

I. Locating Asia's War Memory Boom: national, regional and global perspectives

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In recent decades, Asia has experienced what Jay Winter, the noted scholar of remembrance, would call a war 'memory boom'.¹ The Japanese-instigated conflicts of 1931-45, beginning in China before (from 1941) embroiling the entire Asia-Pacific region, have inspired a proliferation of museums, monuments and other commemorative practices. War remembrance is no longer confined to the nation-building efforts of mostly authoritarian states. It has become, in ways hard to imagine in the first half century after Japan's surrender, an arena for the pursuit of truth and reconciliation, leisure and pilgrimage, and international diplomacy – one populated by civil society activists, war heritage tourists, officials (national and multilateral), as well as scholars, journalists and students. In the process, its boundaries have increasingly transcended those of the nation-state. Indeed, though the state still dominates memory work across the region, its dominance has been steadily eroded. As happened in Western Europe several decades earlier, war remembrance in Asia has thus come to assume a multi-vocal character.²

How and why has this proliferation and intensification of war remembrance come about? Memory booms have tended to be conceptualized as 'overdetermined' phenomena, global in their origins and scope. This is certainly how Winter, who primarily researches Western Europe and the United States, imagines them when he plots the worldwide history of commemorative practices in modern times. The first phase, he argues, commenced from the 1870s and was characterized by a 'statue mania' intended to stimulate sentiments of national pride and belonging. This spread to other parts of the globe as a result of European imperialism, or, in the case of South America, through essentially imitative practices commemorating the patriotic heroes of the anti-colonial struggle. In Winter's account, World War One proved a turning point, forever transforming the images, languages, and practices of remembrance. New, often unofficial, groups challenged state elites' monopolisation of commemoration. One major

¹ Jay Winter, 'The Memory Boom in Contemporary Historical Studies' (2001), 52-66.

² Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War Between Historical Memory and History* (2006); Schumacher, 'Asia's 'Boom' of Difficult Memories: Remembering World War II Across East and Southeast Asia' (2015).

outcome was that the sacrifice of common soldiers rather than the leadership of commanders became a focus for national remembrance, as grief usurped glory in the public imagination.

This ‘democratization of suffering’ continued to define what Winter saw as the second phase of the modern war memory boom. Beginning in the 1960s and taking root in the 1970s and 1980s, this arose in response to the carnage of World War Two and the horrors of the Holocaust, and was marked by further ruptures in the articulation of remembrance. In France or the Netherlands, where memories of the Resistance had been dominant post-1945, the public was confronted by revelations of collaboration that extended to involvement in the genocide of Europe’s Jews. In 1961, the broadcast of Adolf Eichmann’s trial to an international television audience catalysed the emergence of the atrocity ‘hero-survivor’ as a totemic figure of modern remembrance.³ In addition, Winter points to broader social, geo-political and economic factors contributing to this second memory boom. The relative affluence of late twentieth-century Western Europe and the massive expansion in education there spurred the rise of a new generation of war memory consumers. War remembrance, associated with tourism since the battlefield tours of inter-war France, was now driven by the broader leisure habits of an increasingly sizeable and mobile middle class.⁴ Finally, this second ‘generation of memory’ was driven forward by what Charles S. Maier has termed the ‘end of territoriality’, marked by the eclipse of Gaullist nationalism in France, the project of European integration, the end of the Warsaw Pact, the failure of Gorbachev’s reformist socialism (and subsequent collapse of the USSR), not to mention the advance of corporate globalization. All these factors contributed to a widespread ‘ideological disorientation’ and subsequent ‘interrogation of identities’, out of which nationalist discourses drawing heavily on the wartime past have emerged and been revived.⁵

At first glance, several of these insights appear equally applicable to Asia. East and Southeast Asia, with which this volume is primarily concerned, seem to have fully participated in the latter phase of this global efflorescence of commemoration. Clearly, Asia’s war memory boom has been fuelled by the region’s own economic rise, a corresponding expansion in education, and the emergence of an affluent and mobile middle class. In addition, cheaper

³ For the global impact of this trial on remembrance of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, see Ran Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima: the Origins of a Global Memory Culture* (2014)

⁴ Daniel J. Sherman, *The Construction of Memory in Interwar France* (1999); David W. Lloyd, *Battlefield Tourism: Pilgrimage and the Commemoration of the Great War in Great Britain, Australia and Canada, 1919-1939* (1998), 19-39.

⁵ Winter, *Remembering War*

flights and the easing of visa restrictions have given rise, since the early 1990s, to growing regional tourism. The proliferation of officially recognised war memory sites is today part of the much wider process of Asian heritage-making, whose focus has increasingly shifted from the ancient past to incorporate modern, especially twentieth-century, sites and remnants.⁶ And in post-socialist (if still ‘Communist’) Asia, as in Eastern Europe, the end of the Cold War is sometimes seen as having brought about a parallel ‘ideological disorientation’ and state response: nationalist discourses that depend heavily on war memory have emerged as these governments’ preferred forms of social cement.

At the same time, as several of the chapters in this volume argue, it pays to be wary of assigning too much significance to global factors, especially those seen as originating in the West, as determinants of commemorative trends. Such a diffusionist approach suffers from a problem tackled neither in Winter’s account nor in much of the specific literature on Asia: a tendency to reify European experience as central and, effectively, normative. There are ample grounds for contesting such a Eurocentric conceptualization: balancing acknowledgement of external influences on Asian remembrance with recognition of their limits; asserting the distinctive memory trajectories of particular regions and nations; and, in effect, ‘provincializing’ the global memory boom.⁷

Tackling these complicated issues across a region as vast and diverse as East and Southeast Asia presents its own difficulties. One approach is to aim for geographical reach, incorporating as many countries as possible while delineating case studies on the basis of formal state boundaries. While such work can contribute significantly to our understanding of the politics of memory, it can tend to underestimate or ignore the role of transnational factors in shaping – if not ‘overdetermining’ – patterns of commemoration in a particular locale. Here, therefore, rather than striving to maximize geographical inclusivity, we have selected cases with a view to interrogating the cross-border dimension of war commemoration in Eastern Asia, analyzing how ostensibly transnational (or border-crossing) discourses have been refracted or transformed by local political or social agendas. In the process, we offer a critique of interpretations of global memory discourse that appear to take European experience as normative, highlighting how these distort our understanding of where, why and how the key shifts in the commemoration of war in Asia have occurred.

