FRANCO-GERMAN RECONCILIATION AND ITS IMPACT ON CHINA AND JAPAN: SCHOLARLY DEBATE*

Min Shu
Centre for European Studies, Fudan University

ABSTRACT

The extent to which the experience of Franco-German reconciliation is relevant in East Asia is an intriguing question to integration scholars as well as diplomatic practitioners. This article examines scholarly works on the Franco-German experience published in China and Japan during the past fifteen years. The aim is twofold. First, the analysis highlights the factual details upon which the Chinese and Japanese understandings of Franco-German reconciliation are based. Second, we identify the rhetorical patterns adopted by Chinese and Japanese scholars when they argue for the (ir-) relevance of Franco-German experience in East Asia. Based on the theory of communicative action in world politics, the article contends that, while it is unlikely that China and Japan will follow the exact path of Franco-German reconciliation, the common reference to Europe provides a useful communicative platform to reconsider the relationship between the two Asian countries.

* An early version of this paper was presented at the 2nd NESCA (Network for European Studies Centres in Asia) Workshop held in Christchurch, New Zealand in July 2006. The author wishes to thank the workshop participants for comments and suggestions. The helpful comments from the editor and two anonymous reviewers are gratefully acknowledged. All the remaining errors are the responsibility of the author.
INTRODUCTION

The successful experience of European integration has been widely regarded as a role model of inter-state cooperation and regional integration (Mattli 1999; Laursen 2004). An oft-mentioned part of it is the post-war reconciliation between France and Germany. Considering the disastrous wars fought between the two countries over centuries, the formation of Franco-German alliance after the Second World War was an extraordinary achievement (Simonian 1985). The question is to what degree, and in which ways, the experience of Franco-German reconciliation may shed light on the inter-state relationships and regional cooperation in other contexts.

As the Sino-Japanese relationship went through a difficult period over the past few years, the postwar Franco-German reconciliation has been repeatedly raised and discussed by politicians, diplomats, scholars and even internet surfers in China and Japan. Some argue that Japan should follow the German model to acknowledge her war responsibility and manage the postwar relationship with neighbouring countries (e.g., Zhang 2003; Wu 2005; Awaya et al. 1994; Kato 1993). Others contend that East Asia is a completely different regional context to which the Franco-German experience should not apply (e.g., Jiang 2003; Kisa 2001). Interestingly, the disagreement over the relevance of European experience cuts across national borders. In China and Japan, there are people promoting the Franco-German model as well as those who dismiss the European experience as irrelevant.

How, then, does the Chinese and Japanese debate on the European experience matter in East Asia? The ongoing debate shows that many have seen the potential role-model impact of Franco-German reconciliation on East Asia. Yet, the present disagreement indicates it is unrealistic to expect that China and Japan will follow the exact path of inter-state reconciliation and cooperation as postwar Europe. After all, the historical opportunity of postwar reconciliation no longer exists in East Asia. Perhaps more importantly, the recent Sino-Japanese tension has taken a more complex form than the sole issue of history recognition. However, it is equally premature to dismiss the importance of European experience. Because of the scale of the ongoing debate, the European model of inter-state reconciliation has successfully entered ‘the logic of arguing’ with regard to the Sino-Japanese

---
1 The recent tension between the two countries has involved several other issues, such as the territorial dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands and energy exploration in the East China Sea (Roy, 2005).
Franco-German Reconciliation and Its Impact on China and Japan

relationship. That is, today it is almost impossible to discuss the Sino-Japanese relationship without referring to the European experience (Wu 2005).

According to Risse (2000), ‘the logic of arguing’ characterizes a distinct mode of social interaction. It differs not only from the logic of consequentialism in strategic bargaining (Elster 1991), but also from the logic of appropriateness in rule-guided behaviour (March and Olsen 1989, 1998). The Habermasian mode of arguing has two unique features. First, actors may redefine their interests and preferences as they argue with one another. Second, the process of argumentation helps to cultivate a common understanding about the rules of the ‘world’ among the arguing partners. Thus, even if there is no clear-cut answer to the issue(s) under debate, the arguing process play a critical role in (i) clarifying the underlying interests of each actor and (ii) building norms and rules to guide their further interaction.

In order to assess the argumentative impact of the ongoing debate on Europe, this article attempts to map the recent Chinese and Japanese studies on Franco-German reconciliation. Specifically, it examines scholarly analysis of the postwar Franco-German experience published in China and Japan during the past fifteen years. Here, scholarly analysis refers to serious academic studies on the European experience of postwar inter-state reconciliation, as well as sensible intellectual debate engendered by such an analysis. The decision to focus on the voices of academic intellectuals is based on three considerations. First, serious academic studies usually rely on faithful interpretation of historical facts. By examining such factual details, we can understand how the history of Franco-German reconciliation is ‘reconstructed’ in the scholarly analysis. Second, intellectual debate tends to employ more reasonable and less emotional argumentation. The rhetorical patterns of these arguments are therefore more easily comparable in a cross-country analysis. Third, the scholarly debate on current affairs quite often leads political and public views. Examining scholarly works therefore provides a good starting point to make sense of the politicians and diplomats’ speeches and of related popular discussions over the media and internet.

