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Author(s): Barak Kushner

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BARAK KUSHNER

Nationality and Nostalgia:
The Manipulation of Memory in Japan, Taiwan,
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NATIONALISM, HISTORY, AND politics in East Asia are inextricably intertwined. But 2008 may mark a watershed. In March, Taiwan will hold a presidential election in which the Nationalist Party (KMT) and the president, Chen Shui Bian's, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) will woo public opinion by playing up their opposing Chinese and Taiwanese identities. As China will host the Olympic Games at Beijing for two weeks in August, analysts are unsure whether it would risk taking action against Taiwan, even if, after the election, Taiwan declared its independence. Meanwhile, the prime minister of Japan from September 2006 to September 2007, Abe Shinzō, promoted a national debate over the constitutional amendments required to remilitarize Japan, as it seeks to become what the government calls a 'normal country'. The way in which each of the three states remembers its past, especially the history of the Second World War, will be a sure way to predict its future political alignment.

On 4 April 2005, a member of the Taiwanese parliament, Su Chin-chiang, and members of his Taiwan Solidarity Union Party – a small yet prominent group working to promote Taiwan's independence – made an unusual pilgrimage to Tokyo to pay their respects at Yasukuni to the fallen in the Second World War. Yasukuni is a national Shinto shrine notorious for enshrining Japanese war criminals. Aware of the contentious role that Taiwan's history as a Japanese colony plays in the political landscape of East Asia, Su must have predicted the response that his visit would provoke.¹ Su would have banked on the controversial nature of Yasukuni but, more importantly, on the media exposure it would garner for his Taiwanese independence-minded political party.

¹ *Taipei Times*, 5 April 2005; Yu R., 'Chūnichi ryōkoku mondai ni okeru shomondai no teiryū', *Chīki sōken kiyō*, 4kan, 1gō (2006), p. 42. Chinese and Japanese names, in most instances here, are written with the last name first.

The predictable responses came immediately. In Taiwan, the chairman of the People First Party, James Soong, condemned Su's action for having 'degraded Taiwanese national self-respect'.¹ In Beijing, the official Chinese news agency, Xinhua, relied on extensively repeating KMT spokesman Chang Rong-kung's comments, that 'if Su Chin-chiang is visiting the shrine as the leader of a Taiwanese political party, he is clearly demonstrating how Taiwanese "independence party affiliates" worship Japanese militarism.'² Websites and blogs throughout China, which expressed similar criticism, labelled Su a 'traitor'.³ In Japan, where official and unofficial visits to the shrine by high-ranking Japanese politicians have offended other East Asian nations, the ministry of foreign affairs, in a bid to avoid a diplomatic incident, released a statement saying that a visit to Yasukuni by a private Taiwanese citizen was of no official concern.⁴ However, one Japanese website, 'Truth of Asia', a link from the Association for the Advancement of Unbiased View of History, a Japanese revisionist history collective, welcomed Su's visit on the grounds that Taiwanese independence was a fitting legacy of beneficent Japanese colonialism.⁵

Su's obliquely political action, which went almost unnoticed in the Western press, illustrates the continuing volatility of the struggle over the historical memory of Japanese imperialism, and how such memories continue to divide three countries more than half a century after the demise of the Japanese empire. Su's visit to Yasukuni inflamed the historical debate over the legacy of Japanese colonialism and how it should be remembered.

This article examines the ownership of this historical memory and how the memory is used in Japan, China, and Taiwan to influence debates about national character and thus domestic politics; how disparate political parties in the three countries conceive of themselves. The pendulum of change in which the Japanese, Taiwanese, and Chinese evaluate both the colonial era and the Second World War in Asia (1931-45) shapes contemporary bilateral and trilateral relations. The struggle over which of the three may claim that its version of Japan's colonial and imperial history is 'correct' is the issue on which East Asian international relations now turn.

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1 http://j.peopledaily.com.cn/2005/04/06/jp20050406_49023.html (accessed 30 July 2007).

2 http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/taiwan/2005-04/04/content_2786247.htm (accessed 1 Aug. 2007).

3 Two representative sites are http://www.tianyablog.com/blogger/post_show.asp?BlogID=106805&PostID=1465811 (accessed 1 Aug. 2007); and the one that posted a picture of Su with the words written over it, 'I am a traitor', <http://www.carav.com/bbs/dispbbs.asp?Boardid=43&ID=27528> (accessed 1 Aug. 2007).

4 <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/2005/4/0408.html#13> (accessed 2 Aug. 2007).

5 http://blog.livedoor.jp/lancer1/archives/cat_442967.html (accessed 2 Aug. 2007).

FOR THE JAPANESE government and groups interested in teaching history, historical memory means resolving whether the war was just, and liberated Asia, or was an act of aggression that merely substituted one colonial overlord for another. In Taiwan, the struggle over memory pits those, such as the leader of the KMT, Ma Ying-jeou, who wish to align more closely with the mainland in a bid to reunify China, against those who support independence, like the former president, Lee Deng-hui, who uses Taiwan's colonial history as a means of denying Taiwan a Chinese identity. For China's Communist Party, the struggle centres on the extent to which Japan, in recognition of its historical errors, is willing to remember them 'correctly' and atone for its actions. Because the issue turns on Japan, the article first examines the tension between the official and unofficial Japanese media. Second, it examines the debate over identity in Taiwan – are we Chinese or Taiwanese? – in response to the revision of the history curriculum and the realignment of its international political relations. Third, it compares the debates in China's popular media with statements by the government.

The struggle to control East Asia's historical memory is important for three reasons. First, the discussions about the scope of the war demonstrate that contemporary politics in East Asia cannot be divorced from its legacy. Men such as Japan's former prime minister, Koizumi Junichirō, and China's state councillor, Tang Jiaxuan, state that agreement over historical memory is crucial to stable international relations in East Asia. China, which sees its view as the correct one, expects Japan to adopt it: Tang stated in March 2007 that 'the core problem in Sino-Japan relations is the history problem and the Taiwan issue.'¹ Japanese officials, however, prefer to try to bypass the problem in the hope that the colonial legacy will cease to dominate bilateral relations. Koizumi's office, in a white paper issued in November 2002 on Japan's foreign relations in the twenty-first century, stated that, 'within Sino-Japan relations, there are several issues such as the history problem and Japan-Taiwan relations that have risen as problems. While both countries are learning lessons from history, it is time to look towards the future and escape from the bondage of history.'² Japanese and Chinese politicians vie for control of the interpretation of colonial history because they view it not only as a foundation on which to build political support domestically, but also as a lever for use in relations with bilateral partners.

The second reason is that the contested memory of the colonial era

¹ *Nishi Nihon shimbun*, morning edition, 30 April 2007.

² *21 seiki Nihon gaikō no kihon senryaku aratana jidai, aratana bijon, aratana gaikō*, 28 Nov. 2002; <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/kakugikettei/2002/1128f.html> (accessed 2 Aug. 2007).

explains the relationship between otherwise unlikely bedfellows, the Japanese political right and the Taiwanese political left. For the Japanese right wing, most vocal in the form of Fujioka Nobukatsu's Association for the Advancement of Unbiased View of History and the comic books (*manga*) of Kobayashi Yoshinori, imperial Japan was a liberator. Promoters of Taiwan's independence, including Lee and the business tycoon Xu Wenlong, welcome Japan's nationalist rhetoric because they, too, deny Taiwan's Chinese identity. They emphasize Taiwan's colonial inheritance to promote the idea that it does not belong to China, that it does not share a history with China, and that it should be considered a sovereign state.

The third reason is that the manner in which the struggle is waged reflects the fact that Japan's aggression during the Second World War, and its hesitance to accept responsibility for actions such as the 'rape' of Nanjing in 1937, the use of 'comfort' women, and economic exploitation, all contested subjects, remain at the forefront of its relationships with its Asian neighbours.¹ Japan's colonialism and its bid to draw Asia within the 'Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere' is also contested: supporters claim that the bloc was designed to create an Asia for Asians, while detractors retort that the rhetoric was a smokescreen and that Japan exploited the region for its own ends.

