

SAYING SORRY: CONFLICT ATROCITY AND POLITICAL APOLOGY

Marie Leone Chalkley, B.A.

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APPROVED:

Andrew J. Enterline, Major Professor

Paul R. Hensel, Committee Member

Ko Maeda, Committee Member

John R. Todd, Interim Chair of the Department  
of Political Science

Michael Monticino, Dean of the Robert B.

Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

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This study proposes and tests a comprehensive theory detailing the motivations behind political apologies. A brief survey of the literature shows a field rich in case studies but lacking in rigorous scientific analysis. The theory presented proposes a three-level examination of political apology at the state, dyadic, and system levels and incorporates the effects of culture, conflict, and the nature of the international system into analysis. This study makes use of a new dataset recording the occurrence of political apologies for interstate conflict atrocities from 1900 to 2006. The results suggest that the existing literature, while rich, does not account for all the motivating factors behind apology. The results also confirm that political apology is a creation of the modern era and a result of the liberalization of the international system. In conclusion, paths for future research are suggested and the advent of a global “age of apology” is confirmed.

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My master's thesis is dedicated to my family.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In 2006, anti-Japanese protests rocked major Chinese cities including the capital, Beijing. Protesters threw eggs and water bottles at the Japanese Embassy and several Japanese nationals and embassy workers living in Beijing were attacked. The protesters were livid at the approval by the Japanese Ministry of Education of a history textbook which the protestors claimed downplayed Japan's wartime atrocities in China. The Chinese government demanded that the Japanese government remove the textbook from its approved list and apologize, once again, for wartime atrocities against the Chinese people. The Japanese government responded with demands for apologies for the attacks against Japanese citizens in China. The situation escalated as neither side was willing to offer the demanded apology and protesters swelled not only in China but in Japan as well. After a tense week of negotiation, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe apologized to Chinese officials, not for the atrocities in question, but for the treatment of history in Japan.

Living in Japan at the time, I observed this crisis firsthand and was confused by the demands from China and Japan for apologies. What place did apology have in politics, particularly for something that happened so long ago, as was the case with the wartime atrocities of Japan? A quick browse of the Internet showed me that this was not the first time that Japan had been called to apologize for the past. Indeed, the call for and offer of apology by governments for past atrocity was not unique to Japan and her Asia neighbors: other governments had experienced similar situations throughout the world. This observation led me



to the question at the heart of this research: *why do states apologize for past conflict atrocities?*

Political apology for conflict atrocity, briefly and simply defined as an apology by a government for a past action, is a comparatively rare event. For the numerous wrongs committed in the past by governments, there are only a handful of apologies for these events. Despite the relatively rarity of political apology, there is a growing literature discussing its occurrence (Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001; Brooks, 1999; Nobels, 2005). The literature outlines several possible motivations for political apology, such as a cultural argument (Wagatsuma & Rossett, 1986), a moral argument (Brooks, 1999), a legal argument (Bilder, 2008), and a diplomatic argument (Weyeneth, 2001). Apology is also discussed as it relates to political membership and the greater field of transitional justice following conflict (Nobels, 2005; Teitel, 2006). An additional prominent vein in the literature discusses the viability of apology in politics (Weiner, 2005). On the whole, the political apology literature is rich in case study analysis and provides substantial detail into the possible motivations behind apologies by governments. However, the theories presented in the literature suffer from a lack of rigorous scientific analysis of multiple cases to evaluate their claims. Indeed, the vast majority of the literature focuses on only two prominent cases: German and Japanese apologies for crimes committed during World War II (Lind, 2003, 2005; Yamazaki, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to clarify and combine the theoretical arguments presented in the literature into an overall theory of political apology with hypotheses testable with quantitative data. In doing so, the ultimate goal is to illustrate what arguments should be pursued in the literature and what arguments should be refined or perhaps abandoned

altogether. The results of these tests show significant support for the claim in the literature that the international community is entering a period where recognition and atonement for past misdeeds through apology is becoming not only acceptable but expected. Other influences suggested in the literature, such as the influence of victor's justice and of cultural values, show mixed results and suggest the need for theoretical refinement in the literature.

This study is organized into five remaining chapters. The second chapter presents a review of the literature to date and summarizes and critiques the findings and theories of the prominent contributions to the study of political apology. In the third chapter, I present a theory of political apology drawn from the existing literature as well as relevant theoretical arguments outside the literature such as diffusion and demonstration theories, the effects of relative power on state relationships, and psychological literature on motivations for group apology. The fourth chapter presents the data used to quantify the relevant concepts from the theory. In doing so, I present a framework for identifying and separating political apologies from other political statements of contrition. The fifth chapter presents the results of regression analysis of the motivations behind apology and represents the first attempt to quantitatively test these motivations. Results of the analysis are mixed, showing support for some motivations that are sensitive to location and specification. The sixth and final chapter concludes with a discussion of the study's contributions to the study of political apology as well as possible opportunities for future research in the field.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Just as political apology is a steadily increasing phenomenon in state politics and international relations, the literature on apology as a political tool continues to grow. Since the early 1990s, scholars from a variety of fields, including political science, law, history, and psychology, have discussed political apologies from a variety of perspectives. Political scientists and legal scholars focus on the effects of apologies and have only recently begun considering the motivations behind the acts (Bilder, 2008; Gibney & Roxtrom, 2001). Historians focus on the events in question in each apology and consider the effects on the written record of historical apologies (Cunningham, 2004). Psychologists and anthropologists take a more individually-centered approach and consider the cultural motivations and effects of political apology (Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1987; Tavuchis, 1991). This chapter presents an overview of the literature as it currently stands, focusing on theoretical explanations for the possible cultural and political motivations behind political apology suggested by scholars.

#### Apology and Culture

A common trend in the discussion of political apology is to first discuss the cultural implications of apology. Each culture has a unique interpretation of the act of apology and this plays a role in whether a state offers a political apology. For example, Gibson (2002) describes African culture as one that is inclined to offer apologies because of a consensus that offenders, rather than being ostracized and punished, should be returned to the community. This concept of connection is similar to the Japanese views of apology. In Japanese society, an apology is

seen as a crucial component to the resolution of any conflict so that the relationship can be returned to the previous status quo and social stability can be maintained (Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986).

The cultural context of apologies in American society differs significantly from those of African and Japanese culture. Wagatsuma and Rosett (1986) suggest that rather than apologize for a transgression, Americans are more likely to deny or challenge the fact that the transgression took place at all. If that does not work, the next course of action would be to offer payment for damages in lieu of an apology. When an apology is eventually offered, American cultural norms often dictate a promise to never repeat the transgression in the future in order to maintain the newly reestablished status quo. An opposing perspective advanced by Weyeneth (2001) suggests that Americans are more likely to apologize because of the historically strong influence of Protestantism in American society. Indeed, religions the world over emphasize apology and Weyeneth points out that the act of an apology can take on heavy religious overtones. Weyeneth extends the use of apology in American culture to apology in the international system by proposing that globalization has created a dominance of American culture and thus the values attached to apologizing.

Given the culturally-dependent interpretations of apology, there is a cultural argument against apologies between nations. Through the problems faced by British prisoners of war (POWs) in seeking an apology from their former Japanese captors, Cunningham (2004) points out that language is a significant and perhaps insurmountable barrier to the effectiveness of apologies between groups of different cultures. The British POWs view attempts at apology by the Japanese government as “linguistically weak.” This problem stems not only from a

language barrier due to difficulties in translation, but a cultural misunderstanding as well. Even though the Japanese government may be telling the truth when they say that their apologies are sincere, they are interpreted through the English language and culture as weak and insincere. There is also the argument that what passes as an apology in one country does not do so in another, thus complicating the act of apology between nations. This cultural complication can be further illustrated by actions that constitute apologies in Japan and in the United States. For example, while financial arrangements for compensation are common in lieu of apology in the United States, the practice is often times seen as offensive in Japanese society (Wagatsuma & Rosett, 1986).

Scholars tend to agree that there is a significant cultural component motivating political apology and that certain cultures are more likely to do so compared to others. Further, these scholars agree that cultural expectations of apology complicate political apology. However, the literature is vague as to what attributes make a culture more or less likely to apologize in a given situation making analysis and prediction difficult.

### Theories of Political Apology

There are three primary theories when considering the motivations behind political apology at the international level: (1) a moral argument, (2) a legal argument, and (3) a diplomatic argument. The moral argument grows from the psychology and sociology literature on group apology. The legal argument for political apology began in research done by legal scholars, but has been supplemented in recent years by work in political science on the viability of international legal institutions. The diplomatic argument grew from the legal argument, but

focuses more on the political aims of states and further draws on historical evidence for events for which apologies are demanded for or considered. Each argument pertaining to the motivations behind political apology is elaborated in turn.

### *The Moral Argument*

Within the moral argument, two interpretations of the motives behind apologies are present. The first is a more pessimistic argument, which suggests that states that offer apologies only do so to feel morally superior to those states that do not apologize, thus raising their own “moral threshold” (Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001; Brooks, 1999). In this pessimistic view, apologies are seen as insincere and typically have negative effects on the relationship between perpetrator and victim, such as the case of apologies by the Japanese government in South Korea in the 1980s which were continually viewed by the South Korean government, as well as other governments in East Asia, as a poor effort by the Japanese government to improve their own regional and international standing (Yamazaki, 2006). Continuing with the numerous apologies offered by the Japanese government since WWII, another pessimistic observation is that it has become so common for states to offer apologies for wrongs that the gesture has lost all of its potential meaning (Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001). The pessimistic argument about apologies is embodied in the reactions to British apologies by British Prime Minister Tony Blair in 1997 to the people of Ireland for the role of the British government in the Potato Famine of the 1840s and by the Queen in 1997 for Britain’s role in the 1919 Amritsar Massacre in India, which critics claim are empty gestures given the amount of time that has passed.

The opposing moral argument is more optimistic view of state motivations behind apologies. Apology optimists view apologies as a genuine effort by states to morally atone for their past bad deeds (Brooks, 1999; Torpey, 2001; Yamazaki 2006). Tavuchis, whose work *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* is considered the first work dealing at least in part with political apology, describes these apologies as “deep truths” in society which could repair damaged social relations and allow groups to go on with their lives (1991:14).

While many apologies are seen through pessimistic eyes, there are almost always those who view the same apologies as genuine and sincere efforts. The previous example of Tony Blair’s Potato Famine apology is a good example of this dichotomy. While regarded by scholars and journalists as an empty gesture, Irish PM John Bruton welcomed the apology: “While the statement confronts the past honestly, it does so in a way that heals for the future” (Marks, 1997).

### *The Legal Argument*

The legal argument for apologies is perhaps the most compelling argument while at the same time the most controversial. International law recognizes apology as a formal remedy for violations of international norms, as described in the UN International Law Commission’s *Draft Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts* (Crawford, 2002).

According to *the Articles*, a state has a duty after breaching an international obligation to make full reparation and offer appropriate assurances and guarantees of non-repetition (Bilder, 2008; Crawford, 2002).

