Shaming Analogies and Reconciliation Dyads

Germany is to France as Japan is to Korea?

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“The true strength of a nation is tested when it is forced to confront the darkest chapters in its history. Will it have the courage to face up to the truth of its past, or will it hide from those truths in the desperate and foolish hope that they will fade with time? Post-war Germany made the right choice. Japan, on the other hand, has actively promoted historical amnesia.”


“At some point, every nation must come to terms with its own history. And that is all we ask of Turkey. Germany has accepted responsibility for the Holocaust. South Africa set up a Truth Commission to look at Apartheid. And here at home, we continue to grapple with the legacies of slavery and our horrendous treatment of Native Americans. It is now time for Turkey to accept the reality of the Armenian Genocide.”

Chairman Howard Berman’s remarks to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, March 4, 2010

1. Introduction

The modern Franco-German relationship is often held up as a paragon for how South Korea and Japan should resolve their historical grievances and join forces to achieve common economic and political goals. This is often expressed in the form of frustrated chiding statements such as: "Why can't Japan acknowledge its misdeeds in WWII and apologize properly, as Germany has done?" or "Why can't Koreans get over the trauma of the past and accept that Japan has changed, as France has accepted Germany?" Another popular analogy compares the legacy of the Armenian genocide at the hands of the Turks in 1915 with the Nazi Holocaust of WWII. Both were dark moments in human history involving unspeakable atrocities and resulting in the near-total elimination of a people from a region. However, Germany has thoroughly reflected on and apologized for its atrocities, and it appears the survivors have largely accepted the modern German state as a transformed entity and recognized the true contrition of the German people. By contrast, nearly a century after the events of the Armenian genocide, tensions between perpetrator and victim nations remain high and no apology is forthcoming. It appears that these two analogies suffer from important contradictions, and their continued popularity calls for further investigation.

In this paper I seek to answer two questions: 1) What explains the continued popularity of comparisons between the most successful cases of state contrition and some of the least successful ones? 2) When we examine these least successful cases side-by-side, what are the commonalities between them that might best explain their common outcome (reconciliation failure)? To this end, I first review the literature on the role of historical analogies in shaping interstate relations and consider an under-developed dimension: analogy as a shaming

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1 I use this terminology throughout, acknowledging that the Japanese and Ottoman acts under discussion are distinct; the Ottomans perpetrated a genocide against the Armenians, while the Japanese perpetrated an assimilationist colonial policy against the Koreans. “Perpetrator nation” is thus the closest semantic link.
mechanism. With this background, I then explain how the France-Germany dyad is an imperfect analogy for Korea-Japan, just as the Jewish Holocaust is an imperfect analogy for the Armenian genocide of 1915. Then, based on the principles of “most different systems” design, I identify Japan-Korea and Turkey-Armenia as two reconciliation dyads with similar outcomes (zero or negative progress towards reconciliation over time) that nonetheless differ across a range of the most popular explanatory variables used to predict reconciliation processes. I then work backwards to identify alternative explanatory factors, shared by both dyads, which might best account for the current impasses in both Armenia-Turkey and Korea-Japan relations, using this comparison to develop a more complete theory of when and how reconciliation processes are most effective. Finally, I will explore the implications of this theory for a more complete understanding of the barriers to progress in inter-state reconciliation.

2. Analogies in IR

Yuen Foong Khong has developed a theory of the role of analogies in foreign policy, based on an analysis of the various analogies referenced by US policymakers influencing President Johnson's 1964-65 decision to invest combat troops in Vietnam. He identifies two main theoretical types of historical analogies: analytical and justificatory. Analytical analogies are employed directly by policy-makers in the decision process to gain a greater understanding of a problem, predict outcomes, and choose a course of action. Justificatory analogies, by contrast, are directed at the public and used after a policy decision has already been made, typically for the purpose of framing the decision to the public and gaining popular approval. I would argue that there is a third usage, one which appears directly in diplomatic relations at the inter-state level, aimed at “shaming” the opposite party into a change in behavior through reference to a more admirable example. This sort of analogy can be expressed in phrases such as: “Why can't X behave more like Y,” “If they could do it, so can you,” etc.

This is the sort of analogy we see in action when the German example is upheld as a paragon of proper contrition and reconciliation, in contrast to the still-tense relationships of Turkey-Armenia and Japan-Korea. Since the Nazi Holocaust had a much more massive death toll and occurred more recently in history than the Armenian genocide, this is treated as a “least likely” case of reconciliation, shaming the Turkey-Armenia case which occurred further in the past and involved relatively smaller numbers. The main barrier to reconciliation is often attributed to the fact that Turkey never apologized, but that leaves the question of why some apologies are less forthcoming in some cases than others. Similarly, the thorough Franco-German reconciliation casts the ongoing Korean-Japanese enmity in a shameful light, particularly in the eyes of the West which has little awareness of how Japanese rule affected the Korean nation. In that case, Japan has offered official apologies and compensation, but these have often provoked a backlash from conservative members of Japanese society, who issue their own statements denying the apology. Some point to this backlash effect and lack of a unified Japanese understanding of history as explanation of the stalled progress in Japan-

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Korea reconciliation, but this raises further questions about why such backlash occurs in the Japanese case and not the German one. Others point to the Korean side as the source of the problem, chiding Koreans for refusing to accept Japanese apologies and forgive as the French appear to have forgiven the Germans, but this raises the question of why some apologies are more readily accepted than others.

I present these phenomena as prime examples of “shaming” analogies as a distinct type missing from Khong’s typology. By shedding light on the failing points of the two Germanic analogies, we should be better able to assess if this prescription is truly likely to work.

When analogies are misused, the consequences can be quite disastrous. Khong cites several historical examples. Deng Xiaoping mentally equated the 1989 democracy movement to the Cultural Revolution, and concluded that it must be stomped out forcefully for the good of the nation. The generation of European leaders who experienced WWI upheld the "No more summers of 1914" slogan in pursuing the appeasement policy toward Nazi Germany. The WWII generation of US leaders, in turn, cited "No more Munichs" in arguing against complacency in the buildup to the Vietnam War. In the Suez Crisis of 1956, British PM Tony Eden compared Nasser to Hitler, arguing against what he termed “appeasement.” More generally, it has often been observed that policymakers tend to “fight the last war,” i.e. use analogies from events they have most recently experienced. When several analogies appear relevant, formative personal experiences and beliefs may shape which analogies are used and how they are interpreted.

3. Popular Comparison Cases in Reconciliation Literature

The aforementioned popular affinity for the German case appears to have leaked into more academic discussions in the comparative literature of reconciliation, remembrance, and apology. The Armenian case appears most often in comparative genocide literature alongside the Holocaust, as the closest event in terms of scale and racial/religious themes, with lesser genocides such as Rwanda, Serbia, and Cambodia appended as additional test cases. It rarely if ever appears in the apologies literature, which tends to focus on “dogs that barked”: successful cases of formal state apologies such as the US and Canadian apologies for Japanese internment, Australia’s apologies to its aboriginal peoples, German reparations to the Jews, South Africa’s post-Apartheid reconciliation.