⁶ Tim Winter and Patrick Daly, *Routledge Handbook of Heritage in Asia* (2012); Winter, Teo and Chang, *Asia on tour: Exploring the rise of Asian tourism* (2008)

⁷ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial thought and historical difference* (2009)

China assumes particular prominence here, both because the Chinese theatre was so central to the Asia-Pacific War itself, and because the recent upsurge in commemorative activity there has been especially marked. While the Chinese state has maintained a pivotal role in orchestrating and channeling war memory for its own political purposes, these purposes increasingly extend beyond national boundaries, involving engagement with diverse international (especially Asian) actors with their own distinctive agendas. This is illustrated especially vividly by Beijing's recent forays into heritage diplomacy over the 'comfort women' issue (discussed here by Vickers). Moreover, in the case of a society as vast as diverse as China, boundaries other than those circumscribing 'the nation' (at least as officially defined) also impinge upon the politics of war commemoration. For example, in Hong Kong official narratives of the local experience of war and occupation take a rather different ideological tack from those relating to China as a whole. The very determination to downplay the significance of Hong Kong's border with the 'motherland' involves backhanded acknowledgement of the distinctiveness of a local political context in which collaboration can be construed as 'patriotic'. Nor, even within mainland China, is commemorative activity wholly dominated by a monolithic party-state, as Denton's chapter here shows. In short, the diversity and complexity of China's commemorative landscape, and the significance of its wider ramifications in an era of growing Chinese influence across the region, warrant the attention given to it here.

The scope of this volume also reflects our aim of exploring new and newly discovered forms of remembrance, rather than simply recapping or updating already familiar stories. Hence, for example, our discussion of 'comfort women' commemoration focuses not on the more widely known case of Korea, but on that of China. In discussing Japan, we eschew the much-rehearsed issues of Yasukuni Shrine politics and textbook controversies, and instead analyze: an instance of outward-looking war remembrance; reconciliation pilgrimages by the children of Far East Prisoners of War; and transnationalism in the form of NGO-organised touring exhibitions. Furthermore, two of our chapters on China, by Lary and Denton, focus respectively on private remembrance (as shaped or constrained by public commemorative practices), and an unusual private museum complex. These are aspects of conflict commemoration that feature little in the existing literature, and highlighting them enhances the freshness and significance of this volume.

Distinctive trajectories of Asian war remembrance

At the risk of stating the obvious, history has ensured that war remembrance across Asia has followed a different chronology from Europe, evincing a quite distinct trajectory. World War One did not become a ‘Great War’ of remembrance in the region, as it did in parts of Europe directly affected by the catastrophic destruction and political fragmentation engendered by that conflict. It took another two decades for East and Southeast Asia to experience the carnage and devastation of modern mechanized warfare – a ‘democratization of suffering’ that resulted in deaths from combat, bombing, famine, massacres and nuclear annihilation totalling in excess of 30 million,⁸ and which generated the long-term trauma of civilian and POW enslavement, as well as forced migration.⁹

Yet such horrors were not immediately commemorated or publicly mourned in the aftermath of Japan’s surrender. Nor, for decades after 1945, were they commemorated by groups dedicated to pioneering new forms of remembrance practice, imagery and language. History moved on quickly after the end of the global conflict, with the commencement or resumption of civil wars, revolutions and anti-colonial struggles. The newly-minted Asian nation-states which emerged from this political maelstrom soon established memory hegemonies that, in contrast with those of post-‘Great War’ Europe, remained for several decades relatively intact. In those states that were eager to set the historical clock back to zero in their pursuit of modernist post-war futures, remembrance of the conflicts of 1931-45 became subsumed into broader patriotic discourses. If the war with Japan was commemorated at all, it was as one chapter in a longer narrative of heroic nationalist struggle that had its origins decades and sometimes centuries before 1931, reaching a denouement with the attainment of liberation at some point after 1945. As Diana Lary observes in relation to China, while authoritarian governments in Asia have more recently moved to monumentalize the dead of World War II,¹⁰ the spaces for private and personal expressions of mourning continue to be officially limited and contained.¹¹

After 1945, ostensibly democratized societies in the region likewise experienced decades of state-led memory manipulation and containment, which has continued well into the 21st century. Wider geo-political considerations have often played their part. In Japan, even after the formal end of the U.S. occupation in 1952, remembrance of the atomic bombings of

⁸ Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Wars* (2007), p. 7.

⁹ Bayly and Harper, *Forgotten Armies* (2004)

¹⁰ Or, more accurately in the case of China, the dead of the extended war with Japan, dating back to 1931.

¹¹ Diana Lary, *The Chinese People at War: Human Suffering and Social Transformation, 1937-1945* (2010), 204ff.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki was shaped by these two nations' interdependency. As Ran Zwigenberg argues, the Japanese authorities have long presented that atomic attack as a 'blameless act', one that did not impugn the United States: rather, the atom bombs were portrayed as a baptism of fire ushering in the new peace-loving Japan, relegating the preceding experiment with militarism to a historical aberration. In Singapore and Malaysia, as other chapters in this volume show, contemporary relations with the former occupier – in this case, Japan itself – have likewise affected the degree and form of war remembrance, and continue to do so more than 75 years after the 1941 invasion. At various times, from the 1960s through to the 1980s, the introduction in both countries of policies exhorting the populace to 'look to' or 'learn from' Japan have impacted on official war memory.¹² Nevertheless, the shadow cast by these nations' colonial and Cold War pasts has been as significant as their governments' more recent diplomatic agendas. Remembrance of the Japanese invasion has long been complicated by the local political alliances and collaborative relationships of the occupation period itself, over which postcolonial state elites have (for various reasons) often preferred to cast a discreet veil.

In their important 2007 volume, *Ruptured Histories: War, Memory, and the Post-Cold War in Asia*, Sheila Miyoshi Jager, Rana Mitter and their contributors¹³ highlight the 'global changes' that have impacted on the way wars are remembered in China, Japan, Vietnam, Taiwan and the two Koreas. War memory, they conclude, has been reconfigured in response to broader geo-political shifts that have affected, yet have often emanated from beyond, Asia. The most significant of these, they argue, has been the United States' adjusted strategic policy towards the region since 1989. Several of the arguments in their volume echo those proposed in Winter's account of the second stage of the world's modern war memory boom: China's recourse to a war memory-laden nationalism as a social cement to ease its transition away from hardline communist dogma; Japan's need to reinsert itself into an Asia increasingly shaped by regional economic integration, resulting in the domestic 'memory work' with respect to its inglorious wartime past undertaken in the decade to 2005; the emergence of a 'global public culture' which in Japan especially, but also in South Korea, has placed great emphasis on the attainment of 'truth and reconciliation'. The central argument proposed by Jager and Mitter is that all these developments can be linked to back the global end of the Cold War, which they

¹² Simon Avenell, 'Beyond mimesis: Japan and the uses of political ideology in Singapore', in P. Morris, N. Shimazu and E. Vickers (eds), *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia* (2013), 29-48.