Apologies, which require admission of guilt, imply a desire not to repeat the transgression and represent a type of reparation, can serve to fill these legal requirements. This is codified in Article 37 which requires a state to give “satisfaction” to the wronged party and further stipulates that a formal apology acknowledging the breach can fill this requirement (Crawford, 2002). Apologies also have a role in the formation of customary rule of international law. According to Bilder (2008:20), customary international law “results from a general consistent practice of states following them from a sense of legal obligation”. This general practice refers not only to physical acts by states but also to verbal acts, which can include apologies. Bilder suggests that a possible motivation for states to apologize for past actions is their desire to turn the customary law of apology into a more concrete and binding apology requirement in international law.

Apologies are often seen as a fallback or supplementary to restitution or compensation efforts by states. There is little serious consideration of apologies as instruments of reconciliation by states (Bilder, 2008). The strongest legal argument against apologies comes from the observation that in legal settings states often offer apologies in compliance with the judgment of an international legal body or the requirements of a treaty. Apologies offered in this manner can be seen as fake, and while the apology may help to settle the legal dispute in question, it is unlikely that the underlying grievances will be resolved (Bilder, 2008; Cunningham, 2004). This ties in to literature in psychology and sociology, which argues that apologies must be given freely if they are to be considered genuine (Lazare, 2004; Tavuchis, 1991).



### *The Diplomatic Argument*

The diplomatic argument for apologies has grown from both the moral and the legal dimensions of the act of apology. One theory in the diplomatic argument suggests that governments offer apologies to other states in order to restore their reputation and create a starting point for discussion and healing between states following an injustice (Weyeneth, 2001). A slightly more negative view of apologies in diplomacy argues that states use apologies to signal to the previously wronged state, as well as the international community at large, that they have changed their position with respect to the offense committed, though they do not want to be obligated to this changed position by more concrete means such as a treaty (Bilder, 2008; Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001). In this vein, apologies are often required by treaties following a conflict, or in some instances coerced out of weaker states by stronger states as a means of dominance or humiliation (Bilder, 2008). Again, these apologies are seen as relatively weak because, according to psychological conceptions of apology, in order to be authentic an apology must be freely offered and received (Tavuchis, 1991).

Another recent development in the apology literature is how political apologies influence threat perception between states. Theories of threat perception differ on the relative importance of a state's capabilities and intentions. While the neorealist literature focuses on state's material capabilities (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001), other scholars have argued that this focus is too narrow and that a state's intentions also factor into threat perception by other states (Walt, 1987). The debate then becomes about how states signal their intentions. Lind (2003, 2005) argues that how a state remembers affect how its intentions are perceived and thus how threatening a state appears: states that express remorse for past offenses will appear

benign while states that glorify or ignore past offenses will appear more hostile. Political apologies, Lind suggests, are a way for states to make public their remembrance policies and signal their intentions. Lind finds that apologies have mixed effects on threat perception depending on how they are received by the population of the apologizing state. Governments that apologize for past offenses and are supported by their constituents are perceived as less threatening. Governments that apologize for past offenses but face domestic opposition that turns into glorification of the past can actually increase threat perception by neighboring states.

These effects are illustrated by comparing apologies by Germany and Japan following World War II. German apologies, as well as other mechanisms of contrition and remembrance, were vital for threat reduction in Europe. In contrast, Japan's conflicting policies – apologies for the past combined with nationalistic education policies, among other things – have served to elevate threat perception of Japan by its neighbors. It is most effective in this case to compare education policies in Germany and Japan, with Germany recognized by the international community for making interpretations of history that glorify Nazi actions illegal, while the Japanese government seems constantly embroiled in low-level conflict with neighboring countries that accuse it of glorifying wartime crimes.

### Apology and Transitional Justice

Of the three schools of thought on apologies at the international level, the moral and legal arguments have received the most attention when considering apologies at the state level. While political apologies between states have been almost exclusively examined by scholars of philosophy, law, and anthropology, political scientists researching the various facets

of democratic transitions have laid claim to the exploration of political apologies at the state level through study of reconciliation and methods of dealing with past state crimes.

Political apologies can play a central role in state efforts at both reparative and restorative justice in transitional justice periods. Broadly, these theories of justice refer to legal models that incorporate both perpetrators and their victims in the justice process. Restorative justice aims to restore dignity to the victim, in the case of transitional justice the victim of human rights abuses, through confrontation and truth-seeking and the participation of both the victim and the past abuser in the justice process (Braithwaite, 1999; Gibson, 2005). A good example of restorative justice is the proceedings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which sought to restore society through the traditional African philosophy of *ubuntu*.<sup>1</sup> The TRC recognized the power of apology in mitigating blame when laying down the requirements for amnesty. Though an apology was not explicitly required to receive amnesty following a testimony, the designers of the TRC did agree that a sincere apology could be useful and effective when retributive justice, where the past abuser is punished for their past misdeeds such as in most Western models of justice, is not a viable option. Through public opinion survey, Gibson (2005) does find significant support for restorative justice, as measured

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<sup>1</sup> Desmond Tutu (as quoted in Gibson, 2002:543) describes *ubuntu*: “*Ubuntu* says I am human only because you are human. If I undermine your humanity I dehumanize myself. You must do what you can to maintain this great harmony, which is perpetually undermined by resentment, anger, desire for vengeance. That’s why Africa jurisprudence is restorative rather than retributive.”

by the presence or absence of an apology to the victim, in South Africans as a whole and further finds that people are more likely to view the trials of the TRC as fair if an apology is issued.

Reparative justice is an expansion on the idea of restorative justice which calls for a focus not just on the victims but on the survivors as a whole. According to Mani (2005), reparative justice is a blend of the interpretation of reparation in both law, where reparation must wipe out all the consequences of the past act, and psychology, where efforts at reparation grow from feelings of guilt. Reparative justice, with its focus on survivors as a whole rather than individuals as victims and perpetrators, makes transitional justice more inclusive than divisive, requiring the involvement of society at large in the process of reconciliation (Marshall, 1999). These ideas of reparation and collective and individual guilt lead directly to Teitel's (2000, 2006) concept of the transitional apology. Teitel argues that the transitional apology is ideal tool for societies attempting to deal with their pasts as it can express remorse and guilt about the past as well as open the way for a new path to the future. Quinn (2005) proposes through her theory of acknowledgement that forgiveness and the resulting trust are crucial to the creation of a cohesive society following transition. In addition to trials and truth commissions, Quinn suggests that apologies by states show acknowledgement of past crimes which helps to build trust between the new government and society at large. This trust is then cultivated into social capital which creates social cohesion.

### Apology and Membership

Outside of transitional justice, Nobles (2005) suggests that governments, regardless of their state of political development or conflict history, use apologies to strengthen feelings of

membership among minority groups in society. Nobles' membership theory of apology, which has application at both the domestic and international level, draws on the growing consensus among those that study political apology that the practice of apology is globalizing and that this profusion should be seen as a growing desire on the part of states to include others and be included themselves (Nobles, 2005; Yamazaki, 2006; Weyeneth, 2001). With its focus on cohesion and inclusion, Noble's theory can also be seen as an argument for the necessity of social capital in creating democratic societies. If, in order to develop, societies must create trust an apology for a past wrong can go a long way towards fostering that trust (Nobles, 2005).

The membership theory also draws on one of the central debates in political apology: should citizens now be held responsible and called to apologize for the crimes of past generations? Weiner (2005) suggests that those against apology draw upon the biblical idea that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. It is up to each generation to properly atone for misdeeds and this responsibility should not be visited on future generations. Proponents of apology argue against this idea by regarding political entities, such as states, as continual and existing over time. As members of these entities, we are influenced by the actions of our predecessors and live with the consequences of their accomplishments as well as their crimes.

An oft-cited example of this argument is the present-day ramifications of slavery in the United States and calls by African Americans for an official apology in modern times. While the current generation did not play a direct role in the practice of slavery and slavery has long since been abolished, the descendents of slaves still felt the repercussions of the practice through years of segregation and civil rights abuses that subsequent generations participated in. These

perceived injustices continue to affect political membership. Apologies can show recognition by the current generation of their “responsibility for past wrongs as well as responsibility to a future less burdened by historical wrongs” (Weiner, 2005:4).

### The Viability of Political Apology

An interesting overarching question in the work on political apology is the idea of whether or not groups can actually apologize for past actions. When considering events in history long since passed, such as the violence against the Knights Templar centuries ago by the Catholic Church, are the descendants of these Knights owed an apology as they claim they are? And, if so, can the present-day Vatican realistically offer such an apology (Beauchamp, 2007)? There are competing views. Critics argue that it is unrealistic to expect the very distant ancestors of those that wronged your equally distant ancestors to apologize to you. In other words, “the sins of the parents shall not be passed on to the children to defend” (Weiner, 2005:3). This can be illustrated by the apology of the Danish Culture Minister in 2007 for Viking crimes against Ireland: an issue that has been dead for centuries and an apology that critics say is fake and phony ( *Economist, The*, 2008). On the other hand, proponents argue that institutions, such as the Catholic Church, are continuous and should be held responsible and thus required to apologize for their past misdeeds.

### Evaluation of the Literature

The literature dealing with political apology has grown from extensive case study research on two staples in the field: the World War II apologies of Germany and Japan. While

individual case studies of the apologies offered by these two countries exist, the most influential studies are those that have compared the apologies in an effort to discern what constitutes an effective political apology. As evident in the preceding review, the properties of an effective apology by a government are heavily culturally-based and still debated in the literature. This debate is healthy, however, in that the definition of a political apology continues to evolve as more often governments resort to apology in an increasing variety of situations. Drawing from the early case studies of the Japanese and German apologies, scholars are beginning to look to other instances of apology in political life. Brooks' (1999) collection of works dealing with domestic apologies in the English-speaking world is the first of several volumes detailing and comparing several contemporary instances of political apology.

In addition to this rich case study literature, scholars are asking the crucial question of why governments resort to apology. In this vein, several theories of political apology have been proposed. Among these proposed theories are the broad theoretical schools of thought dealing with apology such as the previously discussed moral, legal, and diplomatic arguments for apology. More concrete theories include Noble's (2008) membership theory and Lind's (2008) threat perception theory of apology, both of which are the only works to deal with political apology on a comparative scale.

With this strong background, there is significant room for additions to the literature on political apology. As evident from the previous discussion of the literature, there is a need for an application of theory to a wider selection of cases. While recent works (Nobles, 2008; Lind, 2008; Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001; Brooks, 2001; Gibney et al., 2008) claim an emerging "culture of apology" with apology becoming more and more frequent in government policy, the majority

of these works remain focused on the “traditional” staples of the field in Japan and Germany. Further, the political apology literature as it stands faces a problem similar to that of the literature on truth commissions in that despite being a political event the political motivations behind apology have not been significantly explored.

The research presented here serves to help fill these voids in several ways. First, it presents theories drawn from the literature that can be applied to a wider set of cases than just the German and Japanese experiences. This is crucial as political apology is not an act exclusive to these states and universal motivations, if any, should be examined if research is to expand. Further, this research represents a first step in quantitative measurement and examination of political apology. Previous theories presented in the literature, with some exceptions, have been rich but unquantifiable, making them difficult to apply to other cases. With the goals of broader applicability and quantifiable theories in mind, the following section lays out the three-layered theory of political apology.