Coverage of the Japan-Korea case is scant in the colonization literature, which focuses on the European colonies and seems at a loss to incorporate a non-Western case into comparative models. Perhaps as a consequence, the postcolonial relations of Japan and Korea are also neglected in the dominant post-colonial literature. Instead Japan’s tenure in Korea is most often compared alongside the other long-term Japanese colonies like Taiwan and Manchukuo, or with the German occupations of WWII, perhaps because they culminated at the same chronological time and occurred under similar fascist regimes. Comparing the 36-year-long Japanese control of Korea with the much shorter (4-5 year) occupations conducted

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3 Lind 2010.
6 Mahoney 2010.
by Germany gives the impression of a mere military occupation to what was in actuality a much more pervasive administrative takeover and rebuilding of Korea’s governmental, cultural, economic, and legal institutions. The result is that the Japanese colonization is approached by comparativists as a purely exploitative enterprise (like Nazi-occupied France and Poland) rather than a developmental-exploitative enterprise (like the European colonies in Africa, South America, India, and Southeast Asia). This analytical slant impacts our conception of what a Japanese apology should sound like and how difficult it should be to extract.

John Feffer gives a characteristic assessment: “Comparatively, France and Germany have largely relegated history to the classroom and the cultural festival, while Northeast Asia is still raking over the coals of the twentieth century. Koreans demand a range of apologies from Japan for its colonial practices and wartime conduct. Japan demands apologies from North Korea for its abductions. Korea and Japan square off over a tiny island in the sea between them.”

Jennifer Lind has written an extensive comparative study of diplomatic apologies, in which the France-Germany and Korea-Japan cases play the most prominent role. Thomas Burkman writes, “It is remarkable that in this first postwar period the French grew to regard Germany as their closest friend despite the absence of public contrition on Germany’s part. Korea, on the other hand, harbored deep apprehensions that Japan would remilitarize and reassert its colonial claims.”

Aidan Foster-Carter, in a brilliant piece about Japan-Korea rivalry over the Dokdo/Takeshima issue, writes, “A painful past must be exposed and confronted. But it must also be accepted, and for some reason this seems especially difficult for Koreans. Others have managed it, in a context of yet greater evil. Israel and Germany are friends, despite Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust.”

Many Japanese proponents of a so-called “Northeast Asian Community,” such as Wada Haruki, have struggled to understand why the countries of the region remain unable to achieve meaningful economic, security, or political pacts and remain hampered by the shadow of the past. Until the Eurozone fell into its recent problems, this was upheld as an ideal of what Northeast Asia might accomplish if its history could be resolved. Wada has controversially suggested that, since Korea forms the heart of Northeast Asia and its diaspora extends throughout the region, Korea must form the central nexus of this community, and therefore Japan must resolve its historical issues with Korea to move forward in building a regional community. Korea, for its part, has produced a fair amount of ink comparing Japan’s lack of apology or appropriate reflection on its crimes during the colonial period with the behavior of postwar Germany toward France. Lee Min-ho, an emeritus professor at Seoul University, has done a comparison of historical awareness of Germany and Japan based on the contents of their history textbooks.
Germany-France post-1945 is not the only European analogy applied to Japan-Korea relations. Stephen Walt, citing the historical example of how “the obvious and growing threat from Germany led Britain to resolve various disputes and form stronger ties with other major powers” in the early 20th century, argues that the reluctance of South Korea and Japan to unite in the face of a rising China could lead one to conclude that “these two states are letting national pride cloud their thinking in a most unproductive way. And one big reason might be the long habit of expecting Uncle Sam to take care of their security for them.” On this basis, he advises the US to make efforts in East Asian diplomacy that would include “helping its friends settle differences among themselves.”

Since the key players in both the Young Turk’s genocidal program and Japan wartime occupation were subjected to war crimes tribunals after their respective atrocities, we might expect both cases to appear prominently as nascent cases in the transitional justice literature. Yet it is difficult to find any source in which both cases are included for comparison. Neil Kritz’s edited volume, perhaps the most complete work to date in this field, focuses on post-Cold War cases of Truth and Reconciliation tribunals, mainly in Latin America and the former Soviet regimes. Joanna Quinn’s work covers a wide range of cases of post-conflict transitional justice in diverse areas including Morocco, Rwanda, Guatemala, Northern Ireland, and Uganda, but also neglects more distant historical cases.

Julie McGonegal’s work includes some events such as Australia’s colonial legacy and Japanese internment in WWII Canada which occurred further in the past, although the trials themselves occurred only recently. Pre-Cold War cases of retributive and transitional justice have been relegated to historical analysis, and this hole in the literature deserves greater attention. The trials of the Young Turks and the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunals, though imperfect in many ways, should serve as important formative cases in the development of international justice for crimes against humanity.

4. Turkey-Armenia and Japan-South Korea as Candidates for “Most Different Systems” Analysis

The Armenian Genocide of 1915-1916 and the Japanese occupation of Korea from 1910-1945 are two historical events that are not often considered side-by-side. They occurred under different historical circumstances in different parts of the world, and it is difficult to find a common thread between the two in terms of underlying motivations of the perpetrators. Yet they represent two of the most disappointing cases of reconciliation failure in modern international relations. Following the conventional wisdom that “time heals,” we might expect that, cetera paribus, reconciliation progress should be a positive function of the time elapsed since the atrocity, with the effect of time perhaps mitigated by the severity of the atrocity in question. Mathematically, if we could devise an appropriate operationalization of “reconciliation progress” (RP), we expect to find the following relationship:

$$RP = +\beta \frac{\text{time/severity}}{} + u$$

For the purposes of this analysis, we consider our units of analysis to include all cases in which:

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15 Walt 2012.
17 Quinn 2009.
A. A crime/atrotcity/injustice has occurred in the past between two players, perpetrator and victim.

B. Sufficient time has elapsed since the event for both sides to gather evidence, recollect shared memories, and apply interpretations of what occurred.

C. An apology for the event in question has been demanded of the perpetrator by the victim at some point in the past. This may or may not have produced a response from the perpetrator, war crime proceedings, or a justice tribunal.

D. The victim and perpetrator both possess representative organs which occupy *de jure* equal status within their system of interaction (states, organizations, sub-state bodies, etc.) with autonomy relative to each other, invested with the authority to give or receive apologies.

Possible candidate dyads for analysis may include: China-Mongolia (Qing dynasty occupation), Turkey-Greece (bloodshed during Ottoman breakup), Vietnam-Cambodia (invasion), US-Vietnam (Vietnam War), England-Ireland (political and religious domination), France-Algeria (colonization), Britain-India (British Raj), Turkey-Armenia (genocide), Japan-South Korea (occupation), Russia-Afghanistan (invasion), South Africa (Apartheid), Hutus-Tutsis (Rwandan genocide), Cambodia (Khmer Rouge atrocities).

Although operationalization and coding of reconciliation progress for all cases is beyond the scope of this paper, a look at the current state of affairs should be enough to demonstrate convincingly that the Japan-South Korea and Turkey-Afghanistan dyads stand out as outliers in terms of lack of progress (or even negative progress) towards reconciliation, compared to what the above equation would lead us to expect given the amount of time that has elapsed. Furthermore, the animosities in both dyads are expressed though similar phenomena in the modern states of Turkey, Armenia, Japan, and South Korea today.