The struggle over historical memory in Japan, Taiwan, and China is waged in both official and unofficial histories.² The official memory is manifested in approved school texts and state-run museums; the unofficial includes the scholarly and popular works published by commercial houses. Even though the two often agree on their interpretation of Japan's colonial legacy, international pressure has yet to persuade the Japanese government to accept responsibility for the war,³ owing partly to Japan's post-war transformation by the United States into a bulwark against the spread of Communism; to the unwarranted, in some Japanese eyes, decisions of the Tokyo war-crimes trials; and to the censorship during the occupation.⁴ One result of this failure, combined with China's relentless focus on the history issue, is to persuade Japanese from across the political

1 For letters from students who complain about their history books, see www.tsukurukai.com/17_office_corner/office_letter_read.html (accessed 22 March 2004).

2 See R. Fish, 'From the Manchurian Incident to Nagasaki in Twenty Pages: The Pacific War as Seen in Postwar Japanese High School History Textbooks', in *New and Old Voices on Japanese Education: The Passing of the Torch*, ed. E. Beauchamp (Armonk, 2008); J. Orr, *The Victim as Hero* (Manoa, 2001), pp. 71-105, notes that, since the 1990s, Japanese textbooks have measurably improved. For similar developments in China, see R. Mitter, 'Old Ghosts, New Memories: China's Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics', *Journal of Contemporary History*, xxxviii (2003), 117-31.

3 T. Morris-Suzuki and P. Rimmer, 'Virtual Memories: Japanese History Debates in Manga and Cyberspace', *Asian Studies Review*, xxvi (2002), 147-64.

4 Awaya K., *Tōkyō saibanron* (Tokyo, 1989).

spectrum to perceive of themselves as browbeaten victims singled out unfairly for their historical opinions.¹ Both Japanese officials and many Japanese citizens, who claim that China only ‘uses’ history to gain political advantage, have hardened their resistance to accepting as correct the Chinese view of history.

The rules governing the struggle over East Asia’s historical memory have changed since the early 1990s. Until then, Japanese scholars and textbook committees wrote their colonial histories without interference from an economically impoverished and politically mismanaged China, or a Taiwan aspiring to regain control over the Chinese mainland. The fact that few other Asian countries protested at the time, however, did not signify acceptance. Owing to the shift in the economic balance in East Asia, Japanese historians, whether on the right or left, are no longer able to publish without attracting outside attention; their works, translated immediately into Chinese, are distributed throughout the region. The Internet also enables Chinese to make their responses and counter-offensives available immediately to an international public, while Taiwanese actions, like Su’s visit to Yasukuni, carve out a space between the two.²

The controversy over the symbolism of Yasukuni, although a key irritant in China’s struggle with Japan over historical memory, is not a recent development. The Meiji government, which erected the shrine in 1869 to house the spirits of soldiers who died during the founding of the empire, called it ‘Beckoning the Spirits’ (Shōkonsha) shrine; it was renamed Yasukuni in 1879. The Chinese have objected to its symbolism since the political campaigns of 1919, the era of the May 4th Movement in China, when Chinese exchange students in Japan complained about its associations.³ However, not until the prime minister, Nakasone Yasuhiro, paid an *official* visit to the shrine on 15 August 1985, the fortieth anniversary of Japan’s surrender, did the question arise of whether he went as an individual, or as a representative of state. Not only did Nakasone’s visit vex the Chinese government, but many Japanese also brought civil actions against the government on the grounds that an official visit to the shrine contravened the constitutional separation of religion from the state.⁴ In the face of mounting public criticism, Nakasone did not make a second official visit. The controversy arose from the fact that, in the autumn of 1978, the Class

1 M. Ivy, ‘Revenge and Recapitulation in Recessionary Japan’, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, xcix (2000), 819-40.

2 For Chinese use of the Internet to foment nationalistic criticism of Japan, see Qi Jing, *Chūgoku no intānetto ni okeru tai nichi genron bunseki – riron to jissō no mosaku* (Tokyo, 2004).

3 Saneto K., *Nicchū hiyūkō no rekishi* (Tokyo, 1973), p. 276.

4 Haruyama M., *Shinpen Yasukuni jinja mondai shiryō*, and placed on the National Diet library website for public consumption, p. 4. <http://www.ndl.go.jp/jp/data/publication/document2007.html> (accessed 3 Aug. 2007).

A war criminals found guilty by the post-war Tokyo war-crimes trials had been enshrined without warning at Yasukuni;¹ until then, the shrine, although an obstacle to friendly relations between China and Japan, had not featured prevalently in official discussions between the two. Only after the Japanese government appeared to deny the culpability of its war criminals, and the prime minister appeared to sanctify the imperial memory and ignore Japan's wartime responsibility, was opposition aroused abroad. Koizumi Junichirō, who visited the shrine every year during his five years as prime minister from 2001 to 2006, explicitly challenged Chinese government claims that Japan was denying its responsibility for the Second World War.

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THE DEBATES ABOUT the appropriateness of official visits to Yasukuni became, in the 1990s, one focus of the Japanese comic books known as *manga*. In Japan, historical debates inform more of the public discourse than one would expect because comic books provide a cheap and easily digested treatment of serious subjects. They represent a literary and political force that needs to be seriously addressed, partly because they have spawned increasing numbers of Chinese counterparts.²

Since the late 1960s, when Japan's post-war baby boomers graduated from university, the publishing industry has targeted comic books at adult readers rather than only at youth; by the mid- to late 1980s, businessmen and politicians read them along with regular media. Sharon Kinsella, who studies the rise of what she calls 'adult *manga*', states that they have become 'the source of intellectual power in late twentieth-century [Japanese] society', uniting individuals in 'the absence of political discussion or political movements'.³ In Japan, *manga* account for approximately 25 per cent of the publishing industry's profits, a figure that excludes the earnings from spin-offs such as games and animé. In 2002, Japanese publishers released more than 9,800 *manga*, 27 different titles a day.⁴

Following Japan's meteoric economic rise in the 1980s and the international criticism it faced for its 'chequebook diplomacy' after the first Gulf War, *manga* reflected the way in which Japanese political parties and the population itself struggled with the role of the nation's new regional paradigm. Now that Japan is no longer the sole economic powerhouse in East Asia, its leaders and population have grown anxious about its international

¹ Haruyama, *Shinpen Yasukuni jinja mondai shiryō*, p. 13.

² See F. L. Schodt, *Manga! Manga!: The World of Japanese Comics* (New York, 1983) and *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga* (Berkeley, 1996).

³ S. Kinsella, *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society* (Manoa, 2000), pp. 202-4.

⁴ Nakano H., *Manga sangyōron* (Tokyo, 2004), pp. 2-18.

position. The early 1990s witnessed a proliferation of right-wing-oriented magazines that contained nationalist *manga* focused on recent history and international relations. Populist magazines oriented towards young and middle-aged men, such as *SAPIO* and *BRUTUS*, billed themselves and the *manga* they serialized as sources of 'international information' and insight into the changes in Japan's international position.¹ From the 1990s, one read comic books less for entertainment than to grasp and take a stand on political issues, and by the turn of the century, *manga* had joined the debate on Asian nationalism and Japan's imperial history: they reconstructed historical memory to fit the shifting understanding of the nation's needs.²

In the eye of this historical maelstrom sits a lone Japanese author of *manga*, Kobayashi Yoshinori, who has shown an uncanny ability simultaneously to command a following and earn international derision. While most scholars disagree with him, one may not merely vilify him: his works are indicative of the change in the Japanese and Taiwanese conception of Japanese colonialism. Within the shifting nationalist political landscape in East Asia, his works reflect something larger than one revisionist's personal vision of history.

Kobayashi has been a popular cartoonist for more than twenty years.³ For a long time, he was the civilian voice of reason criticizing the Japanese government for ineffective programmes such as healthcare for AIDS victims who became ill through government malfeasance, or overspending on unnecessary public works. He also chastised the Japanese public for its prejudices. He became a household name with the publication of *Gōmanizumu sengen* (The Arrogance Manifesto), first in the weekly tabloid/news magazine *Spa!*, and later in a rival weekly, *SAPIO*, in the early 1990s. The comic offered short, brilliant pieces of satire, in pictures with witty dialogue, that encapsulated a public view of what seemed to be miscarriages of justice or official ineptitude. By then, large numbers of Japanese regarded Kobayashi as their self-appointed voice: his weekly comic served as a serialized editorial on the Japanese *Zeitgeist*.