The rest of the article proceeds as follows: In the next section we trace the theoretical basis of ‘the logic of arguing’, highlighting the unique role of argumentative action and deliberation in world politics. The third section examines how the experience of Franco-German reconciliation is studied and interpreted by Chinese and Japanese scholars. The analysis focuses on the factual details and rhetorical patterns of each argumentation. The fourth section then tries to identify a possible communicative platform between China and Japan on the relevance of European experience in East Asia. The article concludes with a theoretical reflection in the fifth section.
COMMUNICATIVE ACTION IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The theory of ‘communicative action in world politics’ was first discussed at length by Thomas Risse in a seminal article published in 2000 (see also Risse 1999, 2004). Risse claims that ‘processes of argumentation, deliberation, and persuasion constitute a distinct mode of social interaction to be differentiated from both strategic bargaining—the realm of rational choice—and rule-guided behaviour—the realm of sociological institutionalism’ (Risse 2000: 1). That is, the theory of communicative action in world politics is advanced against the background of the rationalist-constructivist debate in international relations (see Scharpf 1997; Ostrom 1998; Wendt 1999). Rational choice theory presumes that political actors’ behaviour is instrumentally oriented towards the logic of consequentialism. Sociological institutionalism, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of rules and norms in defining the appropriateness of social behavioural patterns (see March and Olsen 1989, 1998). In contrast to the former, communicative action does not require a clear definition of preferences and interests. It instead assumes ‘actors’ interests, preferences and the perceptions of the situation are… subject to discursive challenges’ in the arguing process (Risse 2000: 7). Different from the latter, communicative action often precedes the regulatory function of social norms and rules. Actors who engage in communicative action are searching for answers to the question of what constitutes appropriateness rather than how to be appropriate (Risse 2000: 6). Communicative action thus enables actors to reach a mutual consensus on the constituting elements of social norms and rules.

From a structure-agency perspective, the logic of consequentialism supposes that the agency understands his/her interests in a given structure, whereas the logic of appropriateness highlights the structural impact of norms and rules on agency’s behaviour (Hay 2002). The logic of arguing adopts a quite different analytical approach. As a starting point, it presumes that actors hold a very much fluid understanding of the structure and the agency. Actors are first of all engaging in the process of comprehending the structure—on ‘reality’ of the world and on the norms and rules constituting such a world. At the same time, actors are involved in the process of comprehending themselves—on their own preferences, interests and perceptions. Importantly, the comprehending process follows a specific mode of social interaction: argumentation through deliberation and persuasion. As Risse points out, human argumentation enables actors to ‘engage in truth seeking with the aim of reaching a mutual understanding based on a reasoned consensus’ (2000: 1-2).
Unsurprisingly, how the arguing process is conducted plays a vital role in deciding the outcomes of argumentation. It is worth noting that Risse draws theoretical inspiration mainly from Jürgen Habermas (1986). Compared with Risse’s logic of arguing, the Habermasian theory of communicative action is normatively demanding. More precisely, Habermas has defined a transcendental ‘ideal speech situation’\(^2\) where the quality of arguments is the sole deciding factor and all the involved actors are open to reasonable persuasion. Three preconditions are carefully specified for the ideal speech situation. First, actors are able to intersubjectively understand one another. Second, they must share a ‘common lifeworld’\(^3\) to ensure collective interpretations of the world and themselves. Third, everyone should share equal access to the arguing process.

To recast communicative action in world politics, Risse makes three important reinterpretations of the Habermasian ‘ideal speech situation’. First, ‘the degree to which a common lifeworld exists in international relations varies according to world regions and issue-areas’ (Risse 2000: 16). So, it is possible to understand the existence of a ‘common lifeworld’ as a matter of degree. Second, the ideal speech situation can be relaxed as long as the arguing process maintains truth-tracking behaviour and argumentation leads to reasoned consensus in international affairs (Risse 2000: 19). Third, communicative behaviour in the international arena ‘is likely to involve all three logics of social interaction’—that is, the logic of consequentialism, the logic of appropriateness and the logic of arguing altogether (Risse 2000: 21). The logic of arguing tends to play a key role in world politics, when actors hold uncertain views of the world and of themselves, and when existing argumentation is subject to rhetorical challenges.

Subsequent studies take seriously the reinterpretations made by Risse. One subject of particular interest is the condition(s) under which the logic of arguing may dominate the interaction in world politics. Case studies look into different international negotiations, and find that arguing is especially important during the agenda-setting phrase and in pre-negotiations, that is, a negotiation stage when the underlying issue is still under definition (Ulbert et al. 2004; Risse 2004). Another issue attracts theoretical attention is the inter-relationship between the three logics of social interaction. Several studies point out that the logic of arguing is often

\(^2\) Habermas discussed the ‘ideal speech situation’ at length in his influential two-volume work *The Theory of Communicative Action* (Habermas 1986, esp. vol. 2). Later, he further explores the normative implications of ‘ideal speech situation’ in deliberative politics (see Habermas 1996: 321-328).