Japan-Korea tensions and recriminations have simmered since the end of WWII, and have never been far from the surface. Nevertheless, the historical issues did not emerge in formal legal measures in South Korea until after the democratic government had been consolidated in the mid-1990s with the new history textbook debates. The relationship steadied after the 1998 financial crisis, and South Korea even lifted its decades-long ban on Japanese cultural products in 2004. From this high point, however, the relationship has sharply declined, with political battles over the Takeshima/Dokdo islets and the Comfort Women issue souring popular perceptions and threatening the strong trade relationship. Boycotting movements have become increasingly mainstream in both countries, particularly directed at cultural imports, and groups have staged regular protests outside embassies and places of business in both countries. Notably, the demographic character of these protests has shifted in recent years to include young people in their teens or early 20s, and the thriving internet culture has exacerbated the situation, as the most outrageous incidents of right-wing politicians are rapidly disseminated through Twitter and the blogosphere while more moderate voices are ignored.

The evolution of Turkish-Armenian animosity is to assess, since Armenia did not exist as an autonomous state during the Cold War and had no political authority to demand or accept apologies from Turkey throughout that time. Yet the stories of the Holocaust have been passed down through the generations, particularly among the diaspora Armenians in the US
and Europe, and the historical recriminations returned with a vengeance after the Cold War. Since then, the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and the Turkish response to various global calls for genocide acknowledgement have further heated tensions between the two states, and successive Armenian presidents have ramped up demands for Turkish apologies and compensation at great material cost. Animosity appears to be higher now than at any point since the start of the Cold War.

Most of the popular explanations of the forces shaping reconciliation processes seem to fail in one or both of these dyads. Realists have argued that Cold War politics and the strong external threat Communism forced the countries of Western Europe into an early reconciliation with West Germany, but Japan and South Korea faced the same threat from the same side of the Iron Curtain and still failed to reach a complete reconciliation, even during the existential crisis of the Korean War. Liberal institutionalists may argue that the increasing influence of global governance organizations and the growing norm of the state apology should contribute to a trend of gradually improving relations. Yet even though Turkey faced substantial institutional pressure to apologize in exchange for EU membership, and Japan’s apologetic stance was heightened during its recent drive to join the UN Security Council, still both dyads show negative progress toward reconciliation over the past decade. If anything, conservative elites felt even greater resentment that the world community was making their new improved status contingent upon acceptance of “historical revisionism.” Some constructivist scholars might expect to find reconciliation to proceed at a rate proportional to the degree of cultural proximity (defined by religious, ethnic, or economic proxies) between former adversaries. Yet as the chart below indicates, the level of cultural proximity between Japan and South Korea suggests that they would expect to have an easier reconciliation process than Turkey and Armenia. Another constructivist view would hold reconciliation dependent on the level of perceived threat signaled by the former perpetrator against the former victim; again, this theory might hold across much of the history of the Turkey-Armenia case, but South Korea has not faced a genuine threat from Japan in generations. Political economists might point to economic interdependence as a strong predictor of a conciliatory trend, yet Japan-South Korea hostility has remained steady through several decades of increasing trade inter-dependency. For fans of the Democratic Peace theory, the lack of armed confrontation between Japan and Korea might be satisfying, but the growing level of non-violent political vitriol between East Asia’s strongest democracies defies explanation.

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18 Goldmann 1979, Walt 2012.  
20 Lind 2010.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Japan-Korea</th>
<th>Turkey-Armenia</th>
<th>Germany-France</th>
<th>Germany-Israel</th>
<th>Germany-Poland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical crime</td>
<td>Occupation, forced labor, cultural assimilation</td>
<td>Genocide, territorial theft</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Genocide, forced labor</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>1910-1945 (35.5 years)</td>
<td>1915-1916 (1 yr)</td>
<td>05/1940-12/1944 (4.5 years)</td>
<td>1939-1945 (6 yrs)</td>
<td>1939-1945 (6 yrs)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time elapsed</td>
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<td>97 yrs</td>
<td>68 yrs</td>
<td>67 yrs</td>
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<td>Contiguous</td>
<td>Contiguous</td>
<td>3000 km</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic proximity</td>
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<td>Distant</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>Close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious differences</td>
<td>minor</td>
<td>major</td>
<td>negligible</td>
<td>major</td>
<td>negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (IMF 2012)</td>
<td>46 : 23</td>
<td>10 : 3</td>
<td>41 : 41</td>
<td>41 : 31</td>
<td>41 : 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of apology</td>
<td>Offered, unaccepted</td>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Offered, accepted</td>
<td>Offered, accepted</td>
<td>Offered, accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War crimes tribunal</td>
<td>25 Class A, 5700 Class B or C, 984 death sentences</td>
<td>31 convicted, 4 death sentences</td>
<td>18,000 tried, 185 death sentences</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Economic inter-dependence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>(evolving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial issues</td>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None (Resolved)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the Turkey-Armenia and Japan-South Korea dyads differ across a range of the most popular candidate independent variables used to explain reconciliation processes, and
yet both dyads have arrived at similar outcomes in terms of our dependent variable (progress over time on reconciliation), they constitute excellent candidates for a “most different systems” analysis. In the following section, I will conduct an exploration of the elements that these two cases do share, both historically and in their present-day politics, which impede their progress toward reconciliation. Special attention will be paid to variables that match both “reconciliation failure” cases (Turkey-Armenia and Japan-Korea) but do not appear in the preeminent “reconciliation success” case (Germany-France). It is hoped that this process will serve to identify new candidates for previously unconsidered independent variables to explain reconciliation processes.

5. Common Historical Themes

Although Japan has never been accused of committing genocide in Korea, its colonial administration represented an existential threat to the Korean nationhood to a far greater degree than any WWII German occupation. As mentioned earlier, Germany occupied France for only five years, and never seriously tried to culturally assimilate the French or wipe out its cultural identity. Japan, by contrast, over a 35-year period engaged in a prolonged and elaborate policy of modernization and cultural assimilation of what it saw as a dangerously weak and backward Korean culture; this policy included installing Japanese as the official language, forcing Koreans to adopt Japanese names, transforming traditional Korean modes of education, and mandating worship at Shinto shrines. Because Japan endeavored not just to control Korea but to re-make Korea in its own image, it posed a greater existential threat to the Korean nation than did any European colony (with the possible exception of Australia and the American colonies), though admittedly less serious than the existential threat posed by the Armenian genocide.

The two occupations also had very different rationales. The German invasion of France was inspired largely by opportunity, avarice, and the desire to establish hegemony throughout continental Europe, whereas the Japanese occupation of Korea was motivated in part by fear of Western imperialism and unease about the pace of modernization; at least, this is the common characterization of the motives for expansion and war given by right-wing groups and expressed at many war monuments and memorials in Japan today. As one illustration of this, the plaque at the War Memorial in Kyoto reads:

The Showa era, from its beginnings in the worldwide Great Depression, through the Manchuria Incident of Sept. 18, 1931, the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of July 7, 1937, and the Nomonhan Incident of May 12, 1939, led up to the outbreak of the Great East Asian War with the powers America and Britain on Dec. 8, 1941, which, by its end on Aug. 15, 1945, had developed into a great conflict which gambled the fates of all our people, over an enormous battlefield covering half the world, in which over 4 million soldiers fought a bloody struggle against the overwhelming might of the Allied armies... When considering the peaceful condition of our homeland today, and recalling our memories of bygone days grown thin with the passing of history, we must remember the cause for which those born into that generation sacrificed their youth, education, work and family, which was the belief

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that theirs was a fateful struggle to deliver Asia from colonialism. This truth will be borne out by history...

