarding Koizumi's visit. Unlike former fired Foreign Minister Tanaka, three other members of Koizumi's cabinet voiced their support for his planned visit to the shrine ("3 Ministers," 2001). Koizumi's unrelenting determination to visit the shrine was the result of support from conservative political allies in the LDP.

A similar case occurred in 2007. Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma was forced to resign from newly-appointed Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's cabinet after he said the US atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were unavoidable ("Shinzo Abe," 2007). Kyuma was known to have previously expressed his concern over Koizumi's visits to the shrine citing diplomatic relations with China and South Korea.

A diametrically opposed case occurred in 2006 with former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda. Considered one of the contenders to succeed Koizumi as prime minister, he had expressed his reservation about prime ministerial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. In contrast, Shinzo Abe, another strong contender and the favorite of hawkish right-wingers, was seen as a protégé of Koizumi in terms of the shrine visit controversy. In the summer of 2006, Fukuda suddenly withdrew from the election. The reason for his withdrawal impressed the writer of a *Yomiuri* editorial:

Former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said Friday he would not run in the Liberal Democratic Party's presidential election in autumn. This was a serious decision by a responsible politician who earnestly considers the future of the nation...Fukuda reportedly decided against throwing his hat in the ring because he thought running for the presidency would stir up Yasukuni Shrine visits as a key campaign issue. If the two men (Abe and Fukuda) had gone head-to-head in the race, it could

appear both at home and abroad that the nation is divided on the visits. (“Editorial: Fukuda,” 2006)

The title of the editorial read “Fukuda had nation’s interest at heart.” Fukuda was called a responsible politician because by withdrawing from the election, he prevented polarization on the subject of shrine visits and contributed to preserving national unity, at least in the conservative political arena.

Such a partisan policy enabled Koizumi to even disregard what many in Japanese society saw as a significant finding about former Emperor Showa’s understanding of the war. In 2006 a memorandum of a former steward for the Imperial Household Agency was discovered. The memorandum revealed that Emperor Showa never visited Yasukuni Shrine after Class-A war criminals were enshrined in the Yasukuni Shrine. Liberal political parties and civic organizations used this memorandum as evidence that Koizumi’s visit was in fact against the will of the former emperor. Even some members of the Japan War-Bereaved Families Association, a prominent right-wing group, approved the idea of separate enshrinement of Class-A war criminals after they heard of the memorandum. Koizumi, however, was not moved by what was believed to be the will of the emperor. A *Yomiuri* report conveyed his remark on the discovery of the memorandum:

“The Tomita memo has nothing to do with me. Those who usually think lightly of the Emperor are making a fuss,” Koizumi said flatly to a critic he has been long acquainted with. (“Defiant Koizumi,” 2006)

Concerning the national unity of Japan and Koizumi’s visit to the shrine, an important question can be raised: Was the LDP officials’ policy regarding Koizumi’s visit representative of Japanese public opinion? In a democratic society the public expects a democratic process to reflect different opinions on social issues. Koizumi’s firing of Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka and *Yomiuri*’s support for the firing showed that what they believed to be national unity was in fact their own version of it. The construction of national unity was carried out by excluding divisive views and by pushing their own

claims. The fact that *Yomiuri* urged Koizumi to fire Tanaka was a sign of agenda setting. *Yomiuri* did not just retell the story but advanced its ideological and historical stance, then used its media power to disseminate its discourse. It exerted its power as an authoritative interpreter of society (Zelizer, 1997). What *Yomiuri* accomplished exposed the shortcomings of public journalism. Schudson (1999) notes that public journalism exhorts journalists to put citizens first, to bring new voices into newspapers, even to share setting the news agenda with individuals and groups in the community. Authority has to be vested not in the market, not in a party, and not in the journalist but in the public (pp. 121-123). What was seen in *Yomiuri*'s coverage of the political battle over the Yasukuni visit, instead, was that a ruling party monopolized discussion of an important political issue. An influential newspaper in Japanese society sided with a particular political party and produced an interpretation which was by no means one that the Japanese public as a whole could accept.

Keeping The Public Informed of National Unity

The writing of history and the reconfiguration of memory are ultimately inseparable from political experience, and are intrinsic in contests for political legitimacy and ideological hegemony (Rappaport, 1990). Whatever circumstances a political party or administration has, the goal of the construction of memory comes down to a practical aim in politics: gaining public support. The three newspapers were public arenas where politicians intentionally played to the public to score public support. News articles conveyed politicians' ideas of national memory and their "patriotism," and by doing so created the public mood and sentiments of national unity. Scannell (2000) describes this role of the news media through his concept of "we-ness." "We-ness" is a characteristic practice of communication by which the mass public comes to share the same experience. Reports by nationwide newspapers create an "assurance of identity by the mass media"

since each individual reading the news article assumes that millions of others are sharing the same experience.

As for *Yomiuri*, its role appeared to keep the Japanese public updated about conservative views on historical controversies. Koizumi and his administration's unrelenting determination to visit the shrine was always treated with special attention. *Yomiuri's* December 1, 2005 coverage on Koizumi's plan for the next year emphasized Koizumi's unchanged determination as he prepared for his last year as prime minister. He was quoted as saying, "I'm not worried at all. I don't have anything personal against China and South Korea, no matter how much they criticize me. There is no change" (Ozaki, 2005). As the Koizumi administration faced criticisms from inside Japan for its defensive attitude regarding historical issues, there was more political support coming in from key conservative politicians. They all played to the nationalistic sentiments and anger against China and South Korea. For example, when China and the South Korean government issued their "regrets" over the history textbooks in 2005, Press Secretary Hatushisa Takashima turned the tables and said that "Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura has ordered Japanese government officials to examine Chinese textbooks for anti-Japanese bias" ("Japan Goes," 2005). Rather than acting passively and discussing the reasons for Chinese and South Korean "regrets," Koizumi's administration took an aggressive measure by which it could propagate the legitimacy of its agenda regarding the historical issues. That strategy was similar to the old saying "a good offense is a best defense."

In 2005, Shinzo Abe, then acting secretary general of the ruling party, followed Koizumi's lead. He said, "It's natural for the leader to express his novel respect for those who died for the nation. Whoever becomes prime minister, the duty (to pay a visit to Yasukuni Shrine) should be fulfilled" ("Timing Of," 2005). *Yomiuri* concurred with Abe's logic as the title of the article read "Timing of Yasukuni visit seen as crucial." The Koizumi administration's strategy seemed well accepted by conservatives. Both the

Koizumi administration and the succeeding Abe administration used their undeterred stance over historical controversies as a tool to boost nationalism and garner public support for their administrations.

As Anderson (1983) notes, nations inspire love, and the cultural products (including news media) of nationalism exemplify patriotism. *Yomiuri* played a role by inspiring allegiance which was sometimes sentimental and emotional. Under the title “Crowds flock to Yasukuni Shrine,” an article reported Koizumi’s visit to the shrine and other Japanese and its impact on other Japanese:

An 84-year-old man who lives in the neighborhood said he had been doing exercises at the shrine every morning for the past seven years, but that the crowd Tuesday was the largest he had ever seen...He (Koizumi) bowed slightly at the foot of the stairs to the main shrine and then bowed deeply after climbing the stairs. (“Crowds Flock,” 2006)

Yomiuri described meticulously how the prime minister bowed and how much the people present were impressed by his act. The visit and the commemoration became a sacred act for every individual in Japan to observe. Another article published on the same day provided an emotional story of an old woman:

Last year, none of the parents of the war dead attended the ceremony. This year, a mother from Hidakacho Kokkaido attended the memorial service. Yoshida Tabata, 101, is the oldest person to ever attend the service. (“War Dead,” 2006)

Influential politicians and cabinet members who visited the Yasukuni Shrine were always treated as important news in *Yomiuri*. It reported on August 17, 2001 the chronology of politicians’ visit to the shrine:

Five Cabinet ministers worshiped at the shrine on Aug. 15 this year. In 1993, the number was four under the administration of Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa. However, there are some Cabinet ministers who visited the shrine before Aug. 15 this year or planned to do so on later dates, apparently emulating Koizumi's decision to avoid the date out of consideration for China and South Korea. (“Koga Guided,” 2001)

Despite the difference in specific content of each article, *Yomiuri*’s articles have a common characteristic: They were based upon the cultural traditions of the country.

Going to a Shintō shrine and bowing to ancestors is a centuries-old tradition. Since the Yasukuni Shrine was originally a national memorial site for war dead, then a politician can go to the shrine on the anniversary of Japan's surrender and follow the religious tradition to mourn war dead. That act can become a politically unifying event. It can inspire patriotism, and bring honor to the politician because many people will form a good impression of him based on his actions.

China Daily inspired patriotism in a different way. Rather than ambiguously bowing to “war dead,” commemorations in *China Daily* emphasized its victims and victimhood. On the anniversary of the Rape of Nanking in 2005, *China Daily* reported, air-raid sirens went off everywhere from “Hangzhou on the east coast to the Tibet Autonomous Region capital Lhasa...to commemorate September 18 Incident,” also called “Mukden Incident in Western world. The newspaper called the incident the starting point of the Second Sino-Japanese war. The report went on to describe how unified the country was in commemorating the Japanese invasion:

A handful of protesters gathered outside the Japanese Embassy in Beijing waving flags and banners and denouncing Japan's war record. Representatives of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions protested outside the Consulate General of Japan in Hong Kong on Saturday...Students visited the Nanjing Massacre Museum in Nanjing, East China's Jiangsu Province on Saturday to remember the start of the Japanese invasion. (“Invasion Anniversary,” 2004)

China Daily mentioned demonstrations in cities and provinces located in areas separated geographically from east to west, north to south, thus creating a sense of unity and “we-ness” that Scannell (2000) depicts.