By the turn of the century, Kobayashi had shifted his focus primarily towards Japanese historical memory of the Second World War. As his political orientation lurched to the right, he began to claim that Japan's aggression liberated East Asia and that the 'liberal media' fabricated Japan's wartime atrocities. His first *manga* on the Second World War, published in the summer of 1998, 'sold 420,000 copies in its first three months ...

1 Yoshimi S., 'Zasshi media to nashonarizumu no shōhi', in *Nashonarizumu hisutori o koete*, ed. Komori and Takahashi (Tokyo, 1998), p. 210.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 212. See also, T. Morris-Suzuki, *The Past Within Us* (London, 2005), pp. 185-204.

3 Morris-Suzuki and Rimmer, 'Virtual Memories', pp. 151-3.

went through twenty-nine printings in its first year, and has sold roughly a million copies in total';¹ it overshadowed the standard scholarly works on the topic, which sell much less.² Kobayashi's offensive on the subject of Japan's warped historical memory has led, in the last seven years, to three *manga* on Japan in the Second World War, two on Taiwanese history, and one on the history of the Tokyo war-crimes trials.³ Each of them has sold several hundred thousand copies. Recently, he became editor-in-chief of his own magazine, *Wascism*, or 'Me-ism', a fitting title for a journal that frequently features Kobayashi on the front cover.⁴

Kobayashi's comics are popular because he makes compelling arguments that simplify issues in a manner likely to sway a popular audience, despite the omission of crucial information. They challenge Japanese politicians to show some backbone by resisting what he sees as Chinese attempts to shove 'correct historical memory' down Japanese throats. Meanwhile, discussion of Kobayashi's work in the Japanese media, including scholarly magazines such as *Ronza*, *Chūō kōron*, and *Seiron*, has turned into a major industry.⁵ Although the incendiary tone, and the works of copycat artists, increase sales, they do not necessarily raise the level of discussion.⁶ Kobayashi's strain of nationalist identity, which he claims was shaped during Japan's imperial era, imparts the sense of belonging that contemporary Japanese fear has been lost: his works tie that absence to the longing for a time when Japan's power reached its zenith and had a clear purpose in empire-building. What Kobayashi does offer helps to answer the question asked by Kosaku Yoshino: 'It is one thing to explain why thinking elites "produced" ideas of Japanese distinctiveness and quite another to explain why the more ordinary sections of the population "consumed" such ideas.'⁷ The consumption of *manga* dealing with history and

1 R. Clifford, 'Cleansing History, Cleansing Japan: Kobayashi Yoshinori's Analects of War and Japan's Revisionist Revival', *Nissan Occasional Papers*, xxxv (Tokyo, 2004), 6.

2 Ienaga S., *Taiheiyō sensō*, rev. ed. (Tokyo, 2002); Eguchi K., *Jūgonen sensō shōshi* (Tokyo, 1991).

3 Kobayashi Y.: *Shin gōmanizumu sengen Special sensōron* (Tokyo, 1998); *Shin gōmanizumu sengen Special sensōron 2* (Tokyo, 2001); *Shin gōmanizumu sengen Special sensōron 3* (Tokyo, 2003); *Shin gōmanizumu sengen Taiwanron* (Tokyo, 2000); *Iwayuru A kyū senpan* (Tokyo, 2006).

4 The correct transliteration would be *Washizumu*, but the magazine imprints its own romanization.

5 For scholarly works that keep Kobayashi in the limelight, see Miyadai S. et al., *Sensōron mōsōron* (Tokyo, 1997); and *Kobayashi Yoshinori [Taiwanron] o koete*, ed. East Asian Network of Cultural Studies (Tokyo, 2001).

6 Watanabe S. and Kobayashi Y., *Aikoku tōron* (Tokyo, 2002); Kobayashi Y. and A. King (Jin Meili), *Nyūkoku kyōhi [Taiwanron] wa naze yakaretaka* (Tokyo, 1996); Lee D., *Taiwan no shuchō* (Tokyo, 1999).

7 Kosaku Y., 'Rethinking Theories of Nationalism', in *Consuming Ethnicity and Nationalism*, ed. Kosaka Y. (Honolulu, 1999), p. 18. Aaron Gerow talks on the parallel phenomenon in contemporary Japanese film. See A. Gerow, 'Consuming Asia, Consuming Japan: The New Neoliberalist Revisionism in Japan', in *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States*, ed. L. Hein and M. Selden (New York, 2000), pp. 74-95.

identity results from the perception within Japan that the nation, having lost an empire, has yet to define an alternative role. Japanese read Kobayashi because he offers them a nostalgic, affirmative identity that they, as a community, can adopt. The Chinese version of historical memory threatens to dissolve this nostalgic vision by insisting that Japan's empire-building wrought destruction throughout Asia. Some political parties in Taiwan, on the other hand, applaud Kobayashi's notion of benevolent imperialism because he aligns himself with politicians like Su who are eager to persuade the Taiwanese to accept a new idea of history and nationhood as grounds for a push towards independence.

Manga that prey on Japanese fears of diminishing national pride also play to the prevalent desire to stop feeling guilty about Japan's imperial past. Although other Japanese *manga*, such as Kō Bunyū's *Nine Reasons Why It Is China Who Should Apologize to Japan* (2004) and *The Japanese Created South Korea* (2005), have become more polemical to boost sales, Kobayashi remains the central figure,¹ who satisfies in Japanese consumers a yearning for something they believe can no longer be found at home but only abroad: they pine for a past that Japan never actually experienced. Whereas previous generations of Japanese saw the rest of Asia as backward, since the early 1990s there is 'a tendency to characterize other modernizing Asian nations as possessing the social vigour and optimism Japan is alleged to be hemorrhaging or to have lost'.² Kobayashi's appeal to this nostalgia for an imagined past and a desire to reassert Japan's supposed greatness forms the backbone of his work on the 'truth' about Japan's imperial history.

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THE INCESSANT INTERNATIONAL criticism of conservative, and in most cases distorted, Japanese history has ironically produced exactly the opposite domestic result.³ Progressives, both domestic and abroad, wished to dismantle the idea that Japan's war liberated Asia and brought Asia out of colonial bondage, but the length and breadth of international attention to Japan's history textbooks have, in many cases, hardened those of the

1 Kō (Huang Wenxiong) was born Taiwanese. He went to Japan in 1964 to study at Waseda University. His books have provocative titles such as: *Chūgoku koso gyaku ni Nihon ni shazai subeki gtsu no riyū - dare mo iwanai* (Tokyo, 2004), *Kankoku wa Nihonjin ga tsukutta* (Tokyo, 2005), *Kindai Chūgoku wa Nihon ga tsukutta* (Tokyo, 2005), and *Manshūkoku wa Nihon no shokuminchi de wa nakatta* (Tokyo, 2005).

2 K. Iwabuchi, 'Time and the Neighbor: Japanese Media Consumption of Asia in the 1990s', in *Rogue Flows: Trans-Asian Cultural Traffic*, ed. K. Iwabuchi, S. Muecke, and M. Thomas (Hong Kong, 2004), p. 152.

