

# History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia

Divided memories

*Edited by*  
**Gi-Wook Shin** and  
**Daniel C. Snider**



Routledge Contemporary Asia Series

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and Daniel C. Snider**

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# History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia

Over the past fifteen years, Northeast Asia has witnessed growing intraregional exchanges and interactions, especially in the realms of culture and economy. Still, the region cannot escape from the burden of history.

This book examines the formation of historical memory in four Northeast Asian societies (China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) and the United States, focusing on the period from the beginning of the Sino-Japanese war in 1931 until the formal conclusion of the Pacific War with the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1951.

The contributors analyse the recent efforts of Korean, Japanese, and Chinese scholars to write a 'common history' of Northeast Asia and question the underlying motivations for their efforts and subsequent achievements. In doing so, they contend that the greatest obstacle to reconciliation in Northeast Asia lies in the existence of divided, and often conflicting, historical memories. The book argues that a more fruitful approach lies in understanding how historical memory has evolved in each country and been incorporated into respective master narratives. Through uncovering the existence of different master narratives, it is hoped that citizens will develop a more self-critical, self-reflective approach to their own history and that such an introspective effort has the potential to lay the foundation for greater self- and mutual understanding and eventual historical reconciliation in the region.

This book will be essential reading for students and scholars of Asian history, Asian education, and international relations in East Asia.

**Gi-Wook Shin** is the director of Shorenstein APARC; the Tong Yang, Korea Foundation, and Korea Stanford Alumni Chair of Korean Studies; the founding director of the Korean Studies Program; Senior Fellow at FSI; and Professor of Sociology at Stanford University.

**Daniel C. Snider** is the Associate Director for Research at the Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center at Stanford University.

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Divided memories  
*Edited by Gi-Wook Shin and Daniel C. Snieder*

# Contributors

**Daniel Chirot** is Job and Gertrud Tamaki Professor of International Studies at the University of Washington. He has written books about social change, Eastern Europe, ethnic conflict, and tyranny, and he is the co-author of *Why Not Kill Them All?* (2006) about political mass murder. He has edited or coedited books on Leninism's decline, on entrepreneurial ethnic minorities, on ethnopolitical warfare, and on the economic history of Eastern Europe. He founded the journal *East European Politics and Societies*. His research has been helped by the Guggenheim, Rockefeller, and Mellon Foundations. He has consulted for the National Endowment for Democracy, the Ford Foundation, and CARE. In 2004–2005 Chirot was a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace working on African ethnic and religious conflicts. He has a BA from Harvard University and a PhD from Columbia University.

**Chung Jaejeong** is a specialist in modern Korean history and the history of Korean–Japanese relations, and completed his undergraduate studies and postgraduate research in Korean and Asian history at the Universities of Seoul and Tokyo. He currently serves as professor and dean of the College of Humanities at the University of Seoul. He is also president of the Northeast Asian History Foundation.

Chung serves as coordinator of a Korean historians' group that discusses historical issues with counterpart Japanese historians. He headed an earlier joint Korea–Japan committee set up to discuss historical reconciliation. He has written a number of books, including *Japanese Colonial Control over Korean Railroads and the Korean People's Response (1892–1945)* (in Korean and Japanese); *A New History of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Korea* (in Japanese); *The Teaching of Japanese History in Korea* (in Japanese); *The Teaching of Korean History in Japan* (in Korean); and *The History of Korea–Japan Relations: The View from Kyoto* (in Korean).

**Peter Duus**, a historian of modern Japan, is William E. Bonsall Professor of History Emeritus at Stanford University. He has taught at Washington University, Harvard University, and Claremont Graduate School as well as Stanford. His published work includes *Party Politics and Political Change in*



*Taisho Japan* (1969), *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea* (1995), *The Japanese Discovery of America* (1997), several edited volumes on Japanese colonialism and imperialism, and numerous articles on modern Japan's intellectual, economic, and colonial history. He is also the editor of volume 6 of the *Cambridge History of Japan* (1988) and the author of two widely used textbooks, *Feudalism in Japan* and *Modern Japan*. *Rediscovering America*, an edited anthology of Japanese observations of America, is currently in press.

**Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao** is currently the director of Institute of Sociology and a joint appointment research fellow of the Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies (CAPAS), both at Academia Sinica, and professor of sociology at National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan. His areas of specialization include civil society and new democracies, middle class in the Asia-Pacific sustainable development, and NGO studies. His most recent publications include *Social Movements March Again in Taiwan* (co-editor, 2010); *Cross-Border Marriage with Asian Characteristics* (co-editor, 2010); *Japan-Taiwan Relations in East Asia's New Era* (in Japanese, co-editor, 2010); *Non-Profit Sector: Organization and Practice* (co-editor, 2009); *The Rise of China: Beijing's Strategies and Implications for the Asia-Pacific* (co-editor, 2009); *Deepening Local Sustainable Development in Taiwan* (co-editor, 2008), and *Asia-Pacific Peace Watch* (co-editor, 2008).