China Daily's coverage of anti-Japan rallies and commemorations always described them as massive and coherent in actions. *China Daily* reported on April 7, 2005 “a queue of 10,000 mourners snaked around the Nanjing Memorial Hall to commemorate the victims killed by Japanese invaders on April 5, China's Qingming Festival, an occasion to honor departed family members” (“Fury Erupts,” 2005). According to the

report, the mourners were composed of local residents, people from other parts of China and foreigners, including some from Japan, the Republic of Korea and other Asian countries. “Tears flowed freely” through the faces of participants, many of whom had seen “the blood of the victims turned the clear river red” during the “Rape of Nanking.”

Public support was gained in much the same way in South Korea.

Commemorational ceremonies for “Independence Day” on August 15 and “Independence Movement Commemoration Day” on March 1 were covered in great detail by *Chosun*. President Roh Moo-hyun was quoted on March 1, 2004, as he spoke in the national ceremony: “If there's one piece of advice I'd like to give Japan, it's that while citizens and one or two politicians engrossed in their own popularity may frequently make reckless statements that hurt us, at least national leaders shouldn't do so” (J. Lee, 2004). His remark was designed to invoke the unity of the nation by giving a message of warning to the Japanese government. Similar to *China Daily*, *Chosun*'s reports covered extensively how people in South Korea were “hurt” by Japanese aggression. The anniversaries were remembered along with victims who died in the war and in a variety of independence movements during the Japanese occupation.

One aspect of commemoration ceremonies in South Korea differed from ceremonies of Japan and China. South Korean politicians use commemorations to reemphasize the importance of unifying the Korean race at large. Seeking the reunification of South and North Korea along with overcoming differences between conservatives and liberals were repeatedly articulated in key politicians' remarks. The frequent appearance of the words “the unity of Korean race” in *Chosun* was a sign that the fast-developing democracy and economy of the country had also created social and political conflicts. Commemorations were used in the South Korean context to call on citizens and politicians to overcome their differences and solidify the unity of the country as they did during the Japanese occupation era.

The South Korean government was also busy monitoring public anger against Japanese historical revisionism. In March 2005, the South Korean government formed a team to “counter distortions of Korean history in a controversial Japanese textbook” (“Committee To,” 2005). The committee consisted of senior officials from Cheong Wa Dae (Presidential Office), the Foreign, Defense, Gender Equality, Culture and Tourism, and Fisheries ministries, as well as the Korean Overseas Information Service and the Office for Government Policy Coordination. The formation of such a broad governmental committee was unusual, and was a sign that the South Korean government would employ every possible measure to address the problems of Japanese revisionist history books. The fact that the committee included high-ranking officials from the Tourism and Fisheries ministry also indicated that the government would associate the historical issues with other pending diplomatic conflicts between South Korea and Japan. For example, there were an increasing number of Korean tourists who traveled to Japan from 1990s. The territorial dispute over *Dokdo* Island in East Sea, also called *Takesima* in the Sea of Japan, was an important issue because it could extend or shrink the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of each country. Despite the fact that the committee lacked practicality due to the absence of “working level” officials, *Chosun* called the formation of the committee a timely and necessary effort of the government.

Remembering to Forget

The essence of a remembering in a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things. The narrative component for defining the unity of a people as a nation is the forgetfulness of certain historical events and valorization of other ones. Therefore, Kattago (1996) notes, forgetting is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation. Anderson’s (1983b) conception of the nation as an imagined community and Hobsbawm’s (1990a) invented traditions stem from the ambiguous tension between remembering and forgetting. Over the past decade there were

a number of other historical issues that emerged in public and international discourse in addition to the three sites of memory. From chemical experiments on human beings to slave labor in remote South Pacific Islands, and to forced suicides that occurred in the last phase of the Asia-Pacific War, many wartime atrocities have come to the attention of the public. The past ten years have certainly contributed to an era of commemorations and remembrance. The same period of time has also been the period of denial and forgetting. It would be more correct to say that remembering and forgetting have been underway since the end of the war; however, they erupted into the realm of social and media discourse due to the socio-political and international political situation. Remembering and forgetting have been dormant beneath the social conscience, but have been ignited by politics. In that sense, remembering and forgetting developed as a result of what Halbwachs (1992a) called “a deformation of recollections.” Social beliefs are collective recollection and they relate to the knowledge of the present. Events can be recalled only if they (or their mode of narrative) fit within a framework of contemporary interests (p. 188). Similarly, Nora (1989) explicated the “live” and “deformable” nature of social memory:

Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present. (pp. 8-9)

What has been observed during the period of historical debates have been an active remembering and forgetting, or reconstructing of the past for present political reasons.

Remembering and Forgetting in Apology

Whether Japan offered a “sincere apology” has been a source of tension between Japan and its the two neighboring countries. The Japanese government has maintained its stance that it has given enough apologies. For example, when South Korean President

Kim Dae-jung made a state visit to Japan in October 1998, the President and Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi signed a “Joint Declaration on a New ROK-Japan Partnership for the 21st Century.” According to the declaration,

Prime Minister Obuchi, looking back on relations between Korea and Japan in this century, humbly accepted the historic fact that Japanese colonial rule inflicted unbearable suffering and pain on the Korean people and expressed painfully deep repentance and heartfelt apology for the ordeal. President Kim Dae-jung sincerely acknowledged the Prime Minister's perception of history, expressed appreciation and mentioned that it is a necessity of the times that both Korea and Japan make concerted efforts to overcome the unfortunate past and build a future-oriented relationship based on the spirit of reconciliation and friendship. (MOFAT of S. Korea, 1998)

Japan had officially expressed a certain degree of apology or regret at the time of postwar treaties with its Asian neighbors. In 1965, Japanese Foreign Minister Shiina expressed “true regret” and “deep remorse” concerning an “unfortunate period in our countries.” During the 1980s and on, there have been a number of apologies when historical issues became a topic of international disputes (Yamazaki, 2006).

Then came Koizumi’s politically calculated visits to Yasukuni Shrine, which were truly a watershed moment in the politics of apology in East Asia. What came in the midst of disputes over Koizumi’s visits were his repeated remarks in which he expressed “regret” and “remorse” for Japan’s colonial rule and past acts of aggression. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan, Koizumi visited the Marco Polo Bridge and a museum that commemorates the Sino-Japanese War on October 8, 2001. After his visit, Koizumi had talks with Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji as well as with President Jiang Zemin (MOFA of Japan, 2005a). In his talk with Jiang Zemin, Koizumi stressed “Japan had followed the path of a peaceful nation.” He also added that he would “make all-out efforts toward the further development of Japan-China relations” (MOFA of Japan, 2005d). Despite all that, Jiang Zemin expressed his reservations over Japan’s recent revisionist moves. In response to Koizumi’s mention of past events,

President Jiang remarked that the Japan-China relations has seen both good and bad times, and pointed out Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine and the history textbook issue in Japan as examples of the bad. He then commended the visit to the Marco Polo Bridge by Prime Minister Koizumi on his first visit to China in the capacity as Prime Minister. (MOFA of Japan, 2005d)

Another apology from Koizumi came at the Asian-African Summit, known as Bandung Conference, on April 24, 2005 in Indonesia. He offered an apology for Japan's colonial rule and past acts of aggression. His remarks regarding Japanese rule and aggression follow:

In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. And with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has resolutely maintained, consistently since the end of World War II, never turning into a military power but an economic power, its principle of resolving all matters by peaceful means, without recourse to use of force. Japan once again states its resolve to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world in the future as well, prizing the relationship of trust it enjoys with the nations of the world. (MOFA of Japan, 2005b)

Whereas his apology made international headlines due to the rarity of such an act and the disparity between his shrine visits and his apology, the value of his apology was severely undermined by other Japanese political leaders' visit to the Yasukuni Shrine while Koizumi was in Indonesia. On the same day of Koizumi's speech at the Asian-African Summit, a cabinet minister and approximately eighty Japanese lawmakers paid homage at the Yasukuni Shrine. Weston Konishi, a columnist for *Yomiuri*, wrote that the two events were not lost on the foreign media, which widely reported the "conflicting messages sent about Japan's reconciliation of the past" (Konishi, 2006a). The Chinese government expressed strong dissatisfaction with the visit. A statement from the Chinese Foreign Ministry read:

Given the current serious nature of China-Japan relations, we strongly express our dissatisfaction that some Japanese politicians ignored the interests of both countries and took such a negative move. (MFA of China, 2005b)

A May 30, 2005 statement by the South Korean Foreign Ministry said the South Korean government had continued to “urge Japan to halt acts that nullify its apology and reflection of past wartime atrocities” (MOFAT of S. Korea, 2005b). Nonetheless, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) Acting Secretary General Shinzo Abe rallied public support for the continued visits by the prime minister to the shrine. This confounding situation was seen as Japanese politicians remembering totally different memories or at least other aspects of the same historical events.