3 Ivy, 'Revenge and Recapitation', pp. 819-40; H. Harootunian, 'Japan's Long Postwar: The Trick of Memory and the Ruse of History', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, xcix (2000), 715-39.

middle ground who believe they are being unfairly scapegoated. 'Historical Memory Fatigue might be a result. Official Chinese media, for example Xinhua and *Shijie zhishi* (World Knowledge), an organ of the ministry of foreign affairs, claim that the development among the Japanese of a lack of responsibility for and legal resolution of their wartime aggression and atrocities is attributable to the Japanese media that dupes the Japanese into 'believing propaganda'.¹ The development is more accurately attributed to Kobayashi's membership since the mid-1990s in a larger and more worrisome group that opposes what it labels as 'masochistic history' (*jigyaku rekishi*).² The group, which believes that Japan is unfairly targeted for its historical memory, argues that the history critical of Japan supposedly taught at schools teaches students and citizens to dislike their homeland because of its conduct during the Second World War. In 1995, Fujioka Nobukatsu and Nishio Kanji, two university professors in fields other than history, and Hata Ikuhiko, a respected professional historian, started the group the *Jiyūshugi shikan kenkyūkai*, now known in English as the Association for the Advancement of Unbiased View of History. Kobayashi's membership and the sales of his books, and Fujioka's bestseller, *History the History Textbooks Do Not Teach*, attracted worldwide media coverage.³

These critics of 'masochistic history' wish to excise all derogatory remarks about Japan's colonial legacy from school textbooks. To further its agenda, the group joined with others and decided in 1997 to form a textbook group, Atarashī kyōkasho o tsukuru kai (Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform). Their textbook, published in 2000, provoked widespread criticism abroad, and led to the temporary withdrawal from Japan of the South Korean ambassador; few Japanese schools adopted it.⁴ The textbook glorifies Japanese imperialism and downplays the atrocities that blight the reputation of the Japanese military and colonial governments left in their wake. Nor does it mention the imperial government's ignoring of civil rights, creation of a police state, and habit of sending soldiers to the front with little chance of returning alive. Even as Fujioka's ideas seeped into the popular debate, and received an inordinate amount of international press coverage, since January 2006 the society has been restructured and turned to ideological infighting, greatly reducing its influence,⁵

1 Jin Y., 'Ribei youyi meiti yanlunde "ziyou" yu baoli', *Shijie zhishi* (2006, 2qi), p. 32.

2 Other scholars correctly translate *jigyaku* as 'self-flagellation'.

3 Fujioka N., *Kyōkasho ga oshienai rekishi* (Tokyo, 1997).

4 *Times* (Asia ed., online), 4 April 2001, reported that a Korean newspaper editorialized that, owing to such historical beliefs receiving government authorization, 'Japan is not fit to sit on the UN security council.' On 3 April 2001, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao announced in the English version of *The People's Daily*, the official Communist organ, that the Japanese government approved a textbook 'which confounds right and wrong'.

5 Usesugi S., 'Tsukurukai naifun no haikai to kongo', *Kikan sensō sekinin kenkyū*, Summer 2006.

though Kobayashi's popularity and ability to further his own version of anti-'masochistic history' remains undiminished.

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JAPANESE GROUPS THAT propagate a more positive national memory of Japanese colonialism stress only one aspect of the war in Asia:¹ they depict Japan as the harbinger of the future, as the country best suited to bring civilization, along with urbanization and increased trade, to a backward continent. Thus, a national history designed to instil greater national pride would stress that 'by the time the Japanese withdrew from the island in 1945, Taiwan outpaced mainland China in nearly every measure of material development – per capita income, economic infrastructure, health, educational attainment, and so on.'²

Both the political parties that advocate independence for Taiwan, and the 'anti-masochistic' groups in Japan, gloss over episodes such as the Musha (Wushe in Chinese) incident in October-December 1930 when Japanese troops gassed Taiwanese rebels; Japan's rapacious agricultural policies in Taiwan; and its attempts to replace Chinese with Japanese. The Association for the Advancement of Unbiased View of History and Kobayashi have joined forces to argue that masochistic history places the nation at risk because the education system is failing to turn out citizens who cherish what their country has accomplished and love themselves as Japanese.³

The aim of reinvigorating Japan by teaching a correct version of the history of Japanese imperialism is not limited to extremist groups. Abe suggested in September 2006 that he might not confirm the apology offered in August 1995 by his predecessor, Murayama Tomiichi, for Japan's aggressive colonialism.⁴ Despite his stated opposition to Taiwan's independence,⁵ Abe's purpose in trying to reform the Japanese education system was revealed in statements about the history of colonialism, the nation, and what Taiwan means to the Japanese. He insisted that the United States, as the victor in the Second World War, wrote Japan's recent history and distorted its sense of identity: 'Shouldn't Japan write its own history in its own hand for its own children?' he asked.⁶ His new book, *Utsukishī kuni e*

1 See the Chinese translation of *Taiwanlun* (Taipei, 2000), p. 135, to see how Kobayashi propagates the image of a modernizing Japan in Manchuria. The drawings copy photos employed by Japanese wartime propaganda agencies to make the same point.

2 S. Rigger, *Politics in Taiwan* (New York, 1999), p. 34.

3 Nishio K., *Kuni o tsubushite naru mono ka* (Shatokukan shoten, 2001), p. 86.

4 Abe's grandfather was prime minister in the 1960s and his father was minister of foreign affairs.

5 http://news.xinhuanet.com/tai_gang_a0/2006-07/14/content_4831848.htm (accessed 12 Aug. 2007).

6 As quoted in the *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo ed.), 29 Aug. 2006.

(*Towards a Beautiful Country*), argues that Japan's post-war education system has led Japanese to be critical of nationalism,¹ and he expresses his astonishment upon learning during a visit to the United Kingdom that British schools only teach that the British exploited their colonies.² Like Kobayashi, Fujioka, and their adherents, Abe sought to promote a more positive memory of the colonial era and the war on the assumption that it would help the nation to overcome the paralysis caused by this 'incorrect' historical memory.

Plans to reform the teaching of history did not begin with Abe, of course. Since Koizumi became prime minister in 2001, the ministry of education has called for a change in focus designed to 'teach children to love their country'. Its website lists 'Japanese traditions, respect for culture, loving the land and country, and nurturing the ideology of being a member of international society' as elements fundamental to a revised curriculum designed to create Japanese citizens with a proper sense of national identity.³ Both mainstream Japanese political parties and conservative pressure groups hope to persuade the nation to see only good in Japan's imperial history and no longer to feel guilty about the treatment of former colonial subjects and occupied areas.

The Japanese government and citizens' groups are not alone in promoting this view of Japanese colonialism. In 2001, Taiwan's first popularly elected president, Lee Deng-hui, published a book (in both Japanese and Chinese) written with Kobayashi entitled *Lessons from Lee Deng-hui's School*. The book takes the form of a dialogue between Lee and Kobayashi about nationalism and politics in East Asia. Lee laments that in history classes young Japanese, who learn only about Japan's wickedness, end up feeling that Japan is a wicked country, *huai guo*.⁴ Kobayashi, who agrees, states that Japanese youth have lost their way owing to poor historical instruction, the reason why the nation itself has lost its way: directionless youth, Kobayashi asserts, are directly responsible for the rise in Japan's juvenile crime. Thus, the two men link the public's worries about juvenile crime with the need to teach the 'correct' history. The argument echoes the critique of 'masochistic history': that young persons taught only that Japan has been wrong and that Japanese imperialism was pernicious, will act badly themselves.

One example of juvenile crime that Kobayashi and Lee cite was the

¹ Abe S., *Utsukishi kuni e* (Tokyo, 2006), pp. 97-9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 203.

³ Ministry of Education website, http://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chukyo/chukyoo/gijiroku/002/030301a2.htm (accessed 20 Sept. 2006).

⁴ Lee D. and Kobayashi Y. (trans., Yang Z.), *Li Deng-hui xuexiao de jiaohui* (Taipei, 2001) (Chinese version), p. 139.

incident in May 2000 when a seventeen-year-old high-school student in Aichi prefecture broke into a house and stabbed to death a sixty-five-year-old woman because, he said, he wanted to know how it would feel to take another life.¹ To suggest, however, that Japan's current social anxiety arises from negative historical memory smacks closely of pre-war propaganda. For example, during Japan's war in Asia, the Japanese military dispensed large sums to inculcate Japanese civilians from pitying Caucasian POWs, in an attempt to demonstrate that Japan was weak because it still worshipped the West: announcements and campaigns about such inappropriate behaviour appeared in newspapers and magazines, and on the radio.² Kobayashi, meanwhile, implies that to create a strong, stable, trusting society, one must derive one's identity and purpose through love for one's country: at the moment, he opines, Japan cannot imbue youth with love for the state because the nation is paralysed under the defence umbrella of the United States.³

Taiwan, for the Japanese for whom Kobayashi speaks, appears by comparison with Japan to have saved its soul: it embodies the nostalgic, old 'spirit of Japan' supposedly absent in Japan itself. It is also a successful democracy, for which Japan should take credit. Kobayashi portrays Lee as a distinguished product of the Japanese colonial education system (he glides over Lee's post-graduate degree from Cornell University in the United States). Lee, for his part, wants to explain to young Japanese the beneficent legacy of Japan's colonial administration in Taiwan, to drive home the point that Taiwan's colonial history accounts for its difference from China. He insists that 'Japan did great things in Taiwan,' and that young Japanese should understand that many Taiwanese of his generation view Japan as the saviour of Taiwan and the creator of the modern state.⁴ He uses Japanese colonial history, and himself as one of its products, to support the proposition that, owing to the success of the Japanese colonial administration, the Taiwanese are more Japanese than Chinese.