**Alisa Jones** researches East Asian history and politics with a focus on China. Her recent work has explored historiography and history education in the post-Mao period; in particular, the ways in which knowledge about the past has been produced, disseminated and consumed, and the role history has played in domestic and international politics. She has been a researcher at Leeds, Stanford, and Hanyang Universities, and is headed to Taiwan in 2011 as a fellow of the Centre for Chinese Studies. She is co-editor (with Edward Vickers) of *History Education and National Identity in East Asia* and author of *History and Citizenship Education in post-Mao China: Politics, Policy, Praxis*.

**Li Weike** is professor of Curriculum and Teaching Materials at the Research Institute of the People's Republic of China, director of the History Editorial Department of People's Education Press, and secretary-general of the National Council for History Teaching of the Chinese Society of Education. For nearly thirty years, he has been engaged in the research of history textbooks for middle school. He was the co-author and chief editor of several sets of history textbooks for primary school, junior high school, senior high school, teachers' training school, and adult education of China. He has published many scholarly articles, including "The Nature and Change of the Korean War."

**Hiroshi Mitani** is a professor in the Department of Area Studies in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Tokyo. His major areas of research



are Meiji Regeneration of Japan and regional history of East Asia during the nineteenth century; comparative history of revolution, nationalism, and the public sphere; and historical dialogue and reconciliation in East Asia. His publications and edited works include *Escape from Impasse: the Decision to Open Japan* (2006); *Otona no tame no Kingendaishi* [Modern History for Adults: Japan and East Asia in the Modern World] (2009); *Higashi Ajia no Koron Keisei* [Public Sphere in East Asia] (2004); and *Meiji Ishin to Nashonarizumu* [Meiji Regeneration and Nationalism] (1997). *Kokkyo o Koeru Rekishi Ninshiki* [Contentious Issues in Sino-Japanese Relations], (2006), is also forthcoming in English.

**Soon-Won Park** is associate professor of modern Korean and East Asian History in the History Department, Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul, Korea. She holds a PhD in modern Korean history from Harvard University. She is the author of *Colonial Industrialization and Labor in Korea: The Onoda Cement Factory* (1999), and "Beneath the Colonial Industrial Growth: Urbanization of Korean Labor," in *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, edited by Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson (1999). Park also coedited *Rethinking Historical Injustice and Reconciliation in Northeast Asia: The Korean Experience* (2006). Currently, her research focuses on the themes of the politics of remembrance and history problems in Northeast Asia and the sociocultural aspect of colonial modernity in the interwar Korea focusing on the year 1929.

**Gi-Wook Shin** is the director of the Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center; the Tong Yang, Korea Foundation, and Korea Stanford Alumni Chair of Korean Studies; the founding director of the Korean Studies Program; a senior fellow at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies; and a professor of sociology at Stanford University. As a historical-comparative and political sociologist, his research has concentrated on areas of social movements, nationalism, development, and international relations.

Shin is the author and editor of numerous books and articles. His most recent books include *One Alliance, Two Lenses: US-Korea Relations in a New Era* (2010); *Cross Currents: Regionalism and Nationalism in Northeast Asia* (2007); *Rethinking Historical Injustice and Reconciliation in Northeast Asia* (2006); and *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics and Legacy* (2006). Due to the wide popularity of his books, many of his publications have been translated and distributed in Korea. His articles have appeared in academic journals including *American Journal of Sociology*, *Nations and Nationalism*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *International Sociology*, *Asian Survey*, and *Asian Perspectives*.

Shin is currently engaged in a project addressing historical injustice and reconciliation in Northeast Asia with a particular focus on the responsibility and role of the United States and a project on South Korean democratization. *South Korean Social Movements: From Democracy to Civil Society* will be published in 2011 from these projects.

Shin is not only the recipient of numerous grants and fellowships, but also continues to actively raise funds for Korean and Asian studies at Stanford. He gives frequent lectures and seminars on topics ranging from Korean nationalism and politics to Korea's foreign relation and the plight and history of Korean Americans. He writes op-eds in both Korean and American newspapers and serves on councils and advisory boards in the United States and South Korea. Before coming to Stanford, Shin taught at the University of Iowa and the University of California, Los Angeles. After receiving his BA from Yonsei University in Korea, he was awarded his MA and PhD from the University of Washington.

**Daniel C. Sneider** is the associate director for research at Shorenstein APARC. He currently directs the center's research on nationalism and regionalism and the Divided Memories and Reconciliation project, a three-year comparative study of the formation of historical memory in East Asia. His own research is focused on current US foreign and national security policy in Asia, including work on a diplomatic history of the building of the United States' Cold War alliances in Northeast Asia.