Another Koizumi apology came on the sixtieth anniversary of Japan’s surrender in World War II. On August 15, 2005, Koizumi issued a statement, in which he once again expressed “deep remorse and heartfelt apology.” He also acknowledged the fact of history that Japan caused untold damage and suffering to many countries in Asia. The wording of this apology was not much unlike what he said at the Indonesia summit. His statement read:

In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. Sincerely facing these facts of history, I once again express my feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology, and also express the feelings of mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, in the war. I am determined not to allow the lessons of that horrible war to erode, and to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the world without ever again waging a war. (MOFA of Japan, 2005c)

The Korean government’s statement, however, rebuffed Koizumi’s remarks. It stated “the truth is that some political leaders of Japan have been inflicting considerable wounds on and rousing up angry responses from the peoples of neighboring countries, who had been victimized by Japan's colonization and aggression” (MOFAT of S. Korea, 2005a).

In spite of Koizumi’s repeated apologies during his tenure, *China Daily* and *Chosun* did not seem impressed. Their reactions were identical in content: “Tokyo must Back Words with Actions”(“Tokyo Must,” 2005). *China Daily* responded to Koizumi’s Indonesia speech on June 24, 2005, criticizing the dubiousness and insincerity of the Japanese government:

While we should applaud the progress the Japanese Government has made in facing up to history issues, we should also point out that it has been slow, and worse, their deeds have failed to match their words as illustrated by recent efforts to deny historical facts. (“Japan Should,” 2005)

Chosun, in an editorial on April 6, 2001, argued, “If the promise (Japan had made) is kept then there could be no better friendship...but Japan broke its pledge by approving textbooks that distort that country’s past.” (“Editorial: Flexibility,” 2005). *Chosun* criticized its own government for its “lukewarm” reaction to Japanese revisionist history books. As the title of the editorial “Flexibility or Humiliation” suggests, *Chosun* wanted its government not to be timid in its stance against Japan over historical issues. If the government did act “flexibly,” *Chosun* argued, it would mean a national “humiliation.” The March 3, 2001 editorial in *Chosun* demanded that the new administration of the country face “reality”:

But Japan keeps glossing over its wartime atrocities in school texts, and the country’s Shimane Prefecture designated a special day to commemorate its ownership of Korea’s Dokdo Islets. And the Japanese government refuses even to acknowledge the women who were forced into sexual slavery by the imperial military during World War II. Koizumi also kept paying his respects at the militarist Yasukuni Shrine that honors convicted war criminals from World War II, despite protests from Korea and China. (“Editorial: A fresh,” 2008)

Similarly *China Daily* argued that Koizumi’s remarks were not “a new apology,” and were based on a speech made in 1995 by Tomiichi Murayama, a former Japanese prime minister, marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. *China Daily* wrote, “Japan still treats itself as a victim rather than a perpetrator of history” (“Koizumi Expresses,” 2005)

Koizumi’s expression of his “deep remorse” and other apologies issued by Japan’s political figures were a politically calculated “convenient recall” (Weissberg, 1999). According to Weissberg’s (1999) observation, the German people are constantly reminded of the Holocaust and the Nazi past through television shows, newspaper articles, and a host of books. While being exposed repeatedly to those memory-related

artifacts and discourses, they learn moral-political pedagogy and how to cope with the past. Whether the plethora of memorial artifacts could be a sign of reflexive remembering is the question she raises. She argues, “they can forget while remembering. Memory can be drowned out in the vast number of allusions to the past, by the mere evocation of the concentration camp names” (p. 48). Repeated apologies and frequent media exposure about war memories, primarily through political discourses, are not reflexive remembering or apologies. Such actions, in fact, are forgetting. Japan’s conservative politicians and civic groups have maintained that Japan has done enough to address the responsibility for the war, although public opinion polls among the Japanese indicated that most Japanese believed their nation had not done enough to examine its responsibility for the war or to apologize to the victims of past aggression (Konishi, 2006b).

A series of Japanese apologies have also lacked clear descriptions about what happened during Japan’s aggression against its neighboring countries. While Japan’s political leaders repeatedly acknowledged their “remorse,” they denied the specifics of atrocities. For example, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe stressed in 2007 that the Japanese government would not apologize for its conduct toward the “Comfort Women.” Amid the controversy over the “Comfort Women” resolution of the US House of Representatives, Prime Minister Abe said the resolution was “not based on objective facts” (“Abe: No Apology,” 2007). However, Abe’s remark directly contradicted the so-called “Kono Statement” issued by then Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono in 1993. Explaining the result of a government-initiated study on “Comfort Women,” Kono stated:

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. (MOFA of Japan, 1993)

On the day after Abe's remark on the "Comfort Women" issue, *Yomiuri* published an editorial in which it asked, "Why has the comfort women issue been dredged up repeatedly?" ("Editorial: Don't," 2007). *Yomiuri* wrote that a group of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmakers wanted to have the Kono statement revised because vague expressions in the statement had led to misunderstandings. The newspaper called the Kono statement a "diplomatic mistake" and the result of "the government's misjudgment-made under pressure from South Korea." *Yomiuri* again supported the position of the ruling LDP and conservatives of Japanese society.

Yomiuri's Denial of Negative Memory

Denial or erasure of negative memory occurs when a memory interferes with the construction of new individual, social, and national identities based upon the current situation. Negative memories should be transformed into acceptable interpretations of the past that are not detrimental to positive identities. Memories of war atrocities are negative memories. They include inflictions of mental and bodily pain on victims and subsequent sufferings. Negative memories are remembered not only by aggressors but also by their victims. When a negative memory enters the realm of social discourse, there can be multiple ways to deal with such memories. Apology and reparation is a way by which aggressors can express their remorse and respect for victims. Reconfiguration and reinterpretation also provide memory holders with conduits for keeping positive identities intact. In Japan, conservative intellectuals and history textbooks have reconfigured Japan's invasion as the liberation of Asian countries from the colonial rule of Western powers. Suicidal attacks of kamikaze pilots are interpreted as heroic actions of modern day samurais. In Korea, suffering has been interpreted as the symbol of perseverance by Koreans. Korean textbooks say that the country has never invaded other countries since

the Korean race is peace-loving and adhere to non-violent action (Sesay, 2002). As for China, the Japanese invasion was an attack by a Fascist country.

Yomiuri stood in line with Japanese conservative groups and political parties that did not acknowledge the existence of the “Comfort Women” system during the war. In its coverage of the “Comfort Women” issue, the newspaper said the “Kono Statement” was an erroneous incident and a political blunder. *Yomiuri* dealt with this topic passionately in 2007 when the legislative bodies of multiple countries passed special resolutions on “Comfort Women.” The newspaper printed a number of editorials on the topic. The most conspicuous rhetorical narrative in *Yomiuri* was its denial of what others called “historical facts.” *Yomiuri* focused on addressing a lack of “objective” historical evidence that could show that the Japanese government and military forcefully recruited or kidnapped females from the countries Imperial Japan occupied. In fact, no articles explicitly addressed the specific details of “Comfort women” and the practice of sex slavery during the war. Referring to the US House of Representatives resolution, *Yomiuri* denounced the US House because “the resolution was made without verifying the facts and smacks of cheap rhetoric.” *Yomiuri*, therefore, argued that the resolution made people “doubt the wisdom of US lawmakers” (“Editorial: Get,” 2007).

The newspaper kept insisting that the “historical facts” used as evidence for the state-based support of ‘Comfort Women,’ were never verified by historians. *Yomiuri* wrote:

However, no documents have been found to support this assertion. Historians also accept that no such orchestrated action was undertaken by the Japanese military. (“Editorial: Don’t,” 2007)

Yomiuri’s editorial on August 2, 2007 argued that the US House resolution was “obviously based on a misunderstanding of facts.” The title of the editorial read “Mistaken view of history must be corrected” (“Editorial: Mistaken,” 2007). *Yomiuri* called for a monolithic understanding on the issue in Japan. It reprimanded the former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono because “Kono’s mistake had contributed to the

misunderstanding of the ‘comfort women’ issue and further to the unfounded accusations from other countries and citizen groups” (“Editorial: Get,” 2007). In spite of the fact that there had been official documents uncovered by scholars suggesting Japanese government’s role in the forced sex slavery, *Yomiuri* excluded such information.

The history textbook controversy revealed a number of historical issues where the denial of memory was contested. *Yomiuri* did not remain a passive participant of the textbooks issue. Rather, it was aggressive in supporting the Japanese government’s stance. It argued that there were a number of misrepresentations of historical facts in South Korean history textbooks. For example, it asserted “What should be revised are South Korean textbooks that give the mistaken impression that female volunteers who were mobilized to work in factories were drafted to serve as comfort women” (“Editorial: ROK,” 2005). This *Yomiuri*’s editorial also called other Japanese who demonstrated against rightist textbooks “self-tormenting and “conscientious” Japanese.

We feel that what South Korea calls “conscientious forces” as it deals with the controversy over history textbooks are some media organizations sympathetic toward leftist values that do not accept a diversity of historical views and values, as well as freedom of thought. (“Editorial: ROK,” 2005)

This editorial was an indication that Japan was having internal struggles over war memories, and that *Yomiuri* fought hard to protect the conservative line of historical interpretation from what it called “leftist values.”