¹³ Including Vickers, co-editor of this volume.

understand as a ‘coherent’ historical era born out of the forces that resulted in the dramatic events of 1989 in Europe. Since the commencement of ‘the Post-Cold War’ era, Asian understandings of the wartime past have been ‘ruptured’ as experiences previously buried have been unearthed and have thus, as one of their contributors (Carol Gluck) puts it, ‘come into memory’.¹⁴

However, while the geopolitical rupture constituted by the end of the global Cold War was certainly significant in Asia as well as elsewhere, the precise extent of its implications for Asian historical memory seems debatable – perhaps increasingly so, the further 1989 recedes into the past.¹⁵ Notably, since Jager and Mitter’s volume appeared, the Japanese government has pushed back against much of the memory work that they attributed largely to the demise of Cold War bipolarity. If there is a global story to be told here, it is that for Japan regional integration, financial globalization, the emergence of a global public culture and, not least, the rapid rise of China have created domestic anxieties as significant as the interrogation of identities produced by the earlier apparent victory of capitalism over communism. In parts of Southeast Asia, more extensively discussed in the present volume than in *Ruptured Histories*, the Cold War’s end does not appear to have coincided with dramatic ruptures in remembrance. For reasons alluded to above, Southeast Asian nations have not deployed war memory in their diplomatic relations with Japan in the way that China and South Korea have done. Their governments have instead continued to contain and sometimes bury uncomfortable wartime experiences in a manner little affected by the winding down of the global Cold War.

Yet in fact, further north as well, the origins of Asia’s contemporary war memory boom appear on closer inspection to be rather more complex, and earlier, than is implied by an emphasis on the late 1980s ‘moment’. As Tony Brooks reveals in his chapter here, China’s programme of establishing patriotic education sites in fact began in the early 1980s, a decade earlier than has often been assumed,¹⁶ when plans were laid for major war museums at Nanjing,

¹⁴ Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Rana Mitter (eds), *Ruptured Histories: War, memory and the Post-Cold War in Asia* (2007). Gluck’s discussion of ‘coming into memory’ is on pages 65-74, in her chapter ‘Operations of Memory: Comfort Women and the World,’ 47-77.

¹⁵ Jager and Mitter themselves effectively acknowledge this in the ‘Epilogue’ to their volume, which considers the implications of post-9/11 geopolitical developments for the further shaping of war memory discourse in East Asia.

¹⁶ For examples of such assumptions, see Suisheng Zhao ‘A state-led nationalism: The patriotic education campaign in post-Tiananmen China’ (1998); Zheng Wang, ‘National Humiliation, History education and the politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education campaign in China (2008). One of the present authors, Vickers, has also made similar assumptions in earlier work – e.g. Lall and Vickers (eds) (2009). *Education as a Political Tool in Asia*.

Beijing, Shenyang and (as Brooks analyses in depth) at Harbin. In the case of Harbin's Unit 731 complex, Brooks shows that the PRC government had long held 'in store' such war remnants, in order to deploy them as material evidence of Japanese atrocities should rightists in Japan appear to be in the ascendancy. That moment arrived in 1982, with the outbreak of the Japanese textbook controversy, the result of an official effort by Japan's Ministry of Education to play down the reality of the country's military aggression in Asia during the 1930s. However, Brooks' equally startling insight concerns the domestic pressures which prompted the Chinese government to (literally) dig up China's wartime past. As his research reveals, Deng Xiaoping personally oversaw the promotion of war remembrance from the early 1980s, as part of his plan to create a unifying national culture of memory that would shift public attention from the more recent domestic traumas caused by the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.

In the case of Japan, too, a similar problem of chronology emerges. Frost and Watanabe, in their examination here of the long 'tradition' of Japanese truth and reconciliation efforts in Japan's former Southeast Asian wartime possessions, challenge the idea that such memory work commenced in earnest from the 1990s. Rather, they argue that although the international media, as well as scholars concerned with East Asian diplomatic developments, noticed a 'coming into memory' from that decade, Japanese activists had been energetically challenging officially-sponsored narratives at home, and engaging in reconciliation efforts in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, since at least the mid-1970s. The 1982 textbook controversy, widely publicized in China and South Korea, where it sparked significant popular protest, was testament to the intensity of this struggle. Many of these activists were Marxist-oriented Japanese leftists who operated within a pervading Cold War context. A large number were linked to *Nikkyoso*, the left-wing Japan Teachers Union, which was affiliated with the Japanese Socialist Party (JSP), and, until the late 1980s, included members of the Japanese Communist Party. (A leading Japanese truth and reconciliation activist discussed later in this book was not averse to participating occasionally in international teachers' conferences held in Moscow.)

Japanese war remembrance and reconciliation efforts abroad were thus in large part extensions of domestic political battles which were, ironically, starkly confrontational. Within Japan during the 1980s, the acknowledgement and commemoration of wartime atrocities became a weapon in the struggle against Japanese rightists, leading many leftists to make common cause with elements in China who shared their animosity for the latter. Japanese memory work was thus hardly dependent on a post-Cold War engagement with externally-derived 'global public culture,' for it clearly predated the Cold War's end. Already by the early-

1980s, non-official Japanese war memory activists were participating in what Zwigenberg calls a ‘global memory culture’, one that enabled them to draw direct inspiration from the language and practices of war commemoration in West Germany at that time (as Frost and Watanabe in this volume show). In a further irony, the global end of the Cold War coincided with decline of the *Nikkyoso* as an organizing focus of resistance to the official war memory produced by the dominant Japanese right - a decline occasioned by the departure of hardline leftists and Japanese communists from its ranks by the early 1990s.¹⁷ The entering of the JSP into coalition with the LDP in 1993, heralding the appointment of Murayama Tomiichi as Japan’s first (and so far only) Socialist Prime Minister, led to an apparent shift in official discourse, with landmark ‘statements’ by Murayama (see below) and Cabinet Secretary Kono – but the poisoned chalice of power catalyzed the fragmentation of the Japanese left, with the late 1990s witnessing a resurgence of the nationalist right and a backlash against the ‘apology diplomacy’ that Murayama had briefly sponsored.