As a promoter of traditional Japanese culture abroad, who published in 2003 (first in Japanese and then in Chinese) a book on *bushidō* (way of the warrior),⁵ Lee feels that the Japanese government 'has no balls'.⁶ As Kobayashi frequently notes in his comics, Lee accuses China of 'using' history when it deals with Japan in an attempt to extract aid from the Japanese

1 Kobayashi Y., *Di er bo Taiwanlun* (Taipei, 2001), p. 164; Ping L., 'Can Japan and Taiwan Understand Each Other?', *Taipei Times*, 19 March 2001.

2 B. Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu, 2006), pp. 54-6.

3 Lee and Kobayashi, *Li Deng-hui xuexiao de jiaohui*, pp. 172-3.

4 Kobayashi, *Taiwanlun*, p. 23.

5 Lee D., *Bushidō kaidai – nōburesu oburijju* (Tokyo, 2003).

6 Chang Y., 'Japan "Has No Balls", Lee says', *Taipei Times*, 18 Feb. 2004.

government: 'pre-war Japan had many flaws and made many mistakes, but it did manage to assert itself in the international community.'⁷ Lee wonders why Japan now toadies to China in East Asian international affairs, rather than showing its self-confidence.¹ Despite the criticism, many Japanese politicians, as well as individual Japanese, are attracted by Lee's portrait of Japanese colonialism in East Asia.

* * * * *

KOBAYASHI LAMENTS THAT, in contrast to the dynamic debates about nationalism in Taiwan, Japan lacks a national consciousness worth talking about; the idea of public service; or even the idea of citizenship: instead, it is inhabited by uninterested selfish individuals who have lost sight of the nation.² Impressed by the Taiwanese love of nation and country, he identifies its roots in its Japanese tutelage, arguing that Japan has to find itself again, reclaim its sense of self in order to take the lead in East Asia, and avoid kowtowing to China.³ Kobayashi, like Lee, criticizes Japan's politicians for not standing up to North and South Korea and to China, who have too much influence over domestic Japanese affairs because Japanese still feel guilty about their colonial past.⁴

When Kobayashi's comic book on Taiwanese history, *Taiwanron* (Discourse on Taiwan) arrived in bookstores in Japan in 2000 and Taiwan in 2001, it created an uproar. As with his other works, his books stay in the news because he is a one-man, self-generating publicity machine. The book engendered such heated debate in East Asia that Kobayashi published a response that came out in Chinese with the title of *Di er bo Taiwanlun* (Discourse on Taiwan: The Second Wave). This work is less an analysis of Taiwanese history, and Japan's positive influence on it, than an all-out attack on Japan's youth, the Japanese government, and everyone else he perceives to be caddying for China. Kobayashi asks his readers why Japan should follow the historical suggestions of a Communist country and former dictatorship that prohibits freedom of opinion and expression. In a panel in one section of *Di er bo Taiwanlun*, he portrays a Japanese parent speaking to China about his child saying, 'please allow this child to feel humiliated and ashamed all his life towards your country.' In the same

¹ Lee T., *The Road to Democracy: Taiwan's Pursuit of Identity* (Tokyo, 1999), p. 139.

² Kobayashi, *Taiwanlun*, p. 51. Some Japanese intellectuals take the opposite view. According to Masaru Tamamoto, 'a country without patriotism and treason confers upon the citizen great liberties. The Japanese have come to enjoy and take for granted the luxurious absence of the ultimate duty to the state: 'A Land without Patriots', *World Policy Journal*, xviii, 3 (2001), 38: <http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/volumes.html> (accessed 15 Sept. 2006).

³ Kobayashi, *Taiwanlun*, pp. 58-9.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-9.

panel, a Japanese parent pleads, ‘can you please assist me in helping my child have deep and long-lasting feelings of guilt?’¹



FIGURE 1.

Kobayashi states explicitly that ‘pre-war Japan did not only do bad things; in fact, we should have some pride concerning Japan’s pre-war accomplishments.’ He grumbles that this voice never gets heard because China controls Japan’s education, media, and foreign policy. *Di er bo Taiwanlun* contains a panel (Figure 2) in which a caricature of the former president of China, Jiang Zemin, holds a remote control, implying that China controls Japanese education and foreign policy.

Kobayashi appears to echo the Japanese media’s distaste in 1998 for what was perceived as Jiang’s overly repeated and less-than-subtle monologues on the need for Japan to ‘correctly’ understand the history issue. In fact, Kobayashi recycles the wartime propaganda that China’s control of the world’s media explains why Japan is losing in the court of public opinion. Even the pictures he draws in his *manga*, and the captions that accompany them, showing Japan’s role in modernizing China, echo the wartime propaganda. When arguing that Japan, by its occupation, stabilized an unstable China, he repeats almost word for word the head of the information bureau of the wartime ministry of foreign affairs, Amō Eiji’s, explanation in April 1934 of why China needed Japan.²

¹ Kobayashi, *Di er bo Taiwanlun*, p. 18.

² For Amō’s remarks, see *Amō Eiji nikki shiryōshū dai yonkan*, ed. Amō Eiji nikki shiryōshū kankōkai



FIGURE 2.

Kobayashi is aware that his *manga* on Taiwanese history raises issues of national identity that many Taiwanese are reluctant to discuss. However, Taiwan is ripe for ambiguity on the subject of Japan's influence on its colony. Following Japan's surrender in 1945, the KMT tried to inculcate the idea that Taiwanese history was an aspect of Chinese history: 'the historical memories and cultural traditions peculiar to the island were habitually marginalized and discredited.'¹ Advocates of Taiwan's independence now exploit this historical amnesia – and KMT atrocities such as the incident on 28 February 1947, when the Nationalists massacred thousands of native Taiwanese – for the political purpose of setting Taiwan apart from China. The ministry of education's adoption in September 1997 of a new textbook for its secondary-school classes in history, entitled *Renshi Taiwan* (Know Taiwan), reflects the transformation in the government's reconstruction of the national identity, no longer Chinese but uniquely Taiwanese.

(Tokyo, 1982), pp. 692-8.

¹ A. Hsiau, *Contemporary Taiwanese Cultural Nationalism* (London, 2000), p. 155.

While it is one thing for Taiwanese to debate their national identity, however, it is quite another for a Japanese *manga* artist to imply that Japan's colonial legacy formed modern Taiwan. In March 2001, Taiwan's ministry of the interior placed Kobayashi on a blacklist and banned him from entering the country. In response, he quipped, 'Does this make me a comic terrorist?'¹ The verdict on how Taiwan identifies itself – as Chinese, Japanese, or Taiwanese – remains uncertain. When older Taiwanese wax poetic about the 'Japanese spirit' still in evidence in Taiwan, they express an antipathy towards the Chinese Nationalists rather than fond memories of imperial Japan. Similarly, Japanese support for Taiwan's goal of formal independence is often a disguised challenge to China's increasing political and economic power in East Asia.²

Kobayashi, however politically reactionary, remains an effective social and political critic and objects to being labeled a rightist: 'Is someone who is opposed to military aggression, and to the Chinese occupation of Tibet, and supports Taiwan's independence, a right-winger?' he asks.³ The criticism of Kobayashi and the content of his comics originally stemmed less from his attitude to Taiwan's independence, Japan's toadying to China, and Japan's colonial legacy in Taiwan, than from his statements about 'comfort women', who became the central topic of the debate in Taiwan about Kobayashi. He, however, insists his politics are not easily categorized: 'A right-winger, an extremist you say? Take a look at this! My entire essence is on the left side!' And he draws a picture (Figure 3) of himself sitting on a chair, in his shorts, with his legs spread, his genitalia bulging out on the left side.