“The Rape of Nanking” was another critical issue where the Japanese government’s stance came under serious criticism. Supporting government’s official position, a *Yomiuri* editorial called “The Rape of Nanking” an “incursion into Nanking” and insisted “the accusation must be dismissed as fictional” (“Editorial: Class-B,” 2004). Ikuo Anai, a *Yomiuri Shimbun* senior writer, wrote a book review on a highly controversial book with a conservative hue, *What Really Happened in Nanking – The Refutation of a Common Myth*, in which the writer wrote:

Before we begin our examination of the ‘Nanking Massacre,’ we must first define the word massacre. Otherwise, we may repeat a mistake that others have made and view combatants who lost their lives as victims of a massacre...I urge American researchers, politicians, scholars, journalists and opinion leaders to read it. Once they have, I am convinced that they will arrive at the realization that violations of international law of the magnitude alleged by Iris Chang in ‘The Rape of Nanking’ (more than 300,000 murders and 80,000 rapes) never took place.” (Anai, 2001)

Compared to *Yomiuri*’s continuous questioning about factual information of atrocities, *China Daily* and *Chosun* were in unison accusing Japanese conservatives of denying war crimes. *China Daily* wrote on December 14, 2004:

[T]he trends of Japanese government's treatment of this dark period of history have ranged from total cover-up, denial of the extent of the Nanjing Massacre, to official distortion and rewriting of history with the most extreme being the total denial of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese government officials. (“Massacre Survivors,” 2004)

Similarly, a *Chosun*’s editorial on August 15, 2005 argued that “Koreans, Chinese and others who experienced Japan’s invasions have it all by heart: the horrible history of Japan's invasion of the Asian mainland, the Rape of Nanking, forced conscription, the “comfort women” and the vivisections of Unit 731” (“Editorial: Japan’s,” 2005).

Naturalization of Traumatic Memory

The naturalization of memory is carried out by the normalization of past incidents. It is the result of repeated and habitual reifications. Reconstruction of war memories is an example of naturalization of memory, which involves forgetting other divisive memories. Matsuoka & Sorenson (2001) call active forgetting the process of “naturalized memory making” since it unifies all, regardless of varying values and viewpoints with their associated differences in politics, class, ethnicity, and gender. The Bitburg controversy can be seen an example of such naturalization of memory. The controversy turned on the issue of historical revisionism of German conservative groups and politicians who sought to put a positive spin on the memory of World War II (Shandler, 1999). According to Elsaesser (1996), the incident signified the Kohl

administration's attempts to "normalize" German history by affirming the Western Alliance. What happened with the Bitburg controversy was naturalization, or generalization, of memory.

Therefore, according to Kattago (2001), arguments about the uniqueness and comparability of different atrocities raise questions about the public use of history and the public administration of national memory. In other words, naturalization of memory is a result of tensions among various political groups. In the Bitburg controversy, the tensions between conservative historians and the politicians' desire to forge a positive national identity marked a dramatic departure from previous ways of confronting the past. Bitburg history represented a new stage in the narrative structure of dealing with the past: "from the German as guilty pariah to the German as normal European" (p. 71).

If the naturalization of tragic memory was attempted in Germany with respect to memories of the Holocaust, signs of naturalization were also observed in *Yomiuri* with respect to the memories of the Asia-Pacific War. Germany and Japan share the same position in terms of war memories: they were the invaders during World War II. The most conspicuous rhetoric in *Yomiuri* was a comparison between Japan's case and other cases in which mass killing occurred. The famous conservative columnist Okazaki (2000) wrote:

Incidents for which Japan has been blamed, such as the Nanjing Incident, however, are those that involved civilian casualties during the wartime. By definition, they fall into the same category as the bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Tokyo and Dresden, as well as acts of brutality by Soviet troops in Berlin and Manchuria. These incidents are now part of history. (Okazaki, 2000)

Okazaki put the Rape of Nanking on a parallel with the atomic bombing by the US in the two Japanese cities, as well as the bombing of Dresden, Germany by the British Royal Air Force (RAF) and the United States Army Air Force. He also referred to the atrocities committed in parts of Germany and Poland by Soviet troops against German civilians.

What the writer wanted to say was that Allied Forces also committed controversial mass killings during World War II.

A similar naturalization was seen in *Yomiuri* regarding the “Comfort Women” issue. In an editorial, *Yomiuri* renounced the European Parliamentary for adopting a resolution that asked Japan to formally apologize to the international community. The newspaper went on:

The German military had more than 500 “comfort stations” in East Europe and other occupied areas, yet we rarely hear a peep about this. A number of documents verify this fact, including a report by an official of the Catholic Church to the Pope, saying Nazis took Jewish women to serve as prostitutes for German soldiers. (“Editorial: A troubling,” 2007)

Regardless of the factuality of the “Comfort Women” issue in Asia, references to other similar cases dilute to some extent the significance and the magnitude of the atrocity. In an editorial entitled “A troubled position on ‘Comfort Women,’ *Yomiuri* argued that the European Parliament resolution was propelled by the German members of the Green Party in the European Union. It also added “we wonder if they intend to keep silent over what happened in their own country many years ago” (“Editorial: A troubling,” 2007). *Yomiuri*’s rhetoric, the naturalization of inhumane tragedy as a repetitive mishap in human history, was also applied to other cases. This time, *Yomiuri* introduced the US and South Korean cases. It argued:

So-called comfort stations were not limited to the Imperial Japanese Army. US Occupation forces used such comfort facilities in Japan, and it is now known that the South Korean military had similar facilities during the 1950-53 Korean War. (“Editorial: Mistaken,” 2007)

What *Yomiuri* did was an analogical and contextual comparison of what it saw as similar historical events. Combined with comparisons was its denial of factual information. *Yomiuri*’s approach was an example of appropriation of memory, as appropriations are “explicitly for guidance of present-day concerns or problems” (Gronbeck, 1998). As a voice of Japanese social and political conservatives, *Yomiuri* wanted to protect the

positive national identity by equating the nation's unpleasant past with other atrocities in world history. The comparisons made by the newspaper showed that memory can be evolving, unpredictable, and always partial rather than an integrated whole (Zelizer, 1995).

Summary of Analysis

News not only represents reality but also constructs reality. Influenced by ideologies, social traditions, professional norms, and cultures, journalists cover, select, and disseminate news stories that they believe will resonate with audiences. As Tuchman (1976) noted, news presents to a society a mirror of its concerns and interests. Analysis of this study has shown the role of news institutions in the construction of national memories of the Asia-Pacific War. The three newspapers did not remain objective spectators and conveyers of historical controversies. They were active participants in the historical disputes, and engaged in the construction of national memory through their journalistic coverage.

Research question 1 aimed to identify the thematic focuses of the newspapers as they dealt with the three sites of memory. The main focus of the three newspapers was national unity, and the construction of national unity was carried out through other themes such as victimhood and national redemption. The three sites of memory emerged as symbols of national unity throughout their coverage of historical controversies. *Yomiuri* portrayed different social opinions on historical issues as misinformed arguments raised by "leftist ideological fads" (Okazaki, 2005). Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and social conservatives monopolized the discussions of official stances regarding the three sites of memory. Voices of other political parties and social liberals were not treated with the same attention as those of the ruling party and conservative political interest groups. The newspaper considered the solidarity between the government, political parties, and the public an essential national agenda. For example, whenever the Japanese government

had international disputes over the Yasukuni Shrine visits and the “Comfort Women” issue, politicians holding divisive views became victims of political ostracism. Former Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka and former Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma were such cases. As a result, LDP was able to maintain a well-aligned policy line as it bore diplomatic attacks from its two neighboring countries and severe criticism from the liberal side of Japanese society.

China Daily's strong criticism against Japanese historical revisionism was consistent with the Chinese government's official stances regarding historical issues in relations with Japan. The newspaper followed the development of controversial issues with a great amount of attention as it carefully conveyed the statements issued by the Chinese government. *China Daily* described the Japanese invasion as an attack by a Fascist country, and concentrated on detailing the suffering of the Chinese during the war. *Chosun* focused on the victimhood of the Korean people when covering issues related to the sites of memory. It recollected traumatic memories during the occupation period as it criticized the approval of controversial Japanese history textbooks. Unlike *China Daily*'s role which relayed its government's stances, *Chosun* called on the Korean government to act decisively against Japanese historical revisionism.

Research question 2 examined how the three newspapers discursively constructed the Yasukuni Shrine, the “Comfort Women,” and the history textbooks as sites of memory. To *Yomiuri*, the Yasukuni Shrine controversy became an important issue in terms of redefining a “new” national identity. The issue involved questions of constitutionality, the role and expansion of the Japanese military, and Japan's objections to diplomatic reactions by China and South Korea, all of which *Yomiuri* considered as closely connected to reclaiming the nation's self-confidence and respect. The shrine issue invoked national traditions and customs; *Yomiuri* discussed Shintō traditions and the meaning of paying homage to the war dead. It supported politicians' argument that bowing to the war dead was ingrained in Japanese spirituality and cultural tradition.

Yomiuri never acknowledged the existence of “Comfort Women.” The newspaper asserted that there was no evidence of actual involvement by the Japanese government or military administration. *Yomiuri*’s negation of the existence of “Comfort Women” was a sign that *Yomiuri* aligned its views of history with the conservative Japanese government. Unlike the LDP and *Yomiuri*, many Japanese political parties, civic organizations and media institutions have accepted the existence of “Comfort Women,” and called on the government to issue an official apology. To the newspaper, the textbook controversy was provoked by Japanese “self-tormenting liberals,” and a history textbook “can make the Japanese people proud of the nation’s history” (“Editorial: ROK.” 2005).

Both *China Daily* and *Chosun* portrayed the Yasukuni Shrine visits as a symbol of Japan’s irresponsible valorization of war crimes. *Chosun* placed a great emphasis on the “Comfort Women” issue, and introduced a number of former “Comfort Women” in its coverage. *China Daily* frequently mentioned the Rape of Nanking when it addressed the problems of Japanese historical textbooks. The two newspapers considered the textbook controversy a rightist attempt to play to the nationalistic sentiment of the Japanese public.