Sneider was a long-time foreign correspondent and most recently served as the foreign affairs columnist of the *San Jose Mercury News*. His twice-weekly column looking at international issues and national security from a West Coast perspective was syndicated nationally on the Knight Ridder Tribune wire service. Previously, Sneider served as national/foreign editor of the *San Jose Mercury News*. From 1990 to 1994, he was the Moscow Bureau Chief of the *Christian Science Monitor*, covering the end of Soviet Communism and the collapse of the Soviet Union. From 1985 to 1990, he was Tokyo Correspondent for the *Monitor*, covering Japan and Korea. Prior to that he was a correspondent in India, covering South and Southeast Asia. He also wrote widely on defense issues, including as a contributor and correspondent for *Defense News*, the national defense weekly.

Sneider's writings have appeared in many publications, including the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, *National Review*, the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, the *Oriental Economist*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Financial Times*, and *Yale Global*. He is the coeditor of *Cross Currents: Regionalism and Nationalism in Northeast Asia* (2007), and coeditor of *First Drafts of Korea: The US Media and Perceptions of the Last Cold War Frontier* (2009), as well as a forthcoming volume on regionalism in South Asia. He has also contributed to other volumes including "Strategic Abandonment: Alliance Relations in Northeast Asia in the Post-Iraq Era" in *Towards Sustainable Economic and Security Relations in East Asia: US and ROK Policy Options* (Korea Economic Institute, 2008).

Sneider has a BA from Columbia University in East Asian history and a master's in public administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

**Haruo Tohmatsu** is a professor of diplomatic/war history at the National Defense Academy of Japan. He holds a DPhil in international relations from the University of Oxford. His research interests include the League of Nations mandate/United Nations trusteeship systems, the history of Anglo-Japanese relations, the Russo-Japanese War, the Sino-Japanese War, UN peacekeeping operations, and disputes over interpretation of history. He co-authored *Pearl Harbor* (2001); and *A Gathering Darkness: The Coming of War to the Far East and the Pacific, 1921–1942* (2004). He also contributed to *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations 1600–2000* (2003); *Imperialism on Trial: The International Oversight of Colonial Rule* (2006); *World War Zero: The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, (2006); and *The Battle for China: Essays on the Operational History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945* (2010).

# Preface

The Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (Shorenstein APARC) has conducted a three-year comparative study of the formation of historical memory regarding the wartime era in Asia. The aim of the study was to deepen understanding of how each nation engaged in that war in Northeast Asia, including the United States, forms its own perception of that tumultuous period.

This volume is the first to emerge from that multi-year project, the first year of which focused on a comparative study of the high school history textbooks of Japan, South Korea, the Peoples Republic of China, Taiwan, and the United States. The contents of this volume centre on excerpted translations of the textbooks of those school systems, focusing on key issues of the wartime era. That study was presented to an international conference at Stanford University in February 2008. The contributions to this volume are based on articles presented to that conference.

Two other volumes follow from this project. The next is a study of the role of cinema, and popular culture more broadly, in the formation of wartime historical memory. The final volume will present profiles of elite opinion makers in China, Japan, South Korea, and the United States and their views on the wartime period.

Our hope is that this volume, and those that follow, will deepen mutual understanding and contribute to the process of reconciliation among those who still bear the scars of war in Asia.

Gi-Wook Shin  
Director, Shorenstein APARC

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We also acknowledge the important contributions made by colleagues at Stanford University for assistance in the conception and execution of this project at every stage. This project would not have been possible without the advice and support of three Stanford historians: Professors Peter Duus, Mark Peattie, and Yumi Moon. We also take note of the contributions of various of our contributors not only in writing chapters for this volume but in providing invaluable assistance in carrying out the project: Professors Li Wei-ke, Chung Jae Jong, Kim Do-Hyung, Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao, Haruo Tohmatsu, Hitoshi Mitani, Alisa Jones, Soon-Won Park, and Daniel Chiro.

We also thank the group of Stanford graduate students at the Center for East Asian Studies who worked tirelessly on the team that prepared the translations of the textbooks: Korean textbooks: Daisy Y. Kim and Yoo Jung Lee; Japanese textbooks: Daniel J. Sullivan; Chinese textbooks: Zhijian Qiao and Mingqian Chen; Taiwanese textbooks: Eng Wee Chua and Yuen Yuen Ang. In addition, we thank Asako Otomo, who also assisted with the Japanese textbook translations. The Shorenstein APARC staff also made a significant contribution to the organization of the conference. And not least, we thank Victoria Tomkinson, who has prepared the manuscript for publication.

Gi-Wook Shin and Daniel C. Snider  
Shorenstein APARC

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