\(^3\) The ‘common lifeworld’ is an equally important concept in the Habermasian theory of communicative action. It denotes a unique communicative environment in which actors are able to use linguistic instruments to exchange inter-subjectively their views on culturally defined subjects (see Habermas 1986, vol. 2: 119-152).
intricately mingled with the logic of consequentialism and the logic of appropriateness. For one thing, there are so-called ‘norm entrepreneurs’ who act strategically using special frames to achieve their aims without convincing others to change their preferences (Payne 2001). For another, communicative action in international negotiations cannot escape from the rules and norms shared among negotiators. To certain extent, the logic of arguing is operated within the rules of the logic of appropriateness (Müller 2004).

In summary, the logic of arguing draws attention to an oft-neglected aspect of social interaction. When actors are uncertain about their own identities and interests, and are unsure about the world and its constituting norms and rules, they are likely to engage in a process of argumentation in order to achieve mutual understanding based on reasoned consensus. It is necessary to point out that the outcome of argumentation depends crucially on the communicative environment, where reasoned rhetoric and shared understandings contribute to the quality of argumentation. Meanwhile, the extent to which the logic of arguing is influenced by strategic and/or rule-guided concerns plays an equally important role in shaping the communicative rationality.

In the light of the theoretical argument of communicative action in world politics, the Chinese and Japanese debate on Franco-German reconciliation offers an interesting case to explore the empirical implications of the logic of arguing in the Asian context. First of all, the debate on the relevance of European experience was motivated by the growing uncertainty over the Sino-Japanese relationship in East Asia—a vital precondition for communicative logic to take over. Furthermore, the increasing academic exchange beyond individual countries has turned scholarly debate into a special forum of the international public sphere, where the logic of arguing is of particular importance. The theory of communicative action in world politics contends that the communicative logic relies on (i) reasoned rhetoric and shared understandings, and (ii) the links between the logic of arguing and the logics of consequentialism and appropriateness. Against these two criteria, we proceed to examine the scholarly debate on Franco-German reconciliation in both China and Japan.

---

4 The so-called ‘second-track diplomacy’, for example, emphasizes the roles of non-official representatives and opinion leaders in dealing with the international issues traditionally handled only by diplomats (see Davies and Kaufman 2002).
Postwar Franco-German reconciliation is an important chapter of European history. In the field of European integration in particular, the postwar Franco-German alliance has been widely considered as the engine of European integration for the past half a century. To examine the scholarly debate on the European experience of Franco-German reconciliation, we start from the academic enquiries conducted by the scholars specialized in European integration.

The key Chinese text on the postwar Franco-German reconciliation was written by Wu Yikang (1996). Wu argues in his article that the postwar Franco-German alliance somewhat weakened after the reunification of Germany. While the analytical focus of the article is not related to East Asia, the author provides a comprehensive overview of the historical process of Franco-German reconciliation. The theoretical orientation of the analysis is neo-realist: Wu’s analysis draws special attention to the ways that both France and Germany recalculated their national interests against the background of the Cold War. In his view, Germany’s intention to become a politically normal country and France’s aim of building a stronger Europe were the keys to understanding the postwar Franco-German reconciliation. Despite the fact that the balance of power gradually shifted to the German side, the two countries managed to maintain their close partnership during the Cold War. However, uncertainties arose as a result of the end of the Cold War and the German reunification. Wu predicts that the Franco-German alliance would therefore enter a new phrase of weakened partnership. The analysis puts particular emphasis on the influence of political leadership on Franco-German reconciliation. Yet, it is worth mentioning that the article treats Germany as a normal European country, and there is no discussion of Germany’s handling of war responsibility.

By comparison, the Japanese scholar Toshiro Tanaka’s discussion of Franco-German reconciliation draws tentative lessons from the European experience and dwells on how East Asia and especially Japan may learn from Europe (Tanaka 2003). With regard to the historical details of the European experience, Tanaka takes a similar approach as Wu—emphasizing the special roles of national interests and political leadership in establishing and maintaining the Franco-German alliance in the postwar era. In addition, his analysis points to some key schemes adopted by France and Germany which aimed at cultivating close friendship among the youth and improving the public images of the two countries. In the concluding section, the author argues for the relevance of European
experience in East Asia and stresses the importance of improving public images in the process of inter-state reconciliation. In this way, the article has, to some extent, gone beyond neo-realist readings of the postwar Franco-German relationship. By emphasizing the impact of public images, the author has tentatively drawn the European lesson from a constructivist perspective.

The analytical approaches taken by Wu and Tanaka are not uncommon in the circle of Asian integration scholars. Although integration scholars in China and Japan normally regard the Franco-German experience as a role model of interstate reconciliation, Chinese accounts are more often than not dominated by neo-realist explanations, particularly with regard to the calculation of national interests and the impact of the Cold War (see Liang 1998; Wu 2003; Zhang 2003). Japanese scholars, while stressing neo-realist factors, tend to pay attention to alternative analytical perspectives, for example, the declining role of the nation states in postwar Europe (Amemiya 2001), the increasing economic interdependence, and social exchanges between France and Germany (Hirota 2001; Tanaka 1998). It appears that the difference in analytical perspective plays a critical role in shaping the views of integration scholars in China and Japan.