Construction of the sites of memory occurred in many ways, through ambiguous treatment, reification, naturalization, exclusion, and appropriation of memory. These ways of processing memory were implemented not always by the newspapers. Rather political leaders and social organizations were driving forces that influenced the newspapers in their coverage. However, it is significant to note that the newspapers accepted such constructions of memory and represented them through their coverage. In other words, the newspapers were also sites of memory where social, political, and cultural forces extended their influence to shape discourses of collective memory.

Research question 3 explored forgetting and remembering related to the three sites of memory in the newspapers’ coverage. The analysis revealed that forgetting and remembering are not unconscious actions of individuals or groups. The three newspapers

actively fulfilled what they believed to be their mission as flagship newspapers. They actively participated in forging national unity and identity. Forgetting and remembering were carried out under the influence of the social and political needs of the time. For example, newspapers remembered their own country's sufferings while paying little to no attention to other countries' sufferings. Victims remembered in *Yomiuri*, *China Daily*, and *Chosun* were in fact all different victims of the same war. *Yomiuri* commemorated people who died in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; *China Daily* remembered the victims of the Rape of Nanking; and *Chosun* recounted the suffering of the "Comfort Women." They remembered their own victims. Asking about what the newspapers remembered is the question of representation, while why and how they remembered one particular memory over a different memory is the question of construction. They constructed memory through selective remembering and forgetting. The goal of such selection was to serve the current political situation. This finding was congruent with what many memory studies scholars have said of collective memory. Society remembers the past based on the needs of the present (Halbwachs, 1992a), and the past is not being reconstructed through memory which is "explicitly for guidance of present-day concerns or problems" (Nora, 1996; Nora, 1998b).

Research question 4 was aimed at analyzing how the three newspapers discursively linked memory and identity. In Japan, post-war Japanese identity has been a continuing social and political issue since the end of the war. Discussions of post-war identity did not remain at the psychological level in Japan. Rather, it became an inevitable political question as the country recovered quickly to become one of the international economic and political powers. *Yomiuri* presented the voice of conservative Japanese society. The newspaper supported Koizumi's Yasukuni Shrine visits and revision of the Constitution which mandated a separation between religion and government. *Yomiuri* ran a number of editorials and columns about what the writers called a "masochistic view of Japan's history" (Okazaki, 2001; Uemura, 2002), and it

supported conservative politicians whose controversial views on wartime atrocities caused a diplomatic stalemate between Japan and its two neighbors.

In *China Daily*, the memories of the Rape of Nanking and the Asia-Pacific War became a symbol of national unity and resiliency. The newspaper called the end of the war “the victory over a Fascist country” and “victory of the War of Resistance” (MFA of China, 2006). This rhetoric provided moral superiority which contributed to shaping a positive national identity. In fact, such rhetoric was a reflection of the official policies of the Chinese government and Communist Party of China. Korean national identity constructed by *Chosun* was focused on victimhood. *Chosun* articulated in a number of articles that Koreans could never forget their sufferings. An article questioned “How could the victims of such crimes ever enjoy the memories of the past?” (“Editorial: Japan,” 2007) An editorial concerning former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s denial of the existence of “Comfort Women” commented: “If he’s looking for testimony, there is plenty of it from surviving sex slaves who are still alive and breathing” (“Editorial: What,” 2003).

This analysis has shown that the three newspapers represented and constructed the same historical events in different ways reflecting the social and political circumstances of their own respective countries. *Yomiuri* has shown more diversity and complexity in its representation and construction of memory. There was evidence of a Japanese internal struggle to define the nation’s post-war identity through domestic controversies and diplomatic challenges from the two neighboring countries. Although *Yomiuri* sided with the Liberal Political Party (LDP) and conservatives in its construction of memory, its one-sided coverage was in actuality the testimony of a divided social and political landscape of Japanese society regarding the controversial war memories.

China Daily was a faithful disseminator of the nation’s unified interpretation of war memories. Government officials’ remarks and statements were an important part of its coverage of controversial sites of memory. *China Daily* placed a great emphasis on

national unity as it extensively covered national commemorations and the government's severe criticism of the Japanese government and the conservatives. In *Chosun*, there were no signs of divided opinions regarding the controversial memories. The focus was on suffering and the national trauma. It called for the Japanese government's sincere apology and reparation for wartime atrocities.

These findings show that the three newspapers were agents of collective memory. They articulated the meanings of national memory based upon what they believed to be the most appropriate interpretations of their nations' past. Political circumstances and ideological stances greatly impacted their coverage of the war memories. This characteristic was more evident in *Yomiuri* than *China Daily* and *Chosun*, since Japanese society had been divided over the interpretation of its past. Their coverage has shown that East Asia still lives under the shadow of the Asia-Pacific War that ended more than a half-century ago. Memory has not been forgotten because it has been reinterpreted and reconstructed mirroring the national, social, political, and international climate. Situated at the center of such reproduction of memory, the three newspapers were also sites of memory.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze different interpretations of the same historical incidents and dissect the ways in which memories of historic incidents are constructed into new meanings for the present time. The three sites of memory, which had been the most prominent memory issues in East Asia, were “guided entry” points (Nord, 1989; Smith, 1989; Stempel & Westley, 1989) for the analysis. Those three sites of memory were the Yasukuni Shrine issue, the “Comfort Women” issue, and the Japanese revisionist history textbooks issue. After a careful survey of the history of Japanese modernization, militarization, and invasion of neighboring countries, this study analyzed news texts from the three English language newspapers (*China Daily* of China, *The Daily Yomiuri* of Japan, and *The Chosun Ilbo* of South Korea).

Memory, Identity, and Politics

Echoing Halbwachs’s claim that society remembers the past based on the needs of the present time, the historical controversies surrounding the three sites of memory have revealed the landscape of East Asian war memories in three large discourses: commemoration, memory and identity, and the politics of memory. The identification of the three discourses in this study was not a coincidence, considering those three discourses have been the most often-discussed themes in studies of collective memory. For example, Gillis (1994) notes the core meaning of individual and group identity is sustained by remembering; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity. The interpretations of memory change as the assumed identity of memory holders change, and vice versa. Commemorative activity is by definition social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and in some instances, annihilation (pp. 3-5). Corresponding to Gillis’ observation, the three

sites of memory revealed struggles, confrontations, and forgetting that took place in the three countries and the three newspapers as well. While the discourses of commemoration, memory and identity, and the politics of memory provided a macro system for newspapers memorializing the past, a number of micro discourses emerged in the analysis. Those discourses included: discourses of aggressor and victim (or victimhood), suffering, sacrifice, redemption, appropriate history, respectable past, conformity, national unity, sovereign state, international diplomacy, cultural tradition, stigmatization, denial, forgetting, and revisionism. There was discourse of sexualization of memory, as seen in *Yomiuri* when it discursively constructed the concept of masochistic self-identity of the Japanese. Discourse of moral superiority was also identified when *Chosun* and *China Daily* constructed China and Korea as morally superior to Japan.

The three newspapers saturated themselves with numerous commemorations of the Asia-Pacific War. The three sites of memory triggered and inspired commemorations. In *Yomiuri*, the anniversary of “the end of the war” accorded special attention to the emotions of Japanese citizens. Commemorations were not limited to ceremonial journalism. *Yomiuri*’s articles called on the public to remember memories of the war, such as the atomic bombing, kamikaze soldiers, and numerous people who died while serving the country. By doing so, *Yomiuri* advanced discourses of suffering, sacrifice and national unity. *Yomiuri* also stressed that shrine visits were customary events that had been a part of Japanese culture for many years. Commemorations in *China Daily*’s coverage were always described as massive in public participation and coherent in actions. With sirens wailing, *China Daily* reported, numerous people across the vast country participated in collective remembering. *China Daily* remembered the Rape of Nanking and the “September 18 Incident,” both of which brought its country great suffering. Similarly, *Chosun* recounted “Comfort Women” and slave labor. The anniversaries of Korean “Independence Day,” August 15, and “Independence Movement

Commemoration Day,” March 1, were observed with great attention, and editorials were written to inspire the remembrance of the anniversaries. As such, *China Daily* and *Chosun*’s coverage of the three sites of memory contained discourses of suffering, victimhood, and national unity.

Commemorations in the three newspapers adopted different narratives and used varied rhetoric of remembering such as ambiguity (either intentional or unintentional), elaboration, omission, and appropriation of memory. These different ways of dealing with memory were seamlessly connected to identity formation. Here, identity refers to national identity, since the three sites of memory were national agenda which became international topics. The Yasukuni visit controversy provoked a variety of identity issues. *China Daily* and *Chosun* accused Koizumi and other Japanese politicians of playing to Japanese nationalistic sentiment. They argued that the visit attempted to reinvigorate militarism and imperialism in Japan. Discourses of stigmatization and national redemption flowed across the *China Daily* and *Chosun*’s coverage of the Yasukuni Shrine visit controversy. In comparison, *Yomiuri* asserted that Japanese society needed to reconsider its post-war identity which had been influenced by the Peace Constitution and a sense of collective guilt. The idea of masochistic self-identity was constructed by conservatives of the Japanese society and *Yomiuri*. Discourses of respectable past and appropriate history were conspicuous in the Yasukuni Shrine visit controversy, as the three newspapers relayed the remarks of their respective politicians and actively participated in constructing such discourses.