## CHAPTER 3

### THEORY

Why do states apologize for past wrongs? In particular, what motivates states to apologize for atrocities committed in past interstate conflicts? While the case study literature attempting to answer this question is rich, there have been comparatively few attempts to bring out specific causes and determinants that can explain political apologies in a larger set of cases. In order to develop a theory of political apology that can explain a global set of cases, it is helpful to begin with a brief discussion of what constitutes an apology. After creating a working definition, a discussion of political apology must first begin on the individual level by asking why we as individuals turn to apologies in the first place and how this individual tendency to apologize extends to actions by governments.

It is first necessary to begin with a definition of apology in order to arrive at a definition of a political apology. On a most basic level, an apology is saying sorry for an action, effectively expressing guilt and remorse for a social transgression. Apologies as a speech act are straightforward: they are an expression of regret, remorse, or sorrow for having insulted, failed, injured, or wronged another party (Tavuchis, 1991). In sociology and psychology, however, an apology depends on much more than this simple expression. An apology first requires the appropriate actors, as it must be given and received by the individuals involved in the transgression. For an apology from one individual to another this criterion is straightforward, but for apologies involving groups it is more difficult to discern.

The group apology literature agrees that these apologies can be given by a representative of the group, but deciding who that representative should be is as important as it is controversial. In order for the group apology to be effective, there must be a consensus within the group that an apology is warranted. Further, the group must agree on the individual that is to represent them in offering the apology. These requirements are necessary as the effectiveness of group apologies is ultimately dependent upon on the authority given to the representative by the collective (Tavuchis, 1991). In the political apology literature, it is generally agreed that the executive of a nation, such as a president, prime minister, or monarch, is most qualified to offer apologies on behalf of a states as these individuals are considered the human face of government. In addition, in cases where executives are elected to office, it can often be assumed that they have the support of the majority of the population of their country, thus lending more weight to a political apology.

An apology, then, requires admission of the wrong that was committed as an apology for nothing or an apology for the wrong thing becomes an empty and meaningless gesture. For example, in an argument between friends that leads to an estrangement, an apology requires full disclosure of the circumstances of the argument and admittance of fault in the subsequent estrangement. In the case of political apologies, this admission of guilt and responsibility is difficult, though not impossible to come by. The case study literature on political apologies is divided on the necessity of admission of guilt and responsibility in apologies by governments. On one hand, scholars argue that disclosure of involvement in events without admittance of responsibility or even necessarily guilt is sufficient for a political apology. This argument is best illustrated by instances of apology by the Japanese government for crimes committed during

World War II. While several administrations, beginning with Prime Minister Nakasone in 1985 and including apologies to former British and Dutch POWs by Prime Minister Hashimoto in 1998, have apologized for crimes committed, most notably against China and Korea, admission of responsibility for repercussions or guilt in the original crime have been repeatedly glossed over causing many of the apologies to be treated as empty gestures (Yamazaki, 2006). While these types of apologies have not been accepted by the aggrieved parties, they have still been offered and show effort on the part of the transgressor to right past wrongs. On the other hand, political apology scholars argue that full disclosure and admittance of involvement and guilt are necessary components of political apology. The numerous apologies by the German government for crimes committed under the Nazi regime during World War II are good examples of this full-disclosure requirement. Several administrations of Germany have repeatedly admitted guilt and responsibility for these war crimes, such as Chancellor Willy Brandt's impromptu apology for Nazi crimes in the Warsaw Ghetto. To emphasize this guilt, the government has made arguing otherwise illegal. In other words, while an apology following full-disclosure is morally important, full-disclosure also opens a state up to possible demands for restitution or reparations by the previously aggrieved party. In this sense then it seems more likely that states will offer apologies for actions with as little information as possible so that they can morally atone for actions without any loss of political standing.

To summarize, then, political apologies are statements given by a head of state on behalf of the government or society that admit to past wrongs as well as guilt in said wrongs. Admittance of guilt is highly subjective and dependent on the political motives behind the apology. Political apologies are also culturally dependent as the act of apology has different

social and moral requirements in different environments. So, while on the surface political apologies are all speech acts given by heads of state, what actions warrant apologies and what constitutes an apology are culturally dependent.

With this basic definition of a political apology, it is useful then to build from the ground up and ask first why we as individuals resort to apologies in our personal lives as these personal motivations translate into motivations behind political apologies. We are socialized from an early age to believe that social transgressions, no matter how small, require an apology. Thus, the act of apology depends on an institutionalized social order in which individuals are committed to accepted norms of behavior. This social order is essential to the stability of our daily lives as it dictates how we as individuals must act as well as how others must act towards us in order to be accepted in society. According to Tavuchis (1991), when individuals commit social transgressions, the social order of our lives is disrupted. Apologies, through their admission of guilt and desire for forgiveness and acceptance, have the power to right these wrongs and reestablish the social order.

While apologies do not erase the transgression from memory, they do mend relationships and allow life to go on as if nothing happened. What then motivates us as individuals to offer apologies? Lazare (2004) proposes that there are two categories of motivations behind apologies in our day-to-day lives: internal motivations and external motivations. Internal motivations for apology include strong emotions tied to events, such as guilt or shame following a transgression. External motivations involve a desire on the part of the offender or in some cases a third-party mediator to restore social order and influence how others perceive and behave towards them.

These external and internal motivations behind apologies are commonly applied to apologies by and between individuals, but they also manifest in apologies involving groups. This observation begs the question of what external and internal motivations, if any, are behind apologies at the group level. If individuals are internally motivated by feelings of guilt and shame to apologize, then it stands to reason that groups, as collections of individuals, can be motivated by similar feelings of collective guilt and shame. Further, as individuals often derive their identities from group affiliations such as religion or political ideology the desire to influence how others perceive the group by way of apologizing for past actions can have personal as well as group benefits. States, like other groups, are susceptible to collective guilt as well as the desire to restore order and influence how other actors perceive them.

#### State-level motivations

At the state level, then, a government is a collective member of an institutionalized social order, the relationship between government and society, and thus susceptible to internal and external motivations to apologize for wrongs. Internally, a state can be motivated to apologize due to strong feelings of guilt following a transgression such as a conflict atrocity. This guilt-motivated apology can be seen in Bill Clinton's 1998 apology to the Rwandan government for American inaction during the genocide that took place in the country in 1994. In this apology, President Clinton admitted guilt on the part of the United States government for failing to act during the Rwandan genocide, stating that the United States "did not do as much as we could have and should have done to try to limit what occurred" (Honderich, 2007). While Clinton's apology on behalf of the government was met with criticism at home and

abroad, it was enthusiastically accepted by the Rwandan government as evident by the large and very welcomed American presence in Kigali and frequent visits to the White House by Rwandan President Paul Kagame.

If this guilt is found not in the government but in society, then this guilt can result in a political apology motivated by external pressure on the government by society. Social pressure often manifests as pressure on the government from groups within society such as religious or ethnic groups. These domestic groups, like the government, seek to improve their image and influence how others perceive them through apology. If the state has committed a transgression that reflects poorly on a particular group, this group can pressure the state to apologize for the transgression, thus improving the group's image and allowing for relationships to be restored. Another possible external motivation for political apology is the desire on the part of the government to distance itself from the actions taken by previous administrations.

A source of contention with these political apologies is that of appropriate actors: who should be apologizing to whom in this case as often times the original perpetrators and victims are no longer around though the relationships they damaged remain. In response to this argument, it is held by those studying political apology that states and their governments are continuous entities that can and should be held responsible for their past misdeeds regardless of the individuals involved. Indeed, hypothetically, it would be seen as a poor argument on the part of the present-day German government to argue that since the current leaders did not commit crimes during the Holocaust they could no longer be held responsible for repercussions.

These internal and external sources of guilt as motivation for apology point to an overall cultural argument for political apology. This cultural argument is commonly found in the case study literature on political apology and indeed in the study of apology in general. This argument suggests that certain cultures are more inclined to offer apologies than others. The culture argument for political apology suffers from similar weaknesses that any argument based on culture does in that the concept of culture is difficult to define and often is defined so broadly that it loses much of its explanatory power. Culture, thus broadly defined, is a set of values and learned expectations about a social environment that allows one to adapt and survive, such as language, roles, and norms of interaction. As apology is dependent on social orders and norms of interaction, culture is an important determinant of the propensity of individuals and groups to apologize. The likelihood of resorting to apology when a social transgression has taken place is culturally determined by the extent to which cooperation, competition, or individualism is emphasized. In more cooperative or collective cultures individuals are socialized to subordinate their personal needs to the needs of the collective, usually group stability. Collective cultures are as such more likely to offer apologies for transgressions in order to ensure group stability. A frequently cited example of a collective culture is that of Japanese culture which has a long tradition of stable group relations, another element of collectivist cultures. As Wagatsuma and Rosett (1986) and Tavuchis (1991) argue, Japanese culture is the apology culture par excellence. In more individualist cultures, such as American culture, individuals are members of numerous ingroups that can be dropped if the group's demands are inconvenient or do not conform to the individual's goals. Thus members of individualist cultures are less likely to offer apologies for transgressions such as conflict

atrocities and will instead pass blame or make excuses for the action (Weyeneth, 2001). These cultural attributes suggest the following relationships between culture and apology:

The Culture Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): The more collectivist a culture in a violating state, the more likely the state is to offer political apologies for atrocities.

### Dyadic-Level Motivations

Moving from this state level, it is next necessary to discuss the motivations for political apology at the dyadic level. As political apologies take place between states, dyadic motivations are crucial influences on the likelihood of apologies by governments.

One way in which states interact is through conflict. In the aftermath of conflict, a victorious state can pressure a former adversary to agree to their demands, such as signing treaties, agreeing to trade conditions, and in some cases apologizing for actions during the past conflict. This “victor’s justice” motivation behind political apologies is often the result of pressure on the defeated state by their former adversary to admit to wrongdoing. These apologies, in addition to the soft law power of creating normative standards of behavior, also serve to humiliate the defeated state as well as a symbolic gesture of surrender and inferiority (Bilder, 2001). While these coerced and forced apologies are common throughout history, so much so that the International Law Commission recognizes it as a formal remedy to strained relations between states, whether or not they are actually apologies is debatable. According to psychological definitions, an apology must be offered freely if it is to be considered genuine (Tavuchis, 1991; Lazare 2004). This observation once again embroils the political apology



debate in what makes an apology genuine and if even the very concept of genuine can be universally defined and accepted. Suffice it to say that it is possible that between states in the aftermath of conflict, apologies can be offered by defeated states after they have been forced to do so by treaty obligation or by their former adversaries.

Pressure by a former adversary is not the only reason a defeated state may offer an apology. These states may also be motivated by factors similar to those felt by individuals in the aftermath of conflict, namely a desire to rebuild positive relationships. Offering an apology for actions taken against a former adversary during conflict can help to improve perceptions of the state abroad which strengthens the relationship between the two

former enemies. This desire to rebuild relationships creates a more positive interpretation of the victor's justice motivation behind political apologies.

The Victor's Justice Hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>): In the aftermath of interstate conflict, defeated states are more likely to apologize for conflict atrocities.