This is an important cognitive element affecting the reasoning of policymakers in both the rising Japanese empire and the waning Ottoman empire, and I will return to it throughout this paper.

At the turn of the century, as the European empires of Great Britain, Russia, Germany, and France proceeded to carve up the Chinese empire among themselves, the Japanese leadership grew increasingly uneasy about Korea’s failure to reform and modernize its defensive capacity. “From Japan’s perspective, Korea’s domestic politics remained impossibly chaotic… Korea was ‘a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan.’” This “dagger” analogy has become a recurrent theme in right-wing justifications of Japan’s treatment of its neighbor to the west throughout the modern era. Germany, being part of the West, did not share an analogous anxiety about modernization or Western encroachment; the failing Ottoman empire did, as we shall see.

Another factor potentially affecting the speed of reconciliation is the degree of emotional injury to national pride. It can be argued that French pride was injured less than that of Korea by its occupation experience, for several reasons. Throughout their history, both France and Germany had taken turns invading each other’s territory, and hence France might have had a sense of “giving as good as it got” on balance. Whereas Japan invaded Korea twice, Korea never came close to successfully invading Japan. France has its own colonial legacy, perhaps obliging it to soften its criticism of Germany; Korea does not. Exacerbating this problem, Korea had traditionally viewed Japan as an inferior member of the hierarchical Sino-centric order, whereas France and Germany perceived each other as equal sovereign units within the Westphalian system (albeit with different merits and capabilities). The fact that Korea was overtaken by a nation of people it had traditionally considered inferior made the wound to national pride that much more severe.

Furthermore, the common historical perception is that France lost to Germany in a brief but more-or-less fair fight, according to the Western norm of armed warfare between standing armies. By comparison, the Korean military was disarmed through trickery in July 1907, when the resident-general ordered the small 9,000-man Korean Army to be disbanded. The Armenians were disarmed in a similarly mendacious way in 1915:

A second step to ensure lack of resistance was the Turkish requisition of all guns possessed by Armenians. In some areas, Armenians were given quotas, and if they did not produce enough weapons, they had to buy them from their Turkish neighbors. These confiscated guns were then photographed and presented as evidence of Armenian insurrection.

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23 Plaque at the War Memorial behind Ryozen Gokaku Shrine, Kyoto. Translation mine.
26 Walzer, 2006.
27 Seth 2010, p 255.
28 Miller 1993, p. 41.
Given this history, it is unsurprising that many Koreans and Armenians developed a historical self-perception as pacifist isolationists who were tricked and then overrun by war-loving militants. Salting this wound, it is clear that neither Armenia nor Korea would likely have independent states today but for the vicissitudes of history and great-power interests; whereas France assembled an effective resistance movement and can thus content itself with a "victory story" and the confidence that its continued existence as a nation was never truly under threat. Armenians would strongly relate to the way Koreans to this day characterize their nation as “a shrimp between two whales,” crushed between the interests of the great regional powers.

The shrimp-between-whales mentality and the pacifist self-perception may be found among the pre-WWII European Jewish community as well, and they undeniably faced a severe existential threat from the Holocaust. However, when historical motivations are examined, the Jewish Holocaust/Armenian genocide comparison is problematic as well. The first sign of trouble is in the treatment of the persecuted people by the general population. Oral histories collected from survivors show that Turkish families took in orphaned Armenians found abandoned along the deportation routes and raised them as their own. Turks and Kurds also took young women from the caravans to wife, sometimes forcibly but sometimes with surprising chivalry, and started families with them.\textsuperscript{29} For those whose frame of reference is the Nazi genocide of the Jews, with its objective of completely eliminating the Jewish bloodline, this behavior is puzzling. The strong impression that emerges is that the Armenian genocide was driven not by racist abhorrence of the Armenian bloodline (although this emotion certainly existed), but by political calculus concerned with wiping out the Armenian nation as a distinct political and cultural entity, and that the driving emotion was not hatred but desperation and deep mistrust.

The main observation that emerges from comparative analysis of the two histories is that German persecution of Jews was diffuse and racist in motivation, whereas Turkish persecution of Armenians was centrally orchestrated and motivated primarily by defensive nationalism. Anti-Semitic sentiment had been building in German society for many decades, and the Nazi Party was able to sweep into power in part by riding the tide of popular sentiment. In other words, the Nazis did not instill anti-Semitic fervor so much as they took advantage of it and exacerbated it.\textsuperscript{30} By comparison, it appears that the forced deportation of the Armenians was a centrally devised political decision by the ruling Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which saw Armenians as a threat to national unity and as potential saboteurs of the war effort, as the Turkish forces planned to withdraw to the East during WWI and reorganized for guerrilla warfare. There was some justification for this belief, as the Armenians had suffered increasing levels of discrimination and mistreatment under CUP rule and had a history of appealing to Europe and Russia for aid and diplomatic pressure against the Ottoman government. Dr. Bahaettin Sakir, a key CUP Central Committee member charged with overseeing the deportations, recalled, “It was clearly understood that the continued existence of the Armenians living around the border with Russia represented a

\textsuperscript{29} Miller 1993.
\textsuperscript{30} Goldhagen 1996.
great threat to the country’s future. It was necessary for the nation’s well-being to do whatever was possible to remove this danger.” Just as Japan viewed Korea as a dagger pointed at its heart, the CUP viewed the Armenians as unreliable internal elements that would not hesitate to sell the nation to the European powers. An elaborate plan was devised and CUP operatives were dispatched to ensure that the deportations would proceed smoothly without interference from the local populations, which in many cases objected to the brutal treatment of their friends and neighbors. As Turkish historian Taner Akçam writes:

As a rule the acceleration of the process of a country's decline and partition helps to strengthen a sense of desperation and 'fighting with one's back to the wall.' As the situation becomes increasingly hopeless, those who have failed to prevent the collapse become more hostile and aggressive. When the crisis deepens, they resort to increasingly barbaric means, and come to believe 'that only an absolute lack of mercy would allow one to avoid this loss of power and honor.' A nation that feels itself on the verge of destruction will not hesitate to destroy another group it holds responsible for its situation.

This overview of the CUP’s rationale is not intended to justify the genocide, but rather to highlight an important difference in the historical understanding of the logic of the crime by the general population of the perpetrator nation. I posit that it is more difficult for a nation to feel contrition for a crime that was driven by nationalist logic, particularly in the presence of an existential threat to the nation such as the Ottomans faced in WWI, and particularly if the logic behind the act continues to resonate with the public. Crimes based on racism are easier to condemn at a national level, particularly when in retrospect the victim race posed no clear threat to the perpetrating nation. This distinction will become important when we turn to the question of why some national apologies are more forthcoming than others.