Whilst most integration scholars tend to admire the contribution of Franco-German reconciliation to regional cooperation and integration, intellectuals working in the area of the Asian-Pacific region often disagree with one another over the relevance of European experience in East Asia. This is especially the case in China. In 2002 and 2003 two influential articles written by non-integration scholars appeared in China. Both argue that China should adopt more flexible attitudes and policies towards the Sino-Japanese relationship (Ma 2002; Shi 2003). In one of the articles, the author briefly touches upon the unusual achievement of Franco-German reconciliation in Europe (Ma 2002). In less than three lines, he compares the disastrous war experiences between France and Germany with the creation of the euro and the making of the European Union (EU) Constitution, in an attempt to draw rhetorical comparison between Europe and Asia. His reference to the European experience soon provoked a wide-ranging debate in China about the proper Chinese policy towards Japan.

On the one hand, some Chinese scholars wrote in support of the role-model impact of Franco-German reconciliation on East Asia. Zhang Tuosheng, for example, argues that China and Japan should learn from the European experience and particularly Franco-German reconciliation in order to achieve sustainable peace and development in East Asia (Zhang 2003). In making his argument, Zhang suggests that the political leadership in China and Japan has a lot to learn from Europe. On the other hand, some scholars hold a different opinion and argue against the applicability of the European experience in Asia. In his comment on
the two articles mentioned earlier, Jiang Zhou launches perhaps the most comprehensive attack on the relevance of Franco-German experience in East Asia (Jiang 2003). The author first calls attention to the unsolved historical problems of war responsibility between China and Japan, challenging the argument that Japan has made sufficient public apologies about the war. He then looks into the historical context in which France and Germany managed to reach reconciliation, questioning the applicability of these conditions in today’s East Asia. These historical conditions include (i) the weakening of France and Germany after the Second World War, (ii) the support of the US, (iii) the disastrous war experiences, and (iv) the unity of French and German civilizations. In Jiang’s view, none of these conditions are presently met in relation to China and Japan.

On the whole, however, the non-integration scholars’ discussions on the relevance of European experience are short of in-depth factual analysis and easily resort to rhetorical argumentation. Their analyses have more or less followed the same neo-realist logic as integration scholars. Notably, two arguments stand out in the debate. First, the Franco-German reconciliation worked mainly because of the special balance of power in postwar Europe. Second, whether a similar situation is applicable to China and Japan is one thing; how China may benefit from the improved Sino-Japanese relationship is another important issue. Apparently, the logic of arguing is mixed with certain elements of the logic of consequentialism in the Chinese scholarly debate on Franco-German reconciliation.

In contrast, Japanese studies on Europe often take a fact-based analytical approach. With respect to the German handling of war responsibility in particular, there is a large body of academic literature comparing Germany and Japan. This literature not only examines the general topic of the Germany and Japan’s postwar responsibility, but explores related sub-fields such as war memorials, history textbook, war compensation, and the trials of war criminals. Moreover, there is even an academic journal *The Report on Japan’s War Responsibility* (Sensou Sekinin Kenkyu) dedicated to the topic, which has published four issues a year since 1993.

Most Japanese scholars working in this area admit that Japan has dealt with war responsibility in a less satisfactory manner than Germany. Yamaguchi, an important Japanese scholar in the field, refers war responsibility to the activities that intend to make up for the war crimes against peace and humanity (Yamaguchi 1994). For Japanese scholars, dealing with war responsibility requires (i) war criminals be judged against their crimes, (ii) countries that committed war crimes make a sincere apology for their past, and (iii) war-committing countries make full compensation for the resulting damages (Mochida 1994). In general, the Japanese literature shows that in all these aspects Germany has made more
concrete efforts to address her war responsibility. With regard to war criminals, the German Parliament passed a special resolution in 1979 to annual the time effect of Nazi crimes. According to it, war crimes are subject to legal charges in Germany without the constraint of time. So far the act has enabled legal investigations into more than 90,000 Germans, among which nearly 7,000 criminal charges were delivered (Mochida 1994). As far as war compensation is concerned, Germany not only recompensed Israel for the war crimes against Jews but also compensated for those who had died in the uprisings against Nazism. In addition, Germany paid huge amounts of money to the countries that had experienced the disastrous consequences of the war (Hirowatari 1994). Thanks to these efforts, neighbouring European countries generally agree that Germany had made serious and sincere apologies for the war.5

How, then, to explain Japan’s inadequate response to war responsibility? Comparing the postwar history of Germany and Japan, Yamaguchi identifies four factors that have led to Japan’s sluggishness in recognizing her war responsibility (Yamaguchi 1994). Firstly, the atomic bombs dropped in Japan made quite a few Japanese consider themselves as the victims of the war. This feeling has mingled with, and even blurred, the issue of Japan’s war responsibility. Secondly, because of the special stance of US occupation and the influence of the Cold War, Japan had quite different domestic and international environments in the postwar period. There was much less effort to bring charges against war crimes beyond the Tokyo War Crime Tribunal. Thirdly, the long-term dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party in Japanese politics reduces the immediate pressures on the political leadership to address Japan’s war responsibility. Fourthly, the postwar economic growth in Japan transformed ordinary Japanese people’s perceptions of East Asia, making good neighbouring environments a less prominent political issue.