A corollary to the argument for victor's justice as a motivation for political apology is the power relationship between states. Following conflict, the defeated state often finds itself in a power position subordinate to its former foe. Because of this uneven power relationship, the more powerful state (the victor) can pressure an apology from their comparatively weaker former rival. However, power relationships are rarely stable and the power to pressure apology can transfer from one state to another over time following conflict. So with the passage of time after a conflict, it may not be enough to say that victor's justice motivates apologies at the

dyadic level but rather that power relationships do. The relative power of states is often highly unequal following a conflict, which can explain the suggested likelihood of victor's pressuring apologies from defeated states. This power relationship does not remain so unequal as time passes and it is entirely likely that the formerly defeated state can regain power and indeed become more powerful than the former victor. This can create a situation where the violated state, though defeated in conflict, can pressure an apology from the former violator. Similarly, the weaker violator state is more inclined to apologize given the former victim's position of relative power in order to improve relations and benefit from a positive relationship.

The Power Hypothesis ( $H_{2A}$ ): Relatively weaker states are more likely to apologize for conflict atrocities.

In considering apologies at the dyadic level, the parallel is often made between them and the payment of reparations by states. Some scholars in the apology literature have made the argument that reparations are just another form of apology which uses currency instead of rhetoric to convey guilt and regret (Brooks, 1999). Others argue that apologies and reparations are inherently different and are offered based entirely different motivations, though they can and do sometimes come together (Cunningham, 1999). As with many arguments involving apology, this argument eventually boils down to a culturally-based definition of what constitutes a proper apology. Wagatsuma and Rosett (1986) make the dimensions of this division clear in their discussion of the role of apology in law in the United States and Japan. By

cultural norms in the United States, it is acceptable and commonplace to see payments made in lieu of apology when transgressions are committed between two individuals.

Wagatsuma and Rosett (1986) point out that in legal matters in the United States, a defendant is not required to apologize and that often payment of damages ends further responsibility to the injured party. This is not the case in Japanese society where apology is expected before anything else and offering payment without an apology is considered insincere and viewed with suspicion. Other examples abound and make it clear that there is little universal division between the use of reparations and apology. However, if a definition of political apology drawn from psychology is used, it is clear that an apology is a speech act requiring communication between two or more parties. By this definition, reparations are inherently different from apologies and should be considered separately.

Some scholars refer to political apologies as historical apologies, which points to a temporal influence in the likelihood of apology by a government for a transgression (Weyeneth, 2001; Cunningham, 2004). A historical or temporal argument for political apology is linked to an often overlooked but important consideration in apology between individuals: timing. The debate in psychology regarding the timing of apology centers on whether it is better to apologize sooner rather than later. The general consensus is that the timing of an apology depends largely on the nature of the transgression being apologized for. In the “sooner is better” category, transgressions in which blame is easily assigned are found. Examples of political apologies for these types of transgressions include apologies by the United States and NATO forces to the Chinese government following the bombing of the Chinese embassy in

Belgrade in 1999. However, apologies for transgressions of the magnitude of conflict atrocities fall into the “later is better” timing category.

The rationale for this delay in apology, as Lazare (2004) discusses, is twofold. First, a delay in apology allows for the anger created by the transgression to subside. Speaking specifically of apologies for war crimes, Lazare argues that an apology may have to wait for the arrival of the next generation of leaders so that cooler heads untainted by offenses of the past can prevail. Second, a delay in apology following a conflict atrocity allows time for parties involved to develop a full understanding of the events that took place. In this sense an apology given quickly after an atrocity can be seen as patronizing and condescending, as if the offender does not recognize the full impact of their actions upon their victim. These temporal influences can be clearly seen in the more prominent atrocity apologies of Germany and Japan. In both countries, apologies for atrocities were offered beginning in the 1980s after almost 40 years had passed. Given these expectations and observations, the following relationship is predicted:

The Temporal Hypothesis ( $H_3$ ): A political apology is more likely as time passes.

This observation corresponds with the concept in social memory literature of a “third generation” effect. Simply put, the “third generation” effect suggests that truth and reconciliation on an important social event, such as war crimes, will come three generations after the event took place when the issue is not as salient in society. This decrease in salience is not meant to imply that the event is no longer an important factor in relations, but rather that the issue is no longer a defining and conflicting factor of social identity. At this time, then, the

issue can be addressed with a clear head and truth can be revealed with minimal negative consequences on social stability.

### System-Level Motivations

The final social order to which states belong to is the international system as a whole. That is, in addition to social orders between a state and society and a dyadic relationship between states, states are also part of an institutionalized social order as an international system. Similar to dyadic relationships, states are held accountable to international norms of behavior and can as such make transgression against that social order that call for apology. What then motivates states at the international level to offer apologies for these transgressions? The case study literature on political apology is surprisingly sparse on system effects on apology, focusing instead on the cultural and dyadic motivations behind apology. Given this lack of theoretical discussion, it is helpful to look elsewhere to find motivations for apology at the system level.

To return briefly to the state level, apologies are often included as mechanisms for restorative justice in transitional justice models. Transitional justice refers to attempts by governments to reconcile itself with actions taken under previous regimes and typically takes one of two broad forms: retributive justice or restorative justice. Retributive justice is a traditional legal model calling for the trial and punishment of previous offenders. Popular examples of retributive models in transitional justice include the war crimes tribunals in Nuremburg and Tokyo following World War II. Restorative justice takes a different approach to crimes of the past. Rather than punishing offenders and separating them from society,

restorative justice aims to restore dignity to the victim through confrontation and truth-seeking and the participation of both the victim and the past abuser in the justice process (Braithwaite, 1999; Gibson, 2005). A good example of restorative justice are the proceedings of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which sought to restore a peaceful society through truth rather than punishment following apartheid.

As truth commissions are a method of dealing with past transgressions through restorative justice at the state level, political apologies are a similar way of dealing with past transgressions at the dyadic level. What then motivates the adoption of truth commissions and can this be applied to the use of apology by governments? Similar to work on political apology, case studies of truth commissions gloss over the political determinants of their establishment and focus instead on their cultural and legal influences despite the fact that they are inherently political bodies. A notable exception to this is work by Dancy and Poe (2006) which presents a quantitative study of the political determinants of truth commissions. Regarding external factors to truth commission onset, Dancy and Poe propose that the decision by a government to establish a truth commission is, in part, the result of the positive spatial diffusion of norms across the globe.

The concept of diffusion is used to describe patterns of event occurrence over time. Diffusion has been evident in a variety of international relations, most notably the spread of war and democratic institutions (see Starr, 1991; Gleditsch, 2002). Positive spatial diffusion refers to the process by which the occurrence of an event in one state increases the likelihood of that event in other states, such as the increase over time of the establishment of truth commissions (Dancy & Poe, 2006). The recent application of positive spatial diffusion to the

spread of norms, defined as collective expectations for the proper behavior of actors, can be applied to the spread of political apology. However, a subtle difference between the diffusion of truth commissions and the spread of political apology exists in that while truth commissions can be seen in clusters, such as South America and Africa, apology has a more global spread. This difference hints at a demonstration effect, not spatial diffusion, behind the spread of political apology. Demonstration effects have been used to explain a variety of events in international relations such as the spread of civil war. Applied to civil war, a demonstration effect is visible if conflict in one country leads actors in other states to reevaluate their beliefs regarding conflict. Expanded to the occurrence of political apology, the government of a state can observe apology in another state and subsequently update their beliefs on the efficacy and desirability of apology.

Describing the spread of political apology as the spread of a norm through the international system begs the question of what is a norm? In the traditional image of the international system, the anarchic nature of international society does not allow for norms as there are no standards of behavior between states. This view, however, has been slowly changing since World War II and international relations scholars have begun to give more weight to the role of norms in state actions. In building a theory of international norms, Goertz and Diehl (1992) propose a four-element conceptualization which can be applied to political apology. The first element, which is essential to a norm, is regularity and consistency in behavior. Basically, a norm in this sense is a tradition resulting from ritualization over time. Norms may also be in conflict with the self-interest of state; an extension of the ritual nature of a norm as there may be other, more efficient ways to handle a situation that are overlooked

and eliminated due to the norm. The third element of a norm draws from Robert Axelrod's (1986) definition of a norm that requires sanctions in the event that an individual's behavior deviates from the expected and accepted behavior. The fourth element of Goertz and Diehl's conceptualization of norms deals with the importance of the action's relationship to morality, which is often overlooked in behavioral science. The final three elements of a norm are more malleable and can exist to varying degrees in any given norm. For example, political apology is a ritualized behavior in that it continues to occur, its occurrence is in conflict with the self-interest of a state in that apology can open states up to demands for reparations and other forms of compensation, and apology is intrinsically linked with morality in that apology is often the culturally-demanded "right" thing to do in the case of a social transgression. Absent from this conceptualization of political apology as a norm is the presence of effective sanctions against states that do not apologize. While in some situations, most notably the Japan-China case, sanctions have been placed for not offering an apology, sanctioning power is dependent on the willingness of individual actors and does not stem from a central authority. By Goertz and Diehl's conceptualization then, political apology is a decentralized norm with emphasis on the moral implications of the act and the extent to which it conflicts with self-interest.

The "Age of Apology" Hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>): An increase in the occurrence of political apology increases the likelihood that other states will offer apologies for past conflict atrocity.



While the global nature of political apology lends itself more to demonstration effects than diffusion, there is a possibility that diffusion can be responsible for the spread of apology at a regional level. There is evidence in previous literature that the diffusion of norms is increased by proximity. Similar to the individual level where we look to those closest to us for behavioral clues, states look to neighboring states. This pattern is observed in the growth of the number of truth commissions in South America where “political winds” in the southern cone blew from Argentina to neighboring countries thus influencing the types of transitional mechanisms pursued (Pion-Berlin, 1994). In this case, the South American nations, because of their geographic proximity, shared numerous environmental factors which made them more likely to adopt similar policies. Particular to apology, neighboring states are more likely to share certain cultural characteristics which influence their propensity to resort to apology at an individual as well as state level. With this observation, it can be expected that, in addition to international diffusion, political apology diffuses regionally.

The “Age of Apology” Regional Hypothesis ( $H_5$ ): An increase in the occurrence of *political apology* in a geographic region increases the likelihood that states in the same region will offer apologies for past wrongs.

### Conclusion

Bringing together theoretical themes from the case study literature, it is clear that there are multiple influences on the decision by states to offer apologies. Just as apology is motivated by institutionalized social orders and accepted behavioral norms at the individual

level, political apology is motivated by the social orders to which the state belongs. The state first belongs to a domestic social order, where cultural norms towards apology play a prominent role in society's expectations for government apology and where executives are personally motivated by similar cultural expectations to apologize for actions or not. The state then belongs to dyadic social orders. In this social order, diplomatic demands and pressures motivate a state to choose apology over other diplomatic options. Outside diplomacy, adversarial relationships between states can create environments where states are in positions to either force other states to apologize or be forced to apologize themselves for past crimes. Finally, the state is part of the social order of the international system where standards of behavior have developed over time due to the diffusion of norms. This creates an environment where transgressions can take place which call for apology. Similarly, apology as a course of action has spread along with norms as a viable method of handling state crimes of the past.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The following chapter quantifies the theoretical concepts laid out in the previous chapter. To refresh, this study is concerned with the state-, dyadic-, and system-level motivations behind state apologies for interstate conflict atrocities. The first step in building a data set for the study of interstate conflict atrocity apologies requires defining interstate conflict. On the most basic level, interstate conflict is simply that: conflict between states. When quantifying conflict, the question of what constitutes a conflict typically rests on a threshold of total battle deaths. The Correlates of War (COW) project sets the conflict battle death threshold at one thousand deaths, which creates a sufficient starting off point for this research (Sarkees, 2000). The COW data is subsequently restricted to interstate conflicts occurring between 1900 and 1991 which begins with the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and ends with the First Gulf War in 1991.<sup>2</sup>

#### Dependent Variable

##### *Defining Atrocity*

A question that precedes the definition of apology in this project is what constitutes a conflict atrocity. The word atrocity brings to mind different events for different people, which makes quantifying, much less defining the concept difficult. At minimum, atrocity can be

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<sup>2</sup> The COW code for The Boxer Rebellion is 82 and 199 for the First Gulf War.

defined as an extremely cruel and horrid act of injustice. By this definition, atrocity is just as culturally-sensitive an action as apology.

