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The Contrapuntal: Post-Cold War Politics and Cultures of Japan and Korea

Japan and South Korea have remained at odds over fifty years along the axis of postcolonial politics. Their estrangement has spiraled even more raucously on the issues of war time sex slavery, territorial disputes, and history textbook throughout the 1990s to date. On the contrary, the mutual exchange in and enthusiasm for the popular cultures of the respective nations have visibly augmented since the late 1990s. Then, how do we account for the discrepancy/bifurcation, and what do we make of the synchronization of political enmity and cultural amity? This essay focuses on the contrapuntal junction of politics and popular cultures between the nations as it epitomizes the postcolonial contradictions that became salient in the period of post cold war.