As such, Japanese scholarly works on war responsibility draw on extensive factual details of the European experience. Compared with the scholarly discussion in China, Japanese scholars regard national interests as a less important issue. International and domestic politics mattered, but there were other issues of importance for Japanese scholars. Instead of examining the European experience through the logic of consequentialism, they seem more concerned with the appropriate dealing of war responsibility. In other words, the logic of arguing is bounded by the rules of the logic of appropriateness. Another surprising finding is that the comparative studies of war responsibility have evolved into a unique

5 It therefore came as a surprise when the Polish government referred to the suffering and atrocity of the Second World War during the period leading up to the renegotiation of the Constitutional Treaty in June 2007.
academic field. It becomes even clearer when one looks into the sub-areas of war responsibility studies in Japan.

The official visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, a special symbol of Japan’s handling of war responsibility, has been frequently criticized by other war-torn East Asian countries. Against this background, a detailed study of the European experience on war memorials is a welcome sign of serious scholarship. In 2002 Japanese scholar Minami published three consecutive articles on this particular topic (Minami 2002a, 2002b, 2002c). These articles examine how war memorials have been transformed in Europe over a period from the Napoleonic wars to the German reunification. According to this study, national war memorials prior to the First World War were widely characterized as a symbol of national victory (e.g., the Arc de Triomphe in France, Nelson’s Column in the UK, and Siegessäule in Germany). Individual sacrifice in the war stood no place in these war memorials. However, such a memorial pattern was challenged by ‘the tomb of unknown soldier’ immediately after the First World War. On the Armistice Day (11 November 1920), the opening ceremonies of the tomb of unknown soldier were held in London and Paris simultaneously. Thanks to this innovative approach, national war memorials were no longer a symbol of national victory. Instead, they became the ritual sites for individual soldiers who had died for the country. Nonetheless, in contrast to the British and French practise, war memorials in Germany continued to concentrate on the war itself. Fierce debate on selecting a proper site and architectural design for the ‘Imperial War Monument’ (Reichsheidenmal) carried on throughout the Weimar Republic. As the Nazis came to power, the German government renamed the national ‘War Memorial Day’ into ‘Heroic Memorial Day’. More worryingly, the Nazi government decided to provide strong support to the People’s Association of German War Tombs (Der Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsegräberfürsorge) to promote nationalistic memorials of war heroes. As Minami (2002a: 41-42) points out, the focus of German war memorials in the inter-war period has spiritually contributed to national re-mobilization during the Second World War.

Minami also finds that war memorials remained a disputed issue in Germany even after the Second World War. In East Germany the government built official memorial sites for the domestic uprising against Nazism as well as foreign soldiers who died in the war. On the tombstone in Berlin, for instance, ‘unknown combatant’ was written next to ‘unknown solider’ as the official inscription. Meanwhile, military and civilian war casualties were kept together at the war memorial sites in West Germany. After the German reunification, the newly built national war memorial continued to be devoted to both military and civilian casualties. Yet, questions arose as to whether this kind of war memorials may
have equalized those who died for the war and those who died because of the war. To address the criticism, the German government took the decision to build a new Holocaust Memorial in Berlin to reconfirm the solid stance against the violence of war. In retrospect, the European experience of war memorials has not been without controversies. Over the past centuries war memorials in Europe have transformed gradually from a heroic and nationalist symbol of victory to inclusive and transnational memorial sites whose major purpose is to condemn the violence of war.

Based on the European history of war memorials, Minami reconsiders the controversy surrounding the Yasukuni Shrine in Japan (Minami 2002c). The Yasukuni Shrine has long been a war memorial site devoted to Japanese soldiers who died for the country, regardless of the actual consequences of the war. Minami contends that heroic and nationalist ideology constitutes the public image of the Shrine. Not only have dead soldiers been memorialized as war heroes and semi-gods, but the Shrine also takes no consideration of civilian casualties of the war.6 More worryingly, the Shrine has reopened a war museum advocating a misinterpreted history of Japan’s involvement in the Second World War. To deal with these problems and avoid the German inter-war history, Minami (2002c) proposes that it is necessary to build a different national war memorial site with more inclusive memorial services and an honest record of Japan’s war history.

Apart from the issue of war memorials, how Germany dealt with war compensation also attracts the attention of, and the debate among, Japanese scholars (Sato 1991; Shimizu 1993; Hiriwatari 1994; Hamamoto 1995). Roughly speaking, Germany’s compensation for the Second World War consists of four different categories. The first was paid according to the domestic laws in West Germany. Related legal texts include *inter alia* the Federal Assistance Law in 1950, the Federal Compensation Law (Bundesentschädigungsgesetz) in 1953, and the Federal Returning Law (Bundesrückestattungsgesetz) in 1957. Each of these has its own target group and policy instruments. For instance, the Federal Compensation Law addresses involuntary sacrifices resulting from the Nazi oppression; the Federal Returning Law regulates the return of private properties improperly appropriated by the Nazi government. By 1993 the total amount of domestic compensation stood at about 75 billion deutsche marks. The second category was the war compensation that West Germany paid to other European countries. This was initially decided in 1953 according to the London Debt