When dealing with atrocities during interstate conflict, the International Criminal Court (ICC) provides a useful framework for quantification<sup>3</sup>. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court outlines crimes over which the ICC has jurisdiction: genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. Genocide is defined by the Rome Statute as actions taken with the “intend to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.” The Holocaust of World War II is an example of genocide committed during interstate conflict. The Statute further defines crimes against humanity as actions taken against a civilian population, with state knowledge of the action, such as extermination, enslavement, sex crime, and torture. Again drawing from the Second World War, the “comfort women” of wartime Japan are an example of a crime against humanity committed during an interstate conflict. The ICC definition of war crimes is drawn from the 1949 Geneva Conventions which designated such as willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, and the taking of hostages as war crimes.

The Rome Statute further expanded this definition to include attacks intentionally targeted against a civilian population, the killing of surrendering combatants, and the use of chemical and biological weapons. Examples of war crimes abound throughout history, such as prisoner of war (POW) mistreatment, massacres of cities, and the use of biological weapons. Finally, the Statute stipulates that crimes against humanity and war crimes must be “widespread or systematic” in their execution, which raises the question of what constitutes

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<sup>3</sup> Available at <http://www.un.org/law/icc/index.html>

widespread and systematic. Legal scholars have been quick to point out the lack of a threshold in this caveat but agree that setting a universal threshold is difficult if not impossible (Robinson, 1999).

With these loose definitions in mind then, a conceptualization of atrocity can be made. For the purposes of this paper, an atrocity is *a single event taking place during conflict that meets the requirements of the ICC as a genocide, war crime, or crime against humanity*. This definition is purposefully vague given the sensitive nature of these acts. The broadness of the definition further allows for the inclusion of a variety of events, ranging from POW mistreatment to attacks against civilians as well as numerous other acts committed during conflict that violate the guidelines laid out by the ICC.

Instances of conflict atrocity were catalogued using a variety of research methods. First, online searches of scholarly databases were conducted using keywords such as “atrocity,” “war crime,” “crime against humanity,” and the name of the conflict in question in various combinations.<sup>4</sup> Once a preliminary list was compiled based on these searches, primary and secondary sources such as historical narratives, government documentation, and the printed experiences of survivors and observers were consulted to insure accuracy. In coding,

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<sup>4</sup> Google Scholar, Academic Search Complete, and JSTOR were used to conduct these searches. The search terms were used individually and linked with the common names for each conflict included in the study. For example, a search for events during the First World War would have used the search terms “atrocity world war 1,” “war crime world war 1,” and “crime against humanity world war 1.”

preference was given to single notable events over intermittent reported occurrences. The variable *atrocities* becomes a dichotomous variable with a dyad coded as a “1” if State A committed an atrocity against State B during the conflict in question. In all, the final data set includes 83 instances of conflict atrocities drawn from the conflicts included in the original data set. These atrocities are listed in Table 1. This coding scheme results in a data set with 3304 observations with *post-atrocity dyad year* as the unit of analysis.

### *State Apology*

As previously discussed, an apology, while a seemingly simple occurrence, has numerous requirements and nuances. To refresh, an apology at its most basic level first requires two actors between which a transgression of behavioral norms has taken place. The apology of the offender must include admittance of the transgression that took place and an expression of regret and remorse. Moving from the individual to the collective or state level, apologies by governments must therefore include an account of the wrongs committed, admittance of guilt and involvement in some form, as well as an expression of regret and remorse.

There are significant barriers to overcome when coding apologies, not the least of which are the cultural barriers and interpretation difficulties encountered in any discourse between states. As a step toward reconciling this problem, I follow the guideline used by Yamazaki (2006) and take apologetic statements by governments for their past transgressions at face-value. In other words, a speech or action by the government or a representative thereof that includes the above-mentioned criteria for *apology* is coded as a “1,” regardless of reaction from

TABLE 1: Instances of Conflict Atrocity, 1900-1991

<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Atrocity by</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Called</i>
The Boxer Rebellion	China	United States Great Britain France Russia Japan	1900	Taiyuan Massacre
The Sino-Soviet War	Russia	China China	1900 1900	Blagoveshchensk Massacre Aigen Massacre
The Second Balkan War	Greece Bulgaria	Bulgaria Greece Greece	1913 1913 1913	Demir-Hissar Demir-Hissar Massacre at Doxato
The First World War	Germany	Belgium Belgium	1914 1914	The Rape of Belgium The Burning of Louvain
The Greco-Turk War	Greece Turkey	Turkey Greece	1922 1922	Sacking of Smyrna Massacre at Smyrna
The Manchurian War	Japan	China	1932	Unit 731
The Italo-Ethiopian War	Italy	Ethiopia	1936	Mustard Gas
The Sino-Japanese War	Japan	China China	1937 1938	Rape of Nanking Hankow Massacre
The Nomonhan War	Japan	Russia	1939	The Nomonhan Incident

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<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Atrocity by</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Called</i>	
The Second World War	United States	Germany	1945	Chenogne	
		Italy	1943	Biscari Massacre	
		Japan	1945	Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima	
		Japan	1945	Atomic Bombing of Nagasaki	
		Germany	United States	1944	Malmedy/Baugnez Massacre
			Canada	1944	d'Ardenne Massacre
			Great Britain	1940	Le Paradis Massacre
				1940	Wormhoudt Massacre
			The Netherlands	1939	Holocaust
	Belgium				
	France				
	Poland				
	Hungary				
	Italy				
	Yugoslavia				
	Greece				
	Romania				
	Russia				
	Finland				
	Norway				
	Belgium		1940	Vinkt Massacre	
			1944	Stavelot Massacre	
	France	1944	Oradour-sur-Glane Massacre		
	Poland	1939	The Pacification of Poland		
		1943	Warsaw Ghetto Uprising		
		1939	Bromberg Massacre/Bloody Sunday		
	Italy	1944	Marzabotto Massacre		
	1944	Sant'Anna di Stazzema Massacre			
	1943	Massacre of the Acqui Division/Cephalonia Massacre			

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<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Atrocity by</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Called</i>	
The Second World War	Germany	Italy	1943	The Kos Massacre	
		Greece	1943	Massacre of Kalavryta	
			1944	Ethnic Cleansing in Cameria	
			1944	Distomo Massacre	
			Russia	1941	Babi Yar
				1941	POW Massacres
		Poland	Russia	1945	Pawlokoma Massacre
		Russia	Germany	1945	Treuenbrietzen
				1945	The Rape of Berlin
			Poland	1940	Katyn Forest Massacre
	Japan		Japan	1941	POW Mistreatment
			United States	1942	The Bataan Death March
				1944	Palawan Massacre
				1943	Wake Island Massacre
			United States	1942	Burma Railroad
			Canada		
			Great Britain		
	The Netherlands				
	Australia				
	United States	1941	Unit 731		
	Russia				
	Great Britain	1942	Alexandra Hospital Massacre		
	The Netherlands	1942	Laha Massacre		
	Australia				
	China	1941	Comfort Women		
	Australia	1942	Banka Island Massacre		
The Korean War	United States	South Korea	1950	No Gun Ri	
	North Korea	United States	1950	Hill 303 Massacre	
		United States	1950	Taejon Massacre	

<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Atrocity by</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>Called</i>
The Korean War	North Korea	South Korea United States	1950 1950	Taejon Massacre Sunch'on Massacre
The Vietnam War	United States (North) Vietnam	(North) Vietnam United States (South) Vietnam	1968 1968	My Lai/Son My Massacre Hue Massacre
The Iran-Iraq War	Iraq	Iran	1983	Chemical Weapons

abroad. This results in a focus on the act of apology rather than on the effectiveness of apology as a foreign policy tool which is appropriate for this project.

It is worthwhile at this point to clarify the nature of the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis, *post-atrocity dyad year*, is unique to this research and represents each year of the relationship between a violator and a victim state from the year of the atrocity to the end of the dataset, 2006. The careful reader will notice that in several cases a violator committed several atrocities against a single victim. In this case, each coded atrocity begins a new group of the unit of analysis.

Political apologies were researched and catalogued using methods similar to those used to discover instances of conflict atrocity. First, unlike conflict atrocity, there are several scholarly resources that gather information regarding political apology and make it available in a central location. The first of these sources is a chronological list of political apologies compiled by Dodds (2003). This list has been further updated by Howard-Hassmann's Political Apologies and Reparations database (2009) with the addition of research by Gibney (2001) as well as independent additions by the database project researchers. In addition to these compiled sources, the numerous case studies on political apology provide a rich source for information on atrocity apologies (see Yamazaki, 2006; Lind, 2008; Nobles, 2008; Cunningham, 1999).

Next, Internet searches using keywords such as "apology," "apologized," and the names of atrocities, violators, and the conflicts in question were used to supplement these sources. As with conflict atrocities, the political apologies found through this search method were corroborated with primary sources whenever possible. In each case, the text and reports of

each apology were checked to insure that the requirements of accepting responsibility and expressing remorse were met.

The combination of these two research methods results in 15 instances of apologies by governments for wartime atrocities from 1970 to 2006, as shown in Table 2. Apologies were given by the leaders of four states to 19 former victims of conflict atrocity.

### Independent Variables

Drawing from the research hypotheses proposed in the theory section, this study requires the operationalization of four theoretical concepts: cultural collectivism/individualism, victor's justice, state power, and the effects of demonstration/diffusion. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

#### *Cultural Collectivism/Individualism*

Collectivism and individualism are social-psychological constructs used to describe the strength of the relationship an individual feels to a particular group. These constructs have been further applied to the study of culture as it relates to the strength of group relationships. Triandis (1995) defines individualists as people who define themselves independently of specific groups, pursue goals that maybe inconsistent with the goals of ingroups, and do what is enjoyable and required by personal contracts as opposed to group agreements. Collectivists, on the other hand, define themselves based on their relationship to the group, set and pursue goals that are consistent with the goals of the group, often put the goals of the group above their own, and carry about obligations as specified by group contractual norms. Given the

TABLE 2: Instances of Conflict Atrocity Apology, 1900-2006

<i>Apology by</i>	<i>To</i>	<i>In</i>	<i>For</i>
Germany	Poland	1970	Warsaw Ghetto Uprising <sup>a</sup>
Japan	<i>World</i>	1985	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Germany	<i>World</i>	1985	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Russia	Poland	1990	Katyn Forest Massacre <sup>a</sup>
Japan	China	1992	Comfort Women <sup>b</sup>
Japan	China	1993	Crimes committed during Sino-Japanese War <sup>b</sup>
Russia	Japan	1993	Abuse of Japanese POWs during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Japan	<i>World</i>	1995	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Germany	<i>World</i>	1995	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>c</sup>
Japan	China	1998	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Japan	Great Britain	1998	Abuse of British POWs during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Japan	The Netherlands	1998	Abuse of Dutch POWs during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Germany	Italy	1998	Marzabotto Massacre of WWII <sup>d</sup>
Japan	China	2001	Crimes committed during WWII <sup>b</sup>
Poland	Russia	2006	Pawlokoma Massacre <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Dodds, 2003

<sup>b</sup> Yamazaki, 2006

<sup>c</sup> Howard-Hassman, 2009

<sup>d</sup> Duncan, n.d.

broadness of these constructs, it is logical to conclude that individuals often possess both collective and individualistic tendencies.