Expressed in terms of Prospect Theory, Germany at the time of the Holocaust was acting from a position of gain, whereas Turkey was acting from a position of loss. The CUP felt that they could not accept the risk of further losses posed by the continued existence of an untrustworthy Armenian population within its borders during wartime. Japan at the time of its annexation of Korea appeared to be acting from a position of gain, having just won the Russo-Japanese War; but its situation was considerably more precarious in light of its fears of Western imperialism. Japan was unwilling to accept the threat posed by the continued existence of a weak Korean nation on its doorstep, for the reasons cited above.

It could be that an answer to our reconciliation puzzle lies further back in the historical and cultural roots of the victim and perpetrator nations, long before the historic crimes in question took place. Armenia and Korea share startling similarities throughout their early, pre-modern, modern and post-modern histories. There are far more basic cultural similarities between these two nations than can be found between either of them and any given Western European nation. First of all, both share semi-apocryphal tales of ancient greatness and unity, concentrated on legends of sacred mountains that birthed the nations: Mt. Ararat and Mt.

31 Dr. Bahaettin Sakir, quoted in Akçam, p 129.
32 Akçam 2006, p 126.
Baekdu, respectively. Not coincidentally, the fact that these summits are at present largely inaccessible to the people of their respective nations, due to political developments outside of their control, is the source of much bitterness in both nations today. Korean and Armenian cultures also share a traditional reverence for scholars and book learning; both use alphabets invented relatively recently by historical scholar-king figures (St Mesrop Mashtots and King Kojong) for the purpose of disseminating religion to the masses. Both cultures are characterized by extreme social obligations to clan and family, sharp "insider" vs "outsider" distinctions, and a deep commitment to religion. In both nations, their religious devotion is deepened by a self-perception as nations that adopted foreign religions in antiquity and maintained the "purity" of their ancient forms, even as those religions were warped and reinterpreted by their origin states (Armenian Christianity preserving early Christian rituals, Korean Confucianism/Buddhism preserving the religious culture of Ming China). As an illustration of the eerie cultural similarities, the following passage from Miller could be copied verbatim as a description of Korean traditional family life:

Armenians often lived in extended family units that included grandparents as well as aunts and uncles. The family was patriarchal in structure, with the bride living with her husband's family. Great respect was given to older members of the family clan… The eldest man played an important role in representing the family in social and political interactions; the eldest woman, however, ruled domestic matters. Marriage within the family clan was forbidden up to the fourth degree (second cousins could not marry). Family clans aggressively protected each other against insult or threat and banded together to defend themselves when challenged.33

Historical similarities abound as well. Both Korea and Armenia existed for centuries within hierarchical regional orders (Ottoman Empire, Sinocentric order) that challenged the Westphalian notion of equal units of sovereign nation-states.34 Both nations suffered repeated invasions and domination by perceived "inferior" or "barbaric" neighbors (Armenia by the Persians, Russians, and Ottomans; Korea by the Mongols, Manchurians, and Japanese). Both occupations35 in the early 20th Century were flavored by religious differences with the perpetrator nations; although this point is much stronger in the Armenian case, Koreans were obligated to conform to the Japanese state religion of Shinto and pressured to reject some of the more rigid Confucian norms, and later Catholic and Protestant schools and organizations formed the heart of the Korean resistance movement.

The “perpetrator nations” of the Japanese and the Ottomans also share significant structural commonalities. Both were non-Western empires that viewed Western encroachment with anxiety but at the same time sought to imitate Western patterns of imperialism and expansion. Kamiya Fuji has written that since colonial rule from the

33 Miller, p55.
34 Wohlforth et al 2006.
35 The occupation experience under the Ottomans cannot be properly termed an “occupation,” I need to think of a better term to incorporate both the Korean and Armenian experiences.
nineteenth to the early twentieth century was "widely recognized as a merit to be pursued by advanced countries," it was wrong to judge this period by contemporary standards. Shogo Suzuki clarifies, “Judging from the dates when Japan embarked on its expansionary policies, there is a strong correlation between the rise of Japanese imperialism and Japan’s entry into European International Society.” Furthermore, “it was acknowledged that those who were deemed to have more ‘Westernized’ political systems – or ‘civilized’ ones – were more likely to be afforded the protection of international law.” Suzuki concludes that Japan’s expansionary policies were a reflection both of its anxiety about Western encroachment and its desire to gain entry into the Western “club” of great imperial powers.

The Ottoman authorities, too, shared a love-hate attitude toward the West and its norms that deepened as their empire shrank. “Until the nineteenth century, the Ottomans had traditionally disdained the West, to the point where ‘learning a foreign (i.e. European) language was something of a humiliation… over time, the Ottomans’ sense of elevation turned painfully into inferiority.” The Armenians were perceived as having adapted more smoothly and rapidly to modernization than their Turkish neighbors, in part because of their religious and cultural links to Europe and Ottoman cultural institutions that put them in an advantageous position to pursue commerce, a key entry point to modernization.

In the case of the Armenian Genocide, animosity was created by unequal patterns of modernization between the Armenians and their Turkish and Kurdish neighbors. For a variety of reasons – including the influence of Protestant missionaries, the education of Armenians in Europe and America, and the multilingual ability of many Armenians – Armenians had much greater social mobility than did their Muslim neighbors… The Young Turk leadership mobilized the Turks and Kurds by preying on their feelings of threat and jealousy toward Armenian modernization.

Here the Armenian case would appear to diverge with that of Korea. At the start of the Japanese annexation, Korea was clearly the less modernized side of the Korea-Japan dyad. They had actively resisted opening and modernization for 50 years after Perry’s Black Ships sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1854, kick-starting the Meiji reforms. As described earlier, it was precisely Korea’s political and military weakness in the face of Western encroachment that caused Japan to feel threatened. I argue that this apparent difference obscures a more important similarity – both the Ottoman-Armenian and the Japanese-Korean dyads at the turn of the century were strongly characterized by inter-ethnic tension resulting directly from uneven levels of modernization and uneven adaptation of Western norms, sentiments that deepened as the Western powers extended their empires throughout the world in the 19th Century and pervaded the consciousness of the dominant powers of the non-West. The fact

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36 Kamiya Fuji (神谷不二) editorial, Asahi Shimbun, September 21, 2002, evening edition (Quoted by Wada Haruki 2004)
39 Akçam, p. 124.
40 Miller, p. 48.
that the uneven modernization moved in the opposite direction in the Korea-Japan dyad does not negate the underlying driving emotions – anxiety about modernization and fear of the nation-devouring West. In light of the enormity of the crimes committed in the Armenian genocide and the Japanese annexation of Korea, it is easy to dismiss these anxieties as irrational and as weak justification for the acts that followed. At the time, however, the future was much more difficult to see. It may be that there is a relationship between the presence of an existential threat to the nation and its ability to apologize; i.e., a nation is less willing to apologize for an atrocity, however distant in the past, if it perceives it would no longer exist as a nation today had said act not been committed. By this logic, Germany was able to condemn its war criminals with relative ease because their acts had not been necessary to preserve the continued existence of the nation – had in fact put the nation in tremendous peril.

While Korea’s annexation was no genocide in any sense of the word, it shared with Armenia the experience of near-total destruction of the national language and culture, due to Japan’s assimilationist colonial policies. Armenia, too, suffered an existential threat to its culture. Don Miller writes, "An equally tragic loss is what they called the 'white genocide': the loss of Armenian culture and language resulting from assimilation into a host culture. Hence, a homeland is essential as both the wellspring and the reservoir of a culture." Miller’s oral histories recount many stories of Armenian orphanages and other institutions which struggled to re-establish Armenian identity among orphans who had forgotten their own language and culture after years of living with adoptive Turkish or Kurdish families.