The “Comfort Women” controversy was an important issue for the national identities of the three countries. The acknowledgement of the “Comfort Women” system was a potentially explosive topic for Japanese national identity particularly, since it would confirm the long-suspected guilt of the Japanese government and military administration. In addition, it could jeopardize Japan’s bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. *Yomiuri*’s active denial of the involvement of the Japanese

government and the military administration in the “Comfort Women” system could be understood as a conservative mainstream newspaper’s effort to protect the government’s stance. Instead of accepting the discourse of aggressor, *Yomiuri* advanced the discourse of victimhood for the Japanese identity. *Yomiuri* emphasized that there were similar incidents in different countries, and that Japan also suffered mass killings of its own people during the Asian-Pacific War. To *Chosun*, the topic was a crucial national agenda. Given that Korean society has long felt victimized since the end of the war, the articulation of victimhood was an important mission of the newspaper with the emergence of the “Comfort Women” issue in the international community. *China Daily* advanced a similar discourse of victimhood as it recounted the Chinese “Comfort Women” and other similar cases of national suffering.

The history textbooks controversy was a national identity issue as well. In Japan, the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, the publisher of controversial textbooks, insisted on the importance of recovering from Japan’s “masochistic view” of history among the Japanese public (Ukai, 2001). *Yomiuri* concurred with the conservative view of history, and proposed itself the term “Showa War” to be used instead of other titles for the Asia-Pacific War. In comparison, *China Daily* and *Chosun* argued that the controversial textbooks were “distorted, perverted, whitewashed and fabricated” (“Japan’s ‘No’,” 2001). In *China Daily* and *Chosun*’s interpretation, the denial of such tragic memories were aimed at bolstering national pride in Japan (“Shinzo Abe,” 2007), while they became “nightmarish reminders of the cruelest and the most unjustified sufferings (“Letters And,” 2007). Discourses of victimhood, suffering, and aggressor were presented and contested in the three newspapers.

As Assmann (1995) notes, “the concretion of identity” is accomplished when a group derives from its memory an awareness of its unity and peculiarity. The manifestations of memory are defined through either a positive identification such as “We are this” or a negative identification such as “That’s our opposite” (p. 130). The

newspapers were no exception in employing those manifestations of identity in their coverage. Positive terms used in the newspapers included victim, pain, suffering, tears, etc. In contrast, terms such as aggressor, infliction, communist, fascist, and militarist advanced a negative “our opposite.”

Commemoration and identity construction directly connected to the politics of memory in East Asia. The sites of memory were sites of domestic and international politics. Different party policies and concerns of international diplomacy were the most frequently discussed topics in newspapers, as discussions of historical issues usually boiled down to political questions. *Yomiuri* supported the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which attempted to revise the Constitution, particularly the articles that had placed restrictions on Japan’s collective self-defense rights and politician’s religious rights such as visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. A cultural editor for *Yomiuri* wrote that Koizumi couldn’t be both right- and left-wing, and argued pro-Chinese attitudes had been prevalent among leftist liberals since the end of World War II (Tennichi, 2001). The newspaper called on the Japanese government to keep policies consistent with demands from conservative civic groups.

As for the Yasukuni visit controversy, a number of *Yomiuri* articles and columns argued that Japan’s leftist forces had persisted in maintaining an anti-Yasukuni stance (Okazaki, 2001; Tennichi, 2001). Regarding the “Comfort Women” and the textbooks issue, *Yomiuri* supported the Japanese governments’ stance. The newspaper was sensitive to international diplomacy concerns, too. It asserted that interpretation of the past was a purely domestic matter, in which no other countries could intervene. *Yomiuri*’s political editor Oda Takashi wrote on October 26, 2005:

By taking advantage of Japan’s sense of “atonement for past deeds in the war,” the two countries have found war-related issues a particularly useful bargaining chip with the government. The Yasukuni Shrine issue has been a trump card in turning up the heat. (Oda, 2005)

Discourses of national unity, sovereign state, and international diplomacy set the background for much of *Yomiuri*'s coverage of political aspects of the controversies: that is the interpretation of Japan's own past was a domestic matter in which other countries should not meddle. *Yomiuri* placed grave importance on national unity when it covered what it defined as the interventions in its history-related domestic concerns.

In *China Daily*, there were no signs of internal confrontation over historical issues. Rather, the newspaper focused on international diplomacy between Japan and China. The newspaper conveyed the remarks of key political figures and government statements to criticize the Japanese "rightist's" attempt to fuel nationalism. *China Daily* repeatedly wrote that the recovery of mutual understanding between Japan and China should be founded on "Japan's self-examination on the aggressive war" ("Japan Is," 2004). Similarly, *Chosun* criticized Japan for remembering "only what it wants to remember" ("Editorial: Japan's," 2005). In an editorial titled "Korea could scrap summit over Koizumi's shrine visit" it warned that the Japanese government should take responsibility for the possible outcome of its actions propelled by historical revisionism ("Korea Could," 2005). Discourses of stigmatizing, forgetting, and revisionism were prevalent in *China Daily* and *Chosun*'s coverage of international conflicts over the three sites of memory. The two newspapers severely criticized the policy stances of the Japanese government over the historical controversies. They accused the Japanese government of ignoring other's suffering and attempting to reinvigorate militarism.

Indeed, the period this study examined was an era of commemoration and the politics of memory in East Asia. It began with Koizumi's campaign in which he proclaimed his intention to visit the Yasukuni Shrine. However, it would be misleading to say that Koizumi's hawkish views of history and his politically calculated exploitation of memory were the sole reason for the eruption of historical issues. Rather, it would be correct to say that there was a context that worked as a breeding ground for confrontational interpretations of memory. That context subsumed social, cultural, and

political conditions: Japan's decades old continuation of conservative politics in power, the "lost decade of Japan," Japan's internal struggle to define its post-war identity, Japan's cultural tradition that included Shintō pilgrimage and homage to the war dead, China's growing economic and political power, the exponential growth of trade among the three countries, South Korea's increasing voice in the international community, democratization of South Korea, civic organizations' interest in the "Comfort Women" issue, and decades-old territorial issues among the three countries. Koizumi's visits lit the fuse of the confrontation over war memories in East Asia. Once touched off by politics, memories exploded, displaying the volatility and unpredictability of memory. The three prominent newspapers contributed to the vehemence and fueled the historical controversies with their own constructions of memory. They sided with certain political parties, scolded politicians, called for strong governmental actions, and claimed to be authoritative interpreters of historical issues.

Journalism and Memory

Journalism represents and produces the resonant and dominant values of society reflecting the social, cultural, and political circumstances upon which a society operates. Journalists and their institutions make efforts to maintain the integrity and respected status of journalism. They represent and construct social values and discourses based upon their cultural, historical, political worldviews. Journalists do not live in a vacuum; they grow and perform in each particular context. While they may think that they are authoritative interpreters of social events and members of an interpretive community (Zelizer, 1993), their community is constantly influenced by their collective identity which is the product of the society to which they belong.

Schudson (1995) notes that news is a cultural form, and that journalistic culture varies across different departments of a paper, across different media, across different news organizations. If journalistic culture can be vastly different between one newspaper

institution and another in one country, then it can be assumed that an enormous gulf exists among newspapers operating in different countries. Numerous academic researchers in media communication studies have explored news texts and their production processes to examine the motifs which influence the production of news and its contents. This study has concentrated on the cultural aspect of journalistic construction of reality, for culture is a set of practices, a mode of human activity, a process whereby reality is created, maintained, and transformed (Carey, 1989). Culture shapes society, influences the political process, and in turn is communicated by journalists.

This cultural framework serves the topic of this study well: journalistic construction of memory. Memory is a social and cultural product. Memory is fashioned through the articulation of the past in the present time, to serve the current political situation. Journalism and memory as a realm of academic research, according to Zelizer (2008), has not attracted the attention of many academicians because journalists, as purveyors of the present, tend to display “both obliviousness and disregard for what is in effect their unstated role as agents of memory” (p. 80). Also, studies of collective memories have not paid enough attention to journalism because many believed journalists write the first draft of history, not reconstructions of the past by attending to their own agendas (p. 82). Journalism, in fact, does not record the first and objective draft of history. It rather is the arena of selective representation and arbitrary construction of memory. Consequently, cultural, political, even economic conditions of the present time influence the construction of memory by the media. This study aimed to make a contribution to the largely disregarded domain of journalism research, journalism and memory, especially related to issues found in East Asia.

The analysis of this study has shown that the three newspapers were not writers of the first draft of history. The memories and history of this paper are distant in time. War atrocities took place decades ago and the three countries have undergone remarkable political and economic change. It may be true that a majority of journalists and

columnists who contributed to the coverage of the three newspapers did not have direct experience of the Asia-Pacific War, since people born when the war ended in 1945 turned fifty-six in 2001, the year Koizumi became prime minister. Nevertheless, their coverage of the three sites of memory showed that the historical issues were remarkably active topics in each society, and that the three newspapers were producers of social discourse of memories. Different interpretations over the same history were carried out by the three newspapers' different constructions of discourses. They constructed discourses of victimhood, aggressor, national unity, and many more. Those discourses of memory were not much different from what other researchers in memory studies have found through their case studies from all over the world. One important aspect this study has revealed, however, is that those constructions of war memories were carried out by East Asian mainstream newspapers.

