



# **Inherited Responsibility and Historical Reconciliation in East Asia (Political Theories in East Asian Context)**

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Contemporary East Asian societies are still struggling with complex legacies of colonialism, war and domination. Years of Japanese imperial occupation followed by the Cold War have entrenched competing historical understandings of responsibility for past crimes in Korea, China, Japan and elsewhere in the region. In this context, even the impressive economic and cultural networks that have developed over the past sixty years have failed to secure peaceful coexistence and overcome lingering attitudes of distrust and misunderstanding in the region.

This book examines the challenges of historical reconciliation in East Asia, and, in doing so, calls for a reimagining of how we understand both historical identity and responsibility. It suggests that by adopting a ‘forward-looking’ approach that eschews obsession with the past, in favour of a reflective and deliberative engagement with history, real progress can be made towards peaceful coexistence in East Asia. With chapters that focus on select experiences from East Asia, while simultaneously situating them within a wider comparative perspective, the contributors to this volume focus on the close relationship between reconciliation and ‘inherited responsibility’ and reveal the contested nature of both concepts. Finally, this volume suggests that historical reconciliation is essential for strengthening mutual trust between the states and people of East Asia, and suggests ways in which such divisive legacies of conflict can be overcome.

Providing both an overview of the theoretical arguments surrounding reconciliation and inherited responsibility, alongside examples of these concepts from across East Asia, this book will be valuable to students and scholars interested in Asian politics, Asian history and international relations more broadly.

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