Elsewhere, other examples arise that should make us similarly wary of privileging broad geo-political strategic shifts in the region over internal and domestic factors when explaining surges in war remembrance – or their absence (e.g. in Hong Kong – see below and the chapter by Vickers).¹⁸ That war remembrance practices have proliferated across much of Asia from the last quarter of the 20th century is not in dispute, but how far has the end of the Cold War been pivotal? The example of Singapore is instructive. Here the government imagined communist plots to overthrow the ruling Peoples’ Action Party (PAP) government as late as 1987, when it launched its controversial Operation Spectrum against an alleged ‘Marxist Conspiracy’. In this context, internal political considerations took priority in shaping official memory. As in South Korea, the Singapore authorities used war remembrance as part of a national campaign to instill a sense of perpetual emergency which required Singaporeans to remain in a state of constant mobilization. Following the example of Switzerland, in 1984 the government introduced Total Defence Day on 15 February, commemorating Singapore’s fall to the Japanese. The authorities thus conscripted war remembrance to the cause of nation-building at much the same time as their counterparts in the PRC. Notwithstanding Singapore’s contemporaneous ‘learn from Japan’ campaign, or Japan’s status as the island’s largest trade

¹⁷ Robert Aspinall, *Teachers’ Unions and the Politics of Education in Japan* (2001)

¹⁸ Vickers also discusses the case of Taiwan – where public commemoration of the war has likewise been relatively low-key – in his chapter for Jager and Mitter’s *Ruptured Histories* (pp. 209-232), and in ‘Remembering and Forgetting War and Occupation in the People’s Republic of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan,’ in Patrick Finney (ed.), *Remembering the Second World War*. London and New York: Routledge, 46-67.

partner, invoking the Japanese invasion and occupation to illustrate the need for unity and vigilance in defense of the nation become a hallmark of public history and heritage-making on the island.¹⁹

But many of these elements, now central to Singapore's memoryscapes, were the results of battles over commemoration fought decades earlier. Daniel Schumacher's contribution to this volume reminds us that as early as the late 1940s and 1950s, an often neglected period of transition in Asian memory politics, cosmopolitan nodal points in the region, such as Singapore, experienced a notable uptick in war commemoration. These sites were contested by activists of many stripes seeking to assert their status in post-war (and soon-to-be postcolonial) societies. For Overseas Chinese groups in Singapore, for example, memorialization of the conflict became a means of articulating a new-found local identity. Moreover, as Schumacher argues, other parties to the post-war struggle for hearts and minds, notably the mainland Chinese government and British colonial administrators, competed to direct or co-opt commemorative practices, as in the drawn-out Singapore-Chinese campaign to erect a memorial to the resistance leader, Kuomintang officer and covert British operative, Lim Bo Seng. The diversity of forces at work during this earlier Asian 'memory boom' place the significance of wider global discourses (whether of Cold War or post-Cold War vintage) in a different perspective.

In Hong Kong, too, the end of the Cold War appears to have been of marginal importance as far as the commemoration of World War II is concerned. Rather, the proliferation of transnationally available victimhood narratives – derived in part from the globalization of Holocaust memory – and the local reevaluation of the city's own identity (intensifying from the 1980s, but commencing earlier) lent growing momentum to memory activism from the late 1970s. In the context of the territory's fraught transition to Chinese rule (at best only tangentially related to the ending of the global Cold War), Hong Kong's multi-ethnic ex-service community and their families pressed for pensions, passports and personal

¹⁹ L.L. Thang and S.K. Gan 'Deconstructing "Japanisation": Reflections from the 'Learn from Japan' campaign in Singapore.' (2003); K. Khamsi and C. Han, 'The portrayal of the Japanese occupation in Singaporean textbook narratives', in P. Morris, N. Shimazu and E. Vickers (eds), *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia* (2013), 210-228.

recognition, in the process seeking to re-appropriate public memoryscapes and fundamentally challenge established UK-centric narratives of the war.²⁰

In the case of Malaysia, Hamzah Muzaini's analysis of Perakian state museums provides further evidence that local identity politics, generational change and a 'Look East' policy in the 1980s already involved the critique and re-appropriation of imperial memories, as part of efforts to create a 'postcolonialised' history. Muzaini finds that this exercise in 'rectifying the colonial forgettings of the past' is also still far from complete. Indeed, the state's Malay-centric stance on the wartime past, coupled with almost celebratory accounts of the Japanese invasion of British-ruled Malaya that sideline the Chinese experience of war and occupation, appear to undermine efforts to foster multi-ethnic harmony and present the war as a shared trauma. But Muzaini's research shows that grassroots endeavours, often operating under the radar of officialdom, fill some of the gaps left by the state-sanctioned narrative, as evidenced, for example, in the Sybil Kathigasu Museum at Papan.

The problems with periodization consequent on attributing so much significance to the end of the Cold War are tacitly acknowledged in Jager and Mitter's analysis. Having emphasised the global thawing of the Cold War circa 1989 as a 'coherent' historical moment – one signaled in Asia by the Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing; South Korea's first democratic elections and the end of martial law in Taiwan two years earlier; the introduction of Vietnam's Doi Moi reforms a year before this; and the death of Emperor Hirohito in Japan eleven months prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall – they somewhat backtrack from this claim. The timing of the end of the Cold War in Asia *was*, it turns out, rather distinctive: the 'thaw', in fact, began with the normalization of relations between China and Japan in 1972:²¹ a time when the global Cold War was still in its youthful twenties, with the period of 'détente' yet to give way to the renewed threat of nuclear annihilation in the early 1980s. This chronological realignment would place China's spate of pre-Tiananmen war museum building firmly in what was, in East Asian terms, the 'post-Cold War' (i.e. post-1972) era. Yet reframing the argument in this way undermines the attempt to portray the post-Cold War 'moment' as globally coherent – and thus capable of explaining major changes in Asian war memory. In the early 1970s, while tensions between China and Japan may have eased (at least temporarily), hot wars between

²⁰ D. Schumacher, 'Poppies, pensions, passports: The British Legion and transnational civil society action in decolonizing Hong Kong', in A. Alcalde and X. M. Núñez Seixas (eds), *War Veterans and the World after 1945: Cold War Politics, Decolonization, Memory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 100-113.

²¹ Jager and Mitter, *Ruptured Histories*, p. 2.

capitalist and communist forces continued in Vietnam until 1975, backed by the US and USSR respectively; while from the same year in Cambodia, the communist Khmer Rouge, backed by China, unleashed its four-year genocidal reign of terror, having overthrown the previous pro-U.S. military government. In neighbouring Southeast Asian states during this decade, it was hard to imagine that Sino-Japanese détente signaled any broader winding down of the Cold War. In Singapore, as we have noted, official paranoia concerning the possibility of a communist takeover continued until well into the late 1980s.