The three newspapers' active involvement in the historical controversies exceeded, in their degree of participation and their role in the confrontations, what scholars discussed as common features of commemorative journalism. In general, journalistic representations of the past are expected to include conventional journalistic practices such as rewriting, revisiting old events, generating commemorative or anniversary journalism, and investigating seemingly historical events (Edy, 1999; Zelizer, 2008). The role of the three newspapers displayed in their coverage of historical issues was more than "revisiting old events" and "observing anniversaries," however. They acted as if they were arbiters of historical debates. The newspapers not only represented the memories but also actively engaged in the construction of memory.

For example, *Yomiuri* sided with conservatives of Japanese society and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). *Yomiuri* advanced a discourse that politicians' visits to the Yasukuni Shrine were carried out based upon Japan's cultural traditions. It also argued that the form of worship was a domestic matter, and intervention by foreign countries was not acceptable. It suspected and denied historical facts related to war

atrocities. The “Comfort Women” case was such a case. With respect to the history textbook controversy, the newspaper argued that Japanese society was a democratic society where individuals and groups could freely express their own interpretations of the past.

In contrast, *China Daily* framed the Japanese government’s view of history as “whitewashing Japan’s war crimes.” It reported that the visits to the Yasukuni Shrine were symbols of Japanese militarism, and that shrine visits by high-ranking politicians were key obstacles in Sino-Japanese ties. As for the “Comfort Women” issue, the newspaper extensively covered the Chinese government’s official stance that “the enforced sexual slavery of ‘comfort women’ was a serious crime committed by the Japanese militarists during World War II, and a historical fact that could not be denied” (“War Crime,” 2005; MFA of China, 2006b).

Chosun noted that because of the shrine visits the distrust towards Japan and concerns about a revival of Japan’s militarism were magnified (“Editorial: Koizumi,” 2001). Regarding the “Comfort Women” issue, it argued that the denial of the “Comfort Women” system was a sign of the revival of Japanese militarism (“Editorial: Is,” 2004). The newspaper also called the Japanese history textbooks published by conservative groups a distortion of history (Park, 2002). This view of *Chosun* was consistent with the Korean government’s stance that Japanese history textbooks included “distorted accounts of the history of neighboring countries, failing to reflect a true recognition of history” (MOFAT of S. Korea, 2002).

One commonality among the three newspapers was their strong alliance with their respective governments. There were different motifs behind the seemingly identical trend, however. *Yomiuri* had been the voice of conservatives in Japanese society during the post-war period Japan, while the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) monopolized the political power. *Chosun* was also a conservative newspaper in South Korean society. Since *China Daily* is a party organ of the Communist Party of China, it is

impossible to apply the same liberal-vs-conservative yardstick to *China Daily*. It would be correct to say, with respect to *Chosun* and *China Daily*, that they were representing what they believed was the largely homogenous mindset of the general public of their countries. The memories of being occupied, humiliated, and having friends and family members killed were still vivid experience of some citizens of their countries. The two newspapers repeatedly emphasized the fact that many of those who experienced these events first hand were dying away, and that they needed more attention. Discourse of victimhood predominated their coverage of historical controversies.

It remains controversial why emphasizing victimhood and demonizing Japan for its war crimes was the main focus of *China Daily* and *Chosun* in their coverage. If they wanted to be the objective and authoritative newspapers in their societies, they should have made extra efforts to maintain objectivity and journalistic integrity when covering the historical issues. Rather than relaying their governments' stance on historical issues and calling for an unremitting determination against Japan, they could have been more constructive. A rare example of such constructive reporting was found on April 18, 2005 in *Chosun*. Under the title "Japan's Textbooks More Balanced than Korea's: NYT." *Chosun* reported a *New York Times* article that pointed out some misrepresentations of the Asia-Pacific War in Chinese and South Korean textbooks. The title of the original *New York Times* article read "In Japan's New Texts, Lessons in Rising Nationalism" (Onishi, 2005). The *Chosun* article was an extensive summary of the *New York Times* report. The *Chosun* article stated in reference to China:

The paper (NYT) said Japan's textbooks do mention painful issues like the "comfort women" and forced conscription but are becoming more vague about them...As a typical example, the NYT said Chinese textbooks "teach that Chinese resistance, not the United States, defeated Japan in the war; they say nothing of the postwar Great Leap Forward, in which some 30 million Chinese died because of Mao Zedong's misguided agrarian policies." ("Japan's Textbooks," 2005)

New York Times' observation of Chinese textbooks was consistent with the result of this study's analysis of *China Daily*'s news texts. As mentioned before, *China Daily* repeatedly described the end of the Asia-Pacific War as China's victory over fascist militarism. *Chosun* also wrote about the New York Times' observation of South Korean textbooks:

In the case of Korea, the paper said textbooks had improved since democratization in the late 1980s, but subjects like collaboration with the Japanese occupation were still taboo. "Descriptions of the colonial period used to focus only on Japanese exploitation and Korean resistance, ignoring the role of Japanese colonialism in Korea's modernization," the paper quoted Seoul National University education expert Baek Shin-ju as saying. ("Japan's Textbooks," 2005)

Whether or not the *New York Times* report and the expert's argument were biased, its argument supported what's found in the analysis of this study. There were not many articles in *China Daily* and *Chosun* in which the newspapers discussed potentially diverse perspectives of historical issues.

It was evident throughout the coverage of the three newspapers that the three newspapers persistently constructed discourse of national unity. Even other discourses eventually converged into the necessity of national unity and identity in their coverage of the three sites of memory. This interesting aspect can be explained by the distinctive journalistic tradition of each country. As discussed before, in China, the Chinese Communist Party or its party organs continue to control the media and influence their content (Heberer & Schubert, 2009). As for Japan, the Japanese press club system is the exclusive community of journalists, and has been considered the prime symbol of Japanese clannishness. Journalists in each press club monopolize the 'official news' and cultivate personal relationships with news sources (De Lange, 1998). The South Korean press system has been greatly influenced by a similar press club system as well as authoritarian culture of the society. Professional freedom and independence of journalists from company executives are still challenged in the South Korean journalistic culture.

Together with Confucianism and a relatively authoritarian structure of society, it can be said that these journalistic cultures contributed to shaping a uniform understanding of the historical issues in each journalistic institution.

Kitch (2008) notes that it is not always possible to determine who is constructing memory and who is receiving it in a society because they share the same culture, tradition, and political situation. Audiences, journalists, and critics are not as distinct from each other in a society where people have shaped their collective memory. Kitch furthers her argument:

We are all in the same memory soup, and its ingredients do not come from journalism alone. We acquire memory from all aspects of our lives, including education, work, family, literature, art and many types of communication. Indeed, when certain memory themes gain (or regain) cultural currency, it is usually because they are present across cultural forms simultaneously, and the social group to whom that memory speaks is likely to recall those themes through several of those cultural forms. (p. 316)

Memory does not appear only in a particular form of representation such as art, politics, and journalism. Instead, memory appears through an interconnected network of discourses of memory that expose the concerns of the present time. In Japan, the three sites of memory did not remain concerns of history. Political parties, civic groups, films, publications, and journalism were all involved in the debates. Kitch (2008) calls such situation the “intertextuality” of memory. Similar to the Japanese society, the entire Korean society and its public discourse have been saturated with historical issues. The “Truth and Reconciliation Commission,” “The Special Law to Redeem Pro-Japanese Collaborators’ Property,” and the “Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborator’s Property” were established during the past five years. In actuality, the establishment of these governmental committees followed other social movements initiated by civic organizations. The “Comfort Women” issue has been the main focus in the increased public awareness of war memories. A number of former “Comfort Women” broke their decades-long silence and testified to their experiences. Documentary films

were made and viewed in many public places. In China, the discussions of ever-increasing international trade with Japan and China's interest in the geopolitical power balance frequently appeared in *China Daily's* news stories when it covered the historical controversies.

Kitch's notion of intertextuality of memory coincides with Fairclough's concept of intertextuality of discourse. According to Fairclough (1995), intertextuality is the link among the three different dimensions of communicative events: text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. The three sites of memory were represented through multiple cultural forms such as film, news, social movements, and politics; those very cultural forms were the agents of memory that constructed, reproduced, and represented; and the sociocultural condition worked as the backdrop and the driving force of such emerging memory discourses in each society. Kitch (2008) emphasizes that acknowledging the intertextuality of memory also requires to "theoretically situate journalism within culture, not apart from it, reminding us that journalism is a form of, not merely a conduit for, memory" (p. 317). The controversies surrounding historical controversies and the newspaper's construction of memory have shown that journalism is a cultural practice and that a cultural approach is necessary in journalism studies to gain a more holistic understanding of social events.

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Directions

Given that the relationship between memory and journalism has not been a thoroughly cultivated area in academic research (Zelizer, 2008), this study makes a contribution to enriching such an area of study. In fact, scholars in memory studies have focused on the construction of memory discourses through politics and various forms of commemorations such as national memorials and monuments. Journalism has been largely ignored as an agent of memory. This study can be considered an addition to the effort aimed at filling the void. This study also contributes to knowledge on collective

memory in East Asia because it applies the concept to journalism, international relations, and international politics. While there were many studies about war memories of the Asia-Pacific War, discussions of journalistic representation and construction of war memory has been a hard find. In that sense, this study can be an interdisciplinary contribution to researching war memories in East Asia.

