

Rising Tensions in East Asia?
A Transatlantic Perspective

**Toward East Asian Historical
Reconciliation**

- How can Europe/Germany help us?-

Seiko Mimaki, Ph.D.

Reischauer Center/SAIS

Waseda University/GSAPS

Asia's rise : Opportunities? Or Threats for transatlantic relations?

- Opportunities?

Asian Development Bank, *Asia 2050: Realizing the Asian Century* (2011):

With innovative policies and effective cooperation, Asia can continue **economic development**, and more people would be **part of the rich world**, with per capita income levels equal to that of Europe today . . .

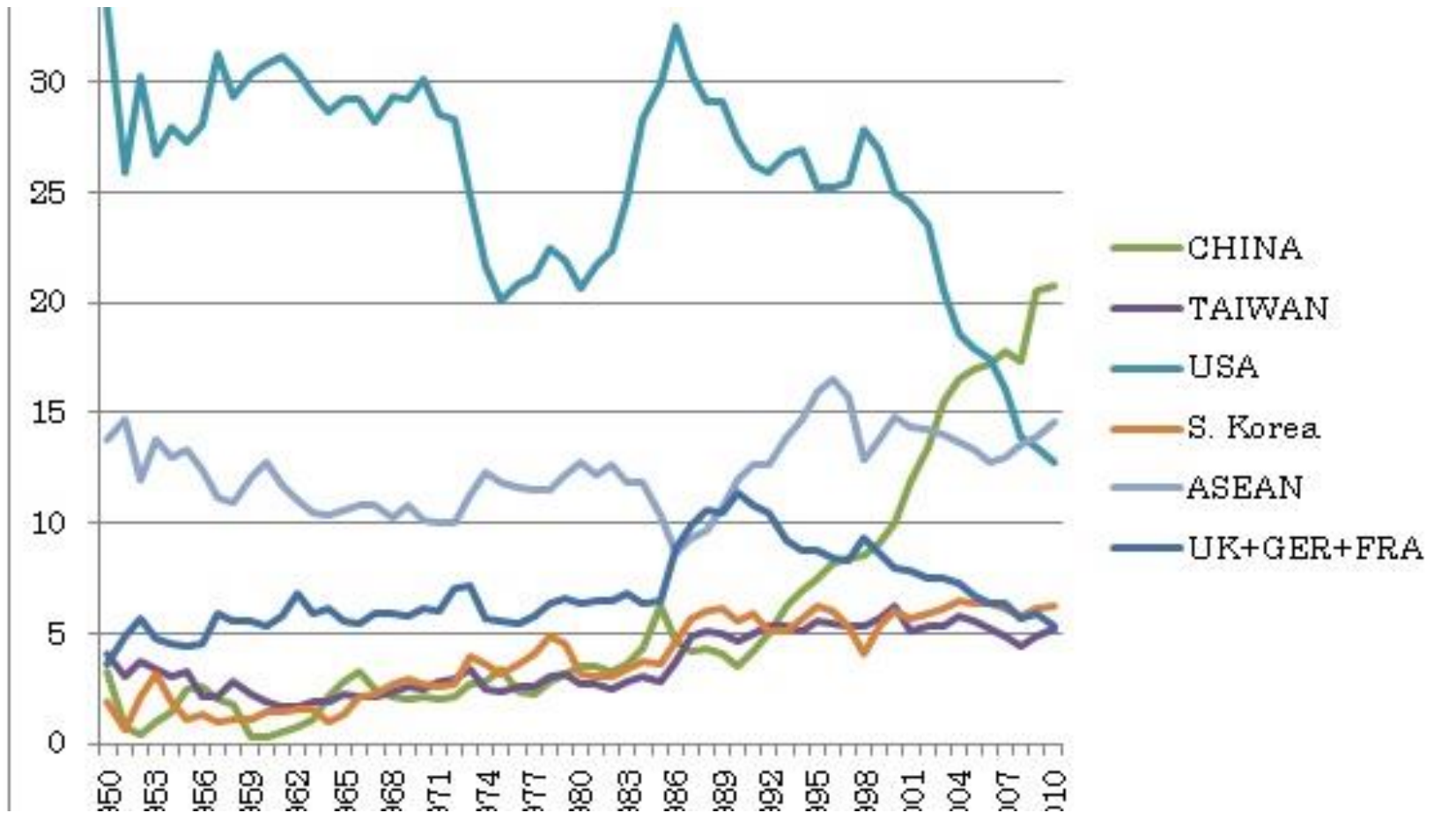
Economically, Asia is promising,
However, will there be enough
stability and peace
as a basis for economic development?