Cultures are classified as being collectivist or individualistic depending on the proportion of people that display either tendency in a given country sample. Thus, if a survey sample in a certain country shows a higher percentage of individuals reporting collectivist tendencies, that country is considered collectivist. There is an obvious ecological fallacy here in attributing the traits of individuals to a whole country. Further, it is not always the case that all the citizens of a country are of the same cultural background. Triandis (1995) addresses these concerns in turn. He argues that while a given country may overall exhibit collectivist tendencies, this does not rule out the possibility of portions of the population being decidedly more individualistic.

He compares this to the common cultural observation that all Americans eat red meat and backs this up with statistical evidence that, in a global sample, Americans do consume more red meat than individuals in most countries. While this is statistically true, there are many Americans that are vegetarian or do not eat red meat for other reasons. This individual exception can be further shown by the presence of individuals with materialist values in countries accepted as being post-materialist overall (Inglehart, 1990). It is also true that the borders of states do not necessarily match the borders of cultures. Examples of this border discrepancy abound. Triandis (1995) admits that using a country as the equivalent of a culture is very approximate. However, practical constraints on research make looking at a defined country more feasible than measuring the individualist/collectivist nature of a culture that spans multiple countries.

With the observations of Triandis (1995) and others, it can be concluded that the degree of individualism or collectivism of a country exists on a continuum. Japan and Brazil are both considered to have collectivist cultures, but to different degrees. Likewise, Germany and the United States are considered to have individualistic cultures, but again to different degrees. In all four countries, there are notable exceptions.

Using dimensions similar to Triandis', Hofstede (2001, 2009) has created cultural values scales based on survey research in 74 countries by IBM covering four dimensions of culture: power distance, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism.<sup>5</sup> Hofstede's

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<sup>5</sup> Hofstede describes his individualism dimension:

Individualism on the one side versus its opposite, collectivism, that is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after

Individualism Scale ranks cultures of countries from 0 to 100, with 100 representing a perfectly individualist culture and 0 a perfectly collectivist one. For the purposes of this research, the Individualism Scale is inverted and divided by 100 to become a Collectivism Scale, with 0 representing a perfectly individualist culture and 1 a perfectly collectivist one. The resulting *collectivism* variable ranges from a low score of 9 in the United States to a high score of 80 in China. The average score within the sample is 57.

### *Victor's Justice*

The phrase victor's justice refers to the common saying that "to the victor go the spoils." In other words, those parties that win conflicts are subsequently in a position to exploit their former enemies in the post-conflict relationship. A popular example of victor's justice is the Tokyo Tribunal set up by the Allies in post-World War II Japan where American officials exacted justice on Japanese military commanders at their discretion but were not held similarly accountable for their own war crimes. Using the Correlates of War data on conflict outcome, each of the dyads in the data set are coded a "0" if they were on the winning side of a conflict and a "1" otherwise (Sarkees, 2000), resulting in a variable indicating violator loss in a dyad.

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him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families which continue protecting them for unquestioning loyalty (Hofstede, 2009).

### *Relative Power*

A corollary of the victor's justice hypothesis is that the power relationship between violator and victim will influence the likelihood of apology for past action. Power, like apology and atrocity, is a fluid and subjective concept. State power can refer to a state's economic standing, their military capabilities, their natural endowments, or any number of factors and as such can be measured any number of ways.

For the purposes of this research, relative power is measured using the Correlates of War Project's Composite Index of National Capability (CINC). The CINC score for a given country is composed of six capability components – total population, urban population, iron and steel production, energy consumption, military personnel and military expenditure – from 1816 to 2001. The scores for each country-year observation are then added together, converted into each state's absolute share of the international system, and then averaged across the six components (Singer, 1987).

A strength of the CINC score is that it continually takes into account the changing nature of the international system: a state's CINC score changes not only as domestic factors fluctuate but also as states enter and leave the system. However, as with any data, CINC has potential problems. Many users of the CINC scores are quick to note that while iron and steel production have historically played a prominent role in state capabilities, that role has declined significantly over the past several decades. This observation is likely to be dealt with in the future, but for



present purposes state iron and steel production is still applicable in a historical analysis of capability.<sup>6</sup>

The power hypothesis calls for a comparison of power between the violator and victim state from the time of the atrocity to 2006. This is accomplished by taking the CINC score of the violator and dividing it by the sum of the violator and victim's respective CINC scores. The resulting variable, *power ratio*, is a continuous variable ranging from 0, where there is no power between the two states, and 1, where the violator approaches a value of 1 where the violator is dominant in terms of material power. In between these two extremes, .5 indicates equal power in the dyad. In the 2282 observation in this dataset, the minimum value for *power ratio* is .03 (Greece and Turkey in 1922) with a maximum value of .99 (Germany and Finland in 1941, among others). The average *power ratio* is .57 with a standard deviation of .25.

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<sup>6</sup>An additional problem for this research is the temporal constraints of the data. The CINC scores for each state are reported until 2001, which causes the 2006 apology by Polish President Kaczynski to drop out of the analysis. With only 15 observations of the dependent variable *apology* it is important to keep them all in any stage of analysis. This data constraint is dealt with using David Kantor's "carryforward" command in Stata 9. The command takes time series data in Stata with missing values and essentially carries forward previous observations to the next, filling in missing values with the previous value. As such, the values for 2002 through 2006 for each country in the sample are the same as the values for 2001 (Kantor, 2005). While for data that changes drastically from year to year this solution would not be applicable, the use of "carryforward" is acceptable in this circumstance because the CINC score for a given country does not change significantly from year.

### *The Age of Apology*

The “Age of Apology” concepts in both their global and regional forms call for count variables indicating the total number of occurrences of apology in a given year for either the system or a specified region. The resulting variable, *global apology count*, counts the cumulative frequency of apologies in the system. For example, before 1970 *global apology count* receives a zero as the first apology in the sample, Willy Brandt’s apology in Poland, does not occur until 1970. In 2006, *global apology count* is 15, representing the 15 apologies that have occurred leading up to and including that year.

The regional “Age of Apology” variables first call for the violator states in the sample to be separated into geographic regions by region dummy variables: North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.<sup>7</sup> Two regional count variables, *Europe apology count* and *Asia apology count*, result from this division. The composition of these variables is similar to the *global apology count variable*. For example, *Europe apology count* begins in 1970 with 1 and changes with each instances of apology by a European state until the end of the sample, resulting in 7 apologies by 2006. Likewise, *Asia apology count* begins in 1985 and changes with each instance of an apology by an Asian state until the final apology in the sample, totaling 8 apologies.

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<sup>7</sup> Africa and South America are excluded due to lack of interstate conflict atrocities in those regions during the sample period. For the purposes of geographic separation, Russia is included in the European subset and Australia is included in the Asia subset.

## Control Variables

### *Political Regime*

A control for the level of democracy or autocracy is included to account for the differences in behavior at the international level between the two regimes. Noble's (2008) membership theory applied to the international system suggests that states with more democratic institutions would be more likely to apologize for past actions to encourage feelings of membership within the international system. The polity variable is thus expected to have a positive relationship to apology, with more democratic nations being more likely to offer an apology.

Political regime is measured using the Polity IV Project's polity2 variable. The polity variable is created by subtracting a country's autocracy score from its democracy score to arrive at an over regime score with -10 indicating countries with purely autocratic institutions and a +10 indicating countries with purely democratic institutions. The polity2 variable is an improvement upon the original polity variable for time series analysis: it includes corrections for missing data that allow for time series analysis (Marshall and Jaggers, 2009).<sup>8</sup>

In this project, a polity score is assigned to the violating state. It is expected that the strength of democratic institutions in a violating state will positively influence the likelihood

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<sup>8</sup> The polity2 variable replaces standardized polity scores of -66, -77, and -88 with conventional polity scores "system missing," "0," and a prorated score for the span of the political transition, respectively (Marshall and Jaggers, 2009).

TABLE 3: Descriptive Statistics

Concept	Variable	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Political Apology	<i>Apology</i>	0	1		
Victor's Justice	<i>Outcome</i>	0	1		
Relative Power	<i>Power Ratio</i>	.007	.994	.611	.267
Collectivism/Individualism	<i>Collectivism</i>	9	80	50.73	18.89
Global "Age of Apology"	<i>Apology Count (Global)</i>	0	15		
"Age of Apology" (Asia)	<i>Apology Count (Asia)</i>	0	8		
"Age of Apology" (Europe)	<i>Apology Count (Europe)</i>	0	7		
Time	<i>Time</i>	26	64	48	6
Democracy	<i>Polity</i>	-10	10	3	7

apology based on Noble's (2008) membership theory and an extension of the democratic peace theory (Russett and Oneal, 2001).

### Sample and Methodology

Summary statistics for the independent variables used in this study are presented in Table 3. The final data set is comprised of 3304 dyads based on the *violator-year* unit. This is expanded from 83 instances of conflict atrocity from 1900 to 2006. Within these cases, there have been 15 instances of conflict apology – roughly 5.5% of cases.

Given that the dependent variable in this study, *apology*, is dichotomous the method of choice is logit regression. However, because *apology* is also temporally dependent some adjustments to the regression are required. Following the research of Beck, Katz, and Tucker (1998) three cubic splines have been generated to correct for temporal dependence within the data.

Several diagnostic tests were run to validate the model as well as illustrate potential weaknesses. First, comparison models were ran to test for outliers in the data using country dummies for each of the four apologizing states. The results of this test show that the results of

the full model are not driven by country-specific factors, which is encouraging given the comparably small number of countries offering apologies in the sample. Next, tests were run to detect possible specification errors within the model.<sup>9</sup> These tests show that the full model presented is potentially incomplete as the linear predicted value is slightly less significant (.05) than recommended. While this does potentially take away from the viability of the model in testing the proposed hypotheses, it is not cause for immediate alarm. In this case it is important to recall that the decision to offer an apology is often a policy one that takes into account the personal preferences of leaders and legislative bodies that is difficult if not impossible to quantify for statistical analysis.<sup>10</sup> The democracy and regime controls present strengthen the model, but they do not capture the entire myriad of influences on leaders in regards to apology. Goodness of fit tests report similar results and stress the importance of

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<sup>9</sup> In testing for specification errors using the 'linktest' command in Stata 9, the linear predicted value and linear predicted value squared are used to rebuild the model. The model is correctly specified if the linear predicted value is significant and the linear predicted value squared is not.