This study took the concept of collective memory as a collective social, cultural, and international phenomenon. Collective memory is constructed for the present condition of society and international relations. Investigating the construction of memory, therefore, requires an extensive survey of the context of memory construction in a given society. Based upon such background research, a good analysis is expected to contain “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973) of social issues as well as surrounding contexts. In that sense, a good collective memory study should reflect upon multiple aspects of contexts such as historical, social, cultural, and political conditions. While this study provided background information about the origin and the development of war memories in the three East Asian countries, it is difficult to say that this study provided a complete and integrated overview of all contexts with a holistic analysis.

A limited scope of social opinions in each respective country was such an example. Since all the three newspapers in this study were either pro-government or under strong governmental influence, the newspapers rarely wrote about divisive social opinions over historical issues present in their own countries. Even if they did write about divisive views, those views were not treated as important as the views they advanced themselves. For example, a number of scholars have found that other media institutions in Japan voiced their concerns against the Yasukuni visits and conservative textbook revisions. Diverse social opinions and discourses covered in those liberal-leaning newspapers could not be included in this study since the study did not analyze other Japanese newspapers. Similarly, the citizens of China and South Korea were considered to have relatively unified opinions over historical issues. However, different journalistic

institutions could have held slightly different stances for the issues. If this study had examined multiple newspapers in a country, it would have been able to provide a more integrated overview of the landscape of war memories in the country.

The role of civic and international organizations is not included in the scope of this study, although it has been an important aspect in terms of the construction of memory discourses in East Asia. The post-war history of Japan and South Korea showed the active role of civic organizations in contesting the conservative attitude of their governments. Civic organizations have contributed to enhancing the public awareness of war atrocities. In Korea, the “Comfort Women” case became a social issue only after multiple civic organizations brought up the topic. They criticized the Korean government for its ignorance and lukewarm stance over the issue. They also worked with their counterparts in Japan and other countries to elicit an official apology from the Japanese government. The “Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery” was such an example (“Editorial: Final,” 2001). The United Nations Human Rights Council, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Labor Organization also produced reports about the “Comfort Women issue (“Open Up,” 2007). In China, Global Alliance for the Preservation of the Truth about the Sino-Japanese War held annual meetings in Beijing (“Alliance Seeks,” 2004). While those events were reported in the newspapers, more in *China Daily* and *Chosun* than in *Yomiuri*, the role of the non-political civic organizations and UN committees has been relatively isolated in the discussions of war memories because of the more explosive political spectacles such as Koizumi’s visits to the shrine.

The journalistic culture of each country and the news production process were not fully explored because this study focused on textual analysis. Chapter I summarized discussions of the journalistic culture of the three East Asian countries, which was different from the conventional understanding and expectations based upon Western style journalistic culture. Since the construction of memory was largely aimed at solidifying

unified national understanding of war memories, an examination of the process of news production in each country could have produced a deeper understanding of the construction of memory in respective countries. Fieldwork, including interviews and ethnographic observation, would be an effective way to buttress these limitation, since in studies with a qualitative analysis a first-hand observation often fills the gap a text-only analysis could not address (Jankowski & Wester, 1991; Patton, 1987).

This study had a large scope that included the three countries and the three main historical controversies in its explanation of the construction of war memories. Whereas a broad view has captured a macro-view of the politics of memory in East Asia, it has also restricted its focus to only three sites of memory. As previous studies have suggested, the construction of memory is carried out through a variety of modes of remembering: such as elaboration, articulation, appropriation, normalization, and reification. Media texts are a paramount example of such modes of constructing memory. Future research can address other sites of memory, as well as details of the representation and construction of memory in different forms of media communication. Also, each historical issue can be examined separately with attention to the details of mode of memory representation and construction. The fact is that the region is still inundated by unaddressed war memories and the construction of memories calls for more academic attention to memory studies. Nora (1998b) notes that “What matters is not what the past imposes on us but what we bring to it” (p. 618). The media bring the audience numerous snippets of the past everyday. It is encouraging and challenging as well that there are so many mediated memories to explore in East Asia.

Recent Political Changes in Japan and Subsequent

Development in Memory Issues

It would be informative to provide an overview of recent political changes in Japan and their impact on historical controversies in East Asia, particularly during the

post-Koizumi era. When Shinzo Abe was elected as the President of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and became Prime Minister of Japan in September 2006, he was described by the media as the youngest prime minister in postwar Japan (“Abe Officially,” 2006) and the first Japanese prime minister who was born after WWII (“Editorial: Abe,” 2006). Upon his taking office, all three countries and their newspapers as well expected Abe to bring a new leadership and improve relations with the other countries. In response, he declared that breaking the diplomatic stalemate with neighboring countries would be one of his first tasks as Prime Minister. He visited China and South Korea within weeks of taking office. He met President Hu Jintao of China and reached agreements that, according to *China Daily*’s report, “thawed relations chilled by former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi’s repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine” (“Hu History,” 2006). *Chosun* reported Abe’s remarks in Seoul:

Asked about the vexed Yasukuni Shrine, Abe said, “As long as it remains a political and diplomatic issue, I don’t want to say whether I will visit or not visit. I will succeed to the spirit of a statement by former prime minister Tomiichi Murayama that reflected on our nation’s past colonization and aggression and the statement by former chief Cabinet secretary Kono Yohei which acknowledged the existence of sex slaves for the Imperial Army and apologized for that.” (“Editorial: The,” 2006)

Chosun added that it remained to be seen whether his words would be “put into action.” It also relayed a government official’s comment that “The attitude Abe takes to the controversial shrine for the first one or two months after taking office will play a critical role in determining the relationship between Seoul and Tokyo in the future” (“Abe Election,” 2006).

In 2007, the discussions about “Comfort Women” flared up as the US House of Representatives worked on a resolution about the issue. When asked about the situation in early March, Abe stressed that the Japanese government would not apologize for its conduct toward the “so-called comfort women.” He was quoted by a *Yomiuri* story as saying: “There’s no conclusive evidence, in a narrow definition, that comfort women

were forcibly recruited. It wasn't like the government and the army took these women away like kidnapping" ("Abe: No," 2007). Along with his remarks, transcripts of a Japanese Foreign Ministry press conference showed that Abe and his administration were playing the same game Koizumi did: the ambiguity of memory:

Q: My first question is, what is coercion in the "narrow sense?"

Press Secretary Mr. Taniguchi: About what? About the comfort women issue?

Q: Yes. It was an expression used by the Prime Minister a few days ago.

Mr. Taniguchi: I do not want to dig into that area because it would serve no one. (MOFA of Japan, 2007)

Behind Abe's ambiguous attitude was Japanese domestic politics. His government's poll numbers plummeted several months into his tenure as Abe came under fire from conservative backers for apparently toning down his stance on controversial issues related to Japan's history. A top aid for Abe was quoted by a Kyodo News service article as saying: "The prime minister wants to clearly show his conservative stance" ("Abe Visits," 2007; "Japan PM," 2007). *Yomiuri* also expressed its complaint about Abe's stance over the "Comfort Women" issue:

The 1993 (Kono) statement was motivated by a political desire to deflect pressure from South Korea on the comfort women issue. But it has helped broaden the misunderstanding. Apparently out of diplomatic consideration, Abe has said he stands by the Kono statement. But as long as the prime minister takes this position, the misunderstanding about coercive recruitment will remain. If the statement is found to be erroneous, it should be modified without hesitation. ("Editorial: Get," 2007)

Yomiuri's complaint was no surprise given the newspaper's conservative views on historical issues. In fact, the newspaper had called for a consistent government stance regarding historical issues at the onset of the Abe administration. An editorial stated that: "it was indicated by the lineup of the new cabinet that there would not be a big change in terms of dealing with thorny issues related to history and memory ("Editorial: Abe Rewards," 2006). The editorial provided the reason for its hopeful prediction: Abe

rewarded factions in the LDP by appointing people from different factions to various cabinet posts. In other words, there was no visible change in the structure of Japanese professional politics. Abe's flexible yet ambiguous attitude toward historical issues did not last long, however. He stepped down as Prime Minister in September 2007, citing personal health concerns. He had been at the post for just a year, compared to Koizumi's five years. Since Abe's resignation, the Japanese public has seen four more prime ministers during the past three years. Yasuo Fukuda and Taro Aso, members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) who succeeded Abe as Prime Minister, did not visit the Yasukuni Shrine during their relatively short twelve-month and twenty-two-month tenures respectively ("Fukuda Out," 2007). One significant change in the history of Japanese politics came in September 2009. The Democratic Party of Japan defeated the long-governing, conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in a general election to take over the government. The liberal democrats had traditionally opposed conservative interpretations of war history and official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine by political leaders. The two prime ministers from the Democratic Party of Japan, Yukio Hayatoma and the incumbent Naoto Kan, did not visit the shrine. Commenting on the frequent changes of prime ministers, a recent New York Times article summarized that the weak leadership of Japanese leaders had caused such rapid changes at the post:

Political experts say a straight-talking prime minister is exactly what Japan wants, after years of ineffective leaders who seemed hopelessly out of touch with voters' concerns and unable to restore a sense of direction to this rudderless nation. What they want, many here say, is the next Junichiro Koizumi who energized the public between 2001 and 2006 with his calls for Reagan-style economic deregulation and small government. His quirky charisma and willingness to defy entrenched interests made him the most popular prime minister in modern times, say experts, and changed Japan's expectations for its leaders. (Fackler, 2010)

During the past four years (2006-2010) of the rapid political change in Japan, the three Asian countries have had a relatively quiet period in terms of historical issues. Historical issues continue to be an important social and international topic in the region, but have

never become the subject of vehement confrontations in East Asia as they were during the preceding eight years.

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