-Especially in **East Asia**
tensions are rising

Deepening Economic Ties

Coexists with political tensions

Japan's trade by country



Asian Paradox situations in East Asia

“Asia suffers from ‘Asian paradox,’ the **disconnect between growing economic interdependence** on one hand, and **backward political, security cooperation** on the other,” especially, “**differences stemming from history** are widening.”

South Korean President
Park Geun-hye at joint session of the
Congress, May 2013.



East Asia Still Haunted by “Past” -History Problems

1. Yasukuni shrine controversy
2. Descriptions of WWII in Japanese history textbooks
3. “Comfort women” issue

Yasukuni Controversy (Dec. 2013)



Anti-Japanese movement in China (2005) as a response to **revisionists' textbook** in Japan



“Comfort women” issues (Glendale, CA)



“comfort women” issue is increasingly
recognized as **human right issue**

Korea's Foreign Minister
Yun Byung-se at a UN
human rights meeting in
Geneva (March 5, 2014)



Current Japan's Choice: **Look to the West**

1. **Panoramic perspective diplomacy**

- Abe has visited a total of **49 countries**, especially tried to strengthen ties with **European countries**

2. **Value-based Diplomacy**

- Emphasize that promoting “**liberal values**” such as **freedom, democracy, human rights** as its diplomatic goal.

**History problems are really messy.
However, is it really possible
for Japan to avoid facing them?**

History problems even intrudes on **Security**

Ex.

Korea's failure in signing a **Korea-Japan General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** in May 2012, due to strong opposition from the public.

Korean people's deep distrust toward "militaristic Japan."



Abe cabinet is ready for more active security role in the region, yet the neighboring countries are not.

How **Europe /Germany** can help East Asian historical reconciliation

1. As a **Model** of Reconciliation
2. As an **Actor** involving East Asian reconciliation

:**informal**/ non-governmental level(ongoing)

:**formal**/government (future?)

Germany as a **Model**

- East Asian **textbook dialogues** (1990s~)-



A History that Open the Future(2005)

First **common teaching material** for Japan, China, and Korea.

The ideal of “common textbook” is now shared by **politicians**

“As Germany and France, and Germany and Poland did, we can publish **a joint history textbook for Northeast Asia** and build up practices of cooperation and dialogue.”

Park Geun-hye at the National Diplomatic Academy, November 14, 2013

Germany/Europe as an **Actor**
of East Asian history dialogues

- **Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research**
- **European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO)**
 - Teach **European/German methods**
to East Asian historians and educators

Future: **Germany** as a **Mediator**?

- **US or Germany?**

US : more **reasons?** (strategic interests/history)

Germany: more **qualified?** (long experience of reconciliation, accumulated methods)

- History problem is becoming a **diplomatic issue**, but **not a purely diplomatic issue**

- In addition to settling disputes, mediator should help bringing **historical justice** for durable peace.

Proposals for Future

1. Toward **East Asian** historical reconciliation
2. Toward better **EU-Asia** relations

Key for future East Asian reconciliation: a wider range of societal actors

- Who should be **the actors** toward historical reconciliation?

1. Political leaders?

2. Historians /experts?

3. Citizens

Historical Reconciliation **as a Continuous Process**- Roles of Citizens esp. **Youth**



De Gaulle' address, September 9, 1962, Ludwigsburg

Future EU-Asia interregional relations

Asia's Rise: “Yellow Peril” again?



Painting by H.Knackfuss (Germany)
“Peoples of Europe, guard your dearest goods” (1895)

Toward peaceful and mutually beneficial EU-Asia Relations

- Can Asia share **core values** with Europe?

Freedom

Democracy

Equality

Rule of Law

Human Rights

- East Asian history problem should be
addressed according to **these core values**