<sup>10</sup> A good example of this personal influence on political apology, albeit in a non-conflict atrocity case, is the apology by the Australian government to the Aborigine population. In the 1990s, Australian Prime Minister John Howard repeatedly refused to apologize on personal grounds to the "stolen generation" of aborigine children taken from their families. It wasn't until 2008 when the newly elected prime minister Kevin Rudd formally apologized to the victims of the "stolen generation" (BBC, 2008; Milliken, 1997)

keeping in mind the personal motivations behind apology<sup>11</sup>. Goodness of fit tests report a McFadden r-squared term of .5 for each of the models.<sup>12</sup> This shows that the model as specified does not violate the assumptions of regression necessary for productive analysis.

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<sup>11</sup> The 'fitstat' command in Stata 9 was used to compare all three models for goodness of fit.

<sup>12</sup> Models were specified using Intercooled Stata 9.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS

The main goal of this research is to quantitatively test theories of political apology for conflict atrocity drawn out from the existing literature on three levels of analysis: state, dyadic, and systemic. Theories of state-level influences result in a culture hypothesis which predicts that comparatively more collectivist countries are more likely to offer political apologies. At the dyadic level, the literature repeatedly deals with the concept of “victor’s justice” and predicts that countries that have lost conflicts are more likely to offer apologies. In this same vein, comparatively more powerful countries are less likely to offer apologies for past atrocities. Further, the theory presented in this paper suggests that apologies are more likely as time passes. Finally at the systemic level, the global and region diffusion of norms and its predicted positive influence on the likelihood of apology draws on the common claim in the literature of an “Age of Apology” in the international system.

Table 4 presents the results of the logit regression analysis discussed in the previous chapter. As coefficients are difficult to translate into substantive effects in logit analysis, the odds ratios are presented as well.<sup>13</sup> In Table 3 there are three models presented as the global and regional count variables require separation for appropriate testing. After discussing each

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<sup>13</sup>Odds ratios represent the unit change in odds of the dependent variable for every one unit change in the independent variable in question. For example, in Table 3 Model 1, Apology Count (Global) indicates that for every additional apology the odds of another apology increases by 1.06.

TABLE 4: Logit Analysis of the Determinants of Political Apology

	<u>Model 1</u> (Global)		<u>Model 2</u> (Europe)		<u>Model 3</u> (Asia)	
	B (SE)	Odds Ratio				
Collectivism	.034*** (.012)	1.03	-.417*** (.159)	.659		
Time	.065** (.030)	1.07	-.017 (.036)	.982	.073** (.042)	1.06
Violator Loss	1.18* (.767)	1.53	1.48** (.728)	.728	1.17* (.796)	3.23
Power Ratio <sub>t-1</sub>	.036 (.585)	.943	.815* (.766)	2.26	1.62 (1.36)	5.03
Apology Count (Global)	.049* (.048)	1.05				
Apology Count (Europe)			.874*** (.209)	2.39		
Apology Count (Asia)					.159 (.127)	1.12
Democracy (Violator)	.034*** (.120)	1.41	-.003 (.104)	1.00		
Spline 1	.001*** (.000)		.001 (.000)		.003*** (.001)	
Spline 2	-.001*** (.000)		-.001 (.000)		-.004*** (.001)	
Spline 3	.001*** (.000)		.001** (.000)		.002*** (.001)	
Constant	-12.08*** (1.13)		11.73* (5.63)		-3.87*** (.893)	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.27		0.29		0.28	
Log-likelihood	-263.07		-141.75		-107.42	
<i>p</i>	0.000		0.000		0.000	
Wald $\chi^2$	196.63		114.51		59.71	
N	2990		1786		618	

Note: \*  $p < .10$ , \*\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$



of the models separately, the overall substantive effects of the three levels of motivations behind political apology will be discussed.

### Apology at the Global Level

Model 1 analyses the occurrence of political apology on a global scale. It is apparent from the results that the dyadic influences of victor's justice and relative power are not the only motivators of political apology. Conflict outcome behaves as expected with a defeated state more likely to apologize. While not significant, relative power behaves against expectations with a unit increase in power increasing the likelihood of apology by a factor of one. This result lends some new supporting evidence to Lind's (2003, 2005) threat perception argument that powerful states are more likely to apologize to lessen their former adversaries perception of threat.

Of the five motivations for political apology presented, time and global apology count have the most significant effect on the likelihood of political apology, countering the literature which focuses on culture and conflict outcome almost exclusively of other influences. With each year that passes, states are 1.07 times more likely to offer an apology for a past wrong. Likewise, for each apology that is offered within the system, that odds that a state will offer an apology increase by 1.05. These results show support for the "third generation" body of literature which argues that political apologies are more likely as directly-affected generations are replaced in government. The results also support the widely-accepted belief that the international system is experiencing an "Age of Apology." Apology itself significantly predicting

subsequent apologies gives weight to the idea that apology is “popular” among governments. This idea will be expanded on further in the discussion section below.

### Apology in Europe

Model 2 presents results for political apology restricted to European countries. While insignificant in the global model, collectivism has a significant negative effect on apology in Europe. This finding is contrary to the expectations of the culture hypothesis. It is possible that, rather than collectivist cultures wishing to stabilize relations with other states, individualist cultures are more concerned with their appearance in the international community and see apology as a viable way to improve their reputations.

The effect of past apologies on the likelihood of future apologies is also significant and positive in Europe. The fact that the effect has twice the impact in Europe, all else held equal, lends support to the idea that the spread of political apology may be tied to culture, defined regionally, and not the effects of global media. This will be discussed in more detail below. Another interesting result from the Europe model is the significant, negative effect that a conflict loss has on the likelihood of apology. This runs contrary to expectations and suggests that the European community recognizes that victors can commit war crimes as well and that apology is warranted in these cases.

### Apology in Asia

Analysis of the motivations behind apology in Asia is primarily driven by Japanese political apologies as Japan is the only Asian country to offer apologies for conflict atrocities during the sample period. Applying the results to only Japan, the model suggests that Japan’s

losses in past conflicts have an increasing effect on the likelihood of apology while the passage of time has a similar positive effect. Depending on whether the administration in place at a given time has a positive or negative view of apology, this result implies a virtuous or vicious cycle for apology. Likewise for Asia as a whole, the likelihood of apology in additional Asian nations increases each time Japan offers a new apology for past atrocities.

## Discussion

Overall, quantitative analysis of the determinants of political apology produces mixed results with interesting implications for the case study literature to date. The following sections discuss the implications of the model's results for each level of analysis presented in the theoretical argument: the state, dyadic, and system levels.

### *State Level Motivations*

The state level motivations presented in the theory are the effects of cultural collectivism/individualism and the passage of time on the likelihood of political apology. The cultural hypothesis suggests that the more collectivist a state's culture is the more likely they are to offer an apology. The temporal hypothesis suggests that the likelihood of apology increases with the passage of time.

Collectivism has mixed results across each of the three models, which suggests that culture defined on this dimension is not a significant predictor of political apology. This calls a large part of the apology literature into question as many authors ultimately resort to a general culture argument when discussing the motivations behind apology. Earlier it was suggested

that the personal beliefs of leaders played a critical role in the likelihood of apology that could not be easily quantified. If this is true, it may be the case that the strength of personal collectivist leanings in a given leader plays a stronger role than cultural beliefs in general. Of course, collectivism is only one dimension of culture and it could be that other dimensions such as religion play a more prominent role.

Time has mixed results across each model as well. When significant, time has a positive effect on the likelihood of apology which supports the claims in the literature that traumatic events must first pass into memory before they can be apologized for effectively. The data shows that the first political apology in the sample was not offered until 26 years after the atrocity it referenced. This suggests that the generational argument for reconciliation, which argues that reconciliation cannot take place until generational replacement does, has statistical validity when applied to apology. The mixed results of time also suggest that there is a negative curvilinear relationship between time and the likelihood of apology: the likelihood of apology increases with time to a threshold point before decreasing. This relationship sheds some light on a possible explanation for political apologies being offered for comparatively recent events while atrocities in, for example, The Boxer Rebellion or the Russo-Japanese War are largely forgotten, or at least no longer important defining characteristics of interstate relationships.

#### *Dyadic Level Motivations*

The dyadic level motivations drawn out in the theoretical discussion, conflict outcome and relative power, can be jointly referred to as realist motivations for political apology. In line with the “victor’s justice” hypothesis, the models show that losing a conflict has a positive and

large effect on the likelihood of political apology. Relative power behaves against the prediction of the power hypothesis in the global and Asian samples, and in Europe, where it is significant, it has a positive effect.

This unexpected relationship is perhaps best understood in terms of Lind's (2005) theory of threat reduction: states are more likely to apologize in an effort to reduce the perception of threat in neighboring countries. In the European sample this relationship can be seen in German motivations for apology: as Germany became stronger following WWII, it can be argued that the government apologized to the European community in order to calm fears of German rearmament. The German experience is one of Lind's case studies and this quantitative finding lends support to her case comparison analysis. However, this analysis also includes political apologies between Poland and Russia. While it is plausible that the Russian government could offer an apology motivated by threat perception concerns in Poland, it is difficult to find evidence of a credible Polish threat in Russia. It is also interesting to note that Lind's other case study, political apology in Japan, does not behave as expected. The analysis presented here suggests that as Japan becomes stronger relative to its neighbors it is less likely to offer apologies for past atrocities.

The addition of controls for democracy, a state and dyadic level motivation, has interesting effects for the model. In the global sample, democracy has the strongest effect on the likelihood of apology and has a similar positive, though not significant effect in the European sample. This result suggests not only that as states become more democratic that we will see more apologies in the system, but that as more states become democracies the occurrence of apology will increase. The addition of the democracy control variable decreased

the significance of all five explanatory variables which hints at a possible joint effect between apology and democracy. The influence of time shows that apology became more likely in the post World War II era and the positive results with the age of apology show growth in apology during this time. During this same period, waves of democratization took place which may account for a significant portion of this increase in apology.

### *System Level Motivations*

The sole system level motivator behind political apology are the “Age of Apology” hypotheses which suggest that states are more likely to offer apologies as other states in the system or in a particular geographic region do. The results are consistent across all three models in showing the positive relationship between past apology and the likelihood of future apology. This confirms the well-established observation that the world is experiencing an “Age of Apology” which judging by the sample distribution began after WWII.

While this positive relationship is present in the global sample, it is stronger in the regional samples. Poe and Dancy (2006) find similar results for the spread of truth commissions. Their suggested reasoning behind this effect on the spread of truth commissions applies to apology as well in that states are likely to look to their neighbors for behavioral clues. In the European case, it is plausible that Poland and Russia looked to past German apologies as models for their own apologies. It will be interesting to see if this regional demonstration effect plays out in Asia as Japan offers apologies for past crimes.

## Conclusion

Given these results, what can be said about the type of states that are likely to offer apologies for past atrocities? The model suggests that relatively powerful, moderately collectivist democratic states that have lost conflicts are likeliest to apologize for past atrocities. The positive relationship between power and apology is interesting in terms of post-conflict attitudes towards reparative justice. In the case of interstate conflict, the results of this study suggest that rather than seek apology and contrition right away from former adversaries it would be more beneficial to rebuild a positive relationship and encourage development: development, along with the passage of time, make apology more likely as well as make sincerity in regret a greater possibility.