---

6 Different interpretations of the military casualties placed in the Yasukuni Shrine emerged again in a recently published paper containing an email exchange between a Chinese scholar based in Switzerland and a Japanese official working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (Chiba and Xiang 2005).
Agreement. The precise amount of payment was settled subsequently by the bilateral agreements between West Germany and other European countries. In total, twelve European countries received about 1 billion deutsche marks from West Germany. The compensation paid to Israel and Jewish organizations comprised the third major part of Germany’s war compensation. This amounts to about 3.4 billion deutsche marks. Last but not least, some German companies were also involved in war compensation. During the war period German companies had made extensive use of forced labours (Zwangsarbeier). It is believed that there were roughly 7.91 million forced labours working in Germany towards the end of the war. To compensate for this, eight German companies paid more than 70 million deutsche marks to Jewish and humanitarian organizations over the past four decades. Put these four parts together, Germany compensated no less than 80 billion deutsche marks for the war. This amount, according to Shimizu (1993: 51), is as much as thirty times of Japan’s total war compensation.

Although most Japanese scholars recognize that Germany has made substantial efforts to deal with war compensation, they disagree on the precise role-model impact. Some question the specific aspects of Germany’s war compensation. First, East and West Germany’s different approaches to war compensation draw the attention of several Japanese scholars (Sato 1991; Hirowatari 1994). Different from West Germany, East Germany was not put in a position to make war compensation to other European countries. Based on the bilateral treaty between East Germany and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union renounced the right to demand war compensation in 1953. Poland later made a similar decision to give up her right of claiming war compensation. Considering the postwar settlement of war compensation in East Asia, some scholars argue that the experience of East Germany probably provides a better model for Japan. A second subject discussed by Japanese scholars concerns with the conceptual distinction between ‘compensation’ and ‘reparation’. According to Sato (1991: 296-297), ‘war reparation’ is the financial burdens (sometimes unduly) imposed on the losing side of the war. In contrast, ‘war compensation’ aims at making compensation for improper, unjustified and immoral behaviour in the war. The latter is therefore more appropriate to address the disastrous consequences of violence and immorality in the war. Based on these conceptual understandings, some Japanese scholars point to the fact that, in contrast to the Japanese case, private demands for war compensation were widely accepted by Germany in addition to the inter-state settlements of war reparation (Sato 1991; Hirowatari 1994).
A COMMUNICATIVE PLATFORM BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN?

Chinese and Japanese scholars both take the European experience of Franco-German reconciliation in a serious manner. Underlying various scholarly discussions are the questions of whether the European experience provides a role model and if yes, to what extent the European model is relevant in East Asia. With such intentions in their minds, it is fair to say that most scholarly argumentation advanced in academic works aims at ‘reaching a mutual understanding based on a reasoned consensus’ (Risse 2000: 1). Indeed, the logic of arguing is quite visible within the academic circles both of Japan and China. In China, what led to the postwar Franco-German reconciliation and whether the European experience is applicable to the Sino-Japanese relationship are the subjects dominating the logic of academic arguing. In Japan, the postwar experiences of Germany and Europe in terms of war responsibility, war memorials and inter-state reconciliation are the main topics that have caught the attention of the academic community. More importantly, the common reference to Europe has made it possible for the scholars of the two countries to engage in the truth-seeking process with regard to the current Sino-Japanese relationship. However, this does not mean that the other two modes of social interaction—the logic of consequentialism and the logic of appropriateness—have completely shied away from the debate. On the contrary, it is the ways the three modes of social interaction interact with one another that differentiate various scholarly works in the field.

As far as the Chinese works on the postwar European experience are concerned, the argumentation is often more rhetorically oriented than factually based. This is due to three reasons. First, there is a lack of cross-disciplinary communication between scholars specialized in Europe and those working on East Asian affairs in China. European integration scholars, such as Wu Yikang (1996) and Liang Ruiping (1998), produce in-depth analyses of postwar Franco-German reconciliation. Unfortunately the main contribution of these works is limited to European studies. Until recently there are few spillover effects across the disciplinary boundary of regional focus. Second, while East-Asia-focused scholars began to pay attention to the European experience, their analysis is lacking in a solid factual basis. In most cases their references to the European model are brief and thus vulnerable to counter-argumentation. Third, as the Sino-Japanese relationship receives wider public attention, Chinese scholars start to pay more attention to the rhetorical consequences of their argumentation. Rhetorical
elements are further strengthened as a result. Rhetorical action is ‘the strategic use of norm-based arguments’ (Schimmelfennig 2003: 48). In rhetorical argumentation, it is possible to identify the logic of consequentialism together with the logic of arguing. For some Chinese scholars, the role of national interest tends to dominate their interpretations of the postwar Franco-German alliance. The academic search for an appropriate model of the Sino-Japanese relationship, though conforming to the logic of arguing in many aspects, often stresses the strategic thinking about China’s interest in East Asia. On occasion the logic of arguing is given way to the logic of consequentialism.