As their extinction approached, both the Korean and Armenian nations appeared to be victimized by great-power interest trading: the Armenians were betrayed by the European powers in the San Stefano Treaty and the Treaty of Berlin, while the Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905 gave Japan free reign in North Korea in exchange for US acquisition of the Philippines. Both cases also presented early challenges to nascent global governance institutions – the 1887 Hunchak delegation to Geneva and the 1905 Korean delegation to Geneva, both of whose appeals fell on deaf ears. The over-riding impression from this is that, in the young and uncertain world order which was shaping itself in the early 20th century, the great powers of the West had little care for the fates of weaker non-Western nations at the hands of their stronger neighbors. Neither France under German occupation nor the Jews under Nazi persecution can claim to share this historical consciousness, as these nations were firmly located within the dominant West themselves, both culturally and geographically.

6. The Shadow of the Past in Today’s Armenia and Korea

Given the above history, it should be unsurprising that Armenia and Korea find echoes of each other in their modern inter-state relationships. The first, most striking similarity is the consciousness of a patriotic duty to remember and avenge the past. This is demonstrated by the tendency of publics in both nations, even in the modern era, to glorify acts of terrorism and assassination against members of the former oppressor ethnic group. “To curse at Muslims and especially at Turks, to talk much about the Armenian Genocide, and to remind others constantly of the brutality of the Turks are all regarded as expressions of patriotism. Among the leaders of the past we consider those who curse Turks and killed Turks to be the
most patriotic. Our most recent heroes are those who assassinated Turkish diplomats in European cities.”42 This quote resonates with any observer of modern Korean historical attitudes, particularly regarding the recent near-beatification of Ahn Jung-geun, the Korean independence activist whose principle achievement was assassinating the former governor-general of Korea Ito Hirobuni in 1910. Although his act accomplished little for the independence movement and only prompted the Japanese authorities to increase levels of repression, Ahn has today become a patron saint of the modern Korean nation, having been featured as the hero of several recent historical movies and even a musical.

Another phenomenon observable in both Armenia and South Korea today is the continued accusation and prosecution of those labeled “collaborators,” even extending to civil servants, police, schoolteachers, businessman and any who appeared to prosper under the perpetrator regime, and the public naming and shaming of their descendants many decades after the events in question. Notably, South Korea recently strengthened its legal definition of “collaboration” to include: “Any act of participating in the Assembly of Japanese Empire as a member of the noble class or member of Japanese Assembly”; “any act of participating as vice chairman, advisor or representative to the Senate of the Choson Government-General; any act of cooperation with the invasion war (WW2) as an officer above lieutenant of the Japanese imperial forces”; and “Any act to operate military supply manufacturing to help the warfare of the Japanese imperialists or donate above a certain amount of money and goods determined under the Presidential Decree.”43 The GA also passed a new law in 2005 enabling the ROK to nationalize land and properties owned by Korean collaborators and their descendants. Confiscated properties are to be redistributed to other Koreans, especially those who fought against the Japanese colonial rule and their descendents.44

Another key similarity between modern Korea and Armenia is the existence of far-flung diasporas that were created in large part by the nation-destroying policies of the perpetrator nation. Diasporas have a multiplying effect on historic remembrance of atrocities, as diaspora members most strongly inherit their ancestors’ memories of the state of affairs at the time of their expulsion or emigration, and tend to lack awareness of any changes in the character of the former oppressing nation over time.45 While counterfactuals are always tricky, a compelling argument can be made that, had the Nazi occupation of France lasted long enough to produce a sizeable diaspora of French who settled abroad and did not return, the memories of oppression and humiliation under Nazi rule might have remained fresher or even grown more exaggerated over time.

Benedict Anderson theorizes that ethno-national diasporas can be transmitters of “long-distance nationalism” (LDN).46 Sheffer elaborates on this mechanism:

In addition to the general information about host countries, homelands, and other international actors, these networks usually carry information and resources that

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45 Sheffer 2003.
are elements of intricate and usually innocuous aesthetic, cultural, political, economic, and scientific trans-state exchanges, especially between homelands and their diasporas. On the other hand, it seems that as a result of the increasing self-assertiveness and self-empowerment occurring within various diasporas, sometimes because of their unfavorable treatment at the hands of host countries and homelands, such trans-state networks have been known to transmit less innocent messages.47

Another problem with diasporas is that, since they tend to be geographically removed from the original scene of the crime, they have little opportunity for interaction with members of the former oppressing nation and are unable to compare narratives of the past. The cause of this is easy to see if one considers that both the Japanese occupation of Korea and the Armenian deportations at the hands of the Turks featured both acts of extraordinary cruelty and extraordinary kindness. Naturally descendents of the victim nation tend to hear more about the cruelty from the generation that lived through the event; descendents of the victimizing nation, however, are more likely to hear about the acts of kindness. In the perpetrator nation, those who committed or witnessed atrocities are likely to remain silent, those who committed or witnessed acts of kindness are likely to speak out. Among members of the victim nation, this phenomenon is reversed. When the two groups are geographically separated and unable to share stories, this creates a gap in the popular consensus of what really happened, and this gap is only exacerbated as time passes and the generation that directly experienced the events dies out. The result is a mutual perception, on both sides, that the other is deliberately lying and warping history for its own benefit.48

The diaspora effect may be measured by comparing the Korean case with other cases under Japanese rule (China, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines) and assessing the relative levels of enmity, keeping a particularly discriminating eye on how these levels have evolved over time. While each of these nations has its own global diaspora, their relative sizes and the timing of the major migration vary, and none were as directly linked to effects of the Japanese occupation as the Korean diaspora. It may be possible on this basis to develop a theory of how the timing of migration and the size of diaspora affect historical consciousness and reconciliation processes.

Perhaps because the Armenian and Korean diasporas were created under conditions of existential threat to their respective home nations and cultural assimilationist policies, a prominent characteristic of the diaspora-homeland relationship in both cases is an emphasis on education outreach programs to help diaspora members recover lost language and cultural heritage. The Korean government has directed particular energy towards such programs for ethnic Koreans now residing in Central Asia, who were removed there from Manchuria by Stalin during WWII. Armenian orphanages and other institutions engaged in extensive efforts, particularly in the immediate post-war period, to restore a their language and culture among orphaned Armenian children who had been raised by Turkish or Kurdish families.

47 Ibid, p.27.
Despite the conventional wisdom that “time heals all wounds,” the bitterness of the Armenians and Koreans toward their past oppressors seems to have retained its salience over time. Indeed, the enmity seems to have grown in recent decades through a combination of factors: the end of the Cold War, buried outrages to come freshly into the light, the aging and dying off of the surviving generation, the growing resource competition increasing longing for lost territories. Korea-Japan relations worsened with the 1991 revelation of Korean “comfort women” forced into prostitution by the Japanese military. The approach of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide and the publication of several recent memoirs have renewed calls for a Turkish apology. Territorial disputes plague both dyads – the Dokdo/Takeshima dispute and the Nagorno-Karabagh dispute – and are associated by the victim nations with a lack of remorse on the part of the perpetrator. As the generations that directly experienced the events pass away, there is increased pressure from a legal standpoint to reach settlements. Each of these factors needs to be examined in greater detail.