This need for development before apology hints at an application of Maslow's (1943, 1971) hierarchy of needs applied to the state as a collective. According to Maslow, self-actualization, which includes morality, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts, only comes after needs of esteem, belonging, safety, and physiological goals are met. Applied to a state, this would imply that citizens must achieve certain levels of human development and security before the reflection and sense of moral justice necessary for apology are present. The tendency in the aftermath of conflict seems to be to immediately begin proceedings to bring former aggressors justice and, in the case of truth commissions, encourage productive confrontations between aggressors and victims. If the goal is atonement and forgiveness, of which apology is crucial, this immediate jump may do more harm than good. By focusing rebuilding efforts more on development and meeting basic needs rather than on justice, the long term results will be more positive.

The argument to encourage development in the short term for apology and reconciliation in the long term has empirical and theoretical support outside as well as inside this study. The results for time indicate that as time passes, apology becomes more likely. Thus, as societies progress they are more likely to look back and seek forgiveness and atone for past crimes.<sup>14</sup> However, it is clear from comparing Table 1 and Table 2 that many atrocities in the past have not been apologized for: all the apologies included in this study's sample are for atrocities committed since 1940 and occurred after World War II. This pattern in the data suggests an inverted-U relationship between apology and the passage of time. In other words, apology for an atrocity becomes increasingly more likely to a certain point in time, after which likelihood decreases.

This observation fits in with arguments of scholars of a third generation effect on remembrance: reflection occurs when the current generation is sufficiently displaced from the traumatic event to where it is no longer a salient event in relations (Forsberg, 2009; Futamura, 2009). An extension of this argument would suggest that with subsequent generations the atrocity would continue to lose salience to the point where an apology would be unnecessary. Of course, the strength of this argument could also depend on the magnitude of the atrocity in

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<sup>14</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, sincerity in political apology and indeed in apology in general is difficult if not impossible to gage. In this study it was not considered a requirement for apology because of this constraint. As such, a similar argument may be that meeting basic needs allows societies to be able to look back and recognize that past actions warrant recognition by way of apology to appease former victims.



question. It is rational to suggest that events such as the Holocaust and the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki will continue to influence the societies they affected and relationships between states for generations to come.

Collectivism performs differently in the Europe and Asia samples, but these varying results have some support in existing theory. Regarding apology in Europe, and more broadly in the West, Weyeneth (2001) suggests that the spread of apology may be linked to the spread of Protestantism in the international system. Protestantism places an emphasis on confession which is psychologically linked to apology for past sin. In regards to apology, this Protestant value has spread through the diffusion of American popular culture via the media. Weyeneth makes his argument at the individual level, but it can be applied to states via culture. However, Weyeneth's major supportive case is the tendency for apology is Protestant America where this trend does not extend to political apology for conflict atrocity. In terms of collectivism and individualism then, the Protestant apology tendency is linked more to individualism, which is supported by the data.

The cultural argument in Asia relates to the Confucian underpinnings of most Asian cultures that encourage conformity and cooperation within the group. This argument is well-known in the Japanese case: traditionally, conformity is highly valued and apology is often used to rectify situations that are not in line with social norms. When looking at political apologies

for conflict atrocities, this claim is difficult to test as Japan is the only country in the region within the sample period to apologize for past crimes.<sup>15</sup>

Within a global sample, it is possible that apology has spread due not to the diffusion of any one cultural characteristic but rather due to the development of a global culture. This argument is not to suggest that individual cultures are disappearing nor unimportant, but instead that global integration in the last 50 years has led to the creation of a global identity in addition to traditional cultural identities. The emergence of global threats and goals has created a heightened sensitivity to the wrongs done to other states, both contemporarily and in the past (Weyeneth, 2001; Gibney & Roxstrom, 2001). This global sense of interconnectedness has also changed historical interpretations of what constitutes a crime against another state. As past events are reflected upon with modern standards of behavior, crimes committed during war which were considered par for the course at the time are oftentimes reinterpreted as heinous atrocities worthy of recognition and apology.

It is clear from the results of this analysis and the subsequent discussion that the motivations behind apology are multiple and up for interpretation. While culture affects apology, it has differing effects in differing situations. The passage of time plays a role in the likelihood of apology, but this may be dependent on the magnitude of the atrocity in question, which is not accounted for in this study. Realist motivations of power and post-conflict state

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<sup>15</sup> China committed massacres of foreign nationals during the Taiyuan Massacre of the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 which theoretically warrant apology. However, referring to the post-third generation argument presented, it seems unlikely for China to apologize for this atrocity.

status are not as influential as previous scholars have led us to believe, though they do play a role in apology. It is also possible that motivations outside those discussed in the literature and tested in this study have significant influence over the likelihood of apology.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Though this project was originally inspired by the first-hand observation of the power of apology in soothing tensions between Japan and China, it was further motivated by observations of additional apologies around the world. Like Japan, Germany has apologized on several occasions for crimes committed during World War II. Russia and Poland have both offered apologies for atrocities committed against each other in the 1940s. In the aftermath of civil war, several leaders have apologized for crimes committed by former administrations and at times rebel groups have even offered apologies for their actions. Though not for conflict atrocities, Belgium, Japan, and others have apologized for actions taken in the name of colonization over the last two centuries. In the United States, officials at the national and state level have offered apologies for events ranging from segregation policies to the treatment of Native Americans and Japanese Americans at various points in history. Why should these states who have seemingly buried the hatchet on their past differences suddenly bring the past back to center stage and offer apologies for their actions?

In addition to inspiration from observances of political apologies, the scholarly field of state atrocity and its social aftermath played an important role in the conceptualization of this project. States have offered apologies for numerous additional types of situations, such as relatively minor diplomatic incidents, military misunderstandings, and the actions of citizens abroad, but conflict atrocities are among the most galvanizing for interstate relations. The importance of rebuilding relationships in the aftermath of atrocity cannot be underestimated and this study has grown from agreement with that observation. The focus on atrocity apology

is not random but instead stems from interest in the relations of states following interstate conflict where one or more states have committed serious crimes against one another. This study is, in one way, about peace.

This study began with a brief overview of the political apology literature as it currently stands. On the whole, the literature is strong in regards to case study analysis and provides substantial detail behind the motivations for specific apologies. However, the literature focuses primarily on two cases of political apology between states, Germany to members of the European community and Japan to its Asian neighbors, which consequently limits the theories these studies propose. The literature further suffers from a lack of rigorous scientific analysis of multiple cases to support or disprove their claims.

This study built on this case study literature, as well as incorporated observations from other literatures and scientific disciplines, such as psychology, law, history, and sociology, to present a comprehensive theory of political apology. The theory presented argues that apologies are motivated by a variety of factors at the state, dyadic, and system levels. At the state level, governments are motivated to offer apologies based on cultural attributes of collectivism and individualism. At the dyadic level, states are motivated by realist influences of conflict outcome, or victor's justice, and relative power. Finally, at the system level, states are motivated to apologize based on observation of other states apologizing with positive, or non-negative, consequences.

The results of the analysis illustrate that there are multiple influences behind political apology, some of which have not been accounted for in the current literature. While a staple of the literature is to ultimately resort to culture as the primary influence on apology, this study

finds that culture may not be as important as the literature suggests and additionally does not behave as expected. For example, scholars have argued that, in the Japanese case, the collective nature of Japanese culture is largely responsible for Japan's apologies for wartime crimes and that collectivist cultures in general are similarly more likely to apologize. Limitations on data do not allow for a comparison in Asia as Japan is the only Asian country to apologize for conflict atrocities at this time, but analysis of the global sample and focus on the European sample suggest that collectivism has the opposite effect. As the degree of collectivism increases in countries, the results indicate that the likelihood of apology decreases. Collectivism and individualism are only one part of the cultural identity of a state, however. It is possible that other facets of culture play an important part in motivating or discouraging state apology. These facets should be considered in future research.

Looking at dyadic influences, the results of this study indicate that traditional realist motivations of power and conflict outcome are not as influential as suggested by the literature. A loss in conflict is a motivating factor in apology, and oftentimes a significant one, but its importance is overshadowed by other influences not typically accounted for in the literature. It would seem then that complaints of victor's justice forcing apologize are exaggerated in the apology literature, though this is not to say that victor's justice does not play a role. Rather, conflict outcome is not as deterministic as suggested. Similar to conflict outcome, relative power proves to be a comparatively weak indicator of political apology. Apology and the reconciliation it implies is a product of a liberal international system. Given this, it is not surprising that realist motivations behind apology are not as powerful.

The most conclusive results regarding the motivations behind political apology come from the system level influences of previous apologies encouraging future apologies. These results support the common claims in the literature that we as an international community are entering an “age of apology” where apology for past state crimes is both acceptable and expected. However, a question that this result leaves unanswered is why a state would offer an apology in the first place, which is only partially answered by the results of this study. It is clear from the psychology literature that apologies are offered in the aftermath of transgressions of behavioral norms, but in an anarchic system norms of behavior fluctuate and are difficult to enforce. Actions that are considered to be transgressions can change over time and with them the likelihood of apology changes.

This study has interesting implications for future research agendas in the study of political apologies. First, while this study focuses on apologies for conflict atrocities and their motivations, it is clear from a casual survey of occurrences of political apology that atrocity apologies make up only a small portion. A possible avenue for future analysis then is to apply this theory to other types of apologies to see if the suggested motivations are unique to atrocity apologies or apply to apologies in general. For example, are apologies for colonial occupations motivated by the same factors as atrocity apologies, or are their other influences at play? It is also possible, and likely, that apologies for atrocities committed during intrastate conflicts are motivated by different factors. The apology literature is only beginning to create typologies of apologies so this field is ripe for additional research.

Additionally, the diagnostics of the model presented show that there are other influences on apology not accounted for. This suggests that the literature on political apologies

may be missing key influences. In this study, I proposed that the personal preferences of leaders could play a role in political apology and cited the example of Australia's apologies to the aborigines. The personal preferences of individuals are difficult to quantify and test, but there may be other unique influences on leaders that effect the likely of apology. For example, party identification may play a role in that leaders from opposition parties may want to separate themselves from the poorly-received actions of the party in power at the time of the transgression. This party influence can be seen in President Bill Clinton's apologies in South America for policy actions taken by previous, Republican administrations. Outside of party identification, political ideology may play a role in state apology. There are many other possible motivations suggested by the literature, and the refinement and analysis of these motivations is another possible avenue for future work.

The study of political apology is a small but growing part of the field of international relations and has the potential to make significant contributions. The results of this study support the liberal theories of international relations which argue that the preferences of states, not their capabilities, determine state behavior. Apology is becoming an increasingly popular policy option in the aftermath of transgressions, and this study shows that it is motivated more by liberal influences, such as culture, rather than realist, power-based influences.

As a final thought, it must be asked what this all means. It is obvious that political apologies are being offered and that they are increasing, but do they mean anything? In other words, do apologies have any substantial effect on the relationships between states? While the legal scholars are correct in asserting that apology is particularly weak in terms of binding a



state to a position, the use of apology does show significant changes in the foreign policy goals of states. The increase in political apology shows a growing awareness of the effects that the past actions of a state have on its future. This growing awareness in the international system brings to mind a well-known saying that those that do not learn from their pasts are doomed to repeat them. The increased occurrence of political apology suggests an extension to this adage: those that learn from their past should apologize for their actions. In the absence of an international mother figure looking over state's shoulders reminding them to say sorry, it is encouraging that governments are facing their pasts and making past crimes a productive part of their relations with other states rather than letting old wounds lie.

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