With regard to the Japanese debates on Europe, the analysis not only identifies serious scholarship dealing with the factual details of postwar Europe but also finds the studies of ‘war responsibility’ as a unique field of academic enquiries. Admittedly, these are unexpected findings against the background of official Japanese positions on postwar handlings. The logic of arguing, however, provides some insightful clues as to the reasons for the quality of Japanese scholarship. After the Second World War, Japan became engaged in a long process of political self-identification. As the constitution was rewritten, military power was renounced, and political institutions were re-constructed, Japan faced considerable uncertainty about her political status in the world and especially her future role in East Asia. Despite the fact that the postwar economic growth has made such a soul-searching process less urgent, many Japanese scholars took the initiative and engaged themselves in serious self-identification in their studies. One of the topics that caught their attention has been the status of Germany in postwar Europe. As Risse (2000: 23) points out, ‘the logic of argumentative rationality and truth-seeking behaviour is likely to take over if actors are uncertain about their own identities, interests, and views of the world.’ The uncertainty of postwar Japanese identity must have contributed to the rich intellectual works on war responsibility.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Japanese scholars tend to concern themselves more with factual details, and sometimes intentionally stay away from rhetorical argumentation. This methodological approach places them in a good position to conduct positivist enquiries into the Franco-German reconciliation in postwar Europe. However, an unintended consequence is that, for some Japanese scholars, the relevance of European experience in East Asia becomes the question of whether Germany had properly dealt with her war responsibility. Depending on the depth and direction of factual enquiries, some find that the German conduct is commendable and should be relevant to Japan in the East Asian context (e.g., Yamaguchi 1994; Mochita 1994); others find problems and deficiencies in the Germany’s handling of war responsibility and therefore argue against the
relevance of the European experience (e.g., Sato 1991; Hirowatari 1994). In many cases the factual details of Germany’s postwar conduct turns into the sole factor in deciding the relevance of European experience. This is unfortunate because the logic of arguing is quite different from the logic of appropriateness (Risse 2000: 6-7). Scholars involved in the communicative action are not to make a simple right-or-wrong factual judgement, but should engage themselves in the search for rightness (i.e., what is the right thing to do) in the context of postwar Europe. Hence, while the positivist analysis of Germany’s postwar conduct is important, the logic of arguing regarding how Germany has conformed to an appropriate dealing of war responsibility is of more significance.

What are the main rhetorical patterns of the Chinese and Japanese debates on the relevance of European experience? Generally speaking, the European experience of Franco-German reconciliation has been perceived either from a nationalistic or from a post-nationalistic perspective. The nationalistic rhetoric draws on neo-realist arguments of national interests and the balance of power. Analytically, it holds that the recalculation of national interests has led to the historical reconciliation between France and Germany in postwar Europe. This view is largely shared by the Chinese and Japanese scholars working on European integration (Wu 1996; Tanaka 2003). Nationalistic rhetoric also claims that Germany’s dealing with war responsibility was instrumental to regain her nationhood in postwar Europe. In the case of West Germany, war compensation was closely associated with her postwar relationships with other European countries (Sato 1991: 300). And because of this, East and West Germany have dealt with their war compensation to neighbouring countries in quite different manners. In contrast to nationalistic interpretations, post-nationalistic standpoints consider the violent and immoral war experience as the ultimate obstacle to Germany’s integration into Europe. Franco-German reconciliation is only part of the European experience. A more profound transformation has taken place beyond the inter-state relationships. Minami’s detailed study on the European history of war memorials is a remarkable example (Minami 2002a, 2002b, 2002c). Nationalistic and heroic war memorials were once very popular throughout Europe. But as the tomb of unknown soldier came into being after the First World War, war memorials in Europe became increasingly oriented to addressing the violent nature of war. The disastrous consequences of the Second World War reinforced such a trend. In the postwar era Germany adopted a more inclusive approach to war memorials, regarding military and civilian casualties both as the undesirable consequences of war. Minami argues from a post-nationalistic perspective that only after confronting the memories of war-induced violence has
Germany succeeded in finding an appropriate way to deal with the complicated issue of war memorials (Minami 2002c).

The key question is whether it is possible to reconcile the nationalistic rhetoric with post-nationalistic argumentation in the Chinese and Japanese scholars’ debate on the European experience. Or, put differently, is there a communicative platform between Japanese and Chinese scholars on the European experience of dealing with postwar responsibility and reaching postwar reconciliation? The findings of our analysis are encouraging. First of all, the disagreement over the relevance of European experience in East Asia cuts across the two Asian countries. In both China and Japan, there are Europeanists who believe in the role-model impact of the European experience and Asianists who put more emphasis on the particularity of East Asian context. Thus, an initial communicative platform can be established by linking the Europeanists and the Asianists respectively across the two countries. Second, though nationalistic and postnational rhetoric may seem irreconcilable at first glance, they may complement each other and further deepen our understandings of the postwar German experience. This is because the nationalistic readings of the balance of power and the post-nationalistic understandings of the violence of war were two sides of the same coin in the German case. It also has become increasingly obvious that inter-state reconciliation in East Asia has to address simultaneously the balance of national interests and the concerns of public opinion. The former demands a delicate compromise between involved countries; the latter requires careful handling of ordinary people’s war memories. The nationalistic and post-nationalistic standpoints each provide a good starting point to tackle these two imminent issues. Last but not least, the tentative optimism also lies in the belief that the academic community conforms better to the logic of arguing. As long as each side is open to reasonable persuasion, it is possible to construct a viable communicative platform between the two rhetorical perspectives and among Chinese and Japanese scholars.