Divergent histories of truth and reconciliation

Another way in which the European history of war memory and remembrance has influenced understandings of this phenomenon in Asia has been through comparative analyses of the success and failure of post-war reconciliation in these two regions.²² Many who invoke this comparison have perhaps tended to idealise the European experience. The most recent additions to the literature do, however, point out that European reconciliation was neither immediate nor smooth and that European countries, too, still suffer from memory-related problems of their own.²³ Indeed, the revival across Europe of far-right parties, and recent support within Germany for the anti-immigrant *Alternative für Deutschland* and for the transnationally active *Pegida* movement (based in Dresden), reminds us that public memory of the past is never entirely fixed or settled. Separating victims from perpetrators is not always easy; many communities or individuals can plausibly be portrayed as both. Meanwhile, the overwhelming focus on Nazi Germany in England's history classrooms, where study of other periods of European history is generally lacking, has been blamed for reinforcing negative perceptions of the continent, contributing to a warped sense of British superiority that was perhaps one factor in the 2016 'Brexit' vote.²⁴ The Greek financial crisis of 2007-8 and subsequently imposed austerity measures also caused bitter memories of Germany's wartime occupation of that country to resurface. Meanwhile, many formerly occupied societies, as well as post-civil war Spain, have barely begun to come to terms with fascism's role in their

²² This comparison has been a feature of literature which has addressed Japan's 'memory problem' and textbook controversy. See Buruma (1994), Fogel (2000), Hein and Selden (2000) Vickers and Jones (2005), Foster and Crawford (2006), Muller (2011), Shin and Sneider (2011).

²³ Daniel Chirot, Gi-Wook Shin, Daniel Sneider (eds), *Confronting Memories of World War II: European and Asian Legacies* (2014).

²⁴ Comments by Germany's ambassador to Britain in 2002 now seem prophetic. See Vasagar (2002). 'History teaching in UK stokes xenophobia, says German envoy,' *The Guardian*, December 9, 2002.

domestic pasts; paralleling the fight against the German 'Other' were myriad, often vicious, internal struggles. And when we look beyond the European Union, for example to the Ukraine, divergent wartime memories are even now being manipulated to stoke conflict in the present.

Nevertheless, Europe's achievement in 'moving on' from the war, and especially the extent of reconciliation between Germany and her immediate neighbours, is striking by comparison with the fraught politics of war memory in East Asia. Inevitably, reconciliation in Western Europe, and the willingness of the governments of Western and then united Germany to confront the wartime past have come to stand, in many people's minds, as a model for Japan to follow in relation to its Asian neighbours (and former 'victims'). And it is not merely scholars and media commentators who have looked to Europe as a model for post-conflict reconciliation. As Frost and Watanabe show, leftist truth and reconciliation activists in Japan borrowed directly from the German model of reconciliatory commemorative practice from the early 1980s.

Problems for the historian of war remembrance emerge when the European experience of reconciliation is presented as a model applicable in a broader global context.²⁵ Any such attempt risks opening the conceptual trap we have noted above, exaggerating the normative quality of European experience and distracting from the specificities of the Asian situation. Viewed from the perspective of most non-Western societies, the Western European experience of reconciliation in the decades following 1945 appears exceptional rather than normative.

It is arguably Asia's experience of reconciliation (or the lack of it) rather than Western Europe's that, for better or worse, is more representative of wider global reality. Even if from 1945 many middle-ranking officials remained in place in West Germany, as in Japan, the senior Nazi leadership was radically 'cleansed', with Hitler himself permanently removed from the scene. By contrast, in Japan, the Emperor was retained as a national symbol, and many senior politicians and officials associated with Japanese expansionism in Asia were quickly rehabilitated to aid in the anti-communist struggle at home and abroad. This difference in post-war Allied policy was partly a factor of simplistic assumptions about Japanese-ness on the part of the American occupiers (largely reliant for local knowledge on well-thumbed copies of Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*). The consequence was that, from the early 1950s (when the American occupation ended), Japanese politics was dominated by figures

²⁵ Seunghoon Emilia Heo points out some important limitations of such an approach. Heo, *Reconciling Enemy States in Europe and Asia* (2012).

deeply implicated in the actions of the wartime regime, while West Germany became a highly decentralized liberal democracy largely cleansed of its pro-Nazi political elite. Japan's so-called 'Liberal Democrats' were licensed by their American sponsors to smother multi-party democracy at birth, re-centralizing much state power that had been dispersed in the immediate aftermath of the war. This had profound and lasting implications for history curriculum development, and for official war memory in Japan more generally.

Another fundamental difference was the post-war push for European integration, which put significant pressure on Germany – or at least West Germany – to confront the Nazi past (though, as Daniel Chirot emphasizes and we have noted above, elites in other countries, such as France, managed to postpone any thorough reckoning with their records of collaboration or anti-Semitism until much later)²⁶. Domestic social and political shifts were also significant. As the hardship of immediate post-war reconstruction gave way to comfortable prosperity by the 1960s, and as post-1945 baby-boomers reached maturity, a generational divide opened up, with many younger Germans questioning the role of their elders in the disasters of the Nazi era. It was in part this generational shift, and the youth discontent that accompanied it, that brought to power the Social Democrats (SPD) under Willy Brandt. Brandt's pursuit of *Ostpolitik*, alongside unambiguous repentance for Nazi atrocities – famously symbolized in his 1970 *Kniefall* in Warsaw – was one upshot. This was undertaken on German rather than American initiative, with approval from the Nixon regime seemingly belated and grudging.²⁷

For Germany, the 1970s brought growing power within an expanding and steadily integrating European Economic Community (EEC). Far from being pawns of a distant foreign state, the West Germans were beginning to assume a leadership role within Western Europe. As Brandt and many of his supporters understood, this necessitated reassuring other Europeans that German dominance represented no threat. Meanwhile, the same sentiments that helped propel the SPD to successive electoral victories, and that supported *Ostpolitik*, also prompted a remarkably open public debate over the legacy of the war. This was epitomized by the 1979 screening on West German television of the American drama *Holocaust*, which was accompanied by studio debates, public phone-ins, and blanket media coverage.²⁸ As a character in the British television comedy *Yes Minister* put it in 1981, the Germans went into the EEC

²⁶ Daniel Chirot, Gi-Wook Shin, Daniel Sneider (eds), *Confronting Memories of World War II* (2014)

²⁷ Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (2005)

²⁸ *Ibid.*

‘to cleanse themselves of genocide and apply for readmission to the human race’²⁹ – but there was always far more to this than cynical political calculation.