The shadow of the past leeches into modern inter-state relations for both Koreas and Armenia, particularly affecting their relations with the former perpetrator nations through two distinctive phenomena: accusations of plans for renewed aggression, and demands for past apologies.

The Armenian genocide and the Japanese occupation occupy prominent places in the national psyche of the two nations, creating what Stuart Kaufman calls “an ethos as a martyr nation.” This mentality is most clearly displayed any time the interests and objectives of the former perpetrator nation appear to infringe upon those of the former victim nation; these infringements, however unconnected to the past, are characterized using the language of genocide, occupation, and invasion. Thus Japanese calls for a modern Northeast Asian economic or security community are roundly attacked on the Korean side and held up as evidence of new Japanese designs upon the continent. On the Armenian side, “Armenian fears were particularly acute because both ethnic domination and minority status were associated in their minds with genocide: the ‘era of massacres’ had shown that even brief domination by Turkish extremists could lead to mass slaughter… Thus they referred to the removal of historic Armenian monuments in Karabagh as ‘cultural genocide’ …. and the relative decline of the Armenian population in Karabagh was called ‘white genocide.’ Alarmists like Zori Balayan tied these fears of genocide to an alleged larger Azerbaijani plan to revive the pan-Turkic movement which would, in the end, annihilate Armenia entirely.”

The Korean and Armenian cases also share the phenomenon of a multi-decade, drawn-out struggle to extract acknowledgement and apologies from the former perpetrator nations for their various crimes, a struggle in which deeper and more fundamental issues often appear to be obscured by seemingly shallow struggles over the semantics and staging of the apologies. If it were simply a matter of the reconciliation process depending upon an apology, we might expect the Korea-Japan dyad to be closer to the level of France-Germany than that of Armenia-Turkey, since Japan has offered official apologies and reparations while Turkey has not. Yet in fact Korea seems no closer to reconciling with Japan today than Armenia does.

49 Kaufman, P. 53
50 Ibid, p. 55.
with Turkey. Thus we must seek an explanation of why the German apology was accepted and the Japanese one was not.

Jennifer Lind theorizes that apologies in such circumstances can actually be harmful to future relations. This is because “A country’s remembrance is somewhat unapologetic if minimal government efforts to atone are met with uninterest or skepticism in society... Still further toward the unapologetic end of the spectrum is a society that responds to government contrition with denunciations and outright denials.”51 The most famous Japanese apology was the statement issued by Prime Minister Murayama on the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII:

During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.52

The Murayama statement was an important step, but it provoked a backlash movement among right-wing politicians in Japan, who pushed to revise textbooks and soften the language of apology. Thus, the rejection of the Murayama apology by some prominent right-wing Japanese politicians was played up in the Korean press as a sign that Japan had not truly atoned for its past, producing the opposite of the effect intended by the original apology.

Furthermore, Japan’s official apologies have tended to be general and have avoided mention of specific atrocities, eliciting complaints of disingenuity and demands for more detailed and sincere apologies. The Murayama statement was a general apology toward all nations occupied during Japan’s expansionary period, and it avoided mention of some of the most controversial issues among Koreans, specifically the “Comfort Women” issue, the forcible conscripting of Korean fighters, and forced labor. In more recent years right-wing politicians have made various remarks implying that these phenomena were exaggerated, and the extensive play given to such statements in the Korean press has given the impression that the whole of Japan is in denial and has not reflected adequately for its crimes. Exacerbating this impression is the fact that the Japanese government still keeps classified much of the documentation of this period.

Even taking these factors into account, however, it is hard to understand Korean resistance to reconciliation with the Japanese without adding other psychological considerations. One such factor, shared by both Korean and Armenian publics, is the perception that the perpetrator nation has not done sufficient "penance" for the past (i.e., it

51 Lind, p. 17-18.
has not suffered enough in post-War period). Furthermore, there is the impression in the victim nations that the specific individuals who profited from the oppressive policies have not been punished sufficiently. Although the topmost leaders in the Japanese government and military were subjected to war crimes tribunals and many were classified as war criminals, the tribunals were limited in scope to the period of the Pacific War against the US and did not consider Korea’s specific grievances from the broader 35-year colonial period. Many prominent Japanese political leaders and administrators of the colonial period retained high-level positions in the post-war Japanese government, and their children and grandchildren have had a continuous presence in Japanese politics up to the present day. In post-WWI Turkey, the CUP governing coalition was replaced by the Turkish Nationalist Movement, which condemned and disavowed the atrocities, yet many former mid-level CUP members re-emerged in prominent roles in the new nationalist movement, including Mustafa Kemal and Celal Bayar.\textsuperscript{53} In post-WWII Germany, by contrast, all Nazi Party leaders and prominent functionaries either fled the country or were taken to trial, and found it nearly impossible return to government subsequently. So thorough was the political stigmatizing of all members of the Nazi Party hierarchy that, 60 years after end of WWII, Cardinal Ratzinger found himself ridiculed in the global media as a “Nazi Pope” for having been briefly a member of the Hitler Youth in his childhood.

Another important distinction to consider is the role of Cold War politics in the reconciliation process for these cases. This facet particularly affected the timing and circumstances of the apologies, and we might theorize about various ways that this may have affected reconciliation. Part of the temptation to compare France-Germany and Korea-Japan cases is that both dyads contain famous Cold War political divisions. The difference is that in Europe it was the former perpetrator state, Germany, that was divided at the time of the apology, whereas in East Asia the victim state was and remains divided. The division took a toll on political liberalization and democratization in the divided countries, associated with the tense bipolar geopolitical structure of the Cold War and US-Soviet rivalry. As a result, the communist halves of both Korea and Germany remained diplomatically isolated from Japan and France, respectively, for many decades after the events deserving of apology occurred. It fell on the other half to issue/receive apologies and compensation; yet both South Korea and West Germany remained politically compromised by quasi-autocratic regimes until the end of the Cold War brought liberalization. This has given modern-day South Korea cause to claim that the early processes of political reconciliation with Japan, and particularly the terms of the 1965 normalization treaty, were compromised because they occurred under the Park Chung-hee military dictatorship. One might expect the German apology to be even further compromised, since it was the perpetrator state in that apology dyad, and yet this appears not to be the case. At least from this small sample, it appears that apologies stand a better chance of facilitating long-term reconciliation when the apologizer is the one politically compromised by autocracy and division, than the other way around.

7. Some problems with the Armenia : Turkey :: Korea : Japan analogy

\textsuperscript{53} Akcam, p. 304.
I would be remiss if I neglected to point out the several ways in which my chosen analogy dyads are also imperfect. First, in terms of historical background, the Ottoman Empire plays a dual historical role for the Armenians, as protective tribute-collecting central hegemon and later oppressor; in the Korean case these roles are split between China and Japan, respectively. Relative to Armenia, Korea was ruled by Japanese only for relatively brief period in the modern era (1910-1945), although Korea was a subordinate member of a larger regional hegemonic system (the Sinocentric order) for much longer. Since the Armenian nation existed in a state of relative complicity and acceptance with the Ottoman Empire until the wars of the 19th Century, the overall comparison still seems relevant.