* * * * *

TAIWAN'S STANCE IN the struggle over memory influences Japan and China in three ways: by applauding Japanese historical memory, denying Chinese identity, and championing a new Taiwanese identity. For a country that, technically, no longer exists as a sovereign state – denied recognition by the United Nations and maintaining diplomatic relations with a dwindling number of other states – this is an unusual situation. Until Taiwan's first election in 1996, it was ruled, as a dictatorship, by the KMT. The calls since then for independence, both by Taiwanese political parties and Japanese who support a positivist vision of their imperial history, show that

¹ Kobayashi, *Di er bo Taiwanlun*, p. 120.

² Honda Y., 'Taiwan de taiwanron dō yomareta ka', *Sekai*, May 2001, pp. 220-8. Cf. Kobayashi Y. and Huang Z. T., *Taiwanlun fengbao* (Taipei, 2001), p. 2. Huang, the director of the Taiwan Independence Alliance, seeks to use Kobayashi's descriptions of the era of 'white terror' to promote antipathy towards KMT rule and to separate Taiwan from China.

³ Kobayashi, *Di er bo Taiwanlun*, p. 182.

Taiwan's national identity is no longer a domestic matter; that its history is played out in opposition to China's and in the shadow of Japan's.



FIGURE 3.

The closer political relationship between Taiwan and Japan in the last fifteen years is evidenced in the increasing number of high-level so-called 'private' visits to Japan by Taiwanese officials, and in Japan's use of them in a bid to cajole or antagonize China. Hitherto, the Japanese government had limited such visits to avoid displeasing China; however, in 1993, Taiwan's foreign minister, Frederick Chien, made the first of the prolonged series of 'private' visits. In October 1994, the vice-premier, Hsu Li-te, 'privately' attended political meetings in Tokyo, while the minister for eco-

nomic affairs, Chiang Ping-kun, 'privately' met with Japan's minister for international trade and industry, Hashimoto Ryūtarō. Ishihara Shintarō, currently governor of Tokyo, visited Taiwan in November 1999.¹ These are only a selection from the increasing numbers of 'private' visits and consultations that have led to a new relationship posited on a different stance towards China.

Taiwan was a Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945, ceded by the Qing empire after defeat in the Sino-Japanese war. Japanese colonial administrators, led by the first head of civilian affairs, Gotō Shimpei, implemented a programme of political and economic reforms designed to turn a Chinese backwater into the showcase for Japanese modernization throughout Asia. Despite decades of opposition, Japan, by pouring millions of yen into education and infrastructure, created a cadre of admirers in Taiwan; thus, Japan's defeat in the Second World War threw Taiwan into turmoil. Its withdrawal not only denied Taiwan's recent history but also provided the escape route in 1949 for Chiang Kai-shek's retreating Nationalist Army, which dreamed of some day retaking the mainland from the victorious Chinese Communist Party. Post-war Japan maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan until 1972, when it followed the lead of the United States in recognizing the Communist regime as the legitimate representative of China at the United Nations. Only after almost one hundred years of Japanese and Nationalist Chinese domination did Taiwan enter the international political arena as a would-be sovereign state.

Until recently, Taiwan lacked a popular historical memory, as the state controlled both education and the publishing industry, and monopolized the media. Since the mid-1980s, therefore, Taiwan has struggled to construct its identity, and to decide how to embed its own nationalism in the history curriculum. From the autumn of 1945 to the mid-1960s, the KMT aimed at obliterating Japanese influences and creating a Chinese identity akin to the mainland's; it used the Chinese term *guangfu*, the return of what has been lost, to notify Taiwanese that the island was rejoining the motherland,² even as its 'monopoly over Chinese culture had to be backed by martial law'.³ It left the Taiwanese to choose whether Taiwan was a Japanese hybrid, a native Taiwanese island, or a renegade Chinese province. Although open debate was not permitted, it surfaced in the mid-1990s as controls were lifted. The construction of a Taiwanese identity, like Japanese nationalism based on nostalgic notions of empire, undermines Chinese

1 Qingxin K. W., 'Taiwan in Japan's Relations with China and the United States after the Cold War', *Pacific Affairs*, lxxiii (2000), 363.

2 Marukawa T., *Taiwan, posutokoroniarushintai* (Tokyo, 2000).

3 A. Chun, "'Culture' in Taiwanese National Politics", in *Taiwan in Perspective*, ed. W. Lee (Leiden, 2000), p. 14.

nationalism: 'Taiwan's independence represents a threat to [Chinese] reunification, because it is a rejection of that *myth* of a common destiny and not because it is a physical act of secession from the mainland.'¹

* * * * *

KOBAYASHI HAS MORE influence than other 'anti-masochist' historians because he is impossible to avoid: his sales in Japan are huge and Taiwanese and Chinese read his works in translation. The Chinese translation of his first work on Taiwan depicted a peanut, the national symbol of Taiwan, on the front cover, split open on the back cover to reveal a Japanese interior, with a 'hi no maru' or red circle representing the Japanese flag. Thus, the debate over Taiwanese identity, which has preoccupied Japan as well as Taiwan since 1945, continues to influence cultural and political relations.²

The variety of *manga* popular with Japanese nationalists and those who applaud the imperialist version of Japanese history reflects the political change in both Japan and Taiwan. The joint statement issued by the United States-Japan security consultative committee in February 2005 elucidated the extent of Japan's military commitment to secure the Taiwan straits if Taiwan was attacked by China.³ Many analysts interpreted the statement as a calculated move to demonstrate to China what changes Japan would accept in the status of Taiwan.⁴ The links between conservative Japanese and liberal Taiwanese are strengthened by their mutual fear of China's economic dominance, and their wish to sustain Japan as a countervailing force in the region.

Kobayashi's interpretation of Japan's colonial history was released at the moment, in 2000, when the Taiwanese were beginning to debate openly the nature of their history and identity, and their relationship with Japanese colonialism. Nowhere is this clearer than in the revision of the Taiwanese ministry of education's authorized history textbooks, which have witnessed a shift in the historical memory of opposition to Japanese colonial rule as well as the re-analysis of the nature of Taiwanese history.

The changes made since 1955 to the authorized Taiwanese history textbooks issued to secondary schools suggests that the ministry of education believes that Taiwan's political isolation behooves it to reinterpret the history of Japanese colonialism. As Taiwan needs Japan, political opportunists and promoters of independence such as Su and Lee try to

¹ Chun, "Culture" in Taiwanese National Politics', p. 23.

² L. T. S. Ching, *Becoming 'Japanese': Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation* (Berkeley, 2001), pp. 1-13.

³ <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/security/scc/joint0502.html> (accessed 20 Sept. 2006).

⁴ *Washington Post*, 18 Feb. 2005.

obtain international political support against China by playing down Taiwan's opposition to Japanese colonial rule in favour of a more benign memory. Taiwanese politicians do not expect Japan to alter the 'one-China policy' that recognizes Beijing rather than Taipei, but try to emphasize the democratic values that Taiwan shares with Japan and that China ignores.¹

The textbooks distributed in 1955 spoke of the Second World War as caused by Japanese aggression, while describing the Chinese Communist Party's decision to join the fight against Japan as 'two-faced', *koushi xinfei*.² Japan's surrender was still being described as Taiwan's 'return', *guangfu*, because the Taiwanese were portrayed as having resisted Japanese colonialism since 1895 in a bid to return Taiwan to its Chinese motherland.³ This interpretation remained stable for decades, despite stronger criticism of the Communist Party beginning in 1977: 'The Communist Party started creating more disturbances and this forced our national army to be less strong in combating Japan.'⁴ Although the textbooks omitted to explain why the Nationalists lost the ensuing civil war, blaming the Communists was, until recently, the norm and dominated historical memory.⁵

In a dramatic shift in 1992, the textbooks reinterpreted what happened after Japan's surrender, detailing the role of the black market; the extent of the Nationalist military government's clampdown on dissent; and the 28 February incident when Chiang's troops killed hundreds if not thousands of civilians (some Taiwanese estimates claim upwards of 20,000).⁶ The following year, the textbooks added that 'innocent people met with great misfortune.'⁷

By 1995, the textbooks were subdividing Japanese colonial rule into three periods. The first, in which the Japanese imperial army subdued the territory, was also characterized by Japan's creation of the infrastructure needed for growth, and Japan's respect of Taiwanese traditions and customs, if not always adequate. The second period was characterized by acculturation: the Japanese augmented their control and the Taiwanese economy expanded.⁸ The text then becomes contradictory during the third period, when Japanese colonialism erased Taiwanese consciousness to implant a Japanese system of culture and thought. The text concedes

1 A. D. Romberg, 'Politicians Jockey for Position in Taiwan's 2007-8 Elections, while Japan Jockeys for Position across the Strait', *China Leadership Monitor*, xx (2007), 10.