By contrast, the heat of the Cold War in Asia - in China, Korea, Malaya and Indochina - determined Japan’s role, especially in American eyes, as an isolated non-Communist archipelago, crucial to Western hopes of holding back the red tide across the region. In Europe, from the 1950s to the 1980s, despite – or because of – chronic East-West tension, Germany’s two halves each became closely integrated into their respective ‘blocs’. This integration facilitated, and indeed necessitated, not just close economic relations, but also extensive political collaboration and people-to-people contact, of a kind that was notably lacking in post-war Japan’s relations with its Asian neighbours. Such divergent geo-political contexts spawned, in large part, by the same Cold War, yet affecting each region in very distinct ways, have meant that Japan has never yet had an open public debate over its wartime past remotely approaching that seen in West Germany since the 1970s. In fact, Japan’s status as a crucial trading partner for many countries in post-war Southeast Asia incentivized governments even in states that had suffered massive death and destruction at Japanese hands, such as the Philippines or Burma, to bury the hatchet early through tacit reparations disguised as investments or bilateral aid.³⁰ Indeed, the same was largely true of Japan’s relations with China until the 1990s – a fact that helps account for Chinese reluctance to join in transnational efforts to pressure Japan on its war record, even while the regime used memories of war to foment nationalist sentiment domestically (see below, and Vickers’ chapter here on China’s commemoration of ‘comfort women’).³¹

Official apologies by Japanese officials were eventually forthcoming in the 1990s, most famously the 1995 ‘Murayama Statement’ (on the 50th anniversary of the end of the war). But these were carefully calibrated diplomatic statements prepared primarily for external consumption. Notwithstanding the efforts of leftwing activists discussed above (erstwhile allies of the SPJ politicians then briefly in power), these official declarations did not reflect a fundamental shift in public consciousness towards understanding and acknowledgement of the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers in wartime Asia. The widespread and genuine

²⁹ The quotation is from the episode *The Devil You Know*, first broadcast in 1981. The *Yes Minister* series was scripted by Anthony Jay and Jonathan Lynn.

³⁰ For an overview of the figures, see K. Blackburn and R. Nakano, ‘Memory of the Japanese Occupation and Nation-Building in Southeast Asia’, in D. Schumacher and S. Yeo (eds.), *Exhibiting the Fall of Singapore: close readings of a global event* (Singapore: National Museum of Singapore, 2018), 33.

³¹ See also MacGregor 2017.

commitment to ‘peace’ characteristic of post-war Japanese society was premised on consciousness of Japan’s own victimhood as the only country to have suffered atomic attack. It did not reflect any broad consensus over the need to confront, let alone atone for, the record of Japanese imperialism.

Further lessening the possibility of such a consensus were Japan’s post-war relations with other parts of Asia, and the Japanese public’s perceptions of these. The nation’s status as a beacon of ‘modernization’ and ‘development’ for its ‘backward’, ‘developing’ neighbours was a well-established trope of public discourse by the 1980s, reviving or reinforcing pre-1945 assumptions of Japanese superiority. Such assumptions were no doubt strengthened by the willingness of some governments in former Japanese colonies (such as Korea) to self-consciously imitate and emulate elements of post-war Japanese modernization. Moreover, in recent decades, as many Japanese have become increasingly aware of the People’s Republic of China’s own brutal and largely uncommemorated post-war history (see Denton’s chapter in this volume) – from the famines and mass hysteria of the Mao era, to the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown and beyond – it has been easy for them to conclude that, concerning applications for ‘readmission to the human race’, there is something perverse in the desire to single out Japan. The cool reception given by the Chinese and Korean authorities and media to the 1995 Murayama Statement prompted Japanese suspicions that both nations were less interested in reconciliation than in the ritual humiliation of Japan. After all, by that time post-Tiananmen China was in the throes of a state-led ‘Patriotic Education Campaign’ which gave top billing to the national struggle against ‘Japanese aggression’. While this campaign was launched in the early 1990s, it built on and extended official efforts from the early 1980s – noted above and discussed in this volume by Brooks – to divert public attention away from fresher memories of atrocities committed by the Communist regime against its own people.

Nor was it simply that China was widely pitied or despised – it was also increasingly feared by a Japanese public whose confidence, from the 1990s onwards, was fast draining away. (West) Germany’s pursuit of reconciliation with its neighbours took place in the context of its transformation into Europe’s economic powerhouse, and at a time when memories of the war were still very much alive. Japanese ‘apology diplomacy’, belated and half-hearted by comparison, was launched when the country’s economic growth had just stalled, while China’s rapid expansion was just beginning. By the early 2000s, as anti-Japan protests swept Chinese cities (in 2005, then again in 2010 and 2012) – in part provoked by the posturing of unrepentant rightists in Japan – a Japanese public battered by economic adversity and largely ignorant of

wartime history was increasingly disinclined to double down on the apologies of the previous decade. Intimidated and resentful in the face of apparently fanatical Chinese and Korean hostility, many were ready to give a sympathetic hearing to their own nationalist right.

The issue with comparative analyses of Europe's achievement of post-war reconciliation does not necessarily concern whether or not Asian societies can or should learn lessons from this. It is the need for narratives of Asia's 'memory problem'³² to move beyond a rather judgemental emphasis on the moral failure of Japanese elites to follow a normative European path, towards an understanding of the deeper geopolitical realities that have made such a path exceptional and extremely hard to replicate. Processes of reconciliation are inevitably shaped by the power relations between the parties involved. As the end of the second decade of the 21st century nears, the nationalist anxiety in Japan generated by economic stagnation and consciousness of weakness vis-à-vis China contrasts dramatically with a now-united Germany's self-confident status as Europe's economic, political and, arguably, moral leader.

Beyond the nation-state and the textbook

We have explained why significant regional geopolitical differences within a global post-war context matter, and thus why Second World War commemoration in Asia deserves its own history as a discrete phenomenon subject to its own internal dynamics. It is our contention throughout this volume that the history of war remembrance needs to be de-centred and provincialized before it can be understood as part of a wider global historical process of the sort postulated by Winter. By the same token, we suggest that, on closer inspection, global frames such as the post-Cold War may not ultimately prove as useful as they initially appear.