**CONCLUSION**

This article has examined the Chinese and Japanese scholarly debate on the European experience of Franco-German reconciliation as a possible model in East Asia. The enquiry leads to three major findings. First, there is a disciplinary division between European and Asian specialists in China. Most European specialists stress the importance of Franco-German reconciliation and argue for the relevance of European experience in East Asia. By contrast, Asian specialists
are much less familiar with the European model. They often disagree with one another over the role-model impact of the European experience. Second, we have uncovered a unique academic field of war responsibility studies in Japan. This may sound strange, but the postwar self-reidentification that Japan has been engaged in provides some explanation for the abundance of scholarly works on this topic. Third, the analysis has identified two distinctive rhetorical patterns in the Chinese and Japanese scholarly debate on Europe. One is the nationalistic approach that draws attention to the calculation of national interests and the influence of balance of power in postwar Europe. The other is the postnationalistic perspective that puts more emphasis on the immorality and violence of the war and their impacts on ordinary people’s memories.

Applying the theoretical framework of communicative action in world politics, the article regards the Chinese and Japanese scholarly debate on the European experience as an empirical case conforming to the logic of arguing. This working assumption finds partial support from the analysis. On the one hand, the academic enquiries into Franco-German reconciliation have contributed to the formation of a ‘reasoned consensus’ on the relevance of European experience in East Asia. Scholarly works in this field cover a wide range of topics such as the Franco-German alliance, Germany’s war responsibility, and war memorials in Europe. These studies not only form the academic communication in question, but also enhance the communicative status of postwar Europe as an external reference. Relying on careful factual analysis and reasoned rhetorical argumentation, the scholarly debate clearly features the logic of academic arguing. On the other hand, however, the logic of arguing is not the sole mode of social interaction at work. Due to the emphasis on national interests and the overuse of rhetorical arguments, some Chinese scholars are susceptible to the logic of consequentialism in their studies. In certain cases, the European experience becomes a rhetorical instrument rather than an argumentation in itself. By comparison, some Japanese scholars pay excessive attention to the factual details of Germany’s handling of war responsibility in postwar Europe. The logic of arguing sometimes is overtaken by the logic of appropriateness as the existing rules of appropriateness become the decisive factor for argumentation.

However, it is necessary to point out that the partial influences of the logics of consequentialism and appropriateness have not altered the dominant role of academic arguing in the current debate. The logic of arguing is of great value in clarifying the underlying preferences and interests and in establishing the norms and rules of social interaction. The scholarly debate on the relevance of the European experience in East Asia has followed such a direction against the growing uncertainty surrounding the Sino-Japanese relationship. It is precisely
because of the necessity of understanding China’s interest in the future Sino-Japanese relationship that the logic of arguing is occasionally influenced by the logic of consequentialism in the Chinese debate. Moreover, the scholarly debate has shown that the appropriate norms and rules of inter-state reconciliation in East Asia are still fluid, and indeed subject to reasonable argumentation in both China and Japan. It is remarkable that the European experience has been a focal point in the academic search for a ‘reasoned consensus’ on how to deal with the Sino-Japanese relationship. Based on reasoned rhetoric, scholarly works have suggested two distinctive approaches—nationalistic and post-nationalistic—to the possible rules and norms in question. Admittedly, China and Japan are unlikely to pursue the exact path of Franco-German reconciliation. It is also not clear how the scholarly debate will reshape public opinion and influence policy-makers in Japan and China. Nevertheless, the common reference to Europe following the logic of academic arguing has provided a useful communicative platform to reconsider the relationship between the two Asian countries.

REFERENCES

Hamamoto, Takashi (1995) ‘Sensou sekinin to sengo hosyou ni okeru nichidoku bunka hikaku’ (Comparing Japanese and German culture in relation to war
responsibility and postwar compensation), *Doitu to Nihon Mondai Kenkyu* (Germany and Japan Studies), No. 12.


Minami, Morio (2002a) ‘Doitu senbotusha tuitou shi to yasukuni · kokuritu boen mondai (jyou)’ (The history of Germany’s war memorials, the Yasukuni Shrine and the issue of national war memorial I) *Sensou Sekinin Kenkyu* (The Report on Japan’s War Responsibility), No. 2.

Minami, Morio (2002b) ‘Doitu senbotusha tuitou shi to yasukuni · kokuritu boen mondai (cyuu)’ (The history of Germany’s war memorials, the Yasukuni Shrine and the issue of national war memorial II) *Sensou Sekinin Kenkyu* (The Report on Japan’s War Responsibility), No. 2.
Minami, Morio (2002c) ‘Doitu senbotusha tuitou shi to yasukuni · kokuritu boen mondai (ge)’ (The history of Germany’s war memorials, the Yasukuni Shrine and the issue of national war memorial III) Sensou Sekinin Kenkyu (The Report on Japan’s War Responsibility), No. 2.


Otake, Hideo (1992) Fudatu no Sengo: Doitu to Nihon (Two Postwar Countries: Germany and Japan), Tokyo: Japan Broadcast Publishing Co. Ltd.


Yamaguchi, Yasushi (1994) ‘Sensou sekinin mondai----doitu to nihon’ (The issue of war responsibility: Germany and Japan) Hougaku Zassi (Law Journal), No. 3.