2 I thank Hsiao Hui-fen for helping me to procure copies of these textbooks; Official history textbook, *Taiwansheng zhengfu jiaoyuting, Lishi [di er ce]* (Taipei, 1955), p. 314.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 321.

4 *Lishi* (1977), p. 91.

5 Lung Yingtai, lecture, 'What Divides Us', University of Cambridge, 17 May 2007.

6 *Lishi* (1992), p. 145.

7 *Lishi* (1993), p. 163.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 164.

that although, as early as the 1930s, Taiwan was considered to be part of Japan, the Taiwanese still fought against Japan for their freedom. After Japan surrendered, many Taiwanese, used to Japanese rule and upset by the arrival of new officials, some of whom were corrupt, felt nostalgia, *juannian*, for colonial rule.¹

The ambiguous relationship between Taiwan's identity and its colonial heritage bears on the question of unification with China or independence, which has more to do with national identity than with politics.² Lee makes this point in one of his several autobiographies: 'As in the past, mainland China is mired in its historical nemesis – the repeated cycle of advance and decline, never moving positively ahead ... conversely, the people of Taiwan have pulled themselves and their country out of stagnation and have continued to persevere in their efforts.'³ As the Chinese government does not treat the Taiwanese as fully Chinese, and large numbers of Taiwanese feel that China's political experience is alien, in part due to the Japanese colonial heritage, the outstretched hand from the historical revisionists in Japan may appear more tempting than the less self-enhancing offers coming from China.

* * * * *

IN CONTRAST TO its stable colonial relationship with Taiwan, Japan was determined to revise the post-First World War settlement in East Asia. Having occupied large parts of Manchuria, in 1931 Japan invaded China; the character of its occupation of much of the country was symbolized by the atrocities at Nanjing in December 1937 and the experiments on human subjects conducted by Unit 731. Japan had no official relations with Communist China until 1972; after that, they were limited to diplomatic ties as China recovered from the Cultural Revolution. In the 1980s, despite more varied Sino-Japanese relations, Chinese began to question the manner in which Japan conceived of its colonial history. According to Alan Whiting, 'two former enemies are attempting asymmetrical co-operation,' with Japan until recently playing the dominant role.⁴ The roles, on being exchanged, became even more unbalanced. Qingxin Wang explains that 'the Taiwan issue has once again posed a formidable challenge to Japan's stable relations with China as a result of China's rapid international ascendancy and Taiwan's democratization.'⁵ In what was previously a stable economic relationship, the present imbalance of power between China and Japan

¹ Lung Y., 'What Divides Us', p. 165.

² M. Brown, *Is Taiwan Chinese?* (Berkeley, 2004), pp. 239-44.

³ Lee, *Taiwan's Pursuit of Identity*, p. 54.

⁴ A. Whiting, *China Eyes Japan* (Berkeley, 1989), pp. 13-15.

⁵ Qingxin, 'Taiwan in Japan's Relations with China', p. 353.

parallels the increasingly serious competition over the historical memory of Japanese imperialism in East Asia.

Whiting argues that 'Chinese reactions to Japanese words and behavior during 1982-7 jeopardized China's interest in better relations between the two countries.'¹ The opening of the Nanjing Massacre Museum in 1985 led to a torrent of scholarly works about the massacre now on sale in Chinese (and Japanese) bookstores, and to occasional claims by the Chinese media that the death toll at Nanjing was greater than at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The link made between Chinese identity and suffering under Japanese colonialism has never since been weakened: almost annually, the Chinese foreign ministry delivers stern messages to Japan about the need for 'correctly understanding Japanese history'.²

Questioning the official historical memory in China, especially of the Japanese colonial legacy, is a sensitive issue because the Communist government frowns upon revisionism. When a former editor of the flagship of the Chinese Communist Party, *The People's Daily*, Ma Licheng, queried in June 2002 China's established view of Japanese colonial history, he provoked a national debate among Chinese scholars, marked by a high level of invective, about the government's unwillingness to re-examine the history of China's relations with Japan.³ Ma suggested that 'we need to distinguish between Japan asking to be allowed to become a normal country with military forces and confusing it with Japan returning to its militaristic past if it remilitarizes. This is precisely where we need to examine our thinking on Japan.'⁴ The demands for Ma's resignation illustrate the difficulty of posing an alternative to historical dogma: Ma did not call for the revision of the historical memory; merely for the less obvious political use of it. Unsurprisingly, the article was translated immediately into Japanese.

The Chinese, like the Japanese, are, however, beginning to express their historical memory in comics. Yu Xingqiang, the Chinese author of *Lunriben* (Discourse on Japan), who admits on the inside front cover that he was responding to Kobayashi, echoes Kobayashi's fondness for incendiary comment: 'Japanese like raw fish and to ensure that it must be very fresh they cut them up while they are still alive. This isn't just for flavour, it's a custom as well. The Japanese samurai tradition of committing hara-kiri probably stemmed from this tradition.'⁵ The *manga* is less a story about Japan's colonial history and its legacy than a provocative compendium of reasonable and absurd vignettes. These include the picture of an engorged

1 Whiting, *China Eyes Japan*, p. 19.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

3 P. H. Gries, 'China's "New Thinking" on Japan', *China Quarterly*, clxxxv (2005), 831-50.

4 Ma L., 'Dui Ri guanxi xinsiwai', *Zhanlue yu guanli*, June 2002, p. 43.

5 Yu X., *Lunriben* (Beijing, 2005), p. 46.

yet dwarfish Japanese politician precariously perched on books containing files about comfort women and Yasukuni while trying to reach for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.¹ China has actively opposed since 2004 Japan's lobbying for a seat, partly on the grounds that Japan refuses to accept its historical responsibility for the Second World War.

Other chapters of the comic follow Kobayashi's method of blending disparate historical elements overlaying a conspiracy. However, Yu also takes a bizarre anti-Semitic stance, claiming that the Jews who control Japanese finances compel the government to pay retribution for the twenty-six people killed and over seventy wounded in May 1972 by Japanese Red Army terrorists at Tel Aviv airport.² The astronomical sums he mistakenly calculates are hundreds of millions of dollars larger than Germany paid to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Yu concludes that China should be more 'Jewish' in its attempts to extract apologies from Japan.

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KOBAYASHI AND LEE accuse the Chinese government of fanning the criticism of Japan, whereas the Japanese government does not fan criticism of China. To a certain extent, this is true. Whereas Chinese are encouraged to examine and discuss the degree to which the Japanese, as a nation, fail to understand their national, especially colonial, history, Chinese scholars are discouraged from re-examining their own national paradigm. That this practice is likely to cause increasing tension is illustrated by the response to the publication in January 2006 in *Bingdian* (Freezing Point), a popularly weekly supplement to the *China Youth Daily*, of an article entitled 'Modernization and History Textbooks', by Yuan Weishi, a professor at Zhongshan University. It shows what happens in China, where history is not openly debated, historical inquiry does not evolve, and historical conclusions remain untested, when scholars question the established interpretation dictated from above. In Chinese history, questions have clearly delineated answers that never leave one in doubt about who is victim and who perpetrator. During the so-called five thousand years of Chinese history, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are reserved for China as the lone victim suffering at the hands of rapacious Westerners and evil Japanese.³ Yuan, however, asserted that if China should follow its own advice to Japan, 'let's correctly use history as a mirror,' *yi shi wei jian*: 'we also

¹ Yu X., *Lunriben*, p. 249.

² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

³ Yuan W., *Chūgoku no rekishi kyōkasho mondai* (Tokyo, 2006) and Li D., *Hyōten teikan no butaiura* (Tokyo, 2006).

have a responsibility to correctly tell the younger generation the truth.¹ His version of it so displeased Beijing that the government reprimanded the editors of *Bingdian* for printing the article and shut down the paper.

In brief, Yuan argues that China's use of an outdated foreign-policy model of a Chinese/Barbarian dialectic exacerbated the tensions with Britain and France that led in 1860 to the burning of the summer palace in Beijing. He also asks why Chinese history textbooks fail to attribute to the Boxers the destruction caused by the social upheaval in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. The most contentious aspect of the work lay in the parallels Yuan draws between Japanese and Chinese textbook treatments of modern history. When he not only questioned the primacy of China's official historical verdicts but also broadcast his questions, he broke two social taboos. Yuan explains that Chinese, who are so irritated by the whitewashed Japanese history textbooks that some ask 'is there not some great defect within the Yamato race' that permits such falsehoods to be published?, should take a look at their own textbooks, which are similarly unbalanced. Reading Chinese history written in China creates Chinese who can show their love for country only by denigrating the foreigner. Yuan concludes with the warning that Chinese 'cannot afford to ignore the effects this type of thinking creates',² for when nationalist ideology permeates history, it sets China and Japan on a collision course.

* * * * *

KOBAYASHI AND LEE assert that neither the Taiwanese nor the Japanese know their own history (nor, according to Yuan, do the Chinese). The assertion justifies Kobayashi and Lee's wish to rewrite the pre-war history of East Asia to portray it as the high point of mutually beneficial Asian relations. By some groups of Taiwanese, Japan is remembered as the great modernizer, a view that appeals to the Japanese right and helps it to promote the teaching of a history that focuses on Japan's wartime achievements, to the exclusion of its mistakes. Similarly, supporting the groups demanding Taiwan's independence offers another way for Japan to promote its own vision of its colonial achievement and to assuage its citizens' anxiety over China's rise to dominance in East Asia. Kobayashi asks his readers, 'Hey Japanese people, do you want to be slaves to China?' For both the left in Taiwan, and the right in Japan, the answer is a resounding no.

¹ Quotations are from the text of the original Chinese article published online, http://www.zonaeuropa.com/20060126_2.htm (accessed 5 Sept. 2006).

² *Ibid.*

There are three ways in which to place these events within modern Japanese history, of which the third gives pause for thought. First, the Japanese can both be critical of Japan's role in the Second World War and patriotic as long as they do not allow their historical memory to focus solely on the early twentieth century. Such a memory would not treat the Second World War as the sole determinant of the Japanese national character, but neither would it ignore crucial questions about the nature of the war and Japan's imperialism. The revisionists are right to claim that neither China nor Japan should judge the whole of Japanese history and Japan's relations with East Asia only in the light of the Second World War. No other nation could meet such a test: US textbooks could not stand up to the scrutiny given to Japanese textbooks, and where is the apology in Belgium for its activities in the Congo?¹ Comparative studies of colonialism that neither trivialize Japan's wartime atrocities nor excuse them would prevent Japan from being treated as unique.² Second, Kobayashi's comics and popular support may demonstrate that Japan has changed significantly since its pre-war imperial heyday. History in Japan, unlike China and North Korea, is contested, by the public as well as in the academy. It is far from a stale, state-mandated project, much less a dogma that leaves no room for disagreement.

The third possibility is that Japanese nationalism may become more belligerent and the malcontents more numerous. On 15 August 2006, thugs tried to silence the former general secretary of the Liberal Democratic Party and lower house of parliament representative, Kato Kōichi, by burning down his home in Yamagata prefecture. Kato is vocal in his criticism of Koizumi's visits to Yasukuni and Abe's foreign policy; in an interview on 18 August, Kato remarked that 'in today's Japan, I see a kind of aggressive nationalism without repentance (on Japan's militarism before and during World War II) like: We did nothing wrong in the last war.'³ A second incident involved the Japanese Institute of International Affairs (JIAA), an organ of Japan's ministry of foreign affairs, when it published several pieces in its English-language journal that infuriated the Washington bureau special correspondent for *Sankei*, Komori Yoshihisa. In August 2006, he publicly criticized the JIAA for unfounded and false statements

1 For samples of US textbooks, see, e.g., H. Zinn, *People's History of the United States*, rev. ed. (New York, 2003), and J. W. Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York, 1996). For Belgium's refusal to come to terms with its colonial past, see A. Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (New York, 1999), pp. 292-306.

2 A website hosted by Peter Van Ness at Australian National University, which offers concrete examples of possible solutions to the history crisis, can be accessed at: <http://www.china-japan-reconciliation.blogspot.com/> (accessed 30 Sept. 2006).

3 *Kyodo News* press release, 18 Aug. 2006.

concerning Japan's foreign policy and the foreign minister, Aso Tarō.¹ Fear-mongering and political violence are becoming a more popular means to cow what are perceived as liberal attitudes towards history and relations with East Asia. In response to Komori's article, the president of the JIAA, Sato Yukio, announced that the institute's English-language journal 'is being suspended for the time being, and the essays from past transmissions on the home page will be removed'.² The unusually swift response from a government that usually requires months to take decisions prompted the former British ambassador at Tokyo between 1980 and 1984, Sir Hugh Cortazzi, to write in October in the *Japan Times*: 'I do not want to see Japan dominated by extremists or old-fashioned nationalists. I hope that this will not happen, but Japanese need to be on their guard'.³

The novelist Morisu Hiroshi and Kang Sang-jung of the University of Tokyo label the obsessions with nationalism and positive views of Japan's colonial history as 'big-dick and little-dick nationalism', a combination of feelings of economic superiority with lack of international stature.⁴ Other Japanese add that 'behind Japanese suspicion of the Chinese lies a society unsure of itself'.⁵ The Japanese are not alone in adopting a phallogocentric image of foreign policy, though in China the language is less colourful. The former Chinese ambassador at Paris and current president of China's Foreign Affairs University, Wu Jianmin, believes that China still suffers from *ruoguo xintai*, 'a weak country mentality', the result of which is it 'does not want to discuss its own shortcomings, and is overly sensitive to others' criticism of it'. In a round-table discussion published in March 2006 in the ministry of foreign affairs' journal, he remarked that some Chinese citizens (if not officials) complain that the government is too 'soft' on Japan. Wu asked: 'Well, what would they like us to be harder with – shall we battle it out with them [Japan] then?' Given that China is dependent on the international system for its economic growth, 'we need to be careful and not step out of place.' He concluded by quoting Deng Xiaoping's dictum that China should 'hide its capacities and bide its time until the moment is right'.⁶

If China is biding its time in its bilateral relationship with Japan, avoiding a conflict over historical memory will become more important. In the last twenty years, numerous international history workshops have tried to

1 *Sankei shimbun*, 12 Aug. 2006.

2 *Sankei shimbun*, 18 Aug. 2006.

3 'Revisionists Damaging Japan', *Japan Times*, 26 Oct. 2006.

4 Morisu H. and Kang S., *Nashonarizumu no kokufuku* (Tokyo, 2002), pp. 60-3.

5 M. Tamamoto, 'How Japan Imagines China and Sees Itself', *World Policy Journal*, xxii, 4 (2005-6), 4, <http://www.worldpolicy.org/journal/articles/wpj06-1/index.html>.

6 Shen G., Wu J., and Long Y., 'Ganshou zhongguo de diwei yu chaju', *Shijie zhishi* (2006, 7qi), p. 18.

write a collaborative history of East Asia. They have failed in the words of one long-standing Japanese participant, Arai Shinichi, because international 'research projects are political projects from the outset, designed to solve highly political battles over textbooks'.¹ In the absence of such dialogue on history, many Japanese, in the search for a populist movement able to buttress their identity, turn to Kobayashi and other nationalistic media.² Similarly, many Taiwanese support political parties promoting independence, and many Chinese remain content to applaud the official interpretation of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One can only hope that the debate about the historical memory in all three will prove productive by encouraging them to write histories and construct identities that mandate co-operation rather than competition.

University of Cambridge

¹ Arai S., *Rekishi wakai wa kanōka* (Tokyo, 2006).

² Oguma E., *Iyashi' no nashonarizumu* (Tokyo, 2003).