At the same time, what we are suggesting is not the adoption of a culturalist approach in which war remembrance in Asia is assumed to be a unified phenomenon set in conceptual opposition to equally essentialized Western practice. Certainly, there is more research to be done on the religious dimensions of war remembrance in Asia, an issue which some of the chapters that follow seek to illuminate. Henrik Kwon's revelatory study of war memory in Vietnam has opened many scholars' eyes to the prevalence across many parts of the region of

³² Mikyoung Kim and Barry Schwartz (eds.), *Northeast Asia's Difficult Past* (2010).

the belief that the ghosts of war still walk among the living.³³ Across East and Southeast Asia the return, and dutiful ritual handling of, the remains of the war dead has taken on a special significance as Asian descendants (even of convicted war criminals) strive to appease and put to rest these wandering spirits. Asian religious traditions, including Christianity, have shaped understandings of reconciliation and expiation. As Tessa Morris-Suzuki has noted, the word ‘reconciliation’ emerged in public discourse in Japan and South Korea only in the last decade of the 20th century, largely due to the influence of overseas developments in global memory culture. Tellingly, the Japanese and Korean terms for this concept were previously typically applied in a judicial context to mean legal settlement, a fact relevant when we consider (as Frost and Watanabe show) that even those involved in grassroots reconciliation activism acknowledge that their efforts can only succeed following compensatory justice.³⁴ Finally, as in Europe (though to a lesser extent), not just religious beliefs but also religious organizations have operated transnationally to shape remembrance and especially reconciliation practices between former enemies, as Terry Smyth demonstrates in his contribution to this volume.

Moreover, in cultural terms, war remembrance in Asia has been influenced not only by religion but also by other belief systems that underline the diversity subsumed under the ‘Asian’ moniker. Official war commemoration in communist states drew (and in China, Vietnam and North Korea continues to draw) heavily on Soviet practice, in terms of form, language and symbolism. If the iconography on display in the statue garden of Nagasaki’s Peace Park is anything to go by, communist symbolism also exerted an influence beyond the communist bloc. In the 1970s, Nagasaki’s municipal authorities derived considerable support for their Peace Park from the statutory contributions of communist governments in Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, in Hong Kong and Southeast Asian societies still under direct European rule, or just undergoing decolonization, colonial networks helped shape the nature of war remembrance, as Schumacher shows here. Besides the colonial authorities themselves, an important role was played by transnational organizations such as the Asian chapters of the British Legion that provided powerful platforms for border-crossing civil society action, with allegiances and objectives shifting as the sun eventually set on the British Empire in Asia. Once again, it pays to recognize that these transnational connections predated the assumed emergence of a post-1989 ‘global public culture’.

³³ Henrik Kwon, *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* (2008)

³⁴ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Timothy Y. Tsu and Morris Low, *East Asia Beyond the History Wars: Confronting the Ghosts of the Past* (2013).

Of course, the cultural diversity of war remembrance activities across Asia – whether operative at a national or transnational level, or inflected by communist, colonial, Buddhist, Confucian, Christian, Muslim or Hindu practices – begs the question of whether our pan-Asian historical lens is any more useful than a global or national one. Just as the history of Asian war remembrance has differed markedly from that of Western Europe, so the East Asian experience has been clearly distinguishable from that of Southeast Asia (let alone South Asia). Likewise, although anti-imperialism constitutes a thread unifying many Asian national narratives, non-communist former European colonies in the region have remembered the wars of 1931-45 in different ways from communist countries such as China or Vietnam – in terms both of *what* is remembered, and *how*.

Some years ago, Arlif Dirlik, in a volume related to the fiftieth anniversary of the Japanese surrender in 1945, made the point that within the Asia and Pacific regions various nationalities ‘remember the wars through different temporalities and with various urgent political issues brought into sharpest focus.’³⁵ He therefore posited, in an argument that in this volume we partly support, that World War Two in Asia was in fact many wars, and ‘that for most people caught up in the world war, their own local wars were of utmost significance.’³⁶ Hence, World War Two in China has been commemorated as the Anti-Japanese Resistance War that commenced, as the PRC government has recently emphasized, not in 1941, 1939 or even 1937, but with the September 1931 Japanese invasion of northeast China.³⁷ 1995 was commemorated by some Chinese less as a fifty-year milestone than as the centennial of modern Japanese aggression that began with the First Sino-Japanese war of 1894-95.³⁸ Given all this, should not the nation-state and the diverse national experiences of Asian war remembrance remain our primary focus? Is there any good reason for us to attempt to articulate a regional perspective over and above the comparative analysis of discrete national experiences?

The reason for doing so relates to our original point concerning those fundamental changes in war memory sites and practices across Asia in the years since Dirlik wrote. To take but one example, visitors to the new annex of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall (NMM), opened in 2016, will find themselves in a profoundly nationalist public space, yet one that does more than reinforce old patriotic narratives about a local war. The captions and design

³⁵ Takashi Fujitani and Lisa Yoneyama (eds), *Perilous Memories: the Asia Pacific War(s)* (2001), p. 3.

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ ‘Textbooks change: China’s war against Japanese aggression lasted 14 years instead of eight’, *South China Morning Post*, 10 January 2017.

³⁸ Takashi Fujitani and Lisa Yoneyama (eds), *Perilous Memories: the Asia Pacific War(s)* (2001)

techniques make clear that the intended audience is the modern-day and mobile museum-going public, both domestic and international. For both audiences, the narrative purpose of these new exhibits is clear: to place the PRC's wartime past at the centre of a globally shared historical experience (namely world war), thereby underlining the international significance of China's national triumph. In this museum, the wars of 1931-45 are no longer simply a story of anti-Japanese resistance; they have become part of the global wartime drama in which China emerged victorious on the right side of history. The sacrifice of Chinese lives in the international struggle against fascism is depicted as ushering in global peace and a post-war international order of which China was a central architect. Far from represented as isolated, bullied and resentful, China is presented in this new 'victory' annex as a consummate global player and exemplary ally, with much emphasis accorded to the international goodwill (across Asia and beyond) garnered in the course of national resistance to Japanese aggression.

As Vickers discusses in his chapter on 'comfort women' commemoration, Nanjing's newly-opened Comfort Station Memorial Museum (formally an annex of the NMM) evinces a similar thematic emphasis, this time portraying wartime sex slavery as a common pan-Asian experience that China shares with other countries subjected to Japanese conquest and occupation. But here the treatment is less gung-ho and nationalist, with the narrative instead adopting a more nuanced and internationalist approach, engaging more directly with the experience of victims of wartime atrocities than Chinese war museums typically do. The final exhibit in this gallery, which moves from an exploration of sex slavery in occupied China to cover, in detail, the rest of East Asia and Southeast Asia, depicts a Dutch Eurasian former 'comfort woman' meeting her Chinese fellow victim more than fifty years after the war's end. A photograph shows both embracing as long-lost sisters. This new exhibition is part of the same process of internationalizing local war memories to stress China's centrality to a broader human narrative connecting it to other parts of Asia and the globe. As Vickers argues, this museum's more sophisticated approach to narrating that history reflects an alliance of convenience between scholars and curators long committed to the cause of 'comfort women' commemoration, and the diplomatic agenda of a regime newly determined to 'weaponise' the issue to discomfit Japan and project Chinese influence.