Second, Korea willfully chose isolation from the West and steadfastly resisted modernization pressures until the late 1800s. Armenia, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, had great interaction with peoples from near and far throughout its history. As has already been mentioned, Armenia and Korea had opposite patterns of modernization/westernization relative to Turkey and Japan, respectively, but since the underlying factor (anxiety about Western encroachment) remains the same, I do not see this as a deal-breaking problem.

Third, in terms of motivating factors, it was the Ottoman’s bitterness over their lost eastern territories (Greece, Rumelia) that drove them to look west, past Armenia to Azerbaijan, hoping to rebuild glorious empire by seizing Russian-held Turkic lands. Japan had not lost any territory at the time of Korean annexation, and in fact was expanding from a position of gain. Where the Turks sought to rationalize expansion based on ethnic and religious ties with Turkic and Muslim populations to the east and south, Japan’s expansion had no such irredentist pretensions (although they did make use of a rhetoric of “protecting the Eastern people from the West”).

Fourth, we must consider the role of unification myths in both dyads. Korea remains divided, meaning that people on both halves of the peninsula are cut off from their sacred lands, but this division is only indirectly a product of Japan’s domination. Armenians lost the main part of their ancestral homeland and particularly their sacred Mount Ararat as a direct result of the Turkish genocide. While the motifs of lost land and lost monuments play prominent roles in the collective psyche of both nations today, we must question whether the comparison between divided Korea and the contested region of Nagorno-Karabakh is fair. Intriguingly, the only remaining territorial loss that the Koreans can directly place on Japan’s doorstep is the contested islets of Dokdo/Takeshima, a set of uninhabitable and insignificant rocky outcroppings in the Sea of Japan. It is worth speculating as to whether such territorial conflicts fill some innate need for the victim nation – as concrete objects to fight over and win, and thus construct a victory narrative in order to overcome the “martyr nation” ethos.

Fifth, there is the problem of where to fit Azerbaijan, which has no analogous place in the Japan-Korea analogy. Azerbaijan is ethnically linked to Turkey and has its own history of atrocities committed against the Armenians, but it did not have any role in the genocide of 1915. It appears that Armenians have grafted much of their ill-will against the Turks onto the Azeris, putting them in a position of being surrounded on all sides by the despised other. By contrast, Koreans have their enmity steadily focused to the east, and do not associate Japanese ethnicity or character onto any other nation in the region.
Sixth, it cannot be overlooked that modern South Korea is much more economically developed, secure, and politically liberalized than modern Armenia. While South Korea has become a modest economic power in the world, maintained significant defensive capabilities and a secure place under the US nuclear umbrella, become a vibrant, pluralistic democracy, and made tremendous strides toward stamping out corruption, Armenia remains trapped in a difficult regional situation and has largely been overlooked by the great powers. We must also acknowledge that the Korea-Japan relationship, despite its ongoing tensions, has transformed into more of a productive economic rivalry. We must ask, could this ever happen with Armenia/Azerbaijan? And if not, why? Ultimately, Japan never tried to commit genocide in Korea. Is this the key difference? If genocide is the ultimate terminator of any prospect for transforming future relations, then how do we explain the benign relations between modern Germany and Israel? Several of the hypotheses presented in the next section address this issue.

8. Tentative Conclusions and Possibilities for Future Inquiry

Ultimately, it may prove that the Turkey-Armenia and Japan-South Korea dyads are too different, both in the nature and causes of their original sin and in the political circumstances of their modern-day states, to stand up to comparison. However, the above analysis suggests that there are some intriguing similarities. Both historic crimes appear to have originated out of defensive nationalist calculations inspired by very real existential threats to the perpetrator nations. Intriguingly, both of these threats where characterized by anxiety about Western encroachment and confusion surrounding the imminent dissolution of centuries-old, non-Westphalian political orders. It is difficult for their citizens to imagine an alternative history in which their nations would still exist today had the crimes in question not been committed. This makes it difficult to uncategorically condemn as war criminals the individuals that made those events happen. Such condemnation feels ungrateful and unpatriotic toward individuals who arguably “saved” the nation at its greatest time of crisis. Strong underlying accusations of double-standards and racism in the application of post-conflict justice still resonate with the perpetrator nations of Japan and Turkey when they remember how their national leaders were prosecuted and punished in the wake of the events. Accusations of racism and moral relativism continue to inspire much of the resistance to full apology-making today.

On the victim side, both victims share a long history of repeated domination by other, stronger neighbors – some occupations more symbiotic than others – and both lack a clear “victory story” to celebrate their triumph over the perpetrators. This leaves an uneasy identity of the victim nations as “shrimps among whales,” always the conquered and never the conqueror, living or dying at the whims of the great powers. The precise causal connection between this victim mentality and the outcome of negative reconciliation progress is unclear, but its strong presence in both failure cases begs for further exploration. Both Armenia and Korea also have large global diasporas that were created as a direct consequence of the historic crimes in question, and both diasporic groups are highly active in the modern politics of their motherland states today. Again, this is a strong connection in search of an explanation.
Based on the above comparison of our principle cases, we can propose a few preliminary hypotheses about background factors affecting the pace and degree of reconciliation between victim and perpetrator nations.

H1: If the historic crime was driven by nationalism rather than blood racism, the perpetrator nation will be more reluctant to apologize even generations later.

H1-a: If the perpetrator nation perceives that the action was necessary in order to continue to exist as a nation in the future, the apology will be even more difficult.

H2: If the historic crime is characterized by acts of cruelty and kindness, it will be more difficult for both sides to agree on what happened, and thus reconciliation will be more difficult (the perpetrator refuses to show full contrition, while the victim perceives that its apologies lack sincerity).

H2-b: If groups are separated geographically or politically and unable to share stories, disagreements about what happened is likely to widen over time. For instance, disagreements will be especially pronounced in cases where the original crime produced mass emigration resulting in a global diaspora.

H3: If the victim state has never committed a similar crime itself, reconciliation will be more difficult. For instance, if the victim of colonization has itself possessed colonies in the past, it is less likely to quibble about the specific wording of the apology from its colonizer, for fear that its own colonial actions will be put under scrutiny.

H4: If the victim state did not play a strong role in gaining its own independence, reconciliation will be more difficult.

All of these hypotheses are weakly developed at present based on our limited number of comparison dyads. It will be necessary to develop a more complete picture of the causal processes at work behind these hypotheses, and to assess whether or not they hold in other dyads. The alternative dyads suggested in section 4 above provide a good place to start.

The concept of shaming analogies also requires further investigation. The phenomenon is clearly an integral part of the contemporary movement to promote state apologies, as seen in legislation and diplomatic statements issued at the state-to-state and global governance levels. However, more investigation is required to determine whether these shaming analogies are effective in producing their intended results on the global stage. It would also be useful to investigate which states have the greater tendency to use such shaming analogies, and against whom. Finally, if the shaming analogy is indeed an effective diplomatic tool, we must consider whether this may affect the decision of some countries to pre-emptively apologize, in order to procure a positive example and participate in the global shaming of others. All of these questions suggest provocative avenues for further development of the shaming analogy concept.
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