Kirk Denton's chapter on the Jianchuan museum complex also alerts us to the diversity of curatorial visions that inform Chinese war museums, as well as the rather narrow parameters within which those visions must be expressed. Denton points us to the important interactions between the different levels of government that participate in the memory-making processes, from the central authorities in Beijing to the provincial and county levels. Taking this very rare

instance of a private Chinese museum that deals with the war with Japan, he analyzes its role as an ‘active agent’ – intertwined with but distinct from the institutions of the party-state – in contributing to a new or ‘alternative’ remembering of that conflict within China, and beyond.

The emphasis on connectivity in official Chinese commemorative discourse – moving away from parochial remembrance to commemorations that blend nationalism and internationalism – is mirrored by shifts in the connections between the sites and practices through which the wars of 1931 to 1945 are remembered. The NMM, since its revamp in 2007 under the then director Zhu Chengshan, has made repeated efforts to forge links with atrocity remembrance sites across the world. An alliance was formed between the institution and the Shoah Foundation in the United States, while a cable released by Wikileaks revealed Zhu lobbying American diplomats in Shanghai for stronger ties between the NMM and Washington’s Holocaust Memorial Museum, which he had visited and whose exhibitionary techniques he claimed to have borrowed. These ventures reveal Zhu’s internationalist curatorial ambitions. Before seeking these American links, however, he had ensured that the NMM was embedded in earlier peace museum networks with origins in the activities of Japanese actors who decades earlier had promoted a similarly global nexus of war remembrance. The commemoration of nuclear cataclysm in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, while always stressing local victimhood, has never been limited in its meaning to Japan. From the very beginning, as Zwigenberg shows, these tragedies have been memorialized as experiences for all humanity to contemplate, both (in the early years of ‘atoms for peace’ at least) in a positive as well as in a cautionary sense.³⁹

All of this points to the difficulties in analysing war remembrance in Asia as merely a series of discrete, if comparable, national experiences, focused around specific national *lieux de mémoire*, which at times have stimulated regional conflicts. As chapters in this volume by Allen and Vickers show, a notable development in war remembrance in Asia in recent years has been the transnational touring exhibition, involving official or non-official bilateral collaboration. And just as exhibitions now travel through and beyond the region, so, increasingly, do the consumers of war memory: making comparisons, seeing parallels and connections, and sometimes feeling empathy and sympathy (as many sites and practices are designed to prompt them to do) across national boundaries. The transnational context in which

³⁹ Zwigenberg, *Hiroshima*

war memories are produced and consumed across Asia is not one that much of the literature on this subject has so far captured, but it is one which this volume begins to attempt to uncover.⁴⁰

For if, indeed, we are to speak of ruptures of memory in Asia following the end of the Cold War, perhaps the reality is not so much of wartime experiences buried by the global contest between communism and capitalism suddenly bursting into view after 1989. Rather, the development that has done most to reshape war remembrance in Asia since that date has been the increasing interconnectivity of transnational practices, building in part on existing commemorative networks, both physical and performative. Discrete nationalist detonations of war remembrance, their fuses often primed at the height of the global Cold War, have since 1989 become part of an interconnected and self-sustaining regional war boom – thanks in large part to the growth of tourism, both domestic (especially within China) and transnational. New practices of remembrance, by reaching out to international audiences, and by internationalizing patriotic memories, have transformed memories of conflicts previously refracted through local or national lenses into a shared pan-Asian experience, which in turn claims an equal place in the wider, global, story. For example, Mitter, in the epilogue to his definitive study, *China's War with Japan* (2013), notes how Chongqing has in recent years sought to highlight its importance as the wartime capital of a Republic of China that was pivotal to the global anti-fascist alliance, primarily in order to bolster the case for greater recognition of the city's importance 'by all Chinese' (page 383).

Lastly, the decades since 1989 have seen a proliferation of war memory genres in Asia, the significance of which this volume seeks to recognize, but which many earlier studies have overlooked. As noted above, the state remains the major player in the production of war memories across the region. Nevertheless, it no longer holds the monopoly. As chapters here by Denton and other contributors highlight, private, non-state actors have become increasingly active in the war remembrance arena since the early 1990s, building alternative museums and memorials, and pioneering new types of remembrance, such as the private battlefield tour or reconciliation pilgrimage. Much of their activity flies beneath the radar of an international media still obsessed with the ritual appearances of East Asian leaders at key national memory sites. Yet this diversification of war remembrance has been profoundly significant in creating new genres through which the past is consumed and commemorated. Japan's textbook controversy erupted in the 1980s when public access to wartime history, in that country as

⁴⁰ Muzaini and Yeoh are spearheading attempts to bring the consumers of memory sites into the picture. Hamzah Muzaini and Brenda S.A. Yeoh, *Contested Memoryscapes: The Politics of Second World War Commemoration in Singapore* (2016)

elsewhere, was largely mediated through formal education at schools and universities. Perhaps inevitably, textbooks have received an enormous amount of attention from scholars of Asian war memory.⁴¹ Today, however, through the explosive emergence of a conflict heritage industry, war memory has also become a fixture of regional tourism and leisure.

This development is, of course, part of a wider war memory boom in popular culture, most evident in China's television serials that, on a daily basis, consign hundreds of Japanese aggressors to a deservedly bloody end. Films, television dramas, art and literature have certainly contributed mightily, in their own ways, to Asia's war remembrance fixation. Nevertheless, such creative genres (as distinct from those historical documentaries that feature survivors and eyewitnesses) rarely aspire to provide the same assumed authenticity as the memory sites and practices that constitute our focus here. It is the proliferation of these 'authentic' sites and practices – each linked to some presumed vessel of concrete historical reality (artefact, remnant, landscape, heroic eye-witness or survivor) – that most clearly defines the recent shift in Asian war remembrance, as the following chapters demonstrate.

⁴¹ Edward Vickers and Krishna Kumar (eds.), *Constructing Modern Asian Citizenship* (2015); Paul Morris, Naoko Shimazu, Edward Vickers (eds.), *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia* (2014); Gi-Wook Shin and Daniel C. Sneider (eds.), *History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia* (2011); Marie Lall and Edward Vickers (eds.), *Education as a Political Tool in Asia* (2009); Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones (eds.), *History Education and National Identity in East Asia* (2005).